



Leicestershire
County Council

Leicestershire Schools' SEND Standards

A Guidance Document
for Parents and Carers



This guidance sets out Leicestershire's expectations of provision for all school-aged children with special education needs or disabilities (SEND).

The system for supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities has changed as a result of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities legislation (often referred to as SEND Reforms) that came into effect from 1st September 2014. As part of these SEND Reforms, the Government published the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice 2014 which is statutory guidance that local authorities and other local service providers across education, health and social care have a legal duty to follow.

The SEND Reforms recognise that the most important people in any child or young person's life are their parents/carers - you know your child best of all and you should be fully involved in decisions that affect them from the earliest possible point.

Every parent should expect people who provide support for their child to make sure that support is planned, discussed with them and is the best it can possibly be. Likewise, every child and young person has the right to expect a good education and the support they need to become independent adults and succeed in life.

Although this is not a legal document, it is based on legislation and guidance. It aims to provide you, as a parent or carer, with guidance on the level and types of support you can expect from your child's school.

You can find out more about the legislation using these links:

[Children and Families Act 2014](#)

[Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#)

[The 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#)

Support for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

If your child has a disability, whether or not they have SEND, the school must make reasonable adjustments to their provision and services to prevent your child being put at a substantial disadvantage. For example, they could be expected to provide auxiliary aids such as sound-field systems or tactile signs around the school. Schools have a duty to prevent discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Schools also have a duty to ensure that their pupils and their parents and carers are fully involved in planning for, reviewing and making decisions about any additional SEND support required. **This is called SEND Support** – it replaces the previous categories used by schools of school action and school action plus - and in early years settings, early years action and early years action plus. The school may refer to this as the **SEND Support Stage**. During discussions to establish suitable support, the school should include the opinions of you and your child on what your child would like to achieve whilst they are in school and beyond the school environment.

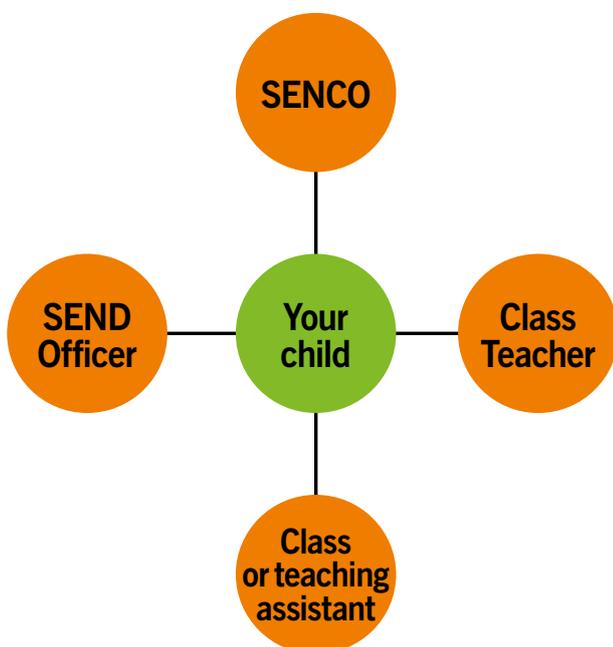
Regardless of whether your child's Special Educational Need (SEND) has already been identified, your child is entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- Achieve their best;
- Become confident individuals living fulfilling lives;
- Make a successful transition into adulthood;
- Make decisions about opportunities open to them like finding a job, training, volunteering, going into further education and living independently.

As a parent or carer of a child with a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), we recognise that you will want to be assured that your child's needs are met.

We also understand that as your child's main carer you should feel comfortable about sharing information with the staff member responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision: the SENCO (see [Jargon Buster](#))

You should ensure you inform school staff with regards to your child's likes and dislikes. This will help them to assess how your child may like to learn, as well as how well they communicate, make friends and develop interests.



Here are some of the things a School should adhere to:

Every school, including maintained schools and academies are required to identify and address the special educational needs and disabilities of the pupils that they support.

