

# SEN Code of Practice 2014

## 1.1 About this guidance

This Code of Practice is statutory guidance from the Department for Education on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Bill and associated regulations. The Code provides practical advice on how to carry out statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN).

The recipients listed in 1.4 **must have regard to it**. This means that whenever decisions are taken relating to children with SEN, consideration must be given to what the Code says. Bodies must fulfil their statutory duties towards children with SEN in the light of the guidance set out in this Code of Practice.

All those organisations listed in 1.4 **must** be able to demonstrate in their arrangements for children and young people with SEN, that they are fulfilling their statutory duty to have regard to this Code.

### References to statutory duties

In this Code of Practice where the text uses the word **must** this refers to a statutory requirement under primary legislation or regulations.

Where the text uses the word **should** it refers to best practice contained in this Code.

## 1.4 Who is this guidance for?

This Code of Practice is statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with SEN and their parents. These organisations include:

- local authorities (education, social care and relevant housing and employment and other services)
- early years providers
- schools
- further education colleges
- sixth form colleges
- academies (including free schools)
- independent special schools and independent specialist providers
- pupil referral units and alternative providers
- NHS England
- clinical commissioning groups (CCGs)
- NHS trusts & NHS Foundation Trusts
- Local Health Boards
- SEND Tribunal (see 1.5 and 9.6)

## 1.6 Changes from the SEN Code of Practice 2001

The main changes from the SEN Code of Practice (2001), to reflect the new legislation, are:

- The Code of Practice (2014) covers the 0-25 age range;
- There is a clearer focus on the views of children and young people and on their role in decision-making;
- It includes guidance on the joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health services and social care;
- or children and young people with more complex needs a co-ordinated assessment process and the new 0-25 Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC plan) replace statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs);
- There is new guidance on the support pupils and students should receive in education and training settings;
- There is a greater focus on support that enables those with SEN to succeed in their education and make a successful transition to adulthood.

## 1.7 Implementation of the Code of Practice

### Implementation

From 1 September 2014 the provisions in the Children and Families Bill, its associated regulations and Code of Practice will be in force.

From 1 September 2014 all the organisations listed at 1.4 **must have regard to this Code of Practice.**

Subject to any transitional arrangements made, from that date the following guidance will cease to have effect:

- SEN Code of Practice (2001)
- Inclusive Schooling (2001)
- Section 139A Learning Difficulty Assessments Statutory Guidance (2013)

### Transitional arrangements

From 1 September 2014 transitional arrangements will be in place to support the changeover from the current system to the new system in an orderly way. These arrangements will set out the elements of the SEN Code of Practice (2001) and Section 139A Learning Difficulty Assessments Statutory Guidance (2013) which will remain in force during the transition period.

## 1.8 Definitions of special educational needs (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which 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:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

(b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them (Clause 20 Children and Families Bill).

This is a broad definition covering children and young people from 0- 25 years of age. Where a child or young person has a disability or health condition which requires special educational provision to be made, they will be covered by the SEN definition.

Post 16 Institutions often use the term learning difficulties. The term SEN is used in this Code across the 0-25 age range but has the same meaning.

## 1.9 Related legislation and guidance

### Legislation

Disabled children and young people without SEN are not covered by the Bill or this Code of Practice but are covered by provisions elsewhere in legislation, including in the Children Act 1989, the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

### The Equality Act 2010

Everyone covered by this Code has duties in relation to disabled children and young people under the Equality Act 2010. They **must** not discriminate and they **must** make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and young people. Public bodies are also under wider duties to promote equality of opportunity.

The definition of disability in the Equality Act includes children with long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Children and young people may therefore be covered by both SEN and disability legislation.

## 2 Summary

### 2.1 Principles underpinning the Code of Practice

The legislative framework for the SEN system and the detailed guidance in this Code of Practice are underpinned by the principles set out in Clause 19 of the Children and Families Bill. Local authorities, in carrying out their functions under the Bill, **must** have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and their parents;
- the importance of the child or 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;
- the need to support the child or young person, and their 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.

These principles are designed to support:

- The involvement of children, parents and young people in decision making
- The identification of children and young people's needs;
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support;
- High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN;
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over their support;
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.

