

supported by the  
Local Authority

**Bolton**  
**Council**



**Bolton Parent  
Carer Consortium**

---

# **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

*a guide for Bolton parents and carers*



# Welcome Message

This booklet has been written by parents to provide parents and carers in Bolton with a guide to Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND.) We understand that the world of SEND can at times be quite confusing, we hope that this booklet can help ease the journey.

2014 saw changes to the way in which children and young people with SEND are supported. If you are new to the system, or wanting to update yourself with how things have changed, then this booklet will help.



The booklet has been written by Bolton Parent Carer Consortium, with support from Bolton Local Authority. It is intended as an overview of the main aspects of SEND, more detailed information can be found online at Bolton's Local Offer: [www.localdirectory.bolton.gov.uk/send.aspx](http://www.localdirectory.bolton.gov.uk/send.aspx) or by visiting the Consortium's website: [www.bpcc.org.uk](http://www.bpcc.org.uk)

*Bolton Parent Carer Consortium 2017*

## Contents

Terminology Explained	4
SEN Support	5
Education, Health & Care Plans	6
Early Years	8
The Local Offer	8
Preparing for Adulthood	9
Health & Social Care	9
Personal Budgets	10
Statements	10
Bolton Parent Carer Consortium	11
Information & Advisory Service (SEN)	12



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

**Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** is a term used to describe the additional needs of children and young people who have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers.

This includes those with a disability that makes it difficult for them to use the facilities generally provided in mainstream settings.

In 2014 an act of parliament was passed called [The Children & Families Act 2014](#), it included new legislation for all children and young people.

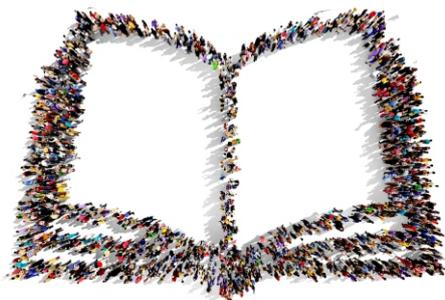
[Part 3](#) of the Children's and Families Act is solely concerned with children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND.)

There is a document called [The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#) which explains how organisations like local authorities, schools, colleges early years providers and health providers must carry out their duties under the new law.

You may hear these referred to as [The SEND Reforms](#).

Section 19 of [The Children & Families Act 2014](#) explains the main principles of the SEND Reforms. These principles are something that local authorities must have regard to when working with children and young people with SEND:

- ▶ the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and their parents.
- ▶ the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decision making, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in these decisions.
- ▶ the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.



- ▶ See the back page for information as to how to access information and advice regarding SEN
- ▶ Turn the page for a guide to terminology



# Terminology Explained

You will come across quite a lot of terminology, phrases and jargon when you have a child or young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We have put together a list of some of the most commonly used.

## Learning Difficulty or Disability

A learning difficulty or disability is defined as being when a child, or young person

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or post-16 institutions.

## Special Educational Needs (SEN)

This is defined in law as when a child or young person...

*“has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.”*

**EHC Plan** Education, Health & Care Plan, see page 6-7 for information.

**SEN Support** Special Educational Needs Support, see page 5.

**Person Centred Review** An annual review that takes place when a child or young person is about to transition to the next key stage. ie when in Year 6 or 9.

**SENCO** Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator. Every mainstream school has a SENCO, they are a qualified teacher that has the day-to-day responsibility for SEN within the school.

**EHC Needs Assessment** an assessment co-ordinated by the LA which decides whether an EHC Plan is required.

**IAS** Previously known as Parent Partnership, the Information & Advisory Service (SEN.) For more information, see the back page.

**Local Offer** Website designed to provide SEND information. See page 8.

## SEN Provision

This is when a child (over 2,) or young person, requires provision that is additional to or different than the provision generally made for others of the same age.

**LA** Local Authority (Bolton Council)

**Aspirations** Long term aims. When in an EHC Plan, focussed on adulthood.

**Outcomes** The benefit, or difference made to an individual as a result of an intervention.

**Provision** The individual support or input required by a pupil.

**Young Person** Within SEND, a child is referred to as a young person at the end of the academic year in which they turn 16.

