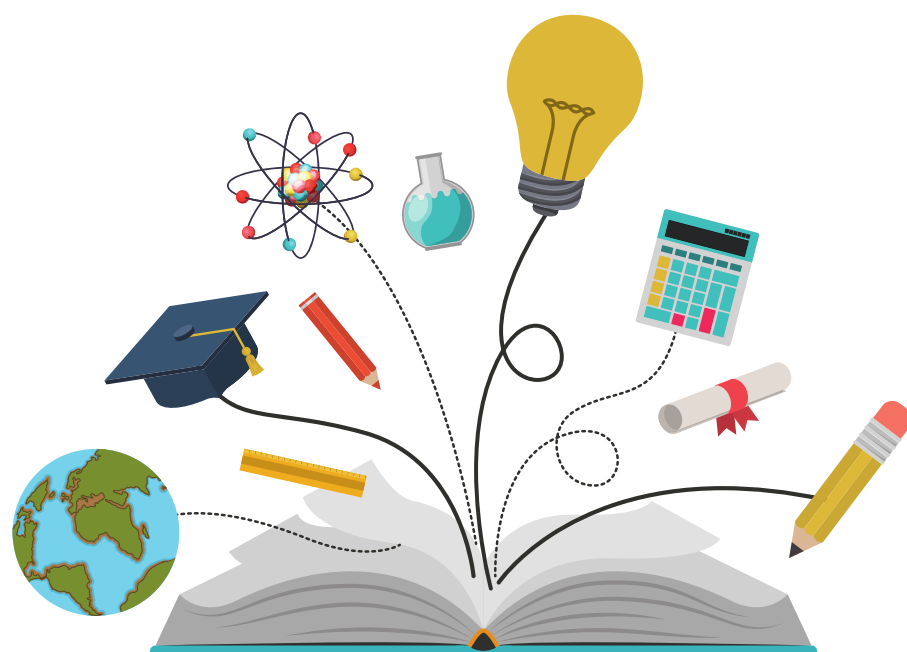
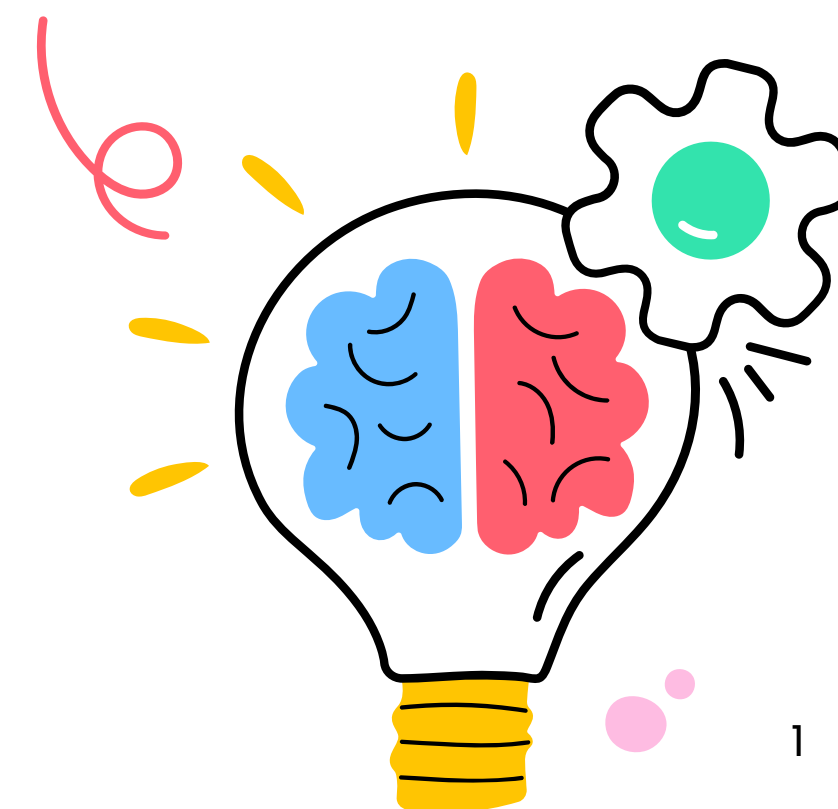


EVERY CHILD, EVERY SCHOOL

ORDINARILY AVAILABLE PROVISION



Guidance for Parents and Carers



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Glossary

ABCC – Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence Chart

ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder

BSF – Building Stronger Foundations. A programme run by Sutton Virtual School and Cognus Educational Psychology Service to promote the use of trauma-informed and relational approaches across schools.

CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. CAMHS assess and treat CYP with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties.

CBT – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

CYP – Child and/or young person

EBSA – Emotionally Based School Avoidance

EHCP – Education and Health Care Plan. An EHCP is a legal document describing a young person's needs, their expected outcomes, the provision required to achieve those outcomes and naming their educational placement.

ELSA – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

EPS – Educational Psychology Service

EWS – Sutton Emotional Wellbeing Service. An in-school service of NHS and Cognus practitioners who support pupils, families and school staff with emotional well-being and mental health needs.

HI – Hearing Impaired/Deafness

LA – Local Authority

LO – Local Offer

NASEN – National Association of Special Educational Needs

PE – Physical Education

PECS – Picture Exchange Communication System

QTVI – Qualified Teacher of children or young people who are Visually Impaired

SEMH – Social Emotional and Mental Health

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Coordinator

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SEND Support – Support put in place to remove barriers to learning for pupils with emerging or identified additional needs which impact learning.

SALT – Speech and Language Therapy

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

OT – Occupational Therapy

OAP – Ordinarily Available Provision

TA – Teaching Assistant

VI – Visually Impaired/Vision Impairment

Directory of Services

<u>Attendance Service</u>	Cognus' Attendance Support Team support education settings, children and young people, parents/carers to ensure attendance levels are maintained at appropriate levels.
<u>Autism Service</u>	The Cognus Autism Service is an education support service set up to support autistic young people, parents and carers of autistic young people, and professionals working with autistic young people.
<u>Cognus Limited</u>	Cognus is about education – we exist to support schools, families and children/young people to access, enjoy and thrive in educational settings in school and in the community.
<u>Early Years</u>	Cognus' Early Years team works closely with settings (pre-schools, nurseries, childminders and early years provision in schools) in the Early Years sector and promoting Early Years practice to ensure that all children benefit from high quality provision.
<u>Educational Psychology</u>	Educational Psychology is the practice of applying psychological theories and ideas to the difficulties that can arise for pupils, teachers, families and schools. EPs will use consultation to help deliver their services. This involves bringing psychology to discussions with adults and young people.
<u>Education Wellbeing Service</u>	The Education Wellbeing Service supports schools in Sutton to improve mental health & wellbeing. We do this by offering timely, evidenced based interventions with children, young people & parents who are beginning to have difficulties. We also offer workshops, training & consultations with schools.
<u>Infinity Support</u>	Infinity Support is a one-stop online platform where parents carers, young people and professionals can access a wealth of resources, guidance, and training on neurodiversity.
<u>MetaSENse database</u>	MetaSENse is a free, evidence-based online database and toolkit which provides evidence-based intervention strategies tailored to different types of SEND. It is designed to support local authorities, schools, and families in improving educational outcomes for children and young people aged 4-25.
<u>Paving the Way</u>	Cognus' Paving the Way service is made up of a multi-disciplinary team. The team provides support for children and young people with a range of difficulties, including social communication, attention and concentration, and anxiety.
<u>School Inclusion</u>	Cognus' School Inclusion service provides information, advice, and guidance to schools to support inclusive practice.

