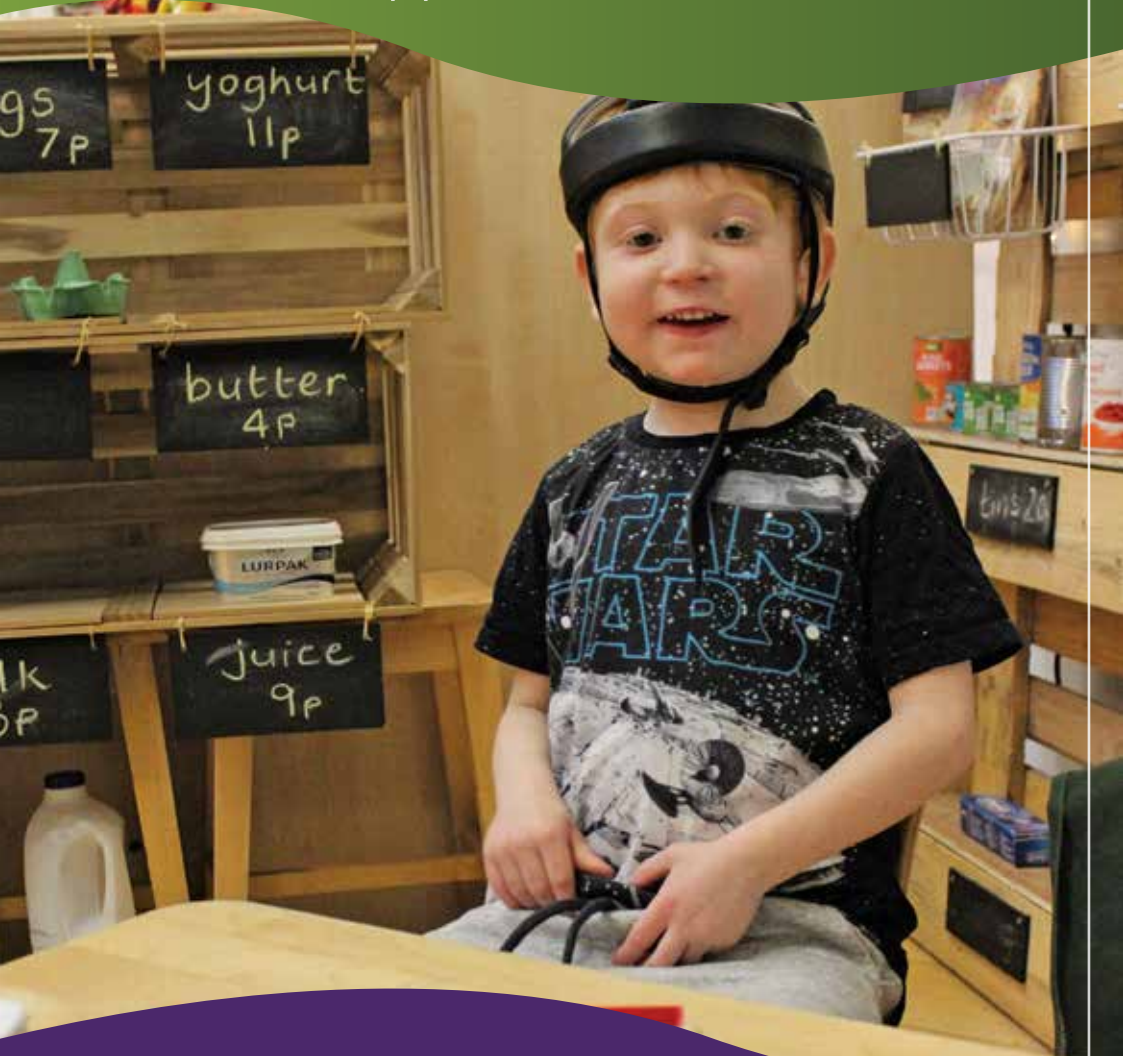




How your child with physical difficulties is supported in school



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 physical difficulty that require different levels of support, but pupils with physical difficulties learn well in mainstream schools if attention is paid to their specific needs.

If your child has a physical difficulty they may also have learning difficulties and health and care services may need to be involved.

If your child needs significant support a medical care plan can be drawn up between you, the school and medical staff to ensure all of their needs are met.

School nurses, specialist nurses and therapy staff may need to provide extra training for school staff to help them meet the specific needs of your child.

Specialist equipment to help with their learning and therapy/care needs.

Changes may have to be made in school buildings to meet your child's needs e.g. ramps, grab rails, toilet seats or specialist equipment. Sometimes changes will need to be made to staff attitudes, preconceptions or the general organisation of the 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 physical 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 aware of your child's issues, Equalities Act 2010 and the School Accessibility Plan.
- The school will have an equality policy (or similar).
- A full check (audit) of the school building if necessary.
- Care plans and risk assessments will be in place
- Staff will be aware that your child may need more time to complete tasks and do some things differently.
- Staff will seek advice from the occupational therapist about how to help your child in school.
- School trips and visits will be carefully planned and include risk assessments.
- Staff will include your child in all activities including PE, swimming and playtimes, with modification and differentiation where required.

- Staff will give your child feedback on their progress.
- Making sure that the curriculum includes examples of diversity.
- Staff will understand that your child's physical disability/medical need may have a wider impact on their social and emotional wellbeing.
- Staff will help when your child is taking medication.
- The school will encourage good home-to-school communication to ensure that staff are aware of any changes in your child's condition.
- Writing aids such as writing slopes or pencil grips, aids such as easy grip scissors for fine motor skills, use of larger lined books or paper and use of laptops/tablets/software will be available as required.
- Staff will consider seating and positioning for ease of moving around.
- Strategies will be put in place to assist your child with self-organisation for example diaries and checklists.
- Staff will help your child to write down homework or use of pre-printed materials.
- Individualised support may be provided, for example toileting, PE, giving medicine, specialist walking aids and alternative methods of recording communication.
- Your child will be allowed ample rest periods.



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:

- Support staff trained to carry out your child's therapy programme and moving and handling.
- Teachers who link class work with therapies.
- Detailed medical care plan/risk assessments written and regularly reviewed.
- Planning therapy and toileting needs so that children/young people still have the opportunity to socialise and learn.
- Sessions outside of the classroom for therapy programmes if needed.
- Individual tailored support, if needed. For example, toileting, PE, delivering therapies, giving medicine, putting on splints and gaiters and alternative methods of recording communication or specialist walking aids.
- Changes to the curriculum in PE and practical subjects to take account of physical disabilities.
- An Access Technology Assessment from the Cognition and Learning Team.
- Planning your child's education, taking into account that your child may miss school due to medical appointments, therapies etc.
- Access to a range of specialist technology.



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.
- Teaching and learning styles 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).
- Habilitation programmes covering mobility and independent living skills will be provided.
- There will be planned specialist arrangements for exams.
- Your child will be able to use equipment where required.
- We will work with your child to develop social and emotional skills alongside educational attainment.
- 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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