**Transition** When a child or young person moves from phase to another. For example in education, moving from Key Stage 2, Primary School, to Key Stage 3, Secondary School.

**Early Years** From birth to compulsory school age. (0-5 years)

**Preparing for Adulthood** Sometimes referred to as Post-16, this is a term used to describe the holistic approach to ensuring a young person, with SEND is supported into adult life.



# SEN Support

Any support your child receives from their school or other setting should meet their needs. If your child or young person is identified as having SEND, schools should take action to remove any barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This is referred to as SEN Support. This replaced School Action and School Action Plus in September 2014.

SEN Support is implemented using a graduated approach and works slightly differently depending on the age of the child or young person and the setting they are in. There are 4 stages:

## 1 Assess

Your child's difficulties must be assessed so that the right support can be provided. Teachers work with SENCO's to fully assess a pupil's needs. This *should* include input from the pupil and their parents. If it is considered necessary, specialists, like an educational psychologist, may be included.

## 2 Plan

If it is decided that a pupil requires SEN Support, their parents *must* be notified. However, parents should *have* been included during the Assessment stage. **Outcomes** for the pupil will be written - these are the changes that are hoped to be achieved as a result of the support.

Parents should be involved with this. Everyone who works with the pupil should be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any strategies that are required.

## 4 Review

The support your child receives is reviewed regularly. At the **Plan** stage, this time frame should have been agreed.

There is no specific guidance for how often these reviews should take place, however good practise suggests having termly reviews. Everyone involved, including the pupil and their parents, should decide together if the support is having a positive impact, or if any changes need to be made.



## 3 Do

The setting will put the planned support into place. The teacher remains responsible for the pupil on a daily basis, however, the SENCO and any support staff or specialist teaching staff involved in providing support should work closely to track the pupil's progress and monitor that the support is being effective.

*Current Government guidance states that schools are required to provide the first £6000 (or 12 hours) of support for any child at SEN Support*

# Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP)

The purpose of an EHC Plan is to provide provision, over and above that normally provided by a school, to meet the **special educational needs** of the child or young person. The plan includes outcomes covering education, health and social care. The aim of an EHC Plan is to prepare them for adulthood.

Most children and young people with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met in a mainstream educational setting via SEN Support, as described on the previous page, without the need for an EHC Plan.

In the case of a child or young person who may require support that is over and above what is normally available to a school, an EHC needs assessment may be considered.

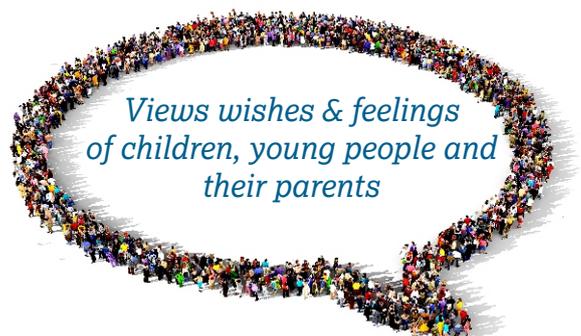
An EHC needs assessment is a long process that takes up to 20 weeks. Within this process there are different stages as described on these pages.

## Stage One: Requesting an EHC Needs Assessment

- Bolton Local Authority (LA) co-ordinate EHC needs assessments.
- A request for an assessment can be made by various people - including the child's parent the young person, the school and foster carers. In most circumstances it is expected that the school would make this request.

## Stage Two: Deciding whether to conduct an EHC needs assessment

- The LA have up to 6 weeks to decide whether an assessment is necessary.
- The views, wishes and feelings of the child's parent and/or the young person are included in this decision.
- Health & Social Care partners will be notified by the LA that a request for an assessment has been made.
- Crucial evidence at this stage is that the child or young person has *already* had 2 terms of SEN Support provided in their educational setting, and that the child or young person is still unable to make progress, despite interventions and additional support provided by school.
- Additional evidence, possibly from clinicians or health professionals may be requested to help the LA understand more about the child or young person's physical, emotional and social development.
- If, after considering all the evidence, the LA decides not to carry out an EHC needs assessment, then they must inform the child's parents or the young person and give reasons for their decision.





