

Governor SEND Webinar One Recording Script

Title Slide

This is a recording of the first of two linked webinars outlining Governor responsibilities regarding pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and those with medical needs. This first webinar will look at the process of support for pupils with special educational needs. The second webinar will focus on inclusion, whole school and whole class approaches, support for pupils with medical needs and equal opportunities for disabled pupils.

We have a script available for each recording for governors with hearing difficulties.

Slide 2

This is just a reminder that on our Suffolk SENDIASS training webpages we have a series of resources linked to our governor recordings which you may find helpful.

Slide 3

A governor's role includes supporting and challenging your school. Effective boards hold their executive leaders to account for improving pupil and staff performance by asking the right questions and we appreciate that many governors can be uncertain as to the best questions to raise with their school.


Our training resources include a check and challenge sheet based on governor's SEND statutory duties.

And the National Governance Association offers a variety of guides to help you.

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At the end of this webinar recording you will:

- ▶ Appreciate what happens when a child is identified as needing SEN support and the advice and support a school can access for pupils and for staff
- ▶ You will have reflected on the need for support for the key players in the cycle of SEN support for pupils

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- ▶ You will appreciate the first 4 statutory duties for schools and their governing committees regarding supporting pupils with SEND. And I will be reminding you of these at the end of the webinar.
 - ▶ You should also have a clearer understanding of key underpinning principles of the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#);

All your statutory duties are highlighted in orange on the slides, and they can also be found altogether in one of our linked resources.

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There should be a member of the governing body with specific oversight for the school's arrangements for SEN and disability, known as the named SEND governor. They are the link person between the governing board and the school in relation to pupils with SEND. Their role includes raising awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings and giving up-to-date information on SEND provision within the school. They can also help to review the school's policy on provision for pupils with SEND. We will be looking at ideas for check and challenge in this first recording.

So they will be your champion for learners with SEND and those with inclusion needs.

However, governor SEND statutory duties are for the whole governing body which is why we encourage all governors to attend or listen to these webinars.

The governing **body** needs to together be able to evaluate the information the named SEND governor shares and together explore and agree how this will impact on future policy and practice. A named SEND governor is a key facilitator of this process but ensuring the ongoing achievement and success of SEND learners is a collective responsibility.

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The SEND Code is clear that the quality of teaching for pupils with SEN and the progress made by pupils should be a core part of the school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff.

The identification of SEN should be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of ALL pupils and supporting pupils with SEN should be part of a proactive approach to supporting all pupils, not a 'bolt-on'.

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I have already referred to the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) which is statutory guidance to which all governors must have regard. Academies must also meet these requirements by virtue of their funding agreement.

The SEND Code includes guidance for education settings on what is known as the 'graduated approach' of SEN support and guidance for those with more complex needs. And we'll be looking in detail at this in this webinar.

You may choose to download the guidance – it is long but there is a clear contents. Chapter 6 is all about schools and what we are looking at in these linked recordings. We will be giving you exact references to the SEND Code throughout the slides.

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Our training resources include links to the Education Endowment Foundation. We would particularly recommend this guidance report to all governors, and we will be referring to it in both webinar recordings:

[EEF Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools Guidance Report.pdf \(rackcdn.com\)](#)

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Let's start with some context by looking at the national picture according to the latest Department for Education stats.

Across all schools, the number of pupils with special educational needs and the number of pupils with Education, Health and Care plans has risen for the sixth consecutive year and now 18.4% of all pupils are receiving either SEN support or support through an EHC plan.

So, all schools will have pupils with SEN and every teacher will be a teacher of SEN and every leader is a leader of SEN.

The [Education Endowment Foundation guide](#) in the last slide highlights that the attainment gap between pupils with SEND and their peers is twice as big as the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers.

The guide emphasises pupils with SEND have the greatest need for excellent teaching and are entitled to provision that supports achievement at school, and enjoyment of school.

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If we break down the overall stats into primary and secondary phases, you'll see that the percentage of pupils with SEN remains at a fairly similar level at secondary school.

