

# Southend SEND: what happens next

## A 'Graduated Response' to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



A working document for  
families and professionals

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# About this guide

You will find information about how all ‘educational settings’ (we will call them ‘settings’ in this guide, which means all schools or alternative provision academies) across Southend are **expected to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities** (usually shortened to ‘SEND’).

This is not meant to be an all-encompassing guide, but to lay out important information and give sources of support all in one place. It is a working document so can be updated over time. Here are some important definitions:

## The legal definition of SEND

**‘children who have learning difficulties that make it harder for them to learn than most children or young people of the same age’**

or

**‘if they have a disability that stops them from making use of the same facilities as others of the same age’.**

The legal definition can be found here (point 20): [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/section/20)

## Disability

**‘A child or young person has a disability if they have a physical or medical impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.**

Children and young people with a disability may or may not have SEND.

The definition can be found here: [Definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/definition-of-disability-under-the-equality-act-2010)

Children and young people with **medical needs** may or may not have SEND. Settings must give support, and this is usually recorded in their Individual Healthcare Plan.

More information can be found here: [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/supporting-pupils-with-medical-conditions-at-school)

# What is the ‘Graduated Response?’

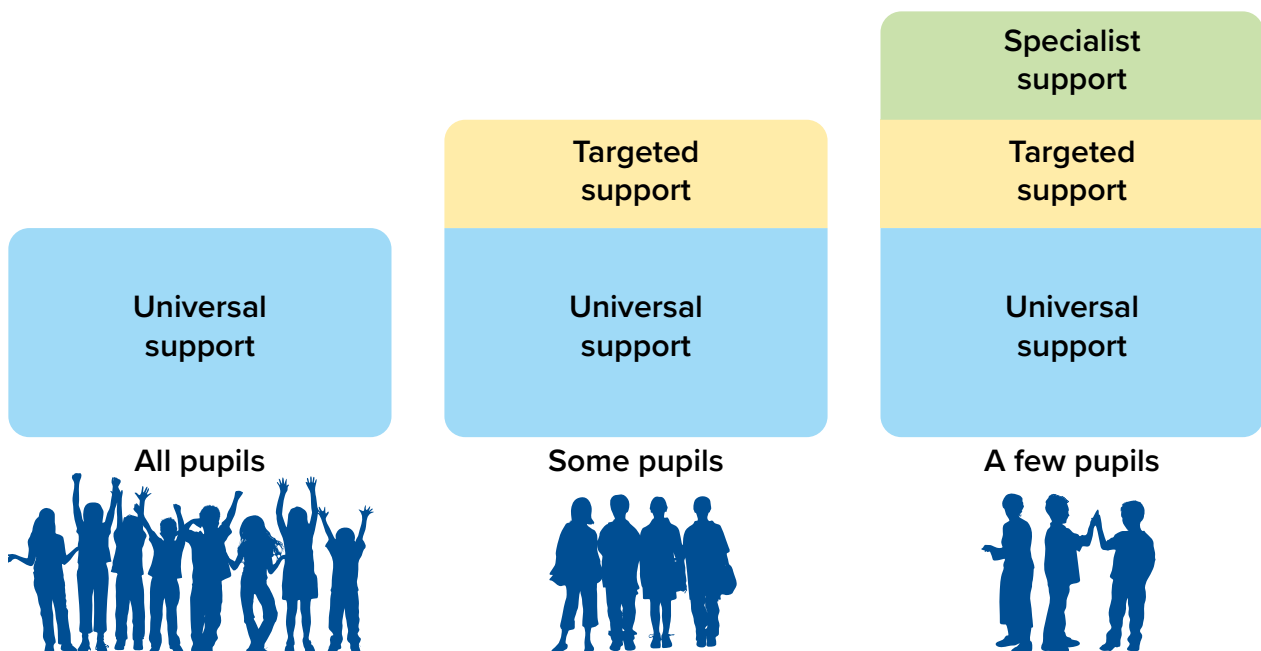
A ‘Graduated Response’ is the **way that settings support children and young people with SEND.**

This definition is set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 which can be found here [SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) (section 6.44).

