

Supporting Families

To navigate the Special Education Needs process

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Welcome Leicestershire Virtual School's bitesize training for Social Care Staff

In response to requests from social care we have designed a series of short training videos to take you through different issues facing children in education. If you want further support please contact:
bronwen.barradell@leics.gov.uk



What are SEND needs?

Section 20 of the Children and Families Act (2014) defines a child as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) if they have “a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for him or her”. (1)

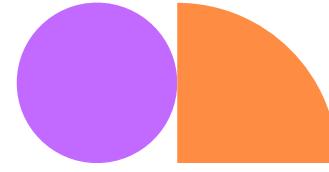
The SEND Code of Practice (2) categorises SEND into 4 broad areas of needs:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties (SEMH)
- Sensory and/or physical needs

The key factor in deciding if a child or young person has SEND needs is if their individual needs impact their ability to be able to learn in the same way and in the same environment as the majority of their peers.

If they require additional support or adaptations to be able to learn effectively then they can be considered as having special education needs.





How should schools support children with SEND?

There are different levels of support that may be offered to students with SEND. The SENA team have created a useful resource that identifies the support that children should be receiving from schools (4)

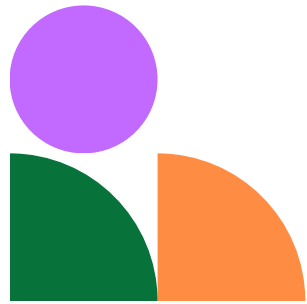
All students identified with SEND should have individual support plans which identify the support they are being provided. School should involve parents/carers and other relevant professionals when creating the support plan and it should be regularly reviewed (preferably termly).

It is important that these reviews document 'assess, plan, do, review' cycles both to ensure the support is working for the student and to provide the essential evidence if a move through the levels is required.

The levels of support are known as the graduated response (2) and schools should use this approach working through the steps in order.

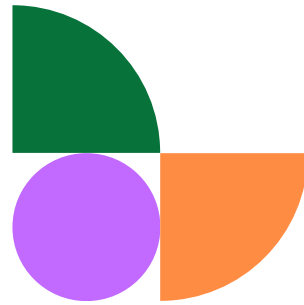
A Graduated Response

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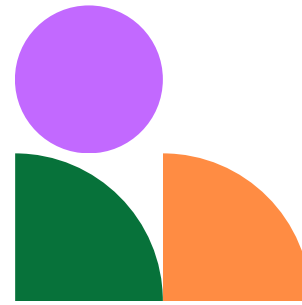
Stage 1 Universal

- Differentiation of work / tasks
- Quality first teaching
- Reasonable adjustments such as use of coloured overlays / laptops / seating plans / additional breaks or limited physical adaptations to the classroom



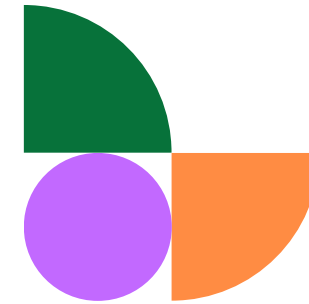
Stage 2 Targeted

- LSA support in mainstream classes (shared / floating support)
- LSA / TA support outside of mainstream classes (small group work)
- SEMH support e.g., nurture groups / in-school counselling / time out cards / safe place / key adult access