Even though the pupil and staff may have a greater understanding of the pupil's challenges by the time they reach secondary, and what works well, new needs can also emerge as a child gets older.

You'll see from the pie charts however, that the majority of pupils (the section in blue) have their needs met through whole school and whole class approaches and what's known as quality first teaching.

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It can be helpful to think of waves of intervention in a learning setting, starting with universal, quality first teaching. The more inclusive schools can make their universal approaches, the fewer pupils will need targeted SEN provision and the quicker they may move out of that tier.

In our second webinar recording we challenge you to think about inclusive whole school and whole class approaches in your setting.

But this recording is focussing on special educational needs so we're looking at the 2nd and 3rd tiers of interventions.

Before we go any further, we need to establish what we mean by a special educational need or SEN.

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A child or young person has a special educational need if they have a learning need or disability which calls for special educational provision. This is support which is:

'additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age'.

(SEND Code Intro para xiii and xv)

The government expects that the needs of the majority of children and young people will be met through universal approaches and high-quality teaching – and the SEND code refers to quality first teaching in various sections as teaching which is differentiated, personalised, flexible and solution-focussed.

On average a teacher will differentiate 3 times to address the different learning styles and abilities in their class as a whole. By differentiation I mean adjust their



teaching approach, their materials and their practice. It is only if a child needs additional support **on top** of this daily differentiation that a special educational need will be recognised.

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There are 4 categories of special educational need.

Cognition and learning needs includes pupils with moderate learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties like dyslexia and dyscalculia.

Communication and interaction needs includes children struggling to say what they want to, to understand what is being said to them and to understand social rules of communication.

The third category is for pupils with a range of social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

And the final category is sensory and physical needs. When the SEND code refers to sensory needs, it means vision and multi-sensory impairment or hearing loss. Physical needs will include pupils with difficulties with balance, core control and gross and fine motor skills.

There is a lot of variation within each of the four categories - as pupils will present with different individual needs. In some cases, difficulties in one area will lead to difficulties in another. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, left unaddressed may lead to frustration, which may in turn manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties. So monitoring and early intervention is key. In some cases needs may co-occur, which is common with pupils on the autistic spectrum.


According to the latest SEND DfE data, at SEN support the most common type of need continues to be speech, language and communication needs so we'll consider that when we talk about universal approaches in our second webinar.

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So just to be clear:

A child does not need a diagnosis or need to be disabled to have a special educational need.

Indeed, one child with a diagnosed condition may have SEN whilst another child with the same diagnosis might not. It will all depend on whether their individual presentation means they have a significantly greater learning difficulty than the



majority of others, requiring support which is additional to, or different from, the support made generally for the class.

Slow progress or low attainment does not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. Some children will work at a different rate - what will be important to check is that the gap between them and their peers is not widening significantly.

Equally, progress in line with their age-group does not necessarily mean that there isn't a learning difficulty. An example of this might be a child with high functioning autism who is achieving well academically but is struggling to make and maintain friends or manage group activities. They may need additional support for their communication difficulties.

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The EEF guide I referred to at the start of this session emphasises that individualisation and person-centred approaches are key.

The guidance states that 'Effective teachers of pupils with SEND are focused on learning more about the individual profiles of the pupils they teach.'

'The key question is not, 'What is most effective for pupils with dyslexia?'

The key question becomes, 'What does this individual pupil need in order to thrive?'

So it's important not to make assumptions based on experience of other pupils whose needs fell into the same SEN category or who shared a diagnosis. A well-known phrase which you may have come across and which is still very much relevant is: 'if you've met with one child with autism, you have met one child with autism.'

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At this point I want to emphasise the key underpinning principles established in Section 19 of the Children and Families Act of 2014, and on which the SEND Code of Practice is founded:

This involves the duty to have regard to:

- the **views, wishes and feelings** of a child, young person and their parents;
- the importance of them **participating** as fully as possible in decision-making;
- providing clear **information** and advice to children, young people and their parents to enable them to feel more confident and better able to take part in discussions and decisions around SEND;

- Supporting children and young people to achieve **the best possible outcomes**.