Schools must:

- Do everything they can to meet your child's needs. **This includes taking note of the opinions and choices of you and your child;**
- Use their best endeavours to make sure your child gets the support they need – **this means doing everything they can to meet their SEND.** It could include getting advice and support from specialists outside the school (such as an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or a specialist teaching and advisory service such as Autism Outreach);
- Consider a special learning programme for your child and inform you how and when they intend to make special educational provision for your child;
- Provide extra help from a teacher or a learning support assistant where required;
- Consider making changes to existing materials and equipment to support your child;
- Consider working with your child in a small group;
- Observe your child in class or at break and keep records;
- Help your child to take part in the class activities;
- Make sure that your child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult;
- Help other children to work with your child, or play with them at break time;
- Support your child with any physical or personal care difficulties, such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing;
- Publish an SEN Information Report, on their website, also known as the school's Local Offer and keep the report up to date. The report will include things like:
 - The kinds of SEND support the school provides;
 - Their approach to teaching children and young people with SEND;
 - The arrangements they have for consulting parents and involving them in their child's education and for engaging young people directly;
- Have a SEND policy and an inclusion policy which they publish and review regularly. **These policies should be made available to you and be known by all school staff.**

In addition to the above points, your child's school must provide you with an annual report on your child's progress. They should talk to you regularly about your child's progress (**at least three times a year**), set clear outcomes and produce a report of these as well as the action taken and support agreed. You may want to ask for this to be outside of the regular parents' evening. It is important that the views of your child are included in these discussions.

There should be a named member of the governing body with specific oversight of the school's arrangements for SEND. **If you are unaware who this is, be sure to ask your child's teacher or the school's SENCO.**

Headteachers, Governors and other senior leaders in schools should regularly review how they link in to expertise and resources in order to address SEND in school.

Equality and inclusion

Your child's school may support pupils with a wide range of SEND. The school should regularly review the range of support they offer to ensure access for all pupils. Your child's school also needs to set out their arrangements for admitting children with disabilities; the steps they are taking to make sure children with disabilities are treated fairly and not discriminated against; the facilities that are provided for disabled children and their plans for improving access in the future.

All schools have duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled children and young people.

- schools **must** make reasonable adjustments so that your child can take advantage of the same opportunities as their friends.
- schools **must prevent discrimination** and should promote inclusion through providing equality of opportunity. This should help remove any barriers to learning and help foster good relations for all pupils and their families.

For example:

School A - ensured that there was safe access to the playground for a pupil with a wheelchair. This enabled the pupil's unrestricted social time and involvement in school sport and game activities.

School B - ensured that there was sufficient adult support to ensure that a child on the Autistic Spectrum was able to attend a school residential trip.

School C – ensured safe access to the dining hall and a table at an appropriate level, enabling a wheelchair user to sit and have dinner with their friends/other pupils.

Medical conditions

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on schools to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions.

- an individual healthcare plan will be written outlining the specific types and level of support required to meet the medical needs of the child.
- if your child also has SEND, your child's school is obliged to ensure that the school provision is planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with the healthcare plan.

For example:

School A - ensured that the school was fully wheelchair accessible including specialist toilet facilities.

School B - ensured that a key person was identified to support a diabetic student when injecting insulin and an appropriate room and hand washing was available.

The Curriculum

All pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum with high expectations and aspirations for pupils with SEND, which should allow your child to reach their full potential.

For example:

Teachers should plan lessons that take the needs of your child into consideration and make sure that:

- Teaching assistant (TA) / Learning Support Assistant (LSA) support is effectively used;
- The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all children;
- Catch-up programmes are available if needed;
- Targets are set which will challenge the pupils;
- Opportunities exist for all pupils to take part in school trips and extra-curricular activities;
- All pupils with SEND are given equal opportunity to follow activities such as The Prince's Trust and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award if they are offered in school.

Additional support may be offered through:

- A sign-supported curriculum with a communication support worker;
- A speech and language programme;
- An occupational therapy programme;
- A physiotherapy programme;
- Life skills training to support independent living;
- Mobility training;
- A programme to support Braille users;
- Activities to develop listening and language skills in a quiet space.

The Learning Environment

Schools should enable all pupils to develop and succeed. Reasonable adjustments should be made to allow pupils to access and receive learning opportunities in a safe environment.

For example:

- Providing printed information on cream or buff backgrounds;
- Desk top prompts such as key word lists or sound mats;
- Colour coded visual timetables;
- Lunch and break time supervision;
- Pastoral support;
- General in-class support;
- Small group work.

Examples of Additional Provision to meet specific needs:

- Targeted lunch-time provision;
- Targeted individual work;
- Provision of coloured overlays;
- ICT equipment made available;
- Low stimulus area;
- Individual behaviour support.

