

Parent Guide



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games



crafts



puzzles



experiments



word searches



What is this resource and how do I use it?

This resource has information for parents about the terms and abbreviations you might hear or see in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

What skills does this practise?

SEND knowledge

Empowering Parents of Children with SEND

Advice and Support

Further Activity Ideas and Suggestions

Further information and advice for parents about Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be found [here](#).

Parents Blog



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Parents Hub

SEND Glossary for Parents

SEND Glossary for Parents

Below is a list of terms and abbreviations you might come across regarding Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and some general education terminology. Whether you hear them in meetings or see them in documentation, there are so many to be aware of that it can feel overwhelming. This resource has been designed to help parents to feel more confident about SEND terminology. We've put the terms in alphabetical order to help you to locate the one you are looking for.



A

Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements allow children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access formal assessments without changing the demands of the assessment. Some examples 'reasonable adjustments' which can be put in place include readers, scribes and Braille question papers.

Alternative Provision (AP)

Alternative Provision (AP) is a setting which provides education for children who cannot attend a mainstream school because of exclusion, illness or other reasons.



SEND Glossary for Parents

Annual Review

Annual Review of an **EHC Plan** must be carried out by a local authority under the Children and Families Act 2014. The annual review looks at the needs, provision and outcomes specified in an EHC Plan and decides whether these need to change.

Areas of need are split into four broad categories:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical needs

Aphasia

Aphasia is a language disorder caused by a sudden brain injury such as a stroke or severe head injury. If something has caused aphasia, then it is likely that symptoms will develop immediately afterwards, however there are some cases where symptoms will develop gradually. Aphasia affects everyone differently, but the main symptoms include having difficulty being able to express yourself or having issues understanding things that you have been told or read. In children, aphasia can affect speech in a variety of different ways: they might need support to find the right word, to use grammar correctly or to understand information.

Asthma

Asthma is a lung condition that causes breathing problems. It's very common and can affect people of all ages. Asthma is essentially inflammation and narrowing of the bronchial tubes and the airways near the lungs.



SEND Glossary for Parents

Attachment Disorders

Attachment Disorders are a range of difficulties typically affecting mood, adherence to social rules and social relationships arising from difficulties to form attachments to primary caregivers during early childhood. According to research, the causes of attachment include early abuse, neglect and separation from or changes in caregivers during early childhood.

Attachment disorders are something that can be changed, usually by working with the child to approach their relationships and bonds differently. However, early intervention is important because a person's attachment style is mostly well-established by the age of three.

Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodivergent learning difference, or specific learning difficulty, which means that people who have ADHD process information in a different way to those who do not. ADHD does not have any effect on intellect. Some of the most commonly known ADHD symptoms include hyperactivity, difficulty controlling certain behaviours, difficulty concentrating or acting impulsively.

Auditory Dyslexia

Auditory Dyslexia means a person has difficulty processing the basic sounds of language. Our ability to process basic sounds is called phonemic awareness and, if your child is having trouble with this, they could have auditory dyslexia or a related auditory processing disorder.

Auditory dyslexia is often called **Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)** - see below. This is the more widely recognised medical term for auditory dyslexia.

Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)

Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) is a difficulty in processing sound, including spoken words. It usually starts in childhood, but some people may develop it later in life.

A person with APD may find it difficult to understand:

- Conversation in noisy places
- People with an accent they are not used to or fast talkers
- Words that sound similar
- Spoken instructions

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Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)

Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) is a developmental condition that encompasses a spectrum of different experiences and presentations. ASC can vary from affecting social development and communication abilities to influencing a person's interests, behaviours and responses to sensory stimuli. As a spectrum condition, there is not one single set of experiences and every Autistic person will have their own individual experience of Autism.



B



British Sign Language (BSL)

British Sign Language (BSL) can be understood as a visual means of communicating using gestures, facial expression and body language. Sign language is used mainly by people who are Deaf or have hearing impairments and their families.



SEND Glossary for Parents

C

Cerebral Palsy (CP)

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is the most common physical disability that occurs in childhood, with over 1800 children diagnosed with a form of Cerebral Palsy each year in the UK. According to neurodisability charity The Pace Centre, there are 30 000 children in the UK living with this disability.

The term Cerebral Palsy refers to a group of conditions, not just one. This means that not all people who have CP will have the same experiences. However, all cases of this disability cause an impact on the person's movements because all types of Cerebral Palsy have an effect on how messages are sent from the brain to the muscles. This is the origin of the disability's name. 'Cerebral' means related to the brain, and 'palsy' means weakness in the muscles.

There is no cure to Cerebral Palsy - it is a lifelong condition - but there is a range of treatments and therapies that can be used to alleviate symptoms that are causing difficulty. The appropriate treatment plan will vary from person to person, as some people will experience milder or more problematic symptoms than others.



SEND Glossary for Parents

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is a specialist NHS mental health service for children and young people. It is accessible to all young people from birth to 19. Children may be referred by school or other agencies if they have emotional or behavioural difficulties, mental health issues or have experienced trauma that has affected their wellbeing.

Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)

Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3) sets out specific duties for schools in relation to identifying and supporting all children with special educational needs whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Cognition and Learning

Cognition and Learning is described in the following terms by the SEND Code of Practice:

‘Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including **moderate learning difficulties (MLD)**, **severe learning difficulties (SLD)**, where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to **profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD)**, where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.’ This also covers **Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)**.

Cognitive Ability

Cognitive Ability refers to thinking and reasoning abilities. It is a term often used by psychologists instead of intelligence.



SEND Glossary for Parents

Communication and Interaction or Speech Language and Communication Needs

Communication and Interaction or Speech Language and Communication Needs is explored in the SEND Code of Practice. It states that 'children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them, or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.' ASC also falls within this category.



Department for Education (DfE)

Department for Education (DfE) is the National Government department which oversees schools and education.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a benefit which can be claimed by the family of a child with special needs.



SEND Glossary for Parents

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) is a monetary allowance for disabled students to cover some of the extra costs incurred because of their disability. Most UK undergraduate and taught postgraduate students who have evidence of a disability are eligible for DSA, provided they are studying an approved course for at least one year.

