The Graduated Approach - a guide for families

Bracknell Forest Council

This document is aimed at families of any child or young person who may have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND*) aged 0 to 25 years, at any stage in their journey to independence. This document was co-produced with Bracknell Parent Carer Forum representatives, local school representatives, health and local authority officers.

Any acronyms or terms marked (*) are explained in the glossary.

Throughout this document we will refer to:

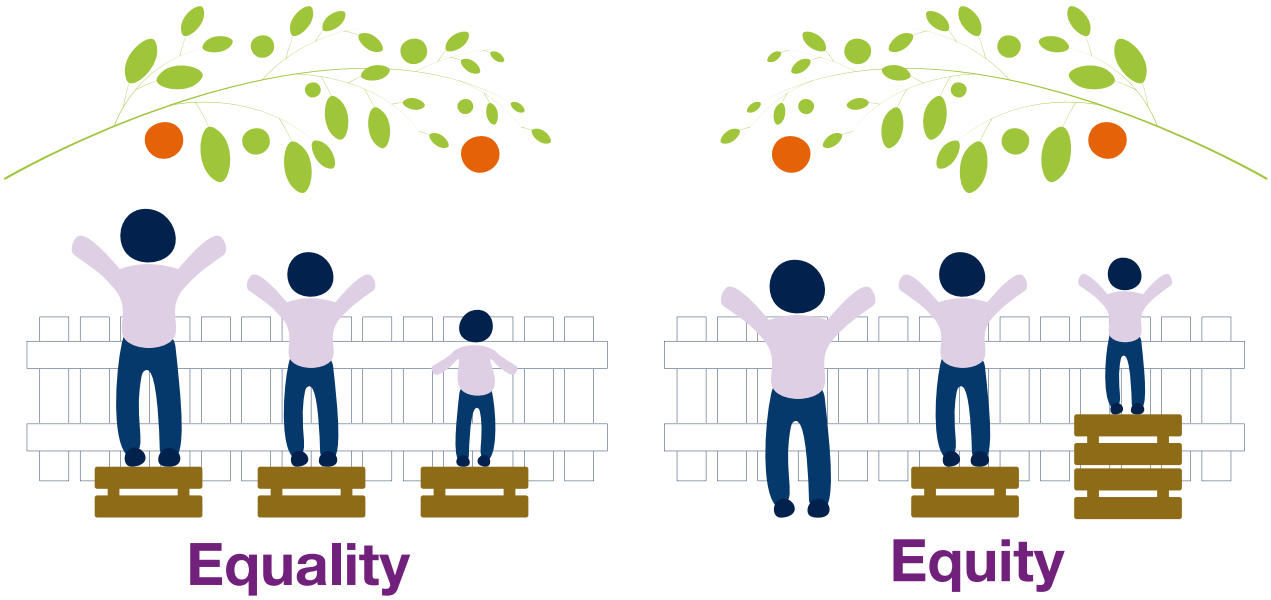
- children and young people as 'students'
- adults who work at nurseries, schools or colleges and who support students as 'staff'
- educational placements including early years provision, schools, and colleges as 'settings'
- special educational needs and/or disabilities as SEND
- special educational needs / or disabilities co-ordinators as SENCo/ SENDCo

Although all children and young people have needs, some may have needs that impact on their ability to access education, known as special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)*. When this is the case, schools or settings may speak to you about placing your child on the SEND register* and what support they may need to help them to make progress and develop.

All services in Bracknell Forest are needs-led and not diagnosis-led. This means a child or young person does not need a formal diagnosis to have identified SEND.

