

## 2. Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support in Mainstream Schools



A **special educational need (SEN)** is when a child or young person has **learning difficulties or disabilities** that make it harder for them to learn compared to others of the same age. It could be in any of these areas:

- **Communication and Interaction:** This includes difficulties with speaking, understanding language, or interacting with others.
- **Cognition and Learning:** Children may learn at a slower pace or struggle with things like memory, reading, writing, or maths.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH):** This covers challenges with managing emotions, behaviour, relationships, or mental wellbeing.
- **Sensory and/or Physical Needs:** Some children have physical disabilities or sensory issues, such as problems with hearing, vision, or movement.

### Who Identifies a Child's Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities?

Your child's teacher may be the first person to notice that your child may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All schools have a SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator) who would then look closely to identify any SEND. You are also very important as you know your child best.

### What is the SEN Register?

- The SEN Register is a list of pupils at the school who have been identified by school as having special educational needs (SEN) and therefore need more support than other children their age
- A diagnosis is not needed to be on the SEN Register.

### What is SEN Support?

Sen support is the help given to children and young people who have additional learning needs but do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Sen support is sometimes referred to as "targeted" and "targeted plus" support.

- In the vast majority of case children need to have tried SEN support for at least two terms before an EHCP will be considered.



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## What is a SEN Support Plan?

A SEN Support Plan is a simple written plan that shows how a school is helping a child with special educational needs and it sets targets for children to work towards. The plan should be reviewed in partnership with parents and the child each term.

## What Does SEN Support Involve?

SEN Support can include things like working in a small group, having one-to-one sessions with a teaching assistant, using visual aids, assisted technology, adapted learning aids or special equipment. It might also include getting help with speech and language or having a quiet space to calm down. The support is planned based on each child's needs and is reviewed regularly to make sure it's helping.

Teachers and schools usually use a cycle of assessment and planning called 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' (APDR).

- **Assess:** Teachers and staff observe how your child is doing in class, talk to you, and may use tests or specialist advice to figure out what kind of support would help.
- **Plan:** Once the teachers have a clear understanding of what your child's needs are, they write a support plan. This includes what help will be given, how often, and what goals your child is working towards. You'll be involved in this planning.
- **Do:** The plan is put into action. Teachers and support staff work with your child using the agreed strategies – this might be extra help in class, small group work, or special resources.
- **Review:** After a set time, the school checks how things are going. They look at progress, talk to you and your child, and decide if the plan needs to change.

This cycle helps schools respond to your child's needs in a thoughtful and flexible way, making sure support is always tailored and effective.

## What are Reasonable Adjustments?

- Reasonable adjustments mainly apply to disabled children (children who meet the definition of a disabled as per the Equality Act 2010), but they can apply to children who have special educational needs too
- Schools must make reasonable adjustments (changes) for a child, so they're not at a disadvantage compared to others.

## Medical Conditions

If your child has a medical condition, the school should provide appropriate support. This may be outlined in a **medical or health plan**, separate from the SEN Support Plan.



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## What If My Child Needs More Help and SEN Support Isn't Working?

There are 3 options:

### 1. Involvement of External Services

In Doncaster we have a range of support services who can help schools and your child. These include:

- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- With Me in Mind (WMIM)
- Educational Psychologist
- ASCETS (Autism Support)
- BOSS (Behaviour Outreach Support Service)

### 2. High Needs Funding

The school can ask for **extra money**, called High Needs Funding, to help support your child. This funding helps pay for things like:

- More adult support
- Special resources
- Extra sessions or interventions.

### 3. Alternative Provision

If your child is really struggling in school, the school might suggest a **different type of learning environment** for part of the week. This could be:

- A smaller setting
- A specialist centre
- A mix of school and another place.

It's usually **temporary** and designed to help your child get back on track. The Local Offer contains details of [Alternative Provision and Pupil Referral Units](#) in Doncaster.

## Need More Support?

If you would like further information on SEND Support, please contact Doncaster [SENDIAS Service](#) by calling [01302 736920](tel:01302736920) or email: [sendias@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:sendias@doncaster.gov.uk).



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