

# Information for Parents and Carers about The Graduated Approach in Sefton



What support is available in Sefton schools and settings to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?



# What do we mean by SEND?

SEND stands for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. A child or young person with SEND is likely to need extra help that is additional to or different from their peers. This extra or different help is known as special educational provision.

The SEND Code of Practice 2014 provides a legal definition; a child or young person as having SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

## Areas of Need

### Communication and Interaction

Children and young people with SLCN have difficulty in communicating with others; this may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to and being understood by others or difficulty understanding what is being said to them.

### Cognition and Learning

Children may have difficulty with learning or remembering basic skills. They may have difficulty with literacy or numeracy or learn at a slower pace than others.

### Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Factors which impact a child's overall wellbeing, such as: emotions, social interactions, and relationships with others which may result in behaviours of concern.

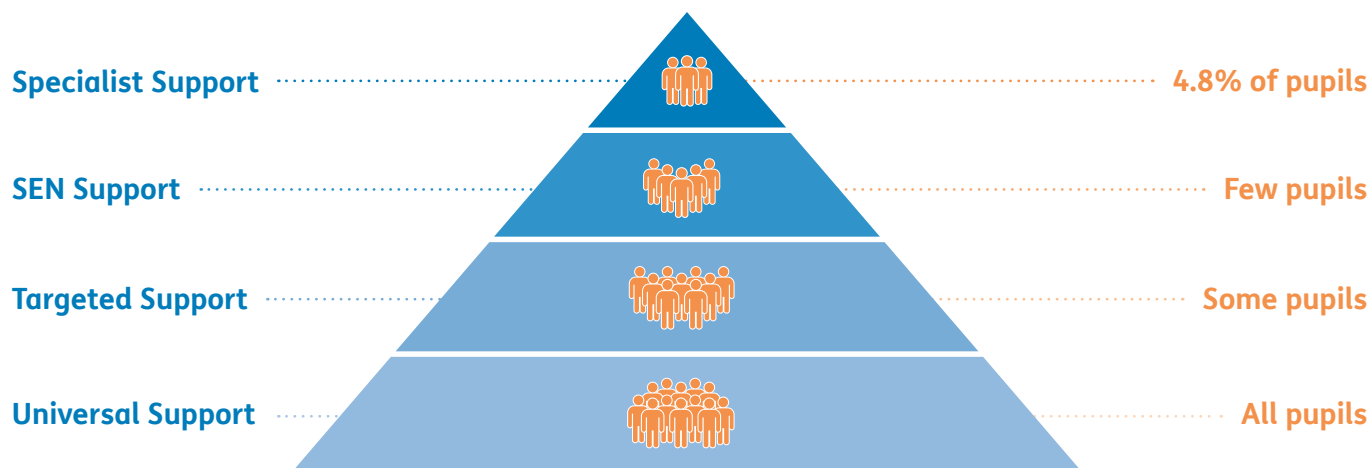
### Sensory and / or Physical Needs

This includes vision, hearing or multi-sensory impairments, physical disabilities or sensitivities to aspects of the environment.

The language around SEND can be complicated and professionals may refer to different acronyms. For further guidance around terminology the Autism Education Trust have produced a terminology guide: [Why Words Matter](#).

# The Graduated Approach

The **Graduated Approach** expects settings and schools to make full use of all their resources and expertise before accessing increasingly personalised support. By continually monitoring all children, settings and schools can decide on the most appropriate level of support for all children, including those with SEND.



## Universal Support

For most children, settings and schools support needs through adjustments made to the quality first teaching. The image below gives an example of the **reasonable adjustments** setting and schools can make to ensure children are appropriately supported.

## Reasonable Adjustments



Charlie is sat at the front and background noise is minimised.



Molly has a laptop to help take her notes.



Liu's needs are met through universal support.



Hanna has extra time for her exams.



Yahia sits at the front and has modified text.



Alfie has noise cancelling headphones to use if it is too noisy.



Lucy has a tablet with Widget software to help her read text.



Ethan has a time out card to access a quiet room.

## Targeted SEND Support

Some children might need a bit more support to meet their needs. If a child or young person has identified needs, schools should go through a process called **The Graduated Approach**.

