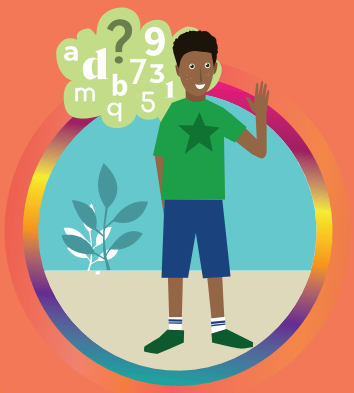
Ordinarily Available Provision:

Parent and Carers Guide



Wandsworth Council

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This guide is for parents and carers of children and young people (CYP) who face challenges in their learning or need additional support. These children are usually described as having Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) Your CYP's school may have told you that your child is receiving "SEN Support".

> "...schools should enable parents to share their knowledge about their child and give them confidence that their views and contrbutions are valued and will be acted upon."

WHAT IS THE ORDINARILY AVAILABLE PROVISION (OAP)?

Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) refers to the types of support that all state-funded schools (including academies), early years (including private nurseries which receive early education funding) and post 16 settings, should be able to provide for their CYP, including those with SEND. Wandsworth Council has produced a document to support schools and settings to deliver OAP. At the moment this Guidance is local to Wandsworth, but many areas have similar documents, and the Department for Education is developing national standards. 'Standards will..... set out clear expectations for the types of support that should be ordinarily available in mainstream settings..... This will give families and providers clarity, consistency and confidence in the support that is ordinarily available' (*1)

HOW DID YOU DECIDE WHAT SHOULD GO IN THE OAP?

Wandsworth Council (the Local Authority) has SEND and Inclusion services which work alongside schools to train staff and provide specialist expertise, such as the Wandsworth Autism Advisory Service. Our Inclusion Service worked with these services, schools, health professionals and parent carers to build a picture of what the very best support for pupils with SEND in our schools would look like. We also looked at research evidence, national recommendations and the law (*2) and brought everything together so that we have the same expectations for all schools and settings. This leaflet covers the same areas, with the same headings, as the OAP but has been written with parents/carers in mind.

> “In Wandsworth we want our local area to be the best place to grow up for all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).”
>
> **Wandsworth Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND**

HIGH QUALITY TEACHING

There is strong evidence (*2) that the first step for CYP with SEND is to be included in their class(es) with teachers delivering high quality lessons. Teachers will adapt their teaching and use additional resources to match the needs of different CYP as part of everyday teaching. All teachers receive training in SEND and are supported by a SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO) in each school and a range of specialist teams in Wandsworth.

> "High quality teaching, differentiated for Individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN"
>
> **SEND Code of Practice Jan 2015**

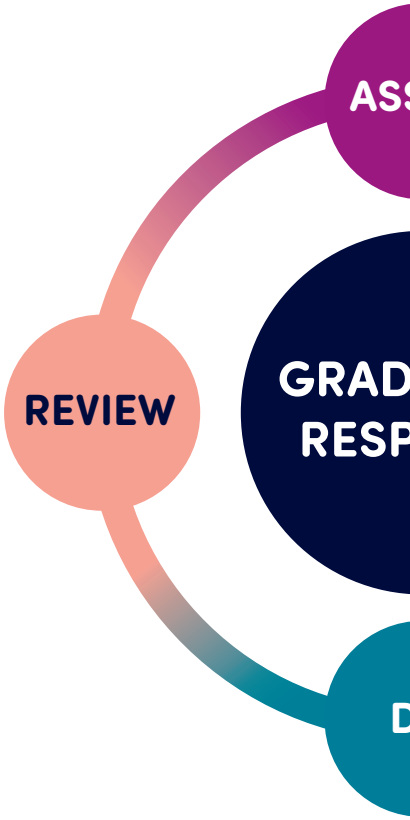
SEN SUPPORT

High quality inclusive teaching meets the needs of CYP learning at different rates, including those who are finding some areas more difficult. If something additional is needed, then the CYP is described as being at "SEN Support". The school then records that the CYP is receiving SEN support on its data system, sometimes called the 'SEN register'. Schools should always have a conversation with you before putting a CYP at SEN support.

THE GRADUATED RESPONSE

When a CYP is described as being at SEND Support, then the school or setting will put the graduated response into place. This means that they will:

Review what progress has been made and whether the the extra support has had a positive impact. Parents, carers and CYP should be involved in this review stage. The descision could be that the CYP has made good progress and no longer needs additional SEN support, or to repeat the cycle and review again, or to change the support offered, perhaps considering a referral to a speciaist service.



