

# Core Standard Four – Identifying Individual Needs

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## Why is it necessary to / what is the purpose of identify the individual needs of children/ young people?

When a child /young person is not making expected progress academically, socially and /or emotionally given their age and individual circumstances, it is vital that educational settings takes action to quickly identify the reasons for this.

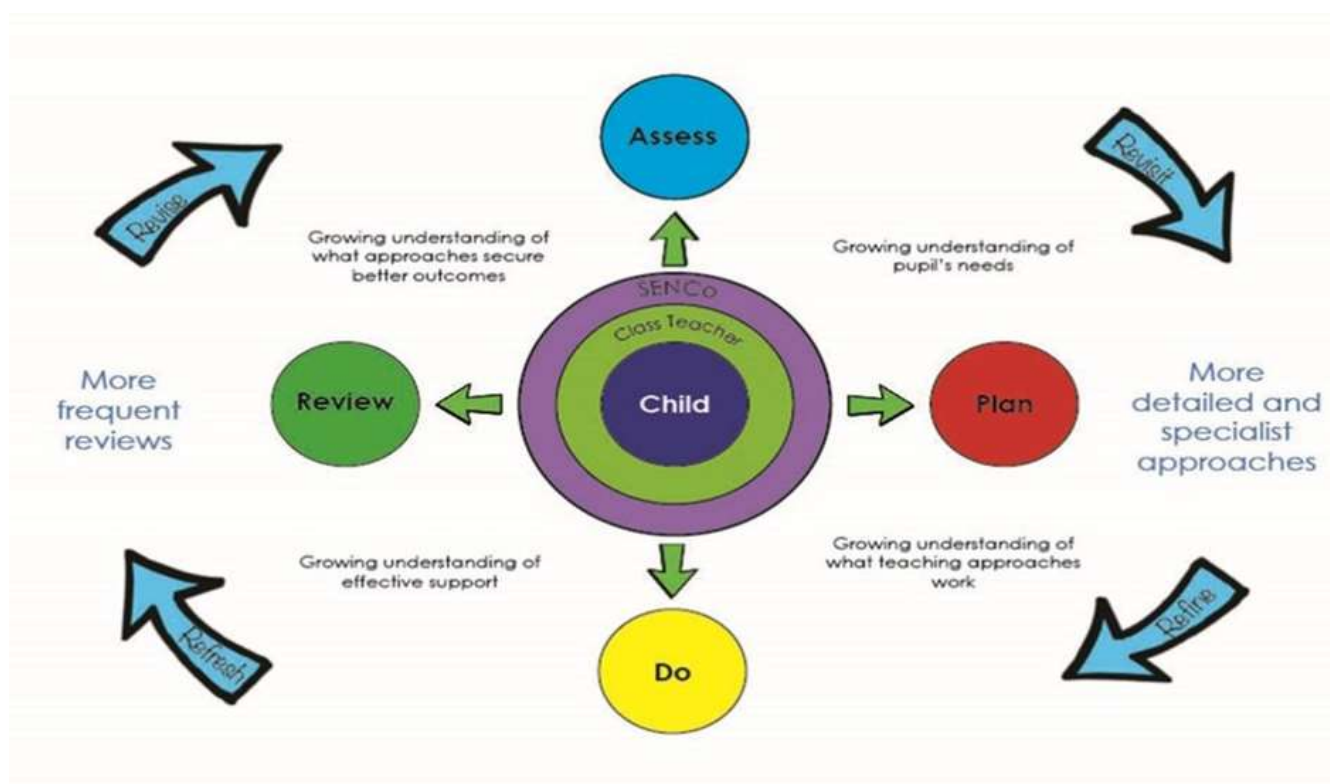
The overriding purpose of this early action is to identify the barriers that are causing a child/ young person to experience difficulties in their learning, socially and /or emotionally, and then make effective provision to remove those barriers so that the child/young person can rapidly catch up. By taking this action as early as possible, educational settings will improve the long-term outcomes for the child or young person.

The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take in order to make effective provision for a child/young person. For some children /young people this will include identifying that they have special educational needs.

All settings should have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the child or young person.

## What is the process for identifying the individual needs of a child /young person?

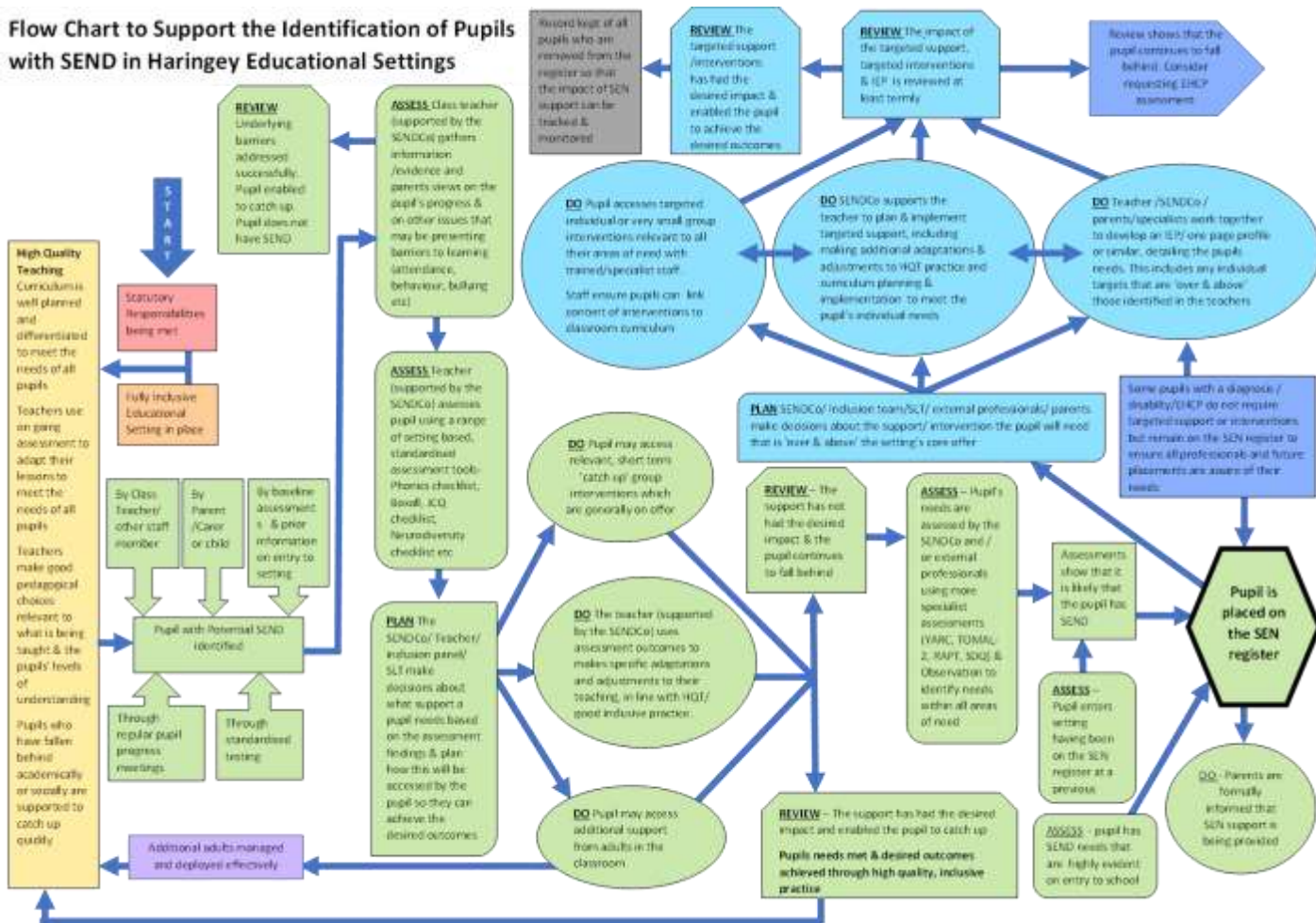
The SEN Code of Practice describes the ‘graduated approach’ that educational settings should follow when identifying and meeting the needs of children /young people with special educational needs. There are four elements to this cyclical process: **ASSESS, PLAN, DO, REVIEW**



