

SEND Glossary of Terms

Academy

A state-funded school in England that is directly funded by DfE, through the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Academies are self-governing and independent of local authority control.

Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements are special arrangements, or reasonable adjustments, which a small number of disabled students are entitled to in their public exams.

Alternative Provision

Education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education. This can include pupils receiving targeted support in their mainstream school; pupils directed to off-site provision to improve their behaviour; and provision for pupils on a fixed period exclusion.

Annual Review

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 local Authorities must carry out a review of every Education Health and Care plan at least once every 12 months. [Learn more about Annual Reviews.](#)

Area of Need

Area of Need is the name for the four broad categories used to describe a pupil's SEND. They are:

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

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The independent regulator of health and social care in England, responsible for registering care providers, monitoring, inspecting and rating services, and taking action to protect people who use services.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) / Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS)

These services assess and treat children and young people with emotional, behavioural, or mental health difficulties.

Children Looked After Children (CLA).

The term 'looked after' refers to children, under 18, who are being provided with care and accommodation by the Local Authority.

Local Authority/Authorities. Local authorities are administrative offices that provide services within their local areas. There are 152 across England which are education authorities. Find out more information about local government [here](#)

Children and Families Act.

The Children and Families Act 2014 became law on 1st September 2014. Part 3 of the Act sets out the new law on SEND. [Find a copy of the Children and Families Act \(external link\)](#).

Children in need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired without the provision of children's social care services, or the child is disabled.

Clinical Commissioning Group.

A CCG is a group of NHS professionals who are responsible for planning and arranging the delivery of the healthcare provision for people in its area.

Compulsory school age

A child is of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday until the last Friday of June in the year in which they become 16, provided that their 16th birthday falls before the start of the next school year.

Direct Payment.

A payment made directly to a parent or young person to purchase specific services. Under the Children and Families Act 2014 a Direct Payment may be made as part of a Personal Budget so that the parent or young person can buy certain services that are specified in their EHC plan. [Find out more about Personal Budgets and Direct Payment](#).

Disagreement Resolution.

Local authorities must provide independent disagreement resolution to help parents and young people resolve disputes with local authorities, schools and other settings about SEND duties and provision. [Read more about Resolution.](#)

Early help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS covers children from birth to age five. Many children attend an early education setting soon after their third birthday. The foundation stage continues until the end of the reception year.

Early years provider

A provider of early education places for children under five years of age. This includes schools, pre-schools, private nurseries and childminders.

Education Funding Agency.

The EFA is the government agency that funds education for learners between the ages of 3 and 19, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities between the ages of 3 and 25.

The EFA allocates funds to local authorities, which then provide the funding for maintained schools. The EFA directly funds academies and free schools.

Education Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA).

The initial assessment carried out by the Local Authority, for deciding whether a child or young person needs an EHC plan. [Find out more about the EHCNA.](#)

Education Health and Care Plan.

An EHC plan describes the special educational needs that a child or young person has and the help that they will be given to meet them. It also includes the health and care provision that is needed. It is a legal document written by the local authority and is used for children and young people who have high support needs. [Find out more about EHCPs.](#)

Elective Home Education.

Elective home education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home. A child who is EHE will not be on role at a school. Can be called Home Schooling.

First-Tier Tribunal (SEND and disability).

The First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) is a legal body. The Tribunal hears appeals from parents of children with SEND, and young people with SEND, about EHC needs assessments and EHC plans.

The Tribunal also hears claims of disability discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. [Learn more about Tribunals.](#)

Free school

A free school is a type of academy, which is free to attend, but is not controlled by the local authority.

Graduated Approach.

The SEND Code of Practice states that schools should follow a graduated approach when providing SEND Support. This is based on a cycle of:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do
- Review

[Learn more about the Graduated Approach.](#)

High Needs Funding and High Needs Top-up Funding.

High needs funding is the funding that LA use to pay for special school places.

High needs top-up funding is additional funding paid directly by the LA for some high needs pupils.

Independent school

A school that is not maintained by a local authority and is registered under part 4 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. Section 347 of the Act sets out the conditions under which an independent school may be approved by the Secretary of State for Education as being suitable for the admission of children with EHCPs.

Key Stage.

A key stage is a stage of education. They are separated in age as follows:

- Key Stage 1, 5-7 years old, school years 1 and 2
- Key Stage 2, 7-11 years old, school years 3 – 6
- Key Stage 3, 11 – 14 years old, school years 7 - 9
- Key Stage 4, 14 – 16 years old, school years 10 - 11

- Key Stage 5, 16 – 18 years old, school years 12 - 13

Maintained School.

Schools in England that are funded by a local authority including any community, foundation or voluntary school, community special or foundation special school.

Mainstream School.

This is a school that provides education for all children, whether or not they have special educational needs or disabilities.

Mediation.

A form of disagreement resolution for parents and young people considering appealing decisions about EHC needs assessments and plans at the 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. [Find out more about Mediation.](#)

Mediation Advice.