The Graduated Approach involves a four-stage process:



All settings and schools will have their own **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** format to record your child's progress towards their short-term outcomes. Short-term outcomes are typically reviewed each term. Consideration is given as to whether your child has achieved, partially achieved, or not achieved their desired outcomes. If your child is on the SEN register their provision will be recorded in a SEN Support Plan which will be shared with you.

More information about a school's SEN provision can be found in their **SEN information report** which is normally available on the school website. More information about Sefton's Local Offer can be accessed on [Sefton Council's website](#).

## Specialist SEND Support

If a child does not make progress with the support available at targeted SEND support when several cycles of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process have been followed more specialist support may be needed.

External agency professionals such as Speech and Language therapists, Educational Psychologists, Community Paediatricians, Mental Health support or Occupational therapists may be asked to provide further support and advice on how school can help your child.

### Good Practice:

#### The SEND code of practice states:

Children, young people and their parents should be asked about their views wishes and feelings.

Children, young people and their parents should be involved in decisions being made about them.

#### What if I feel that my child needs 1:1 help?

If you feel your child needs more support in their setting or school than they are currently receiving, please talk to your SENCo about concerns you have in the first instance. Evidence suggests that having 1:1 support is often not the most effective approach, as children and young people can become over reliant. Research has found that children progress well using evidence-based interventions and targeted strategies, as opposed to consistent 1-1 support.

## Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Where it has been identified that a child is not making progress and the gap between them and their peers is significant, the child or young person may be considered to have needs that are complex and long-term.

The school SENCo can refer a child for an EHCP assessment. Where agreed, this assessment may lead to an EHCP. This is a legal document which outlines what support a child or young person needs, to achieve their desired outcomes and aspirations.

**Parents or Carers**, the setting, school or educational provider can, **at any point** in the Graduated Approach, request an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.

**Only 4.8% of children nationally have an EHC plan.**

**The number of children receiving Targeted SEN Support is 13.6%.**

(DfE, 2024).

## Annual Reviews

If your child has an EHCP it must be reviewed every 12 months, this is referred to as an **annual review**. The annual review gives parents the opportunity to suggest changes to the plan and raise any concerns about the plan.

As a parent you can request an early annual review if there has been a significant change such as; a diagnosis, change of address or new information about your child's needs which indicates the provision in the plan no longer meets need. [Scope charity](#) provides detailed information on the annual review process for parents which you may find useful.

## SEND in the Early Years

Children, particularly in the Early Years develop at different rates and present with a learning profile that is individual. Most children will make progress in a setting which has high quality ordinarily available provision. Children may present with additional needs that can be age/stage related and may change over time.

**More information can be found on the Early Years Padlet:**



# Common Questions

## How does a setting or school identify that a child needs support?

Settings and schools try to identify this as soon as possible, through regular monitoring and assessment of children through the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Process, as set out in their SEND information report.

## How long does it take for my child's setting or school to put support in place?

Once a setting or school has identified that a child may need extra support, they can begin the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Process as soon as possible. One cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review tends to take six weeks.

## Does my child need to have a diagnosis to get support?

No. Settings and schools provide support to children and young people regardless of whether they have a diagnosis or not. It is up to you and your child as to whether you would like to pursue an assessment for a diagnosis, depending on your child's presenting needs. Any additional support required for children and young people is provided on an individual needs led basis, a diagnosis is not required for external agency support or for an EHC needs assessment.

## My child has an EHCP, will they go to special school?

Most children and young people with an EHCP are supported in their local mainstream school. In most cases, when a child/young person has a new EHCP, it is anticipated that the current mainstream school will continue to meet the child's/young person's needs using the EHCP. If you feel that your child may need more specialist provision, please speak to your child's setting/school SENCo in the first instance.

## My child has an autism diagnosis and/or SEND; does this mean they need an EHCP?

Where a child has a diagnosis of autism and/or SEND this does not necessarily mean they will need an EHCP. The majority of children with SEND make progress with high quality teaching, reasonable adjustments and targeted interventions carefully planned to meet their needs. If a child is not making the expected progress following the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process and they require ongoing support due to their complex and long-term needs, it may be helpful to request an assessment for an EHCP. The setting or school SENCo should support and guide these decisions with you.

