

SEN - What does it mean?

In the 1996 Education Order, a child is described as having special educational needs (SEN) if they have a *significantly greater* difficulty in learning than other children which calls for special educational provision to be made for them that is additional to or otherwise different from that which children of a similar age receive in an ordinary school.

A child also has SEN if they have a disability that calls for special education provision to be made for them. If your child's nursery thinks that your child requires special educational provision they will be placed on the school's SEN register.

The nursery staff will meet with you to discuss your child's needs and agree the targets/expected outcomes for their Individual Education Plan (IEP)/Personal Learning Plan (PLP) and what you can do to help. Only the school can decide if your child should be placed on the SEN register.

What if the difficulties persist?

If your child does not make adequate progress on the targets in their IEP/PLPs and continues to experience significant difficulties, the nursery school may wish to seek further advice and support from the Education Authority.

The nursery school's staff will discuss this with you and seek your agreement.

CONTACT DETAILS

The **SEN Advice and Information Service** helps parents of children with special educational needs access support, guidance, and advice in relation to the needs of their children.

SEN Helpdesk

Tel: 028 9598 5960

When you call the SEN Helpdesk you will be given several options:

Choose option 1:

To select a local area office for specific SEN queries about a particular child

Choose option 2:

For all general SEN queries.

Choose option 3:

To make a request for consideration for Statutory Assessment

Dispute Avoidance & Resolution service (DARS)

Global Mediation

55-59 Adelaide Street, Belfast Tel: 028 9072 6060

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST)

Tel: 028 9072 4887

Email: tribunalsunit@courtsni.gov.uk

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

DE, The Code of Practice on the Identification & Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1998) and the Supplement to the Code (2005)



How Children's Learning is Supported in Nursery School Guidance for Parents and Carers



CYPS SEND Implementation Team

www.eani.org.uk

Your role as a Parent

As a parent you know your child better than anyone else. You hold key information and therefore have an important role to play in supporting their education. You have unique knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of your child's needs and the best way to support them with their learning and development both at home and in school.

Open and honest communication

The nursery school will make time to listen to concerns that you may have about your child and will offer advice and support if needed.

The nursery school will involve you in decisions about them.

The nursery school will ask your permission if they need to involve any other professionals to support or assess your child.

Your child's views are important

Children have a unique view of their own needs and capabilities and possess their own opinions.

The nursery school will ensure that your child will be listened to and that their views will be responded to and valued.

How does the nursery school meet the needs of all its learners?

If your child is provided with different activities in class from that of their peers, you should not worry. All children are different. Teachers are highly skilled professionals and use a wide range of approaches and strategies to help children learn. Praise your child for their efforts and for trying their best in school. This will help to build their confidence.

Children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best.

Teachers take account of this by looking carefully at how they organise lessons, the classroom, the books and materials they give to each child and the way that they teach.

Supporting individual differences

Teachers have a professional responsibility to act upon their assessments and observations. Therefore, teachers will always choose the most appropriate way to help each child learn from a range of activities within a continuum of learning support.



What to do if you are worried that your child may have Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children do not all learn at the same rate or pace. They may have difficulties with some aspects of their learning from time to time but most children with learning difficulties do not have special educational needs.

If you are worried about your child's progress, contact the class teacher who will arrange a time to meet with you. The teacher will explain how your child is getting on in nursery school and, if needed, will address any concerns you may have. They will also advise you on how you can help your child at home.

If, after a period of observation, the teacher thinks that additional provision in nursery school is needed for your child, they will contact you and arrange a meeting to discuss this with you.

Please be assured that nursery schools have clear processes for identifying and assessing children with special educational needs. Staff will strive to ensure that your child's needs are fully met whether they have learning difficulties or SEN.