



For Parents & Carers  
of children with  
Special Educational  
Needs (0-25)

# Welcome

## An Introduction to the SEN Education System in England

By Southampton SENDIASS

## By the end of this presentation we hope you will:

- Understand the Education structure in England
- Understand how School Admissions works
- Understand what SEN support is
- Have a basic knowledge of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Know how and where to access support through SENDIASS

# Education Structure

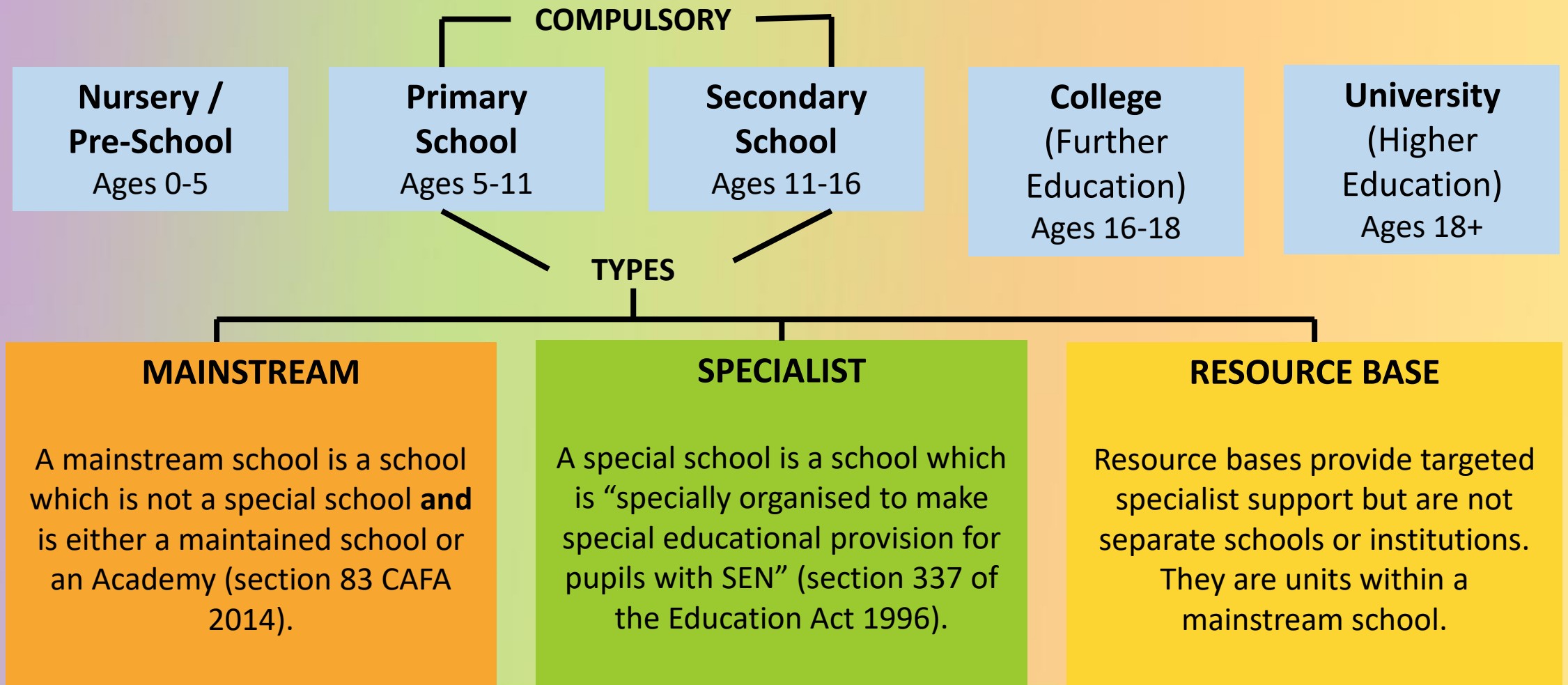
# The UK Education System

- The school year is split into three terms; Autumn, Spring and Summer and each term is split with a week of school holiday roughly in the middle.
- Term dates change slightly each year but the school year runs from early September until the end of July. Southampton term dates can be found at: <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/in-school/>
- Compulsory education is divided into two phases, primary and secondary, but primary education can be delivered at a primary school, or, at an infant school followed by a junior school.
- Schools split children into 'Year Groups'.
- The curriculum is split into blocks called 'Key Stages'.
- Children are regularly tested to assess their progress.
- A national programme of assessment is also in place.