(This diagram is available as a separate document [10. Assess, plan, do, review cycle \(PDF, 89.7KB\)](#))

The following flow chart summarises the actions associated with each element of the ASSESS, PLAN, DO, REVIEW process

## Flow Chart to Support the Identification of Pupils with SEND in Haringey Educational Settings



Key for Flow Chart:

	Core Standard One – Statutory Responsibilities
	Core Standard Two – Fully Inclusive Educational Setting
	Core Standard Three – High Quality Teaching
	Core Standard Four – Identifying Individual Needs
	Core Standard Five – Targeted Support and Interventions
	Core Standard Six – Education, Health and Care Plans
	Core Standard Seven – Effective Use of Additional Adults
Shapes	Assess = <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;"> </span> Plan = <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Do = <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;"> </span> Review <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> Comment = <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span> <span style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> </span>

The elements covered in this core standard are coloured green in the flow diagram. (a larger version of the flow diagram is available as a separate document). [11. Identifying need flow diagram A3 V 0.9 Final with key \(PDF, 133KB\)](#)

## What are the three main stages to identify individual SEND needs?

### Stage one of the process – Identifying and addressing underlying barriers to learning

This stage begins when concerns about the progress that a child/ young person is making academically, socially or emotionally are raised.

Concerns about the progress a child/ young person is making are likely to be raised in one of the following ways: by the class teacher, by a member of staff, by parents/ carers, by the child/young person, through baseline assessments on entry, through information from a previous setting, through pupil progress meetings or through standardised tests.

In particular, it is important that all educational settings listen and understand when parents express **concerns about their child's development**. Settings should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child/young person has special educational needs and should not automatically lead to them being recorded as having special educational needs.

A wide range of underlying difficulties can cause certain symptoms or behaviours. For example difficulty in following classroom instructions could indicate:

- hearing difficulties
- language difficulties
- attention difficulties
- short-term memory difficulties
- frustration at other, seemingly unrelated situations such as friendships or home life.

A child often seeming worried or anxious could have:

- learning difficulties
- sensory processing issues
- worries from outside of school and so on.

**All these different options have been explored and a full picture of a child or young person's strengths and weaknesses**, in terms of cognitive skills, relevant medical issues such as hearing and vision, motivation and engagement, and family support all need to be considered.

With this in mind, it is important that as a first stage, educational settings gather information to identify and as far as possible, empower the child/ young person to overcome any underlying barriers that may be preventing them from fully engaging in education.

*“While informally gathering evidence, settings should not delay in putting in place extra teaching or other rigorous interventions designed to secure better progress, where required. The child/ young person's response to such support can help in identifying their particular needs at a later stage in the process.” SEN Code of Practice*

Educational settings should have a range of information and data in place that will enable them to identify any underlying barriers for a child /young person. Outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child / young person. The setting should liaise with these professionals as part of the evidence gathering. Where professionals are not already working with a child /young person, the setting should only contact them if the parents agree.

By the end of this stage of the process an agreed plan of action that focuses on strategies from within the educational settings core offer should be in place to empower the child /young person to overcome any identified barriers. This plan should be reviewed by the class teacher ( with support from the SENDCo if required) at least termly to ensure it continues to be relevant.

Identifying and assessing the individual needs for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Educational settings should look carefully at all aspects of a child or **young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish** whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it could potentially be arising from special educational needs or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN.

How should parents\* be involved at this stage?

