

Early years special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Information and Guidance



Welcome

Welcome to the (SEND) information and guidance pages for early years setting managers, special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), practitioners, and childminders working in Essex.

The early years foundation stage (EYFS:2025) is a fully inclusive statutory framework with overarching principles that focus on the unique child and the understanding that children develop and learn at different rates. It seeks to provide “equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported”. Most children including those with SEND, will make good progress in the EYFS:2025. Some children may need extra support that is ‘additional to or different from’ the High-Quality Practice that is provided for all children.

When children start at an early years setting, some may have already have an identified need and are being supported by other professionals. Others may have an emerging need that the parent may or may not already be aware of. In addition, there may also be children who have a transient delay across one or more areas of learning. Therefore, it is important for children to be able to access an early years setting where they will receive the early intervention required to support them with their learning and development.

This document sets out the requirements for early years providers. Information for families and young people 0-25 with SEND can be found on [**Essex Local Offer**](#).



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Chapter one:

**Statutory requirements
that support inclusion
in the early years**

All early years settings are required to have an appointed SENCO. [The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years \(2015\)](#) sets out the importance of the role and the statutory duties in [chapter five](#).



Relevant legislation

The following sections of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#) link into the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015):

- co-operating generally: governing body functions: [Section 29](#)
- children and young people with SEND but no Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan: [Section 34](#)
- children with SEND in maintained nurseries: [Section 35](#)
- using best endeavours to secure special educational provision: [Section 66](#)
- SEND co-ordinators: [Section 64](#)
- informing parents and young people: [Section 68](#)
- SEND information report: [Section 69](#)
- duty to support pupils with medical conditions: [Section 100](#)

SEND code of practice 0-25 years (2015) [Section 5.52](#):

A maintained nursery school must ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as the SENCO.

SEND code of practice 0-25 years (2015) [Section 5.53](#):

The EYFS framework requires other early years providers to have arrangements in place for meeting children's SEND. Those in group provision are expected to identify a SENCO.

Key legislation to enable an early years SENCO to fulfil their statutory requirements

Childminders are encouraged to identify a person to act as SENCO and childminders who are registered with a childminder agency or who are part of a network may wish to share that role between them. Early years practitioners working with children should monitor and review the progress and development of all children throughout the early years.

Please see key legislation:



Equality Act (2010)



Early years foundation stage (EYFS:2025) statutory framework for group and school-based providers



Early years foundation stage (EYFS:2025) statutory framework for childminders



Early years inspection toolkit (2025)



The role of the SENCO (2022)



United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child



Safeguarding in the early years

Non-statutory documents

The early years foundation stage (EYFS:2025) is an inclusive framework that can be adapted to meet the needs of most children. Below are some examples of non-statutory documents that can support practice to meet children's individual needs.

Inclusion Framework

The Inclusion Framework is an Essex Framework that enables anyone working with children and young people to identify barriers to learning, development and preparation for adulthood. It is a non-academic outcomes framework that focuses on building and retaining the essential skills which enable children and young people to have a positive in life and pertains to:

- resilience and confidence
- wellbeing
- opportunity
- independence

 The details of this can be found in the [Inclusion Framework interactive document](#).

For more information, speak to your SEND Inclusion Partner.



Useful links

- For further information - [SEND Services and Support page](#).
- [Development Matters 2023](#): Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage
- [Birth to 5 Matters](#): Non-statutory guidance for the early years foundation stage
- [Department of Education](#): Progress check at the age of two
- [Solent NHS Trust Children Therapy Service](#): Early years development checklist
- [Sensory awareness toolkit \(PDF, 7.66MB\)](#)

Within Essex we have people in the following roles who can support you to further enhance your practice both statutory and non-statutory such as:

- **SEND Inclusion Partner (IP):** helps settings fulfil statutory duties for children with SEND and develop inclusive practices; helps settings deliver improved outcomes for children with SEND, through implementation of the person-centred graduated approach.
- **Early Years Education Partner (EYEP):** assists in reviewing and developing all aspects of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision to support all children effectively.
- **Early Years Intervention Partner (EYEIP):** supports settings in understanding and meeting the developmental needs of children with emerging needs. The EYEIPs are only allocated through the Early Years Resource Panel.

 [The Early Years Resource Panel](#)



Chapter two:

Role of the early years SENCO (PVI and childminders)

Responsibilities of the early years SENCO

The early years SENCO role is for a Level 3 practitioner in a PVI setting and is also relevant to childminders. It is an important role to ensure best possible educational outcomes are achieved for children with SEND. As an early years and childcare provider, you must follow the requirements set out in the key legislation highlighted within the statutory requirements section.

The early years SENCO is responsible for:

- working with the manager and practitioners within the setting to ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills required to support all children with SEND
- to understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEND, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015)
- ensuring there is a robust cycle of assess, plan, do, review (graduated approach) in place that is reviewed regularly to monitor progress. The one plan should reflect the views of the child, parents and professionals offering a person-centred approach
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting
- continually develop own practice

➤ Further information can be found in [The role of the Early Years Special Educational Needs Coordinator document \(January 2022\)](#).



★ Case study

This case study sets out the tasks expected of the setting SENCO in supporting practitioners to gather and analyse information as part of the One Planning process.



Bobbie has Down syndrome and was 30 months old. He had a place at nursery and had input from several professionals.

