

SEN

Special
Educational
Needs

Assessment & the Statement

learning
communication
inclusion
progress
potential
provision
achievement
school action

teacher
review

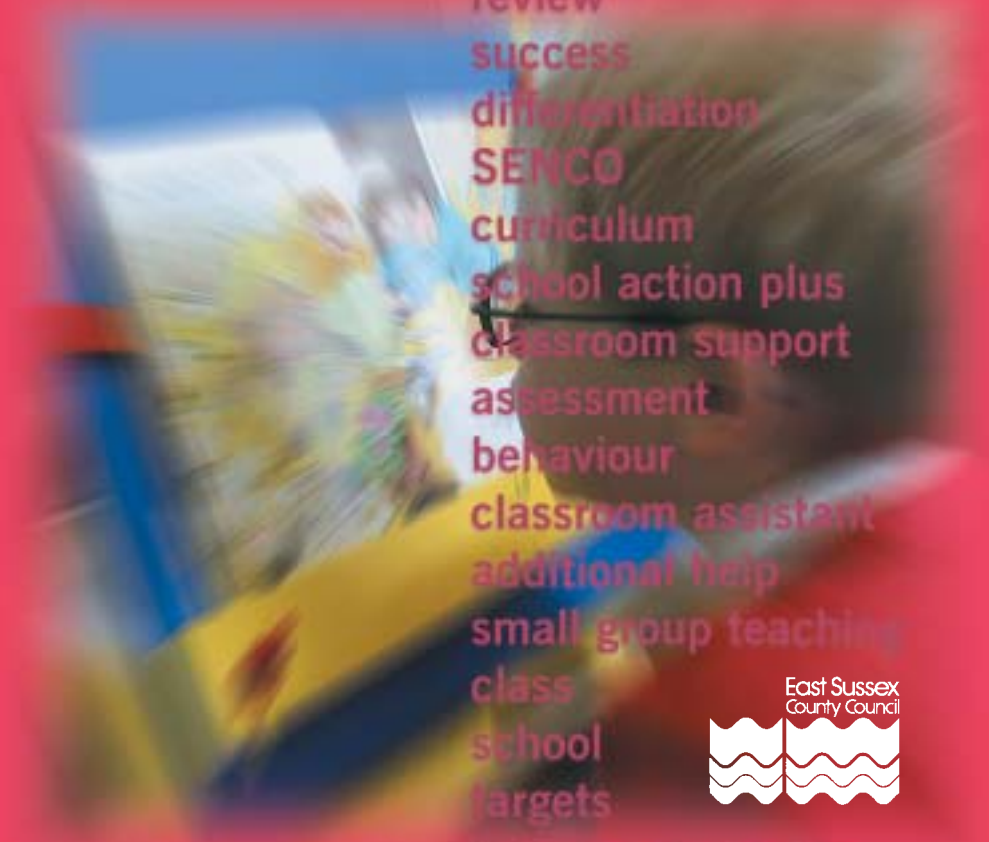
success
differentiation
SENCO
curriculum
school action plus
classroom support
assessment

behaviour
classroom assistant
additional help

small group teaching
class

school
targets

learning strategies
individual education plan



*Key principles

- ✓ All children with special needs should have their needs met
- ✓ The special educational needs of children are normally met in mainstream early education settings or schools
- ✓ Your views should be taken into account and the wishes of your child should be listened to
- ✓ You have a vital role in supporting your child's education
- ✓ Children with special educational needs should get a broad well-balanced and relevant education including the foundation stage curriculum (for children aged 3 to 5) or the National Curriculum (for children aged 5 to 16).

**Extract from Special Educational Needs (SEN) a guide for parents and carers published by DfES.*

The information in this booklet relates to the 1996 Education Act, the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and the 2001 Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. The Code of Practice provides practical guidance for us – the local education authority (LEA) – and our schools on our responsibilities towards children with special educational needs.

