



The Role of the Early Years Setting SENCO



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The role of Early Years SENCO

All early year settings are required to appoint a SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator). The SENCO's fundamental role is to oversee the day to day running of the early years setting's special educational needs/inclusion policy. More specifically, the early years setting SENCO has responsibility for:

- Supporting colleagues in identifying and meeting the special educational needs/disabilities of children within the setting.
- Ensuring relevant background information about individual children with special educational needs/disabilities is collected, recorded and updated.
- Overseeing those records are kept and assess, plan do review process is carried out for children with special educational needs in the setting (ensuring support plans are in place.)
- Acting at the first point of contact for outside professionals regarding children with special educational needs/disabilities within the setting.
- Seeking outside advice and support when appropriate for individual children with special educational needs/disabilities.
- Ensuring that liaison and consultation with parents of children with special educational needs/disabilities takes place.

Being a SENCO in an early year's setting can be demanding and both rewarding and fulfilling

Early years setting SENCO Job Description

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- Should provide an environment in which all children with special educational needs and Disabilities (SEND) are supported to reach their full potential.
- Must have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 (2015).
- Ensure our provision is inclusive to all children with special educational needs.
- Support parents and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs at the earliest opportunity and meet those needs through a range of SEN strategies starting with an IRC, then creating Support and or Health Care Plans and moving on to raising EHCP as appropriate, with risk assessments if necessary.
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- Monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.
- Work closely with the manager and other colleagues and has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy and for co-ordinating provision for children with SEND.
- Ensure that the provision for children with SEND is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- Ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- Use the graduated approach system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs.
- Work closely with the parents of children with special educational needs to create and maintain a positive partnership.

- Work in partnership with Health to complete the Shared Review 2 year Progress Checks.
- Ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- Provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and their families, including in connection with transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- Provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children with special educational needs.
- Use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing action plans for children with special educational needs, ensuring they are specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and timebound.
- Ensure that children with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the graduated approach, taking into account their levels of ability.
- Have systems in place for supporting children based on a continuous cycle of 'assess, plan, do and review', which is applied in increasing detail and frequency to ensure that children progress.
- Have systems in place for working with other agencies through each stage of the Family Support Process (FSP) or local alternatives.
- Use a system for keeping records of the 'assess, plan, do and review' for children with special educational needs.

