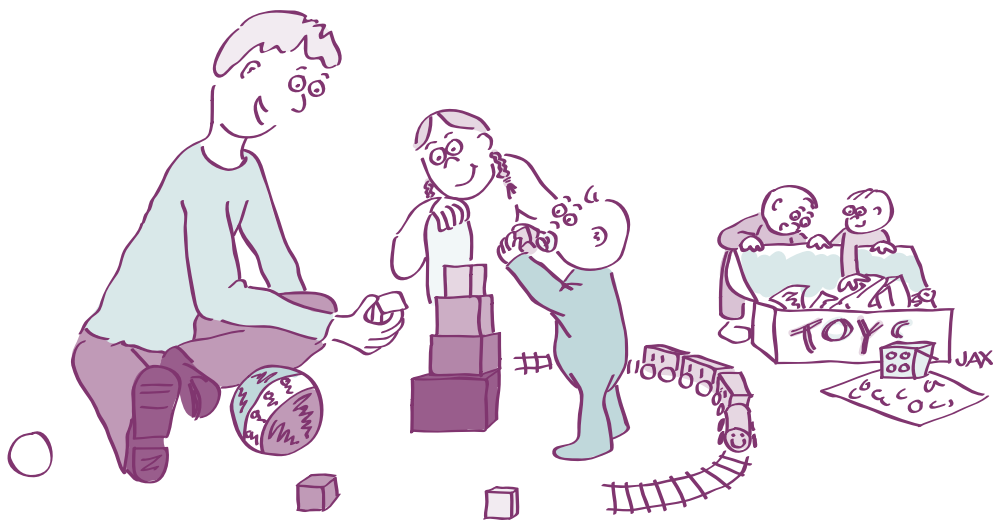


Pre-school children with special or additional needs



Are you worried about your child's progress ?

This booklet is to help you understand the support you and your child may be able to get





This booklet has been designed by Partnership with Parents and Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service to help parents and carers understand the support their child may be able to get in their early years settings.

More information about the processes can be found on the Partnership with Parents website

www.pwpsurrey.org or
by telephoning the
**Partnership with Parents
Helpline on 01737 737300.**

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What are special or additional educational needs?



Your child's playgroup, nursery or school should be able to help your child if they are having difficulties.

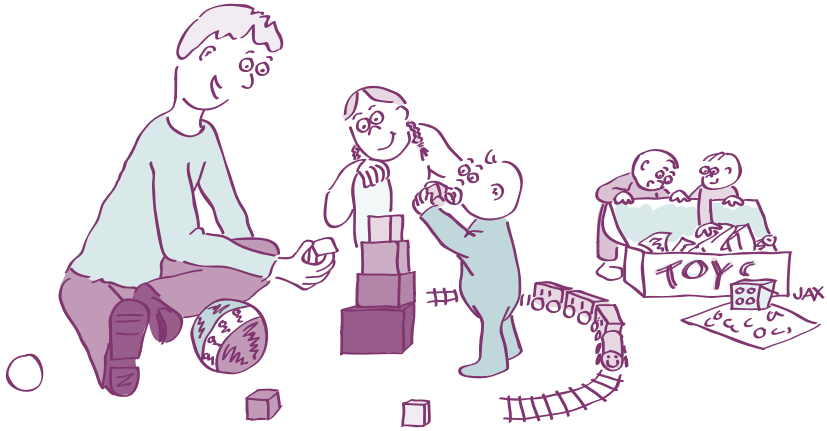
Your child may be described as having special (or additional) educational needs (SEN) if he or she has:

- developmental delay, and/or
- a known disability or health problem, and/or
- speech and language delay or disorder, and/or
- behaviour difficulties which affect their ability to learn, and/or
- learning difficulties

Many children (perhaps as many as 1 in 5) will have special educational needs at some time and these needs will usually be met in their early education setting, perhaps a nursery, playgroup or school.

Sometimes outside specialists may give help. In a few cases the local education authority (LEA) may be asked to provide extra help, perhaps by carrying out a statutory assessment of the child's needs.

