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# **Frequently asked questions (F.A.Qs.)**

**Factsheet Number 8 August 2025**

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## **Disclaimer**: This is a guide and should not be treated as legal advice. Although SENDIASS Manchester makes all reasonable efforts to ensure that the information contained in this factsheet is accurate and up to date at the time of publication, we cannot accept responsibility for outcomes suffered because of reliance placed upon it.

All hyperlinks in this factsheet are correct as of August 2025.

## **I think my child may have a special educational need - what do I do?**

You could speak to your General Practitioner (GP), school or nursery teacher, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or the school nurse. You can also contact SENDIASS (Special Education Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service) Manchester, if you feel you need further help. How to contact SENDIASS is at the end of this FAQ sheet.

## **My Child has a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) but does not have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC plan) - what support is available?**

The support available is called ‘SEND Support’ and this support is tailored to your child’s individual needs. It can be wide-ranging. For example, if a child has dyslexia, it might simply involve using pastel coloured paper overlays. (See our factsheet 33 for a list of reasonable adjustments for dyslexia). <https://www.iasmanchester.org/factsheets> If a child is learning at a slower pace, the SEND support could involve small group work within the classroom. Sometimes these forms of support are called ‘reasonable adjustments.

Through the Code of Practice 2015 for SEND support, schools and other settings are required to use the approach: Assess, Plan, Doand Review.

You should be involved, and your views will be needed throughout the process, and you should be kept up to date with the progress made. Young people aged 16 to 25 should be fully involved in designing their own SEND Support and provision.

## **My child is about to move schools - what advice and tips can you give me?**

It is useful to find out:

* Whether the school has experience of children with similar needs and what strategies are in place and have been effective.
* What the school's special educational needs policy is- this should be available on the school’s website.
* How the SENCO passes information about children to teaching staff.
* How your child would be supported in class.
* How you would be involved in supporting your child's progress and development.

## **I think my child might need support with their social understanding / behaviour - what is available?**

There are several types of help available depending on your child's needs. If you think that your child may need extra help you could:

1. Contact the SENCO at your child’s school or setting.
2. Contact SEND Information, Advice and Support Service – Manchester (SENDIASS)

# Confidential Helpline 0161 209 8356 Mon - Fri Clearly leaving your name, contact number and a brief message and a member of the team will respond to you within 24 hours or the next working day.

# By email- [sendiass@manchester.gov.uk.or](mailto:sendiass@manchester.gov.uk.or) via our [SENDIASS website](https://www.iasmanchester.org)

## **What is SEND?**

The Education Act 1996 defines SEND as:

“A child has special educational needs if he or she has a difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.”

### A child has a learning difficulty if s/he:

1. Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age
2. Has a disability which either prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority?
3. Is under five and falls within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for the child.

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of the home is different from the language in which he/she will be taught.

## **What does Special educational provision mean?**

* For a child over two, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made for children of the child’s age in maintained mainstream schools, in the area.
* For a child under two, educational provision of any kind (Section 312, Education Act 1996)

## **My Child has Special Educational Needs and needs more help at school, what help can they get?**

As your child already has identified Special Educational Needs, it is a good idea to ask to meet with your child's class teacher, form tutor or the pre-school setting leader and the SENCO or Inclusion Co-ordinator. You may already have a review meeting arranged to look at your child’s progress and support. If not, you can ask for one to be arranged.

You can explain at the meeting why you think your child needs more help, you feel they are not making progress, falling further behind, or just telling you or showing you, they are unhappy at school. You can ask to see evidence of the progress your child is making and talk through any changes to support that would help. You can look at their individual progress tracker, see which targets your child has achieved and what support helps them learn.

The amount of support you can expect your child to have depends on whether your child receives support at the level called SEND Support or has an EHC plan. Whichever stage your child is at, you can expect them to be given the right level of support to help them learn and make progress.

If your child is not making progress, then perhaps they need more individual support, more targeted support, or a different approach to help them learn.

The school could offer increased support or adapt the ways they are teaching them. The school should always be able to show you what support your child is getting and how they are monitoring their progress, who else is involved in planning their support, for example, an educational psychologist or speech and language therapist or a teacher from the Special Educational Need Support Services and how they are following their advice.

## **What is an EHC plan?**

An EHC plan is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person to achieve what they want to in their life.

It should:

* State the views, interests, and aspirations (wishes) of the parents and child or young person.
* Describe the child or young person’s special educational needs and any health and social care needs.
* Specify the provision required to meet those needs.
* State how services will work together to meet the child or young person’s needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes that have been agreed together. The plan should have short, medium- and long-term outcomes.

## **Who can make a request for an EHC plan?**

A child or young person’s school or setting can make a request to have the child assessed, as can a parent. A young person (16-25 years) can also make a request themselves.

In making its decision about whether a child or young person needs an EHC needs assessment, the local authority must look at what support has already been provided and whether there has been any progress. If a school or setting makes the request, they will be able to provide evidence of support, attainment, and rate of progress.

