

**Q&As**

Q How do schools initially contact parents if they think there may be a problem?

A The class teacher usually speaks to the parent and arranges a meeting. The SENCO could be part of that meeting, if it is felt appropriate. This meeting should be face to face and will be used to discuss the concerns the class teacher/school has and their proposed SEND Support plan to address these issues. This plan will have been put together after assessing the child. Once it is agreed with the parents/family it should be implemented. It will be reviewed at an agreed time. This is known as the **GRADUATED APPROACH** of **Assess, Plan, Do, Review**. Parents should receive feedback on how well their child/young person is doing once a term.

Q How does Assess, Plan, Do, Review work?

A The child's needs are identified and then support is put in place via an individual support plan, agreed with the school and the parent. The SEND Support Plan/IEP must be reviewed termly with the family and the child/young person where appropriate, to discuss how the additional support (targeted interventions-not all C/YP will need targeted support) has worked and what needs to be put in place (if necessary) for the following term.

Q What happens if the needs are not being targeted by school?

A Parents should arrange a meeting with the class teacher and the SENDCo in the first instance and outline their concerns. Be open and honest. It is important that you have an open dialogue with the school to ensure your child gets the support they require. Ask to have regular updates on your child/young person. This could be in the form an update once a fortnight. *(These regular updates don't have to be face to face, it could a telephone call or the school sending photocopies of work completed home)*

Q What happens next if the SENCO meeting has not worked and the support provided is still not enough?

A Arrange a meeting with a member of the senior leadership team HT/DHT. Prior to the meeting you could ask for a copy of the latest IEP and the Provision Map together with any other evidence from school which should detail specific targets that have been identified and the support provided for your child to meet these targets (Please see page 13, 14, 15 of the handout (LINK TO WEBSITE)) Good communication and partnership working is key. Make sure you leave this meeting feeling that you have a pathway forward.

- Q Why do children have to fail before help is given?
- A This should not happen; any issues or needs should be addressed as soon as they are identified.
- Q My child is 3 years' behind and I have been told that they won't get an EHCP/Support until they are in secondary school and that things are going to get really bad!
- A Arrange a meeting with the necessary professionals at your child/young person's current school to discuss your concerns and their proposed next steps. What Transition arrangements does the school have in place? How are they going to ensure your child/young person gets the necessary SEND Support they need for a successful transition? Does your child/young person need any additional funding like an Additional Support Contract to facilitate a smooth and successful transition. Ask if they could arrange a meeting with the Year Head (Class teacher primary) and SENDCo of the receiving school for you to attend.  
You should have a transition meeting to include the current SENCO together with key staff from secondary school which would include the SENCO and class teacher. This meeting should be used to go through the provision map so that the secondary school are very aware of what is required as well addressing the young person's needs going forward
- Q Why won't the school tell the parent where the child is with their learning?
- A The school should discuss this with you at least at the termly/SEND support/IEP meetings.
- Q If your child masks their behaviour and emotions at school, how do you get the SENCO to support your child when the school do not acknowledge their masking?
- A When you attend a meeting at school to discuss this, it could be helpful to plan a list of points you want to share and explain. Be honest and say it how it is and, if appropriate, get the child/young person to give their views so that everything can be documented. Sometimes it can be helpful to take a family member/friend or a member of SPCF/SIASS to support you at the meeting. It may be easier for them to explain your child's behaviours and emotions as they will not be so emotionally involved.
- Q Can your child be removed from the SEN register without prior agreement with parent?
- A All changes such as this should be discussed with the family. You should be informed at the termly SEND Support meeting, if your child has achieved all

their targets and there is no longer the need for them to be on the SEND register

Q What is the process for complaining about your school's SENCO?

A In the first instance you would ask to speak to a member of the senior leadership team to raise your concerns. If you feel after speaking to this senior person, there is no significant improvements then you would approach the governing body. *(It would be useful to consult the school's Complaints and SEND Policies prior to acting)*

Q Process is very difficult for parents. Can you send slides from today please?

A Yes, we can send slides and they will also be posted on our website [Notes from events, workshops and coffee mornings 2022 - Sutton Parents Forum](#)

Q How has Covid impacted on support in schools?

A There has been an increase in SEND numbers because of the pandemic. This has resulted in many of our schools seeking support from outside agencies. Jane Morgan gave the example that the number of referrals to her Early Years Team have tripled since March 2020.

Q Is there a shortage of SENCOs and resources in schools?

A Every school must have a SENCO who is a qualified teacher, although it does not need to be a full-time role. Larger schools 4 form entry primary or above secondary schools may have assistant SENDCos. These individuals do not need to be a qualified teacher. Some schools may have an Inclusion Lead and a SENDCo. The Inclusion Lead could be a deputy or assistant headteacher. Schools receive SEND funding that is deemed appropriate to meet the level of need within the school.

