

Special Educational Needs- What does it mean?

If your child has significantly greater learning difficulties than the other children in the class and needs special educational provision that is additional to what the other children are receiving, then he/she will be placed on the school's SEN register and the school will meet with you to agree an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

What if the difficulties persist?

If your child does not make adequate progress on the targets in their IEPs and continues to experience significant difficulties, the school may, with your consent, wish to seek advice and support from the Education Authority or in a small number of cases may wish to consult with the Educational Psychologist.

The school's Principal and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will oversee this process for your child.

Having Special Educational Needs could mean significant difficulties with

- Some or all of their work in school
- Reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- Expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying
- Making friends and/or relating to adults

CONTACT DETAILS

The SEN Advice and Information Service:

helps parents of children with special educational needs access support, guidance and advice in relation to the needs of their children.

SEN Advice and Information Service

Armagh Office Tel: 028 37415355

Ballymena Office Tel: 028 25661319

Belfast Office Tel: 028 90564273

Dundonald Office Tel: 028 90566200

Omagh Office Tel: 028 8241 1286

The Dispute Avoidance & Resolution Service (DARS):

is an independent service which works towards avoiding and resolving disagreements between parents and the Authority, or parents and a school, in regard to children with SEN. The service provides a forum for exploring differences, identifying points of agreement and finding a way forward which is acceptable to all involved.

More details of both of these services can be found on the Authority's website www.eani.org.uk or Tel: 028 37512383

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

DE, The Code of Practice on the Identification & Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998) and the Supplement to the Code (2005)

www.eani.org.uk



I'm worried that my child may have Special Educational Needs

The Learning Continuum in School

Guidance for Parents and Guardians



**Children and Young People's Services
SEND Implementation Team**

Your role as a Parent

As a parent you know your child better than anyone else. You hold key information and have an important role to play in supporting your child's education. You have unique knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of your child's needs and the best way to support them with their learning both at home and in school.

Open and honest communication

The school will make time to listen to any concerns that you may have about your child and will offer advice and support if needed.

The school will involve you and your child in decisions about them.

The school will ask your permission if they need to involve any other professionals to support or assess your child.

Your child's views are also very important

Children have a unique view of their own needs and capabilities, and possess their own opinions about the sort of support they would like to access to help them to reach their potential. The school will ensure that your child will be listened to and that their views will be valued.

How does the school meet the needs of all its learners?

If your child is provided with different work or activities in class from that of their peers, you should not worry. All children are different and teachers are highly skilled at using a wide range of approaches and strategies to help children learn. Praise your child for their effort and for trying their best in school. This will build their confidence.

Children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best.

Teachers are trained to take account of this by looking carefully at how they organise lessons, the classroom, the books and materials they give to each child and the way that they teach.

Supporting individual differences

All teachers will consider a number of options and will choose the most appropriate ways to help each child learn from a range of activities within a continuum of learning support. This is often described as **differentiating the curriculum**.



What to do if you are worried that your child may have Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children do not all learn at the same rate or pace. Some may have learning difficulties from time to time but most children with learning difficulties do not have special educational needs.

If you are worried about your child's progress, contact the class teacher who will arrange a time to meet with you. She will explain how your child is getting on in school and, if needed, will address any concerns you may have. She will also advise you on how you can help your child at home.

If, after a period of observation, the teacher thinks that additional provision in school is needed for your child, she will contact you and arrange a meeting to discuss this with you.

Please be assured that schools have clear processes for identifying and assessing children with Special Educational Needs. Staff will ensure that your child's needs are met whether they have learning difficulties or SEN.

