

# *The Provision of Education for Children with Special Educational Needs in Gateshead*



*Guidance for Schools*

# Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	2
<i>Special educational provision in Gateshead Schools for children with special educational needs (SEN) but without a statement</i> .....	3
● <i>Background</i> .....	3
● <i>The graduated response</i> .....	3
● <i>The SEN provision that Gateshead Council expects maintained schools to meet from their delegated budgets</i> .....	4
● <i>SEN provision that would normally be met from funding held centrally by the Council</i> .....	10
<i>Gateshead Council's SEN Policy</i> .....	12
<i>The general arrangements made by Gateshead Council for children with special educational needs</i> .....	13
● <i>Identifying children in Gateshead with SEN</i> .....	13
● <i>Monitoring the admission of children with SEN to maintained schools in Gateshead</i> .....	14
● <i>The Statutory assessment of children's SEN</i> .....	14
● <i>Support to schools in Gateshead with regard to making special educational provision for children with SEN</i> .....	14
● <i>Auditing, planning, monitoring and reviewing provision for children with SEN</i> .....	15

# Introduction

Under statutory regulations made by the Secretary of State, Gateshead Council is required to publish information about matters relating to the provision of education for children with Special Educational Needs (The Special Educational Needs (Provision of Information by Local Education Authorities) (England) Regulations 2001).

The information is available on the Council's website using the links below and as a written copy on request from the following address.

**Pupil and Parent Services Manager**  
Gateshead Council  
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Evistones Road  
Gateshead  
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# Special Educational Provision in Gateshead Schools for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) but without a Statement

## Background

The SEN Code of Practice, which was published by the Government in 2001, gives guidance on the identification and assessment of children with SEN and how they should be helped to progress. It proposes a graduated response to intervention with two levels of intervention for pupils with SEN but without a statement.

- **School Action.** Intervention provided by the school using its own resources including the specialist staff within the school.
- **School Action Plus.** More intensive intervention by the school using its own resources but supported and guided by external specialists.

*NB: In Reception, the terms Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus are used instead of School Action and School Action Plus.*

## The graduated response

Gateshead's schools provide for children who have very varied strengths, skills and abilities. Many different teaching approaches are used and teachers vary their teaching methods to adjust for the differences between their pupils. However, a small number of children require help that is additional to or different from the range of help that is generally available to all children in Gateshead schools. Where this appears to be the case, schools should consider providing extra help through *School Action*.

If *School Action* does not result in adequate progress, schools should consult external specialists, such as specialist teachers (called liaison teachers in Gateshead) and educational psychologists, about whether the child should be provided with additional help through *School Action Plus*.

Further information about the graduated response can be found in the **Professional's Handbook: Special Educational Needs in Gateshead** which has been circulated to all schools.

*The SEN provision that Gateshead expects maintained schools to meet from their delegated budgets.*

## **Funding for SEN**

Schools in Gateshead receive funding to support pupils with SEN as follows:

### **1. Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) Funding**

Funding for the school based on pupil numbers and the age weighted pupil unit contains an element to enable schools to carry out their core responsibilities related to SEN provision.

These include the following:

- The employment of a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). (One full time equivalent post per 500 pupils is quoted as good practice by the DfES)
- Administrative support for the SENCO
- Liaison with parents and carers
- Internal liaison between staff working with a child with SEN;
- Liaison between teachers, support staff and external specialists.
- Provision of resources for differentiation and low cost technical aids.
- A proportion of additional support for children with SEN
- Participation of classroom staff in SEN reviews;
- Whole school activities related to the development, implementation and monitoring of the school's SEN Policy

Around 5% of the AWPU is a reasonable estimate of the amount that should be allocated for SEN provision although figures above and below this would be appropriate, dependent on the circumstances of the school.

## 2. Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Funding

Following a review of additional educational needs funding carried out in 2002, schools receive AEN funding calculated using a formula that is intended to reflect levels of social deprivation and low achievement in each school and to enable schools to meet the additional needs that result. The formula is based on the number of children eligible for free school meals in the school and the attainments of children on admission to the school. As there is considerable overlap between children experiencing social disadvantage or achieving at a low level and those identified with SEN, a high proportion of this funding should be allocated to SEN provision.

