



THE HERTFORDSHIRE **SEND TOOLKIT**

Eighth Edition



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THE HERTFORDSHIRE **SEND TOOLKIT**



Introduction: making the most of the SEND Toolkit

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Introduction: making the most of the SEND Toolkit

Foreword from the Director of Inclusion and Skills and Director of Education

It is with great pride and purpose that we introduce the refreshed Hertfordshire SEND Toolkit, a key resource designed to support every school in delivering high-quality, inclusive practice for all children and young people.

As we look ahead to the next phase of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reform, there is a renewed national focus on inclusion, early identification, partnership working, and ensuring that children and young people receive the right support, at the right time, in the right place. The ambition of these reforms aligns closely with Hertfordshire's longstanding commitment to creating an education system where every child can thrive, achieve, and belong.

This toolkit reflects our shared vision for a more inclusive education system. It brings together evidence-informed approaches, practical guidance, and examples of effective practice that support schools to meet the diverse needs of learners. It recognises that inclusion is not a separate initiative, but a fundamental principle that underpins excellence in education and improved outcomes for all children and young people.

More than a set of guidance documents, this toolkit represents our collective commitment to strengthening ordinarily available provision, building professional confidence and expertise, and ensuring greater consistency of support across Hertfordshire schools. It has been developed through collaboration with school leaders, practitioners, specialist services, families, and partners who share a determination to improve experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.





Introduction: making the most of the SEND Toolkit

We encourage every school to engage fully with this resource, reflect on its messages, and use it to support meaningful and sustainable improvement. By working together, sharing effective practice, and embracing the opportunities presented by SEND reform, we can continue to build an education system that is ambitious, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all learners.

Together, we can ensure that Hertfordshire remains a leader in inclusive education, providing children and young people with the support, opportunities, and skills they need to succeed in education, employment, and life.

Sam Rostom, Director of Inclusion and Skills

Tony Fitzpatrick, Director of Education





Introduction: making the most of the SEND Toolkit

Hertfordshire's mission

In Hertfordshire, our mission is clear: to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to live their best life - one filled with hope, ambition, and a strong sense of belonging. We believe every young person should feel accepted for who they are, supported in their learning environments, and connected to the communities they call home. Our goal is for them to be as happy, healthy, and safe as possible so that they can thrive.

SEND Strategy 2026-2029



The **Outcome Bees** were developed to explain the outcomes we want all children and young people to achieve and support them to Be Happy.

In delivering the ambitions of the SEND Strategy, we are aiming for children and young people with SEND to achieve these outcomes.





Introduction: making the most of the SEND Toolkit

About the toolkit

This toolkit has been produced by HFL Education in partnership with education and health professionals, schools and parents/carers and is updated annually.



What does the toolkit seek to do?

This toolkit is to help and guide anyone who has an interest in promoting the achievement and wellbeing of Hertfordshire's children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).



The Hertfordshire SEND Toolkit:



- **is a guide to statutory information and duties placed on schools**
- **provides tools to support staff development in your school**
- **provides links to other sources of information, advice and guidance**
- **signposts you to essential Hertfordshire documents**

The toolkit fully reflects the statutory guidance of the **SEND Regulations** and the current **SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**.

With the government's SEND reforms underway, changes and improvements signposted from the start of the programme have been acknowledged where relevant and helpful.

This updated resource aligns with the government's vision for a strong universal offer that embeds inclusion within the core school offer - in line with the seven principles of inclusion - and has a positive impact on attainment, progress in learning, wellbeing, belonging and engagement.





Introduction: making the most of the SEND Toolkit

Key to icons used throughout the toolkit:



Statutory information – sets out what **must** be done to comply with the law. See **Tools and references** section at end of each chapter for link to document.



Guidance from the current statutory SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. This explains duties to provide for those with special educational needs, under part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. See **Tools and references** section at end of each chapter for link to document.



This icon indicates ideal opportunities for strengthening communication, partnerships and co-production with families.



This icon signposts to guidance, forms, templates and tools from Hertfordshire County Council. See **Tools and references** section at end of each chapter for link to document.



Signposts other suggested resources that may be useful to you. See **Tools and references** section at end of each chapter for link to document.



Introduction: making the most of the SEND Toolkit



Tools and references

Useful references:

- Hertfordshire Local Offer
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>
- SEND: guide for schools and alternative provision settings, DfE 2014
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings>
- SEND: guide for early years settings, DfE 2014
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-early-years-settings>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, DfE
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- SEND support: easy-read guide for parents with learning disabilities, DfE 2014
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-support-easy-read-guide-for-parents>
- Hertfordshire SEND Strategy 2026-2029
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/Local-Offer/Feedback/SEND-Strategy/SEND-Strategy.aspx>
- The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/part/3/enacted>
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/contents>









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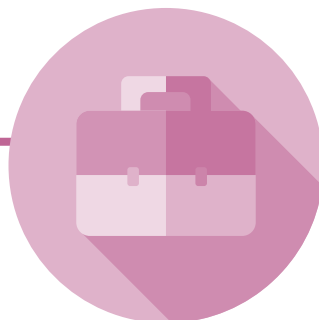
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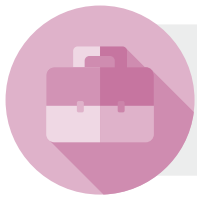


Principles and statutory requirements

Contents:

- **Principles of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years**
- **Statutory requirements**
 - The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)
 - SEN information: policy and information report
 - Supporting children and young people with medical conditions and allergies
 - Disabled children and young people: equality, reasonable adjustments and accessibility planning





Principles and statutory requirements

The principles of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years

One of the most significant changes brought in by the Children and Families Act 2014 is the set of principles that apply to special educational needs and disability responsibilities.

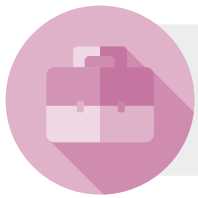


The principles focus on the importance of:

- 1. listening to the views, wishes and feelings of the child, young person and their parents**
- 2. the child, young person and their parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions**
- 3. the need to support the child or young person and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood**

**What are the
implications
for schools?**

Schools need to listen to and respond to the views, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families. By listening to children and young people and their families, schools will get better at providing the right support at the right time.



Principles and statutory requirements

Children, young people and their families should be actively involved in decision making from the start. Schools and other professionals must make sure that families are provided with information, advice and support, so that they fully understand the decisions or choices to be made. This will ensure schools and families work together in partnership.

Schools should focus on outcomes and evidence the impact of their actions on the progress of the children and young people.

Schools should make sure children and young people with SEND do well in school, reach their goals and are prepared for their journey as they grow up.

Getting it right in schools

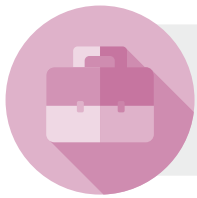
The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years has led to a shift in experiences for children and young people with SEND and their families. The biggest difference has been from “doing to” to “doing with”, as described in the principles.



Schools should be using person-centred approaches in all their discussions and conversations with children, young people and their families.

As a starting point, explore the range of person-centred thinking tools available from Helen Sanderson Associates. A helpful link can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of the chapter.





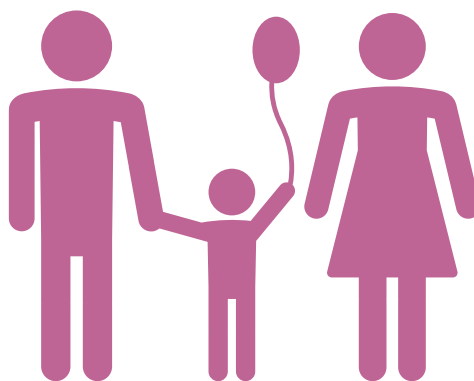
Principles and statutory requirements

When person-centred working is effective, children, young people and their families will:

- ✓ feel confident that their voices will be heard and that their wishes and feelings matter
- ✓ have choice and control over decisions
- ✓ have more say in the direction of travel and feel they are partners in the journey

What would children, young people and their families say about their journey in your school?

See ideas for activities to explore this further in the **Communicating with parents/carers, children and young people** chapter.





Principles and statutory requirements

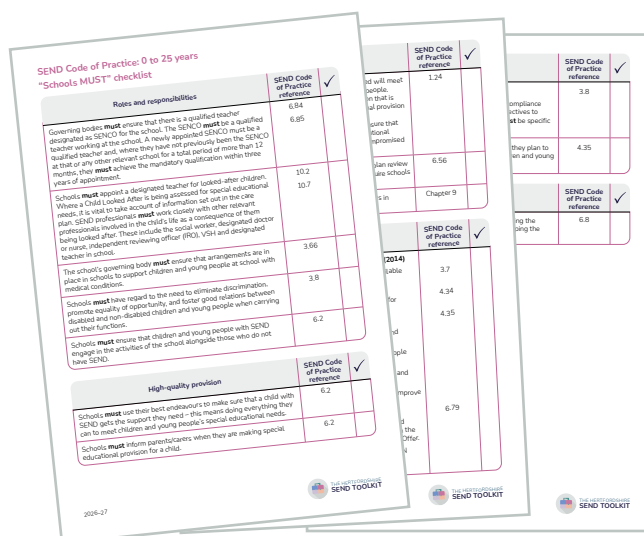
Statutory requirements

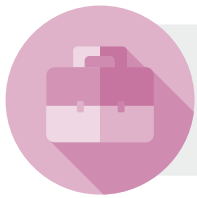
Throughout the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, there are references to things that schools **must** do to be within the law.



The Government's programme of SEND reform is now underway. However, these reforms remain proposals at this stage and will require further legislation before substantive changes to the statutory framework can take effect. Until any new legislation is enacted, the current legal framework, including the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Regulations 2014, the SEND Code of Practice, and all associated statutory duties relating to identification, assessment, provision and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), remains fully in force and must continue to be implemented.

A handy checklist is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Principles and statutory requirements

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)

Every school is required to identify and address the special educational needs of the children and young people that they support.



Mainstream schools¹ **must** ensure that:

- there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO and employed at the school²
- the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to fulfil their responsibilities, including providing sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching, in a similar way to other important strategic roles

From September 2024 the NPQ for SENCOs became the mandatory qualification replacing the National Award for SEN Coordination (NASENCO).



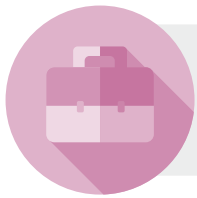
SENCOs must achieve the mandatory qualification within three years of first appointment. Schools and SENCOs must ensure that, where necessary, they are enrolled on training that will allow them to meet this requirement.

SENCOs in post prior to 2009 or those who successfully completed the NASENCO will not be required to complete the new national professional qualification.

Guidance on the recruitment of SENCOs is available in the **Tools and references** section.

1 This includes maintained schools and academies (including free schools) that are not special schools, maintained nursery schools, alternative provision academies and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) 2 This does not apply to 16–19 academies





Principles and statutory requirements

What is the SENCO's role?

The SENCO, in partnership with the headteacher and governing body, determines the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the school.

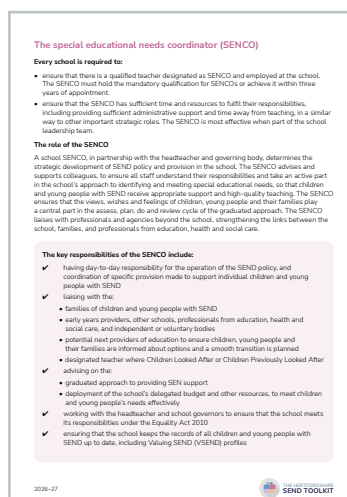
As Ofsted notes, leaders of SEND, including the SENCO, are most effective when they are empowered through their leadership status within the school to lead whole-school improvement for children and young people with SEND.

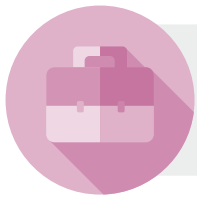
The SENCO advises and supports colleagues, to ensure all staff understand their responsibilities and take an active part in the school's approach to identifying and meeting special educational needs, so that children and young people with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.

The SENCO ensures that the views, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families play a central part in the assess, plan, do and review cycle of the graduated approach.

The SENCO liaises with professionals and agencies beyond the school, strengthening the links between the school and families, and professionals from education, health and social care.

A helpful summary on the role of the SENCO is available in the **Tools and references** section.





Principles and statutory requirements

**What are the
SENCO's key
responsibilities?**

The SENCO's responsibilities include:

- ✓ having day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the school's SEND policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual children and young people with SEND
- ✓ liaising with the:
 - families of children and young people with SEND
 - early years settings; other schools; professionals from education, health and social care; and independent or voluntary bodies
 - potential next providers, to ensure a child or young person and their family are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
 - designated teacher, where a Child Looked After or a Child Previously Looked After has SEND
- ✓ advising on the:
 - graduated approach to providing SEN support
 - deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources, to effectively meet the needs of children and young people
- ✓ working with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010
- ✓ ensuring that the school keeps the records of all children and young people with SEND up to date, such as written plans and Valuing SEND (VSEND) profiles





Principles and statutory requirements

SEN information

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, clearly states that schools must set out their SEND policy and information on its approach to supporting children and young people with SEND.

Both local authority maintained schools and academies must have an SEND policy. The DfE recommends that governing bodies review this annually.

As described earlier in this chapter, the SENCO has an important role to play with the headteacher and governing body, in determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the school. In addition, the SENCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy, and coordination of specific provision made to support individual children and young people with SEND.

A helpful checklist to use when developing or reviewing your SEND policy is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



Ref. 6.87,
6.88,
6.90



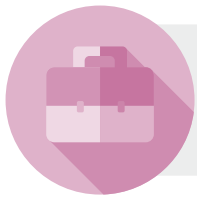
Creating a statutory SEND policy
A checklist for mainstream schools
This checklist reflects relevant parts of the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014. Review policy annually.

Policy sub-headings	Possible text	Further detail can be found here
School context		
Who was involved in creating the policy and how?		
Reference to statutory legislation	This policy refers to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. Full consideration has been given to the Code of Practice SEND 0-25 years (January 2015).	Code p12, 18, 91
School's objectives		
Definition of SEN	A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they: • have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or • have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.	Code p15-16 Code 6.15 Code 6.23-6.24 Code 6.28-6.30 Code 6.32-6.35
Equality and inclusion	Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is – a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.	Code p16

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Principles and statutory requirements

What is a
SEN information
report?

SEN information report

The SEN information report provides information to families about the implementation of the SEND policy in an accessible format. Under the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Regulations 2014, a school **must** provide information to parents on how they support children and young people with SEND.



The SEN information report tells families how the school's SEND policy works in practice. It should be written in a way that makes the information clear and easily understood.

Schools **must** publish their SEN information report on their website.

The SEN information report should be reviewed at least once a year (or updated as soon as possible if a change is made).

In Hertfordshire, a group of parents/carers and schools worked together to come up with key questions they would find helpful to be answered.



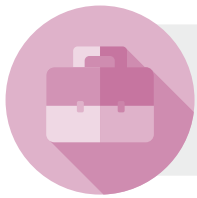
Schools should use these questions, available in a template, to write their SEN information report.



The accompanying guidance document should be followed to make sure the school covers all the points required in the SEND Regulations.

The template and guidance is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.

Each school can decide what their SEN information report looks like.



Principles and statutory requirements

Developing and publishing an inclusion strategy

In summer 2026 the Department for Education (DfE) announced that schools must develop and publish an inclusion strategy – a plan to use their overall school funding allocation (core funding allocation, notional SEN budget as well as the Inclusive Mainstream Fund) to identify and meet the needs of their cohort.



This initial inclusion strategy is a first step towards a reformed SEND system. It should show how a school is taking meaningful steps towards building a strong universal offer that embeds inclusion and supports the delivery of early, effective targeted support for those who need it.

Schools must publish an inclusion strategy by Thursday 31st December 2026.

An effective inclusion strategy will:

- ✓ present the school's strategy for ensuring high-quality ordinarily available provision
- ✓ be published as a statement on the school's website
- ✓ be available to Ofsted inspectors to consider when evaluating inclusion
- ✓ be refined through scrutiny by governors and trustees

As part of the SEND reform programme, the DfE intends that the requirement to publish an annual inclusion strategy will continue beyond the 2026-27 financial year. Schools may wish to develop a multi-year inclusion strategy.

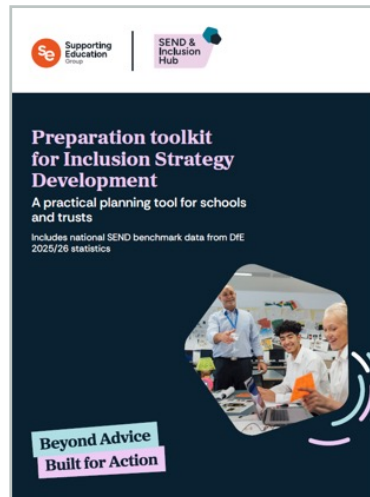
A link to DfE guidance and expectations to support schools to produce their inclusion strategy and embed inclusive practice, including a template can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.

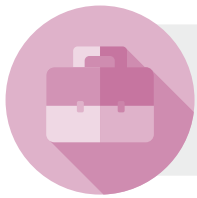




Principles and statutory requirements

In addition, a freely downloadable practical planning tool for schools and trusts has been developed by the Supporting Education Group. A link to this can also be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Principles and statutory requirements

Supporting children and young people with medical conditions and allergies

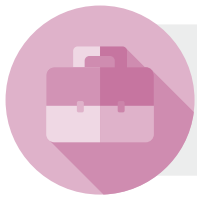


Governing bodies have a legal duty to support pupils with medical conditions including allergies.

Are you complying
with the law?

- Since September 2014, school governing bodies have had **a duty** to make arrangements to support children and young people with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, so they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.
- In July 2026, the Department for Education (DfE) published statutory guidance on allergy safety in schools, taking effect mandatorily from 1st September 2026.
- Schools must have a policy for supporting children and young people with ongoing health needs and have a named person who can be contacted by parents and the local authority.
- Schools must create and publish a separate allergy safety policy owned by a senior leader.
- Schools must identify the children and young people who require Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) to manage their medical condition and/or allergy, and to produce them.
- Schools must put allergy safety training in place for all staff, and record and learn lessons from serious incidents and near misses.





Principles and statutory requirements

Alongside the statutory guidance, the DfE has produced a series of templates to help schools. Hertfordshire provides an exemplar policy in line with DfE guidance and further advice around anaphylaxis and allergies. Links to these essential documents can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



Where children and young people also have special educational needs, their provision should be planned and delivered in a coordinated way. Schools should ensure they work closely with health and social care professionals, and children, young people and their families.

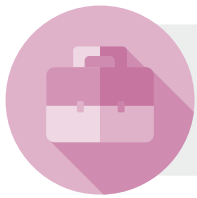
Children and young people with medical needs may receive education in several ways.



- They may attend school.
- If they are well enough to learn but are not able to attend, schools must make arrangements for remote education provision.
- If they cannot attend school full-time schools should seek advice from Hertfordshire's Education Support for Medical Absence (ESMA) teaching service who can offer advice and different types of support depending on medical evidence and the needs of the child or young person.



Some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled. Where this is the case, school governing bodies must comply with their **duties** under the Equality Act 2010. This includes making reasonable adjustments and ensuring equality of opportunity for the children and young people at their school.



Principles and statutory requirements

Making reasonable adjustments and accessibility planning for disabled children and young people

How do I develop the school's policy?

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010. That is,



“a physical or mental impairment that has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”

A physical or mental impairment includes learning difficulties, mental health conditions, medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer) and also hidden impairments (such as specific learning difficulties and autism).

The definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise. Long-term is defined as “lasting a year or more”. Substantial is defined as “more than minor or trivial”.

The disability discrimination legislation within the Equality Act 2010 covers disabled children and young people, whether or not they have SEN.

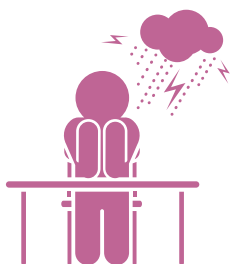




Principles and statutory requirements



Remember ...



- When considering whether someone is disabled, it is the **effect** of an impairment that has to be considered.



- Schools should take “reasonable steps” to find out if a child is disabled. This could be through discussions with families, or through careful observation of progress or behaviour. Make sure to ask in a way that encourages parents/carers, or the children and young people themselves, to share information. Remember to be sensitive and ask parents/carers in the broadest terms, as they may not think of their child as disabled.



- Schools don’t have to collect information about disability but they will be in a better position to show how they are promoting disability equality if they do.



Principles and statutory requirements

Duties for disabled children and young people under the Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, disability is one of the protected characteristics. The overriding principle of equality legislation is generally one of equal treatment. However, the law on disability discrimination is different from the rest of the act in a number of ways.



This means schools:

- are allowed to treat disabled children and young people more favourably than those who are not disabled
- must often make reasonable adjustments to put disabled children and young people on a more level footing than those without a disability

As part of the SEND reform programme, one of the seven principles of inclusion is: inclusive environments with continuous improvement to accessibility. This means that removal of all barriers to learning and participation is key to creating an inclusive environment. All spaces in schools should be designed to be accessible to aid learning, development and regulation, in a way that supports common and predictable needs. Find a link to the DfE inclusive education estates guidance to help you develop your own building and spaces in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.

Another of the seven principles of inclusion is: enriching provision beyond the classroom that all children can access. This means giving all children and young people the opportunity to participate and enjoy school life, including taking part in enrichment activities, attending trips and after-school clubs.

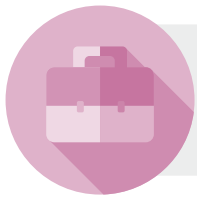




Principles and statutory requirements

For further practical help, read the Council for Disabled Children's useful guides and the DfE advice for school leaders. Links to both publications can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Principles and statutory requirements

What are reasonable adjustments?

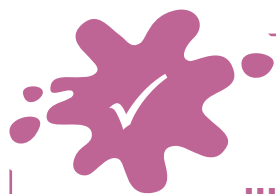
Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people, to avoid any disadvantage that may occur as a result of their disability, and enable them to participate in the whole life of the school. **This duty is anticipatory.** Therefore, schools need to think ahead about what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments may need to be made for them.



Many reasonable adjustments are inexpensive and will often involve a change in practice rather than the provision of expensive pieces of equipment or additional staff. Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance gives examples of reasonable adjustments that are part and parcel of everyday high quality inclusive provision.



The act does not say what is reasonable. This allows for flexibility for different circumstances, so that what may be reasonable in one situation may not be reasonable in another.

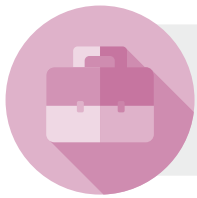


Remember ...

... in schools that are effective at making reasonable adjustments, children and young people and their families:

- ✓ share their expertise about living with a disability
- ✓ are central to the conversations
- ✓ are acknowledged to be the best judges of what is effective
- ✓ are good advocates for what is working well for them





Principles and statutory requirements

How do I develop an accessibility plan?

The SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years states maintained schools and academies **must** publish an accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access for disabled children and young people over time.



An accessibility plan meets statutory requirements when:

- ✓ it is published on the school's website and is easily available
- ✓ it is reviewed annually and renewed every three years
- ✓ it covers the three strands to ensure schools are:
 - increasing access to the curriculum for disabled children and young people
 - making improvements to the physical environment, to increase access to education and associated services
 - making improvements in the provision of information for disabled children and young people where it is provided in writing for those who are not disabled

Schools should take account of Hertfordshire's accessibility strategy when drawing up their own accessibility plans.

Links to this can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.

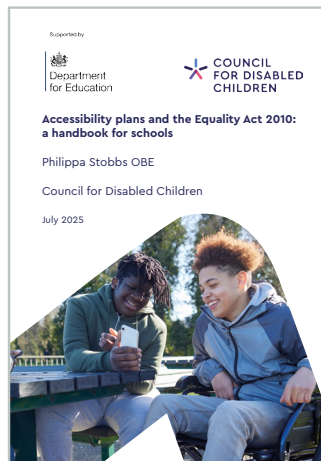




Principles and statutory requirements

In great schools, everyone takes responsibility for accessibility. For example, access to the curriculum is in the hands of every curriculum leader, and so on. Overall, the senior leadership team has a strategic overview of accessibility planning and reports regularly to governors.

For further practical guidance on developing an effective accessibility plan, read the Council for Disabled Children's useful guide. A link to this publication can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Principles and statutory requirements



Tools and references

Tools:

“Schools MUST” checklist

The special needs coordinator: information sheet

SENCO recruitment checklist

SEND Policy Checklist

HCC guidance for using the school’s SEN information report template

Useful references:

- Hertfordshire Ordinarily Available Provision guidance
<https://thegrid.org.uk/send-and-additional-needs/ordinarily-available-provision>
- A model policy describing the essential criteria for how a school can meet the needs of children and young people with long-term medical conditions, in line with DfE statutory guidance
<https://thegrid.org.uk/search/all?term=medical%20conditions>
- Children and Families Act 2014, part 3
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/part/3/enacted>
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>





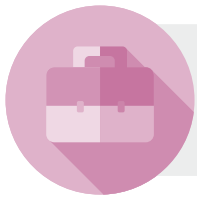
Principles and statutory requirements



Tools and references

- Hertfordshire's employer guidance for the management of learning outside the classroom (LOtC) and offsite visits
<https://thegrid.org.uk/health-and-safety-offsite-visits-premises/offsite-visits/learning-outside-the-classroom-and-offsite-visits-guidance>
- Helen Sanderson Associates, person-centred thinking tools
<https://www.helensandersonassociates.com/person-centered-thinking-tools/>
- Hertfordshire Accessibility Strategy
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/media-library/documents/policies-and-procedures/hertfordshires-send-accessibility-strategy.pdf>
- Hertfordshire Local Offer
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/contents>





Principles and statutory requirements



Tools and references

- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions – Statutory guidance, templates and links to other useful resources, DfE, December 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>
- Council for Disabled Children's guides and training packages for schools on the Disability duties in the Equality Act
<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/all-resources/filter/educators/new-series-cdc-guides-disability-duties-equality-act>
- Hertfordshire's Education Support for Medical Absence (ESMA) teaching service
<https://thegrid.org.uk/send-and-additional-needs/specialist-advisory-teams/medical-absence>
- Allergy Safety in Schools – statutory guidance, templates and links to other resources, DfE, July 2026
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/allergy-safety-in-schools#:~:text=This%20statutory%20guidance%20outlines%20what,that%20schools%20can%20use%20to%3A>
- Inclusive mainstream fund: support for school leaders, DfE, July 2026
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mainstream-fund-support-for-school-leaders>



Principles and statutory requirements



Tools and references

- Preparation toolkit for Inclusion Strategy Development, Supporting Education Group
<https://sendandinclusion.com/inclusion-strategy-template/>
- Inclusive education estates, DfE June 2026
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-education-estates>



SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years

“Schools MUST” checklist

Roles and responsibilities	SEND Code of Practice reference	✓
Governing bodies must ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school. The SENCO must be a qualified teacher working at the school. A newly appointed SENCO must be a qualified teacher and, where they have not previously been the SENCO at that or any other relevant school for a total period of more than 12 months, they must achieve the mandatory qualification within three years of appointment.	6.84 6.85	
Schools must appoint a designated teacher for looked-after children. Where a Child Looked After is being assessed for special educational needs, it is vital to take account of information set out in the care plan. SEND professionals must work closely with other relevant professionals involved in the child's life as a consequence of them being looked after. These include the social worker, designated doctor or nurse, independent reviewing officer (IRO), VSH and designated teacher in school.	10.2 10.7	
The school's governing body must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support children and young people at school with medical conditions.	3.66	
Schools must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between disabled and non-disabled children and young people when carrying out their functions.	3.8	
Schools must ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside those who do not have SEND.	6.2	

High-quality provision	SEND Code of Practice reference	✓
Schools must use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's special educational needs.	6.2	
Schools must inform parents/carers when they are making special educational provision for a child.	6.2	

High-quality provision	SEND Code of Practice reference	✓
High-quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this. This is special educational provision under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Schools and colleges must use their best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it. Special educational provision is underpinned by high-quality teaching and is compromised by anything less.	1.24	
Schools must cooperate with the local authority in the EHC plan review process and, as part of the review, the local authority can require schools to convene and hold annual review meetings on its behalf.	6.56	
Additional musts for assessments for EHC plans and reviews in chapter 9.	Chapter 9	

Publishing Information	SEND Code of Practice reference	✓
Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014) All schools must publish details of what SEN provision is available through the SEN information report. Schools must publish more detailed information about their arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for children and young people with SEND. The information must also include information about: • the arrangements for the admission of disabled children and young people • the steps taken to prevent disabled children and young people from being treated less favourably than others • the facilities provided to assist access for disabled children and young people • the schools' accessibility plans, showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time The school-specific information should relate to the school's arrangements for providing a graduated response to children and young people's special educational needs. It should elaborate on the information provided at a local authority-wide level in the Local Offer. Further details of the information that must be included in the SEN information report are available in section 6.79 of the SEND Code of Practice.	3.7 4.34 4.35 6.79	

Publishing Information	SEND Code of Practice reference	✓
Equality Act 2010 Schools must publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the general duty and must prepare and publish objectives to achieve the core aims of the general duty. Objectives must be specific and measurable.	3.8	
Schools must publish an accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time for disabled children and young people	4.35	
As part of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund conditions of grant, schools must publish an inclusion strategy to explain their plan to use their overall funding allocation to build a strong inclusive offer.		

Working with others	SEND Code of Practice reference	✓
Schools must cooperate with the local authority in reviewing the provision that is available locally (Chapter 3) and in developing the Local Offer (Chapter 4).	6.8	

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO)

Every school is required to:

- ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO and employed at the school. The SENCO must hold the mandatory qualification for SENCOs or achieve it within three years of appointment.
- ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to fulfil their responsibilities, including providing sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching, in a similar way to other important strategic roles. The SENCO is most effective when part of the school leadership team.

The role of the SENCO

A school SENCO, in partnership with the headteacher and governing body, determines the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the school. The SENCO advises and supports colleagues, to ensure all staff understand their responsibilities and take an active part in the school's approach to identifying and meeting special educational needs, so that children and young people with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching. The SENCO ensures that the views, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families play a central part in the assess, plan, do and review cycle of the graduated approach. The SENCO liaises with professionals and agencies beyond the school, strengthening the links between the school, families, and professionals from education, health and social care.

The key responsibilities of the SENCO include:

- ✓ having day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy, and coordination of specific provision made to support individual children and young people with SEND
- ✓ liaising with the:
 - families of children and young people with SEND
 - early years providers, other schools, professionals from education, health and social care, and independent or voluntary bodies
 - potential next providers of education to ensure children, young people and their families are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
 - designated teacher where Children Looked After or Children Previously Looked After
- ✓ advising on the:
 - graduated approach to providing SEN support
 - deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources, to meet children and young people's needs effectively
- ✓ working with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010
- ✓ ensuring that the school keeps the records of all children and young people with SEND up to date, such as written plans and Valuing SEND (VSEND) profiles

Recruitment checklist – SENCO

Candidate name:

Criteria	Action	Verified by and date
1. Does the candidate have qualified teacher status (QTS)?	Proof of QTS must be retained.	
2. Has the candidate worked as a SENCO in another school for more than 12 months prior to 2009?	If yes, there is no statutory requirement for the candidate to hold the mandatory qualification for SENCOs. However, it is advisable that the candidate refreshes their knowledge and skills.	
3. If no, does the candidate hold the National Award for SEN Coordination?	If yes, proof of certification must be retained. If no, continue to point 4.	
4. Is the candidate working towards the NPQ for SENCOs?	If yes, confirm when the candidate is due to complete the qualification and request confirmation that they are enrolled on a recognised course. Confirm the date at which the candidate started working as a SENCO, so that the school can ensure that they complete the qualification by the third anniversary of them starting as a SENCO. If no, are the school willing to support the candidate in gaining the qualification?	

Creating a statutory SEND policy

A checklist for mainstream schools

This checklist reflects relevant parts of the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs Regulations 2014. Review policy annually.