Careers guidance for children and young people

Schools and Academies should ensure that pupils from Year 8 to Year 13 are provided with independent careers guidance.

Special arrangements may include:

- A one to one meeting with a careers advisor;
- Students with SEND able to access appropriate work experience regardless of their SEND needs.

Identifying SEND in schools

Your child's school will have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND **at the earliest point** because making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for your child or young person.

This will be built into their overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. **School should ensure both you and your child are actively involved in the decision-making process.**

Assessments will take into consideration your child's current skills and levels of attainment, building on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate. This could include progress in areas other than attainment, such as their social needs, in order to support their next stage of learning and development.

While persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that your child has SEND, they can be indicators of learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties, such as bullying or bereavement. Slow progress and low attainment may be an indicator of a range of learning difficulties or disabilities. It should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability.

The school's first response should be high quality teaching targeted at areas of weakness. If your child's progress is less than expected, the class or subject teacher should work with you as parent/carer and your child to help gather information to plan additional support measures designed to secure better progress. Your child's response to such support can help identify any additional or particular needs.

Special Educational provision in schools – the graduated response

Your child's teacher is responsible for the progress and development of all pupils in their class. If they feel your child is finding it harder to learn compared to other pupils in the class of the same age, they may decide whether to make special educational provision.

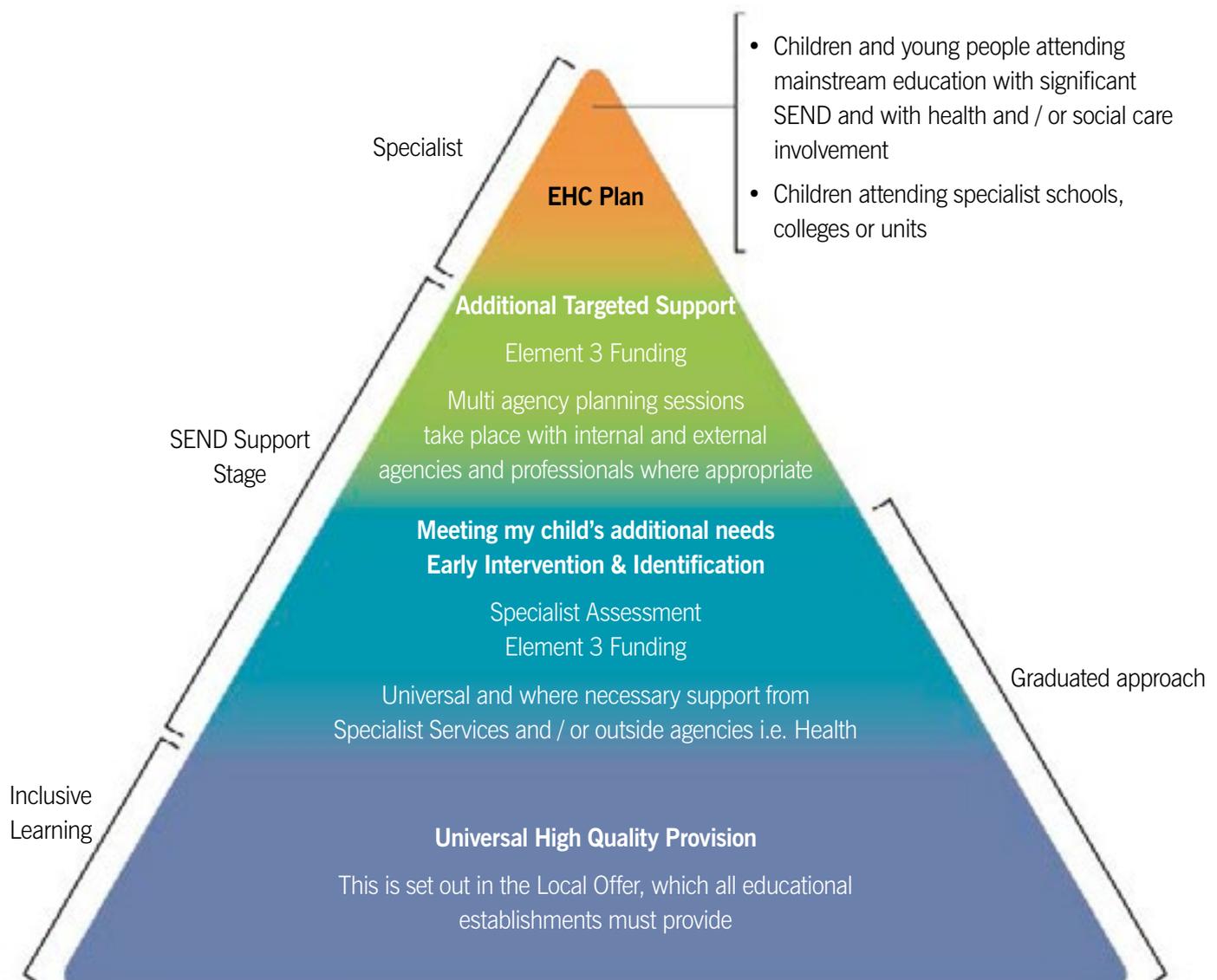
If this is the case, your child's teacher or the teacher who co-ordinates SEND provision in school (SENCO) will consider all of the information previously gathered about your child's progress and they will contact you. Alternatively if you think your child might have SEND you can approach your child's school. You will be involved and your views will be needed throughout the process and you will be kept up to date with the progress made.

