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**The SENCO Guide**

**for Newcastle Schools**

**Updated September 2021**

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1. **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

**Related legislation and guidance:**

**Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2014):** Statutory guidance from the Department for Education which sets out the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system for children and young people aged 0 to 25

**Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2020)** This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education which schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)** A guide to inter-agency working to promote and safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2 (Care Planning Placement and Case Review)** and **Volume 3 (Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers):** Guidance setting out the responsibilities of local authorities towards looked after children and care leavers

**Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools:** Non-statutory advice from the Department for Education, produced to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the Act

**Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012):** Technical guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission

**Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2017):** Statutory guidance from the Department for Education

**The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)** Schools must have a SEN Policy, SEN Information Report, an Accessibility Plan and a link to Newcastle’s Local Offer. These documents must be published on the school’s website and updated annually. Schools need to demonstrate how they have involved stakeholders in this process. For further information on SEN Information Reports and Accessibility Plans see school websites within the Local Authority.

1. **The graduated response to meeting SEN**

SEN Support

SEN Support /EHCP

SEN Support /EHCP

EHCP

**How we meet Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) needs in Newcastle for Children and Young People (CYP) age 0-25 in early years settings, schools, and post 16 providers**

**(The Graduated Response)**

**April 2021**

This is not intended to show a SEND pathway for individual support.

It outlines the support available at various levels of the graduated response. For example, a child or young person may have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) without accessing SEND Advice and Support Allocation Panel (ASAP) or an ARP placement.

It is also possible for a child or young person with an EHCP to access support via SEND ASAP

1. **SEN SUPPORT (Tier 1 and 2)**

As a SENCO the following Newcastle services will be able to support you. Further information on each service and relevant documentation can be found by clicking on the service link.

[**Newcastle School Effectiveness SEN team**](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/school-effectiveness-sen) – click for further information

Work with First, Primary, Middle and Secondary schools who buy into their service. They offer support to Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) helping to keep them up to date with key SEN developments in the Local Authority and nationally.

Support is through a traded service.

**Sue Alexander, Advisor for SEND**

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**Phone : 0191 2115337 or 07814974924**

**Jill Tough, SEN Consultant**

**Email:** [**jill.tough@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:jill.tough@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone: 0191 2774609 or 07952 170032**

**Lead SENCO: Lianne Howse, Newburn Manor Primary**

[**SEND Outreach Service (SENDOS)**](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/send-outreach-service)– click for further information

SENDOS is a team of specialist teachers and support staff who work in partnership with mainstream schools and parent/carers to advise and support provision for children and young people with the needs in the following areas of the Code of Practice:

* **Cognition and Learning** (Specific Learning Difficulties, Moderate Learning Difficulties, Motor Coordination Difficulties)
* **Communication and Interaction** (Speech, Language and Communication Needs including Autism)
* **Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) Team** provides a multidisciplinary assessment for children and young people with significant Speech Language and Communication Needs followed by intensive targeted intervention work.

**Angela Gemmell, Manager SEND Outreach Service**

**Email:** [**angela.gemmell@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:angela.gemmell@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone:**  **2774611 or 07970623209**

[**SEND Sensory Service**](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/send-sensory-service)– click for further information

SEND Sensory Service is a team of specialist teachers and support staff who work across the city with children and young people with Hearing Impairment (HI), Vision Impairment (VI) and Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI).

The sensory service also manages six Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs) across the city.

**Joanne Scott, Manager SEND Sensory Service**

**E-mail:** [**joanne.scott@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:joanne.scott@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone: 07793 968 889**

**Hearing Impairment Team:**

**Rebecca O’Leary, Specialist Lead Teacher HI**

**Email:** [**rebecca.oleary@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:rebecca.oleary@newcastle.gov.uk)   
**Phone: 07795015485**

**Vision Impairment Team:**

**Katie Fuller, Lead Specialist Teacher VI**   
**Email:** [**kathryn.fuller@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:kathryn.fuller@newcastle.gov.uk) **Phone 07814071974**

[**Newcastle Educational Psychology Service**](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/newcastle-educational-psychology-service)– click for further information

The Newcastle Educational Psychology Service works with children and young people (aged 0-25 years) who may have special educational needs disabilities or other vulnerabilities in order to help them overcome barriers to learning and development and be included in their community.  An Educational Psychologist can become involved with a child or young person through several routes including:

* Following a request from the Local Authority to contribute to the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) needs assessment of a child or young person. This work is funded by the Local Authority.
* Through core time funded by the Local Authority to meet the needs of specific groups. This includes work into the ARPS, work around transitions for some individual pupils with particularly high needs, time for children with high levels of SEMH Needs through the ASAP panel and work into the Inclusive Schools city wide agenda.
* Schools or settings can also fund additional EP time for early intervention and preventative work, through a Service Level Agreement.