The special Educational Needs and Disabilities

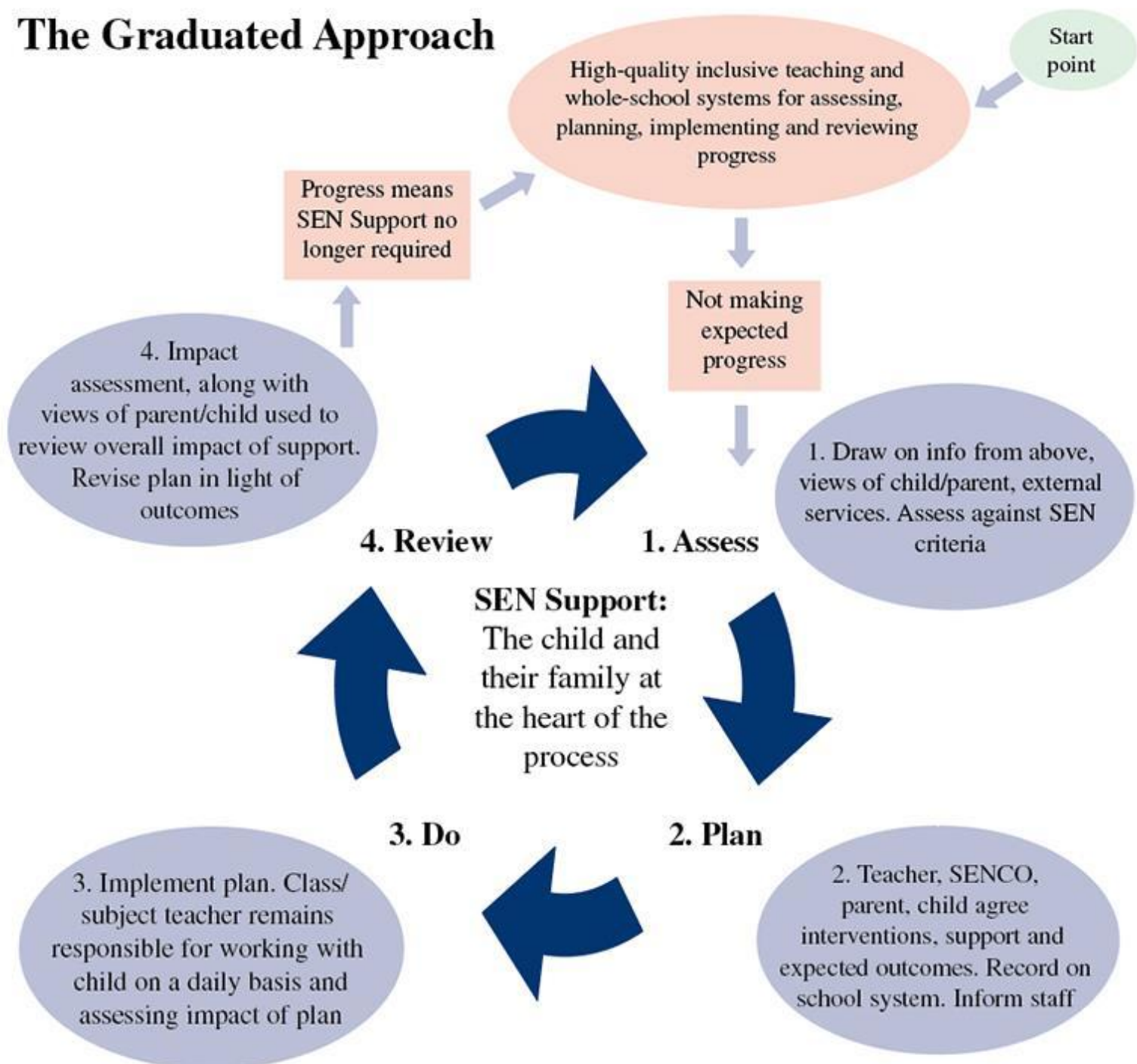
Code of practice 2015

Most children in the early years setting will be able to access all areas of the curriculum and the activities that are on offer in your preschool.

However, there are a few children who may find this more difficult. If you feel that, despite putting in place your usual differentiated curriculum, a child is not making progress, you might consider making plans and provision which are different or additional for most other children.



The Graduated Approach



Further information to support the graduated approach

Checklist of action

Try to do the following

- Find out if other members of staff share your concerns with the SENCO
- Observe the child indoors and outside
- Record your observation.

Ensuring that appropriate differentiation is in place:

Strategies used to enable the child to progress should be recorded with in the setting planning.

- Speak with the child's parents/ carers about your concerns. It is important to remain positive relationship with parents to form alliances based on trust. This will go some way of aid the discussion of difficult topics such as your concerns about their child.
- Find out from parents/carers if any other professionals involved e.g health visitors, speech, and language. With parental responsibilities contact other professionals and see if they share your concerns and if the child has received a 2 year old check, medical or hearing test, if appropriate.

Talking to the SENCO is the first port of call for “outside” help. s/he will then liaise with, with, or help you to liaise with other professionals to ensure that the children are fully identified and met. Your area SENCO can help you to make a referral to other services

What's next?

Liaise with parents

Parents must be kept fully informed about their child's needs, and are the prime sources of information. It is important to involve parents in:

- Gathering information
- Planning interventions and devising SEN support plans.
- Reviewing progress

Liaise with other professionals

Multi Agency input is often very significant for young children. Outside professionals such as health or social services may already be involved and it is important that the SENCO- With parental permission- liaise with all those professionals already involved with the child.

Advise and support other practitioners

The SENCO may not be the person who has most contact with the child whoever takes the role of SENCO will need to work closely with the key workers.

Ensuring that relevant background information is collected

From parents and all professionals involved.

Recorded

In addition to the information that all settings will record for all children with SEN should include:

- Information about the child progress
- Information from parents
- Information from any other involved professional

Referral for education, health and care plan needs assessment

For every few children the help given by the early education provider through the SEN support plan will not be sufficiently effective to enable the children's progress satisfactorily. It will then be necessary for the provider, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, to consider whether a request for an Education, Health Care plan needs assessment be made.

Parents and early years setting can make a request to the local Authority for such as an assessment. The LA will make a decision whether a Assessment will need to be required.

When a request for an assessment is made, the LA will require:

- Evidence that any strategies or programme implemented for the child has been continued for a reasonable period with only limited success.
- Clear documentation in relation to the child's special educational needs and any action taken to deal with those needs.

In considering EHCP needs assessment, where the child is attending an early year setting, the LA will look for the following information to decide:

1. What difficulties has been identified by the setting? Has the staff provided individualised strategies through an SEN plan?
2. Has outside advice been sought, regarding the child's development?
3. Has parents' views been considered.

Early Indications of Possible Special Educational Needs

Depending on the age of the child, s/he may have special educational needs/disabilities if s/he regularly displays one or more of the behaviours below, after having had a reasonable period to settle-in to the group:

The child:

- has no desire to join in with social play
- has limited or no imaginative play (home corner etc.)
- has no or limited verbal communication
- uses jargon (made up words)
- does not follow and/or does not seem to understand basic instructions given
- directly to her/him or the group
- does not communicate basic needs (e.g. need to go to the toilet, have a drink etc.)
- takes part in prolonged repetitive actions, and disruption of this leads to the child becoming very distressed (e.g. rocking or spinning an object
- still does not understand how to play on large equipment despite having been shown a number of times
finds it difficult to climb or descend stairs without unusual amounts of adult help often falls over or bumps into things
- finds it difficult to sit down in a space without sitting on something or someone > has an unusual fear of open/closed spaces
- has a very limited attention span becomes distressed easily or for no apparent reason
has a lot of difficulties separating from a parent/carer
- refuses to move from one activity to another
- moves between activities very rapidly without settling
- displays excessive attention-seeking or socially inappropriate behaviour
- displays an unusual reaction to sounds e.g. no reaction, over reaction displays a resistance to change in routine
- finds a difficulty with, or a resistance to, following adult-led activities
shows a dislike of tactile and/or messy play activities e.g. sand, play dough,