



Inclusion and SEND Commitment - B&NES' Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP)

Section B - A Graduated Approach

Contents

A Graduated Response and a Graduated Approach	03
Assess	
Four Areas of Need	04
Assessments and Screeners	08
Plan	
Planning provision prompts	09
Do	11
Review	12
Key Stages of Review Process	13
Considering an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment Request	14



A Graduated Response and a Graduated Approach

The Graduated Response and Graduated Approach are key principles in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015 (CoP). They describe structured ways to support children and young people (CYP) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

- **Graduated Response**

A flexible, responsive system that helps identify and meet needs appropriately. It involves proactively adapting teaching and the learning environment to promote inclusion. Support can then become more individualised, and formally recorded through a Graduated Approach.

- **Graduated Approach**

A structured, cyclical process used at an individual level for all CYP with SEND. It follows the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle, as outlined in the CoP, for those identified at SEND Support.

APDR helps identify needs and secure progress for CYP who are:

- Not making expected progress
- Working below the level of peers
- Facing complex barriers to learning
- At risk of social exclusion or lack belonging





1. Assess

All settings must monitor and review the progress of every CYP.

The first step in supporting those with SEND is High Quality Teaching (HQT), adapted to individual needs. Most CYP will make progress with this.

If progress remains a concern—such as:

- gaps in attainment not closing or widening, or
- extra support needed for social or emotional development. Then the setting should assess the CYP's needs further.

Every setting must have a clear, proactive, person-centred approach to identifying SEND. This means:

- Listening to CYP and parent/carers
- Taking their experiences seriously
- Focusing on the whole person
- Treating the individual with respect and dignity.

Identifying Needs

CYP's needs are identified by gathering information through:

- Discussions
- Observations
- Screeners and assessments
- Reports from relevant professionals

Key Points:

- Support should start early —it is not necessary to wait for formalised assessments.
- Early identification leads to better outcomes.
- Behaviour may indicate unmet or undiagnosed needs and can present in a variety of ways.
- Consider temporary or external factors (e.g. bereavement, peer conflict).
- Low attainment does not always mean SEND; SEND can exist with average or high attainment.
- For English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners, distinguish between language acquisition and SEND.
- Identification should guide action, not label the child.
- Needs can span multiple areas and change over time—review regularly.
- A clear understanding of need ensures support is targeted and effective, considering educational history, family context, and health.

Four Areas of Need

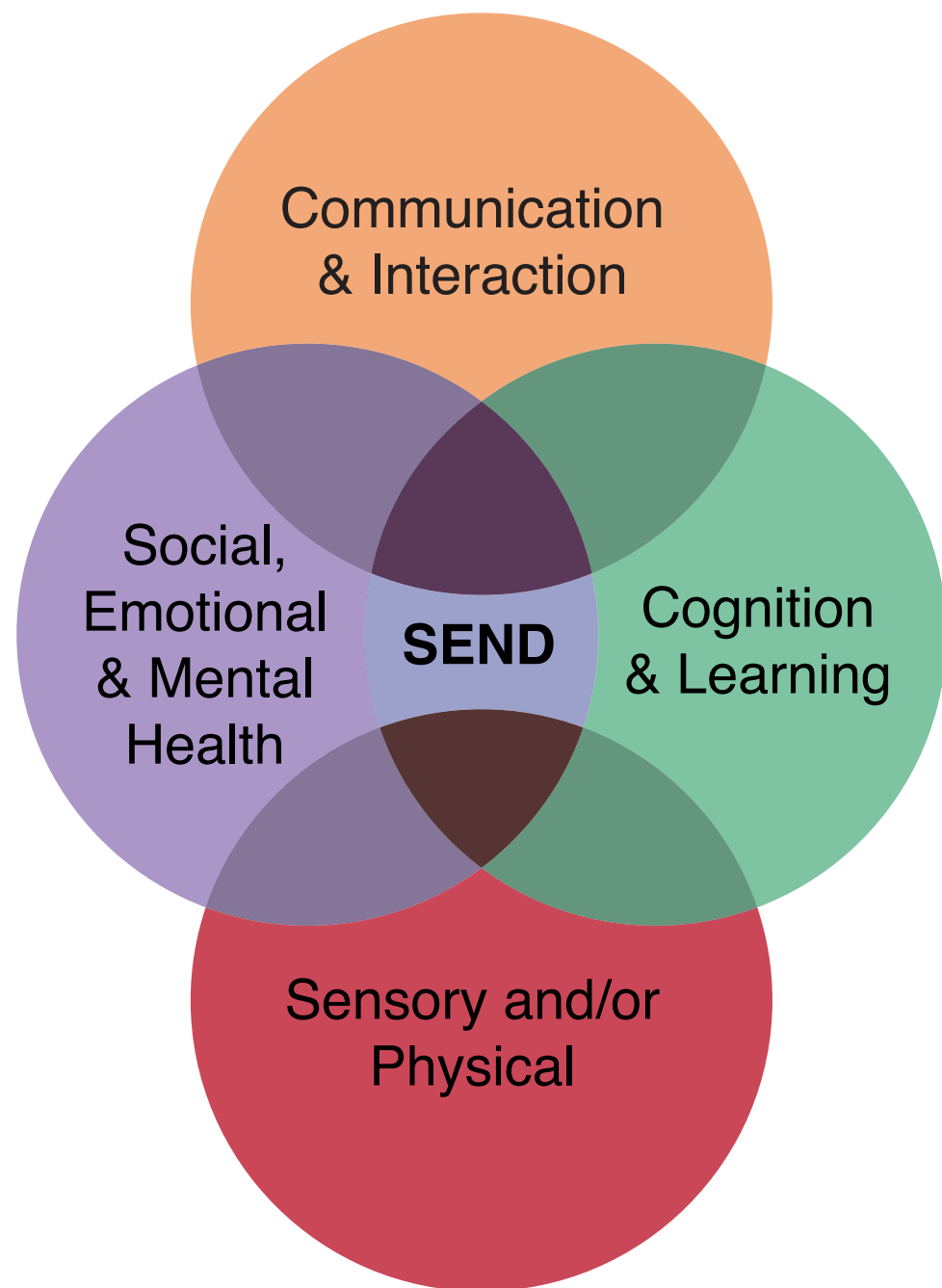
Assessment of needs should consider all four key areas from CoP:

