



## JARGON BUSTER FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education uses a number of terms and abbreviations that can be confusing to parents and others who are unused to them. This jargon buster tries to list the most common, and to describe their place in the special education system. They are not intended to provide a legal definition.

Also see the DfE Glossary of Special Educational Needs Terminology:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/sen/schools/a0013104/glossary-of-special-educational-needs-sen-terminology>

**Annual review:** the review of a statement of special educational needs which an LEA must make within 12 months of making the statement or, as the case may be, of the previous review. (Also: "A meeting of parents and professionals at school to evaluate a child's progress and make sure the statement still meets the child's needs.")

**Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)** This includes the milder form of ASD, Aspergers Syndrome through to full blown Autism.

**Baseline Assessment:** An assessment of your child's skills and abilities usually made by a teacher within the first seven weeks of starting primary school. It shows teachers what your child can do when starting school and helps them to plan lessons and measure progress. Areas covered include language and literacy, maths and personal and social development.

**Behavioural difficulty:** A pattern of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour, usually occurring in particular situations, which disrupts the education of the child and/or other pupils.

**Behaviour Support Plan:** A Statement which sets out local arrangements for schools and other service providers for the education of children with behavioural difficulties.

**Carer:** a carer is a person named by a local authority to care for a child for whom the social services department has parental responsibility, i.e. a child who is the subject of a care order and who has been placed in a residential or foster placement. The carer may qualify as a parent for the purposes of the Education Acts because they have care of the child (see the definition of Parent below). If so, they will have a role to play in the consideration of a child's special educational needs.

**Case conference:** A formal meeting of professional staff and parents to discuss a particular child.

### **Child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS)**

CAMHS promote the mental health and psychological wellbeing of children and young people, and provide high quality, multidisciplinary mental health services to children and young people with mental health problems and disorders to ensure effective assessment, treatment and support, for them and their families.

**Child protection register:** in each area covered by a social services department, a central register must be maintained which lists all the children in the area who are considered to be suffering from, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and for which there is a child protection plan. This is not a register of children who have been abused but of children for whom there are currently unresolved child protection issues. Children 'in need': a child is deemed to be 'in need'



if: they are unlikely to achieve and maintain, or do not have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision made by the local

authority; or their health and development are likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without provision made by the local authority; or they are disabled. (Section 17(10))Children Act 1989)

**Children 'in need':** a child is deemed to be 'in need':

- if he or she is unlikely, or does not have the opportunity, to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision made by the local authority; or
- if his or her health and development are likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services by the local authority; or
- if he or she is disabled. (Section 17(10), Children Act 1989).

**Code of practice for special educational needs:** A guide for schools and LEAs on the practical help they should offer children with SEN. The code must be considered when making any decisions about a child's education.

**Connexions Service:** The service (due to be withdrawn) provided a single point of access for all 13 – 19 year olds to help them prepare for the transition to work and adult life.

**Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs):** provide a universal information, advice and guidance service for all young people 13 – 19 years when and where they need it – whether they are at school, in further education, in or out of work.

**Definition of SEN:** A child is defined as having special educational needs (SEN) if he or she has a learning difficulty which needs special teaching. A learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age. Or, it means a child has a disability which needs different educational facilities from those that schools generally provide for children of the same age in the area. The children who need special educational education are not only those with obvious learning difficulties, such as those who are physically disabled, deaf or blind. They include those whose learning difficulties are less apparent, such as slow learners and emotionally vulnerable children. It is estimated that up to 20% of school children may need special educational help at some stage in their school careers.

**Department for Education (DfE):** the Government Department responsible for all matters to do with education.

**Developmental curriculum:** A programme for children who need to learn everyday skills, self-care, dressing, etc, and who may spend most of their education working towards the first level of the core school subjects in the national curriculum.

**Differentiated Curriculum:** A curriculum that is specially adapted to meet the special educational needs of individual children.

**Disagreement Arrangements:** All LEAs must provide arrangements to help prevent or resolve disagreements between parents, whose children have special educational needs, and the LEA or a school. They must include an independent element. They are designed to bring together the different parties in an informal way to seek to resolve the disagreement through discussion.



Using these arrangements is voluntary and does not in any way affect a parents right to appeal to the SEN Tribunal.

**Disapplication:** removal or lifting of a programme of study, attainment target, assessment, or any other component of the National Curriculum, or any combination of these including entire subjects or the entire National Curriculum through relevant regulations. (See also Modification, below.)

