

# Ordinarily Available Provision

## A guide for parent carers

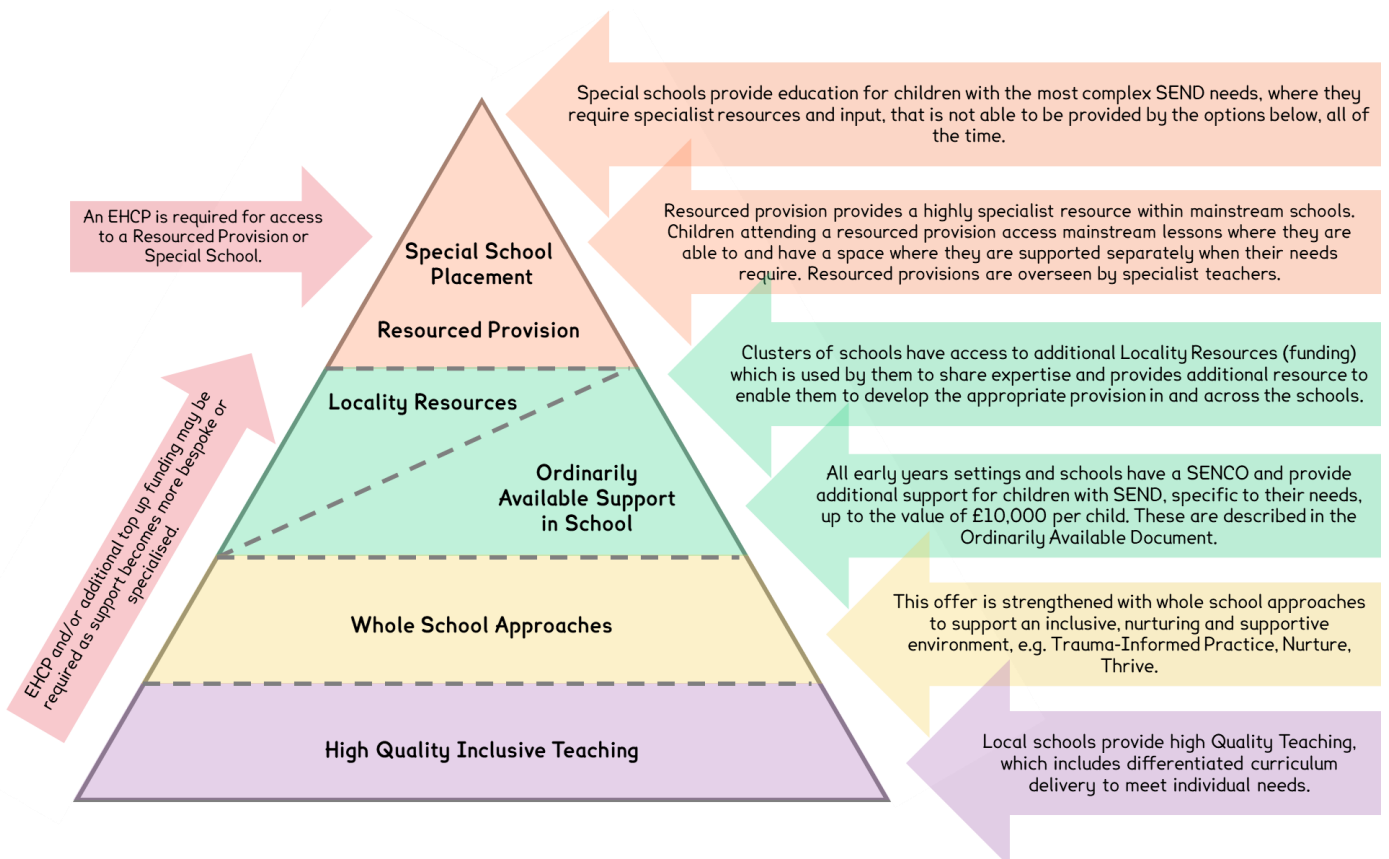


## Introduction

In Medway, the majority of children and young people with SEND are supported to attend their local mainstream school or early years setting, with their friends and peer group. The law and the statutory duties on schools are very clear on the duty on schools to meet your child's needs so that they have access to and benefit from the same learning and activity opportunities as the other children in their group or class. This duty includes those children with an EHCP. Schools receive funding to enable them to do this.

