

October 2023



# **SEN Support Planning**

## **Guidance and case studies for senior leaders and Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENDCos)**



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# 1. Introduction

We want all our children and young people in Norfolk to Flourish, preparing the way for successful adult lives.

This guidance aims to provide clarity of expectations around best practice for mainstream Norfolk education settings in creating robust, effective SEN Support Plans (SSPs) for children and young people (CYP) with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

This guidance document and associated resources have been developed through engagement and collaborative work with mainstream Norfolk primary and secondary settings, including the development of case study examples to share current practice. This work will continue in collaboration with settings, families and children and young people, to develop a shared understanding of what works and a bank of guidance and resources that Norfolk settings can draw upon to develop their practice.

SEN Support Plans (SSPs) are one aspect of the wider picture of support and services available to all families to support their CYP to flourish. [Signs of Safety](#) has been adopted as the core philosophy for working with CYP and families in Norfolk. The Family Network Approach is an integral component to Signs of Safety Practice. We know that CYP are more resilient and likely to achieve better outcomes when they have the support of a naturally connected network and that plans are likely to be more successful when they are led and owned by the family and their wider network. These approaches support family networks and professionals to work together in partnership to address concerns and find solutions to meet the needs of children and young people. Further information about [Family Networking](#) and [other services to support families](#) is available on the [Just One Norfolk](#) and [NSCP websites](#).

SSPs are referred to using different names across Norfolk settings. They may be known as Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individual Learning Plans (ILPs), Learning Support Plans (LSPs), Personalised Support Plans (PSPs), Learning or Communication passports, or by another term. In this guidance we refer to all these kinds of plans using the generic term 'SEN Support Plan' (SSP). An SSP provides a coordinated and personalised planning approach to meeting a child or young person's SEN, supporting them to make progress.

Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should also have a support plan which breaks down the longer-term outcomes in their EHCP and shows the small 'steps towards' achieving the outcomes. In this document we refer to both using the 'umbrella term' SSP.

## 2. Why have a written SEN Support plan (SSP)?

CYP with special educational needs or disabilities may need extra help to enable them to learn and make progress in their learning alongside other children of the same age.

The SEN Code of Practice (6.44) states that:

*'Where a pupil is identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN), schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes.'*

This is the [Assess, Plan, Do, Review](#) cycle, also known as the graduated approach to [SEN Support](#).

### **The Code of Practice (6.72) also states that:**

'It is for schools to determine their own approach to record keeping in line with the Data Protection Act 1988. The provision made for pupils with SEN should be recorded accurately and kept up to date. As part of any inspection, Ofsted will expect to see evidence of pupil progress, a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEN support provided.'

### **The Code of Practice (6.73) states that schools should:**

- Record details of additional or different provision made under SEN support. This should form part of regular discussions with parents about the child's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps
- Ensure that they have accurate information to evidence the SEN support that has been provided over the pupil's time in the school, as well as its impact

SSPs are not a statutory requirement, but they are good practice. A robust plan will ensure that families, CYP and staff are working together towards personalised outcomes. They support a culture where everyone involved in supporting the CYP has a shared understanding and responsibility to support them towards meeting their outcomes.

### **A robust support plan:**

- Enables everyone involved in supporting the CYP to have a shared understanding of the support that will be put in place and why, and by whom
- Helps families to understand how their child will be supported at school and what they can do to help at home
- Supports the CYP to become more involved in their own learning, take ownership of their targets/goals and move towards independence
- Defines the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle - the identification of need, what has been tried so far, the impact of additional support and what needs to happen next
- Allows settings and staff to plan for progression, monitor the effectiveness of teaching, and the provision for additional support needs within the school
- Supports effective information sharing (across the setting and at key points of transition)
- Provides information for support requests, referrals to external support services, or for statutory assessment requests where appropriate

### 3. What to include in a robust SEN Support Plan (SSP)

The diagram below summarises the key elements that should be included in a robust support plan.



Each aspect of the diagram is explained in more detail on the next page.

### 3.1 CYP and parent/carer participation in decision making

The importance of CYP and their parent/carers participating as fully as possible in decisions and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions, is a 'golden thread' throughout the SEN Code of Practice. Settings should support CYP and parent/carers to be actively involved in decision making at all stages.

