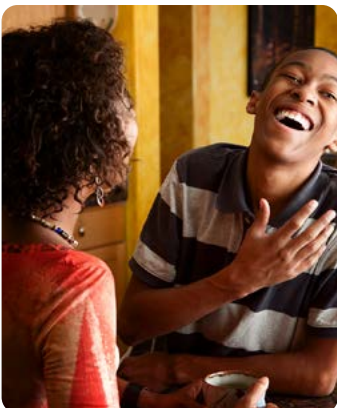




Graduated Response Guidance 2024 - 2028



**A handbook for building inclusive
practice in Bristol educational settings**



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Introduction

A vision for Inclusion in Bristol

The Bristol SEND and Inclusion Strategy (2024-2028) has been developed through a partnership of education, health and social care, as well as Bristol Parent Carers and The Listening Partnership (a group of children and young people (CYP) with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) aged from 13-25. The Listening Partnership told us through this strategy:

“We have the same hopes and aspirations for our future as all children and young people in Bristol.”

“We experience many of the same challenges and struggles as other children and young people.”

“We want and have the right to the same opportunities in our lives.”

The strategy outlines six priorities:

- 1. Understanding needs:** Work with CYP with SEND and their parent carers so we understand what they are good at, what they find difficult and what they need to thrive.
- 2. Listening to families:** Listen to what CYP with SEND and their parent carers tell us so that we can make decisions together as equal partners.
- 3. Right help right time:** Provide our CYP with SEND with the right help at the right time so that they can achieve good outcomes.
- 4. Inclusive educational provision:** Develop higher quality and inclusive educational provision.
- 5. Preparing for the future:** Prepare our CYP with SEND for changes in their lives and futures so they can reach their potential.
- 6. Feeling safe and included:** Work together so CYP with SEND feel safe and included in their educational settings and communities.

These priorities raise a call to action for all professionals working with CYP.

The CYP of Bristol need every early years provider, school and educational setting in Bristol to foster an inclusive culture where all CYP have equal access to opportunities, receive high-quality support, and are encouraged to reach their full potential.


Early years providers, schools and educational settings must promote early identification and a flexible, needs-led, person-centred approach to effectively respond to the diverse needs of all CYP at every stage of their learning journey and in support of their pathway to adulthood.

Early years providers, schools and educational settings will be referred to collectively as educational settings throughout these documents.

Aims of the Handbook

This handbook has been produced with the following aims:

- To support educational settings to set up a graduated response and graduated approach (assess-plan-do-review cycles) for CYP in their setting.
- To support educational settings in delivering the priorities from the Bristol SEND and Inclusion Strategy.
- To help educational settings and the Local Authority meet their duties and responsibilities in identifying and supporting CYP with SEND in educational settings (0-25 years).
- To offer a single point of reference for staff (particularly Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCoS) and Inclusion Managers) to use when they are supporting CYP with additional needs in their educational settings.

This handbook is produced in conjunction with an A-Z guide and toolkit documents. These are to be used alongside this guidance and include associated practical resources. The toolkit symbol indicates a supporting document in the [toolkit](#) .

Key Legislation and Local Strategy

The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child

Ratified in 1992, this convention has 54 articles that cover children's rights in all aspects of their life. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy each of their rights. Each right in the convention is interlinked, and no right is more important than another (www.unicef.gov.uk downloaded Jan 2025).

Examples include that every child has the right to:

- **Relax** and **play** (Article 31).
- Freedom of **expression** (Article 13).
- **Be safe** from violence (Article 19).

- An **education** (Article 28).
- Protection of **identity** (Article 8).
- **Know** their **rights** (Article 42).

Children and Families Act (2014) and the SEND Code of Practice (2015)

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) was published in January 2015 following the Children’s and Families Act (2014). It provides statutory guidance to Local Authorities and educational settings in relation to CYP with SEN and disabled CYP. The Code of Practice (CoP) states that:

“A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her”. (Dfe, 2015. p15)

Where the CoP says ‘must’ then Local Authorities and education settings must follow this as a legal obligation. Where the CoP says ‘should’ then Local Authorities and education settings must make regard to it.

