

# Wolverhampton Information, Advice and Support Service

'for special educational needs and disability'



## SEN Support

Support for  
Children and  
Young People  
in Education

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COUNCIL

## Families at the heart of the system

Children and young people (and their parents or carers) will be fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve. This is not just best practice it is a legal requirement.

With this in mind, this leaflet is written for both parents and carers and for young people. When you see the word "you" it is applicable for both.

For parents and carers reading this leaflet, references to involving you also extend to involving your child. For example, on page 11 it says "As part of any assessment your views should be taken into account" this means that your views as parents or carers and those of your child should be taken into account.



This leaflet is designed to inform you how schools, settings and other services support children and young people with special educational needs and or a disability and how you will be involved.

All schools and early years / post 16 settings have a legal duty to use their best endeavours to meet the special educational needs of children and young people.



Everyone learns in different ways and at different rates. Many children and young people will therefore need extra help at some time during their education. In most cases, schools and settings will help them overcome any difficulties by providing work that is suitable for their level of ability. This is called **differentiation**.

However, some children and young people will have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision. This means something that is 'additional to' and 'different from' that is generally available to pupils of the same age. **These children and young people may be identified as having special educational needs (SEN).**

## What does SEN mean?

The term special educational needs is described in law in the Children and Families Act 2014 as:

- 1 *A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.*
- 2 *A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:  
(a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or  
(b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.*
- 3 *A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age (or would be likely, if no special educational provision were made).*
- 4 *A child or young person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home.*

## What does disability mean?

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability. A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as:

*'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'*

This includes, for example, sensory impairments such as those that affect sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.

Many disabilities are hidden.



The SEND Code of Practice provides statutory guidance for organisations (this includes schools and settings) working with and supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. It covers the 0-25 age range.

### The SEND Code of Practice says:

*All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:*

- *achieve their best*
- *become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and*
- *make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training* (6.1)



The Department for Education has identified four broad areas which cover a range of needs. Some children and young people may have SEN that are defined by more than one of these areas:

## 1. Communication and interaction

Where children and young people 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.

Children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder, including Asperger's Syndrome, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction.

## 2. Cognition and learning

Where children and young people learn at a slower pace than others their age, they may:

- have difficulty in understanding parts of the curriculum
- have difficulties with organisation and memory skills
- have a specific difficulty affecting one particular part of their learning such as in literacy or numeracy

The term 'learning difficulties' covers a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple difficulties (PMLD). Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia come under this term.

## 3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which present themselves in many ways. They may:

- have difficulty in managing their relationships with other people
- be withdrawn
- behave in ways that may hinder their and other children's learning or that have an impact on their health and wellbeing

This broad area includes attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and attachment disorder. It also includes behaviours that may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression, self-harming and eating disorders.

## 4. Sensory and/or physical needs

Where children and young people have visual and/or hearing impairments, or a physical need that means they must have additional on-going support and equipment.

# Support for pupils with medical conditions

There is a duty on maintained schools and academies to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. In doing so they should ensure that children can access and enjoy the same opportunities at school as any other child.

The aim is to ensure that all children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

## Key points:

- Pupils with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.
- Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place to support pupils at school with medical conditions.
- Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.

Individual healthcare plans provide clarity about what needs to be done, when and by whom. Plans need to be reviewed at least annually or earlier if the child's needs have changed. Plans should be developed with the child's best interests in mind and ensure that the school assesses and manages risks to the child's education, health and social well-being and minimises disruption.

Governing bodies should ensure that all schools develop a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions that is reviewed regularly and is readily accessible to parents and school staff.



# Disability and the Equality Act 2010

Many children and young people with a medical condition and/or special educational needs will be protected by the legislation that defines disability under the Equality Act 2010. This means that they have a right not to be discriminated against. Schools and other education providers have a legal duty to make **reasonable adjustments** to their policies and their premises and to provide auxiliary aids and services to avoid children and young people with disabilities being placed at a substantial disadvantage. It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because of a reason connected to their disability. This applies to all aspects of school, nursery or college life, including extra-curricular activities and trips.



## Remember the definition of disability:

A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as:

*'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'*

*This includes, for example, sensory impairments such as those that affect sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.*

Schools and settings are also required to anticipate the likely needs of future disabled learners and take steps that are reasonable to meet those needs.

A failure to make a reasonable adjustment amounts to unlawful discrimination and can be challenged in a court or tribunal.

## Getting support in place

All schools and settings should have a clear approach to identifying and responding to special educational needs. For schools and nursery schools, this should be published in their **SEN Information Report**.