What is an early education setting?



An early education setting provides education to young children and may receive funding from central government to do this.

This includes:

- maintained (state) mainstream and special schools,
- maintained nursery schools,
- independent schools,
- non-maintained special schools,
- local authority daycare providers such as day nurseries and family centres,

and other registered daycare providers such as:

- pre-schools,
- playgroups and private day nurseries,
- local authority Portage schemes and
- accredited childminders working as part of an approved National Childminding Association network.

more about What is an early education setting?

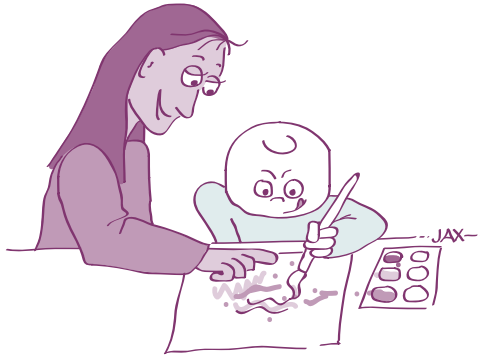
All settings which are in receipt of the government funding (except specialist provision) must have a member of staff who acts as the “special educational needs coordinator” (SENCO).

The Early Years SENCO has responsibility for:

- ensuring liaison with parents and other professionals in respect of children with SEN
- advising and supporting other practitioners in the setting who may have expressed concerns about an individual child
- ensuring that appropriate Individual Education Plans are in place
- ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with SEN is collected, recorded and updated

The SENCO may be able to request assistance from the Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCS). There is an EYCS team in Surrey which supports settings with SEN procedures. The team includes Advisers and Early Education and Childcare Officers (EECOs).

How is support provided?



Once a child has been identified as having special educational needs the setting should provide an appropriate programme that is additional to or different from the programme usually provided for all the children in the setting.

This is known as **Early Years Action** and can be triggered if parent/s or the setting are concerned that a child:

- is making little or no progress
- continues to work at a level significantly below that expected for children of a similar age in particular areas
- has on-going emotional and/or behavioural difficulties which have not improved after using behaviour management approaches
- has sensory or physical difficulties and has made little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment
- has significant communication and/or social difficulties and needs some individual support in order to learn

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be written for the child with details of the short-term targets, the teaching strategies and any provision to be put in place. The IEP should be discussed with parent/s and will be reviewed regularly.

more about **How is support provided?**

At the IEP review if it is felt that the child is not making enough progress, even with the additional help, then a decision might be made to bring in professionals from outside the setting. This can only happen with parent/s' permission.

These outside professionals, perhaps

- an educational psychologist,
- specialist teacher, or
- speech and language therapist,

will sometimes work directly with the child but are often more likely to provide advice to the setting on how best to support individual children.

If outside professionals are involved, the child is said to be on **Early Years Action Plus** and the IEP should include details of their involvement. Regular reviews should take place and parent/s will be involved in the process.

Please note that information about children at EY Action, EY Action Plus and with Statements will be stored electronically by Surrey County Council. This does not affect your rights under the Data Protection Act. Information about the Data Protection Act can be found at www.surreycc.gov.uk

What is a Formal Assessment?



For a very few children who have significant needs, help given in the ways described so far may not be enough for them to make satisfactory progress. For these children a **Formal Assessment of special educational needs** (sometimes called Statementing) might be required. At the end of the formal assessment a Statement of SEN may be issued.

A Statement is a legal document that sets out the additional support an individual child will receive from the Local Education Authority (LEA) as a result of the assessment.

Parent/s, schools and some early years settings can ask the LEA to carry out this Formal Assessment. Only maintained and independent settings that receive Government funding to provide nursery education for 4 and 5 year olds have a right to request a formal assessment for a child. If your child does not attend such a setting you should request the assessment yourself.

A Paediatrician may also notify the LEA that a child has significant special needs - this is called a "pre-school notification".

more about What is a Formal Assessment?