<u>SENCO Cluster</u>	SENCO Clusters were set up in Sutton in 2020/21 to provide support to Special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) and Schools in Sutton to meet the needs of young people who are resident in the Borough.
<u>The SEND Local Offer</u>	The SEND Local Offer is a place to find information and support for families with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
<u>SEND Support Advisory Partnership (SSAP)</u>	SSAP is a multi-agency group that provides advice, resources, and, where appropriate, additional funding to help schools meet pupils' SEND needs earlier and more effectively.
<u>Sutton Virtual School</u>	Cognus' Sutton Virtual School provides educational support for Children Looked After, Previously Looked After, children on formal kinship orders and children with a social worker to improve their educational outcomes.
<u>Sutton School Nursing</u>	The School Nursing team provides advice and support on the following: Children with additional needs and complex health needs Sleep Behaviour Child development Healthy lifestyles Eating concerns Toileting Alcohol, drugs and smoking Emotional and mental health issues Sexual health and relationships
<u>Therapies</u>	Cognus Therapies comprises of qualified Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Senior Therapy Assistants. We are a large and diverse team with a wealth of knowledge and experience in supporting children and young people with additional needs.
<u>Traveller Education</u>	The Traveller Education Service encourages and supports improved access to educational opportunities amongst all Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. We aim to raise awareness and understanding of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
<u>Vulnerable Pupils Panel (VPP)</u>	The Vulnerable Pupils Panel (VPP), is a multi-agency partnership panel that meets monthly to discuss new requests for support and where appropriate agree and allocate support according to a broad criterion. Requests for support from the panel can be made by school and education professionals.

Note – A more extensive list of support services for children, young people and families can be found on our [SEND Local Offer](#)

SEND and Inclusion

A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision. Evidence about the progress a child is making in response to support in school and professional recommendations, if applicable, should be used to identify SEND.

It is the responsibility of each school to make sure that children and young people with SEND are included, respected and valued within their school. It is the right of parents/carers that a child with SEND is educated in a mainstream setting, although not necessarily a particular mainstream setting.



According to SENCOs in Sutton inclusion means:

- Being ambitious for every pupil, acknowledging where they started, and their support needs so that these do not hold them back
- Creating equal access & opportunity for all students
- Ensuring all students are able to make progress by removing barriers to learning
- Children learning alongside their peers not just being in the same room
- Having resources that are available for all
- Incorporating the voice of the child in planning for their support
- Recognising that adaptations and provision for pupils with SEND are essential for some but useful for all
- All staff identifying themselves as leaders of SEND
- Having a culture with practice that sits across the whole school
- Making sure all children have what they need

Every child, every school

Our Vision: Excellence and Equity for ALL

- **Quality First teaching** for all is good teaching for pupils with SEND
 - Children in Sutton should be able to **attend their local school**
 - **Graduated Approach:** We utilise the SEND graduated approach (assess, plan, do, review) to build a holistic understanding of pupils' needs and provide targeted support
 - **Inclusivity and equity** is at the core of our educational provision
 - **Respect and Value:** We foster warm, welcoming, safe and respectful environments where everyone feels included and valued
 - We value the **voice of parents and carers**, are committed to working in partnership to ensure all views are considered. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that parents and carers are aware of what is available for pupils at the SEN Support level
- 
- **Embracing Neurodiversity:** Our focus is on capitalising on individual strengths and interests, adapting our approach to support unique learning styles
 - **Preparation for adulthood from the earliest years:** This means that approaches which lead to over reliance on adults and limit the independence of children are used in a limited way e.g. one to one support, support staff deployed to pupils rather than to deliver interventions
 - Points of **transition require planning and adjustment**
 - **Sutton settings work together:** To share good practice and to support one another in an ongoing cycle of improvement working closely with leaders across LBS and Cognus

Using this document

Who is this guidance for?

Who is this guide for? This guide has been created for parents and carers of children in Sutton who have, or who may have special educational needs or disabilities.

This guide provides key pieces of information about how support for pupils with additional needs is put in place by schools and the types of support that can be expected in all Sutton schools. It also offers some information about how you can best support any special educational or additional needs your child may have at home.

How has this guidance been created?

This guidance has supported by members of the Sutton Parent Carer Forum and staff from SIASS and has been co-produced by Sutton Headteachers, SENCOs and professionals from across services in Cognus and the London Borough of Sutton.



Partnership of Sutton Secondary Schools



What is SEND Support?



Pupils with SEND may need teachers to make adaptations or 'differentiate' lessons

This may also include considering some reasonable adjustments to the curriculum for all or for the child. These are key aspects of SEND Support. Pupils with SEND are also entitled to reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments can include things like making the physical environment accessible, adapting resources to be a different size or presented in a different way, allowing a pupil to use a laptop or being flexible about things like uniform or the entrance that a pupil uses to come into the school building.

SEND Support

describes the level of support that children and young people with additional needs are provided with in school. This includes a variety of support which is ordinarily available across all mainstream settings and will be specified in an SEN Support plan (an EHCP is not needed) that should be reviewed termly with the child/young person and their family.

For all pupils, including those with SEND and additional needs, high-quality teaching is the most effective intervention they will receive during their time in education. High quality teaching for all is good teaching for pupils with SEND.

Pupils supported at SEND Support will have their support reviewed as schools utilise the 'assess, plan, do, review' approach



Some children supported at the SEND Support level may have carefully selected, evidence-based small-group and one-to-one interventions alongside high-quality teaching. Teaching assistants may support the running of interventions for pupils at SEND Support, but this should always be focused on supporting children's access to learning and their independence.

Please see Ordinarily Available Provision guidance for specific approaches and interventions that would be expected to be available for pupils with SEND without the requirement for an EHCP.



What is an EHCP?

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

is a document for children and young people aged 0-25 who have significant special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) which will continue throughout their time in education.

The majority of pupils with SEND

have their needs met through provision which is ordinarily available within early years settings, schools and colleges, and which can be funded through the notional SEND funding delegated to schools.

EHCPs are reviewed at least annually.

to monitor progress and make sure they still provide a good picture of the pupil and the support they need. The support in EHCPs should be changed over time to ensure that a young person's outcomes are met, and they are prepared for adulthood. From time to time the support in EHCPs may change in discussion with schools and parents and based on the progress that a young person has made over time.

An EHCP

outlines the strengths and needs of the pupil and the support they require to meet outcomes that have been designed for them. EHCPs are legally enforceable so if a child moves school, the support and plan move with them. The SEND Code of Practice explains when assessment requests should be made for EHCPs and provides lots of other information about SEN processes. A multi-agency panel consisting of representation from schools, education, health and social care professionals is tasked with decision making, following the legal tests which can be found in sections 36.8 and 37 of the Children and Families Act 2024.



Around 4.5% of pupils currently have an EHCP and around 13.5% are supported at the SEND Support level.

EHCPs are only

for pupils who require high levels of support that a setting would otherwise not be able to provide. This is normally ascertained by settings through applying the graduated approach to meeting needs.

EHCPs are ceased

as young people make progress and achieve their outcomes. Most EHCPs will not be in place for young people until age 25.

When applying for an EHCP

it is important to remember that children develop naturally and at different rates. Identifying needs early is important but children that are behind 'age related' expectations do not necessarily have SEND or they may not have SEND that requires specialist provision as set out in an EHCP.

There may be circumstances where EHCPs are not agreed in the Early Years in order to understand the needs of a young person 'in context' when they join primary school. For other young people their needs may be so complex that it is clear that they will need more support than could be ordinarily provided when they start in primary school. Similarly, for young people over 16, applying for an EHCP at this point would be in exceptional circumstances, as their needs will have already been identified and supported as they have moved through their education.

If you would like to know more about [Education, Health and Care Plans](#) and SEND Support please make use of [Sutton's Local Offer](#). See also '[What is an EHCP?](#)', '[What an EHCP isn't](#)' and '[What is SEND Support?](#)'.

What is Ordinarily Available Provision?

OAP refers to the support, resources, and reasonable adjustments that **all mainstream schools and early years settings** in Sutton are expected to provide for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) **without needing a formal assessment of their needs, a particular diagnosis** or an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). It is part of the “Graduated Response” – a process that schools follow to assess, plan, do, and review SEND support. It includes universal provision as well as some forms of targeted support and intervention.

Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) is the support that should be available for all children within a school that can be provided for out of the resources a school already has.



We have co-produced extensive guidance with Early Years settings and primary and secondary schools about what sorts of things can be expected to be provided across all schools in Sutton.

Whilst the provision of each setting will differ slightly there are lots of things which can be ordinarily expected and provided. If you would like to read these guidance documents in full, please click on the images below.

High quality teaching is the most important part of universal provision and will support the majority of pupils to make progress with the national curriculum.

Evidence suggests that additional intervention cannot make up for a lack of high quality teaching, although some pupils may require both.

High quality teaching

“High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN”

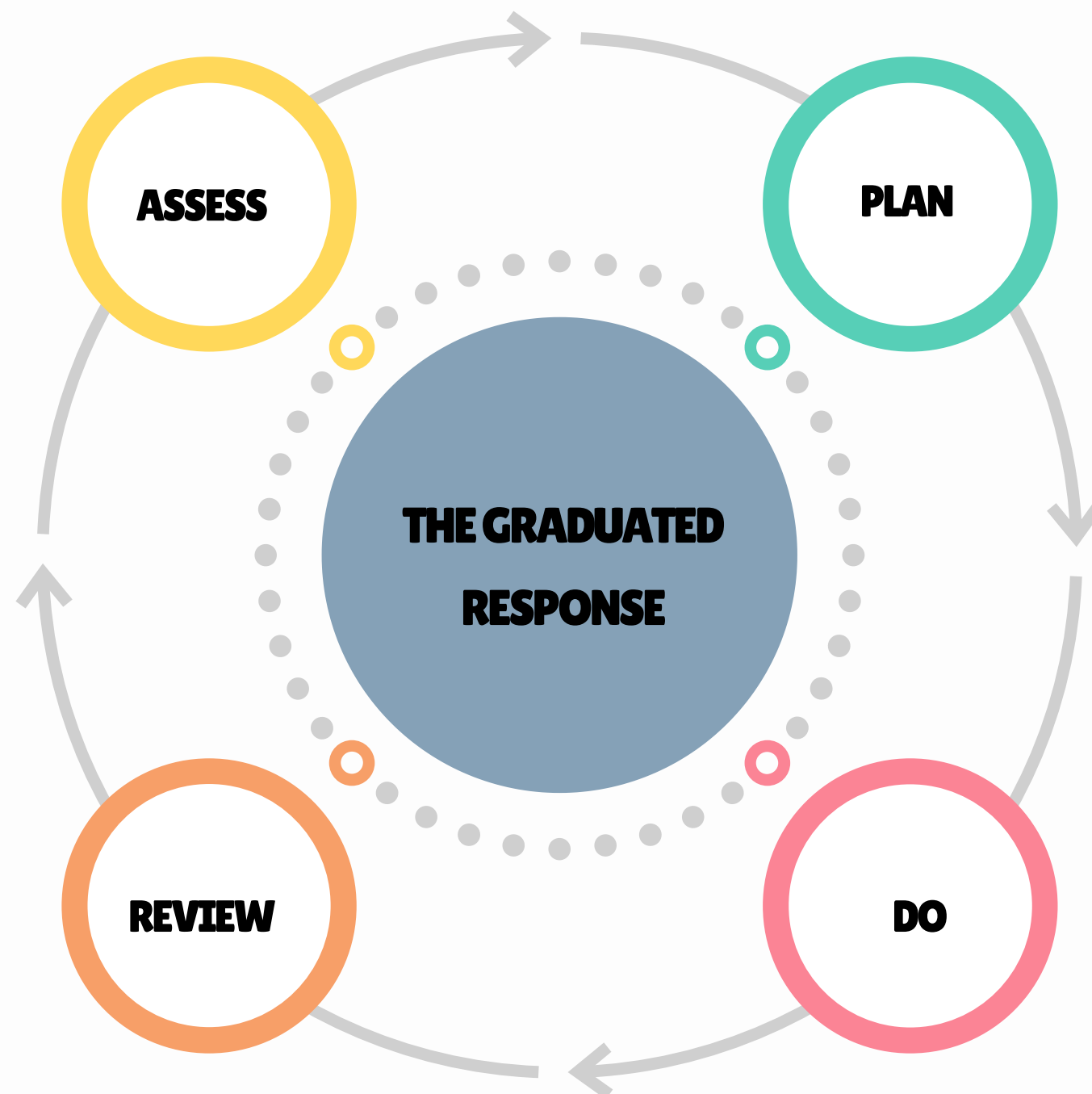
SEND Code of Practice, 2015



These are some of the high-quality teaching strategies recommended by the Education Endowment Foundation:

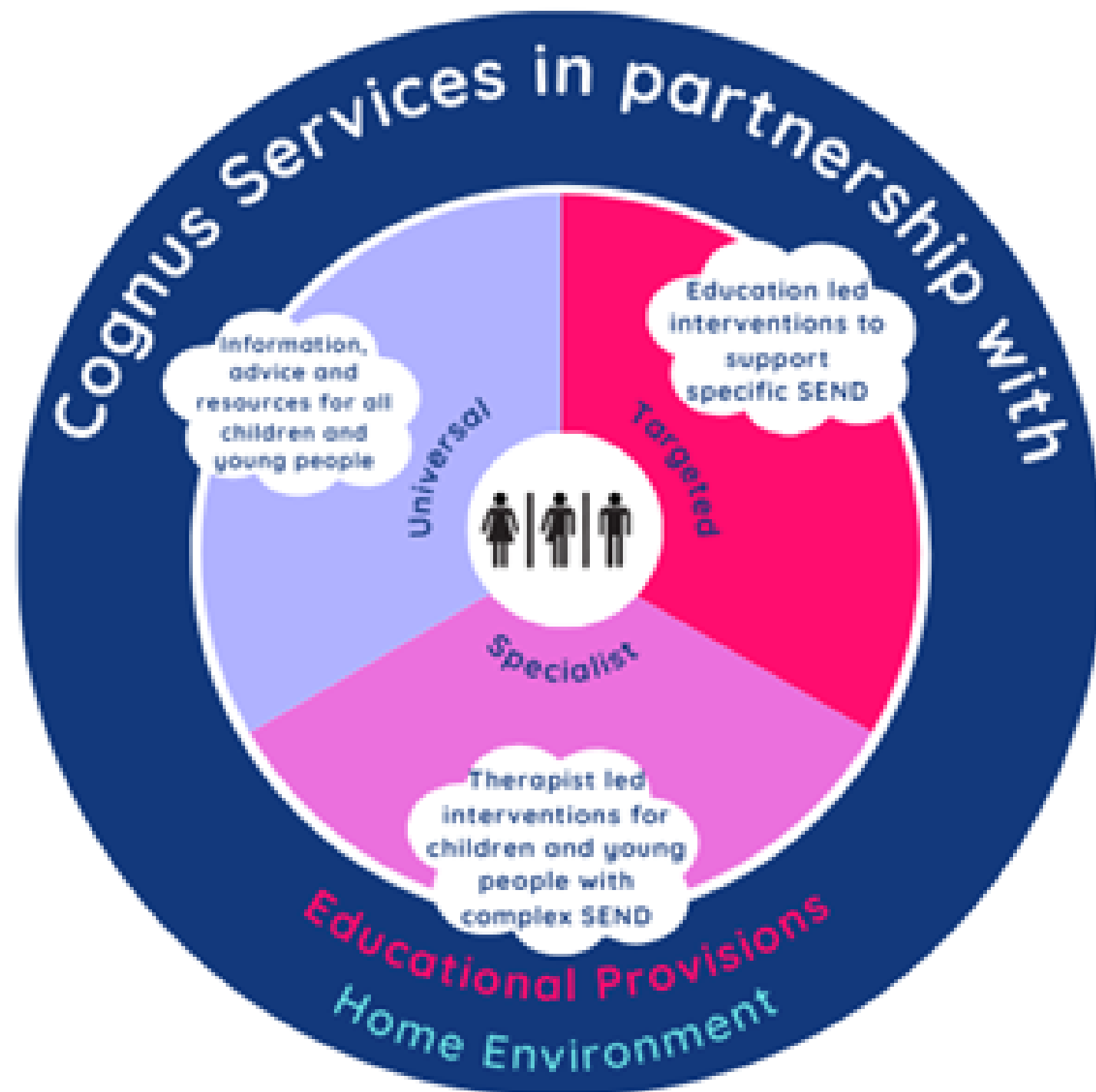
- Scaffolds for learning which are materials that a pupil can use independently to support their learning
- Demonstration and guided practice followed by independent work
- Chunking information into smaller bits
- Repeating key information and giving more time to make sense of it
- Grouping of pupils to provide extra teacher time
- Using technology to model learning and present information differently

What is the Graduated Response?