Medway schools and early years providers work hard to meet this duty. 15.3%<sup>1</sup> of pupils attending mainstream school have a special educational need or disability. That is equivalent to 4 or 5 children in every class. The diagram below sets out the tiers of support. Mainstream schools provide the bottom 3 tiers of the support shown in the diagram below. All children can access this support, whether they have an EHCP or not.

The 'Ordinarily Available Provision' guide has been co-produced with schools and sets out in more detail the provision that you can expect to be made for children and young people with SEND in Medway schools and educational settings.



<sup>1</sup> Jan 2022 – All children with SEND (Including EHCP's)



## How to Use this Guide

This guide outlines the types and descriptions of identified needs and will give you an idea of the support you can expect your child to receive when they attend school. You may find it helpful to talk about Ordinarily Available Provision with your child's school or setting when you meet to discuss the support they need. It is important to understand that not every approach will be in place in every school or setting. Some schools may use different but useful alternatives.

Schools are responsible for the provision of education and will be able to discuss with you the strategies that will most benefit your child. If you are worried about the provision in your child's school or setting, then speak to your child's SENCo or class teacher in the first instance.

You can also find information on the local offer website: <https://www.medway.gov.uk/localoffer>

## Legal duties of schools in regard to Special Educational Needs and Disability.

All schools have a legal duty to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities ("SEND") and/or disabilities under the Children and Families Act 2014 and SEN and Disability Code of Practice 2015 (the "Code"). This includes all children with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Schools must "have regard" to the Code. This means that they should do what it says or be able to explain why they have not done so, and what alternative action has been taken.

The law is clear that where a parent of a child with SEND, or a young person with SEND, wants a place in a mainstream setting, this must not be denied on the basis that mainstream education is unsuitable, or that their needs or disabilities are too great or complex.

Mainstream schools must ensure that children or young people with SEN engage in the activities of the school together with children or young people who do not have special educational needs (section 35 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

For a few children and young people, the mainstream school may say it cannot meet their needs. In order to do this, they have to demonstrate that providing the support would be 'incompatible with the efficient education of others. This means to meet the needs of your child would mean they are unable to meet the needs of others. This incompatibility cannot be due to funding and the school would need to demonstrate that there are no reasonable steps that can be taken to prevent that the incompatibility.



## There are four different types of SEND. They are:-

<p><b>1. Communication and Interaction</b></p> <p>Children with communication and interaction difficulties will have difficulties understanding language and communicating with others.</p>	<p>This category of need includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)</li> <li>● Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Cognition and Learning</b></p> <p>Children who have cognition and learning needs will learn at a slower pace than others of their age and may have difficulties with memory and organisational skills or have difficulty in a specific area such as numeracy or literacy.</p>	<p>This category of need includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Specific Learning Difficulties (SPLD)</li> <li>● Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)</li> <li>● Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)</li> <li>● Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Sensory and Physical</b></p> <p>Children who have sensory needs will have difficulty seeing and/or hearing.</p>	<p>This category of need includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hearing Impairment (HI)</li> <li>● Vision Impairment (VI)</li> <li>● Physical Disability (PD)</li> <li>● Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Social, Emotional and Mental Health</b></p> <p>Children who have SEMH needs may have difficulties managing relationships with other people, be withdrawn, or behave in ways that may disrupt their own and others' learning.</p>	<p>This category includes a range of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties including ADHD.</p>

## Approaches that are in place for all CYP with SEND



The school or setting will use an approach called “Assess, Plan, Do, Review” (also known as The Graduated Approach) to make sure the right support is in place to meet your child’s additional needs. The Assess, Plan, Do, Review approach is a cycle which may need to happen a number of times before the right support is found which helps your child make progress. Support can include teaching your child new skills, teaching in a different way or changing their physical environment to make it easier for them to be happy and successful in their school or setting. It may also mean that an additional adult works with them for part of their day or that a specialist visits your child at school to offer them support.



