

Special Educational Needs (SEN) is a legal term. It describes the needs of a child who has a difficulty or disability which makes learning harder for them than for other children their age. They will need additional provision in order to make progress.

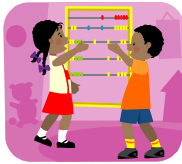
Kent's Children and Young Peoples joint commissioning Board defines Special Educational needs as: *a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made.*

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- a) Have significantly greater difficulty in learning from the majority of children of the same age; or-
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of any kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local Educational Authority;
- c) Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition of a) above or b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

SEN covers a broad spectrum of difficulty or disability. Children may have wide-ranging or specific problems. E.g. a child might have difficulty with one area of learning, such as letters or numbers. Or they might have problems relating to other children, or to adults. SEN includes children with moderate or severe learning difficulties and physical, neurological or sensory disabilities (such as hearing, motor and visual disabilities), speech and language problems as well as needs such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, Asperger syndrome and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

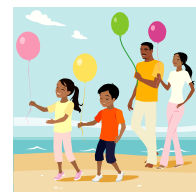
Around one in five children has the need of 'additional support' at some point during their school years or throughout their time in school. The need for additional support all through school or for part of the learning journey does not mean your child will be put on the **SEN register** but they will still receive the support they need from the School.



The Children and Families' Bill and SEND Strategy

The 2010 Lamb report called for:

- ▶ Children's outcomes to be at the heart of the system
- ▶ A stronger voice for parents
- ▶ A system with greater focus on children's needs
- ▶ A more accountable system that delivers better services



The government's response was to introduce the Children and Families Bill which became law in September 2014. The Bill introduced a multi-agency single assessment called an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). In addition, there is only one category of 'Additional SEN support' for children that are on the SEN register.

This strategy maintains that we must continue to be ambitious for SEN pupils and have greater understanding of communication, social, mental, behavioural and emotional needs. To be defined as SEN and be placed on the SEN register the pupil will have *a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made and the pupil will have displayed a significant lack of progress (&/or have relevant medical needs) despite the following being in place in school: Quality first teaching & evidence of quality interventions. Where needs are more complex and there is evidence*

that quality interventions (up to notional £6,000) had failed to help an EHCP (20weeks to complete) would be actioned, if LIFT (local inclusion forum – see below) were involved and in agreement.

LIFT – local inclusive forum will be the main conduit for advice and procurement of specialist services. Their permission must be sought before external specialist services can be offered to the child. The Senco will attend these meetings. They will support and examine outcomes; be a resource for additional local support; and provide training. They will decide on awarding EHCPs and will normally have been involved in a child's progress before an EHCP is suggested.