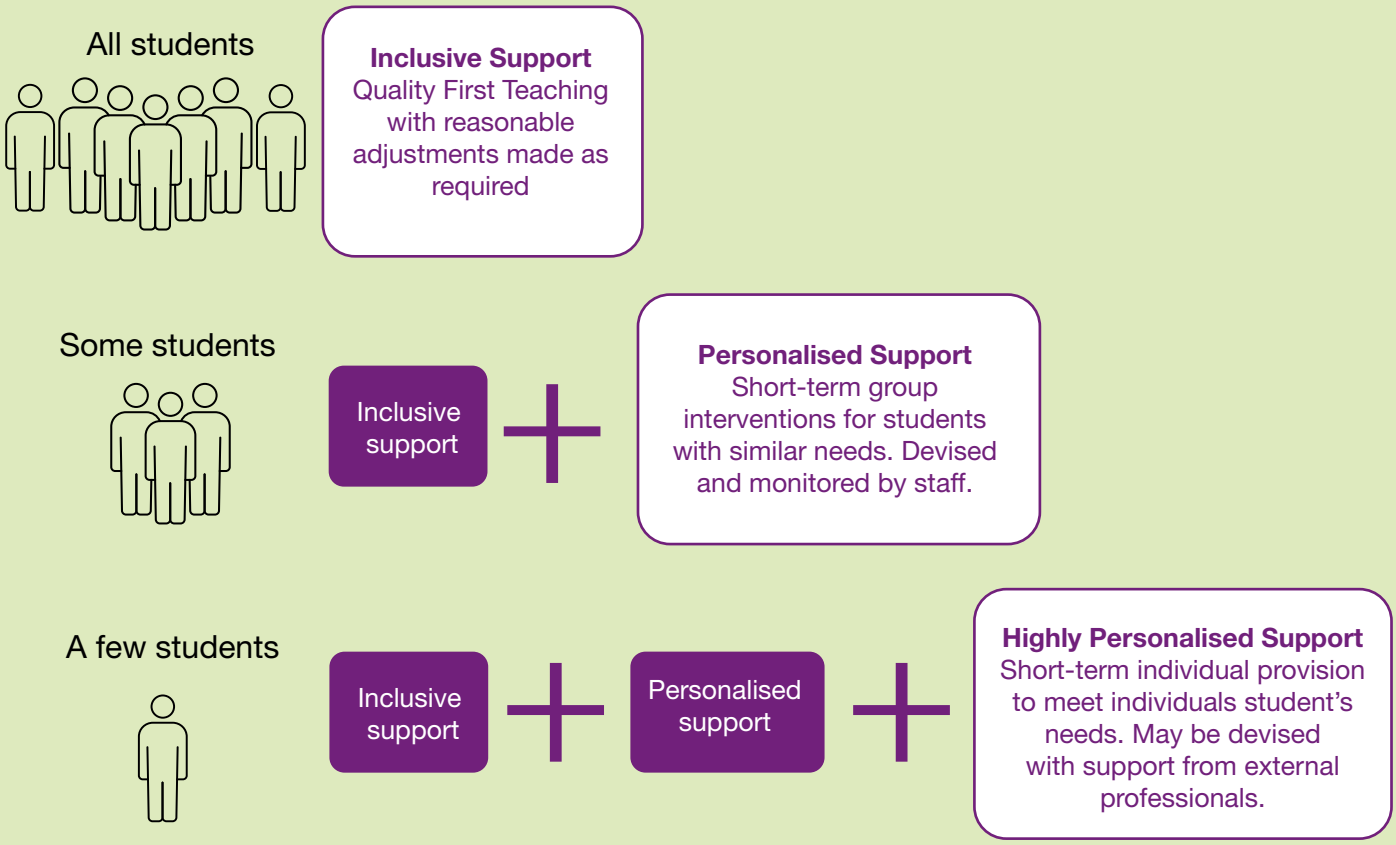
- Your child or young person may have indicated that they are struggling at school.
- You may have been approached by staff at your child or young person's setting about putting support into place to help them to access their education.
- You may have had challenging conversations around behaviour that has led to considering if your child or young person needs different or additional support.
- Your child or young person may have been given a medical diagnosis that may change the way they access their education.

The process for supporting a child or young person with SEND makes use of the graduated approach, with the aim of equitable, inclusive access to learning for all students. Equitable access means resources are adjusted so everyone has a fair chance to succeed, rather than equal access where everyone has the same resources.



Ordinarily available provision (OAP), is the range of provision made available in every part of an educational establishment for every person, every day, although not every student will need everything that is available. It is the underpinning principle that enables an equitable, inclusive learning environment to be established, so that every student can succeed. This starts with quality first teaching* and can be supplemented with a range of reasonable adjustments that can be made as they are needed to support a child or young person in their setting.

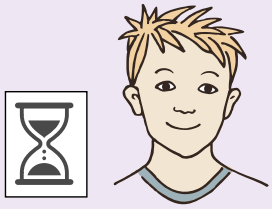
The Graduated Approach



To find out more about the ordinarily available resources at your child or young person's setting, check their school information report, or request the SEND report. These documents set out what the setting offers as quality first, targeted and personalised provision. What is ordinarily available may vary by setting and may change over time according to resources, cohorts, or other factors. Personalised and highly personalised support is offered when a child or young person is not making expected progress, or the gap is widening between them and their peers.