Principles underpinning the Children and Families Act (2014) and SEND Code of Practice (2015), guide how CYP should be supported in settings. Settings must:

- Support CYP and parents to participate in decisions about their support.
- Identify SEN as early as possible.
- Collaborate between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- Provide high quality provision to meet the needs of CYP with SEN.
- Focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Support successful preparation for adulthood.
- Ensure all teachers are responsible for the progress of CYP with special educational needs.
- Ensure all leaders are involved in leading for CYP with SEN.

The Act and CoP make it clear that:

- A strong sense of belonging has fundamental benefits for CYP, impacting on their learning, development and wellbeing.
- Special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching. Universally inclusive practice and good quality teaching for CYP with SEND is good practice for all.

Equality Act (2010) and The Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

CYP who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that the LA and education settings have towards disabled CYP:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled CYP.
- They must not discriminate for a reason related to a child or young person’s disability.
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services (for example a specialist chair, IT equipment or therapy).

Whether something is ‘reasonable’ depends on factors such as:

- The child/young person’s disability and what support, if any, they receive through an EHCP.
- How practicable the changes are and the resources of the education setting.
- The cost of making the change or providing the aid.
- If the change requested would overcome the disadvantage the child/young person experiences.
- If there are other ways of overcoming the disadvantage.
- Health and safety considerations and the interests of other CYP.

In education, the duty to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory, meaning schools and providers must plan ahead to prevent disadvantage, rather than simply responding when issues arise. This means settings must consider in advance what they need to do to make sure all disabled CYP can access and participate in education, facilities, services and other benefits they provide for those within their settings. For example, training all staff on trauma informed practice - regardless of whether there is a CYP in their class with identified adversity and trauma.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and Equality Act (2010) support the necessity to ensure that children and young people with SEND are not disadvantaged or discriminated against. If a setting fails to meet its legal duties under the Equality Act (2010) then parent/carers can bring a disability discrimination claim to the First-tier tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability). This process ensures that settings are held accountable and that CYP with SEND have equal access to education.

Bristol SEND and Inclusion Strategy

The SEND and Inclusion Strategy has been developed by the partnership of:

- Education, Health and Social Care.
- Bristol Parent Carers.
- The Listening Partnership.
- Organisations working in the local community.

This strategy sets out how the partnership will make things better for CYP with SEND between 2024-2028.

Graduated Approach and Graduated Response

The **graduated response** and **graduated approach** are key concepts outlined in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015). These terms refer to a structured, staged process for supporting children and young people with special educational needs (SEN).

The **graduated response** is a system wide expectation that educational settings take increasing, proportionate and personalised steps to remove barriers to learning and promote positive outcomes. High quality teaching, adapted for individual CYP, is the first step in supporting CYP with SEND. Building on this foundation, a graduated response aims to provide a flexible and responsive system of support that promotes inclusion and ensures that a CYPs needs are met in a timely and appropriate manner.

A graduated response is the way in which schools/educational settings adapt the following based on the individual and group needs of CYP in a setting:

- Teaching approaches.
- Classroom environment.
- Resources.
- Feedback.
- Monitoring.

Where CYP are:

- Not making expected progress.
- Not working in line with their peers.
- Experiencing sustained or complex barriers to learning.
- Are at risk in terms of social inclusion and belonging.

The graduated response can become increasingly individualised. A graduated approach is the cyclical process of assess, plan, do, and review, which is tailored to meet the individual needs of a CYP.

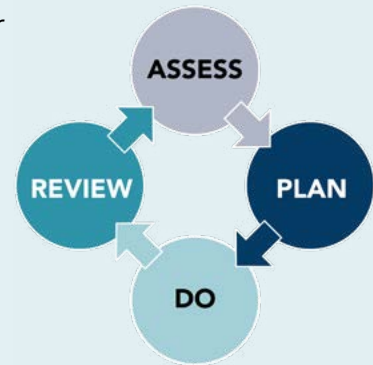
Most CYP with hearing loss or a vision impairment will require an individualised approach overseen by the Sensory Support Service.