Q Has workload increased for SENCOs?

A Yes it has, but they should still want to do the best for your child. Covid has prevented some interventions taking place, because sometimes there are not enough staff in school *(due to Covid infections)* to provide all of the additional support required e.g. targeted group work which may need to take place outside of the classroom.

Q Is there mandatory training for staff who support Down Syndrome children in school? What is defined by a TA Specialist in Down Syndrome? What qualifications should we expect the TA to have other than learning on the job?

A The school would provide the necessary and appropriate training for any support staff in their school supporting a child or young person with Downs Syndrome or any other condition.  
The Down Syndrome Act is expected in 2022 and the aim of this is to ensure that Local Authorities take account of the specific needs of children and young people with Down Syndrome when delivering interventions. All staff including TAs, office staff and midday supervisors should be trained to support children with DS appropriately.

Q Who funds training for schools?

A The senior leadership team and the governing body will decide what training needs to take place within their school and the necessary funding they need to allocate to facilitate this training taking place.

Q Why can't an ADHD assessment be carried out until a child is 7?  
When parents are concerned how can ADHD be picked up between 2-5 years?

ADHD can be diagnosed as early as four years old. To be diagnosed between the ages of four and 16, a child must show six or more symptoms for more than six months, with most signs appearing before twelve years of age.

Is there any other support for a child with ADHD other than from CAMHS?

A There are other services such as school nurses, some schools have child well being practitioners and educational psychologists.  
Cognus have Paving the Way who can give advice and strategies for young people with ADHD tendencies.

Q Some children with ADHD have very challenging behaviour and dislike school so what can should a parents/carer do to get the right support to enable the child to access school? E.g. My son has ELSA input twice a week but this is not sufficient.

A Fifteen of our schools are currently participating in an inclusion project being run by Rebecca Duffus and Andrew Whitehouse. They have worked extensively with the schools. A consequence of their work will be that we will have some Neurodiverse Champions within our local area from September 2022 to support our SENDCos moving forward. Agreed at the meeting to put on some workshops lead by Rebecca and Andrew in the summer and Autumn terms for SPCF

Q Does Paving the Way work alongside CAMHS or is CAMHS separate?

A CAMHS and Paving the Way are separate services and you would not be under both at the same time. The link to the Paving the Way pathway will give you more information [Early Intervention and Identification \(Paving the Way\) – Cognus](#)

Q Is it standard practice to have small group working in schools?

A Yes but this is based on the identified needs of the child or young person and the targeted intervention agreed in the SEN Support Plan. Most schools do have small groups working within classes or outside the classroom. Ask the school to explain how this works so that you can understand how this works in your child's school.

JM explained that an Additional Support Contract, where an amount up to £2,000 can be awarded for a maximum of two terms, can be applied for if the school feels it needs additional funding in the medium term to facilitate them meeting a child or young person's needs.

High Need Block Review is usually long-term funding resulting in an EHCP.

Q How do you know when SEN Support interventions are not enough and an EHCP is needed? What happens if you are turned down for an EHCP despite school insisting that is what is needed to support the child?

A If the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle and agreed interventions, including where appropriate taking advice from an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language or OT Therapist or the Early Years advisors or Autism Team are not enough to support your child or young person to make progress and their needs are deemed to need support long term, then an EHCNA can be requested. The provision map should clearly evidence that the school is exhausting its notional budget £6K and the intervention in place are predominantly targeted and specific. There should be clear assessment data to show that the child/young person is significantly behind their peers and progress is limited.

Q How do you get outside help such as Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy when school feels it is necessary and waiting lists are excessive?

A If a child or young person needs therapeutic support this should be discussed as part of the SEND Support meeting. Waiting lists with Cognus are longer than we would like because of the challenges the pandemic has presented. However, hopefully things will improve soon.

Q What happens if you are on a long waiting list for OT and you have had to go privately?

A You should not have had to pay for a private assessment. If you choose to pursue this route, you should share the private report with school so that the recommended interventions can be put in place for your child. You should be signposted to Paving the Way, Rebecca Duffus, to see what service from Cognus can be provided in school. The therapies team has been restructured with graduated support?

If EHCNA is unsuccessful, parents should receive feedback from the EHCP Co-ordinator explaining why the SEN Panel did not agree. The family will be offered a Next Steps meeting. In certain scenarios the paperwork can go back to Panel e.g. if you have further/new evidence to support the application. It is always a good idea to take someone to support you at the Next Steps Meeting.

Q You described the funding structure in your slides. Is this per child?

A Yes, the school has a notional SEND Budget and how it is used is up to the leadership team. Up to £6,000 can be spent on one child per year. The school will decide how best to use this funding to ensure the child or young person's needs are met.

**JM to look into providing specialist workshops on ADHD, Dyslexia and other needs. SPCF to work with JM to plan specialist workshops.**