

Script for Video: Support in schools for pupils with special educational needs or SEN.

Title slide

This recording will give an overview of the process of support for pupils in schools who have special educational needs or SEN. We will also refer to how this works in nurseries and further education colleges.

Slide 2

This recording will go through:

Some key principles of SEN support, including whole school and whole class approaches, from slide four.

I'm going to explain what's known as the graduated approach or the graduated cycle of SEN support, including how you and your child are involved and some examples of targeted SEN support, from slide nine.

We'll discuss positive approaches for working with schools and explain the SEN Information Report, from slide nineteen.

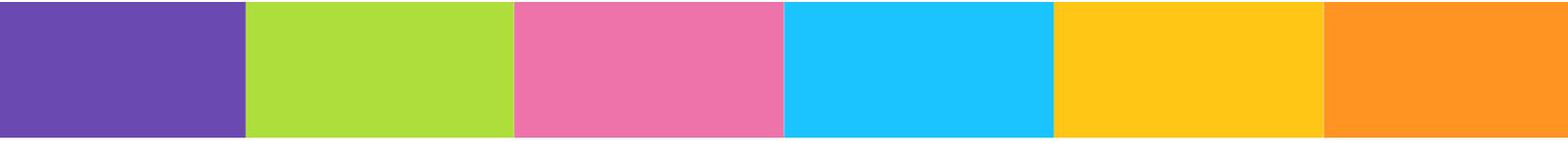
And we'll explore the advice schools can access if a pupil needs more support, from slide twenty-four.

We've created timestamps in the description under this video on YouTube so if you want to watch just part of the recording again, you can click on a particular section and the video will start at that point.

Slide 3

This recording will refer frequently to the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice of 2015](#). This is statutory guidance which means it comes directly from law.

You can download it for free if you would like to. Chapter 6 is all about SEN support in schools and I'll be giving exact references to the Code in this recording.



Slide 4

The SEND code of Practice says that all children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

achieve their best

become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and

make a successful transition into adulthood, whether that be into employment, further or higher education or training.

(SEND Code of Practice sections 6.1)

Slide 5

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have, SEN.

(SEND Code of Practice Section 6.37)

Differentiation means being flexible with the way teachers teach and communicate and adapting resources to suit a range of different learning styles and abilities, to help all pupils to understand and learn. High quality teaching is therefore personalised, flexible and solution-focussed.

Some pupils with additional needs may have all or some of their needs met through these adjustments made at a whole class and whole school level.

Slide 6

Many approaches which are good for pupils with SEN are good for all pupils.

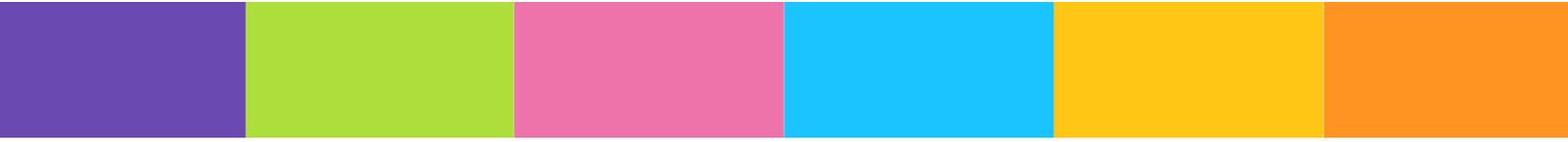
When you meet with school to explore support, we want to encourage you to explore whole school and whole class approaches which would help your child, as part of your overall discussions.

Many children and young people with SEN have told us that they don't like to stand out as different in school, so the more whole school and whole class approaches are able to support them, the more included they will feel. In this way, SEN support becomes an essential part of whole-school practice, rather than an add-on.

So, let's consider a few examples of support at whole school and class levels now.

Slide 7

If we consider pupil well-being, examples of whole school approaches for supporting this could include:



Educating pupils on the importance of well-being and strategies to maintain it.

