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## SEN Support in mainstream schools

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### Summary

This information is about the support that mainstream schools should provide for children with special educational needs (SEN). SEN Support may also be called the Graduated Response, the Graduated Approach or Ordinarily Available.

### The duties on schools to make SEN provision

The **SEND Code of Practice** says: all 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 SEN co-ordinator, or SENCO.*
- *inform parents when they are making special educational provision for a child*



- *publish an SEN information report and 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*  
(Section 6 Paragraph 2)

## What is SEN support?

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

The purpose of SEN support is to help children achieve the **outcomes** or learning objectives set for them by the school. Schools should involve parents in this process.

Every school must publish an **SEN information report** about the SEN provision the school makes. You can find this on the school's website. You can also ask your child's teacher or the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) for information on the SEN provision made by the school.

The **Local Offer** published by your Local Authority also sets out what support it expects early years settings, schools and colleges to make for all children and young people with SEN or disabilities. [Herefordshire Local Offer](#) [Worcestershire Local Offer](#)

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 or changing 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.



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## Who decides what SEN support my child has?

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.  
(Section 6 Paragraph 17)

The school should then decide if your child needs SEN support. The school should talk to you and your child about this. If a young person is 16 or older the school should involve them directly.

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 (SENCO).

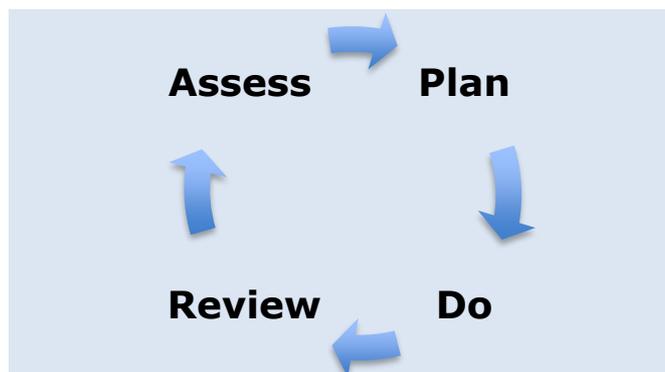
If you are not happy about the support your child has you can ask to talk to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator or headteacher.

## A graduated approach

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

- *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.*  
(Section 6 Paragraph 44)

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





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## Assess

Teaching staff should work with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to assess your child's needs, so that they give the right support. They should involve you in this and, where possible, seek your child's views. The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

*Schools should take seriously any concerns raised by a parent.* (Section 6 Paragraph 45)

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 talk with you about the outcomes that will be set, what help will be provided and agree a date for progress to be reviewed.

## 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 **SEND Code of Practice** says all those who work with your child should be made aware of:

*their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required.* (Section 6 Paragraph 49)

## Review

The school should review your child's progress, and the difference that the help your child has been given has made, on the date agreed in the plan. You and your child should be involved in the review and in planning the next step.

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

*Schools should meet with parents at least three times a year* (Section 6 Paragraph 65)

Sometimes it helps to involve other professionals in further assessment or to support planning the next steps. If your child has not made reasonable progress it will be important to agree with the school what should happen next.

You and the school can look at your local authority's **Local Offer** to see what support is available that could help achieve your child's outcomes. [Herefordshire Local Offer](#) [Worcestershire Local Offer](#)



Information, Advice  
and Support Service  
Herefordshire &  
Worcestershire

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## Where can I get more information, advice or support?

You can find out more about SEN Support by:

- Watching the [HW SENDIASS animation 'SEN Support in Mainstream Settings'](#)
- Looking at the ['Intervention Guidance for SEND in Schools and other educational settings' on the Herefordshire Local Offer](#)
- Looking at the [Graduated Response page of the Worcestershire Local Offer](#)
- looking at the SEN Information Report on the school website
- talking to your child's teacher or the Special Educational Needs Coordinator
- reading Chapter 6 of the **SEND Code of Practice**

You can also get in touch with **Herefordshire and Worcestershire SEND Information, Advice & Support Services (SENDIASS)** who can give you:

- information about SEN support, including information about SEN funding
- advice about what to do if you are not happy with the support your school is providing
- information about other organisations, support groups and information services that could help
- information and advice about your rights to request an **EHC needs assessment**.

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