## My child has targeted support in primary school; will they need an EHCP to get the same support in secondary school?

Primary and Secondary SENCos discuss children with SEND needs that are due to move up to Secondary school at the earliest point possible prior to the new academic year. During the discussion the SENCos share the required support and provision to meet your child's needs. Secondary school provision may look and feel different to the provision that may have been provided in Primary school. However, provision will be designed to support your child's growing independence based on their needs, as identified by the Primary school and through conversations with Parents and Carers. If you have any concerns about your child's transition from Primary to Secondary school please speak to the school SENCo.

**I have been in contact with my setting/school but I still don't feel my child is getting the right support. What should I do?**

You may wish to contact Sefton [SENDIASS service](#), they provide free, impartial advice for young people with SEND and their parents. You can also contact [Sefton SEN and Inclusion service](#).

[Advanced Solutions](#) offers free support and advice for families of neurodivergent children and young people.

Further common questions and answers can be found on the [Sefton Parent & Carers Inclusion Padlet](#).



# What support is available in Sefton?

| Mainstream Offer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Mainstream with SEN Support (13.6% of pupils)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | SEN Support & External Agencies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | EHC Plan Enhanced Provision (4.8% of pupils)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | EHC Plan Specialist Provision (1.5% of pupils)                                                                                                                          | EHC Plan Independent Provision (0.4% of pupils)                                                                        |
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| The majority of children access mainstream education with quality first teaching that identifies need and adapts the curriculum.                                                                                                                                                                                 | Some children require additional resources or adjustments to help them achieve and make progress in mainstream education..                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Schools seek advice from other agencies to implement additional and different provision, resources or curriculum.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | A minority of children will need an Education Health and Care Plan. This outlines support that is needed beyond what is available through SEN Support.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Some children will need access to specialist provision which caters for pupils with the most complex needs.                                                             | Highly specialised provision for children with exceptionally high complex needs.                                       |
| <p><b>Help and advice:</b><br/><a href="#">Find a school</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton School Admissions</a></p> <p><a href="#">Choosing a Nursery</a></p> <p><b>Information:</b><br/><a href="#">Sefton's quality first offer - primary</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton's quality first offer - secondary</a></p> | <p><b>Information:</b><br/><a href="#">Sefton Local Offer</a></p> <p><a href="#">British Dyslexia Association</a></p> <p><a href="#">Ambitious about autism parent toolkit</a></p> <p><a href="#">ADHD Foundation</a></p> <p><a href="#">Developmental Delay</a></p> <p><a href="#">Speech and Language</a></p> <p><a href="#">Reasonable Adjustments</a></p> <p><b>Help and advice:</b><br/><a href="#">SEND Code of Practice</a><br/><a href="#">School Health</a></p> <p><a href="#">Carers Trust</a></p> <p><b>Parent training:</b><br/><a href="#">Supporting with maths</a></p> <p><a href="#">Supporting with English</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sensory workshop</a></p> <p><b>School / GP Referrals:</b><br/><a href="#">ASD Pathway</a></p> | <p><b>Help and advice:</b><br/><a href="#">ADDvanced Solutions</a></p> <p><a href="#">CHATHealth</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton Mental Health Support Team</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton Parent Carer Forum</a></p> <p><b>School / GP Referrals:</b><br/><a href="#">Educational Psychology Inclusion Consultant Team</a></p> <p><a href="#">Hearing Needs Team</a></p> <p><a href="#">Visual Needs Team</a></p> <p><a href="#">Occupational Therapy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Speech and Language Therapy</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton Early Years SEN</a></p> <p><b>Family Support:</b><br/><a href="#">Early Help (FAST)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Family Hubs Network</a></p> <p><a href="#">Parenting 2000</a></p> | <p><b>Sefton EHCP Process:</b><br/><a href="#">EHC application request</a></p> <p><a href="#">Disagreement Process</a></p> <p><a href="#">EHC Review Process</a></p> <p><b>Help and advice:</b><br/><a href="#">SENDIASS</a></p> <p><a href="#">Independent Special Education Advice</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton Carers Centre</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton Complimentary Education</a></p> <p><a href="#">CALM</a></p> <p><b>Parent Training:</b><br/><a href="#">Triple P Parenting Course</a></p> <p><a href="#">Riding the Rapids</a></p> <p><a href="#">EarlyBird</a></p> <p><a href="#">TeenLife</a></p> | <p><b>Information:</b><br/><a href="#">Sefton specialist provision</a></p> <p><a href="#">SCOPE</a></p> <p><b>Help and advice:</b><br/><a href="#">Sefton CAMHS</a></p> | <p><b>Information:</b><br/><a href="#">Independent Schools</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sefton's preferred providers</a></p> |

# Types of Need

## Autism

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects the way a person communicates and how they experience the world around them.

