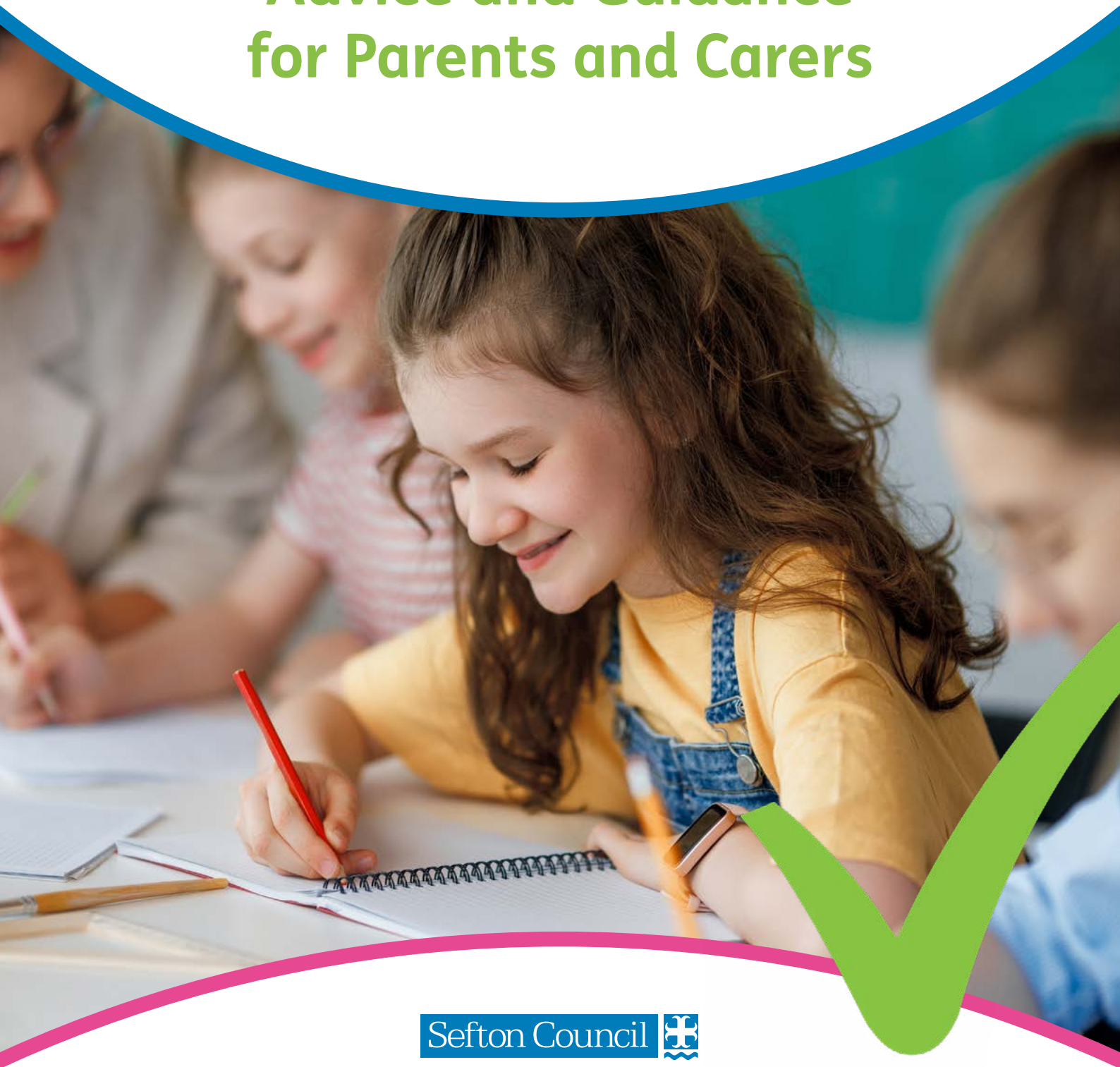


**SEND**

# Advice and Guidance for Parents and Carers



# SEND Flow Chart

The majority of children and young people with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met within local mainstream early years settings, schools or colleges. Some children and young people may require an EHC needs assessment in order for the local authority to decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC Plan. **The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person.** (SEN Code of Practice, 2014) Although EHCPs are coproduced between Health, Social Care and Education they are based on meeting the **educational need** of the child.