The graduated response describes the process schools use to identify, monitor and review SEND Support in place for pupils. It's important that the four step process – assess, plan, do, review – is put in place so that support is increased in line with what a pupil needs and is reduced when they no longer need it.

Assessment can include the use of screeners, observations across different contexts or standardised tests. Initial assessment will be completed by school staff, but if a pupil is not making expected progress assessments may become more specialist.



Plan/Do involves putting in place strategies and intervention that have been identified to help a child meet their agreed targets.

Review of progress will happen once the support arrangements have been put in place and involve parent/carers. When support has been successful in achieving a target, it may be reduced. If support has not been successful this is the time to try and work out why not, and to decide on next steps. This could be more support; changes made to the support or further assessment.

“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”

SEND Code of Practice, 2015

Who is Ordinarily Available Provision for?

Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) is support that all children and young people can access in early years settings, mainstream schools, and colleges. This includes pupils who have identified or emerging special educational needs (SEN).

Your child does **not** need a formal diagnosis for their school to offer extra support—many needs are short-term or change over time. If your child needs help that is additional to high-quality everyday teaching, the school will talk to you about this.

If a child has identified special educational needs, they may be added to the school's SEN Register (with your permission). Their support will then be monitored through a plan such as a SEN Support Plan, Individual Education Plan (IEP), or Pupil Passport. Schools may use different names for these plans, so feel free to ask if you're unsure.

For children who have a diagnosis but do not require support beyond universal teaching, the SENCO may discuss with you whether being on the SEN Register is appropriate.

Q & A

When does a child have SEND?

Every child develops at their own pace. Schools consider whether a child may have SEND by thinking about questions such as:

- Is the child's difficulty in one or more areas of learning significantly greater than that of their peers?
- Does the child have a disability that makes it harder for them to access learning or resources?
- Do they need support that is additional to, or different from, what is normally offered in the classroom?

What support is available for pupils who need more than OAP?

Universal Support

Universal support is available to all pupils and includes high-quality teaching, inclusive classroom practice, appropriate differentiation, reasonable adjustments, flexible grouping arrangements, and evidence-based interventions where needed. Most children and young people make good progress with this level of support alone.

Targeted Support

Some pupils may need support that is additional to, or different from, the universal provision available to all learners. This is known as targeted support. It may include specific interventions, small-group work, additional monitoring, or adapted strategies.

Targeted support is still considered part of the provision that schools are ordinarily expected to provide and is funded through the school's existing resources and notional SEND budget.



Specialist Support

A small number of pupils may require more individualised support that goes beyond universal and targeted provision. This is known as specialist support.

Specialist support is often recommended following advice from external professionals, such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists or Occupational Therapists. This support can be delivered within mainstream schools as well as specialist settings, depending on a child's needs.



What role do parents and carers play in the graduated approach?

Parents and carers are central to the graduated approach and should be involved at every stage of the process. You could:

- Help the school to understand your child's strengths and interests
- Provide information about how your child manages the home environment and offer your thoughts as to why they may be experiencing difficulties in school
- Work with the school to develop and review your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or support plan, typically on a termly basis
- Support learning and development at home through agreed strategies and activities
- Attend review meetings and be involved in discussions about your child's progress and next steps
- Ask for more information about how schools measure progress
- Work alongside professionals involved with your child including specialist services, where appropriate
- Challenge decisions respectfully if you believe support is insufficient or not being delivered
- Share your views, wishes and aspirations for your child and participate in decisions about the support they receive, in line with the principles of the Children and Families Act 2014

What if I think my child needs a provision they don't currently have?

OAP is a guide, not a checklist that must be followed for every child. Schools use their professional judgement to decide what is appropriate.

In Sutton, staff have access to a wide range of training, and SENCOs may seek advice from specialists (e.g., Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists). This helps ensure support is personalised.

It's important to remember:

- Not every child will need every strategy listed in OAP
- A child's needs can change over time
- Parents and schools work best when they collaborate and aim for a shared understanding of what is right for the child

Do schools need to provide OAP?

Yes. All schools must make reasonable adjustments and provide support so children with SEN and disabilities can access learning.

However, the OAP guidance itself is not something schools are legally required to follow word-for-word. It provides examples of good practice, but how these are implemented will vary from school to school, especially between primary and secondary settings due to the different ways in which these types of schools operate, how support is deployed, how pupils are grouped and the reduction in direct support that most pupils need as they move through education. their different structures. Schools choose the approaches that best fit their pupils' needs and their context.

How will I know what OAP my child's school offers?

Every school will have a SEND Support Offer in place. You can expect:

- clear communication if your child needs SEND support
- regular meetings or reviews involving you and your child
- opportunities to ask questions and understand what the school is doing

Some schools also offer coffee mornings, workshops, or drop-in sessions for parents.

Each school must publish a **SEND Information Report** on their website—this explains their approach to supporting pupils with SEND. From January 2027 schools will also need to publish their **Inclusion Strategy** detailing how they remove barriers to learning and deploy their Inclusive Mainstream Fund.

The SENCO is also a great first point of contact if you want to understand what the provision looks like in your child's school.

What if the school says they don't have funding for additional support?

Many children have their needs met fully through OAP alone. Some may need temporary additional support, and in Sutton there are early-intervention options available outside the EHCP system including the SEND Support Advisory Partnership (SSAP). Your SENCO can explain these.

All schools receive 'notional SEND funding' as part of their budget. Schools decide how to use this money to support both pupils with EHCPs and those receiving SEND Support. Universal provision—changes to teaching or the environment—does not cost schools extra.

Finally, although budgets are stretched nationally, but in Sutton much SEND-related training is fully funded, and there are strong professional networks to support consistency in practice.

What support is in place in secondary schools?

Secondary schools offer the same range of ordinarily available and targeted provision that primary schools do, although some of the approaches may look a little bit different. Most pupils do not need an EHCP to receive support at secondary school if they did not need one when they were at primary school. In Sutton our secondary schools work very closely with our primary schools to support pupil transition and to share good practice across the two phases.

Most secondary schools do not tend to have a 1:1 model of teaching assistant support in place, even for children with EHCPs, and students will be encouraged to work with shared LSA support to develop their independence. There is also likely to be fewer interventions in place during the school day so that pupils do not miss out on curriculum content and additional support may be offered before and after school or during break and lunchtimes.

Secondary schools typically offer SEND-specific open events, and SENCOs are happy to answer questions or arrange additional visits.

Do schools make reasonable adjustments when responding to the behaviour of pupils with SEND?

Yes. Whilst schools have high expectations for all students some pupils with SEND may need additional support or adjustments to help them meet those expectations. Schools have a duty to take reasonable steps to avoid placing disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage and should consider whether a pupil's SEND may be affecting their behaviour.

Reasonable adjustments may include things such as:

- planned movement breaks
- adapted seating arrangements
- adjustments to uniform expectations for sensory or medical needs
- changes to routines, instructions or communication methods
- a reduced length of sanction for a pupil with attention difficulties
- additional adult support or preventative strategies identified through the graduated approach

Should a behaviour incident occur, schools will consider whether the child's SEND contributed to the behaviour and whether any reasonable adjustments to support or sanctions are needed.