### 2.2 The principles in practice

The key elements of the statutory framework in Part 3 of the Children and Families Bill reflect the principles above:

#### **Involving children, parents and young people in decision making**

Parents have statutory rights to contribute to the decision making process about their child's education including in relation to assessments of SEN, provision for SEN, and the way that support is provided for SEN. Young people over 16 also have these rights.

Families and young people should have access to impartial information, advice and support to enable them to exercise their rights, including key working. Chapter 3

provides guidance to local authorities who are required to provide such advisory services. Information on these should be publicised in the local offer.

Children have a right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choices. They have a right to receive and impart information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them. Their views should be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capability (*Articles 12 and 13 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*).

Children and young people with SEN have unique knowledge of their particular circumstances. They have aspirations and goals. They have views on what might be done to remove any barriers to their learning and participation. They should be supported to participate in decisions about their own life, for example in relation to their learning and development, in reviews of their progress, assessments of their support needs and in decisions about their transition to adult life (Chapters 6 and 7). They should also be involved in discussions about the schools and colleges they would like to attend (Chapter 7) and have opportunities to participate in class and school councils and youth forums. Having these opportunities will help them develop the skills, confidence and self-esteem to contribute to decision making at a more strategic level such as the development and review of the local offer (Chapter 5).

## **Identifying children and young people's needs**

Local authorities **must** carry out their functions with a view to identifying all the children and young people in their area who have or may have SEN (clause 22).

Anyone can bring a child or young person who they believe has or may have SEN to the attention of a local authority (clause 23). Early years providers, schools and colleges have an important role in doing so; health bodies also have a duty to do so (clause 24). A child's parents, young people, schools and colleges have specific rights to request an assessment for an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan) and children and young people themselves should feel able to tell their school or college if they believe they have or may have SEN.

Chapter 6 provides guidance for early years providers, schools and colleges on identifying children and young people's SEN and making provision to meet those needs as early as possible.

Local authorities, CCGs and other partners **must** work together in local Health and Wellbeing Boards to assess the health needs of local people, including those with SEN. Their assessment (called a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) informs a local health and wellbeing strategy which sets priorities for those commissioning services. Local authorities **must** also keep their special educational provision and social care provision under review (clause 27). Together these activities are designed to ensure that the education, health and social care needs of local children and young people with SEN are identified. Guidance on these matters is given in Chapters 4 and 5.

## **Greater choice and control for parents and young people over their support**

The services that are available as a result of strategic assessments of local needs and reviews of local education and care provision (clause 27) and of health provision (Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Commissioning arrangements (clause 26)

should be reflected in the local authority's local offer. Linking these assessments and reviews to the local offer will help to identify gaps in local provision. Local authorities **must** involve children and young people with SEN and the parents of children with SEN in the development and review of their local offer. This will help to ensure it is responsive to local families. Guidance on the local offer is provided in Chapter 5.

Parents of children who have an Education, Health and Care plan and young people who have an Education, Health and Care plan have a right to ask for a particular school or college to be named in the Plan and for a personal budget for their support. Guidance is given in Chapter 7.

## **Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support**

If children and young people with SEN are to achieve their ambitions and the best possible educational and other outcomes such as getting a job and living as independently as possible education, health and social care services **must** work together to ensure they get the right support.

When carrying out their statutory SEN duties, local authorities **must** do so with a view to making sure that services work together where this promotes children and young people's wellbeing or improves the quality of special educational provision (clause 25). Local authorities **must** also work with one another to assess local needs. Local authorities and health bodies **must** have arrangements in place to plan and commission education, health and social care services jointly for children and young people with SEN (clause 26). Chapter 4 gives guidance on fulfilling those duties effectively.

## **High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN**

High quality teaching is that which is differentiated and personalised to meet the needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need something additional to or different from what is provided for the majority of children; this is special educational provision and schools and colleges **must** use their best endeavours to ensure that provision is made for those who need it. Special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching and is compromised by anything less. Guidance is provided in Chapter 6.

For children and young people with SEN it is important to know precisely where they are in their learning and development; to ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of children and young people themselves; to have high ambitions and to set stretching targets for them; to track their progress towards these goals; to keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them; and to ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress. Chapter 5 contains guidance setting out what all schools should be providing through the local offer.

