



How Specialists support Children and Young people in Mainstream Settings: Advice for Learners, Parents & Carers

What specialist support is available?

Schools, Local Authorities and NHS services have lots of different experts that they can call on to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Two of the most commonly used are Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs) and Educational Psychologists (EPs); but there are a lot more who can support schools such as Specialist Teachers, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists. Evidence suggests that specialists have the biggest impact when they work alongside School Leaders to improve whole school SEND strategy and deliver high quality Continuous Professional Development to school staff to improve what's happening in classrooms across school.



Speech & Language Therapists

These are specialists who support children and young people with speech, language, communication and swallowing difficulties. They can give detailed advice about programmes to target specific areas of difficulty.

Some schools may choose to commission support for SaLT or EP from private companies. This can be on a regular basis or more ad hoc. Schools are encouraged to be empowered to deploy these specialists to best meet the needs and demands of their school and children.



Educational Psychologists

These are qualified and registered Psychologists with PhDs. They are able to do lots of different types of assessments to understand people's needs. They can give detailed advice about how to support children and young people to learn better.

Who is this for?

Any child or young person with SEND in education who would benefit from specialist support. An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) does not need to either be in place, or in the process of application, for a child or young person to benefit.

As a parent, who should I talk to about my child's learning needs?

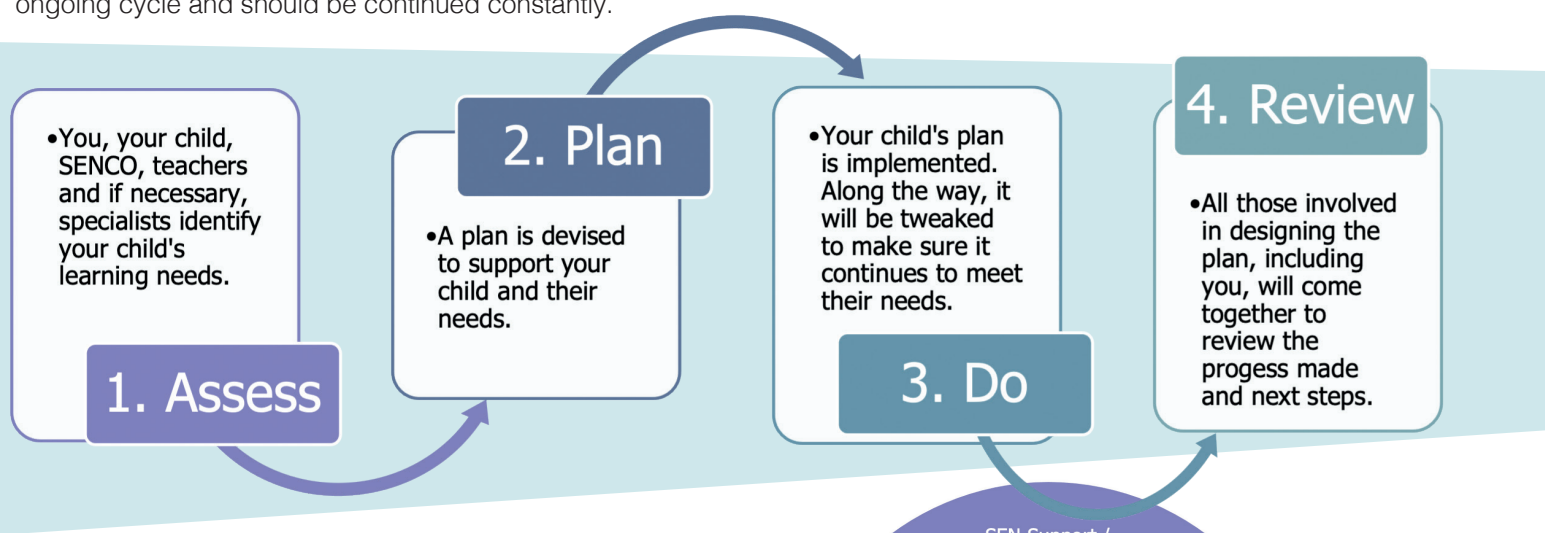
If you are worried, speak to your child's teacher first and try to explain why you think they are struggling. They might then speak to the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) to get more advice.

Who to contact if you have a concern.

If you wish to discuss your child's provision further, you can ask to speak to the Headteacher. Most Local Authorities also have parent partnership teams called the Special Educational Needs and Disability Independent Advice Support Service (SENDIASS) who can work with you and your child's school in partnership.

The Graduated Response

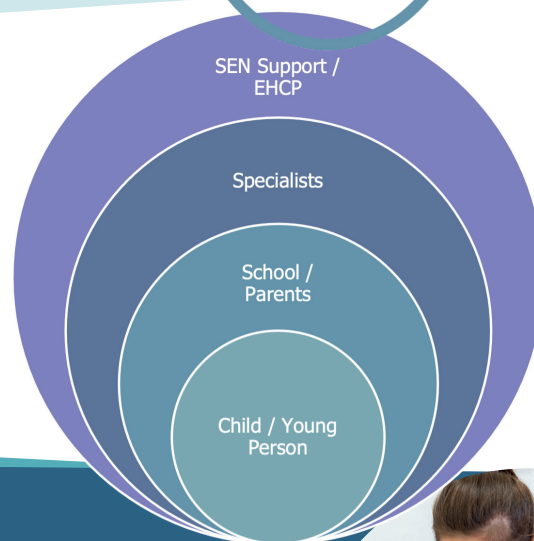
Schools must do everything they can to provide high quality teaching and learning for all children. If your child needs additional support, they may be started on the Graduated Response cycle. This is a continuous cycle which is focused on your child and sets targets and provision for them to work towards. This is an ongoing cycle and should be continued constantly.



The circles of support:

When supporting your child, their school should always work in a child-centred way – your child is at the centre of all of the decisions and discussions that the people supporting have.

Only a small number (approximately 3%) of children and young people need support from an EHCP – most can have their needs met by good quality teaching.



What our parents say:

“The Educational Psychologist was so knowledgeable about my daughter’s learning difficulties and was able to support teachers to improve her experience.” (Heather)

“Speech and Language Therapists working alongside my son’s school have made sure that teachers and TAs were equipped to use the right systems to support him and give him a voice.” (Ellie)

“The Speech and Language Therapist created a world that wasn’t as scary as we initially thought when they started working with our son from a young age.” (Liz)



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