DSA is not a loan: nothing has to be paid back or given back at the end of your child's course. The funding and support your child receives depends on their needs; it is not means-tested or related to you or your family's income.

DSA is paid for four main categories of equipment and support, depending on individual requirements, as follows:

- Specialist equipment and software such as speech to text software, mind-mapping software, a digital voice recorder or ergonomic equipment
- One-to-one support from a specialist support worker, such as a Study Skills Tutor (dyslexia tutor, for example), Specialist Mentor or BSL interpreter
- A travel allowance to help with any extra travel costs which may be incurred because of your child's disability
- Support with additional study-related costs such as photocopying or printing materials

Your child may not receive all of these elements of DSA. For more information about DSA and applying for support for older learners follow this [link](#).



SEND Glossary for Parents

Disagreement Resolution

Disagreement Resolution aims to help parents, through discussion, resolve disagreements with your child's school, the Local Authority or others.

Disagreement resolution arrangements are available both free and confidentially and they should be easily accessible for all children and young people with SEN.

Down's Syndrome or Down Syndrome (DS)

Down's Syndrome or Down Syndrome (DS) is not a disease or an illness, but a condition or syndrome. According to the Down's Syndrome Association, the condition is caused by the presence of an extra chromosome in the body cells of a foetus. Down's Syndrome isn't hereditary, but it isn't yet known what precisely leads to the presence of an extra chromosome. DS is one of the most common genetic chromosomal conditions worldwide.

Down's Syndrome Association states that:

'People who have Down's Syndrome will have some level of learning disability. This means they'll have a range of abilities. Some people will be more independent and do things like get a job. Other people might need more regular care.'

Like everyone, people who have Down's Syndrome have:

- their own personalities
- things they like and dislike
- things that make them who they are'



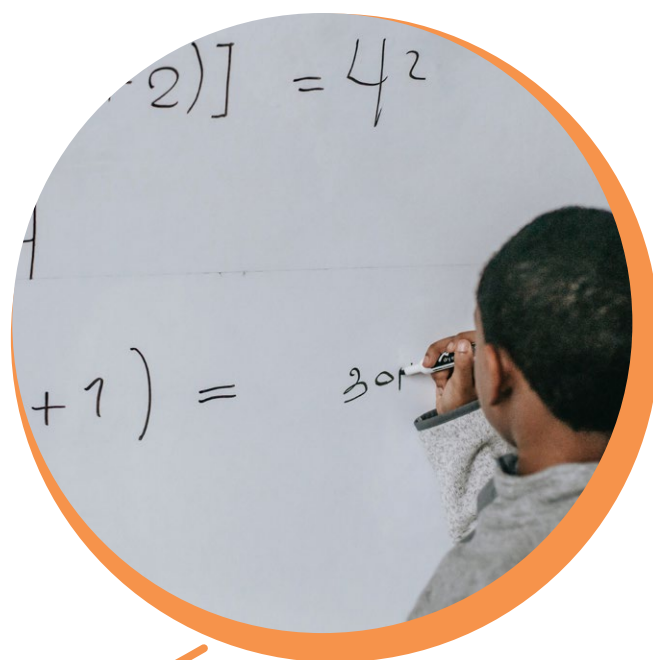
SEND Glossary for Parents

Dyscalculia

Dyscalculia is a specific and persistent difficulty in understanding numbers which can lead to a diverse range of difficulties with mathematics.

Signs of dyscalculia include:

- difficulty counting backwards
- poor sense of number and estimation
- difficulty in remembering 'basic' facts, despite many hours of practice. This can include times tables
- reliance on counting to solve mathematical problems
- difficulty understanding place value
- generally slow when performing calculations
- difficulty remembering mathematical methods and procedures.
- avoidance of difficult tasks
- weak mental arithmetic skills
- high levels of mathematics anxiety



SEND Glossary for Parents

Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is a **Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)** that affects written expression. The word literally means 'difficulty with writing'. Dysgraphia can appear in different ways, such as difficulties with spelling, grammar, handwriting and trouble organising thoughts on paper. It specifically impacts writing ability and is not associated with the ability to read.

Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a **Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)** that primarily affects reading and writing skills, it also impacts on other areas of learning too. This is because dyslexia is a condition that impacts the ability to process information that a person hears or sees. This can impact literacy, numeracy and communication skills.

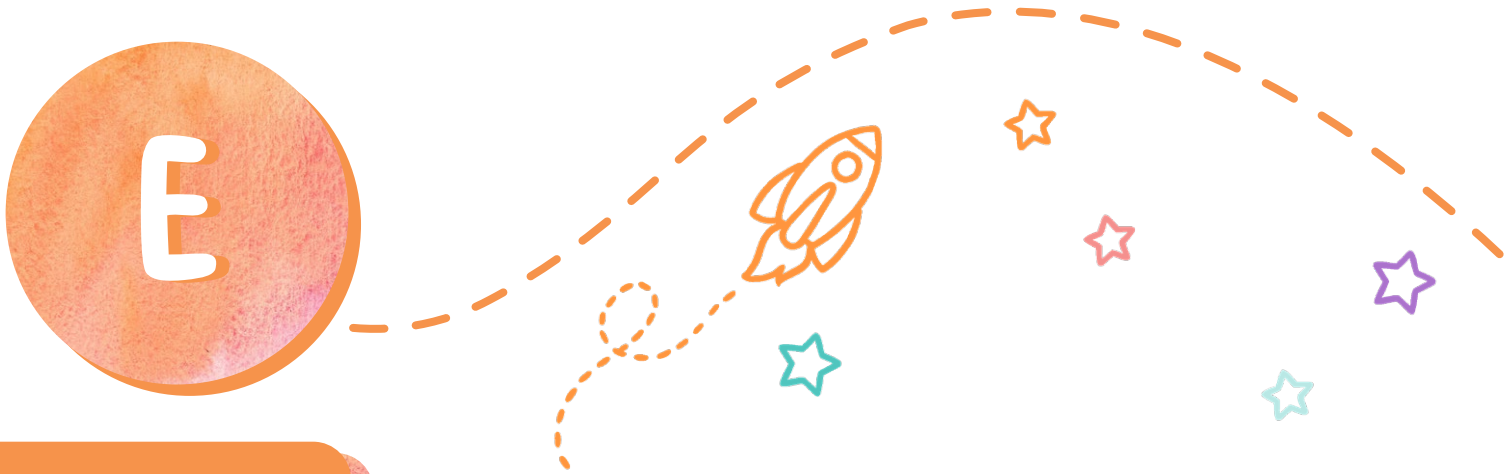
It's important to remember that every child is different and children may experience dyslexia differently. Moreover, dyslexia does not have any effect on intelligence. It is a type of neurodivergence that causes a difference in the way that we process and understand information.