- Communication and Interaction (C&I)
- Cognition and Learning (C&L)
- Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH)
- Sensory and/or Physical (S&P).

Many CYP have needs in more than one area, and these can change over time.

To target the biggest barriers to progress, identify a Primary Need and a Secondary need. These may change as more information is gathered and understood.





Diagnoses and Named Conditions

The CoP categorises need into four areas to help plan support.

- Identification should lead to action, not just a label.
- A diagnosis is not required to provide targeted support.
- A diagnosis can help understand a CYP's experiences, but it does not always mean they have SEND.
- Focus on presenting needs, not the diagnosis.
- Whether or not a CYP has a diagnosis, if they have SEND, follow the APDR cycle and Graduated Approach.

Communication and Interaction

This area includes Autism and Speech, Language, and Social Communication Needs (SLCN). CYP may experience:

- Expressive language challenges, e.g. sharing thoughts, ideas, or messages through speech, writing, or non-verbal means.
- Receptive language challenges, e.g. understanding or processing what others say.
- Social Communication challenges, e.g. using social rules of communication (e.g. turn-taking, understanding tone or body language).

Cognition and Learning

This area applies when a CYP makes slower academic progress than peers, even with adaptations and support. It may affect:

- Processing and retaining information.
- Verbal reasoning and problem-solving.
- Working memory.
- Attitude and approach to learning.

This area includes Specific Learning Difficulties, such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dyspraxia.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

This area includes a wide range of presentations and needs such as:

- Emotional, e.g. regulating and understanding emotions, which may present as fight, flight, freeze or fawn responses.
- Mental Health, e.g. anxiety, Emotionally-Based School Avoidance (EBSA), depression, eating disorders, self-harm.
- Attention, e.g. engagement and focus, ADHD.
- Attachment, e.g. as a result of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) or familial trauma.
- Social interaction, e.g. initiating and maintaining relationships.
- Sense of Self, e.g. positive self-esteem, self-confidence, self-worth and value.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

These needs can create barriers to learning and accessing the environment. They may involve:

- Physical Disability (PD).
- Fine and Gross motor skills, co-ordination and balance.
- Sensory responses.
- Personal Care and Hygiene.
- Hearing Loss (HL).
- Visual Impairment (VI).