Age	Year Group	Curriculum Key Stages	National assessments	Phase of education
4 to 5	Reception	Early Years		
5 to 6	Year 1	KS1	Phonics screening check	Primary
6 to 7	Year 2	KS1	National tests in English, Maths and Science	
7 to 8	Year 3	KS2		
8 to 9	Year 4	KS2		
9 to 10	Year 5	KS2		
10 to 11	Year 6	KS2	National tests in English and Maths	
11 to 12	Year 7	KS3		Secondary
12 to 13	Year 8	KS3		
13 to 14	Year 9	KS3		
14 to 15	Year 10	KS4		
15 to 16	Year 11	KS4	Children take GCSEs or other national qualifications	

- The national curriculum is taught. It is a set of subjects and standards used so that children learn the same things.
- By the end of each summer term the school must write a report on your child's progress and offer to talk it through with you.

# Education Settings



# Admissions

# Getting a School Placement

**You must apply for a school place.** You must give your choices and then the Local Authority will allocate spaces. You can usually apply for three schools in order of preference.

Your selection would normally be from local catchment schools. A catchment is a defined geographical area surrounding a school from which it will usually takes most of its pupils.

The Local Authority Local Offer provides information for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) and their parents or carers in a single place. It shows families what they can expect from a range of local agencies including education, health and social care. This can help you to see what SEN support offer each school has.

Here is the [Southampton Local Offer](#)

Here is the [Southampton Local Offer list of schools](#)



# How are places allocated?

Local authorities set the admissions criteria, but they usually give priority to children who:

- have Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- are being looked after by a local authority (i.e. in care)
- are the child of a member of staff
- have a sibling at the school already
- are from a particular religion (if it's a faith school)
- live in a specified priority area

Once these criteria have been met, it usually comes down to distance – i.e. how far your child lives from the school. Distances may be measured by either a straight line from your home to the school (called as the crow flies) or walking distance.

The School Admissions Team will offer you a place at your school of choice unless it is full. If your preferred school is full you will be offered a place at the closest school to your home address with a place available. In the absence of other arrangements your child must take up this place.

Your child will be added to the waiting lists of your preferred school(s) that the Local Authority cannot offer, for the remainder of the academic year.

# Who can you contact?

## **Southampton City Council School Admissions Team**

Email:

[school.admissions@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@southampton.gov.uk)

Phone: 023 8083 3004

## **School Application Deadlines**

**15<sup>th</sup> January**

- Early years provider to school
- Infant school to junior school
- Primary school to middle school

**31<sup>st</sup> October**

- Primary school to secondary school
- Middle school to secondary school

# SEN Support

# What are Special Educational Needs? (SEN)



**SEN are described as: A learning difficulty and/or disability which requires Special Educational Provision. (SEP)**

**Learning Difficulty :** Significantly greater difficulty learning than others the same age

**Disability :** A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial long-term adverse effect on carrying out day-to-day activities

**SEN are categorised into the 4 Broad areas of need:**

1. Communication and Interaction
2. Cognition and Learning
3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
4. Sensory and Physical

This means that a formal diagnosis is not required to access SEP. It is based on the child's presenting needs.

# What support is available in education?

- The support in schools is called SEN Support. This is defined as help that is additional to/different from support generally given to other children the same age.
- Schools will arrange SEN Support from their own resources. Details for each school is in their SEN Information Report.
- By law, Schools must use their “**best endeavours**” to ensure any child with SEN gets the support they need, making “**reasonable adjustments**” to support a disabled child in accessing education
- Schools use a guidance document on SEN support from their LA to help them decide whether/what type of support your child needs
- **All teachers should regularly check whether their pupils are making progress.** If they think your child is finding it harder than others, they should consider whether your child might have SEN. School must talk to you about this and involve you in all decisions

# What does SEN Support look like?

- School's SEN support should take the form of a **"Four-Part Cycle"**:  
**Assess, Plan, Do, Review**

- **ASSESS** the child's needs
- **PLAN** how to address those needs
- **DO** put the plan into practice
- **REVIEW** how it's going and if anything needs to change

The SEN Support system uses a **"Graduated Approach"**. This might include some of the following special educational provisions (SEP):

- An individual learning programme
- Extra help from a teaching assistant
- Being taught in a small group for short periods
- Making/changing materials and equipment
- Advice/extra help from specialists such as an Educational Psychologist (EP)



# Diagnosis



## What if you already have a diagnosis from Hong Kong?

- If you already have a diagnosis, you will need to get it translated into English at your own expense. However, if you access services for diagnosis in England they will translate their reports into Cantonese for you.
- Re- Assessments are not likely to be necessary, but any diagnoses given in another country would have to be endorsed. The community Paediatric medical service would be able to help with this.

