



**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
Educational Provision in Sandwell**

Revised May 2023



**A guide for
Parents
and
Carers**



Dear Parents/Carers

We appreciate that no one knows your children better than you do.

That is why it is important for parents/carers, schools and the Local Authority to work together to support children and young people to be successful in school and early years settings. We want to support you by providing clear information about the range of services available to you together with the advice that is also available to you.

We hope that the Sandwell Local Offer provides you with all the necessary information but if you want further advice please do not hesitate to contact

Sandwell Council's Inclusive Learning Service
Special Educational Needs Team
Connor Road
West Bromwich
B71 3DJ

Telephone number 0121 569 8240 or
Email address: sen_team@sandwell.gov.uk

We are always happy to help.

Yours sincerely



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Introduction

This is a Sandwell guide for parents and carers, working in partnership with schools and support agencies, to help children with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve their full potential. It explains how we make provision in Sandwell and should not be taken as a guide to any other Local Authority (LA).

In this document:

The term 'parent' is used and should be taken to mean anyone with parental responsibilities.

The terms 'child or children' should be taken to mean all children and young people including pre-school and all of those in full-time education.

Our principles are in line with the SEN & Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015)

These principles are designed to support:

- The participation of children, their parents and young people in decision making.
- The early identification of children and young people's needs and early intervention to support them.
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over support
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.

This is a reference booklet; you do not need to read all of it unless you want to; choose the sections that you need to read from the contents page.



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Support for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

This section tells you:

- *The law on Special Educational Needs*
- *The Code of Practice on Special Educational Needs and Disability*
- *Sandwell's commitment to pupils with special needs and/or disabilities and their parents/carers*

What are Special Educational Needs (SEN)?

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 a child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or a disability if he or she:

- has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of the kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or post 16 institutions; and,
- needs special educational provision to be made for him/her.

For example, children could have difficulty with:

- keeping up with children in all of their subjects
- some of the work in schools such as reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying
- making friends or relating to adults
- behaving appropriately in school
- organising themselves
- their sensory or physical needs which may affect them in school.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years

This document sets out in full what is expected of schools, colleges and local authorities in meeting children's SEN. A full copy is available on the DfE section of the Government website.

The Code of Practice 2015 says early years providers, schools and colleges should know precisely where children and young people are in their learning and development. They should:

- ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of children and young people themselves
- have high ambitions and set stretching outcome targets
- track their progress towards these outcome targets
- keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them
- promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development, and
- ensure the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress.

When do children need an Education, Health and Care Plan?

Many children experience difficulties in learning, at times in their lives, before they leave education. These learning difficulties may be related to other difficulties such as with speech and language, physical difficulties or social, emotional, mental health difficulties.

Schools have an amount of funding devolved to their budgets from the Department for Education (DfE) to support children's SEN at an early stage.

The Code of Practice says that schools must use this funding to support children's SEN.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans are for those children whose needs are so complex that they need more resources to support their learning than the early years providers, schools and colleges can fund from that devolved budget.

The DfE sets an amount which we can expect a school to spend to support an individual child and, at the moment, that is £6,000.

If it costs more than £6,000 to support your child then an Education, Health and Care Plan will be needed to access additional funding.

Education, Health and Care Plans

Education, Health and Care Plans replace statements of SEN. They are for children who meet the above criteria i.e. the resource needed to meet their needs costs more than £6,000 and, for those children whose needs can be best met in a special school.

They are for children and young people from 0-25 years of age while they are in education and have an educational need.

Children do not need a plan if they only have health or care needs, but no educational need; they do not have to have health and social care needs to have an EHC Plan.

Where children have educational, health and care needs the new EHC plans should ensure that those needs are considered together and a set of outcomes for their future employment, making friends, living in the community, independent living and staying as healthy as possible, are delivered by the plan.

2 Parents and Schools Working in Partnership

This section explains the partnership approach and tells you:

- *What parents can expect from the school and Sandwell Local Authority.*
- *What schools can expect from parents*
- *How parents can contribute to planning to meet their child's special educational needs.*

Parents' contributions in planning to meet a child's special educational needs

Parents' contributions are important. You may wish to write something down or speak to someone. You will be given the opportunity to use your preferred language (including (BSL) British Sign Language). The SEND Independent Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) offers support to parents and schools throughout the process.

Parents may wish to comment on:

- what they think their child is best at and what they like and admire about their child
- their child's main difficulties
- how they think their child best learns
- the progress their child has made towards achieving outcomes
- their child's general health
- what their child likes/dislikes doing at home or at school
- how their child gets on with other children or adults.

What parents can expect from the school and Sandwell Local Authority

- The Local Offer, which you can see on the Sandwell website, sets out in full all the information that early years providers, schools and colleges put in place for children and young people with SEN.
- The Local Offer sets out what support is available from health services and social care and through voluntary agencies.
- Each school has a link on their website to the Sandwell Local Offer. Their own more detailed information about their approach to meeting SEN, through their SEN Information Report/SEN Policy must also be on a school's website.
- The Local Authority publishes an Accessibility Strategy which shows how it will support those schools for which it is responsible, to promote access for disabled pupils. This strategy is available on the Sandwell Local Offer website.

Sandwell's Local Offer

- Parents must be informed by the school if their child needs help due to special educational needs being identified and when additional and different support is needed in order for the child to make progress.
- Parents should be encouraged to make regular contributions to planning the programme for their child.
- Parents should be able to state their views and be involved in reviews and decisions about their child's educational progress.
- Parents should be able to consult and inform all the professionals involved with their child.
- Every effort will be made to provide information in a language and format which parents can understand.
- Parents can express a preference about which school their child attends.
- Parents will receive information about provision for children in Sandwell with SEN through the Local Offer website.
- Parents are invited to give the Local Authority feedback on the Local Offer so that it can be changed and improve. Please e-mail sen_team@sandwell.gov.uk
- Parents can request an Education, Health and Care Assessment under the Children and Families Act 2014.
- Parents will receive information about the Sandwell SEND Information and Advice Support Service which is able to offer independent information, advice and support.*
- Parents will receive information about mediation arrangements.

Working in Partnership

- Schools recognise that parents know their child better than anyone and draw on that knowledge and expertise.
- The work of schools will be more effective when parents are involved in decision making, planning and delivery of educational programmes.
- With help from the school, parents can support their child at home.
- Good communication between the home and school helps a child make progress.

What schools can expect from parents

Parents should always do their best to:

- work in partnership with the school for the benefit of their children
- contact the school if they have any worries or questions
- share any information about their child that might affect their education
- support their children with encouragement and praise throughout their school work
- give time to supporting their child's school work.

*Sandwell SEND Information, Advice and Support Service is currently based at: Hillside Children's Centre, Connor Road, West Bromwich, B71 3DJ

Please note: as of 1 April 2023 the Sandwell SENDIASS service moved from being managed by Action for Children to Barnardo's. The current staff team and contact details will be finalised in due course. The service can be contacted via email at: SandwellSENDIASS@barnardos.org.uk

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Provision for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

This section tells you about arrangements for meeting special educational needs in Sandwell MBC.

- *What is available in all mainstream schools.*
- *Arrangements for children with disabilities.*
- *Support services provided by the Local Authority.*
- *Support provided in schools.*
- *When would your child see an outside agency?*
- *What is Alternative Provision?*

All schools in Sandwell have children with SEN. There are arrangements in schools to identify children's special educational needs and provide support for those needs. These arrangements will follow the recommendations of the Code of Practice.

What is available in all mainstream schools?

- All schools will have a member of staff who is the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator often known as the SENCO. The school governing body is responsible for making sure that the school is able to provide appropriate education for children in school with SEN. The SENCO's role is to help parents, children and class teachers so that children with SEN make progress.
- Schools receive money for each child and part of this is for special educational needs.
- In April 2013 the Government changed the way children with SEN are funded so that schools will receive money directly into their budget. The amount of funding varies but it is expected that your school will be able to support children with learning and social, mental and emotional difficulties, via 1:1 support and small group interventions up to a cost of £6,000, if necessary, for them to progress.
- Sandwell Local Authority (LA) has support services that can offer additional help to schools. The Inclusion Support Service consists of Educational Psychologists; Advisory Teachers for Learning, Autism and Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Teachers of the Deaf and Vision Impaired children.

- All Sandwell schools have access to training for their teachers and staff in meeting the needs of children with SEN.
- All schools must take notice of the SEN Code of Practice 2015. They must also abide by the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and should have regard to its accompanying codes of practice. As part of their Equality Act duties, and in addition to their Equality Action Plan, all schools must produce an Accessibility Plan to show how they will promote access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum, written information and the physical environment.

