

SEN support in schools

6.44 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. This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people.

Assess

6.45 In identifying a child as needing SEN support the class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, should carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This should draw on the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment, as well as information from the school's core approach to pupil progress, attainment, and behaviour. It should also draw on other subject teachers' assessments where relevant, the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data, the views and experience of parents, the pupil's own views and, if relevant, advice from external support services. Schools should take seriously any concerns raised by a parent. These should be recorded and compared to the setting's own assessment and information on how the pupil is developing.

6.46 This assessment should be reviewed regularly. This will help ensure that support and intervention are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome, and that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their effect is developed. For some types of SEN, the way in which a pupil responds to an intervention can be the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need.

6.47 In some cases, outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child. These professionals should liaise with the school to help inform the assessments. Where professionals are not already working with school staff the SENCO should contact them if the parents agree.

Plan

6.48 Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEN support, the parents **must** be formally notified, although parents should have already been involved in forming the assessment of needs

as outlined above. The teacher and the SENCO should agree in consultation with the parent and the pupil the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review.

6.49 All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil 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.

6.50 The support and intervention provided should be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and should be provided by staff with sufficient skills and knowledge. **6.51** Parents should be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and, where appropriate, plans should seek parental involvement to reinforce or contribute to progress at home. The information set out in 6.39 should be readily available to and discussed with the pupil's parents.

Do

6.52 The class or subject teacher should remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Where the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they should still retain responsibility for the pupil. They should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The SENCO should support the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

Review

6.53 The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

6.54 The impact and quality of the support and interventions should be evaluated, along with the views of the pupil and their parents. This should feed back into the analysis of the pupil's needs. The class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, should revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil.

6.55 Parents should have clear information about the impact of the support and interventions provided, enabling them to be involved in planning next steps.

6.56 Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the local authority **must** review that plan as a minimum every twelve months. Schools **must** co-operate with the local authority in the review process and, as part of the review, the local authority can require schools to convene and hold annual review meetings on its behalf. Further information about EHC plan reviews is given in Chapter 9, Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans.

Transition

6.57 SEN support should include planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life (see Chapter 8, Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years). To support transition, the school should share information with the school, college or other setting the child or young person is moving to. Schools should agree with parents and pupils the information to be shared as part of this planning process. Where a pupil is remaining at the school for post-16 provision, this planning and preparation should include consideration of how to provide a high quality study programme, as set out in paragraph 8.32.

Involving specialists

6.58 Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the pupil's area of need, the school should consider involving specialists, including those secured by the school itself or from outside agencies.

6.59 Schools may involve specialists at any point to advise them on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions. A school should always involve a specialist where a pupil continues to make little or no progress or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those expected of pupils of a similar age despite evidence-based SEN support delivered by appropriately trained staff. The pupil's parents should always be involved in any decision to involve specialists. The involvement of specialists and what was discussed or agreed should be recorded and shared with the parents and teaching staff supporting the child in the same way as other SEN support.

6.60 Where assessment indicates that support from specialist services is required, it is important that children and young people receive it as quickly as possible. Joint commissioning arrangements should seek to ensure that there are sufficient services to meet the likely need in an area. The Local Offer should set out clearly what support is available from different services and how it may be accessed.

6.61 Schools should work closely with the local authority and other providers to agree the range of local services and clear arrangements for making appropriate requests. This might include schools commissioning specialist services directly. Such specialist services include, but are not limited to:

- educational psychologists
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- specialist teachers or support services, including specialist teachers with a mandatory qualification for children with hearing and vision impairment, including multi-sensory impairment, and for those with a physical disability. (Those teaching classes of children with sensory impairment **must** hold an appropriate qualification approved by the Secretary of State. Teachers working in an advisory role to support such pupils should also hold the appropriate qualification.)
- therapists (including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists)

6.62 The SENCO and class teacher, together with the specialists, and involving the pupil's parents, should consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions in order to support the child's progress. They should agree the outcomes to be achieved through the support, including a date by which progress will be reviewed.

Requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment

6.63 SEN support should be adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes. Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, the school or parents should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (see Chapter 9). To inform its decision the local authority will expect to see evidence of the action taken by the school as part of SEN support.

Involving parents and pupils in planning and reviewing progress

6.64 Schools **must** provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress. Most schools will want to go beyond this and provide regular reports for parents on how their child is progressing.

6.65 Where a pupil is receiving SEN support, schools should talk to parents regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school. Schools should meet parents at least three times each year.

6.66 These discussions can build confidence in the actions being taken by the school, but they can also strengthen the impact of SEN support by increasing parental engagement in the approaches and teaching strategies that are being used. Finally, they can provide essential information on the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs.

6.67 These discussions should be led by a teacher with good knowledge and understanding of the pupil who is aware of their needs and attainment. This will usually be the class teacher or form tutor, supported by the SENCO. It should provide an opportunity for the parent to share their concerns and, together with the teacher, agree their aspirations for the pupil.

6.68 Conducting these discussions effectively involves a considerable amount of skill. As with other aspects of good teaching for pupils with SEN, schools should ensure that teaching staff are supported to manage these conversations as part of professional development.

6.69 These discussions will need to allow sufficient time to explore the parents' views and to plan effectively. Meetings should, wherever possible, be aligned with the normal cycle of discussions with parents of all pupils. They will, however, be longer than most parent-teacher meetings.

6.70 The views of the pupil should be included in these discussions. This could be through involving the pupil in all or part of the discussion itself, or gathering their views as part of the preparation.

6.71 A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion should be kept and shared with all the appropriate school staff. This record should be given to the pupil's parents. The school's management information system should be updated as appropriate.

Use of data and record keeping

6.72 It is for schools to determine their own approach to record keeping in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. The provision made for pupils with SEN should be recorded accurately and kept up to date. As part of any inspection, Ofsted will expect to see evidence of pupil progress, a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEN support provided. Ofsted publish more detail about their expectations in their inspection guidelines.

6.73 Schools should particularly record details of additional or different provision made under SEN support. This should form part of regular discussions with parents about the child's progress,

expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps. They should ensure that they have accurate information to evidence the SEN support that has been provided over the pupil's time in the school, as well as its impact. A local authority that is considering or is carrying out an assessment of the pupil's needs will wish to review such information (see Chapter 9). For children and young people detained in custody, a Youth Offending Team will seek information from the school to support their initial assessments. The school should respond to such requests as soon as possible (see Chapter 10).

6.74 Schools use information systems to monitor the progress and development of all pupils. Details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists should be recorded as part of this overall approach.

6.75 As outlined in 'Involving parents and pupils in planning and reviewing progress' from paragraph 6.63 above, the school should readily share this information with parents. It should be provided in a format that is accessible (for example, a note setting out the areas of discussion following a regular SEN support meeting or tracking data showing the pupil's progress together with highlighted sections of a provision map that enables parents to see the support that has been provided).

6.76 Provision maps are an efficient way of showing all the provision that the school makes which is additional to and different from that which is offered through the school's curriculum. The use of provision maps can help SENCOs to maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of pupils and provide a basis for monitoring the levels of intervention.

6.77 Provision management can be used strategically to develop special educational provision to match the assessed needs of pupils across the school, and to evaluate the impact of that provision on pupil progress. Used in this way provision management can also contribute to school improvement by identifying particular patterns of need and potential areas of development for teaching staff. It can help the school to develop the use of interventions that are effective and to remove those that are less so. It can support schools to improve their core offer for all pupils as the most effective approaches are adopted more widely across the school.

6.78 The Department for Education publishes a helpful range of further information and resources about provision mapping (see the References section under Chapter 6 for a link).