**Dyscalculia** Pupils with dyscalculia have difficulty in acquiring mathematical skills. Pupils may have difficulty understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers and have problems learning number facts and procedures.

**Dyslexia** Pupils with dyslexia have a marked and persistent difficulty in learning to read, write and spell, despite progress in other areas. Pupils may have poor reading comprehension, handwriting and punctuation. They may also have difficulties in concentration and organisation, and in remembering sequences of words. They may mispronounce common words or reverse letters and sounds in words.

**Dyspraxia** Pupils with dyspraxia are affected by an impairment or immaturity of the organisation of movement, often appearing clumsy. Gross and fine motor skills are hard to learn and difficult to retain and generalise. Pupils may have poor balance and coordination and may be hesitant in many actions (running, skipping, hopping, holding a pencil, doing jigsaws, etc). Their articulation may also be immature and their language late to develop. They may also have poor awareness of body position and poor social skills.

**Early education practitioners:** all the adults who work with children in early education settings, whatever their qualifications.

**Early education settings:** providers in receipt of government funding to deliver early education including – maintained mainstream and special schools, maintained nursery schools, independent schools, non-maintained special schools, local authority daycare providers such as day nurseries and family centres, other registered daycare providers such as pre-schools, playgroups and private day nurseries, local authority Portage schemes and accredited childminders working as part of an approved National Childminding Association network.

**Early learning goals:** expectations in each of the six areas of learning for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage.

**Early Years Action:** when the early education practitioner who works day-to-day with the child or the SENCO identify that a child has special educational needs together they provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the setting's usual curriculum offer and strategies. An IEP will usually be devised. **Early Years Action Plus:** when the early education practitioner who works day-to-day with the child and the SENCO are provided with advice or support from outside specialists, so that alternative interventions additional or different strategies to those provided for the child through *Early Years Action* can be put in place. A new IEP will usually be devised.

**Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships:** Every LEA is required to establish an early years development partnership to work with them in reviewing the sufficiency of nursery education and preparing early years development plans.



**Educational Psychologist (EP):** educational psychologists offer help and guidance to staff and parents who work with children with significant learning, communication, social, emotional, behavioural, physical or sensory difficulties.

### **Educational psychology service**

The educational psychology service visit schools regularly and contribute to the statutory assessment of pupils. They provide psychological advice in the form of a report based on observations and tests. Educational psychologists (EPs) are trained and have worked as teachers. They should not be confused with psychiatrists who are doctors concerned with mental illness.

### **Education social workers**

Education social workers (ESWs) work with schools and families to promote good school attendance. ESWs also work with individual children who have behavioural difficulties.

**Education supervision order:** an order that LEAs, under section 36 of the Children Act 1989, can apply for a child of statutory school age who is not being properly educated to be put under the supervision of the LEA, with the intention of ensuring that he or she receives efficient full-time education suited to his or her age, aptitude, ability and any special educational needs, and that sufficient support, advice and guidance are provided to the parents.

**Education Welfare Officer:** person employed by an LEA to help parents and LEAs meet their respective statutory obligations in relation to school attendance. In some LEAs Education Welfare Officers are known as Education Social Workers.

**Foundation stage:** the foundation stage begins when children reach the age of three. Many children attend an early education setting soon after their third birthday. The foundation stage continues until the end of the reception year and is consistent with the National Curriculum. It prepares children for learning in year 1, when programmes of study for key stage 1 are taught.

**Graduated approach:** a model of action and intervention in schools and early education settings to help children who have special educational needs. The approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be brought to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing.

**Group Education Plan:** where pupils in the same group, class or subject lesson have common targets and hence, common strategies a group learning plan can be drawn up rather than IEPs for each child.

**Inclusion:** inclusion encompasses broad notions of educational access than the term 'integration' and recognises the importance of catering for diverse needs. Inclusive principles highlight the importance of meeting children's individual needs, of working in partnership with pupils/carers and of involving teachers and schools in the development of more inclusive approaches. Inclusion assumes that the school will adapt to the child as much as the child will adapt to the school (see also **integration**) **Also: Inclusion:** Inclusive education means that mainstream schools should be structured and resourced to enable them to welcome and accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other abilities and needs.