School should talk to you regularly about your child's progress (at least 3 times a year), set clear outcomes and produce a report of these as well as the action taken and support agreed. It is important that the views of your child are included in these discussions.

If your child is aged 16-25 they will be fully involved in designing their own SEND support and provision. In these cases, schools should engage with secondary schools or FE providers, to help plan for these transitions or [Preparing for adulthood](#).

Where higher levels of need are identified, schools have arrangements in place to draw on more specialised assistance and support from other professionals and external agencies e.g. [Educational Psychology](#), [Learning Support Service](#) or [Specialist Teaching Services](#).

SEND - Model of Graduated Support



Four broad areas of need

The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school should take to support your child and **NOT** to fit your child into a category. Your child's needs may cover more than one or all areas and their needs may change over time. The school will complete a detailed assessment of need and produce an individual [SEND Support Plan](#) to ensure that the full range of your child's needs are identified, not simply the primary need.

The support provided for your child should always be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and needs, and interventions put in place should target their areas of difficulty. In some instances this may include the use of specialist equipment or software from the school or the [ICT Assessment Service \(ICTAS\)](#).

Your child's one page profile should be shared with all their teachers and support staff.

Listed below are **the four broad areas of needs** that schools should plan for along with some examples of support that could be provided.

1. Communication and interaction - your child will receive support in school for this area of need if they have speech, language and communication difficulties which make it difficult for them to make sense of language or to understand how to communicate effectively and appropriately with others.

Support with this may include:

- Small group work to develop social skills and interaction with others such as friendship groups or Lego therapy;
- Topics broken down into manageable tasks;
- Providing clear instructions to make sure your child has understood, encouraging them to ask questions or try something they find difficult;
- Targeted lunch time provision to enable other children to work with your child or play with them at break times;
- Observing your child in class or at break and keeping records to inform future support.

2. Cognition and learning - your child will receive support in school for this area of need if they learn at a slower pace than others their age, have difficulty in understanding parts of the curriculum, have difficulties with organisation and memory skills or have a specific difficulty affecting one particular part of their learning performance such as in literacy or numeracy.

Support with this may include:

- Making or changing materials and equipment e.g. dyslexia friendly materials used in classrooms such as coloured overlays for pupils to use, worksheets and materials printed on coloured paper, writing frames;
- Multi- sensory methods of learning;
- Extra help from a teacher or learning support assistant.

3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

– your child will receive support if they have difficulty in managing their relationships with other people, are withdrawn or if they behave in ways that may hinder their and other children's learning, or that have an impact on their health and wellbeing.

Support with this may include:

- A named key person who your child can relate to or trust such as a counsellor, mentor or pastoral care worker;
- A safe environment during lunch or break times;
- Opportunities for small group work to develop social skills and interaction with others through supported social time groups;
- Clear boundaries shared with staff to give a consistent approach;
- Positive reward systems;
- Social emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) curriculum activities in small groups or on a one to one basis.

4. Sensory and/or physical needs – for example, children and young people with visual and/or hearing impairments or a physical need that means they must have additional ongoing support and equipment.