### **Stage Three: Conducting an EHC Needs Assessment**

- ▶ The EHC needs assessment follows an approach called a **person-centred approach**, meaning that it looks at your child or young person as an individual and you will both be able to express your views, wishes and feelings and be part of the decisions made.
- ▶ Bolton Local Authority manages the process. They will request information from:
  - ▶ the child or young person's educational setting
  - ▶ from any health care professionals involved - in Bolton this is co-ordinated via a single health report
  - ▶ an educational psychologist
  - ▶ any social care parties involved
  - ▶ If the child is in year 9 or above, information related to preparing for adulthood
  - ▶ anyone else the LA thinks is appropriate
  - ▶ any other person that the parents or young person reasonably thinks should also offer advice and information.



### **Stage Four: Deciding whether an EHC Plan is needed**

- ▶ When deciding if an EHC Plan is needed, the LA reviews all the information provided, especially the evidence that shows a child or young person's progression, or lack of progression, despite an educational setting providing increased provision through the SEN Support process.
- ▶ If the LA decide, based on all the evidence of the assessment, that an EHC Plan is not necessary, then parents and young people will be notified and given reasons for this decision. This notification will include information on how to appeal this decision.



### **Stage Five: Preparing an EHC Plan**

- ▶ An EHC Plan includes detailed information about the child or young person (their strengths and needs,) their future long term aspirations, key stage outcomes, short term targets, educational provision, and any health provision and social care provision - if applicable.
- ▶ A draft plan is sent out to the child's parents or young person, including all the information used to draw up the plan. The family have 15 days to read this plan and either agree to it, or offer views on the content. At this point, they can ask for the final plan to have a particular, or type of, school or institution named.
- ▶ Once a final plan is agreed, a new copy is issued to the parents or young person and also to the school or institution named in the plan.

EHC Plans are reviewed on an annual basis (more regularly if a child is under 5.) Parents should always be involved in the annual review process. Through this process, progress is monitored and consideration is given to whether the provision specified in the EHC Plan is adequately meeting the needs of the child or young person.

# Beyond the classroom....

## SEN in the Early Years

*“All those who work with young children should be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parents know their children best and it is important that all practitioners listen and understand when parents express any concerns about their child’s development.” SEND Code of Practise*

**0-2 Years:** During the health checks that babies have in their first months and years, including newborn screenings and their progress checks, GP’s, health visitors and paediatricians may identify potential difficulties that could mean the child will have special educational needs.

The use of the phrase SEN at this stage of a child’s life is used to explain that it is thought that once the child is of school age, it is likely that they will have special educational needs.

If it is thought that a child has, or probably has SEN, then the Code of Practice makes it a duty for the practitioner to inform the parents and the Local Authority (LA.) This may be quite alarming when your child is only very young, however, it ensures that the appropriate support and provision can be offered to your child.

**Pre-School:** Some 2 year olds and the majority of 3 and 4 year olds attend some form of early years provision - nursery or pre-school. These settings have a specific framework called the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that, for children with SEND works alongside the Code of Practice to monitor and review children’s progress. If it is thought that a child may need additional support, early year settings follow the Assess, Plan, Do, Review pathway for SEN Support and can, if appropriate, request that the LA carry out an EHC needs assessment.

## The Local Offer

The Bolton Local Offer is a section of the local authority website which can be found by visiting [www.localdirectory.bolton.gov.uk/send.aspx](http://www.localdirectory.bolton.gov.uk/send.aspx)

The Local Offer has information about provision available in Bolton across education, health and social care for children and young people with SEND. You can also find specific Bolton Local Authority guidelines regarding EHC Plans, Personal Budgets and Transport.

There are links to childcare, leisure activities, and voluntary organisations and charities that can provide advice, support or a variety of social opportunities.

There is also Information for young people moving into further education and training, including apprenticeships and supported internships..



# Preparing for Adulthood

The vision for children and young people with SEND is that they achieve well in their early years, at school and in college and lead happy and fulfilled lives.