If your child has a Statement of SEN, reviews should take place every 6 months until their 5th birthday and there will be on-going support from EYCS and/or Surrey Children's Service.

What if the LEA feels my child doesn't need a formal assessment but does need additional help?

Young children's needs change very quickly, and in some instances the LEA may agree to pre-school placement support through discretionary funding.



This is a way of giving short-term additional support to a child in a setting without the need for a formal assessment.

This funding is reviewed regularly and a decision is usually made after two reviews as to whether or not a formal assessment will be needed.

What happens when my child has to go to school?

What is statutory school age?

Statutory school age is the age when parent/s must make sure that their child goes to school.

In England, this is from the **term after the child's 5th birthday until June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16 (usually Year 11)**. In Surrey most children are able to start school at age 4.

What about the move to school?

It is important to start to plan early for the move to school.

With parent/s' permission information can be shared between the early years setting and the school the child will be attending.



If the child is being supported at Early Years Action Plus the setting will arrange a transition review to help plan for the child's transfer and the smooth continuation of monitoring and support. A representative of the receiving school will be invited to the transition review and may visit the child in their early years setting. They may visit the child and parent/s at home too.

Schools use a similar framework to identify special educational needs. So a child who is at Early Years Action Plus will almost certainly start school at School Action Plus. The transition review is important in planning for this. It may also be possible for EYCS to continue to provide support while the child settles into school.

Do very young children with SEN get support?

Children with significant learning difficulties benefit greatly from early help with their education.

Surrey has a home teaching service called "Portage" which provides :

- home support for families of very young children with significant developmental delay (0-4 years)
- special programmes for children with autism (NAS Earlybird)
- a Positive Play and Interaction home support programme for families with a child under 5 who has significant behavioural problems

For further details of all Portage programmes contact 01737 737979.

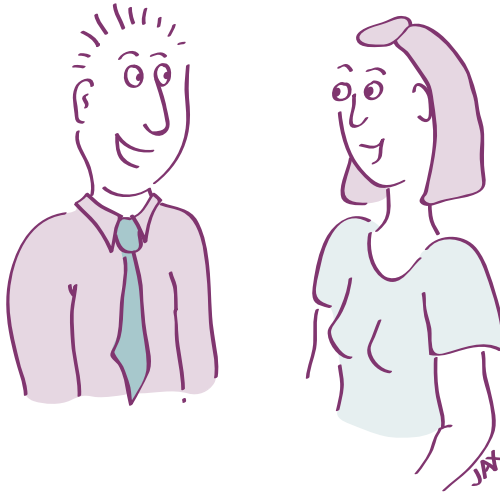
The Physical & Sensory Support Service provides specialist teachers for children with serious physical, visual or hearing difficulties who work with the child and parent/s in the home and early years setting.

You can contact The Physical & Sensory Support Service on 01372 833774.

Physio and/or Occupational Therapists may support a child with physical needs in an early years setting and a specialist teacher will become involved in preparation for moving to school.

Again the early years setting can call for advice & support from the EYCS Team.

How can I find out more?



Partnership with Parents (PwP) provides a confidential information, advice and support service for parents of children with special and/or additional educational needs.

PwP's Parent Partnership Advisers can assist parents to raise concerns they have about their children, to understand the different processes that are in place and to gather the information they need to make decisions about the best way forward for their child.

They can also tell you more about the topics covered in this booklet.

PwP can be contacted on 01737 737300.

Useful contacts and websites

Partnership with Parents

Helpline: 01737 737300

Website: www.pwpsurrey.org

Email: pwps@surreycc.gov.uk

Early Years and Childcare Service

01372 833833

Family Information Service (FIS)

01372 833800

Website: www.surreycc.gov.uk/fis

Email: surrey.fis@surreycc.gov.uk

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

www.dcsf.gov.uk or

www.teachernet.gov.uk

Physical & Sensory Support Service

01372 833774

Portage

01737 737979



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