Reasonable Adjustments refer to adaptations that can be made to enable a disabled person to access the same activities as their peers in an equitable way. Settings should consider what is fair and proportionate in each specific situation, taking into account factors like cost and practicality. This is legally bound under the Equalities Act 2010. The graphic below gives some examples of what could be considered reasonable adjustments and is not an exhaustive list.

Reasonable adjustments



Kian has used his time out card to go to the quiet room

Rashmi's needs are being met through inclusive support

Molly's needs are being met through inclusive support

Mike has a tablet to help him write

Ethan is sat at the front and given his own modified copy of the text

Sasha is sat at the front and background noise in the class is kept to a minimum

Ava has noise cancelling headphones to use if it is too noisy

Malik's needs are being met through inclusive support

Thomas wears a slightly different type of jumper.

Toby uses different coloured paper to write and overlays to read

Fara has a person to take them to lunch or an extra five minutes to resettle after break times

Raj can take meals in a separate room with a small group of friends rather than in the large busy cafeteria.

Tilly uses a wheelchair at a school currently without lift access, so subjects usually taught upstairs use a downstairs classroom.

Tom with medical needs has alternative arrangements made in order to take an exam.

Cooper has an energy limiting condition and has a 'buddy' to carry school books. Application of the school policy is adjusted so they are not penalised for lateness.

The statutory document outlining how to support children and young people's SEND, also known as the SEND Code of Practice* groups together different kinds of SEND into four broad areas, as shown:

Communication and Interaction

How children communicate, understand and play with others around them. This will also include children with speech, language and communication needs.

Cognition and Learning

This includes difficulty with learning or remembering basic skills. They may have difficulty with literacy or numeracy, or learn at a slower pace than others.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Factors which impact a child's overall wellbeing, such as: emotions, social interactions, and relationships with others which may result in behaviours of concern.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

This includes vision, hearing or multi-sensory impairments, physical disabilities or sensitivities to aspects of the environment.

Not every child or young person will have needs in all four areas, and some may change over time. In the same way, what works for one child may not work for another and may need to adapt over time. To make sure the support provided is right, once needs are identified, the graduated approach is used to monitor and review this over time.

All schools receive funding for children with SEN also known as the SEN notional budget, which they are expected to use to provide training, assessment, delivery of effective interventions* and relevant equipment to children and young people within their setting. Discussions regarding funding remain the responsibility of the school and the local authority.

Assess - plan - do - review (the graduated approach)

An effective graduated approach should result in matching the support for a child or young person to their current needs, to enable them to make progress.

Each part of the assess, plan, do, review (APDR) cycle should be carried out in partnership with the setting, child or young person (if they wish, and are able), and parent carers. It should be specific, meaning that it is person-centred* and needs-led.

It is expected that each cycle is monitored appropriately, and repeated if needs are not being met, or development is not as expected. It is common to go through this cycle multiple times and to keep adjusting the targets and/or provision as necessary.

Each setting will have documentation to record and monitor this process and may call them different things. Many settings use an i**ndividual learning plan (ILP)***. Other terms may include individual education plan (IEP), support and achievement plan (SAP). This is different to an individual health care plan (IHCP) where more specific medical needs are set out.

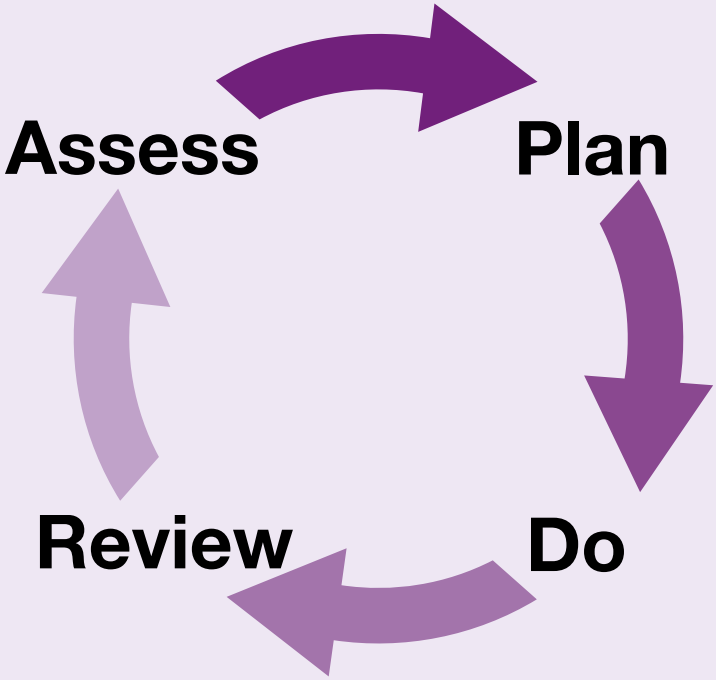
The documentation should set **SMART*** outcomes/targets, and detail provision, strategies and interventions to support the child or young person towards them.

