



# How your child with **general learning 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 different types and degrees of learning difficulties that require different levels of support.

**If your child has general learning difficulties they may have problems with some or all of the following:**

- Memory
- Learning how to speak
- Understanding others
- Reading, writing and doing maths
- Putting into practice what they have learned
- A broad range of other difficulties, for example social and emotional development or organisational skills

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 general learning 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:**

- Systems for setting targets and tracking your child's progress.
- Giving extra time where needed for classwork and homework.
- Praising your child's achievements and developing their self-esteem.
- Providing opportunities for small group work based on your child's needs.
- Provide your child with opportunities to learn from pictures, using practical equipment, moving and doing, rather than sitting.
- Allow your child to use a range of resources to support their learning and independence e.g. visual timetable.
- Keep tasks short, clearly explained and supported with visual information to help with memory difficulties.
- Provide a home-school diary to assist in effective communication.
- Break new learning into small steps.

- Provide examples and prompt sheets.
- A curriculum which promotes positive examples of diversity.

## 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:

- Providing your child with access to individualised and/or small group support, which may include help to develop your child's social skills.
- Provide your child with opportunities to repeat tasks to help reinforce learning.
- Make arrangements, if appropriate, for supervision during out-of-class time if your child requires extra adult support.
- Provide supported career programmes for your child in secondary school.
- Planned arrangements for assessments.
- Seeking additional advice about how to support your child from outside specialists e.g. therapists, specialist teachers and educational psychologists.
- Provide your child with individual tailored support to help them to achieve outcomes.
- Staff will understand that your child will have good and bad learning days and may require lots of repetition.
- Use visual reminders, resources and rewards to help your child to develop independence.
- Provide your child with a structured, multisensory approach to learning.



## 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 work with the SENCO and other professionals on how the curriculum can be modified to meet your child's needs.
- Teaching and learning styles, tasks and resources will be modified to meet your child's needs.
- 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](http://www.countydurhamfamilies.info/localoffer)**

**Telephone 03000 26 99 95**

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## 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](mailto:sendiass@durham.gov.uk)**

**Telephone 03000 267 003**

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## 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](http://www.mctdurham.co.uk)**

**Telephone 0191 587 3541**

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