Common attributes of dyslexia can include issues with verbal memory, verbal processing speed and phonological awareness. Dyslexia can occur in isolation or with related specific learning difficulties such as dyspraxia and dyscalculia.

Dyspraxia, Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)

Dyspraxia, also known as **Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)**, is a condition that primarily affects physical coordination, often causing difficulty in completing everyday tasks and activities, such as tying shoelaces and handwriting. It's a very common condition, affecting between 6% and 10% of the population. People with dyspraxia may find tasks involving fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, such as drawing or catching a ball, can be challenging. The condition can also affect reading and writing level and the ability to concentrate and follow instructions.

SEND Glossary for Parents



E

Early Help

Early Help, also known as early intervention, is support given to a family when a problem first emerges. It can be provided at any stage in a child or young person's life. Early help services can be delivered to parents, children or whole families, but their main focus is to improve outcomes for children.

Educational Psychologists

Educational Psychologists are professional psychologists with specialist knowledge and expertise in areas related to child development and the education system. They use this expertise to help children and young adults with learning difficulties, social and emotional problems, developmental disorders and other Special Educational Needs (SEN). They can work both with schools and local authorities to make recommendations that help improve the educational experience of all children and with individual children and their parents to help them to achieve their full potential.

There is a wide range of reasons a child might be referred to an Educational Psychologist, but generally a referral is the result of parents and/or teachers having concerns about the learning, development or behaviour of a child.

Education Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA)

Education Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) is the step before an EHCP - but it does not guarantee an EHCP. It is the initial assessment carried out by the Local Authority, for deciding **whether a child or young person needs an EHC plan**.

Additional note: An EHCNA only requires two tests in law - the child MAY have a SEND and the child MAY need support with that SEND.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Education, Health and Care Plan

Education, Health and Care Plan is the legally binding document which identifies a child or young person's educational, health and social needs and sets out the additional support which the Local Authority must put in place to meet those needs. An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.

Additional note: The application is not for an EHCP, it is for an EHC needs assessment. This assessment does not guarantee an EHC plan and an EHC plan does not guarantee extra funding. It is also important to note that different LAs may have different ways of banding or allocating funding/resources.

Education Other Than at School (EOTAS)

Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) includes hospital school, online schooling or home tuition. Government guidance states that:

'Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, Local Authorities should provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child's best interests.'

Ehler-Danlos Syndromes (EDS)

Ehler-Danlos Syndromes (EDS) is a collection of hereditary disorders which affect the connective tissue in the body. It is thought to affect around 1 in 5000 people. In EDS there is a genetic fault in how the body makes collagen which leads to the connective tissue becoming weaker.

Symptoms of EDS include but are not limited to:

- joint hypermobility
- joint pain and deformity
- muscle and nerve pain
- loose or unstable joints which are prone to frequent dislocations
- fragile skin that tears and bruises easily
- slow and poor wound healing
- swallowing difficulties
- bowel and bladder difficulties

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Elective Home Education (EHE)

Elective Home Education (EHE) is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home. Where parents have chosen EHE for their child, they will not be on roll at a school.

ELSA

ELSA stands for **Emotional Literacy Support Assistant**. ELSA support in schools is a project designed to help schools support the emotional needs of their pupils. ELSA acknowledges that children and young people learn best when they feel happier and their emotional needs are being addressed. The initiative was developed and supported by educational psychologists who used knowledge of how children develop socially and emotionally and apply this knowledge to the needs of pupils.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

The Somerset Educational Psychology service defines **Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)** as a term used to describe 'children who experience persistent challenges in attending school due to negative feelings'. There are lots of reasons why children may experience EBSA but it is common for these to be anxiety based.

Engagement Model

Engagement Model is the assessment (replacing P scales 1 to 4) for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum assessments and not engaged in subject-specific study. Teachers must use the engagement model to assess pupils working below the standard of the national curriculum assessments and not engaged in subject-specific study at key stage 1 and key stage 2.

The engagement model has 5 areas of engagement:

- exploration
- realisation
- anticipation
- persistence
- initiation

SEND Glossary for Parents

Expressive Language

Expressive Language is how a child or young person expresses ideas, thoughts and feelings through speech.



Fine motor skills

Fine motor skills can be defined as the ability to make movements using the small muscles in the hands and wrists. These skills involve the coordination of the hands and fingers with the eyes. Improving these skills is a really important part of our development, as we use fine motor skills in a variety of ways every day.

Fine motor skills also help children perform educational tasks, such as cutting with scissors and sticking down, colouring in or painting, handwriting and typing.

Fingerspelling

Fingerspelling is using sign language to spell out a word which has no corresponding sign. The most common words to be finger spelled are names of people or places.



SEND Glossary for Parents

First Tier Tribunal (SEN and disability)

First Tier Tribunal (SEN and disability) is responsible for handling appeals against local authority decisions regarding special educational needs, including appealing a refusal to:

- assess a child or young person's educational, health and care (EHC) needs
- reassess their EHC needs
- issue an EHC plan
- change what's in a child or young person's EHC plan
- maintain the EHC plan

They also handle appeals against decisions to refuse young people in custody:

- an EHC assessment
- an EHC plan after assessment
- a placement in a suitable school or other educational institution after their release

They also handle appeals against discrimination by schools or local authorities due to a child's disability. See Also **Form SEND35**

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD)

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD) is a lifelong, neurodevelopmental condition that results from prenatal alcohol exposure which affects the brain and body.