- 1 Gathering information before he started nursery**
- 2 Bringing parents and professionals together to plan for his start**
- 3 Supporting practitioners through planning, training and implementing provision**
- 4 Coordinating joint meetings and making sure his one plan was updated**
- 5 Submitting his one planning for funding requests**
- 6 Gathering information for submission for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment**
- 7 Taking the lead to plan for transitions going into preschool and reception class**

Inclusive Practice in the early years

Most children with SEND do not require additional funding and are able to be supported and included in an Early Years setting by:

- responsive adults
- an enabling environment
- high quality delivery of the EYFS

High quality early years practice

High quality early years practice provides children with the opportunities to learn, progress and achieve the best possible outcomes. The most important elements of this are practitioners who have the highest expectations for every child and who strive to provide the learning environment that meets children's individual needs.

Inclusive practice

Inclusive practice is the responsibility of everyone who works with young children in the EYFS. It is a legal requirement that the duties of the Equality Act (2010) are fully met. It is also every child's right to be fully included and for practitioners to value their strengths and seek to remove barriers to their inclusion.

Inclusive education

Inclusive education includes:

- equalities and inclusion that applies to all children and families
- equity that requires more than treating everyone the same
- ensuring children can see themselves and their families reflected in the environment
- focus on the child at the centre
- practitioners working with children with SEND acknowledge and value each child, emphasising what they can do through a strengths-based perspective on disability



For more information, visit the [Birth to 5 Matters website](#).

Strong and effective leadership

Strong and effective leaders:

- have a clear vision of what they are trying to achieve
- know what good/outstanding teaching looks like
- can identify accurately what works and what needs to change
- build teams of well-qualified and skilled practitioners through performance management
- they monitor the quality of teaching and children's progress

➤ Further features are outlined in [Getting it right the first time Ofsted publication.](#)

Ordinarily Available

Ordinarily Available sets out a common set of expectations about the provision and practice that is expected in all early years settings, mainstream schools and post 16 providers for all children and young people with SEND. It is what a parent or family can expect to be "normally" or "ordinarily" available to their child without the need for involving specialist support.

➤ Further information can be found in the [Ordinarily Available document.](#)

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes that organisations and people providing services must make if someone's physical or mental disability puts them at a disadvantage compared with others who aren't disabled.

➤ For further information, visit the Council for [Disabled Children website.](#)



Chapter three:

Graduated Approach
- One Planning

In Essex, we refer to One Planning as our Graduated Approach to fulfil our statutory duties as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) and the Early Years Foundation Stage (2025). It sets out the cycles of assess, plan, do, review (APDR) to support the child's needs in a person-centred way.

- More information can be found in the One Planning document which can be downloaded from the [**Essex Schools Infolink**](#).



One Planning – My Early Years One Plan

As a SENCO, it is up to you how you present your one planning, however, the templates that Essex provide can be adopted by a setting or used as guide to design your own.

If you are designing your own template, then make sure you include all the information as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) and highlighted below:

- clearly outlining the child's needs
- shows progress made by the child
- record of the child's aspirations (long term ambition or hopes)
- outcomes (steps towards the aspiration)
- SMART Shorter-Term Targets (steps towards the outcomes)
- small steps towards the targets (steps the child will achieve; these monitor progress and achievement towards the shorter-term targets)
- record of resources and provision to support the child's progress towards the targets (includes use of staff)
- start and review dates
- space to record the progress made towards targets, outcomes, and aspirations at the review point
- evidence that the document has been co-produced (evidence of the voice of the child and their parents and carers, practitioners, and where relevant, other professionals)

The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) sets out the graduated approach, which is made up of a cycle of assess, plan, do, review.

This approach will be included in your one planning document which will provide a person-centred approach and should be reviewed regularly with parents and professionals to monitor development and support the child's progress.

Four-part cycle of:



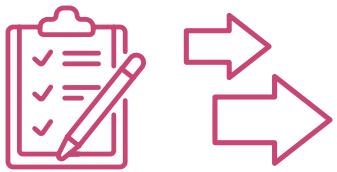


Assess

Your assessment will form the first part of the graduated approach as highlighted in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) and in this section of the one plan, it is vital to demonstrate the child's needs and what this looks like in practice, considering the 4 broad areas of need.

Assessment is key to identifying a child's needs, working with the setting SENCO as well as in partnership with parents/carers and any professionals working with the child and their family. There are a number of assessment tools available including statutory and non-statutory tools to support you in assessing a child's needs to ensure that support is matched to need. These assessments should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need. Where there is little or no improvement in the child's progress, with parents' agreement, further support from external professionals can be sought.

➤ **SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015)**
Section 5.39



Plan/Do

Any additional support will be agreed by all parties in consultation to support the child's progress and development. Planning should incorporate the voice of the child and activities should be planned appropriately. The Early Years practitioner with support from the SENCO will oversee the implementation of the strategies and interventions agreed at the planning stage to support the child's development.

► SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) Section 5.40 – 5.42



Review

Early years practitioners must review the one plan regularly to monitor the child's progress. As part of the review, you must identify the child's strengths as well as any further areas for development or referrals, incorporating the views of the child, parents, and any professionals involved.

► **SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015)** Section 5.43 – 5.46

More information on person-centered reviews can be found on the [Helen Sanderson Associates website](#). There is also an animation video available [to watch](#).



One Planning – Training

One planning training has been designed to help you explore one planning and the information required as part of your statutory responsibilities. It will provide you with a toolkit of resources to enable a person-centered approach, through setting SMART outcomes, shorter-term targets and small steps to achievement that will support you to monitor the child's progress. For further information and to access training you can contact your SEND Inclusion Partner.

My Early Years One Plan

The template for the My Early Years One Plan can be downloaded from the [EYCP website](#).