Policy sub-headings	Possible text	Further detail can be found here
School context		
Who was involved in creating the policy and how?		
Reference to statutory legislation	This policy refers to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. Full consideration has been given to the Code Of Practice SEND 0-25 years (January 2015).	Code p12, 18, 91
School's objectives		Code 1.2 Code 6.1-6.2
Definition of SEN	A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they: • have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or • have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions	Code p15-16 Code 6.15 Code 6.23-6.24 Code 6.28-6.30 Code 6.32-6.35
Equality and inclusion	Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is “... a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.	Code p16

Policy sub-headings	Possible text	Further detail can be found here
Children and young people with medical conditions		Code 6.11
Roles and responsibilities		Code 6.2-6.3 Code 6.17 Code 6.36 Code 6.43 Code 6.79 Code 6.84-6.85 Code 6.87-6.90
School's approach to identification		Code 6.5 Code 6.14-6.27
SEN support		Code 6.44-6.56
Education, health and care plans		Code 6.63
School's approach to teaching children and young people with SEND		Code 6.12 Code 6.36-6.43
School's approach to involving parents/carers		Code 6.2 Code 6.76. Code 6.19-6.20 Code 6.39 Code 6.43 Code 6.59 Code 6.64-6.71 Code 6.81 Code 6.90
School's approach to actively listening to children and young people's views		Code 6.7 Code 6.19-6.20 Code 6.39 Code 6.43 Code 6.81 Code 6.90
Record keeping, monitoring and data management		Code 6.4 Code 6.8 Code 6.25 Code 6.37 Code 6.72-6.77
Working together with others, including health and social care and outside specialists		Code 6.8 Code 6.20 Code 6.37 Code 6.58 Code 6.59-6.62

Policy sub-headings	Possible text	Further detail can be found here
Transition		Code 6.13 Code 6.16 Code 6.40 Code 6.57
Children and young people in specific circumstances		Code 6.80 Code 6.90
Training and expertise of staff		Code 6.4 Code 6.37
Safeguarding, including anti-bullying, e-safety		Code 6.22
Funding and Resources		Code 6.95-6.99
SEN information report		Code 6.2 Code 6.8 Code 6.79-6.82
Complaints process		
Links to other school policies		
Appendices		

Guidance for using the school's SEN information report template

The SEN information report provides information on a school's website about the implementation of its policy for children and young people with SEND. This should be updated annually and published on the school's website. Any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible. See SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (6.79–6.81)

Introduction

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Welcome to our SEN information report • Contents • Co-production with families • Questions or suggestions on the SEN information report • About the school (include details about the school, including the percentage of SEN in relation to national average and range of special educational needs)	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 1

1a. How does the school know if the children / young people need extra help 1b What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• How does your school identify children / young people with special educational needs? • How are parents/carers informed if their child has special educational needs? • How will parents/carers be able to raise any concerns they may have? • How are children and young people's views listened to? • Provide name and contact details of SENCO and others whom parents/carers can speak to in the school.	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 2,4,7 and 8 SEND Code of Practice, pages 15 and 16 for definition of SEND SEND Code of Practice (6.14–6.27) SEND Code of Practice (6.64–6.71)

2. How will the school support my child?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Explain the different roles of school staff and how they support children and young people with SEND in the school (e.g. class teacher, form tutor, subject teachers, learning support assistants, head of year, SENCO, headteacher, governors). • How do the school plan and oversee the provision for a child/young person? • How are parents/carers involved in discussions about provision for their child?	SEND Code of Practice (6.36–6.56) SEND Code of Practice (6.64–6.71)



3. How will I know how my child is doing?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• How the school knows how well a child or young person is doing • How the school ensures that provision for a child or young person is effective • Opportunities for parents/carers to discuss their children's progress and expected outcomes • How parents/carers are involved in reviewing progress • How children and young people are involved in reviewing their own progress • Opportunities for regular communication about things that have happened at school or home, e.g. a home school book	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 3a, 3b SEND Code of Practice (6.36–6.56) SEND Code of Practice (6.64–6.71)

4. How will the school's approach to teaching and learning be matched to my child's needs?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• High-quality teaching referring to Hertfordshire Ordinarily Available Provision guidance • Interventions and other SEN provision • How the school adapts the implementation of the curriculum and learning environment for children and young people with special educational needs • Graduated approach exemplifying assess, plan, do and review cycle • Details of written plans for children and young people with SEND • How the school works with parents/carers in agreeing provision to suit children and young people's specific needs • How children and young people are consulted and able to give their views about their provision	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 3c, 3d, 3e. SEND Code of Practice (6.36–6.56) SEND Code of Practice (6.64–6.71)



5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Name and contact details for the school's mental health lead practitioner • How the school supports children and young people's emotional and social development, including access to specialist support, mental health and therapy services • How the school supports children and young people with medical conditions, including the administration of medicines and provision of personal care • Support for behaviour, including preventative strategies and supportive interventions, in order to avoid exclusions and increase attendance • Arrangements to prevent and respond to bullying • Arrangements for listening and responding to children and young people's views	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 3g Supporting children with medical conditions (DfE) Keeping Children Safe in Education (part 1 and part 2) SEND Code of Practice (1.3–1.10) SEND Code of Practice (6.32–6.33)

6. What training have the staff, supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Details of SEND expertise in the school and at basic, enhanced and specialist levels • Details of mandatory qualification (National Award for SEN Coordination or NPQ for SENCOs) including date achieved	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 5 SEND Code of Practice (4.32) SEND Code of Practice (6.84–6.89)

7. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Any specialist staff working at the school and their qualifications • Other services the school accesses; including health, therapy and social care services; any other agencies and voluntary sector organisations; also including any specialist local resources used by the school • Explanation of the arrangements for triggering additional support in the school • Contact details for support services for parents/carers of children and young people with SEND, including SEND Information and Advice Support Service (SENDIASS)	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 10, 11. SEND Code of Practice (6.58–6.62)

8. How will you help me to support my child's learning?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Information for families on how they can support their children's learning outside the school • Details about adaptation of homework activities • Details of any parent/carers training or learning events	School homework / home learning policy

9. How does the school enable constructive partnership working with families?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• How parents/carers are involved in the school more widely (parent forum, working parties, etc) • Arrangements for consulting children and young people with SEND about whole-school issues • How children and young people with SEND are represented on the school council • Role of parent/carers in development of school SEND policy and practice, and on the governing body	SEND Code of Practice (1.3–1.12) SEND Code of Practice (6.64–6.71)

10. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• How you enable children and young people with SEND to access all of the activities of the school • How you involve families in planning activities and trips • Reference to relevant school policies	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 3f HCC Policy for the Management of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) and Offsite Visits

11. How accessible is the school environment?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Improvements to the environment for children and young people with physical disabilities, including ramps, adapted toilets and washing facilities, access to specialist curriculum areas, etc • Improvements to the environment for children and young people with visual and/or hearing impairments, including well-designed room acoustics, signage, etc • Other improvements to the environment, including safe spaces, calming areas, etc	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 6 Equality Act 2010 Advice for schools Accessible Schools: Summary Guidance (DfES, 2002) HCC Access audit template for schools HCC Accessibility Strategy 2023–2026 SEND Code of Practice (6.9–6.10)

12. Who can I contact for further information?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Name and contact details of the SENCO • Who can parents/carers talk to if they are unhappy? Details of a clear process to handle complaints • Details of the parents/carers' first point of contact if they want to discuss something about their child • Who else has a role in the child or young person's education? • Details of SENDIASS and parent carers forums	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 9 School complaints policy SEND policy SEND Code of Practice (1.3–1.13)

13. How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, or transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Preparation the school makes before a child or young person joins the setting • How the school supports the parent/carer and their and the child when joining the school or transferring to the next setting • What information and support is provided to the next school/setting	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 12 Code of Practice chapter 5–8.

14. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• How the notional SEN budget is allocated • High Needs funding (HNF/FIF) • How the Inclusive Mainstream Fund allocation is used to support the school to become more inclusive including a working link to the school's Inclusion Strategy • Any other sources of funding accessed by the school for SEND	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 6 SEND Code of Practice (6.95–6.99)

15. How are decisions made about the range of support my child will receive?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• How parents/carers are involved in decisions about the way resources are used to effectively support their child • How children and young people are involved in planning provision	SEND Code of Practice (1.3–1.13) SEND Code of Practice (6.64–6.71)

16. Where can I find out about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with SEND?

Include in this section	Other sources of information
• Details of the Local Offer and where it can be accessed www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer	SEND regulations (2014) reference: 13 SEND Code of Practice chapter 4 SEND Code of Practice (6.81)





THE HERTFORDSHIRE **SEND TOOLKIT**



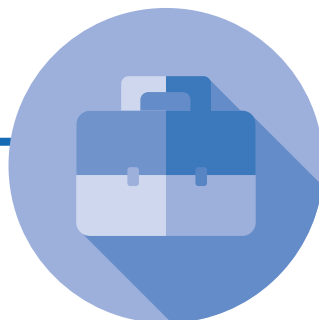
THE HERTFORDSHIRE **SEND TOOLKIT**



Providing high-quality provision

Contents:

- **Understanding your own context**
 - Using a graduated approach
 - SEN support
 - Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP)
 - Exploring local and national data
- **High-quality adaptive teaching**
 - Principles for developing an inclusive curriculum
 - Ordinarily available provision – building a strong universal offer
 - Inclusive classroom strategies





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

Identifying commonly occurring barriers to learning and participation and additional needs – understanding your own school context

Before reading any further, SENCOs and leaders will want to reflect on their own school context.

The identification of commonly occurring barriers to learning and participation is an essential first step in the process for building a strong universal offer and considering the targeted support needed to strengthen inclusion.

As part of the SEND reform programme, DfE guidance on how to develop an inclusion strategy using the inclusive mainstream fund encourages schools to draw on a range of sources, including:

- classroom observation and engagement with teachers
- internal assessments
- engagement with families and children and young people
- discussions with external professionals
- data including SEND, attendance, behaviour and attainment
- evidence on local or national trends in changing need

The guidance is clear that this should not just be led by specific diagnoses or limited by the current identification of children and young people receiving SEN support or with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP).





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

What is the graduated approach?

The graduated approach to identifying and supporting children and young people with SEND builds upon the school's overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children and young people.

This helps to ensure that children and young people receive an appropriate level of support that meets their needs, and staff receive suitable training and support to implement it.

In great schools, teachers are continually assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing their approach to teaching for all children and young people.

In addition, school leaders will be relentless in improving standards; confident that data is robust and accurate; and rigorous in monitoring the quality of the teaching, learning and pastoral provision in their school. This ensures the highest standards are reached for all children and young people.



For many children and young people, these systems work well. The majority of children and young people journey through their school days participating fully in lessons and activities and making good progress. They grow to become secure and confident young adults, well prepared for their next steps into adulthood.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

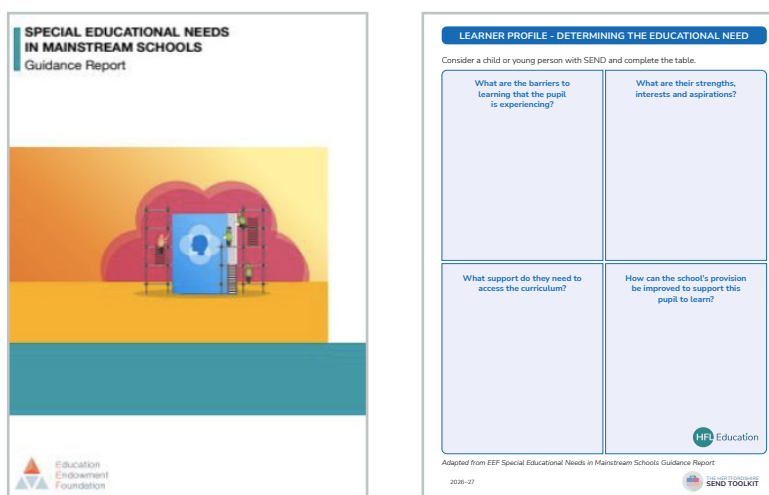
For some children and young people making less than expected progress, additional time for discovery is needed. Schools need to have a thorough understanding of children and young people's strengths and needs in order to plan the most helpful and tailored response.

To provide the most effective provision, it is important to develop a growing understanding of children and young people's strengths and barriers to participation and learning. Having a better understanding of their experience of school can support teachers in planning effective provision for them and making any reasonable adjustments where needed.



A useful tool for making these decisions is the learner profile from the Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF) Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools Guidance.

This is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



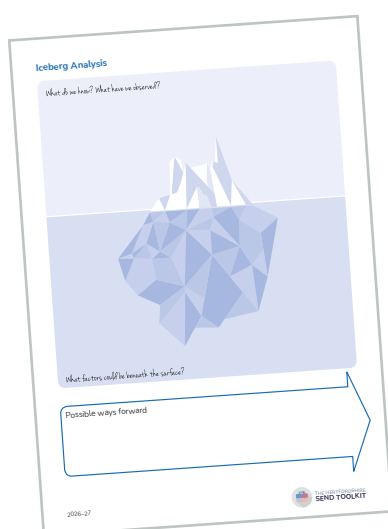
It is important to explore the child or young person's experience beyond the classroom during unstructured times, enrichment activities, moving around the school and at home as these could be having an impact on their learning. This tool gives the opportunity to explore early concerns and monitor how the child or young person responds to the strategies and approaches put in place following completion of the learner profile.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

When you first notice that gaps are developing, begin to explore possible barriers to learning such as attendance, bullying, a delay in speech, language and communication development, or a child or young person's limited use of English. (Difficulties related only to English as an additional language are not SEND.)



A useful first step when exploring barriers to achievement is the Iceberg Analysis. This information could provide the keys to success for the child or young person in your school. This is available in the **Tools and references** section.

During this time, schools should put in place strategies, approaches to teaching, and adaptations to the learning environment as described in Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance to boost progress. How the child or young person responds to this support can help identify their particular needs.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

When should we agree a child or young person has special educational needs?

A child or young person is identified with special educational needs (SEN) if they have “significantly greater difficulty in learning than other children or young people of the same age”. Before this can be agreed, all other possible causes of slow progress or low attainment should be explored with the family, teachers, SENCO and perhaps other professionals.



For some children and young people, special educational needs can be identified at an early age. However, for others, difficulties become evident only as they develop.

All those who work with the child or young person should be alert to emerging or changing needs, responding quickly and accurately, and making sure support is effective. In particular, parents/carers know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents/carers express concerns about their child’s development. They should also listen to and respond to any concerns raised by the child or young person themselves.

Hertfordshire’s Valuing SEND (VSEND) tool will support schools to develop a growing understanding of children and young people through solution-focused and person-centred tools. It helps to strengthen the provision for children and young people with SEND, building a holistic understanding of their needs, and enabling better engagement with families.



SENCOs and other professionals should use a range of information to create a student profile across the four broad areas of need and independence as part of the graduated approach.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years describes four broad areas of need. However, the purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a child or young person into a category. In practice, individual children or young people often have needs across several or all of these areas, and their needs may change over time.



Cognition and learning

Could include:

- specific learning difficulties (SpLD), e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia
- moderate learning difficulties (MLD)
- severe learning difficulties (SLD)
- profound and multiple learning difficulty (PLMD)

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

Could include:

- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- anxiety disorders
- mental health issues

The four broad areas of need

Communication and interaction

Could include:

- speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)
- autism
- social communication difficulties

Sensory and/or physical needs

Could include:

- visual impairment (VI)
- hearing impairment (HI)
- multi-sensory impairment (MSI)
- physical disability (PD)





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

What should happen when a child or young person is identified as needing SEN support?

SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle, where a child or young person's strengths and difficulties are identified, and then a plan is put in place to address the difficulties. This is known as the "graduated approach".

This continuous cycle of assess, plan, do, and review should be in place for any child or young person who has been identified as having SEND. Class teachers and subject teachers should be at the centre of this process, working closely with families, although of course they can be supported by other members of staff, such as the SENCO.



Ref. 6.44





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

The elements of the assess, plan, do and review cycle:





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

Should I keep a written record?

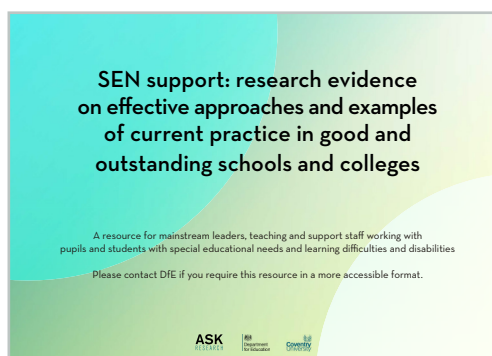
It is important that a written record is made of the discussions and agreed actions, in order to monitor and evaluate the child or young person's progress over time. These written records will provide information about what has worked and not worked in the past and will inform future discussions. The document is intended to be useful and supportive for families, children and young people and staff, and should clearly outline what strategies have been put in place, and the difference they have made in the journey towards the desired outcomes.



Using evidence-based support prioritising early intervention



Early evidence-based support can help children and young people with SEND achieve better outcomes. This may include evidence-based professional development that is explicitly focused on improving classroom teaching, delivering effective targeted intervention, or deploying teaching assistants in line with best practice.



You may find it helpful to share this information with colleagues and families.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

The majority of children and young people with SEND will have their needs met through the assess, plan, do and review cycle at SEN support.

Occasionally, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action, including drawing on specialist advice when necessary, to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, they have not made expected progress. In this situation, a request for an education, health and care needs assessment (EHCNA) may be considered.

Education, health and care needs assessments

For most children and young people, an EHCNA should not normally be the first step. However, for those with more complex developmental and sensory needs, identified at or soon after birth, an EHCNA may already have been requested before they arrive at school.

By following the graduated approach over time, schools and families will have already collected a range of information, which highlights the needs of the child or young person and what is required to support them. It will include what has been put in place and the impact this has had. It will also reflect the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person and their family.

Professionals should be working together with families to request an assessment, as applications are best made together. There are a number of decisions to be made throughout the assessment process.

It may be helpful to visit the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning to ensure you have a full understanding of the process. A link to this is available in the **Tools and references** section.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

How do I start the EHC needs assessment process?

The purpose of an education, health and care needs assessment is to get a good rounded picture of a child or young person's education, health and care needs to decide whether or not they require an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to support their needs.

The Statutory Assessment Team are responsible for managing the EHC assessment process in Hertfordshire.

The request form for the EHC needs assessment is available on The Hertfordshire Grid for Learning. A helpful link is provided in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter. Make sure that you complete the correct form.



Complete the request form together with families and the child or young person. Ensure that the information you provide gives a very clear picture of the school and the child or young person. Remember that the information you provide on these forms will be read by professionals who are unlikely to know the child or young person, their family or your school. It may be helpful to include a summary page as an introduction, such as a VSEND Needs Profile, and a list of the contents of the application. These should be in chronological order where possible. Full details of all the types of evidence can be found in the guidance documents.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

If the assessment is agreed, a Children's Advice and Information Officer (CIAO) from the Statutory Assessment Team will be the main point of contact. They will get in touch with families to explain the next steps of the process, share all the information, provide regular updates, and let them know what advice has been sought from professionals and when this has been received.



From the day that the application has been received by the SEND team, the 20-week time frame described in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years begins.



If the local authority decides that an EHCP is not necessary, they will notify the child's parent and/or the young person, the setting currently attended, and the health service, giving the reasons for that decision.

The SEND Implementation and Support Officers (SISOs) will work with the family and the school to make sure additional needs are supported and that adaptations and reasonable adjustments are all in place.



If the family is unhappy with the decision not to issue an EHCP, they can exercise their right to appeal.

Ref. 9.44

Education, health and care plan reviews

An EHCP must be reviewed at least once a year, except for children aged 0-5, where the EHCP should be reviewed at least every six months. This is to ensure it stays up-to-date and continues to provide the best support the child or young person needs.

For further information and templates visit Hertfordshire's Grid for Learning. A link is provided in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

The local authority provides a template for the annual review meeting, for schools to record the discussions at the meeting. This should be submitted to the local authority within two weeks following the review meeting.



Those attending the meeting must also consider whether the child or young person's needs remain the same and whether the outcomes and provision remain appropriate. Please see the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years for further details on what annual reviews should do.



Ref. 9.67

The local authority then has a further two weeks to make its decision following the annual review.

The statutory SEN team has implemented a new online report through Solero which allows schools to see live data on when annual reviews are due to take place. This has been rolled out to maintained schools and academies that were previously HCC maintained in summer term 2026, and to “new” academies and FE settings in the autumn 2026. This replaces the old “termly notification” letters.

The local authority and schools must cooperate to ensure that the meeting takes place. Officers from the statutory SEN team may attend annual reviews but do not routinely attend all reviews. If you feel that an officer from the statutory SEN team should attend the review, it is best to discuss the reasons with them and identify the best way forward. It may be that they do attend, or that the discussions identify that attendance by another professional is more appropriate, or that support can be given to the school/family prior to or after the meeting.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

Exploring local and national trends in changing need

This may be information you already have. If not, the simple School Context Summary template may be a useful starting point. This is available in the **Tools and references** section.

The image shows two overlapping templates. The left template is titled 'SEND: SCHOOL CONTEXT SUMMARY' and includes sections for school information, SEND policy review due date, and a table for SEN support. The right template is titled 'OL CONTEXT SUMMARY' and includes a table for EHC plan data. Both templates are part of the SEND TOOLKIT.

How does my SEND summary compare with the local and national picture?

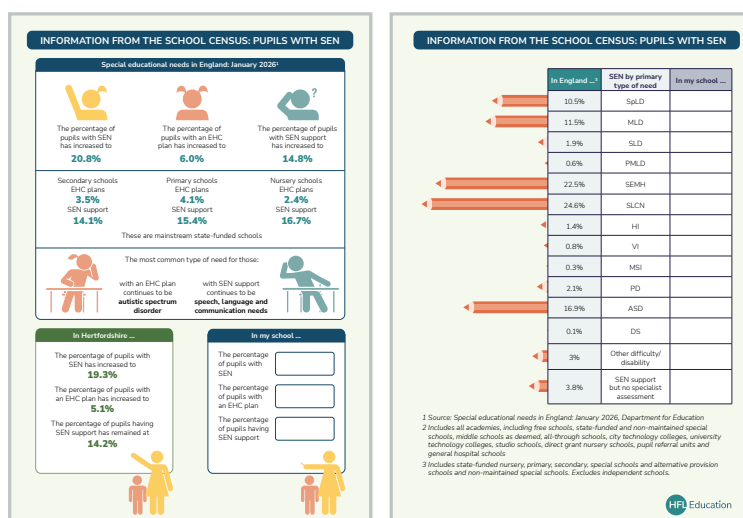
In June every year the Department for Education (DfE) releases data on children and young people with SEN. Known as “Special educational needs in England”, the publication includes breakdowns by type of SEN provision, type of SEN, age, national curriculum year group, gender, ethnicity, English as a first language and free school meal eligibility.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

To help you compare your own school information with local and national information, you will find a helpful poster in the **Tools and references** section. With space to record your own school information, this is ideal to share with staff, governors and Ofsted inspectors.



You can find the latest data and current “Special educational needs in England” publication through the link provided in the **Tools and references** at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision



Making sure the school's information management system holds accurate data for children and young people with SEND is vital. The DfE collects SEN provision data for all children and young people on roll three times a year in October, January and May through the school census using the following codes:

Pupil SEN provision code descriptions

- N** No special educational need (this is only used for pupils who were previously recorded as having SEN)
- E** Education, health and care plan
- K** SEN support

Remember, it is particularly important to have carefully checked the data before the spring census (Thursday 21st January 2027). This is when the DfE collects additional details, including the type of special educational need, for all children and young people with SEN provision.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

The four broad areas of need described in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years support schools to understand need and plan priorities for provision. The data on SEND, however, is collected according to primary and secondary type of need. To be recorded under one of the SEN types, there is no requirement for a child or young person to have a specialist assessment, though it is important, as part of your ongoing conversations with families, that they are aware of the type code descriptions the school is using. This is collected using the following codes:



Ref. 6.28



Pupil SEN type code descriptions

SpLD	Specific learning difficulty
MLD	Moderate learning difficulty
SLD	Severe learning difficulty
PMLD	Profound and multiple learning difficulty
SEMH	Social, emotional and mental health
SLCN	Speech, language and communication needs
HI	Hearing impairment
VI	Vision impairment
MSI	Multi-sensory impairment
PD	Physical disability
ASD	Autistic spectrum disorder
DS	Down Syndrome
OTH	Other difficulty
NSA	SEN support but no specialist assessment of type of need.*

**This code should only be used in those very rare instances where a child or young person is placed on SEN support but the school is still assessing what the primary need is, for example, where a child or young person on SEN support has transferred into the school shortly before school census day. Where code "NSA" is to be used, the child or young person must have SEN provision of code "K".*





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

In addition, the spring census requires data about the child or young person's **SEN type ranking**.

The primary need – and, where appropriate, any secondary need – is recorded.

The most significant, or primary need, is ranked as “**1**”, with any secondary need ranked “**2**”. (Only two rankings are collected in the school census, with no two needs given the same ranking – that is, if there is more than one SEN type reported, they cannot both have a ranking of “1”).

You can find further information in the DfE guidance on how to complete the school census provided in the **Tools and references** at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

High-quality adaptive teaching with curriculum designed for all children and young people

Effective SEN provision is built upon the foundations of the day-to-day learning experiences within every classroom. The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years goes further, stating that “special educational provision is underpinned by high-quality teaching and is compromised by anything less.”



Ref. 1.24

Having high expectations and setting suitable learning challenges for every child or young person are prerequisites for inclusive learning and teaching. Teachers must use their “best endeavours” to plan lessons for children and young people, and use appropriate assessment to set targets that are ambitious.

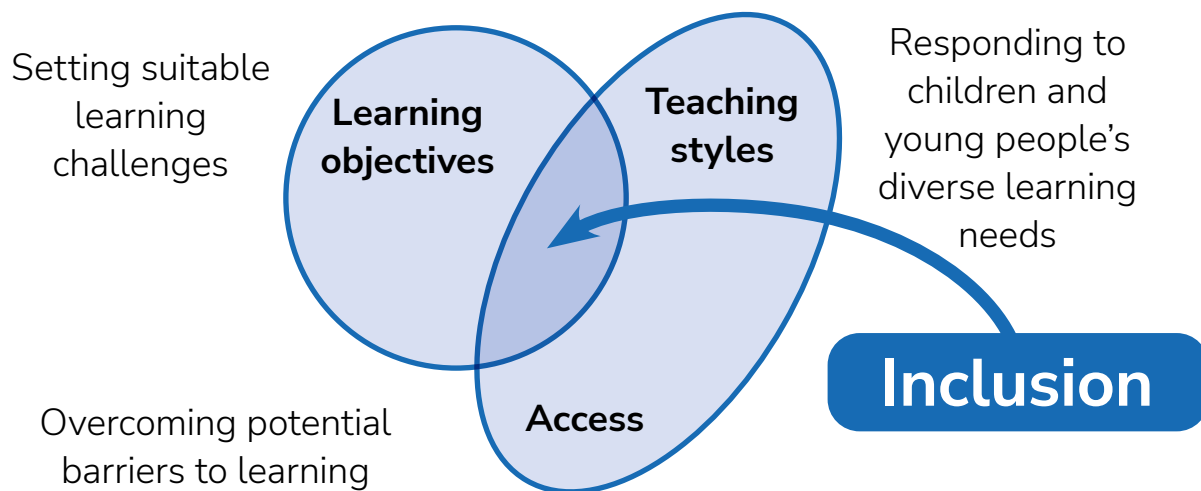
Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad, well-balanced, knowledge-rich curriculum for all children and young people. The statutory national curriculum in England includes a statement on inclusion. The image on the next page sets out the principles for developing an inclusive curriculum, which provides all children and young people with relevant and challenging learning.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

Principles for developing an inclusive curriculum



For further information, read the Statutory Inclusion Statement handout in the **Tools and references** section.

What does this mean for classroom practice?

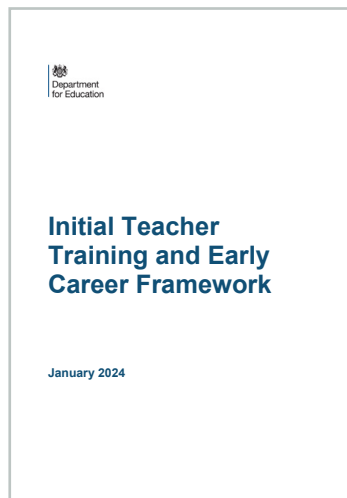
The Teachers' Standards apply to the vast majority of teachers, whatever their career stage. Within Part One, it makes clear that teachers must adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils. Within this standard, it outlines the expectation that teachers must have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

Department for Education Teachers' Standards	
Preamble Teachers make the most of their pupils' prior knowledge, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards for each and every child. Teachers set high standards and challenge pupils to meet them. They have a high level of subject knowledge, and are able to explain and model this knowledge to their pupils. They are also able to explain and model this knowledge to their pupils. They are also able to explain and model this knowledge to their pupils.	
Part One: Teachers	
1. Set high standards which challenge pupils to develop their knowledge and skills, achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning.	2. Make accurate and productive use of assessment
A teacher must: • establish a high and challenging curriculum for pupils, taking account of their prior knowledge, skills, and needs • set high standards for pupils' work, and challenge them to achieve these standards • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning	• assess and monitor pupils' progress, and use this information to plan and adapt their teaching • make accurate and productive use of assessment to plan and adapt their teaching • use assessment to monitor pupils' progress, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning
3. Promote good progress and outcomes for all pupils	4. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
• be responsible for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning	• have clear rules and routines for behaviour in lessons, and ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve
5. Develop good subject and curriculum knowledge	6. Work with professional colleagues
• have a secure knowledge of the subject they teach, and ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning	• work with professional colleagues to ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning
7. Plan and prepare lessons	8. Engage, motivate and inspire pupils
• plan and prepare lessons to ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning	• engage, motivate and inspire pupils to ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning
9. Assess and monitor pupils' progress	10. Keep accurate records
• assess and monitor pupils' progress to ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning	• keep accurate records to ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning • monitor pupils' progress and achievement, and provide feedback to help them improve • ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their best, and progress to the next level of learning



What do we do every day that is especially important for children and young people with additional needs?

High quality teaching is the most important lever for improving outcomes for all children and young people, particularly those with SEND. DfE guidance encourages schools to use well-supported evidence to strengthen and sustain their practice and signposts to the recently published EEF Guide to Inclusive Teaching.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

Using the Inclusive Classroom Checklist

A helpful starting point to strengthen practice within Teacher Standard 5 is to use the Inclusive Classroom Checklist available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



This could be used:

- ✓ as a self-evaluation tool for yourself or a colleague
- ✓ as a discussion tool with your group of teachers
- ✓ to help support teachers develop their practice
- ✓ as part of the school's monitoring cycle
- ✓ during a learning walk with the SEND governor





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

The inclusive classroom: approaches to teaching, adaptations to the learning environment and reasonable adjustments - Hertfordshire Ordinarily Available Provision guidance

Every local authority must set out what it expects to be available in its area for children and young people who have SEND including information about approaches to teaching, adaptations to the curriculum and the learning environment.



Ordinarily available provision is the everyday inclusive practice and adaptive teaching that all mainstream schools are expected to provide from their own resources for children and young people, including those with SEND, before specialist help is considered.



This guidance has been co-produced with headteachers, SENCOs, Hertfordshire Parent Carers Forum (HPCI), and other professionals, making it a collectively owned tool that we are all invested in.



Developed to support providers to build a strong universal offer that embeds inclusion and delivers early, effective, targeted support for those who need it, the guidance gives examples of adaptations and reasonable adjustments that are part and parcel of everyday high-quality inclusive provision and our Universal offer.

A link to download the Hertfordshire Ordinarily Available Provision guidance is available in the **Tools and reference** section.



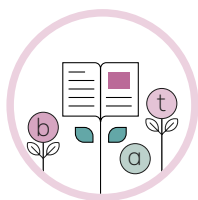


Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision

Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND - eLearning resources

To support staff in developing their understanding and confidence in using evidence-based strategies to adapt teaching effectively, you may find it helpful to explore the inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND series of eLearning resources. These resources have been co-produced by HFL Education with Hertfordshire's SEND Specialist Advisory Service and schools in the local area.

Designed to support schools in developing provision that should be made available for all children and young people, including those with SEND, each resource supports class teachers to know the needs of the children and young people in their class and plan effective provision to meet those needs.



English: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

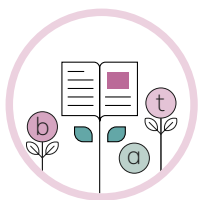
Modelling a range of inclusive teaching strategies and providing practical examples this resource demonstrates how the written and visual scaffolds recommended in Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision can be implemented in English lessons. This fully funded resource is available to download from the **Tools and references** section.

A helpful directory is available in the **Tools and references** section to enable busy SENCOs and subject leaders to navigate the content and plan impactful professional development for staff.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision



Phonics: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

Exploring the foundations of reading and supporting all staff to know children and young people's starting points and plan effective next steps, this resource demonstrates how to use explicit instruction and concrete and visual scaffolds in the context of phonics as recommended in Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision. This fully funded resource is available to download from the **Tools and references** section.



A helpful directory is available in the **Tools and references** section to enable busy SENCOs and subject leaders to navigate the content and plan impactful professional development for staff.



Maths: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

Examining many of the strategies within Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance such as explicit instruction, planning small steps, and using worked examples, this resource demonstrates how to respond to individual learning needs and support children and young people to secure base facts, and develop mathematical language. This fully funded resource is available to download from the **Tools and references** section.



A helpful directory is available in the **Tools and references** section to enable busy SENCOs and subject leaders to navigate the content and plan impactful professional development for staff.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision



Science: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

Including approaches such as how to use graphic organisers to organise knowledge, concepts and ideas, the use of technology and explicitly teaching the meaning of unfamiliar words, this science resource explores how to implement even more strategies from Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance.

A helpful directory is available in the **Tools and references** section to enable busy SENCOs and subject leaders to navigate the content and plan impactful professional development for staff. This subsidised resource is available to download from the **Tools and references** section.



Top Tips for Teaching Assistants (TA): inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

Exploring evidence-based practical approaches and examples of high-quality adaptive practice, this resource supports TAs to promote pupil independence and purposeful learning in line with Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance.

This fully funded resource is available to download from the **Tools and references** section. A helpful directory is available in the **Tools and references** section to enable busy TAs to navigate the content.





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision



Tools and references

Tools:

SEND: school context summary

Inclusive teaching observation checklist (SEND)

Special Needs in England, January 2026 poster

Learner Profile - Determining The Educational Need

Iceberg Analysis

Using the Iceberg Analysis activity – top tips

Assess, plan, do and review cycle

Statutory Inclusion Statement

Teachers' Standards - overview poster

Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Teacher Framework: adaptive teaching standard 5

Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND: Contents Directories.

Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND: eLearning links

English: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

<https://hub.hfleducation.org/courses/english-inclusive-strategies>

Phonics: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

<https://hub.hfleducation.org/courses/phonics-inclusive-strategies-to-support-learners-with-send>





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision



Tools and references

Maths: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

<https://hub.hfleducation.org/courses/maths-inclusive-strategies-to-support-learners-with-send>

Secondary Science: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

<https://hub.hfleducation.org/courses/secondary-science-inclusive-strategies-to-support-learners-with-send>

Primary Science: inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

<https://hub.hfleducation.org/courses/primary-science-inclusive-strategies-to-support-learners-with-send>

Top Tips for Teaching Assistants (TA): inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

<https://hub.hfleducation.org/courses/top-tips-for-tas-recording>

Useful references:

- The EEF Guide to Inclusive Teaching, July 2026
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/inclusive-teaching>
- EEF blog: 'Five-a-day' to improve SEND outcomes
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-five-a-day-to-improve-send-outcomes>
- Complete the school census, DfE
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census>





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision



Tools and references

- Hertfordshire's Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan information
<https://thegrid.org.uk/send-and-additional-needs/ehcps-and-funding/education-health-and-care-plan>
- Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Teacher Framework
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-and-early-career-framework>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- SEN support: research evidence on effective approaches and examples of current practice in good and outstanding schools and colleges
<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/resources/effective-sen-support-research-evidence-effective-approaches-and-examples>
- Statistics: special educational needs
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-special-educational-needs-sen>
- Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send>
- Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send>





Outcome 1. Providing high-quality provision



Tools and references

- Valuing SEND (VSEND)
<https://thegrid.org.uk/send-and-additional-needs/senco-tools-and-resources/vsend-valuing-send>
- National curriculum in England: framework for Key Stages 1 to 4
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>
- Teachers' Standards: Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>
- Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision Guidance (OAP)
<https://thegrid.org.uk/send-and-additional-needs/ordinarily-available-provision>



SEND: SCHOOL CONTEXT SUMMARY

School:	Date:
SENCO:	SEND governor:
SEND policy review due:	SEN information report reviewed: With:
Number of pupils on roll:	Number of pupils with SEND: % of pupils with SEND: % of pupils with EHC plan: % of pupils receiving SEN support:

SEN support

Primary type of need		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Total
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Specific learning difficulty	SpLD																	
Moderate learning difficulty	MLD																	
Severe learning difficulty	SLD																	
Profound and multiple learning difficulty	PMLD																	
Social, emotional and mental health	SEMH																	
Speech, language and communication needs	SLCN																	
Hearing impairment	HI																	
Visual impairment	VI																	
Multi-sensory impairment	MSI																	
Physical disability	PD																	
Autistic spectrum disorder	ASD																	
Down Syndrome	DS																	
Other difficulty/disability																		
Total number of pupils																		



SEND: SCHOOL CONTEXT SUMMARY

EHC plan																		
Primary type of need		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Total
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Specific learning difficulty	SpLD																	
Moderate learning difficulty	MLD																	
Severe learning difficulty	SLD																	
Profound and multiple learning difficulty	PMLD																	
Social, emotional and mental health	SEMH																	
Speech, language and communication needs	SLCN																	
Hearing impairment	HI																	
Visual impairment	VI																	
Multi-sensory impairment	MSI																	
Physical disability	PD																	
Autistic spectrum disorder	ASD																	
Down Syndrome	DS																	
Other difficulty/disability																		
Total number of pupils																		

You may want to add colour coding to identify other relevant characteristics, for example ethnicity, first language other than English, in receipt of pupil premium funding, or Children Looked After.

Inclusive teaching observation checklist (SEND)

Whole-class work

	Access to teacher and any resources used has been planned for, e.g. a number line or grid or text visible to all or made accessible in other ways, background noise avoided where possible, light source in front of teacher not behind
	Children and young people's seating carefully planned
	Rules and routines for the lesson taught and displayed; consistent and fair reinforcement by adults in the classroom
	All children and young people clear about their own objectives for lessons
	All children are clear about the structure of lessons and the day, promoting a calm and purposeful climate, e.g. visual timetables are on display
	New or difficult vocabulary clarified, written up, displayed, revisited
	Understanding of instructions checked by teacher, e.g. by asking a child or young person to explain them in their own words
	Support in place for children and young people who cannot "hold things in their heads" – sticky notes, jottings, individual whiteboards
	Questions pitched so as to challenge children and young people at all levels, e.g. define paragraph (for higher attaining), define sentence (for lower attaining)
	Individuals targeted for particular questions
	Use made of alternatives to questions to invite a response, e.g. making suggestions from which the children can choose, speculating, making a personal contribution from own experience
	Questions used to ensure the rest of the class are listening, e.g. "Does anyone have a question for Gupta?", "Who thinks the same as Jo?", "Who thinks differently?"
	Children clear about the timescale for the question, e.g. "This is one for a quick response.", "This is one which needs several minutes to think about.", "This is one I want you to work at for ten minutes."