Arrangements for children with disabilities

- Sandwell LA is committed to making a school place available to children with disabilities at their local school wherever possible.
- Sandwell LA is working with schools to make them fully accessible to children and parents with disabilities through its Accessibility Strategy.
- Transport to school may be provided for children if they have a disability. It is never automatically provided, but their needs will always be assessed. Children, for whom transport is agreed, will be assessed to see if they are able to access independent travel training from age 12. (Sandwell's Transport Policy is available to read on the Local Offer website)

Support for early years and pre-school

Inclusion Support Early Years (ISEY) gives support, advice and training to Early Years and childcare providers in the private, voluntary and independent sectors. The service also supports schools as young children with SEN transition into nursery or reception classes.

ISEY is responsible for:

- Assessing children's needs
- Planning, implementing and reviewing their programmes of work
- Helping families with all the services provided through joint working.
- Working with all childcare settings to include SEN children.
- Providing funding for 1:1 support through the Inclusion Grant appropriate to the children's needs
- Transition into school
- Training and monitoring the quality of inclusive provision.

Support in school

Class teachers

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff' (Code of Practice 2015)

Learning Support Practitioners (LSPs)/ Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

These are people who assist the class teacher in meeting a child's special educational needs. An LSP will have qualifications and therefore be able to take on extra responsibilities. They will assist the teacher by:

- helping a child or groups of children to take part in the work of the rest of the class (the teacher should ensure that the work is at the right level for your child)
- taking small group activities directed by the teacher
- supporting a child with self-help, physical and social skills
- preparing work and/or materials for children
- delivering a programme aimed at developing skills i.e. reading, number etc; outside the class 1:1 or in a small group
- helping your child to become increasingly independent in their learning

Outside agencies

The people and support services listed below are not based in schools but are able to offer support and advice to schools and families when requested.

The Inclusion Support Service

This service gives support, advice and training to schools and parents; carries out assessments of children; and in some circumstances will work with children in schools.

Education and Child Psychologists are responsible for:

- psychological assessment of the needs of children and families
- monitoring of pupil progress and the development of effective teaching programmes
- individual counselling and support programmes
- training for school staff, governors and parents
- advice and project work for the Local Authority to support school improvement.
- support and advice to parents/carers and liaison with Health and Social Care.

Specialist Advisory Teachers: Learning are responsible for:

- advice on, assessment of and support for the needs of children with learning difficulties
- monitoring of pupil progress and the development of effective teaching programmes
- training for school staff, governors, parents etc.
- advice and project work for the Local Authority to support school improvement.
- providing individual support and advice to staff working with pupils who experience specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia

Teachers of the Deaf and Children with Vision Impairment are responsible for:

- assessment of pre-school special needs
- work with families to implement home-based teaching programmes
- supporting pre-school activities in schools and with voluntary groups.
- advice, assessment and support for schools primarily in respect of children with hearing/vision impairment.
- support and advice to parents/carers and liaison with health professionals.
- training for school staff, governors and parents

- advice and project work for the Local Authority to support school improvement.

Specialist Advisory Teachers (Complex Communication and Autism (CCAT) are responsible for:

- advice, assessment and support for pre-school settings, schools and parents.
- in service training
- advice and project work for the Local Authority to support school improvement.

Specialist Advisory Teachers: SEMH are responsible for:

- advice, assessment and support for schools primarily in respect of children with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- advice and project work for the Local Authority to address mental health, well-being and behaviour to support school improvement
- training for school staff, governors and parents
- providing advice/support to schools with regard to pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion; and
- promoting liaison and the active involvement of parents/carers in supporting their child.

Preventing Primary Exclusions Team

This team is part of the SEMH team. They are Learning Support Practitioners and are responsible for:

- providing short-term direct support to individual primary aged pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion;
- assisting in the development, monitoring and evaluation of teaching programmes for improving pupil's regulation of emotions, behaviour and learning; and,
- supporting school staff to liaise with and actively involve parents in supporting their child.

Therapists: Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Teams

These services aim to help children reach their potential by providing the best possible management of communication, mobility or physical skills. This may be in a clinic, in school, at home. Therapists work in partnership with children, parents and school staff.

Therapists will:

- contribute to the assessment of a child's needs;
- work with parents and school staff to identify outcomes for the child;
- provide advice and individual therapy programmes;
- provide training for staff and parents to help work towards identified outcomes; and,
- contribute towards the annual review and Education, Health and Care assessment

Therapist support for a child may include:

- guidance and training for school staff to follow programmes of support to individual children or small groups;
- working alongside support staff with individual children or small groups; and
- guidance for parents in helping their child at home.

The need for input from the therapy services will be regularly reviewed. It may be that a child's needs can be met from within a school that has received advice and training from these services.

Alternative Provision

Alternative Provision provides education for children or young people, including those who cannot attend mainstream school due to SEMH and medical needs, or those who are at risk or have been permanently excluded. The Local Authority maintains a list of registered alternative providers that it has approved, following checks on the quality of the provision and safeguarding arrangements. A referral to alternative provision must be made in consultation with the child or young person, and their parents / carers.

4 Arrangements for children with severe, complex and long term Special Educational Needs

- *What Focus Provision means and the admission arrangements*
- *Which schools have Focus Provision*
- *Special Schools*
- *Transport from home to school*
- *Admission arrangements for mainstream and Special Schools*

Most children with severe, complex and long term needs attend their local schools. A very small number may need a very high level of specialist teaching and resources. For these children the Local Authority has schools with Focus Provision (FP) and special schools.

Focus Provision (FP)

Focus Provision is based in a mainstream school. Focus Provisions (FPs) take children with certain types of very significant needs that cannot easily be met at their local school. All FPs will have specialist support staff and equipment.

Children who are included in a FP will spend most of the day in a mainstream classroom with their peers but may be withdrawn for specific support programmes. Class or subject teachers within schools, that have a FP, will have a greater awareness of the implications for their teaching of having children with hearing impairment, autism spectrum difficulties etc;

FP staff are also able to provide support and advice to help with the inclusion of children with SEN in their local schools.

Nursing and Medical Staff

Some children with significant medical problems have complex needs and may be supported by the school nurses and specialist paediatric doctors and nurses in mainstream, Focus Provision and special schools.

Currently, Sandwell has Focus Provision for the following needs:

| | Infant/Junior/ Primary School | Secondary School |
|--|---|--|
| • Hearing impairment | Hargate Primary | Wodensborough Ormiston Academy |
| • Moderate learning difficulties plus other needs e.g. speech and language | Galton Valley Primary | |
| • Autism spectrum disorder | Grace Mary Primary, Ferndale Primary Christ Church C.E. Primary Devonshire Infant School Devonshire Junior School | Bristnall Hall Academy Wodensborough Ormiston Academy |
| • Complex needs and autism spectrum disorder | Great Bridge Primary School | |
| • Speech, language and communication difficulties | Uplands Manor Primary (will close 31/8/25) | |
| • Physical/medical difficulties | Crocketts Community Primary | St Michael's CE |
| • Social, emotional and mental health needs | Hargate Primary (KS1 only) St Martins C.E. Primary (KS1 and KS2) (will close 31/8/24) Ocker Hill Academy | |
| • Severe Learning Difficulties | Uplands Special Unit | |

Admission to Focus Provision

Admission to a Focus Provision will normally follow an Education, Health and Care Assessment or a review of progress in school or nursery. Children will require an EHC Plan to access a Focus Provision place. Parents and professionals would discuss the benefits of attendance at the Focus Provision compared with attending their local mainstream school or a special school. The decision depends on the availability of places and the agreement of the SEN Service (at Provision Panel), head teacher and parents.

Special Schools

These are schools where all the children have complex special educational needs that cannot be met at their local school. Staff have specialist knowledge and expertise, specialist equipment will be available and classes are small. A child who is placed in a special school will have an Education Health and Care Plan.

Special schools also provide outreach support and advice to help with the inclusion of children with SEN in their local schools.

There are currently 6 special schools offering special arrangements for particular types of needs.

Shenstone Lodge

This school has two sites, one focussed on primary and one on secondary aged pupils

(i) Main site

This site is for primary age children with social, emotional/mental health difficulties with day attendance or weekly boarding decided as appropriate to each child's needs. A small number of pupils stay on site at Key Stage 3 if they are in the process of transitioning back to mainstream. Children are re-integrated into mainstream schools as and when they are ready.