Forest School

Forest School is an educational establishment with an outdoor model. Forest schools are community learning environments in nature where children are supported to develop holistically through exploration and play. They are run by trained Forest School leaders. Their aim is for participants to enjoy their experiences and to improve their knowledge and health in an outdoor setting.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Form SEND35

Form SEND35 is the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal appeal form.

This form is used to appeal a Local Authority's decision about a child or young person. It can be used by parents, those with parental responsibility or by a young person aged 16 to 24.

Functional Curriculum for Students with SEND

Functional Curriculum for Students with SEND is focused on the development of knowledge in relation to real-life situations and scenarios. This still includes an academic element, particularly in relation to English and maths. In contrast to a 'traditional' curriculum, with a functional curriculum for SEND students, these subjects are taught specifically through the lens of a practical life skill.

The idea of developing functional skills is to help students to practise actions and interactions that are a part of daily life. With practice, they'll become more confident with these tasks, meaning that they'll be better prepared for independent living and contributing to society with activities like jobs or volunteer work.



SEND Glossary for Parents



Global Developmental Delay (GDD)

Global Developmental Delay (GDD) is a term used to define a condition that significantly delays cognitive and physical development in children between birth and 18 years. It describes a child that has not gained the developmental skills expected of someone their age.

Primarily, a child who has been diagnosed with global development delay has been judged to have missed developmental milestones in two or more areas of development in their movement, speech or other basic skills.

Graduated Approach

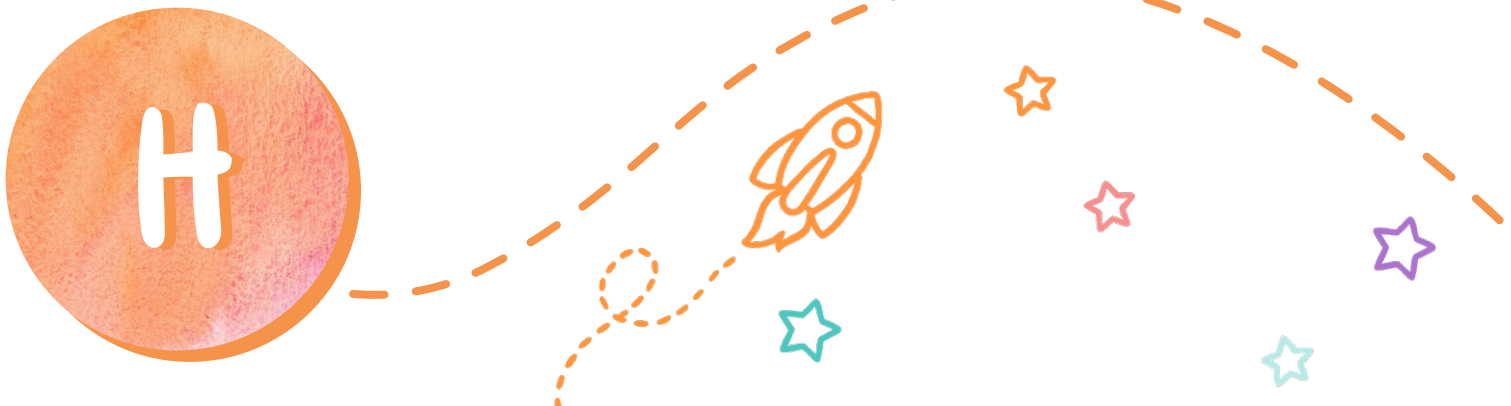
Graduated Approach The SEND Code of Practice states that, for learners who continue to face challenges despite high quality teaching, teachers are required to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place through SEN support.

This SEN support takes the form of a graduated approach in a continuous four part cycle - assess, plan, do, review. Throughout this ongoing cycle, actions are reviewed and refined as the teacher's understanding of the child's needs increases.

Gross Motor Skills

Gross Motor Skills can be defined as the bigger movements we make - such as rolling over, jumping, climbing and sitting - that use the large muscles in the arms, legs, torso and feet.

SEND Glossary for Parents



H

Hearing Impairments (HI)

Hearing Impairments (HI) in children occur in a variety of different ways. Many of them are genetic; however a significant portion are caused by injury. Some more common causes of hearing impairments include:

- birth complications
- infectious diseases
- ear infections
- exposure to excessive noise

Many hearing impairments are treatable with things like hearing aids, cochlear implants and other assistive devices.

High Needs Funding

High Needs Funding is the funding that the Local Authority uses to pay for special school places.

High Needs Top-up Funding

High Needs Top-up Funding (sometimes referred to as element 3) is the funding required over and above the core funding (sometimes referred to as elements 1 and 2) a school or college receives to enable a pupil or student with high needs to participate in education and learning.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Hyperlexia

Hyperlexia is defined as having an advanced reading ability without the accompanying speech or language skills. Because of this, it's often diagnosed alongside an autism spectrum condition (ASC).

Hypermobility

Hypermobility is the ability to move joints in an increased range of movements. Hypermobility exists, to varying degrees, across a large proportion of the population. Studies have shown up to 71% of under 8s and 55% of four to fourteen-year-olds have some degree of hypermobility. For many, medical intervention is not required and hypermobility can be seen as an advantage for athletes, dancers and gymnasts. The flexibility of joints is measured using the Beighton Score. See also **Hypermobility Spectrum Disorder and Ehler-Danlos Syndromes (EDS)**



Hypermobility Spectrum Disorder (HSD)

Hypermobility Spectrum Disorder (HSD) is when a person has very flexible joints which cause them pain.

SEND Glossary for Parents

I

Inclusion

Inclusion is a basic right for all pupils. It ensures that equality, equity and accessibility are championed across a curriculum and the school. By challenging the sources of inequality, especially for those in marginalised groups, schools become inclusive.

Independent Schools

Independent Schools (also known as 'private schools') charge fees to attend instead of being funded by the government. Pupils do not have to follow the national curriculum. All private schools must be registered with the government and are inspected regularly. These schools can be mainstream (also called non-maintained, fee-paying or private schools) or specialist independent schools funded through an EHC plan (also called non-maintained specialist schools).