Further resources

- [Partnership between parents and carers publication](#)
- [Helen Sanderson Associates - person centred thinking tools](#)

Health Care Plans

For children with a medical need there should also be a health care plan in place so all practitioners know and understand the needs. Plans should be written in liaison with parents and health professionals. The following resources will help guide you to provide the information required:

- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK](#)
- [Medical needs checklist and example template](#)
- [Children with medical needs in school](#)



Chapter four:

Education Health and Care plans and support from the local authority



Education, Health, and Care plans (EHC)

An EHC plan is a statutory document which sets out the support a child or young person needs from all the agencies that support them (education, health and social care). [Essex Local Offer](#) provides more information for parents and [Essex Schools InfoLink](#) provides further information for schools and settings around the support that is available for children and young people with SEND including one planning and EHC plans.

Support from the Local Authority

The SEND Inclusion and Psychology Team offers a number of services to support all educational settings to be equally and effectively inclusive. All settings that offer FEEE will have access to a SEND Inclusion Partner who will work with the SENCO to implement their statutory duties in meeting the needs of children with SEND.



Visit [Essex Schools Infolink](#) for further information.

Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVIs)

All settings will be allocated to a cluster group and receive invitations to a combination of cluster meetings/workshop/one planning sessions each half term. These sessions will provide an opportunity for training, networking, and solution focused discussions, as well as talking to your allocated SEND Inclusion Partner (IP) about any concerns/issues that have arisen.

You can also contact your IP in between these sessions for support and advice around supporting children with additional needs/one planning/advice around strategies, ideas, curriculum differentiation and where to find resources/information.

IPs will also support you with developing your One Planning as part of the graduated approach and statutory processes and agree a plan of action around the setting and child.

There are also several training opportunities advertised on [the Early years and childcare website](#).

Childminders

There will be a SEND Inclusion Partner (IP) in attendance at your meetings with the Early Years Education Partners to offer advice and guidance around children with SEND.

Childminders have an allocated email inbox [EYSEND](#). [CMEquiries@essex.gov.uk](#) which is monitored regularly so any queries can be emailed and will be responded to. This is monitored by the Senior SEND Inclusion Partners who will arrange for an IP contact you to discuss any concerns about a child that you may have.

Funding

Funding can be provided in situations where a child needs additional support at an enhanced level which is over and above that which is ordinarily available for all children with SEND.

Funding information is outlined below:



- [Funding pages on the Early years and childcare website](#)
- [Individual Pupil Resource Agreement \(IPRA\) on Essex Schools InfoLink](#)



Email enquiries

- Early Years Resource Panel - [Eyresourcepanel@essex.gov.uk](#)
- Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) 2 Queries - [twosfunding@essex.gov.uk](#)
- Portal queries and headcount submissions - [earlyyearsdata@essex.gov.uk](#)
- Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) 3 and 4-year-olds and contract queries - [FEEEQueries@essex.gov.uk](#)

Chapter five:

Four broad areas of need

Four broad areas of need – Statutory requirements

The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) **Sections 5.33/6:27/6:28** identifies four broad areas of need. These four broad areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for.

Areas include:

- communication and interaction
- social, emotional and mental health
- cognition and learning
- sensory and/or physical needs





Communication and Interaction



SLC Awareness training

This training is a general speech, language and communication awareness course for all early years practitioners, teachers and SENCOs. The training consists of a three-hour training session which will consist of definitions, research, key strategies and encouraging reflective practice, as well as discussing the importance of early identification.

By the end of the training delegates should be able to review their own and their colleagues practice to ensure they work towards having a language rich environment, feel confident with strategies to use to support children with language delay and deepen their understanding of the role of the adult during playful learning opportunities.

For more information and to book your place, please visit the [Education Essex online booking system](#).

Early Talk Boost

Early Talk Boost is a targeted intervention, delivered by a trained early years practitioner to a group of up to eight children aged 3-4 years old that have delayed language.

The intervention helps to boost their language skills to help narrow the gap between them and their peers.

This training is for early years practitioners who will develop the skills and knowledge to understand the rationale behind Early Talk Boost, identify appropriate children, measure their progress, and deliver the intervention successfully. The resources required for this training will need to be purchased by the setting prior to attending the training.

For further information on SLC training, visit the [Speech and Language UK website](#).

To view available SLC training courses, visit the [Education Essex online booking system](#).

To order the resources for Early Talk Boost, visit the [Speech and Language website](#).



ELKLAN training

ELKLAN evidence-based speech and language support for 0-3s and 3-5s is a highly successful externally accredited training course which equips staff to develop these key communication skills in children proved to ensure later success in school.

This is the only accredited training in speech, language and communication that is aimed specifically at those working with 0-3s and 3-5s. For further information visit the [Essex Schools InfoLink website](#).

- SLCN contact: SLCN.Training@essex.gov.uk
- [Visit the Elklan website for more information on support for 0-3s](#)
- [Visit the Elklan website for more information on support for 3-5s](#)

For more information and to book your place, please visit the [Education Essex online booking system](#).



Talk, Listen and Cuddle (TLC)

Talk, Listen, Cuddle (TLC) is an Essex campaign helping parents, carers and families give their young children the best start to life, developing their communication skills through playful learning at home. For more information, visit the [TLC website](#).