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Introduction

The majority of children with special educational needs will have their needs met within mainstream schools and mainstream early years provision,* through Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus, or School Action and School Action Plus. Our booklet 'SEN Information for Parents and Carers explains these stages. In a very small number of

cases (about 3% nationally) where a child does not seem to be making enough progress, the LEA may need to make a statutory assessment and then consider whether or not to issue a statement.

**In this booklet from now on when we refer to schools this also covers early years settings*

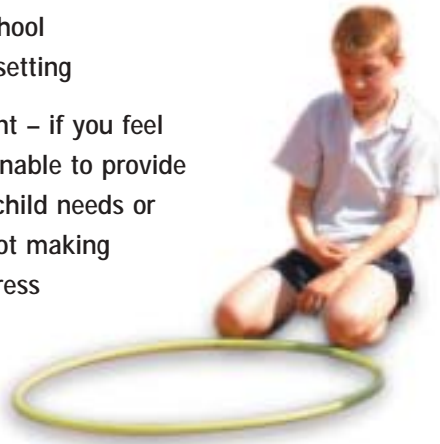
What is a statutory assessment?

This is a detailed investigation to find out exactly what your child's needs are and what special help would benefit your child.

It is only necessary in a very few cases as most children will have their needs met at the Action and Action Plus stages.

Who can request a statutory assessment?

- ✓ Your child's school or early years setting
- ✓ You, as a parent – if you feel the school is unable to provide the help your child needs or your child is not making sufficient progress