(ii) Brades Lodge

This site is for children with social and emotional/mental health difficulties who are not able to manage in a mainstream secondary school environment. The children at this school typically need a highly individualised curriculum.

The Westminster School

This is a school for children aged 7-18 years with moderate learning difficulties and additional needs, based on a shared site with the mainstream St Michaels CE High School Business and Enterprise College. This co-location gives unique opportunities for children to access mainstream teaching, at the secondary phase, if appropriate to their learning needs.

The Orchard School

This is a primary school for children with complex, profound and multiple needs. Many of the children have physical disabilities and medical needs and all the children have severe or profound learning difficulties. The school has good links with mainstream schools which it supports through its outreach work. If children at the Orchard School make good progress they may attend mainstream school for integration sessions, usually a morning each week and, if appropriate, may transfer to full-time mainstream education.

The Meadows School

This is a secondary school for children with complex, profound and multiple needs. Many of the children have physical disabilities and medical needs and all the children have severe or profound learning difficulties. Most of the children from the Orchard School move to the Meadows School for their secondary education.

Elm Tree Primary Academy

This is a special school for children with autism aged 4-11. It is part of the Victoria Academies Trust

High Point Academy

This school provides 90 places for children with autism aged 11-16 with associated moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs.

Admissions to mainstream and special school

Parents have a right to say which school they would prefer their child to attend. The school must be suitable to meet the child's SEN. If a school is oversubscribed, that means there are more applications for a school than places available. Priority will be given to children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan or who have begun an Education Health and Care Assessment of their needs.

Academies

Academies are only obliged to admit children who have an Education, Health and Care plan or who have begun an Education Health and Care Assessment of their needs.

Special schools

Special schools can only admit pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or who have begun an Education, Health and Care Plan assessment of SEN.

Transport from home to school

The Local Authority has a home to school transport policy for children with SEN. Most children with SEN will not require assistance with home to school transport. However, a small number of children with SEN may qualify for free travel assistance to school.

Local Authority policy is to ensure participation and encourage independence in children. It is in the best interests of all pupils that they are encouraged to develop educationally and socially; this includes working towards independent travel.

Sometimes the provision of travel assistance is written into a child's Education, Health and Care Plan.

A decision about travel assistance will be made when a child is placed in a Focus Provision or Special School.

When a child is 12 they will be expected to undertake an assessment for their suitability for independent travel training. Children will only be expected to undertake independent travel training if that assessment indicates they can achieve some level of independence.

Schools in Sandwell are supporting the Travel Independence Training Across the Nation (TITAN) curriculum based programme.

TITAN is a structured way of providing opportunities for building the skills necessary for greater independence and choice.

Sandwell's Transport Policy is available on the Local Offer website.

5

The identification and assessment of children’s special educational needs

This section tells you:

- *What assessment means*
- *Who may carry out the assessment to identify a child’s special educational needs*

Teachers assess children all the time and use assessments to plan further teaching. It is the way that teachers check the child’s progress to see if they are learning.

Assessment may be carried out using recognised standardised tests that generally concentrate on particular areas of a child’s learning such as reading, spelling or number.

Assessment may also be used to identify specific difficulties or address particular concerns. It may also cover social skills and behaviour.

If following an assessment it is felt that a child may have SEN, the class teacher, SENCO or head teacher will contact the parent.

Parents must be informed when the child is being assessed for SEN and told who is going to make the assessment. Parents have the right to refuse permission for outside agencies to work with their child. (An outside agency must have been involved, giving advice over time, if the school is to request an Education, Health and Care plan.)

Who may carry out the assessment to identify children’s Special Educational Needs

- Teachers in the school
- Staff from the Inclusion Support Service e.g. Education and Child Psychologists, Specialist Advisory Teachers etc.
- Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists or other health services.

How teachers use assessment to identify children’s Special Educational Needs

After discussions between parents and those who have carried out the assessments, the school will plan in detail what they are going to do to help the child.

SEN Support

In early year’s settings and in schools this help may be called SEN Support.

- The school must tell parents when they first identify that a child may have SEN.
- The school, in discussion with parents, will plan additional or extra support to help the child.
- This help could be a different way of teaching the things your child is finding difficult, some help from an adult, perhaps support in a small group or 1:1, or use of a particular piece of equipment.
- At an agreed point in time (usually termly) the effectiveness of the support and the progress the child has made will be reviewed with parents; at this point a new plan might be required.

If a child does not make the expected progress, then the teacher or the SENCo will discuss this with parents, and agree new strategy or intervention.

The school may request that Inclusion Support or other outside agencies make further assessments and give advice and recommendations on the programme. If the school does not involve an outside agency, parents can request that they do, particularly if there are concerns about the child’s rate of progress.

Once a new plan has been agreed, including targets for progress, a new review date should be set.

If the child has more complex needs and does not make progress, despite at least 12 months of intervention, the school may require additional resources to help your child make progress; it may be appropriate to request an Education, Health and Care Assessment.

6

Education, Health and Care Assessments and Plans

This section tells you:

Education, Health and Care Assessments

- *How a parent can ask for one*
- *What a parent should do if they want to request one*
- *Who makes the decision about whether an Education Health and Care Assessment will be made?*
- *What happens if the decision is **not** to make an Education Health and Care Plan?*
- *What happens during an Education Health and Care Assessment?*
- *How parents are involved in the Education Health and Care Assessment?*
- *What happens at the end of an Education Health and Care Assessment?*
- *A decision is made not to issue an Education Health and Care Plan*
- *A decision is made to issue an Education Health and Care Plan.*

Education Health and Care Plans

- *What is an Education Health and Care Plan?*
- *What is included in an Education Health and Care Plan?*
- *How long a parent has got to comment on a proposed an Education Health and Care Plan*
- *Parental choice of school for a child with an Education Health and Care Plan*
- *What happens after Sandwell Local Authority makes the final Education Health and Care Plan?*

Personal Budgets

- *What is a personal budget?*
- *Who can request a personal budget?*
- *How are decisions made?*

- *What services could you use a personal budget for in Sandwell?*

What happens if a parent disagrees with the Local Authority?

- *Sandwell SEND Information and Advice Support Service*
- *Mediation*
- *Disagreement Resolution*
- *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Tribunal*
- *Local Government Ombudsman*

What is an Education Health and Care Plan?

An Education Health and Care Needs Assessment is a very detailed investigation that will find out exactly what a child's special educational needs are. It will also consider all of the special help that he or she may need in order to achieve their aspirations.

Following assessment an Education Health and Care Plan may be agreed for a child with severe, complex and long-term needs.

Who can request an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment of a child's Special Educational Needs?

- Parent
- A young person over the age of 16 but under the age of 25 years
- A child's school or nursery
- Sandwell Local Authority

The Local Authority must agree to make an assessment, unless they consider it to be unnecessary. The decision whether or not to assess will be based on the evidence about a child's special needs. The Local Authority may consider starting an assessment if:

- A child's special educational needs have not been fully identified.
- A school has assessed a child's needs and put in additional and different arrangements to meet the needs over a period of time but progress is not being made.
- The school is making good use of the £6,000 it already has in support of a child. There should have been 1:1 work, small group work and advice from outside agencies. The school must be able to show how more funding via an Education Health and Care Assessment will help to ensure better progress for your child.

- The Local Authority wishes to specify the arrangements for meeting a child's SEN
- It is clear that a child has severe and complex needs before starting school

What should a parent do if they want to request an Education Health and Care Assessment?

- If the child is at school or nursery, they should first talk to their child's class teacher or nursery teacher, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or the head teacher. School may organise a Community Assessment Meeting (CAM) (see below)
- A parent may want to discuss their views with other professionals who work with their child, for example a speech therapist or physiotherapist.
- If the child is not yet at school or nursery they should discuss their views with their child's pre-school teacher, health visitor or other professionals who know and work with their child.
- It is helpful for all the professionals who have been helping and advising to meet with parents and decide the next steps. The LA expects that the school will talk to you about holding a Community Assessment Meeting (CAM) before sending in a request.
- Parents can also contact the Special Educational Needs Service in writing, if they have concerns that are not being addressed by the school or nursery or if the school or nursery does not organise a CAM. Officers in Sandwell's SEN Service will help and advise parents with any difficulties or information they may need. The SEN Service will then contact the child's school/setting to arrange a date for a Community Assessment Meeting (CAM), if this has not already taken place.
- Parents may wish to contact Sandwell Information, Advice and Support Service on 0121 289 2566

Community Assessment Meeting (CAM) – what is it?