**Lara Lillico, Educational Psychology Service Manager**

**E-mail:** [**Lara.Lillico@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:Lara.Lillico@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone: 0191 277 4577**

1. **ROLE OF THE SENCO**

**The 2014 SEND Code of Practice**

**SENCOs:**

* Must be a qualified teacher working at the school
* New to post must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination (NASC)
* Are most effective if they are part of the school leadership team
* Provide professional guidance to colleagues and works closely with staff, parents, potential next providers and other agencies
* Should be aware of the provision in the Local Offer
* Can be shared by a number of small schools
* Should have sufficient time and resources to carry out key responsibilities.

**The key responsibilities of the SENCO may include:**

* overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school’s SEN policy
* co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
* liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
* advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
* advising on the deployment of the school’s delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils’ needs effectively
* liaising with parents of pupils with SEN
* liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
* being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
* liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
* working with the head teacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
* ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date

**National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination (NASC)**

In [September 2009 it became law](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/1387/made?view=plain) for every new SENCO in a mainstream school to gain the Masters-level NASC within 3 years of taking up the post.

**Newcastle SEND Review Framework**

This is a document for schools to use as a self-evaluation tool. The Newcastle SEND Review Framework can be externally validated by the School Effectiveness SEN team.

The review involves a full day visit to school by the SEN Advisor and SEN consultant. It includes interviews with key staff, pupils and parents, examination of SEN paperwork and observation of practice. A written report is produced which details findings and recommendations. The report is shared with the head teacher and SENCO.

The framework is also used to support peer to peer SEND reviews across groups of schools.

**Inclusion Quality Framework (IQF)**

The IQF is Newcastle’s tool to support schools in evaluating their inclusive practice. Representatives from the School Effectiveness team, Inclusive Education team, SENCOs, parent/ carers, young people and school governors remodelled this tool in 2019. The implementation of the quality assurance process was delayed due to covid and rescheduled to start in Autumn 2021.

1. **HIGHER LEVELS OF NEED**

**(Tier 3 and 4)**

**SEND Code of Practice 2014:**

6.99 Schools are not expected to meet the full costs of more expensive special educational provision from their core funding. They are expected to provide additional support which costs up to a nationally prescribed threshold per pupil per year. The responsible local authority, usually the authority where the child or young person lives, should provide additional top-up funding where the cost of the special educational provision required to meet the needs of an individual pupil exceeds the nationally prescribed threshold.

9.1 The majority of children and young people with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met within local mainstream early years settings, schools or colleges (as set out in the information on identification and support in Chapters 5, 6 and 7). Some children and young people may require an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment in order for the local authority to decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan (EHCP).

9.2 The purpose of an EHCP is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood.

**SEN Support, Assessment and Review (SEND SAR)** – click for further information

The team are responsible for all EHC assessments, Annual Reviews of EHCPs, CYP with EHCs transferring in and out of the city, admissions to ARPs and specialist provision (0-25).

**Jane Bayley, Manager SEND SAR**

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**Phone: 0191 2774650**

**Caseworkers:**

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| Veena Attri | [veena.attri@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:veena.attri@newcastle.gov.uk) | 07793 968 923 |

There is also a SEND SAR email account for general enquiries: [sencaseworkers@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:sencaseworkers@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Specialist Provision in Newcastle**