Having SEND does not automatically mean that behaviour expectations do not apply. Schools must balance support for individual needs with maintaining a safe, calm and positive learning environment for all pupils.

Schools should aim to identify and remove barriers early, so that learning and school environments are as accessible as possible for all pupils. For more information about reasonable adjustments, please see the Department for Education guidance [here](#) and Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance [here](#).

How do schools decide exam arrangements? Will primary arrangements continue into secondary school?

Exam arrangements must follow JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) guidance.

This means:

- Extra time cannot be awarded based solely on private reports therefore even if a Year 6 receives this by the time the pupil gets to Year 9, they may not continue to qualify for extra time
- Schools must use their school assessor
- A standardised score below 84 and evidence from classwork is needed
- Exam arrangements must reflect a child's usual way of working

Secondary schools must review arrangements again from Year 7 onwards, so primary-school concessions do not automatically carry over.



Areas of need

Sutton's OAP guidance gives school information about each of the four main areas of need: Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Physical and/or Sensory, and universal and targeted support that can be put in place for pupils. There is also information about supporting pupils with Autism and Social Communication needs.

The following pages provide some examples of universal and targeted provisions which are ordinarily available across Sutton schools across these areas of need.

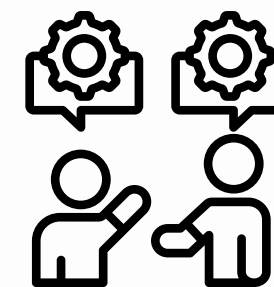
Please note that it is not necessarily the case that every school will implement all of these or that they will be implemented in exactly the same way across different schools.

Communication and interaction



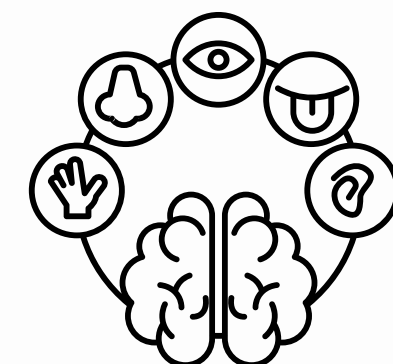
Autism and social communication

Cognition and learning

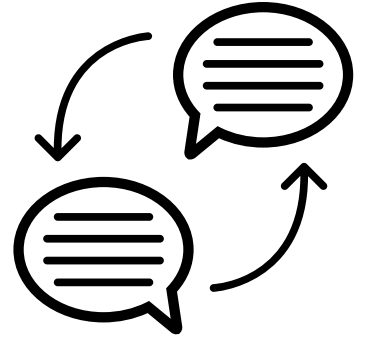


Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Physical and/or sensory



Communication and interaction



Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or understanding and using social rules of communication. These issues may also affect their reading, learning, socialising and making friends and behaviour and control of emotions (DfE).



You can find lots more information about communication and interaction needs, recommended support and resources on the [Cognus Speech and Language Therapy website](#).

Some pupils may be identified with developmental Language Disorder (DLD). DLD is a long-term condition where children have difficulties talking and/or understanding. It affects their language, social communication and academic learning. On average 2, in every classroom of 30 will have DLD.

Communication and interaction

[See here](#) for more information on the Cognus website



Children and young people who need support to	Strategies that may help (universal support)	Targeted support that may help
Understand key vocabulary and concepts Follow and engage in conversations and class discussions Understand and follow instructions so that they can get started on tasks independently Express wants, needs, thoughts and emotions Learn and use new vocabulary, particularly abstract words, and concepts Self-monitor so that they do not disrupt classroom learning Focusing and maintain attention to tasks Get their message across Feel confident to communicate their ideas in the classroom in front of their peers Ask for help and express their wants and needs	Use of visuals to support attention and listening, e.g., help board on the whiteboard, or by their desk, visual timers, visuals. Reduction of distractions, and / or background noise (e.g., projectors, windows, class noise). Place individuals with attention and listening difficulties towards the front of the classroom. Use of visuals to support teaching of vocabulary and new concepts with use of word maps. This could include graphic organisers, use of the Frayer model etc. After initial teaching regularly consolidate vocabulary through vocabulary quizzes. Break instructions down into smaller and more manageable chunks, repeat key points and encourage pupils to note down key information Provide additional time to process spoken information. Expand on what the pupil says, by repeating back what they've said but with additional information added. Provide sentence starters and examples of key phrases to support a young person in formulating their response. Provide opportunities for structured talk, including through an Oracy approach or the use of dialogic teaching. Making sure that the young person feels listened to and not under pressure to speak "perfectly". Focus on content, insight, effort and contribution when praising them.	Intervention targeted on building attention and listening skills. Use of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems, where appropriate. Additional vocabulary instruction in the classroom. Task list/visuals to accompany task instructions. Intervention to build expressive language skills Opportunities to develop and rehearse ideas orally with an adult or peer. Provide time for small group rehearsal before whole-class sharing. For group working allocate roles and monitor the peer dynamics.



Support at home

Modelling

Saying words or sentences that the child could use next time. You can do this when introducing new words to children.

- For example: "Miserable means feeling really sad about something. I felt miserable when I realised I had lost my favourite shoes."

Model (don't correct) when children make mistakes

You can also use modelling when a child makes a mistake with something they say. Instead of correcting them, repeat back what they've said the right way.

- For example, if a child says "I goed to the farm", you can say back, "Yes, you went to the farm."

Build on what children say

Extend children's thinking and their language skills by building on what they say.

- For example, if they say "We planted a tomato plant", you could say, "yes, we planted the tomato plant in the vegetable patch".

Match your language to the child's level

This might mean using more simple sentences, particularly if you are working with younger children or children who talk less.

Gain children's full attention

before giving an instruction or giving important information.

Taken from [Speech and Language UK](#)

Speak slowly and pause often

This gives children time to think about what you have said and plan what they want to say.

Use visual supports

Use gestures, pointing, showing, pictures and real objects at the same time as talking to support children's understanding.

Teach vocabulary

Explicitly teach children new words, repeat them often and give children opportunities to practise them. Check children's understanding of new words often.

The ShREC approach from the EEF is a great framework for successful interactions with children. It begins by connecting with a child by showing interest in what they are doing before then responding to them in an attuned way: a way that feels comfortable for them. The role of the adult is to then expand the language a child uses, modelling good language in context.

- Make sure I can see your face when you're speaking
- Comment more and question less
- Use gestures when you're speaking
- Use short sentences and give me time to work out what you mean
- Make sure I'm paying attention first

[Read more about it here](#)



Autism and social communication



Autism is not a 'disorder' or a 'burden', it is simply a difference. Just like every other brain type, the autistic brain has its negatives and things that make life more difficult. But autistic brains also have many positives that others may never have the opportunity to experience. These may include having a logical brain with good attention to detail, the ability to focus deeply, strong memory skills and unique thought processes. Autistic people place less value on small talk and more on openness and honesty. Autistic people may also have lots of knowledge and skills in one specific area.

Autistic people have brains that process the world differently to non-autistic people, which impacts both positively and negatively on aspects of their thinking and learning; sensory processing; social relational experiences; and communicative style, abilities and preferences (Spectrum Gaming).

Autism is not one of the four main categories of need contained within the Code of Practice, however in light of the number of children and young people in Sutton with a diagnosis or presenting needs we have decided to dedicate a separate section in this guidance.

"An autistic person's experience of and ability to be successful in the world, is dependent on the compatibility between their individual profile and their physical/ social environment." – Dr Julia Leatherland

Autism + Environment = Outcome

Please note that the strategies listed in the following pages are strategies that schools may try, but are not an exhaustive list and should be used in line with professional judgement.