Decide what additional support is needed and when and who will put this in place. Teachers should discuss this with parent carers and the CYP. All staff working with the CYP should be made aware of their needs and what teaching approaches to use.

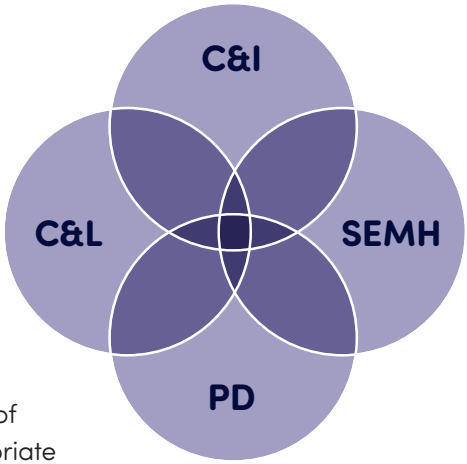
Assess the progress the CYP is making and what they are finding difficult. Teachers should use information from their observations and assessments and include the views of the CYP and parent carers.

Carry out the **plan** to support the CYP to achieve their targets. Where this involves group work or teaching away from the main class (sometimes called interventions) the class or subject teacher should remain responsibile for the CYP's progress. Staff leading interventions should have received appropriate training.

SEND FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

All schools (for children ages 5-18) receive funds which are specifically intended to be spent on supporting pupils with SEND. This is called the notional SEN budget. Individual schools decide how to spend their money to provide for CYP with SEND. The OAP guidance helps schools to do this by describing the best practice to support children with different sorts of needs using the funds they are given.

SUPPORT FOR THE BROAD AREAS OF NEED



The SEN Code of Practice groups together different kinds of SEND needs into four broad areas as shown here. However, it is very common to have needs across several of these areas. CYP do not need to have a diagnosis in order to have their needs recognised and to receive OAP. Adults who know the CYP well will use their experience and knowledge of a CYP to choose the most appropriate strategies from all sections of the guidance. These could range from making some small adjustments to the classroom environment to putting several strategies in place.

Cognition and Learning (C&L).

CYP may have difficulties with:

- developing reading, writing and number skills
- memory skills
- concentrating on their learning
- planning and organisational skills
- transition and managing change

Communication and Interaction (C&I)
CYP may have difficulties with:

- using and understanding language
- managing and communicating emotions
- using language in social situations to relate to other people and make friendships.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH) CYP may have difficulties with:

- Following adult directions and classroom rules for learning
- Participating or attending school
- Managing strong emotions when upset or angry
- Forming secure attachments, perhaps a result of challenging life events

Physical, complex medical and sensory needs (PD).
CYP may have:

- A physical disability, requiring them to have support with moving around
- Medical needs, for example needing support with breathing or eating
- A hearing or visual impairment.
- Auditory sensitivity
- Dislike of touch and certain fabrics

Most of these strategies and interventions can take place in the CYP's normal classroom or learning environment. Some may take place in small groups or when an adult works individually with a CYP for a set time on a specific programme.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) Why do you use the term 'OAP'?

OAP is not a Wandsworth term but comes from the SEND Code of Practice (CoP) which states that meeting the needs of children and young people (CYP) with SEND starts with high quality teaching. "... higher quality teaching ordinarily available to the whole class is likely to mean that fewer pupils will require such support." - (Para 6.15). The Department for Education also use the term in the 2022 Green Paper and the subsequent 2023 SEND Action Plan 'Offering the right services at this early stage will help to reduce escalation of need and reassure parents that their child is being effectively supported to thrive through ordinarily available services.'

2) Is there a requirement for schools to use the OAP expectations to train staff and how will teachers become familiar with it?

The CoP requires that all staff are prepared to meet CYP's SEN as part of their professional development and schools use a wide range of materials and resources for this. The Local Authority cannot make using the OAP expectations a specific training requirement but we are pleased that so many schools have told us that staff find it very helpful. The SENCO provides professional guidance to colleagues and is responsible for overseeing how staff meet CYP's needs. SENCOs often use the document when planning strategies for a CYP with teachers and thus all staff are becoming familiar with it.

3) How will staff have time to look through OAP when there is less staff and more demands?

It's true that there are lots of demands on teachers' time but, as explained above, being prepared and trained to meet CYP's SEND is a requirement for every teacher. The OAP Guidance is designed as a toolkit so that teachers and SENCOs are not required to read everything but can navigate to what they need. In this way, we hope to be able to provide information in a manageable format for school staff.

4) How do you find the right section if the child does not have a diagnosis?