Useful links

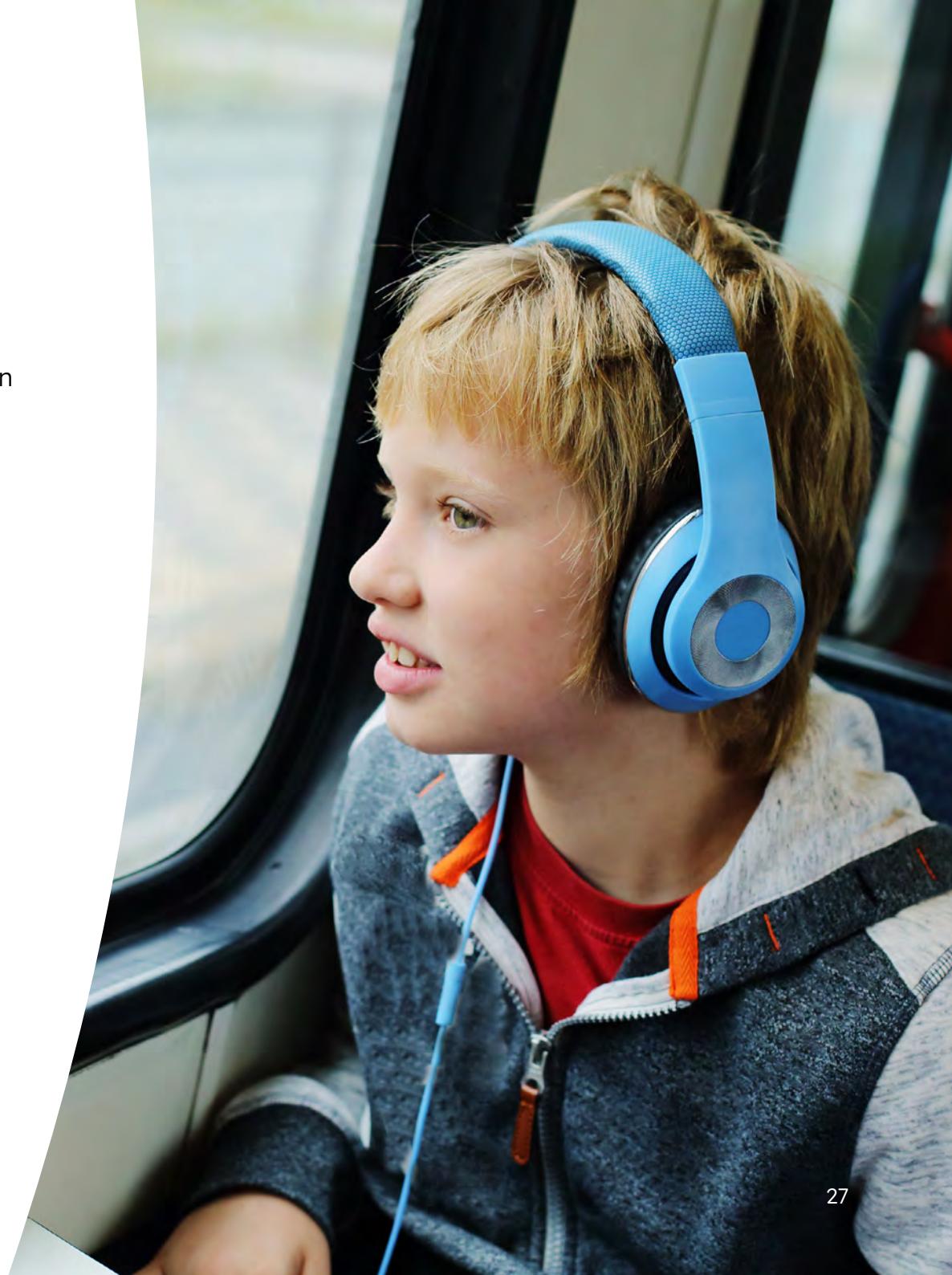
- [Start for Life website](#)
- [Tiny Happy People](#)
- [Tiny Speech and Language UK Enquiry Line](#)
 - This free enquiry service is part of speech and language UK's family support. It is designed to give parents or carers and practitioners a chance to discuss questions or concerns about a child's speech and language development with a speech and language therapist.

Neuroinclusive Education Network (NEN)

Supported by the Department for Education, the NEN promotes and supports partnerships throughout the education system to improve educational access, experience and outcomes for children and young people with autism.

Underpinned by current research the 'Good Autism Practice' training is available for free to all PVIs/schools, nurseries and childminders. To gain further information about this training please contact your SEND Inclusion Partner.

 Further information on the training can also be found on the [Essex Schools Infolink](#).



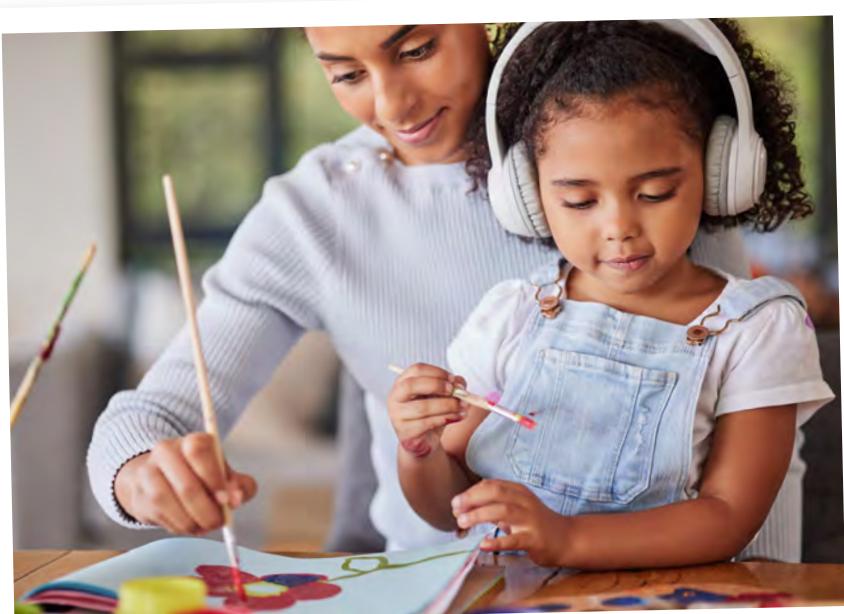
Information and training for parents

Good Beginnings – [Please visit the Local Offer website for further information.](#)

Supporting your Neurodiverse Child information pack – Please visit the [Essex Family Forum website to access the pack.](#)

Autism Portal

There is a new and updated autism portal for professionals to find all support, services and resources related to supporting autistic individuals. This can be accessed on the [Essex Schools Infolink.](#)



Advanced practitioners course for autism

Develops theoretical understanding, practical skills, and knowledge of interventions and strategies to support attendees to effectively include and understand autistic pupils.