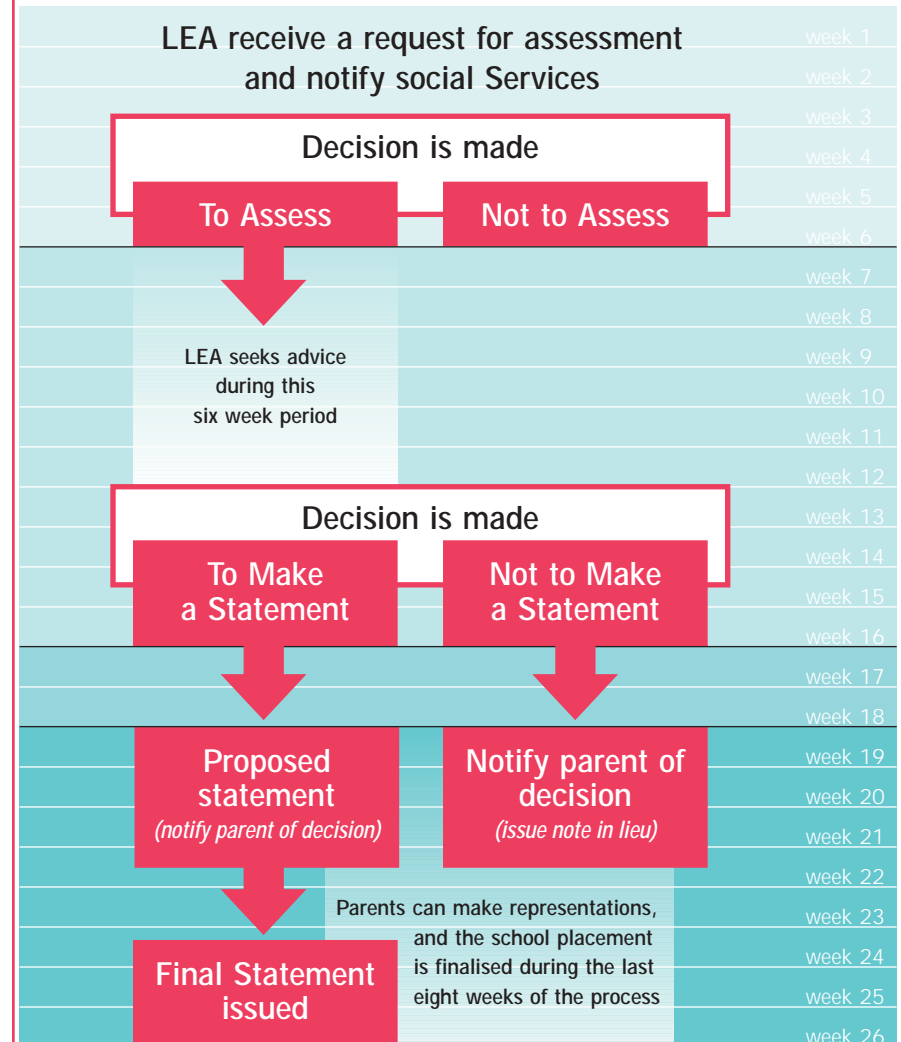


How long will it take for a decision to be made?

Once we have received a request for a statutory assessment we will normally tell you within six weeks whether we will carry out an assessment. To help us make our decision we will ask you for

information about your child and we will also ask your child's school for information about your child's needs and how your child is progressing. We will write to you once a decision has been made.

Timetable for Assessment



What happens if the LEA decides not to assess my child?

If we decide not to carry out an assessment we will write to you and tell you and we will explain the reasons why we have decided not to make an assessment. We will ask the school to arrange a meeting with you, key school staff and an educational psychologist to discuss the future programme of support for your child.

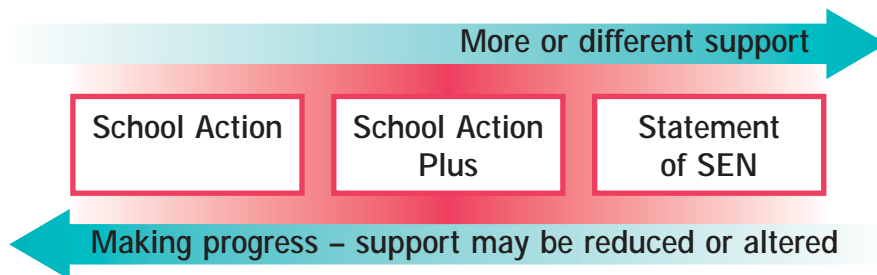
We will also tell you about Parent Link, which is a source of information, advice and support, an independent mediation service and of your right to appeal against our decision to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

Can I ask for my child to be assessed again?

After six months has elapsed you may make a further request which will be considered in the same way. Remember very few children need a statutory assessment, as schools can

be flexible and creative and can cater for pupils progressing at their own pace. Most children's needs can be met through school action and school action plus.

School Action Plus



What is involved in a statutory assessment?

We have 10 weeks to complete the assessment. In this time we collect together detailed information about your child in order to get a clear picture of your child's needs. We will ask you for additional information and we will contact a number of professionals including:

- ✓ the headteacher of your child's school
- ✓ an educational psychologist,
- ✓ a doctor
- ✓ social services

We will also include anyone whose views you consider would be helpful.

You will be contacted if any assessments or examinations are arranged for your child. You have the right to be present at any medical, test or interview. However, in certain circumstances it is helpful for your child to be seen without you for example where classroom observation is being carried out.

The decision

Once we have received all the information we requested about your child's needs we will consider whether to issue a **statement of special educational needs**. We will normally write and tell you within 12 weeks of starting the assessment.

If we have decided to issue a statement we will send you a 'proposed statement'. This is a draft of the statement and you will be able to comment on it if you wish.

If we have decided not to issue a statement we will write to you and explain the reasons for this decision and we will tell you how we think your child's needs can be met in school. We will ask the school to arrange a meeting with you, key school staff and an educational psychologist to discuss the future programme of support for your child. We will also give you information about who you can contact if you disagree with our decision and we will tell you about your right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

The Statement

The statement will set out your child's educational needs, and the provision your child needs in order to make progress at school. The statement is in six parts:

Part 1 gives your own and your child's name and address together with other personal details.