The information on pages 9-10 will help. Also in section 9 of the OAP expectations for schools and settings you will see the left hand column has headings like 'attention difficulties' and 'difficulties using and understanding language' so parents/carers and staff in schools can work through those headings to find the specific areas the CYP has difficulties with without the need for a diagnosis.

5) How do I know which parts of the OAP my child should receive, or should they receive all of it?

The OAP expectations is a menu of strategies so that schools can select the most appropriate ones for each individual CYP's particular needs. We would not expect CYP to receive all of the strategies from any section. Often SENCOs will talk through what is likely to work best with class or subject teachers and yourselves. For example, children who find it very hard to change from one activity to another often benefit from the use of timers and now-next boards. However, another child might find this heightens their anxiety and would respond better to spoken reassurance. It is important to allow time for strategies to embed to see if they have effect and to gain the views of the CYP – they often surprise us with their insights into what helps them. Specialists working alongside schools like an Educational Psychologist, or a Speech and Language Therapist will often advise on which strategies might be most appropriate.

6) My CYP behaves differently in school/ at home. I am concerned that the school doesn't fully understand my CYP's needs. What should I do?

Schools and settings should always seek your views as part of the Graduated Response cycle. It is quite common for CYP to behave differently at home and school. Some children appear to be doing well in school but 'bottle up' their feelings and let them out at home. This doesn't mean that the school is ignoring their needs, it may be for example that your child has to work hard at concentrating and following the school's expectations for behaviour and needs to relax and let their feelings out at the end of the day. Home with family is often the safest place to do this. Always explain this behaviour to your contact at school. You may find it helpful to have a family member or friend with you who has witnessed the behaviour at home and it may be useful to seek support in the home from Wandsworth's Early Help team or other services included in the Wandsworth Local Offer.

7) What do I do if 'OAP' isn't used in school or they don't agree with me on what I think my child needs?

All schools are required to identify and address the SEN of their pupils. The CoP says that all schools, maintained nurseries and post 16 settings must 'use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need.' OAP is the first step in this. Your first point of contact to raise concerns should be with your CYP's class teacher (or in secondary schools the form tutor and then Head of Year), and then, if you are not able to resolve your concerns, to ask for a meeting with the SENCo, who is best placed to resolve any issues. On the rare occasions where agreement still can't be reached you would need to contact a member of the school's senior leadership team, possibly the Headteacher. You may wish to approach The Wandsworth Information, Advice and Support Service (WIASS) to help you to have conversations with schools (see links at the end of this leaflet). It can be useful to look at the school's SEND Information Report which must be published on

the school's website. This report will explain how the school delivers SEND support so it can be a useful place to start. It is reasonable to ask the school how they are supporting your CYP in accordance with the information they publish.

8) What if my school says they don't have the financial resources to fund OAP?

School budgets are currently under a lot of pressure and leadership teams work hard to manage competing demands. However, lack of money cannot be provided as a reason not to follow the guidance of the CoP. Many of the OAP strategies do not require additional funding to implement, but there may be costs of training and resources. Wandsworth LA provides a great deal of free training and advice which schools can draw on and the SENCO network provides further advice on sources of free training and resources. Please also refer to number 7 above.

9) Can my child receive the OAP support that is not included in their EHCP?

Yes, OAP is for all CYP, whatever their level of need. Sometimes section F of the EHCP includes strategies we have included in OAP, such as 'using alternative methods of recording'. The difference for the CYP with an EHCP is that this must be delivered, whereas if the CYP was at SEN support this may be one of the approaches that school select to support your CYP.

10) Should schools include parents and carers in the graduated response and should they provide documentation detailing the support they are providing and progress made?

When a school or setting believes a CYP would benefit from additional support, they should discuss this with parents/carers. This could be face-to-face or by telephone or virtual meeting. The SEND CoP says that 'schools should talk to parents/carers regularly to set clear outcomes

and review progress towards them' (para 6.65). The SEND CoP goes on to say that records of these discussions should be kept and shared with school staff, a copy given to parents /carers and stored on the school's record keeping system. See the section on the Graduated Response for more detail.

11) How will schools providing SEN support be monitored and how will you know if the OAP expectations are successful?

The LA's Inclusion team and specialist support services work closely with SENCOs and schools to support the implementation of the OAP. Schools maintained by the Local Authority have Link Advisers who provide support and challenge to schools in all areas including SEND. OFSTED has amended their inspection framework with a greater focus on how schools meet SEND needs for all children including at SEND Support. OFSTED reports will comment on the provision for CYP with SEND. We will know if the OAP is successful because CYP and parents will tell us when we seek their views, which we often do when visiting schools.

12) Where can I find more information on different learning difficulties and how can I best help my child?

