

☺ Where can I find out more?

- You can ask any of the following people for more information about special educational needs:
The Special Needs Educational Co-ordinator (SENCO) for your child's early years setting
The Headteacher or SENCO at your child's school
The Plymouth Parent Partnership Service
Martins Gate, Bretonside PL4 0AT Telephone: 01752 258933
- You can order copies of the SEN Code of Practice (DfES 581/2001) and the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Guide for Parents and Carers (DfES 0800/2001) – or view them on line – from the DfES website www.dfes.gov.uk/sen or from the DfES Publications Centre (0845 602 2260)
- You can ask one of the many voluntary organisations. You can find a list of the main national voluntary agencies in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Guide for Parents and Carers. Links to many of these organisations can be found on the SEN Regional Partnership's website at www.sw-special.co.uk. Your Parent Partnership Service will also be able to tell you about more local groups.

The Parent Partnership Service has a Directory of Services for Parenting in Plymouth with an extensive range of information on local and national services and support around parenting.

If you would like more information on any of these materials, or support from a Parent Partner (Independent Parental Supporter), please contact:

Plymouth Parent Partnership Service

Martins Gate, Bretonside, Plymouth PL4 0AT

Telephone: 01752 258933 Email: parent.partnership@plymouth.gov.uk

www.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk



Special Educational Needs

– what does it mean?



Special Educational Needs – what does it mean?

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

This short definition emphasises the two key phrases that are part of the full legal description of special educational needs. This comes from the 1996 Education Act. You can find a copy of the legal definition in Paragraph 1:3 of the SEN Code of Practice.

😊 What is a learning difficulty?

Children who have a learning difficulty find it harder to learn than the majority of children of the same age, or they may have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the education provided for other children.

A learning difficulty may lead to problems with:

- some or all of your child's work
- reading, writing or number work
- your child's ability to express themselves or understand information
- making friends or relating to adults
- behaviour in school
- personal organisation
- tasks or activities which depend on sensory or physical skills

Children do not have learning difficulties simply because their first language is not English. However some of these children may also have learning difficulties.



😊 What is the SEN Code of Practice?

The SEN Code of Practice is the guidance that early years settings, state schools, LEAs and others must follow to identify, assess and make provision for children who have special educational needs. The Code (paragraphs 7:52 to 7:63) suggests that there are 4 main areas of special need. These are:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- behaviour, emotional and social development
- sensory and/or physical needs

Some children have needs in more than one of these areas.



😊 What is special educational provision?

Special educational provision is the extra or different help given to children with special educational needs.

For children under two years old any educational provision is special educational provision.

Special educational provision takes many different forms. Most children with special educational needs have extra support in their class. It might be additional or different help provided in a mainstream class for a small group or an individual child. It can include group work or individual support that takes place outside the classroom. It could also be attendance in a specialist class or in a special school.

😊 How many children have special educational needs?

About 1 in 5 children may have special educational needs of some kind, at some time. Some children may have special educational needs for a relatively short time, others will have special needs right through their schooling. Some will have special needs in particular curriculum areas, but others may need help with all or most aspects of their education.