Schools could provide information on support for young people and self-help resources.

Schools could embed the THRIVE approach which aims to give staff the knowledge, skills and tools to support social and emotional wellbeing, focussing on the relationship with the child or young person.

Schools could support students to help each other by supporting and encouraging buddies or student mentors, playground leaders and wellbeing ambassadors.

They could make sure that pupils' voices are heard by regularly seeking feedback and demonstrating the difference it makes on school decisions and practice.

Calming and organising activities could be encouraged across the school, like supporting pupils to regularly practice and focus on and control their breathing or practice mindfulness. They could offer Yoga or Tai Chi or simply encourage stretching exercise to become part of class routines.

Slide 8

Examples of whole class approaches might include:

Ensuring classrooms are uncluttered and maintain displays which support understanding and engage pupils' learning, without overwhelming or distracting them.

Simply ensuring class routines are consistent and resources are clearly labelled and always returned to the same places can benefit all pupils and particularly those with SEN.

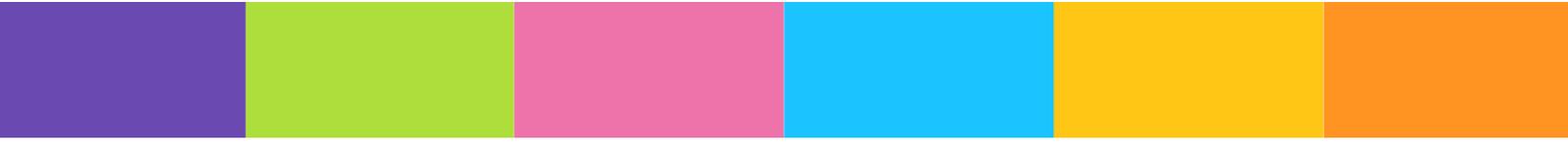
Likewise, visuals can support the learning of the whole class and can include visual timetables and sequencing visuals, checklists, reminders and visual prompts.

Classes could include a worry box or sensory box which all pupils could use.

And teachers could routinely adapt their questions and give all pupils time to process and think about their answers, perhaps using talking partners.

Reading aloud could be made voluntary and teachers could ensure that pupils always have alternative methods to record.

As we said earlier, whole class and whole school approaches may meet the needs of some children with additional difficulties, but there will be others who will need more help.



They may have a special educational need identified which means they need support, which is additional to, or different from, the support made generally for other children or young people of the same age.

Slide 9

Following the Children and Families Act of 2014, nurseries, schools and colleges are expected to follow what's known as the graduated approach to SEN support. This involves a four-stage cycle of assess, plan, do and review.

And it's important to know that schools must inform you when they are making special educational provision (which means support) for your child.

(SEND Code of Practice sections 5.6 and 6.2)

Slide 10

The first stage in the cycle, assessing your child's needs, is where the setting draws on their understanding of your child's progress and attainment, the views of you and your child, and if relevant, the advice of external services.

The SEND code is clear that 'Schools should take seriously any concern raised by a parent.'

(SEND Code of Practice sections 5.39 & 6.45)

Slide 11

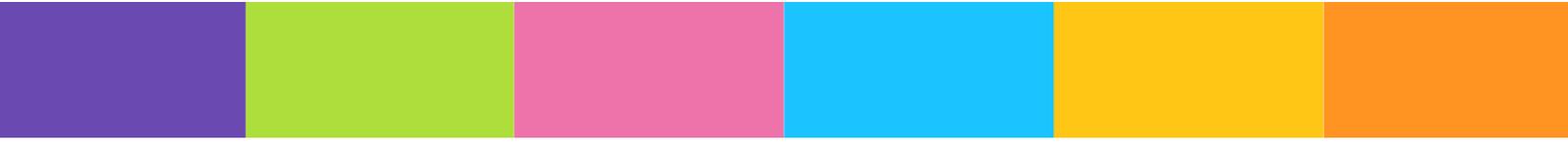
The second stage is where support for your child is planned and here the teacher, often with the special educational needs' coordinator (or SENCo) explores and agrees with you and your child, what support and interventions they will offer based on what your child needs to be able to do. The plan can also include how parents can be involved in supporting this process.