This funding is expected to help the school provide the following, as required:

- Provision of additional time from learning support teachers, learning support assistants and learning mentors.
- Resources to support the implementation of IEPs
- Provision of additional resources to support individual needs such as low cost technological aids and minor changes to the physical features of the school.
- Enhanced access to ICT for pupils with SEN.
- Access to smaller pupil groups.
- Alternative curriculum opportunities at Key Stage 4.
- Specific inclusion activities and initiatives.

The balance of provision that should be made using the AEN funding will depend on the circumstances of the school. Schools that receive lower levels of AEN funding should have fewer children with SEN and, therefore less demand for special provision.

## 3. Additional delegated funding for pupils with statements of SEN (Secondary schools only)

Mainstream secondary schools receive delegated funding for pupils with statements based on the number of such pupils in the school. This funding is provided in order to enable the school to make the additional provision required by the statements. That is, it is intended to supplement the provision normally available at School Action Plus and not to substitute for it.

A pupil's statement lists all the provision required to meet the child's SEN, including both the provision made from the school's normal resources and the provision based on the additional funds brought by a statement.

Although the funding is simply related to the number of pupils with statements, it is expected that the resources funded will be deployed differentially, according to the different needs of the pupils, and as efficiently as possible, making full use of potential economies of scale. Some pupils will require more provision than others, according to their statements, while pooling of provision might enable a pupil to receive a higher level of support than would otherwise be possible.

This funding is specifically for pupils with statements and should not be used for the direct support of pupils with SEN but without statements. However, pupils with SEN but without statements may benefit indirectly from provision made for pupils with statements. For example, a pupil without a statement might benefit from being part of a small group set up to meet the SEN of another pupil who has a statement or has access to additional resources.

#### **4. Other Funding opportunities**

Under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001, all schools must produce accessibility plans and consider the long-term access needs of current and potential future pupils attending the school. In order to make progress on their accessibility plans, schools are expected to use their delegated school budget to support improvements in access on their school site. Schools are expected to recognise that the costs of implementing their plan are legitimate costs which should be incorporated into the schools development plan and then the budget plan when funds permit.

Various other funding sources are available to schools which could assist in improving access. These include devolved formula capital and the local authority coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (available to voluntary aided schools) as well as the Council managed Schools Access Initiative. Funding is also available through initiatives such as Excellence in Cities, including the Behaviour Improvement Programme, and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

Whenever accessing or utilising these sources of external funding that are outside of the schools delegated budget, schools should give consideration to the resource requirements of those pupils with SEN or disabilities.

## *General expectations of maintained schools*

On the basis of this funding, Gateshead Council has the following expectations of the maintained schools in the borough.

1. The school has an SEN policy that's it reviews annually and that reflects the following legislation and guidance:
  - SEN Code of Practice (2001)
  - SEN and Disability Act (2001)
  - Inclusive schooling: children with SEN (2001)
  - The national curriculum inclusion statement
  - The Government's long-term strategy for SEN "Removing Barriers to Achievement"
  - The Children Act 2004
  - The framework described in "Every Child matters: Change for Children"
  - The Council's 'Professional's Handbook'
  - The Council's SEN and Inclusion Policies and SEN Inclusion Strategy
2. The school publishes information in relation to SEN as required by the Education (Special Educational Needs)(Information)(England) Regulations 1999.
3. The school has an Accessibility Plan to improve access to the curriculum, written materials and school buildings for current and potential future pupils. The Plan is reviewed on an annual basis.
4. The school takes reasonable steps to avoid putting pupils at a disadvantage because of their disability as is required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
5. The school monitors the progress of pupils with SEN and the effectiveness of its SEN provision based on a systematic whole school framework.
6. The school's curriculum is suitably differentiated to meet the needs of the full range of its pupils and is linked to effective assessment and monitoring systems that support early identification of SEN.
7. The school employs a SENCO or SEN team, learning support staff and teaching assistants who are suitably qualified and who provide additional support to children with SEN.