## Assess

Your child’s school or setting will gather information to make sure they understand your child’s strengths and difficulties and what will help them make progress. They may gather information from observations or ask your child to do a test or carry out a task. They will also ask you how they are at home and for your thoughts on how they are getting on in school. They will find out what your child thinks. If they are very young or have difficulties communicating this may be as simple as watching what they like and do not like in their setting and what kind of support is helpful to them.

## Plan

Once the school or setting has assessed your child’s needs, they will make a plan for how they can support your child. This plan will be made in conversation with you. Different schools and settings often take slightly different approaches to supporting children and young people. The plan that is agreed will depend on the school or setting and the resources and approaches that they have found useful with other children.



## Do

Once the plan has been agreed the support will be put into place. It is important you understand how often the support will happen and who will be providing it. It is also important you understand how you will know if your child is making progress.

## Review

Your child's school or setting will talk to you at agreed intervals (we recommend at least once a term) about the support for your child and how they are getting on. If possible, your child should also be involved in these discussions so they can share their views about what is going well and what they find difficult. It is important to remember that sometimes it takes time for support to make a difference. If the support has worked well, it might not need to continue. If this happens, your child will still receive the support available to all children in the school or setting. If your child isn't making good progress, the support they receive might need to change. This could mean trying different approaches, increasing the amount of support provided or involving specialist teams to help your child's school or setting better understand your child and what might work for them. There are many different specialists who support children with SEND. Some of these teams may work with you as a family outside of your child's education and some need to be contacted directly by schools and settings when advice is needed.

## Partnerships with learners, parent carers and schools

As a parent/carer, you know your child well. It is important that schools and parent carers work in partnership to ensure every child has their needs met. There should be regular contact between home and school, including regular reviews of provision. Some of the ways schools communicate with families are:

- Home/school diaries or planners
- Book bags
- Contacting you directly by telephone, email or text message

There will be other opportunities throughout the school year to meet with your child's school such as parents' evenings or coffee mornings. You can also get support from SENDIAS which is a free service offering information, advice, and support.

## Pastoral care

Every child should feel safe, valued and have a sense of belonging in their school or setting. Pastoral care is the support schools provide for children's social and emotional wellbeing. Pastoral care can look differently in different settings. This could be:

- A key person (such as a head of year)



- A pastoral lead
- A family liaison officer

Your child's school or setting can tell you about how they support children's social and emotional wellbeing. This will include information about how they deliver personal, social and health education

## The Learning Environment

Some children have challenges accessing the physical learning environment. This might be because they have a physical disability or a hearing or visual impairment. Other children (including those with autism) may find the physical environment difficult to manage. Schools and settings plan how to make activities accessible for all children by making changes to the way they normally do things. This is set out in a document known as an 'accessibility plan'. Schools and settings also make sure that all children can participate in activities outside of the main learning spaces. This includes playtimes, trips and after-school activities.

## Teaching and learning

All children need high quality teaching to make good progress. High quality teaching differentiates activities, resources, and instruction to meet the range of abilities and needs of the children in the classroom. This differentiation is part of all teachers training and practice and enables all children to access the curriculum. Examples include:

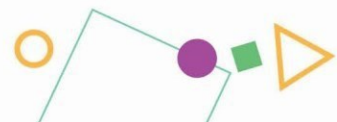
- Visual strategies such as a personalised visual timetable, a task board or now and next cards
- Auditory strategies such as music to indicate the end of a task or activity
- Breaking activities down by giving instructions one step at a time and dividing tasks into small steps and providing support at each stage

## Resources

Your child may need access to equipment and assistive technologies to support their learning and to help them to be as independent as possible. Some examples include:

- Writing slopes
- A work station or laptop
- Fidget toys
- Coloured overlays or papers
- Ear defenders
- Maths equipment such as counters or number lines
- Technology such as voice recognition software

## Staff skills and training





Every school and setting has a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENCo). It is the SENCo's role to organise the provision in a school or setting and check that it is helping children make progress. All staff who work with your child will be aware of the needs of the children in their setting or school.