It should be clear what impact is expected from the support strategies and also the date for reviewing these, to check that they are working.

All teachers and support staff, including teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors, should be made aware of this support plan and it should be recorded.

There is no longer a requirement for an Individual Education Plan or IEP but parents can ask for a copy of the support plan.

(SEND Code sections 5.40 & 6.48 – 9)



Slide 12

Schools can record your child's needs and support in different ways. They might use resources like pupil passports or one-page-profiles, like the templates you can see on screen.

Whatever form is used, what is important is that you and your child have been fully involved and fully understand what has been agreed. In order to engage with the support, your child needs to understand what the point is, in other words, what they will be able to do with the help and they need to know what the support will look like so that they can be prepared for what to expect. And you need to be clear so that you can support your child to work with school.

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Let's look at a few examples of support for different types of SEN which could be reasonably explored with school at this stage.

A short movement break like a real of staged errand to another part of the school is a well-used strategy which can help relieve sensory overload for a pupil with sensory processing needs.

A 'move-n-sit' or wedge air filled cushion might help relieve the need to fidget in a seat for some pupils.

There are a variety of language packages which schools may use to help with screening, assessing, and supporting pupils with speech, language and communication needs. Speech Link on this slide is one such package which helps identify and support pupils with speech sound delays.

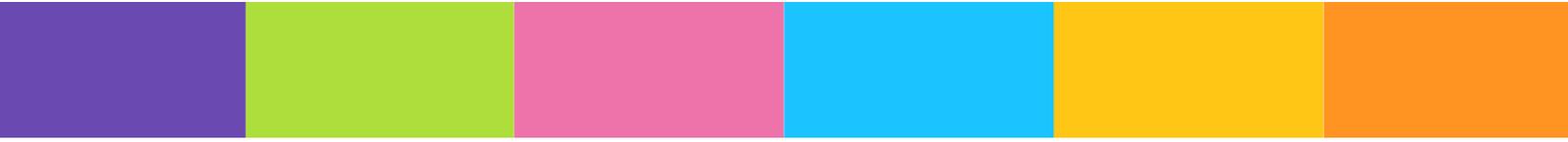
Schools might use nurture groups to support pupils to build social skills and confidence.

And support strategies for pupils with specific learning difficulties like Dyslexia might include coloured overlays or the use of assistive technology like an e-pen which can scan hard copy and read the text back.

These are just a few examples. Every child is different and for support to be person-centred, your child's views and thoughts need to be at the centre of what is agreed.

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In the third stage of the graduated cycle, the setting gets on and puts the agreed support in place. With the help of the SENCo, the class or subject teacher oversees the support and should work closely with teaching assistants and specialist staff to assess the impact of the support plan.



(SEND Code sections 5.42, 6.52 & 7.18 for further education colleges)

Slide 15

The law is clear that schools 'must use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's SEN.'

(SEND Code, sections 5.6, 6.2 and 7.3)

However, this doesn't mean that they all have to offer the same strategies and the culture and physical environment of the school can influence this.

Every child is different and sometimes schools may need to try different ideas before they find what works best for your child.

So, if a setting is unable to offer a particular strategy that you or your child requests, it's important to ask, what can they offer instead that will have a similar impact to meet your child's needs? What is key is that they are doing all they can to meet your child's needs.

Slide 16

The final and very important stage in the cycle is the review where the setting evaluates the impact and quality of the support, deciding on any changes with you and with your child.

So, you will be looking at what has worked well, what has not worked as well as expected, and what the setting can do next to try and help your child make better progress.

The SEND Code says that 'parents should have clear information about the impact of the support and interventions provided, enabling them to be involved in planning next steps.'