If your child is struggling in school. Not making progress, getting into trouble behaviourally, showing signs of anxiety around schoolwork and attendance, and/or having social difficulties. Or you are concerned about their ability to access education.

**Follow this guidance before considering an EHC needs assessment** – there are multiple layers of graduated response that should be followed before EHC is considered.

Your child has had multiple school moves, and/or missed a significant amount of school, and/or has experienced ACEs. There may be an underlying undiagnosed learning need.

Your child has a diagnosed learning need, or a suspected learning need, which is not currently being met as they are not making progress at school.

### Ask the SENCo questions...

Has the graduated approach been followed? Is the child on the SEN register? (K – SEN Support) – there does not need to be a formal diagnosis in place for this. Is there a SEN plan in place at the school? All children on the SEN register (K) should have a termly review of the support that is in place. (Is there evidence of assess, plan, do, review cycle?)

#### No

Talk to the SENCo and discuss the graduated response – is there evidence of your child's underachievement in school? What Wave 2 or 3 interventions can they offer to support your child make progress? Is the child on the SEN register? Should they be?

**\*\* FURTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE AVAILABLE in the Tool Kit**

#### Yes

Ask about assessments of need that have been completed – does the SENCo understand your child's gaps clearly?

**\*\* FURTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE AVAILABLE in the Tool Kit**

Refer to the Local Authority's Local Offer – a statutory area of the Sefton website offering information about what is offered to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

**\* FURTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE AVAILABLE IN 5 Minute Facts**

**After approximately 2 terms of graduated response is the child starting to make progress? Are their educational needs are being met?**

#### No

Talk to the SENCo and seek their professional views on an EHC assessment. Do not expect to initiate the process immediately but see this as a starting point to enhancing the support that is being offered. Always consider what the impact of an EHCP will be, what will it add to what your child already has in place?

The EHC Assessment Process is found on the Local Offer: [Education, Health and Care Assessment and Plans \(EHC\) | The Sefton Directory](#)

#### Yes

Child's needs are being met through the graduated response. No EHC assessment is required at this stage.



# 5 Minute Facts: SEND Support

## Definition of Special Educational Needs:

‘A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision **different from or additional to** that normally available to pupils of the same age.’ Code of Practice, 2015, 6.5

A school should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. ‘This can be characterised by progress which:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child’s previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap’ (Code of Practice, 2015, 6.17)

When establishing if a child’s lack of progress is due to SEN professionals always need to look at the overall picture and consider any wider issues that have impacted on the child’s academic experience. For example, extended absence, multiple school moves (see: VS Moving Settings Tool Kit) and ACEs. It is not reasonable to expect any child to keep up with age related expectations if they have not been taught content – especially Early Years and Foundation Skills (eg: Phonics before they are 7).

## The SENCO

The SENCO is a one of the mandatory roles all schools must have (as well as a headteacher, governing body and designated safeguarding lead).

In 2009 the Department for Education made it law that every new SENCO in a mainstream school to gain the Master’s level national award for special educational needs co-ordinator (NASENCO) within 3 years of starting the job. SENCOs also have to have postgraduate qualifications in teaching and most will have a number of years teaching experience. Most SENCOs will also be part of the school’s leadership team.

SENCOs oversee the strategic development of SEN policy and provision. In addition, they ensure the implementation of the SEN policy on a day-to-day basis.