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The SEND code says that in fulfilling their duties schools should have regard to these key principles and a should in law is actually very robust - you would need to be able to demonstrate very good reasons for not following a should.

In particular, schools should ensure that children, parents and young people are actively involved in decision-making throughout the approaches (for identifying and supporting pupils with SEND).

(SEND Code Section 6.7)

Included in our resources is a summary of the implications of these key principles for schools and we will be exploring some of these implications in this webinar.

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The law expects that the majority of children with identified special educational needs to have their needs met through what's known as the graduated approach cycle of SEN support. This is sometimes referred to as the graduated approach.

In the first stage (assess) the setting draws on their understanding of the pupil's progress and attainment, the views of the pupil and parent and, if relevant, the advice of external services. Consideration of whether SEN provision is required should start with the desired outcomes, in other words, what everyone wants the child to be able to do in an agreed time frame with the additional support.

The second stage is where the SEN support is planned. Here I want to emphasise the first of the statutory school SEND duties:


Schools **must** inform parents when they are making special educational provision for their child.

(SEND Code 6.2)

All teachers & support staff should be made aware of this support plan and it should be recorded.

The SEND Code affirms that SEN support should include planning and preparation for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life and should agree with parents the plan to be shared with the next school.

In the third stage (do), the class or subject teacher, with the help and guidance of the SENCo, will oversee the support and interventions and should work closely with



teaching assistants and, if appropriate, specialist staff to assess the impact of the support.

The final and very important stage is the Review where the setting evaluates the impact & quality of the support.

Every pupil presents differently so a strategy which has worked well for one pupil may not work so well for another with similar difficulties and often a school will have to experiment a bit to find what works best for a pupil.

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The Code is clear that parents (and as far as possible pupils) should be involved at three stages of the graduated cycle of SEN support. I am going to be quoting from the SEND code and I'll reference the sections at the bottom in a minute.

So The Codes says that when assessing a pupil's needs in the first stage, the teacher and SENCO should draw on the views and experience of the parents and the pupil and it states 'they should take seriously any concern raised by a parent.'

In the 2nd stage the SEND code states that 'the teacher & SENCo should agree in consultation with the parent and the pupil the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review.'

So, this is a process of exploring and agreeing the plan of support together.

The next stage where parents and pupils are expected to be involved is the important review stage.

The SEND Code states that 'the impact and the quality of interventions should be evaluated along with the views of the pupil and the parents.. deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil.'


There is no longer a requirement for an individual education plan or IEP, but the SEND code is clear that,

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

So it is entirely reasonable for them to ask for a record of the needs identified and the plan of support and a record of the impact the agreed strategies are having.

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Schools can record the support plan in different ways. Many schools produce something similar to the old individual education plans; however, many others



embrace the person-centred approach which the Children and Families Act advocates and produce pupil passports like the template on the left of your screen, or one-page profiles written in clear, straightforward language which the pupil can understand.

So, a Named SEND Governor may come across different types of record when for example, they meet with a SENCo to explore a typical SEN journey for a pupil. What is important is that the school can demonstrate that the parents and as far as possible the pupil have been involved in exploring and agreeing the SEN support plan.

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The Code is clear that ‘Schools should talk to parents regularly...and meet parents at least three times each year.’

‘These discussions can build confidence in the actions taken by the school... strengthen the impact of SEN support by increasing parental engagement.. and provide essential information on the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil’s needs.’

(SEND Code 6.65 – 6.71)

Our service receives a lot of calls from parents who are unclear what provision is being made for their child and what impact any support is having.

This may not be the school’s fault – sometimes this is about managing parental expectations, sometimes there may be communication issues between staff but the involvement of parents and pupils at the 3 stages of SEN support goes back to those key principles of the Children and Families Act and the SEND Code, the duty to have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of parents and pupils, the importance of their participation and the importance of giving them the information they need in order to work in an equal partnership with schools and make informed decisions around learning

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As the SEND Code states:

‘parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child’s development.