(SEND Code of Practice sections 5.43 & 6.54 - 6.55)

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So, just to be clear, for nurseries and schools the SEND code says that parents and pupils should be involved in three stages of the graduated cycle in assessing your child's needs, in exploring and agreeing the plan of support and at the review. As the SEND Code states, 'parents should be fully aware of the planned support and interventions.' (SEND Code of Practice section 6.51)

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In the case of Further Education Colleges, the SEND Code says that they 'should involve the student, and particularly for those aged 16 - 18 years, their parents, closely at all stages of the cycle, planning around the individual.'

The Code recognises that some students may need help with this, stating that 'young people should be supported to participate in discussions about their aspirations, their needs and the support that they think will help them best.'

(SEND Code sections 7.14 and 7.13)

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The SEND Code says that 'parents know their children best and it is important that all professional listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by the children and young people themselves.' (SEND Code sections 5.5 and 6.20)

Research has shown that pupils make the best progress when families and schools (and, where relevant, the local authority) are working together in equal partnership.

We encourage you to approach school offering to work with them to support your child.

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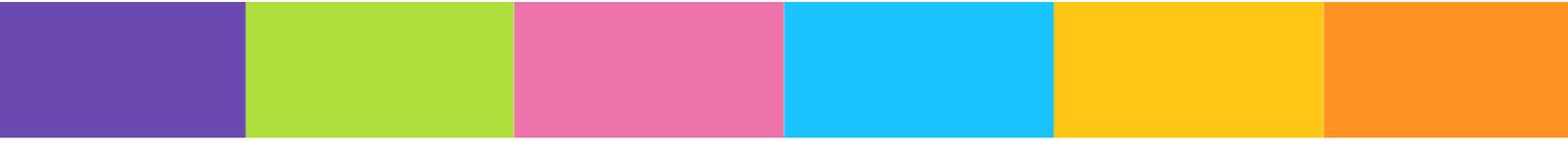
When preparing to meet with school to explore SEN support for your child, you might like to make bullet point notes of what you and your child think has been working well, what your child is still struggling with and any ideas which you or your child think might help.

We would encourage you to acknowledge the school view and experience along with sharing your own. It is common for pupils with additional needs to present very differently at school and at home as the environments and structure of the day are so different.

Aim to pool everyone's understanding about your child's needs, in equal partnership.

Agree to work towards the future – try not to dwell on past problems. It's helpful to spend the majority of your discussions exploring solutions together.

And before your meeting ends, check back and record any agreed actions or ask the school to email a record to you. Make sure that you all have the same perception of what has been agreed, who is responsible and what the reasonable timeframe is for these actions to happen.



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It's helpful for you to become familiar with the school's SEN Information Report which all schools must publish on their websites. The information must include explaining how the school assesses a child's SEN, how they review progress and evaluate how effective the SEN support plan is.

It must show how the school will involve you and your child in this process of identifying and supporting SEN.

And explain the approach to teaching pupils with SEN and how adaptations are made to the curriculum and environment.

(SEND Code section 6.79)

This report is meant to increase the understanding of both you and your child as they get older. The SEND Code therefore says it should be easily accessible and written in a way that is easy for you and young people to understand. When your child is moving to a new school, the SEN Information Report will be a good starting point to help you to find out more about the new SENCo and the school approach to teaching SEN support, to help you with your discussions in a transition meeting.

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SEN support should include planning and preparation for the transitions between different phases of education and preparation for adult life.

You may find our training sessions and videos around transition helpful, along with information and frequently asked questions on our SENDIASS website.