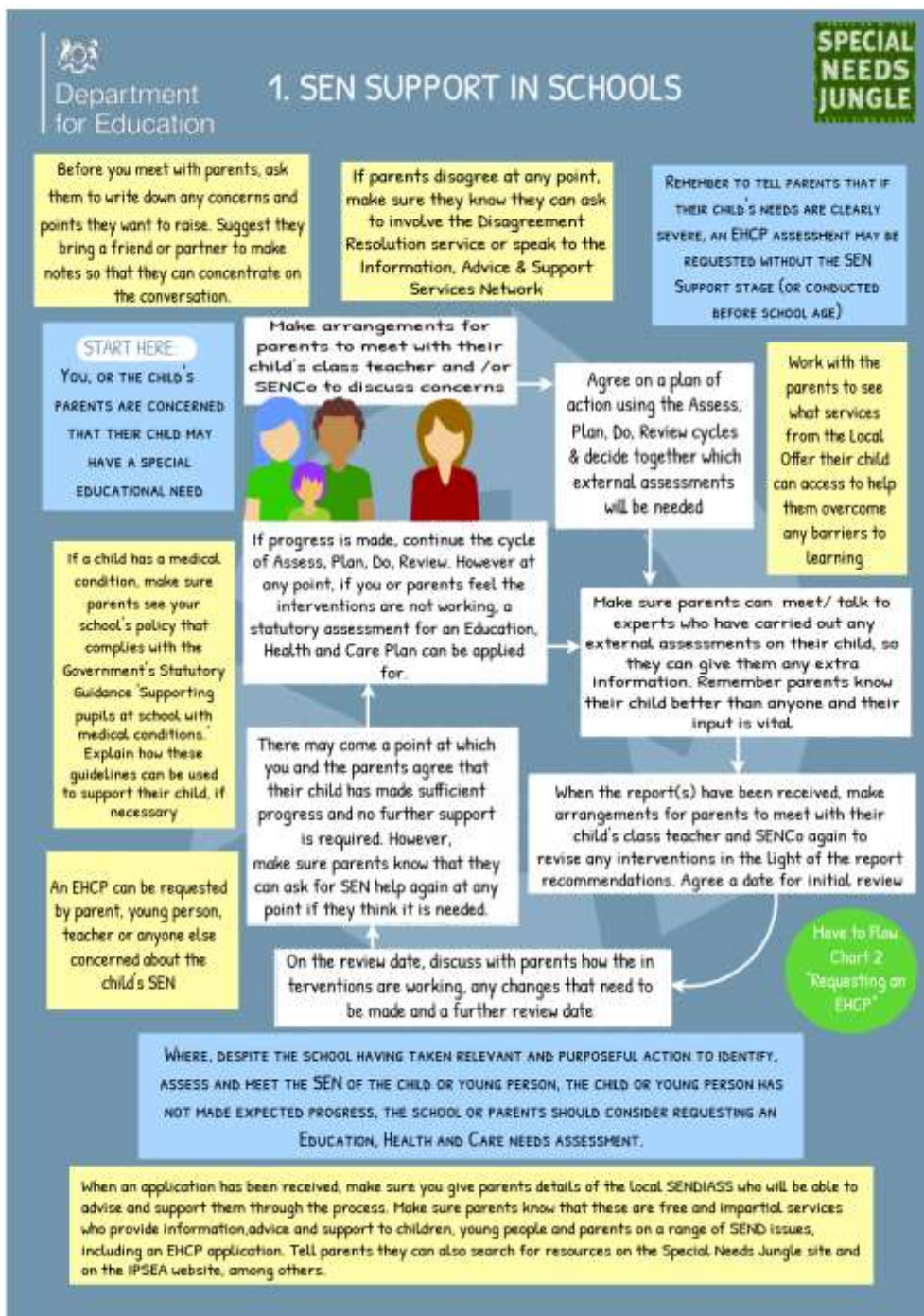
(\*parents refers to anyone with parental responsibility. This includes parents and those who care for a child /young person.)

It is important to remember that parents know their child best and can therefore provide valuable information to help with the identification process.



Settings should view parental involvement as a partnership **and a process of ‘co-production’** rather than as a consultation process, this means **asking** parents for their views, opinions and observations at each stage of the process **rather than informing** them about what has been done once each stage has been completed. As such, the identification process should always involve early discussions with parents

The following flow diagram provides an overview of how parents should be involved:



The code of practice is very clear that parents should be involved from the very beginning of the identification process i.e. as soon as concerns are raised about their child, and then at each of the subsequent stages.

This means that at this first stage of the process, the class or subject teacher (supported by the SENDCo if necessary) should have discussions with parents as soon as possible to gather their views, observations and opinions.

These early discussions should be face to face and in a discrete or private location so that the conversation cannot be overheard. The conversation should be structured in such a way that it develops a shared understanding of the child/ young person's areas of strength and difficulty and include any concerns that the parents' may have about their child.

Face to face meetings are far more productive and supportive than other forms of communication as they enable evidence and information such as attendance figures and examples of a child's /young person's work to be shared and avoid misunderstandings that can arise by sending emails or a letters.

When meeting with parents at this initial stage of the process It is not appropriate to mention the possibility of their child having special educational needs. Instead, the class or subject teacher should clearly explain their concerns about the child /young person not making expected progress in one or more areas and make sure parents understand that the setting wants to gather their views, observations and opinions to help identify what might be causing this so that the child /young person can be helped to catch up.

The discussions might include:

- Practical and personal barriers
  - poor attendance
  - exclusions
  - housing difficulties
  - safeguarding issues
  - disability
  - limited access to information and resources
  - Lack of HQT in the educational setting
  - bereavement
- Social and cultural barriers
  - disadvantage
  - family background
  - peer pressure (gangs etc)
  - EAL
  - BAME
- Emotional barriers
  - bullying
  - low self-esteem
  - lack of motivation
  - negative previous learning experiences
  - anxiety
  - stress

Notes/ minutes of the meeting should be taken, a copy of these should be placed on the settings information system and another copy sent to parents for them to keep. This will also enable them to raise any further questions they might have and to provide any further information they have thought off.

It is important to keep a record of all the meetings, emails, phone calls and any other conversations you **have with parents regarding the identification of their child's'/ young person's potential SEND.** Even if you believe you have done a great job of keeping them on board throughout the process, some parents may not realise that they have been involved in the process and this can lead to difficulties later on.

### Stage two of the process – Identifying children/ young people who may have special educational needs

For some children/ young people special educational needs can be identified at an early age. However, for other children /young people difficulties become evident only as they develop.

An educational setting should start the process of identifying if a child/ young person is likely to have special educational needs, when:

- HQT is in place but concerns about the progress that a child /young person is making academically, socially and/ or emotionally continue to be raised and/or
- The underlying barriers being experienced by the child/young person have been identified and appropriate support has been put in place through the educational settings core offer but the

child/young person's **academic social and/ or emotional progress continues to be 'less than expected'**

and/or

- The child/ young person is experiencing long- lasting difficulties and continues to make 'less than expected' progress in one or more subjects or areas of their development

'Less than expected' can be characterised by progress which:

- Is significantly slower than the **child's/ young person's** peers starting from the same baseline
- **Fails to match or better the child's / young person's** previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child/ young person and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

It should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, left unaddressed may lead to frustration, which may manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need:

- Communication & interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical

Individual children /young people often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. For instance, speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) may have needs across all areas, including particular sensory requirements.

This means that it is really important for educational settings to carry out a detailed assessment of need that covers all four of these broad areas, not just the area that appears to be the primary need.

The class or subject teacher, working with the SENDCo, should gather the relevant information and carry out the initial assessments to identify whether a child or young person may have special educational needs. Any staff involved in carrying out standardised assessments should have had the relevant training to do this correctly.

In assessing whether to identify a child/ young person as needing special educational provision, a setting should:

- Gather a range of information **from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data**, and expectations of progress.
- Build on information about the child /young person from previous settings and key stages where appropriate.
- Consider evidence that a child/ young person may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and, if so, what reasonable adjustments may need to be made for them.
- Assess the child /young person using a range of school based, standardised assessment tools that cover all four of the broad areas of need and a range of cognitive areas.
- Meet with parents to discuss the ongoing concerns and to gather their views, opinions and observations

How should parents be involved at this stage of the process?

Involving parents at the previous stage of the process will mean that they should already be fully aware that their child has not been making the progress that they should have been making and of the strategies that the setting has been using to address this. Nevertheless, if a setting thinks a child/ young person may have SEND and should be assessed, the SENDCo and class /subject teacher should not delay in meeting with parents. Waiting until the entire term or the entire year has passed before raising such an issue, for

instance at a parents evening, is likely to be highly counterproductive and could lead to problems or disagreements because parents have not been made aware of any concerns the setting has about their child possibly having SEND earlier.

