

Newcastle SENDIASS How to Guide:

How to understand SEND support



What are Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND)

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- a. Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age;

Or

- b. Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 settings.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Clause 20 Children and Families Act)

Definition of disability

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

A child must have a special educational need to be considered for an Education, Health and Care assessment. A care need or medical need in isolation would not result in an EHC Assessment.

The four primary areas of Special Educational Needs are:

Communication and interaction

Cognition and learning

Social, emotional and mental health

Sensory and/or physical

What is SEN Support?

Every child with special educational needs should have SEN Support. This means help that is additional to or different from the support generally given to most of the other children of the same age.

The purpose of SEN Support is to help children and young people achieve the outcomes of learning objectives set for them by the school alongside parents and pupils themselves.

Every school must publish a SEN Information Report about the SEN provision the school makes. You can find this on the school's website. You can also ask your child's teacher or the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) for information on the SEN provision made by the school.

SEN support can take many forms, including:

- a special learning programme for your child.
- extra help from a teacher or a learning support assistant.
- making or changing materials and equipment.
- working with a child in a small group.
- observing your child in class or at break and keeping records.
- helping your child to take part in the class activities.

- making sure your child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult.
- helping other children work with your child or play with them at break time.
- supporting your child with physical or personal care such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing.
- advice and /or extra help from specialists such as specialist teachers, educational psychologists and therapists.

A graduated approach

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. SEND Code of Practice (6.44)

When your child is identified as having SEN, the school should use a graduated approach based on four steps. These are:

Assess

Teaching staff should work with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to assess your child's needs, so that they get the right support. They should involve you in this and where possible, seek your child's views.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

Schools should take seriously any concerns raised by a parent, SEND Code of Practice (6.45).

Sometimes schools will seek advice from a Specialist Teacher or a Health Professional. They should talk to you about this first.

Plan

If the school decides that your child needs SEN support, they must tell you. The school should agree with you the outcomes that will be set, what help will be provided and a date for progress to be reviewed.

Do

Your child's class or subject teacher is usually responsible for the work that is done with your child and should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved. The school should tell you who is responsible for the support your child receives.

All those who work with your child should be made aware of:

their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. SEND Code of Practice (6.49)

Review

The SEND Code of Practice says:

Schools should meet with parents at least three times a year, SEND Code of Practice (6.65).

The school should review your child's progress, and the difference that the help your child has been given has made, on the date agreed in the plan. You and your child should be involved in the review and planning the next step. If your child has not responded to the help they were given, the review should decide what can be done next. This may include more or different help.

Sometimes it helps to involve other professionals to investigate the difficulties or to plan the next steps.

You and the school can look at the Local Offer to see what support should be available that could help achieve your child's outcomes.

School may need to request additional funding from the Local Authority to provide the right level of support.

Sometimes the next step may be to ask the local authority for an Education Health and Care needs assessment. If the school decides to do this they must tell you. If you think it is needed you can ask for this yourself.

Assess, Plan, Do and Review cycle (The Graduated Response)



Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 (part 6 applies to education) contains the 'reasonable adjustments duty'.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 summarises the Equality Act duty and says Nurseries, Schools and Colleges must:

- not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage (Introduction xix)

Nurseries, Schools and Colleges should be thinking in advance, and reviewing what adjustments they may need to make to avoid substantial disadvantage for disabled children.

- All aspects are covered, including homework, school trips, provision of education and around exclusions.
- They must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices and by the provision of auxiliary aids and services.
- Nurseries and post-16 providers must also make reasonable adjustments by making physical alterations.
- Schools and the local authority are not required to make physical alterations, but they must publish accessibility plans (and local authorities, accessibility strategies) setting out how they plan to increase access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information.

Where can I get more information, advice or support?

You can find out more about SEN Support by

- looking at the SEN Information Report on the school website
- talking to your child's teacher or the Special Educational Needs Coordinator
- looking at the Local Offer
- reading Chapter 6 of the SEN Code of Practice

You can get in touch with Newcastle SENDIASS

By calling 0191 211 6255

By emailing SENDIASSadmin@newcastle.gov.uk