Independent and group work

	Use of formative assessment and feedback to swiftly address misconceptions and move learning on
	Time and support given before responses are required, e.g. personal thinking time, partner talk, persisting with progressively more scaffolding until child can answer correctly
	Contribution of all children and young people or young person valued – secure and supportive learning environment where there is the safety to have a go, to make a mistake
	Children and young people help and support each other with ideas; they give one another space in which to think and respond to questions
	Contributions reflected back by teacher and support staff in expanded form or expanded on by other children and young people
	Multi-sensory teaching approaches (visual, verbal, kinaesthetic) in use
	Children provided with regular movement breaks and agreed calm spaces
	Buddying used for seating and paired or partner work, e.g. more settled child or young person paired with one who finds concentration difficult
	Interactive strategies used, e.g. children and young people having cards to hold up or own whiteboards or coming to the front to take a role
	Visual and tangible aids used, e.g. story sacks, real objects, signs and symbols, photographs, pegs on a coathanger, variety of number lines, counting sticks, computer animations
	Strategies that children and young people need to use (e.g. for problem solving or text composition) made very explicit
	Abstract concepts made concrete, e.g. word problems in mathematics turned into pictures or acted out or modelled with resources
	Children and young people who need it being pre-prepared or pre-taught, where this would help them to access the lesson



Independent and group work

	Additional adults, if present, are actively involved throughout in supporting or assessing learning
	Transition from whole-class work to independent and group work clearly signalled and actively managed
	Tasks clearly explained or modelled – checks for understanding, task cards or boards as reminders, time available and expected outcomes made clear
	Children and young people's different needs for explanation are recognised: children can choose to start if they feel they understand or wait for further explanation if they do not
	Materials and resources for task available and accessible; expectations about independent personal organisation are clear and routines have been taught
	A distraction-free area has been set up for those who need it
	Strategies taught to children and young people, enabling them to continue to work without direct teacher help if they get stuck; prompts to remind them are on display
	Children and young people are provided with and regularly reminded of resources to help them be independent, e.g. relevant material from whole-class session kept on display, word lists or mats, dictionaries of terms, glossaries, number lines, hundred squares, tables squares
	Tasks link back to earlier (or later) objectives, where these are appropriate for child or young person and group
	Tasks simplified or extended, e.g. short, concrete text used by one group or long, abstract text by another, numbers to 100 by one group or to 20 by another
	Tasks made more open or more closed, according to child or young person's needs
	Arrangements (buddying, adult support, taping) made where necessary, to ensure that children can access written text and instructions

Independent and group work

	Alternatives to paper and pencil tasks used where appropriate
	Scaffolding, including written and visuals (e.g. problem-solving grids or writing frames or clue cards) provided where needed
	Variety of pupil groupings used so that children and young people are able to draw on each other's strengths and skills
	Children and young people taught to work together in groups
	Appropriate behaviour is noticed, praised or rewarded
	Effective use of additional adult support to promote independence and support positive peer interactions
	Effective use of technology as an access strategy, e.g. speech or sign supported software, on-screen word banks, predictive word processing
	Individual's learning objectives, e.g. positional language, number facts, punctuation, prediction are picked up on
	Texts and equipment are at children and young people's instructional level and matched to their age and dignity
	Teachers effectively deploy additional adults to prepare some children and young people for the whole class teaching through pre-teaching (such as rehearsing feedback, discussing questions in advance, discussing key vocabulary.)
	Peers helped to give feedback in positive ways, using speaking and writing frames(e.g. "I like the way ...", "One idea for improvement would be ...")
	Questioning designed to assess grasp of particular objectives relevant for each child or young person or group

Inclusive teaching observation checklist (SEND) adapted from "Leading on Inclusion", DfES 2005

INFORMATION FROM THE SCHOOL CENSUS: PUPILS WITH SEN

Special educational needs in England: January 2026¹



The percentage of pupils with SEN has increased to

20.8%



The percentage of pupils with an EHC plan has increased to

6.0%



The percentage of pupils with SEN support has increased to

14.8%

Secondary schools
EHC plans

3.5%

SEN support

14.1%

Primary schools
EHC plans

4.1%

SEN support

15.4%

Nursery schools
EHC plans

2.4%

SEN support

16.7%

These are mainstream state-funded schools



The most common type of need for those:

with an EHC plan
continues to be
**autistic spectrum
disorder**

with SEN support
continues to be
**speech, language and
communication needs**



In Hertfordshire ...

The percentage of pupils with SEN has increased to

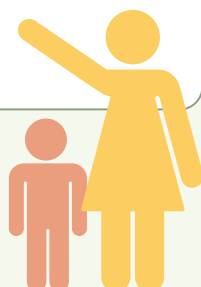
19.3%

The percentage of pupils with an EHC plan has increased to

5.1%

The percentage of pupils having SEN support has remained at

14.2%

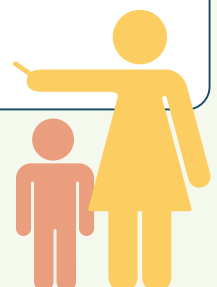


In my school ...

The percentage of pupils with SEN

The percentage of pupils with an EHC plan

The percentage of pupils having SEN support



INFORMATION FROM THE SCHOOL CENSUS: PUPILS WITH SEN

	In England ... ³	SEN by primary type of need	In my school ...
	10.5%	SpLD	
	11.5%	MLD	
	1.9%	SLD	
	0.6%	PMLD	
	22.5%	SEMH	
	24.6%	SLCN	
	1.4%	HI	
	0.8%	VI	
	0.3%	MSI	
	2.1%	PD	
	16.9%	ASD	
	0.1%	DS	
	3%	Other difficulty/ disability	
	3.8%	SEN support but no specialist assessment	

1 Source: Special educational needs in England: January 2026, Department for Education

2 Includes all academies, including free schools, state-funded and non-maintained special schools, middle schools as deemed, all-through schools, city technology colleges, university technology colleges, studio schools, direct grant nursery schools, pupil referral units and general hospital schools

3 Includes state-funded nursery, primary, secondary, special schools and alternative provision schools and non-maintained special schools. Excludes independent schools.

LEARNER PROFILE - DETERMINING THE EDUCATIONAL NEED

Consider a child or young person with SEND and complete the table.

What are the barriers to learning that the pupil is experiencing?

What are their strengths, interests and aspirations?

What support do they need to access the curriculum?

How can the school's provision be improved to support this pupil to learn?

Iceberg Analysis

What do we know? What have we observed?



What factors could be beneath the surface?

Possible ways forward



Using the Iceberg Analysis activity – top tips



Completing an Iceberg Analysis explores possible underlying causes or reasons why a child or young person is making significantly slower progress than other children and young people of the same age.



Start the activity by writing down above the waterline what you know and what you have observed about the child or young person in different situations.



Work with the child, young person and their family to ensure all the information is captured.

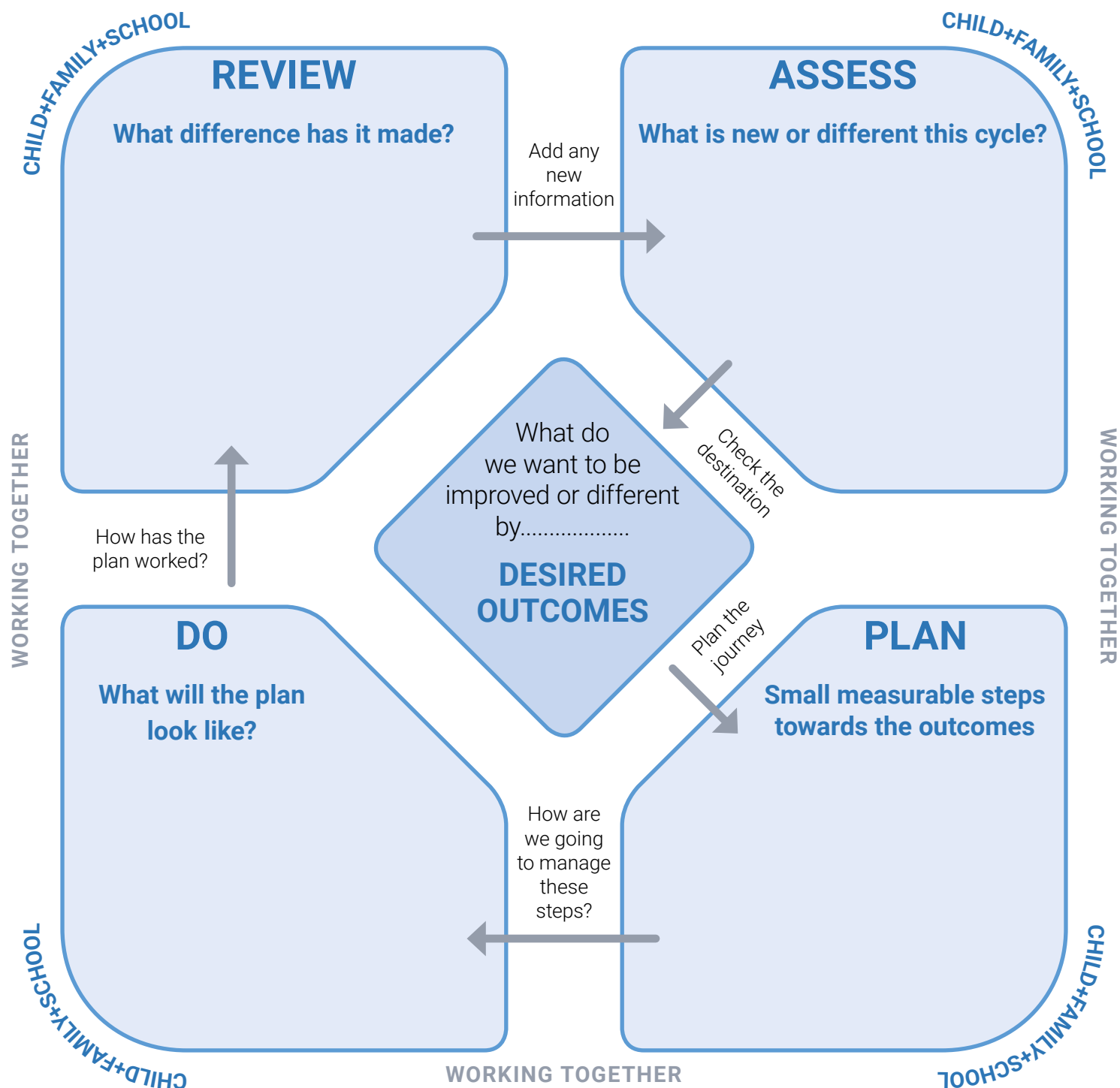


Work together to identify as many underlying causes, barriers to learning, triggers, and so on, that could be explored as possible reasons for limiting progress. Remember to explore a broad range of possible reasons such as poor attendance and punctuality, EAL, quality of teaching, medical conditions, summer-born children, and so on.



From this information, jointly agree the way forward to filter the information and to put a plan in place.

Assess, plan, do and review cycle



Statutory Inclusion Statement handout

Setting suitable challenges

4.1 Teachers should set high expectations for every pupil. They should plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. They have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets that are deliberately ambitious.

Responding to pupils' needs and overcoming potential barriers for individuals and groups of pupils

4.2 Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.⁵

4.3 A wide range of pupils have special educational needs, many of whom also have disabilities. Lessons should be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning will mean that these pupils will be able to study the full national curriculum. The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years includes statutory advice on approaches for identification and assessment, which can support this. A minority of pupils will need access to specialist equipment and different approaches. The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years is clear about what should be done to meet their needs.

4.4 With the right teaching, which recognises their individual needs, many disabled pupils may have little need for additional resources beyond the aids which they use as part of their daily life. Teachers must plan lessons so that these pupils can study every national curriculum subject. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset of work.

4.5 Teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience, and ability in other languages.

4.6 The ability of pupils for whom English is an additional language to take part in the national curriculum may be in advance of their communication skills in English. Teachers should plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English and should aim to provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects.

Taken from "The national curriculum in England – Framework document", DfE 2014

⁵ Age is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 but it is not applicable to schools in relation to education or (as far as relating to those under the age of 18) the provision of services; it is a relevant protected characteristic in relation to the provision of services or employment (so when thinking about staff). Marriage and civil partnership are also a protected characteristic but only in relation to employment.



PREAMBLE

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

PART ONE: TEACHING

A teacher must:

1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

4 Plan and teach well structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
 - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The Teachers' Standards can be found on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

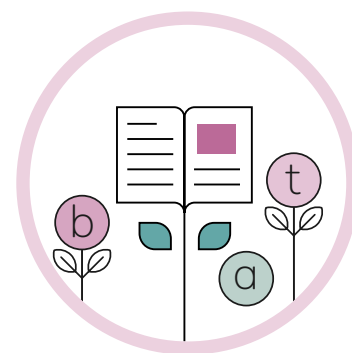


Adaptive Teaching (Standard 5 – Adapt teaching)

Learn that...	Learn how to...
1. Adapting teaching in a responsive way, including by providing targeted support to pupils who are struggling, is likely to increase pupil success. 2. Pupils are likely to learn at different rates and to require different levels and types of support from teachers to succeed. 3. Seeking to understand pupils' differences, including their different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning, is an essential part of teaching. 4. Adaptive teaching is less likely to be valuable if it causes the teacher to artificially create distinct tasks for different groups of pupils or to set lower expectations for particular pupils. 5. Flexibly grouping pupils within a class to provide more tailored support can support learning, but care should be taken to monitor its impact on attainment, behaviour, engagement and motivation, particularly for low attaining pupils.	Develop an understanding of different pupil needs, by: a) Identifying pupils who need new content further broken down. b) Making use of formative assessment. c) Working closely with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and other SEND specialists or expert colleagues. d) Working closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. e) Supporting pupils with a range of additional needs and using the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, which provides guidance on effective school systems and approaches for identifying and supporting the special educational needs of pupils with SEND. f) Utilising existing opportunities to engage with parents and carers to better understand pupils' individual needs (e.g. meetings with parents). Provide opportunity for all pupils to experience success, by: g) Adapting lessons, whilst maintaining high expectations for all, so that all pupils have the opportunity to meet expectations. h) Balancing input of new content with the revisiting of prior learning so that pupils master important concepts. i) Making effective use of teaching assistants and other adults in the classroom. j) Making effective and judicious use of specialist technology to support pupils with SEND.

Learn that...	Learn how to...
6. There is a common misconception that pupils have distinct and identifiable learning styles. This is not supported by evidence and attempting to tailor lessons to learning styles is unlikely to be beneficial. 7. Pupils with SEND are likely to require additional or adapted support; working closely with colleagues, parents/carers, and pupils to understand barriers to learning and identify effective strategies is essential. 8. High quality teaching for all pupils, including those with SEND, is based on strategies which are often already practised by teachers, and which can be developed through training and support. 9. Technology, including educational software and assistive technology, can support teaching and learning for pupils with SEND.	Meet individual needs without creating unnecessary workload, by: k) Making use of well-designed resources (e.g. textbooks, manipulatives). l) Planning to connect new content with pupils' existing knowledge or providing additional pre-teaching if pupils lack critical knowledge. m) Building in additional practice or removing unnecessary expositions. n) Reframing questions to provide greater scaffolding or greater stretch. o) Considering carefully whether intervening within lessons with individuals and small groups would be more efficient and effective than planning different lessons for different groups of pupils. Group pupils effectively, by: p) Applying high expectations to all groups, and ensuring all pupils have access to a rich curriculum. q) Intentionally grouping in relation to a specific learning outcome, regularly reviewing those groupings, taking care to monitor their impact and avoiding the perception that groups are fixed.

English: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND



CONTENTS DIRECTORY

Enabling schools to identify and plan CPD priorities, this directory provides an overview of each video in the English: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND training. The training will upskill all staff in the use of high quality inclusive teaching strategies as part of ordinarily available provision.

Session 1

Understanding the needs of your pupil

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: What is effective support in a whole school approach? • What is SEND? • Educational rights • The four broad areas of need • Learning needs • Diagnosis – helpful or not?	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders Governors	9m 25s
Video 2: Learner profile • Building a learner profile • Determining the educational need • Acting on the educational need	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	9m 37s
Video 3: Person-centred tools to explore needs • Exploring underlying needs • The Iceberg Analysis Tool • How to complete an Iceberg analysis when exploring need • Other person-centred tools		14m 23s

Session 2

Effective pedagogy to meet pupil needs

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: Introduction • Importance of effective pedagogy • SEND code of practice and high-quality teaching for all • How to use the remaining videos in the session	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders	8m 12s
Video 2: Scaffolding • What is scaffolding? • Modelling to 'see the learning' • Worked examples • Frames and concrete resources • Key vocabulary – shape coding and visual scaffolding • EEF TA scaffolding framework	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	22m 42s
Video 3: Explicit instruction • What is explicit instruction? • Rosenshine's Principles • Small step teaching • Anticipating misconceptions • Using clear and unambiguous language • Essential content/removing distracting information		23m 43s
Video 4: Digital technology • Types of technology to support: modelling, recording, motivation, assessment tracking, practice, gap spotting and teaching		18m 14s
Video 5: Flexible grouping • Strategies to successfully implement using knowledge of the curriculum, pedagogy and pupils • Working in threes • Purpose of the group - meeting specific needs for a small group or individual's needs		13m 0s
Video 6: Cognition and metacognition • What is metacognition? • Supporting comprehension • Preventing cognitive overload and the importance of talk • Sequencing learning to develop metacognition (7 step model)		19m 35s

Session 3

Making adjustments for pupils with learning needs

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: Self-regulation in decoding • What is self-regulation? • Self-correcting • Helping reading behaviours • Why can't readers self-correct? • How to scaffold a 1:1 reading support session	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	15m 12s
Video 2: Blending difficulties in decoding • The Reading Framework recommendations • Connected phonation • The use of phoneme frames • Scaffolding techniques to support automaticity – analogy, inflections, syllables		21m 11s
Video 3: Visual perception in decoding • Signs of visual perception difficulties • Physical positioning when reading • Strategies to develop visual perception including visual discrimination, visual memory, visual spatial skills • Promoting eye tracking • Lifting words out of a text during reading		17m 46s

Session 4

Additional provision to meet pupil learning needs

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Additional provision • Use of structured interventions • Provide sustained practice and secure independence • Choosing the focus of intervention • Principles of effective English interventions (diagnostic assessment, personalised intervention plans, teaching guidance)	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders Governors	35m 41s

Phonics: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND



CONTENTS DIRECTORY

Enabling schools to identify and plan CPD priorities, this directory provides an overview of each video in the phonics training. The training resource and accompanying materials will upskill all staff in the use of high quality inclusive teaching strategies to support the teaching of phonics.

Session 1

Effective assessment

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: Assessment of early reading skills • DfE early years SEND assessment • Pre- key stage standards	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders Governors	2 mins
Video 2: Effective assessment • Removing barriers to assessment • Formative assessment • Developing an individual profile • Whole school approach to assessment		21 mins

Session 2

Foundational skills in reading

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: Developing the foundations in reading • The Simple View of Reading • Listening and understanding skills • Developing talk and explicitly extending vocabulary • Phonics • Fluency • Language comprehension	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders Governors	35 mins

Session 2 Continued

Making adjustments for pupils with learning needs

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 2: Amwell View Foundational phonics skills • Aspect 1: Sound discrimination (environmental) • Aspect 2: Sound discrimination (instrumental) • Aspect 3: Sound discrimination (body percussion) • Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme • Aspect 5: Alliteration • Aspect 6: Voice sounds • Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting • Creating a reading rich environment	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	18 mins

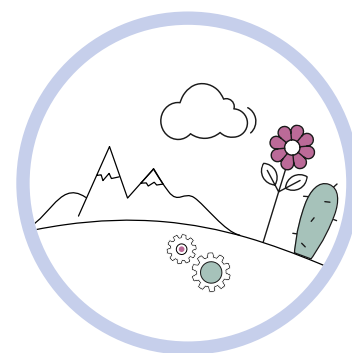
Session 3

Delivering strong phonics teaching in the classroom

You will need to watch the videos in each session and access the relevant resources and practical demonstrations.

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: Explicit instruction of phonics • What is explicit instruction? • Modelling: sound articulation / letter sounds / phoneme frames / adjacent consonants / tricky words • I do, we do, you do • Scaffolding	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders	24 mins
Video 2: Application of phonics in reading • Importance of small group reading • Scaffolding fluent blending • Opportunities to overlearn • Visual and concrete strategies for decoding: stroke the word / taking words apart / connected phonation / finger framing / re-scooping • Executive function prompts	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	15 mins
Video 3: Application of phonics in writing • Scaffolding spelling in writing • Learning tricky words • Best practice: sight words • Co-constructing writing • Scaffolding the spelling process • Scaffolding towards independence • Sentence building		36 mins

Maths: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND



CONTENTS DIRECTORY

Enabling schools to identify and plan CPD priorities, this directory provides an overview of each video in the Maths: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND training. The training will upskill all staff in the use of high quality inclusive teaching strategies as part of ordinarily available provision.

Session 1

Understanding the needs of your pupil

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: SEND in mainstream schools • What is SEND? • Educational rights • Areas of need • Diagnosis – helpful or not?	SENCOs Leaders Teachers TAs/LSAs Governors	9m 25s
Video 2: Creating a learner profile • Case study approach • Determining the educational need • Acting on the educational need	SENCOs Teachers TAs/LSAs	9m 37s
Video 3: Person-centred tools to explore needs • Exploring underlying needs • The Iceberg Analysis Tool • How to complete an Iceberg analysis when exploring need • Other person-centred tools		14m 23s

Session 2

Effective pedagogy to meet pupil needs

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: Introduction • Importance of effective pedagogy • SEND code of practice and high quality teaching for all • How to use the remaining videos in the Section	SENCOs Leaders Teachers Governors Subject leaders	8m 12s
Video 2: Scaffolding • What is scaffolding? • Models for language • Organising concrete resources • Developing recording • The role of the adult in scaffolding	SENCOs Leaders Teachers TAs/LSAs Subject leaders	19m 7s
Video 3: Explicit instruction • What is explicit instruction? • Small carefully planned steps • Importance of small step practice • Using worked examples • Using examples and non-examples • Planning for misconceptions		21m 18s
Video 4: Digital technology Types of technology to support: modelling, practice, gap spotting and teaching		13m 55s
Video 5: Flexible groupings • What is flexible grouping? • How to use flexible grouping successfully • The purpose of groups		
Video 6: Cognition and metacognition • Cognition and cognitive strategies • Use of working walls and scripts • Cognitive overload and how to prevent it • Teacher talk (think aloud) and learning talk • EEF model of metacognition and increasing pupil independence • Metacognition in problem solving		24m 34s

Session 3

Making adjustments for pupils with learning needs

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Video 1: Securing base facts • Knowing base facts • Building recall • Explicit instruction • Important models • Making and practising connections • Using what you know	SENCOs Leaders Teachers TAs/LSAs Subject leaders	11m 26s
Video 2: Developing mathematical language • Common barriers in maths language and vocabulary • Identifying maths vocabulary in a unit of work • Explicit vocabulary instruction • Overlearning opportunities		13m 22s
Video 3: Overlearning and practice in maths • Overlearning and practice • Fading scaffolds • Explicit instruction with practice • Continuing to build learning • Additional practice to embed learning		12m 42s

Session 4

Additional provision to meet pupil learning needs

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Additional provision - maths • Use of structured interventions • Provide sustained practice • Secure independence • Choosing the focus of intervention • Principles of effective maths intervention	SENCOs Leaders Governors Teachers TAs/LSAs Subject leaders	35m 41s

Secondary Science: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND



CONTENTS DIRECTORY

Enabling schools to identify and plan CPD priorities, this directory provides an overview of each video in the [secondary science inclusive strategies training](#). The training will upskill all staff in the use of high quality inclusive teaching strategies as part of ordinarily available provision.

You will need to watch the video 'Knowing the needs of your learners' before choosing the most relevant videos for your setting/staff.

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Knowing the needs of your learners • What is adaptive teaching? • Identify barriers to learning - know the needs of your class • The Iceberg Analysis Tool • Introduction of strategies – a science curriculum toolbox	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders Governors	12m 7s
1 . Explicit Instruction • Modelling • Worked examples • I do, we do, you do • Teaching content in small steps • Explicit vocabulary instruction - The Frayer Model • Planning for misconceptions	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	21m 30s
2 . Metacognition • Four levels of metacognitive learners • Teaching students to plan, monitor and evaluate • Activating prior knowledge • Retrieval • Modelling strategies to overcome challenge		16m 31s
3 . Scaffolding • Visual scaffolds • Graphic organisers • Integrated instructions • Verbal prompts • Written scaffolds		19m 2s

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
4 . Flexible Grouping • Using formative assessment • Planning for group work • Impact of peer support • Scaffolding • Discussion prompts and speaking frames	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	10m 56s
5 . Technology • Enhancing explanations and modelling • Strengthening pupil practice assessment and feedback • Removing barriers to recording and organising ideas		10m 42s

Primary Science: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND



CONTENTS DIRECTORY

Enabling schools to identify and plan CPD priorities, this directory provides an overview of each video in the [primary science inclusive strategies training](#). The training will upskill all staff in the use of high quality inclusive teaching strategies as part of ordinarily available provision.

You will need to watch the video 'Knowing the needs of your learners' before choosing the most relevant videos for your setting/staff.

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
Knowing the needs of your learners • What is adaptive teaching? • Identify barriers to learning - know the needs of your class • The Iceberg Analysis Tool • Introduction of strategies – a science curriculum toolbox	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs Leaders Governors	12m 7s
1 . Explicit Instruction • Teaching content in small steps • Focusing on essential content • Clear and unambiguous language • The Frayer Model - examples and non-examples • Planning for misconceptions • Checking understanding	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	15m 57s
2 . Metacognition • Appropriate challenge • Activating prior knowledge • Planning, monitoring and evaluating • Metacognitive talk • Modelling thinking • Graphic organisers		10m 3s
3 . Scaffolding • Removing stigma • Moving to greater independence • Written scaffolds • Discussion prompts and speaking frames		10m 58s

Title and content	Training suitability	Video length
4 . Flexible Grouping • Planning for group work • Using formative assessment • Impact of peer support • Scaffolding during group work	Subject leaders Teachers SENCOs TAs/LSAs	10m 33s
5 . Technology • Enhancing explanations and modelling • Strengthening pupil practice assessment and feedback • Removing barriers to recording and organising ideas		10m 46s

Top Tips for TAs: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND

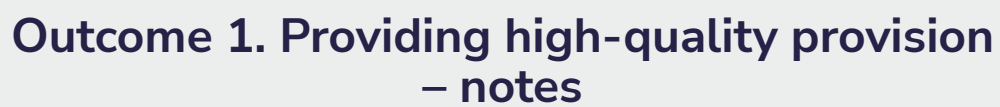


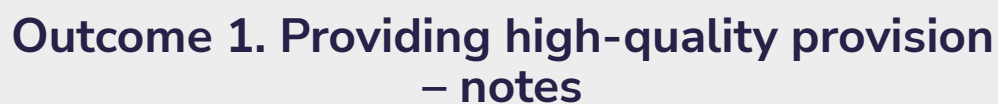
CONTENTS DIRECTORY

Enabling schools to identify and plan CPD priorities, this directory provides an overview of each video in the Top Tips for TAs: Inclusive strategies to support learners with SEND training. The training will upskill teaching assistants in the use of high quality inclusive strategies as part of ordinarily available provision.

Title and content	Video length
Effective questioning in reading • Questioning: The Reading Framework • Authentic questions • Question matrix • How might this look in key stage 1, 2 and 3?	26 minutes
Using Technology to Assist Learners • Why use technology to support the recording of learning? • Dictation in Microsoft Word • Transcribe in Microsoft Word • Dictation in Google Docs: Voice recording • Dictation on iPads • Tips for dictation	21 minutes
Supporting Oracy and Vocabulary Across the Curriculum • Why focus on oracy and vocabulary development? • Frayer Model • Adapting the Frayer Model • Dual coding • Speaking frames	24 minutes
Bringing Calm to the Chaos: Strategies for De-escalation What is the 3R's response? How to implement the 3R's response: • at lunchtimes • in the classroom • in the corridor	20 minutes

Title and content	Video length
Spend Time with Me: Using Interactions to Promote Personalised Learning • Interactions • The learning environment • Spend time together • Daily Practice	22 minutes
Getting the Balance Right: Promoting Independence with the Right Adult Support • Zone of proximal development • What are scaffolds? • A careful balance • Scaffolding framework • An anecdotal example	22 minutes
Using Games in Maths to Secure Number Facts • Why play games in maths? • Ordinarily Available Provision • Playing cards • Incorporating scaffolds • Extending the learning	21 minutes
Seeing Language: Creating Visuals in the Inclusive Classroom • Benefits of visual support • Creating word banks • Pre-teach vocabulary • Stories and literature • Sequencing • Writing scaffolds	20 minutes

This image shows a single page from a notebook or ledger. The page is white with light blue horizontal ruling lines spaced evenly apart. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines. The top edge of the page has rounded corners.





THE HERTFORDSHIRE **SEND TOOLKIT**



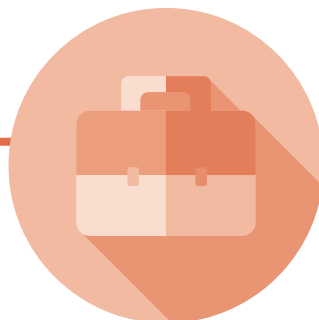
THE HERTFORDSHIRE SEND TOOLKIT

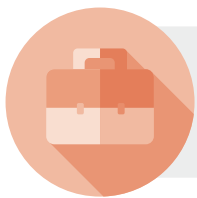


Improving outcomes

Contents:

- Developing outcomes for children and young people
- Attendance - an inclusive approach
- Suspensions and exclusions - an inclusive approach
- Evaluating SEN provision - celebrating strengths and identifying areas for improvement through the SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool





Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

Developing outcomes for children and young people

What is an outcome?

Since the introduction of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, there has been considerable discussion about what outcomes are. An outcome can be described as the result or effect of an action or event.



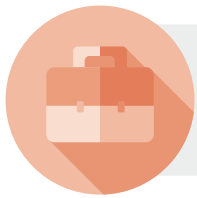
Ref. 9.61
and 9.66

In the first part of this chapter, we are exploring how to develop high-quality outcomes for individual children and young people, and how these differ from aspirations.

- ✓ Aspirations describe what someone wants their life to be like in the long term.
- ✓ Outcomes describe the benefits or differences made to a child or young person over a period of two to three years, or to the end of a phase or key stage. These could include skills learnt to improve educational achievement or develop confidence, raise self-esteem, manage anxiety, and so on.

When starting to agree outcomes with a child or young person and their family, there should be a good understanding of their aspirations, in addition to a clear identification of the child or young person's special educational needs.





Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

A useful starting point is to ask:

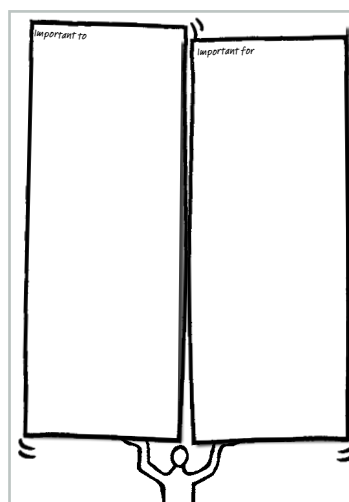
- ✓ the child or young person what they want to be able to do
- ✓ their family what they want to see the child or young person doing
- ✓ other professionals what skills they would like the child or young person to learn

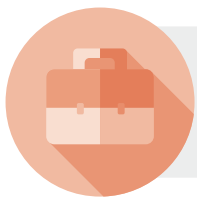


Don't forget to consider:

- ✓ what is important **to** the child or young person
- ✓ what is important **for** the child or young person
- ✓ the child or young person's starting points
- ✓ the child or young person's strengths and barriers to participation and learning

You might want to use the Helen Sanderson Associates' template, "Important to/for", which you can find in the **Tools and references** section.



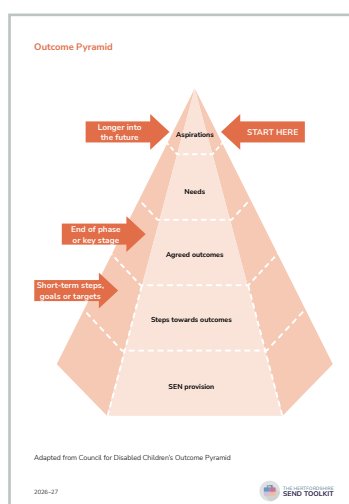


Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

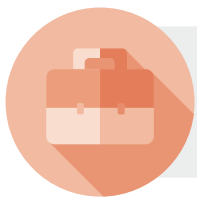
From these starting points, outcomes can be agreed. These will lead conversations allowing for the development of short-term, smaller steps and be the basis on which SEN provision is planned and delivered. An invisible golden thread should weave through the whole process.



Use the Outcome Pyramid tool to help you achieve a coherent approach to developing outcomes and planning provision. A helpful guide for using the Outcome Pyramid is available in the **Tools and references** section.



Children and young people's aspirations set the direction of travel in terms of understanding their needs, setting relevant outcomes and agreeing appropriate provision.



Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

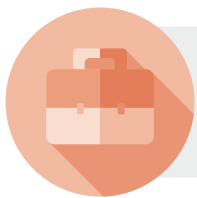
Remember, over time, as outcomes are achieved, a child or young person's aspirations may change. Their needs can change too and, in turn, provision may need to change. A continuing cycle of review is essential. Flexibility may be needed. Consider increasing or decreasing the amount of time required to achieve the outcome. Change the provision, think about what could be done differently. Increase the level of challenge, identify the level of support or degree of independence, for success to be achieved.



REMEMBER

How you stretch, adapt and respond to the changes is crucial to improving outcomes.

For information about how outcomes are integral to the graduated approach, please see the [Providing high-quality provision](#) chapter in the toolkit.



Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

Goal Based Outcomes (GBOs)

How can the GBO approach be introduced in school?

GBOs are intended to be introduced in a phased manner by incorporating them:

- ✓ following an EHCP draft planning meeting to finalise the Plan
- ✓ at or following a child or young person's next Annual Review



In most schools, SENCOs are likely to delegate the setting, monitoring, and reviewing of goals to those working and supporting the child or young person. This information can be fed back to the SENCO who can collate this to assist in informing the Annual Review meeting.



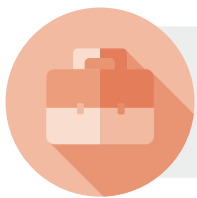
The introduction of the GBO approach may have training implications for school staff. Training materials developed by the Educational Psychology Service have been shared with SENCOs via their DSPL Leads.

What are Goal Based Outcomes?

SENCOs should embed GBOs into the school's existing Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle and record as part of this approach.



This approach places greater emphasis on children and young people and parent/carer involvement in the setting, monitoring, and reviewing of progress against goals. Adopting this approach facilitates a collaborative approach in developing and reviewing progress against outcomes in EHCPs.



Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

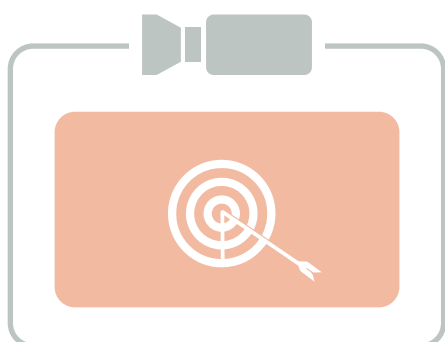
SENCOs recognise the importance of communicating with parents/carers regarding their child's progress or lack of progress against the outcomes in their EHCP throughout the year.

Effectively involving and informing parents/carers can be achieved in different ways by:

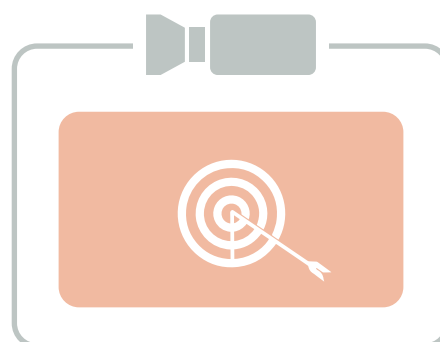
- ✓ having face-to-face meetings
- ✓ using alternative forms of communication such as a telephone call or email communication if deemed sufficient by both parents/carers and school.



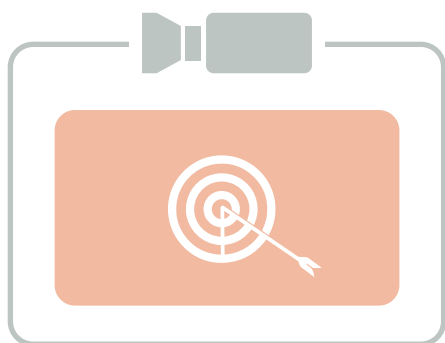
These short video clips available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter will provide a helpful overview of the principles of the GBO approach and its implementation.



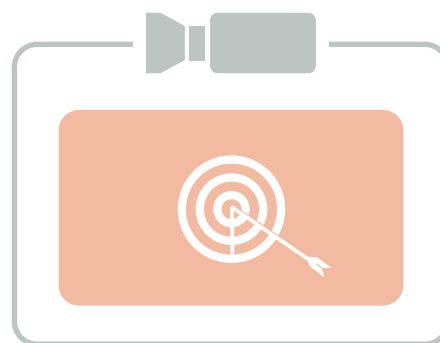
**An introduction to
Goal Based Outcomes**



**Introducing Goals
(Some examples)**



**Scoring Goals and
Behaviour Descriptors**



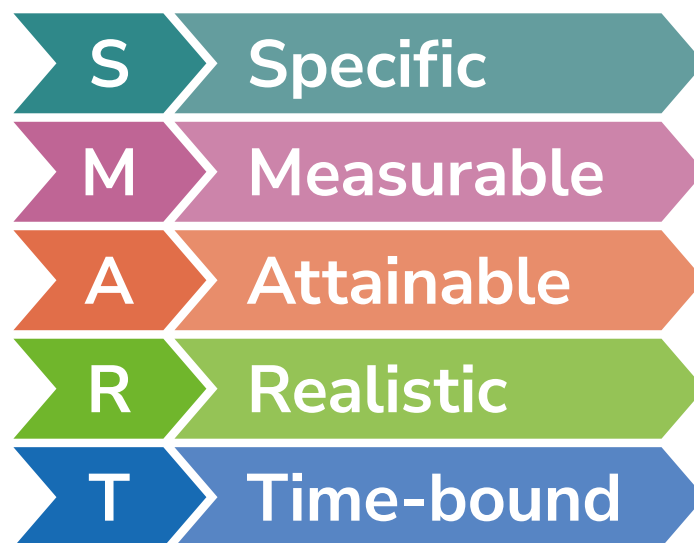
**Monitoring
Progress**



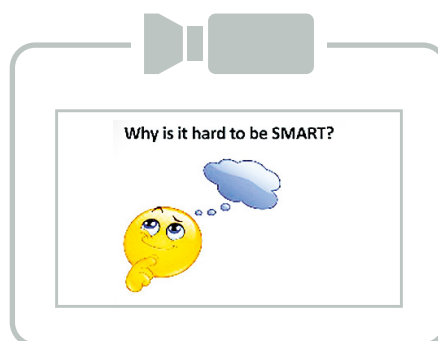
Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

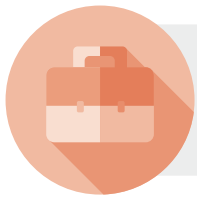
What makes a
high-quality outcome?

High-quality outcomes are SMART.



To explore outcomes in more detail, you may want to watch the video clip: Why is it hard to be SMART? Please see link in the **Tools and references** section.





Outcome 2. Improving outcomes



High-quality outcomes are ...



written in clear, simple and positive language

built on something that is already working well, or changing something that isn't working well



addressing the child or young person's needs

supporting the child or young person to move towards their future aspirations



person-centred

specific to the child or young person



holistic – this may mean working proactively and collaboratively with other professionals

based on setting high, realistic expectations



something everyone can clearly visualise as what success looks like

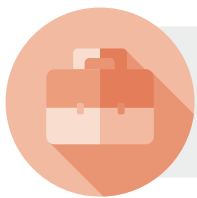
preparing the child or young person for adulthood



SMART

NOT based around provision (provision is what must be provided to meet a child or young person's needs and enables the outcomes to be achieved)

monitored to ensure provision is having an impact on progress and development



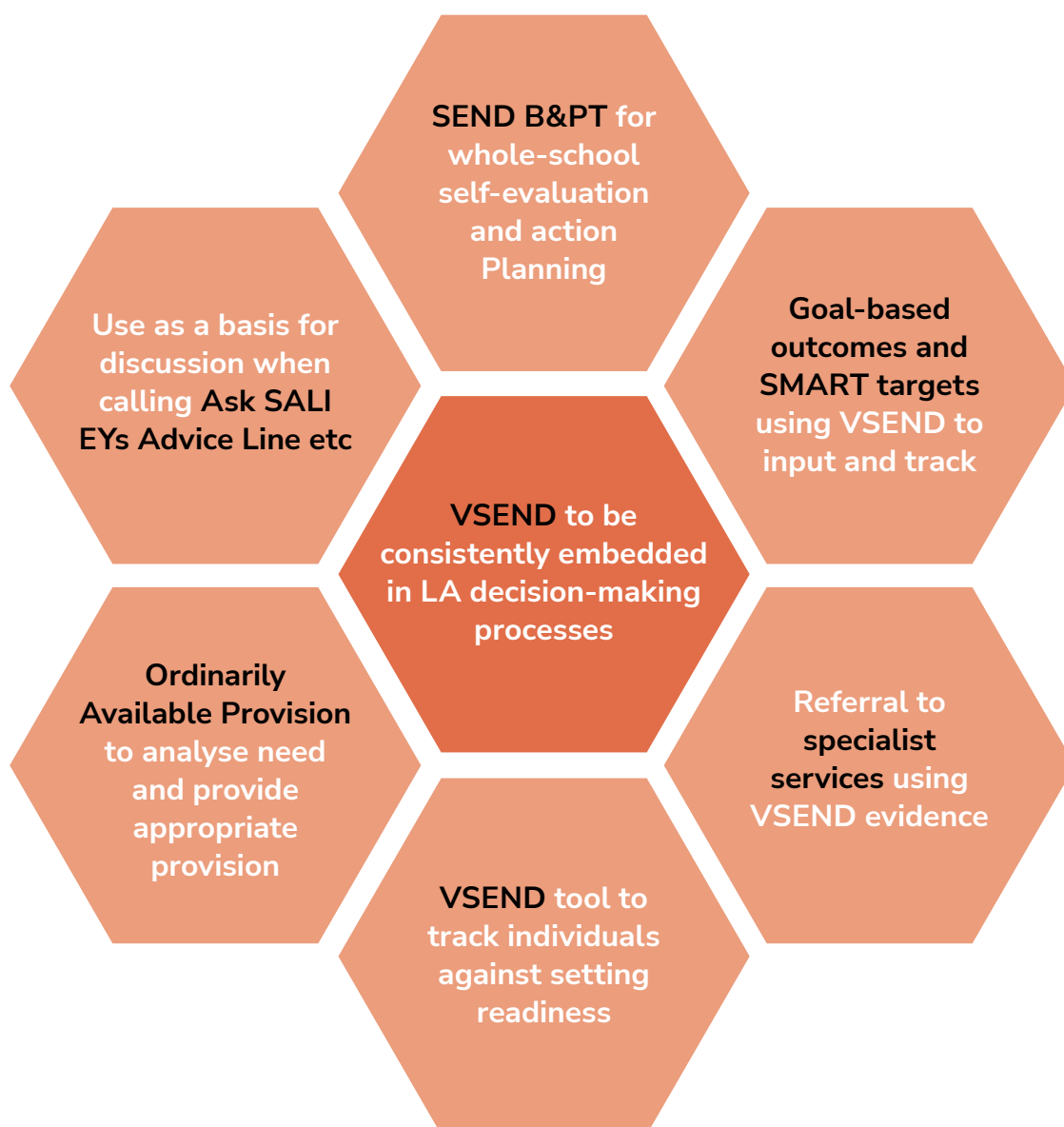
Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

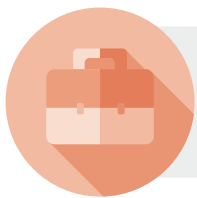
Valuing SEND (VSEND)

As part of SEND Transformation in Hertfordshire, Valuing SEND (VSEND) aims to standardise the approach to identifying needs earlier and improving outcomes for children and young people.



Taking a coordinated approach, Hertfordshire intends to embed VSEND across all its decision-making processes.





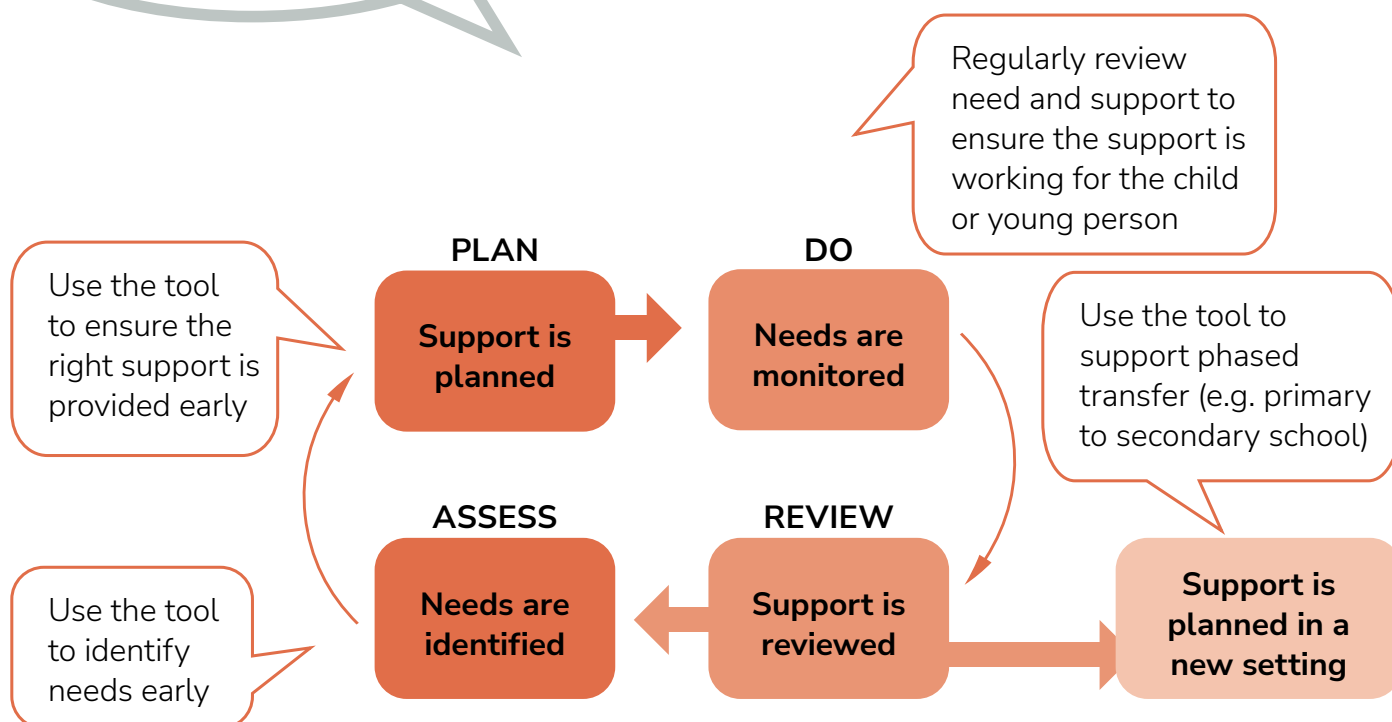
Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

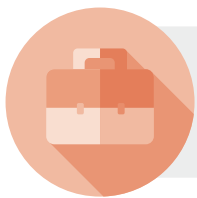
Key benefits from using the VSEND tool and approach include:

- ✓ establishing a common language when describing levels of need and enabling planning of how to meet needs.
- ✓ supporting the work of professionals and promoting collaboration between staff and parents/carers.
- ✓ supporting the child or young person - enabling tracking of progress made and supporting annual review and transition planning
- ✓ enabling settings and professionals to build a peer support network and share best practice and support strategies.
- ✓ supporting settings to identify gaps and areas for further development.



How and when should a SENCO use VSEND?

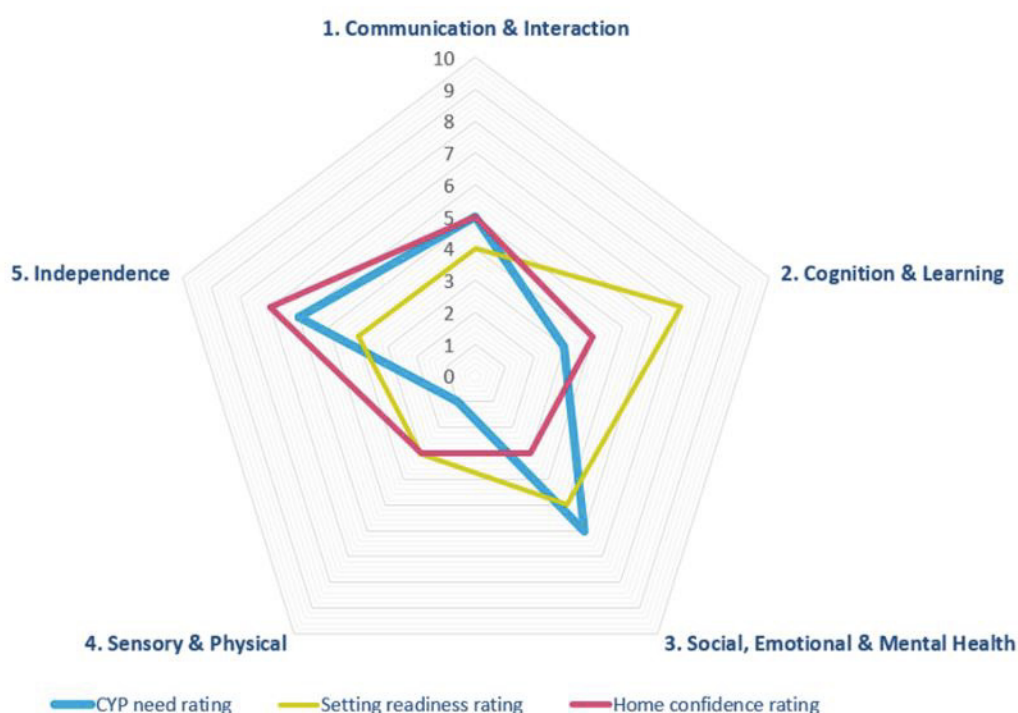




Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

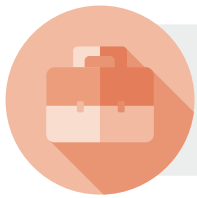
The VSEND tool produces a helpful 'at a glance' radar chart which maps:

- A **child or young person's** needs across five key domains
- The **readiness of the educational setting** to meet needs across the five domains
- The **confidence of the home environment** to meet needs across the five domains. Schools have found it helpful when parents/carers have shared tools and techniques that work in the home with them to support their child's in-school learning and vice-versa



If you have any questions or queries, please contact:
vsend@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Please see the links in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter for further information about the VSEND tool and training opportunities.



Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

Consistent use of the tool will also provide a clear picture of how needs change over time for the setting as a whole and can be used to support a range of school improvement activities.



To track a learner with emerging needs over time and see whether they have SEND



To support the coaching of staff or CPD



To facilitate discussion with a parent



For transition between settings



As part of the school's Assess, Plan, Do, Review tracker and updated termly



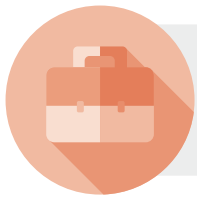
For support staff to log and track the intervention/s they are using with an individual (or a group)



To provide evidence for discussion with advisory teachers, for FIF, for provision panel, or as part of a request for an EHCNA



To produce reports and case studies for senior leaders, governors, inspections, staff meetings.



Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

As part of the SEND reform programme, one of the seven principles of inclusion is: a safe and respectful culture fostering belonging, attendance, and participation in learning. This means that all pupils should feel safe, respected and develop a sense of belonging to ensure engagement and improved behaviour and attendance outcomes.



Identifying and addressing barriers to attendance

School attendance is vital for children and young people's learning, wellbeing and wider development - being in school every day helps them stay connected to learning, their peers and the wider life of the school.



Regular attendance promotes a sense of belonging, provides a stable routine and access to opportunities that support personal, social and academic development.

When attendance declines, children and young people are more likely to experience reduced progress, increased vulnerability and poorer long-term outcomes, including an increased risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

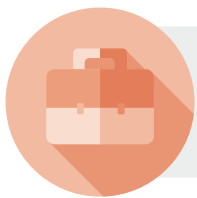


Since the pandemic, school absence rates have risen with DfE data showing that children and young people with SEND experience significantly higher rates of overall, persistent, and severe absence compared to their peers, with a widening attendance gap over time.

By taking an inclusive approach to attendance, SENCOs and leaders can use a combination of actions including:

- robust data analysis to help identify barriers
- implementation of reasonable adjustments and targeted provision to show improvements over time

DfE guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, emphasises that attendance is not a standalone issue but is closely linked to children and young people's welfare, inclusion and access



Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

to education. It recognises that some children and young people with SEND face greater barriers to attending school, but their right to a full-time education and the ambition for good attendance should be the same as for all children and young people.

Schools should provide additional support and reasonable adjustments where SEND-related barriers affect attendance such as:

- working with parents/carers to develop specific attendance support plans
- identifying practical changes that may remove barriers
- making reasonable adjustments to policy and practice such as adjustments to uniform expectations, daily routines or lunchtime arrangements
- ensuring any provision set out in an EHCP is being accessed

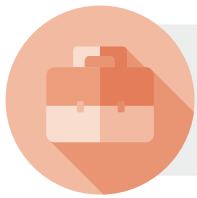
For those experiencing complex barriers to attendance, school leaders should engage in compassionate discussions with both children and young people and their families, collaborating to provide targeted support that meets their specific needs.

SENCOs should ensure that attendance is considered as part of the wider SEND, pastoral, behaviour and wellbeing agenda, rather than being viewed solely as an attendance matter.

By coordinating support, removing in-school barriers and maintaining high aspirations for attendance, SENCOs can play a vital role in ensuring that children and young people with SEND are able to access their education consistently and successfully.

Links to DfE guidance and information and support from the local authority is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





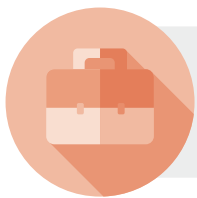
Outcome 2. Improving outcomes



SENCOs should take an inclusive approach to attendance:

- routinely analyse individual attendance data to identify not simply who is absent, but to understand why children and young people with SEND are struggling to attend
- ensure early intervention is taken and reasonable adjustments are in place before absence becomes persistent or severe
- explore attendance data for cohorts to identify patterns, trends and barriers to attendance, and consider what support may be needed
- use attendance data not only to identify concerns but also to measure whether support is working
- consider if whole-school systems and processes are sensitive to children and young people with additional needs such as SEND
- ensure the school's transition arrangements help children and young people, especially those with SEND to feel they belong before they even join the school
- work in partnership with families, clearly communicating attendance expectations and processes while also making them aware of the support available and how to access it especially at key risk points or when attendance begins to dip
- collaborate with other professional including local authority teams, mental health support teams and other relevant agencies when children and young people require support beyond what the school can provide alone.





Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

Suspensions and exclusions: key considerations

The DfE's Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance makes clear that children and young people with SEND are disproportionately represented in exclusion statistics and that schools must carefully consider whether a child or young person's behaviour is linked to an unmet need, disability-related behaviours, or safeguarding concerns.



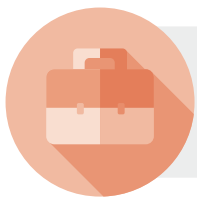
By taking an early intervention, graduated, and inclusive approach to behaviour, school leaders should consider whether appropriate assessments, support strategies and reasonable adjustments have been put in place, and whether additional action could prevent a suspension or exclusion. The guidance emphasises that exclusion should not be used because a school has failed to meet a child or young person's SEND needs or to make the reasonable adjustments required under the Equality Act 2010.

For children and young people with SEND, school leaders should be able to demonstrate that support and reasonable adjustments have been implemented and reviewed.

SENCOs should be actively involved in:

- identifying barriers to learning and participation
- ensuring that the graduated response is clearly evidenced
- maintaining clear records of provision
- working with parents/carers and wider professionals to review the impact of support

Robust evidence can help schools demonstrate that they have taken appropriate action, identify where further support is required instead of exclusion and show improvements over time.



Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

SENCOs should take a key role in:

- working strategically with school leaders to develop inclusive practice
- understanding the reasonable adjustment duty
- ensuring that behaviour is understood through the lens of SEND
- providing training so that all staff can recognise when behaviour may be a form of communication, a response to unmet needs, sensory difficulties, anxiety, communication differences or other underlying factors
- using exclusion and suspension data to identify patterns and vulnerable groups, challenging any disproportionate use of exclusion for children and young people with SEND
- working in partnership with families and other professionals

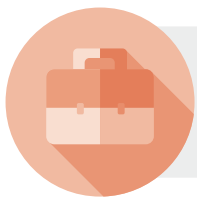
For pupils with an EHCP, the guidance expects schools to consider whether the provision specified in the plan is being delivered and remains appropriate. Where exclusion is being considered, SENCOs should review whether an emergency annual review may be necessary, whether the child or young person's needs have changed, and whether additional specialist support is required. They should also ensure that local authorities are involved appropriately and that families understand their rights throughout the process. Exclusion should prompt careful reflection on whether the current provision is meeting the pupil's needs.



The overarching message is that while suspension and exclusion remain lawful sanctions, SEND considerations should be embedded at every stage of the decision-making process with school leaders able to demonstrate that statutory duties towards children and young people with SEND have been fully considered.

Links to DfE statutory guidance and information and support from the local authority is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 2. Improving outcomes

Evaluating SEN provision - celebrating strengths and identifying areas for improvement through the SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool

The Hertfordshire SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool has been developed to give schools a framework for discussion about their policy and provision for children and young people with SEND.

Hertfordshire schools should be using this as part of a collaborative, solution-focused approach, through which they can evaluate and identify strengths in their practice and plan next steps.



The screenshot shows the title page of the 'Hertfordshire Schools' SEND Benchmark and Planning Tool'. It includes a 'School Name' field with a link to enter text. Below this, it states the tool's purpose: 'This innovative tool will provide Hertfordshire schools with a framework for discussion about their policy and provision for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND). This is set within the statutory guidance of the SEND Regulations 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015.' It also mentions a collaborative, solution-focused approach. A section titled 'The Benchmark and Planning Tool has been developed to help schools:' lists four bullet points: 'Work with children and young people with SEND, their families and colleagues within and beyond the school to identify current practice using a "best-fit" model', 'Strengthen their knowledge and understanding through the use of incremental statements', 'Plan manageable next steps towards exemplary practice', and 'Explore practice within the five outcomes from the Hertfordshire SEND Quality Offer'. There is a 'Key dates:' section with a large empty box for input. At the bottom, there are logos for DSPL (Delivering Special Provision Locally), 0-25 integration, SEND Strategy (Shaping the Future of SEND in Hertfordshire), and the Hertfordshire logo.

Under Ofsted's inspection framework, inclusion is a dedicated, standalone evaluation area and a core thread running through every part of an inspection.

Inspectors evaluate the extent to which schools identify and support vulnerable children and young people, including those with SEND.

Knowing your own school's strengths and areas for development can support SENCOs when preparing for an inspection.

The Hertfordshire SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter, along with helpful guidance on how to use it.





Outcome 2. Improving outcomes



Tools and references

Tools:

Important to/for handout

Outcome Pyramid and guidance

Valuing SEND: At-A-Glance

Hertfordshire SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool

How to use the SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool

Useful references:

- Helen Sanderson Associates – sorting important to/for
<https://www.helensandersonassociates.com/person-centered-thinking-tools/>
- School inspection: toolkit, operating guides and information
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-toolkit-operating-guide-and-information>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- Why is it hard to be SMART?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6rBkVpCnqc>





Outcome 2. Improving outcomes



Tools and references

- Valuing SEND (VSEND) resources and training:
<https://thegrid.org.uk/send-and-additional-needs/senco-tools-and-resources/vsend-valuing-send>
- Hertfordshire's Attendance information including a model attendance policy template and guidance about part-time timetables, emotionally based school non-attendance, elective home education and flexi-schooling
<https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/attendance-guidance>
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance, DfE
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
- Hertfordshire Grid for Learning: exclusions information and guidance
<https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/exclusions>
- Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, DfE statutory guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions>

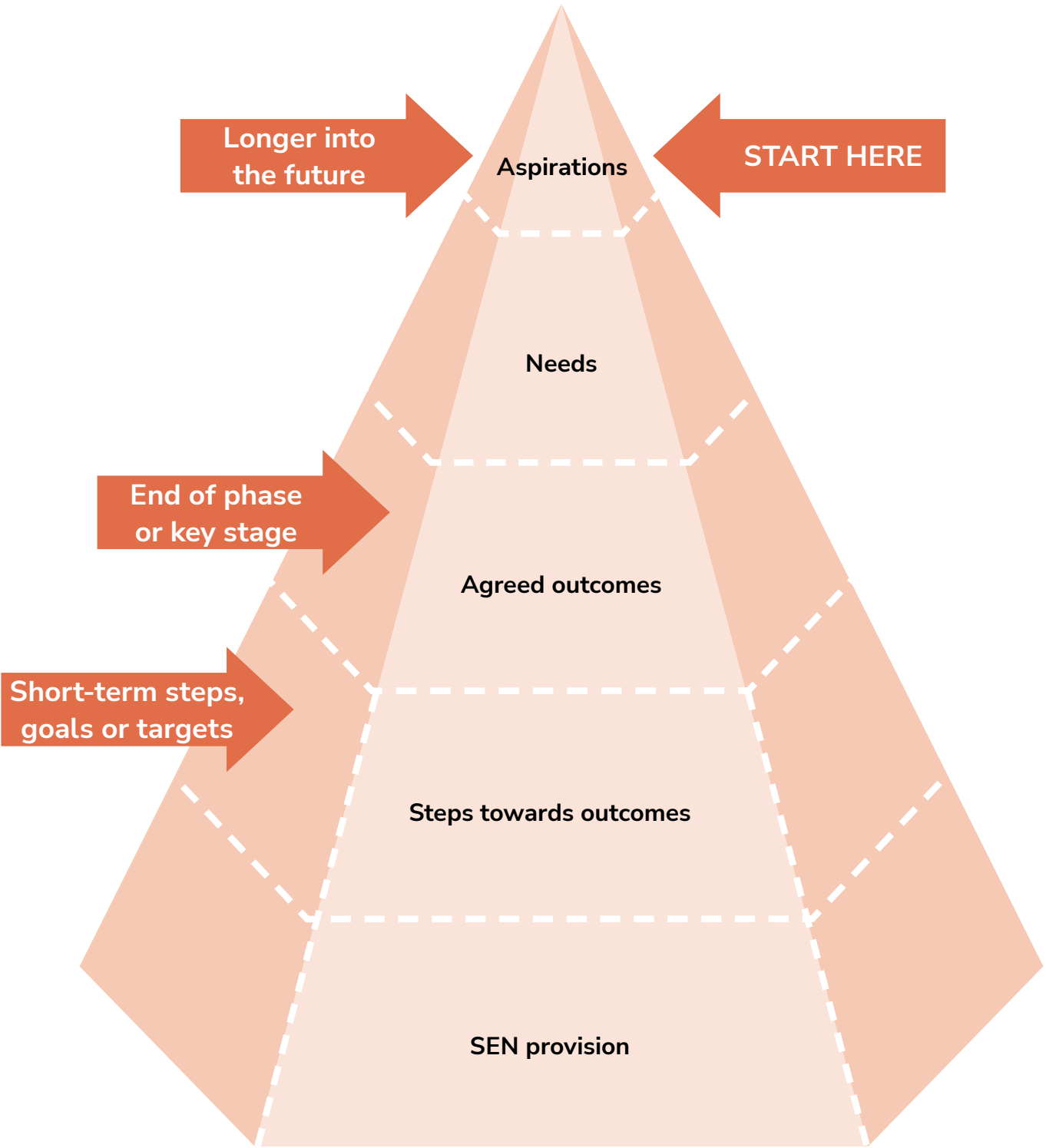


Important to

Important for

Template: Helen Sanderson Associates

Outcome Pyramid



Adapted from Council for Disabled Children’s Outcome Pyramid



Using the Outcomes Pyramid

- ✓ With the focus on one particular child or young person, start to gather information to complete the pyramid. The information should come from conversations with the child or young person and their family. For example, it could emerge from the process of developing a one-page profile or completing an Iceberg Analysis.
- ✓ It may be helpful to gather the views of other professionals working with the child or young person and their family at this point.
- ✓ Using the Outcomes Pyramid sheet, jot down words and phrases that capture the aspirations of the child or young person and their family. Then work down the pyramid, taking each level in turn, completing the provision section last.
- ✓ Be clear about who the aspirations have come from and reflect this in how the information is recorded.
- ✓ The needs section may develop as your knowledge and understanding of the child or young person increases, or when further advice and information is received from other professionals.
- ✓ The timescale for the achievement of desired outcomes may be several years ahead or the end of a phase or key stage. As they emerge from the conversation, they may not be SMART. They can be specified more precisely or “SMARTened up” at a later stage.
- ✓ The provision section should be completed last. This should describe the provision in place to meet the identified needs and lead to the achievement of the steps towards the outcomes.
- ✓ Arrangements for setting the short-term steps should be described in the school’s SEND policy and SEN information report. The short-term steps might be achieved in a few weeks, a half-term or term. These should form part of the separate written plan agreed with the family, as part of the assess, plan, do review cycle.



USING VALUING SEND (VSEND): AT-A-GLANCE

Supporting inclusion through solution-focused, person-centred tools, strengthening provision, building an understanding of need, and enabling engagement with families



SETTING READINESS

1. Exploring provision: Settings rate their readiness to meet need across the four broad areas of need and independence. Completed by SENCOs with the Senior Leadership Team to identify strengths and areas for development.



NEEDS DESCRIPTORS

2. Building a holistic understanding of a young person: Settings use a range of information to create a student profile across the four broad areas of need and independence. Completed by SENCOs and other practitioners who know the child or young person well as part of the graduated approach.



HOME CONFIDENCE

3. Understanding parent/carer confidence: In a supportive conversation with the SENCO or other practitioners, parents/carers use prompts to describe how confident they feel about meeting their child's needs at home.

Hertfordshire Schools' SEND Benchmark and Planning Tool

School Name:

Click or tap here to enter text.

This innovative tool will provide Hertfordshire schools with a framework for discussion about their policy and provision for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND). This is set within the statutory guidance of the SEND Regulations 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015.

Using a collaborative, solution-focused approach, schools can identify strengths in current practice and plan next steps.

The Benchmark and Planning Tool has been developed to help schools:

- Work with children and young people with SEND, their families and colleagues within and beyond the school to identify current practice using a 'best-fit' model
- Strengthen their knowledge and understanding through the use of incremental statements
- Plan manageable next steps towards exemplary practice
- Explore practice within the five outcomes from the Hertfordshire SEND Quality Offer

Key dates:



Who has been involved in the Benchmarking and Planning activity?

