

SEND Glossary of Terms

Academy

An academy is a school which receives funding directly from the Government and is not controlled by the local authority. The majority of academies are secondary schools, but some primary schools also have academy status.

Activities of daily living (ADL)

Basic self-care tasks that must be accomplished every day, such as eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring and continence.

Additional needs

Additional needs describes a group of children or young people who require additional support to help them make improved progress or catch up, which may be a short-term intervention or a longer term strategy.

Advocate

An advocate is someone who can help children, young people and parents say what they want if they find it difficult to do so.

Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU)

The AWPU is the amount of money that every maintained school receives for each pupil that is on the school roll, whether or not they have SEN. The value of the AWPU varies from one local authority to another and according to the age of the pupils.

Alternative provision

Education in a setting that is not a mainstream or special school. The education should be based on the needs of the child and can be provided through a variety of routes, including pupil referral units (PRUs).

Annual review

The annual review is a process which includes a meeting where a local council, a school or a college, and some other people look at the support a child or young person gets and if it is right for them. The annual review must happen every twelve months.

Asperger Syndrome

Asperger Syndrome is a form of autism. People with the condition usually have difficulties with social communication, social interaction and social imagination.

Assessment

An assessment is a way of working out what kind of support someone needs.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A medical diagnosis related to the child's behaviour and attention span, which can affect their ability to concentrate and learn.

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)

Different methods that can be used to help people with disabilities communicate with others, for example using signing, speech synthesisers, symbols, objects of reference or a combination of these.

Autism

Autism is a lifelong developmental disorder. Autistic people think differently to other people. It affects how a person communicates with and relates to the people around them.

C

Carer

A family member or paid helper who regularly looks after a child or a sick, elderly or disabled person.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Services that are provided by the NHS for children and young people up to the age of 18 who need support with their emotions, their behaviour or their mental health

Children & Families Act 2014

The Children and Families Act 2014 became law on the 13 March 2014. The Act aims to improve how different agencies and services work together and create a more joined-up approach to the statutory assessment process for children and young people with the most complex needs. The Act aims to give children and young people with complex needs and their families more choice and control about which services they can access and how they are paid for. The Act will also improve information about services for children and young people with SEN and their families.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

CCGs are groups of professionals who work together to commission health services, ensuring there is sufficient capacity contracted to deliver the necessary services to people.

Code of Practice

The revised Special Educational Needs Code of Practice was published by the Department for Education and Skills in January 2015. The code provides guidance on policies and procedures intended to enable pupils with SEN to reach their full potential, to be included in school communities and to make the transition to adult life successfully.

Cognition and Learning

The mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgement.

Cognitive Ability

Thinking and reasoning abilities. A term often used by psychologists instead of intelligence.

Commissioning

The process that ensures the right people and services are in the right place at the right time for all children, young people and families. It is the process by which services are planned, investment decisions are made, delivery is ensured and effectiveness is reviewed.

Comprehension

Understanding of spoken or written material or practical situations.

D

Decision Support Tool

The form that is used by the nurse or other health worker who does the assessment to see if a person is eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare.

Developmental delay

A slower rate of development where a child learns more slowly than most children of the same age.

Differentiated curriculum

Children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best. Teachers take account of this when planning their lessons, organising the classroom and choosing books and materials. They are then able to choose from the range of available approaches and resources to make a selection which best fits the learning styles of a particular child or group of children. This is what is meant by a differentiated curriculum.

Direct Payments

A payment made directly to a parent or young person to purchase specific services. Under the Children and Families Act 2014 a Direct Payment may be made as part of a Personal Budget so that the parent or young person can buy certain services that are specified in their EHC plan. Direct payments can only be used for provision provided on the school or college premises if the school or college agree.

Disabled

A person is disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, which has substantial and long-term effect on his/her ability to carry out day-to-day activities. The definition also covers pupils with sensory or intellectual impairments, those with a learning disability, severe disfigurements or progressive conditions.

Disagreement Resolution

Local authorities must provide independent disagreement resolution to help parents and young people resolve disputes with local authorities, schools and other settings about SEND duties and provision.

Dyscalculia

A condition associated with specific learning difficulties in Maths. In its simplest terms this means that sufferers have problems with even simple arithmetic.

