

Early Years SEND Toolkit

0-5 years

great
prospects



A great place to live and work.

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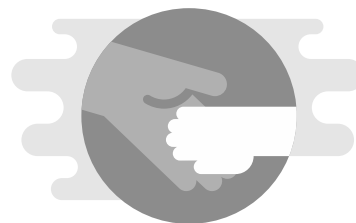
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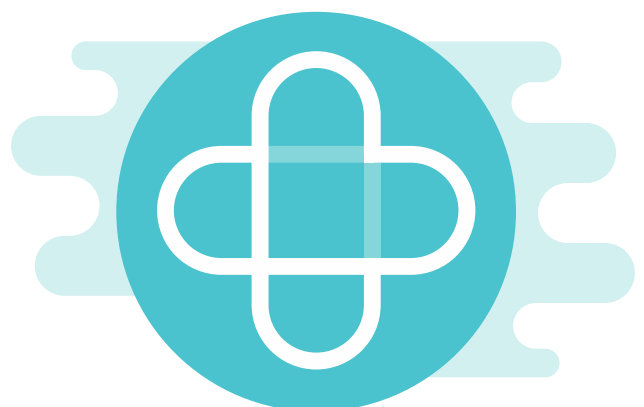
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Welcome to the toolkit

The [Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (2017) states *'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'* (para 1)

Underpinning the toolkit is that expectation that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides a framework for all children and is based on 4 important principles:

- Every child is a unique child
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

We have worked alongside our settings across Central Bedfordshire to produce a locally focused, user friendly toolkit, the foundation of which lies within the following vision –

Vision

We want every child in Central Bedfordshire to enjoy their childhood and have the best possible start in life. We want every child to have high aspirations, reach their potential, make friends and build strong relationships with their family. As young adults, we want every young person to have the knowledge, skills and qualifications that will give them the best chance of success so that they are prepared to take their full place in society as a healthy, happy contributing and confident citizen.

(Children and Young People's Plan 2018-2021)

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Why a Toolkit?

In the Early Years, the focus is on providing early identification and intervention as the key to supporting children with SEND and improving outcomes. The [SEND Code of Practice](#) (2015) encourages us to look at the following three requirements together:

- Duties under [The Equality Act](#) (2010),
- The [Foundation Stage Framework](#) (2017)
- SEND requirements

All these should, be reviewed in parallel to strengthen the importance of high-quality early years provision for all children.

This toolkit aims to provide a useful resource to settings, teachers, practitioners and any other adults, working together to support children's learning.

Using the toolkit

The aim is that this toolkit will form part of a whole setting approach to promoting SEND, early intervention, provision and support within the Early Years.

Each section of the toolkit looks at a separate part of provision in the Early Years and focuses on providing the knowledge and tools to support staff further.

The toolkit contains information, practical support such as audits, ideas and resources, and links to further advice and support as required.



1. What are Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability?

The term Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) covers a broad and varied range of difficulties that an individual may face, incorporating different levels and types of need. Any provision that is made should then be relevant to supporting those needs. The [SEND Code of Practice](#) states that **'A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her'**

A child has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age,

or

- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age.

All Early Years providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEND and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. These requirements are set out within the [EYFS framework](#).

The SEND Code of Practice (Department of Education, 2014) advises that 'Early Support, supports the better delivery and co-ordination of services for disabled children, and their families, including training for professional or trained independent volunteers providing a single point of contact or key working.' (5.17)

'Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, from practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting, practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions about whether or not a child has SEND. All the information should be brought together with observations of parents and considered with them.' (5.28)



2. Types of Need

There are four broad areas of need as described in The SEND Code of Practice (2015). These broad areas of need are not definitive; and the Code of practice recognises that individuals' children may experience difficulties across all of these areas and that these difficulties may change over time.

Further information can also be found in

['Guidance on SEND in the Early Years: A graduated Approach 2018, Central Bedfordshire'](#)



Communication and Interaction

This includes:

Speech, language and communication needs for the majority of children, communication skills develop naturally over the course of the Early Years, and the development of the speech sound system is typically not complete until 6 or 7 years of age. Communication and language skills in general will continue to develop throughout life. Communication and interaction difficulties cover a wide and complex range of needs that frequently overlap. These include:

Developmental language Delay, Phonological / speech Difficulty, Receptive Speech Difficulty, Expressive Language Difficulty.

Social Communication and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (including **Asperger's**) are medical diagnosed Neurodevelopmental disorders, resulting in developmental differences within each of the relevant areas of need.

Cognition and Learning

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including:

Moderate learning difficulties (MLD)

Severe learning difficulties (SLD) where children and young people are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication

Profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) where children and young people are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This includes a range of conditions such as **Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia.**

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming **withdrawn or isolated**, as well as **displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour.**

These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have diagnosed disorders such as **Attention Deficit Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder or Attachment disorder.**

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. This includes children and young people with:

- **Visual impairment**
- **Hearing impairment**
- **Multi-sensory impairment - a combination of vision and hearing difficulties**
- **Physical disability**

3. The Graduated Response

What is the graduated response?

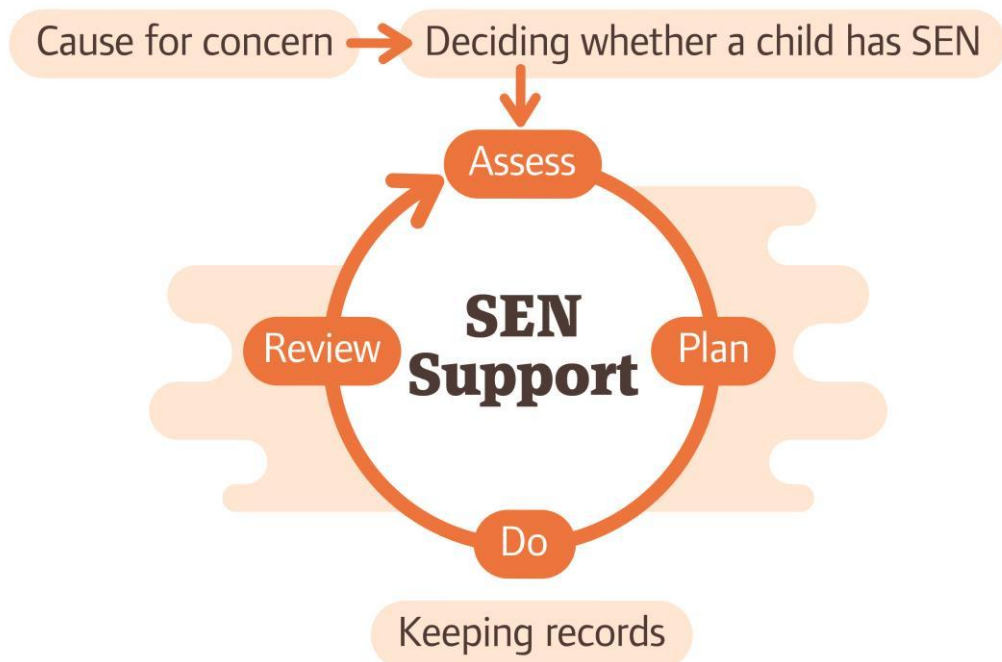
The Code of Practice makes it clear that high quality teaching which is adapted to support individual pupils is the first step in responding to a possible SEND need. This is developed through removing any barriers to learning and putting effective special educational provision in place. This provision and support should come from a cycle or review, known as a graduated response.