Autism and social communication

[See here for more information on the Cognus website](#)



Children and young people who need support to	Strategies that may help (universal support)	Targeted support that may help
Demonstrate awareness of social 'rules' and others around them Initiate interactions with peers and maintain conversation Understand non-verbal communication, e.g. gesture Understand how others may feel Focus their attention on lessons they are not interested in Make friends and maintain friendships Use adaptative strategies to self-regulate Manage everyday situations because they find these stressful Manage transition points during the day Feel ok when something changes or happens which is unusual	Acceptance and flexibility in terms of how a young person communicates. This may include learning to interpret their body language and other signs which indicate how they're feeling. Tasks during lessons which involve turn-taking, and which are scaffolded and facilitated so that young people know the role they will be taking. Model and explicitly reference social skills including conversation initiation, non-verbal communication and turn-taking during interactions throughout the day. Provide longer for a young person to respond and use less verbal language to increase their comprehension. Be really clear about the purpose of a task and how it fits into the larger programme of study. Making tasks and lessons more purposeful will support pupil engagement. Think carefully about pupil groupings in the classroom so that a young person doesn't need to select their own group but is working alongside peers who will actively seek to include them. Use a peer buddy system to ensure a young person has someone to play with during break and lunch times. Approaches to develop the mutual understanding, communication, and support between autistic young people their peers, and staff. Reinforce an understanding of emotions and emotional regulation strategies to all pupils. Provide specific, positive, process praise when pupils are able to engage in activities outside of their comfort zone.	Comic Strip Conversations used to teach conversation skills and to build awareness of how others may be thinking in a particular situation. Intervention to build pragmatic social skills and social understanding. Use of social stories to teach everyday social skills. Lunch time groups with the provision of games and structured social opportunities monitored by school staff. Use different types of interaction to build an emotional connection with a young person and to help them develop a range of social and emotional skills. Support young people and young people to recognise their strengths and interests and provide structured opportunities to engage with peers who have a shared interest. Intervention focused on understanding Autistic Identity. Intervention to explicitly teach feelings vocabulary and development of self-regulation strategies. Direct teaching of strategies to cope with change such as using a change card alongside a visual timetable.

Support communication and interaction skills by:

- Giving your child enough time to process language and ensuring that they're listening when you speak to them.
- Break instructions down and repeat the steps one at a time.
- Narrate how you are feeling in a situation and how you think your child may be feeling in a situation to give them emotional language as well as social understanding.

Support good eating by:

- Making it fun to try new foods and trying to reduce the pressure.
- Think about the eating environment and any sensory barriers that could be addressed.
- Provide warning about new foods and think about some rules that could be in place e.g., one food from each food group a day.
- Explain in language your child can understand the importance of having a balanced diet.

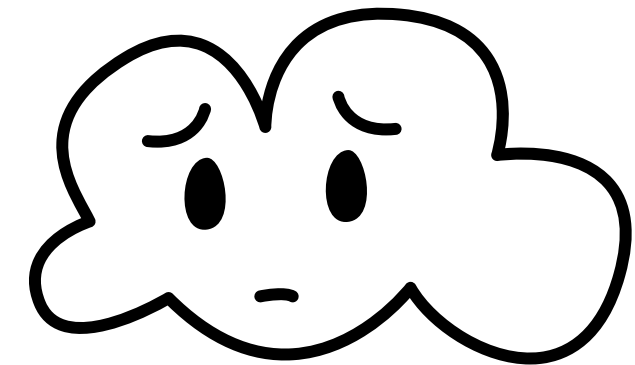
See [more advice here](#).

Support worries about change, new situations or environments where there are lots of people:

- Talk about what to expect in a situation, using pictures or other visuals to support these conversations.
- Use a visual schedule at home to show things that are coming up.
- Be selective about social events and recognise when your child might not have the capacity to attend something.
- Provide time before an event to prepare for it and after to regulate and recharge. Help your child develop strategies for both of these times e.g., using a sensory activity, or using a calm space after an event.
- Have a plan for when situations become overwhelming e.g., using ear defenders, identifying a signal that your child can use to show they need some time out.
- Show respect and patience for their preferences and try to understand how they feel whilst explaining how you feel too.
- Recognise behaviour as a form of communication and support worries by breaking situations down into smaller steps that feel manageable, building up to bigger things over time.

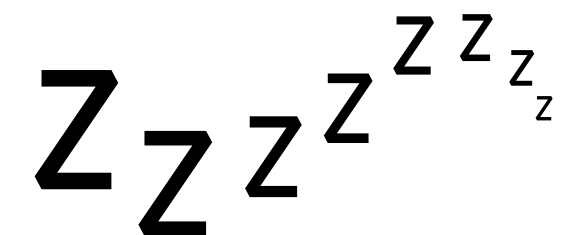
See [more here](#) and [here](#).

At home you can ...



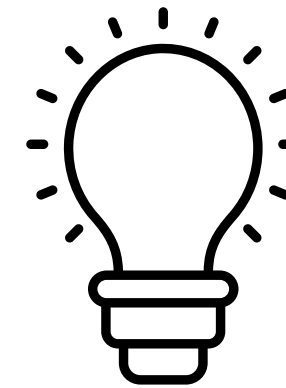
Support good sleeping by:

- Having a bedtime routine which is the same even at weekends and during holidays.
- Limiting screen time within two hours of bedtime.
- Making sure motivators to be awake e.g. games, screens aren't accessible by a child if they wake up during the night.
- Making the sleep environment as relaxing as possible, think noise, temperature, light etc.



Download [Ambitious about Autism's parent toolkit](#). It contains more tips, templates for appointment³⁵ and meeting checklists.

Cognition and learning



'Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs ... Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning (DfE, 2018).

Cognition and learning needs may encompass most of the curriculum ... or may only impact on specific areas such as reading, writing, spelling and mental calculations. Cognition and learning needs generally account for difficulties in curriculum-related areas such as reading, writing and spelling, numerosity, comprehension, processing difficulties such as sequencing, inference, coherence and elaboration, working memory, short term verbal memory, other types of executive function difficulties (Whole School SEND).

"The core skills of great teaching are the core skills of great SEND support. By focusing on universally effective instructional strategies, teachers can feel more confident and capable in meeting the needs of all students in their classroom" (Mccrea, Barker & Goodrich, 2025)

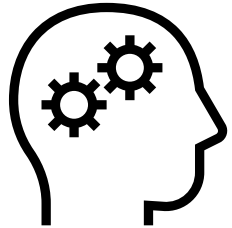


The way children view learning underpins their engagement and later success so it's important we get it right for children from the very beginning.

Please note that the strategies listed in the following pages are strategies that schools may try, but are not an exhaustive list and should be used in line with professional judgement.

Cognition and learning

[See Cognus Literacy difficulties and dyslexia guidance here](#) and [Cognus supporting Maths difficulties guidance here](#)