☐ Head Teacher	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
☐ SENCO	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
☐ Senior Leader	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
☐ Governor	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
☐ Parent / Carer	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
☐ Other Professionals	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
☐ Children and young people	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
☐ Other Role	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
Role: Click here to enter text.	Name: Click here to enter text.	Date: Click here to enter text.
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The Schools' Statutory Checklist (SEND Regulations 2014 and SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years 2015) <i>In this section, consider carefully whether your school meets the statutory requirements outlined below and could demonstrate this through evidence.</i> Schools must:		YES	NO
Have regard to the principles underpinning the code of practice to ensure the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents, are central to achieving the best possible educational and other outcomes (1.1)		☐	☐
Use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with special educational needs gets the support required		☐	☐
Appoint a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who must be a qualified teacher working at the school. A new-to-role SENCO must achieve the National Award for SEN Coordination within three years of appointment (6.89). <i>This applies to all mainstream schools, academies and free schools but not to 16 – 19 academies</i>		☐	☐
Take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required to meet those needs. (5.11 and 6.11)		☐	☐
Publish and update at least annually the SEN information report (6.79)		☐	☐
Publish their arrangements for admission for disabled children, the reasonable adjustments being made 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 over time		☐	☐
Co-operate with the local authority in the Education, Health and Care plan review process (6.56)		☐	☐
Co-operate with the local authority in reviewing the provision that is available locally (Chapter 3) and in developing the Local Offer (Chapter 4)		☐	☐
Inform parents when they are making special educational provision for their child (6.43)		☐	☐

Outcome 1:

Providing high quality provision that meets the needs of children and young people with SEND

Consider the following questions for each section: 1. What do you have in place? 2. How well does it work? What difference does it make? 3. How do you know? What evidence do you have to support this view? 4. Next steps			
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
a. Use of effective differentiation is inconsistent across the school. b. Senior leaders review the quality of teaching for all children and young people, with only limited evidence of a focus on children and young people with SEND.	a. High quality teaching is regularly differentiated, personalised and responsive to the views and experiences of children and young people with SEND. b. The SENCO, with senior leaders, regularly and carefully reviews the quality of teaching for children and young people with SEND and gives developmental feedback to staff.	a. High quality teaching is always differentiated, personalised and responsive to the views and experiences of children and young people with SEND and improves outcomes and progress. b. The SENCO, with senior leaders, reviews the quality of teaching for children and young people with SEND and responds with a range of practical and strategic actions to improve outcomes and progress.	

c. The culture for learning is limited in its inclusivity. There is some understanding of the four broad areas of need.	c. The culture for learning is responsive to the needs of all children and young people. The inter-relationship between the four broad areas of need is fully understood by teachers and informs practice.	c. The culture for learning is dynamic, reflective and responsive to the needs of all children and young people. It is informed by a consistently high level of understanding about the inter-relationship between the four broad areas of need and improves outcomes and progress.
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary
d. Children and young people with SEND and their families are usually included in the life of the school, including some extra-curricular activities.	d. Children and young people with SEND and their families are fully included in the life of the school, including extra-curricular activities.	d. Children and young people with SEND and their families are active partners in all aspects of school life, including extra-curricular activities.
e. There is limited evidence of joined-up provision within school, and from services beyond school, to meet the particular needs of children and young people with SEND, including those in specific circumstances.	e. Joined-up provision within school, and from services beyond school, meets the particular needs of children and young people with SEND, including those in specific circumstances. It is clearly evidenced and effectively promotes educational achievement.	e. Joined-up provision within school, and from services beyond school, meets the particular needs of children and young people with SEND, including those in specific circumstances. It is embedded, consistent and leads to improved outcomes and progress.
Evidence to support judgement		



SEND Strategy
Shaping the Future of
SEND in Hertfordshire

Page 5
24 February 2017



DSPL | Delivering Special
Provision Locally
Achieving quality outcomes





Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
f. The approach to identifying SEN at the earliest point lacks clarity and consistency. g. The use of the graduated approach in the form of a four-part cycle is inconsistent. h. Parent/carers are informed if their child is identified with SEN.	f. A clear consistent, approach to identifying SEN at the earliest point using a range of information which is understood by all, is in place and detailed on the school's SEN information report. g. All school staff understand and use the graduated approach, in the form of a four-part cycle through which decisions and actions are made, revisited, refined and revised. h. Parent/carers are consulted as part of the approach to the identification of SEN.	f. The school has developed in partnership with children and young people, families and others, a clear approach to identifying SEN at the earliest point. This is actively promoted through the school's SEN information report. g. The four-part cycle of the graduated approach demonstrates strong collaboration through which decisions and actions are made, revisited, refined and revised. h. Parent/carers' views are actively sought and used to embed choice and decision making as part of the approach to the identification of SEN.	
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
i. Barriers to learning are recognised. SEN provision is in place, but delivered inconsistently. j. Reasonable adjustments, to enable access to the curriculum and learning environments, are in evidence across parts of the school.	i. Action is taken to remove barriers to learning at the earliest point. Effective SEN provision is put in place. j. Reasonable adjustments are used effectively to ensure access to the curriculum and learning environment.	i. Anticipatory and responsive action is taken to rapidly remove barriers to learning. High quality SEN provision is in place. j. Reasonable adjustments are embedded in every aspect of school life.	

k. Parent/carers are informed when provision is put in place to remove barriers to learning and when reasonable adjustments are made.	k. Parent/carers are consulted about any provision to be put in place to remove barriers to learning and when reasonable adjustments are required.	k. Parent/carers' views are actively sought and used to embed choice and decision making as part of the approach to removing barriers to learning or making reasonable adjustments.
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary
l. A current provision map is in place recording an overview of interventions. There is limited analysis and monitoring of outcomes. m. The SENCO determines the development of SEND policy and provision.	l. All teachers are involved in provision mapping and management, and use it to monitor and analyse impact of provision on outcomes and progress. m. The SENCO, working with the SLT, and governing body, determines the development of SEND policy and provision.	l. Provision mapping and management is used strategically. It contributes to school improvement by identifying particular patterns of need and potential areas of development. The most effective approaches are adopted widely across the school and ensure good outcomes and progress. m. The SENCO, working with the SLT and governing body, determines the strategic development of SEND policy and provision.
Evidence to support judgement		



Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
n. Information about special educational provision and outcomes is recorded and linked to whole school systems in a limited way. o. The SENCO plans some professional development to develop a basic awareness for all staff working regularly with children and young people with SEND.	n. The effectiveness of special educational provision is evaluated by the SENCO, working with senior leaders, using a range of information normally available in school. o. The SENCO, working with senior leaders, plans a comprehensive programme of professional development for all staff working regularly with children and young people with SEND, to ensure enhanced expertise is secured.	n. A range of information normally available in school is evaluated rigorously by the SENCO, working with senior leaders, to ensure high quality provision resulting in good outcomes and progress. o. The SENCO, working with senior leaders, strategically plans professional development for all staff working regularly with children and young people with SEND, to ensure enhanced expertise is secured. The impact of training is clearly measured and evidenced.	
Notes			
Actions •			

Outcome 2:

Improving short and long term outcomes for children and young people with SEND

Consider the following questions for each section:		
1. What do you have in place? 2. How well does it work? What difference does it make? 3. How do you know? What evidence do you have to support this view? 4. Next steps		
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary
a. Teachers have an awareness of the needs of children and young people with SEND and there is some evidence of the use of differentiation to support them. b. Some teachers take responsibility for the progress and development of children and young people with SEND. c. Impact of support from teaching assistants or specialist staff is unclear.	a. Teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of children and young people with SEND. They use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage, support and promote good outcomes and progress. b. All teachers take responsibility and are accountable for the progress and development of children and young people with SEND. c. Teachers take responsibility for the impact of support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.	a. All staff have a very good understanding of the needs of children and young people with SEND. High expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge ensure good outcomes and progress. b. All staff are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of children and young people with SEND. c. Teachers maximise the impact of support from teaching assistants or specialist staff and can evidence the effectiveness on outcomes and progress.
Evidence to support judgement		



Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
d. Systems to track progress and measure outcomes are in place. They lack consistency and are not well integrated in to whole school assessment policy and practice. e. There is some understanding of the graduated approach but its use across the school is inconsistent. f. Feedback to teachers focused on improving teaching and learning for children and young people with SEND is ad hoc with limited evidence of impact.	d. Outcomes and progress for children and young people with SEND are monitored and evaluated through a range of effective whole school systems and are clearly understood by children and young people and their families. e. There is clarity between teachers of how the graduated approach promotes good outcomes and progress. Opportunities to make decisions with children and young people and their families are included. f. Effective feedback, provided to teachers over time, improves teaching and learning for children and young people with SEND.	d. Outcomes and progress for children and young people with SEND are robustly monitored, evaluated and shared widely through a range of channels that are both accessible and effective. e. A fully embedded graduated approach demonstrating active participation of teachers, children and young people and their families leads to good progress and outcomes. f. A continuous cycle of effective feedback, collaborative working and solution-focused activities improve teaching and learning for children and young people with SEND.	
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
g. Teachers have some awareness of how to reduce anxiety and promote good mental health, but this requires further development for children and young people with SEND.	g. All teachers have an enhanced understanding of how to reduce anxiety and promote good mental health for children and young people with SEND and there is evidence of impact.	g. Knowledge and understanding of how to reduce anxiety and promote good mental health for children and young people is embedded and applied appropriately by all staff and makes a positive difference to children and young people with SEND.	

h. There is some provision in place for listening to the views of children and young people with SEND but this is applied inconsistently with little evidence of how this informs practice.	h. There are a range of person-centred approaches in place for listening and responding to the views of children and young people with SEND.	h. Children and young people and their families contribute to the development of person-centred approaches used within the school. All staff actively listen and respond to the views of children and young people with SEND and encourage collaborative partnership working.
i. Some teachers understand the heightened risk for children and young people with SEND in regard to bullying. There is little evidence of how this knowledge is used across the school to safeguard children.	i. Teachers understand the heightened risk of children and young people with SEND in regard to bullying. This knowledge is used effectively to safeguard children and prevent or resolve issues.	i. All staff understand the heightened risk of children and young people with SEND in regard to bullying. This knowledge results in whole school approaches to prevention and resolution.
Notes		
Actions		
•		





Outcome 3:

Communicating sensitively, appropriately and effectively with parents, children and young people with SEND. Engendering trust, confidence, respect and a constructive partnership working.

Consider the following questions for each section:			
1. What do you have in place?			
2. How well does it work? What difference does it make?			
3. How do you know? What evidence do you have to support this view?			
4. Next steps			
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
a. Children and young people, and their families, have limited participation in decision making and co-ownership of desired outcomes. b. There are inconsistent notes from meetings or insufficient focus on how desired outcomes can be achieved.	a. Teachers ensure that children and young people, and their families, participate in decision making and have a sense of co-ownership of desired outcomes. b. A record of the desired outcomes, actions and provision is kept and shared with children and young people with SEND, their families and appropriate school staff.	a. All staff ensure children and young people, and their families, are informed and well supported in understanding choices. This enables them to participate in decision making and have co-ownership of desired outcomes. b. Records from meetings are jointly developed, agreed and shared with children and young people with SEND, their families and appropriate school staff.	

c. Whole school systems to meet with parent/carers are in place but there is no adjustment for families of children with SEND.	c. There are arrangements to meet with parent/carers at least three times each year, allowing sufficient time to explore the views of children and young people with SEND and their families and to plan effectively. Discussions are led by a teacher with good knowledge and understanding of the pupil and who is aware of their needs and attainment.	c. Arrangements are made to meet with parent/carers at least three times each year, allowing sufficient time to explore the views of children and young people with SEND and their families. This is promoted and evaluated. All teachers are supported and trained to manage these conversations as part of professional development.
d. There are limited opportunities to capture and explore the level of parental confidence about the school's provision and practice for children and young people with SEND	d. There are effective opportunities to capture and explore the level of parental confidence about the school's provision and practice for children and young people with SEND. These are understood and used by teachers across the school.	d. The opportunities to capture and explore the level of parental confidence about the school's provision and practice for children and young people with SEND are consistently applied across the school and gathered, analysed and used to inform developments in practice.
Notes		
Actions		
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Outcome 4:

Managing resources for SEN through a transparent approach that is fair, meets the needs of children and young people with SEND and achieves best value for money

Consider the following questions for each section: 1. What do you have in place? 2. How well does it work? What difference does it make? 3. How do you know? What evidence do you have to support this view? 4. Next steps			
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
a. There is inconsistent knowledge by leaders and governors of how resources, including funding, are used to improve outcomes and progress for children and young people with SEND. b. The school has a provision map.	a. Leaders and governors regularly review how expertise and resources are used to improve outcomes and progress for children and young people with SEND and improve the quality of whole-school provision. b. Provision management is used to evaluate the impact of provision on outcomes and progress. Provision management contributes to school improvement by identifying particular patterns of need and potential areas of development for teaching staff.	a. Leaders and governors regularly review and evaluate how expertise and resources are used to improve outcomes and progress for children and young people with SEND and improve the quality of whole-school provision. Value for money principles form a central part of discussions. b. Provision management systematically and consistently demonstrates the impact of provision on outcomes and progress. Provision management is central to school improvement and value for money principles are in place.	

c. It is unclear how the school uses its delegated budget and other resources for SEND to improve outcomes and progress.	c. The school's delegated budget and other resources are used efficiently and effectively to promote good outcomes and progress.	c. There is transparent use of the school's delegated budget and other resources. School leaders and governors collaborate to review and evaluate impact. There is evidence of good outcomes and progress.	
Notes			
Actions			
•			



Outcome 5:

Working proactively and collaboratively to improve provision

Consider the following questions for each section:			1. What do you have in place? 2. How well does it work? What difference does it make? 3. How do you know? What evidence do you have to support this view? 4. Next steps
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
a. There is a limited knowledge of services available from education, health, social care and voluntary services for children and young people with SEND.	a. There is evidence of proactive and collaborative working practices with professionals from education, health, social care and voluntary services for children and young people with SEND.	a. There is evidence of strong working relationships with professionals from education, health, social care and voluntary services for children and young people with SEND leading to a joint understanding of expected outcomes and analysis of impact and next steps	
Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
b. Systems for transitions within school, between schools and in preparation for adulthood are limited. There is a lack of evidence of person-centred approaches.	b. Systems for transitions within school, between schools and in preparation for adulthood are secure. Relevant adjustments, person-centred approaches and collaboration between children and young people and their families is clearly evident.	b. Systems for transitions within school, between schools and in preparation for adulthood are robust and effective and use person-centred approaches. There is evidence children and young people feel safe and supported, and settle quickly to continue their journey.	

Emerging	Expected	Exemplary	Evidence to support judgement
c. The SEN information report is published on the website. However staff in the school lack knowledge about its content. It is updated but the principles of co-production are not embedded.	c. The SEN information report is published on the website, updated annually and made increasingly accessible to children and young people and their families through well-embedded co-production. Teachers are aware of its content.	c. The SEN information report is published on the website, updated annually and made increasingly accessible to children and young people and their families through well-embedded co-production. All staff are knowledgeable about its content and this is reflected in consistent practices across the school.	
Notes			
Actions			
•			



Action Plan

Target - the overarching aim: (What do we want to achieve?)	Actions: (What actions need to be taken to achieve the overarching aim?)	Person/s responsible:	Resources required: (Time, cost, materials, etc.)	Evaluation - evidence of success and impact:	Date completed:
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How to Use the SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool

Getting started

Familiarise yourself with each outcome in the Hertfordshire SEND Quality Offer and the incremental statements in the Benchmark & Planning Tool.

Effective school self-evaluation is achieved through a collaborative process. Consider who will be involved. As a minimum the SENCO, a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) and a governor should complete the exercise. Other people to consider including in the discussion are suggested on page 2 of the Benchmark & Planning Tool.

Consider how best to include children and young people with SEND and their families in the process.

Plan some time to work together to complete the framework.



Collecting information

Before you begin the process, gather up a range of documents and useful information that can help you come to a decision about the best-fit judgement for each statement. This should include: relevant school policies, accessibility plan, SEN information report, achievement data, most recent Ofsted inspection report and SEND development plan.

Feedback from other professionals, children and young people with SEND and their families will help you compare their experience of your provision with the school's own self-evaluation against the statements, and so strengthen your review process.



Evaluating provision

Make a step-by-step evaluation of your existing provision for children and young people with SEND against each of the incremental statements.

Use the four key questions at the start of each section to support your discussion.

Highlight your best-fit judgement for every element.

Jot any notes, evidence to support your decisions and actions in the spaces provided.

Make sure all the sections are completed and plan a date for review.

Once your analysis is complete, make a list of all the statements where you have classed your provision as “emerging”. This list will highlight the priority areas for development that will form the basis for your action planning.



Taking action



Plan actions arising from your self-evaluation. To help you develop effective improvement measures, you could refer to the supporting resources in the Hertfordshire SEND Toolkit, see how other schools have addressed the issue or seek advice from other professionals in ISL.

Once you have identified your action points, assign these to individuals for action and include completion/review dates. Prioritise actions that will have the most benefit. You may want to set measures for evaluating success.

Disseminate your findings and action plan to the senior leadership team, the whole staff, and governors. You may wish to publish the action plan on your school's website.

To maximise the impact of the SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool, set regular review dates immediately after completion of the baseline school self-evaluation, involving pupils and parents, as appropriate. Ideally, the SEND Benchmark & Planning Tool should be reviewed at least annually.

Celebrate success and share what is working well for your school. Check your assessment of how well the school is performing and what it needs to do next with others in your DSPL area.



2026-27

2026-27



THE HERTFORDSHIRE **SEND TOOLKIT**



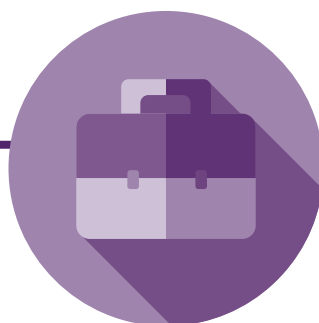
THE HERTFORDSHIRE **SEND TOOLKIT**



Communicating with parents/ carers and children and young people

Contents:

- Putting children, young people and their families at the heart of the system
- Knowing parents/carers well and building partnerships
- Capturing conversations through person - centred approaches
- This is Me - gathering the views of children and young people with SEND





Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people

Putting children and young people and families at the heart of the system

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years outlines clear expectations that schools should have high levels of engagement with families of children and young people with SEND. Schools should be aspirational with their vision, building strong links with families, and forming collaborative and creative, problem-solving relationships.



Ref. 1.1

For children and young people and their families, this means that:

- ✓ they experience a system where their voices are heard and their wishes and feelings matter
- ✓ they have choices and control over decisions, which have been made clear to them, so they experience high-quality provision that is tailored to their own unique needs
- ✓ their special educational needs and disabilities will be picked up at the earliest point and provision quickly put in place, increasing independence and respecting dignity
- ✓ there will be high aspirations, embedded within jointly agreed outcomes
- ✓ they have the necessary information and support to fully participate in discussions, including signposting to Hertfordshire's Local Offer

Parents/carers' views are important. Schools should develop partnerships that enable parents/carers to share their knowledge about their child, and give them confidence that their views and thoughts are valued and will be acted upon.

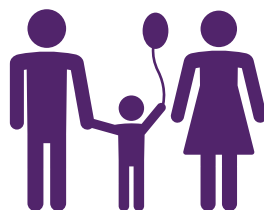
Discussions with parents/carers should be structured in such a way to develop a good understanding of the children and young people's areas of strength and difficulty, the parents/carers' concerns, the agreed outcomes and the next steps. Written records or notes from the discussions should be made and shared, so everyone is clear about what was said.





Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people

At times there may be differing opinions, and some discussions may be challenging. It is in the child or young person's best interests for a positive dialogue to be maintained, to work through points of difference and establish the best way forward, together.



Knowing parents/carers well

As part of the SEND reform programme, one of the seven principles of inclusion is: strong partnerships with families and wider services. This means schools should seek to strengthen relationships with families, working in partnership, sharing information and plans for provision. The starting point for this is knowing and understanding the range of experiences that may be affecting the lives of families of children and young people with SEND.

Schools should provide a welcoming and accessible space for parents/carers to meet staff who have an appreciation of the different pressures families may be experiencing. When relationships with schools are at their best, parents/carers will feel a sense of belonging, feel respected and feel valued, as partners and co-producers in the journey for their child.

Parents/carers know their children well, but often differently from how schools know them. Staff can listen to and learn from parents/carers through a simple, open-ended question, "What can you tell me about your child that will help me to help them?"

Parents/carers are as individual as the children and young people in each class. What works for one child does not work for all, and the same is true for parents/carers. You need to get to know them well, what they think, what they wish for, what they need and, importantly, what they are already doing to support their child.

Think about the barriers that families face. These will be different for each family.

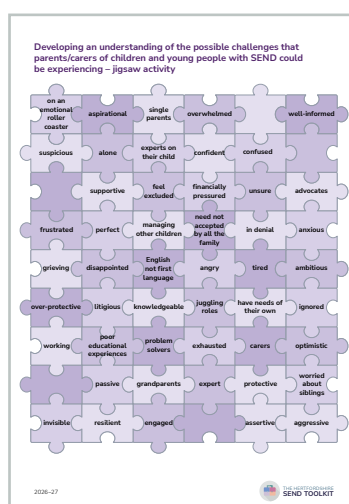


Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people

Building partnerships

It may be helpful if staff have an opportunity to explore the range of experiences that families could be managing on a day-to-day basis. It is important to remember that parenting a child or young person with SEND can bring its own additional challenges and responsibilities.

This **jigsaw activity** is a useful starting point to open discussions in a staff training session. This is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



What do families think about your current ways of working?

When strengthening partnerships with families, it may be helpful for parents/carers of children and young people with SEND to share some of their family story. Schools should take care not to make judgements or develop stereotypes. Dismissing parents/carers as unavailable, lacking interest or hard to reach will never help schools to develop better engagement.

Positive working relationships with parents/carers are built within an open and listening culture and the development of trust.





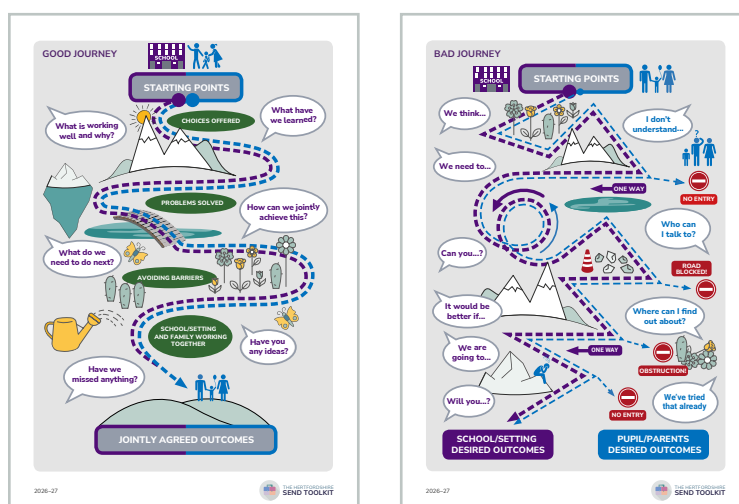
Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people

Reviewing and reflecting on the views of families

Below are two activities you may find helpful to learn more about what matters to your families. Exploring what it feels like to be parents/carers of a child or young person with SEND can help you to know what is working well and where you need to make things better. Organising formal and informal activities to seek the views of parents/carers, in relation to SEN provision, should be an integral part of the SENCO's role.

Good journey / bad journey

This activity, based upon the Helen Sanderson person-centred, good day / bad day activity, will work well with your staff and families. The posters and full instructions are available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/ carers and children and young people

Capturing the views and feelings of families

This activity provides an opportunity for families to share their views and feelings about how they are experiencing the principles of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. The scaling activity is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter. Further guidance on the principles can be found earlier in the **principles and statutory requirements** chapter.



What do families think?

The school provides me with helpful information about SEND. (2) _____ (5)

School understands the future I would like for my child. (2) _____ (5)

I work with staff to plan provision for my child. (2) _____ (5)

I feel the teacher(s) know my child well. (2) _____ (5)

I feel listened to. (2) _____ (5)

I take an active role in making decisions about my child. (2) _____ (5)

I feel that the school and I work in partnership to plan for my child's future. (2) _____ (5)

Any other thoughts? _____

2026-27 SEND TOOLKIT

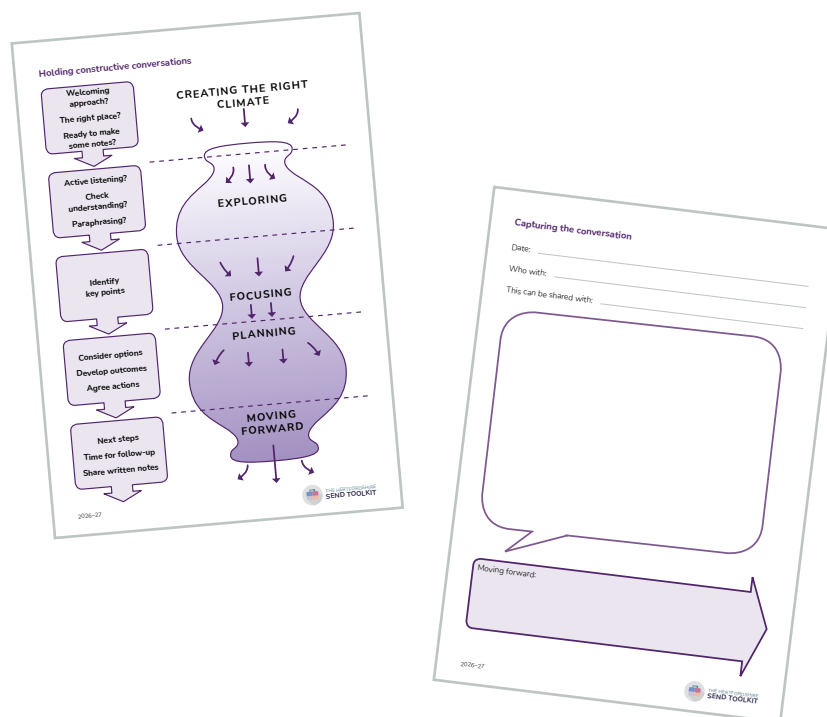




Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people

Providing regular opportunities for relevant staff to meet with parents/carers is an essential part of co-production. Skillful conversations maximise the potential of parents/carers actively engaging in their child's learning and collaborating on plans to meet need. Families should feel more confident, have a shared understanding of the barriers to learning, and the strategies to support their child and next steps.

Regardless of the length and formality of discussions, it is helpful to have in mind the four-part structure outlined below, to ensure all the key points are understood and acted upon. This helpful diagram is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of the chapter. A template to capture the conversation is also available to support schools in keeping a record of agreed outcomes.





Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people

Some tips to maximise the potential of conversations, to ensure they are constructive, are outlined below.



How to ensure conversations are constructive – top tips



Acknowledge that you are keen, willing and prepared to listen and respond to the parent/carer or child and young person. Although the current time may not be ideal, offer alternative choices. The tone of this initial interaction is crucial. Any feelings of rebuff felt by the parents/carers or their child can have repercussions on your developing relationship.



Ensure a conducive climate. Give open and positive body language.



Consider where you are holding the conversation. Does it feel the right place to talk? Ask the family if they would prefer a more private space.



Present a welcoming approach and show the parents/carers their views and feelings are valued by the school. Offer seating and perhaps a drink for everyone.



Have some notepaper available to jot down or briefly record the essence of the conversation. It may be helpful to have some copies of the “Capturing the Conversation” sheet already prepared and readily available.



Introduce everyone in the room, don't assume everyone knows everyone, be sure of names, especially those of the child or young person, don't refer to 'mum'. If there are siblings present, offer an activity to keep them entertained so conversation can remain focused.



Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/ carers and children and young people

Person-centred approaches

Schools should use person-centred approaches to routinely listen to the views of children and young people and their families.

It may be helpful to explore the full range of person-centred thinking tools available from Helen Sanderson Associates. A range of these have been included in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



The image displays four person-centred thinking tools arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each tool is a hand-drawn style template for gathering feedback or ideas.

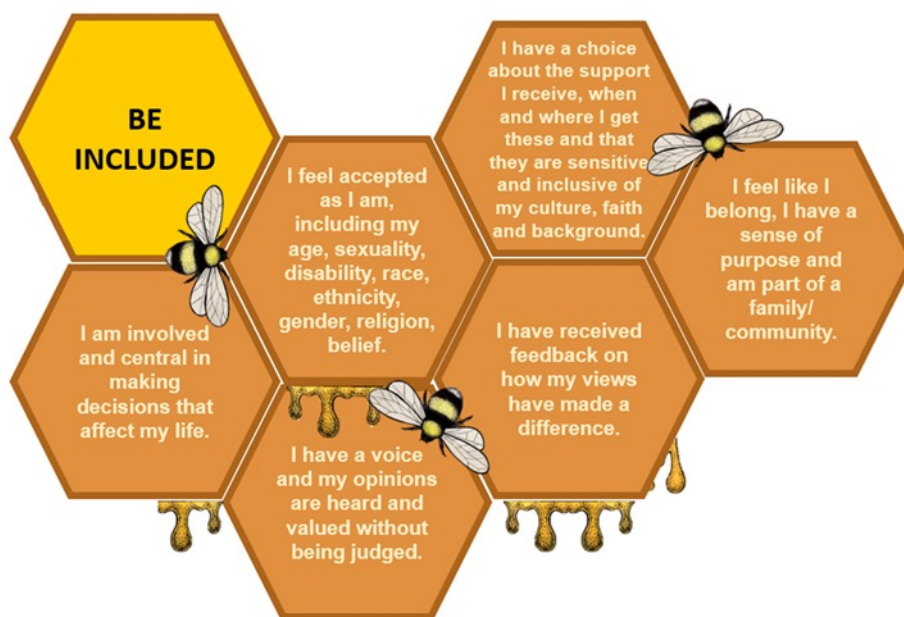
- Top Left:** A vertical rectangle divided into two equal halves. The top left half is labeled "Good day?" with a sun icon. The top right half is labeled "Bad day?" with a cloud and rain icon. At the bottom, a large arrow points to the right, containing the text: "What will it take to have more good days and less bad days?"
- Top Right:** A vertical rectangle divided into three horizontal sections. The top section is labeled "What's working?" with a thumbs up icon. The middle section is labeled "What's not working?" with a thumbs down icon. Below these are three smaller sections labeled "the person", "family", and "staff". At the bottom, a large arrow points to the right, containing the text: "What needs to happen next to build on what's working and change what's not working?"
- Bottom Left:** A vertical rectangle divided into four quadrants. The top left quadrant is labeled "What have we tried?" with a smiley face icon. The top right quadrant is labeled "What have we learned?" with a smiley face icon. The bottom left quadrant is labeled "What are we pleased about?" with a smiley face icon. The bottom right quadrant is labeled "What are we concerned about?" with a sad face icon. At the bottom, a large arrow points to the right, containing the text: "What do we need to do next?"
- Bottom Right:** A vertical rectangle divided into two equal halves. The left half is labeled "Important to" and the right half is labeled "Important for". At the bottom, a small stick figure is shown holding up the bottom of the rectangle.



Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/ carers and children and young people

Gathering the views of children and young people

The Voices of Hertfordshire, Be Included, Coproduction and Engagement model enables the views of children and young people with SEND to be gathered at an individual, operational and strategic level.



Children and young people with SEND have several ways to give feedback and understand the impact they have on services by engaging with Voices of Hertfordshire.



These are partnership wide groups, settings and councils which can all support children and young people with SEND in being heard and help them to influence positive change.

Further information can be found by using the links in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Schools should also consider if the **This is Me** forms could be a useful format to use with other children and young people; those receiving SEN support without an EHCP or those who are being monitored for possible special educational needs.

[illegible]

This is Me forms have been coproduced with children and young people and the Hertfordshire Participation Team.



Outcome 3. Communicating with parents/ carers and children and young people



This is Me – top tips

- Include information about This is Me in question 1 of the school's SEN information report and explain how it helps school staff to listen to children and young people's views. You may wish to embed the parent briefing video as part of the information you share with families.
- Every child or young person should be enabled to give their views in whatever way they can.
- Allow time to complete the form with the child or young person, tailoring as appropriate - it may take more than one sitting.
- When completing This is Me as part of the EHCP process:
 - Ensure it is clear to the education health coordinator who completed the form and how.
 - Remember a photo or self-portrait for the front of an EHCP is non-negotiable.
 - Remember to review the preparing for adulthood framework - this can be included from the earliest years.
 - After each review, keep a copy for the school record, append to section K and give a copy to the child or young person and their family to ensure they can use with other services.
 - If the child or young person is very different at school to at home, it is fine to complete two versions - both should be appended in section K and both should make clear why two versions were completed.



Outcome 3. Communicating with parent/ carers and children and young people



Tools and references

Tools:

Developing an understanding of the possible challenges that parents/ carers of children with SEND could be experiencing – jigsaw activity

Good journey / bad journey posters and tips

What do families think?

Holding constructive conversations

Capturing the conversation

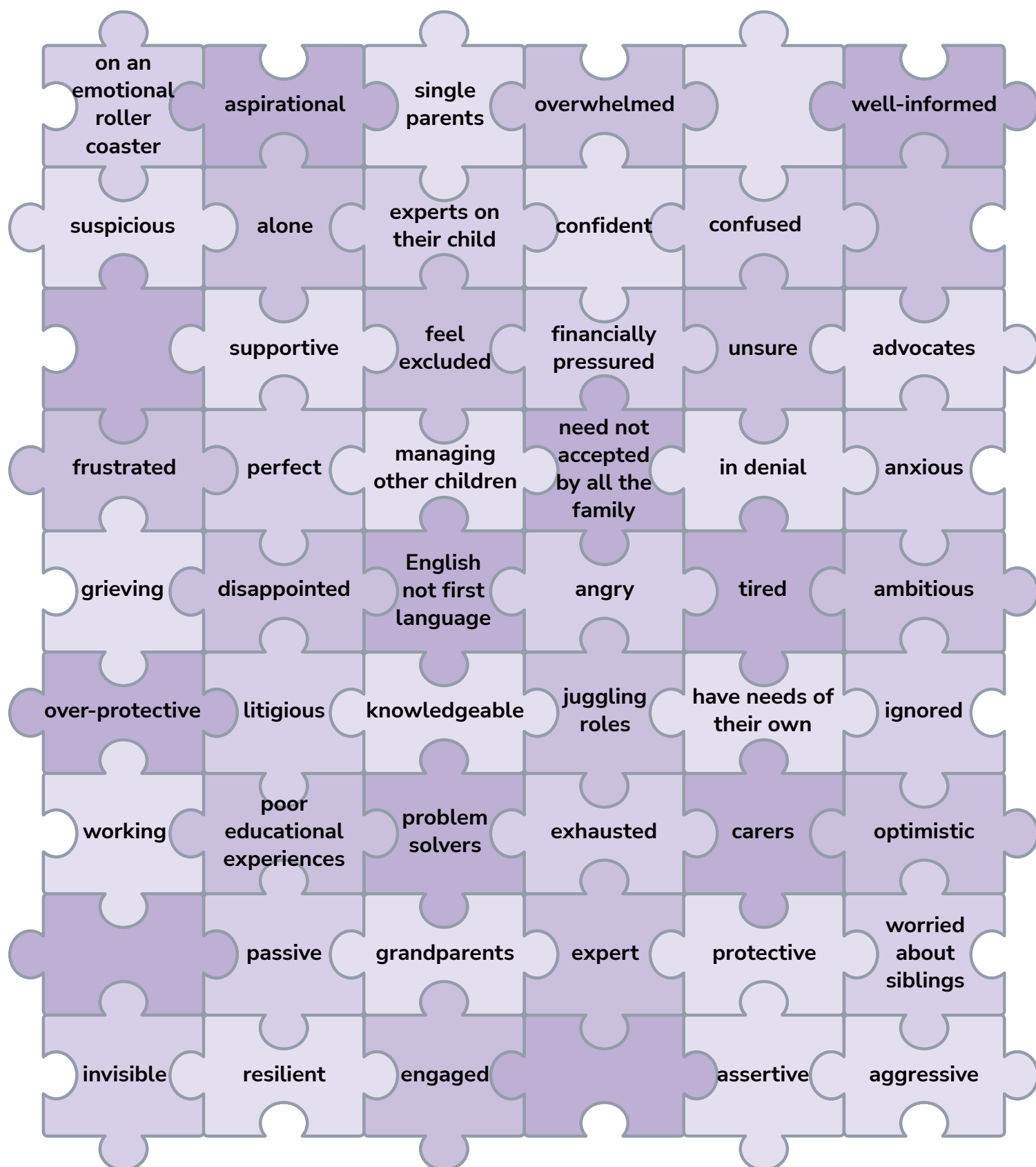
Selection of Helen Sanderson Associates person-centred tools.

Useful references:

- Helen Sanderson Associates, person-centred thinking tools
<https://www.helensandersonassociates.com/person-centered-thinking-tools/>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
[link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)
- This is Me forms and guidance
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/education-health-and-care-plans/the-ehcp-assessment.aspx#thisisme>
- Voices of Hertfordshire You Tube videos
<https://www.youtube.com/VoicesofHertfordshire>
- Hertfordshire SEND Strategy 2026-2029
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/Local-Offer/Feedback/SEND-Strategy/SEND-Strategy.aspx>



Developing an understanding of the possible challenges that parents/carers of children and young people with SEND could be experiencing – jigsaw activity





STARTING POINTS

What is working well and why?

CHOICES OFFERED

What have we learned?

PROBLEMS SOLVED

How can we jointly achieve this?

What do we need to do next?