‘Where a setting makes special educational provision for a child with SEND, they should inform the parents....All settings should adopt a graduated approach with four stages of action: assess, plan, do, review’ (Department of Education, 2014)

By ensuring that the individual is kept at the centre of the process with all those supporting and working with them involved, a greater understanding of each individual is gained. This means that as any actions, provisions and decisions are regularly revisited, refined and reviewed all those working with and supporting an individual will have a greater depth and understanding of their needs. Effective support then enables individuals to make good progress and therefore secure better outcomes.

The graduated approach is a cycle of actions that should be ‘revisited in increasing detail and with increasing frequency, to identify the best way of securing good progress’. The plans and interventions should be reviewed in line with the date identified on the plan.

The Code of Practice advises that: ‘Where, despite a setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, the setting should consider an Education, Health and Care Needs assessment.’ Characteristics that may indicate the need for an EHC needs assessment can be found in [‘Guidance on SEND in the Early Years: A graduated Approach 2018’](#).



A Child-Centred approach

An individual with SEND should always be at the centre of any assessment or planning process that is focusing on them. A child-centred approach is about discovering and acting on what is important **to** the child or young person, what is important **for** them and then finding the balance between these. A child-centred approach reflects what a child is able to do (strengths), what is important to them (now and in the future) and thinks about what support (provision) they might need in order to reach their potential. It is therefore a process of continual listening and learning. Being child-centred includes problem solving and thinking about how we can allocate the most appropriate support and resources in order to enable children with SEND to work towards their aspirations. These resources may come from the child or young person's own network and/or available support within the local community or setting; not just from specialist services.

SEND Support Plans

In Central Bedfordshire it is recommended that the [SEND Support Plan](#) is used to provide a framework for the plan, do, review process, following a child-centred approach.

This document contains information such as, the child's likes and dislikes, aspirations, who is supporting the child, professional's involvement, long term and short-term outcomes, and provision to support these. It provides a running record of the support and intervention provided for the child. It is a document which should always be completed with parents/carers.

Outcomes

The outcomes in a SEND Support Plan, are what you want the child to be able to do. These outcomes should reflect shared priorities, and what would make the most difference for a child with SEND at that time. Outcomes should be clearly recorded in language that everybody recognises and understands. This means that you should be able to make an informed judgement as to whether the child has reached that outcome after an agreed amount of time. This is often referred to as a 'SMART' outcome (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound).



An example of an outcome might be: 'I will be able to put my shoes and socks on, by the end of December.' Outcomes are achievable when everybody involved works together.



Writing Outcomes

Start by looking at the child's strengths, difficulties and interests.



Look at the difficulties and shared priorities, deciding what would have the biggest impact currently on the child. This should be agreed with all those working with the child; parents and professionals.



Agree on an area of need and think about what skills the child may need in order to achieve this. What are we looking for? What would the achievement of this look like?



Agree on a SMART outcome.



What provision are we going to put in place to achieve this?

Pause for Thought!

- ▶ An outcome is a benefit or difference made to an individual as a result of a change.
- ▶ Outcomes should reflect the needs of the individual taking into account the views of all involved.
- ▶ Outcomes should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound.
- ▶ Outcomes should be regularly reviewed.



Example Outcome: Smith can sit on the carpet for 5 mins, daily.

Example Provision: We will use a sand timer to support this, use of a carpet square.

What do we think of this outcome?

The outcome is written in a SMART way, however what is the child gaining from this? Is it **Specific** to the child's needs? What area of need are we trying to develop and support? What skills does the child need to have or learn? Can we develop this outcome to be clearer and identify what provision the child needs?

Think about:

Tell me about Smith?

Smith finds it hard to listen and attend to an activity for any length of time. He has worked on previous outcomes focusing on intensive interaction and is now aware of others in his space and is happy to play alongside them. Smith will look at different activities in the setting and at home, but often will look at them and move onto the next activity, rather than engaging for any length of time.

What do we want Smith to be able to do? How will this help Smith?

We want Smith to be able to settle and focus on a short task or activity. This means that he will be able to start practising and learning skills such as shared attention when reading a book and participate in short turn taking activities with an adult. The next step would be for Smith to start to participate in short turn taking activities with peers and groups such as 'lift off to Language.'

What are Smith's Likes and Dislikes?

Smith likes activities which are motivating to him, such as toys which use lights, sounds and noises as these interest him. At home Smith will sit with Dad and look at a short 'That's not my... ' Book.

With the information above how could we change the outcome and provision to be more specific to Smith's SEND need?

Ideas:

Outcome 1: Smith can share a short (approx. 5 minute) book with an adult daily.

Provision: Use Smith's like of the 'That's not my... ' To encourage him to share a book with an adult. Start in a quiet environment and then add other children to this or find a quieter spot within the main classroom.

Outcome 2: Smith can complete a short (approx. 5 minute) activity with an adult, following what they have modelled first, each session.

Provision: Use Smith's like of motivational activities. Activity ideas could be putting cars down a track, Rolling a ball backwards and forwards, filling a bucket in the sand tray, marble run. Encourage adults to use their body language to help enthuse Smith to come and join the activity.

4. Working with Parents/Carers

Working in partnership with parents and/or carers is central to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Consulting with parents/carers about children's early experiences helps practitioners plan for effective learning in the setting and supports parents to continue their children's learning development at home.

Indeed, one of the key principles in the [Children and Families Act](#) (2014) and the [Code of Practice](#) (2014) is the importance of providing the information and support necessary to enable parents/carers to participate fully in the decision-making regarding their child.



Effective practice: Parents as Partners

Effective partnership with parents is important because:

- Parents have the right to play a central role in making decisions about their child's care and education at every level.
- Successful relationships between parents and educators can have long-lasting and beneficial effects on children's learning and well-being.
- Successful relationships become partnerships when there is two-way communication and parents and practitioners really listen to each other and value each other's views and support in achieving the best outcomes for each child.
- Parents provide a learning environment which is enduring, stable and comprehensive. It begins even before birth, operates beyond the child's day at the setting and provides continuity as the child transfers from one setting to another.
- Over 70% of children's lives are spent, not in a setting, but with their family and the wider community. Therefore, home and community must be recognised as significant learning environments in the lives of children.
- All parents can enhance their child's development and learning.

