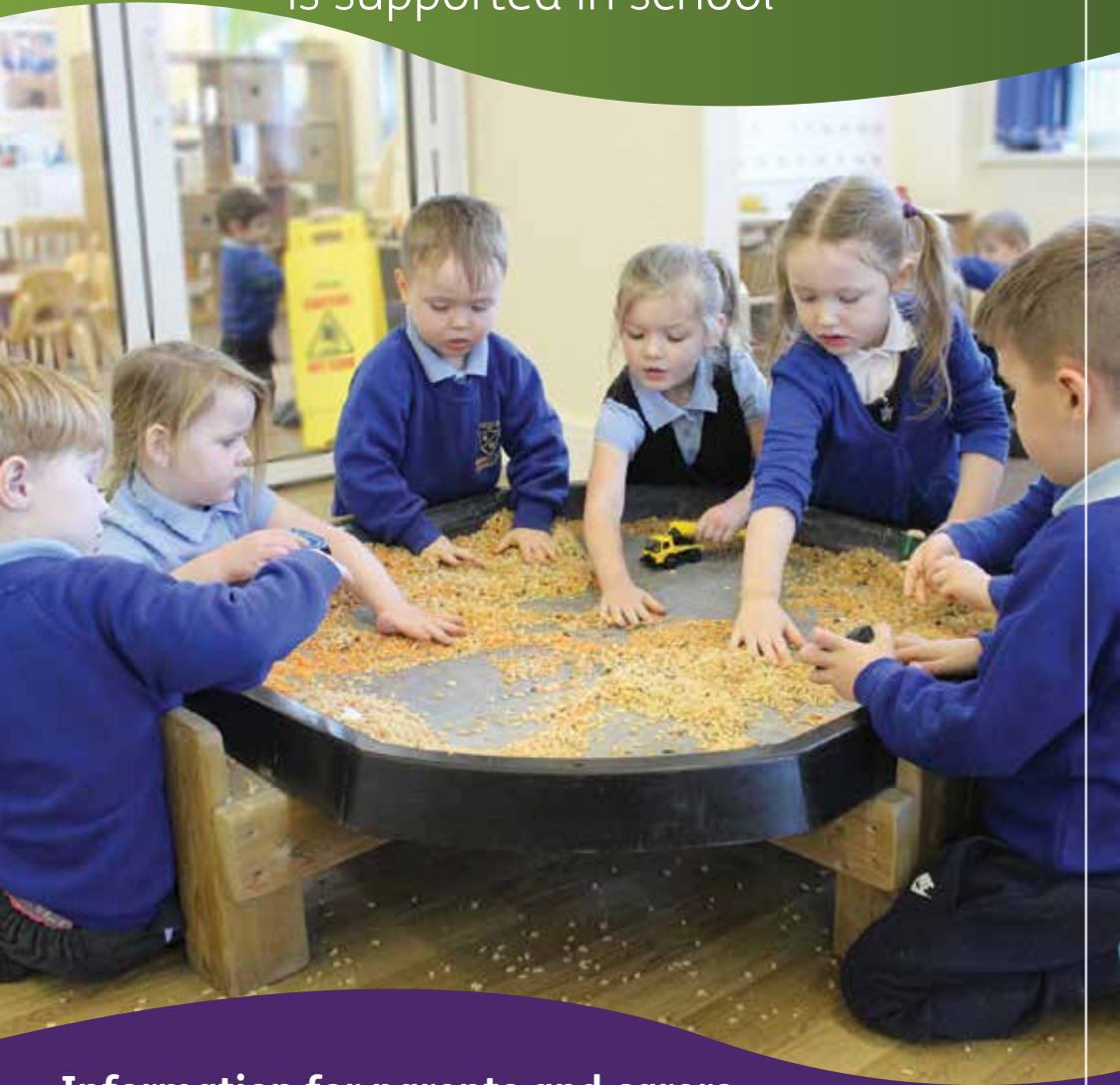




How your child with social emotional and mental health difficulties is supported in school



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 social, emotional and mental health difficulties that require different levels of support.

If your child has social, emotional or mental health difficulties they may have problems with some or all of the following:

- Being unhappy, with low self-esteem or poor self-image.
- Being confrontational and disruptive in the classroom.
- Being withdrawn.
- Being anxious
- A fear of bullying
- Interacting with their peers and/or adults.
- Expressing their feelings.
- Anger/anger management.
- Self-harming
- Hyperactive tendencies and attention difficulties.
- Undiagnosed or diagnosed learning difficulties.
- Underachieving.

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 social emotional and mental health 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:

- Consistent routines and secure boundaries for your child.
- A child-centred approach.
- Opportunities for your child to experience success and be given praise.
- Make adjustments to grouping and seating arrangements to allow your child to participate.
- A clear and consistent reward and sanction policy for example, stickers, celebrations or withdrawal of privileges, detentions.
- A positive, caring, whole-school attitude, where your child feels safe and valued.
- General support when learning is moving too fast for your child.
- Taking steps to build your child's self-confidence.
- Helping your child to work independently.
- Taking special steps to build the relationship with the pupil.

- When your child is misbehaving, label the behaviour, not your child eg 'bullying is not allowed in our class' rather than 'you are being a bully'.
- Access to some individual and/or small group support.
- Planned opportunities to learn and practise social and emotional skills during structured activities.
- Targeted use of strategies such as 'circle time' and peer mediation
- Focussed support outside of class.
- Formal and informal regular feedback between parents and schools.
- Arrangements, if appropriate, for supervision during out-of-class time requiring extra adult support.
- Group work to develop social skills.
- Supported career programmes in secondary school.
- Access to external specialists such as NHS, CAMHS and Durham County Council Social, Emotional and Mental Health Services.
- A wider 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:

- You and the school will be aware of strategies to support your child.
- Targeted support to develop social, emotional and mental health skills.
- A quiet area where the pupil can be withdrawn.
- Support from outside agencies as required, such as NHS, CAMHS; Durham County Council Social, Emotional and Mental Health Services.
- Targeted use of strategies such as ‘circle time’ and peer mediation.
- Teaching problem solving skills.
- A plan specifying the role of physical contact in managing the child/young person’s behaviour, where necessary.
- A personalised reward system for targeted activities
- Risk assessments to inform actions in the plan.
- Close monitoring of attendance and home visits where necessary.
- Multi-agency meetings, for instance Team Around the Family, as appropriate.



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:

- They will have an individual management plan.
- They will receive planned, regular, targeted support.
- A flexible, child-centred approach will be used.
- There will be planned adaptations to less structured times, such as
- Members of staff will be trained in positive handling strategies.
- Staff will be able to promote de-escalation of challenging situations.
- There will be opportunities for small group therapeutic sessions.
- Medication will be monitoring and reviewed.
- Conflict resolution will be used where necessary.
- We will undertake careful planning when your child is moving to the next stage of education (transition).
- 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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