There are too many to list here, but a good source is to search on the Wandsworth's Local Offer website, see links at the end of this leaflet. The OAP includes links to the main services that are commissioned by Wandsworth and provide specialist advice to our schools.

13) How can I access this information in other languages?

This code takes you to where we have published the leaflet online. It is published in English but we will also be publishing in other key languages and will provide links on this page as soon as they are ready.

GLOSSARY

CoP: The revised Special Educational Needs Code of Practice was published by the Department for Education and Skills in January 2015. The code provides guidance on policies and procedures intended to enable pupils with SEN to reach their full potential.

CYP: Child or Young Person. We use this term throughout this leaflet because we want to include all ages and stages. Other documents might refer to 'pupils' or 'students'.

IEP/ILP: An Individual Education Plan or Learning Plan is the school's written/electronic record of what is in place for a CYP at SEN support or with an EHCP. It should record what is happening within the graduated response and include the views of parent carers and CYP. Schools do not have to follow a particular format, and some may call it a 'Provision Map' or 'SEN support record'.

EHCP: Education, Health and Care Plan An EHC plan is a legal document which describes the special educational needs that a child or young person has and the help that they will be given to meet them. It also includes the health and care provision that is needed. 4.3% of pupils in England have an EHCP (2023)

Inclusion Service: The service in the Local Authority which advises and supports schools and settings to meet the needs of CYP with SEND with a particular focus on ensuring inclusion in mainstream schools.

Intervention: An intervention is support or an activity that is put in place as part of the graduated approach. For example, it could be a ten minute catch-up phonics group, targeted support in class or a social skills group. Interventions can take place inside or outside the CYP's classroom and some interventions are part of OAP.

Local Authority (LA): The local government body that provides services, including education, for local people. This OAP is relevant to schools in the Wandsworth LA.

OFSTED: Office for Standards in Education, a non-Ministerial government department established to take responsibility for the inspection of all schools in England.

Provision Map: see IEP left.

Reasonable Adjustments: Reasonable adjustments are changes schools and other settings are required to make for CYP with SEND to ensure that their provision is as accessible to disabled people as everybody else

SENCo/SENDCo: The SENCO is the person at a school who oversees making sure CYP who have special educational needs or disabilities get the support they need. All maintained mainstream schools have to have a SENCo.

SEND: Special Educational Needs or Disabilities: A CYP is described as a person with SEN if they have:

- find it harder to learn than other people their age;
- face challenges that make it hard to go to school or college;
- need extra or different support to learn.

A CYP is described as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

SEN support: The purpose of SEN support is to help children achieve the outcomes or learning objectives that have been set for them by the school. This may take the form of additional support from within the school or require the involvement of specialist staff or support services. CYP described at being at SEN support do not have an EHCP. 13% of CYP in England are recorded as being at SEN support (2023).

State-funded mainstream school: this is a school that provides education for all children, whether or not they have special educational needs or disabilities. Some schools are maintained by the Local Authority, others are academies that are funded directly by the government.

References

***1:** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan Right Support, Right Place, Right Time. This was published by the government in March 2023 and is based on the Green Paper of 2022. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan

***2:** Special Educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years. This is the statutory guidance for organisations who work with CYP with SEND and was published by the Departments of Education and Health in January 2015. It is often referred to as the 'SEND CoP' or the "Code of Practice". send code of practice 0-to-25

There are several reports from Ofsted (the government body that inspects schools) on what works for CYP with SEND eg Research and analysis on Supporting Send, updated May 2021 supporting send implications

Special educational needs in mainstream schools, based on extensive evidence and published by the Education Endowment foundation, an independent charity, partly funded by the Department of Education to research and publish what works best in a range of educational areas. Special educational needs in mainstream schools guidance report

FURTHER INFORMATION AND IMPORTANT LINKS

Ordinarily Available Provision:
Expectations for Schools/Settings.

Wandsworth Local Offer: this is the key website where you can find information and contact details for the local authority, education, health, voluntary groups who can support you and your child or young person, from 0 to 25 years old.

WIASS: The Wandsworth Information, Advice and Support Service is a free service providing confidential and impartial information, advice and support to children and young people (aged 0-25) with special educational needs.

SEND Allkind: SEND Allkind is Wandsworth's free general SEND support and advice service for children with SEND from 0 up to 18 years of age.

SEND Parent Carers in Wandsworth: SEND Parent Carers in Wandsworth is Wandsworth's local Parent Carer Forum. Membership of the forum is free, and you can be involved as little or as much as you want. Keep up to date with SEND services and events in Wandsworth, by becoming a Member.

With thanks to SEND Parent Carers in Wandsworth, school and local authority colleagues in co-producing this document. Published November 23