

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years

To support schools, settings, local authorities and other organisations to implement the SEN legislation, the government introduced the SEND Code of Practice. All maintained schools, including Academies and Free Schools, started following the code from 1st September 2014.

The Code of Practice provides statutory guidance and advice on how to identify, assess and make provision for children and young people's SEN. It includes guidance on the following:

- How education, health and social care should be working together
- Action that early years settings, schools and further education providers should be taking to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN
- Support to prepare children and young people for adulthood
- Education, Health and Care Plans and personal budgets
- Resolving disagreements

All children have a right to an education that enables them to make progress so that they achieve their best, become confident individuals and live fulfilling lives. The Code of Practice outlines what schools, early years providers, further education colleges, local authorities and other organisations should be doing to help children and young people to achieve these goals.

Definition of SEN

The term 'special educational need' (SEN) has a legal definition that is outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. Children and young people with SEN all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children and young people of the same age. For children affected by HHUGS, their condition can potentially result in a range of learning difficulties. Children and young people with such conditions may need extra or different help from that given to others.

The Code of Practice sets out four broad areas of SEN:

1. Communication and interaction e.g. speech, language and communication difficulties (SLCN) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
2. Cognition and learning e.g. moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and specific learning difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia.
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties e.g. Attention Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), social isolation, depression and self-harming.

4. Sensory and/or physical needs e.g. visual or hearing impairments and physical difficulties.

Some children and young people may have needs that cover more than one of these areas. A child affected by HHUGS, for example, may have some difficulties within all four areas.

Support from schools, early years providers and further education colleges

The SEND Code of Practice states that schools and other settings must use their 'best endeavours' to ensure the right provision is made for pupils with SEN. In practice, this means doing everything they can to meet needs through having a whole school approach to the following:

1. Ensuring any decisions made about SEN provision are informed by the views of pupils and parents
2. Having high ambitions and setting challenging targets for pupils with SEN
3. Carefully tracking progress towards these targets and long term outcomes
4. Reviewing the impact of any special educational provision on pupil progress
5. Promoting personal and social development.

Schools must have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), to take responsibility for coordinating provision for pupils with SEN. The school must tell you if they are making special educational provision for your child. However, if you have any concerns about your child's SEN, you can contact either the SENCO or their class teacher directly to discuss your concerns.

The graduated approach to support

The SEN Code of Practice recommends that all schools, including mainstream schools, adopt a model known as the graduated approach in order to match provision to children's SEN. When your child is identified with a need, they are provided with 'SEN support'. SEN support replaces the previous system of school action and school action plus. There are four stages to SEN support:

1. **Assess** - Your child's difficulties will be assessed so that the right support can be provided. This should include looking at progress records, discussions with you and your child, getting information from their class teacher and talking to other professionals who work with your child.
2. **Plan** – You, your child and professionals from the school will agree on how your child will benefit from the support they receive (the outcomes) and what provision is required to

help them meet their needs. Provision through SEN support can take different forms, depending on the needs of your child, and may include:

- Working in a small group
- Peer support
- Differentiated materials or additional resources
- Extra help from an adult
- Specialist programmes or interventions
- Physical or personal care support
- Special arrangements for tests and exams

3. **Do** - The school will put the planned support into place. The teacher remains responsible for working with your child on a daily basis, but the SENCO and any other staff involved in providing support should also work closely with them to track your child's progress.

4. **Review** - The plan of support will be reviewed at an agreed time by everyone involved in supporting your child. You can decide together what difference the support is making and any changes that need to happen.

Where your child is receiving SEN support, it may be appropriate at times to involve other professionals. Specialists who might work with children and young people affected by HHUGS include educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and general practitioners. The specialist can give assessment advice and provide guidance on effective teaching approaches, resources and interventions. As a parent, you should always be part of any decisions to involve specialists.

Where SEN support has been provided for your child but the complexity of your child's condition means that the school alone cannot meet their needs, it may be appropriate to consider an EHC assessment, as outlined above.

Preparing for adulthood

As your child approaches young adulthood, they are likely to need support in preparing for their next steps. This involves making decisions about whether to move on to further education, training or employment. It is also about supporting them to live independently,

become involved in the community and lead a healthy life. The Code of Practice notes that schools should be supporting young people with SEN in the following ways:

- Discussing preparation for adulthood in planning and review meetings
- Providing guidance on options available after they have finished their studies
- Helping them to prepare for employment and securing any available support
- Helping to prepare for independent living e.g. information on housing options
- Understanding how to keep healthy e.g. medical support, healthy eating
- Participating in the community e.g. accessing local activities, using transport

If your child chooses to go into further education, the further education provider must also follow the recommendations within the SEND Code of Practice by adopting the graduated approach to SEN support.

Further information

The following websites will provide further detail on the above information:

- The Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3):
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/part/3/enacted>
- The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (Provide information on local authority Parent Carer Forums): <http://www.nnpcf.org.uk>
- Information, Advice and Support Services Network (supports and promotes the work of IAS Services across England): <http://www.iassnetwork.org.uk>

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