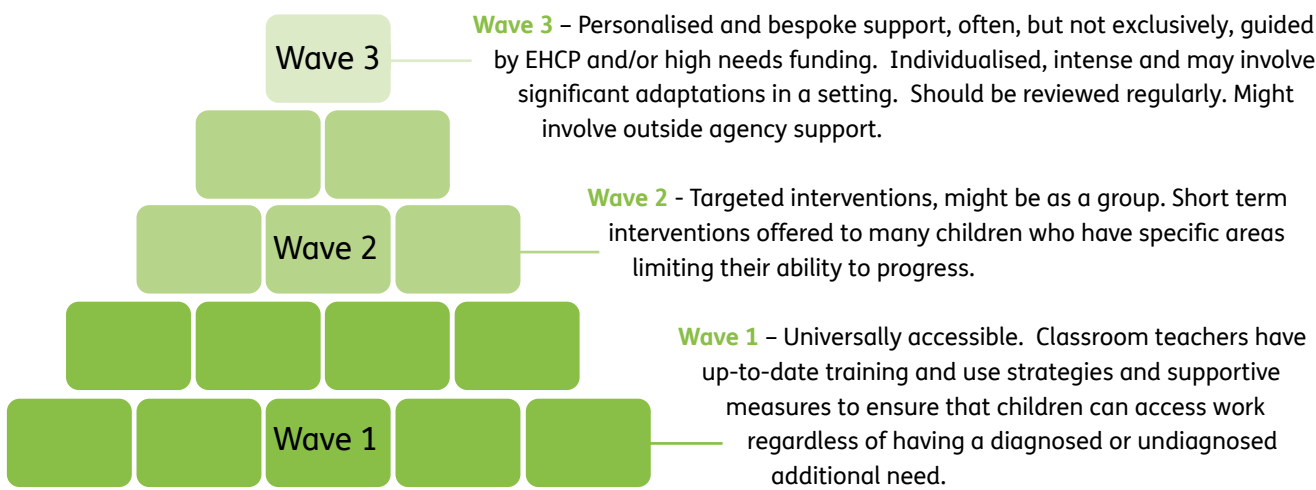
They are a key point of contact for parents and carers, professionals in schools and the local authority officers and can offer support and advice for the identification of needs and suitable provision to meet those needs. Through provision management they will maintain an overview of the progress of pupils with SEND and will seek to develop practice to ensure the effectiveness of interventions and support. They have a responsibility to do this for all children with SEND regardless of whether they have an EHCP issued by the LA or not.

SENCOs are highly qualified and through their experience, and higher educational experience, have professional understanding of various learning difficulties. SENCOs are in a strong position to advise and support with whether an EHC needs assessment is suitable to enhance a child’s learning. They will refer to and implement a ‘graduated approach’ and ensure that there is evidence of this to enhance any future referrals. They are responsible for ensuring that statutory guidance in relation to applications is implemented. A SENCO should only refer for an EHCP assessment when all other avenues of support have been implemented and progress has still not been made, or it is clear that to maintain the level of support required to make progress would require SEP (Special Educational Provision) which is additional to, and different from, that which is available to other children.



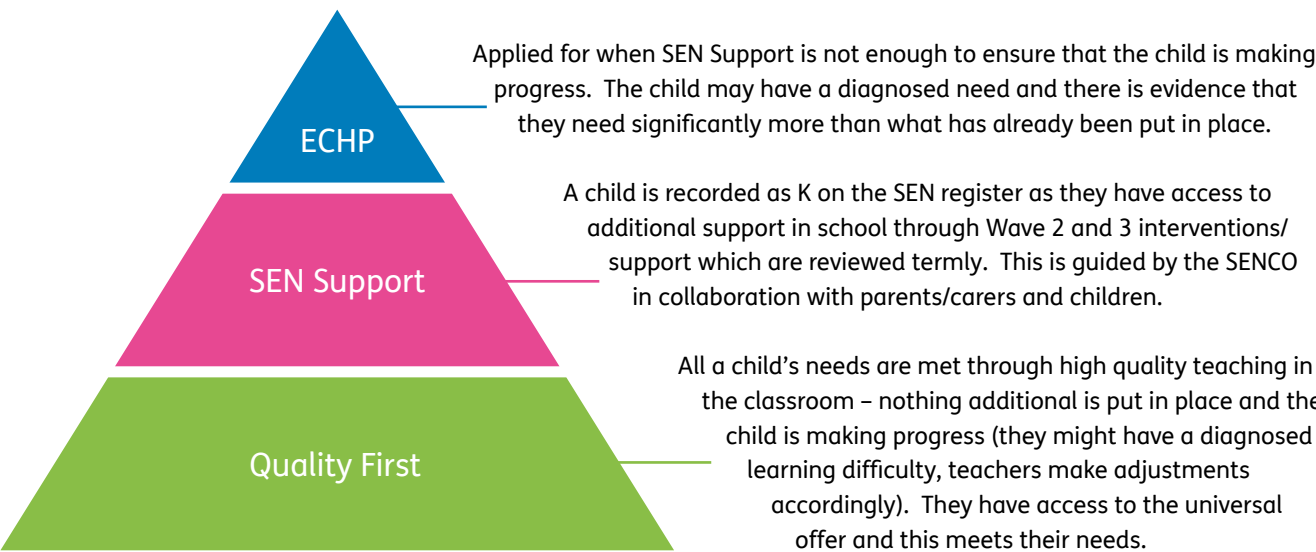


# Waves of support in schools:



## The Local Offer and Graduated Approach

The Code of Practice, 2014 provides guidance on a ‘Graduated Approach’ to identify and support pupils with a range of differences across the developmental spectrum. Sefton SEN and Inclusion Service supports schools in fulfilling their statutory duties at each level of the Graduated Response (see below).