The course will specifically help attendees to:

- develop an in-depth understanding of autism - including the 3 areas of difference
- develop an understanding of the 3 psychological theories of autism
- develop an understanding of sensory differences in autistic children and related interventions
- increase understanding of social communication differences in autistic pupils and how to support these
- better understand and manage communicating behaviour
- better understand the perspectives of autistic individuals and parents of autistic children



To book a place visit the [Essex Schools Infolink.](#)

Autism Central

Autism Central is peer-led programme that supports parents/carers of autistic individuals. Parents/Carers can access a broad range of information on the [Autism Central website.](#) They can also book places on the free online group sessions and request 1:1 support via telephone or Teams call. This is a free, all age service which does not require a diagnosis.



Social emotional and mental health

Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP)

TPP is the Essex approach to understanding behaviour and supporting emotional wellbeing – for further information, please visit the [Essex Schools InfoLink website](#).



Cognition and Learning

A child who presents with greater difficulties than the majority of other children of their age in making progress across all areas of the curriculum despite high-quality provision. The extent of learning difficulty can range from mild to moderate. These difficulties are not due to factors such as:

- learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- social deprivation (lack of opportunity)
- sensory impairment
- emotional difficulties

The child may present with delays in all areas of the EYFS including understanding, thinking, problem solving and retaining information, concepts, and skills as well as difficulties in:

- attention and listening
- understanding
- speaking
- self-help skills

For children with Down syndrome, we offer some bespoke training that will support your practice and help you to:

- recognise the specific learning profile of a child or young person (CYP) with Down syndrome to plan suitable learning activities for them
- identify suitable resources and strategies to deliver appropriate learning activities
- recognise a range of methods that may be employed in order that CYP can demonstrate progress
- identify appropriate strategies that may be used to enable CYPs to show increased independence skills

Sensory and/or physical needs



Deaf/hearing impaired (HI) specialist teaching service for deafness/hearing impairment

We provide teaching, support and advice for deafness/hearing impairment. We work in homes and early years settings and run weekly, local communication groups across the county called CHIPS (stay and play sessions for children who are deaf or have a hearing impairment). Our team consists of qualified teachers of the deaf, an educational audiologist, British Sign Language (BSL) tutors, and sensory support specialists. The level and nature of the support provided varies according to need and is determined using a nationally agreed eligibility criteria for our service.

Our team will visit deafness/hearing Impairment pre-school children on our caseload in their homes and early years settings to provide:

- teaching, assessment, support, monitoring and advice on the development of the listening, language, literacy, learning, interaction and social and emotional skills of deafness/hearing impairment children
- track and monitor child development at ages 0-3 using the success from the start profile for deaf children
- provide free training for early years staff regarding deafness/hearing impairment children in their setting
- advice and support for 'One Planning' and Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments, Plans and reviews

- specialist equipment, such as radio aids, and the training and support required to use them effectively
- advice regarding the impact of the acoustics of an Early Years setting on children's listening and development
- support and advice at the point of transition into education
- BSL instruction for families and children on our caseload



Referral Criteria for the Deafness/Hearing Impairment Team

Children and young people are accepted from the time of diagnosis onto the caseload of a teacher of the deaf if they have either permanent deafness/hearing impairment or, alternatively, a temporary deafness/hearing impairment with an additional SEND.

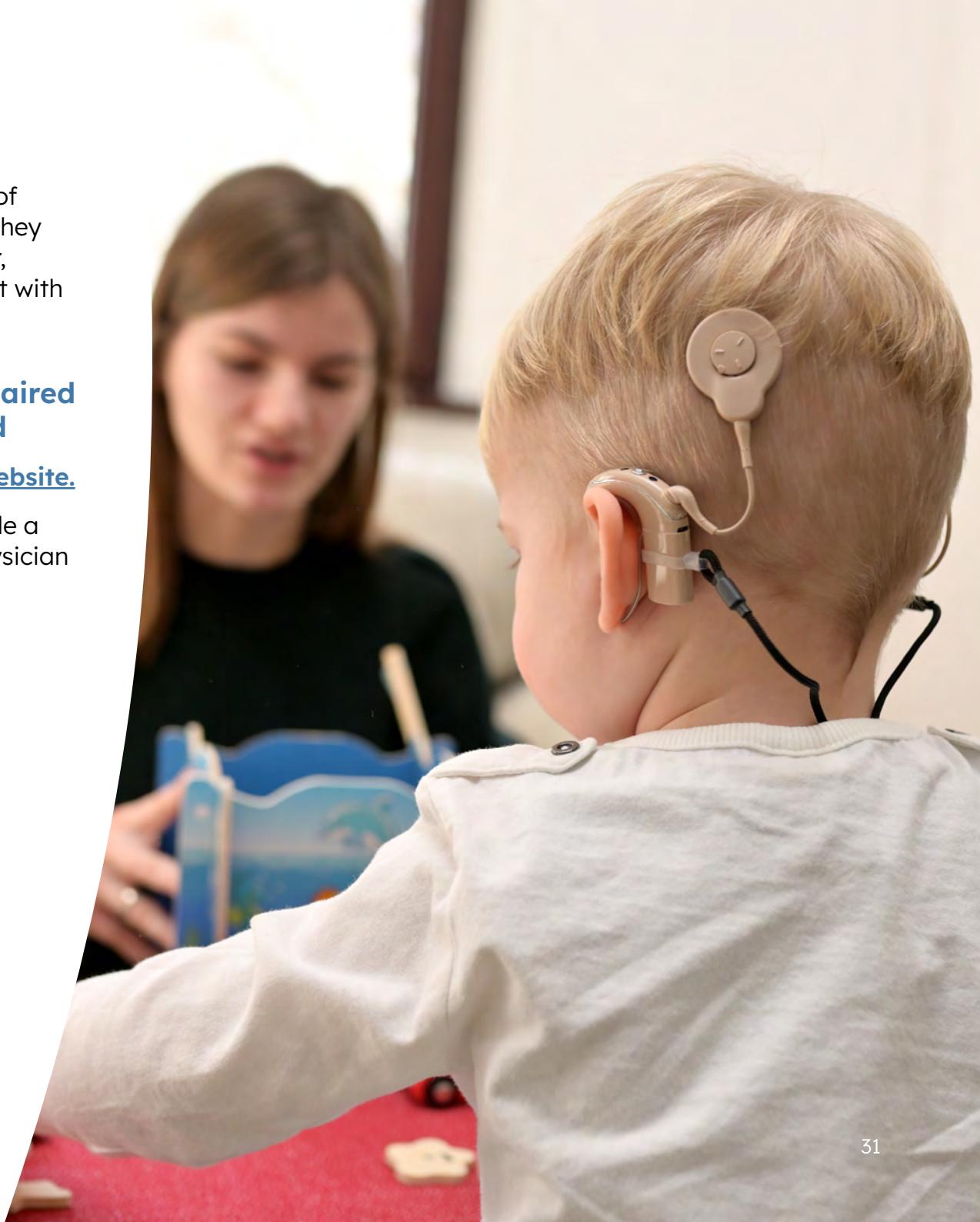
How to make a request for deaf/hearing impaired children who are not already on our caseload