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a document that schools can use to outline and monitor the support they provide to a child or young person. It is a non-statutory document meaning that schools can choose if and how they use it. The IEP describes the provision and adaptations that an individual needs in order to access their learning as well as setting out personalised targets. These documents can also have different names such as SEND Support Plans, Pupil Passports or One Page Profiles and should be linked to the **graduated approach**.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS)

Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) offers free impartial information, advice and support in confidence for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities aged from birth to 25. This service is dedicated to helping the children, their parents and young people to play an active and informed role in their education and care. Although funded by local authorities, SENDIAS Services are run either at arm's length from the local authority or by a voluntary organisation to ensure children, their parents and young people have confidence in them.

Intervention is a term used to describe a short-term, focused teaching programme. This series of sessions will focus on a specific intended outcome or outcomes and is to support individuals or small groups of pupils who have particular needs.



Learning Difficulty

Learning Difficulty is not the same as **learning disability**. A learning difficulty is a neurological condition that causes the brain to process information differently. A learning difficulty is a condition that only creates an obstacle to a specific form of learning, but does not affect the overall IQ of an individual, also referred to as **Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)**.

Some of the more common learning difficulties include dyslexia, ADHD, developmental language disorder, Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD, also known as dyspraxia) and dyscalculia.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Learning Disability

Learning Disability is a condition that affects a person's learning across all areas. It is defined by the Department of Health as a "significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), which started before adulthood". Learning disabilities can be categorised based on the severity of the effect they have on the lives of those who have them. See also **Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)**, **Severe Learning difficulties (SLD)** and **Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)**

Learning Support Assistant (LSA), Teaching Assistant (TA)

Learning Support Assistant (LSA) and **Teaching Assistant (TA)** are terms which are often used interchangeably to describe someone who assists teachers by providing teaching and learning support in a range of different ways. Often, an LSA will work consistently on a one-to-one basis with a child with SEND (or may have a specialist role such as Speech, Language and Communication Needs) where a TA may work with small groups more frequently.

It is recognised that looked after children often experience difficulties with progress in school; schools receive **Pupil Premium funding** to enable them to support these pupils' learning.

Local Authority/Authorities

Local Authority/Authorities are administrative offices that provide services within their local areas. They are responsible for non-academy schools in their local area.

Local Offer

A **Local Offer** provides, in a single place, information for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their parents or carers. It shows families what they can expect from a range of local agencies including education, health and social care. Every Local Authority is responsible for writing a Local Offer and making sure it is available for everyone to see.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Looked After Children (LAC)

Looked After Children (LAC) refers to children who are accommodated by the local authority, who are subject to a care order or who are remanded by a court into local authority care. Looked-after children may be placed with parents, foster carers (including relatives and friends), in local authority accommodation or with prospective adopters.



Mainstream schools

Mainstream schools provide education for all children, whether or not they have special educational needs or disabilities.

Maintained Schools

Maintained Schools are schools which are funded and controlled by the local education authority (LA). They must follow the national curriculum and provide teachers with pay and conditions in line with the national requirement.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Mediation

Mediation is a form of disagreement resolution for parents and young people considering appealing decisions about EHC needs assessments and plans at a tribunal.

Every local authority must provide independent mediation to help parents and young people resolve disputes with local authorities about:

- a decision not to carry out an EHC needs assessment
- a decision not to draw up an EHC plan
- the content of a final EHC plan or amended plan
- a decision not to amend an EHC plan
- a decision to cease to maintain an EHC plan

Mediation must also be provided on the health and social care elements of an EHC plan.



Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD)

Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) is a general term for when a pupil is having difficulty accessing the curriculum, even when the learning is well-differentiated and support is put in place. See also Global Developmental Delay.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) - according to the NHS website, 'Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a condition that can affect the brain and spinal cord, causing a wide range of potential symptoms, including problems with vision, arm or leg movement, sensation or balance.

It's a lifelong condition that can sometimes cause serious disability, although it can occasionally be mild. In many cases, it's possible to treat symptoms. Average life expectancy is slightly reduced for people with MS. It's most commonly diagnosed in people in their 20s, 30s and 40s although it can develop at any age. It's about 2 to 3 times more common in women than men. MS is one of the most common causes of disability in younger adults.'

Multisensory Learning

Multisensory Learning is a teaching method which encourages learners to use more than one of their senses in a learning opportunity. This learning style promotes using activities that appeal to our visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile senses. It might also include gustatory, olfactory, proprioceptive or vestibular senses.

'Must'

'Must' - The SEND Code of Practice says in Section i of the Introduction:

'...where the text uses the word 'must' it refers to a statutory requirement under primary legislation, regulations or case law.' This means that wherever the term 'must' is used there is a legal duty for LAs and schools to do what the Code says.



SEND Glossary for Parents



Neurodivergent

Neurodivergent refers to a person with mental or neurological function which differs from that of a neurotypical person.

Neurodiverse

Neurodiverse - a group of people could be neurodiverse - a mix of neurodivergent and neurotypical people. A single person can not be neurodiverse; they would be neurodivergent.

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioural traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Neurotypical

Neurotypical describes individuals who display typical intellectual and cognitive development.



O

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is a common mental health condition where a person has obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Occupational therapists

Occupational therapists help with barriers that affect a child's emotional, social and physical needs. To do this, they use everyday activities, exercises and other therapies.

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Occupational Therapy (OT) is a branch of the healthcare service that helps people of all ages who have physical, sensory or cognitive problems. OT can help them regain independence in all areas of their lives. OT can help children with play, improve their school performance and aid their daily activities.