It is a meeting of pupil, parents/carers, school and the professionals who have been working with a pupil.

The purpose of the meeting is for the school and professionals to explore pupil and parental views, to set agreed outcomes and plan how provision should be adapted or replaced in order to achieve these outcomes.

The meeting will usually be informal; you and your child should be asked about how and where the meeting should be set up by the SENCo or SEN Officer. It can take place in a venue chosen by you, in the school, in a community centre or at home as long as the chosen place can accommodate the number of people you wish to invite.

In order to prepare for the meeting, you will be given a form by school that they can complete at home or at school in discussion with a member of staff. Your child will also need to be prepared.

Professionals who have been working with the child should provide a report which should be no more than 6 months old. Reports should be delivered to school 2 weeks before the CAM, so that the SENCo can distribute them to parents and those attending the meeting 3 working days before the meeting takes place.

The meeting

The people at the meeting will consider what is happening now for the pupil, what is good about it and what is not going so well through a series of questions.

Who is important to....

What do we like and admire about....

What are our hopes and dreams for.....

What is important for.....

What is important to.....

What's working well.....

What do we need to develop

What are our short term outcomes

What are our long term outcomes

What are our next actions.....

How their views should be presented at the meeting will be discussed with the child, if they are old enough/able to have an opinion, and their parents.

If the pupil is very young their views could be presented by their parent and/or a support worker telling the people at the meeting what they are like, what they find difficult and what is important to them. It could be written down before the meeting for people to read.

For an older pupil this might be face to face with a preferred adult accompanying them such as a member of support staff, via a video or presentation or presenting a written view.

The people attending the CAM will discuss and agree a set of outcomes for the child together with the support and intervention programmes needed to order to achieve them.

At the CAM it will be decided if those outcomes can be achieved with the existing Local Offer resources (including the school's SEN notional budget), or whether an Education Health and Care assessment should be requested to access additional funding. This decision must be made with close reference to the agreed LA guidance in the schools' SEN handbook.

If the decision of the CAM is to request an EHC Needs Assessment the school will gather the information and reports into the set format and send it into the SEN Service at the LA.

If the decision of the CAM is not to request an Education, Health and Care assessment, a SEN Support Plan will be agreed, using resources from the school's notional SEN budget, and any relevant additional resources from the Local Offer. If additional assessments are required for the SEN Support Plan then the SENCo will ask the professionals/agencies to conduct them and provide reports. The CAM should then set a date to review the SEN Support.

If parents and/or the child are not happy at the end of the meeting, they can still choose to request an EHC Needs Assessment. However, the SENCo will need to ask the parent for their reasons and include these in their paperwork for requesting an EHC Plan.

Parents may wish to contact Sandwell SEND Information, Advice and Support Service,(delivered through Barnardo's), Hillside Children's Centre, Connor Road, West Bromwich, B71 3DJ. Tel: 0121 289 2566, email: SandwellSENDIASS@barnardos.org.uk

Who makes the decision about whether an Education Health and Care Needs Assessment will be made?

The Assessment Moderation Panel is chaired by the SEN Service and includes representatives from:

- The Inclusion Support Service
- SEN Service
- Schools
- Health Services
- Social Care
- Parents

The panel considers all the information that has been collected and makes reference to the agreed LA guidance in the schools' SEN handbook. The panel then decides whether or not to agree an Education, Health and Care Assessment of a child's special educational needs.

After the panel parents will receive a letter telling them whether or not Sandwell LA has agreed to make an assessment of the child's Education, Health and Care needs. The decision will be based on the arrangements being made to meet the child's needs and the impact upon the child's progress.

What happens if the decision is not to make an Education, Health and Care Assessment?

Parents will be offered an opportunity for a meeting with a SEN Officer to discuss the decision of the Assessment Moderation Panel. In addition, parents will be advised of mediation services which are able to provide support.

Parents also have the right to appeal to the SEN and Disabilities Tribunal if they disagree with the decision that the Local Authority has reached.

Even if Sandwell LA decides that an Education Health and Care Assessment is not needed, a child should still be getting extra help from the school's SEN funding. £6,000 should provide short daily intervention, some 1:1 and in class support in some lessons; the school should be able to show you how much the support they provide for your child costs.

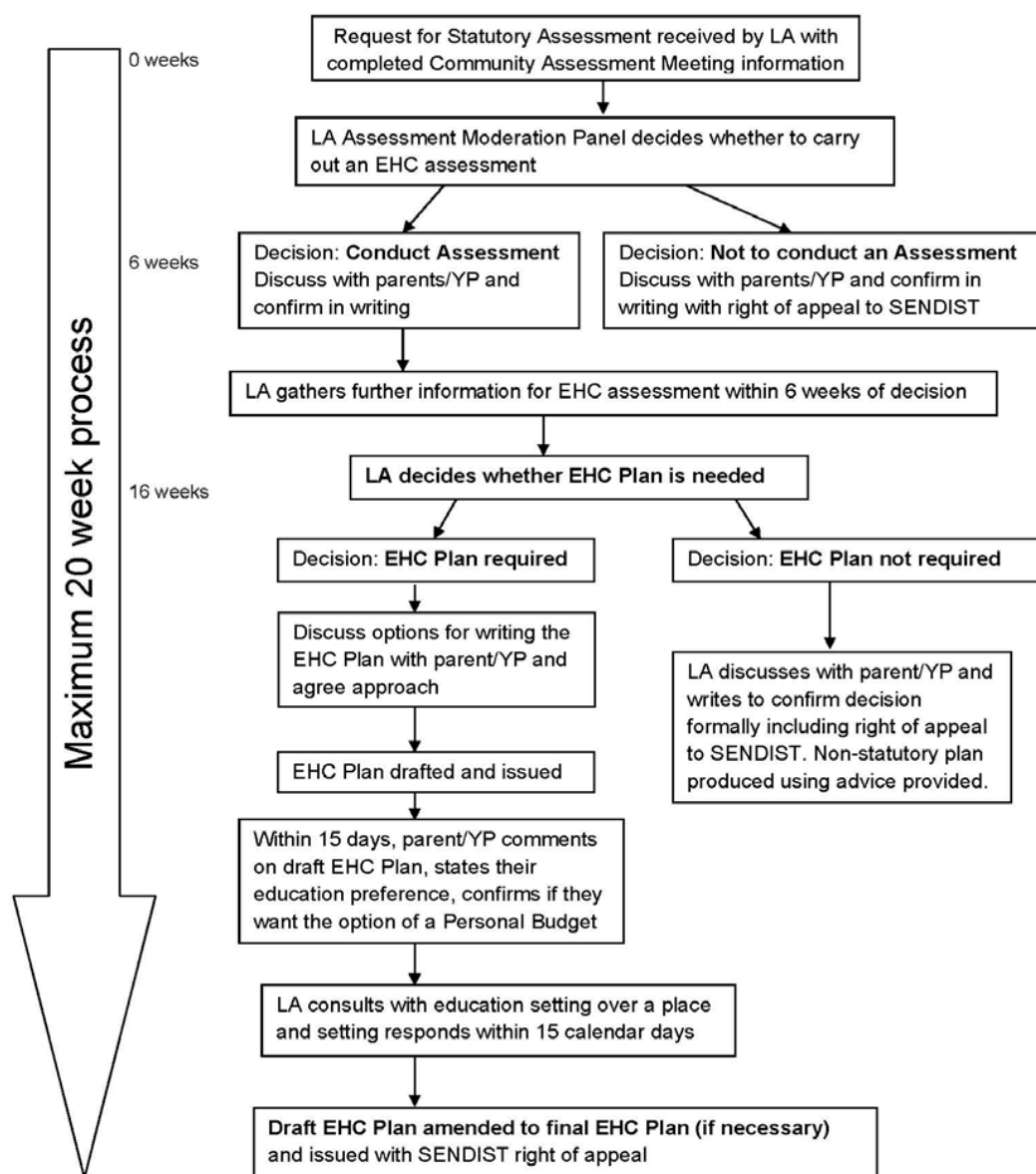
What happens during an Education Health and Care Assessment?

Reports (often called 'Advices') will be requested from the following:

- Parents will be asked to give their views on their child's progress and any areas of concern.
- The child will be asked for his/her views if he/she is able to make their own contribution
- The child's school or nursery
- An educational psychologist

- A medical officer
- Anyone else who has been involved in supporting the child
- Social Care Services will be asked to write a report if they know the child

Statutory Assessment Process for an EHC Plan



[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

Who else will parents be involved in the assessment?