If you as a parent, or your young person, make a request, visit the Independent Provider for Special Education Advice (IPSEA) website which gives detailed advice on what you should do – [www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)

## **What does an EHC plan look like?**

Contact SENDIASS Manchester who have template copies of the Manchester EHC plan.

The template for plans can look different in local authorities but all must include the same information.

There are thirteen sections that must be in a plan. Each section relates to specific information from specific services or people. Parents and young people fill out section ‘A’ and can add to section ‘K’ but are involved throughout.

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### **Sections of an EHC Plan:**

A: The views, interests, and aspirations (wishes) of your child

B: Special educational needs or Disability (SEND)

C: Health needs related to SEND

D: Social care needs related to SEND

E: Outcomes (goals) - how the extra help will benefit your child

F: Special educational provision (support)

G: Health provision.

H: Social care provision. (H1 and H2).

I: Placement - type and name of school or other institution.

J: Personal budget arrangements.

K: Advice and information - a list of the information gathered during the EHC needs assessment.

## **My child has been put on a part-time timetable - Is this legal?**

In very exceptional circumstances a pupil can be put on a part-time table but in law they are entitled to full time education from the age of five. There needs to be full agreement from the parent/carer. It needs to be temporary with a time limit stating when it will end and regular meetings with the school to see how they are going to get the pupil back into full time education. If the child has an EHC plan. it may be that an early review needs to be called. For more information, please read our Factsheet No: 9 - Part-time timetables.

## **School keeps sending my child home to “cool off,” are they allowed to do this?**

No. These are classed as illegal exclusions and are unlawful regardless of any agreement from a parent/carer. Any exclusion of a pupil even for a brief period must be formally recorded. For more information, please read our Factsheet No:9 Part-time timetables.

## **I keep being asked to take my child home for lunch time, should the school be doing this?**

Each lunchtime exclusion must be recorded as a half day exclusion. You must receive a letter from the school about this. You and school should be working together to get your child back into school at lunch time.

## **The school are not providing any SEN Support for my child. What do I do?**

The Code of Practice says educational settings must use their ‘best endeavours’ to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need. A child with SEN should have a SEN Support plan in place following a four-stage cycle Assess, Plan, Review called the graduated approach. The school should review your child’s progress and the difference that the help has made. Every mainstream school gets a basic funding entitlement to support children with SEN. Arrange a meeting with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and class teacher at your child’s setting to discuss. For more information, please read Factsheets No:4 SEN Support in mainstream schools and No:17 SEN Support for Further Education

## **School/college/nursery have told me that my child’s needs are not high enough for an EHC plan and would not qualify for one, is this correct?**

No. This is not correct. There are legal tests and criteria that a local authority must use in determining whether a child needs an EHC plan or not. This is done on a case-by-case basis using evidence provided. For more information on the EHC plan needs assessment read factsheet No.2 and No: 28 Applying for an Education, Health, and Care Assessment.

## **I have been told that EHC plan is just a piece of paper, and nothing is ever done with it, is that right?**

No. This is not correct. An EHC plan is a legal document that details your child’s needs and the provision to support those needs. Legally an educational setting must comply with that is written in the EHC plan. It is the local authorities’ responsibility to make sure the EHC plan is being followed and legally compliant.

## **I have my child’s draft EHC plan, what should I do now?**

This is your chance to check that everything you expected to be in the plan is there and to tell the local authority EHC plan team if you think that there is anything missing or wrong. For more information, please read Factsheets No 1, Education and Health Care Plans and No: 2 The Statutory Assessment Process. <https://www.iasmanchester.org/factsheets>

## **Whose responsibility is it to provide my medically unfit child with an education?**

Children and young people with medical conditions are entitled to a full education. In the first instance it is the educational setting (school) that the child is on roll at. The governing body must ensure there are arrangements in place to support pupils with medical conditions.

The Local Authority (LA) is responsible for arranging suitable, full-time education for children of compulsory school age, who because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision.

The LA should be ready to take responsibility for any child whose illness will prevent them from attending school for fifteen or more school days, either in one absence or over the course of a school year, where education is not otherwise being arranged.

LAs should arrange provision as soon as an absence will last more than 15 days, and it should do so at the latest by the sixth day of the absence.

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| **Contact Details for SENDIASS Manchester**  Helpline Telephone number: 0161 209 8356. Please clearly leave your name, contact number and a brief message on the answerphone and a member of the team will contact you within 24 hours or the next working day.  **Or**  Email your query to us: [**sendiass@manchester.gov.uk**](mailto:sendiass@manchester.gov.uk) leaving your name, child’s name and their date of birth.  You can complete our website contact form: [**Contact Us (iasmanchester.org)**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/contact)  Visit Manchester SENDIASS website [**About SENDIASS Manchester (iasmanchester.org)**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/)  Manchester SENDIASS Podcasts [**Listen to our SEND Talk podcasts**](https://www.iasmanchester.org/podcasts)  Manchester SENDIASS YouTube channel [**https://www.youtube.com/@SENDIASSManchester**](https://www.youtube.com/@SENDIASSManchester)    **QR code for the website QR code for Facebook page** |