The [Participation and co-production best practice guidance](#) on the Norfolk SEND Local Offer web pages contains further information, including top tips and resources to support participation.

The starting point is to think broadly and holistically about the CYP and their family's wishes and aspirations. Discussing this with the CYP and family puts them at the centre. The responsibility for finding solutions is shared. Shared ownership leads to increased motivation to make changes. The Signs of Safety approach includes tools to support practitioners to elicit [the voice of the child](#) such as 'The Three Houses'. Many different [person-centred thinking tools](#) are available to structure conversations and capture information that feeds into support planning.

**When CYP are invited to attend meetings (eg SEN support or annual review) it is important that everyone understands:**

- What the meeting will be about
- Where and when the meeting will take place
- What will happen at the meeting
- Who will be involved
- How they want to participate/give their views

The Council for Disabled Children has a short, helpful guide for CYP written by a member of their CYP advisory group: [How to share your views for your annual review](#).

When eliciting the views of CYP we need to consider how they communicate best (eg verbally, in writing or drawing, using visuals, using technology) and to choose appropriate methods and tools to gather their views and encourage participation. Tools to support this include the use of visuals or pictures as prompts, choice boards, Talking Mats, other scaffolds such as picture or sentence completion, or scaling questions (used to support solution-focused discussions, capture how people feel at any one time and create further conversations about what they can do to move up the scale).

### Plans should reflect:

- Their aspirations and hopes for the future (medium and long term)
- What or who is important to them
- What they like or are good at
- What they find difficult or need support with
- Things that they want to achieve or be able to do more independently
- How they want to be supported
- Progress they have made towards their targets

In order to make informed decisions, CYP and families need to be supported to understand the range of additional help that is available in order for them to decide what would be most helpful for them. The [Provision Expected at SEN Support \(PEaSS\)](#) guidance and resources can be used to support these conversations and identify appropriate provision to meet need.

We need to use simple, clear jargon-free language wherever possible to ensure that everyone fully understands what is happening. Any acronyms used in discussion or in the plan (eg ELSA, THRIVE, WellComm) should be explained.

Families may also need additional support to enable them to participate in decision making, for example, those with English as an additional language, SEN, mental health needs or a disability.

## 3.2 Any 'must know' information, including links to other types of plans

### Key information about the CYP should be shown in the plan. This may include:

- Setting name
- CYP full name
- Photo
- Date of birth
- Year group (and if taught in chronological year group)
- Class
- Teacher name
- SEN Stage (SEN Support/EHCP)
- Start and review date
- Plan number in the APDR cycle
- CYP or family who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Pupil premium
- Child in care
- Young carer
- Medical need
- Other

It is helpful to include links to other support plans that may be in place for the CYP or family, such as Individual Health Care Plans, Intimate Care Plans, Positive Behaviour Support Plans, Risk Assessments, Personal Education Plans, Family Networking, Early Help or other plans. This helps to provide a holistic picture of needs and the support that is in place.

### **3.3 A holistic description of SEN**

Plans should reflect strengths/likes as well as identified needs/barriers to learning to provide a holistic picture of the CYP. It is essential to build on strengths and likes when planning appropriate support.

Plans should reflect all identified needs (not just the primary need), from internal assessments or observations, INDES completion, professional reports or from the EHCP. The [Identification of Needs Descriptors in Educational Settings](#) (INDES) provide a framework of standardised terms and support a common language to identify and describe need.

Plans should also reflect advice and recommendations from any specialist reports. Some settings also include key assessment or progress information in their plans.

### **3.4 Details of in-class reasonable adjustments and/or access arrangements led by the teacher**

Teachers take responsibility for meeting the needs of all CYP, including those with SEND. Support and training should be provided so that teachers have the skills to tailor and adapt their teaching to meet a range of needs, eg identifying barriers to learning, matching needs to appropriate support and effectively monitoring and reviewing progress.

SSPs should reflect the high quality, adaptive teaching strategies that are in place for the CYP and any reasonable adjustments that are part of the setting's core offer (ordinarily available provision).

The [Provision Expected at SEN Support \(PEaSS\)](#) guidance and resources should be used to identify appropriate provision to meet need, alongside any specific recommendations from specialist advice/reports.

