

SEN Support

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced Special Educational Needs Support (SEN Support) to replace School Action and School Action Plus arrangements in mainstream settings. SEN Support is a term used to describe a programme of help that is additional to or different from, the support generally given to other children and young people (CYP) of the same age. A wide range of interventions may constitute SEN Support. Settings must publish a SEN Information Report on their website describing the SEN Provision typically available.

Most CYP with SEN have their needs met through mainstream education provision with SEN Support. The purpose of SEN Support is to formalise planning towards the achievement of learning objectives and personal outcomes. SEN Support is relevant to approximately 26,000 CYP in Hertfordshire. Far more children require SEN Support (11.9 % of pupils in Herts) than require support under an Education Health and Care Plan (2.1% of pupils in Herts).

The Children and Families Act 2014 sets out the legal framework governing SEN Support. The SEND Regulations 2014 provide further detailed rules about the duties of the Local Authority (LA) and settings. The Code of Practice provides useful further practical guidance for settings, families and CYP on how SEN Support should be implemented. The SEND Code of Practice 2015 has the legal status of statutory guidance and must be followed unless there is a good reason not to. Chapters 5&6 of the SEND Code of Practice are relevant to SEN Support.

All settings are responsible for meeting the needs of children and young people with SEN. The SEND Code of Practice says settings should have high expectations for all pupils and all teachers are teachers of SEN and responsible for the progress of all children. Class and subject teachers make assessments of progress for all CYP and these seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress.

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN and requires SEN Support, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective Special Educational Provision (SEP) in place. Where a setting makes SEP they should inform the parents. All settings should adopt a graduated approach to intervention with four stages of action: assess, plan, do and review (APDR). Regular reviews of progress refine this planning and the interventions required to meet the changing needs of the CYP and achieve targets.

Where the correct level of SEN Support is not identified, unavailable or not implemented to match the Special Educational Needs of the child or young person, this may lead to needs being unmet. In some cases, this may contribute to further avoidable difficulties; feasible learning targets may not be achieved, behaviours that challenge may escalate, and anxieties, absences or exclusions may increase, further disadvantaging CYP with SEN.

For some children and young people, SEN Support may require more effort, resource or specialist advice to be effective and settings can access this via Hertfordshire's Integrated Services for Learning team (ISL). In some cases, if the pupil is still not making expected progress, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify and meet the pupil's needs, the school should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment from the local authority with a view to ensuring the highest levels of provision in accordance with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The extra provision made for CYP with SEN Support usually comes from the setting's own budget. In Hertfordshire mainstream settings (excluding colleges which have separate arrangements) can apply for exceptional needs funding (ENF) for children on SEN Support or with an EHCP, where the cost of the provision exceeds £6,000 pa.

Placing a child or young person on SEN Support or applying for ENF does not necessarily result in extra funding for settings in Hertfordshire.

HPCI expect schools to fulfil ALL their duties towards pupils who have SEN.

1. Settings must use their 'best endeavours' to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need. This means doing everything they can to identify and meet a CYP's SEN.
2. Setting must ensure that CYP with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN and support referrals for Families First (early help) or child in need (CIN) assessments to obtain necessary support from other services where necessary. The LA and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) should be providing services and support to settings to enable settings to meet the needs of children on SEN Support.
3. Settings must have regard to the Equality Act 2010 which requires settings to anticipate reasonable adjustments that may be required for disabled children and young people.
4. Settings must have regard to Government Guidance on Support for Pupils with Medical Conditions to enable SEN Support at school and elsewhere.
5. SENCOs (the SEN Coordinator) must be qualified teachers and complete relevant qualification within 3 years of appointment (unless exempt).
6. Settings must inform parents when they are making SEN Support available, consult with parents and child (where appropriate) before interventions are put in place, support parents and children to participate in planning meetings with the school at least three times a year that are separate from parent consultation meetings and provide copies of written records related to the graduated approach (APDR).
7. Have an up to date readily accessible SEN Information Report on their school websites describing their arrangements for admission, inclusion, support, staffing, environment etc.

HPCI expect the LA and CCG partners to fulfil ALL their duties towards pupils who have SEN, aged 0-25:

1. Promote good practice around SEN and raise awareness of the process and its importance.
2. Provide clear and easily accessible information about SEN Support on the Local Offer including details of all health and education specialist services who may provide information, advice, equipment, augmentative technology, training, interventions, therapies and resources.
3. Ensure that early help through Families First Assessments are clarified and aligned both strategically and operationally to the meet the needs of children requiring SEN Support.
4. Additional funding such as Inclusion Funding and Disability Access Funding (for early years) and ENF (for all ages in mainstream nurseries and schools) should be fairly allocated and consistent with Government guidance.
5. Entitlement to additional Government funded nursery hours needs to be understood by professionals and accurate information shared with parents. [Families in receipt of Carers Allowance may still be entitled to funded nursery places](#). The LA must ensure sufficient suitable settings are able to offer 30 hours of education so that children can receive full early education entitlement and SEN support.

HPCI worked with HCC to produce this useful leaflet which summarises the key features of SEN Support. <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/media-library/documents/sen-support-in-education-0-25-leaflet.pdf>