They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves’.



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So, we've been establishing that the law regards parents and pupils as Key Players in the Graduated Approach of SEN support.

Do you know what tools your school uses to support parent and pupil participation in the cycle of SEN support?

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Many schools use one-page profiles. A One-Page Profile captures all the important information about a person on a single sheet of paper.

These are deceptively simple summaries – they've been shown to help enable a more person-centred approach, with more pupil engagement.

And they can help bridge the gap between school and home. They work best when they're filled out in collaboration with the teacher, pupil, parents and any other adults working with the child like a designated teaching assistant or a speech and language therapist.

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The Psychology and Therapeutic Services have created this video explaining one-page profiles and how to create one. You might like to think about suggesting that your school embed a video like this and other resources which this team have produced on your school website to support parents and pupils to participate.

[Online Support Series: Creating a One Page Profile - YouTube](#)


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Included in our resources are links to tools produced by The Inclusion Facilitator Service (which is part of Suffolk's Psychology and Therapeutic Service). We also include a link to the Helen Sanderson Associates organisation which offers a range of free person-centred tools aimed at supporting pupils to be more involved in their learning and in their SEN support plan.

[Inclusion Facilitators Free Resources | Suffolk County Council](#)

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This slide shows some examples of Preparing for Adulthood resources produced by the National Development Team for Inclusion. They aim to help young people to



participate, engage and share their views and we include a link to this website in our training resources too.

[Preparing for Adulthood | PfA | Home Page](#)

More and more schools are including links to helpful resources for families on their parent/carer and student webpages and we want to encourage you to consider discussing this with your school, if this is not already happening.

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Staying with considerations for supporting pupils and parents to participate, our service is very aware that many need help in clarifying their thoughts, understanding processes, and in sharing their views.

A child or young person or parent or carer can contact our SENDIAS service for confidential, impartial advice and support. Pupils with SEN may find our animated videos for children and young people helpful too.

So how are parents and pupils of your school receiving details of our statutory service? Many schools have a link to our website leaflets or videos explaining our service on their SEN or parent and carer webpages which you might want to consider. These links are in our linked training resources.

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Young people could get the help from an independent advocate through the charity [PohWer](#) who provide advocacy services in our county. This includes pupils with disabilities and children in care.

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To support parent participation, your school could send parents our Making Meetings Matter leaflet or include it in website resources and alert parents and carers to, or arrange for us to deliver, our Working with Schools workshop for helping families prepare and manage meetings with school using positive, collaborative and solution-focussed approaches.

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We also offer information sessions and recordings which may support your families to participate in SEN discussions. Every term we offer sessions which explore SEN support in schools.



We have been partnering with the Specialist Education Services who support schools to support pupils with SEN. We're collaborating to offer sessions which aim to build the understanding of families around resources which schools routinely use like social stories, comic strip conversations and Lego Therapy which schools may refer to in their SEN discussions with parents.

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Now we come to the next statutory SEN duty for schools which is closely linked to what we have just discussed:

Schools **must** publish a SEN Information Report on their websites about the implementation of the governing body's policy for pupils with SEN.

The report can be included in a school's SEN policy or it might be separate, but must contain all the elements outlined in section 6.79 of the Code of Practice including:

Amongst other key information, the report must include:

- arrangements for consulting the pupil and parents and involving them in their child's learning
- policies for identifying and assessing SEN
- how adaptations are made for pupils with SEN
- how they evaluate the effectiveness of provision

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It's important for governors to think about who needs to use the school SEN information report and what might their needs be?


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There was always a requirement to have a SEN policy but this further duty to have a SEN information report goes back to the key principles of the Children and Families Act of parent and pupil participation and the provision of information to enable that.

So the report is meant to be a tool, a means of increasing the parent and pupil's knowledge and confidence so that they can take a better part in conversations and decisions around SEN.