# *Expectations for Provision Made for Individual Pupils with SEN*

## **Provision for Pupils at School Action and School Action Plus**

1. For pupils being supported through School Action and School Action Plus, the school provides systematic and focused individual education plans (IEPs). These may be implemented in class or with the pupil withdrawn from class but should be an integral part of the pupil's full educational programme. They may involve small group or individual support and may be delivered by one or more of the following:
  - Class teacher
  - Support teacher
  - Teaching assistant
  - Learning mentor
2. Work on the IEP takes place throughout the week but with more intensive intervention taking place on a regular basis to support progress. For children at School Action Plus, additional work to support the IEP should normally take place at least three times per week.
3. Different learning materials or special equipment are provided as required by the pupil's IEP.
4. The IEPs are reviewed at least twice a year in accord with the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice.
5. The school works in partnership with parents, ensuring they have any necessary support, guidance and information to participate fully in their child's education. In some cases this may involve the provision of an interpreter for reviews and other meetings.
6. The school ensures that the pupil is actively involved in preparing and reviewing the IEP and in monitoring his or her progress.
7. The school has good arrangements for liaison with external specialists at School Action Plus and deploys its resources effectively to implement individual education plans developed in consultation with those specialists and the child's parents.
8. The school takes such other action required to meet pupils' SEN in accord with the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice

## Provision for pupils with statements

1. The school makes special educational provision as required by the pupils' statements of SEN.
2. In order to provide for the SEN of pupils with statements, the school uses the additional funding for pupils with statements to augment the resources otherwise available for pupils with SEN in the school.
3. Different learning materials or special equipment are provided as required by the statements with the proviso that schools may seek additional funding for costly equipment for a pupil's sole use that is intended to increase access to the curriculum.
4. The school implements detailed and systematic individual education plans (IEPs) for each pupil with a statement that include targets linked to the long term objectives listed in the statement.
5. IEPs are implemented in a variety of ways but delivery is consistent with statement requirements.
6. The IEPs are kept under review with informal reviews, which should involve contact with parents, taking place at least termly. One of the three IEP reviews each year is carried out as part of the statutory annual review.
7. The school works in partnership with parents, ensuring they have any necessary support, guidance and information to participate fully in their child's education. In some cases this may involve the provision of an interpreter for reviews and other meetings.
8. The school ensures that the pupils with statements are actively involved in preparing and reviewing their IEPs and monitoring their progress and have the opportunity to contribute fully to their annual reviews.
9. The school carries out an annual review of each child's statement according to the expectations of the SEN code of Practice. Interim reviews are arranged as requested by the Council or as otherwise appropriate. In year 9 and above annual reviews follow the transition review format and are organised to ensure the attendance of the appropriate Connexions personal advisors.

## *SEN provision that would normally be met from funding held centrally by the Council*

### *Specialist Services*

Gateshead Council provides a range of specialist services that work with schools to help to meet the needs of children with SEN, as follows:

#### **1. The Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS)**

SENSS is a team of specialist teachers (liaison teachers) and SEN assistants (SENAs) who work with schools to support children with SEN. Members of the SENSS team have a range of specialisms including:

- Specific learning difficulties
- Language difficulties
- Autistic Spectrum disorders
- Physical difficulties
- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment

Contact telephone number: 0191 433 8530

#### **2. Behaviour Support Service (BSS)**

The BSS provides a range of services that may be accessed by children with SEN including the following:

- School-based support provided by a team of specialist teachers (liaison teachers) and SEN assistants
- Hospital and home tuition.
- The pupil referral unit.
- Alternative curriculum provision for pupils in key stage 4.

Contact telephone number: 0191 420 0607

#### **3. Psychological Service**

The psychological service is a team of educational psychologists who have a broad remit that includes work related to the full range of SEN.

Contact telephone number: 0191 433 8550

#### **4. Education Welfare Service (EWS)**

The EWS works with pupils whose attendance at school is poor or who are disaffected from school. This includes some children with SEN.

