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School Action and Action Plus

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Parent Partnership Service



TORBAY

Special educational needs
and disabilities



Children's
SERVICES

Transforming children's lives together

School Action and School Action Plus

a guide for parents/carers

The purpose of this booklet is to help you understand how provision is made in school for children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

How can school help my child?

Every child is individual. They all develop and learn at different rates. This means that different teaching styles will be used in the classroom to support individual children with their learning and/or appropriate arrangements will be to help with medical conditions and/or disabilities that are affecting your child's schooling. All schools provide a cycle of planning, teaching, assessment and evaluation that takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of children. Most children will benefit from these different approaches and will make appropriate progress, whilst other children may require more support for special educational needs (including learning difficulties, medical conditions and/or disabilities)

What if my child needs more support?

If you or the school are concerned that your child is not making adequate progress it is possible that they may have special educational needs. The SEN Code of Practice sets out a graduated approach that recognises that children learn in different ways and can have different kinds or levels of SEN.

Schools:

- should follow the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice;
- must have a written SEN policy and as part of their statutory duties the governing bodies of

all maintained mainstream schools must report annually on this policy;

- have a duty to inform parents if their child has special educational needs and of the special provision being made;
- will have a member of staff appointed as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or equivalent.

What can the SENCO or equivalent do to help?

The SENCO or equivalent will:

- help to decide if your child has special educational needs;
- take the lead in further assessment of your child's particular strengths and weaknesses;
- plan future support for your child called School Action or School Action Plus;
- ensure that appropriate records are kept of their progress;
- ensure that the appropriate school staff talk to you and other professionals involved with your child;
- advise and support other members of staff in the school.

What is School Action?

The school must tell you when they think that your child has special educational needs. At this point you may wish to contact the Parent Partnership Service.

Your child's teacher, SENCO or equivalent will collect information about your child, which may include additional information from you and other people who work with your child. They will discuss with you what extra or different help is needed. This is called School Action.

School Action will continue until it is no longer needed or it is decided that your child needs additional support at School Action Plus.

What is School Action Plus?

If there are concerns that the progress your child is making with support at School Action is not adequate the SENCO or equivalent will ask your permission to seek further advice from external support services. They may want to ask for help from, for example, a specialist teacher, an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or other health professional.

The SENCO or equivalent will usually develop a new Individual Education Plan (IEP - see below) based on this additional advice. You will continue to be involved, and your child's progress will be regularly recorded and reviewed as at School Action.

School Action Plus will continue until it is no longer needed or it is decided that a request for a statutory assessment may be appropriate.

What is an IEP?

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a method by which schools can plan for pupils with SEN. The IEP will include information about:

- the short-term targets set for or by for your child (small steps that your child can achieve);
- the teaching strategies to be used;
- the provision to be put in place;
- when the plan is to be reviewed;
- success and/or outcome criteria;
- outcomes (to be recorded when the IEP is reviewed).



Your child's teacher, SENCO or equivalent will discuss the IEP or other arrangements to plan individually for your child's progress with you.

The school will review the IEP at least twice a year and ideally termly. Wherever possible your child should be involved in the review process and setting of new targets. If your child is not involved directly then his or her views should still be considered.

Sometimes the school will decide not to write an IEP but to keep the record in another form. They should always tell you how they are helping your child and what progress is being made. The school should also explain why they have not written an IEP.

What is statutory assessment?

Statutory assessment is a very detailed assessment under the 1996 Education Act. Reports about your child will be provided by a number of people. These will include you, teachers, an educational psychologist, health, social care and others who work with or support your child. This assessment will identify your child's needs and any special help they may receive. At the end of the assessment the Local Authority (LA) will decide whether or not to issue a Statement of Special Educational Need for your child.

Statutory assessment is only appropriate for a very small number of children. You can find more information from the Parent Partnership Service or the LA.



If you require this leaflet in a different format or language, or want further information and support, please contact:

For children who do not have a statement of special educational need contact: Maddalena Cawse on 01803 559765 or torbaypps@fsmail.net

For children who already have a statement of special educational need or are in the statutory assessment process contact: Marianne Lewis on 01803 208239 or 07788684965 or email marianne.lewis@torbay.gov.uk