So, to this end, to support meaningful participation,

The SEND Code states that schools should ensure



‘.. that the information is easily accessible by **young people and parents** and set out in clear, straightforward language.’

Bear in mind that parents of pupils with SEN may have learning or mental health difficulties themselves so straightforward language is as important to them as it is to the pupil.

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There are various templates online but how accessible would parents and young people find these? How would you know?

Have you invited a working party of parents to go through the report to see what would make it easier for them to read and use?

We have seen excellent examples of SEN Information reports but also some which are written in what you might call ‘Edu speak’ where it doesn’t look like attempts been made to work with parents or pupils to ensure that it is easy to understand.

Equally, when it comes to accessibility it is important to think about how the information is organised to make it easier to process. These reports are often 15 – 20 pages long and often presented entirely in text. We include a tile in your post session resources which walks through some ideas for making the report more accessible.

Finally, is it easy for pupils and parents to find so they can use it to support their discussions? Is it tucked away on your website or is it part of resources on your pupil and parent webpages?


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So, let’s just pause a minute and reflect on why the Children and Families Act and the SEND Code of Practice put such emphasis on the importance of engaging parents.

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There has been a great deal of research in the last 20 years around the impact of parental engagement in learning which has found that:

- Parental engagement is a powerful lever for raising achievement in schools.
- It is parental support of learning within the *home* environment that makes the maximum difference to achievement.



There's been a shift from simply involving parents with the school to enabling them to engage themselves more directly with their children's learning. Parental engagement is therefore more active and personal than just involvement in school life.

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A report in 2016 by the National Governance Association and PTA UK cited at the bottom of this slide states:

'A properly engaged governing board not only involves and listens to parents, but values their perspective. It also knows **how this input has made a difference to its debates and decisions.**'

'engagement with parents must not be tokenistic but needs to be regular and meaningful..

'The governing board will ensure the school has a plan to communicate and work with parents.'

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The Department for Education has co-produced this leaflet on the left of your screen with families and it is intended to help build a mutually respectful partnership between families and the school, college or other education settings.


The Education Endowment Foundation has also produced a helpful guide for working with parents – links to both are included in the resources linked to this training.

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Our SENDIAS service can offer a free workshop around working with parents exploring practical and solution focussed approaches and scenarios which we have delivered to schools, many groups of SENCOs and also to Newly Qualified Teachers to positive feedback.

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We've talked about the importance of supporting the participation of parents and pupils in the graduated cycle and now it's time to consider another key player in the process: the SENCO.



And we've come to your next statutory duty – the duty to appoint a qualified teacher as SENCo.

(SEND Code 6.84)

Where they have not previously been the SENCO at your or any other relevant school for a total period of more than twelve months, they must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of appointment.

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This is a key and demanding role with a variety of duties which can include:

- The strategic development of SEN policy and provision
- Day to day operation of SEN policy
- Coordinating provision and advising on the Graduated Approach
- Being the point of professional guidance and contact for staff, parents and outside agencies
- And ensuring up to date records of all pupils with SEN

(SEND Code 6.87 – 6.90)

I'm sure you can appreciate that the paperwork, liaison, and conversations for these duties can be both time-consuming and challenging, with a great deal of responsibility.

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So, the SEND Code states:

'They will be most effective in that role if they are part of the school leadership team.'


(SEND Code 6.87)

If your SENCo is not on the senior leadership team, what influence will he or she have?

Do all senior leaders work with your SENCo to ensure SEND is a key part of strategic whole school development?

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The SEND code continues:



‘The school should ensure that the SENCo has sufficient time and resources to carry out these functions. This should ensure providing the SENCo with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within a school.’

(SEND Code of Practice 6.91)

However, the responsibility for Special Educational Needs is not solely the job of the SENCo. Yes, they have a key role, but remember, ensuring all pupils achieve - including those with SEND - is everyone’s responsibility, linked to the high-quality teaching and whole school approaches we mentioned earlier. Every teacher is a teacher of SEND.

