SEN Support in Early Years Settings
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Introduction

This booklet explains the special educational provision Havering Local Authority expects to be made available to all children within Early Years settings or delivering the Early Years Foundation stage framework (EYFS) through a graduated response of support and intervention.

The booklet will assist providers in developing a consistent approach in their provision for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities.

It will also help parents and carers to understand the support that their child will receive during their early years.

Legislation

Early years providers are required to have regard to the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and must ensure that they know precisely where children with SEN are in relation to their learning and development. To do this they should:

- Ensure decisions are informed by the insight of parents and children themselves
- Have high ambitions and set stretching targets for children
- Track children’s progress towards their outcomes
- Ensure assessments of children’s learning and development are accurate
- Regularly review the additional or different provision that is made for children
- Promote positive outcomes for the wider areas of personal and social development
- Ensure that approaches are based on the best possible evidence and have the required impact on progress
- Have very good systems to support children when they move to another setting (transition support)
- Ensure that staff are aware of SEN and disability and that they have the relevant training, skills and experience to be able to provide support for children.

Many children with SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010, i.e. ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial and adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

This definition would mean that children with sensory impairments and those with long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy would also be covered by this legislation.
The Equality Act sets out the legal obligations that Early Years providers and schools have towards disabled children, and includes:

- They must not directly discriminate against disabled children
- They must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled children are not disadvantaged in comparison to their peers. This duty is anticipatory, requiring settings and schools to think in advance about the adjustments they need to make.

The EYFS is the statutory framework for children aged 0 to 5 years and sets out the arrangements that must be in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN.

In addition all Early Years providers should take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required to meet those needs.

All children are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and
- become confident with a growing ability to communicate their own views and be ready to make the transition into compulsory education

The benefits of early identification are widely recognised. Identifying additional needs at the earliest point, then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children.

All those who work with young children should be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parents know their children best and it is important that all practitioners listen to and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children themselves.

All children in an early years setting who are 2, 3 and 4-years-old and funded by the Local Authority for up to 15 hours of early education a week must be actively supported if there are concerns that they have SEN or a disability.

Providers of early education in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors are required to have regard to the SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2014.

**The Local Offer**

The Havering Local Offer provides, in one place, information advice and guidance about services available for children and young people in Havering who have SEN or disabilities. The Local Offer is published at [www.havering.gov.uk/directory](http://www.havering.gov.uk/directory)
Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children learn and develop at different rates and have areas of strength and interest and areas of weakness. A child may have a special educational need if, despite appropriate activities and differentiated planning and support, they continue to experience a greater difficulty than their peers in learning and developing skills.

Early Years practitioners ‘should adopt a graduated response so as to be able to provide specific help to individual young children’ (SEN and Disabilities Code of Practice 2014.)

A child has identifiable SEN if their needs require the provider to put in support that is additional or different to what is available to all children in the setting. It is important to distinguish between children with SEN and children who are underachieving but who can and will catch up.

Areas of SEN

Children may have needs in one or more of the following categories:

• communication and interaction
• cognition and learning
• social, emotional and mental health
• sensory and/or physical needs

A child may have needs which span two or more categories, for example a child with a hearing loss may also experience difficulty with interacting with their peers and have some challenging behaviours.

Each child should be considered holistically, so that all their needs can be identified and include the context of the setting.

A child's needs arise as a result of their interaction with their learning environment; it is not appropriate to regard all needs as being problems generated from within the individual children. Any needs identified need to be prioritised so that targets and provision can be focused upon achieving measurable progress.

The Role of the SENCo

The SENCo should have additional training and knowledge in matters of SEN and Disabilities including:

• The SEN & Disabilities Code of Practice 2014
• The role of the SENCo
- Implementing SEN Support using a graduated approach
- Behaviour Management
- Supporting children’s Speech and Language
- Policies to include Special education Needs (SEN), Behaviour, Inclusion, Diversity and Equal Opportunities
- Well-developed systems for observational, assessment and planning
- Arranging person centred planning meetings at transition