Assess - Identify the child or young person's needs. This could include observations of the child or young person, gathering information from parents carers feedback, listening to the child's own voice and **screeners***

Parent carers, child or young person, class teacher, SENCo

Plan - Identify why action is needed to help, then create a written plan of outcomes and associated provisions, actions/support with timeframes. This should look at the holistic view of the child or young person, be collaborative, person-centred, and communicated to all involved. It should include training and a skills audit of this responsible for delivering.

Parent carers, child or young person, class teacher, SENCo



Review - Regularly check how the plan is working and whether any progress is being made towards the agreed outcomes. Consider what impact has been observed, and should the same time frames be adjusted? There should be a central point of contact for reviewing the documentation and the outcomes generated.

Parents carers, child or young person, class teachers, SENCo and other professionals as required.

Do - put the actions into place. This should include monitoring of interventions, regular review of record keeping, delivering training to staff and implementation of the targets with students.

Parent carers, child or young person, class teacher, SENCo

Children and young people's support needs may change over time. The cyclical nature of assess, plan, do, review allows for these to be managed, and support adjusted as required. The SEND code of practice suggests schools should meet with parent carers three times a year. It also sets out the requirement for collaborative working, meaning parent carers and children or young people should always be able to provide their point of view. The decision to involve specialists can be taken at any time.

Sometimes, one cycle of the assess, plan, do, review process is all that is needed and the child or young person starts to make progress with the support put in place. For others, the review stage may flag up that different support is needed, or that progress is not what was expected, so the cycle continues. It can take several cycles to address multiple needs, as not all can be worked on at the same time. The plan should be ongoing and reviewed regularly.

There may come a time when challenges or barriers arise that means the support being offered needs to be increased beyond what is ordinarily available. This means that the cycle has been followed, and further support is needed to offer a child or young person the right level of support. This is known as SEND support and can be personalised or highly personalised depending on the identified need. This support is implemented under the same principle of assess, plan, do, review. If at least 2 cycles of APDR demonstrate the interventions are not having the intended impact, it may become apparent that the child requires a greater level of support. At this point, applying for an education, health and care needs assessment* (EHCNA) might be the next step.

More details can be found on the IPSEA website and Bracknell Forest Council website education, health and care needs assessment | Bracknell Forest Council.

It is important to know who to ask for more information at the relevant setting. You might choose to do this in person or in writing.

Birth to five years

SEND may have been identified before, during or after birth (concerns over developmental milestones not being met). In Bracknell Forest, you can also seek help via the Child Development Centre. You can also be referred here by a health visitor, GP, hospital or outreach workers. If your child is in an early years foundation stage (EYFS)* setting you can speak to their key worker, teacher, the manager or SENDCo about needs as they arise.

Five - 11 years

If your child or young person has support in place already, this should transition to the school setting. The school should involve you in their monitoring and reviewing of any support needed. If this is the point that you start to notice emerging needs, you can speak to the class teacher or SENDCo.

11-16 years

Becoming a young adult can be more challenging for those with SEND, and so their needs may change during this stage, or this may be the first time you start to see additional needs developing. There will be many people yourself and your child or young person will be collaborating with at the setting. This may include: the SENDCo*, teachers, school nurses, counsellors, and the pastoral support team.