It is always be easier if you discuss children's progress with parents on a regular basis, but when you have identified a concern here are some **Tips for Initial Meeting** to discuss those concerns:



Describe

Explain what your concerns are, give examples and explain the effect on the child's development.

Invite

Parents to give their views; have they noticed anything similar at home?
What do they feel their child's strengths and difficulties are?

Agree

What is going to happen next? Who will do what and when?

Close

Make sure that you finish the meeting on a positive note and that parents/carers know that they can take their time to think about the discussions and come back with any questions.





Evaluation Audit Tool

Think about your own setting, use the following questions to reflect on own practice in relation to working with parents in order to achieve the best outcomes for the SEND child. Use the table to RAG rate current practice in your setting –

RED – attention to this area required as a priority

AMBER – consolidation in this area required

GREEN – this is an area of strength currently

Date the reflection and review with all staff and parents working together.

Reflective question	How do we know? Add date	RAG rating
How do we welcome parents into our setting?		
How do we let parents know who's who in our setting? (Roles and responsibilities)		
How does our setting communicate with parents? What opportunities are there for formal and informal contact?		
Do we regularly evaluate the communication with parents? How do we do this?		
How effective is the communication?		
Do you have information around the setting which makes the process of learning visible for all parents and children?		
Do parents understand your policies on important areas such as key person, inclusion, behaviour, learning and teaching? Have they been involved in drawing them up?		



What arrangements do you make to ensure parents are aware of the needs of their child? How is this communicated?		
What arrangements do you make to ensure parents are aware of the provision made for their child? (Nature, frequency, resources)		
Are parents / carers actively involved with the SEND support plan particularly regarding the plan, do, review approach? Have their concerns, views and perspective been taken into account?		
What opportunities are there for parents to contribute to practitioners' developing understanding of the child as a unique individual?		
If using home / school books what is the purpose of these – if they are reporting behaviour, how effective is communicating in this way? Has it enhanced the relationship between the parents and setting?		
Are parents encouraged to evaluate the environment with their child's needs and interests in mind?		



5. Transition

Transitions occur throughout a child's early years; from home to a setting, early years setting into Reception and Reception into Year 1. When preparing a child transition, it is important to remember that the preparation is not about assessing his/her academic skills. It is about helping him/her to develop positive self-esteem and confidence. A positive disposition and keeping him/her at the centre of the process will support and promote a child's readiness for the next step.

There are a number of activities which support children to make that next step transition, and in particular those children with a SEND need.

1. Visiting the new setting, school or classroom plays an important part in dispelling fears of the unknown. Encouraging the child to use a digital or disposable camera on such visits can help to make the environment more familiar for the child. This supports a personalized approach and the autonomy can be very empowering for the child. It would be good for settings to provide a small book photobook of their new class and identify aspects that they may worry about e.g. where to go to the toilet, hang a coat, who the adults are and what are their names etc. The photographs can then be shared by the child and discussed in the security of a familiar setting such as home.
2. Effective communication with parents and carers is crucial in ensuring a smooth transition; children may disclose their concerns at home. Staff and parent relationships need to be positive to ensure that this information is shared in order that the appropriate support is offered. Ideally parents, including fathers, should be involved in any planning as parents have a wealth of knowledge that professionals can draw on.
3. The key person has a particular role to play in supporting and preparing the child for transition; particularly children who may experience feelings of sadness and resistance before leaving a setting, especially if he/she has been there for a very long time or has had the same key person. It also gives a parent a consistent point of contact, to build relationships with.
4. Use stories to explore the new situations that the child will experience when he/she moves. Stories, particularly open-ended ones, can empower a child to reason and problem solve independently.
5. Acknowledge a child's relationships with both adults and children. Having friends in the same class may help children adjust to the demands of the new environment.
6. Recognise that a child needs time to settle and that a period of regression is quite normal, for a child to stand and watch before joining in is quite usual and appropriate.
7. Regular transition meetings between settings and schools enable important information to be shared and transition arrangements agreed.
8. A Transition Policy will help clarify the process of transition for all stakeholders and ensure that they are clear about the principles and practice. This should include not only transition into the Reception classroom but also how we support transition into year 1.
9. It is useful for setting to review transition processes in the autumn term so that any actions can be put into place for the following year.

Additional Information

Refer to: [Smooth Transitions in Early Years: A Good Practice Guide](#)



6. Reflection on own setting and practice

The document '[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage: Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five](#)' (March 2017) sets out the standards of practice. There are Four guiding principles that should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- Every child is **unique** who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Children develop and learn in different ways** (see “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.9) **and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Universal Inclusive practice

Universal inclusive practice ensures that all children have the same opportunities and exposure to a variety of learning experiences. This includes 'Quality First Teaching' – what is available to support all children within the environment to access the learning?

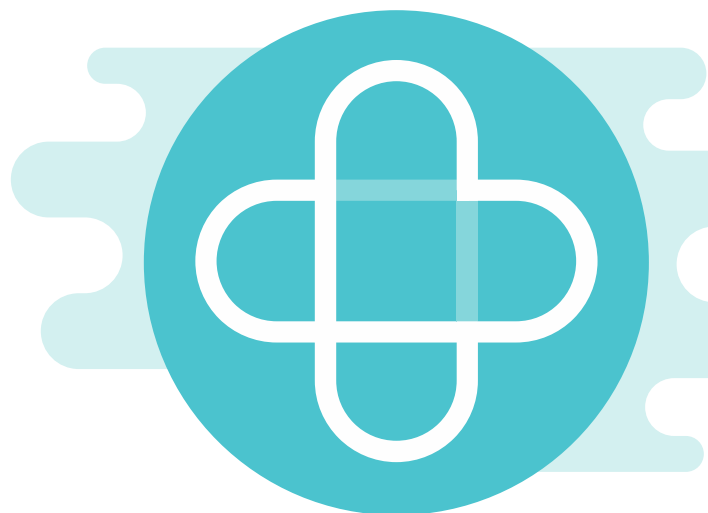
To ensure a universal and inclusive approach to supporting children within the Early Years the following should be considered:

- Every child is unique and develops in their own rate and way.
- High quality first teaching is provided to all children.
- Key person / adults within the environment are working together and know how to support each individual child.
- Observation, assessment and planning is used to support and develop each child.
- Every child is included and supported.

The following documents have been produced by School Readiness and Childcare Team and are available to support settings:

- [Environment Quality Audit](#)
- [Learning and development Audit](#)
- [SEND and Inclusion Audit](#)

A further overview assessment tool is included below:





Assessment tool

Think about your own setting, use the following questions to reflect on own practice. Use the table to RAG rate current practice in your setting –

RED – attention to this area required as a priority

AMBER – consolidation in this area required

GREEN – this is an area of strength currently

Date the reflection and review regularly with all staff working together.