A ‘Graduated Response’ is a **‘stepped’ approach** to the support that **meets the needs of every child and young person at the earliest opportunity. It affects everyone involved with SEND**, including:

- The child or young person
- Their family
- The teacher and all staff in the setting
- Professionals, from across education, health, and social care
- Support Services, within and outside Southend-on-Sea City Council

**Figure 1: Graduated Response diagram**



There are many examples of support that can be given within a ‘Graduated Response’ which are **Universal Support, Targeted Support and Specialist Support.**

This is not the same for every pupil because **support differs based on what the child or young person needs.** Examples of support that settings across Southend may use can be found on Southend SEND Local Offer: [Southend SEND Provision Guidance for Schools](#)

# Universal Support

A ‘**Graduated Response**’ within each setting starts with ‘**High-Quality Teaching**’, or this may be called ‘**Quality First Teaching**’ for ALL pupils.

This level is called ‘Universal Support’, it is the actual teaching by the member of staff that is **inclusive** to meet the needs of each child or young person. This includes pupils who are not on the SEND register, as well as pupils who are. It reflects that **pupils learn at different rates and in different ways**.

The teacher or form tutor is responsible for meeting the needs of all the pupils in their care through the Universal Support that they give. It is expected that “**All teachers are teachers of SEND**”.

Figure 2: What does High-Quality Teaching look like?



## Meet ‘A’ at Universal Support with a Hearing Impairment:

‘A’ has a bilateral moderate to severe sensorineural hearing loss with fluctuation glue ear. He wears two hearing aids. ‘A’ has recently been issued with an Edumic radio aid that helps to give him direct input from the teacher’s voice into his hearing aids. ‘A’ says that he prefers to sit in the middle of the classroom where he can hear what the teacher and other children are saying. School staff know that they should face ‘A’ when talking to him as this supports his hearing with lip-reading. Staff check that ‘A’ has understood instructions, especially when there is background noise. During whole class teaching, adults do not move around the class when talking, as this makes it much harder for him to follow what is being said. The staff know that it is important to have the least amount of background noise as possible and to repeat what other pupils may say. ‘A’, with this support, is on track with his learning.

# What happens next?

**Children, young people, and their families** should speak to the **teacher or form tutor** if they are having difficulties. They can share what is already in place across the setting. Pupils may show different emotions, feelings, and actions at home to school, and vice versa, so this may need exploring. Although **many pupils may need added, short-term interventions** this does not mean that they are placed on the SEN register or at SEN Support. **Interventions are not to be used in the place of High-Quality Teaching** delivered by the teacher or form tutor as part of the 'Graduated Response'.

Where there are  
difficulties or  
progress is less  
than expected.

The teacher or form tutor may get support from **other experienced staff** in the school.

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The teacher or form tutor may get support from the **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**, who, day to day, makes sure that the setting meets the needs of pupils with SEND.

The SENCO may meet with the pupil and their family, carry out observations and assessments. This will help to **find if there is SEND** and what **support that is additional to or different**, from the Universal Support, is needed.

**Families are not expected to pay for costly diagnoses;** settings are expected to meet pupil needs. An assessment through a qualified provider can support decision making around accurate identification, support, and review, as well as give evidence for examination access arrangements, funded support at university and information for employers.