Assess: The first step is to collect information to better understand need or barriers to learning and wellbeing.

Plan: Once needs are understood, adaptations, provision and other support can be planned. Signposting and requests to other services may be made. Expected outcomes can be agreed.

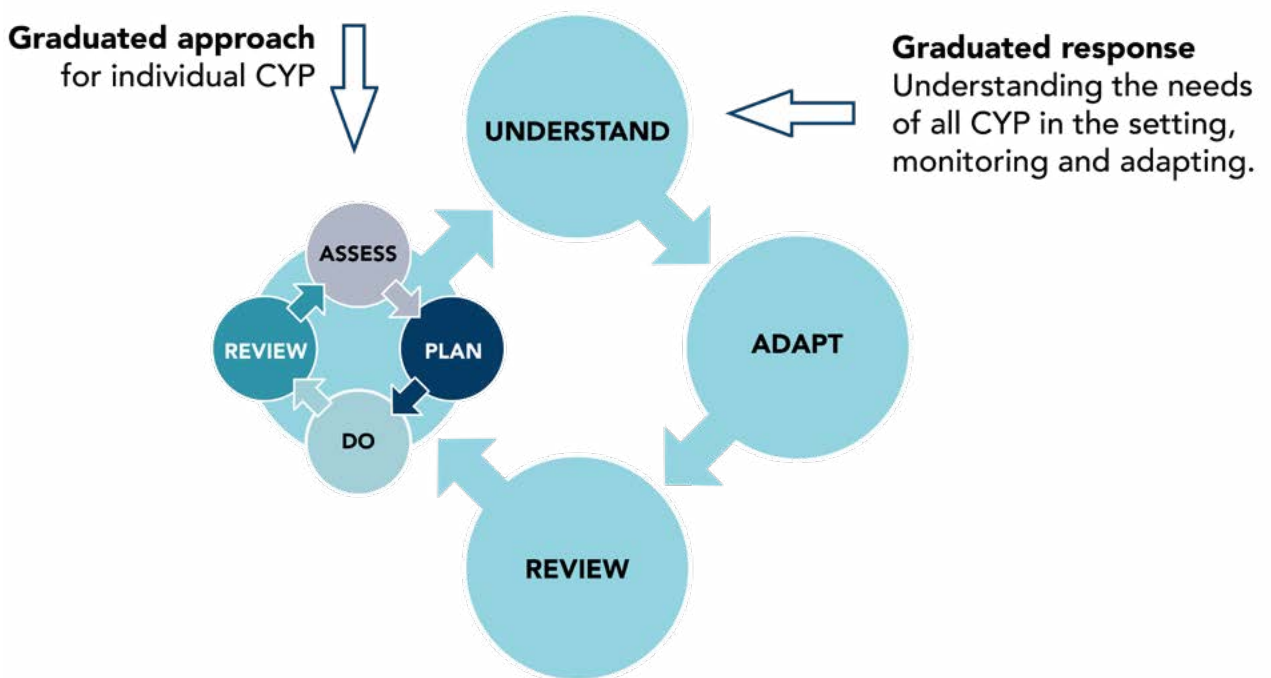
Do: In this step, the plan is put into practice. This may involve strategies at home and in an educational setting.

Review: The impact of the plan is reviewed in partnership. Good progress may mean SEN support is no longer needed; lack of progress will require the assess-plan-do-review cycle to be repeated and for adaptation of support to take place.



The 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle should be repeated as many times as needed; 'in increasing detail and with increasing frequency, to identify the best way of securing good progress' (CoP 5.44). This is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1- Graduated Approach and Graduated response – Repeated Cycles of Support in Educational Settings



In summary, the graduated response sets the strategic expectation for inclusive practice across the school and the graduated approach is how this is enacted for individual CYP.

Children and Young people, parents and carers

CYP, their parents and carers must sit at the heart of all SEND processes and practice. The participation of CYP and parent/carers in all processes is paramount, not only in line with their human rights, but also because to be effective, impactful and to have meaning to CYP and their families, they must be informed, heard and involved.

Person-centred planning

A graduated approach is a person-centred process.

Being person-centred means:

- Focusing on the individual and considering the whole person.
- Acknowledging needs, barriers and differences.
- Involving the individual.
- Listening to preferences and respecting choices.
- Treating people with respect and dignity.
- Personalising and individualising any support that is put in place.

Person-centred planning encourages everyone involved to share responsibility for actions and to do what they can to support. This includes the CYP, the educational setting, family and sometimes friends or peers and the wider community.

Person-centred planning works from the key principle that the CYP and their family are experts in their own lives. Everyone who is part of a person-centred plan needs to be clear about their roles and what they can and can't influence. A graduated approach requires person-centred planning. If assess-plan-do-review cycles are to be effective, then it needs to be collaborative, relevant and meaningful to the CYP. Person-centred planning also makes sure that any targets are relevant and meaningful. Targets in person-centred plans should be SMART, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time related.



The Views of Children and Young people

Giving views and sharing how you feel about situations, takes skill and insight. If CYP are only asked for their views and interests at one or two points a year as part of a review, then they may not have the skills necessary to be able to participate in an authentic way. It is important for CYP to be engaged at whatever level is possible and reasonable along the whole journey of their support in educational settings. Enabling CYP to understand and share what their barriers to learning (SENs) are, what goals they are working towards, and what helps them to learn and feel safe in schools is invaluable insight for staff working to support them.

When a young person turns 16, they have a right to make their own decisions as stated in the Mental Capacity Act (2005). This has an impact on all plans created for young people with SEN as part of a graduated approach. Educational settings, parents and CYP need to be prepared for this change.

The Views of parent/carers

It is fundamentally important that parent/carers are well informed, not just about their child but also the school/educational setting and wider local authority systems that relate to SEND systems and support. Parent/carers must be involved in conversations about their child and be supported to share their insights and expertise on their child. This is an important part of both identifying the child's barriers to learning (SEN) and ensuring that the support that is put in place is individualised and impactful.

Working together

Parent/carers and staff in an educational setting must work in collaboration to support CYP with SEND. For strategies of support to be impactful there will be responsibility on both the parent/carer and staff in terms of actions and communication. A CYP is most likely to make progress where there is collaboration.

If you need any help engaging with parent carers or support with translations, please contact Bristol Parent Carers at info@bristolparentcarers.org.uk. They can support you to involve families meaningfully in SEND discussions and decisions.



Core Expectations for Inclusive Practice

There are expectations which must be considered in all settings as part of inclusive practice and the foundations of a graduated response. With these aspects in place, if a CYP or group need a graduated approach and further support, this is more likely to have impact.

These foundations can be understood under the core areas of:

- Leadership and Management
- Curriculum, teaching and learning
 - Assessment and individual planning
 - Equipment and Resources
- Supporting social and emotional development and pastoral care
- Supporting transition and transfer
- Managing the physical and sensory environment
- Staff skills, training and use of expertise

[Checklists to review practice in these areas can be found in the Graduated Response toolkit !\[\]\(f4349ea867b307dd2675269f68d0971f_img.jpg\)](#).

Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments and Plans (EHCNAs and EHCPs)

“Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, the setting should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.” (CoP 5.49)

The graduated approach for a CYP continues whether they are waiting for a needs assessment (EHCNA) or have an EHCP. The concept of assess-plan-do-review continues to be as relevant. CYP with an EHCP, must have an Annual Reviews as this is part of the statutory responsibility. Reviewing needs, outcomes and provision can lead to changes in wording to a statutory document and there are processes that need to be followed. However, the fundamental principles remain the same as for all CYP with SEND.