**Additional Resourced Provisions (ARPs)**

Early Years Assessment Bridgewater

Cheviot

Social, emotional and Cheviot

mental health difficulties Hawthorn

North Fawdon

West Walker

Speech and Language Atkinson Road

Welbeck

Kenton

Communication and Interaction Atkinson Road

Kenton Bar

Tyneview

Kenton

Benfield

Walbottle Campus

Physical Disability Kingston Park

Benfield

Visual Impairment Regent Farm First

Gosforth Junior Academy

Gosforth Academy

Hearing Impairment Broadwood

Benton Park

Jesmond Park Academy

**Special Schools:**

**Hadrian**

Provision for pupils aged 3-11 years with severe or profound and multiple

learning difficulties

**Sir Charles Parsons**

Provision for pupils aged 11-19 years with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties

**Thomas Bewick**

Provision for pupils aged 3-19 years with autism

**Trinity Academy**

Provision for pupils aged 7 – 18 years with social, emotional or mental

health difficulties

**Bespoke Provision:**

**Mary Astell Academy**

Provision for pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream

Newcastle schools

**Newcastle Bridges**

Newcastle Bridges School is a multi-site alternative provision academy within Prosper Learning Trust which provides education to pupils from ages 2-19. NBS predominantly serves children in the city of Newcastle but also those children and young people referred into hospital or mental health provisions from regional and national services, and some young people from outside of the authority. The school provides educational opportunities to pupils whose education has been interrupted by mental or physical ill-health or emotionally based school avoidance. NBS seek to support each pupil’s access to a full-time, broad and balanced education appropriate to their potential and their educational needs and encourage reintegration into mainstream whenever relevant.

Pupils are referred to the school according to their specific needs via their home school, multi-disciplinary agencies, medical services and CYPS provisions regionally, nationally and internationally.  Pupils may be fully or dual registered depending on their circumstances.

1. **SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

As a SENCO you need to know who leads in school for supporting medical conditions. This will not necessarily be the SENCO as it is not listed within SENCO roles and responsibilities.

Statutory guidance came into effect in September 2014 and was updated in 2017. The responsibility for supporting pupils with medical conditions lies with school governors.

‘Some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. Where this is the case governing bodies must comply with their duties under that Act. Some may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. For children with SEN, this guidance should be read in conjunction with the Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice4 The Special educational needs and disability code of practice explains the duties of local authorities, health bodies, schools and colleges to provide for those with special educational needs under part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. For pupils who have medical conditions that require EHC plans, compliance with the SEND code of practice will ensure compliance with this guidance with respect to those children’. (Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions 2017)

The SENCO is not necessarily responsible for supporting pupils with medical conditions, but they may contribute and support when medical needs impact on education. Some pupils may have Individual Healthcare Plans (IHP). These are not to be confused with an EHC plan.

**School Nursing and Health Visiting Service (0-19)**

The aim of the School Nursing and Health Visiting Service is to improve the health and wellbeing of children/young people and their families. This is achieved through evidence-based assessments, targeted intervention, advice and signposting.

Referrals can be made by either:

* Contacting the 0-19 Single Point of Access on 0191 2823319
* Completing the referral form

Referrals will be prioritised according to need, based on the information provided on the form. Initial contact will be made via telephone, letter or face to face and the child or young person may be placed on a waiting list.

It isESSENTIA**L** that consent from the parent/carer and/or young person is obtained prior to referral. Referrers must ensure that young people who self-consent are able to make an informed decision.

School Health Referral Guidance for Professionals - Reasons for referral:

* Toileting support
* Nutritional advice and healthy lifestyle support
* Sleep issues
* Family focused behaviour support
* Emotional wellbeing (i.e. self-esteem, low mood, friendships)
* Smoking cessation support
* Sexual health advice

This list is not definitive. Referrers can contact the School Health Service prior to completion of referral to clarify the appropriateness of the referral. Some issues may require further discussion to identify the most appropriate support for the child or young person.

Referrals more appropriate for other services:

* Day time and nocturnal enuresis
* Non-attendance at health appointments where school health has not made the initial referral (unless in special circumstances).
* Significant or long-term mental health concerns
* Children and young people requiring counselling

It would not be appropriate to refer to the School Health Service if the child’s health need is already being met by a specialist health service. This is to avoid duplication or confusion to the child or young person.

Paediatric Nurse Specialists in the Great North Children’s Hospital will support common medical conditions in school such as asthma, diabetes, allergy and epilepsy in schools, where they have patients in the school.