Access arrangements are the reasonable adjustments that can be made for exams. They may include things like extra time, use of a reader or scribe, use of assistive technology or rest breaks. Where these are required, they should be part of the 'normal way of working' for a CYP in the classroom and be reflected in their support plan.



### 3.5 Quantifiable provisions 'additional to and different from' responsive high quality/adaptive teaching

A CYP has SEN where they require special educational provision that is 'additional to or different from' that normally available to other children of the same age.

Plans should include quantifiable provisions, with start and end dates and how this supports the CYP towards their outcome, linked to the APDR cycle.

Provision maps are an efficient way of showing all the provision in the school which is 'additional to and different from' that which is offered to all CYP through the school's curriculum (core offer).

Provisions should be time bound and linked to the CYPs specific small-step SMART targets to support a move towards longer-term outcomes.

Targets should be SMART because this is a valuable framework to provide clear focus and direction with success criteria to the support being implemented for a CYP. A SMART target should be realistically achievable and take into account any longer-term outcomes, for example those from EHCPs.

- **Specific** - clearly state what the goal is
  - What do you want to achieve?
  - Why is it important?
  - How does it link to longer-term outcomes?
  - Does it build on previous targets?
- **Measurable** - clearly identify how progress towards the target will be measured
  - Quantitatively, for example
    - Standardised score
    - Reading age
    - Attendance
    - Behaviour points
    - Number of high-frequency words learned
  - Qualitatively, for example
    - Observations
    - CYP class work feedback
    - Feedback from the CYP, teachers or family

- **Achievable** - make sure that you set goals that can realistically be achieved and that build on previous successes or longer-term outcomes
  - Who needs to support the CYP with the target?
  - What is the CYPs responsibility in the success of the target?
  - How can parents/carers support with success?
  - Are there any material constraints that need to be considered/accounted for?
- **Relevant** - set goals that matter to the CYP and their longer-term aspirations
  - Is this something the CYP recognises the importance of?
  - Is this a worthwhile target?
  - Is now the right time for focus on this target?
  - Are there other factors that should or could be addressed first?
- **Time-bound** - set start and end dates to retain focus and build in a review. Any target can be continued or adapted based on the review
  - When will the target be reviewed?
  - How often will the associated provision/support be delivered?

**The plan should specify:**

- What support will be in place?
- Who will support?
- When?
- How?
- How often?
- How long for?

Where adult support is specified, it should be clear what adults are doing and how they are supporting the CYP to learn and become more independent.

### **3.6 Details of external support or advice being provided for the CYP**

The plan should note any prior/current involvement from external agencies and/or reports that have informed the support plan.

As noted above, any needs identified or recommendations and support strategies from external reports should be reflected in the SSP. When new advice is received, the SSP should be reviewed and updated to reflect the new information and to incorporate any new needs, strategies or recommendations identified.

### **3.7 Review of impact of additional support towards specific outcomes**

**Everyone involved in the process should reflect and discuss**

- What has worked well? Not worked so well?
- What progress has been made towards outcomes/targets? Have they been achieved?
- Do new outcomes need to be identified?
- Does the support need to continue or does something different need to be tried?

The APDR cycle starts again. It may take several cycles of intervention and different strategies before support needs are understood and met.

The APDR process needs to link in with key milestones/timescales in the assessment cycle of the setting eg key assessment points, pupil progress meetings.

## 4. Process and implementation

### 4.1 The process

Implementation of the APDR process varies from setting to setting. Practice, approaches, interventions and programmes of support for learners with SEN will vary according to:

- The size and context of the setting
- The specific needs of cohorts and individual learners
- The knowledge, skills and experience of staff in the setting

There is no 'one size fits all' approach.

A number of case studies (three primary and two secondary) were completed in collaboration with SENDCos (see [supporting resources](#)).