The leaders of early years settings, schools and colleges are responsible for establishing and maintaining a culture of high expectations: a culture that expects those working directly with children and young people with SEN to include them in all the opportunities available to other children and young people; to facilitate their participation; and to ensure that they achieve well.

## Supporting successful preparation for adulthood

Local authorities, education providers and their partners should work together to help children and young people achieve successful long term outcomes, such as getting a job or going into higher education, being able to make choices about their support and where they live, and making friends and participating in society. Raising aspirations is crucial if young people are to achieve these goals. Planning needs to start early on, from Year 9 in school at the latest, and preparing for adult life should be an explicit element of conversations with children and their families as the young person moves into and through post-16 education. Guidance on what the local offer should include about support in preparing for adulthood is in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 includes guidance about how schools and colleges can help children and young people prepare for their future adult life, and Chapter 7 includes guidance about how EHC plans should reflect this important ambition.

## Education, health and care provision

### Education

Mainstream schools and colleges, including academies and free schools, **must** use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by a child's or young person's needs. These settings receive core funding to make general educational provision for all pupils/students and additional funding to help make provision for those who need additional support, including those with SEN. These funds are included in their budgets and they can spend them as they think best. But they should make sure funding is allocated to provide high quality provision for those with SEN. They have a duty to identify, assess and make special educational provision for all children and young people with SEN, whether or not they have an EHC plan. If they can show that a child or young person with SEN requires special educational provision that costs more than a certain threshold they can ask the local authority to provide top-up funding to meet that extra cost, whether or not the child has an EHC plan.

The local authority **must** set out in their local offer a description in broad terms of the special educational provision early years providers, schools, and the full range of post-16 providers and other institutions are expected to provide from their own budgets to support children and young people with SEN, including information about the arrangements in place for:

- Identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs;
- Adaptations to curriculum, teaching and the learning environment and access to ancillary aids and assistive technology;
- Assessing and reviewing pupils' and students' progress towards outcomes, including how they work with parents and young people in doing so;
- Supporting pupils' and students' in moving between phases of education;
- Enabling pupils and students to prepare for adult life so they can go on to achieve good outcomes such as higher education, employment, independent living and participation in;

- Securing expertise among teachers, lecturers or other professionals to support children and young people with SEN – this should include expertise at three levels: awareness, enhanced and specialist;
- Assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision they make for children and young people with SEN;
- Enabling children and young people with SEN to have access to facilities and extra-curricular activities that are available to those who use the setting; and
- Supporting emotional and social development (this should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of pupils and students with SEN and measures to prevent bullying).

The above will include arrangements for supporting children who are looked after by the local authority and have SEN.

In addition to the information in the local offer about the special educational provision the local authority expects to be available in early years providers, schools and post-16 institutions, schools are required to publish, under the *Special Educational Needs (Information) Regulations*, more detailed information about their arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils/students with SEN. The school-specific information should reflect the local offer and elaborate on it. The local offer **must** make clear where this information can be found. The local offer should also make clear how young people and parents can find relevant information published by post-16 institutions about their SEN provision (see Chapter 5).

### Early years

When securing funded early education for two, three and four year-olds local authorities should promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or SEN. This will involve securing relevant expertise among early years providers and working with parents to ensure that appropriate provision is in place to enable each child to flourish. Local authorities **must** also secure sufficient childcare for working parents and **must** work with providers to plan and manage local provision to meet the needs of families and children in their area.

Local authorities should publish in their local offer information about:

- free early education places and eligibility criteria;
- childcare options available to parents including the range of expertise to support children with SEN;
- relevant services from other agencies such as Portage and the Early Support Programme;
- arrangements for identifying and assessing children's needs in the early years;
- support available to parents to aid their child's development at home; and
- arrangements for reviewing children's progress, including progress checks and health and development reviews between the ages of 2 and 3.