The Local Authority will also provide the following

- Training for the SENCo to understand how to deliver their role, work with others and put SEN Support Plans in place
- Training for staff to support children’s communication, understanding, listening and speech
- Training to support children’s behaviour and emotional and social development
- Training to understand how to support children with specific diagnosis (e.g ASD)
- Cluster Meetings (termly) to enable SENCos to keep up to date with their knowledge, share practice and network
- Documentation and good practice guidance and resources
- Advice to put SEN Support in place
- An Area SENDCo (AS) visit, via an Request for an AS Visit Form, where a child is on a SEN Support Plan and the child is not making expected progress
- AS support in planning transition to school
- AS support in making an application for an assessment for an Education, Health and Care plan
- Termly AS consultation visits.
Children not making expected progress or on an SEN Support Plan at Universal Plus

All Early Years providers have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to be inclusive. Therefore, all children with emerging or identified SEN are entitled to access the EYFS via the provision offered by each setting.

There is an expectation that settings will manage the majority of lower level needs themselves – ensuring that their provision, resources, routines and staffing are used in the best possible way to meet children’s needs. This will include children who are underachieving and/or are less experienced learners (for many reasons) but who do not have SEN and children who are making slower progress because they are learning English as an additional language (EAL).

However, it should not be assumed that these children have SEN just because their progress is slower than others. Children who are making slower progress will need carefully differentiated learning opportunities to support their development, together with regular and frequent monitoring of their progress.

All Early Years settings should already have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), with a recommended minimum NVQ Level 2 qualification, and working towards a level 3 in place.

Provision for children not making expected progress or on an SEN Support Plan at Universal Plus

Stories

- short, well-illustrated and read with enthusiasm by an adult.
- use of props/story sacks etc.
- story group kept as small as staffing resources allow
- children grouped according to age/stage of development in relation to communication and language
- repetitive phrases for children to join in with
- consider using ECAT ‘Talking Stories’

Instructions:

- repeated and accompanied by clear and concise gestures/visuals prompts
- wait 10 seconds to allow child to process and repeat, if needed using exactly the same instruction (do not rephrase)
could include SALT Language Group, as well as reinforcement in everyday play

Adults:

- join in with an activity the child has selected and play alongside and support turn-taking, possibly in group games
- are receptive and give time to children having difficulties speaking or who need time to understand and process.
- differentiate the language they use according to the child’s stage of development
- give children time and opportunity to build relationships with Key Person and peers

Positive Language:

- use praise and positive reinforcement immediately when warranted.
- say what you want the child to do rather than what you don't want e.g. ‘walk’ or ‘walk nicely’ rather than ‘don’t run’

Behaviour Strategies:

- model positive behaviour and recognise positive behaviour in others to illustrate expectations.
- ensure staff consistency of approach
- could also consider ‘Social Skills’ groups such as the ‘Playing and Learning to Socialise (PALS) programme.

Group work:

- plan focused support for all children delivered in small groups (5-6 children) throughout the day
- could be within key person groups / for planned activities / according to themes identified within learning and development plans
- should be well planned and resourced to support children at their assessed stage of learning and emotional development
- should be delivered by staff who are able to differentiate the activity and their interactions

Environment:

- acoustically friendly environments
Children and Adults with Disabilities Support Team, 0-5

- visually friendly environments
- structured and organised to include a quiet space

Resources:

- objects of reference
- pictures for labels and pictorial / visual timetables
- Symbols
- plan for adults to use resources well by participating in imaginative play activities to support and extend play

Target Setting & Planning:

An SEN Support Plan or a Behavioural Plan may be in place with specific targets set, or there will be effective planned strategies in place for those children not making expected progress.

Settings should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning environment and the support, interventions and strategies they are using with children to enable them to learn and develop more effectively. This includes the provision of differentiated learning opportunities, routines, staff deployment and interactions with children.

Funding for SEN Support at Universal Plus

Early Education Funding (EEF) for eligible children. No extra funding.

Monitoring SEN Support at Universal Plus

PVI settings receive consultation visits from their allocated Area SENDCo to discuss individual cases and assess the setting’s ability to provide appropriate interventions and strategies to support children with SEN.

They will expect to see SEN Support Planning, on-going assessment of children’s progress and evidence of the strategies and interventions put in place and the review process.