Stage 3 Specialist

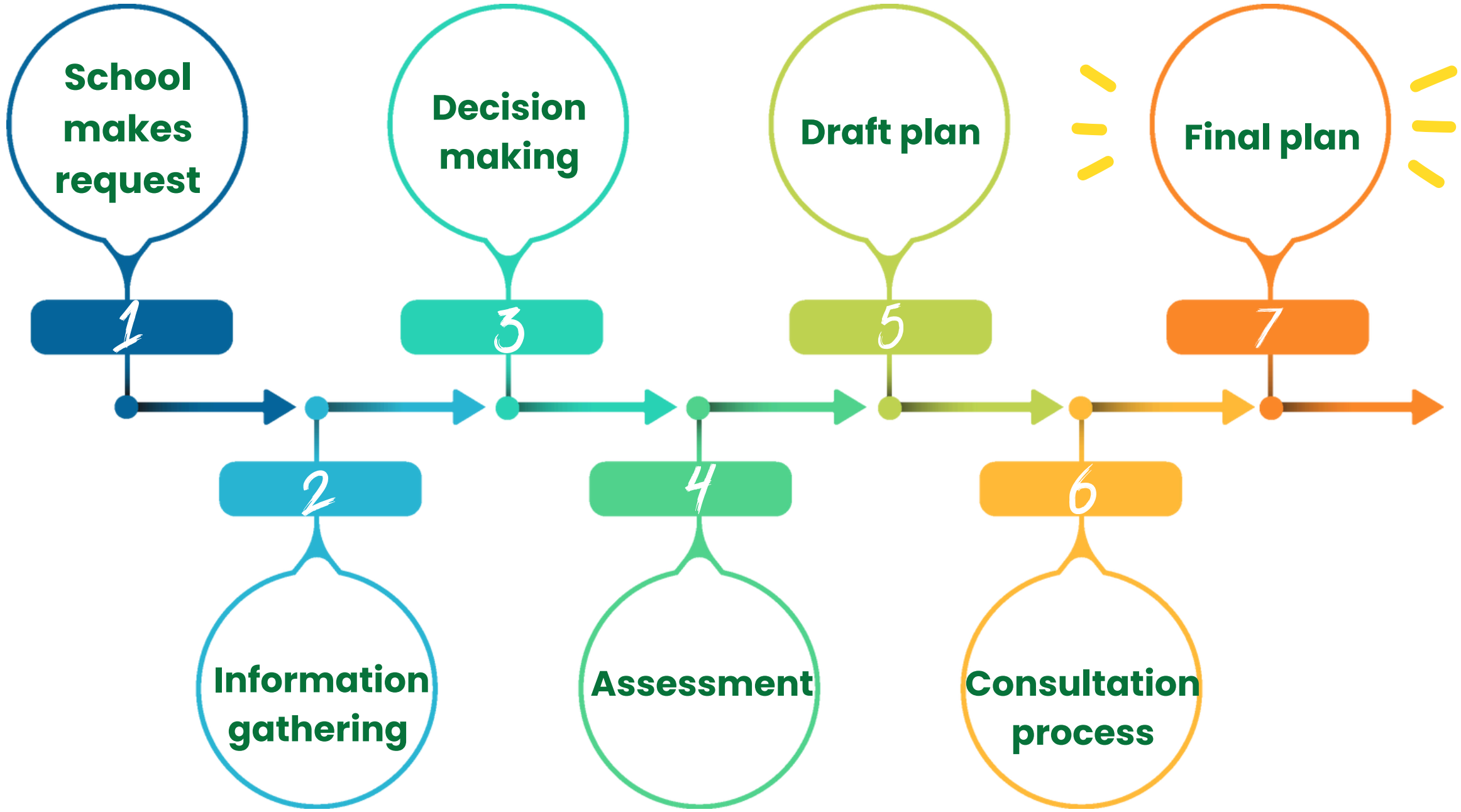
- LSA support in or out of classes (maybe one to one or small groups)
- Using external professionals for specialist advice (e.g., Educational Psychologist (EP) / Occupational Therapist (OT) / Speech and language therapist (SALT) / Autism Outreach)
- Possible use of alternative educational provision for part of the timetable or for a short period of time
- Purchasing of specialist equipment e.g., software / hoists / lifts / reading pens



Stage 4 EHCP Assessment

- Individualised support
- A high level of support which may include during both lesson and break / lunch times
- Access to a specialist school place
- Need for full time alternative educational provision on a long-term basis

The EHCP process



What does an EHCP offer?

An EHCP is...

A legal document outlining ...

- the needs of a young person and how these impact their ability to access learning
- the additional support a young person needs to achieve

A document which follows a CYP across counties and up to age 25 (or when they leave full time education)

The only route to accessing a special school place

An offer of funding to cover support e.g., LSA hours in school or part/full time alternative to mainstream school

The route to funded SEND transport (different LA's offer different routes)

An EHCP is not...

An automatic agreement that a place in a specialist school is required.

A document which gives any greater priority in applications for mainstream school / college places

A guarantee that a suitable offer of a specialist school place will be available even if the EHCP states this is required.

A guarantee that a school can find staffing to cover the allocated LSA hours / support or access to other provisions.

A document which makes for a swift transition process if a CYP moves across a county border.

Roles

School

initial identification of need; putting into place SEND support plans; using the graduated response; ensuring a robust review process that is clearly documented; usually responsible for SENIF and EHCP applications; responding to consultations from SENA for children with EHCPs.

