



How your child with **speech and language difficulties** is supported in school



Information for parents and carers

This leaflet provides examples of what you and your child can expect from schools through a graduated approach for supporting Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).



There are a wide range of impairments covered by the term speech and language difficulties, including:

- **Expressive language** – for example your child’s ability to speak in sentences.
- **Language comprehension** – your child’s ability to understand what people say.
- **Social communication** – your child’s ability to understand and use language in everyday situations.
- A broad variation in the age at which normal language develops.

Schools can refer pupils to the Speech and Language Support Programme (SALSP), where speech and language therapists can assess your child’s needs and identify ways to support them in school.

The type and level of support required will depend on your child’s needs. Schools will use the graduated approach, a system to identify and meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. Most children and young people with speech and language difficulties will make good progress and achieve well when the right support is in place.



Quality First Teaching

Quality First Teaching is high quality teaching which provides appropriate learning opportunities to all pupils, whatever their individual needs. It is the first step of the graduated approach in responding to pupils who have, or may have, SEND. Staff knowledge and understanding of SEND is a key factor to Quality First Teaching. All staff are also required to have knowledge and understanding of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and the The Equalities Act 2010.

You will be involved in decisions about your child at every stage of the graduated approach and all staff who come into contact with your child should be made aware of their needs and given strategies to cope with them.

Examples of what might be expected from this level of school support:

- Staff will be trained to the appropriate level.
- All staff will take responsibility for the development of your child's speech, language and communication skills.
- Staff will use a range of screening methods to identify your child's needs.
- General speech and language programmes will be in place.
- Staff will be aware of the implications of your child's speech and language difficulties in developing relationships with others.
- Staff will work with you to help you to support your child's speech and language development.
- A curriculum which includes examples of diversity.
- Staff will provide an environment where children/young people can listen and talk to each other, and provide opportunities for games.
- Staff will provide your child with feedback and help to raise their self-esteem.

- Staff will actively teach listening skills.
- Staff will simplify instructions.
- Staff will be aware that your child may need more time to complete tasks, or may need to do some things differently.
- Staff will use resources such as calendars, visual timetables, symbols and pictures to support learning in the classroom.
- Computer programmes will be provided, if appropriate.
- Classroom support including gesturing or signing that visually show's your child what is expected of them
- A buddy system will be in place at lunchtimes and playtimes.
- A predictable, structured environment tailored to your child's needs.
- Opportunities will be provided for individual and small group work in a quiet environment.
- Speech and language therapists will provide guidance to the school on how to meet your child's needs
- Use of specialist equipment and resources if required.



SEN Support Plans

Some children will require SEN support which should be ‘additional to’ or ‘different from’ what schools provide for all pupils.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and the teacher will work with you and your child to create a SEN Support Plan which should be reviewed three times a year. This will be based around your child’s strengths and needs and will identify outcomes for your child that will be agreed with you.

It will be important to identify the main characteristic of your child’s need (primary need). However, support plans will identify all the needs of your child within these four broad areas:

The four broad areas of need are:

- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Communication and interaction
- Sensory and physical



Targeted SEN support might include:

- A specialist teacher from the Cognition and Learning Team to provide assessments and advice.
- Advice and/or assessment from a speech and language therapist, with appropriate interventions put in place at school.
- An individual speech therapy programme.
- An individual language support programme.
- Specialist equipment and resources as required.
- Pre-planning arrangements for assessments.



Education, Health and Care Plans

Before a school can apply for a statutory assessment of your child's needs they must do all they can to support your child and must be able to show that they have taken "sufficient relevant and purposeful action".

You and your child will be the focus of the assessment process. The assessment will provide valuable information to help decide the most appropriate support for your child, and may result in an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

If your child has an EHC Plan

- Staff will be trained to appropriate levels.
- The support for your child will be detailed in the EHC Plan and your child will have an individual learning programme.
- Teachers will have access to specialist advice.
- We will modify teaching and learning styles and resources as required.
- We will undertake careful planning when your child is moving to the next stage of education (transition).
- There will be planned specialist arrangements for exams.
- We will undertake an annual statutory review in addition to termly reviews.

Additional Support

The Local Offer

Information for parents and carers on a broad range of SEN and disability issues and support can be found on the Local Offer website. SEN planning tools can also be found in the 'for providers' section of the website.

www.countydurhamfamilies.info/localoffer

Telephone 03000 26 99 95

Durham SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Durham SENDIASS supports parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and children and young people with SEND. All services provided are confidential and impartial.

Email sendiass@durham.gov.uk

Telephone 03000 267 003

Making Changes Together

Making Changes Together (MCT) is a group for parents and carers of children with SEND. MCT work with professionals in County Durham to improve services for children and young people with SEND.

www.mctdurham.co.uk

Telephone 0191 587 3541

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SENDandInclusion@durham.gov.uk

03000 267776