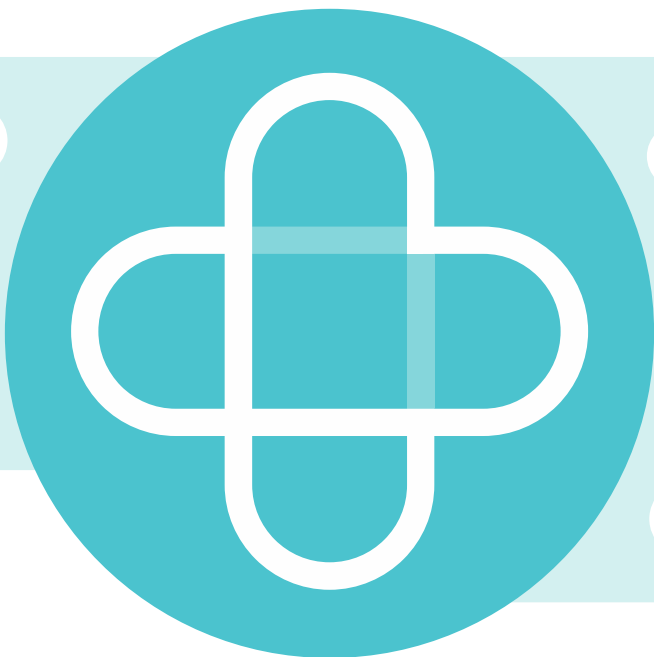
Reflective question	How do we know? Add date	RAG rating
How inclusive are our policies and practices?		
Do we offer quality first teaching to all?		
Do we offer a fully differentiated curriculum?		
Are all staff confident on child development, where the children currently are and how to move them forwards?		
Are all staff aware of any SEND needs, current outcomes and strategies of support		
Do staff have high expectations of all children?		



Have we provided an environment that enables children to thrive and learn?		
Are we flexible in our routines? Do our children know and understand them?		
Do we give enough time to free choice? Can they access outdoor play when they want to?		
Do staff have an understanding of the activities on offer and how these can be used to support children's skills within the three Prime areas?		
What changes or adaptations do we regularly make to meet individual needs at a Universal level? E.g. emotions register, visual timetable Do all staff understand and recognise how to use these? Are they currently effective and being used with children in the classroom?		
Has information from transition been used to inform the learning environment?		
Are strategies suggested to support a child ready? Are they the same resources used prior to starting? Do all staff understand how to use these?		



<p>If a child is struggling – think about how the learning environment could be affecting this? Is there anything that could be changed?</p>		
<p>Are there visuals to support children? How are they accessed? Are the adults modelling?</p>		
<p>Is the environment we create regularly monitored? Can we adapt?</p>		
<p>Are we supporting behavior by reading the room? Are we supporting colleagues through Stop! Look! Listen!?</p>		

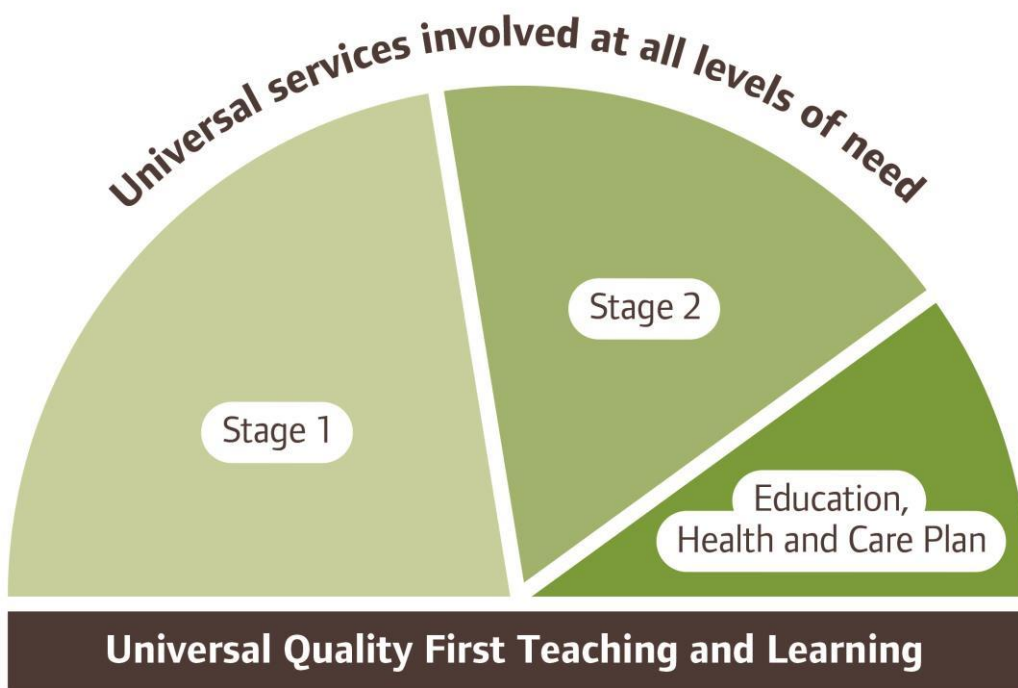




7. Targeted support, appropriate referral and sources of support

Universal services such as Quality First Teaching described in section 6, are provided to all children and young people. These should continue to be provided to children and young people with SEND who are also receiving additional support through the other levels of the Graduated Approach. This means that we are all working together to support children and young people with special educational needs.

Support for children and young people at both **Stage One** and **Stage Two** level are tailored to the needs of the individual child or young person, and provided through a variety of means, for example: individual strategies, individual or small group teaching, assistive technology etc.



Ideas, strategies, appropriate referral and sources of support

The following is a tool for guidance on more targeted support and should be used alongside the [‘Guidance in the Early Years: A Graduated approach 2018’](#). Please note the ideas / strategies is not an exhaustive list.



Stage 1

Impact on Development / What are we seeing?

Refer to the ['Guidance in the Early Years: A Graduated approach 2018'](#).

Response /What could we do?

Key person to liaise with setting SENDCo

Setting SENCO to support in identifying differentiated activities and strategies for the child

Work in partnership with the parents in planning for the child in the setting and at home, and start the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' process: Introduce the SEND Support Plan, and review this regularly

Consider an environmental audit for example audits as outlined in section 6 or [Autism Education Trust's Sensory Assessment](#)

Support family to access relevant health professionals for example, Health Visitor, Speech and Language.

Support children and their families to access universal and targeted service as appropriate e.g. Early help Assessment, Health Visitor, Speech and Language drop in, Local Children centres. (See section 8 for links)

[Local offer](#)

Continue to track and monitor the child's progress.

Ideas / Strategies / What could I put in place?

All support and strategies must be used consistently. All staff should know, understand and agree on strategies to be used



Communication and Interaction - Stage 1 suggested strategies

Use the [Language Launchpad](#)

Use [NHS speech and Language website](#) to provide support with referrals, specific information on speech and language difficulties and contact information.