Ofsted

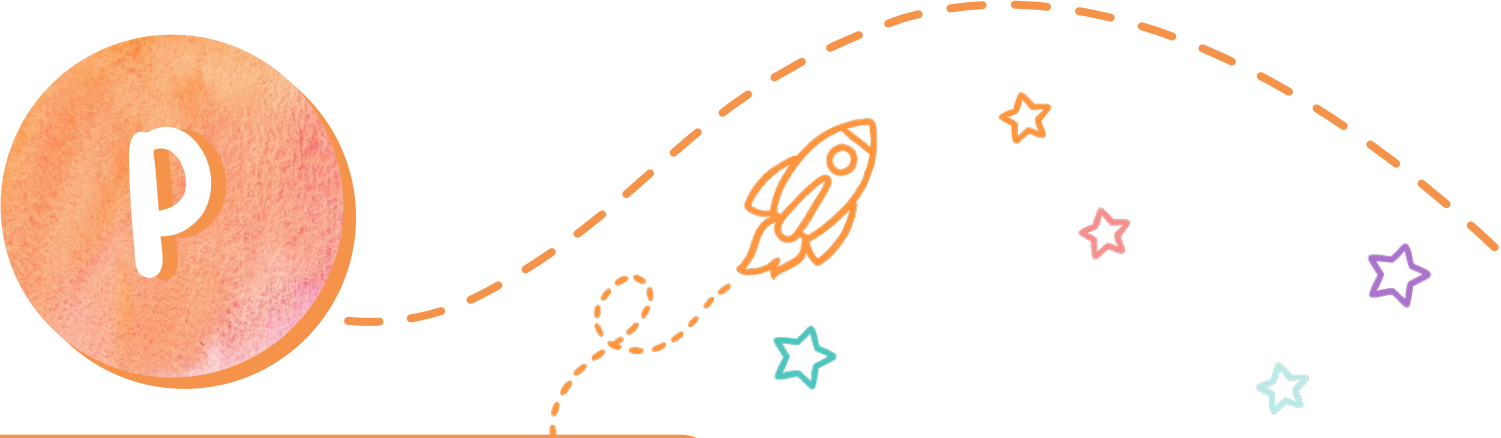
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'Ofsted's role is to make sure that organisations providing education, training and care services in England do so to a high standard for children and students'. They report directly to Parliament and are independent and impartial.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) is a behavioural disorder, usually diagnosed in childhood, that is characterised by uncooperative, defiant, negative and irritable behaviours towards parents, peers, teachers and other authority figures. Many children, particularly adolescents, can be oppositional: this does not mean they have ODD. A positive diagnosis of ODD often requires the child's behaviour to cause considerable distress for the family and will often affect their school and social life.

SEND Glossary for Parents



P

Parental Responsibility (PR)

Parental Responsibility (PR) is defined in section 3(1) of the Children Act 1989 as being “all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which, by law, a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his property”. People with PR can make or be involved in the important decisions necessary in a child’s life including issues relating to (among other things):

- education (for example, where a child should go to school and the right to receive school reports)
- health and medical treatment (for example, whether a child should receive medical treatment or inoculations)

If you have any questions about PR you should consult a legal advice line or solicitor.

Parent Carer Forums

Parent Carer Forums are a representative local group of parents and carers of children and young people with SEND. The group works with local authorities and education and health providers to make sure the planning and provision of services for families take full account of parent carer views and experiences. This in turn should ensure that those services can be both effective and timely as well as ensuring they make the best use of resources. For more information on your area's Parent Carer Forum visit The National Network of Parent Carer Forums [website](#).

SEND Glossary for Parents

Performance Levels/Scales (P Levels/Scales)

Performance Levels/Scales (P Levels/Scales)

P Scales or (P Levels) were previously used to assess the progress of children aged 5-14 who have special educational needs (SEN) and whose abilities do not yet reach Level 1 of the national curriculum. P scales 1 to 4 have been replaced by the **engagement model**.

From September 2021, P scales 1 to 4 can no longer be used to assess pupils working below the level of the national curriculum and not engaged in subject specific study. Schools should instead use the engagement model to assess these pupils.

Personal Budget

Personal Budget is a sum of money that would be needed to cover the cost of making the special educational provision specified in the EHC plan for a child or young person with special educational needs. You cannot have a personal budget unless you have an EHC plan. Information about Personal Budgets can be found in the LA Local Offer.

Portage

Portage is a home-visiting educational service for pre-school children with SEND and their families.

Portage aims to:

- work with families to help them develop a quality of life and experience, for themselves and their young children, in which they can learn together, play together, participate and be included in their community in their own right
- play a part in minimising the disabling barriers that confront young children and their families
- support the national and local development of inclusive services for children

More information about Portage can be found on the [National Portage Association Website](#).

SEND Glossary for Parents

Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD)

Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD) refers to the needs of learners who have severe and complex difficulties in learning and development. They are likely to have additional significant difficulties in relation to communication, sensory impairment and/or physical difficulties. With PMLD, the child or young person's difficulties are seen and evidenced as being wide ranging, very complex and with a very significant impact on attainment. Children with PMLD are significantly more likely to have an EHC Plan and their needs may be best met at a specialist provision.

Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium is funding to improve education outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in schools in England. Evidence shows that disadvantaged children generally face additional challenges in reaching their potential at school and often do not perform as well as other pupils' – Government definition.

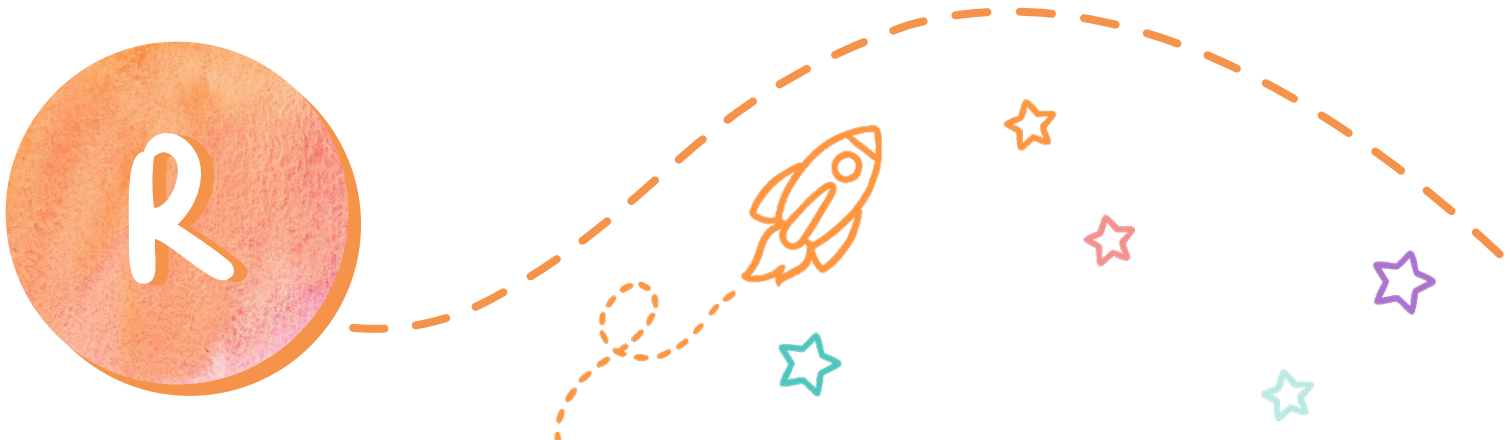
Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)

Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) teach children who aren't able to attend school and may not otherwise receive suitable education. This could be because they have a short- or long-term illness, have been excluded from a mainstream school or are a new starter waiting for a mainstream school place.

Some pupils will have all their lessons at a PRU, while others split their time between the mainstream school where they're registered and a PRU. PRUs are not special schools, and pupils who have more severe special educational needs or disabilities should not be sent to a PRU as a long-term solution.



SEND Glossary for Parents



R

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable Adjustments are changes schools and other settings are required (by law) to make to ensure that disabled students are not discriminated against. These changes could include providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment) or ensuring accessibility.

Receptive Language

Receptive Language is the ability to understand what is being said.

Resourced or Resource Provision

Resourced or Resource Provision caters for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans who require a specialist environment within a mainstream school to support their access to the curriculum and activities offered by the school. Pupils can either be withdrawn to a resource for specialist input, or teachers from the resource deliver specialist help to the child within the classroom. A Resource Provision usually has a specialist focus such as hearing impairment or Autism.

SEND Glossary for Parents



School Focused Plan (SFP)

School Focused Plan (SFP) is a plan for any child identified as having SEN and SEND which outlines the child's strengths and areas of difficulty and what the school is doing to support the child. It is also used as a way of closely tracking the child's progress and recording support received. Children whose needs entitle them to further funding will have an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan).

Section 41 Schools

Section 41 Schools - Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014 allows the Secretary of State to publish a list of approved independent special schools and special post-16 institutions. Institutions can only be included on the list with their consent.

Sensory and/or Physical needs

Sensory and/or Physical needs includes pupils with Hearing Impairment (HI), Visual impairment (VI), Multi sensory impairment (MSI) or Physical disability (PD). The SEND Code of Practice describes states that, 'Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties.'

It also states that, 'Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.'

SEND Glossary for Parents

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) According to the SEND Code of Practice '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 him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions'

There are other factors which can also determine SEN; for information on this please refer to the SEND Code of Practice.

The '**D**' in **SEND stands for 'Disability'** - The Code of Practice states that many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

SEND Code of Practice or Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

SEND Code of Practice or Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years is statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities.

It tells local authorities, early years settings, schools, colleges, health and social care providers and others what they must and should do to identify, assess and provide for children and young people with SEN or disabilities. In this Code of Practice, where the text uses the word 'must' it refers to a statutory requirement under primary legislation, regulations or case law.

The SEND Code of Practice refers to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations. The regulations associated with the Children and Families Act 2014 are:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- The Children and Families Act 2014 (Transitional and Saving Provisions)

SEND Glossary for Parents

SENDCo or Special Educational Needs Coordinator

SENDCo or Special Educational Needs Coordinator - Every UK school is required to have a SENCo. SENCos are qualified teachers who are responsible for special educational needs within a school. They ensure that every child with SEND in the school is supported. They oversee the SEND provision within the school and ensure that teachers are following the SEND Code of Practice. Teachers are responsible for the progress of ALL children; the SENCo is responsible for the day to day operation of the school's SEN Policy, which includes:

- supporting the identification of children with special educational needs
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with parents of children with SEN
- liaising with other providers, outside agencies, educational psychologists and external agencies particularly for children receiving support.
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date

SEND Information Report

SEND Information Report must be available on the school website and contain details about the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with SEN. It should be updated annually.

According to guidance from the DfE, the report must comply with section 69 of the Children and Families Act 2014, meaning that it must contain:

- the 'SEN Information' specified in schedule 1 to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. (Statutory guidance on this is contained in section 6.79 to 6.82 of the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years)
- information as to
 - the arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils
 - the steps you have taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils
 - the facilities you provide to help disabled pupils to access the school
- the plan prepared under paragraph 3 of schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan) for:
 - increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum
 - improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school
 - improving the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled

SEND Glossary for Parents

SEND Link Governor

SEND Link Governor plays a vital role in ensuring that SEND stays on the governing body agenda and providing a link between the governing body, its committees and the staff with regard to Special Educational Needs. They must present reports to the governing body following visits and meetings with staff.

The working relationship between the SENCo and the governing board – in particular the governor, trustee or committee that has oversight of SEND – is one of the most important in governance.

SEN support

SEN support is the provision put in place to support a child who has been identified as having special educational needs. Schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place called SEN Support. This SEN Support should take the form of a four part cycle (assess/plan/do/review - see **Graduated Approach**).

Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD)

Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) refers to the needs of learners who have significant and severe difficulties in learning across the curriculum and require support in all areas of the curriculum and in wider life skills. Most pupils with SLD will require direct and intensive intervention to support progress and development in relation to learning, developing and maintaining motor skills, self help skills, independence and attainment.

'Should'

'Should' is a word that occurs frequently in the SEND Code of Practice. Section i of the Introduction to the Code says:

'... where the text uses the word 'should' it means that the guidance contained in this Code must be considered and that those who must have regard to it will be expected to explain any departure from it.'

This means that wherever the term **'should'** is used in the SEND Code of Practice, organisations must consider what the Code says, however they can choose to depart from it.

SEND Glossary for Parents

Signposting

Signposting is when a service or organisation that provides information, advice and support is not able to give the required support directly, so they point the person seeking support to other service providers.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) is described in the SEND Code of Practice as "Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or attachment disorder."