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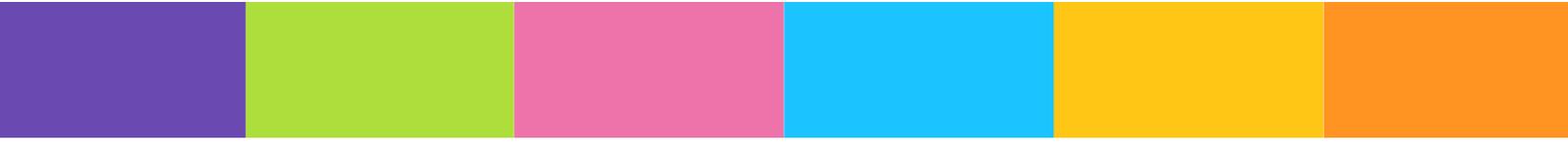
Sometimes despite a setting's best endeavours, trying different strategies of support, a child or young person might still struggle with their learning.

The SEND code says that:

'Where a pupil in school continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the pupil's area of need, the school should consider involving specialists.'

The SEND code is clear that this also applies to Further Education colleges.

(SEND Code section 5.48, 6.58 and 7.23 for FE)



Schools could bring in specialists, with your agreement, at any stage in the graduated cycle, to offer advice and support. However, they should always look at involving a specialist when a pupil is still struggling.

So, who might these specialists be?

Every county will have some specialist services able to support schools to support pupils with SEN. In our county of Suffolk, there are five specialist education services.

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The first four services match the categories of special educational need outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.

So, there is a Cognition and Learning team who can offer support and advice for pupils with a range of learning needs, including Moderate Learning Difficulties and Specific Learning Difficulties like Dyslexia, Dyscalculia.

There is a team offering support for pupils with a range social, emotional and mental health or SEMH difficulties.

The Communication and Interaction team offers advice and help for pupils with speech and language and/or social communication needs

And there is a team to offer advice and support for pupils who have sensory and physical needs. This includes pupils with hearing and visual loss or multi-sensory loss and physical difficulties like issues with coordination and balance and gross and fine motor skills.

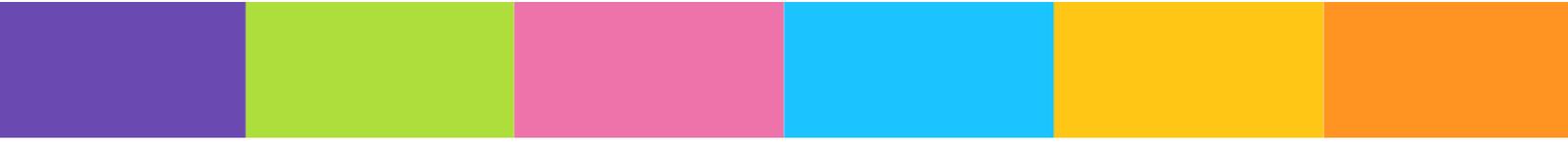
In addition, our county of Suffolk has a Whole School Inclusion team which supports whole school practice around SEND and inclusion.

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In line with the SEND Code of Practice, these specialist services can support children and young people between the ages of 0 – 25 years, if the young person is still in some form of education or training and there are still learning needs.

No formal diagnosis or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is needed to access the Specialist Education Services.

Parent consent is required, and the education setting should discuss the referral with you, sharing aims and what everyone would like your child to be able to do with the additional support and advice.



Every county council will employ a team of educational psychologists. And in Suffolk, the Psychology and Therapeutic Services can offer further advice and support around emotional well-being, mental health, behaviour and learning on an individual, group and whole school basis. Their service also includes a team of Inclusion Facilitators, who can offer immediate therapeutic support, frequently at times of transition or high anxiety.

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If a pupil is still struggling, despite the setting doing all it can and accessing specialist advice, then the child or young person may benefit from what is called an education, health and care (or EHC) needs assessment.

These assessments help identify the education, health and care needs which are making it difficult for a child to learn in a nursery, school or college and identify the support which may be required to meet those needs.

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We have lots of information and videos about the EHC process on our [Suffolk SENDIASS website](#) and [YouTube channel](#) which you might find helpful..

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..along with further information about [Equality and inclusion](#) for pupils with special educational needs, disabilities and medical conditions.

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This video was made by Suffolk SENDIASS, but every county has an impartial and confidential SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.