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We know that many schools share a SENCo and in these cases they should not have a significant class teaching commitment. And the SEND Code says that such a shared SENCo role should not be carried out by a Headteacher at one of the schools.

The SEND code states:

‘Schools can consider this arrangement **where it secures sufficient time away from teaching and sufficient administrative support** to enable the SENCo to fulfil the role effectively for the total registered pupil population across all of the schools’ that they are supporting.

As the SEND Code continues:


‘Schools should review the effectiveness of such a shared SENCo role regularly and should not persist where there is evidence of a negative impact on the quality of SEN provision, or the progress of pupils with SEN.’ And we would suggest consideration of a negative impact on the SENCo’s wellbeing.

(SEND Code 6.92 -6.94)

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The Named SEND governor will raise awareness of the quality of SEND provision and push for improvement whether that's considering teacher training, data collection or school trips.

Developing a strong working relationship with the SENCo is really important for the Named SEND Governor and they will want to meet to stay well informed.



They could set up regular meetings – the National Governance Association recommends meeting once a term, as well as offering the SENCO the opportunity to attend governing board meetings.

The Named SEND Governor could arrange with the headteacher/SENCO to spend time in school to go on a learning walk– observing class/group work, to understand how the school organises and delivers SEN provision, to look at records of the SEN provision reviews, seeking evidence of the positive impact of the provision in a pupil's SEN support plan. These visits will help them appreciate whether the SENCo would benefit from additional support and will also provide an opportunity to talk with pupils, staff and parents to gather their views.

There is also a lot which can be gleaned through a virtual meeting. Ask the SENCo to prepare to walk you through a pupil's SEN journey from assessment to review.

It's also helpful to try and find out from the pupils how they generally find their experience of the school and again this could be done virtually after an invite to the family.

As the governance handbook emphasises, you need to know your school if accountability is going to be robust and if your vision for the school is to be achieved.

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Here are a few questions a named SEND governor might ask when looking at a pupil's SEN journey:

How was this pupil's SEN first assessed and how was the pupil involved in agreeing the plan of support?

How are you communicating and meeting with parents/carers of the child?

Consider: how does what you learn compare with detail in the SEN information report? Do the processes followed match?

You could ask what the impact is of interventions being used and how this is being captured?

How do we know that the pupil feels happy and safe (which is something Ofsted is always interested in)

How does the school's SEND approach link with other policies, eg for behaviour and health and safety?

It's helpful to talk to some pupils with SEN to find out their general experience of learning in the school.

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It is important to consider pupils who are most vulnerable to SEN.

SEN continues to be more prevalent in boys than girls.

According to the latest statistics, 72% of pupils with an EHC plan are boys.

62% of pupils receiving SEN support are boys.

When it comes to ethnic groups, SEN is most prevalent in the Traveller or Irish heritage group (25.9% of this group had SEN)

The most recent social care stats show that pupils in all social care groups were over twice as likely to have SEN than the overall pupil population.

We'll consider the link between SEN and exclusions in the next webinar recording.

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Now we come to the next SEND statutory duty which is sometimes referred to as the 'Best Endeavours duty'.

Schools **must**:

'Use their best endeavours to ensure that a child with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing all they can to meet children and young people's SEN'.

Individual schools can offer support in different ways - indeed the limitations of their physical environment can influence this. What is important is that the school can demonstrate they are doing 'all they can'. If they are unable to offer a strategy which a parent or child suggests or requests, what can they offer instead which will still meet the pupil's need?

Can you see where/how the school has done all they can to support a child with SEN?

So, let's reflect for a minute. We've looked at the graduated cycle of SEN support and the expectation that the majority of pupils with SEN will have their needs met through this 4-stage cycle and through the effective partnership work between pupil, parent and school.

But sometimes despite their best endeavours, the SEN support plan does not have the expected positive impact.

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The SEND code states:

‘Where a pupil 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**, including those secured by the school itself or from outside agencies’.

So who might these specialists and agencies be?