Support with this may include:

Providing an inclusive environment by:

- Ensuring appropriate seating arrangements for young people with hearing impairments;
- Providing additional resources for visually impaired students i.e. a 'nook' to download enlarged books and resources;
- Completing an environment audit and making appropriate adaptations to ensure a safe and accessible learning environment;
- Opportunities for young people with sensory or physical difficulties to access extra-curricular activities or clubs;
- Access to alternative means of recording work;
- Access to appropriate storage for resources and equipment;
- Access to networked computers with personalised settings such as magnification;
- Fostering a positive attitude towards young people with sensory and physical difficulties. For example, development of inclusive policies and opportunities for mentoring and peer mentoring;
- Undertaking risk assessments to ensure health and safety requirements are met both in school and on school trips;
- Enabling the use of specialist equipment e.g. Braille literature.

Providing high quality teaching and learning by:

- Placing high expectations and aspirations of achievement for children with sensory and physical difficulties;
- Ensuring challenging but realistic targets are set for young people
- To promote independent access to and independent learning;
- Small step assessments to enable regular monitoring of progress towards targets;
- Ensuring that materials, resources and specialist equipment are available;

- Providing adapted and modified resources i.e. enlargements or colour contrasting work sheets;
- Consideration of a young person's pace of learning;
- Opportunities for listening skills and vocabulary development in quiet listening conditions;
- Supporting young people with sensory and physical difficulties in the use of equipment to maximise their independence;
- Provision of specific resources required to meet the young person's needs such as coloured paper and black pens;
- Enabling access to equipment required to produce adapted resources e.g. a laminator or photocopier;
- Access to technical support and use of standard ICT equipment.

Providing social and emotional support through:

- Offering opportunities to develop independence;
- Targeted interventions and support focussed on social skills and communication;
- Opportunities for children and young people with sensory and physical difficulties to meet with peers with similar difficulties;
- Encouraging children and young people with sensory and physical needs to advocate their own needs;
- Personal, social, cultural and health education lessons are used to promote an awareness of the issues of living with a sensory and physical disability;
- Provision of SEAL (social and emotional aspects of learning);
- Referral processes for children with mental health difficulties (CAMHS);
- Opportunities for the child and their parents or carers to be involved in planning and reviewing support to meet the needs of the child;
- Support to access the playground and outside areas at lunch and break times.

Some children and young people may have SEND that covers more than one of the areas listed above.

Ensuring positive outcomes for beyond school

If your child's school thinks your child may need SEND Support, you may be contacted by your child's teacher or SENCO to ensure you remain involved throughout the process. You will be kept up to date with the progress made.

SEND Support is part of what is known as the '**graduated approach**' (see [Jargon Buster](#)). Please refer to SEND - Model of Graduated Support.

Any support offered to your child during the **SEND Support Stage** should take the form of a four-part cycle.



Assess: Your child's difficulties must be assessed so that the right support can be provided; this might mean getting advice and further assessment from someone like an educational psychologist, a specialist teacher or a health professional.

Plan: Your child's school needs to agree, with your involvement, how your child will benefit from any support they get.

Do: The school will put the planned support into place, and your child's teacher, SENCO or nominated support staff will remain responsible for working with your child on a regular basis, to track their progress and check that the support is being effective.

Review: The support your child receives should be reviewed regularly. Together with your child, their teacher / support worker or SENCO, you should decide whether the support is having a positive impact.

This graduated approach includes regular reviews and the involvement of specialist expertise, when required.

This could include:

- Encouraging pupils with sensory and/or physical difficulties, and their parents/carers, to think about what they can achieve when they leave school;
- Ensuring children with sensory and physical difficulties have access to careers advice;
- Ensuring both you and your child are informed of the post-school options and support services available;
- Providing work experience opportunities;
- Providing opportunities for the development of life skills.

Transitions

SEND support should include planning and preparation for your child's transitions into and between phases of education, e.g. early years into primary school, into secondary schools and colleges in preparation for adult life.

As part of the transition planning process, the school will ask your permission to share the information about how they have supported your child with the next school or college your child is moving to.

If your child wishes to stay on at their school for post-16 provision, planning and preparation should:

- involve your child in the planning and consultation;
- include consideration of their aspirations and study programme; this could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society;
- consider how adaptations can be made to your child's curriculum and learning environment.