AVOIDING BARRIERS

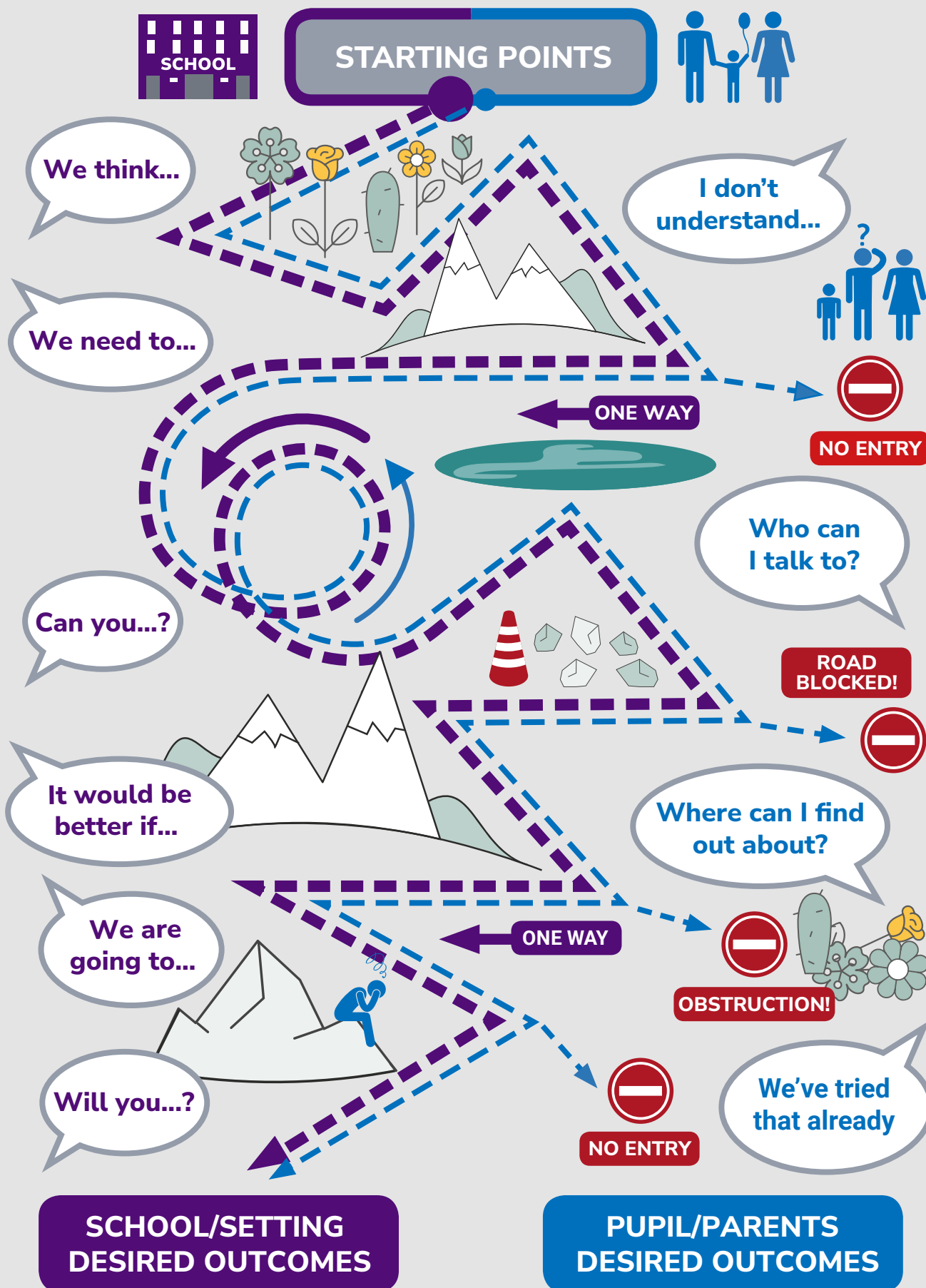
SCHOOL/SETTING AND FAMILY WORKING TOGETHER

Have you any ideas?

Have we missed anything?

JOINTLY AGREED OUTCOMES

BAD JOURNEY





Good journey / bad journey activity sheet – top tips



Work with families exploring the language and images on each poster.



Which poster feels most like their experiences in your school?



How do the views of parents/carers align with those of your staff?

What do families think?

The school provides me with helpful information about SEND.

☹️ | _____ | 😊

School understands the future I would like for my child.

☹️ | _____ | 😊

I work with staff to plan provision for my child.

☹️ | _____ | 😊

I feel the teacher(s) know my child well.

☹️ | _____ | 😊

I feel listened to.

☹️ | _____ | 😊

I take an active role in making decisions about my child.

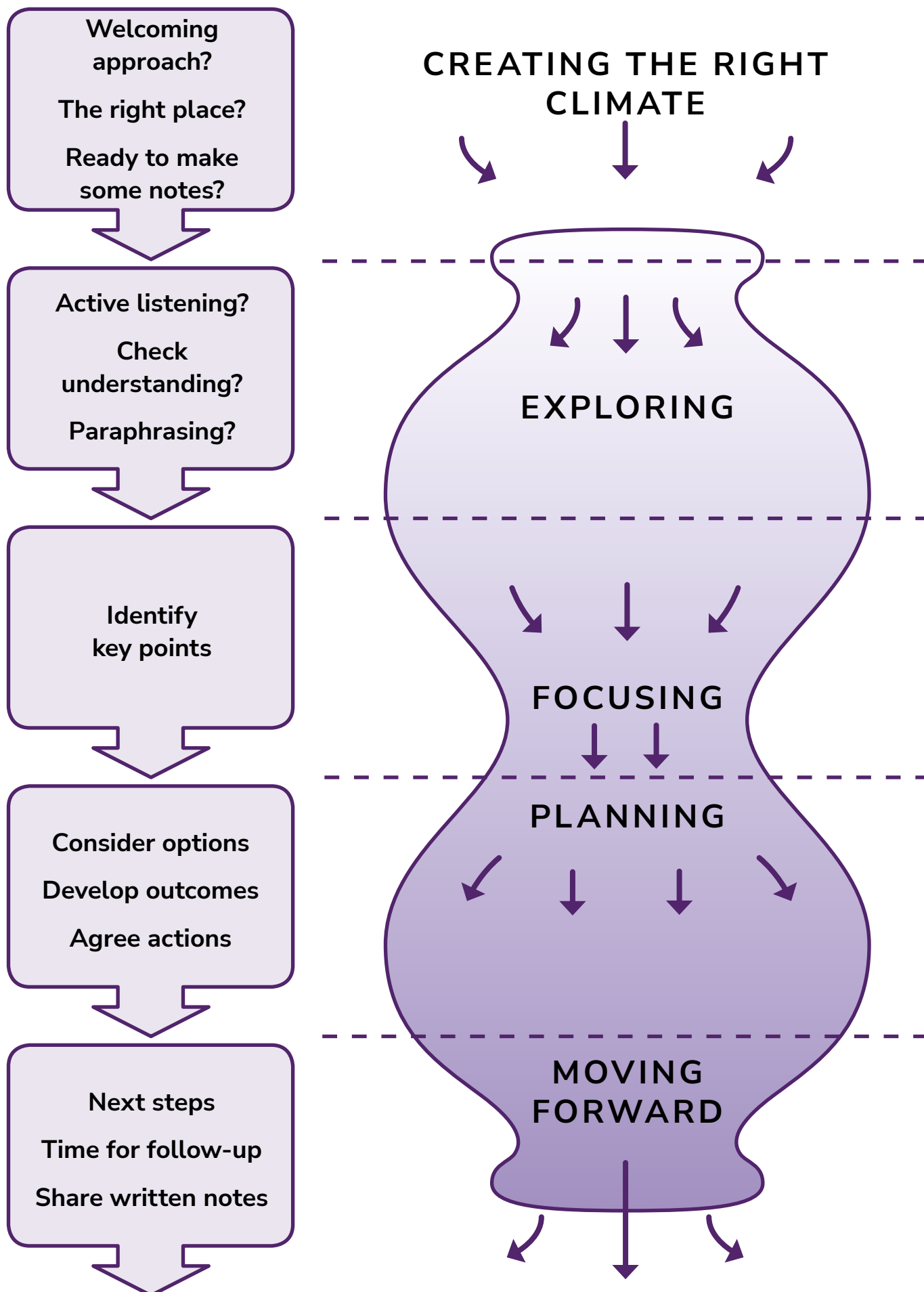
☹️ | _____ | 😊

I feel that the school and I work in partnership to plan for my child's future.

☹️ | _____ | 😊

Any other thoughts?

Holding constructive conversations

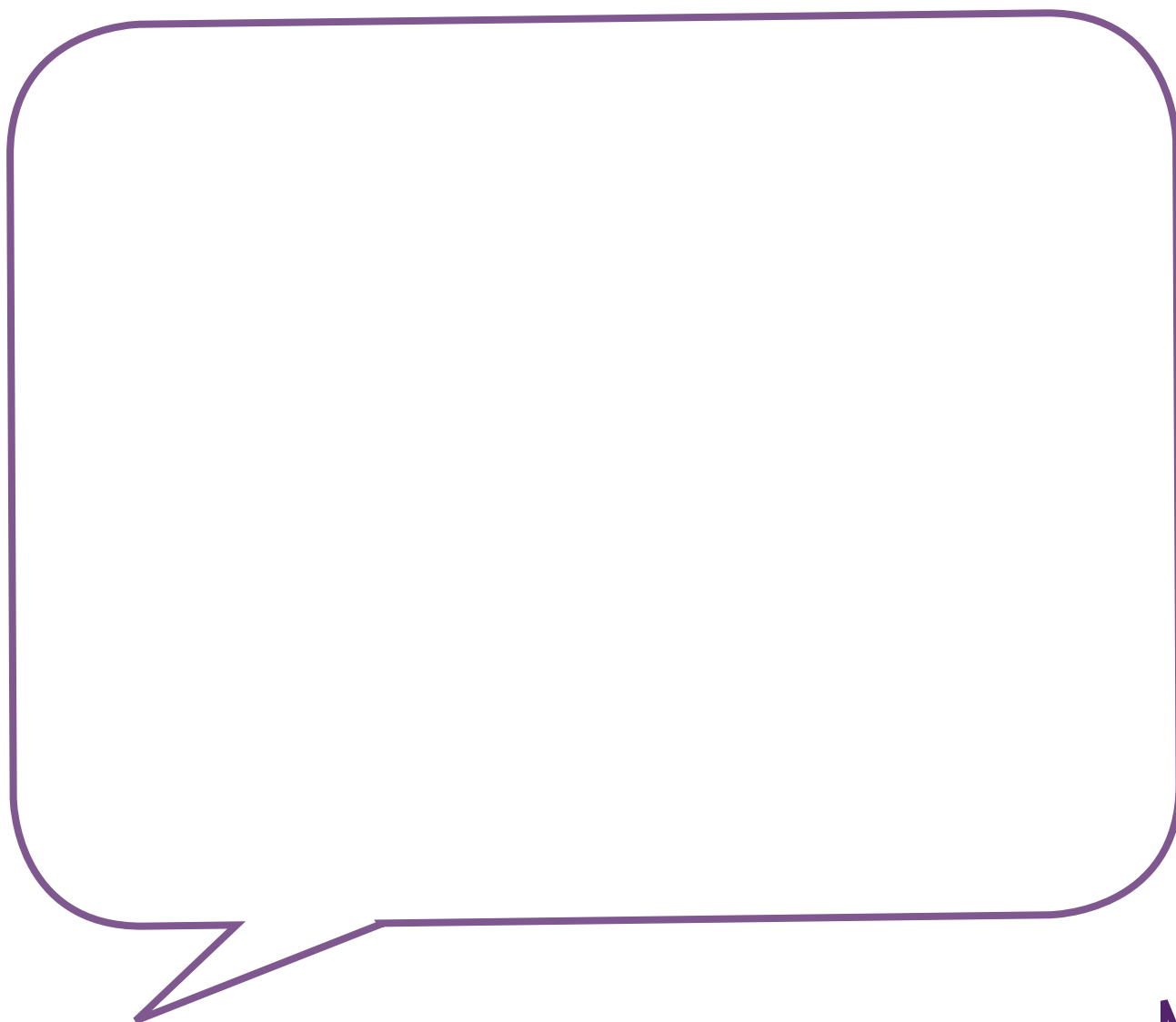


Capturing the conversation

Date: _____

Who with: _____

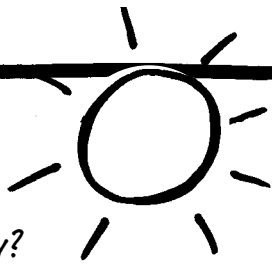
This can be shared with: _____



Moving forward:



Good day?



Bad day?

What will it take to have more good days and less bad days?

Template: Helen Sanderson Associates



What's working?



What's not working?

the person

family

staff

*What needs to happen next to build on what's working
and change what's not working?*

4 + 1 Questions

What have we tried?



What have we learned?



What are we pleased about?

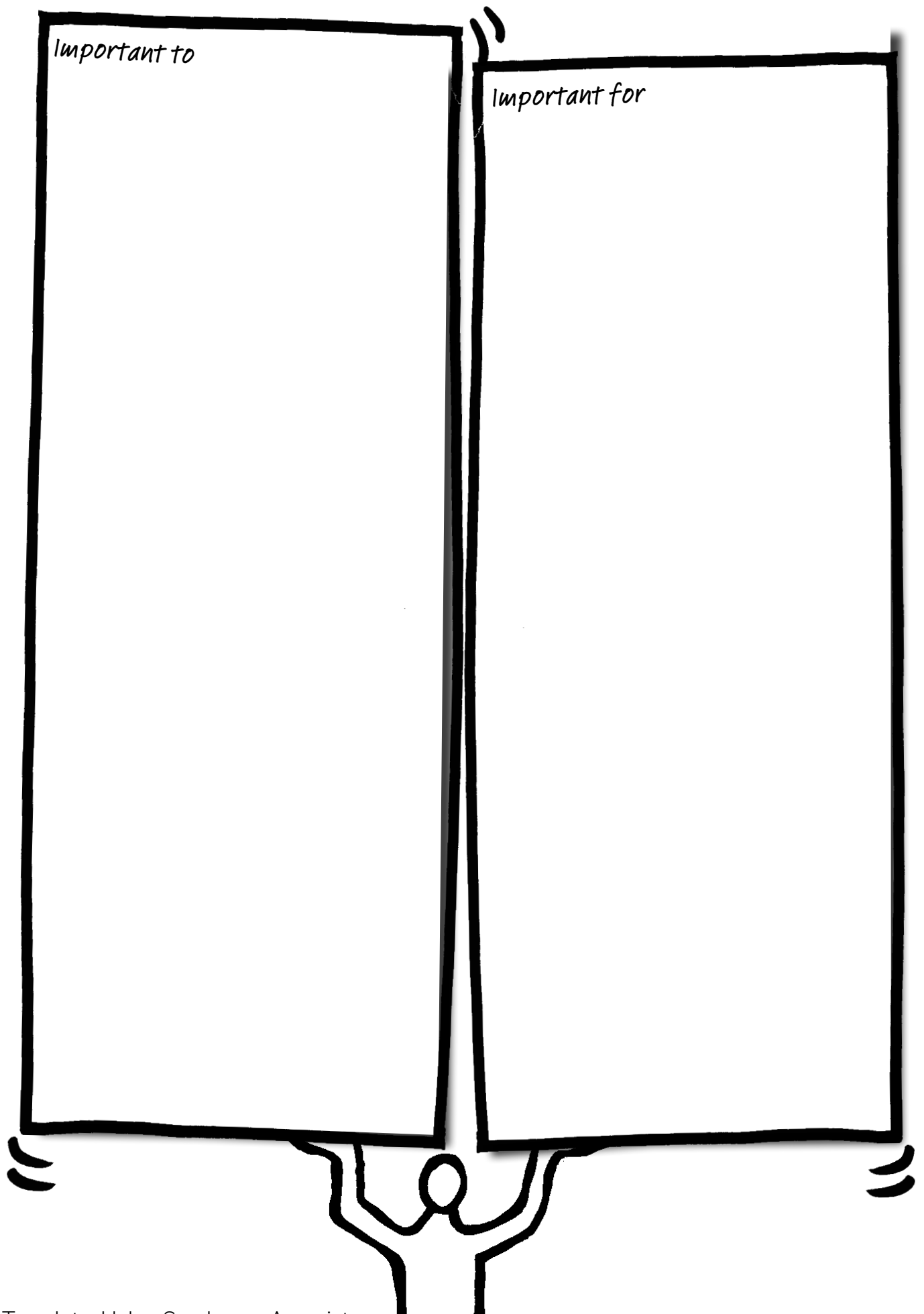


What are we concerned about?



What do we need to do next?

Template: Helen Sanderson Associates



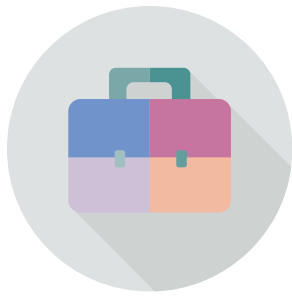
Template: Helen Sanderson Associates



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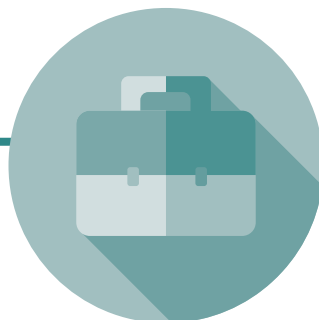
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Managing resources

Contents:

- Professional Development for SENCOs
- Working Effectively with Teaching Assistants (TA)
- SEND and school governing boards
- A brief guide to SEND funding including the Inclusive Mainstream Fund





Outcome 4. Managing resources

Professional Development for SENCOs

SENCOs should keep themselves informed and up to date about relevant statutory guidance, national developments including the proposed changes to the SEND system, local developments and research about SEND and inclusion by actively engaging in ongoing professional development.



With other senior leaders, SENCOs can contribute to the implementation of high-quality SEN provision and strengthen the effectiveness of teaching and learning for all learners, including those with SEND.

As described in the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years, a tiered approach to professional development should be taken that includes:

- giving a basic **awareness** of the four broad areas of need and common conditions that is appropriate for all staff who encounter children or young people with SEND
- offering **enhanced** training on how to adapt teaching and learning to meet a broad range of needs, for early years practitioners, early career teachers (ECT), class and subject teachers, teaching assistants and others who are working directly with children or young people on a regular basis
- gaining **specialist** in-depth knowledge about a particular type of SEN for staff who will be advising and supporting those with enhanced-level skills and knowledge





Outcome 4. Managing resources

Where can I find information about SEND related training?

For new SENCOs ...

The **Hertfordshire SENCO Induction programme** has been developed by HFL Education in partnership with Hertfordshire's SEND services, DSPL area managers and Hertfordshire's SEND Academy.



This essential course is designed to equip SENCOs to have the confidence, knowledge and skills to succeed in their role.

With three tailored pathways, depending on experience, SENCOs can access high-quality training and support if they are:

- New to role and at the start of their journey
- New to Hertfordshire and bringing previous experience
- New to a DSPL area yet have experience and knowledge of Hertfordshire systems

With a mix of online, self-directed and in-person sessions this programme offers every SENCO working in Hertfordshire a great start to their journey.

Please note this programme is fully funded for Hertfordshire maintained schools and academies as part of the HCC core contract.

SENCOs working in the independent sector are welcome too though there would be a charge. To explore induction options please email: HFL.SEND@hfleducation.org





Outcome 4. Managing resources

For all SENCOs

Let the information come to you!

For busy SENCOs, attending a termly **SEND briefing** will ensure you keep up to date, are aware of national and local news and developments and have an opportunity to consider implications for your own school or setting.

These carefully curated conversations are designed to highlight key issues and provide practical support to both experienced and new to role SENCOs and support you to fulfil your leadership and management responsibilities.

Please note these briefings are fully funded for Hertfordshire maintained schools and academies as part of the HCC core contract.

SENCOs working in the independent sector are welcome to join though there would be a charge.

Signing up to receive regular SEND related **blogs** such as those from HFL Education provide you with short topical reads that can also be shared with staff as part of ongoing CPD.



Subscribe via the QR code to receive new blogs automatically to your inbox.

Subscribing to SEND related mailing lists such as [HFL's SEND newsletter](#), and [Hertfordshire SEND News](#) provide you with news and announcements.





Outcome 4. Managing resources

Other SEND focused training:

Delivering Special Provision Locally

(DSPL) offer networking opportunities and keep SENCOs informed of local training and specific events in the local area. Please see the **collaborating with others** chapter for more information.



Delivering Special
Provision Locally

Hertfordshire's SEND Academy hosts high quality multi-agency learning and development for individuals, services and organisations within the Hertfordshire SEND workforce including training for schools related to statutory processes.



Hertfordshire
SEND
ACADEMY

HFL Education offers a range of SEND related traded training and events including an annual SEND conference, training for school leaders, SENCOs, teachers, EY practitioners, teaching assistants and governors.



Education

Complete the DfE's mandatory qualification for SENCOs - National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for SENCOs - with the National Society for Education and HFL Education as the local delivery partner.

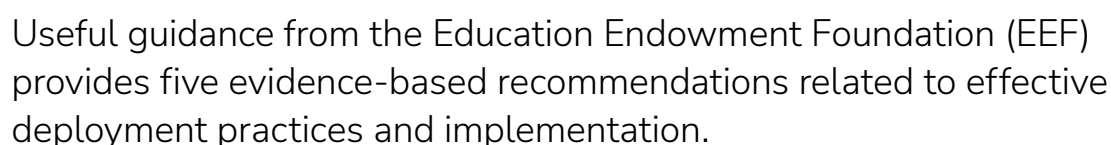
In addition, the Level 3 Certificate for SENCOs in Early Years (CERTSEY) and Level 3 and 4 Awards covering some of the broad areas of need and other conditions such as autism are available.

For other specific SEND related training from HCC SEND services and other professionals please see information in the **collaborating with others** chapter including the Support on a Page directories.





While the role is broad, many teaching assistants (TA) play a key role in supporting the inclusion of children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools. Schools should consider how they can deploy any additional adults effectively, so they have a positive impact.



This is available in the **Tools and References** section at the end of this chapter.

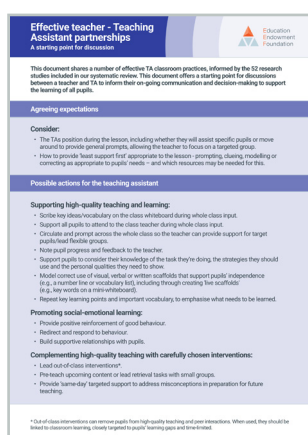


- ✓ in ways that enable children and young people to access high-quality teaching
- ✓ to scaffold learning and to develop children and young people's independence
- ✓ to deliver well-chosen, evidence based, structured interventions when necessary



Outcome 4. Managing resources

In addition, schools should ensure the TA's role is clearly understood, teachers know how to work effectively with TAs and what good practice looks like. A helpful starting point for discussions between a teacher and a TA is the EEF 's guide to Effective Teacher-TA partnerships. This can be found in the **Tools and references** section.



TAs may find this self-reflection tool in the **Tools and references section** helpful when considering how they can embed the adaptations and reasonable adjustments described in Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance into their everyday classroom routine.



Teaching Assistant (TA) Self-Reflection Tool

This self-reflection tool can be used by TAs to consider how they can embed the adaptations and reasonable adjustments described in Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance into their everyday classroom routine.

Providing high-quality provision	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
...	...monitor and adapt the physical environment to meet the needs of all children and young people?	
...	...understand the individual needs of children and young people that I support and know how to respond to them such as by referring to SEND action plans?	
...	...adapt teaching in the moment using a range of scaffolding strategies to meet the needs of all children and young people and to promote independence?	
...	...provide opportunities for collaborative learning and peer support to ensure that children and young people with SEND are fully included in learning?	
Improving outcomes	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
...	...develop a growing understanding of children and young people's needs including their strengths, learning points, and barriers to participation and learning?	
...	...give regular and powerful feedback to teachers about an individual's learning so they can evaluate the impact of provision?	
...	...promote active engagement, positive relationships and wellbeing for all children and young people?	
...	...ensure that all children and young people feel safe, and that their opinions and concerns are valued?	

Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
...	...listen to the views of children and young people, and encourage them to make decisions about their learning?	
...	...contribute to information provided for parents/carers?	
Managing resources	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
...	...ensure equipment and adapted resources are readily available to children and young people during a lesson?	
...	...use technology as a useful tool to support learning?	
...	...collaborate with teachers to integrate the strategies taught during an intervention into day-to-day teaching so that children and young people can sustain progress within the classroom?	
Collaborating with others	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
...	...actively seek information from the SENCO or other professionals about children and young people to inform teaching and learning?	
...	...actively share information with the SENCO or other professionals about children and young people to inform teaching and learning?	

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THE HERTFORDSHIRE SEND TOOLKIT

This can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 4. Managing resources

SEND and school governing boards

What responsibilities does the governing body have for children and young people with SEND?

As part of the SEND reform programme, one of the seven principles of inclusion is: ambitious leadership and governance that embeds inclusion. This means leaders and governors should put inclusion at the heart of schools' planning and policies, embracing high expectations for all children and young people, particularly those with SEND.

This section applies to governors of local-authority-maintained schools and academy trusts, although others may find the information helpful.

Governing bodies have a vital role to play in a whole-school approach to SEND. As governor, you can make an important contribution to the school and the support it provides for children and young people with SEND.

Ensuring the ongoing achievement and success of children and young people with SEND is a collective responsibility. The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years recommends that governing bodies appoint an individual or sub-committee with specific oversight for SEND.



Ref. 6.3

The governing body has statutory responsibilities for children and young people with SEND. Put simply, the governing body must do its best to ensure the school makes the necessary provision for every child or young person with SEND. Make sure SEND is included in discussions, whether you are considering the budget, personnel, policies, achievement or curriculum.





Outcome 4. Managing resources



Remember ...

to include SEND in discussions when you are considering:



budget



achievement



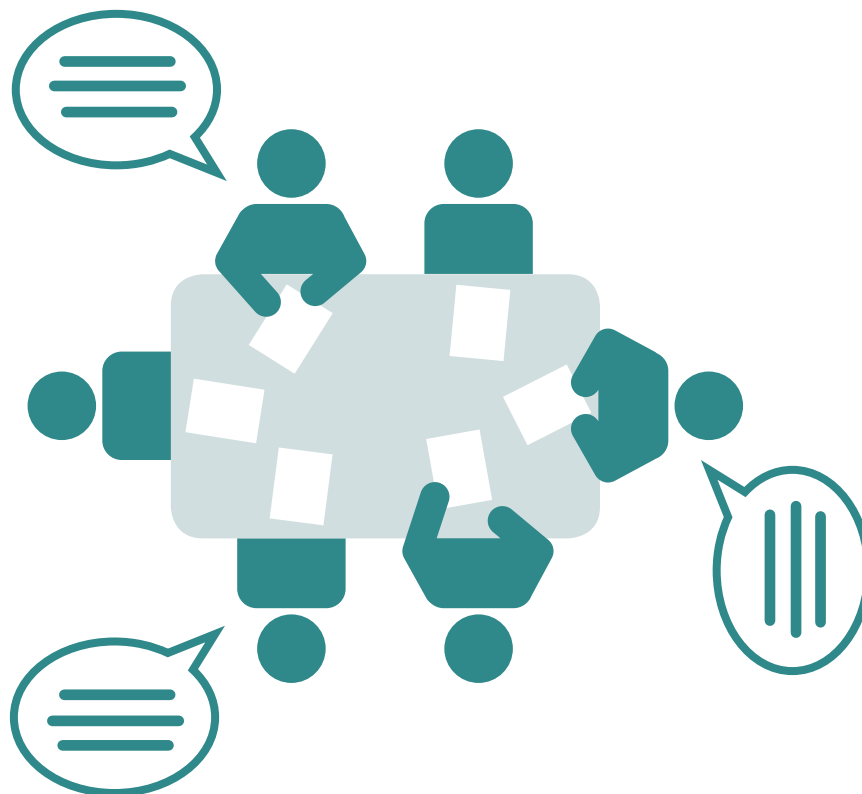
personnel



curriculum



policies





Outcome 4. Managing resources

Governors **must:**

- ✓ have regard to the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- ✓ publish information on the school's website about the implementation of the school's policy for children and young people with SEND
- ✓ ensure there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO
- ✓ cooperate generally with the local authority, including developing the Local Offer and when the school is named in an EHC plan
- ✓ ensure that arrangements are in place in school to support children and young people with medical conditions and allergies
- ✓ publish information about the arrangements for:
 - the admission of disabled children and young people
 - the steps taken to prevent them being treated less favourably than others
 - the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children and young people and the school's accessibility plans



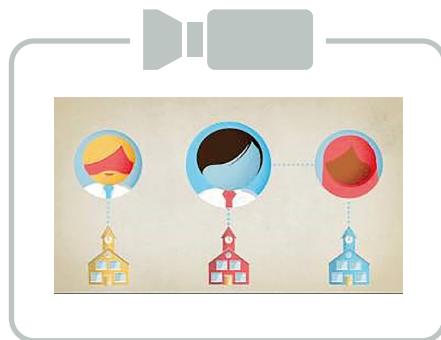
Detailed information about each of these points and a printable checklist can be found in the **Principles and statutory requirements** section of the toolkit.





Outcome 4. Managing resources

It may be helpful to watch this Driver Youth Trust video. It is a brief summary of the responsibilities of a SEND governor and how to build a strong partnership with the SENCO. See **Tools and references** section for web link.



Further guidance from the DfE for governing boards, a quick guide to the SEND governor role and suggested activities to support your work with the SENCO are included in the **Tools and references** at the end of this chapter.



Making a difference:
A quick guide for special educational needs (SEND) governors

As a special educational needs (SEND) governor, you can make a crucial contribution to the school and the support it provides for children and young people with SEND.

The governing body, of which you are a member, has statutory responsibilities for children and young people with SEND or disabilities. This means that, whenever the governing body is making decisions, they must consider what the SEND Code of Practice (0 to 25 years) says. They cannot ignore it.

Make a good start to understanding governor responsibilities by:

- Getting a copy of the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years. This provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, associated regulations, and applies to England. It relates to children and young people with SEND.
- Reading the Schools' guide to the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years. This draws out elements of the full SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years that relate to schools, as well as wider aspects that all those who work with children and young people with SEND or disabilities and their families should have regard to.
- Watching The Driver Youth Trust video. What is the responsibility of the Governing Body for SEND (senior)? This gives a brief outline of what is expected of SEND governors. See tools and reference section for web link.
- Taking a training course about the role of a SEND governor.

Take the time to find out certain basic information.

You can talk to the school's special needs coordinator (SENCO) about:

- How the school identifies children and young people with SEND
- Make sure you understand how the school identifies children and young people with SEND (Read Code of Practice 6.14-6.39) and what happens once a child or young person has been identified.
- Ask what action the school takes to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place (Read Code of Practice 6.44-6.56)
- How the school allocates its budget for SEND
- Make sure you understand how the school decides how it spends its resources for children and young people with SEND
- Find out if the school receives additional local authority funding for some children and young people.

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SEND TOOLKIT

Activities for SEND governor visits

It will be useful to plan a series of visits for the year, according to the time available and the priorities of the school. The visits will provide valuable opportunities to build relationships and gather knowledge. The main point of contact is likely to be the SENCO. You may find some of the activities below helpful.

Activity 1

Discussion about engagement with families of pupils with SEND

Many schools ask parent/carer for their views on communication with the school and satisfaction with provision.

Questions to consider:

1. How do you inform parent/carer that their child has SEND?
2. Do you make use of pupil passports, one-page profiles or other person-centred approaches?
3. What arrangements are in place to meet with the parent/carer of children and young people with SEND? What is the impact?
4. How are parent/carer involved in any reviews? How do they share their views and experiences? How do you enable parent/carer to have the right information to make decisions?
5. How are parent/carer involved in the review of the SEN information report and policy?
6. Is information for parent/carer available in a range of accessible formats?
7. What is working well?
8. Have you identified any areas for development?

Activity 2

Exploring the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people

Most schools carry out a pupil engagement survey. Some ask children and young people with SEND additional questions.

Questions to consider:

1. How do you make use of pupil passports, one-page profiles or other person-centred approaches?
2. How are pupils involved in any reviews? How do they share their views and experiences?
3. How do you enable pupils to have the right information to make decisions?
4. How do you encourage pupils to advocate for what they need?
5. Are there any areas for development?

2026-27

THE HERTFORDSHIRE
SEND TOOLKIT





Outcome 4. Managing resources

A brief guide to funding for special educational needs

All mainstream schools are provided with funding to support those with additional needs, including children and young people with SEND.

Schools, as part of their usual budget planning, should determine their approach to using their funding, to support the progress of children and young people with SEND. School leaders should consider their strategic approach to meeting special educational needs in the context of the total funding available, including any funding targeted at particular groups, such as the pupil premium.

Every child or young person in a school attracts an amount of money. This is known as age weighted pupil unit (AWPU). The amount varies from one authority to another and is dependent upon a locally agreed formula.

This is the main source of funding and should include the salary of the SENCO.





Outcome 4. Managing resources

What is the notional SEN budget?



Ref. 6.96

Schools have an amount identified within their overall budget, called the notional SEN budget.

It is called notional because schools can choose to spend what is required to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. The notional SEN budget is not ring-fenced.

The amount in the notional SEN budget is based on a formula, which is agreed between schools and the local authority.

The government requires that schools are given enough money through the local funding formula, so that they can meet the costs of SEN provision, from within their own budget, of up to £6,000 for each child or young person needing additional provision. SEN provision is anything that is provided to meet the child or young person's SEND, which is additional to or different from provision made for all children and young people.

A school can use its budget in a flexible way to meet the needs of most of their children and young people with SEND.

Schools are not expected to meet the costs of more expensive support from within their core funding. The local authority must provide additional top-up funding.

If a school needs more than £6,000 to provide a child or young person's SEN provision then, depending on the needs of the child or young person, a top-up from the "high needs block" may be allocated.





Outcome 4. Managing resources

Top-up High Needs Funding (HNF) and Focused Intervention Funding (FIF) in mainstream schools

Hertfordshire's Top-up Funding - High Needs Funding in Mainstream Schools, known as HNF, is additional funding provided to support inclusion and meet the needs of children and young people with needs identified as requiring support at targeted levels or above in mainstream schools and settings.

HNF has been designed collaboratively by the Local Authority, schools and settings and parents/carers working together. HNF is a transparent system that allocates additional funding according to the needs of the individual child or young person using the draft EHCP.



There is also a discretionary local system delivered through DSPL and managed and chaired by the DSPL managers but involving local schools and external professionals in the decision making. This is a system for children and young people with emerging needs, where needs cannot be met through Ordinarily Available Provision, and is called Focused Intervention Funding (FIF).

For further information about SEN funding in education please use the link to Hertfordshire's Grid for Learning in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 4. Managing resources

The Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF)

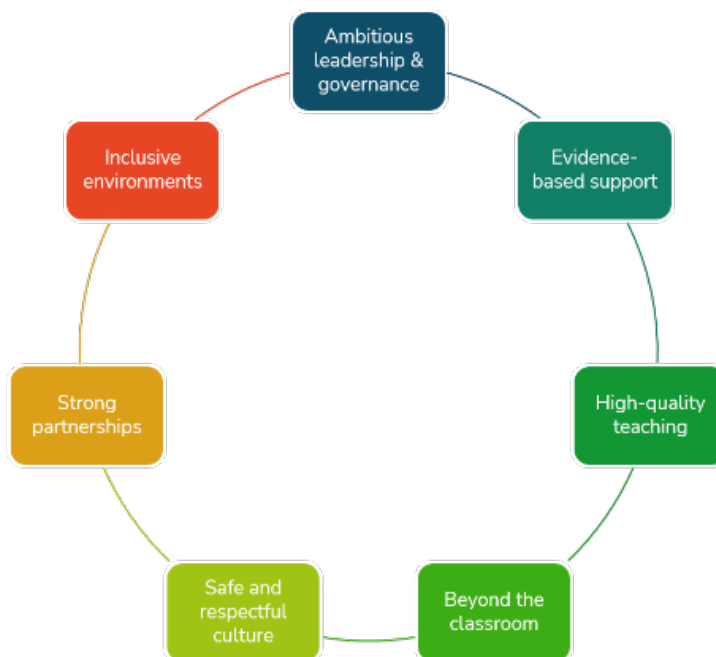


As part of the proposals for a reformed SEND system, the Government has set out a vision where schools have a strong Universal offer with mainstream funding reforms supporting early intervention and more flexible support. The introduction of an inclusive mainstream fund (IMF) from April 2026 is the first step.