### How does it affect my child?

Pupils with autism are more likely to need support in various areas of school life including:

- Understanding social interaction
- Understanding verbal and non-verbal clues
- Strategies and adaptations to support individual sensory differences
- Help with emotional regulation and anxiety
- Help to think flexibly and cope with changes

### How do I know if my child has autism?

There is no medical test for autism. If you think your child has autism you will need to contact your health visitor, GP or the SENCO in your child's school. If you need help getting a diagnosis for your child more information on how to do this can be found on the [National Autistic Society diagnosis pages](#), [Alder Hey website](#) and [NHS website](#).

### Where can I get help for my child?

Speak to your child's SENCO to see what help or support school can offer you.

There is a lot of support available online at:

- [National Autistic Society](#) is a great place to start
- [Ambitious about Autism](#) has a great website to help guide you through everything from understanding autism, coping with different behaviours, right through education to preparing for adulthood.
- [Advanced Solutions](#) supports the emotional health and wellbeing of neurodivergent children and young people, their families and the professionals that work with them.

## Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia)

### How does it affect my child?

Children may experience challenges in some of the following:

- Reading and spelling compared to other skills and subjects.
- Blending and segmenting sounds for reading and spelling.
- Short term verbal and working memory, e.g. following longer instructions or completing tasks with many steps.
- Processing of spoken and written language.
- Planning and organisation

### What reasonable adjustments can school make?

- Provide a coloured overlay
- Provide visual and memory aids
- Break up information into small chunks
- Provide technology such as a computer or use of interactive software
- Use of pre-teaching or intervention groups

### Where can I get help for my child?

Start by speaking to your child's SENCO. There is useful information available online:

- [British Dyslexia Association](#) has good help support and advice for individuals with Dyslexia and support for their families.
- [Dyslexia Assist](#) is a site by parents for parents.

### What support is there for schools?

- [Learning, Communication and Interaction \(LCI\)](#) work to support pupils with dyspraxia in school.
- [School Support for children with SEND](#) offers information about your school's responsibilities to all SEND learners.
- [Inclusive provision for SEND pupils in mainstream schools \(BERA framework\)](#)

# Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

## How does it affect my child?

Children with speech, language and communication needs often have difficulties in the following areas:

- understanding instructions, questions and information
- listening and concentration
- being able to say what they are thinking or their opinions
- organising
- literacy

## What reasonable adjustments can school make?

- Provide a visual timetable and / or a personal visual timetable
- Use labels and signs around school
- Provide an individual area to work or rest in
- Use consistent images for communication
- Create personalised social stories
- Allow extra time for thinking and responding
- Break up information into smaller chunks
- Use visual task plans

## Where can I get help for my child?

- [I Can](#) is a charity set up to help and support parents of children with
- [Afasic](#) have help for parents and good resources
- [The Ace Centre](#) offer help and support to parents, carers and therapists of children with complex physical and communication difficulties focussing on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

## What support is available?

Alder Hey support pupils with speech, language and communication needs in Sefton schools. More information can be accessed on [Alderhey's Website](#).

# ADHD

## How does it affect my child?

Children may have difficulties with:

- Processing information
- Organising
- Listening in class
- Recording their ideas in writing
- Focusing their attention
- Remaining seated or sitting still
- Following instructions
- Self-regulation and emotion control
- Awareness of own safety
- Acting without thinking

## What reasonable adjustments can school make?

- Access to a quieter learning environment
- Provision of noise cancelling headphones / fidgets
- Visual aids
- Movement breaks
- Sensory circuits
- Assistive technology – laptops, iPads, spell checkers
- Adapted seating plan
- Extra time to complete tasks

## Where can I get help for my child?

- School or the GP can refer your child to the [ADHD pathway at Alderhey](#).
- [Young Minds](#) provide parent friendly information on how to support your child.
- [The ADHD Foundation](#) provide courses for parents and carers.

**Further information  
and resources can be  
found on the Sefton  
Parent & Carers  
Inclusion Padlet:**