Contact telephone number: 0191 433 8572

#### **5. Pupil and Parent Services**

The Pupil and Parent Service administer the statutory SEN assessment and annual review procedures.

Contact telephone number: 0191 433 8594

#### **6. Parent Partnership Service**

The Parent Partnership Service provides information and support for the parents of children with SEN, particularly in relation to statutory assessment.

Contact telephone number: 0191 433 8353

#### **7. Raising Achievement Service**

This service provides a range of support to schools and includes a link inspector for SEN and Inclusion.

Contact telephone number: 0191 433 8604

#### **8. Raising the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children (REALAC)**

The REALAC team works with the full range of children and young people who are looked after by Gateshead Council. A proportion of these children and young people have SEN.

Contact telephone number: 0191 433 8523

### ***Other Resources***

The Council may be able to help with the purchase of the more expensive specialist equipment to support the inclusion of individual children, subject to certain criteria.

# Gateshead Council's SEN policy

Gateshead Council has published a detailed policy for special educational needs. The Council's core aim, expressed in this policy, is as follows:

**To provide the highest quality of education for all young people and to seek to offer a continuum of provision that will enable:**

- pupils' Special Educational needs to be met in as inclusive a setting as possible;
- all pupils to have access to the broad balanced and relevant curriculum to which they are entitled;
- high expectations to be set for pupils with SEN; and,
- parents to play a vital role in supporting their child's education.

**Underpinning these aims are a number of key principles:**

- The special educational needs of pupils should normally be met in mainstream schools or settings.
- All pupils should have access to a curriculum and teaching and learning strategies that maximise achievement.
- The views of children and young people should always be sought and taken into account.
- Opportunities should be taken to develop the role of parents in supporting their child's education.
- Children special educational needs should be identified as early as possible.
- Provision to meet children special educational needs should ensure value-for-money and equality of opportunity.
- Effective partnerships should be established with key partners, including partners in social care and health, to develop policies and practices that are co-ordinated and best meet the needs of children, parents and carers.

The full Policy for SEN and the linked Policy for Inclusive Education may be obtained from Access and Inclusion Admin Support, telephone number 0191 433 8594, and are also available on the Council's website.

The actions being taken by Gateshead Council to implement its Policies on SEN and Inclusion are described in its SEN Inclusion strategy and the associated Action Plan. These documents may be obtained from Access and Inclusion Admin Support, telephone number 0191 433 8594, and are also available on the Council's website.

# The General Arrangements Made by Gateshead Council for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

## *Identifying children in Gateshead with special educational needs*

The main responsibility for the initial identification of children of school age with SEN rests with the school, in partnership with parents and carers. Guidance in relation to good practice in this area is contained in *The Professional's Handbook: Special Educational Needs in Gateshead* which has been circulated to all schools. Parents and carers will sometimes be the first to identify a concern and schools are expected to treat any such expression of concern seriously.

The Council does not require schools to inform it of children at the initial stage of identification although they may consult the Council's support services for guidance about a child's difficulties. On an annual basis, the Council collates information about children who are receiving support through School Action Plus although the information is available throughout the year from each of the support services. In addition, the Council maintains a database of those children with statements of SEN which records the nature of their difficulties.

For pre-school children, identification may occur in a number of ways. Early years settings, supported by Gateshead Council's two Early Years SENCOs, will often be the first to identify a child's SEN. In some cases, parents and carers will themselves approach the Council about their child's difficulties. In the case of children with the more severe levels of difficulty, identification is made by health service personnel who are able to refer the child for intervention by health, Council or voluntary services through a joint referral panel established by the Gateshead Children and Young People's Trust.

## *Monitoring the admission of children with SEN to maintained schools in Gateshead*

The monitoring of the admission of children with SEN to maintained schools in Gateshead is carried out as part of the Council's overall SEN monitoring procedures. These are described in the document ***SEN Monitoring: Guidance for Schools***.