Everyone who is asked to be involved in an assessment must let the parent know.

Parents will be informed before anyone visits their child at school or nursery.

Parents will be given a copy of all reports that are written as part of the assessment and will have the opportunity to discuss these with the people who write them, either at the Community Assessment Meeting or after.

The SEN Service officer, a friend, relative, SENDIASS worker, representative of a voluntary organisation or parents' group, can give parents support in discussing the reports with the people who wrote them. This person can also be invited to the Community Assessment Meeting

Parents have a right to go with their child to any interview, medical test or other test during the EHC Needs Assessment. However, if the young person is over 16, they have the right to attend the meetings alone if they wish.

At some stage those carrying out the assessment may ask to see the child alone, because children often act quite differently when their parents are not there. They may also wish to observe the child in class.

Those carrying out the assessment will explain what they are doing and what they are looking for.

What happens at the end of an Education Health and Care Assessment?

An officer of the Local Authority's SEN Service will normally write to parents within 20 weeks from the date that the Education Health and Care Needs Assessment was requested.

The letter will tell them whether or not an EHC Plan will be made for their child. Parents have an initial 15 working days to request a meeting with the Local Authority if they wish to discuss the contents of the Education Health and Care Plan.

A decision not to issue Education Health and Care Plan

If the decision is not to issue an Education Health and Care Plan an officer of the SEN Service will meet with parents and the school to draw up a SEN Support Plan for the child using reports gathered through the assessment process.

Parents will receive copies of all the reports and advice received from the professionals during the statutory assessment.

A decision to issue an Education, Health and Care Plan

Sandwell LA will send a draft Education, Health and Care Plan to parents. This will include all parts of the plan except the type and name of the school. Parents will be offered a meeting with a representative of Sandwell LA to discuss the draft EHC Plan. After this meeting, they have another 15 days to ask for further meetings, or they can send in any more comments they may have and Sandwell LA will consider them.

What is an Education, Health and Care Plan?

An EHC Plan is a document that sets out a child's needs and all the special help that he or she should have.

A Local Authority makes an EHC Plan when they decide the special help your child needs cannot reasonably be provided within the resources normally available to the school. These resources can include money, staff time and special equipment and a Personal Budget if this has been agreed.

Personal Budgets

- *What is a personal budget?*
- *Who can request a personal budget?*
- *How are decisions made?*
- *What services could you use a personal budget for in Sandwell?*

What is a Personal Budget?

A Personal Budget is the amount of money identified by the local authority to deliver the provision set out in an EHC plan where a parent

or young person is involved in securing that provision i.e. you are directly involved in the purchase of an element of the support described in the EHC plan.

If a Personal Budget is requested, the EHC Plan will specify the SEN that will be addressed using the funding and the outcomes that will be achieved.

Who can request a personal budget?

As a parent or young person you have the right to request a Personal Budget when the local authority has completed an EHC needs assessment and confirmed that it will prepare an EHC plan. You may also request a Personal Budget during an EHC Plan review.

How are decisions made?

Decisions on the funding of Education, Health and Care Plans are made at a multi-agency EHC plan Resource Panel for children whose funding comes from different service e.g. education and social care or provision panel.

Education

The decisions in respect of the education element of the EHC plan are made using a banding system.

The first two bands are within school resources so no additional LA finding is allocated;

Band 1: the child's needs can be met using the funding allocated for all children

Band 2: the child's needs can be met using the SEN notional budget delegated to schools from which a school can be expected to spend up to £6,000

Band 3 is the High Needs Funding and children for whom provision costs more than £6,000 will attract a top up according to their needs from this fund.

Health

At this time there are no personal budgets available in health because it is not possible to disaggregate health funding. This may become available in the future.

Social Care

Funding decisions for adults are made using the Resource Allocation System and the system will soon be adopted for Children's Social Care. More information is available on the Sandwell website.

What services could you use a personal budget for in Sandwell?

Education

At this time the only education service for which it is possible to use a Personal Budget is transport.

It may be possible to increase the range of options in the future.

Social Care

- ‘Short breaks’ packages of support for children under 18 agreed as part of a Child in Need Plan
- Packages of support, as agreed, as part of an Adult Care Plan.

What is included in Education, Health and Care Plan?

The plan is set out in sections:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Section A | Gives the views, interests and aspirations of the child and their parents' or of the young person |
| Section B | Gives details of all the child's learning difficulties and disabilities, this may include needs for health and social care provision that are treated as special educational needs provision because they educate or train the child /young person |
| Section C | Describes the child or young person's health needs, which relate to their SEN It may also identify health needs which are not related to SEN for example a long term condition which might need management in a special educational setting. |
| Section D | Describes the child/young person's social care needs which relate to their SEN or which require provision under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 The Local Authority may also specify other social care needs which are not linked to SEN i.e. A Child Protection Plan |
| Section E | Describes the outcomes sought for the child /young person and the special help that the Local Authority think the child/young person should get in order to achieve these outcomes. These outcomes are broken down into smaller steps. For example, what we want the child/young person to be achieving at the end of key stage 2 (Primary School) |
| Section F | Describes the special help or provision that is needed to help the child/young person achieve their outcomes How the young person or parents wish to spend their Personal budget (if this is applicable) |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Section G | Describes the special help required to support the child/young persons health needs (which result in them having SEN) |
| Section H1 | Describes the special help required to support the child/young person (under 18) resulting from section 2 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 |
| Section H2 | Describes the special help required for social care provision resulting from the child/young person's SEN i.e. residential or short breaks |
| Section I | The name and type of school where the child will go to get the special help |
| Section J | Describes how any Personal Budget will be used to secure the special help with the EHC Plan |
| Section K | Lists the advice and information gathered by different professionals during the EHC Assessment |

It is essential that you read the draft Education, Health and Care Plan, to ensure accuracy and to ensure that your child's needs, as you know them, will be met by the parts described.

Parental choice of school for a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan

Parents will be asked which school they would prefer their child to go. This can be the school that he or she already attends. A parent may wish to visit a number of schools or nurseries before they express their preference.

Sandwell LA will normally agree with the preferred school as long as:

- The school is suitable for the child's age, ability and special educational needs.
- There is a space in the chosen school and year group
- The child's presence will not affect the efficient education of other children already at school.
- Placing a child in the school will be an efficient use of Sandwell LA's resources.



What happens after Sandwell Local Authority makes the final Education, Health and Care Plan?

- Parents will be sent a copy of the final EHC Plan within 20 weeks of the request for an EHC Need Assessment and Sandwell LA must then provide your child with any extra resources, including any Personal Budget, that are needed.
- The final EHC Plan will name the school or nursery that Sandwell LA has agreed your child should attend.
- The school will plan how extra resources will be used and make sure the child receives the type of help described in his or her EHC Plan.

What happens if a parent disagrees with the Local Authority?

If parents disagree with any stage of the Education Health and Care Needs Assessment process or a final plan they should contact the officer of the SEN Service who has been dealing with their child's assessment. In most cases, the problem can be put right quickly. Sandwell SEND Information and Advice Support Service can also help put parents' views to the Local Authority and give advice about Local Authority processes.

It is important that schools, parents and the Local Authority try to reach agreement wherever possible.

Sandwell SEND Information, Advice and Support Service

This service provides free confidential, impartial, information and advice to parents whose children have SEN. They do not 'take sides'. They help parents make informed decisions about their child's education. They can be contacted on 0121 289 2566. Further contact details can be found at the back of this booklet.

Resolving Disagreements

Mediation

If as a parent you disagree with the Local Authority's decision:

- not to carry out an EHC Needs Assessment
- not to draw up an EHC Plan following assessment
- not to amend an EHC Plan following assessment or annual review
- to cease to maintain an EHC Plan, contact the SEN Service at Connor Education Centre to discuss your views, and if it is not

possible to resolve the disagreement directly with the SEN Service, then the next step is to contact the mediation service.

- The SEN Service will give you the contact information of the service. The mediation service is, as it **must** be, independent of the Local Authority.

As a parent you **must** contact a mediation adviser before registering an appeal with the Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Tribunal (the Tribunal)

Parents do not have to contact a mediation adviser prior to registering an appeal if their appeal is solely about the name of the school, college or other institution named on the plan, the type of school or other institution specified in the plan or the fact that no school or other institution is named. They may then go directly to Tribunal.

The mediation advice arrangements do not apply to disability discrimination claims.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Tribunal

This is an independent body that hears parents' appeals against the Local Authority decisions on EHC Needs Assessments and Education, Health and Care Assessment and Plans. A parent has to apply to the Tribunal no later than two months after the Local Authority gives parents a decision.

Parents can appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Tribunal if:

- The Local Authority refuses to carry out an EHC Needs Assessment of a child after the parent has asked them to.
- The Local Authority refused to make an EHC Plan for a child after an assessment.
- A parent disagreed with what is written in their child's EHC Plan, when a Plan is first made or if it is changed later.
- A child has an EHC Plan and the Local Authority refuses to assess the child again or to change the name of the school in the Plan.
- The Local Authority refuses to amend the EHC Plan following the Annual Review
- The Local Authority decides to stop a child's EHC Plan.

Appeals to the tribunal are heard locally. The tribunal is made up of three people. One of these will be the chairman, who is a lawyer. The other two will have experience of SEN. Parents can go to a tribunal on their own or they can be helped by voluntary organisations or parents' groups. Parents can ask for up to two people who know their child to speak at the tribunal.

The tribunal will look at the evidence and will make a final decision.

| Some questions answered | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Question | Can I disagree with the final EHC Plan? |
| Answer | You can contact an officer from the SEN Service to ask for an opportunity to discuss the Local Authority's final decision. If you are still unhappy with the EHC Plan, you can ask for the name of the mediation service. If the disagreement is still not resolved following mediation you can then appeal to the Special Education and Disabilities Tribunal. |
| Question | Can I disagree with the Local Authority's decision not to issue an EHC Plan? |
| Answer | You will be sent all the reports that the Local Authority receives. You will be told why an EHC Plan is not thought necessary. Your child's school will be able to use the information to help your child. If you are still unhappy with the decision not to issue an EHC Plan, you can attend mediation. The local authority will give you the name of the independent mediation service. |
| Question | What happens if my child has an EHC Plan and I move to another area? |
| Answer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your previous Local Authority must send the new Local Authority a copy of the EHC Plan and all the reports. • Your new Local Authority must make sure that your child gets all the special educational help set out in the EHC Plan. • Your new Local Authority must tell you within 6 weeks when they are going to review your child's EHC Plan, whether they are going to make a new EHC Assessment or whether they will confirm the existing EHC Plan. |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Question | How you can help: |
| Answer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as you know you are going to move to another part of the country, make sure the new Local Authority knows about your child. • Either you or child's head teacher should contact Sandwell SEN Service about your move. • If you have moved quickly without the chance to plan, tell the head teacher of the local school in your new area about your child's EHC Plan and/or get in touch with the SEN Service in your new area. |
| Question | What happens if my child has a EHC Plan and I move to a new address? |
| Answer | You should contact your child's school and the SEN Service at the earliest opportunity and tell them your new address. |
| Question | What happens if I want to remove my child from the school named in the EHC Plan? |
| Answer | You should not make any arrangements to move your child from the school named in the EHC Plan until you have discussed this with the head teacher or Educational Psychologist. If you wish the Local Authority to consider changing the name of the school you should contact the SEN Service. |

7 | The Annual Review of Education, Health and Care Plans

Your child's EHC Plan must be reviewed at least once a year, within twelve months of the last review, or by the date the EHC Plan was completed if it is a new EHC Plan. The review may be brought forward if either you, or the school, has concerns about your child.

The review is a chance to discuss your child's progress, and whether any changes need to be made to the EHC Plan. Your view and your child's views are very important to this process.

The review process is started by the head teacher/SENCO at your child's school who will invite you, and the other professionals who are involved with your child, to a meeting. The head teacher/SENCO will also ask for written advice about your child from you and other professionals. You may be sent a form to complete. This is an opportunity for you to give your views and raise any issues.

In preparation for the Annual Review, you should go through your child's EHC Plan and ensure that, it still describes your child's needs accurately. Is your child making progress with their current support and interventions? What do you think would help them to progress more quickly if you have concerns?

All reports from other professionals about your child should be sent to you at least two weeks before the meeting. This will give you time to read the reports and make notes of anything you would like to discuss at the Annual Review.

Some professionals might not attend the Annual Review meeting unless there are particular concerns or it is a significant review such as transition (for example, moving between schools or from school to college/employment). Your child will be invited to join the review (or part of it if they prefer). You can take someone along to the meeting to support you, a friend, relative, or someone from the Sandwell SEND Information and Advice Support Service. You should tell the school if you are intending to take someone to the review with you.

The meeting should focus on the progress your child has made since the last review and if changes need to be made to the EHC Plan. The meeting should also look at the outcomes set in the EHC plan or at the

last review and set new short-term outcomes for your child to work towards for the next year.

The head teacher / SENCO should send the findings of the review to the Local Authority no later than 10 days after the meeting. The report should draw together the views expressed at the review and include any recommendations. The recommendations could be to continue, amend (to update information) or end the EHC Plan. You should receive a copy of this report.

The Local Authority will look at the report and decide on further actions.

8 Progress Tracking and SEN Support Plans

In this section:

- *How you can tell if your child is making good progress*
- *How progress is measured and tracked*
- *Tables to show progress from key stage to key stage in National Curriculum and P level*
- *What should be included in an SEN Support Plan and how it should be reviewed*

How can you tell if your child is making good progress?

Parents will know if their child feels happier about being in school or is now able to read or is behaving better and these are important measures of progress; for some children developing a friendship or their ability to make choices is good progress.

All children make progress at different rates and the examples below are only a guide. What you should expect of the school is that they explain clearly what they are doing to help your child make good progress and tell you where they expect them to be at the end of that phase (i.e. end of Reception, end of year 2, year 6 and year 11).

In secondary school there should be a focus on how your child is being helped to develop skills for independence and employment, or college and supported living.

How academic progress is measured and tracked**National Curriculum Years and Key Stages**

| Age | Year group | Key Stage |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 3 - 4 years | Nursery | Early Years Foundation |
| 4 - 5 years | Reception | Early Years Foundation |
| 5 - 6 years | Year 1 | Key Stage 1 |
| 6 - 7 years | Year 2 | Key Stage 1 |
| 7 - 8 years | Year 3 | Key Stage 2 |
| 8 - 9 years | Year 4 | Key Stage 2 |
| 9 - 10 years | Year 5 | Key Stage 2 |
| 10 - 11 years | Year 6 | Key Stage 2 |
| 11 - 12 years | Year 7 | Key Stage 3 |
| 12 - 13 years | Year 8 | Key Stage 3 |
| 13 - 14 years | Year 9 | Key Stage 3 |
| 14 - 15 years | Year 10 | Key Stage 4 |
| 15 - 16 years | Year 11 | Key Stage 4 |

| The majority of pupils are expected to work at: | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| Early Years Foundation Stage | By the end of Reception | 40-60 months in the 7 aspects of learning |
| Key Stage 1 | By the end of year 2 | The 'expected standard' for Y2 progress is assessed in reading, writing, spelling, punctuation, grammar and maths |
| Key Stage 2 | By the end of year 6 | The 'expected standard' for Y6 and a 'scaled score of 95-105' (pupils take standardised tests in reading, maths and spelling, punctuation and grammar to give the score.) |
| Key Stage 4 | By the end of year 11 | 8 GCSEs or BTEC equivalents at grade 5 or above including English and maths |

Key stage 1 and 2

There are 3 standards that children can achieve in reading, writing and maths at the end of the key stage 1 and 2:

- Working towards the expected standard for KS 1 or 2
- Working at the expected standard for KS1 or 2
- Working at greater depth for KS1 or 2

When other children are taking the tests in May of Y2 or Y6 the head teacher may have decided that this is not appropriate for your child. This should be discussed with you and you should ask to discuss it with the school if they have not involved you

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

For 2018-19 a stage called '**Pre-key stage standards**' will be used for children whose progress cannot be described using the 3 levels above.

There are 4 pre-key stages standards in Key Stage 1 and 6 pre-key standards in Key Stage 2.

This level may better describe where your child is working than the 'working towards' descriptors.

An example of this level in reading is:

- Respond speedily by saying or communicating the correct sound for all the letters of the alphabet
- Blend the sounds for all letters of the alphabet into words
- Sound out words accurately in a book closely matched to the sounds and blends that your child knows e.g. sh-i-p is ship
- Answer literal questions about a familiar book that is read to them, for example Question. 'How many little pigs are there?' Answer: 3

The DfE website at gov.uk has the full descriptors of what a child is expected to know for each standard. In reading and maths a child cannot achieve the standard unless all criteria are met however teachers can use some discretion in writing e.g. excluding handwriting statements if the child has dyspraxia.