SEN Support Plan at Targeted Level

For a child to be considered as SEN Support Plan at targeted level the Area SENDCo must be involved and the SENCo must be actively engaged in the SEN Support Planning. There may be other professionals involved.

There will be clear and well monitored evidence that the child has not made expected progress, despite the interventions and strategies put in place, and that the child is now significantly delayed in relation to their peers. There are also likely to be clear agreements across professionals that the child does require increased differentiation and direct teaching to help them make progress.
Provision for children on an SEN Support Plan at Targeted Level

Settings should continue to include some of the strategies listed above under ‘Provision for children not making expected progress / SEN Support Plan at Universal Plus’. However, children at this level are likely to require additional support arrangements which may include:

- SEN Support Plans or Provision Mapping which includes specific targets for the child, based on their primary need and includes strategies received from other professional or specialist agencies. These should include the following:
  - short term measurable targets set out for or by the child (SMART)
  - teaching/support strategies to be used
  - provision to be put in place
  - when the plan is to be reviewed
  - success/exit criteria (i.e. when child has made adequate progress on developmental levels)
  - outcomes, recorded when the plan is reviewed
  - full involvement and signature of parent/carer

- integral use of visual timetables incorporating objects of reference, symbols, etc.
- differentiation of activities and materials to support specific targets
- direct teaching sessions clearly planned for the individual child
- regular supervision and individualised and consistent behaviour management approaches, including behaviour management plans for those children with individual challenging behaviour
- risk assessments and Care Plans may be in place, including an audit of the environment to ensure safety around the setting.
- staff training on specific SEN or Care Plan issues.
- specialist equipment may be required to support children with physical disabilities.
- changes to staff deployment to enable small group work or individualised support for specific and planned activities
- emotion support to gain positive relationships with peers
support at circle time to maintain concentration, built up slowly over time and incorporating a reward system.

all activities should be supported with visual prompts and size of the group at circle time should be carefully considered.

Resources:

- individual visual timetables
- behaviour support materials
- specific environmental adaptations for sensory needs
- specialist equipment to ensure curriculum access (e.g. hearing aid systems for children with hearing impairment)
- identified working spaces
- clear signage aids
- additional supervision when accessing particular equipment or resources, to ensure health and safety of all children and adults
- support from an Area SENDCo
- support from other professionals (e.g. Hearing Impairment teacher, Educational Psychologist)
- advice from Speech and Language Therapy, Specialist Health Visitor, Physiotherapy and Occupational Health, Visual Impairment Team, Early Support, Early Help Practitioner
- Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings where appropriate to encourage a consistent approach.

Funding SEN Support Plan at Targeted Level

Child already in a setting or nursery class within a school

Some children will not require any additional funding at this level, and the setting will be able to put effective strategies and interventions into place which are having a positive impact upon the child’s outcomes.

However, there will be some children who will require additional funding to enable the setting to be able to support the child to make progress.

Where a setting identify a child who they feel will benefit from additional funding, they should seek support, in the first instance, from their Area SENDCo.

If the Area SENDCo working with the SENCo, considers that the child would benefit from additional funding to enable the setting to be able to provide the specific support
and additional differentiated teaching, they should complete the Early Years Funding application form. For a copy of the form, email UFI-Service@havering.gov.uk

**Child not yet in a setting or school**

Where a child has SEN and is transferring from Home Learning Support to a setting, or where a child has not yet started at a setting and there are a number of other professionals already involved, then the Early Support Keyworker will need to complete the Early Years Funding application form.

This will provide an opportunity for the professional to identify the needs of the child, the support they will need when they start at a setting, and detail why the setting may need additional funding to support the child.

The application for additional funding will be considered at the next Early Years Funding Panel meetings. The referrer will be informed of the Panel's decision within 5 working days of the meeting.

**Funding Amount SEN Support at Targeted Level**

Early Education Entitlement (EEE) + £100 for a 3 hour session maximum of 15 hours per term.

**Monitoring SEN Support at Targeted Level**

PVI settings receive consultation visits from their allocated Area SENDCo to discuss and assess the setting’s ability to provide appropriate interventions and strategies to support children with SEN.

