



# Information about Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

A guide for Parents & Carers



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## Our School SENCOs:

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators

Mrs Hoggarth and Miss Wright

☎ 01915261531

✉ [ourladyoflourdes@durhamlearning.net](mailto:ourladyoflourdes@durhamlearning.net)

## Our SEND Governor:

Mrs Hood

If you would like any independent support or advice about any aspect of your child's Special Educational Needs please contact the **Durham SENDiass** ☎ 0191 5873541

You will find a lot of information on the **school website**. Look for the SEND information Report.

You can also find information on the **Families Information Service** about the **Local Offer**. This details resources and support - <http://www.countydurhamfamilies.info>

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## What are Special Educational Needs?

A special educational need can be a number of different things. For example, your child may be having problems with communication, memory, reading, maths or a social or emotional issue, which school can help by putting extra support in place and by working in partnership with yourself. It may also be due to a disability or sensory impairment. For some children, this may be a temporary difficulty, while others may have a long term need for special help.

**Types of special educational needs fall into four broad categories which are:**

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

Some children have some difficulty in some areas of school work or make slower progress at some time in their school life. This does not necessarily mean they have a special educational need.



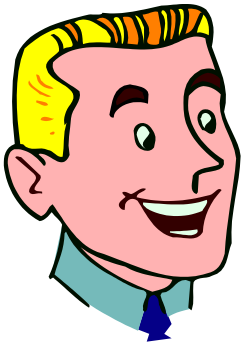
## How do schools help children with Special Educational Needs?

Children learn and develop in different ways. Teachers recognise this and use different teaching styles, resources and plan different levels of work in the classroom to cater for the various ways children learn. This is called Quality First Teaching and is something schools must provide for all children. However, some children, at some time in their school life, may need extra help.

### **Because of this, schools must:**

- ❖ Talk to parents/carers if they think their child has a special educational need and let them know what special help the school is giving
- ❖ Appoint a member of staff as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
- ❖ Publish a SEND Information Report on the website
- ❖ Have a written Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy - a copy should be made available for parents
- ❖ Take account of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice. This is advice given to schools by the government which outlines what schools should do to support pupils with SEND and gives recommendations for good practice
- ❖ Take account of their duties under the Equality Act 2010

**Schools recognise that you, as your child's parent/carer, are the expert on them and will involve you every step of the way.**



What does the  
SENCO do?

**SENCO = Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator  
(this must be a qualified teacher)**

**If your child has Special Educational Needs the SENCO should:**

- ❖ Ensure the right support is put in place for your child
- ❖ Advise other teachers on how to help your child
- ❖ Arrange training for staff so they understand your child's needs
- ❖ Work closely with you on a regular basis to talk with you about your child's needs and listen to any ideas or concerns you might have
- ❖ Work with other professionals (if necessary) who may be able to help your child, e.g. Speech and Language Therapist /medical professional/ Educational Psychologist





## How are Special Educational Needs identified?

The first person to identify that a child has special educational needs may be:

- ❖ Yourself, as parent or carer
- ❖ The class teacher
- ❖ A health visitor
- ❖ Another medical professional

If it seems that your child may have special educational needs, your child's class teacher or the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) will assess:

- ❖ What your child is good at and what they need help with
- ❖ What your child would benefit from learning
- ❖ How best to help your child learn

Information about your child's outcomes and any extra support they receive at school may be recorded on a Short Note, Support Plan or they may undergo statutory assessment to assess whether they may need an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

**Children with a Support Plan or an EHCP will be placed on the school's special educational needs register.**

The level of support received may change throughout their time at school. School staff will speak to you if they think this should happen and will ask you for your opinion about this.



## What is a Short Note?

Early identification is the key to supporting a pupil's needs. A 'short note' will be written by staff to show the support your child is getting and this will be shared with you. Short Notes will be used for short periods of support (e.g. 1 or 2 terms)

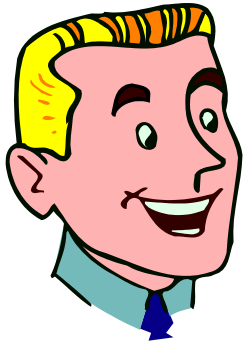
### The Short Note will include:

- ❖ Short term outcomes for your child which are linked to their needs
- ❖ Details of any extra support your child will get
- ❖ Who will give your child help
- ❖ How often your child will get help
- ❖ How and when the school will look at your child's progress again

Schools must share copies of the Short Note with parents/carers.







## What is a Support Plan?

SEND support plans are recommended for pupils with more complex needs. The plan should be produced by the SENCO in partnership with the child/young person and their parents/carers. It will include the joint outcomes that pupils want to achieve and the support needed to meet these goals. There are long and short Support Plans depending on your child's needs.

### **The Support Plan will include:**

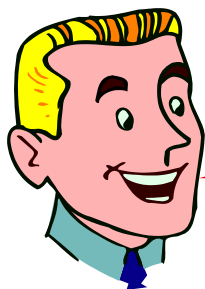
- ❖ Short term, measurable, outcomes for your child which are linked to their needs
- ❖ Details of any extra support your child will get e.g. group work, Lexia
- ❖ Details of any external support your child will get e.g. Speech and Language Therapy
- ❖ Who will give your child help
- ❖ How often your child will get help
- ❖ How and when the school will look at your child's progress again
- ❖ You will be asked to contribute to a Support Plan and attend termly reviews along with any external specialists involved



## What is Statutory Assessment?

**If your child's needs are very complex and/or severe the school may ask for a Statutory Assessment:**

- ❖ This is a very detailed assessment of your child's needs. Parents or carers, the school and a range of professionals will all be asked to provide written reports.
- ❖ At the end of the assessment phase, the Local Authority will consider these reports to help decide whether or not to issue an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for your child.
- ❖ As a parent/carer you also have the right to ask the Local Authority to carry out this assessment although it is usually best if you can do this with the support of the school.
- ❖ Statutory Assessment is only appropriate for a small number of children. Your school SENDCO or SENDiass will be able to advise you.



## What is an Education Health and Care Plan?

An education, health and care plan (EHCP) is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.

EHC Plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

**If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan the school must:**

- ❖ Hold an Annual Review Meeting to which you, your child (if appropriate) and other professionals must be invited.
- ❖ Have termly interim reviews to reflect on the progress the child is making
- ❖ Provide your child with the full range of support specified in their EHCP. It may be group or individual support (Schools organise this in different ways according to the needs of your child)

**We appreciate this is a very complicated process so please seek advice from your school's SENCO or your SENDIASS.**

**Every child has a right to an education regardless of any additional needs they may have. (Article 28 of the UNCRC)**

**We hope this information has helped you to understand how we support children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.**

**If you would like to talk to someone about your child's needs please call into school.**

**If you are concerned that your child's Special Educational Needs aren't being met or your child isn't making progress, please talk to Mrs Hoggarth or Mrs Wright about the support for your child.**

**Thank you for working with us to help your child enjoy school and enjoy learning.**