A referral can be made on the [Essex County Council website](#).

For our service to process new referrals, you must include a clinic letter from an audiologist or audiological/ENT physician which includes both the diagnosis of deafness/hearing impairment and an audiogram. For further information, please contact educationpsi@essex.gov.uk.

Links Professional resources for Early Years | National Deaf Childrens Society

- Visit the [National Deaf Childrens Society](#) for more information and resources.



Sensory and/or physical needs



Vision impairment (VI) specialist teaching service for children with vision impairment

We provide teaching, support, and advice for children with vision impairment and their families. We work in homes and Early Years settings. Our team consists of Qualified Teachers for Children with Vision Impairment (QTVIs), habilitation specialists, a Braille instructor, a SEND ICT Technician, and sensory support specialists. The level and nature of the support provided varies according to need and is determined using a nationally agreed eligibility criteria for our service.

Our team will visit pre-school children with vision impairment on our caseload in their homes and Early Years settings to provide:

- teaching, assessment, support, monitoring and advice on the development of young children with a vision impairment, including promoting the developmental of any residual vision
- track and monitor child development at ages 0-4 using the Development Journal for Children with Vision Impairment
- provide free training for early years staff regarding children with vision impairment in their setting
- advice and support for 'One Planning' and Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments, Plans and reviews
- advice on suitable toys and resources to promote play and learning skills

- pre-braille teaching and advice on developing learning through touch for children who are likely to learn literacy through the braille code
- advice and specialist teaching on mobility and habilitation skills
- environmental access audits for settings
- support and advice at the point of transition into education

Referral Criteria for the Vision Impairment Team

A referral can be made on the [Essex County Council website](http://www.essex.gov.uk).

For our service to process new referrals, you must include a clinic letter from an ophthalmologist or orthoptist, which gives the diagnosis and visual acuities. For further information, please contact educationpsi@essex.gov.uk



More information can be found on the [Royal National Institute of Blind People \(RNIB\) website](http://www.rnib.org.uk).

Sensory and/or physical needs



Physical Neurological Impairment (PNI) Specialist Teaching Service

We work with children and young people from the ages of 0 to 25 who meet our criteria for support. This would be a significant medical and/or physical need which affects their ability to access the environment and/or learning. You will need to contact us if you think a child in your setting needs our support.

What is PNI?

PNI is a long-term condition that will affect the child in all aspects of their life.



Physical – affects their gross and/or fine motor skills and their ability to carry out everyday tasks



Neurological – How has the disability come about? There may be a brain injury and/or the neuro networks may be damaged.



Medical – Complex conditions that require ongoing support and care

Type of support we offer could include some or all of the following:

- telephone calls and emails
- virtual and/or face-to-face visits to your setting. Support with transition to primary school. Record of Contact reports
- signposting to useful organisations or other websites
- assess the physical environment, discuss adaptations and/or reasonable adjustments
- link with other professionals e.g. occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech and language therapists, social workers, specialist nurses
- make suggestions about how to meet the child's learning and physical or medical needs and discuss next steps

