

Supporting your key children with additional needs throughout the year- a quick reference guide 2025 – 2026

At all times remember – the unique Child, their individual starting points and needs and build strong parental partnerships.

Transition	
<p>Throughout the year:</p> <p>If you think a child has emerging or unidentified additional needs, begin by discussing this with parents and carers to gather as much knowledge and understanding about the child as possible and to work in partnership to identify the best strategies to support the child. Use the Area SENCO considerations prompt document to support information gathering.</p> <p>Support for transition. Transition is a process and not an event. Transition put simply means a change which may have an impact on a child. This might be a big shift in their life – like going to pre-school for the first time, or maybe a small daily change – like moving from a childminder to a playgroup or between rooms within a setting.</p> <p>School readiness toolkit. Being ready for school is part of each child's life journey from pre- birth onwards, through every age and stage of development. It is about supporting transition, gaining competencies and promoting family health and well- being to ensure that no child is at a disadvantage.</p> <p>School readiness for professionals – a shared understanding across Leicestershire</p> <p>School starter pathway for children who start at your setting with just a year or less to go before they start school and who have emerging or unidentified additional needs.</p>	
Autumn term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School applications open – encourage families to visit school open days and prompt parents/carers to have early conversations with School SENCOs to find out school's SEND offer
Spring term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind families that the school application deadline is 15 January • For children with physical and medical needs, training, health care plans and reasonable adjustments need to be discussed with the school
Summer term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School offer day – 16 April – check each child has a school place, parents and carers can check by accessing their portal • Complete the 'Transition into School' document for children who require an enhanced transition, refer to transition to school guidance • Apply for transition funding if an enhanced transition will be required • Liaise with schools and invite teachers to visit children within the setting • Organise transition visits and meetings with school, when appropriate, inviting parents/carers too • Additional funding may be needed when a child starts school so consider applying for SEND Intervention Funding • Share school readiness video and leaflet with families

Graduated approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review

Throughout the year:

The [Early Years SEND Inclusion webpage](#) provides lots of information to help you to support children

The graduated approach is the four-stage process of [assess, plan, do and review](#), to plan for and meet the needs of children with SEND. Start this process as soon as concerns are identified and work in partnership with parents and carers.

Identify [training needs](#) for all staff, consider how to share this with parents and carers.

Where required and with parental permission, complete a [Multi-Agency Referral Form](#) for Early Help and Social Care services (MARF).

Be alert to and support children's [mental health](#), [wellbeing](#) and [self-esteem](#).

Signpost families to Leicestershire's [family hubs webpage](#) and [health for under 5's webpage](#) for advice, information and resources to support the home learning environment.

Ensure that the [Integrated Health review](#) is completed between 2 years and 2 years 4 months.

[Refer to early years panel](#) where a child needs extra help with their learning and development following the graduated approach.

Contact your [local care navigator](#) (with parental permission) for information about reports, appointments or other professionals working with the child.

Attend a [SEND drop in](#) session to receive advice from a range of professionals regarding children who present with initial concerns.

Funding

Inclusion funding application deadline dates

29-Aug-25	02-Jan-26	10-Apr-26
26-Sep-25	23-Jan-26	01-May-26
24-Oct-25	20-Feb-26	29-May-26
28-Nov-25		

FEEL headcounts and adjustment tasks – opportunity to submit [DAF](#) application

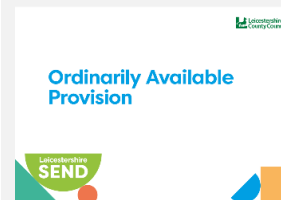
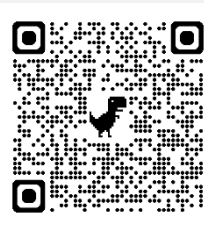
Autumn term headcount: 1 – 9 September 2025 Autumn Term adjustment: 15 – 22 October 2025	Spring term headcount: 5 – 16 January 2026 Spring term adjustment: 19 – 24 February 2026	Summer term headcount: 7 – 17 April 2026 Summer term adjustment: 21 – 27 May 2026
---	---	--

Quick reference guide



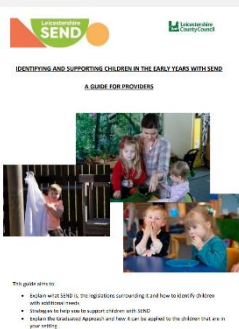
The graduated approach for children with SEND in the early years

The Graduated approach booklet is a document for practitioners to refer to within settings. It is broken down into key areas of need, each describing quality first teaching as well as graduated support and strategies for any children with emerging additional needs.



Ordinarily available provision

The Ordinarily Available Provision describes a wide range of activities, opportunities and approaches that are offered as good inclusive practice to meet a range of additional needs without the need for formal diagnosis or specialist support.



Identifying and supporting children in the early years with SEND: A guide for practitioners

This guide explains what SEND is and how to identify children with additional needs. It explains the Graduated Approach, outlining what support and funding is available.



Identifying and supporting children in the early years with SEND: A guide for childminders

This guide explains what SEND is and how to identify children with additional needs. It explains the Graduated Approach, outlining what support and funding is available.



Early years – Small Steps document

An assessment aid for Early Years practitioners and professionals to monitor and celebrate the small steps of progress children with SEND make.



School readiness toolkits

The "School Readiness" toolkits will equip schools and early years providers as they support children's continuing learning journey into and through the reception year.