Part 2 sets out the details of all your child's special educational needs which were identified during the assessment.

Part 3 sets out the special educational provision. It describes:

- ✓ the special help your child should get to meet the needs listed in part 2
- ✓ the long term educational aims for your child
- ✓ the arrangements for setting short-term goals, reviewing your child's progress towards those goals and how your child's progress is to be monitored.

Part 4 tells you about the school your child will attend to get the help set out in part 3 or any other arrangements for education other than in school.

Part 5 describes any relevant non-educational needs your child has such as medical needs.

Part 6 gives details of how your child will get the help outlined in part 5.

You will be sent copies of all the reports that we obtain as part of the assessment process.

What is differentiation?

Some pupils will need different approaches to learning depending on their needs. There are many things a teacher can do to help a pupil to learn and these may range from giving instructions in different ways, adapting teaching materials, providing more time for homework to providing specialist equipment.

What happens next?

When we send you the 'proposed statement' we will ask you for your views on it, and you will have 15 days to let us know your views. We will consider your comments before the statement is finalised. You can also ask for a meeting with us to discuss the proposed statement.

At this stage you will find Part 4, which describes the type of school and gives the name of the school, has been left blank. We will also ask you to say which school you would like your child to attend. Most parents prefer their child to continue at the school they already attend.

What if I disagree with the statement?

If you disagree with what is in the proposed statement you should talk to your named caseworker. You can also:

- ✓ Talk to Parent Link – an impartial source of information, advice and support.
- ✓ Consider independent mediation – there is a separate leaflet which tells you about mediation.

Mediation is a positive way of resolving difficulties using a neutral person – the mediator.



Questions or worries?

You can talk to:

- ✓ The school SENCO
- ✓ Your child's caseworker
- ✓ Parent Link

Your child's school?

Most children with statements attend maintained mainstream schools and most parents prefer their child to continue at the school they already attend following a statement being issued. However, the decision about which school is right for your child is clearly a very important one. It is important to make sure that you get all the information you need. If you need help and advice you can talk to Parent Link, or the caseworker and you can ask for a meeting if this would be helpful.

You may express a preference for the maintained school you wish your child to attend, or you may make representations to the LEA for a place in any other school. We will send you a list of our maintained mainstream and special schools and a list of non-maintained and independent schools which have been approved by the Department for Education and Skills as being suitable for children with special educational needs.

If you ask for a mainstream school place, this may be the school your child is attending, we must agree with your preference as long as:

- ✓ **the school is suitable for your child's age, ability and special educational needs**
- ✓ **your child's attendance at the school is not incompatible with the efficient education of other children at the school**
- ✓ **placing your child in the school is an efficient use of resources**

We will need to consult the school before naming it on the statement. However, the LEA makes the final decision.

The LEA has eleven special schools that cater for pupils with the most severe and complex needs and a number of our mainstream schools have specialist places for pupils in Units and Special Facilities. These specialist places support pupils with dyslexia, hearing impairment, physical difficulties and speech & language difficulties.

If you want your child to attend a non-maintained or independent school that can meet your child's needs, we will consider your wishes very carefully. However, if there is a place available in a suitable maintained school, which is able to meet your child's needs we would place the child there.

When will the final statement be issued?

We will usually send you the final statement, which will name the school in part 4, within eight weeks of issuing the 'proposed statement'.

The statement comes into force on the day it is issued. It will then be reviewed annually, and six monthly for under-fives.

How long does the statement last?

A child can have a statement for the whole of their school career, or for just a part of it. If a child makes good progress and no longer needs a statement we may decide to end the statement. However, you will be consulted. Usually a statement is

stopped at the end of year 11 when a pupil leaves school. If a child stays on at school the statement can continue until the pupil is 19 or until the end of their course, whichever is the earlier.