The Code of Practice states that settings:

“...should know precisely where children and young people (with SEN) are in their learning and development. They should ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents. Early years providers and schools should enable parents to share their knowledge about their child and give **them confidence that their views and contributions are valued and will be acted upon.**”

When meeting with parents to discuss the possibility that their child may have SEND for the first time always allow plenty of time. Bear in mind that being told that their child may have SEND may come as a huge shock to them and may result in them becoming upset or angry. They will need time to express this upset or anger before you will be able to move on to gathering their views and observations.

Ensure you have all the necessary information to hand so that you can answer any questions they may have or concerns they may raise.

Make sure the conversation is two way. Explain to them clearly the reasons why you think their child might have SEND and that you want to gather their views, opinions and observations on the matter so that their child can get the right support, then take the time to listen to what they have to say. Don't interrupt unless you are asking for clarification or answering a question they have asked.

**Parents view should always be recorded and compared to the setting's own assessment and information** on how the pupil is developing. It may be helpful to ask parents to write down what they believe the problems are, what they would like to happen and some background of the family situation. Recording it on paper can be therapeutic and sometimes revealing. It may also indicate how committed they are to working with the setting and how accepting they are that their child may need help.

Remember to take minutes of the meeting for the settings records and to share these with parents after the meeting.

The results of the information gathering and initial assessments should be used to determine the support that is needed and how it can be provided by adapting the settings core offer, for instance by identifying the specific adaptations and adjustments that teachers will need to make to their teaching / classroom practice in line with HQT / good inclusive practice that will support the child / young person to catch up and achieve the desired outcomes.

As well as informing classroom practice, the assessment results should be used to identify any additional support that the child/ young person might need to access from the range of options that are already on offer in the educational setting through its core offer this could include:

- The child/ young person attending short term group interventions which are already delivered in the setting as part of the core offer.
- The child/ young person getting support from an additional adult who is already present in the classroom

### Stage three of the process – Identifying children/ young people who need to be placed on the SEN register

When the initial assessments have determined that the support needed by a child/ young person is different from or additional to the settings core offer, or where a child/ young person continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to their areas of need, the setting should carry out more detailed and specialist assessments. These more specialist assessments **should ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need** and so should cover all four broad areas of need. Such assessments might include: YARC, TOMAL-2, RAPT, SDQ and should be administered by staff who have appropriate and up to date



training to do so. At this stage of the process the setting may also want to consider involving external specialists or outside agencies to carry out more detailed specialist assessments.

The results of these more specialist assessments should be used by the SENDCo and other relevant staff, in partnership with parents to identify and plan the support and interventions that the child/ young person **needs that are 'additional to or different from' the setting's** ordinarily available offer.

The 'additional to or different from' support/ Interventions might include:

- A differentiated curriculum that has been adapted and adjusted to meet the child /young person's individual needs
- A personal plan that includes individual targets that are 'over and above' those identified in the teachers normal planning
- Targeted individual or very small group interventions delivered by trained or specialist staff

**\*\*\*It is at this point that the child/ young person should be placed on the setting's SEND register. \*\*\***

Where assessments indicate that support from specialist services is required, it is important that children and young people receive it as quickly as possible.

This might include:

- Educational psychologists
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Therapists (including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists)
- Specialist teachers or support services

How should parents be involved at this stage?

As with previous stages, parents should be involved as partners at every step of this stage, including in any decisions to involve external specialists.

Consideration of whether special educational provision is required should start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of parents.

Where it is decided that a child/ young person does have SEN, the decision should be recorded in the **school records and the child/young person's parents must be formally informed that special educational provision is being made.** Parents should already have been fully involved in the assessment of needs as outlined above, but they will still need to be formally informed.

If the young person is aged 16 or over then the right to make requests and decisions under the Children and Families Act 2014 applies to them directly rather than to their parents. As such the young person themselves should be formally informed. If this is the case, the Code of Practice states that:

**"Parents, or other family members, can continue to support young people in making decisions, or act on their behalf, provided that the young person is happy for them to do so, and it is likely that parents will remain closely involved in the great majority of cases."**

Some young people, (and possibly some parents) will not have the mental capacity to make certain decisions or express their views. Provision is made in the Children and Families Act (Section 80) to deal with this and Annex 1 (page 273) of the [SEN code of practice](#) provides further details

There may be cases where the young person (aged 16 or over) and the parents do not agree on an issue. **Legally, it is the young person's decision which prevails, subject to their capacity.** Where there are disagreements, staff providing information, advice and support should work impartially and separately with both the parents and the young person.

**Settings should also tell children, parents and young people about the local authority's SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.**

## What other circumstances might lead to a child /young person being placed on the SEND Register?

When a child /young person enters a setting having been on the SEND register at another setting, the SENDCo and class teacher should use their professional judgement, supported by scrutiny of all relevant documentation, to decide if the child /young person's needs can be met from within the settings universal offer, including through high quality teaching. If it is likely that the child/ young person will need provision that is additional to or different from the universal offer then they should be placed on the settings SEND register as soon as they join the setting.

When a child/ young person enters the educational setting and, based on the professional judgement of the class teacher and SENDCo, it is highly evident that they have special educational needs that require provision that is additional to or different from the universal offer, the child/ young person should be placed on the SEND register as soon as possible and further assessment to establish their individual needs should then be carried out.

When a child /young person enters a setting with a diagnosis or disability they should always be placed on the SEND register, even if they do not require support that is additional to or different from the settings core offer. (This may include some children/ young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan – see core standard six).

It is important that any child/ young person with a diagnosis or disability remains on the SEND register so that professionals and future placements are aware of their needs. The teacher and SENDCo should ensure that there is an up to date personal plan or one page profile in place for these children/ young people that provides information about their medical, health or care needs. This plan should be reviewed and updated at least termly to ensure it remain relevant and appropriate.

## What information should be on the SEND Register?

A SEND register should contain basic information about each child / young person, this includes:

- Name
- Gender
- Year group
- Class
- Teacher
- Main areas of need
- Ethnicity
- Social services/ child protection issues -Yes or No
- Disadvantaged – Yes or No
- Date placed on register
- Date removed from the register
- Other agencies involved
- EHC plan – Yes or No

A setting may wish to include other information such as current attainment levels and details of any personal SEN support plan. (PSP)

The SEN register should be reviewed on a termly basis.