Social Care

may need to make an application for EHCP assessment; respond to requests for information and documents from SENA in a timely manner (short deadlines); forward declines / draft EHCP / relevant emails to virtual school officer for advice; instigate official challenges to SENA decisions (if they hold PR)

SENA

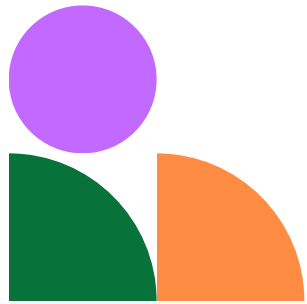
consideration of requests for short term SENIF funding; consideration of request for statutory assessment; writing of draft and final EHCPs; consultation process with both mainstream and specialist schools as required; funding of support required by SENIF and EHCP documents (bearing in mind the SENA team involved will usually be from the LA where the young person lives)

Parents/ Carers

involved in discussions of need at PEP meetings; respond to requests for information and discussions with SENA in a timely manner; instigate official challenges to SENA decisions (if they hold PR)

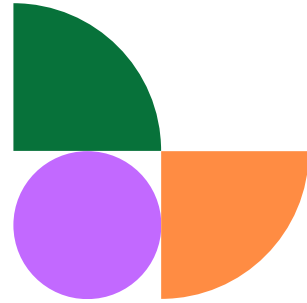
Funding for SEND

The levels of support are known as the graduated response (2) and schools should use this approach working through the steps in order.



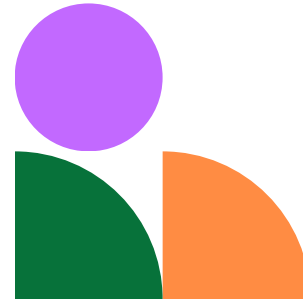
AWPU

The standard budget each school receives per pupil regardless of need – approximately £4500 per primary pupil and £6000 per secondary pupil.



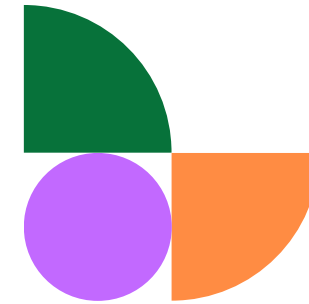
**School SEN
funding**

Money each school is required to contribute from their own budget for pupils with SEND needs – set at £6000 per pupil. If more funding than this is required school can request short term SENIF funding or ask for a full EHCP application.



SENIF

Through an application process to SENA. For pupils with high level needs felt likely to be short term (1 academic year or shorter). Usually allocated as number of LSA hours (often 15, 25 or 32.5 hours) per week equating to a few thousand pounds per year.



EHCP

Accessed through full statutory assessment process to SENA. For pupils with high level needs felt likely to be long term (1 academic year or more). Anywhere from a number of LSA hours similar to SENIF funding up to expensive specialist school places that can cost many thousands of pounds per term.

Acronyms

AWPU: Age Weighted Pupil Unit award: the amount of money schools receives from national government per pupil on roll.

C&I: Communication and Interaction: one of the four main categories of SEND need.

C&L: Cognition and Learning: one of the four main categories of SEND need.

EHCP: Education and Health Care Plan: the legal document outlining the needs and support requirements of children with the highest level of SEND need.

EHCNA: Education Health Care Needs Assessment:

EP: Educational Psychologist: Usually the lead professional in assessing learning needs

PR: Person with Parental Responsibility:

SEMH: Social Emotional and Mental Health: one of the four main categories of SEND need – often extremely relevant to children in care.

SEN: Special Educational Needs:

SENA: Special Educational Needs Assessments team: t term)

SEND: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: a more inclusive term which covers the diverse needs that can impact education.

SENI: Special Educational Needs Intervention Funding: funding to schools from SENA for high level but short-term needs.



References and further reading



- 1) Children and families act (2014) at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/section/20>
- 2) SEND code of practice (2015) at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- 3) UCL research “Special educational needs, social care and health” (2020) discussed at <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2020/jan/80-cent-children-care-need-special-educational-support>
- 4) Leicestershire SENA Inclusive Practice Toolkit at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/send-service-developments/inclusive-practice-toolkit>
- 5) Leicestershire SENA assessment pathway at <https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/resource/files/field/pdf/2017/3/13/SEND-assessment-pathway.pdf>