

SEN- What does it mean?

In the 1996 Education Order, a child is described as having special educational needs (SEN) if they have a **significantly greater** difficulty in learning than other children which calls for special educational provision to be made for them that is additional to or otherwise different from that which children of a similar age receive in an ordinary school. A child also has SEN if they have a disability that calls for special education provision to be made for them.

If your child's school thinks that your child needs special educational provision they will be placed on the school's SEN Register.

The school will meet with you to discuss your child's needs and agree the targets for their Individual Education Plan (IEP) and what you can do to help. Only the school can decide if your child should be placed on the SEN Register.

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 wish to seek further advice and support from the Education Authority.

The school's Principal and/or the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will discuss this with you and seek your agreement.

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 82411286

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



How Children's Learning is Supported in Primary Schools

Guidance for Parents and Guardians



April 2019
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 therefore have an important role to play in supporting their 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 and development both at home and in school.

Open and honest communication

The school will make time to listen to 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 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 assist them in reaching their potential. The school will ensure that your child will be listened to and that their views will be valued and responded to.

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. Teachers are highly skilled professionals and use 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 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

Teachers have a professional responsibility to act upon their assessments and observations. Therefore, they will always choose the most appropriate way 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. They may have difficulties with some aspects of their learning 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. The teacher will explain how your child is getting on in school and, if needed, will address any concerns you may have. They 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, they 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 strive to ensure that your child's needs are fully met whether they have learning difficulties or SEN.