(A template for the SEND register can be found here [12. KeyDoc-SEND register template \(57KB\)](#))

## What should happen next?

Arrangements for appropriate support should be made through the school's approach to SEN support. The SENDCo and class teacher, together with the specialists, the child/ young person's parents and where appropriate the child/ young person themselves, should consider:

- A range of evidence-based and effective curriculum adjustments and adaptations
- Individualised teaching approaches and strategies
- Targeted support and interventions
- Appropriate equipment
- Expected impact on progress, development, or behaviour
- A clear date for review.

in order to support the child/ young person's progress, development and /or behaviour. The agreed strategies and desired outcomes should be summarised in an individual education plan (or similar) for the child/ young person which includes targets that are 'over and above' those identified in the teachers normal planning. (see core standard 5). This plan and any assessments should be reviewed regularly. (at least termly) to ensure that the support and interventions continue to be well matched to the child's /young person's needs.

All teachers and support staff who work with the child/ young person should be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. This should also be recorded on the school's information system.

## What if a parent **doesn't** agree that their child has special educational needs?

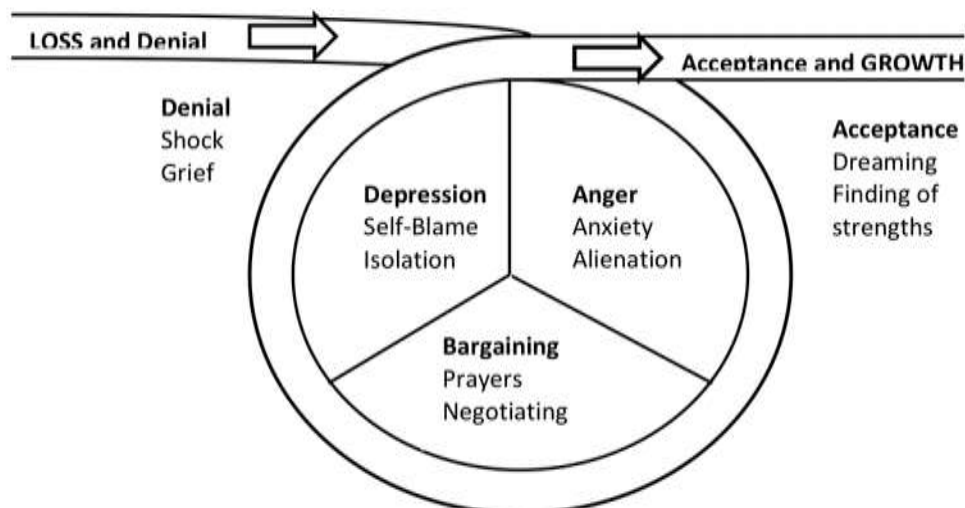
It may not happen very often but there are times when parents **don't agree** that their child may have special educational needs. They may recognise that their child is struggling in school but they don't want their child to be placed on the SEND register.

A parent will always want the best for their child but there are many different reasons why this might not appear to be the case. For example:

Parents go through the stages of grief when they learn that their child might have SEND.

- These stages are: Denial, Anger (this might also include 'Blame'), Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance
- Parents will pass through these stages at different speeds as they come to terms with the news that the dreams and expectations, they have for their child are being called into question
- Parents may get 'stuck' at any of the stages, including 'denial'

## The Stages of Grief in Learning your Child has Special Needs



for more information see: [This article by Doug Goldberg](#)

There are many social and cultural differences about **a child having 'special needs'**.

- MENCAP found that within some BAME communities, having a child with a learning disability is considered to be a punishment for past-life transgressions. It is reported that this creates a taboo around learning disability within the community, leading to subsequent stigmatisation and shame. **As such families want to avoid their child being labelled as having 'special needs'** one professional stated that:  
“The shame and taboo surrounding learning disability makes it difficult for mothers to get help and support. They get little practical support from their families and no emotional support either”
- [Research by Brigitte Rohwerder in 2018](#) identified the key drivers of disability stigma within different cultures. These included:
  - Lack of understanding and awareness regarding the causes of disabilities and their resulting characteristics
  - Misconceptions about the cause of disabilities often resulting from cultural or religious beliefs.
  - Disability being blamed on: misdeeds of ancestors; misdeeds of parents; misdeeds of the person with disabilities; supernatural forces such as demons/spirits; witchcraft; or punishment or fate from God.
  - People with disabilities being considered to be a source of shame
  - Misconceptions about the nature and abilities of people with disabilities, including:
    - that they are unable to contribute financially
    - that they are not able to have a normal relationship
    - that they will be unable to report sexual abuse
    - that their disability is contagious
    - that they bring bad luck
    - that their bodies have magical powers
    - that they are witches

This research also found that attitudes towards disability can vary greatly within countries, communities, or even families. For example:

- Different types of impairments carry different levels of stigma, as does the severity of the impairment and how it was acquired. People with intellectual disabilities, severe mental

health conditions, and sensory disabilities are often more stigmatised than people with physical disabilities.

- People with disabilities who can participate in their communities experience less stigma than those with more severe disabilities.
  - Females who are disabled can be doubly disadvantaged, due to the stigma associated with gender as well as disability.
  - Socio-economic status can affect attitudes towards disability.
  - BAME parents born in the country where they are living are less likely to stigmatize disabilities
- In contrast, MENCAP found that in many BAME communities there is no taboo. However, families do not believe it is necessary to ask for or agree to their child having additional support because they have the view that their child with a learning disability is the responsibility of the family and that they have a duty to care for the child without placing a burden on others, including on educational settings and other organisations such as social services.

### Parents personal experiences

- The parent may have been 'labelled' as having SEND themselves when at school and do not want this for their child
- The parent may have had negative experiences relating to one of their other children being placed on the SEND register
- The parent may know other families who have had negative experiences around their child being placed on the SEND register
- The parent may have read a range 'bad press' on social media about children being placed on the SEND register

It is crucial to remember that 'grief', social and cultural differences and /or personal experiences are likely to play a significant part in why a parent refuses to accept that their child has special educational needs.

### How can a setting work with a parent who doesn't want their child placed on the SEND register?

Parents of students with SEND may require additional support from educational settings in order for them to feel comfortable to be open and honest about their child's needs. Parents are often required to take on an 'advocate' role for their child and this can be a time consuming and emotionally laden responsibility. They may also have different concerns to other parents, for example, they may be more worried about whether their child is safe in school or college, whether they are making friends or what other parents may think of their child, rather than focusing on academic performance.

In this situation it is important to remember that educational settings must use their 'best endeavours' to make sure that a child/ young person with SEN gets the support they need; this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's SEN.

In addition, all settings have duties under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for children /young people with a disability (this includes children /young people who have been identified as having special educational needs) to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage.

This means that it is vital for a setting to work with parents to find a resolution that is in the child's /young person's best interests.

The Code of Practice stipulates that:

**'Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEN support, the parents must be formally notified'**

This means that a setting does not require 'parental permission' to place a child /young person on the SEND register and therefore could do so despite parental opposition. The setting needs to believe that this course of action is appropriate and in the child's /young person's best interests. However, the decision will still need to be discussed with and explained to parents, and a child /young person cannot be put on the register without telling parents.