Place yourself where children can see your face clearly and you can see them

Keep all distractions to a minimum



Allow extra time for processing information, answering and completing tasks

Allow for frequent practice through recall and repetition

Give a warning when an activity is coming to an end and to support the transition (this may need to be a visual warning, e.g. Traffic Light System, button timer, visual Now and Next)

Introduce new activities and experiences sensitively and in smaller amounts, e.g. small tray of sand presented individually

Support development of sharing and turn taking in small groups and on individual basis if required

Offer child choices, e.g. from two songs, stories, toys, drinks, snacks - support choice making visually with objects/pictures/symbols

Carry out the ECaT Enabling Environments Audit and provide the necessary resources to promote communication and language

Create a predictable and consistent environment, ensuring routines are followed

Have visual prompts on display these may be pictures or concrete objects

Support child-initiated activities focussing on communication and language by joining in with child chosen activities, following their lead and playing alongside

Keep language clear and unambiguous

Model language

Plan differentiated small group activities and resources, e.g. [ICAN](#): Babbling Babies, Toddler Talk, Chatting with Children

Give time to children who have difficulty speaking or who need time to process thinking - Use strategies from the [Early Language Development Programme \(ELDP\)](#) training, through adult Interactions and use of Language

Plan story times that encourage the children to join in, e.g. use short, well-illustrated stories, story refrains and props, story sacks etc.

Provide resources that are clearly labelled with pictures or objects of reference and display visual timetables.

Cognition and Learning - Stage 1 suggested strategies

Use [Characteristics of Effective Learning to](#) assess how children are choosing to learn and where they like to go both indoors and outdoors



Consider how the child plays and explores. What motivates them and how can this be used to support learning.

Find out what gains the child's interests and attention and use this information to plan next steps for learning

Consolidate learning by ensuring that the activities that the child enjoys remaining available and are easily accessible. Use pre-teaching to support if needed.

Provide developmentally appropriate activities and ensure that the child is able to access them at his/her own pace, thereby enabling the child to achieve success

Provide activities which are stimulating and encourage children to use all their senses

Model, extend, and adapt activities as children's interests and thinking develop and change

Consider the environment. Help the child to focus by keeping distractions to a minimum, e.g. support play in a quiet area within the setting

Stimulate curiosity and engagement through new activities or changing familiar activities, e.g. Lego in the sand tray, cars in the play dough etc.

Provide activities such as treasure baskets with contents regularly changed for the children to explore

Encourage the child to explore both indoors and outdoors and develop a sense of curiosity, e.g. muddy puddles etc.

Develop shared and sustained attention through Storytime, sharing a resource or activity, turn taking.

Encourage problem solving by asking questions, e.g. 'what will happen if...?' Allow the child time to respond

Use simple language at a level that the individual child is able to understand and respond to

Support language with visual props e.g. Concrete objects of reference, story sacks, puppets etc.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health - Stage 1 suggested strategies

Use [Characteristics of Effective Learning](#) to assess how children are choosing to learn and where potential difficulties in this area might be

Consider how the child plays and explores, is motivated to learn, thinks critically etc.

Consider the environment and provide an environment in which the child feels safe and secure, Carry out an Environment Audit – see section 6.

Consider the layout, noise levels etc. within the setting



Ensure there is a quiet, calm space available at all times for the child to access, e.g. large cushions, cosy area

Consider your daily routine and whether there are any times in which the child may need additional support, e.g. at busy times such as during meet and greet, at the beginning or end of a session

Observe you and your staff's interactions with the child. Would you consider these to be of high quality? Have positive relationships been established?

Encourage the child to bring something from home as part of the settling in process, e.g. favourite toy

Consider using a visual support to help the child understand the daily routine, e.g. objects of reference to show the child what is going to happen next, such as nappy for changing

Provide resources, materials and activities which the child enjoys and engages with. Use these to inform future planning for the child

Support play with other children by modelling simple play scenarios and language that can be used through play

Gradually introduce small group time, initially with an adult then an adult and child then 2 children with the adult supporting, and gradually introducing more

Promote positive behaviour.

Stand back and observe the child to gain a good understanding of what is happening and why. Think about using a frequency chart to track types of behaviour and any patterns, and/or [ABC chart](#) to focus on what is happening. The outcome of both being to understand behaviour and effect a change which will support the child.

Give clear guidance and ensure that everyone working with the child is giving consistent messages

Work with parents and carers to see if any additional support can be sourced via [children's centre](#) such as positive parenting or Triple p. (See local offer / Central Bedfordshire website)

Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties - Stage 1 suggested strategies

Note: it is important to note that difficulties interpreting sensory information can have an impact on how we feel, how we think and how we behave e.g. sitting for long periods of time, a busy, noisy classroom etc.

Look at how the child responds to your environment and make changes as appropriate e.g. lighting, noises, smells

In discussion with parents, talk about the child's likes and dislikes

Ask the parents about the materials that the child enjoys at home and provide these in the setting



Have a corner with sensory activities that the child can go to at any time

Seeking sensory information

If the child has become overstimulated and this is making them anxious and impacting on their behaviour, consider some of the following strategies:

- Squeezing a small fidget toy
- Providing a small calm, quiet space, e.g. a small pop up tent
- Ask the child to help with heavy manual tasks e.g. putting bikes in the shed, digging in the garden
- Putting on a heavy coat or a heavy blanket

Avoiding sensory information

- Individual/small group activities focusing on sensory play
- Build up tolerance to sensory play activities slowly e.g. start off with dry sensory play and slowly add liquid
- If children are unwilling to touch, offer alternatives such as tools, zipper bags filled with messy play, cling film over tables etc.
- Talk to children about what and why things happen, e.g. noises like the phone ringing, fire alarm

Visual Impairment

If the child wears glasses, encourage the child to bring them and wear them as appropriate

Make sure that you say the child's name before speaking to them and ensure that you are at the child's level and face to face

Adapt the environment to ensure that the child is able to move around the setting safely e.g. clear paths between areas and different levels within the setting are marked with fluorescent tape (see environmental audits section 6)

Consideration given to lighting, displays etc. Use contrasting colours on displays and visuals / resources (see environmental audits section 6)

Ensure the child is supported to follow a consistent routine

Ensure all children value the importance of tidying up after themselves, e.g. pushing chairs under the table, putting cushions back in the cosy area etc.

Ensure that the child is close to the practitioners during activities and use visual cues such as story props, puppets etc.