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In Suffolk there are 5 [Specialist Education Services](#) which support schools to support pupils with SEND. The first 4 reflect the 4 categories of special educational need outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.

There is team focussed on Cognition and Learning supporting a range of learning needs including Moderate Learning Difficulties and Specific Learning Difficulties like Dyslexia, Dyscalculia.

A Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) team supports pupils with a range of social and emotional difficulties.

The Communication and Interaction team supports pupils with speech and language and/or social communication needs

And there is a Physical and Sensory team for pupils with hearing or visual impairment, multi-sensory loss and/or physical needs.

In addition, there is a Whole School Inclusion team which supports whole school practice around SEND and inclusion.

This new service reflects the importance of supporting schools to have inclusion at the heart of whole school practice.

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The [Specialist Education Services](#) have a broad remit, in line with the SEND Code of Practice, covering 0 – 25 years.

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

Parental 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.

The [Psychology and Therapeutic Services](#) are the other main source of advice and support around learning. They offer a lot of support around emotional well-being, mental health and behaviour as well as learning assessments and their service

includes a small team of [Inclusion Facilitators](#), who can offer immediate therapeutic support, frequently at times of transition or high anxiety.

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Suffolk has an Inclusion Toolkit for settings which is supported by the Psychology and Therapeutic Service and the Specialist Education Services. It brings together a suite of assessment and intervention tools to support staff to deliver a graduated approach to SEN support.

Tools include Valuing SEND (VSEND) which is being rolled out across the county and which aims to deliver a single rounded picture of a child's needs to support with planning and commissioning of services.

The [Analysis of Additional Needs Tool](#) allows staff to take part in a rapid evidence-based video consultation with an Educational Psychologist, aiming to help staff understand the learner's needs and find new ways of supporting them. They receive a concise solution-focussed report with practical ideas for next steps.

There is also an Essential SENCo Toolkit which is a strength-based framework for learners with SEND.

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[SENCo Central](#) is an area on the Suffolk Local Offer website which provides details of support services, training events, advice on statutory assessment, annual reviews and funding with links to paperwork.


Two further popular sources of immediate advice are:

- the [Inclusion Support Line](#) which is offered each day in term-time between 9am and 5pm.
- And schools can access a 20-minute online Inclusion Support Meeting with a specialist teacher from the [Specialist Education Services](#), to support early intervention.

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Just highlighting some further sources of support and advice.

Schools could seek support through a SEND support consultation. This could lead to a SENCo support visit to your school or the involvement of the [Psychology and Therapeutic Services](#), for example Inclusion Facilitator support.



The [Raedwold Trust](#) offers outreach and has a [Medical Needs in School](#) hub which includes workshops and videos to help support pupils in school with health needs.

Schools can refer to external agencies - like health (for example, the Occupational therapy service in the west and south of Suffolk offer free school workshops for supporting pupils with coordination difficulties and another free workshop for pupils with sensory processing needs.

Or schools could refer to mental health, early help (for example when considering a CAF assessment) and social care.

Finally, schools can gain the support of three Teaching school hubs in Bury, Ipswich and Waveney. These form part of a new network of 87 centres of excellence for teacher training and development.

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The following sources of information are also helpful to schools:

- **the Suffolk SENCo Bulletin** is a regular letter for all SENCOs to update them on national & local SEND issues & to support with meeting the needs of SEND pupils.
- There are regular online SENCo Forum meetings which are proving very popular.
- **Suffolk Headlines** is a weekly e-newsletter issued to schools and settings on a Tuesday containing the latest education news and updates from Suffolk County Council. Training offered by organisations like the Lark Teaching school alliance, ConnectEd and the Raedwold Trust are often promoted here.


So, let's just pause again.

We've explored the support and advice available to schools if the support plan is not having the expected positive impact and we've emphasised the importance of positive partnership between schools, parents and pupils, and the expectation of differentiated and flexible teaching which centres on the individual child.

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There will be some children and young people who may have SEN which may need support which goes beyond the resources and advice available to settings to provide SEN support.