16-25 Years

At this transition into adulthood, support should remain in place at further education settings, vocational training establishments, supported internships and apprenticeships. Bracknell Forest works with many local providers to offer a range of these opportunities. Education, social and health officers should also support the transition into relevant adult services. At these types of settings or establishments, the contacts may be known as learning support, inclusion, student support or high needs director. Every journey for families of children or young people with SEND is going to look different depending on a child or young person's needs, but there are lots of resources available to support families. The additional needs info hub (also referred to as the **SEND local offer***) is a guide that all local authorities must publish, created to inform parent carers, young people, and professionals about services and support available. This includes information on education, health and care services, peer support groups, financial assistance, medical signposting and general SEND advice from IASS (information, advice and support service).

Many support groups exist for young people with SEND, with some providing help and support for them to express their views and wishes and advocate (be heard) for themselves when it comes to their future. Further information on groups can be found via the Braccan Walk Youth Centre and the Youth Zone of the additional needs info hub.

Where else you can get support and information?

IPSEA (IPSEA) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice

IASS Home - Bracknell Forest IASS

Parent Carer Forum – Bracknell https://youtu.be/QwPN2cfqZsE

The Local Offer – Additional Needs Hub Bracknell Forest Directory | Additional needs info hub (SEND Local Offer)

NHS Health and Care Passports NHS England » Health and care passports: implementation guidance

Early Help – Social Care support What to expect from an EHA assessment | Bracknell Forest Council

Bracknell Forest children's social care's commitment to children with SEND empowering_futures_send_v4.pdf

Glossary

Education, health and care needs assessment (EHCNA) refers to the first step of the statutory process towards an **education, health and care plan (EHCP)**. It is an assessment of a child's or young person's education, health and care needs. It is a legal process and as such there are statutory processes and timescales that the local authority must meet in making their decisions. If the assessment results in the issuing of an EHCP, the Local Authority then becomes legally responsible for ensuring the provisions detailed within the plan at the appropriate setting,

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) refers to a framework used in England to support the learning, development, and care of children from birth to age five.

Holistic refers to supporting children and young people with SEND by considering their entire being, not just their academic or specific learning needs. It recognises that various factors, such as their social, emotional, and physical development, influence their overall well-being and learning.

Intervention refers to a short-term focused teaching approach that will typically have a specific set of outcomes planned for a child with additional needs. SEND interventions should be used alongside high quality teaching methods so that children with SEND in a class feel as supported as possible.

Ordinarily available provision, following feedback from parent carers, is broken down into three levels:

- **inclusive provision for all** – reasonable adjustments should be made available to all students across all settings, if required
- **personalised provision for some students** – short-term, small group interventions, that would be devised by the setting staff and monitored through the APDR process
- **highly personalised provision for a few students** – short-term, individual interventions, devised with advice and support from outside professionals and monitored through the APDR process

Parent carer is the term used to describe a parent, or other adult with parental responsibility, who provides significant care and support to a child or young person with additional needs, such as disabilities or other conditions. This goes beyond the typical parental role.

Person-centred approach refers to focusing on the needs of an individual, ensuring that their preferences, needs and values guide decisions, and providing care that is respectful of and responsive to them.

Preparing for adulthood (PfA) is the term used to describe the support on offer to young people with SEND as they move (transition) into adulthood.

PfA usually focuses on four pathways, helping young people to achieve the best outcome in:

- Higher education or employment
- Independent living and housing options
- Participating in the local community and society, and having positive relationships and good health
- Good Health

Quality first teaching (QFT) is a high-quality teaching approach used in schools to ensure that every child receives the best possible education in the classroom. It focuses on well-planned lessons, engaging teaching methods, and tailored support to help all children succeed, including those who may need extra help. It may also be referred to as high quality teaching.

Screeners are quick toolkits that education staff can use to assess for difficulties with speech and language.

SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. This framework helps in setting clear, attainable, and effective outcomes/targets by ensuring they are well-defined and trackable.

Special educational needs and disability (SEND) A child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities if they have a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special health and education support.

SENDCo stands for special educational needs and disabilities coordinator. They are a qualified teacher responsible for leading the school's provision for and the support offered to students with SEND. The SENDCo works with other staff within the school, parent carers and external professionals to develop, implement and monitor individual support and learning plans for students with SEND. What is a SENCO or SENDCO? What does SENCO stand for? - BBC Bitesize

SEND register is a list maintained by schools which tracks students identified as needing additional support. It helps schools ensure that SEND students receive the right support.

If you need a reasonable adjustment to communicate with us, please call 01344 352000 or email: customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk.