
The 0 – 25 Special Educational Needs and Disability Reforms

Information for School Leaders

The Children and Families Act 2014 changes the way children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported. The new SEND code of practice was published in June 2014 and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

The new approach places pupils at the centre of planning and makes teachers more accountable for their progress. The new system takes effect from September 2014 and all schools will be affected by the changes.

The SEND reforms aim to join up help across education, health and care, from birth to 25. Help is to be offered at the earliest possible point, with children and young people with SEND and their parents fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve. This will help lead to better outcomes and more efficient ways of working.

The reforms will impact on the whole school community and will give schools the freedom to develop what works for them, in partnership with their local authority, parents and young people.

The greater emphasis on person-centred care underlying the reforms will have important implications for how the planning process is delivered in schools and what role schools will play.

New SEN Code of Practice – Key points

- Covers 0–25 age range
- Joint planning and commissioning between health, education and social care required
- For more complex needs Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) will replace Statement
- SEN Support and graduated response will replace School Action/Plus
- Stronger focus on:
 - high aspirations and on improving outcomes for CYP with SEN
 - accountability of class/subject teachers
 - participation of children and young people and parents
- SEN Local Offer to be produced by LAs and schools

Expectation for schools from DfE:

Schools will be expected to:

- have clear systems for identification, assessment, monitoring and securing appropriate support for children with special educational needs.
- involve parents in a more structured and systematic way to shape the support their child receives
- be more transparent about what the school can provide.
- ensure that high quality teaching, appropriately differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to possible special educational needs.

The reform vision – what does success look like for schools?

- Positive outcomes for children, young people and their families
 - Improved attainment and progression of pupils with SEN
 - Increase in the percentage of KS4 and KS5 SEN cohort going to, or remaining in, Education, Employment and Training
 - Reduction in percentage of pupils with SEN receiving one or more fixed period exclusions
 - Reduction in school absence of pupils with SEN
 - Planned and well managed transition at key points
 - Parents, children and young people get the right support at the right time and feel that they are listened to and in control of their support, choices, decisions and opportunities
- Effective Preparation for Adulthood
 - Better support received to prepare young people for a successful transition to adulthood

Implementation of the Reforms – what schools need to do

- Initiate review of the school's SEN policy, engaging governors, staff, parents and young people
- Publish the school's SEN Policy and information about SEN provision, as set out in the SEND Information Regulations
- Inform parents about the reforms and explain how the transition will happen
- Ensure all staff are aware of reforms and start essential training needs
- Engage with the LA in relation to the requirements, particularly in relation to the local offer and the process for transferring from statements to EHC plans
- Ensure the SENCO has the right qualifications and explore how they fit into the strategic management of the school
- Ensure arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions

- Review and refresh processes for early identification and assessment of need to follow the graduated approach
- Review pupils currently on School Action/School Action Plus, engaging the child and parent in decision making and planning. Be clear about the support that they need, what impact the support is expected to have, and by when
- Review and refresh procedures for effective engagement to ensure children, young people and their parents are involved in decision making and planning
- Review support for pupils with SEN with their transition to post 16 provision and preparing for adult life.
- Consider workforce development needs

What the reforms mean for Governors

Governors must:

- Have regard to the SEND Code of Practice and should oversee the implementation of the reforms, providing strategic support to the head teacher
- Ensure information is published on the school's website regarding the implementation of the policy for pupils with SEN.
- Ensure there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO.
- Co-operate generally with the LA, eg. in developing the local offer and when the school is named in the EHC Plan
- Ensure arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions
- Ensure information is published regarding the arrangements for admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent these children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans

What the reforms mean for Head Teachers

Head Teachers are required to:

- Take overall responsibility for implementing the SEND reforms
- Ensure the SENCO is able to influence strategic decisions about SEN
- Ensure that the wider school community understands the implications for whole school improvement
- Ensure arrangements are in place to regularly engage parents in discussions about the progress of their child (at least three times a year)
- Ensure a process is in place for involving parents and young people in reviewing provision and planning for those currently on school action/plus and any newly identified pupils with SEN
- Secondary Heads develop/strengthen relationship with post 16 providers and explore how pupils with SEN will be supported in their transition to post 16 education

What the reforms mean for SENCOs

The SENCO has a strategic role working with the senior leadership to review and refresh the SEN policy and then, with the classroom/subject teacher to review its practice ensures every child with SEN gets the personalised support they need. The role involves:

- Overseeing day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- Liaising with the designated teacher when a child/young person in care has SEN
- Advising on graduated approach to SEN support
- Advising on use of delegated budget/other resources
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN
- Maintaining/establishing links with other education settings and outside agencies
- Liaising with potential next providers of education
- Working with the Head Teacher and Governors on the Equality Act
- Ensuring that SEN records are up to date

The role of classroom/subject teachers

Classroom and subject teachers are at the heart of the new SEND support system, driving the movement around the four stages (assess, plan, do, review) of action with the support and guidance of the SENCO and specialist staff.