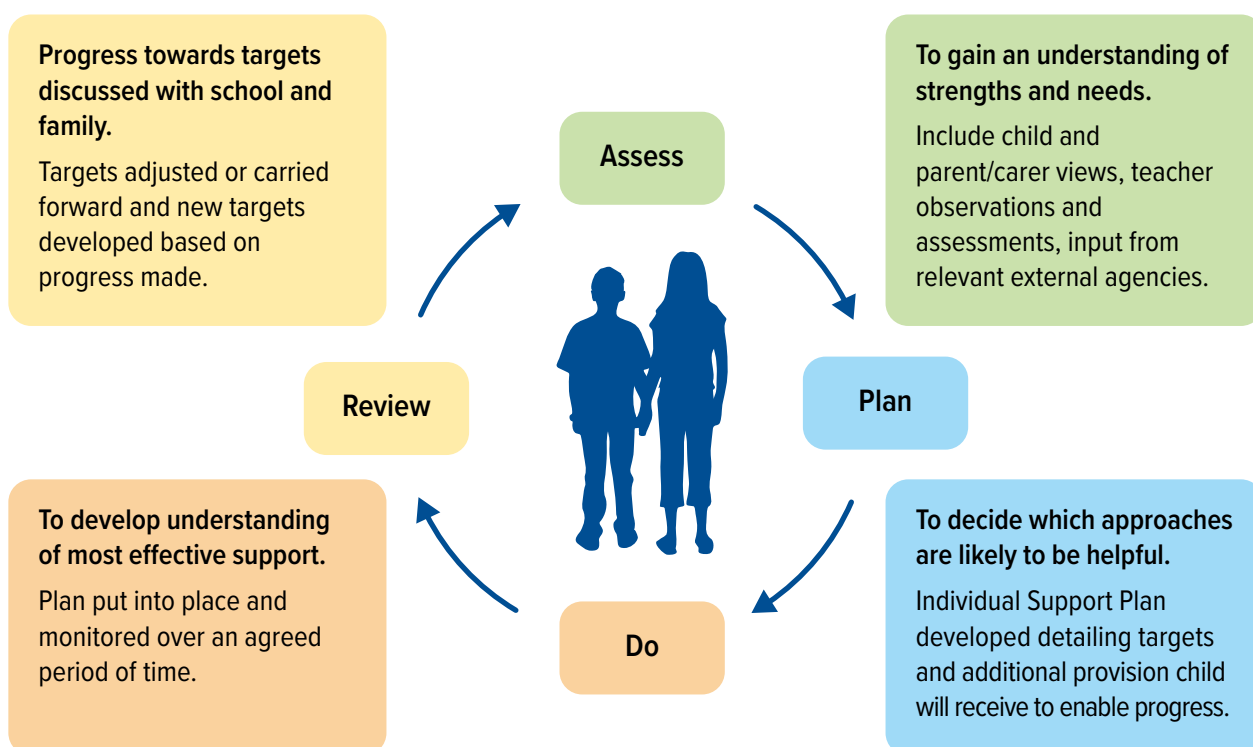
# Targeted Support

Some children and young people need targeted support that is **additional to and different from other pupils** and this is called 'SEN Support'.

The teacher or form tutor works with the SENCO. The pupil and their family are involved at every stage. Other staff may be involved who are trained to deliver what is needed. Support Services outside of the setting may be asked for their input.

All settings follow a 'Graduated Approach' with the four stages of action: 'assess, plan, do and review' (APDR) (Code of Practice, 5.38). Most pupil needs are met through this cycle being put in to place early and through the resources that are available in the setting.

Figure 3: The four stages of a 'Graduated Approach'



The targeted support is written down in the pupil's **Personalised Plan**. In Southend, this is often called an **Individual Support Plan (ISP)**; it may also be called a 'Pupil Passport', 'Support Plan', 'Education Plan' or 'One Plan'. If your child or young person is Electively Home Educated (EHE), their last ISP may support with the planning of learning opportunities.

**The ISP includes** the date (and that of the next review), the category of and details about the need, pupil and family views, targets and outcomes, support, advice and any recommendations from Support Services and review of the progress.

# What happens next?

## If my child or young person has an ISP?

The teacher or form tutor with the pupil and their family **review progress against the targets** that are agreed in the ISP (or equivalent). This information is **written down** in the ISP and everyone gets a copy.

The pupil **makes progress** and no longer needs the support or to be at SEN Support. They are taken off the SEN register.

They may be monitored longer to make sure that progress continues.