#### **Key elements of effective practice drawn from the case studies and other engagement with settings is summarised below:**

- There is a culture of collective responsibility for SEN in the setting. It is seen as everyone's responsibility and developments are driven by the school leadership team
- Robust plans result from effective APDR processes in the setting, embedded in policy and practice
- The development of effective processes is an ongoing 'journey' over time, with review and improvements based on a continuous cycle of feedback from stakeholders
- Plans are coproduced with families, CYP and staff to ensure an accurate and shared understanding of needs and appropriate support, and to promote engagement and motivation to achieve the agreed outcomes ('done with' rather than 'done to')
- Plans are dynamic working documents that are accessible to and used by all those involved in supporting the CYP
- They are reviewed and updated regularly, including when any new needs or support strategies are identified (eg when needs change significantly or to reflect new specialist reports or advice)
- Teachers are responsible for implementing the plans and monitoring the impact of support in their classrooms, guided by the SENDCo
- Teachers and support staff access ongoing support and training, eg to understand SEN processes, accurately identify need, and plan and deliver appropriate support strategies for cohorts or individuals
- The SENDCo and other senior leaders monitor the quality of plans and the implementation of agreed support in the classroom
- Monitoring and review of the impact of additional support feeds back into strategic provision planning
- Interventions are evidence-based. 'What works well' is identified and best practice shared across the setting
- Robust SSPs are used to support effective information sharing (across the setting and at key points of transition) and for referrals to external agencies

## 4.2 The format and content of plans

The appropriate format and content of the plans will vary depending on the setting context and the needs, age and/or stage of the CYP in education.

The supporting [resources](#) provide a range of optional examples and templates for Norfolk settings to use and adapt to suit their needs.

## 4.3 Additional considerations for secondary settings

Within a secondary setting the number of CYP for whom an SSP is required can present a barrier to effective creation, delivery and review of the plans. As such, the SENDCo alone is unlikely to be able to write all the plans and it is necessary to consider how other members of the school community can work together in the development and review of SSPs in an approach coordinated by the SENDCo.

There are a number of considerations when developing or enhancing systems in a secondary setting:

### Identify an SSP Team

- The SENDCo works with others, including the leadership team in the setting to develop a designated team with responsibility for drawing up, and reviewing the SSP with CYP and their families

### Identification of CYP in need of SSPs

- The SENDCo identifies CYP who need to have an SSP
- In collaboration with the leadership team, pastoral team and other key staff, generate a priority list of CYP for whom a plan is necessary

### Delegation of responsibility

- Decisions are made as to which staff member should be the 'case holder' for a particular CYP
- Case holders could be allocated based on primary area of need, year group/house, or links to a key adult, as appropriate to the setting

### Team training

- To ensure consistency, the team needs to be trained on the settings' expectations
- Training could include understanding professional reports (eg Educational Psychology), identification of need (using INDES), format of planning and review meetings, target setting etc

### Quality assurance

- The SENDCo should quality assure the SSPs drawn up by members of the team to ensure consistency, quality, and appropriateness of the plan related to the CYP's needs
- The SENDCo and leadership team should monitor the implementation of the plans in the classroom

## 5. Reflection and action planning

Below are some questions for settings to use as prompts to support reflection on their current approaches, to identify areas of strength and further development.

The questions are also available in a separate document as an [editable 'tickable' checklist](#) that settings can use to support reflection and action planning.

The Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) Process	Tick box
Are support plans in place for all CYP with SEND? Settings may have a 'monitoring' or 'awareness' list	
Are short-to-medium-term implementation/support plans in place for CYP with EHCPs (identifying the small steps needed to meet longer-term outcomes identified in the EHC plan)?	
Does the APDR cycle fit in with the assessment cycle (eg pupil progress reviews, assessment points)?	
Does the APDR cycle feed into planning for the cohort within the setting (getting the teaching right for those children)?	
Do the identified needs of the CYP (using INDES) align with needs and provision identified in the support plans? (eg through internal moderation with staff)	
Do you collate and disseminate the information so that is easy to understand and accessible?	
Do you internally moderate SEN Support Plans alongside INDES?	
Is this reflected in your SEND policy/SIR <check acronym> and identification of need processes?	

Supporting coproduction	Tick box
Do you support coproduction with children and young people? If so, how?	
Do you support coproduction with families? If so, how?	
Are CYP and families involved in the review and development of SEND processes?	
Do we use simple, clear, jargon-free language wherever possible to ensure that everyone fully understands what is happening?	
Are any acronyms used in the plan (eg ELSA, THRIVE, WellComm) explained?	