In these cases, it may be helpful to request an Education, Health and Care (or EHC) needs assessment.



EHC needs assessments help identify the education, health and social care needs which are making it difficult for a child or young person to learn, and to identify the support which may be required to meet those needs.

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The SEND Code is clear that:

‘A local authority **must** do an EHC assessment if a child may need special educational provision in accordance with an EHC Plan.’

In other words, if the child is likely to need support which goes beyond the resources and advice routinely available to a setting to provide SEN support.

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As the threshold is around learning, the local authority will want to see whether the learning setting has taken what the SEND code describes as ‘relevant and purposeful action’ to assess and meet the special educational needs of a pupil and that despite this, the child is still struggling.

Records from the graduated cycle of SEN support will help a school demonstrate:

- what strategies have already been tried
- what advice has been sought
- and the impact this has had on the child’s progress.

A school or post 16 institution, a parent or a young person each has a specific right to request an EHC needs assessment.

In addition, anyone else can bring a child or young person who may have SEN to the attention of the LA.

A request for an EHC needs assessment can be made at any time.

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When it comes to SEND funding, Suffolk has a set of 9 SEND funding descriptors for mainstream schools, Pupil Referral Units and specialist schools which was developed following consultation with schools. Funding needs have been broken down into a series of defined elements.

High Tariff Needs funding updates are regularly shared on the Suffolk Headlines and SENCo newsletters and at the SENCo forums to which I referred earlier. And blank cost provision proformas are available on the Suffolk learning website.

High Needs Funding – Suffolk Learning

A governing board will need to determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND.

Governors need to ensure that funds are allocated each year within the school budget specifically to cater for SEND pupils and to support the implementation of the SEND policy.

So, governors will need to be aware of the various headings under which schools spend the SEND budget each year (like resources, training, support assistants, medical time etc). You will need to monitor and evaluate the use of these funds as a governing body and other resources, considering cost effectiveness in terms of increased progress for pupils with SEND.

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There are other funding streams for you to be aware of.

Many probably know of the Pupil Premium which aims to raise attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

Pupil Premium Plus aims to support the needs of pupils who are currently looked after or who have been looked after by the LA for at least one day. The DfE guidance is clear that this is meant to be used to help develop the social and emotional needs of these pupils.

Service Pupil Premium – aims to help support the pastoral needs of children whose parents are in the armed forces.


None of these streams are ring fenced to the child but the school needs to be able to demonstrate to parents how the funding is being used to support their child.

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Ofsted's school inspections report on the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils who attract the Pupil Premium so schools need to demonstrate the impact of the use of the funding and how this is informing future planning.

Schools maintained by the local authority must publish their strategy for using the pupil premium on their website and the DfE has guidance on what local authority maintained schools must publish online.

Academies and free schools should read their funding agreements to identify what they need to publish on their website.



There are a number of useful resources available from the Endowment Foundation (or EEF) and the Department of Education which may be helpful regarding the Pupil Premium.

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So just to re-cap: in this first webinar we have explored:

Key principles from the Children and Families Act and Send Code of Practice

The graduated cycle of support, including key players and specialist advice for pupils who continue to struggle to make progress

Four of the statutory duties for schools and their governing bodies for supporting pupils with SEN:

- the duty to inform parents when they are making special educational provision
- And the duty to publish an accessible SEN Information Report
- The requirement to appoint a trained teacher as SENCo
- The 'Best Endeavours' duty – ie the duty to do everything you can to address the needs of a child with SEN

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In the second webinar we explore:

inclusion and the statutory considerations regarding pupil exclusion;

the statutory duties from the Equality Act for supporting disabled pupils, including the Reasonable Adjustments Duty;

And we'll also go through the statutory duties of schools and governing bodies for supporting pupils with medical conditions.

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Remember we have lots of information on our [SENDIASS website](#) and [SENDIASS YouTube channel](#) around special educational needs including short videos which break down the cycle of SEN support in detail which you might find helpful to refer to if you haven't time to go back to this webinar recording.



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