If a setting finds themselves in this situation, before placing the child /young person on the SEND register, you should consider:

- What is gained, in the short-term, by putting the child/ young person on the SEN register
- Whether special provision can be put in place without “labelling” the child/ young person for example, by putting an ‘achievement plan’ in place rather than a ‘individual education plan’ or a ‘learning support plan’
- Whether outside agencies could provide information and support for parents for example, could an educational psychologist, therapist or specialist teacher attend a meeting with the parents?

## Meeting with Parents

If parents are struggling to accept that their child needs to be placed on the SEN register, it is essential to organise a meeting with them to discuss how you can best support their **child’s** learning. Ideally this meeting should take place without the child in question being present. It is best to talk to the parents alone in a calm environment.

The code of practice recognises that:

**‘At times, parents, teachers and others may have differing expectations of how a child’s needs are best met. Sometimes these discussions can be challenging but it is in the child’s best interests for a positive dialogue between parents, teachers and others to be maintained, to work through points of difference and establish what action is to be taken.’**

Bear in mind that parents are likely to be upset or angry. It is OK for parents to be upset or angry, but it is not OK for them to be abusive. If that happens and it is clear you are not going to be able to have a productive discussion you can adjourn the meeting for a short while to give the parents some time to themselves or bring the meeting to a close and reschedule it for another day.

Always take time to prepare well for the meeting.

Think carefully about:

- The timing of the meeting
- The location of the meeting
- The duration of the meeting
- Who is going to attend the meeting
- The layout of the room
- Refreshments
- Tissues
- How the meeting will be minuted

Think about the language you are going to use:

- **Avoid using terms such as ‘SEN’ and ‘needs’, and instead discuss concerns in terms of their child’s ‘learning’, ‘achievement’ ‘progress’ and ‘catching up’**
- Refer to 'maximising their child’s achievement' rather than 'supporting their child’s Special needs'
- Talk about an 'achievement plan' rather than a 'learning support plan'
- **Talk about the ‘catch up’ register rather than the ‘SEN’ register**
- avoid using jargon

Have tangible evidence ready:

- **Parents may be in denial simply because they have not observed their child’s difficulties for themselves**
- **Parents may perceive that you are making a ‘personal attack’ on their child and feel that it is your word against theirs. Showing them tangible evidence can alleviate this perception**
- You may want to include video or photographic evidence, but only do so if you have gained relevant permission from the parents to video / photograph their child

Make sure you will be able to talk calmly, clearly, and concisely:

- Ensure you are able to carefully explain why the setting believes that their child needs to be placed on the SEND register
- Ensure you can confidently describe what you think needs to be done and what they can do to help
- Think about the specific questions you can ask parents to gather their views on the matter
- Make sure you have read relevant information about the family so that you are aware of any possible social or cultural differences
- Ensure you are able to suggest well thought out pathways for solutions so that you can give them several options and allow them to respond to and evaluate each one

Ensure you will be able to listen to the parents:

- Allow plenty of time for the meeting so you can give them several uninterrupted minutes to give you information that you may not be aware of and to express their views on the matter
- Make sure you will not get distracted by taking notes

Possible things to say to /discuss with parents during the meeting:

- Their **child's** attainment is below the national average, or below that of their peers (initial assessments could be used as evidence to support this)
- Their **child's social skills / behaviour/ emotional development is below or different from that of their** peers and is having an impact on their level of achievement / progress (show evidence to support this)
- **If provision isn't put in place** their child may not 'catch up' with their peers, and may not be ready for the next year or school phase
- Categorising their child as needing SEN support is not about 'labelling' their child, but about supporting their learning, and ensuring that all staff know how to help them
- **Being in the category of 'SEN support' doesn't mean that their** child has a long term special educational need, it can simply mean that they need help to 'catch up' with peers
- SEN support is something that many children in the setting receive
- SEN support is often short term
- If their child is not recognised as needing support now, it may mean that they will fall further behind their peers
- If their child is not recognised as needing support now, it may mean that they will need more intensive, longer term support when they are older and this may be harder for them to get
- **Talk about their child's strengths as well as their difficulties**
- **Emphasise that difficulty doesn't equal inability**
- Give them a chance to explain why they are against their child being placed on the SEND register:
  - Acknowledge how they are likely to be feeling (stages of grief)
  - Talk about any different social or cultural attitudes to special needs that might be impacting on them, for instance what would other members of the family think or say
  - Ask them if there are any particular reasons why they are refusing
- Give them the opportunity to talk to some other parents who have a child on the SEND register
- **Ask 'what would it take' for them to agree for their child to be placed on the SEND ('catch up')** register and be given the support they need
- You may also want to mention that the setting has legal duties to provide support for their child

If a parent continues to oppose SEN provision for their child:

- Keep a careful record of your settings actions and the rationale for these

- Continue a dialogue with parents and seek to ascertain their reasons for disagreeing with SEN provision
- The DfE recommends that the setting refers this information to the LA, who are required to have disagreement resolution services available (see paragraph 11.6 of the code of practice)

## What are the criteria for identification for each area of need?

**Much of the following information is included in the Haringey 'Guidance for SEN Support' document**

[\(Link needed when document has been put on to website\)](#)

### Cognition and Learning

The SEN code of practice says that:

“Support for cognition and learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.”

A child or young person may be identified as having special educational needs (SEN) in the area of Cognition and Learning if they:

- Are making less than expected progress compared with the majority of pupils of their age in at least two key areas of learning (reading/phonics, spelling, writing/recording, maths.)
- Are making less than expected progress for the majority of the pupils their age across the wider curriculum
- Are not making satisfactory progress in at least one key area of learning, despite appropriate focused support being put in place.
- Some moderate difficulties with concept development and logical thought which limits access to the curriculum
- Possible signs of frustration, impulsivity, poor motivation, inattention and low self -esteem.
- Need support to be able to:
  - deal with abstract ideas
  - generalise from experience and/or using problem solving skills
  - focus on a task for a reasonable period of time
  - remember and follow instructions
  - organise themselves for learning
  - attempt a task independently
- Difficulties persist over time

### Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

The SEN code of practice says that:

“Children and young people with speech language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives

A child or young person may be identified as having special educational needs (SEN) in the area of Speech, Language and Communication Needs ( SLCN) if they have moderate and/ or persistent difficulties with:

- Saying what they want to say for example using correct vocabulary or grammar ( Expressive language)
- Understanding what is said to them for example following oral instructions (Receptive language)
- Misunderstanding / misinterpreting what has been said
- Social use of language with adults and peers for example conversations, asking questions, turn taking, keeping on topic
- Quality of voice problems ( pitch, tone, volume etc)
- Eating and drinking/ oro-motor control
- Speech sounds /phonological awareness
- **Fluency e.g. stammering, ‘shaky’/ quivery voice**
- Language based learning such as reading comprehension
- Constructing a verbal sentence
- Finding the right words/ limited vocabulary
- Attending in a larger group setting for example in assembly

## Autism/ Social Communication & Interaction

The SEN code of practice says that:

**Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger’s Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.”**

A pupil may have special educational needs in the areas of Autism/Social Communication and Interaction if their difficulties impact on their access to the curriculum and/or cause a barrier to their learning or their interactions with others or ability to successfully communicate their needs and if the support required is additional to or different from that which would normally be expected for pupils of the same age.