In some cases, additional adults, usually known as teaching assistants (TAs), will be allocated to support your child either individually or in a smaller group. TAs have a range of experience and training.

Settings and schools are expected to make sure that staff receive the training and have the skills they need to meet the needs of children with SEND.

## Approaches that are in place for some children with SEND based on the need type.

Schools and settings should follow the approaches above for all of their children with SEND. They will also need to use additional approaches with children to meet their individual needs. The type of support needed for each child will depend on whether they have difficulties with:

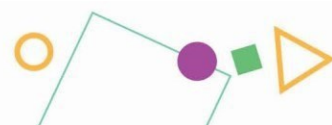
- Cognition and learning
- Communication and interaction
- Social emotional and mental health
- Physical and/or sensory needs

This part of the guide to Ordinarily Available Provision gives examples of some of the activities that schools and settings could consider for children with different types of SEND. Not all provision that might be helpful is included in this guide, and schools and settings may not use every approach listed. Some children may have needs across more than one area. You can talk to your child's school or setting to agree what will work for them. The support your child receives will depend on their individual needs and is not dependent on whether they have a formal diagnosis of any kind.

### Cognition and Learning

**For children with cognition and learning difficulties, schools and settings may:**

- Change the way they teach maths and English.
- Provide help with language and communication skills
- Help your child feel positive about their learning
- Help your child make friends with other children
- Use IT to help your child learn more easily





- Make sure staff are trained to help children with learning difficulties and know how to help them make progress

If your child has difficulties with learning across some or most of their lessons and is making slow progress, schools and settings may:

- Give clear and simple instructions and give them time to respond
- Support your child's learning with visual clues and information
- Go through some of the content (such as key words) with them before the lesson so they feel prepared
- Teach them different content from other children of the same age so that they learn the skills and knowledge they need
- Use a different approach to teaching which gets them involved and uses all their senses
- Help them to become independent learners
- Make sure they experience successes and feel good about themselves

If your child has difficulties with learning in a specific area schools and settings may:

- Give them extra help with specific skills which will help such as phonics or motor skills
- Support the child to understand how they learn and how they learn best
- Recognise and celebrate successes in other areas of their life and learning
- Change the way they present information, for example using a different kind of font or coloured paper
- Making sure that staff receive training in your child's area of need for example dyslexia or dyscalculia

## Communication and interaction

**For all children with communication and interaction difficulties, schools and settings may:**

- Make sure that all staff (including lunch time supervisors and reception staff) understand communication and interaction needs
- Use visual teaching aids support CYP's learning and social activities
- Adapt tasks so that they are set at the right level, expect children to achieve at their own level, are delivered at the right pace (with clear beginnings and endings) and are sometimes delivered to a smaller group so that children get the help they need
- Use an approach known as 'Structured Teaching' where teachers pay attention to the physical environment, timetabling, how they teach children and how they give instructions

**If your child has difficulties with saying what they want to say or difficulties understanding language, schools and settings may:**

- Support your child with their language skills in a small group or by themselves



- Encourage your child to communicate and give them time to respond to instructions and in conversations
- Use rhymes and songs to introduce new language
- Teach your child another way of communicating (for example using signs, symbols or technology)
- Make sure that the physical environment in school supports good communication. This might include thinking about where your child sits and reducing distractions in the classroom.
- Adapt their own communication such as keeping instructions simple and using your child's name to get their attention
- Check that your child's hearing has been tested
- Teach your child new vocabulary before a lesson or when starting a new topic
- Use 'now and next' boards which help your child to understand what they will be doing during the day
- Provide support from a member of staff during assessments who can simplify language to make sure your child understands what questions mean

