



Cheshire East Information
Advice and Support
(CEIAS) team

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support in mainstream schools

What is SEN support?

Every child with special educational needs should have access to SEN support. This means help that is additional to or different from the support generally given to most of the other children of the same age.

The purpose of SEN support is to help children and young people achieve the outcomes or learning objectives set for them by the school in conjunction with parents and pupils themselves.

Every school must publish an “SEN information report” which gives information about the SEN provision the school makes. These should be located on each school’s website and should be kept up to date. It must have information including the identification, assessment and support available to pupils who have or may have SEND and the complaints procedure for their parents. You can also ask your child’s teacher or the school’s Special Educational Needs Coordinator for information on the SEN provision made by the school.

What is the “Local offer” in Cheshire East?

The Cheshire East Local Offer includes information about the support and provision that families can expect from a wide range of agencies for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND) from birth to 25 years old. <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities.aspx>

What does the government say schools have to do for children with SEND?

The SEND Code of Practice says mainstream schools must:

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

What sort of support might a school give to a child with SEN?

SEN support can take many forms, including:

- a special learning programme for your child
- extra help from a teacher or a learning support assistant
- making specific materials or changing/adopting existing materials and equipment
- working with your child in a small group
- observing your child in class or at break and keeping records
- helping your child to take part in the class activities
- making sure your child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult
- helping other children work with your child, or play with them at break time
- supporting your child with physical or personal care, such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing
- advice and/or extra help from specialists such as specialist teachers, therapists and educational psychologists

Who decides what SEN support my child has?

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

All children are individuals. They make progress at different rates and learn in different ways. Teachers are expected to take this into account when they organise their lessons and choose materials and activities to help each pupil learn. This is known as 'differentiation'. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN.

The school will assess children's needs in a wide range of areas on a daily basis; they will also carry out specific assessments if they have any concerns. The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

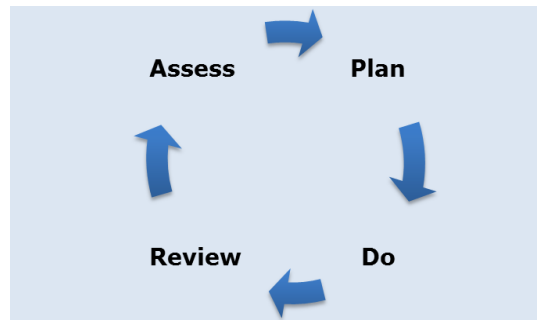
Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, should make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. (6.17)

Where it is decided that a pupil does have SEN, this should be recorded in the school records; the child's parents must be formally informed that special educational provision is being made. In identifying and assessing SEN in children there are four broad areas of need:

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

What is a “Graduated Approach”?

When a child is identified as having SEN, the school should use a graduated approach based on four steps. These are:



Assess

Teaching staff should work with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to carry out a clear analysis of your child’s needs, drawing on teacher assessments and experience of the child in the classroom, so that they give the right support. They should involve you in this and, where possible, seek your child’s views.

Sometimes schools will seek advice from a specialist teacher or a health professional. They should talk to you about this first.

Plan

If the school decides that your child needs SEN support it must tell you. The school should agree with you and your child the outcomes that will be set, what help will be provided and a date for progress to be reviewed. All teachers and support staff who work with your child should be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies and interventions that are required.

Do

Your child’s class or subject teacher is usually responsible for the work that is done with your child, and should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved. The school should tell you who is responsible for the support your child receives. The SENCO will support the teacher.

Review

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

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

At these meetings the school should review your child’s progress, with you and your child and the difference that the help your child has been given has made, on the dates agreed in the plan. You and your child should be involved in this process.

A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion should be kept and shared with all appropriate school staff. Parents should also receive a copy.

What if progress isn't made?

A school should always involve other professionals such as educational psychologists or speech and language therapists where a pupil continues to make little or no progress to give support in investigating the difficulties or to plan the next steps.

It might be useful to access the **Local Offer** to see what support is available that could help achieve your child's outcomes.

If your child does not make the expected progress despite the actions being taken by the school with regard to SEN support then the school may consider requesting an **Education Health and Care needs assessment**. If the school decides to do this they must tell you. If you think it is needed you can ask for it yourself.

The local authority will expect to see evidence of the actions the school has taken to help meet the child's needs for SEN support in order to consider any request

You can find out further information on the EHC process on the Cheshire East website <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/education/supporting-send-in-education/special-educational-needs.aspx>

If at any stage you have concerns about the support your child is receiving you can ask to talk to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator or Headteacher in your child's school; they will be able to listen to and respond to those concerns . What is extremely important is that all of those involved work together in the best interests of your child in order to help them thrive and achieve.

Leaflet designed by CEIAS

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