When setting up activities, use trays, non-slip matting, shallow containers etc. to ensure that the child has safe access to the resources they have chosen

Hearing Impairment

Provide a range of sensory activities. Encourage the child to investigate different textures, sounds, smells, tastes and sights



If the child uses technology such as a hearing aid or Cochlear implant, make sure they wear it, that it is clean, and the batteries are not flat

Use the child's name to gain their attention

Ensure that they are listening before you start speaking to them

Make sure the child can see your face when you speak to them and your face is not in shadow

Maintain eye contact and remember the child will be responding to your facial expressions and gestures

Speak clearly to the child, making sure you don't speak too fast and that you use expression in your voice

Consider the setting environment and adapt as appropriate (Environmental audits – see section 6)

Consider the acoustics of the setting, i.e. background noise etc.

Enable to child to access quieter areas for focused activities/interventions

Use visual supports such as objects, photos, pictures, and visual timetables to support what is said and familiarise children with routines

Consider where the child places themselves throughout the daily routine and support them to be in close proximity of the practitioner/child as appropriate e.g. at large group time etc.

Physical Needs

Ensure that the setting has an Intimate Care policy in place and that it is followed by all staff

Provide appropriate indoor and outdoor equipment that provides children with the appropriate level of support, risk and challenge focussing on gross and fine motor skills:

Gross Motor Skills

Ensure there is sufficient floor space and provide the child with plenty of opportunities to walk, run and crawl on different surfaces – grass, carpet, vinyl

Provide outdoor equipment that encourages children to balance, climb, jump, slide, lift, pull, push, hang, spin and swing; for example, steps, logs, planks, wheelbarrows, tyres, tunnels, large balls, large blocks etc. Create a path with things to step onto (carpet mats for no height or blocks/logs) and paths with defined sections to step into (hoops, ladder on ground, tiles).

Introduce an obstacle course with items at different heights and promote a range of movements such as climbing, crawling, tummy wriggling, rolling and sliding.

Provide opportunities to use bikes. As the child builds skill and confidence in riding a bike, introduce obstacles to peddle round and traffic lights to encourage stopping and starting.

Play parachute games and chasing games such as Musical Statues and 'What's The Time Mr. Wolf?'



Fine motor skills

Provide builder's trays with a range of messy play opportunities and large surfaces to mark with paint, water and shaving foam using brushes and hands.

Provide a range of resources to build hand coordination, control and dexterity such as playdough, clay, finger and brush painting, tape, ribbons, string, rope and pulleys, water play equipment, pegs, tweezers, threading, construction equipment and small world resources

Introduce 'Start Stop' games to develop fine motor skills with musical instruments (fast/slow, loud/quiet): drumming using two hands and alternate hands, spoons and sticks on pots.

Stage 2

Impact on Development / What are we seeing?

[Refer to the 'Guidance in the Early Years: A Graduated approach 2018'.](#)

Response /What could we do?

As above for Stage 1

At this point settings should be consulting with outside agencies to support their own interventions with children. Settings must seek parents' written consent before consulting any outside agency and tell them in advance when a professional is visiting the setting. All reports should be shared and parents/carers should be an integral part of the process.

Continue to ensure close partnership working with parents. This includes sharing SEND Support plans, and strategies and interventions to use in the setting and at home

Continue to monitor and review the SEND Support Plan, focussing on the child's progress and the impact of strategies and interventions used. This should be completed at least every 6 weeks as part of the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' process

Continue to liaise with the setting's linked Health Professional, as appropriate. Consider other referrals that may be necessary for example, Paediatrician.

Where behaviour is a concern start to collate information through a frequency chart or ABC Chart.

Complete referrals to supporting agencies such as [Early Years SEND Team](#), Speech and Language etc.

SENCO to support the key person in planning differentiated activities and strategies to support the child, and provision map support.

Ensure that any suggested specialist advice is incorporated into the child's SEND Support Plan.

Ideas / Strategies / What could I put in place?

Continue to ensure that support and strategies are used consistently. All staff should know, understand and agree on strategies to be used

Continue with any relevant strategies from Stage 1, plus:



Communication and Interaction - Stage 2 suggested strategies

Build on stage 1 strategies and support adding –

Put in place the interventions and strategies from any Speech and Language Therapy Care Plans

Identify times and areas of targeted individual support

Strong emphasis on, and consistent use of, visual support which is appropriate to the child's level of language abilities and cognitive development e.g. objects of reference/photographs/symbols

Daily small group session to focus on development of language and social skills e.g. Lift Off To Language, Time to Talk

Daily individual session to follow targets set out in SEND Support Plan

Delayed and Disordered Speech Development Strategies, see additional support for specific speech difficulties via [Child Speech Bedfordshire](#)

Continue with the [Early Language Development Programme \(ELDP\)](#) strategies and in particular remember to talk about what is happening, so that the child hears

Use of language that relates to actions as they happen, the activities they are involved in and the objects they are using

Provide opportunities for communication – use a toy to excite their curiosity

Role of Adults in the environment:

- Observe how the child communicates, who they communicate with and where they communicate
- Pause to give plenty of time for the child to say what they want to communicate with you. Remember to allow the child plenty of time to finish what they are saying; maintain eye contact to communicate that you are listening to them

- Model correct pronunciation for the child, use commenting to support them rather than correcting their efforts.
- Use pictures, concrete objects and cues as well as verbal to aid a child's understanding and communication.

Cognition and Learning - Stage 2 suggested strategies

Build on stage 1 strategies and support adding –

Consider what gains the child's interests and high levels of involvement and wellbeing

Ensure that at each session attended, the child accesses an individually supported learning opportunity, small group time and support during child-initiated play, as based on the provision set out within the SEND Support plan

Ensure there are plenty of opportunities to repeat activities, or pre-teach activities.

Encourage children to use a range of stimulating open ended resources that encourage children to use all their senses

Continue to create interesting experiences that develops a child's curiosity and motivation to explore

Develop 'joint attention' by following the child's interests, joining them in their play, and modelling language appropriate to the child's level of development

Provide opportunities to explore and manipulate play equipment and materials

Develop a bank of clearly marked sensory resources that can be used at different times to develop the child's awareness and exploration of the senses

Introduce unexpected objects, place toys in unusual places, and/or introduce treasure boxes of interesting objects for children to explore

Give short closed tasks (e.g. an activity with a clear start and finish), this may require pre-teaching, and build on successes.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health - Stage 2 suggested strategies

Build on stage 1 strategies and support adding –

Develop 'joint attention' by following the child's interests, joining them in their play, and modelling language appropriate to the child's level of development

Encourage the children to make choices and to play independently. Choices can be made verbally, through the choosing of a picture or concrete object. Start with two and move onwards.

Model friendly, caring behaviour in play that support successful interaction, e.g. 'Can I have a go?', 'Do you want some playdough?' etc.

Use clear concise language, giving the child time to process

Ensure the setting has a quiet low stimuli area for the child to access adult led activities

Support sharing and taking turns. Initiate turn taking with an adult and when the child is ready, gradually introduce play with one other child

Ensure there is adequate uninterrupted time for the child to explore at their own pace and in a space, they feel comfortable

Provide opportunities for children to talk about their feelings and needs often, using the children's own experiences. Introduce an Emotions register or group activities such as Time to Talk or Sunshine circles.