### **Meet ‘B’ at Targeted Support with Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties:**

‘B’ experienced the bereavement of a family member. She looked for a lot of adult reassurance, wanted to stay at home with her Mum and was anxious in and outside the school. She has good friends but was withdrawn; not enjoying extra-curricular activities as she normally would. ‘B’ joined in well with weekly 1-1 mentoring sessions with the Learning Mentor; Lego intervention was used to find and discuss feelings. ‘B’ had a trusted adult that she could go to if needed. ‘B’s’ family were signposted to sources of support outside the school. ‘B’ made good progress and no longer needs SEN support.

The pupil **makes progress** (because of the support) **or makes less progress than expected.**

The ‘APDR’ cycle begins again, and this may be on-going. The amount or type of support that is additional to or different from can change or be adapted.

### **Meet ‘C’ at Targeted Support with Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN) Difficulties.**

Staff ask open ended questions to ‘C’ and model the correct way of saying a phrase, to develop vocabulary and make his words clearer. Prompts develop language skills. He plays games with a partner to support the use of expressive language, attention, and focus. Vocabulary is taught before the lesson, and he learns mapping to help record information. He has added time to share his thoughts, process information, recall vocabulary and organise his responses. ‘Information Carrying Words’ is used, as suggested by the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT). ‘C’ continues to work towards his termly targets, including ones in his care plan as suggested by the SALT.



A few pupils **do not make progress, or this is less than expected.**

They may need more specialist support than that which can be given at SEN Support. An Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA) may be needed.

### **Meet 'D' at Targeted Support with Social Communication difficulties and Autism:**

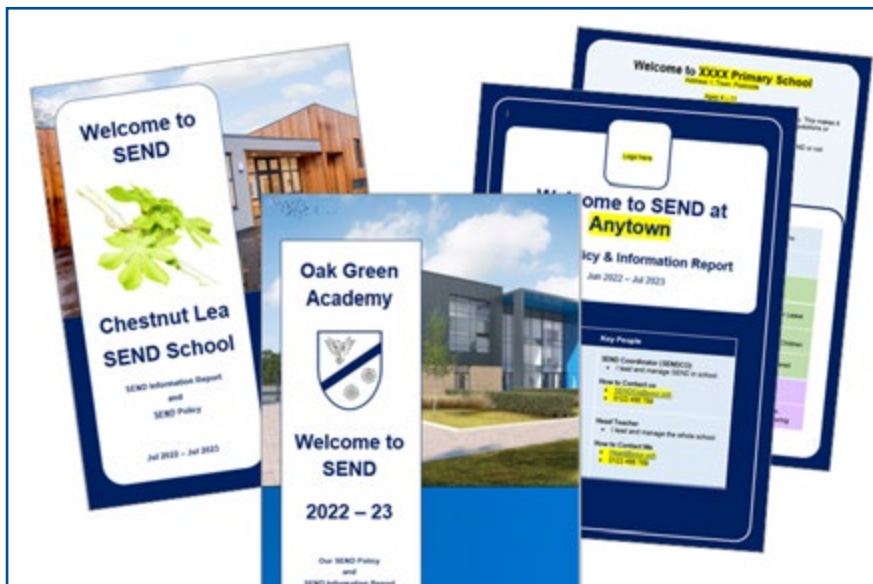
'D' enjoys familiar, repetitive activities, broken down, with daily visual supports. He has some basic skills but finds them hard to apply. He can't access some topics. Ear defenders and breaks are used, if there is background noise, they work sometimes. He needs an adult when working with classmates; he gets frustrated if they talk about anything other than "Minecraft". A personalised social story was written to help his play with others, but he prefers to find an adult. He doesn't like clubs because of the routine change. The school and family saw little progress, if at all, from the personalised support agreed with the input of Support Services. He is anxious and withdrawn. An EHCNA is requested.

# What is offered by our setting?

The ‘SEN Information Report’ is important because it describes what is offered by the setting to children and young people with SEND. It can be found on the website and makes clear the ‘Graduated Response’ for pupils who have SEND. It is personalised to the setting.

More information for parents and carers can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417435/Special\\_educational\\_needs\\_and\\_disabilites\\_guide\\_for\\_parents\\_and\\_carers.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417435/Special_educational_needs_and_disabilites_guide_for_parents_and_carers.pdf)



In Southend, we expect the SEN Information Report to:

- **Be accessible** – which means that it is easy to read, navigate and understand.
- **Include the information that is needed** – so that everyone can understand what is on offer for SEND and what can be expected in that setting.
- **Be accurate** – which means that it is reviewed at least annually (or more) so that it reflects what is happening now.

The SEN Information Report will include:

How pupils and their families are actively involved.

The approach to teaching pupils with SEND.

The types of SEND and how SEND is identified.

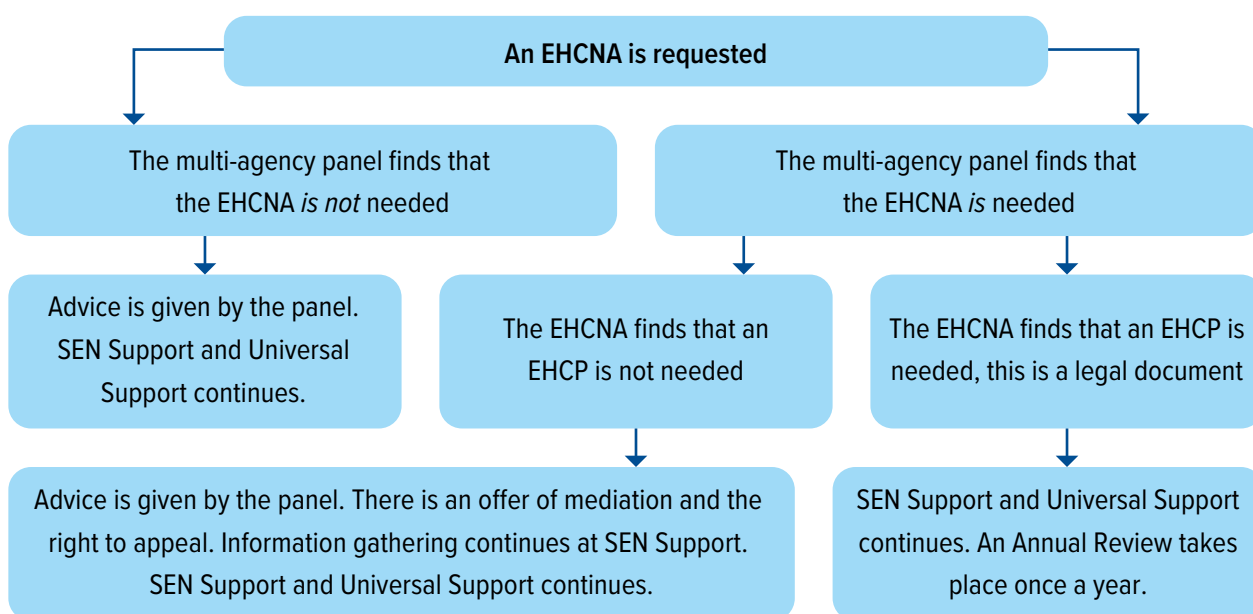
# Specialist Support

A few pupils need specialist support and may need an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA) to find out if special educational provision is needed.

An Education, Care and Health Needs Assessment (EHCNA) can be requested by the parent or carer, a young person (over the age of 16 but under the age of 25), a person acting on behalf of the setting (including post-16) and a person who knows the child or young person and thinks that an EHCNA may be necessary.

In Southend, the EHCNA is sent to the Local Authority using an online application through the 'Education, Health and Care Hub' (EHC Hub) portal, wherever possible. This can be found at: <https://ehchub.southend.gov.uk/about/>

Figure 4: EHCNA Process

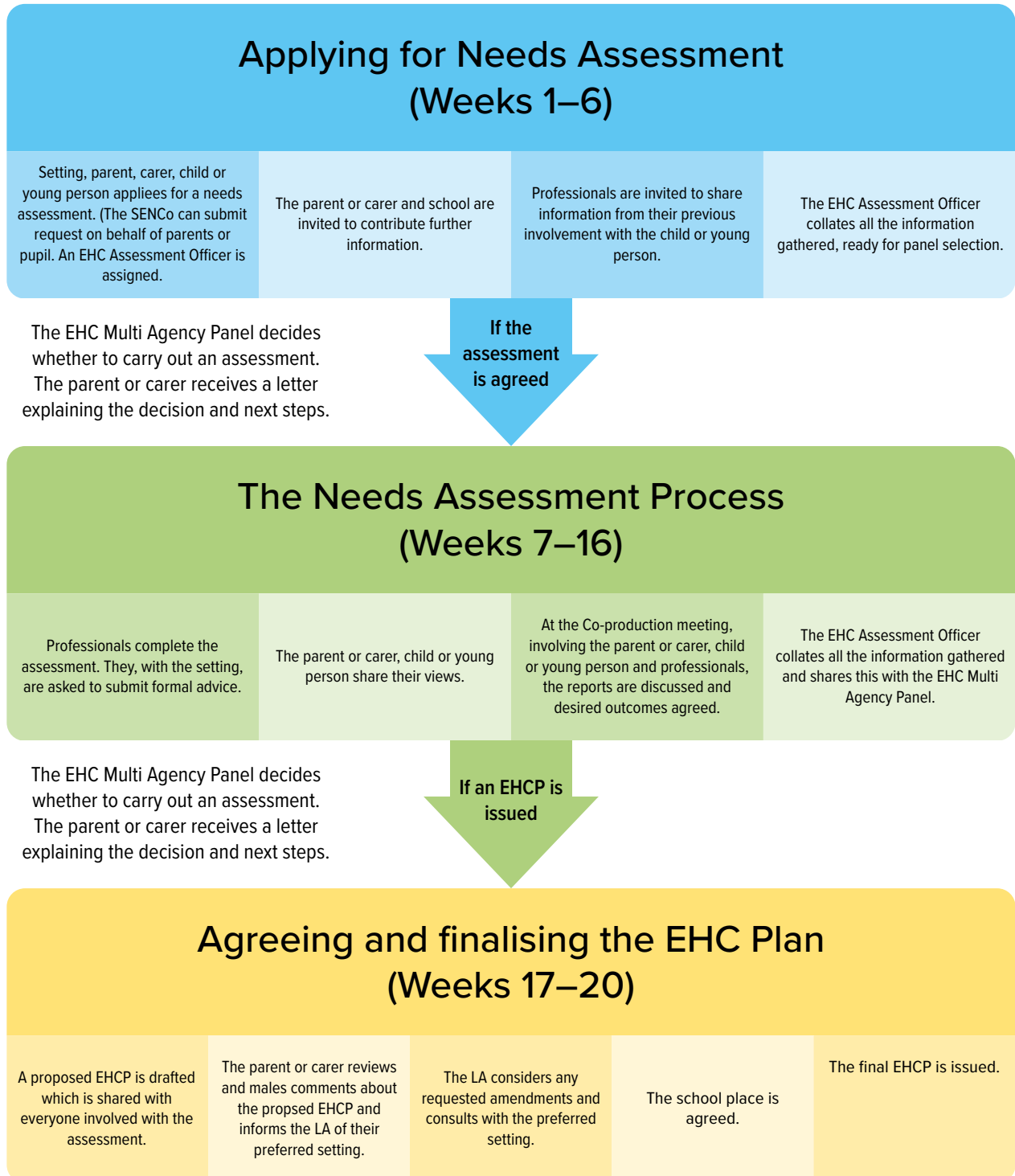


## Meet 'E' at Specialist Support with a Visual Impairment:

'E' is still coming to terms with his visual difficulties and what this means to him. He is registered sight impaired. Training for staff makes sure that they understand his condition and needs. Materials are in print 24, Arial font, black ink on blue paper. There is good contrast and matt materials avoid glare. Pictures and text are not mixed, and presentation of information is simplified. Verbal instructions are given. 'E' sits at the front of the class, near the whiteboard, with the light to his side or behind. An adult helps him to understand the environment; and he can safely navigate around school. Stairs are difficult so he is always helped by a member of staff. Classmates make him aware of obstacles, objects or what is happening at a distance, especially when he is in a place that he doesn't know. For assessments, 'E' has up to 25% added time, eye rest breaks and uses a magnifier. He has regular touch-typing sessions and in Year 7 will use a laptop in lessons. He is making steady progress against his targets (mobility, orientation, wellbeing).

# What happens next?

Once an application is submitted and the 20 week timeline begins



There are some exemptions that can be applied to these timescales, such as school holiday date. Please refer to the Code of Practice for more details

More information can be found on Southend SEND Local Offer: [Education, Health and Care needs assessment](#) and [Education, Health and Care Plans \(EHCP\)](#)

# What happens next?

## If I have a question about the 'Graduated Response'

- You should start by talking directly to your child or young person's teacher or form tutor.
- You may wish to speak to the SENCO or member of the setting's SEND team.
- If you feel that you are not getting a suitable response you can ask to meet with a Senior Leader or the Head Teacher.
- If necessary, you can contact the Governing Body, or this may be a named representative from the Multi Academy Trust. The setting's complaints policy which is found on the setting's website can tell you more.
- You can also contact the Local Authority and information can be found here: [Southend SEND Team](#)
- If you are still not satisfied with the response that you have received, Ofsted may be able to help and information can be found here: [Complaints to Ofsted about schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)



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# What happens next?

## If I need more information?

### Talk to the staff in the setting

The teacher or form tutor to start with, or the SENCO.  
