



Does your Child/Young Person have Special Educational Needs?

The law says that a child/young person has special educational needs if they have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children/young people of the same age.

What is meant by Special Educational Needs?

If your child/young person is making slower progress than you expected or the teachers are providing additional support at school, don't assume that your child has special educational needs. Children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best. Teachers are expected to take this into account when they organise their lessons: this is called **differentiating the curriculum**. Schools and other organisations can help most children/young people overcome their difficulties, but a few children will need extra help for some or all of their time in school.

Special Educational Needs could mean that a child has difficulty with any of the following:

- reading, writing, number work
- understanding information
- expressing themselves
- understanding what others are saying
- making friends or relating to adults
- behaving properly at school
- a physical need which may affect them in school
- a sensory impairment (sight, hearing, etc.)

Help for children with special educational needs will usually be in the child's ordinary mainstream school, college or early education setting, sometimes with the help of outside specialists.

Children do not have learning difficulties just because their first language is not English, although of course some of these children may have learning difficulties as well.

What should I do if I am worried that my child/young person may be having difficulties?

- If he or she is not yet at nursery, playgroup or school, talk to your family doctor or your health visitor.
- If he or she goes to nursery, playgroup or primary school talk to your child's playgroup leader, teacher, the SENCO or the Headteacher.
- If he or she is at secondary school or college talk to your child's tutor, head of year, SENCO/ Inclusion Manager or the Headteacher.

Don't delay – talking about your concerns is the first step to getting help for your child. If your child is at school, you might like to ask:

- Does the school think your child/young person has difficulties?
- Is your child/ young person able to work at the same level as other children of the same age?
- Is your child/young person already getting some help? If so, what?
- Is there anything you can do to help your child/young person?

What can Hackney SENDIAGS offer you?

Hackney SENDIAGS is an arm's length confidential service offering impartial information, advice and support to parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

We can help you if

- You are worried that your child is falling behind at school.
- You think something is wrong, but you are not sure what.
- You think your child needs more help than they are getting now.
- You would like to talk to the school.
- You have been told that your child needs an Education, Health and Care plan.
- You disagree with your child's Education, Health and Care plan.
- You are worried about choosing the right nursery, school or college.
- You want to find out where to go for other help and support.

More info at www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk/sendiaags

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