Children and young people who need support to	Strategies that may help (universal support)	Targeted support that may help
Read unfamiliar words, read fluently and clearly and with a good level of comprehension Write using full sentences and correct grammar Learn new information and retain knowledge over time Recall information they have already learnt Make links between different topics and concepts Organise and sequence their thinking Complete learning tasks without becoming distracted Work independently and to monitor their learning during tasks Understand their strengths and needs as a learner Be confident in knowing what they can do without support	Implement a '<u>disciplinary literacy</u>' approach in which there is explicit teaching and practise for subject specific literacy skills of speaking, reading and writing. Provide <u>targeted vocabulary instruction</u> in every subject. Use of classroom learning aids including tech support such as a laptop for typing, speech to text software, text to speech software, speaking dictionaries, Grammarly.com, Gingerpage app, Docs, Clicker or low-tech approaches e.g., subject specific word mats, word lists. Offer writing supports e.g. sentence starters, example sentences, connectives, checklist of points to include and draw pupils attention to the components of a 'good' piece of writing. Preparation at the whole class level before writing e.g., <u>Talk for Writing</u> style approaches. Address misconceptions as they arise during whole class teaching, following up with individual pupils to ascertain that this has been embedded. Teach and model problem solving strategies using worked examples, encouraging pupils to compare and contrast different strategies. Build in retrieval practice including rehearsal of key information e.g., pupils begin with fluency work e.g., low stakes quizzes as starter tasks. Varied questioning techniques so that all young people can engage successfully in classroom learning. Well managed peer support including learning partners and peer assessment. Provide natural learning breaks in the lesson e.g., to complete a classroom job, to write an example on the board, to show the teacher work, or a whole class movement break. Teach organisational strategies as well as skills of planning, monitoring and evaluation.	Targeted literacy (spelling, word reading, reading comprehension, writing) intervention using a validated programme and/or based on evidence-based principles of delivery. This may be delivered as part of the core curriculum (during English lessons), or as withdrawal intervention. Groupings made to English classes to support pupils working below expectations. Explicit support to develop reading comprehension skills during lessons. A higher level of scaffolding for a small group of learners in the classroom. This would focus on decreasing the pace of learning, matching this to the rate of progress pupils are making, working towards mastery. Sessions over the week for overlearning and reinforcement of key concepts and information, focused on developing fluency and accuracy e.g., literacy or Maths intervention. Classwork and homework tasks set at a level of facilitate consolidation of learning. Intervention focused on the development of executive functioning skills, e.g. attention, self-monitoring and organisation..



At home you can ...

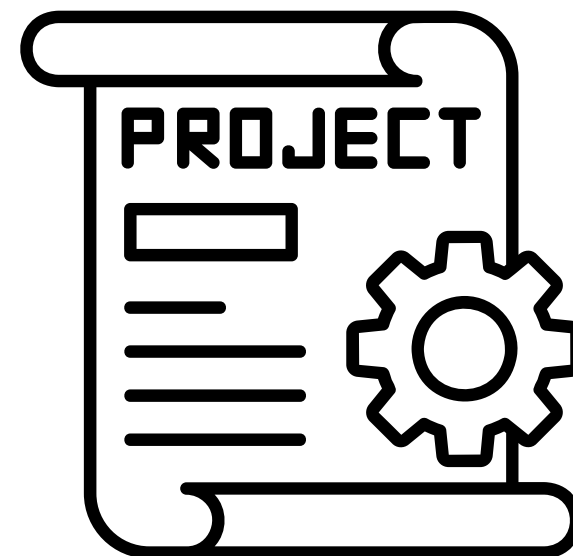
Mediate learning so that you provide just the right level of support for your child when practising things they have done at school or when doing homework. Children don't often remember things straightaway, but encouragement and some careful questioning is better than giving them the answer straightaway. Whatever you do try and avoid correcting. Other strategies that can help including making a plan for the piece of work together, helping your child to identify what exactly they're finding hard and the problem solving that together, for instance by thinking about a time they have had a similar difficulty and what helped them out then.



When praising it's better to praise the process i.e., what your child is doing, how hard they're trying etc., rather than just the end product.



Build reading, writing and number skills into everything you do until your child is really confident. This could include getting them to read your shopping list when out and about, getting them to weigh and measure when cooking or doing DIY and helping you out by writing lists of things that need to get done around the house.

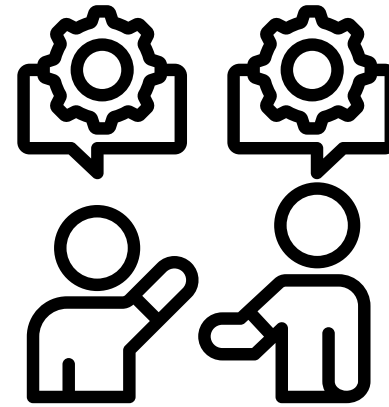


Child-led projects are another way of supporting children to love learning for the sake of it and can be easily supported at home. All you need to do is help your child to pick a topic, decide what they're going to research and how they want to display that. Once they're ready encourage them to use the internet as well as books to find out more about something they're interested in and then present it back to you once they're finished.

Practise other skills that underpin all types of learning such as:

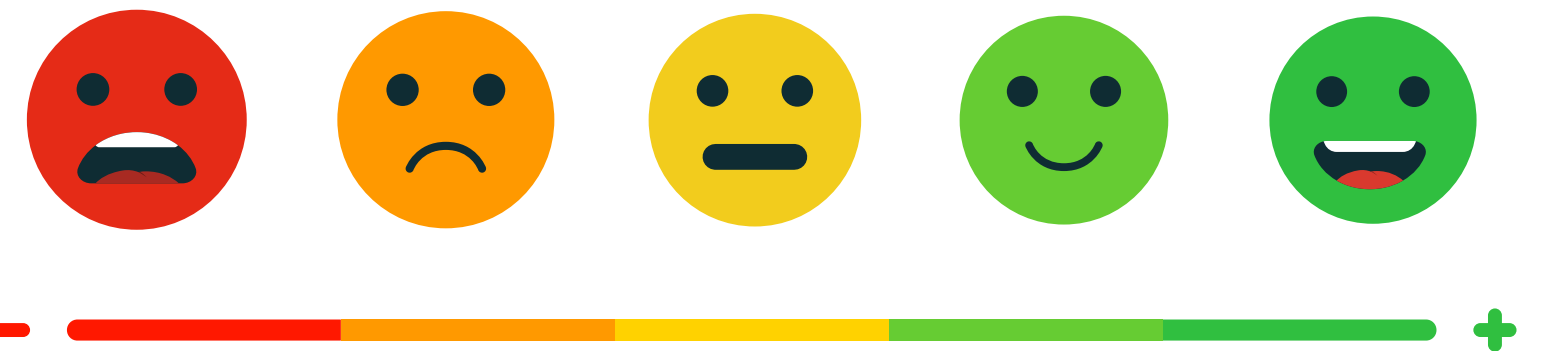
- Categorisation and comparison when putting away the shopping or when tidying up.
- Ordering and sequencing when playing together or when following daily routines.
- Planning ahead of a journey or holiday, or when getting ready for school.
- Persistence by working together to finish something and then celebrating at the end.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health



Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained (DFE).

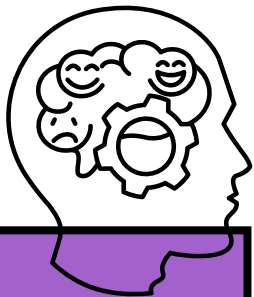
The SEN Code of Practice (2015) no longer includes 'behaviour' as part of this category of need. The reasoning is that a child's behaviour is perceived as a communication about the child's state of mind and may be caused by a variety of factors such as: anxiety, sensory overload, anger, including anger about pervasive life situations or undisclosed difficulties, response to trauma or attachment difficulties, frustration due to speech and communication difficulties, response to the wrong level of challenge in lessons, grief, overwhelm, physical pain or discomfort, such as hunger, underlying mental health problems, undisclosed physical, mental or sexual abuse (Whole School SEND).



Please note that the strategies listed in the following pages are strategies that schools may try, but are not an exhaustive list and should be used in line with professional judgement.

Social, emotional and mental health

See [here](#) for more information on the Cognus website and [a range](#) of Cognus documents for school staff, parents/carers and young people struggling with attending school.