**Independent Parental Supporter:** a person to whom all parents should have access, if they so wish. The Independent Parental Supporter must be someone who can support parents for example by attending meetings, encouraging parental participation, and helping the parent



understand the SEN framework. Independent means someone independent of the decision making process that determines the type and level of support for a child with special educational needs. Independent Parental Supporters will often be someone from a voluntary organisation, a parent partnership service, another parent or a friend. Also: **Independent Parental Support (IPS)**

*A person identified by the LEA or parents to provide confidential, independent support and information to parents during the statutory assessment process.*

**Independent school:** a school that is not maintained by a local education authority and is registered under section 464 of the Education Act 1996, sometimes called a 'private school'. Section 347 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the conditions under which an independent school may be approved by the Secretary of State as being suitable for the admission of children with statements of special educational needs.

**Individual Education Plan (IEP):** The IEP is a planning, teaching and reviewing tool. It is a working document for all teaching staff recording key short-term targets and strategies for an individual pupil that are different from or additional to those in place for the rest of the group or class. The interventions will be provided Early Years Action, *Early Years Action Plus*, *School Action*, *School Action Plus* and statements of SEN. Also: **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** A learning programme for an individual child with learning difficulties, which includes what the child needs to learn and how that will be taught.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** covers a range of microcomputers, both portable and desktop; generic or integrated software packages, such as word processors, spreadsheets, databases and communication programmes; input devices such as keyboards, overlay keyboards, specialised access switches and touch screens; output devices such as monitors, printers and plotters; storage devices such as CD-ROM, and microelectronics controlled devices such as a floor turtle.

**Integration:** educating children with special educational needs together with children without special educational needs in mainstream schools wherever possible, and ensuring that children with special educational needs engage in the activities of the school together with children who do not have special educational needs (see also **inclusion**).

**Key Stage:** (see **National Curriculum Year**)

**Language and Literacy Centre (LAL Centre):** provision for primary age pupils who have a specific literacy difficulty. Children are taught in small groups for one session a week in the Centre.

**Learning Mentors:** school staff who work with teaching and pastoral staff to assess, identify and work with those pupils who need extra help to overcome barriers to learning inside and outside school. They are a single point of contact for accessing specialist support services, such as the Social Services, Youth Services, Education Welfare Services etc..

**Learning support assistant (LSA):** a widely used job title for an assistant providing in-school support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. An LSA will normally work with a particular pupil or pupils providing close support to the individual pupil and assistance to those responsible for teaching him/her. Some assistants specialising in SEN may also be known by titles other than LSA as these matters are decided locally. LSAs are one of a group of assistants coming within the broader DfES classification of "teaching assistant".

**Local Education Authority (LEA):** The LEA is responsible for educational provision in its area.





**Maintained school:** for the purposes of this Code, schools maintained by a local education authority – any community, foundation, voluntary schools, community special and foundation special schools, sometimes called a ‘State school’.

**Modification:** amendment or alteration of a programme of study, attainment target, assessment or any other component of the National Curriculum in order to give the child access to that area of the Curriculum (see also **Disapplication** and **National Curriculum Inclusion statement**).

**Named LEA Officer:** the person from the LEA who liaises with parents over all the arrangements relating to statutory assessment and the making of a statement. LEAs must inform parents of the identity of the Named Officer when they issue a notice of a proposal to make a statutory assessment of a child.

**Named officer** An officer of the LEA who can give you information and help about your child's education. In Ealing they are called named special education officers.

**National Curriculum:** this sets out a clear, full and statutory entitlement to learning for all pupils, determining what should be taught and setting attainment targets for learning. It also determines how performance will be assessed and reported.

**National Curriculum Inclusion statement:** A detailed overarching statement on Inclusion is included in the National Curriculum; it makes clear the principles schools must follow in their teaching right across the curriculum, to ensure that all pupils have the chance to succeed, whatever their individual needs and the potential barriers to their learning may be. It includes modification of the National Curriculum.

**National Curriculum Year:** the school year (1 September to 31 August) during which a child reaches a particular age often shortened to ‘Y’. The stages of a child’s education are grouped into key stages:

National Curriculum Year	Age of child	
1	6	Key Stage One
2	7	
3	8	
4	9	Key Stage Two
5	10	
6	11	
7	12	Key Stage Three
8	13	
9	14	
10	15	Key Staged Four
11	16	

**Non-maintained special school:** schools in England approved by the Secretary of State under section 342 of the Education Act 1996 as special schools which are not maintained by the state but charge fees on a non-profit-making basis. Most non-maintained special schools are run by major charities or charitable trusts.