Implementation and monitoring	Tick box
Do teachers/support staff have 'ownership' of the plan/APDR cycle?	
Do you ensure that the plan is a 'dynamic' live document that is actively used, not just a 'piece of paper'?	
Are plans shared with all staff? If so, how?	
Does the SEN Support Plan reflect classroom practice?	
Do teachers and support staff monitor implementation and the impact of additional support? How?	
Do senior leaders monitor the quality of support plans? How?	
Do senior leaders monitor how effectively support plans are implemented? How?	

Support and training	Tick box
Are teachers supported to identify precisely how they will support pupils who need help with their learning? How?	
Is training provided for staff in supporting the learning of pupils with SEND?	
Are training needs identified? (eg audit of staff skills, needs of cohort, provision mapping to identify gaps in current provision)	
Is good practice shared to develop consistency across the setting? How?	

Content of the plan	Tick box
Does the plan provide a holistic picture of the CYP's strengths and needs (not just the barriers to learning/primary need)?	
Is the provision appropriate and it is clear to see the additional provision and support in place?	
What does the target progression look like? (smaller 'steps to success')	
Are targets identified 'SMART'?	
Is the plan clear and easy for families to read and understand? (eg jargon or acronyms used are explained?)	
Does the plan identify appropriate strategies and provision to meet the needs? (Provision Expected at SEN Support/PEaSS)	
Do the targets relate back to curriculum planning?	



## 6. Supporting Resources

A range of supporting resources have been collated to supplement this guidance:

### 6.1 Case studies

These case studies have been developed by settings who are on a journey towards best practice, and have shared their processes, thinking and development of SSPs. They are all at different stages in the development or review of their SSPs and this is reflected in their case studies.

#### Primary case studies and supporting SSP examples:

- [Case Study 1 Hingham Primary](#)
- [Case Study 2 Colby Primary](#)
- [Case Study 3 Woodlands Primary](#)

#### Secondary case studies and supporting SSP examples:

- [Case Study 1 Framingham Earl High School](#)
- [Case Study 2 Taverham High School](#)

### 6.2 Editable blank (optional) templates for primary and secondary

There are three primary [templates](#) and two secondary [templates](#). These are optional and in an editable format for settings to use and/or adapt.

### 6.3 Exemplar SEN support plans (which align with INDES)

There are two primary [exemplars](#) and four secondary exemplars. These show the support plans for a CYP alongside the INDES submission (tabular format) for that CYP. There is an example for a CYP with an EHCP and SEN Support.

Secondary [exemplars](#) cover both CYP with EHCPs and at SEN Support to demonstrate how different formats can be used to capture increasing levels of SEN.

### 6.4 SSP checklist to support reflection and action planning

Settings can use this [optional checklist](#) to support reflection on their current processes and plans and to identify what is working well and any areas for development.

## 7. Next steps in the development of this work

We will continue to work with settings to develop a broader range of case studies and exemplars which reflect the diversity of approaches across Norfolk settings. These [resources](#) will continue to be found on the Norfolk Schools website.

**Further collaborative work is also planned to develop a shared understanding of:**

- Participation of CYP with SEN in decision making
- Supporting families to participate in decision making
- SMART outcomes/targets

## 8. If further support is needed

- You can discuss at core consultations
- Book a 'SEND Surgery' session with a Learning and SEND adviser. These are offered termly and are advertised on [Norfolk Services for Schools](#)
- Contact the Inclusion and SEND team for Learning and SEND adviser support: [inclusionandsend@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:inclusionandsend@norfolk.gov.uk)
- Attend an INDES Moderation Panel (IMP). SENDCos who have participated in this process have found it a valuable experience and said it supported them to reflect on their own APDR approaches. Contact the INDES IPSEF support mailbox to register your interest: [indesipsefsupport@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:indesipsefsupport@norfolk.gov.uk)

## 9. Contact us

**General enquiries** – [inclusionandsend@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:inclusionandsend@norfolk.gov.uk)

**INDES and IPSEF enquiries** – [indesipsefsupport@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:indesipsefsupport@norfolk.gov.uk)

**SEND funding enquiries** – [element3funding@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:element3funding@norfolk.gov.uk)

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