The IMF provides additional funding to support schools to become more inclusive.

To adhere to the conditions of grant, schools must:

- publish an inclusion strategy on their school website by Thursday 31st December 2026
- invest their allocation on evidence-informed activities that fall under the **seven principles of inclusion** set out by the DfE





Outcome 4. Managing resources

1. ambitious leadership and governance that embeds inclusion
2. evidence-based support prioritising early intervention
3. high-quality adaptive teaching with curriculum designed for all learners
4. enriching provision beyond the classroom that all children can access
5. a safe and respectful culture fostering belonging and attendance
6. strong partnerships with families and wider services
7. inclusive environments with continuous improvements to accessibility

It is for schools to decide how to use their IMF allocation. They do not have to allocate the IMF across every principle of inclusion and, in the first year, may choose to focus on a small number of approaches that best address the barriers to learning identified and what will make the biggest difference to the children and young people on their roll.

Schools must use their IMF allocation alongside their core funding allocations, including their notional SEN budget, to strengthen their inclusive offer and remove commonly occurring barriers to learning and participation for all children and young people, including those with SEND.

This should include taking meaningful steps to:

- build a strong universal provision that embeds inclusion and has a positive impact on attainment, progress in learning, wellbeing, belonging and engagement
- support the delivery of early, evidence-based targeted support for those who need it, without the need for formal assessment or diagnosis





Outcome 4. Managing resources

Developing and delivering an effective inclusion strategy

The DfE has provided schools with a five-step approach to developing and refining their inclusion strategy similar to the one already undertaken for the pupil premium strategy:



If schools opt to create a multi-year strategy, they must ensure this is reviewed annually and noted on the cover page of the document.

Inclusion Strategies will be available to Ofsted inspectors to consider when evaluating inclusion.

Links to helpful DfE guidance on the conditions of grant, developing an inclusion strategy and best practice for schools can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 4. Managing resources

Some ideas to start exploring the school's SEN budget

For many SENCOs this is straightforward and a natural part of their everyday work. For others, access to information about the budget may be limited. Where this is the case, the SENCO will need to discuss the importance of this information with their headteacher, finance manager and SEND governor. The SENCO has an important strategic role in knowing how to deploy resources effectively.



Consider the following:



Identify the notional SEN budget and inclusive mainstream fund allocation. This will be a useful starting point for discussion about school spending.



Work with the headteacher and governors to consider budget implications when planning, managing and reviewing SEN provision.

This could include costings for:

- ✓ staffing allocations with a SEND focus
- ✓ evidence-based interventions and specific approaches, to enable children and young people with SEND to make good progress
- ✓ training for staff
- ✓ equipment and other related resources provided for children and young people with SEND



Outcome 4. Managing resources



Tools and references

Tools:

Making a difference:

A quick guide for special educational needs (SEND) governors

Activities for SEND governor visits

Teaching Assistant (TA) self-reflection tool

Effective teacher-TA partnerships

Useful references:

- Driver Youth Trust video, “What is the responsibility of the governing body for SEND learners?”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3581sPLe4Zw>
- SEN funding in Hertfordshire
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/education-support/help-you-can-get-when-your-child-is-in-school/sen-funding-in-education.aspx>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>





Outcome 4. Managing resources



Tools and references

- Inclusive mainstream fund for schools: methodology 2026 to 2027, DfE
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mainstream-fund-2026-to-2027/inclusive-mainstream-fund-for-schools-methodology-2026-to-2027>
- Inclusive mainstream fund: best practice for schools, DfE
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mainstream-fund-support-for-school-leaders/inclusive-mainstream-fund-best-practice-for-schools>
- Developing an inclusion strategy using the inclusive mainstream fund, DfE
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mainstream-fund-support-for-school-leaders/developing-an-inclusion-strategy-using-the-inclusive-mainstream-fund>
- Special educational needs (SEN) guidance and disabilities: guidance for school governing boards DfE, February 2025
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sen-and-disability-duties-guidance-for-school-governing-boards/special-educational-needs-sen-and-disabilities-guidance-for-school-governing-boards#:~:text=Governors%20and%20trustees%20should%20be,pupils%20with%20SEN%20and%20disabilities>





Outcome 4. Managing resources



Tools and references

- Equalities Act 2010 and disabled pupils: A guide for governors and trustees from the Council for Disabled Children
<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/all-resources/filter/educators/new-series-cdc-guides-disability-duties-equality-act>
- Deployment of Teaching Assistants Guidance Report, EEF March 2025
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/teaching-assistants>
- Hertfordshire SEND Academy
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/professionals/send-academy/send-academy.aspx>
- HFL Education
<https://www.hfleducation.org/>
- DSPL areas
<https://thegrid.org.uk/send-and-additional-needs/specialist-advisory-teams/dspl-and-local-school-partnerships>



Making a difference:

A quick guide for special educational needs (SEND) governors

As a special educational needs (SEND) governor, you can make a crucial contribution to the school and the support it provides for children and young people with SEND.

The governing body, of which you are a member, has statutory responsibilities for children and young people with SEND or disabilities. This means that, whenever the governing body is making decisions, they **must** consider what the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years says. They cannot ignore it.

Make a good start to understanding governor responsibilities by:

- Getting a copy of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. This provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, associated regulations, and applies to England. It relates to children and young people with SEND.
- Reading the Schools' guide to the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. This draws out elements of the full SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years that relate to schools, as well as wider aspects that all those who work with children and young people with SEND or disabilities and their families should have regard to.
- Watching The Driver Youth Trust video, What is the responsibility of the Governing Body for SEND Learners? This gives a brief outline of what is expected of SEND governors. See tools and reference section for web link.
- Taking a training course about the role of a SEND governor.

Take the time to find out certain basic information.

You can talk to the school's special needs coordinator (SENCO) about:

- How the school identifies children and young people with SEND
 - Make sure you understand how the school identifies children and young people with SEND (Read Code of Practice 6.14–6.35) and what happens once a child or young person has been identified.
 - Ask what action the school takes to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place (Read Code of Practice 6.44–6.56).
- How the school allocates its budget for SEND
 - Make sure you understand how the school decides how it spends its resources for children and young people with SEND.
 - Find out if the school receives additional local authority funding for some children and young people.

- The school's SEND policy
 - You should know the policy and make sure it is reviewed regularly.
 - Check that the SEN information report accurately reflects the policy, is published on the school's website and is reviewed at least annually.

Build relationships

- Get to know the headteacher and the SENCO and establish a good working relationship with them.
 - Keep in touch – set up a regular meeting with the SENCO to discuss current issues or complete an activity together. See the suggested activity sheet for some ideas.
 - Ask questions – most SENCOs welcome a critical friend who can bring a new point of view. If you're not sure about any aspect of the schools SEND policy and provision, ask.
-

Activities for SEND governor visits

It will be useful to plan a series of visits for the year, according to the time available and the priorities of the school. The visits will provide valuable opportunities to build relationships and gather knowledge. The main point of contact is likely to be the SENCO. You may find some of the activities below helpful.

Activity 1

Discussion about engagement with families of pupils with SEND

Many schools ask parents/carers for their views on communication with the school and satisfaction with provision.

Questions to consider:

1. How do you inform parents/carers that their child has SEND?
2. Do you make use of pupil passports, one-page profiles or other person-centred approaches?
3. What arrangements are in place to meet with the parents/carers of children and young people with SEND? What is the impact?
4. How are parents/carers involved in any reviews? How do they share their views and experiences? How do you enable parents/carers to have the right information to make decisions?
5. How are parents/carers involved in the review of the SEN information report and policy?
6. Is information for parents/carers available in a range of accessible formats?
7. What is working well?
8. Have you identified any areas for development?

Activity 2

Exploring the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people

Most schools carry out a pupil engagement survey. Some ask children and young people with SEND additional questions.

Questions to consider:

1. How do you make use of pupil passports, one-page profiles or other person-centred approaches?
2. How are pupils involved in any reviews? How do they share their views and experiences?
3. How do you enable pupils to have the right information to make decisions?
4. How do you encourage pupils to advocate for what they need?
5. Are there any areas for development?

Activity 3

Participating in whole-school self-evaluation of SEND policy and practice

Questions to consider:

1. What is working well? What are the areas of strength identified?
2. What are the areas for development identified? How does this information feed into whole school development planning?
3. How collaborative was the self evaluation process-how were the views of children and young people, parents/carers and school staff included in the review?
4. How clearly is the evidence to support judgements documented? Are there any ways to strengthen the use of evidence in making judgements?

Activity 4

Finding out how SEND is identified and addressed

Questions to consider:

1. How many / what percentage of pupils have SEND?
2. How many / what percentage of pupils have an EHC plan or are receiving SEN support?
3. What is the most common primary type of need?
4. How does the school's data compare with county and national information?
5. What information does the school use when identifying a child has SEND?
6. Does the school's SEND policy and SEN information report accurately reflect the identification process?
7. How are parents/carers involved?
8. Do all staff understand and engage with the identification process?

Activity 5

Exploring the school's graduated response with the SENCO

Questions to consider:

1. How are you recording the assess, plan, do and review cycle?
2. Who is involved?
3. How have you built in at least three meetings a year for review of the cycle? These should be "longer than most parent-teacher meetings".
4. How are teachers taking greater ownership of these meetings?
5. How do you capture small steps of progress?

Activity 6

Inclusive high-quality teaching: carrying out a resource audit or focused learning walk with the SENCO

Questions to consider:

1. What are the areas of strength?
2. Are there any areas for further development?

Activity 7

Checking the school's website for compliance and quality

Questions to consider:

1. Is an up-to-date accessibility plan published on the school's website?
2. Is an up-to-date SEN information report published on the school's website?
 - Is it honest and accurate?
 - Is it easy to find? How many clicks away?
 - Does it contain the SENCO's name?
 - Is it parent-friendly? Does it have a welcoming tone? How well is it promoted and shared with parents/carers?
 - Are the staff, parents/carers and governors aware of it?
 - Is it linked to and from the Local Offer?
3. Is an up-to-date Inclusion Strategy published on the school's website?

Activity 8

Discussion of outcomes for children and young people with SEND, using data that the school collects

Questions to consider:

1. Are pupils doing better in certain subjects than others, e.g. is there better progress in reading than writing? Why is this?
2. Do pupils with a particular area of need do better than others, e.g. do pupils with specific learning difficulties make better progress than pupils with general learning difficulties? Why is this?
3. Are pupils in particular year groups doing better than others? Why is this?
4. What are the positive outcomes? Are there any issues that have been identified for further action?
5. How successful is your school in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND, so that they achieve good outcomes? How do you know?
6. If outcomes are not good, is this a resourcing issue (e.g. staff numbers, competence, CPD requirements, or classroom resources and equipment)?
7. What are the barriers to further improvement and even better outcomes for pupils with SEND? What actions could the governors take?

Activity 9

Scrutinising the school's analysis of attendance and suspensions and exclusions of children and young people with SEND

Questions to consider:

1. How does the attendance of pupils with SEND compare with the attendance of the school as a whole? If significantly lower, why is this?
2. How does the unauthorised absence rate compare with that of the school as a whole? If significantly higher, why is this?
3. How does the number of suspended or excluded pupils with SEND compare with that of all pupils?
4. What is the main area of need of pupils with SEND who are suspended or excluded, e.g. specific learning difficulty, SEMH? Does this inform future provision?
5. Are local authority procedures followed?

Activity 10

Finding out how the school allocates the budget for SEND

Questions to consider:

1. How effectively is the school using its SEN budget, including the Inclusive Mainstream Fund, to build a strong universal provision that embeds inclusion wellbeing, belonging and engagement?
2. How is the school deploying its SEN budget to support the delivery of early, evidence-based targeted support for those who need it, without the need for formal assessment or diagnosis?
3. Is the provision having a positive impact on attainment, progress in learning, wellbeing, belonging and engagement for all children and young people, especially those with SEND?
4. Is there sufficient time given to non-class-based tasks, e.g. preparation of resources, administration, review meetings, meeting/liaison time for teaching assistants?
5. How effective is support from external agencies?

Activity 11

Focused interview with a group of staff

Further questions:

1. When were SEND-related staff knowledge, confidence and skills last reviewed?
2. What were the outcomes of that review?
3. What training has been undertaken this year? What impact has it had?

Teaching Assistant (TA) Self-Reflection Tool

This self-reflection tool can be used by TAs to consider how they can embed the adaptations and reasonable adjustments described in Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance into their everyday classroom routine.

Providing high-quality provision	To what extent do I	Reflections
	 monitor and adapt the physical environment to meet the needs of all children and young people?	
	 understand the individual needs of children and young people that I support and know how to respond to them such as by referring to SEND written plans?	
	 adapt teaching in the moment using a range of scaffolding strategies to meet the needs of all children and young people, and to promote independence?	
	... provide opportunities for collaborative learning and peer support to ensure that children and young people with SEND are fully included in learning?	
Improving outcomes	To what extent do I	Reflections
	... develop a growing understanding of children and young people's needs including their strengths, starting points, and barriers to participation and learning?	
	... give regular and purposeful feedback to teachers about an individual's learning so they can evaluate the impact of provision?	
	... promote active engagement, positive relationships and wellbeing for all children and young people?	
	 ensure that all children and young people feel safe, and that their opinions and concerns are valued?	

Communicating with parents/carers and children and young people	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
	...listen to the views of children and young people, and encourage them to make decisions about their learning?	
	 contribute to information provided for parents/carers?	
Managing resources	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
	... ensure equipment and adapted resources are readily available to children and young people during a lesson?	
	use technology as a useful tool to support teaching?	
	 collaborate with teachers to integrate the strategies taught during an intervention into day-to-day teaching so that children and young people can sustain progress within the classroom?	
Collaborating with others	To what extent do I ...	Reflections
	... actively seek information from the SENCO or other professionals about children and young people to inform teaching and learning.	
	... actively share information with the SENCO or other professionals about children and young people to inform teaching and learning?	

Effective teacher - Teaching Assistant partnerships

A starting point for discussion



Education
Endowment
Foundation

This document shares a number of effective TA classroom practices, informed by the 52 research studies included in our systematic review. This document offers a starting point for discussions between a teacher and TA to inform their on-going communication and decision-making to support the learning of all pupils.

Agreeing expectations

Consider:

- The TAs position during the lesson, including whether they will assist specific pupils or move around to provide general prompts, allowing the teacher to focus on a targeted group.
- How to provide 'least support first' appropriate to the lesson - prompting, clueing, modelling or correcting as appropriate to pupils' needs – and which resources may be needed for this.

Possible actions for the teaching assistant

Supporting high-quality teaching and learning:

- Scribe key ideas/vocabulary on the class whiteboard during whole class input.
- Support all pupils to attend to the class teacher during whole class input.
- Circulate and prompt across the whole class so the teacher can provide support for target pupils/lead flexible groups.
- Note pupil progress and feedback to the teacher.
- Support pupils to consider their knowledge of the task they're doing, the strategies they should use and the personal qualities they need to show.
- Model correct use of visual, verbal or written scaffolds that support pupils' independence (e.g., a number line or vocabulary list), including through creating 'live scaffolds' (e.g., key words on a mini-whiteboard).
- Repeat key learning points and important vocabulary, to emphasise what needs to be learned.

Promoting social-emotional learning:

- Provide positive reinforcement of good behaviour.
- Redirect and respond to behaviour.
- Build supportive relationships with pupils.

Complementing high-quality teaching with carefully chosen interventions:

- Lead out-of-class interventions*.
- Pre-teach upcoming content or lead retrieval tasks with small groups.
- Provide 'same-day' targeted support to address misconceptions in preparation for future teaching.

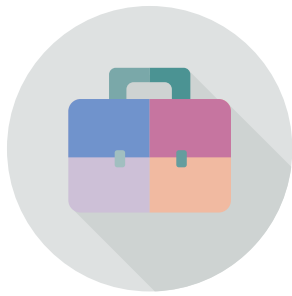
* Out-of-class interventions can remove pupils from high-quality teaching and peer interactions. When used, they should be linked to classroom learning, closely targeted to pupils' learning gaps and time-limited.



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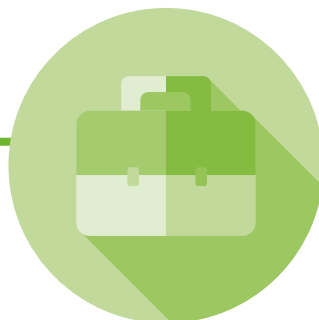
THE HERTFORDSHIRE SEND TOOLKIT



Collaborating with others

Contents:

- The principles of co-production
- Running effective meetings
- Planning effective transitions
- Making the most of the Local Offer
- Involving specialists
- Delivering Special Provision Locally (DSPL)
- The Virtual School
- Whole school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Children and Young People's Therapy Service
- Strategic leads for mental health in schools





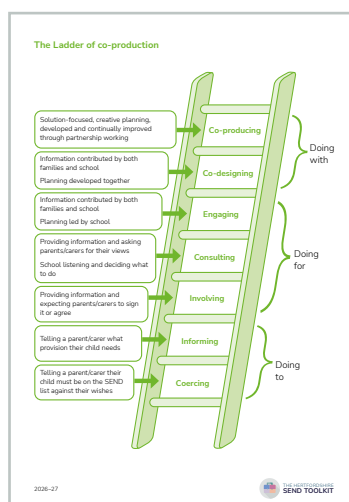
Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Principles of co-production

This toolkit has been produced through co-production – an equal partnership between parents/carers, local authority officers, schools and HFL Education SEND advisers. This has been a challenging, inspiring, spirited and ambitious project so far. Working together has brought different ways of seeing things, and a wide range of knowledge and experiences to the design, which have helped to make the final toolkit better.

The principles of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years encapsulate the importance of collaborative and partnership working. In great schools, co-production should be at the heart of policy and practice for children and young people with SEND.

Look at the Ladder of co-production and illustrative text alongside each rung. This is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter. What rung best describes current practice for children, young people and families in your school? Consider an aspect where this can be strengthened, or examples of where this is working well.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Running effective meetings

When arranging meetings, it is essential that they are productive and make good use of everyone's time. The meetings should be centred around the child or young person and their family, and be solution-focused.

Meetings should be run in a way that allows for honest and open discussions, which identify the needs of the child or young person, build on their strengths, overcome barriers, and plan for the future. Remember that even meetings with one parent/carers can need as much thought and planning as a meeting for a larger group.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

WHY

Meetings need to have a purpose, and this should be clear to all invitees when the meeting is arranged. It is important to outline what will be achieved by the end of the meeting too. This will help to keep the meeting on track.

WHO

Consider who you need to invite to the meeting and how you will know they are coming. It is also important that the child or young person's voice is heard within the meeting. You need to consider how this will be organised and whether or not the child or young person will attend all or some of the meeting.

WHAT

Ensure all those invited are clear about what will happen in the meeting, what their role will be and if any preparation is required.

WHERE

What flexibility is there around venue? Consider discussing this with the family to find out what is important to them. Ensure the venue offers privacy and dignity to the family.

WHEN

Check with the family that the timings are convenient and fit in with other arrangements.

Everyone attending the meeting should know all of the above.



Outcome 5. Collaborating with others



Practical arrangements to consider to ensure meetings run smoothly

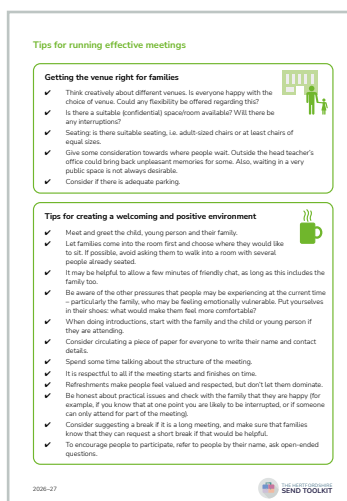
- ✓ When planning the date for the meeting, ensure you give everyone reasonable notice to attend.
- ✓ Are there any access issues to be resolved, e.g. physical access to the building, or access to the discussion if the parent/carer's first language is not English?
- ✓ Is any cover required to enable relevant people to attend?
- ✓ Some lead-in time (e.g. 15 minutes) could be factored in for a meeting that involves a large number of people, when people could arrive and have refreshments. When this happens, the meeting is more likely to start on time.
- ✓ Consider who is going to make tea/coffee (and ask this person in advance).
- ✓ Parents/carers may welcome some support with preparation for some meetings.
- ✓ How is a record going to be made of what is discussed and agreed, and who is going to do this? Will this person be able to take an active part in the meeting? How will any notes be circulated afterwards and who will do this?





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

It is important to make sure meetings run smoothly and are effective. A helpful guide to running effective meetings is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Planning effective transitions

How should I support children and young people to cope with change?

Transition is not just about major changes that occur throughout life. Many transitions occur in schools and settings during a typical day or week or term, including:

- ✓ **changing from one activity to another**
- ✓ **moving from one room to another**
- ✓ **moving from break time back to lesson time**
- ✓ **changing from one year group to another**

However, the transition between phases of education – notably Early Years to primary, primary to secondary, secondary to post-16 provision, and even on to higher education – is a particularly high risk point for children and young people with SEND.

This section offers guidance and further reading suggestions for when children and young people with SEND move between settings or schools, or on to other providers.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Working together

Essential to the success of transition planning is working closely with the child or young person and their family. This will ensure that any information to be shared, and support to be put in place, are agreed together. The plan may also offer additional opportunities for reassurance and practice at home.

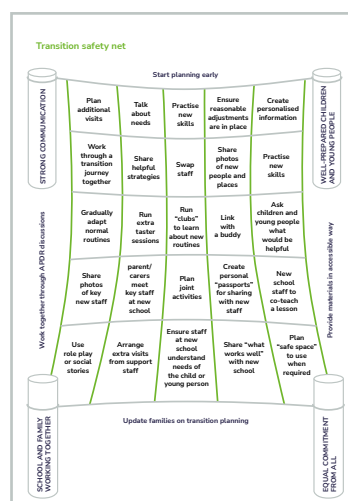
Involving the child or young person in the planning and preparation for transition helps them to identify small achievable steps along the transition journey. Using the discussions within the assess, plan, do and review cycle offers opportunities for them to share any concerns and to explore ideas for overcoming these.



Well-prepared children and young people

Transitions must be thoughtfully planned so the child or young person has time to prepare for the changes. It is important to offer a range of practical strategies and support in order to establish which of these would work well for the child or young person.

It may be helpful to share the ideas within the Transition safety net tool available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Strong communication

Feeder schools and settings have an important role in sharing the right information at the right time. This will ensure that the staff in the receiving school understand the needs of the child or young person, and will have plenty of time to plan how they will meet those needs, through the reasonable adjustments, adaptations, and practical strategies that work well for them.

Some schools or settings share person-centred information such as pupil passports or one-page profiles. It may be helpful to explore and use the person-centred format of the new school so it will be in place and understood by staff within the receiving school. This may include the function within Valuing (VSEND) to share a child or young person's Needs Profile with another setting.



Remember

Check with the child or young person and their family before sharing information with the receiving school or other provider.



Equal commitment from both feeder and receiving schools/settings, as well as from other providers

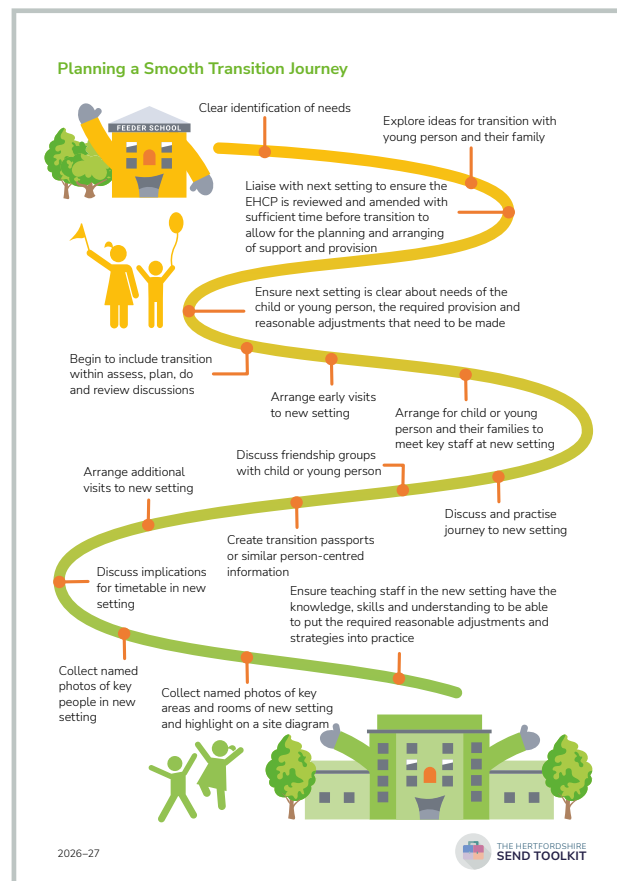
A smooth transition will benefit not only the child or young person with SEND, but also their peers, teachers and families too.

Effective partnership working between the feeder and receiving schools/settings will lead to the best transitions. However hard one school strives to get a plan in place, the outcome will be determined by the cohesion of the two schools or settings working together.



Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

The **transition journey** below shows the ideal partnership between feeder and receiving schools or settings, and is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Moving from Early Years settings into primary school

The vast majority of children and young people look forward to moving on in learning and in life, but for some children, transitions can be challenging. When transitions work well, children and young people move between settings acquiring skills and the confidence to manage future changes in their lives. Positive conversations between settings, families and schools can help transitions to be more successful. Some children and young people with SEND may need particular help, including from other professionals, to ensure that their transition is as smooth as possible.



Hertfordshire's supporting smooth transitions is designed to enable early identification and support for all children and young people, particularly those with potential barriers to learning.



The materials and resources will be helpful for settings and their families with the transition process, from pre-school into the nursery or reception class.



To access the smooth transitions resources, please see the link in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Transition between schools

Moving on from one school to another can be stressful for any child or young person. However, this time can be even more challenging for those with SEND. During this period in their lives, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years makes it clear that SEN support should include additional planning and preparation for changes ahead. A smooth transition can make a major difference to a child or young person's future success.



Ref. 6.57





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Transition from school to post-16 provision

In Year 11, schools should work alongside the child or young person and their family to firm-up plans for their post-16 options and familiarise them with their expected new setting. It is also helpful to discuss what to do if the plans change.



Ref. 8.22

To prepare the child or young person for a change in educational setting, schools should work with the young person and their family, and the further education college or other post-16 provider, to ensure that their chosen setting has a good understanding of what the child or young person's aspirations are and how they would like to be supported.

Transition from post-16 provision to higher education

Schools should ensure that any young person with a learning difficulty, medical condition or disability is well prepared for university application and admission.

Schools should signpost the young person and family to the university disability advisory service, which will be open during the university open days. The advisers will be able to answer many questions about meeting the needs of the young person and explore possible reasonable adjustments that could be made for the young person on admission.

In addition, when young people are applying for student finances, schools should signpost them to the information available about Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs). How much a young person would receive depends on their individual needs, not on their household income, and is available for both full-time and part-time courses.

The link for further information on Disabled Students' Allowances is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Hertfordshire's SEND Local Offer website

The Local Offer lets families, professionals, children and young people know what special educational needs and disabilities services are available in Hertfordshire, and who can access them.



What can you find on the Local Offer?

- ✓ Education
- ✓ Money
- ✓ Early Years (ages 0 – 5)
- ✓ Preparing for Adulthood (post-16 support)
- ✓ The education and health offer for children and young people according to broad area of need
- ✓ Support for families and social care
- ✓ A self-help resource area
- ✓ Courses, support groups and activities for children and young people



How do I find Hertfordshire's Local Offer?

You can visit Hertfordshire's Local Offer on the website by clicking the link in the **Tools and references** section.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Ask SALI

The SEND Advice Line for Inclusion or Ask SALI, is a phoneline for SENCOs and other school professionals to call and get advice about meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in their school.

This service should help you to meet children and young people's needs much earlier and might mean that they may not need more high-level support in the future.

What could SENCOs contact Ask SALI to discuss?

- ✓ Being unsure of what the next steps are for a child or young person
- ✓ Being unsure of what's available to meet a particular need
- ✓ Wanting to know what else to do to support a or young person or young person in their school
- ✓ Wanting to test their thinking and talk through options
- ✓ Wanting advice on supporting a child at risk of exclusion





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

When should schools involve specialists?

As part of the SEND reforms, one of the seven principles of inclusion is: strong partnerships with families and wider services. This means strengthening relationships, working in partnership to support children and young people, sharing information and plans for provision.



Ref. 6.58

Schools may involve specialists at any point to advise them on early identification of SEND and effective support and interventions. As part of the government's SEND reforms, a new Experts at Hand service is being launched from September 2026. This offer will help to identify needs earlier and make sure children and young people receive the best possible support in their everyday educational environments. Experts at Hand works by bringing health and education experts like educational psychologists, specialist teachers and speech and language therapists directly into mainstream settings, working closely with teachers and staff. Children and young people will not need a diagnosis to access support. To find out more about what Experts at Hand year 1 will look like use the links to DfE guidance in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



Experts at Hand is a core pillar of the SEND reform, but it does not replace existing statutory duties. Instead, it is intended to build on what is already in place.

Support on a Page directories

Hertfordshire have co-produced a series of service directories, known as Support on a Page, to help parents/carers and professionals find the services that are available to support a child or young person's educational needs.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

These directories provide clear, accessible and concise information to help find the right level of support. Support on a Page directories can be found for speech, language, and communication needs, neurodiversity, learning difficulties, deafness and sight loss, physical needs, mental health and behaviours that challenge. Please find a link to the documents in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.

A school should consider involving a specialist where a child or young person continues to:

- **make little or no progress**
- **work at levels substantially below those expected of pupils of a similar age, despite evidence-based SEN support delivered by appropriately trained staff**

The child or young person's parents/carers should always be part of any decision to involve specialists.

Where assessment information indicates that support from other services would be helpful, it is important that children and young people receive it as quickly as possible.



Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

The school should record any involvement from specialists, including the outcomes to be achieved and the date by which progress will be reviewed. These should be shared with the parents/carers and teaching staff supporting the child or young person.



Access to Education for Refugees and Travellers: The team supports families to access appropriate education for their children.

Attendance: Local authority attendance officers (LAAO) work directly with children and young people, their families and schools, assessing difficulties and helping to develop practices and strategies to improve children and young people's participation in education. Their central team carries out statutory functions in relation to children of compulsory school age, including children missing education and elective home education, as well as advising on school-age employment matters and issuing performance licences.



Early Years SEND: This team support children aged 0–7 with a range of SEND, following a multi-professional approach with families at the centre. The EYS SEND Team work in partnership with families and setting staff to provide advice for individual children, inclusive practice guidance for EYFS cohorts and training on a range of SEND needs, such as, autism and Therapeutic Approaches to Behaviour in the Early Years. The team also provide modelling and coaching support for professionals in Early Years settings and schools to develop skills and confidence to use techniques and interventions to understand and meet the educational needs of the child.

Education Support Team for medical absence: The team supports children and young people who are unable to attend school temporarily because of medical reasons.

Educational Psychology service: This service helps schools, settings and families to understand and manage a wide range of developmental issues and special educational needs. They use psychological based approaches to assess and intervene to enhance





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

the learning, emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people aged 0-25 years.

Hertfordshire's Emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA) framework is a comprehensive, early-intervention tool designed to support schools in understanding and addressing the complex emotional factors behind reduced school attendance.

This practical guide empowers educators, families, and professionals to work collaboratively using a structured “Assess, Plan, Do, Review” approach. With a strong focus on child or young people’s voice, relational strategies, and inclusive practices, the framework offers actionable insights and resources to help children and young people re-engage with education and thrive in school environments.

Speech, Language, Communication and Autism (SLCA) Team:

Provides specialist advice, training and interventions for children and young people with needs relating to social communication, autism, and/or speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), without the requirement for diagnosis, predominately at a Targeted Plus and Specialist level/Specialist Plus level, including a broad autism and ADHD training offer across Universal to Specialist level.



Statutory School Exclusion Team:

This has two primary responsibilities.

Firstly, under the Fair Access Protocol (The School Admissions Code 2014) the team is responsible for children and young people who are likely to place a significantly higher demand on the resources of a school and who are likely to present challenging behaviour.

This may include:

- Children and young people attending Pupil Referral Units (referred to in Hertfordshire as Education Support Centres) who need to be reintegrated back into mainstream education
- Children and young people withdrawn from schools by their families following suspensions and unable to find another place





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

- Children and young people returning from the criminal justice system
- Children and young people who are at serious but not imminent risk of permanent exclusion

When a child or young person is at risk of permanent exclusion or has been permanently excluded, the team supports all parties to know what options are available to them, will negotiate and ensure next steps in the child or young person's education and will act as the local authority representative at Governors Disciplinary Committee meetings and Independent Review Panels.

The team also has responsibility for negotiating managed moves under the Fair Access Protocol and collaborating with other professionals to ensure the appropriate support is in place to enable success. As part of this, the team operates Inclusion Panels which bring together several professionals to find solutions for children and young people's education.

SEND Specialist Advisory Service (SEND SAS): Provides specialist advice, whole school support and modelling of strategies and interventions. It also provides a range of training to ensure children and young people have access to learning within their school/setting.

- **Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI) Team:** Provides highly specialist advice and support for individual children and young people with a physical and/or neurological impairment requiring support in our mainstream schools including a broad training offer in PNI.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

- **Deaf and Hearing Support Service (DHSS), Vision Impairment (VI) Team, and Multi-sensory Impairment Team (deafblindness):** Provides highly specialist advice and support for individual children and young people with sensory impairments. The teams also provide support to parents in home settings for newly diagnosed babies with a sensory impairment.
- **Cognition and Learning Team:** Are mainly providing a training offer to schools and settings to support the learning needs of children and young people with persistent literacy and numeracy difficulties and a teaching offer for children missing education (CME). The team also provides some early intervention support to children with cognition and learning needs that are at risk of permanent exclusion.



Relational Practice: This approach has been adopted as Hertfordshire's preferred model for supporting emotional wellbeing, behaviour, and inclusion in schools. This is grounded on the understanding that positive relationships are central to learning, behaviour, and wellbeing. It encourages schools to:

- Prioritise connection over correction
- Use restorative practices to resolve conflict and repair harm
- Create safe, nurturing environments where all pupils feel valued and understood
- Promote collaborative problem-solving between staff, pupils, and families





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire: is a relational approach to positive behaviour management. The Therapeutic Thinking approach is based on the following principles:

- a shared focus on inclusion of all children and young people within their educational settings
- a shared set of values and beliefs
- a shared commitment to diversion and de-escalation
- shared risk management
- shared reparation, reflection and restoration

See the link in the **Tools and references** section to contact one of the local authority SEND services.

Special School Outreach

Hertfordshire's Outreach service is delivered by teachers who are teaching daily in special schools and can offer practical advice, modelling and interventions that ensure children and young people with education, health and care plans (EHCP) are receiving learning adapted to support them in the mainstream classroom. In addition, they are able to offer in reach so mainstream staff can observe, develop strategies and resources that will meet the needs of children and young people with cognition and learning needs.

The Service can also provide whole school training.

SENCOs should contact the school providing outreach in their own DSPL area for further information.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others



Delivering Special Provision Locally

Delivering Special Provision Locally (DSPL) is a Hertfordshire-wide partnership approach, which responds to local need. It provides a range of support across the county for children and young people with SEND. The nine DSPL areas support schools to:

- ✓ **meet the needs of children and young people with SEND as close to home as possible**
- ✓ **improve outcomes for wellbeing and attainment**
- ✓ **widen choice for children, young people and families**
- ✓ **remove barriers to learning**
- ✓ **use resources effectively**



Each area works with:

- ✓ **families**
- ✓ **schools**
- ✓ **representatives from other agencies**



Further information and contact details for each DSPL area group can be found on the Local Offer. The link is available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years highlights particular groups of children and young people whose specific circumstances require additional consideration by those who work with them and support their special educational needs.



