

SEN Support

Guidance for parents

The SEND Code of Practice says that all children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they achieve their best; become confident individuals living fulfilling lives; and make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

Nurseries, schools and colleges have legal duties towards pupils with special educational needs (SEN). This information is about the support that these settings should provide for children and young people with SEN.

What are Special Educational Needs?

The SEND Code of Practice says that 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 or young person has a learning difficulty or disability if:

- they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, **or**
- they have a disability which makes it difficult for them to use the facilities normally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or post-16 institutions.

Special educational needs can affect a child or young person's ability to learn in different ways. For example, someone's SEN might affect their:

- ability to understand things
- reading and writing, for example because they have dyslexia
- behaviour or ability to socialise, for example they struggle to make friends
- concentration levels, for example because they have ADHD
- physical ability to do things such as writing.

A child or young person does not need a medical diagnosis to be recognised as having SEN.

What is SEN support?

Every child or young person with special educational needs should have access to SEN support. This means help with education or training that is additional to or different from the support generally given to most other children or young people of the same age. This support is to help children and young people achieve the outcomes and learning objectives which have been set for them.

SEN support can take many forms, depending on the needs of your child or young person, and might include:

- one-to-one or small group learning support
- needing small class sizes
- using different learning materials or special equipment
- helping your child or young person work or play with others
- communicating through sign language.

What is the graduated approach?

The SEND Code of Practice says that schools should use a graduated approach, based on this four step cycle, to support pupils with SEN:

Step 1: Assess

Teaching staff should work with the SENCO to analyse your child's difficulties and assess their needs. They should involve you in this and, where possible, seek your child's views. The school can ask specialist support services, for example, educational psychology, behaviour support or speech and language therapy, to carry out assessments and provide further advice and support if necessary. They should talk to you about this first.

Step 2: Plan

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

Step 3: Do

The school will put the support in place. The 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.

Step 4: Review

The school should review your child's progress and the difference that the help they have been given has made, so that they can change the amount or kind of support if needed. You and your child should be involved in the review and in planning next steps. If your child has not made reasonable progress, it will be important to agree with the school what should happen next.

If your child is receiving SEN support, it should be written down in an SEN support plan or record which should focus on the outcomes and learning objectives or targets your child needs and wants to achieve. The targets should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound). It should be clear to you what support your child will receive, who will provide it, what the desired outcomes are and when progress will be evaluated.

The school should meet with you at least three times a year to review how your child is progressing and what the next steps will be. In addition, the school must provide a report at least once a year on your child's progress.

How can the SENCO help?

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is responsible for coordinating extra help for pupils with SEN. The SENCO works with the class or subject teachers to plan and monitor the help each child needs.

If you think your child needs some extra help in the classroom, make an appointment to speak to their class teacher or the SENCO about your worries. You can ask about the support your child is getting; whether the school shares your concerns; and what the next stage will be if they need more help.

You can use our sample letter as a template to request a meeting with your child's teacher or the SENCO and our guidance to help you prepare for and take part in a meeting.

What if my child needs more help than their school can give?

Most children and young people with special educational needs will have their needs met through SEN support. However, some children and young people need more help than the nursery, school or college can provide. If your child or young person is not achieving to their full learning potential, despite the SEN support which is put in place for them, it might be appropriate to request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment.

An EHC needs assessment is the first step to getting an EHC plan. It is a legal process carried out by the local authority (LA) and can result in additional support and funding for a child or young person with special educational needs.

To find out more, you can read our **guidance for parents on requesting an EHC Needs Assessment**.

Where can I get more information?

- The Tameside **Local Offer** website brings together a range of information on services, support and guidance for you and your child or young person with SEN. You can find it at www.tameside.gov.uk/Education/Tameside-Local-Offer
- Every school must publish an **SEN Information Report** about how they support pupils with SEN. You can find this on the school's website.
- Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of the **SEND Code of Practice** explain the action that early years providers, schools and colleges should take to identify and support all children with SEN. You can access the SEND Code of Practice online at www.gov.uk and search SEND Code of Practice.

For further information, please contact:

SENDIASS (Tameside Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service)

Tel: 0161 342 3383

Email: sendiass@tameside.gov.uk

Website: www.tameside.gov.uk/sendiass