**All schools and settings will carefully monitor the progress of all children and young people.**

**SEN support** should be considered in schools for pupils who continue to make less than expected progress which:

**The SEND Code of Practice says:**

- *is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline*
- *fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress*
- *fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers*
- *widens the attainment gap* (6.17)

**The SEND Code of Practice says:**

*Colleges should be involved in transition planning between school and college so that they can prepare to meet the student's needs and ensure a successful transition into college life.* (7.10)

*Some needs may emerge after a student has begun a programme. Teaching staff should work with specialist support to identify where a student may be having difficulty which may be because of SEN.* (7.11)

The benefits of early identification are widely recognised. Identifying need at the earliest point and making effective provision improves long term outcomes.

If you are concerned or worried it is important that you speak to your school or setting. You should contact a teacher/tutor or the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo).

## The role of the SENCo

Schools and early years settings must have a SENCo who is responsible for arranging and co-ordinating extra help for those with SEN. The SENCo works with the class and subject teachers to plan and deliver support. The SENCo must be a qualified teacher working at the school. The SENCo has an important role to play with the head teacher and governing body to develop the SEN policy and has day to day responsibility for the co-ordination of SEN provision. The SENCo provides professional guidance to colleagues and other professionals and works closely with staff, parents and carers and other services. The SENCo ensures children and young people are at the centre of the SEN support process.

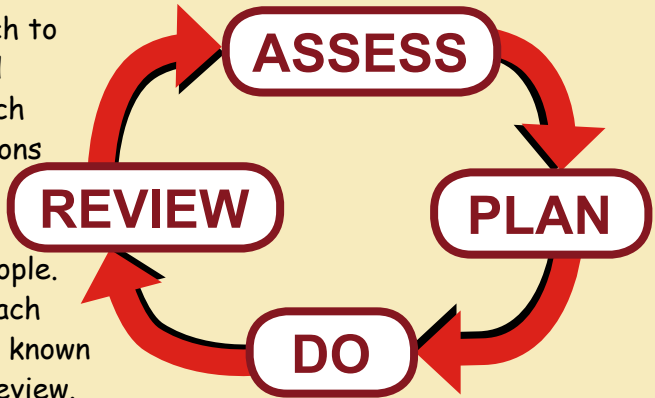
There is a named person in colleges with oversight of SEN to ensure support and provision is in place.

Once a potential special educational need has been identified, information will be gathered to identify the extra support needed. You will also be asked to give your views. It is essential you are involved at every stage. It may be decided to provide additional support. This may be referred to as **SEN support**.



## What is SEN support?

It is a staged approach to identifying needs, and providing support which will involve conversations with school/setting, parents/carers, children and young people. This graduated approach within SEN support is known as Assess, Plan, Do, Review.



### ASSESS

Teaching staff will look at individual development and progress. As part of any assessment your views should be taken into account. In some cases, outside professionals may already be involved and should help to inform any assessments and planned support. The SENCo may wish to contact services not already involved and should seek your agreement to do so. You must be told if SEN support is needed.

### PLAN

The plan of support will be agreed with you, detailing interventions and support to be put in place. The school/setting should agree with you, the desired outcomes, what help will be provided and a date for it to be reviewed. SEN support should be delivered by staff with sufficient skills and knowledge.

The plan should consider what approaches and strategies can be used at home (or elsewhere) to enhance SEN support.

The plan will be in writing, shared with you and appropriate staff to ensure everyone is aware of individual needs, the support required and agreed strategies or approaches.

## DO

The teacher/tutor/early years practitioner is responsible for implementing SEN support on a daily basis, even if this means working away from the main class or group. There is also a requirement to work closely with teaching assistants or specialist staff involved to link the interventions and plan of support to classroom teaching. The SENCo will provide further support to staff.

**SEN support can take many forms and, dependent on age, may include:**

- a special learning programme
- extra help from a teacher or assistant
- to work in a smaller group
- observation in class or at break
- help taking part in class activities
- extra encouragement in their learning, eg to ask questions or to try something they find difficult
- help communicating with other children
- support with physical or personal care difficulties, eg eating, getting around school safely or using the toilet



## Young people aged 16 or over in further education

Contact the college before your child starts further education to make sure that they can meet your child's needs.

The college and your local authority will talk to your child about the support they need.

## REVIEW

The school/setting should review the plan regularly with you in line with the agreed date. The review should evaluate the effectiveness of the support, the quality and impact on progress towards meeting the identified outcomes. Teachers, with the SENCo, should consult you for your views before deciding on any changes to the support plan and next steps. Reviews should take place three times a year.

Wolverhampton Local Authority has issued guidance on the additional support it expects schools and settings to provide for children and young people. This can be found on [Wolverhampton.gov.uk/send](http://Wolverhampton.gov.uk/send)



## Data and Record Keeping

Schools and settings will record all details of SEN support. Whatever format is used, clear and accessible information should be provided.

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.



## Transferring between settings

SEN support should include planning and preparation for any transition between education phases.

Liaison and careful planning with future settings should take place to ensure a smooth transfer.