**If your child has difficulties with understanding the 'rules' of communicating with other people or has difficulties making relationships, schools and settings may:**

- Make sure staff receive training in how to help children with communication and social skills, including those who have autism
- Write your child special stories known as a 'social stories' which help them understand social situations and what is expected of them
- Work with a group of children to support your child in their setting or school
- Use role play with your child to help them practice the skills they need in social situations
- Provide your child with support to help them make friends, and settle things when they 'fall out'

**If your child finds it difficult to use their imagination, schools and settings may:**

- Use role play and drama or use props such as puppets.
- Tell them stories using photos, videos and sounds to help them imagine what is happening

**If your child finds gets anxious in busy environments, schools and settings may:**

- Make sure they are able to learn in a calm environment
- Provide your child with a key worker or mentor, or give them a 'buddy' who looks out for them
- Give them lots of praise to help improve their feelings about themselves
- Help them prepare for changes in activity or routine

**If your child is over or under sensitive to sensory triggers (such as noises, smells and touch), schools and settings may:**

- Let them take a break such as taking a walk around the classroom or doing an activity which helps them calm down
- Be flexible with the school uniform policy
- Make changes to the physical environment for example, noise and room temperature



- Be flexible about how and when they expect your child to come into, go home from and move around their school or setting
- Make a safe place available to them
- Use a sequence of activities to help your child get ready for their next activity called a 'sensory circuit'
- Set up a separate space where your child can work successfully
- Help them to learn to cope with situations they find difficult by using timers

**If your child finds it difficult to pay attention compared to other children their age, schools and settings may:**

- Provide them with regular, short breaks
- Break down tasks and deliver them in short 'chunks' and use a timer so your child knows how long they need to focus
- Give your child a personalised visual timetable or 'task board' so they know what is happening during the day
- Use the 'I do it, we do it, you do it' approach to encourage your child to work independently
- Make sure that your child has listened to and understood instructions
- Give your child regular clear feedback on their progress

## Social Emotional and Mental Health

**For all children with social emotional and mental health difficulties, schools and settings may:**

- Do some assessments to make sure that your child's difficulties are not caused by learning or communication difficulties
- Have a whole school approach and behaviour policy which is based on a good understanding of the effect of children's experiences on their behaviour and feelings
- Identify a key adult who your child can build a positive trusting relationship with
- Provide training to staff to make sure they understand why some children find it difficult to form relationships and how they can help
- Help children to understand how their behaviour makes others feel and help them to make things right when they make mistakes
- Make sure children understand their approach to preventing and managing bullying
- Train some staff to work with children with social emotional and mental health difficulties in a small group or one to one
- Use techniques which help your child make good behaviour choices when they are upset or angry • Teach social and emotional skills to all children in the school or setting
- Check out how children are feeling on a regular basis, even when they appear to be okay

**If your child has difficulties attending regularly, schools and settings may:**

- Bring your child in at the end of an activity (such as assembly) and then build up slowly to them attending the whole thing



- Provide opportunities for your child to learn through play
- Reward your child for joining by letting them choose an activity that they enjoy
- Give them a 'buddy' or a 'peer mentor'
- Give your child responsibility for looking after someone or something else.
- Try to make the start of each lesson a 'fresh start' by welcoming them and helping them feel calm and motivate

**If your child has difficulties controlling their emotions and their behaviour is challenging (for example refusing to follow instructions or hurting other children) , schools and settings may:**