A child or young person may be identified as having special educational needs (SEN) in the area of Autism/ Social Communication & Interaction if they have moderate and/ or persistent difficulties with:

- Understanding or using the social rules of communication
- Managing their social interactions and relationships successfully
- Stress and anxiety
- Play skills / solitary play
- **Understanding and responding to their own and others’ emotions**
- Managing their emotions in the classroom or in their interaction with others
- Transitions between activities/ lessons/ classrooms/ year groups etc
- Managing the sensory or social demands of the school/classroom environment, which is impacting on their access to learning e.g., they struggle to maintain focus and attention or become distressed
- May present with few difficulties at school, but present significant levels of difficulty at home. In this situation, appropriate support and intervention to manage the environment and demand at school can have positive impact on difficulties exhibited at home.
- Flexibility of thought are impacting on their learning for instance because they find it difficult to accept a new way of doing things or to accept that they need to edit work or do corrections.
- Coming into school calmly in the mornings due to their anxiety around the sensory or social demands of the school/classroom environment.

## Specific Learning Difficulties

The code of practice says:

**“Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.”**

A specific learning difficulty will impede the ability of a child/ young person to learn or use specific academic skills (e.g., reading, writing, or arithmetic), The learning difficulties are 'unexpected' in that many other aspects of development often appear to be fine.

## Definition of Dyslexia

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) has adopted the Rose (2009) definition of dyslexia:

“Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points. Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia. A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention”.

In addition to these characteristics, The BDA acknowledges the visual and auditory processing difficulties that some individuals with dyslexia can experience, and points out that dyslexic readers can show a combination of abilities and difficulties that affect the learning process. Some also have strengths in other areas, such as design, problem solving, creative skills, interactive skills and oral skills.

## Definition of Dyscalculia

The BDA also provide a definition of dyscalculia:

“Dyscalculia is a specific and persistent difficulty in understanding numbers which can lead to a diverse range of difficulties with mathematics. It will be unexpected in relation to age, level of education and experience and occurs across all ages and abilities.

Mathematics difficulties are best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and they have many causal factors. Dyscalculia falls at one end of the spectrum and will be distinguishable from other maths issues due to the severity of difficulties with number sense, including subitising, symbolic and non-symbolic magnitude comparison, and ordering. It can occur singly but often co-occurs with other specific learning difficulties, mathematics anxiety and medical conditions.”

## Definition of Dyspraxia

The Dyspraxia Foundation definition of the condition is:

“Dyspraxia is a form of developmental coordination disorder (DCD) and is a common disorder affecting fine and/or gross motor coordination in children and adults. It may also affect speech. DCD is a lifelong condition, formally recognised by international organisations including the World Health Organisation. DCD is distinct from other motor disorders such as cerebral palsy and stroke, and occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. Individuals may vary in how their difficulties present: these may change over time depending on environmental demands and life experiences. **An individual's coordination difficulties may affect participation and functioning of everyday life skills in education, work and employment.**

Children may present with difficulties with self-care, writing, typing, riding a bike and play as well as other educational and recreational activities.”

A child/ young person may be identified as having special educational needs in the area of specific learning difficulties if they have specific and persistent difficulties with:

### Dyslexia

- Listening and/ or understanding what is said to them
- Expressing themselves in writing
- Basic reading skills
- Reading fluency skills
- Reading comprehension
- Phonological awareness



- Verbal memory
- Verbal processing speed
- Possible difficulties with visual or auditory processing

#### Dyscalculia

- Basic mathematics skills
- Understanding numbers/ number sense
- Mathematics calculation
- Recognising the number of objects in a group without counting (subitising)
- Comparing different sized groups ( actual and symbolic)
- Ordering
- Mathematical problem solving
- Mathematics anxiety/ negative attitudes to mathematics

#### Dyspraxia (DCD)

- Self-organisation skills
- Fine motor skills
- Gross motor skills or co-ordinating their movements
- Poor posture and sitting position
- Clumsiness
- Focus /concentration

The child's/ young person's educational establishment should always be consulted as part of the process for diagnosing a specific learning difficulty (including a private diagnosis). The educational establishment can provide pertinent information about how the child's / young person's difficulties impact on their ability to access learning. Any diagnosis that has been given without the input of the child/ young person's educational establishment should be treated with caution and should not automatically lead to the child /young person being placed on the SEND register. This is especially the case if the child /young person is not presenting with any difficulties within the educational environment or if their needs are being met through the educational establishment's 'core offer'.

### Social, Emotional and Mental Health

The SEN code of practice says:

“Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.”

A child/ young person may have special educational needs (SEN) in the area of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) if their difficulties impact on their access to the curriculum and/or cause a barrier to their learning or their interactions with others or ability to successfully communicate their emotional needs and if the support required is additional to or different from that which would normally be expected for pupils of the same age.

A child or young person may be identified as having special educational needs (SEN) in the area of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) if they have:

- Behavioural difficulties that cannot be explained by other needs such as language difficulties, unmet learning needs, or sensory difficulties
- Poor self-regulation (mood swings, temper outbursts, meltdowns, shutdowns, distress, overload)
- Diagnosis such as ADHD, attachment disorder or difficulties, or a mental health difficulty

- Social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) difficulties resulting in under attainment and poor progress

Persistent medium level difficulties with some or all of the following:

- Following adult direction
- Low self-esteem
- At risk of isolation or becoming withdrawing socially vulnerable
- Developing and sustaining positive relationships / sabotaging relationships
- Reliance on adults for reassurance
- Swearing or sexualised language
- Low mood/ depression
- Stress & anxiety
- Eating disorder
- Selective mutism
- Lack of empathy
- Attention seeking
- Self- harm
- Imagined /feigned sickness/ illness
- Poor attendance/ punctuality/ school refuser
- Removing self from classroom on a regular basis

## Physical/ Medical

The SEN code of practice says:

“Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.”