At the meeting planning your child's next stage the school should involve specialists, including those from the school itself or from outside agencies.

The [Leicestershire Local Offer](#) sets out clearly the support that is available from different Specialist Services, and how it may be accessed.

Such specialist services include, but are not limited to:

- Educational Psychologists;
- Learning support specialist teachers and/or assessors;
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS);
- Support for improving emotional and social development. This could include pastoral support arrangements for listening to your child and to prevent bullying;
- Other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations;
- 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;
- Therapists (including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists).

Requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment

If your child has not made expected progress, the school, along with parents and carers could consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. Information supplied through the SEND Support Plan is used by Leicestershire's Special [Educational Needs Assessment Service \(SENA\)](#) to decide whether a statutory assessment is required.

This information will form part of your child's one page profile, and becomes part of the [SEND Support Plan](#) or if your child has more complex needs, they might then instead need an [Education, Health Care \(EHC\) Plan](#). If you have any concerns about this process or the support offered to your child to help with their progress you should make contact with the [SEND Information Advice & Support Service \(SENDIASS\)](#).

Working together

Schools **must** provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress and should meet parents at least three times each year.

If your child is receiving SEND support, your child's school will talk to you regularly to:

- set clear outcomes for your child to achieve;
- discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the outcomes;
- review progress towards agreed outcomes;
- identify any parental responsibilities;
- provide essential information on the impact of SEND support outside school and any changes in your child's needs.

The views of your child should be included in these discussions.

- A record of your child's outcomes, action and support agreed through these discussions should be kept and shared with all the appropriate school staff;
- regular discussions with you regarding your child's progress and their expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps will be recorded.

Schools use information systems to monitor the progress and development of all pupils. Details of SEND, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists should be recorded.

- your child's school should readily share information about your child's planning and reviewing progress so that you can see the support that has been provided.

The role of the SENCO in schools

All schools **must** ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.

- your child's school will have a readily available SEND policy which should outline the role of the SENCO;
- the SENCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy and co-ordination of support to individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC Plan.