Dyslexia

A learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.

Dyspraxia

A common developmental disorder affecting fine and/or gross motor coordination in children and adults. It may also affect speech.

E

Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

An EHC plan describes the special educational needs that a child or young person has and the help that they will be given to meet them. It also includes the health and care provision that is needed. It is a legal document written by the local authority and is used for children and young people who have complex support needs.

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

The ESFA is the government agency that funds education for learners between the ages of 3 and 19, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities between the ages of 3 and 25. The ESFA allocates funds to local authorities, which then provide the funding for maintained schools. The ESFA directly funds academies and free schools.

Educational psychologist (EP)

An educational psychologist looks at how a child or young person can be better supported to learn. This includes children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Epilepsy

A health condition that affects the brain and causes seizures.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in school, the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it's unlawful to treat someone.

F

Foetal alcohol syndrome disorder (FASD)

A condition caused by the mother consuming alcohol, resulting in abnormal brain development before birth.

Fragile X Syndrome

The most common cause of inherited learning difficulties after Down's Syndrome.

G

Graduated Approach

A four-part cycle for assessing, planning, delivering and reviewing provision for pupils with SEN

H

Habilitation

One-to-one training for children and young people with a vision impairment. It aims to develop their personal mobility, navigation and independent living skills.

Hearing Impairment (HI)

Pupils with a hearing impairment range from those with a mild hearing loss to those who are profoundly deaf.

Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA)

An experienced teaching assistant who plans and delivers learning activities under the direction of a teacher, and assesses, records and reports on pupils' progress.

L

Lacking capacity

Lacking capacity is when a person is not able to make a decision for themselves. Just because someone finds it hard to make one decision, it does not mean they are not able to make other decisions.

Learning difficulties/disabilities

A learning disability affects how someone understands and remembers information. It is different from person to person. Some people may need more time to understand information.

Learning mentors

School staff who work with school and college students to help them engage more effectively in learning and improve achievement.

Local Authority (LA)

The local government body of a county or city that provides services, including education, for local people.

Local Offer

A local offer is published by every local authority and provides information about the support and services that children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities and their families can get. It includes information about education, health and care provision. It also gives information about training, employment and independent living for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Looked After Child (LAC)

Any child who is in care of the local authority, or who is provided with accommodation by the local authority social services department for more than 24 hours.

M

Mainstream school

This is a school that provides education for all children, whether or not they have special educational needs or disabilities.

Mediation

A form of disagreement resolution for parents and young people considering appealing decisions about education, health and care (EHC) needs assessments and plans at the tribunal

Mental capacity assessment (MCA)

A mental capacity assessment is carried out to see if someone is able to make decisions. If someone can not make a decision by themselves, they should still be supported to have their say.

Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)

Describes a general level of academic attainment that is significantly below that of other children of the same age. There may be difficulty acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills, speech and language difficulties and poorly developed personal and social skills. Pupils should only be recorded as having a MLD if additional educational provision is being made to help them access the curriculum.

Modification

Amendment or alteration of a programme of study, attainment target, assessment or any other component of the curriculum so that a child can access that area of the teaching and learning.

Multi-agency working

Practitioners from different sectors and professions working together to provide joined-up support for children, young people and families.

Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)

Pupils with multi-sensory impairment have a combination of visual and hearing difficulties. They are sometimes referred to as deafblind but may have some residual sight and/or hearing.

N

NHS Continuing Healthcare (CHC)

NHS Continuing Healthcare is the name given to a package of care that is arranged and funded solely by the NHS for individuals aged 18 and over who are not in hospital but have complex ongoing healthcare needs.

O

Outcome

Describes the difference that will be made to an individual as a result of special educational and other provision. Must be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART)

P

Parent carer forum

A Parent Carer Forum is a representative local group of parents and carers of disabled children who work with local authorities, education, health and other providers to make sure the services they plan and deliver meet the needs of disabled children and families.

Peer support

Peer support is when other pupils provide emotional, social or practical help to each other. Pupils are usually trained to provide this support.

Personal assistant

Personal assistants are approved support staff who offer a range of individual support and care to disabled children and young people.