Key stage 4

Pupils are expected to take at least 8 qualifications GCSE or BTEC equivalents.

DfE says that it may benefit some students who have SEN, to work towards getting good grades in fewer subjects with the emphasis on doing well in English and maths, rather than take 8 subjects and risk getting lower grades in all.

Taking fewer subjects will give more time for English and maths and also make it possible for students to take longer, wider programmes in subjects which will interest and motivate them, e.g. BTEC.

You should discuss with the school if you think fewer subjects, BTECs and more time on maths and English would better suit your child.

What helps children make progress?

- Class or subject teachers who have had additional training in teaching children with SEN. As a parent, you could ask what training staff have had that helps them understand and support your child's SEN.
- Good assessment of a child's difficulties so that teaching and intervention can be focused in the best way.
- Intervention programmes delivered in class, small group or 1:1, targeted at the gaps in your child's understanding.
- Help and support from parents working together with school staff.
- Regular, at least termly, review of progress and new programmes tried if your child has not made progress.
- Well trained support staff whose support for children focuses on developing independence in learning.
- Not being 'over supported' (A report published in 2009* said that the more time a child was supported by a teaching assistant in literacy and numeracy, the less progress they made. Just having a teaching assistant sitting next to a child, does not necessarily help them to make progress and we are asking schools to think more carefully about the purpose of one to one support in classrooms.)

* London University' Institute of Education
'The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff 2009'

SEN Support Plans

Once your child has been identified as having a Special Educational Need, school must produce a plan of how they will support him/her to progress. The plan should record:

- The outcomes for the child
- Intervention and support to achieve those outcomes
- Any teaching strategies or approaches that are required

The provision plan should be developed in consultation with you and your child.

The interventions/teaching strategies chosen should be based on reliable evidence that they are effective. You might be asked to reinforce or contribute to your child's progress at home e.g. listen to them read each day

Outcomes should be:

- Specific - i.e. say 'Jay will be able to read 10 words (listed)' and 'Jay will be able to read 10 CVC words (cat, hat, big etc)' rather than 'Jay will improve reading' or 'Jay will have a positive report from an employer following work experience.' Rather than 'Jay will have some work experience at the café.' Outcome targets should be written so you will know how your child has improved
- Chosen at a level at which the child can be expected to succeed within a given time limit.

In addition to the outcomes the SEN support plan should say:

- What arrangements are in place to help the child achieve the outcomes
- Who is involved in the arrangements
- How and when the child's progress is being checked
- What help parents can give the child at home.

Post 16

For information on planning for your child post 16 see chapter 10 of this guide.

Good progress at this age means that you and your child can see that they are acquiring qualifications and/or experiences that will help them live as part of the community, while being independent, as healthy as possible and, getting a job or, being able to spend their time usefully, if paid employment is not appropriate.

Your child may wish to make their own decisions about their future and this is appropriate, or to fully involve you.

The college should still maintain an individual plan if your child has SEN, with or without an EHC plan and put in place interventions to help your child succeed and achieve their career aspirations.

Reviews

Your child's Individual Programme or SEN Support Plan should be discussed with you and your child on a termly basis. During this review you should be told about the progress your child is making towards their outcomes and discuss any changes that need to be made to how they are supported.

Your child should be asked to attend for all or part of the meeting.

The reviews may include any of the following professionals: Class Teacher, SENCo, LSP and/or LSA, Advisory Teacher, Educational Psychologist any other person who is part of the child's planned provision.

The outcomes of a review could be:

- Your child has made good progress and an Individual Programme or SEN Support Plan is no longer needed.
- To set new target outcomes. Outcomes should not be 'kept the same' if your child has not achieved them unless there is a change of programme/support to help them to achieve the outcome.
- That support should be increased and/or different interventions put in place.
- To ask for a Community Assessment Meeting to ask for an Education Health and Care Assessment (see part 5).

Remember

It is how a child is helped that is important and not the way in which the school writes it down. The school should ensure that the Individual Programme or Provision Plan is easy to understand for everyone involved.

9 | Finance

Funding for children with SEN

The DfE has decided that it is fairer to put funding for children with SEN directly into schools' budgets. This is called the SEN notional budget and the amount that schools will receive is allocated via a formula. The factors of the formula have been designated by the DfE and relate to levels of deprivation in the school's area, and the level of learning children have when they start school.

What difference does it make that funding for SEN is put into the school budget.

Funding will come into schools as one amount rather than having children's names allocated to it so that it is the school's responsibility to ensure that children have the support and intervention they need.

The DfE intends that a school will use its SEN notional budget to spend at least £6,000 on any individual child with SEN before requesting additional funding from the LA via an Education, Health and Care plan.

If a child currently receives more than £6,000 in additional resources/support via their EHC Plan, the school will receive the 'top up' amount from the Local Authority, for those named children.

e.g. Sam requires £11,000 in order to implement the provision that is specified in his EHC Plan. £6,000 will be provided by school from their SEN funding. The Local Authority will provide the remaining £5,000 as a top up amount. Over time we will try to focus more on progress and interventions rather than 'hours of support', as just having an adult with them a lot of the time, does not necessarily mean a child makes progress.

Staff in school will be able to spend less time on form filling and more time on planning and working with children.

Staff will be able to be more flexible in the way they support children to access the curriculum and make progress.

If you wish to know how much time has been spent with your child by adults the school will be able to tell you but we feel the important questions you need to ask are around the progress **your** child is making

Will my child still have their support assistant in class with them?

Some children will always need a high level of support, particularly if they have a physical disability.

Schools will put in place interventions that they think will make a difference to your child's learning. This may mean a support assistant with them for some of the time or going out of class to work on a programme. Support staff should also spend some of their time planning work for your child with teachers and will sometimes need to prepare materials to work with your child.

Sometimes your child should be working independently and the work in the classroom should be at the right level so that he/she can try to do it on their own. You should ask about this if your child always finds the work in school or subjects to be 'too hard'.

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Preparing for adulthood

Sandwell Local Authority wants its young people to succeed, achieve employment, live independently, be healthy and have friends they can socialise with within their local community.

This section covers the arrangements for:

- Planning longer term goals from year 9
- SEN provision post-16
- Planning the transition to post-16 education
- Transition to higher education
- Leaving education and training and progressing into employment
- New requests for Education Health and Care Plans post school

Planning longer term goals from year 9

Whether your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, or is supported via the Local Offer, the outcomes of provision should increasingly be directed towards them gaining employment, being healthy, being independent and having friendships within the community, from the start of secondary school. These goals are the essential focus of planning from Y9.

At the Annual Review of the EHC Plan, or Individual Provision Plan reviews, from Y9, there should be a focus on what the young person's aspirations are for post-16 and how they can be supported to achieve them.

Young people should be fully prepared for review meetings, be present throughout and have an advocate, if necessary. Sandwell SEND Information, Advice and Support Service can support young people as can other voluntary bodies.

As a parent you should feel the support and provision at school is moving your child towards achieving their aspirations and ask the key questions- 'how is the plan going to help my child to have a job, live independently and have friends?' What progress has been made towards achieving their aspirations since the last review? The Local Authority expects that even if your child experiences severe learning difficulties the life goals of employment, being healthy,

becoming independent and having friends in the community can be achieved. Pathways and support levels will be different but you should still feel that, at their EHC Plan review, your child is involved and that the outcomes reflect their aspirations.

SEN provision post 16

Your child should stay in some form of education, training or apprenticeship until they reach 18 years of age. Your child's EHC Plan will remain in place until they are 25 years of age, if they are in education or training and continue to need that level of additional resource.

FE colleges, sixth form colleges, 16-19 academies have statutory duties in respect of young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

- The LA and the post 16 provision must work together to make arrangements for young people with SEN
- They have the duty to admit a young person if the institution is named in an EHC Plan
- They must have regard to the Code of Practice
- The duty to use their best endeavours to secure the SEN provision that the young person needs

The Code of Practice makes clear that colleges should be ambitious for young people with SEN and focus on supporting them so they can make progress and achieve the best possible outcomes in their adult life. This commitment is regardless of whether the young person has an EHC Plan or not.

As young people develop and form their own views they should be increasingly involved in making decisions about their own future. From the end of the year in which they turn 16, the right to make decisions about their EHC Plans and requests for EHC Plans, is the young person's rather than their parents. Parents would normally be involved but the final decision rests with the young person, unless they lack capacity, as set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Most Sandwell schools have post 16 provisions either on their own site or on joint sites with other schools and colleges. Taster days and visits may help with the decision making process.