All mainstream settings have a statutory obligation to ensure that all children on their roll have access to the graduated response and should provide reasonable adjustments to their provision (physically and academically). Reasonable adjustments, incorporate the notion that settings should be making **efficient use of resources**, so schools should be offering SEN Support which equates to £6,000 before applying for high needs funding or EHCP support.

If a child's lack of progress is potentially a result of wider issues it is often pertinent to address those gaps before pursuing an SEN diagnosis or status. Intensive interventions to close the gap can have positive outcomes and reduces the need to put children through further assessment and scrutiny unnecessarily.

## The Local Offer

[Local Offer - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities | The Sefton Directory](#)

All local authorities have a statutory obligation to have a 'Local Offer' where they provide clear and accessible information about the provision available locally for children and young people from 0 to 25 who have special educational needs and/or disability (SEND). The Local Offer is on the Sefton Website so parents, carers and professionals understand what services they can expect from a range of local agencies, it includes statutory entitlements, eligibility and referral criteria. The Local Offer also makes clear what is available from early years settings, schools (including Academies and Free Schools), colleges and other services including those from health and social care.



This toolkit is designed to guide parents and carers in the questions they need to ask themselves and then SENCOs, prior to considering an EHC assessment.

Remember that often part of an EHC assessment is a substantial amount of assessment for a child, it is worth considering the timing of this, again working in collaboration with educational professionals.



**Criteria and Thresholds** – there are statutory expectations placed on LAs when deciding to assess for EHCP – have these been met?

<p><b>Has the young person had access to all relevant resources available from their educational setting,</b> including universal &amp; targeted health services and social care input? (See Wave 1 and Wave 2 support)</p>	<p>Are there measures of any impact that this support has or has not had over a sustained period of time (approximately 2 terms)?</p>
<p><b>Is there evidence that your child's needs are significantly greater need than others of the same age?</b></p> <p>We try not to compare children – but what milestones would you expect a child to have achieved at the age they are at – how far behind are they and in how many areas? Has this always been the case, or has something happened which has brought this on.</p>	<p>Ask about Reading Age data?</p> <p>Attainment data – are they below expected/ expected/above expected in any areas?</p> <p>Has a Boxall assessment been completed?</p> <p>Have the school got a log of behaviour incidents?</p> <p>What other data is being used by the setting to track a child's progress?</p>
<p><b>Has the educational setting sought advice from external professionals?</b> EP, SaLT, OT, Specialist Teachers, Health, Inclusion Team</p>	<p>If not – why not? It may be that they do not see that it has been necessary at this stage, remember that going through a thorough assessment with an EP can be a significant process at this time (sometimes 4-5 hours of testing) and is very intense. Is this the right thing when there are teachers qualified to make professional judgements?</p>
	<p><b>If yes - Has the setting followed an Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle with targets set based upon advice received?</b> (A rough guide is a minimum of 2 terms) What has the impact been?) Remember an assessment is not summative but formative and should change support to see if a child can benefit from a different approach.</p>



# An Education Health and Care Plan

## Will:

- Provide an overview of a child's learning needs including diagnosis, relevant home circumstances, life experiences. (This should also be done at K – SEN Support level by a SENCO and all teachers should be aware of a child's needs in a school)
- Provide guidance on what interventions and support strategies should be used in a setting to meet the needs of the child.
- Outline the Special Educational Provision required to help you child make progress, the first £6,000 PA is funded via the school's notional budget and anything additional is requested from the LA.
- Ensure that the child's education is reviewed annually in a meeting with the SENCo.
- Name a school that will follow the plan, this is based on the plan being sent out to settings who read the plan and then indicate if the needs of the child can be met within the setting (there is a legal test which settings must follow).

## Won't:

Automatically mean a child's placement changes – the majority of EHCPs are managed in mainstream schools. Whilst a parent can indicate a preference of the 'type' of setting they want their child to attend, there is no guarantee that a specific setting will be named following a parental preference.