The purpose of mediation advice is to give information about what mediation involves. Parents or young people who wish to register an appeal with the First Tier Tribunal (SEN and Disability) must first seek mediation advice. The advice must be factual and unbiased. After mediation advice has been given the parent or young person can choose whether they wish to go to mediation.

Non-maintained special school

Schools in England approved by the Secretary of State for Education under Section 342 of the Education Act 1996 as special schools which are not maintained by the state but charge fees on a non-profit-making basis. Most non-maintained special schools are run by major charities or charitable trusts.

Ofsted

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills is a non-Ministerial government department established under the Education & Inspections Act 2006. It

has responsibility for the inspection of schools, children's services, and local SEND provision in England.

Outcome.

Outcomes describe the difference that will be made to a child or young person as a result of special educational and other provision. Must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART).

Parent

Under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, the term 'parent' includes any person who is not a parent of the child but has parental responsibility (see below) or who cares for him or her.

Parental responsibility

Parental responsibility is defined under Section 3 (1) of the Children Act 1989 as meaning all the duties, rights, powers, responsibilities, and authority which parents have with respect to their children and their children's property.

Parent Carer Forum.

A Parent Carer Forum is a representative local group of parents and carers of disabled children who work with local authorities, education, health and other providers to make sure the services they plan and deliver meet the needs of disabled children and families. [Find information about Sutton Parent Carer Forum \(external link\).](#)

Personal Budget.

A Personal Budget is money set aside to fund support as part of an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) for a child or young person with special educational needs. It can include funds from Education, Health and Social Care. [Learn more about Personal Budgets.](#)

Portage.

Portage is home-based educational support for pre-school children with special educational needs. Local authorities usually provide Portage services.

Pupil Premium.

Schools in England get extra funding from the government to help improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. Schools get pupil premium funding based on the number of pupils they have in January each year who receive free school meals and/or have done in the past six years.

Pupil Premium Plus Funding.

Pupil Premium Plus Funding is provided for each Child Looked After within a Local Authority and is distributed by the Virtual School Headteacher to improve educational outcomes.

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

A school which is specially organised to provide education for pupils who would otherwise not receive suitable education because of illness, exclusion or any other reason. Also called an alternative provision.

Reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments are changes schools and other settings are required to make which could include: changes to physical features – for example, creating a ramp so that students can enter a classroom or providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment).

Resourced or Resource Provision.

Resourced provision within mainstream schools are where pupils are either 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 Spectrum Disorder.

Section 41 schools.

Section 41 Schools is school included on the Secretary of State Approved List of independent educational institutions, independent special schools and post-16 institutions.

SEND Code of Practice.

This is the statutory guidance that supports Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. 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.

[Find a full copy of the Code \(external link\).](#)

[Find a shorter version of the Code \(external link\).](#)

SEND Information Report.

All schools must publish on their websites information about their policy and arrangements for supporting children with SEN. This must be kept up to date.

SEND Service.

The SEND Service, which often have a name unique to the Local Authority, are the team responsible for the EHC assessments, plans, reviews and placements. You should be able to find the contact details for the SEND Team through the Local Offer.

Siass - Sutton Information, Advice and Support Service.

Sutton IAS Service, formerly Sutton Parent Partnership Service, provides confidential, impartial, information, advice and support to parents/carers, children and young people on special educational needs and disability (SEND). A young person is an individual over compulsory school age (16) and under 25. [Find out more about SIASS.](#)

Signposting.

Sometimes a service that provides information, advice and support may be asked for help that it is not able to give directly.

When this happens the person seeking information, advice or support may signposted to other service providers. This means that they will be given information, including contact details, about other sources of help.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Special educational needs often referred to as 'SEN' or 'SEND' (Special educational needs and disabilities), is a term used to describe learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for a child to learn compared to children of the same age. [Find out more about SEND.](#)

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENCo). A SENDCo is a qualified teacher in a school or maintained nursery school who has responsibility for co-ordinating SEND provision.

Special educational provision

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is different from, or additional to that normally made for others the same age in mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or places at which relevant early years education is provided.

Special school

A school which is specifically organised to make special educational provision for pupils with SEN.

Speech and language therapy

Speech and language therapy is a health care profession, the role and aim of which is to enable children, young people and adults with speech, language and communication difficulties (and associated difficulties with eating and swallowing) to reach their maximum communication potential and achieve independence in all aspects of life.

Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Under the Education Act 1996 local authorities issued Statements of Special Educational Need for children whose needs could not be met through the provision normally made by schools. The Children and Families Act 2014 replaces Statements with EHC plans.

Statutory guidance.

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

Transition Planning.

Preparation for moves between phases of education or for adult life

Tribunal.

See First-Tier Tribunal.

Virtual School Head (VSH)

The Virtual School Head (VSH) is an officer of a local authority who leads a virtual school team that tracks the progress of children looked after by the authority as if they attended a single school. The Children Act 1989 requires every local authority to appoint an officer who is an employee of that or another authority to discharge this duty