Children and young people who need support to	Strategies that may help (universal support)	Targeted support that may help
Understand and express how they're feeling Regulate their emotions so that they do not become overwhelmed Use adaptative strategies to self-regulate Manage everyday situations because they find these stressful Regulate feelings of stress and worry which lead to avoidance and withdrawal Not being overly self-critical Engage with their peers and to be included Struggle to attend school or do not frequently attend certain lessons Make friends and maintain friendships Develop their social problem solving skills Feel safe because they are wired to view the world around them as threatening Feel confident and safe enough to attempt independent learning	Reinforce an understanding of emotions and emotional regulation strategies to all pupils, facilitating discussion so that young people can gain ideas from their peers about self-regulation strategies and normalise experiencing difficult emotions during RSE or whole school mental health and emotional wellbeing events. Provide clear instructions on where to go and who to talk to when pupils feel uncomfortable. Monitor the energy levels of a young person and support them to make use of calming activities if they are becoming overwhelmed. Staff to model resilience, problem-solving and regulation strategies throughout the day e.g., using language to model thinking through a situation and rationalising it. Encouragement for young people to help-seek early before feelings escalate through having information clearly available around school about sources of support and pupil advocates. Consider possible underlying issues which could be contributing to stress e.g., unidentified learning, social or communication needs. Ensure there are times when the young person needs to be independent if they are becoming over reliant on adult support, warning them in advance and explaining the situation to them. A soft start to the school day which involves coming in through a quieter entrance, either before or after most other young people, and participating in a regulating activity before going into lessons. Behaviour policy which prioritises relational approaches.	Key worker/pastoral sessions to work on developing emotional awareness and regulation skills. Intervention to teach about worries and anxiety and stress.. Provision of an emotionally available adult in school who can provide regular check-ins and become a secure attachment figure within school. Group sessions to implement Zones of Regulation or other emotional literacy programme. Providing a quiet space at break and lunchtimes for a young person to use if they need a quieter space to reset. Use of Comic Strip Conversations to help talk about a process different scenarios and the emotional regulation within these. Have a safe space that young people can use if they are starting to feel overwhelmed accessed by showing a time out card to their teacher. Small group activities to build friendships and positive experiences in school. A time-limited arrangement by which a pupil's key worker can meet them briefly at the start of the school day. An ongoing social skills intervention or PSHE curriculum that focuses on social skills.

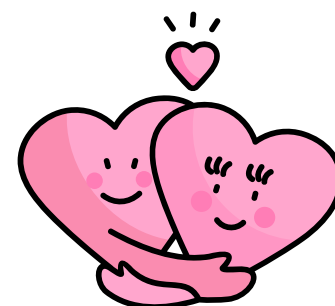


Supporting worries and anxieties at home

Feelings of worry are totally normal, and in some situations feeling a bit worried or anxious is actually helpful. However when children worry about lots of things or experience very intense worry about things they really don't need to worry about this can be problematic. Becoming more easily worried can be a genetic in nature, but things that happen to the child can also play a part. Worries can develop for many different reasons, including life experiences, temperament, stressful events, and the ways children make sense of situations around them. Children often look to trusted adults for cues about how to respond when something feels difficult or uncertain. One of the most helpful things adults can do is model calm coping strategies and show that worries can be managed, even when situations feel challenging.

If you're an anxious parent, rather than try and hide this from child, share with them (not going into too much detail) some of the things you worry about but the ways that you manage these worries. Spend time problem-solving worries which could include trying to rationalise them as well as working on calming and grounding strategies your child could use if they start to feel worried. More useful resources: [YoungMinds](#)

Try to avoid reassuring your child that something won't happen because whilst reassurance can feel helpful in the moment, children often benefit most from support that helps them understand their worries and develop confidence in their ability to cope with uncertainty.

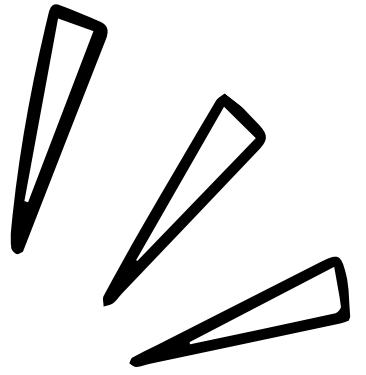
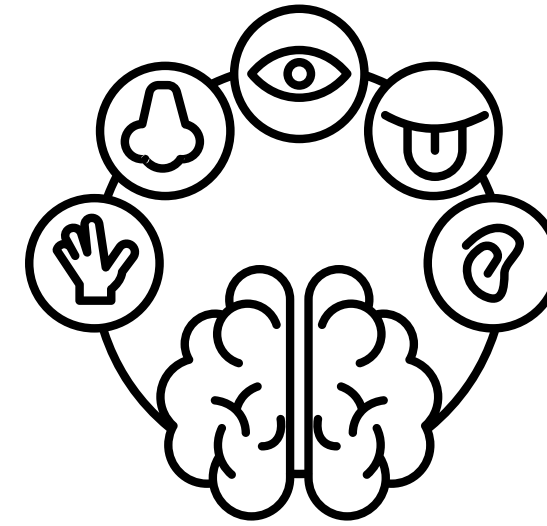


Supporting children to face worries gradually can help build confidence over time *

Most worries can be overcome one step at a time and all worries can only be overcome by facing them head on. This means that even if your child is distressed by something it will be more helpful to try and break that down into a smaller, less worrisome event rather than to avoid it entirely. Avoiding things is a short-term quick fix but then only makes the worry bigger in the longer-term.

Some children find it extremely difficult to be away from a parent/carer, which often relates to a fear that they will be separated and never see each other again. This fear can make it difficult to take part in independent activities e.g. at school / sleeping alone. Separation anxiety can come from the child or the parent, or both of them. Sometimes we can work out what has caused separation anxiety and sometimes we can't but it's usually quite challenging for the parent as well as the child.

When you leave your child try to keep it as brief and positive as possible if they're struggling with this separation. Having a goodbye ritual or giving them something they can take into school as a transitional item can also help. Chances are they settle in quickly once you've gone. Many children settle more quickly when goodbyes are brief, predictable and consistent. This can be difficult for both children and parents, so it can help to agree a supportive goodbye routine in advance.



Children and young people may have a physical disability which affects their learning or access to learning. Some may also have issues with processing sensory information (such as sight, hearing sound, touch) ... 'Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time (DfE).

Physical and sensory needs cover a wide range of medical conditions. Some children with physical disabilities may be very cognitively able so the levels of support must be tailored to a person-centred needs analysis of each child's needs and preferences, taking into account the views of children and their families (Whole School SEND)

Physical and/or sensory

[See here for more information on the Cognus website](#)



Children and young people who need support to	Strategies that may help (universal support)	Targeted support that may help
Be independent with self-care tasks in line with peers Use hands together in a coordinated way to carry out everyday tasks Engage with structured physical activities, games or equipment Independence with self-care activities, travelling and community skills Use every day tools and materials within functional activities independently Manage noisy and busy spaces in school Filter out distracting information Be ready for learning and to self-regulate during learning Increase their tolerance of specific sensory information including noise, tactile, food textures, movement	Offer tools such as writing slopes or alternative seating options to support posture handwriting. Offer short breaks during extended tasks to reduce fatigue and maintain focus. Encourage naturally occurring/ structured movement breaks throughout the day. Differentiate physical and practical activities in PE, science, technology, and other subjects to ensure accessibility for all. Ensuring the school environment and building are accessible to all students. RSE lessons or tutor time used to facilitate discussions amongst pupils about safety in the community and independent travel. Visual schedules and task lists to support routines in school. Reduce sensory information in the classroom environment e.g., reduce noise, dim lights, ensure wall displays are not overly distracting. Develop a toolbox of sensory objects and between lesson movement breaks that a young person can access independently throughout the day. Reasonable adjustments to reduce sensory information e.g., ear defenders/buds, adjustments to uniform, weighted tools, TheraBand's, fidget objects.	Intervention to teach new motor skills. Learning breaks to reduce fatigue and extra time to complete tasks. Staff trained in moving and handling. Establish specific functional self-help and independence SMART goals with the young people and plan targeted intervention in school and at home in line with this. Make specific adaptations to the environment in order to meet individual young people and young people's accessibility needs and ability to be independent from a physical perspective. A time out card which a young person can make use of independently to take short breaks away from the learning. Intervention to develop the ability to recognise and indicate their need for a sensory break. Talk to the young person or young person to understand their sensory differences and create a system together to support them in communicating how they are feeling and in choosing a range of self-regulating activities.

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