## Who can make a referral for therapy services?

- Parents / Carers
- paediatricians
- GPs
- health visitors or other health care professionals, including audiologists
- pre-school or school staff

## How long do I have to wait for an appointment?

- Once your referral has been received, a member of the clinical team will look at your referral and may contact you to gather further information and offer advice, for some referrals you would then be placed on the waiting list based on the needs identified. If you live in Southampton, they will aim to see you within 18 weeks. If you live in the rest of Hampshire, they will aim to see you within 12 weeks. If an appointment date and time is not suitable, please contact the team who will help to re-arrange this for you.

# Diagnosis



## What happens after the assessment?

- The therapist will talk to you about their findings and decide if further support is needed.
- All recommendations and findings will be clearly explained to you.
- You will have the opportunity to ask any other questions you may have.
- The therapist may need to talk to other professionals, for example pre-school or school staff, and explain the assessments and what they need to do to support your child. This might include what targets or activities are needed and who will carry them out.
- At the end of the appointment your therapist will talk to you about what happens next and what the arrangements for this will be.
- A report will be written, and with your consent, shared with other professionals eg GP and school staff so everyone is aware of what the plan is. The report will include advice and recommendations for supporting your child's development.
- You will be actively involved in managing your child's care alongside your child's therapist and other professionals.

## Is there a waiting list for therapy?

- Some clinics and settings can be busier than others at times, so waiting times may vary, your child's therapy should begin within 18 weeks. You may have to wait a little longer for some types of group therapy or more specialist support. They will discuss the number of appointments your child will need and how often they will be seen when they first see you.

## Where can therapy take place?

- Therapy may take place in a clinic setting or children's centre / family hub, within the pre school or school setting. This will be decided with you.



# Communicating with School

- **Need to speak to someone?**

If you have concerns about your child's needs, speak to their class teacher in the first instance about adjustments that could be made to support them or additional support available. You could arrange a meeting with the class teacher and the school's SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO)

- **Resolving disagreements?**

Ask the SENCO to go through the SEN Support guidance with you and discuss points of disagreement on what your child is finding difficult

- **Have specialists been involved?**

If your child is struggling despite accessing the school's SEN support, it may be helpful to approach specialists for further advice

- **Still no progress?**

If the school's resources have been exhausted, and your child is still struggling, it may be time to ask the Local Authority (LA) for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment

# Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

# What is an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?



It is generally expected that your child's needs will be met by "Ordinarily Available Provision", which is the term for SEN Support that the Local Authority expects to be readily available in all schools. However, some children with SEN may need a higher level of support than this. These pupils require their provision to be implemented via an EHCP.

This is a legal document for an individual child or young person that describes their special educational, health and social care needs; it details the support that is required to meet those needs; and how that support will enable the child or young person to achieve set outcomes and realise their aspirations.

# How do you get an EHCP?

- **An EHC Needs Assessment (EHCNA) is the step before an EHCP**

It is a detailed exploration to find out what your child's special educational needs are and what provision should be put into place to meet them.

- **An application for EHCNA must be made** by the education setting, or the parent/carer or young person to initiate the process

The application process differs in each Local Authority area. Southampton City Council has an application form to fill in.

- An application for assessment doesn't always lead to an EHC needs assessment taking place
- An EHC needs assessment doesn't always lead to an EHCP being issued

# Legal Criteria to Secure EHCNA & EHCP



## Securing an EHC Needs Assessment

- The Local Authority must secure an EHCNA if the child **has or may have SEN** and it **may be necessary** for extra provision to be made through an EHCP
- The Local Authority can only refuse a EHCNA request if the information gathered at **application** does not meet the **legal test**

## Securing an EHC Plan

- The Local Authority must secure an EHCP if it is **necessary** for the child to receive special educational provision (SEP) through an EHCP
- The Local Authority can only refuse to issue an EHCP if the information and advice gathered during the EHC assessment determines that an EHCP is not necessary

*There is no other set criteria. Any other policies imposed by the Local Authority are trumped by these legal tests*

# How should an EHC application demonstrate this?

**The decision panel at the LA will be looking for evidence that despite action taken to identify, assess and meet the Special Educational Needs of your child, they have not made expected progress.**

This could include school records, professional reports, diagnostic assessments, medical records, record of history, copies of schoolwork, and any other statements that demonstrate the following:

- **SEN** - The nature, extent, and context of your child's SEN
- **OTHER NEEDS** - Physical, emotional, social development and health needs, including relevant evidence from professionals
- **LEARNING PROGRESS** - Academic attainment or developmental milestones and the rate of progress. How this has been reviewed over time. Ensure you have highlighted that there is a highly significant barrier to learning in comparison to others their own age
- **PAST/CURRENT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT** – Action already taken by school to meet your child's SEN, and whether they have sought/responded to any advice from external professionals. Areas where progress has been made, but only as result of much additional intervention and support, over and above what is usually provided
- **OUTCOMES WANTED** – What you want to achieve through access to special education provision. i.e. achieving educational outcomes, preparation for adulthood, independent and social skills etc.