Questions to ask settings about SEN Support can be found here: [Ask, Listen, Do: Understanding SEN Support | Whole School SEND](#)



### Southend SEND Local Offer

This has information, advice and guidance about Support Services that are available for children and young people with SEND and can be found here: [www.southend.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer](http://www.southend.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer)



### Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

If you need impartial information, advice, and support.  
A video about SEN Support is found here: [Education | SENDIASS Southend](#)

FAQs and Myth Busting can be found here: [FAQs and Myth Busting | SENDIASS Southend](#)

**SENDIASS**  
Southend



Special Educational Needs & Disability  
Information, Advice & Support Service

### Southend SEND Independent Forum (SSIF)

SSIF is the official Parent Carer Forum for SEND families. They are part of the SEND Partnership, and make sure that the voice of parents, carers and their children are heard. They can be found here: [Home | Southend SEND Independent Forum](#)



### IPSEA

If you need independent legally based advice, support and training you can find this here: [\(IPSEA\) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice](#)



# Thank you

Thank you to everyone that contributed towards the production of this guide on behalf of Southend's Local Area, including:

- The families that shared their views and engaged through the 'Southend SEND: What happens next' co-design event. Southend SEND Independent Forum (SSIF) who jointly planned and promoted this event, and supported on the day. SEND the Right Message charity who personalised the event flyer to meet the needs of their members and promoted the event. The families and professionals across Southend who gave their views through an online survey.
- Southend SEND Independent Forum
- SENDIASS Southend (Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice & Support Service)
- Representation from the Southend SEND Local Offer Team.
- SENCOs and professionals from settings and Support Services.
- The Southend Educational Psychology Service with the support from SSIF through their document 'SEND Support in Southend' that can be found here: [SEND Support in Southend - A guide for parents, children, young people and professionals](#)

It was suggested by some families, during the co-design process, that sharing case studies in this guide would help everyone to understand better the stages through the 'Graduated Response'. The case studies gathered through Support Services and shared are based on real life experiences however names are anonymised.

## **The SEND Support Team, School Performance and Provision Services, Southend City Council.**

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Translations of this document in alternative languages are also available upon request.



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