Travel to and from school

Some children may be entitled to assistance with travel to and from school. However this will depend on how far they live from their designated school. If a child lives more than three miles from their designated school or two miles for children under eight, they may be eligible for help, as long as they are attending the nearest appropriate school. Contact your child's caseworker if you want to know more about help with travel.



Moving Away?

What happens if I move to another LEA area?

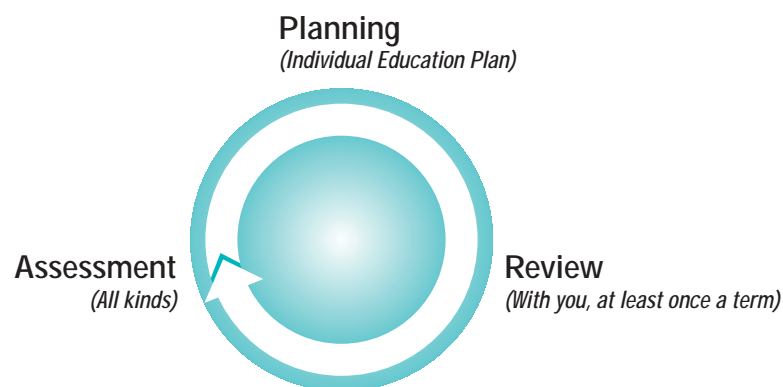
If you are planning to move to another LEA area you should let us know. You should talk to us and to your new LEA about your child's needs and the best way of making sure they continue to be met.

When you move we will send your child's statement to your new LEA. The new LEA must then make sure that your child gets all the special educational help set out in the statement.

Within six weeks of receiving your child's statement, your new LEA must tell you when they will review the statement and whether they are going to make a new statutory assessment of your child. Your child may start at a new school before the new LEA reviews the statement or makes a statutory assessment.

Remember that you have a right to tell the new LEA what you think before they make any changes.

Continual Assessment



Definitions

Annual review

A review of a statement held each year

Caseworker

The person who undertakes the administration of the statementing process

Designated school

The school nearest to your home which the LEA considers to be suitable and has a place available

Independent School

A school not maintained by the LEA

Local Education Authority (LEA)

A local government body that is responsible for providing education

Mainstream School

A school which is for all children

Maintained school

A state school

Non-maintained school

A school not maintained by the LEA which charges fees on a non-profit making basis

Note in lieu of a statement

A document in which the LEA sets out the reasons for their decision not to make a statement

Proposed statement

A draft of the statement

Special Educational Needs

Co-ordinator SENCO

The teacher in school who has special responsibility for children with special educational needs

Special educational needs and disability tribunal SENDIST

An independent body that hears appeals against decisions made by LEA's on statutory assessments and statements

Special educational provision

The special help given to children with special educational needs

Special school

A school which is specially organised to provide provision for pupils with special educational needs

Statement of special educational needs

A document that sets out a child's needs and all the extra help they should get

Statutory assessment

A very detailed examination of a child's special educational needs. It may lead to a statement

Transition Plan

A plan drawn up after the year 9 annual review of a statement. It sets out the steps needed to move from school to adult life.

Contacts

At school: You can talk to the class teacher, the SENCO & the Headteacher. However, it may be advisable to make an appointment so the person you wish to see can set aside some time for a meeting.

Alternatively, once the assessment process has started your child will be allocated a caseworker who will deal with the administration of the assessment and who will be able to answer your queries on the assessment process and the statement.

To talk to the SEN team contact:

SEN Team
PO Box 4
County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 1SG
Tel: 01273 481000

To talk to Parent Link contact:

Parent Link
Helpline 01273 481172
Email:
parentlink@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

Or write to Parent link at

PO Box 4
County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 1SG

To talk to the Early Years Service
SEN contact:

Early Years Service SEN
St. Mary's House. 4th Floor.
52 St Leonards Road
Eastbourne
BN21 3UU
Tel: 01323 747490



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