A child/ young person may have a Special Educational Need if their physical or medical needs impact on their access to the curriculum and/or cause a barrier to their learning and if the support required is additional to or different from that which would normally be expected for pupils of the same age. A child or young person would be identified as having a Special Educational Need under the area of physical/ medical needs if they:

- Have a diagnosed medical condition such as diabetes or epilepsy
- Experience moderate difficulties with gross motor skills
- Display moderate difficulties with fine motor skills such as fastening buttons and zips, handwriting
- Require use of a mobility aid such as a wheelchair or walking frame

Experience difficulties with:

- Their physical condition varying from day to day
- Recording their work
- Managing a medical condition or mild pain or discomfort
- Moderately impaired mobility for example difficulties on the stairs, with spatial orientation, and being unsteady in crowded areas or across uneven ground
- Physical ability to produce speech sounds
- Core stability
- Fatigue

Regularly require support to be able to:

- Access learning tasks and opportunities
- Engage with activities
- Record their ideas
- Carry out self-care skills
- Move safely and confidently around the site
- Position themselves comfortably in a chair
- Participate fully and safely in P.E and sports activities
- Participate fully and safely at play times

## Hearing Loss

The SEN code of practice says:

**“Many children and young people with hearing loss will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning.”**

A pupil may have a Special Educational Need if their hearing loss impacts on their access to the curriculum and/or causes a barrier to their learning or their ability to communicate their needs or interact successfully with others and if the support required is additional to or different from that which would normally be expected for pupils of the same age. A child or young person would be identified as having a Special Educational Need under the area of Hearing Loss if they have a clinically diagnosed mild or moderate bilateral hearing impairment which may impact on:

- Communication interaction (attention and concentration)
- Speech discrimination
- Speech intelligibility
- Comprehension
- Expression
- Independence
- Interpersonal skills
- Curriculum access
- Attainment or progress
- Social inclusion

Regularly require support in order to be able to:

- Access the curriculum and engage with activities
- Hear and understand teaching and instructions
- Communicate their thoughts or needs successfully
- Interact successfully with others

## Visual Impairment

**“Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support.”**

A pupil may have a Special Educational Need if their visual impairment impacts on their access to the curriculum and/or causes a barrier to their learning or their ability to interact successfully with others and if the support required is additional to or different from that which would normally be expected for pupils of the same age. A child or young person would be identified as having a Special Educational Need under the area of Visual Impairment if they have a clinically diagnosed mild or moderate visual impairment which has an impact on some or all of the following:

- Concept and skill development
- Spatial awareness and strategies
- Communication (verbal and nonverbal)
- Social and emotional development

- Orientation skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Independence
- Curriculum access
- Attainment
- Mobility skills
- Concentration
- Pace of learning and fatigue

Regularly require support in order to be able to:

- Access the curriculum
- Engage with activities
- Move around the site safely
- Interact successfully with others

## IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS- DESCRIPTORS

1.	The setting has a clear approach to identifying SEND based on the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle that is set out in an SEN policy
2.	All staff are confident that they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to accurately identify when a pupil may have SEND.
3.	The setting has clear processes for raising concerns about CYP who may have SEND. All staff know, understand and follow the processes consistently.
4.	The setting understands that parents/ carers know their child the best and therefore ensure that they are fully involved in the identification and assessment of child/ young person who may have special educational needs
5.	Where CYP are not making expected progress, academically, socially and/ or emotionally, the setting considers the effectiveness of High Quality Teaching and can demonstrate that it uses a range of information (attendance, behaviour, academic, safeguarding etc) to quickly identify and address the barriers to learning before assuming that a pupil has SEND. If necessary outside agency support and advice is sought and utilised effectively.
6.	The setting is proactive in identifying and reducing common barriers to learning for instance by monitoring the types, rates and patterns of bullying and levels of attendance of CYP
7.	The setting recognises that difficulties relating solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN.
8.	The setting does not assume that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability and recognises that some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, if left unaddressed may lead to frustration, which can manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties.
9.	The setting recognises that individual children /young people often have needs that cut across all four broad areas of need and has a comprehensive range of in house assessments which cover all four of the broad areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication and interaction</li> <li>• cognition and learning</li> <li>• physical and sensory, social</li> <li>• emotional and mental health</li> </ul>
10.	The setting has a suite of in house initial and more specialist assessments which are all evidence based and are up to date/ current versions of the assessments

11.	Staff involved in using the in house assessments have up to date training on how to administer them correctly and effectively
12.	There is evidence that outcomes from in house assessments are used to adapt the settings core offer, including informing classroom practice and feed into the interventions available within the setting to ensure that the <b>CYP's individual needs are responded to rapidly and appropriately.</b>
13.	There is evidence that assessment results are used to identify any additional support that the child/ young person might need from the range of options that are already available within the settings core offer.
14.	There is evidence that when the initial assessments have determined that the support needed by a child/ young person is different from or additional to the settings core offer or where CYP continue to make less than expected progress, academically, socially and/ or emotionally, despite evidence based support and interventions that are matched to their areas of need, the setting is pro-active in seeking the support of internal and external professionals to conduct more specialist targeted assessments when required
15.	There is evidence that the more specialist assessments used by the setting cover all four of the broad areas of need
16.	<b>The setting ensure that the child's/ young person's parents are always included in any decision to involve external specialists.</b>
17.	There is evidence that the results of these more specialist assessments are used to help identify and plan the support and interventions that the child/ young person needs that are 'additional to or different from' <b>the setting's</b> ordinarily available offer. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A differentiated curriculum that has been adapted and adjusted to meet the child /young person's individual needs</li> <li>• A personal plan that includes individual targets that are 'over and above' those identified in the teachers normal planning</li> <li>• Targeted individual or very small group interventions delivered by trained or specialist staff</li> </ul>
18.	The SEND register is up to date and accurate and is reviewed at least termly
19.	There is evidence that the setting only places children/ young person the SEND register when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the child/young person is at 'stage 3' of the process for identifying individual needs after stages one and two have been completed</b></li> <li>OR</li> <li>• the child/ young person has arrived at the setting having been on the SEND register at a previous setting and the professional judgement of the teacher and the SENDCo indicates <b>that the CYP's needs cannot be met from within the settings core offer</b></li> <li>OR</li> <li>• the child/ young person has a diagnosis or disability even if they do not require individualised support</li> </ul>
20.	There is evidence that where assessments indicate that support from specialist services is required, arrangements are made to ensure the child/ young person receives it as quickly as possible.
21.	There is evidence that where it is decided that a child/ young person does have SEN, parents are formally informed that special educational provision is being made for their child/ young person
22.	The agreed strategies and desired outcomes for each child/ young person identified as having SEN have been summarised in an individual education plan (or similar) which includes targets <b>that are 'over and above' those identified in the teachers normal planning</b>



23.	The establishment ensure that all individual plans are reviewed and updated regularly (at least termly) so that they remain appropriate and provide an accurate picture of the CTYP needs at any given time
24.	All teachers and support staff who work with the children/ young people who have been identified as having SEN are aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.