- Give your child consistent messages such as 'I want you to be in class learning' and be flexible about how they achieve this
- Make sure that all staff know what works for your child and are consistent in the way they help them with their feelings and behaviour
- Try to understand what your child is communicating with their behaviour and what has led to the situation
- Teach your child positive behaviours and different ways of managing their feelings
- Give your child some choices during their day in school or their setting
- Change their routine or timetable to help them with their feelings and behaviour
- Identify any risks from your child's behaviour and make a plan to manage these
- Work with you as a family to understand your child's life at home and agree how to support your child
- Help your child to understand they are still valued and important even when they make mistakes
- Build a good relationship with you and your child and try to understand how things in their life make them feel and behave
- Keep records of your child's behaviour to understand where and when things go wrong to try and reduce the chance of this happening again
- Help your child to calm down when they are becoming angry or upset
- Make a plan for your child to help them return to school successfully if they have been suspended
- Agree with you how staff will physically hold your child if they are in danger of hurting themselves or someone else

**If your child is showing behaviours which may suggest they are experiencing anxiety or depression, are self-harming, mis-using drugs or alcohol or have an eating disorder, schools and settings may:**

- Work with other agencies to understand what is happening for the child and make referrals to support services
- Work closely with you as a family on a regular basis to agree a plan and keep review how things are going



**If your child has difficulties paying attention or concentrating, schools and settings may:**

- Look at when your child is finding it more difficult to concentrate, such as just before lunch, and make changes to help them at these times.
- Allow plenty of time for movement between frequent short periods when your child is expected to focus.
- Have a clear structure to the day and consistent expectations about their behaviour
- Think about adapting the school behaviour policy for your child if they have a diagnosis and are disadvantaged by the approach taken for typically developing children

**If your child has difficulties with relationships (including as a result of challenging life experiences in their life, schools and settings may:**

- Set up opportunities for them to make friends, for example having a buddy system at break times or identifying a group of children who can support them
- Help them to identify how their behaviours affect others and support them to put things right when things go wrong
- Suggest your child attends a small 'nurture group' for part of their day
- Talk to your child's previous setting to understand what helped them and plan carefully for any transitions or changes to their routine
- Provide a key worker with whom your child can form a trusting relationship and find solutions to challenging situations
- Work with or get advice from Medway Virtual School if your child is in care or has previously been looked after
- Consider your child's life experiences and the situation at home when arranging any support

**If your child disrupts the learning of others (for example calling out or seeking a lot of attention), schools and settings may:**

- Encourage positive behaviour by using their voice, gesture and body language in a way which supports your child
- Note anything that makes your child anxious and try to reduce this so that your child is more likely to be able to focus on their learning
- Be flexible and creative with their use of praise and rewards
- Give lots of spoken and visual reminders to your child about how they are expected to behave
- Provide your child with some 'time out' or allow them to spend some time in a quiet area in their classroom or setting
- Keep a record of your child's behaviour to understand when they are doing well and when they are finding things more difficult, so that changes can be made which help them



**If your child has difficulties following and accepting adult direction, schools and settings may:**

- Help them to calm down and to make a positive choice, for example using a sand timer for 'thinking time'
- Reward them when they follow directions and look for times when they are behaving well
- Redirect your child's attention and use other children as role models
- Use a timer to encourage them to share for a short period

**If your child appears to be particularly unhappy or stressed, schools and settings may:**

- Work with your child to identify how they like to learn, what subjects they enjoy and their interests and then provide opportunities for these things during the day
- Provide a safe place and or quiet area for them to calm down and relax
- Talk to you as a family and make a plan together about how to improve things for your child