# The EHCNA Process Timeline Overview

The whole EHC process takes **20 weeks**, providing there are no delays

1. A request for an EHC needs Assessment is made – this starts the process
2. By 6 weeks – The LA must tell you if they will or will not be assessing your child (opens right of appeal)
3. By 16 weeks – The LA must finish the assessment and tell you if they think your child needs an EHCP
4. Between 16-20 weeks – If the LA decides to grant an EHCP, they will send you a draft EHCP. You have 15 days to comment and request a particular school
5. By 20 weeks – The LA must complete the final draft of your child's EHCP
6. Every 12 months – The LA must review your child's EHCP

# About SENDIASS



# Who and we and what do we do?

## Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

### SEND

A free service for those with, living with or working with SEN & Disabilities ages 0-25yrs

### Information

Providing factual information established by SEND Law as well as local knowledge and signposting

### Advice

Providing impartial advice on what steps to take in the areas of Education, Health and Social Care

### Support

Providing confidential individualised support to empower those who seek our assistance

There is a SENDIASS service in every Local Authority area in England

# What can we help you with?

- ✓ Getting the right support in nursery/school/college
- ✓ Informing you of your legal rights under SEN law
- ✓ Support, preparation, and advocacy for meetings
- ✓ Transferring schools/placement
- ✓ Exclusions and part-time/reduced timetables
- ✓ Preparing for Adulthood and age 18-25 options
- ✓ Disability discrimination cases
- ✓ Understanding and filling in forms, writing letters and emails
- ✓ Finding out what support is available to you (The Local Offer)
- ✓ Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) and processes
- ✓ Resolving disagreements, including mediation, appeals and tribunals
- ✓ Signposting you to relevant local and national services, support groups and forums



# How do we provide support?

Our aim is to empower you to make your own decisions with the information, advice and support we provide. Some of the ways we can provide support include:

- **Phone** – we operate our helpline 9am-5pm Mon-Fri with a 24/7 answer machine and turnaround time up to 5 working days
- **Email** – we also respond to email enquiries and use this as our main method to give information
- **Facebook messenger** – please follow us on Facebook and send us a message if you have any queries
- **Face-to-face meetings** – to discuss your situation/next steps in person, upon request
- **Community support events** – we attend events by invite where we will offer SEND information
- **Leaflets and information sheets** – which we will happily email or send via the post
- **In person support** – at discussions and meetings
- **Signposting** – by putting you in touch with other services that could help you

Please get in touch if the support you are looking for is not listed.



# How can you stay updated?

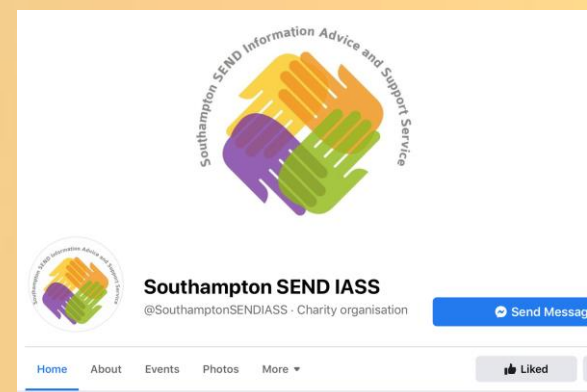
**Our website:**  
**[southamptonsendiass.info](http://southamptonsendiass.info)**



**Our growing list of resources:**  
**Available on our website**



**Our Facebook Page:**  
**@SouthamptonSENDIASS**



**We post on Facebook daily, sharing local updates, advice, and other SEND themes**

**The Local Offer**

A Local Offer gives children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities and their families information about what support services the local authority think will be available in the area.  
[Southampton Local Offer](http://Southampton Local Offer)





# How to get in contact with us?



**Phone**  
**0300 303 2677**



**Email**  
**Southamptoniass  
@roseroad.org.uk**

You can contact us at any time, no referral is necessary. We will ask for your contact details and information around what the situation is you are enquiring about.



**You can also write to us at:**

**Rose Road Association  
The Bradbury Centre  
300 Aldermoor Road  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO16 5NA**



**Website Contact Form**  
**On the “Contact Us”  
webpage**



**Facebook Messenger**  
**Via our  
Facebook page**

If you require translation of our parent resources and advice, we can make arrangements for this.