## Other education provision

Information about educational provision should also include:

- The special educational provision (such as Area SENCOs, SEN support or learning support services, sensory support services or specialist teachers) made available to mainstream schools, early years providers, special units, alternative provision and other settings (including home-based services), whether provided by the local authority or others;
  - Local arrangements for collaboration between institutions to support those with SEN (for example, cluster or partnership working between post-16 institutions or shared services between schools);
  - The local authority's arrangements for providing top up funding for children and young people with high needs in mainstream and specialist settings;
  - Where to find the list of non-maintained special schools and independent schools catering wholly or mainly for children with SEN, and Independent Specialist Colleges in England [and Wales] which have been approved by the Secretary of State to give parents and young people a statutory right to request that they are named on an EHC plan;
- Support for young offenders who have been released from custody. This should include support offered by Youth Offending Teams in relation to education.

## The role of the SENCO in early years provision

All settings are expected to have a member of staff who acts as special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO).

A maintained nursery **must** ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated SENCO in order to ensure the detailed implementation of support for children with SEN. This individual should also have the prescribed qualification for SEN Co-ordination or relevant experience.

The EYFS framework requires other early years providers to have an SEN policy which should include the name of the SENCO. . In the case of accredited child minders who are registered with a child minder agency or who are part of an approved network, the SENCO role may be shared between individual child minders and the agency or coordinator of the network.

The role of the SENCO involves:

- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN;
- advising and supporting colleagues;
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting;
- liaising with professionals from beyond the setting.

When securing funded early education for two, three and four year olds, local authorities should promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or special educational needs. This includes removing barriers of access to early education and working with parents to give each child support to fulfil their potential.

Local authorities must ensure that all providers in the maintained and private, voluntary and independent sectors that they fund to deliver funded early education places are aware of the requirement on them to have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and that they effectively meet the needs of children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

To support this approach, and to fulfil their role in identifying and planning for the needs of children with SEN, local authorities should ensure that there is sufficient expertise and experience amongst local early years providers to support children with SEN. Local authorities often make use of Area SENCOs to provide advice and guidance to private and voluntary early years providers on the development of inclusive early learning environments. The Area SENCO helps make the links between education, health and social care to facilitate appropriate early provision for children with SEN and their transition to compulsory schooling.

Typically, the role of the Area SENCO includes:

- providing advice and practical support to early years providers about approaches to the identification, assessment and intervention within the SEN Code of Practice;
- providing day to day support for setting based SENCOs in drawing up and implementing an SEN policy;
- strengthening the links between the settings, parents, schools, social care and health services;
- developing and disseminating good practice;
- supporting the development and delivery of training both on an individual setting and wider basis;
- developing links with existing SENCO networks to support smooth transitions to school nursery and reception classes;
- informing and working with local impartial Information, Advice and Support services, to promote effective work with parents of children in the early years.

The SENCO will also play an important part in planning for children with SEN to transfer between early years provision and schools. Where an Area SENCO is involved it will be helpful for them to have made strong links with education health and social care services and be able to help inform the transition planning.

## 6.5 Schools

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, even where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. Where a pupil is not making adequate progress, teachers and SENCOs and parents should collaborate on problem-solving, planning support and teaching strategies for individual pupils.

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. The majority of pupils can make progress through such teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for pupils at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the special educational needs most frequently encountered.

The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN, and the progress made by pupils, should be a core part of the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. SEN should not be regarded as sufficient explanation for low achievement, nor should there be an assumption that all children will progress at the same rate or that all children falling behind their peers have SEN.

### Identifying needs in schools

The identification of SEN should be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.

Schools should assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry.

Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, should make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. Where pupils are falling behind or making inadequate progress given their age and starting point they should be given extra support.

At this early stage teachers may suspect that a pupil has SEN. While informally gathering evidence (including the views of the pupil and their parents) schools should not delay putting general teaching support in place where required. The pupil's response to such support can help identify their particular needs.

Adequate progress can include progress which:

- is similar to that of peers starting from the same baseline;
- matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress;
- closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers;
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider.

Where pupils continue to make inadequate progress, despite high-quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness, the class teacher, working with the SENCO, should assess whether the child has a significant learning difficulty. Where this is the case, then there should be agreement about the SEN support that is required to support the child.

Identification should include the use of high quality formative assessment, as well as effective tools and early assessment materials. For higher levels of need, schools should have arrangements in place to draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals. These arrangements should be agreed and set out as part of the local offer. The school's approach to identifying and assessing SEN should be published as part of the information under the *Special Educational Needs (Information) Regulations*.

The phonics screening check is a short assessment of all pupils in mainstream schools in year 1 (and those pupils in year 2 who did not meet the expected standard during year 1). It can provide additional information, as part of the overall approach set out above, to help identify a child who is experiencing difficulties and may be making inadequate progress. The phonics screening check should not, in and of itself, be used as an assessment of special educational needs. Additional guidance on responding to the results of the check is available at: [www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/phonics/a00210354/phonics-screening-check](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/phonics/a00210354/phonics-screening-check)

As part of their approach to school improvement, school leaders and teaching staff, including the SENCO, should identify any patterns in the identification of SEN both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.

### **Requirements from the national curriculum**

Teachers should set high expectations for every pupil and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and 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. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset of work.

### **SEN support in Schools**

Once a potential special educational need is identified, four types of action should be taken to put effective support in place. These actions form part of a cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with the growing understanding of the pupils' needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach; it draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people.

Before identifying a child as needing SEN support the class teacher, working with the SENCO, should establish a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This should draw on the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil, as well as information from the school's core approach to pupil progress, attainment, and behaviour. It should also draw on the individual's development in comparison to their peers, the views and experience of parents, the child's own views and, if relevant, advice from external support services. Schools should take seriously any concerns raised by a parent. These should be recorded and compared to the setting's own assessment and information on how a child is developing. The main areas of need that characterise pupils with SEN are set out at 6.3.

This assessment should be regularly reviewed. This will help to ensure that support is matched to need, and that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their effect is developed. For some types of SEN, the way in which a pupil responds to an intervention can be the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need.

In some cases, outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child. These professionals should liaise with the school to help inform the assessments. Where these professionals are not already working with school staff the SENCO should contact them if the parents agree.

## **Plan**

Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEN Support, the parents **must** be notified. The teacher and the SENCO should agree in consultation with the parent and the pupil the interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review.

All teachers and support staff who work with the child should be made aware of their needs, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. This should also be recorded on the school's information system.

The support and intervention provided should be based on reliable evidence of effectiveness and be provided by staff with sufficient skills and knowledge.

## **Do**

The class or subject teacher should remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Where the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they should still retain responsibility for the pupil, working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of interventions. The SENCO should support the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of the support.

The support and intervention provided should be based on reliable evidence of effectiveness and be provided by staff with sufficient skills and knowledge.

## **Review**

The effectiveness of the support and the impact on the child's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

The impact of the support provided, along with the views of the pupil and their parents, should feed back into the analysis of the pupil's needs. The class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, should revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to support and revised outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil

## **Involving Specialists**

Where a child continues to make little or no progress, despite well-founded support that is matched to the child's area of need, the school should consider involving specialists, including those from outside agencies. The role and expectation of some of the key sources of external support are set out at 6.9.

Schools may involve specialists at any point to advise them on early identification of SEN and effective support. A school should always involve a specialist where a child continues to make little or no progress over a sustained period or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those expected of children of a similar age despite well-founded SEN support. The child's parents should always be involved in any decision to involve specialists. The involvement of specialists and what was discussed or agreed should be recorded and shared with the parent and teaching staff supporting the child in the same way as other SEN support.

The SENCO and class teacher, together with the specialists, should consider a range of well-founded and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions in order to support the child's progress. They should agree the outcomes to be achieved through the support, including a date by which progress will be reviewed.

Support should be adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the expected outcomes.

## **Involving parents**

### **Involving parents and pupils in planning and reviewing progress**

Schools **must** provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress. Most schools will want to go beyond this and provide regular reports for parents on how their child is progressing.

Where a pupil is receiving SEN support, schools should meet parents at least termly to set clear goals, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, review progress and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school.

This meeting should be led by a teacher with good knowledge and understanding of the child or young person who is aware of their needs and attainment. This will usually be the class teacher or form tutor, supported by the SENCO. It should provide an opportunity for the parent to share their concerns and, together with the teacher, agree their aspirations for the child.

Conducting these meetings effectively involves a considerable amount of skill. As with the other aspects of good teaching for pupils with SEN, schools should ensure that teaching staff are supported to manage these conversations as part of professional development.

These meetings will need to allow sufficient time to explore the parents' views and to plan effectively. Meetings should, wherever possible, be aligned with the normal cycle of discussions with parents of all children; they will, however, be longer than most parent-teacher meetings.

The views of the child should be included in this planning. This could be through involving the child in all or part of the meeting, or gathering their views as part of the preparation for the meeting.

Following the meeting the teacher will need to inform all the appropriate school staff of the outcomes and agreed targets, as well as updating the pupil's record as appropriate.

## Use of data and record keeping

It is for schools to determine their own approach to record keeping. But the provision made for pupils with SEN should be accurately recorded and kept up to date. Ofsted will expect to see evidence of the support that is in place for pupils and the impact of that support on their progress as part of any school inspection. Ofsted publish more detail about their expectations in their inspection guidelines. Schools should particularly record details of additional or different provision (SEN support). This should form part of regular discussions with parents about the child's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps. They should ensure that they have accurate information to evidence the SEN support that has been provided over the pupil's time in the school, as well as its impact. A local authority that is considering or carrying out a statutory assessment of the pupil's needs, will wish to review such information.

Schools already use information systems to monitor the progress, behaviour and development of all pupils. Details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists should be recorded as part of this overall approach.

Provision maps are a powerful way of showing all the provision that the school makes which is *additional to* and *different from* that which is offered through the school's differentiated curriculum. The use of provision maps helps SENCOs to maintain an overview of the collective programmes of individual children and young people and provides a basis for monitoring the levels of intervention and assessing their impact on progress.

A helpful range of further information and resources about provision mapping is available from [www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/a00199972/provision-mapping](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/a00199972/provision-mapping)

## Publishing information

### SEN information report

The governing bodies of maintained schools and maintained nursery schools and the proprietors of academy schools have a legal duty to publish information on their websites about the implementation of the governing body's or the proprietor's policy for pupils with SEN. The information published **must** be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year must be updated as soon as possible. The information required is set out in the draft Special Educational Needs (Information) Regulations and reflects the information required for the local offer:

- identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs;
- assessing and reviewing children and young people's progress towards outcomes, including the opportunities available to work with parents and young people as part of this assessment and review;

- supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood. As young people prepare for adulthood outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society;
- adaptations to curriculum, teaching and the learning environment and access to ancillary aids and assistive technology;
- securing expertise among teachers, lecturers or other professionals to support children and young people with SEN;
- assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of the provision they make for children and young people with SEN;
- enabling children and young people with SEN to have access to facilities and extra-curricular activity available to all children in the setting;
- supporting and improving emotional and social development, including extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEN and measures to prevent bullying.

The above should include arrangements for supporting children who are looked after by the local authority and have SEN.

Schools should ensure that the information is easily accessible by parents and is set out in clear, straightforward language. This should include information on the school's SEN policy, named contacts within the school where parents have concerns and details of the school's contribution to the local offer.

In setting out details of the broad and balanced curriculum provided in each year, schools should include details of how the curriculum is adapted or made accessible for pupils with SEN.

Schools should also make data on the levels and type of need within the school available to the local authority. This data will be required to inform local strategic planning of SEN support, and to enable the local authority to identify pupils who have or may have SEN. Such data, collected through the school census, is also required to produce the national SEN Information report.

## **The role of the SENCO in schools**

Governing bodies of maintained mainstream schools and the proprietors of academy schools (including free schools) **must** ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as Special Educational Needs (SEN) co-ordinator (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 twelve - months, they must achieve the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination within 3 years of appointment.

The SENCO has an important role to play with the head teacher and governing body, in determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school. They will be most effective in that role if they are part of the school leadership team.

The SENCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual children with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.

The SENCO provides professional guidance to colleagues and will work closely with staff, parents and carers, and other agencies. The SENCO should be aware of the provision in the Local Offer and be able to work with professionals providing a support role to the family to ensure that children with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.

The key responsibilities of the SENCO may include:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy;
- coordinating provision for children with SEN;
- liaising with the relevant designated teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN;
- advising a on graduated approach to providing SEN Support;
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively;
- liaising with parents of children with SEN;
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies;
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the LA and LA support services;
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a young person and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned;
- working with the head teacher and school governors that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- ensuring that the school or maintained nursery keeps the records of all children with SEN up to date.

The school should ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out these functions. This should include providing the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within a school.