*“Professionals across education, health and social care should support children and young people with SEND to prepare for adult life, and help them go on to achieve the best outcomes in employment, independent living, health and community participation.”*

SEND Code of Practice

**Preparing for Adulthood** is the term used to encompass all of this, it means, providing support that will prepare the individual for the following 4 keystones on adult life:

## ► Employment

Covering aspects of employment including exploring different Higher Education and/or employment options like support for becoming self-employed and supported pathways such as Supported Internships and Access to Work programmes.

## ► Independent living, including supported living.

This means young people having choice, control and freedom over their lives and the support they have and their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living.

## ► Participating in society

This includes having friends supportive relationships and participating in, and contributing to, the local community.

## ► Health

This means being as healthy as possible in adult life.

At all stages of a child's life, there is an emphasis on having **high aspirations** for their long term future. This means whilst working on short term outcomes, there should be a link to those outcomes being part of working towards their long term aspirations. From Year 9 onwards, this planning takes on a more practical approach as outcomes will be moving towards helping the young person progress and achieve their aspirations through focussing on the above 4 keystones.

# Health & Social Care

There is a duty on local authorities, health and social care providers to develop effective partnerships that allow joint working and commissioning wherever they think it would promote the well-being of children and young people with SEND, or improve the quality of special educational provision. This is seen most prominently for families, with EHC Plans, where special educational provision is provided to enable the best possible outcomes across education, health and social care.

Personal budgets are another area where education, health and social care have the opportunity to work together. (See next page for more information.)

# Personal Budgets and EHC Plans

When a child or young person has an EHC Plan, the cost of some of the SEN provision required to meet their special educational needs is referred to as their [personal budget](#).

Parents can choose to take some of the personal budget as a direct payment and make this element of the provision themselves. This aims to give young people and parents more choice and control over the provision made for them/their child.

There are specific guidelines for how this money can be used and what it can be spent on as it must always be used to ensure a child or young person can achieve the outcomes specified in their EHC Plan. Examples are - specialist equipment, continuing health care packages or support from a personal assistant.

Any spending must be detailed in the EHC Plan and be set against an identified educational outcome. Education, health and social care elements of the EHC plan are all included. Further details of what can and cannot be included in a personal budget are available on the Bolton Local Offer, as well as information on how a personal budget is managed and funded.

## Statements of Special Educational Needs

The Children & Families Act in 2014 introduced EHC Plans to replace both Statements and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDA.)

Transitional arrangements were put in place to support the changeover to the new system. The transfers are being completed systematically, usually when a pupil reaches the end of a key stage, The government have allowed until 2018 to complete transfers.

The transfer process starts with a [person centred review](#) to gather all the information and views required. The process then follows that described on page 6 of this booklet, where the person centred review forms Stage 3 of the process. A draft plan is drawn up following the person centred review and issued as in Stage 5.

There is an Independent Support programme in Bolton designed *specifically for those families whose child or young person is transferring from a statement of special educational needs, to an EHC plan*. The Independent Supporter will guide you through the process. They will attend meetings with you, help you with the paperwork and ensure your draft plan is right for your child and also that throughout, your views are heard.

Independent Support is delivered by two services in Bolton. IAS if your child is under 16, and Together Trust if your young person is over 16- both services can be accessed by contacting Cheryl Wyatt on 01204 848722.



# Information & Advisory Service (SEN)

Bolton's Information and Advisory Service (IAS) are here to support parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-25 years with Special Educational Needs (SEN.) We also support young people with SEN up to the age of 25.

IAS provide legally based, impartial information and advice for parents and young people.

We offer a range of services tailored to suit individual needs, and can support parents carers and young people with issues across education health and social care.

**This service can be accessed by contacting Cheryl Wyatt on 01204 848722**

This booklet was produced by:

## **Bolton Parent Carer Consortium**



**Bolton Parent Carer Consortium**



**[www.bpcc.org.uk](http://www.bpcc.org.uk)**



**@BoltonParents**



**07715 201798**



**[enquiries@bpcc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bpcc.org.uk)**



**[boltonparents](https://www.instagram.com/boltonparents)**