The designated medical officer (DMO) is Mark Anderson.

The SEND specialist nurse advisor is Jenny Ellis.

1. **INVOLVING PARENTS/ CARERS AND PUPILS**

It is good practice to gather children, young people and parental views with respect to the SEN provision. A variety of methods can be used such as a focus group, interviews, comments gathered at reviews or parental questionnaires.

The principles underpinning the Code of Practicestate the importance of the child or young person, and the child’s parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions. Parents can find impartial and useful advice and services available on the Local Offer website.

**Newcastle Special Educational Needs and Disabilities** **Information, Advice and Support Service** – click for further information

**Sarah Francis, SENDIASS Manager**

**E-mail:** [**SENDIASSadmin@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:SENDIASSadmin@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone: 07974 196 684**

**Address:** Newcastle SENDIASS, Woodlands Children’s Centre, Newton

Place, High Heaton, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE7 7HD

Provides information, advice and support at any stage of a child or young person’s education including support for families in the process of getting an Education Health and Care Plan.

**Schools have a responsibility to tell parents about this service.**

This is an impartial, confidential service providing information, advice and support for:

* parents and carers of children with special educational needs
* children and
* young people up to the age of 25 years

Typically, parents can have their concerns listened to, Special Educational Needs policies and procedures explained to them and be offered practical support to help them in their discussions with schools, the Local Authority and other statutory agencies.

**Newcastle City Council and the Clinical commissioning group fund the following support for parent/carers and CYP:**

**Jill Bauld, SEND Voice Lead**

**E-mail:** [**jillian.bauld@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:jillian.bauld@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone: 07974215459**

The SEND Voice Lead role supports parent carers and children and young people to have their voice embedded in the services they use and works across health ,education and care to facilitate dialogue and positive change by building opportunities for coproduction- getting it right together.

**SEND Voice youth Trainees:**

**Phillip Blackburn**

**E-mail:** [**phillip.blackburn@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:phillip.blackburn@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone: 07974588068**

**Jack Hussey**

**E-mail:** [**jack.hussey@newcastle.gov.uk**](mailto:jack.hussey@newcastle.gov.uk)

**Phone: 07974588080**

Phillip and Jack work closely with the SEND Voice Lead and are developing a city-wide network across all schools for children and young people to have their voices heard, in school, in their wider community and in the services they use

They are peer mentors and leaders and also support services directly to look at practice from a young person’s perspective.

# **7. FURTHER INFORMATION**

**Guidance and Procedures for Placing Pupils with Special Educational Needs Out of Chronological Age Group**

**Introduction**

Placing pupils out of their chronological age group is occasionally practised and can lead to confusion and difficulties around respective responsibilities and funding. As responsibility for addressing special educational needs lies with the school through an appropriately differentiated curriculum, this should happen only in exceptional cases after careful consideration of the evidence. This applies to children and young people of all ages, including those transferring into school from an Early Years setting.

**Rationale**

The purpose of this guidance is to clarify practice in respect of pupils being educated in a group different from that of their chronological age. Phase transfer highlights particular difficulties where a receiving school may insist upon a pupil being placed in their correct year group and whilst decisions are made for significant reasons at the time there can be an impact on the pupil’s educational and social life. Sometimes the fact that the decision has been made has significant impact on the pupil, their family, the host and future school. Expectations of good practice are based upon a child’s entitlement to be educated alongside their age equivalent peers.

**Aims**

To ensure that decisions to place pupils outside their chronological age group have a clear rationale based on the following:

i) The pupil has exceptionally delayed intellectual skills and cannot productively engage in group learning tasks and presents teachers with major difficulties in curriculum differentiation.

ii) Often in association with i) the pupil is very delayed emotionally and cannot

make adequate relationships with their peer group, is at risk of isolation and

possible bullying.

iii) A pupil may have missed a substantial part of a year through illness or other reasons.

iv) Reasons associated with a child’s physical condition, physical frailty which

appears to justify a ‘less robust’ environment than that found in the same age

group.

v)These reasons may be frequently linked with strong parental preferences for their child to be placed in an alternative year group.

i) and ii) of the above reasons are particularly significant at the point of phase transfer where the demands of the next phase are perceived to be too onerous for the pupil to cope with.