Ref. 10.1

Evidence shows that Children Looked After and Children Previously Looked After are more likely to have some form of special educational needs than their peers, and it is likely that a significant proportion of them will have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. In addition, they may have suffered disrupted learning and may have missed extended periods of school. The gaps in their learning, and in many cases the emotional impact of their experiences, are likely to have become significant barriers to their progress.



**What is a
virtual school?**

The Hertfordshire Virtual School is not a teaching institution but a way of bringing together the information about Children Looked After as if they were in a single school, so that their progress is tracked and intervention can be targeted in a strategic way. It also offers advice and information to schools, colleges and educational settings about improving the inclusion and educational attainment of Children Previously Looked After and Children With a Social Worker.



In September 2024, the Virtual School took on responsibility for monitoring and reducing the number of Hertfordshire children who are missing education and who are electively home educated.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

The Virtual School

- ✓ champions the needs of Children Looked After by Hertfordshire and educated inside the county or in other local authorities
- ✓ ensures that Children Looked After have the best possible education and every chance to realise potential
- ✓ offers tailored personal education plans (PEPs), including the small steps PEP, identifying and funding interventions to raise attainment and aspirations for the future
- ✓ robustly tracks cohort trends and targets resources effectively to promote achievement
- ✓ focuses on the “narrowing the gap” agenda
- ✓ provides advice and guidance to promote the educational attainment of Children Previously Looked After, Children with a Social Worker and Children in Kinship Care
- ✓ promotes, at a strategic level, the educational attainment for all children and young people with a social worker

A link to the Hertfordshire Virtual School can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others



Schools will want to ensure they have robust systems that focus on whether Children Looked After, Children Previously Looked After and children with a social worker:

- ✓ have SEND, and whether those needs are being identified and met
- ✓ have mental health needs, and whether those needs are being identified and met
- ✓ are supported effectively by the behaviour policy of the educational setting which needs to be based on kind and supportive relationships and understands that behaviour is communication
- ✓ are specifically considered to ensure that their teaching and learning needs are met and that this is reflected in school policies and resource allocation e.g. targeted interventions using pupil premium and pupil premium plus
- ✓ have comprehensive and up-to-date SEN records which evidence the child or young person's strengths, needs, interventions, targets and academic and other progress



Ref. 6.80





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Designated teachers and designated safeguarding leads should:

- ✓ have a working knowledge of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, as it relates to Children Looked After.
- ✓ work closely with the child or young person's social worker (in close consultation with the Virtual School) as they will ultimately make any educational decision on the child or young person's behalf.
- ✓ develop strong partnerships with the child or young person's carer, as they have the day-to-day responsibility for taking decisions.
- ✓ have the skills to identify signs of potential special educational needs, and know how to access further assessment and support where necessary, making full use of the SENCO and other local authority services where applicable.
- ✓ work with other professionals, to consider how written plans add to information about how education, health and care needs will be met, without duplicating information already in a child or young person's care plan or PEP.
- ✓ when necessary, ensure a child or young person's personal education plan (PEP) works in harmony with their EHC plan to, coherently and comprehensively, set out how their needs are being met.
- ✓ when necessary, arrange the annual review meeting, if possible and appropriate, to coincide with one of the reviews in the care plan (This could be done as part of the review of a child or young person's PEP, which feeds into the review of the wider care plan).



Ref.
10.9 and
10.11





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Children Looked After, Children Previously Looked After and those with a social worker are more likely to experience the challenge of social, emotional and mental health issues.

Designated teachers and designated safeguarding leads have an important role in ensuring they work closely with other school staff, such as the SENCO and mental health lead, to identify potential issues and understand where the school can draw on specialist services, such as the Virtual School, CAMHS and educational psychology services.

In addition, using the Iceberg Analysis tool in the **Providing high-quality provision** chapter will reduce the risk of danger in only seeing the manifestation of behaviour rather than exploring possible underlying causes.



Effective schools are attachment-aware and trauma-informed, understanding the impact of attachment disorders on a child or young person's emotional development and learning. A toolkit, designed to enable schools to adopt a whole-school approach to identifying and supporting children and young people with attachment difficulties, is available on the Virtual School website.



Designated teachers, designated safeguarding leads and SENCOs may find it helpful to refer to DfE guidance with respect to supporting Children Looked After, Children Previously Looked After and those with a social worker. The links to these can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others



The Emotional and Mental Wellbeing in Education (EMWiE) Team

The Emotional and Mental Wellbeing in Education (EMWiE) team sits within the Integrated Health and Care Commissioning Team (IHCCT); the joint Mental Health commissioning team in the Council that works on behalf of Hertfordshire County Council and the Central East Integrated Care Board (ICB). The EMWiE team supports all education providers through Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Further Education to develop and deliver a Whole School College Approach (WSCA) to mental health and emotional wellbeing.

In addition, the EMWiE team have provided input to the local authority's Emotional Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy ensuring an integrated approach and informing principles of a consistent, graduated response countywide.

To support the WSCA, the EMWiE team have developed an Emotional Mental Wellbeing in Schools Mark process; a framework to support education settings to reflect upon, measure and enhance their emotional wellbeing offer to students and staff.

The EMWiE team are also responsible for the development and expansion of Mental Health Support Teams across Hertfordshire; an early help offer within educational settings for children and young people with mild to moderate emotional wellbeing concerns and also a non-targeted approach to preventing mental health needs escalating. The teams also work with Mental Health Leads in educational settings to plan workshops, assemblies and support for





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

staff across the academic year. They also have a dedicated SEND MHST who support students and staff in special schools across Hertfordshire and in some mainstream schools where SEND needs are high.

Mental Health Lead role

It is recommended that all Hertfordshire schools have a nominated Mental Health Lead within their setting, to support the WSCA.

Mental Health Leads' training is available to all education settings in Hertfordshire and aims to provide Mental Health Leads with the tools to plan and action a whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing. It is delivered by the EMWiE team and supported by Public Health. To book a place on the training please email schoolsmh@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Courses are available throughout the year and following the completion of the training a Mental Health Leads' toolkit is provided.

Mental Health Leads will also be kept up to date and given the opportunity to book onto thematic workshops and webinars that will support continued learning and emotional mental wellbeing in education awareness.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Whole-school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health

All Hertfordshire school settings can access support from the EMWiE team for signposting support and resources to ensure children and young people have the information on how to access information on tools and strategies to support self-resilience and access to wider services to support their emotional and mental wellbeing needs as relevant.

Whole-school approaches



The Emotional Mental Wellbeing in Schools Mark enables all Hertfordshire schools to achieve recognition for their contribution, as well as celebrating areas of success that schools are implementing to support mental health and wellbeing within their own setting.

For more information regarding the Emotional Mental Wellbeing in Schools Mark please contact the EMWiE team using the link in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Waiting Well: strategies for Senior Mental Health Leads

'Waiting Well' refers to a set of approaches and strategies designed for Senior Mental Health Leads to use when working alongside staff to support children and young people in the classroom, while they await access to formal mental health services.

The strategies aim to provide immediate and effective support during the interim periods when children and young people may be on waiting lists emphasising proactive measures such as:

- ✓ promoting resilience
- ✓ fostering positive relationships
- ✓ maintaining a supportive environment
- ✓ facilitating access to appropriate tools in educational settings.

They are essential in supporting the impact of waiting times on children and young people's mental health and well-being, ensuring they receive necessary adaptations throughout their mental health journey.

A helpful set of strategies can be found in the Waiting Well document in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Children and Young People's Therapy Service



The Children and Young People's Therapy Service is an integrated service for children and young people in Hertfordshire providing:

- ✓ Speech and Language Therapy
- ✓ Physiotherapy
- ✓ Occupational Therapy

The integrated therapies service delivers holistic support and advice for children and young people from 0-18 years of age with multidisciplinary working across the three clinical therapy professions. The Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy teams also support young people up to 25 years of age, when therapy provision is specified in section F or specified to access the curriculum in their setting in their Hertfordshire EHCP.

The service focuses on maximising children and young people's functional skills and abilities to support them to be happy, healthy, safe and independent at home and in school.

Therapy teams work with children and young people within early years settings, mainstream schools, specialist educational settings, colleges, home or clinics across Hertfordshire:

- North Hertfordshire and Stevenage CYPT Team (DSPL 1 and 2)
- East Hertfordshire CYPT Team (DSPL 3, 4 and 5)
- St Albans and Dacorum CYPT Team (DSPL 7 and 8)
- Watford and Three Rivers CYPT Team (DSPL 6 and 9)





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

The Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy Service has produced a short helpful video. The link can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of the chapter.



Speech and Language Therapy



The Children and Young People's Speech and Language Therapy service offers a child-and family-centred approach to support children and young people with speech, language, communication needs (SLCN) and those with eating and drinking difficulties.

Speech and Language Therapy in Hertfordshire follows a three-tier model of service delivery.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Speech and Language Therapy Education Leads are the key point of contact for schools and work alongside community speech and language therapists. They are specialist Speech and Language Therapists with a focus on improving the links between education and health.

Education Leads work closely with schools, other professionals, families and education stakeholders within each DSPL area to better understand and support local need.

Occupational Therapy

The Occupational Therapy service offer a 3-tiered model of service delivery.



The Children and Young Person's Occupational Therapy service offers a child and family-centred approach to support children and young people with their independence in all aspects of daily living, such as self-feeding, dressing and participating in play and school activities.

They work in partnership with parents/carers and other colleagues to promote positive outcomes using a range of approaches tailored to each child or young person and their family. This can be achieved through individual assessments, treatment, advice, training and multi-agency working.

Support may include the provision of an activity plan, specialist equipment, treatment sessions or training to parents, carers and school staff. The service in Hertfordshire also provides assessment and advice on adaptations to the child or young person's home or school environments to meet their specific needs.

Useful resources are available for families and people who work with children and young people including general advice on common difficulties in everyday activities including dressing, ball skills, using a pencil, sensory processing and school strategies.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

Physiotherapy

The Children and Young People's Physiotherapy service offers a child and family centred approach to children and young people, from 0-18 years of age, who are registered with a GP in Hertfordshire and who have a physical disability or condition impacting on their development and functional daily activities at home or in school.

The Children's Physiotherapy service is a specialist team providing services to promote health and preserve and improve the best possible functional level of the child or young person. Physiotherapy can be advice or a hands-on approach to ensure the child or young person is optimally positioned to carry out activities and exercises. In addition, they can make recommendations for specialist equipment to support mobility or posture.

The team can provide assessment, treatment, rehabilitation, education and advice for children and young people with physical difficulties or conditions which impact on their physical development including:

- Genetic conditions like neuromuscular disorders
- Injury or illness such as a brain injury
- Long term conditions like cerebral palsy
- Developmental difficulties

They can provide advice on:

- ✓ Posture
- ✓ Mobility
- ✓ Pain management
- ✓ Motor coordination difficulties
- ✓ Gait
- ✓ Physical development delay



Further information can be found in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

How do schools and families access support from the CYP Therapy Services?

If a child or young person is in full-time education, parents/carers and school should meet together to discuss initial concerns as part of the early identification process. Some children can be supported through the school's provision and the Children and Young Person's Therapy service's universal offer without requiring a referral to the service.



An advice line which parents/carers and professionals can call to speak to a therapist about a child or young person's is available on weekdays:

01923 470680 option 3.



All referrals for speech and language therapy and occupational therapy should be made via the online referral form available in the **Tools and references** section at the end of this chapter.



Please note: referrals for physiotherapy must be made by a health professional including GPs.





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others

What is Families First?

Families First is the term used in Hertfordshire for services that work together to support families who need extra help. These are also known as early help services. Evidence tells us that families with children and young people with SEND may benefit from more support for the whole family, this is where the Families First approach may help.



Who is it for?

Families First is available to all Hertfordshire families with children and young people under 18 (25 if they have a learning need or disability).

Families First can help families with:

- ✓ parenting.
- ✓ mental and physical health problems.
- ✓ drug or alcohol dependency.
- ✓ domestic abuse.
- ✓ school related concerns – such as your child is not attending school.
- ✓ debt problems.
- ✓ risk of becoming homeless.
- ✓ young carers.
- ✓ parental conflict.

There are different types of help available:

- ✓ Self-help parenting advice – via the website.
- ✓ Coordinated support for a family's individual needs, which might include advice, signposting to helpful organisations or a Families First assessment.



Outcome 5. Collaborating with others



Tools and references

Tools:

Ladder of co-production

Tips for running effective meetings

Transition safety net

Transition journey

Waiting Well: Strategies for Senior Mental Health Leads

Children and Young People's Therapy service - useful websites

Useful references:

- Contact a Hertfordshire SEND service
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/contact-a-send-service.aspx>
- Delivering Special Provision Locally (DSPL)
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/education-support/delivering-special-provision-locally-dspl.aspx>
- Hertfordshire Emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA) framework
<https://thegrid.org.uk/admissions-attendance-travel-to-school/attendance/emotionally-based-school-non-attendance>
- Mental health and behaviour in schools
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>





Outcome 5. Collaborating with others



Tools and references

- Hertfordshire emotional wellbeing and mental health
<https://thegrid.org.uk/wellbeing/wellbeing-and-mental-health/whole-school-approach>
- Hertfordshire Local Offer
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- Early Years transition project: “Supporting smooth transitions”
<https://www.hertsforlearning.co.uk/leadership-and-management/early-years-improvement-services/transition-project>
- Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSAs) website
<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>
- UCAS Disabled Student Allowance Information
<https://www.ucas.com/finance/additional-funding/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>
- Contact the Emotional Mental Wellbeing Education (EMWiE) Team
email: schoolsmh@hertfordshire.gov.uk
- Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children, DfE
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-looked-after-children--2>





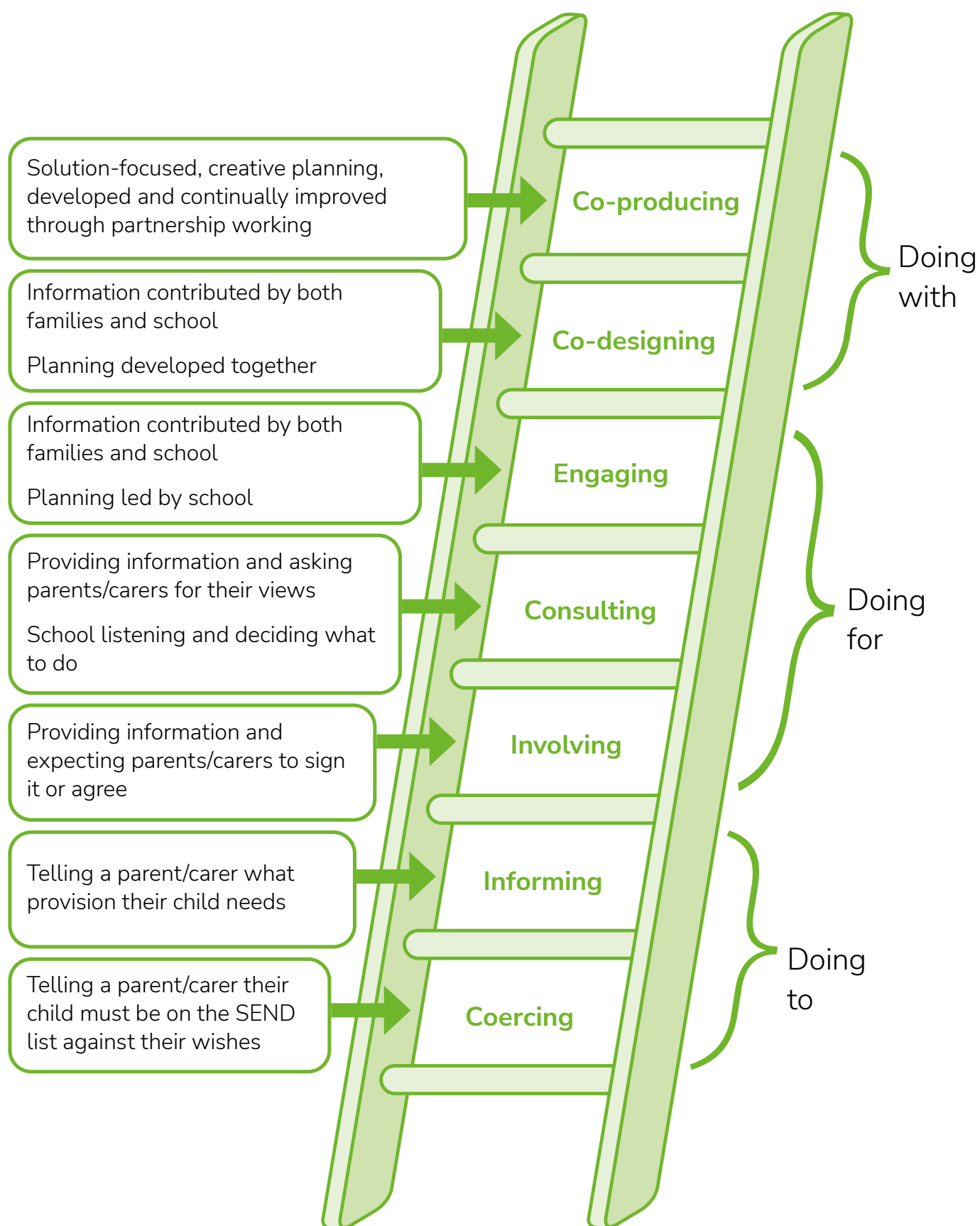
Outcome 5. Collaborating with others



Tools and references

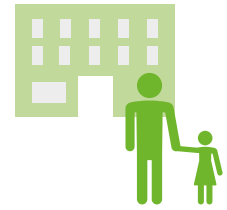
- The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children, DfE 2018
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>
- Hertfordshire Virtual School website
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/virtualschool
- Children and Young People Therapy Services Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMqZrdNpMUU>
- Children and Young People's Integrated Therapy service offer:
<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n456.pdf&ver=579>
- Speech and Language Therapy service information and training offer
<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/-children-and-young-people-speech-and-language-therapy-training>
- Hertfordshire Families First
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/families-first/families-first.aspx>
- Relational Practice; a Hertfordshire approach
<https://thegrid.org.uk/wellbeing/behaviour/relational-practice-a-hertfordshire-approach>
- Experts at Hand: what those leading and working in mainstream settings need to know
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-send-reform-developing-the-experts-at-hand-offer/experts-at-hand-what-those-leading-and-working-in-mainstream-settings-need-to-know>

The Ladder of co-production



Tips for running effective meetings

Getting the venue right for families



- ✓ Think creatively about different venues. Is everyone happy with the choice of venue. Could any flexibility be offered regarding this?
- ✓ Is there a suitable (confidential) space/room available? Will there be any interruptions?
- ✓ Seating: is there suitable seating, i.e. adult-sized chairs or at least chairs of equal sizes.
- ✓ Give some consideration towards where people wait. Outside the head teacher's office could bring back unpleasant memories for some. Also, waiting in a very public space is not always desirable.
- ✓ Consider if there is adequate parking.

Tips for creating a welcoming and positive environment



- ✓ Meet and greet the child, young person and their family.
- ✓ Let families come into the room first and choose where they would like to sit. If possible, avoid asking them to walk into a room with several people already seated.
- ✓ It may be helpful to allow a few minutes of friendly chat, as long as this includes the family too.
- ✓ Be aware of the other pressures that people may be experiencing at the current time – particularly the family, who may be feeling emotionally vulnerable. Put yourselves in their shoes: what would make them feel more comfortable?
- ✓ When doing introductions, start with the family and the child or young person if they are attending.
- ✓ Consider circulating a piece of paper for everyone to write their name and contact details.
- ✓ Spend some time talking about the structure of the meeting.
- ✓ It is respectful to all if the meeting starts and finishes on time.
- ✓ Refreshments make people feel valued and respected, but don't let them dominate.
- ✓ Be honest about practical issues and check with the family that they are happy (for example, if you know that at one point you are likely to be interrupted, or if someone can only attend for part of the meeting).
- ✓ Consider suggesting a break if it is a long meeting, and make sure that families know that they can request a short break if that would be helpful.
- ✓ To encourage people to participate, refer to people by their name, ask open-ended questions.

Tips for creating a welcoming and positive environment (continued)

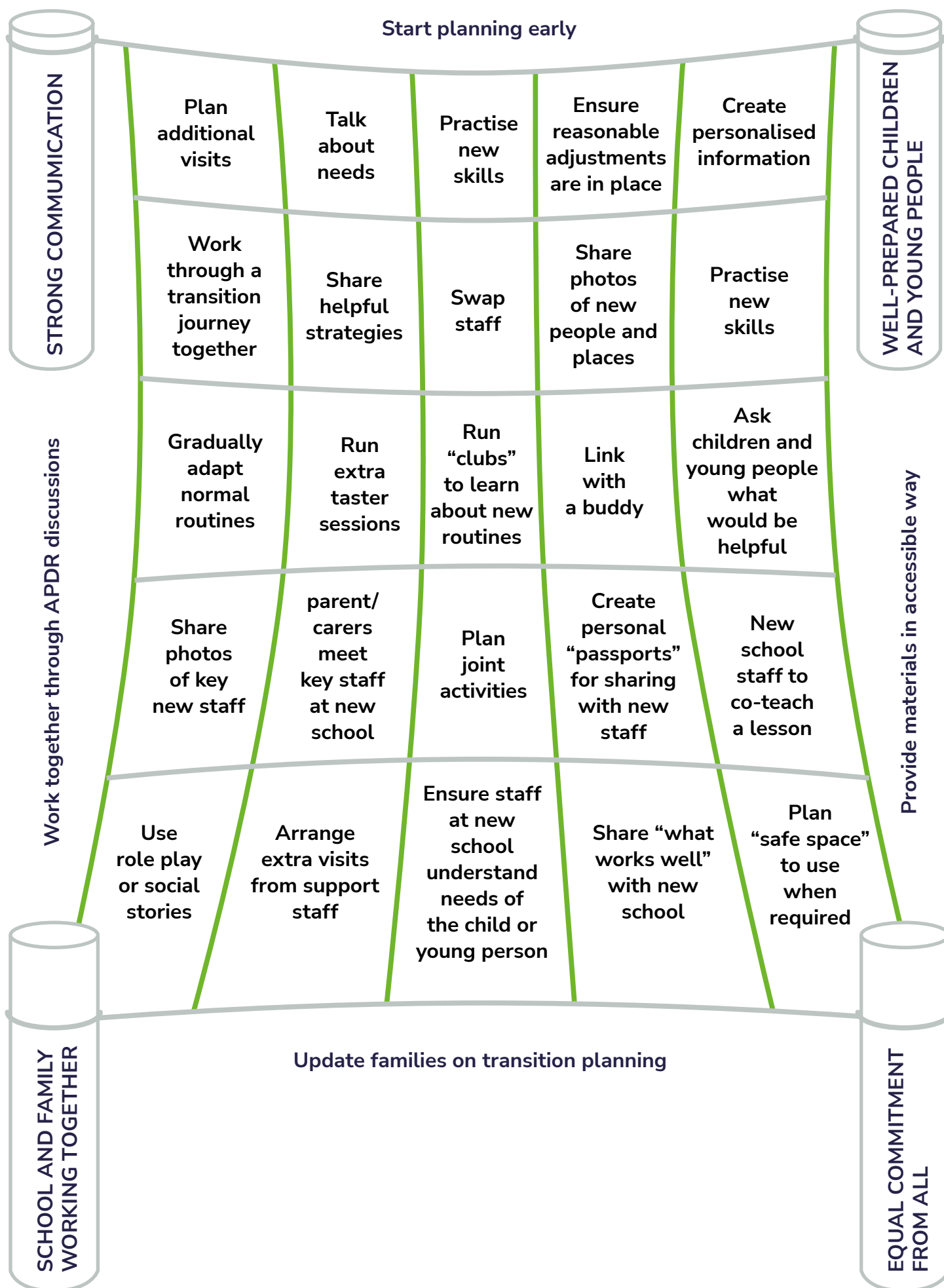
- ✓ Give families some warning that a question or query may be asked, by saying things like, "It would be good to hear your views on ...", "in a few minutes, after we have discussed ...", etc. This gives them more time to prepare their answer.
- ✓ Show families, and child or young person if attending, through your actions, posture and warm and welcoming smiles and nods that you are actively listening to their response and expect everyone else to do similar.
- ✓ Always thank people for their contribution.
- ✓ It can be useful to have a box of tissues available.
- ✓ Try to ensure additional conversations that don't include the family only take place after the meeting has finished. If you need to stay and talk about something else or fix diary dates, then let the family know that this is what you are doing.

The meeting process

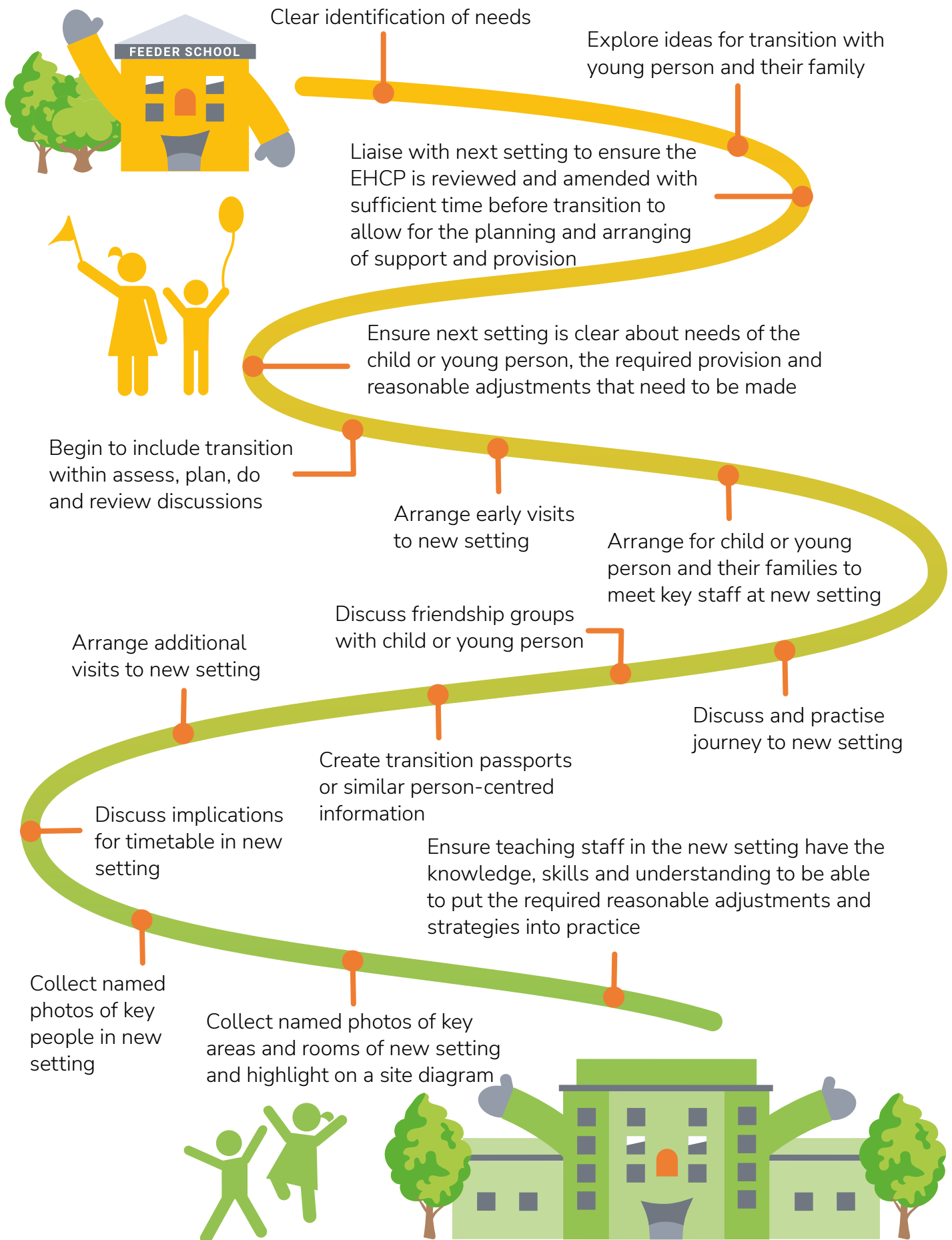


- ✓ Who will be facilitator/chair? It is helpful to explain this role at the start of the meeting. It is this person's responsibility to make sure the process of the meeting runs as smoothly as possible.
- ✓ Consider having an agenda, depending on the nature of the meeting. This should be agreed with those attending, especially the family. Some people find it helpful to have this on paper or on a flipchart, so that everyone has a visual reminder of the structure. When people are sharing views, consider the most appropriate sequence in which to do this. There should be no shocks/surprises for the family.
- ✓ Make sure that all items are covered, and the structure is adhered to; that everyone has the opportunity to participate, particularly the family and child or young person if attending. If you run out of time and there are items/issues left not covered, consider how to address this.
(A second, smaller meeting may be appropriate.)
- ✓ It is helpful for all for the discussion and outcomes/actions to be summarised. Check who is going to do what by when.
- ✓ Agreed actions/outcomes are usually at the end. Make sure there is adequate time for these.
- ✓ It is respectful to have an end time (double-check that this is OK with everyone) and stick to this.
- ✓ Allow time to fix another meeting date if needed.
- ✓ Always finish on a positive tone, however challenging the agenda, reminding everyone of the value of sharing information and arriving at an agreed way forward.

Transition safety net



Planning a Smooth Transition Journey



Waiting Well: strategies for supporting regulation of behaviours

	What	How
PRE	Develop strong connection with pupil	2x10 Relationship building
	Understand pupil and their context/journey	Working with pastoral team and Senior Mental Health Lead to understand context of child
	Identify protected space that pupil can choose to go to Create 'toolbox' of items the pupil finds help with regulating. Understand how a pupil's behaviour manifests and what might happen when dysregulated. Agree phrases/ hand signals/ communication method staff and pupil to use when feels or is noticed becoming dysregulated	Discuss with pupil and/or family to identify wand create. Ensure all staff are aware of processes that will be used with this pupil. Record all key information in a concise short written plan.
	Establish quick information sharing process	Agree with family, pupil, and Senior Mental Health Lead, how any evening/morning incident can be quickly communicated between home and school so staff are aware and can make any adjustments to support pupil
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT	Maintain consistency and predictability	Clear routines and expectations are explicitly taught and modelled regularly.
	Use visual cues to reinforce predictability of the day e.g. timetable and staff.	Include a CHANGE image to demonstrate there will be an unexpected change to the usual and expected timetable. Any changes pre-arranged need to be communicated with pupil in preparation for that lesson/day.
	Consider seating arrangements in the classroom	Identify appropriate places for pupil to sit – near door/ teacher/ support staff etc. Maintain routines around where pupils sit.
	Provide access to equipment	Ensure pupil has easy access to own equipment, if necessary and can be marked as 'theirs'
	Establish exit routine	Ensure a clear path from pupil's seat/carpet space to the door (that doesn't take them around lots of tables) to enable them to leave the classroom safely if dysregulated

	What	How
CRISIS POINT	Use concise scripted language or visual cues that offer choice. Understand what can and will be 'heard'	Agreed language or signs for adults to use to direct pupil to identified space or a different area. Give 2 clear choices about where pupil can go – one being identified space outside or away from classroom. Ensure not using too many words, they will not necessarily be heard by a pupil in crisis
	Follow clear steps/guidance as laid out in written plan	Ensure this is clearly communicated with all staff and regularly reviewed and recommunicated
POST	Provide regulation/settling period	Give adequate time for the pupil to regulate and settle following an incident, refer back to pupil passport/ support plan to ensure appropriate settling activities are made available e.g. walking, sitting on own, not being spoken to etc
	Repair and reflect	When pupils are ready and able to have a conversation regarding the incident it is essential that this is a 'neutral' conversation, and that it is carried out with staff who were involved, allowing opportunity for the relationship to be restored. Reflect what they believe happened and how they felt. Discuss strategies that the pupil could adopt in the future and what they need from staff. This is an appropriate time to utilise restorative practise techniques.
	Offer de-brief for staff	Give staff an opportunity to reflect on the incident and talk through their emotions around it, their responses and explore if they could have taken different action and what that may have resulted in.
	Keep written record	Clear, concise and accurate reporting of the incident is essential. The antecedent or perceived trigger, what happened, actions taken and follow up.

Waiting Well: strategies for reducing anxiety

	What	How
PRE	Family Partnership; Strengthen communication and foster positive working relationships.	Establish rapport with family via Senior Mental Health Lead/Pastoral Team i.e. understanding any need-to-know events/triggers that may impact the pupil's day.
	Engage with pupil, understand the context of how they are feeling/ events that may have potential impacts on their day.	Check in opportunity with designated adult/ mentor, using active listening skills so the pupil feels heard. Clarify what you have heard, ahead of planning next steps.
	Provide opportunity to regulate the start of the day and discuss intended outcomes.	Agree expectations via daily supportive engagement, to sustain pupil within the day's learning activities.
	Create a learning agreement, i.e. next steps for support if pupil is struggling throughout the day.	Ensuring there are clear steps to follow when/if the pupil feels overwhelmed.
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT	Share information with teaching staff is crucial. This could form as part of a regular briefing update, email communications or printed resources.	Pupil portrait with designated strategies for individual pupil to be shared with all staff. This will enable a consistent approach to learning and expected outcomes, as well as supporting with their transitions around the setting.
	Provide regular updates from SMHL in line with pupils needs and responses.	This may include a script that all staff can refer to. Where appropriate, Senior Mental Health Lead/ mentor check ins/TA support in class.
	Create a safe space in the classroom.	Designated calm/quiet space in the room and/ or working area; in line with pupil needs to access learning.
CRISIS POINT	Be aware of next steps if learning becomes overwhelming, as well as the early signs of increasing levels of anxiety. (Should be noted on pupil portrait to alert staff)	Next steps for designated pupil clear to all teaching staff, to raise consistency in methods used. I.e. Any agreed actions such as, the agreed time outside the space, safe space to go to/ agreed mentor check ins etc.
POST	Check in before departure from premises	De-brief with pupil, agree any next steps for next day's interactions/reflect on day.
	Maintain and foster relationships with pupil and family.	Communication with home; What went well today/restorative opportunity if applicable.
	Senior Mental Health Lead shares information, if required following days events.	Updates to relevant members of pastoral team/ teachers, as required.



Useful advice for families and education staff supporting children with SLCN, incorporating information previously found on ICAN (The Children's Communication Charity) and The Communication Trust websites.



Click or Scan me for more information



Afasic provides information and support for families with children and young adults who have Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) with a focus on Developmental Language Disorder (DLD).



Click or Scan me for more information



Information and resources about Selective Mutism.



Click or Scan me for more information



Access to free online training sessions on Selective Mutism delivered by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust.



Click or Scan me for more information



Resources and information for users of Makaton.



Click or Scan me for more information



Resources and activities for families and settings.



Click or Scan me for more information



Information about DLD for schools and families.



Click or Scan me for more information



Range of information, advice and training to help children who stammer.



Click or Scan me for more information



Useful advice and guidance and a wide range of information about autism.



Click or Scan me for more information

SCOPE

A UK disability organisation whose focus is on people with cerebral palsy.



Click or Scan me for more information



HemiHelp are a UK based charity for people with hemiplegia and their families.



Click or Scan me for more information



A UK charity for families with disabled children.



Click or Scan me for more information



A UK based charity focussing on all muscle diseases.



Click or Scan me for more information



For children with arthritis.



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Children and Young People's Therapy Service Useful websites



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THE HERTFORDSHIRE SEND TOOLKIT