Special Educational Provision

Special Educational Provision is any educational or training provision which is extra to or different from what is needed by other children or young people the same age. This can include many different things, including communicating through sign language, having worksheets in a larger font and needing one-to-one or small group support.



SEND Glossary for Parents

Special Schools

Special Schools provide an education for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These schools have a higher staff to pupil ratio due to the additional needs of the pupils. According to the DfE, special schools with pupils aged 11 and older can specialise in 1 of the 4 areas of special educational needs:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and physical needs

Schools can further specialise within these categories to reflect the special needs they help with, for example Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), visual impairment or speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)

Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) is a difference or difficulty with some particular aspects of learning. The most common SpLDs are Dyslexia, Developmental Language Disorder, Dyspraxia (DCD) Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyscalculia and Dysgraphia. Specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) are some of the most common special educational needs affecting learners.

‘The underlying logic behind the term ‘specific learning difficulty’ is that these individuals have a weakness in one specific area of cognition, and that other areas are unimpaired.’ (Current Understanding from the Government Office for Science [review](#))

Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs)

Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs) work with both adults and children to support speech, language, communication, eating, drinking and swallowing in a range of settings.

All SaLTs in the UK are registered with the HCPC (Health and Care Professionals Council) and are members of the RCSLT (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists). All SaLTs will have a degree, and many also have post-graduate training.

SaLTs use specific skills to support the needs of the children they work with. This may be through play and games, depending on the child's needs. They also work closely with families, teachers, psychologists, doctors and occupational therapists in order to provide the individual support needed for the child.

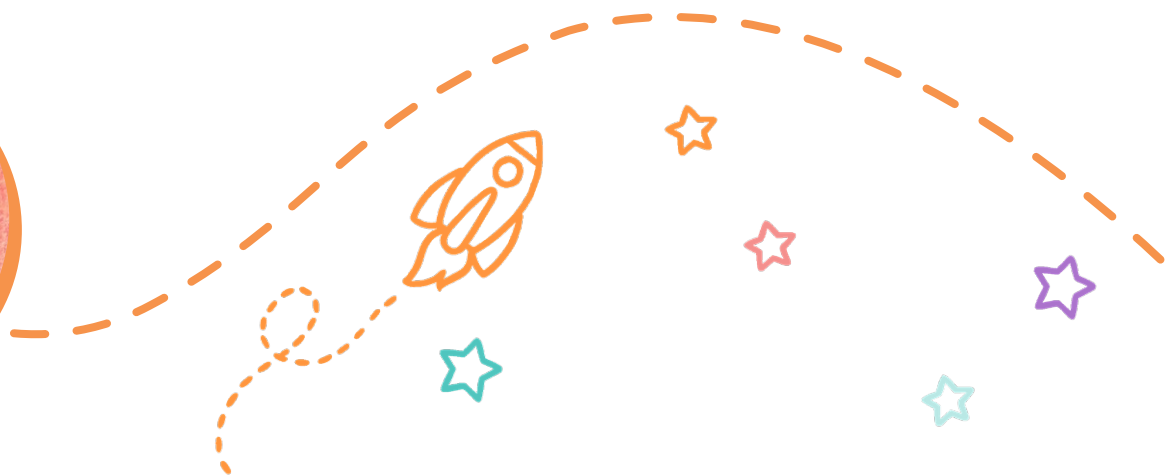
SEND Glossary for Parents

Statements of Special Educational Need

Statements of Special Educational Need were replaced in The Children and Families Act 2014 by **EHC plans**.

Statutory guidance

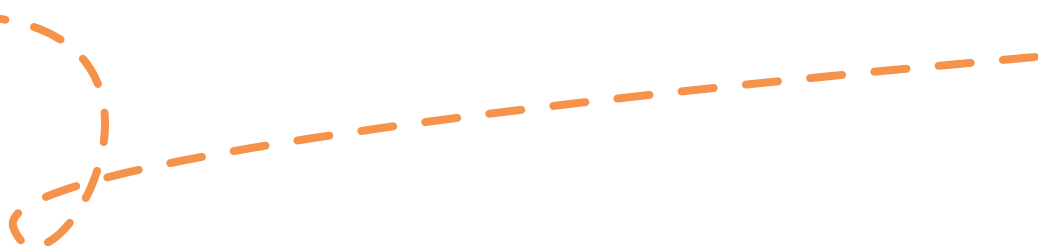
Statutory guidance is guidance that local authorities and other local bodies have a legal duty to follow.



Tics

Tics are involuntary sounds and movements, commonly associated with Tourette Syndrome, which can start in childhood around the age of six or seven. Symptoms tend to peak at around 11 or 12 years of age. Tourette Syndrome is a fluctuating condition, which means that tics can come and go.

Tics can also be triggered or increased by environmental factors such as stress, excitement or relaxation. Tics can occur in nearly any part of the body and in any muscle. Some individuals report 'internal tics' such as deep abdominal muscle tension and 'stomach tics'.



SEND Glossary for Parents

Tourette Syndrome (TS)

Tourette Syndrome (TS) is a genetic condition that often runs in families and can occur alongside other conditions such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). The genetic cause of TS is complex, as not one single gene has been identified to be the cause of the condition.

In some cases, different environmental factors may contribute to the onset or affect the severity of TS. These include pregnancy and complications during pregnancy, as well as being born prematurely and at a low weight.

Transition is the movement between different environments, rooms or settings. All transition involves change and it is vital to prepare all children for this. When children are prepared for transition they adapt more easily to changes. Many children with SEND find transitions particularly challenging and provision should be put in place to support them during transition periods.



Visual Discrimination

Visual Discrimination is the ability to detect differences and similarities in size, shape, colour and pattern. Children should begin to have the ability to recognise details in visual images. Developing discrimination skills will help children learn to read print.



SEND Glossary for Parents

W

Working Memory

Working Memory is the term used to refer to the ability we have to hold and manipulate information in the mind over short periods of time. Information is not 'stored' in the working memory - it is like our brain's notebook. Once something is lost from the working memory it is irretrievable. Working memory difficulties are common in (but not limited to) children with SEND.



Disclaimers

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