The classroom teacher should:

- Focus on outcomes for the child, being clear about the desired outcomes from any SEN support
- Be responsible for meeting special educational needs, using the SENCO strategically to support the quality of teaching, evaluate the quality of support and contribute to school improvement
- Have high aspirations for every pupil, setting clear progress targets and being clear about how the full range of resources are going to help reach them
- Involve parents and pupils in planning and reviewing progress, seeking their views and providing regular updates on progress.

The role of learning support/teaching assistants

LSA/TAs are part of the whole school approach to SEN, working in partnership with the classroom/subject teacher and the SENCO in order to deliver pupil progress and narrow gaps in performance.

It is for schools to decide how they deploy Teaching Assistants depending on their level of experience. To be most effective, the support they give should be focused on the achievement of specific outcomes within the graduated approach to SEN support agreed with parents in the context of high quality teaching overall.

The role of school nurses

Where schools have nurses, they can be part of the integral part of the whole school approach to SEN and Disability. They can:

- Support effective communication with all professionals, children, young people and families to ensure that they are supported to achieve positive health and educational outcomes
- Provide clear information and actions for all involved with the child or young person's individual health care plan (where they have one)
- Identify specific training requirements around health needs for education support staff
- Take part in the review of the Education, Health & Care Plan
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of key health workers
- Support plans for transition

Transition from Statements and Learning Difficult Assessments (LDA)

Children and young people who have statement of SEN, or receive provision in further education as a result of a LDA will be transferred to the new system gradually. LAs will be expected to transfer children/young people to the new system in advance of key transition points.

Young people in further education with a LDA will transfer to the new system by 1 September 2016, and children/young people with a statement of SEN will transfer by 1 April 2018.

In order to ensure that support continues for these children and young people, the legislation relating to statements and LDAs will remain in force during the transition period.

SEN Support

SEN support replaces School Action and School Action Plus. It is the new category of support for children with SEN but who do not have EHCPs. It focuses the system on the impact of the support provided to that individual child, rather than how children access support according to the category they fit into. It places emphasis on the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review. The aim is to improve the experience and outcomes of school for all pupils, ensuring high quality teaching and learning.

School Census – Recording of Information

All new pupils with SEN who will not be on EHCPs should be recorded on the school census under "SEN Support" from September 2014. Schools should review the provision for those pupils currently on SA/SA+ to SEN Support by the January 2015 census. Children and young people who are newly assessed must be assessed under the new EHCP arrangement and should be recorded as such under the school census from September 2014.

Support for pupils with medical conditions

The reforms place a duty on governing bodies to ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils with medical conditions. These arrangements should demonstrate an understanding of how medical conditions impact on a child's ability to learn, as well as increase their confidence and promote self care.

Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of pupils with medical conditions are effectively supported. Staff should be properly trained to provide the support required. Governing bodies should also ensure that the appropriate level of insurance is in place and appropriately reflects the level of risk.

The DfE has published statutory guidance for governing bodies on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, which is available via the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/306952/Statutory_guidance_on_supporting_pupils_at_school_with_medical_conditions.pdf

SEN Information Report

The SEN information report sets out information about the school's SEN policy and its implementation. Current arrangements should be published in September 2014. The information must be easily accessible by young people and be set out in clear, straightforward language. It should include information about named school contacts for situations where young people or parents have concerns. It should also provide details of the school's contribution to the local offer and must include information about where the LA's Local Offer is published.

Ofsted Inspections

Ofsted inspectors consider the extent to which schools meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with SEN, using the four key judgements of achievement, quality of teaching, behaviour and safety, and the quality of leadership and management (which includes governor effectiveness). Inspectors evaluate the progress of all pupils, and when judging the achievement of pupils with a disability or SEN consider the progress they have made since joining the school.

Ofsted: What does good provision for children with SEN look like?

- High aspirations for all students, including those who have SEN.
- Ensure those pupils in most need receive the most expert support
- Focus on enabling pupils to make the best possible progress, and to increase their independence, so that they are well prepared for their futures
- Leaders ask challenging questions about the progress and attainment of every pupil/young person. They use whatever information is available to compare pupils' progress against that of other pupils who started at the same level, at the same age, across the country. They ensure that

teaching is strong, that staff meet the need of all pupils and provide well targeted challenge in lessons

- There is a very well understood view of how to help an individual become self-reliant and independent
- Ambitions and views expressed by the young people are taken into account when devising the curriculum and style of support
- The best schools that meet the needs of pupils with the most complex needs understand and make use of the community in which the children live, as well as the one in which they are educated.

Joint commissioning

Schools should be involved in the commissioning process to influence decisions about commissioning provision for children with SEND generally and will need to be directly involved in commissioning provision for individual pupils.

Governor Training

Bury will continue to provide regular training for SEN Link Governors to keep them up to date with these changes and the implementation of the Code. Further information regarding courses is available from the Bury Governor Training Group <http://www.burygtg.org.uk/>.