Assessments and Screeners:

Prompts for exploring initial concerns – forms available in Appendices and Forms
www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-appendices-forms

- Assessments and screening tools may include:
 - C&I – Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), Neurodevelopmental (ND) Pathway
<https://bswcommunityservices.co.uk/needs-led-approach/>
<https://bswcommunityservices.co.uk/services/neurodevelopmental-pathway/>
 - C&L – Phonics, Dyslexia, Reading age, Spelling age
 - SEMH profiling tools
 - S&P – environment audit, sensory profiles, fine and gross motor skills
- Assessment/ Screener Resources developed by B&NES' Educational Psychologists to support staff in identifying, assessing, and meeting the needs of CYP in educational settings. It brings together a curated list of tools and resources that are grounded in evidence-informed practice, designed to help professionals better understand individual needs and implement appropriate interventions and provision.
 The resources included span a range of areas and approaches and are intended to be used flexibly depending on context and need. We do not endorse any one tool or resource over another; rather, we aim to provide a broad selection to empower settings to make informed decisions based on their professional judgement and the unique needs of their CYP.
<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/special-educational-need-or-disability-send/professionals-and-senco-section/educational-psychology>
- Consider Department for Education (DfE) guidance on identifying needs for further information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identifying-and-supporting-the-needs-of-children-with-send-in-mainstream-settings>



2. Planning

When the primary area(s) of need have been identified, settings should co-produce a planned response which targets the biggest barriers to progress at the current time. This support should meet the presenting needs of the CYP and is not reliant on a diagnosis. This ensures that a CYP with SEND receives the appropriate, additional support, at the right time, for their future aspirations, learning and development. It will consider what adjustments are needed to make the biggest difference to outcomes for the CYP. Targets should be recorded in a plan.

- CYP and their parent/carers co-produce targets.
- A support plan is created recording clear, measurable outcomes and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) targets.
- It outlines the support, interventions, provisions, strategies and resources required.
- The timescale for reviewing the planned support is set.

“Schools should maintain an accurate and up-to-date record of the provision made for pupils with SEN. This should be kept in a format that is accessible and understood. It should provide clarity about what the pupil’s needs are, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required” (CoP, 2015, Section 6.72)

Planning provision prompts:

Review Current Practice

- How successfully has the CYP accessed HQT across the curriculum?
- Do all staff understand how to meet the CYP’s needs?
- What existing provision can be utilised to meet needs?

Involve CYP

- Do they recognise and share the concerns identified?
- What are their priorities and aims?
- What do they think will help them to progress?
- How can they be an active participant in the process?

Involve Parent/Carers

- Do they recognise and share the concerns identified?
- What are their priorities and aims for their CYP?
- What do they think will help their CYP to progress?
- How can they support progress?



Identify Targets

- Set short-term, SMART targets that build towards the long-term outcomes (phase or key stage).
- Are they specific enough? Are they realistic and relevant? If they are, they should be achievable!
- Decide how success will be measured – what difference will interventions make?
- What is really achievable and realistic within the timescale being set?
- Include targets that support transition to next phase, employment, and independence - link to Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes.

Plan Targeted Provision

- Has advice from external agency reports been implemented?
- Is the planned provision directly linked to the identified gaps, biggest barriers and primary need?
- Are any planned interventions evidence-based and research-informed?
- Are there training needs for staff?
- What new provision/resources (staffing, equipment) might be needed?
- Are all relevant staff aware of the targets and their role in the planned support?

Record

- Use the setting's preferred format (e.g. My Plan, SEND Support Plan, provision map).
- Set a review date (there should be at least three formal review points a year, CoP).
- Ensure copies go in/on SEND file and appropriately shared with relevant staff.
- Share and discuss plan with CYP and parent/carers.

Remember:

- Class teacher(s) remain responsible for daily support.
- Teacher(s) should liaise closely with staff delivering interventions.
- SENDCo provides planning and problem-solving support to implement the plan.
- All plans should aim to be co-produced and planned with CYP and their parent/carers.

- See Section C for strategies, support, resources and advice in the four areas of need www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-strategies



3. Do

This is the implementation stage. It moves from planning to practical delivery and focuses on making measurable progress towards agreed SMART targets and wider outcomes based on assessed needs.

The plan must include clear, specific details so everyone knows exactly how progress will be achieved. This means:

- Which strategies and interventions will be used.
- How often and for how long they will take place.
- Who is responsible for delivering them.
- What resources or adaptations are needed.
- How each action links to the intended outcomes.
- How progress will be monitored.