Where additional funding is in place the termly consultation visit will also assess whether the additional funding is being used effectively to support the child’s learning.

In settings the AS expect to see SEN Support Planning, on-going assessment of children’s progress and evidence of the strategies and interventions put in place and the review process.

**SEN Support Plan at Specialist Level**

For a child to be considered as SEN Support Plan at Specialist Level the SENCo, in partnership with the Area SENDCo and other professionals, will have sufficient and mounting evidence over a period of time that the child has made very little progress and is now significantly delayed, despite very targeted strategies and interventions at Targeted Level.

**Provision for children on an SEN Support Plan at Specialist Level**

At this stage Settings should continue to include some of the strategies listed above under SEN Support Plan at Universal Plus and SEN Support Plan at Targeted Level but will need to include a combination of the following.
- Additional support for the child by increasing staffing ratios for intensive support and interventions to meet the targets set for the child (note this does not mean the child requires 1:1 at all times)

- Intensive support/teaching for the child, taking place on an individualised basis and based on the child’s level of development

- Intensive support for the child to meet Personal, Social and Emotional development (e.g. highly challenging behaviour, social interaction, self-esteem and positive relationships.)

- Intensive support to manage basic hygiene and personal needs.

- On-going TAF or multi-agency meetings with a range of professionals, which may also include social care or early intervention professionals through an Early Help Assessment

- Significant attention being paid to the provision and maintenance of a range of personal equipment.

- Manual handling and hoist training for staff where applicable.

- Team Teach training (i.e. Positive Physical Intervention) where appropriate

- All staff must be fully aware of the child’s issues to ensure consistent and highly efficient application of strategies across the session.

- Health Care Plan and Risk Assessment in place for children with medical needs and/or challenging behaviour.

- If the child is due to attend school consider an application for an Education, Health and Care assessment.

### Funding SEN Support Plan at Specialist Level

**Child already in a setting**

An Early Years Funding Panel request should be completed. For a copy of the form, email UFI-Service@havering.gov.uk

The application will be considered at the next Early Years Funding Panel meeting. The setting will be informed of the Panel’s decision within 5 working days of the meeting.

**Child not yet in a setting or school**

Where a child has SEN and is transferring from Home Learning Support to a setting, or where a child has not yet started at a setting and there are a number of other professionals already involved, then the Early Support Keyworker will need to complete the Early Years Funding request form.
This will provide an opportunity for the professional to identify the needs of the child, the support they will need when they start at a setting, and detail why the setting may need additional funding to support the child.

The application for additional funding will be considered at the next Early Years Funding Panel meetings. The referrer will be informed of the Panel’s decision within 5 working days of the meeting.

**Funding Amount SEN Support at Specialist Level**

Same amount as a child on Target Level support, Early Education Entitlement (EEE) + £100 per 3 hour session maximum of 15 hours per term. In exceptional cases contingency funding may be requested for further information and a request form e-mail UFI-Service@havering.gov.uk

**Monitoring SEN Support at Specialist Level**

PVI settings receive consultation visits from their allocated Area SENDCo to discuss and assess the setting’s ability to provide appropriate interventions and strategies to support children with SEN.

Where additional funding is in place the termly consultation visit will also assess whether the additional funding is being used effectively to support the child’s learning.

Whilst settings can decide how the funding is spent (e.g. staffing, resources, SENCo non-contact time), they will be closely monitored on the impact of their support to the child or children and we will expect to see SEN Support Planning, on-going assessment of children’s progress, evidence of the strategies and interventions put in place and the review process.

If no appropriate impact is evidenced, the Local Authority will request evidence of appropriate spend and may seek to withdraw funding.

**The Early Years Funding Panel**

The Early Years Funding Panel is a small group of professionals representing a multi-agency response who meet twice a term, to consider requests from providers for funding to help support the individual needs of children who have SEN and disabilities in the early years. Referrals are always made with parental consent.

The main aims of the Panel are:

- To consider all requests for Early Years Funding
- To ensure there is a co-ordinated response for children with SEN and disabilities in the early years
- To clarify the nature of the child’s additional needs
- To consider the interventions and strategies that have already been put in place by settings
To consider the support, interventions and strategies that are in place from other professionals.