**Note in lieu:** a note issued to the child's parents and school when, following a statutory assessment, the LEA decide not to make a statement. The note should describe the child's special educational needs, explain why the LEA will not make a statement and make recommendations about appropriate provision for the child. All the advice received during the



assessment should be attached to the note sent to the parents and, with their consent, should also be sent to the child's school. **Also: Note in lieu (of statement)** A document, produced by the LEA that sets out the reasons why a statement should not be made and the special provision to be made by the school.

**Occupational therapy (OT):** Occupational therapy is the use of purposeful activity and play to help a child attain maximum levels of functional performance, thus gaining self-esteem and independence. Motor, sensory, perceptual, social, emotional and self-care skills are assessed. Working with the child, parents and teachers, occupational therapists use therapeutic techniques (advising on equipment and environment adaptations where appropriate) to improve a child's ability to access the physical and learning curriculum.

**Occupational therapist (OT)** Provides programmes to develop the management of everyday tasks. They can also advise about aids and adaptations.(Occupational therapists usually work for the local health authority).

**OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education:** a non-Ministerial government department established under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 to take responsibility for the inspection of all schools in England. Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) forms their professional arm.

**Paediatricians** Doctors who specialise in children's needs and can refer a child to other health specialists, if necessary.

**Parent:** under section 576 of the Education Act 1996 a parent includes any person who is not a parent of the child but has parental responsibility (see also Parental Responsibility), or who cares for him.

**Parental responsibility:** under section 2 of the Children Act 1989, parental responsibility falls upon: all mothers and fathers who were married to each other at the time of the child's birth (including those who have since separated or divorced); mothers who were not married to the father at the time of the child's birth; and fathers who were not married to the mother at the time of the child's birth, but who have obtained parental responsibility either by agreement with the child's mother or through a court order. Under section 12 of the Children Act 1989 where a court makes a residence order in favour of any person who is not the parent or guardian of the child that person has parental responsibility for the child while the residence order remains in force. Under section 33 (3) of the Children Act 1989, while a care order is in force with respect to a child, the social services department (SSD) designated by the order will have parental responsibility for that child, and will have the power (subject to certain provisions) to determine the extent to which a parent or guardian of the child may meet his or her parental responsibility for the child. The SSD cannot have parental responsibility for a child unless that child is the subject of a care order, except for very limited purposes where an emergency protection Order is in force under Section 44 of the Children Act 1989. Parental responsibility is defined under section 3(1) of the Children Act 1989 as meaning all the duties, rights, powers, responsibilities and authority which parents have with respect to their children and their children's property.

**Parent Partnership Services:** provide advice and information to parents whose children have special educational needs. They provide neutral and factual support on all aspects of the SEN framework to help parents play an active and informed role in their child's education. Although funded by the local education authority they provide a service to parents and are often either run at arms length from the authority or by a voluntary organisation to ensure parents have confidence in them.



**Physiotherapy:** physiotherapy is a health care profession that emphasises the use of physical approaches in the promotion, maintenance and restoration of an individual's physical, psychological and social well-being. Following assessment, a treatment plan is developed in partnership with the client/carers; this plan is constantly evaluated to ensure that it is effective and relevant to the individual's changing circumstances and health status.

**Physiotherapists** Trained to assess movement and physical development such as balance, co-ordination, ability to sit, stand and walk. They advise on how to help a child develop movement.

**Placement** A school, unit or other facility, which the LEA thinks best meets the specific needs of a child.

**PMLD** - Profound and multiple learning difficulties.

**Pupil Referral Unit:** any school established and maintained by a local education authority under section 19 (2) of the Education Act 1996 which is specially organised to provide education for pupils who would not otherwise receive suitable education because of illness, exclusion or any other reason. Further details are given in DfEE Circular 11/99 Chapter 6.

**Responsible Person:** the head teacher or the appropriate governor, that is the chairman of the governing body unless the governing body have designated another governor for the purpose. In the case of a nursery school, the responsible person is the head teacher. The LEA must inform the responsible person when they conclude that a pupil at a school has SEN. The responsible person must then ensure that all those who will teach the child know about the child's SEN.

**School Action:** when a class or subject teacher identify that a pupil has special educational needs they provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum offer and strategies. An IEP will usually be devised.