## *The statutory assessment of children's special educational needs*

The statutory assessment of children's SEN and the making and maintaining of statements is carried out in Gateshead according to procedures that are consistent with the SEN Code of Practice. The procedures are described in the ***Professional's Handbook: Special Educational Needs in Gateshead*** which has been circulated to all schools.

## *Support to schools in Gateshead with regard to making special educational provision for children with SEN*

Support to schools with regard to making special educational provision is provided by a range of central support services. These services are described in the booklet ***Guide to Services to Support Access and Inclusion*** which may be obtained from Access and Inclusion Admin Support, telephone number 0191 433 8594, and are also available on the Council's website.

Monitoring and evaluation of the special educational provision made by schools is part of the Annual Progress Review carried out by the Raising Achievement Service. If a school is identified as requiring a high level of support from the Raising Achievement Service, which may include support in relation to special educational provision, this can be provided through the School Intervention and Support Programme (SISP)

## *Auditing, planning, monitoring and reviewing provision for children with special educational needs*

### *Provision Generally*

The Council has established a SEN Inclusion Strategy Group that has responsibility for auditing, planning, monitoring and reviewing special educational provision. It is responsible for developing and implementing the Council's Strategy for SEN Inclusion and for ensuring that provision is kept under review in terms of its suitability, effectiveness and match to need.

The SEN Strategy Group is supported in its work by the SEN Panel, which reviews the level of demand for special educational provision on an ongoing basis and advises the Group on matters such as overcapacity or gaps in provision.

The SEN Strategy Group also establishes working groups to address particular issues and to carry out audit and research. These working groups may be set up for a single time-limited task or be given a long-term role. Examples of such working groups are:

- The Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty (BESD) working group set up to audit the level of demand for BESD provision and develop innovative solutions to the inclusion of children and young people with BESD).
- The "Promoting SEN Inclusion" project which was set up to look at the role of special schools in supporting SEN Inclusion.

The SEN Strategy Group currently comprises Council officers but a review is taking place that is expected to broaden the membership. Ways of improving consultation with users are also under consideration.

### *Provision for Individual Children*

Provision for individual children is audited, monitored and reviewed as part of the overall process of SEN Monitoring and evaluation described in the document *SEN Monitoring: Guidance for Schools*.

Children receiving support at School Action or School Action Plus are identified through the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) on an annual basis and their progress assessed. Individual progress is evaluated in more detail through the regular review of individual education plans. These reviews are carried out

by schools and, at School Action Plus, usually attended by any outside specialists involved with the child. In this context, the outside specialist is responsible both for supporting the school in implementing the IEP and for challenging the school where necessary to ensure that the resources available are used effectively.

When children are proposed for statutory assessment, part of the process by which the Council considers the proposal involves an evaluation of the action taken by the school to meet the child's SEN. Under the SEN Code of Practice statutory assessments should only be agreed where the evidence demonstrates that the school has used its normal resources appropriately and taken relevant and purposeful action to meet the child's SEN. Where the evidence does not support this conclusion, statutory assessments should normally be refused.

Where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs, provision is monitored and evaluated through the annual review.

For children in mainstream schools, a representative from SENSS normally attends reviews to support and, where appropriate, challenge the school in relation to meeting the child's needs as listed in the statement. There is also an annual monitoring programme, again carried out by a member of the SENSS staff, to ensure that provision required under a statement is being delivered.

For children in maintained special schools, reviews are attended by an educational psychologist or other Council officer if the children are reaching a critical transition or where specific concerns justify it. Again, the role of the Council officer is to support and, if appropriate, challenge the school. For children in non-maintained or independent special schools, annual reviews are attended by either an educational psychologist or a specialist liaison teacher. In these reviews, the Council representative's role, while still including an element of support to the child, parents and school, includes ensuring that the provision being made matches the provision required under the statement and considering whether the provision remains a good match to the child's SEN.

If an annual review recommends a significant change to the SEN provision made for a child, the SEN Panel will seek evidence and professional opinion from all relevant specialists, in addition to the evidence and views of the child, parents and school, before reaching a conclusion.



*The Provision of Education for Children with Special Educational Needs in Gateshead*  
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