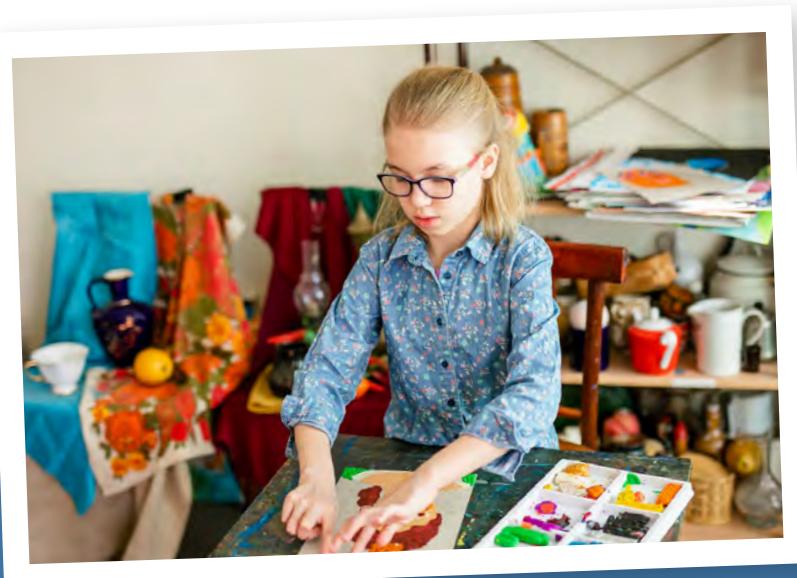


Criteria for our possible support

Criteria: We do not have set criteria for our input – each referral is looked at on a case-by-case basis, but it does need to be evident that that child has a significant medical and/or physical need. We would not accept referrals for needs such as ASD or Down's Syndrome, for example, unless the child has a clear physical need alongside this.

You will need to:

- make sure you have been carrying out the graduated approach
- speak with the child's parents or carers to share thoughts and to gain their views. This can be either at a meeting to review the 'one plan' or another appropriate time
- speak to any health professionals already involved with the child. This can be an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, or health visitor



How to request support

Referrals: Please use the online referral form available on the EY and Childcare website.

Please add any relevant documentation to back up your request, e.g. HealthCare Plan if there is one in place.

We will need to know about the child's physical and/or medical needs such as:

- how the child finds it difficult to access your setting
- how they affect the child's ability to learn
- any changes needed to the setting beyond that needed for any other child in the setting
- if there is significant need for specialist equipment
- if there is a significant need for adaptations to the physical environment

Virtual Consultation: If do not already have a PNI Specialist Teacher working with your setting, and you are not sure whether the child's needs would meet our criteria or you have some questions, then we can offer an anonymous virtual conversation with you. Please fill out the [online form](#) to request this support.



Introduction to supporting children with physical and neurological impairment (PNI)

This short 10-minute training video is suitable for preschool and nursery SENCOs and inclusion managers. It gives an overview of PNI, the impact it has on children's development and where to get extra help.

Follow the steps below:

- 1** Watch the [video](#) through to the end

- 2** Download and complete the [PNI post course task document](#)

- 3** Email the completed PNI post course task document to nicky.rollinson@essex.gov.uk

- 4** When we receive your post course task we will send you a certificate of participation. The post course task will help us identify future training needs and make possible improvements to the course



General Training and Information:

- [PDNET online training](#)
- [The National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\) website](#)
- [The First Discoverers website](#)
- [Early years child development training](#)
- [Early years SEND toolkit - Oxfordshire County Council](#)
- [Noodle Now website](#)
- [Early years hub](#)

Chapter six: Transitions in the early years

Overview

There are several transition points in a child's early life such as home to nursery, room to room (in nursery/ preschool) and preschool to school. Getting this right is vital for every child and can have a significant impact on a child's start as well as their journey as they prepare for later life and into adulthood.

Transition should be viewed as a process rather than an event that involves children, practitioners, and parents / carers together. When smooth transitions occur, there are huge benefits for the child's personal, social and emotional development, their learning and future success at school. There are many definitions of school readiness, but all broadly concur with the need to consider the three aspects outlined by UNICEF: children's readiness, families' readiness, and schools' readiness.



Transitions

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years

Foundation Stage (EYFS: 2024) provides us with a general definition of school readiness, ‘the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life’.

The Department for Education (DfE) document - Supporting Families in the Foundation Years, states that ‘Children should start school healthy, happy, communicative, sociable, curious, active and ready equipped for the next phase of learning’. These definitions have been used to develop local agreement about what it means for children across Essex to be school ready and have resulted in various school readiness intervention projects, involving the engagement of children and their families as well as schools and settings.

Schools and settings may already have approaches to transition that work well, as it is good practice to ensure continuity for children during periods of transition. The intention of the new materials is to complement what is already in place, or to offer something that can be used as a standalone model, or something to be developed further to personalise the experience for children in your own setting.

Please remember to link in with your local best practice networks to join in with transition discussions. The Essex Talk, Listen, Cuddle (TLC) website has lots of information for families about children’s speech and language, ideas for playful learning at home and preparing children to be ready for school. Don’t forget to download 50 things to do before you’re 5 from the TLC website. You can also visit the Start for Life website for more ideas on activities to boost children’s communication, language and literacy development. Everything you do together, no matter how small, will help get them ready for school.