**School Action Plus:** when the class or subject teacher and the SENCO are provided with advice or support from outside specialists, so that alternative interventions additional or different strategies to those provided for the pupil through *School Action* can be put in place. The SENCO usually takes the lead although day-to-day provision continues to be the responsibility of class or subject teacher. A new IEP will usually be devised.

**School medical officer** A doctor who ensures that a child's health is not stopping them from learning. They may do regular check-ups.

**SEN coordinator (SENCO):** member of staff of a school or early education setting who has responsibility for coordinating SEN provision within that school. In a small school the head teacher or deputy may take on this role. In larger schools there may be an SEN coordinating team.

**Special educational needs officer (SEO)**

**Special educational needs service (SENS)** A team of specialist teachers who advise schools about teaching children with special educational needs.

**SEN Tribunal:** an independent body which has jurisdiction under section 333 of the Education Act 1996 for determining appeals by parents against LEA decisions on assessments and statements. The Tribunal's decision will be binding on both parties to





the appeal. **Special school:** a school which is specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with special educational needs. Special schools maintained by the LEA comprise of community special schools and foundation special schools, and non maintained special schools are approved by the Secretary of State under section 342 of the Education Act 1996. *See also: SEN Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) This is an independent tribunal set up by an Act of Parliament for determining appeals by parents against their LA about children's SENs, where parents cannot reach agreement with the LA. SENDIST also considers parents' claims of disability discrimination in schools.*

**Sensory Consortium:** a Berkshire-wide provision for children with significant hearing or vision loss.

**SLCN** - Speech, language and communication needs

**SLD** - Severe learning difficulties.

**Special Educational Needs (SEN):** (see **Definition of SEN**).

**Special Educational Needs Code of Practice:** guidance issued by the Government to which all LEAs and maintained schools must pay regard. It sets out models of good practice and describes appropriate ways for schools and others working with children with special educational needs to identify, assess and provide for SEN.

**Special school:** a school which is specially organised to make special educational provision for pupils with special educational needs.

**Speech and language therapy (SALT):** Speech and language therapy is a health care profession, the role and aim of which is to enable adults and children with speech, language and communication difficulties (and associated difficulties with eating and swallowing) to reach their maximum communication potential and achieve independence in all aspects of life.

**Speech and language therapist (SLT)** Helps children who have difficulty talking or communicating. They work in schools, health centres and other community centres.

**Statement of Special Educational Needs:** a legal document provided to the parents and those who will be working with a child with special educational needs. It is prepared after a formal, statutory assessment and is in five sections, covering the child's personal details, a description of the child's special educational needs, the provision needed to meet those special educational needs, the appropriate school or other placement, the child's non-educational needs and the non-educational provision that is appropriate.

### **Statutory assessment**

A detailed examination to determine your child's special educational needs and calculate the special help needed. This may or may not lead to a statement of special education needs.

### **Transition plan**

A document drawn up at the annual review from national curriculum year 9 onwards, to help plan for a pupil's ongoing education after they leave school.



**Teaching assistants (TAs)** Work under the direction of teachers and are appointed to provide additional help in the classroom for a child or a group of children with identified special educational needs. Also known as teaching assistants.

**Teaching and Support Services (TASS):** one local authority's provision providing three types of teacher. The pre-school support teachers who work with pre-school children who have more severe or complex needs. The learning support teachers assess and, in some cases directly teach, children with a variety of needs in their own school. The specialist teacher for motor impairment assesses children with physical or co-ordination difficulties and also advises on specialist equipment.

**Temporary Disapplication:** A maintained school must provide access to the National Curriculum for all pupils on the school's register including those being taught temporarily at home, in a hospital school or in a pupil referral unit. Where it is impossible or inappropriate to offer these pupils the full National Curriculum, aspects may be disapplied through a general direction or a special direction if a statement is being considered or amended. Head teachers have considerable discretion over directions for temporary disapplication but should only consider a direction where pupils' present circumstances or conduct mean that they cannot fully participate and benefit from the National Curriculum. Disapplication should be limited to those aspects of the National Curriculum that are inappropriate for the pupil.

**Transition Plan:** a plan devised following the year 9 annual review and updated at subsequent annual reviews. The purpose of the plan is to draw together information from a range of individuals within and beyond the school, in order to plan coherently for the young person's transition to adult life.