By making this section detailed and actionable, staff can implement support consistently and measure its impact effectively.

Staff adapt teaching, use scaffolds, adjust the environment, trial new strategies or resources, and introduce targeted, evidence-based interventions. Additional support is agreed with the CYP and their parent/carers. HQT continues alongside this extra provision.

Collaboration is essential—teachers, support staff, parent/carers, and specialists (as appropriate) should work together to plan, share, implement, and monitor interventions. Reinforcing and generalising learning across different contexts is critical. Informal recording on what support has been provided, and its impact are important to capture small steps of progress and inform the review.

Provision should:

- Support agreed outcomes and SMART targets.
- Be given enough time to have impact.
- Be followed, delivered, and monitored.





4. Review

The Review stage revisits earlier decisions and actions to check their impact and make changes if needed “actions are revisited, refined and revised...” (CoP, 6.44). It focuses on measuring and evaluating whether the planned support has helped the CYP make progress towards SMART targets and wider outcomes, and whether the support is still appropriate.

Formal review meetings should take place at least three times a year, in addition to regular parent/carer meetings. These meetings should:

- Include CYP, parent/carers, and key staff.
- Be led by someone who knows the CYP well.
- Allow time to capture the CYP’s voice and parent/carer views.
- Follow a person-centred approach.

During the Do stage, staff should have developed an understanding of where progress is happening, where gaps remain, and which strategies work best. Do not wait for formal reviews to make changes, if they are needed.

Progress should be monitored and based on evidence. Signs of good progress may include:

- Improved measures compared to baseline.
- SMART targets met.
- Narrowing gaps with peers.
- Skills from interventions used in class and independently.
- Consistent positive feedback from staff, CYP, and parent/carers.

If progress is sustained, consider whether CYP is ready to move to universal support. If progress is limited, adapt the plan – check SMART, modify support, or seek specialist input, and begin next APDR cycle.

The voice of the CYP and their parent/carers should be captured at every stage of the APDR cycle.



Key Steps of the Review Process

Gather Evidence

- Assessment data, observations, work samples.
- Feedback from staff, CYP, and parent/carers.
- Compare current performance to baseline.

Conduct Review Meeting

- Invite CYP, parents, key staff, and specialists (if needed).
- Allow enough time for discussion.

Evaluate Outcomes

- Were SMART targets met?
- Has the CYP moved closer to long-term goals?
- Capture small steps of progress.
- Use clear measures (scale, percentage, success criteria).

Reflect on Strategies

- Which interventions worked?
- Which need adapting? Why?
- Gather CYP and parent/carers’ views.

Decide Next Steps

- Close the plan if progress is good and sustained, return to universal support.
- Begin a new APDR cycle if support is still needed.
- Modify provision (targets, timings, groupings, level of support).
- Involve specialists, if appropriate.

Record and Share

- Document the review clearly (avoid vague terms like “ongoing” or “still needed”).
- Share with CYP, parent/carers, and all relevant staff.

Considering an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment Request

It may take several cycles and different strategies before needs are fully understood and met. If, after several APDR cycles, the CYP is still not making expected progress—despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, deliver, and review SEND support—a request for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHC NA) may be considered.

The Local Authority will consider a wide range of evidence when deciding whether an EHC NA is appropriate and necessary. This may include:

- Evidence of the CYP's academic attainment (or developmental milestones) and rate of progress.
- Information about the nature, extent, and context of the CYP's SEND.
- Evidence of the action already being taken by the setting to meet the CYP's SEND.
- Evidence that progress has only been achieved through significant additional intervention and support beyond what is usually provided.
- Evidence of the CYP's physical, emotional, and social development and health needs, drawing on relevant input from clinicians and other health professionals, and what has been done to meet these needs by other agencies.
- For young people aged over 18, whether they require additional time—compared to the majority of others of the same age without SEND—to complete their education or training.

(CoP 9.1–9.7)

An EHC NA may or may not result in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). If it does not, the information gathered can inform further SEND support provided by the setting.

An EHC NA can be requested by any of the following:

- Early years settings, schools, and colleges (with the knowledge of the parent/carers or CYP).
- The CYP's parent or legal guardian.
- The CYP, if they are over 16 but under 25.
- Foster parents.
- Health or social care professionals.

Ideally requests are co-produced and made in partnership.

For further information: <https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/special-educational-need-or-disability-send/step-by-step/request-ehc-needs-assessment>

