

## SEN Support in Early Years Settings

**This information is about the support that Early Years providers and maintained nurseries within schools must and should provide for children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities**

**This information is for parents/carers of young children in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.**



All providers of early year education that a local authority funds are required to have regard to the SEND Code of Practice. They have duties under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against disabled children, and they must follow the safeguarding, welfare, learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. It is important that settings listen to parents' concerns and to those raised by children themselves.

The **SEND Code of Practice** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25> says:

All early years children are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- achieve their best possible educational and other outcomes, and
- become confident young children with growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transitions into compulsory education

(5.1)

All early years educational providers (eg pre-school playgroups, private day nurseries, childminders and maintained nurseries in school) have a duty to ensure children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities have their needs met.

All 3 and 4 year olds, and *some* 2 year olds, are entitled to 15 hours per week of free early years educational provision, over 38 weeks. Some 3 and 4 year olds *may* also qualify for an additional 15 hours per week of free childcare.

Parents can also opt to pay for additional hours, ie over the free entitlement, with the same, or another, provider.

The **SEND Code of Practice** says maintained nursery schools **must**:

- *use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need*
- *ensure that children and young people with SEN engage in the activities of the provision alongside children who do not have SEN*
- *designate a teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision – the SEN co-ordinator, or SENCo.*
- *inform parents when they are making special educational provision for a child*
- *provide a report on the implementation of their SEN policy and their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the setting for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access.*

(5.6)

## What is SEN support?

**SEN support** is help that is additional to or different from the support generally given to most other children of the same age. The purpose of SEN support is to help children achieve the **outcomes** or learning objectives set for them.

Every setting must publish an **SEN Information Report** about the SEN provision they make. You can find this on the setting's website, and you can also ask your child's nursery teacher or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) about it.

SEN support can take many forms, including:

- individual care or learning promoted especially for your child with help from your child's key person, early years practitioner or nursery teacher
- observing your child and keeping records to assist their development and progress in cooperation with you
- helping your child to take part in daily activities and learning routines both individually and in small groups
- encouraging your child to interact with others and have a voice, in order to ask questions and maybe try things they may find challenging
- promoting social skills and integration between your child, other children and adults
- supporting your child's physical care routines like toileting, eating and dressing whilst promoting skills for independence
- seeking advice and/or extra help from outside agencies and specialists such as Early Years specialist teachers, educational psychologists, and therapists

## Who decides what SEN support my child has?

The **SEND Code of Practice** says

All early years providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework requires settings to share children's progress with their parents. (5.12)

Sometimes you may be the first to be aware that your child has some special educational needs. If you think your child may need SEN support you should talk to your child's key person, nursery teacher, or to the SENCo. If you are not happy about the support your child receives you can ask to talk to the SENCo, manager or head teacher.

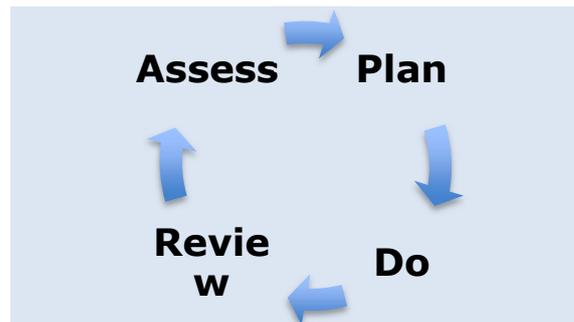
## A graduated approach

The **SEND Code of Practice** says

- *Where a setting identifies a child as having SEN, they **must** work in partnership with parents to establish the support the child needs.*

(5.37)

Where a setting makes special educational provision for your child, the setting should use a graduated approach based on four steps. These are:



### Assess

The Early Years practitioner works with the SENCo to assess and identify your child's needs, so that they can provide the right support, and regularly review it. They should involve you in this process and, where possible, seek your child's views.

The **SEND Code of Practice** says:

*Where early years assessment indicates that support from specialist services is required, it is important that children receive this as soon as possible.* (5.9)

Sometimes providers will seek advice from a specialist teacher or a health professional. They should talk to you about this first and seek your permission.

### Plan

If the provider decides that your child needs SEN support they **must** tell you. The setting should agree with you the outcomes that will be set, what help and interventions will be provided and a date for progress to be reviewed by.

### Do

Your child's Early Years practitioner, usually your child's key person, is responsible for the work that is done with your child, and works closely with you (parents) and other involved staff, supported by the SENCo. The setting should tell you who is responsible for the support your child receives. All those who work with your child should be made aware that:

*The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) oversees the child's support programme and advises on the approaches that are required.*

(5.42)

## Review

The **SEND Code of Practice** says

*The graduated approach is led by the setting SENCO who supports individual staff to implement the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) guidance and materials to support children to reach their intended outcomes. (5.45)*

Early years providers review children's progress and share a summary with parents at two points: the 2 Year Progress Check (between the ages of 24 and 36 months), and at the end of the reception year via the EYFS profile. Children with very complex needs who have an Education, Health and Care Plan have an annual review of this Plan.

You and your provider can look at the Local Offer to see what support is available that could help achieve your child's overall outcomes.

The setting should review your child's progress, and the difference that the support interventions have made, on the date agreed in the plan. You and your child should be involved in the review and in planning the next steps.

If your child has not responded to the help they were given, the review should decide what can be done next. This may include more or different help from other professionals in further assessment or to support with planning the next steps in early learning.

Sometimes the next step may be to ask the local authority for an **EHC needs assessment**. If the setting decides to do this, they must advise you and work with you. If you think it is needed you can ask for it yourself.

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

You can find out more about support for early years children by:

- talking to your child's key person, SENCo or nursery teacher
- looking at the SEN Information Report on the setting's website
- looking at early years Ofsted reports which can be found at ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))
- looking at the Local Offers published by Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council, detailing SEN support available to all children and young people, plus a list of Early Years providers and their provision made for children with SEN or disabilities.
- speaking to your local Children's Centre services for children 0–5 years
- looking at the Families Information Service offered by your local authority
- reading Chapter 5 of the **SEN Code of Practice**

You can also get in touch with Ask Us Nottinghamshire ([www.askusnotts.org.uk](http://www.askusnotts.org.uk)) who can give you:

- advice about what to do if you are not happy with the support your child is receiving from a provider
- SEN support, including information about funding for early years children
- information about other organisations, support groups and information services that could help
- Information and advice about your rights to request an **EHC needs assessment**.



### Ask Us Nottinghamshire

Telephone : 08001217772

Email : AskUs@futuresforyou.com

Post : Ask Us Nottinghamshire,  
c/o Futures,  
57 Maid Marian Way,  
Nottingham,  
NG1 6GE



Last updated : Sept 2018