Sandwell College and all other local Further Education Colleges offer additional support for young people able to access mainstream provision. All local colleges also offer specialist provision for young people with high level needs. Very specialist provision is available at other colleges and providers for young people whose needs cannot be met by mainstream schools or colleges.

Transition

From year 9, schools and colleges should help children and their families with more detailed planning, including which post 16 provisions will be best suited to helping the young person to achieve their aspirations.

When a post 16 place has been identified then the college should be involved with the school in planning a smooth transition.

The Code of Practice says that information about the young person's SEN must be shared with the new institution, if there is to be a move post 16 to another school, college, or training provider. As a parent you may want to ask at review, how information will be shared and who will be responsible for ensuring that it is, if the future provider does not attend.

If your child requires it, the transition process may involve a number of visits to the new college, in any case, the way the transition is managed should reflect your child's individual needs.

Transition Assessment for young people with EHC plans

For some young people there will be a transition to adult care and support when they reach 18 years of age. Transition to adult care should be planned at least from the Annual Review in the year in which they become 17. At that review the outcomes, views and wishes of the young person should be considered alongside whether they will need adult care or support to achieve those outcomes.

Assessments for adult care or support **must** consider:

- Current needs for care and support
- Whether the young person is likely to have needs for care and support after they turn 18, and
- If so, what those needs are likely to be and which are likely to be eligible needs

If the decision is that the young person's needs are not eligible for adult services then the LA will provide advice about how their needs may be met under the Local Offer.

Under statutory guidance accompanying the Autism Strategy, the SENCo, or member of staff with SEN responsibility should inform young people of their right to a community care assessment and their parents of the right to a carer's assessment. This should be built into the preparing for adulthood review meetings for those with EHC plans.

Transition to higher education

Support to enable your son/daughter to move into higher education may be available. There is information in the Local Offer section, 'Becoming an adult' or he/she may be eligible for Disabled Students Allowance. DSAs are available to help students in higher education with the extra costs they may incur on their course because of a disability. This can include an ongoing health condition, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia. Information is available at the link below.

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) <http://tinyurl.com/SFE-DSA>

If your child is likely to be moving to higher education then this should be planned from the EHC Plan review, or School Provision Plan review, in the year in which they are 17 years or over for some students in specialist provision and applications for funding made well in advance.

Leaving education and training and progressing into employment

When your child leaves education or training the EHC Plan will cease. Your child's school or college should ensure that he/she has the information they need about local employers, job opportunities etc. Planning for this should start in Y9 and be more specific from the review prior to leaving education. For young people leaving post 16 education, advice and support will be given that may include work placements and/or supported Internships and Apprenticeships.

- There should be a clear transition plan drawn up with timescales and responsibilities and the young person should know what happens when their EHC Plan ceases.

New requests for Education, Health and Care Plans post school

If your child has:

- not had an Education, Health and Care Plan while at school, or
- is newly arrived in the country and is post 16,

and you think they may be eligible, you should contact Sandwell SEN Service at:

Education Directorate
Connor Education Centre
Connor Road
West Bromwich
B71 3DJ
0121-569-8240.

Glossary and Further Information

These are some of the terms you may see in this guide.

Accessibility Strategy

A strategy produced by the Local Authority for increasing, over time, the accessibility of schools for children with disabilities.

Academy

An Academy is a school that is independent of the Local Authority and is responsible directly to the DfE. It has the same responsibilities towards children with SEN/disabilities as non-academies

Advice

Information or reports from different professionals as part of a statutory assessment under the Children and Families Act 2014.

Advisory Teacher

Teachers from the Inclusion Support service who give support, advice and training to schools and parents; carry out assessments and reviews of children; work with children in schools and pre-school children with identified SEN; provide tuition for pupils who experience specific learning difficulties.

Annual Review

The review of an Education, Health and Care Plan which a school must carry out within 12 months of the date an Education, Health and Care Plan is issued or 12 months of the last Annual Review.

Assessment

Finding out the strengths and weaknesses of a child.

Assessment Moderation Panel (AMP)

A panel that meets to consider whether or not to make an Education Health and Care Assessment of a child's special educational needs. The panel may include the Inclusion Support service, the LAs Special Educational Needs Service, other education professionals and health service professionals.

Community Assessment Meeting (CAM)

A meeting of pupils, parents, school and the professionals who have been working with the child/young person to discuss, how the child is progressing and their SEN support

Children and Families Act (2014)

An Act of Parliament that outlined the assessment and provision for pupils with SEN and disabilities

Connexions

If your child has SEN the Connexions service has specialist officers. They will see you and your child to discuss his/her future particularly in his/her last years of schooling.

Department for Education (DfE)

The Government Department that has responsibility for education.

Disapplication

Alterations or changes to the National Curriculum can either be temporary or permanent as part of an Education, Health and Care Plan of Special Needs. You will be consulted at all stages if disapplication is thought to be necessary for your child.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act brings together all previous anti-discrimination legislation (including the Disability Discrimination Act) into one Act. It restates and reinforces all the previous rights of disabled people and requires schools to:

- Make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled pupils being put at a substantial disadvantage
- Produce an Accessibility Plan which shows how they will promote access for disabled pupils
- Publish and monitor equality objectives (including those for disabled people)

From 1 September 2012 the reasonable adjustment duty on schools includes the provision of auxiliary aids and equipment.

Early educational settings

All pre-school education provision such as nursery classes and schools, day nurseries (private and voluntary) and playgroups.

Education, Health and Care Assessment

A very detailed examination by a range of professionals of a child's SEN, which may result in an Education, Health and Care Plan

Education, Health and Care Plan

A detailed document that sets out a child/young person's additional and different provision that should be put in place to meet their needs

Educational Psychologist

A person with education experience and specialist training in psychology who provides advice to parents, teachers and the Local Authority on meeting a child's SEN.

Focus Provision (FP)

Mainstream schools that have additional Local Authority resources to meet the needs of groups of pupils with specific types of needs such as hearing impairment, complex speech and language difficulty or physical/medical needs etc.

Inclusion Support Service

A team of Educational Psychologists, SEN Advisory Teachers, Pre School Specialists and Learning Support Practitioners. The service works with schools, parents and children with SEN.

Learning Support Assistant, Learning Support Practitioner, Teaching Assistant (LSA, LSP, TA)

A person, who is not a teacher, employed in school to provide additional support in the classroom or to work with individuals or small groups.

Local Authority (LA)

A local government body responsible for providing education to all children of school age within its area.

Local Offer

A Sandwell Website setting out provision available across education, health and social care for children and young people who have SEN or are disabled. www.sandwell.gov.uk/send

Mediation Service

If parents or young people want it to, mediation can take place following decisions by a local authority not to carry out an EHC needs assessment, not to draw up an EHC plan, after they receive a final EHC

plan or amended plan, following a decision not to amend an EHC plan or a decision to cease to maintain an EHC plan.

Outcomes

What happens to children as a result of provision and practice put in place by the Local Authority, schools and agencies - do children improve and make progress, become happier in school because of what we do?

**Sandwell SEND Information, Advice and Support Service,
Action for Children, Hillside Children's Centre, Connor Road, West
Bromwich, B71 3DJ. Telephone: 0121 289 2566
Email: SandwellSENDIASS@barnardos.org.uk**

This service provides information, advice and support to resolve problems facing parents, schools, colleges and the Local Authority.

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy is about the assessment, treatment and management of children who have difficulties with movement and function as a result of disability or illness.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25

Guide published by the Government's Department for Education (DfE) for schools and LAs about how they should help children and young people with SEN and Disability.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The member of staff with additional qualifications who oversees all the SEN provision in a school.

SEN Support Plan

A record of how schools and parents plan to support the needs of children with SEN in order for them to make progress

Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) work with children who have speech, language and communication/interaction difficulties. Therapists will carry out assessment and offer intervention as needed to support a child's language and communication. In order to be effective, SALTs work with parents, school staff and other agencies.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal

An independent body that hears appeals against decisions made by the Local Authority on statutory assessments, statements and claims of disability discrimination.

IL0: Unclassified

Special school

A school for children with severe, complex and long-term special educational needs; all children in a Special School have Statements / EHC Plans of Special Educational Needs.

Further Information

Sandwell SEN Service
Education Directorate
Connor Education Centre
Connor Road
West Bromwich
B71 3DJ

0121 569 8240

Sen_team@sandwell.gov.uk

www.sandwell.gov.uk/send