Support children in communicating with and recognising and responding to the feelings of others

Support children to develop friendships and confidence in their social interaction and give lots of expressive, specific, positive praise e.g. "I saw you help put the car away"

Consider if support is needed to scaffold/support social interaction in play

Where possible, try not to respond to unwanted behaviours designed to gain adult's attention unless they are harmful to the child or others, work on developing positive relationships with adults

Help the child to build trust, confidence and independence e.g. self-regulation. When conflict arises, encourage children to problem solve and find solutions together

Carry out risk assessments on a regular basis and incorporate any actions and strategies into planning, use [ABC charts](#) to look at patterns of behaviour and work with other adults' and professionals to support and plan effective provision.

[Social and emotional wellbeing: early Years – NICE Guidance](#)

[Promoting emotional health, wellbeing and reliance: a whole school and college approach](#)

Look at the child's background and how this may be affecting their learning and development. See [information attachment and trauma](#)

Sensory and / or Physical Difficulties - Stage 2 suggested strategies

Build on stage 1 strategies and support adding –

Incorporate professional advice into reports e.g. from Visual Impairment service, Hearing Impairment Service, Paediatrician, Occupational therapy, Physiotherapy, Early Years SEND Team

Visual Impairment

Follow specific advice and guidance from the **Visual Impairment Team** (VITeam) including the use of any specialist equipment loaned to the setting

Discuss with parent and observe how the child with vision impairment makes the most of the sight they have. For example: do they tilt their head, focus on bright colours and mirrors, stare at sunlight or artificial light, move more confidently in bright or dim light, look at objects and faces? This will help to build knowledge of the child's vision and assist with providing the correct approaches and resources to support the child

Create a calm, quiet area that the child can have as a safe area which they can return to when they need to

When the child is feeling confident with their surroundings, encourage them to learn their way to different areas in the setting

Try to keep the physical environment as consistent as possible

Encourage the child to touch and explore different aspects of the environment explaining what they are exploring and talking about what is in each area

Provide a range of multi-sensory experiences that encourage the child to investigate different textures, sounds, smells, tastes and sights. Some children will find this overwhelming and will need to be introduced sensitively

Help the child to make sense of what they hear in noisy situations e.g. 'Robert is banging the pots with a spoon to make that sound; do you want a go?'

Provide plenty of opportunities for singing songs and rhymes and help the child to form actions by physically guiding them as needed

Use books with illustrations that have good contrasts between colours and features and interesting textures to explore

In a group story session, make sure the child has a good sightline to the pictures and use big books and story props that the child can hold

Enlarge image and print as necessary

Follow and implement recommendations regarding strategies and adaptations from the resulting from any specialist environmental audits carried out by **Visual Impairment Team** (VITeam)

Hearing Impairment

Follow specific advice and guidance from the **Hearing Impairment Team** (HITeam) including the use of any specialist equipment loaned to the setting



Make sure that the lighting in the setting is good so that children who are lip reading or rely on facial cues can see you

Always check the child has followed what you have said and that they have understood any instructions

Keep background noise to a minimum

Give the child time working with an adult by themselves or in small groups

Enable children to access quiet areas for focussed activities where possible

If the child is using British Sign Language (BSL) or , Signed Supported English (i.e. BSL signs in English word order with speech) learn key signs.

Provide a range of multi-sensory experiences that encourage the child to investigate using different senses

Use language alongside every activity and ensure that the child is exposed to a language rich environment

Repetitive rhymes, singing and musical instruments can be used to provide some children with valuable auditory experiences whilst taking care not to overwhelm them with sounds

Follow any recommendations from relevant professional e.g. **Hearing Impairment Team** (HITeam) regarding listening skills and language development activities and small group individual interventions.

Physical Needs

Follow the strategies advised by the child's Physiotherapist and/or Occupational Therapist

Provide an environment that supports a child's developing independence e.g. position furniture to enable children to access resources, activities etc.

EHC Needs assessment

Impact on Development / What are we seeing?

Refer to the ['Guidance in the Early Years: A Graduated approach 2018'](#).

Response /What could we do?

As above

Gather the evidence, continuing to work in a child centered approach.

Ensure that additional support and information from external services has been sought and accessed upon.



Review the **'Guidance in the Early Years: A Graduated approach 2018'** and complete a request for assessment.

Ensure that information of these process is shared with parents and that information such as the Local offer and parent support agencies such as SENDIASS and SNAP have been shared.



Notes



Additional Funding Support

1) Disability Access Fund (DAF)

The [Disability Access Fund \(DAF\)](#) offers funding to early years providers to support children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) by removing barriers which prevent children from accessing their free early education entitlement. To claim this funding, a child must meet certain national criteria. Providers can claim the funding once the parent/carer has nominated them as the main provider of their child's early education entitlement, and demonstrated their child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) 3 and 4-year olds will be eligible for the Disability access fund if the child:

- is in receipt of child disability living allowance (DLA) and
- attends an Early Years provider for the funded entitlement

Note: Four-year olds in primary and infant school reception classes are NOT eligible for DAF funding. Children become eligible for free early education at different points in the year depending on when they turn 3.

2) Inclusion Grant

Additional funding for mainstream settings, schools and colleges for children/young people without an education, health and care plan (EHCP). Inclusion grant (formerly known as CBEP) funding is provided to settings for young people without an EHCP. Settings may request an inclusion grant for specific short term, targeted, interventions to support an individual's SEND need where support is required above the notional £6,000 delegated funding. The [inclusion grant](#) should not be viewed as a long-term solution, as if the SEND needs continue to require additional support, consideration should be made for an assessment for an EHCP.

See Local Offer for further information.

Early Years / Pupil Premium

This was introduced in 2011. The [Pupil Premium Grant](#) is a sum of money given to settings to improve the attainment of disadvantaged children.

Schools, Nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and other childcare providers can claim extra funding through the [Early Years Pupil Premium](#) (3 to 4 year olds) Pupil Premium 4 +.

This applies children whose:

- parents receive certain benefits
- or who have been adopted
- or are in care

See Local Offer for further information.

8. Local Offer

The [Local Offer](#) sets out in one what support and services are available for children and young People with Special Educational needs (SEND)

The information will include how to access services and organisations for children and young People with SEND from birth to 25 years

**Here are just some examples of the support available for Children with SEND in the Early Years.
(Please note this list is not exhaustive, refer to the local offer for further information)**

Support Service (Description)

[Early Help](#)

Central Bedfordshire's Early Help Offer identifies the need for help for children and families as soon as problems start to emerge, or when there is a strong likelihood that problems will emerge in the future.

The Early Help Offer is not just for very young children as problems may also emerge at any point throughout childhood and adolescence. The Early Help Offer includes universal and targeted services designed to reduce or prevent specific problems from escalating or becoming entrenched.

