

# Support at School Action, School Action Plus, Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus

The Code of Practice on Special Educational Needs defines quite clearly how support at Early Years Action, Early Years Action Plus, School Action and School Action Plus should be put in place. Schools should follow this model within the classroom to ensure that children at this level of need receive appropriate interventions. The majority of information is taken directly from the Code of Practice as this should be followed by all schools and Early Years settings and the recommendations made in the Code should form the basis for SEN practice in schools. In addition to this the SEN Tool Kit provides a reliable practical guide and as such should be used.

Following the identification of learning difficulty early responses to School Action should include the gathering of information. The recording of the child's special needs should include the planning and teacher response as well as any consultations with parents. The trigger is when a teacher, parent or other professional gives evidence of concern and support is provided. Further action is required if, after some additional input, reviews show that special help has not resulted in some progress being made. If as in the majority of cases the child does make satisfactory progress, evidence of this can serve as confirmation that intervention at this level in school has met the child's needs.

Responsibility for assessing children's needs, differentiating teaching and appropriate planning for learning remains the responsibility of the class or subject teacher. Information should be shared with the Head teacher and parents and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator whose role is to coordinate special needs activities. If necessary, Medical Personnel, the Educational Psychology Service, the Special Educational Needs Support Service and other specialist services should be consulted. If progress is not made then a move from School Action to School Action Plus may take place. At this stage intervention from specialist services should be put in place.

At all levels it is essential that attainment and intervention be monitored through Individual Education Plans (IEP's) as substantial evidence

may be required if intensive teaching and support is required at a later stage.

## **The Nature of Intervention at School Action**

**5:43** (Code of Practice) when a class teacher or the special educational needs coordinator identifies a child with SEN the class teacher should provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum.

**5:49** " The special educational needs coordinator and the class teacher should decide on the action needed. This does not indicate a need for the deployment of extra staff to enable 1:1 tuition; this may not be the most appropriate way of helping the child. A more appropriate approach might be to provide different learning materials or special equipment to introduce some group work or individual support; to devote extra adult time to devising the nature of the planned intervention and to monitoring its effectiveness; or to undertake staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies. Speedy access to LEA support services for one off or occasional advice on strategies or equipment or for staff training may make it possible to provide effective intervention without the need for regular or ongoing input from external agencies."

### Triggers for intervention:

**5:44** The Triggers for Intervention could be (or should) be the teachers (or others) concern, underpinned by evidence about the child who despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills, which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas;
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques of the school;
- has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment;
- has communication and/ or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness.

### Progress

Progress needs to be carefully monitored through IEP's, which need to be reviewed on a regular basis. It is essential that evidence be recorded on a regular basis and that any evidence to suggest deterioration or improvement be kept by school. If lack of progress suggests that a statutory assessment is needed in the future recorded evidence may be needed to support this.

The key test of the need for further action is evidence that the current rate of progress is inadequate.

### SCHOOL ACTION PLUS

Indicates a higher level of intervention.

A request for help from external services is likely to follow a decision taken by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and colleagues in consultation with parents at a meeting to review the child's IEP.

### WHAT DOES THE SEN TOOLKIT SAY?

Relating Action to special educational needs:

- Strands of action need to be organised so that progressively more powerful interventions can be used to meet increasing need;
- The range, type and intensity of interventions can also be reduced as a child makes adequate progress;
- The actions may be appropriate at School Action, School Action Plus or pupils with statements of special educational needs;
- For most pupils extra help will be provided within the classroom, managed by the class or subject teacher;
- Where it involves spending some time outside the ordinary classroom it will nonetheless be in the context of the inclusive curriculum.

### (CoP 5.54)

- Schools should always consult specialists when they take action on behalf of a child through School Action Plus;
- The involvement of specialists need not be limited to such children;
- Outside specialists can play an important part in the very early identification of special educational needs and in advising schools on effective provision designed to prevent the development of more significant needs;
- Specialists can act as consultants and be a source for in-service advice on learning and behaviour management strategies for all teachers.

## WHEN DOES THIS BECOME APPROPRIATE

**5.5** (Code of Practice) The triggers for School Action Plus could be that despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support under School Action, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period;
- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age;
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills;
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties, which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme;
- has sensory or physical needs and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service;
- has on-going communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

## WHO WILL BE INVOLVED?

**5:58** (Code Of Practice)

- The special educational needs coordinator and class teacher together with curriculum, literacy and numeracy coordinators and external specialists, should consider a range of different teaching approaches and appropriate equipment and teaching materials, including the use of information technology. The external specialist may act in an advisory capacity, or provide additional specialist assessment or be involved in teaching the child directly;
- In some instances improved management or alternative arrangements based on advice from health professionals may considerably reduce the child's special educational needs.

## Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus.

### Support at Early School Action and Action Plus.

Provision at Early years Action and Action Plus should ensure that children follow a similar route to that set down in School Action and Action Plus but usually within a nursery or pre-school setting.

Early Years Settings that receive government funding have a duty to follow the law and have due regard for the Code of Practice on SEN. These settings should have a SENCo and are expected to have an SEN Policy. Early Years Providers includes a full range of schools with nursery settings, as well as day care providers such as day nurseries and family centres, registered pre-schools, playgroup and private nurseries, Local Authority Portage schemes and accredited childminders working as part of an approved network.

### The Nature of Intervention at Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus

The initial intervention within early years for pupils with SEN should come under this umbrella. Parents must be told when their child begins receiving help. (School Standards Framework Act). For those children who are making slow progress, early years staff should take a graduated approach, beginning with a differentiated curriculum and progressing to further support if a child fails to make adequate progress. (Code of Practice 4:11 ). The intervention should be such that it provides alternative strategies that are additional to or different to those provided as part of the settings usual curriculum. An Individual Education Plan will usually be devised.

## **WHAT THE SEN TOOLKIT SAYS**

### **Early Years Action should take place when:**

- Early Years practitioners who work day-to-day with children or the SENCo identify that the child has special or additional needs;
- Together they provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the setting's usual curriculum offer and strategies;
- An IEP will usually be devised.

### **Early Years Action Plus should take place when:**

- The early education practitioner who works day-day with the child and the SENCo are provided with advice or support from outside specialists;
- Alternative interventions additional or different strategies to those provided for the child through Early Years Action are put in place;
- A new IEP will be devised.