## What might happen following a review of SEN support?

- 1 Adequate progress is made and SEN support is no longer required. Careful monitoring will continue. The decision to remove SEN support must be agreed with you.
- 2 SEN support continues with revisions to the plan. Changes to the support are discussed and agreed with you. Involving specialists from outside services may be agreed. A further review date will be set.
- 3 If expected progress has not been made, an Education, Health and Care needs assessment may be requested (sometimes referred to as a single or statutory assessment).

Please see our leaflet 'Education, Health and Care plans'.

## Specialist support

Specialists can be involved at any stage. They can advise on teaching strategies, special resources, access needs, adaptations and specialist equipment. As well as talking to staff about support strategies and approaches, these people may need to do some individual work to help meet specific need. People who provide specialist support may include:

- An Educational Psychologist
- A specialist learning support teacher
- An Occupational Therapist
- Staff from the Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS)
- A member of the Special Needs Early Years Service
- A Speech and Language Therapist
- A Physiotherapist
- Other medical professionals
- Social care workers
- Staff from Wolverhampton's Outreach Service

## SEN funding

All mainstream schools, academies, academy sixth forms, sixth form colleges, further education colleges and 16-19 academies are provided with resources to support those with additional needs, including children and young people with SEN and disabilities.



Wolverhampton Outreach Service assists schools and settings in developing their capacity to meet the needs of children with a range of difficulties.

**They may provide:**

- Training
- Advice, guidance and practical solutions
- Tailor made support to meet individual needs
- Opportunities to observe good practice
- Examples of resources and assistance with developing resources
- Information on how to structure the learning environment and teaching approaches

Referrals can be submitted by schools and other professionals by contacting the Outreach Co-ordinator on 01902 556756 or 01902 558640

## Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements may allow children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities to access support during tests, assessments and examinations. This support may include a reader, scribe or papers and questions in appropriate formats. In some instances extra time or supervised rest breaks may be allocated.

This support may be arranged internally but some access arrangements require an application in advance with supporting evidence. You might wish to discuss access arrangements as soon as possible so that support can be put in place and to avoid missing any deadlines.

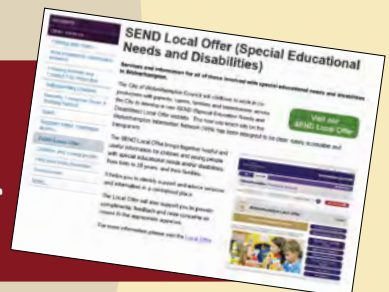


# SEN Information Reports

Each school will determine its approach to supporting the progress of pupils with SEN and provide a clear description of the types of SEN provision generally available. It is the duty of all maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and academies, to ensure its policy for pupils with SEN is published and updated annually. You can find the SEN Information Report on the school website. It must include:

- The kinds of SEN provided for
- How pupils with SEN are identified and how needs are assessed
- The name and contact details of the SENCo
- How parents are consulted and involved
- How young people with SEN are consulted and involved in their education
- Arrangements for assessing and reviewing progress towards outcomes and involving parents and young people
- How children and young people are supported in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood
- How children and young people with SEN are taught
- How the curriculum and learning environment is adapted
- The expertise and training of staff to support SEN, including how specialist expertise will be secured
- How the effectiveness of SEN provision is evaluated
- How children with SEN are able to engage in available activities
- How support is offered to improve emotional and social development, this should include extra pastoral support arrangements and measures to prevent bullying
- How other services are involved in meeting SEN and supporting families
- Arrangements for handling complaints

A link to the SEN Information Report for each Wolverhampton school or setting can be found on the Local Offer [www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/send](http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/send)



# What should I do if I have concerns?

## Parents and carers

**The SEND Code of Practice says:**

*Schools should take seriously any concerns raised by a parent.*  
(6.45)

If you have any concerns or are confused about support for your child you should speak to your child's school or setting.

Schools and settings have a duty to inform you of any special help your child is receiving and should plan this support with you. You should also have copies of any paperwork relating to your child's special educational needs.

If you are still unsure about the help your child is receiving you should find out the following:

- What sort of difficulties your child is experiencing in school
- What concerns school has about your child and/or if your concerns are shared
- How you can help at home
- What additional help your child is getting in school
- If your child is making adequate progress
- What the next steps are

If you feel that your child is having difficulties in school but is not receiving additional support, you should speak to your child's teacher or the SENCo about the possibility of your child receiving SEN support.

## Children and young people

If you feel you need help or are confused about the support you receive, you can speak to your parents or a teacher. Schools and settings must listen to your concerns and involve you in discussions to plan how best to support you.

# Wolverhampton Information, Advice & Support Service 'for special educational needs and disability'



Impartial information, advice and support on matters relating to a child or young person's special educational needs or disability from birth to 25 years.

Contact: 01902 556945

Email: [ias.service@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:ias.service@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

Website: [www.wolvesiass.org](http://www.wolvesiass.org)



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