Whenever such a change in year group occurs there are implications for the pupil, the school, the family and the LA.

**Implications**

Pupils are seldom uniformly delayed in their intellectual development. If a pupil is kept down and a reduced set of general expectations are in place, then areas of strength are at risk of not receiving appropriate stimulation.

Similarly, physical, emotional and social expectations are likely to be inappropriate.

Summer born children and young people present other challenges which could be that this group tend to show lower levels of achievement and maturity, this should be addressed within the class group through normal differentiation of the curriculum.

Phase transfers, SATs, GCSEs and school leaving status are achieved a year or more late. The consequences of ‘making up’ a year are invariably very negative for the pupil. Furthermore, they miss a statutory right; a national curriculum year programme of work.

Decisions to keep a pupil in a younger age group must be fully discussed within school, including parents/carers, the pupil and other agencies. Where consideration is being given to moving a pupil out of their chronological age group written advice should be sought from all agencies involved with the pupil. There should be an assessment by an educational psychologist and any other agencies involved. The circumstances relating to the request should address the factors outlined in this document, with appropriate information and evidence for the request to be given due consideration.

**Implications for the School / LA**

Making the decision to move a pupil out of year has implications for admissions when the next year is oversubscribed. This can make it difficult for a school to plan pupil numbers for the following year. Pupil class size legislation says at KS1 no class containing 5, 6 or 7 year olds may contain more than 30 pupils with one teacher. One pupil over 30 will necessitate the employment of an additional teacher.

The exceptions to this requirement are:

• Children and young people attending mainstream lessons who are on the roll of a special school.

• A child admitted to a class outside of the normal transfer / admission round and who has an EHCP naming that school. (This can be counted as an exception for the remainder of that academic year only, in order to allow the head teacher time to plan future provision).

Pupils placed out of chronological age are not regarded as exceptions. Pupils so placed may cause additional costs for the school in respect of additional teaching staff. They may also ‘block’ places for pupils due to be admitted and for whom placement may be appropriate or necessary. Uncertainties may create difficulties for ‘receiving’ schools at the end of key stages.

In schools where there is a practice of moving children and young people out of age for a year or more, staff should be alert to the fact that this may reflect issues in the school around curriculum differentiation and SEN provision.

**Guidelines**

1. It should only be in exceptional circumstances that a pupil moves out of their chronological age group. In no instance should this be more than a single NC year. In the case of vertically grouped classes this will apply to the age range of the class rather than a single chronological age.

2. For a pupil to stay down a year, it is likely they would be the subject of an

EHCP. The most recent review meeting should endorse any decision to move a pupil out of chronological age group.

Schools and involved professionals should satisfy themselves that the following apply:

• The pupil shows significant delay in intellectual development / educational

skills across the subject areas, to an extent that curriculum differentiation is

not reasonable.

• The pupil’s physical maturity does not place them in a position of being

developmentally different from their peer group.

• The pupil shows an equivalent delay in emotional development and social

skills appropriate for a younger peer group.

• There is full parental support and agreement.

• There is pupil support and agreement following explanation and counselling

at a level the pupil is able to understand.

• There are clear objectives and time scales to the change with plans in place

to manage phase transfers and examinations if appropriate.

3. The pupil should not be expected to remain out of chronological age indefinitely. Any move out of the chronological age is expected to be managed within a key stage or school phase, i.e. at the **end** of a key stage, or before the pupil is due to transfer phase, the pupil should be placed within their chronological age group.

**Resolving disagreements**

Chapter 11 in the Code of Practice is primarily about resolving disagreements between parents or young people and early years’ providers, schools, colleges, local authorities or health commissioners. It:

• supports early resolution of disagreements at the local level

• explains the independent disagreement resolution arrangements which local authorities **must** make available for disagreements across special educational provision, and health and care provision in relation to Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

• also explains the independent mediation arrangements which parents and young people can use before deciding whether to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability) (‘the Tribunal’) and for health and social care complaints in relation to EHC plans

• goes on to describe the conditions for appealing to the Tribunal or making disability discrimination claims. It finishes by describing other complaints procedures and health and social services complaints procedures