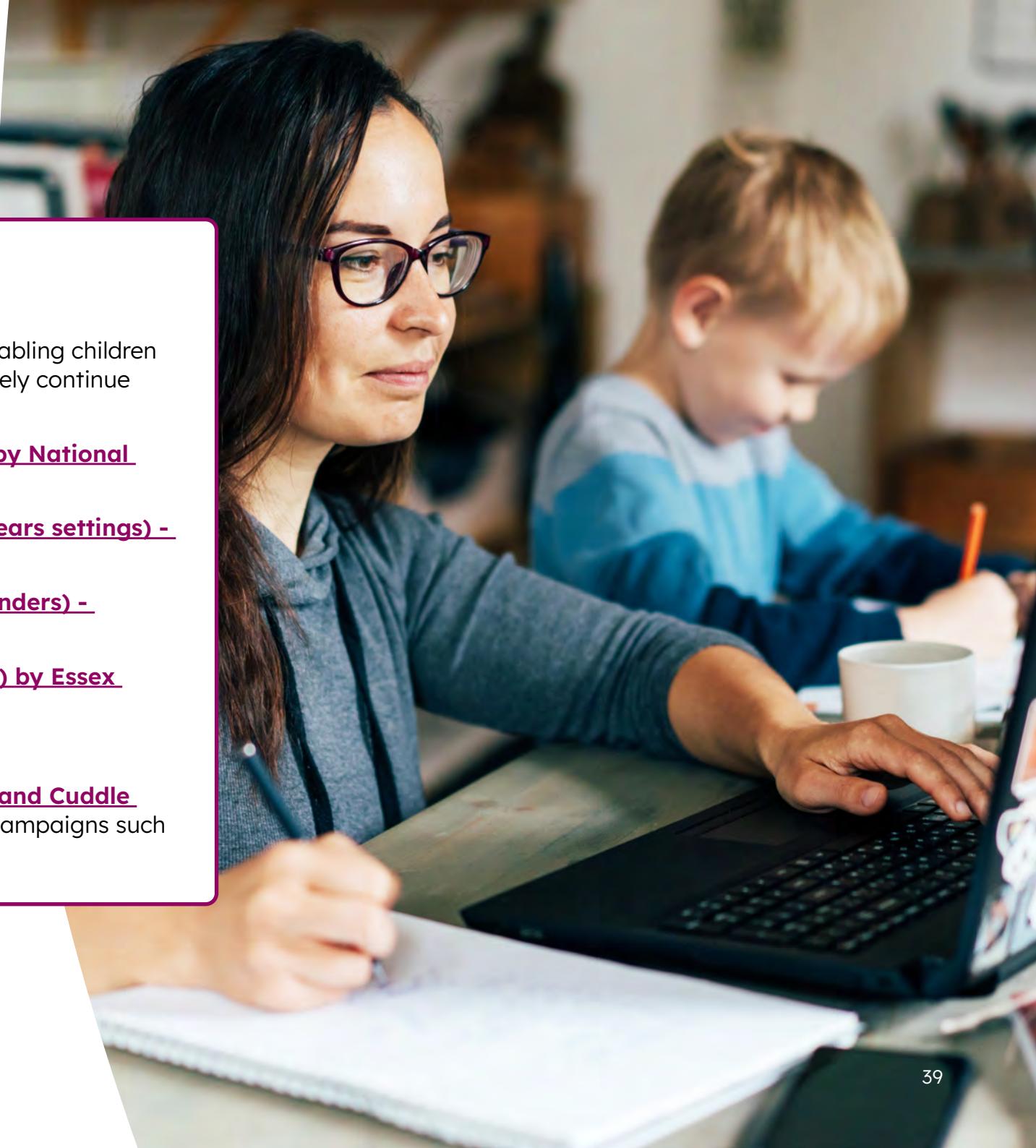


Relevant resources

The below materials will support you in enabling children to have smooth transitions and to effectively continue their learning journey.

- [All about transitions - PDF, 101KB - by National Strategies](#)
- [Quality Matters: Transitions \(Early Years settings\) - by Essex County Council](#)
- [Quality Matters: Transitions \(childminders\) - by Essex County Council](#)
- [Quality Matters: Transitions \(schools\) by Essex County Council](#)
- [TLC - Going to School](#)

Remember to also follow the [Talk, Listen and Cuddle Facebook Page](#) to keep up to date with campaigns such as the starting school campaign.



Transitions – preparing and planning



Prepare

- start early
- liaise with others
- gather existing paperwork and information on the child, including the child's views, likes, and dislikes
- gain parental consent to share information with the new setting.
- have a named transition coordinator
- provide role-play activities in your setting related to book bags, uniform, and reading books.
- encourage independence wherever possible
- provide opportunities to talk about moving to their new school and create their own memory book to take with them



Plan

- arrange a planning meeting
- talk through the process up to date with them
- create an individual or child transition summary
- discuss any barriers or difficulties that may arise in the new setting
- create an updated meeting
- provide accurate planning and associated paperwork



Do

- attend the planning meeting
- offer support and encouragement
- observe any adjustments needed for the environment in the new setting
- allow visits to maximize the potential for a successful transition

Planning for transition should be part of your one planning discussions with parents in the academic year prior to moving into reception. This can be incorporated in your one planning document or as part of a transition plan.

- **SEN and disability in the early years: A toolkit**
- **Preparing your child for starting school**
- **Suggested transition arrangements for a child with SEND from an early years setting to a maintained nursery, or reception class in Essex**
- **High Quality Transition in the early years Birth to 5 guidance**



Chapter seven:

Training and useful links



Training and Qualifications

Visit the [Education Essex online booking system](#) to see the wide range of eLearning, webinars and face to face training courses available for you to book onto. For further information on the courses around supporting children with SEND please contact your SEND Inclusion Partner.



Links to useful websites

- [Early years and childcare website](#)
- [Essex family hubs](#)
- [Training for early years professionals](#)
- [Essex Local Offer – information for parents](#)
- [Key documents to support children with SEND](#)
- [Essex Family Wellbeing website \(family hubs\)](#)
- [SEN and disability in the early years toolkit](#)
- [Council for Disabled Children](#)
- [Inclusive Communication](#)
- [Essex Schools InfoLink](#)
- [Helen Sanderson Associates](#)
- [Getting your setting listed on the Local Offer website](#)



Early Years Foundation Stage Newsletter

To get all the latest news, sign up to the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) Newsletter](#).



Booking Training

All training bookings can be made via accessing the [Education Essex online booking system](#).



SEND in Essex interactive document

[This interactive guide](#) sets out some of the SEND Improvement work happening in Essex and provides further information on supporting children in your schools and settings.



This information is issued by:
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

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 [essex_cc](https://twitter.com/essex_cc)

 [Essex County Council](https://www.youtube.com/c/EssexCountyCouncil)

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