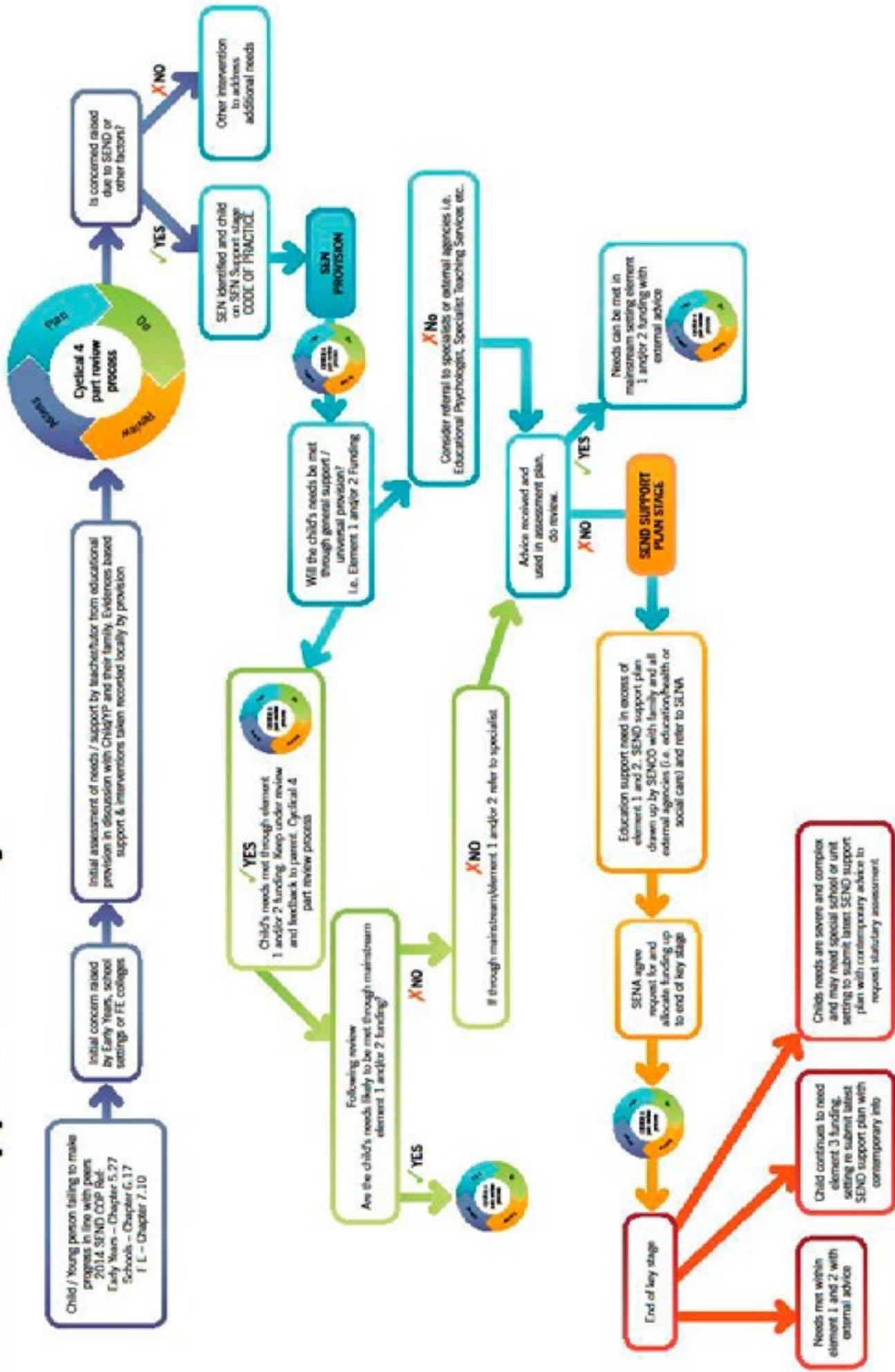
Funding for SEND Support

All mainstream schools are provided with resources to support those with additional needs, including pupils with SEND. Most of these resources are determined by a local funding formula. Sixth Forms receive an allocation based on a national funding formula.

This funding enables schools to provide a clear description of the types of special educational provision they normally provide and will help parents to understand what they can normally expect the school to provide for pupils with SEND.

Schools are not expected to meet the full costs of more expensive special educational provision from their core funding. They are expected to provide additional support which costs up to a nationally agreed threshold per pupil per year.

SEND Support Pathway



Appendix 1

Jargon Buster

Since the SEND reforms came into force in September 2014, many key terminologies have come into place and have been used throughout this document.

EHCP/EHC Plan - Education, Health and Care Plan:

If your child needs more support than is available through special educational needs (SEN) support, the EHCP sets out what the special educational needs and disabilities are and the extra help needed.

Graduated Approach: A model of action and intervention that recognises a continuum of provision in early education settings, schools and colleges to help children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities.

SEN - Special Educational Needs: A child or young person with a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. Mainstream post-16 institutions often use the term learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). The term SEN is used in this Code across the 0-25 age range but includes LDD.

SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disability:

Children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. ‘Long-term’ is defined as a year or more, and ‘substantial’ is defined as more than minor or trivial. There is often a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEN.

SENCO - Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator:

A qualified teacher in a school or maintained nursery school who has responsibility for co-ordinating SEND provision.

Send Support Plan: Introduced to distinguish the complexity of needs of children and young people with SEND. A SEND support plan is developed between professionals, the young person and their parents/carers, and will be available to children and young people with SEND but not the complex difficulties requiring an EHC Plan.

Special educational provision: Provision that is different or additional to that normally available to pupils or students of the same age, which is designed to help children and young people with SEND to access the National Curriculum at school or to study at college.

Special school: A school which is specifically organised to make special educational provision for pupils with SEND. Special schools maintained by the local authority comprise community special schools and foundation special schools, and non-maintained (independent) special schools that are approved by the Secretary of State under Section 342 of the Education Act 1996.

Targeted: The provider will offer specific support to those who need it, for example targeted social communication groups.

Universal: The provider will make this available for everybody in their setting as part of their everyday offer.

Useful documents

For a greater understanding around Equality Duty and Human Rights, parents /carers could refer to the following documents:

- [Special Educational Needs \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#)
- This should be read in conjunction with chapter five of the Department for Education Guidance on the [Equality Act 2010](#). This covers the Equality Duty as it applies to schools.
- There is also more generic guidance on the Equality Duty on the [Equality and Human Rights Commission's website](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities guide for parents and carers](#)