

SEN Support in mainstream schools

This information is about the support that mainstream schools should provide for children with special educational needs (SEN).

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

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 (6.1)*

The duties on schools to make SEN provision

The **SEND Code of Practice** says all schools **must**:

- *use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's SEN*
- *ensure that children and young people with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN*
- *designate a teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision – the SEN co-ordinator, or SENCO.*
- *inform parents when they are making special educational provision for a child*
- *publish an SEN information report and their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time. (6.2)*

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 other children of the same age.

SEN support can take many forms, including:

- a special learning programme for your child;
- making or adapting materials and equipment;
- working with your 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 your child to ask questions or to try something s/he finds difficult;
- extra help from a teacher or a teaching assistant
- helping other children work with your child, or encouraging play them to play together at break time
- supporting your child with physical or personal care, such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing.

Who decides what SEN support my child should receive?

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, should make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. (6.17)

The school should then decide if your child needs SEN support. The school should talk to you and your child about this. If a young person is 16 or older the school must involve them directly.

Sometimes you may be the first to be aware that your child has some special educational needs. If you think your child may need SEN support you should talk to your child's teacher or to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

If you are not happy about the support your child is receiving, you can ask to talk to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or head teacher. You can also find out more by looking at the Reading SEND Local Offer at <http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/family.page?familychannel=3>.

A graduated approach

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

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. (6.44)

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

Assess

Teaching staff should work with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to assess your child's needs, so that they give 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. (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 it **must** tell you. The school should talk with you about the outcomes that will be set, what help will be provided and agree 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 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 in planning the next step.

The **SEND Code of Practice** says

Schools should meet with parents at least three times a year. (6.65)

Sometimes it helps to involve other professionals in further assessment or to support planning the next steps. If your child has not made reasonable progress it will be important to agree with the school what should happen next.

There is no set timescale for each cycle of the graduated approach but each cycle usually lasts for about 12 weeks (or a long term).

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

Where can I get more information, advice or support?

You can find out more about SEN Support by:

- looking at the school's SEN Information Report on the school website (this can also be found on the Local Offer)
- talking to your child's teacher or the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)
- looking at the **Local Offer**
- reading Chapter 6 of the **SEN Code of Practice**

You can also get in touch with Reading Information, Advice and Support Service for SEND who can give you:

- information about SEN support, including information about SEN funding
- advice about what to do if you are not happy with the support your school is providing

- information about other organisations, support groups and information services that could help
- information and advice about your rights to request an **EHC needs assessment**.

To contact the Reading Information, Advice and Support Service for SEND you can telephone: 0118 937 3421 or email iass@reading.gov.uk.

The purpose of SEN support is to help children achieve the **outcomes** or learning objectives agreed for them by parents and the school. Schools should involve you in this process.

Every school must publish an **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 for information on the SEN provision made by the school.

The **Local Offer** published by Reading Borough Council also sets out what support it expects early years settings, schools and colleges to make for all children and young people with SEN or disabilities

<http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk/kb5/reading/directory/advice.page?id=vNYSbVE3mws>.