Personal budget

A personal budget is money set aside for a young person or a parent by their local council. It can be used to buy some of the support a child or young person gets in their education, health and care plan. Sometimes a local council will keep this money and use it to buy some support that a young person or their family might need. Parents of children with an EHC plan and young people with an EHC plan can choose whether or not they wish to have a Personal Budget.

Personal Education Plan (PEP)

An element of a care plan maintained by a local authority in respect of a looked after child, which sets out the education needs of the child.

Personal Health Budget

A personal health budget is a set amount of money to spend on the support and services that will meet your health and wellbeing needs, as agreed between you (or your representative) and your local NHS team.

Person Centred Reviews

A Person Centred Review uses person centred thinking approaches to explore what is happening from the person and other people's perspectives. The review looks at what's working and not working, what's important to the person now and in the future, and agrees outcomes for change.

Physical disability (PD)

Disabilities that limit mobility. Among the causes are congenital conditions, accidents or injury.

Preparing for Adulthood

The transition of a young person leaving childhood and preparing to become an adult.

Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)

Someone with more than one disability, with the most significant being a learning disability. Many children diagnosed with PMLD will also have a sensory or physical disability, complex health needs or mental health difficulties. Pupils with PMLD need a high level of adult support both for their learning needs and for their personal care.

Provision map

A provision map is a way of documenting the range of support available to pupils with SEN within a school.

Pupil Profile

A non-statutory document setting out school-based support and interventions for a pupil with SEN. Other types of school-based plan, which may be used in other settings, include IEPs, SEN support plans, pupil passports, and one-page profiles.

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

This is a school established and maintained by a local authority that is specially organised to provide education for children who are excluded, sick or otherwise unable to attend mainstream school.

R

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes schools and other settings are required to make which could include: changes to physical features – for example, creating a ramp so that students can enter a classroom or providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment).

S

Safeguarding

The process of identifying children and young people who have suffered or who are likely to suffer significant harm, and then taking the appropriate steps to keep them safe.

SALT

Speech and language therapy, sometimes speech and language therapist.

School SEN Support

A category for young people (0-25) who need extra specialist support but not an EHC plan. This may take the form of additional support from within the school or require the involvement of specialist staff or support services. The purpose of SEN support is to help children achieve the outcomes or learning objectives that have been set for them by the school. Schools should involve parents in this process.

SEND

Special educational needs and disabilities. A pupil has SEN if he or she needs special educational provision due to a learning difficulty or disability (see special educational provision).

SEND Code of Practice

This is the statutory guidance that supports Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. It tells local authorities, early years settings, schools, colleges, health and social care providers and others what they must and should do to identify, assess and provide for children and young people with SEN or disabilities.

Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD)

Pupils with SLD have significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. This will have an impact on their ability to participate in the school curriculum without support.

Social, mental and emotional health (SEMH)

Social, mental and emotional difficulties, usually resulting in behaviour difficulties, that present a barrier to learning and participation.

Special Education Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

SENDIASS offer free information, advice and support to parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs, and the young people themselves. They are statutory services which means there has to be one in every local authority.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO is the person at a school who is in charge of making sure students who have special educational needs or disabilities get the support they need.

Specialist services

Services provided by the local authority or health service to provide specialised services for children with acute or high level needs.

Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLD)

An umbrella term used to cover a range of frequently co-occurring difficulties, usually dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ADD and ADHD.

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

A wide range of difficulties related to all aspects of communication in children and young people. These can include difficulties with speech, understanding what others say, and using language socially.

Statutory assessment

A process of assessment referred to as an education, health and care needs assessment carried out by the Local Authority for a child or young person 0-25. An EHC needs assessment is a detailed look at a child's special educational needs (SEN) and the support her or she may need in order to learn.

T

Transition plan

A plan drawn up at the annual review meeting which sets out the steps needed to move from one school to another or from school to adult life.

Top-Up Funding

Additional funding available from the LA for pupils with high needs, i.e. those whose educational provision costs more than £6,000 per year. Usually assessed through an EHC assessment.

Tribunal

An independent body that determines appeals by parents or young people against LA decisions on EHC needs assessments and EHC plans, as well as claims of disability discrimination.