## Sensory and/or physical needs

**For all children with sensory and/or physical needs, schools and settings may:**

- Make sure that all staff are aware of their sensory and/or physical needs and what they need to be successful in the school or setting
- Think about their seating arrangements and movements around the school or setting
- Understand that sensory and/ or physical needs may affect your child's language and relationships
- Encourage your child to wear any sensory equipment they have been given and use physical aids
- Be aware of and take quick action to prevent unkindness related to your child's needs If your child has a hearing impairment, schools and settings may:
- Work with a teacher of the deaf to understand how best to support your child in the school or setting
- Sit your child near the front with clear view and away from any source of noise such as windows or doors
- Make sure instructions are delivered clearly and at an appropriate volume
- Ensure your child has heard and understood what has been said, particularly new information, instructions and new vocabulary
- Repeat comments made by other children • Ensure staff are face on when giving instructions and avoid moving around the room whilst talking if your child lip reads
- Use pictures and handouts to support your child's learning
- Be aware that during physical activity it will be more difficult for your child to hear
- Support your child when watching or listening to a recording by repeating what has been said and using subtitles
- Use carpeting, soft furnishing, rubber feet on chairs to reduce background noise
- Encourage good listening behaviours such as sitting still, looking and listening
- Encourage your child to ask when they are not sure what to do
- Deliver some lessons in a separate quiet working environment
- Provide additional time to complete some tasks and assignments
- Apply for extra time for exams if needed



**If your child has a visual impairment, schools and settings may:**

- Work with a qualified teacher for the visually impaired to understand how best to support your child in the school or setting
- Develop your child's typing skills to support their written work
- Use magnification equipment and technology such as visualisers, low vision aids and tablets
- Provide additional time to complete tasks
- Adapt PE activities to make them accessible for your child
- Make changes to the school or setting environment to make it easier for your child to move around safely
- Use of real objects to support your child's understanding of new ideas

**If your child has a physical disability, schools and settings may:**

- Work with other professionals to include approaches that help your child into their day for example including appropriate exercises during a warmup session for PE
- Provide staff with moving and manual handling training and personal care training
- Use specialist equipment which helps your child take part in all activities during the school or setting day • Change the physical environment so it is accessible for your child
- Make sure there are suitable toilets and showers in the setting to meet your child's needs
- Use adapted equipment such as cutlery, crockery and scissors
- If your child has severe and complex medical needs including a life-threatening diagnosis or condition, schools and settings may:
  - Ensure any medication and equipment is kept safely in lockable medicine cabinets, first aid bags and fridges
  - Ensure staff have the training they need to meet your child's medical needs, for example giving them their medication and providing them with care when they are unwell or as part of their daily routine
  - Seek regular advice from medical professionals who know your child well
- Work closely with you as a family and stay in contact if your child is not able to attend for a while to help them continue to feel part of things





## Useful Links

### The Local Offer

Local Authorities must publish a local offer, setting out in one place information about provision that is available for children and young people in their area who have special educational needs (SEN) or disability.

The local offer includes:

- Support available to all children and young people with SEN or disability from universal services such as early years settings, schools and colleges;
- Targeted services for children and young people with SEN or disability who require additional short term support over and above that provided routinely as part of universal services;
- Specialist services for children and young people with SEN or disability who require specialised, longer term support.

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200307/local\\_offer](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200307/local_offer)

### Medway SENDIAS – Family Action

Medway Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information and Advice Support service (SENDIAS) provides a range of free and impartial help to parents/carers, children and young people.

We hope to make children and young people with SEND more aware of what they're entitled to, and the options available to them, and their parents and carers.

Through the provision of information, advice and support we promote informed decision making and our service is free to access, accurate, confidential, comprehensive and easy to understand.

- Address: Medway SENDIAS, Family Action, 5a New Road Avenue, Chatham, ME4 6BB
- Telephone: 01634 566 303 (answerphone messages will be responded to within 48 hours).
- Email: [medwaysendias@family-action.org.uk](mailto:medwaysendias@family-action.org.uk)

<https://www.family-action.org.uk/what-we-do/children-families/send/medway-sendias/>

### Medway Parents & Carers Forum



## **An independent parent led group**

MPCF is an independent parent led group of parents and carers of young people with all types of disabilities and additional support needs.

E-mail: [info@medwaypcf.org.uk](mailto:info@medwaypcf.org.uk)

Phone: 07813 123984

Address: c/o Snapdragons Centre, Cliffe Rd, Rochester ME2 3FF

<https://medwaypcf.org.uk/>