[Child Development Centre, Kempston](#)

The Edwin Lobo Child Development Center provides a consultant-led service for children and young people, living in North and Mid Bedfordshire. They bring together a team of professionals from health, education and children's social care who are based at, or visit the center. These include; Paediatrician, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Nurse led clinics, speech and language

[Edwin lobo Centre, Luton](#)

The Edwin Lobo Child Development Center provides a consultant-led service for children and young people, living in South Bedfordshire and Luton. They bring together a team of professionals from health, education and children's social care who are based at, or visit the center. These include; Paediatrician, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Nurse led clinics, speech and language

Speech and Language

Children's Speech and Language Therapy in Luton and Bedfordshire

www.childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk

The website includes details of how to refer, support and information.

[Health Visiting Service and School Nursing team 0-19](#)

Prior to a child starting school they have access to the health visiting team, who will be able to support with developmental checks, behavior and speech. When a child moves into school the school nursing team can then provide on-going support.

[SEND TEAM](#)

The SEND team works with parents, carers, children and young people aged from 0-25 who have an Educational Health Care Plan, to ensure that appropriate educational provision is provided.

The team works in partnership with parents/carers, children/young people, health and social care teams and the education setting to ensure that they have the most up-to-date advice on the child or young person.

See [local offer](#) for further information

[Early Years SEND Team](#)

The Special educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Early Years Team contains early years advisory teachers and specialist practitioners, and forms part of our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) service. The team provides support to children with additional needs or who are disabled, their parents/carers and the settings they attend.

The team will work with children, parents and settings offering advice and guidance on all aspects of child's development, progress and future planning. They will help settings to identify any additional support the child may need and support them to provide this. The team work closely with other professionals such as physiotherapists or speech and language therapists.

See [local offer](#) for further information, and referral processes / forms

[Educational Psychology Service](#)

An educational psychologist is someone trained to help children and young people (from 0 - 25) with their learning and development. All educational psychologists are registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

An educational psychologist is usually asked to provide support regarding a pupil at pre-school, school or college when they are believed to be struggling at school despite the support the school is providing.

See [local offer](#) for further information, and referral processes / forms

Visual impairment (VI Team)

Support children, families and settings throughout Bedfordshire with Visual impairment difficulties.

See local offer for further information, and referral processes / forms

Email: Visualteam@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Hearing Impairment (HI Team)

Support children, families and settings throughout Bedfordshire with Hearing impairment difficulties

See local offer for further information, and referral processes / forms

Email: Hearingteam@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Jigsaw

This is an Extended Education support service. The Jigsaw center work with schools to prevent exclusion and help pupils return to school following exclusion. They help vulnerable young people reconnect with their learning by helping them to feel safe enough to access education. Jigsaw support emotional development and achievement.

www.jigsawcentre.co.uk

Outreach

Ivel Valley

‘We have highly qualified staff, specialists and therapist – leaders in their respective fields who offer outreach. We visit mainstream schools to support the needs of select students, offering highly personalized advice’

Visit the website for more information and referral processes.

www.ivelvalley.beds.sch.uk

Chiltern

‘Outreach support is provided in schools and is aimed at children 4-16 with significant special educational needs. The support is tailored to each child and is intended to increase the skills and knowledge of the staff working with them. The aim of the outreach process is to empower professionals working with children who have significant needs, thus enabling them to be successfully included in a mainstream setting.

Visit the website for more information and referral processes.

www.chiltern.beds.sch.uk

9. Suggested Resources / Appendix

Please note this is not an exhaustive list of resources and sources of support but should provide some ideas and suggestions. These resources have not been endorsed by the Local Authority, but have been suggested experienced, Central Bedfordshire SENCOs following their own use and/or by other local professionals.

Resource	Area of Need	Description and Ink	Any other comments
Early Years Framework	All	Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.	National document
Guidance on SEND in the Early Years: A graduated Response 2018	All	Guidance material outlining SEND and characteristics within the Early Years	Central Bedfordshire document
Transition Document	All	Guidance to support children during transition from home to preschool, pre-school to school, and Reception to year 1. Smooth Transitions in the Early Years: A Good Practice Guide	Central Bedfordshire document
SEND Support Plan	All	Recommended SEND Support Plan to use developed in Central Bedfordshire using a plan, do, review approach. Central Bedfordshire SEND Support Plan	Central Bedfordshire document
Nasen Early years SEND Resources	All	Variety of supporting documents and mini-guides including Supporting SEND in the Reception Classroom. www.nasen.org.uk	Some free resources – also option to subscribe.
The Key	All	Ideas, support, templates for SENDCOs, staff and Governors https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/	Need to subscribe and there is a cost implication
Nurture groups / Boxhall	SEMH	Information on nurture groups and supporting children’s social, emotional and mental health development. Includes information and access to supportive tools such as the Boxall Profile, and Beyond the Boxall Profile, and free resources regarding Nurture groups and attachment. www.nurtureuk.org	Some free resources and information.

NHS Childs Speech Bedfordshire	C and I	Information and resources. Referral information https://childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk/	Downloadable resources
Socially speaking / time to talk	C and I SEMH	Provides teaching plans and materials to support small group work focusing on social communication and interaction skills. A Schroeder (Author) Available online, e.g. https://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=dp_byline_sr_book_1?ie=UTF8&text=Alison+Schroeder&search-alias=books-uk&field-author=Alison+Schroeder&sort=relevancerank	Cost implication to purchase
The Communication Trust	C and I	Speech and Language information, activities and ideas http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/early-years	Downloadable resources
Lift off to language	C and I	This promotes speech and language through small group activities, including introducing them to a wide range of vocabulary and promoting their self-confidence to interact with their peers. Includes resources, plans and video in order to use. Can be purchased via a variety of sources including Amazon.	Cost implication to purchase
OT Toolkit	PD	The Occupational Therapy Toolkit is a collection of 354 full-page illustrated patient handouts that you can print and use. The handouts are based on current research and best practice. https://www.ottoolkit.com/	Downloadable resources
Autism Education trust	C and I	Ideas and Resources https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk	Downloadable resources
IDPs	All	Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) A variety of programmes developed to support specialist advice, and guidance. Includes information on supporting children within the early Years with Speech and Language difficulties, Autism and SEMH difficulties. www.ideponline.org.uk	Downloadable resources
ERIC	PD	ERIC – Children’s bladder and bowel charity Resources on supporting toileting including downloadable guides for toileting, and toileting children with additional needs. www.eric.org.uk	Downloadable resources

Central
Bedfordshire

great
prospects

Central Bedfordshire in contact

Contact the Early Years SEND Team:

Call: 0300 300 5503

Email: Rebecca.Fossey@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Write to: Central Bedfordshire Council Watling House,
High Street North, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU6 1LF