



## Warwickshire Parent Carer Webinar (SEND) The Graduated Approach 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 Q&A's

- 1. Secondary school - when I ask about EHCP support progress and the graduated response they cannot give me information. They say there are no records made of tracking. What do you need to ask for to get the information?**

If your child is at SEND support level or above, you should have meetings (termly) with the school including a review of progress against targets. Please look at the Inclusion Guidance online for more information: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send-inclusion-guidance>

Record keeping and paperwork will vary across settings, although work is underway to improve this area. When a child is receiving support that is additional to and different from what is ordinarily available, records should be kept showing the starting point of the child so that progress can be monitored.

- 2. My son's funding goes into a big pot for staff training. At Annual Review there is only progress information on the academic side not the four SEN areas.**

Your child should have a document which records their targets across all areas of need and the support being put in for them. This should be reviewed, usually termly. This used to be called an Individual Education Plan, but other common names for this are Provision Plans and Pupil Profile.

- 3. Is it true that unless they have an EHCP schools cannot put anything in place to help a child?**

No, this is not true. The Graduated Approach is what should happen prior to any Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and all teachers are teachers of SEN, as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015. Schools should be able to make 'reasonable adjustments' that don't necessarily cost money. All maintained schools are allocated an amount of 'notional budget' which is an additional amount of money to help make special educational provision to meet the needs of children with SEND. Schools are expected to use the notional budget to meet the needs of learners with SEND before an EHC Needs Assessment is requested. This funding is not ring fenced.

- 4. How long does it take to issue an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?**

The whole process should take 20 weeks from request to the plan being issued. Warwickshire County Council is better than most other LAs at achieving this target. To follow up on progress, please contact your allocated Plan Coordinator, email [sen@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:sen@warwickshire.gov.uk) or phone 01926 742160 for more information.

- 5. Is it best practice to reach out to the SENCo and have a dialogue?**

Yes, reaching out to the class teacher and SENCO is a good approach to start a conversation. Parents know their children best, so highlighting your observations to a teacher and/or SENCO and sharing ideas about things that could be done as part of the Graduated Approach are helpful.



**6. Is there something parents can proactively do to maximise the effect of the support? How do the assessments look at home? How do we take away learnings that are perhaps root-caused at home?**

We'd recommend you work with the teachers who know your child best. If you wish to do extra with your child meet with the class teacher to plan what would be helpful. Bear in mind that young people often need downtime when they get home and, if they are struggling at school, it may be better for their self-esteem to spend time doing an activity they are good at rather than struggling more at home.

Children learn best when they feel safe, secure and connected. Positive time with their family, e.g., playing games or going for walks, can be more valuable than the battle which can occur if your child is reluctant to engage in learning at home. Short bursts of learning activities at home can be rewarded with access to more fun activities.

**7. How do we engage at secondary school when there are multiple teachers?**

It is the role of the school SENCO to gather and share information with subject teachers regarding the support and progress of the young person. There is likely to be a SEN team to support the SENCO. Information on SENCOs should be on the school website. If your child is at secondary school, you could contact the pastoral lead e.g., head of year.

The SEND Inclusion Guidance also covers aspects like Pupil Passports to support schools (here is the link: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send-inclusion-guidance>).

**8. How does a parent find out that the school are complying as the teacher does not relay the information to the parent?**

If you have an EHCP then it will set out what the school needs to put in place. If you have concerns it can be useful to arrange a time with the SENCO to sit down with the plan and go through each aspect of it so they can explain how it is being implemented. A record should be made of where the child is at prior to intervention.

**9. Should the SENCO be involved in every review meeting (usually termly) or just the teacher?**

For SEN support, the teacher may be best placed to meet as they know the child best, but if progress is not being made or there are any issues then the SENCO should be the next port of call. If the child has an EHCP the SENCO will be involved in review meetings.

**10. Is there set paperwork that we should be expecting this all to be recorded on? School notes are often lacking in structure and clarity leaving parent to struggle to hold them to account for action.**

Targets should be set and progress recorded clearly and shared with the child/young person and their family – we would suggest you speak to the school about this. At present there is no set paperwork, but there is a project beginning to develop paperwork for schools to use (however this will not be mandatory).



**11. Is there a way of finding out which schools do not subscribe to traded services? Also how is it legally allowed that schools don't subscribe?**

You should ask your school; it should be on the school's SEN report on the school's website. It is not a legal requirement that they subscribe to this support and other support may be bought in.

**12. Should 'assess, plan, do, review' be used for social, emotional, mental health and sensory concerns if the child is meeting academic targets for their age?**

Yes, absolutely, it is recognised that a child's needs are not just academic. It is still important to assess needs, plan targets and support and evaluate this support.

**13. School don't have an Educational Psychologist assigned to them following maternity leaves/absences which is stalling next steps. Is that to be addressed?**

All schools have a named Educational Psychologist regardless of whether or not they subscribe. Cover is generally arranged for maternity leave or extended absence. Schools choose the size of their subscription, and it is used throughout the year. Due to EPS capacity issues schools are unable to buy more time at present from the Local Authority. The new financial year begins on 1st April which is where schools buying into the service are allocated the selected resource.

**14. My two children are not diagnosed ASD, but I have contacted the SENCO (secondary) for early discussion about assistance for them. With lots of masking they are not really seeing it at school. Any suggestions for how to take it forward? Do they need to be formally diagnosed first? I am at early stages, and I must admit I am confused about the difference between the diagnosis process and the educational support process. Any basic information on this would be welcome!**

They don't need to be formally diagnosed first. In the SEND Inclusion Guidance parents' concerns should be respected. Mutual respect with the setting and feeling heard are so important; there are reasonable adjustments which can be put in place.

The diagnosis process is separate to education support. A referral can be made, if appropriate, to the diagnostic service and there is currently a waiting list for that.

In the meantime, the school can begin a graduated response via the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process and has avenues for support including looking at the SEND Inclusion Guidance or discussion with Educational Psychologists or the Specialist Teaching Service. These cases can be tricky, and you and the school will need to work closely together to problem solve what aspects of the school day may be challenging for your children if they are masking this at the time and expressing it later.

**15. Is the SEND Inclusion guidance compulsory?**

No, however it is built on the Code of Practice, and it is good practice for schools to follow. We are awaiting the outcomes of the National SEND Review to assess the impact on schools in the future.



**16. Why are schools able to repeatedly get away with discrimination against children with SEN (such as not differentiating and punishing autistic behaviour) and no one will take responsibility or be held accountable? Even when it is clear that the child will not reintegrate back in to mainstream why do we have to constantly fight to get a basic legal right for our children and their needs met?**

We are not able to comment on individual cases here, however if parents are concerned please contact your school, or Warwickshire County Council via [sendchange@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendchange@warwickshire.gov.uk)

As part of our Written Statement of Action following the Ofsted/CQC local area SEND inspection, Warwickshire County Council and partners are committed to promoting inclusion in schools and strengthening workforce development for staff to help support children and young people with SEND. We will provide further updates on this work over the next few months. Please look at our [Warwickshire SEND newsletter](#) and sign up via this link for regular updates on SEND: [Sign up here.](#)