Supporting the Graduated Approach in Bristol educational settings

In Bristol, a digital tool called SEND Support Tool (SST) has been developed to support educational settings alongside the implementation of their graduated approach for CYP.

Introduction to the SEND Support Tool (SST)

The SEND Support Tool (SST) has been developed using Department for Education (DfE) digital funding and is designed to support settings as they put a graduated response in place for CYP with SEND.

The SST is designed to manage applications for contributions from the Early Intervention Fund (EIF) for specific early intervention provisions.

The SST sits as one resource within a package of training, guidance and practical tools that aims to enhance practice in settings.

The SST enables schools to:

- Set up a record for a CYP (using their UPN as an identifier) that can be followed through the education system.
- Identify needs (barriers to learning).
- Record planned provision for a CYP (in terms of quantity of time taken for provision to be delivered).
- Download an overview that can be added to and used directly as part of a SEND support summary for a learner.
- Review and update needs and support as part of the graduated response.
- Request early intervention funding contributions as appropriate.





It is essential to have a record of the graduated approach for a CYP which is accessible and reviewed regularly in line with the assess-plan-do-review cycles. This should be a working document that provides clarity as stated in the SEND Code of Practice:

“Schools should maintain an accurate and up-to-date record of the provision made for pupils with SEN. This should be kept in a format that is accessible and understood. It should provide clarity about what the pupil’s needs are, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required” (CoP, 2015, Section 6.72)

This document should help to avoid families having to repeat their story over transitions between key stages, educational settings and when they access other services outside of education. This is in line with the principle from the SEND Code of Practice:

“Children, parents and young people should not have to tell their story more than once” (COP, 2015, Section 1:1)



1. Assess

There are some CYP who for one reason or another find it more difficult to access learning, feel happy, socially included and have a sense of belonging in our educational settings.

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) refers to a CYP who has a learning difficulty or disability that necessitates special educational provision. According to the Code:



- A learning difficulty or disability means the individual:
 1. Has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age.
 2. Has a disability that hinders or prevents them from making use of educational facilities typically provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or post-16 institutions.

- SEN can be understood as barriers to learning when a child or young person’s difficulties or disabilities hinder their ability to access education in the same way as their peers.

When we talk about the needs of CYP, the language can be confusing. Some examples are given below:

Statement	Meaning
A CYP needs is to go to a breakfast club in the mornings.	This is describing a strategy or provision that will benefit the CYP
A CYP has needs in expressive communication. He finds it difficult to communicate that he is hungry.	This is describing barriers to learning or difficulties
A CYP is not having his basic needs met. He is hungry at school.	This could relate to basic human needs as outlined in Maslow’s hierarchy of Needs

CYP are also described using some of the terms listed in Table 1. [Tool kit](#)

Table 1: Examples of descriptions of Special Educational Needs

A child/young person with/who experiences:	A child/young person who is:	A child/young person who experiences/has experienced:
Additional needs Special educational needs Learning difficulties Barriers to learning Developmental delay Disabilities Physical difficulties A diagnostic label A genetic abnormality	Out of step with their peers Developmentally delayed Not at the expected level for their age Not making expected progress	Adverse Childhood Experiences Trauma Poverty Loss and Separation

SEN can be seen as innately present and, in some way, fixed and attached to the child. However, an SEN or disability is often also about a limitation in the context the CYP is in. A social rather than medical model of disability is accepted and described in Figure 5:

Figure 5: Defining the social model of disability.

The Social Model of Disability

The model says that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets. Or they can be caused by people’s attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can’t do certain things.

The social model helps us recognise barriers that make life harder for disabled people. Removing these barriers creates equality and offers disabled people more independence, choice and control.

www.scope.org.uk Downloaded August 2020

This handbook has been written with due regard to a social model of disability.

For the purposes of this handbook, CYP will be described as having needs if they have difficulties or barriers to learning or accessing education in the same way as their peers.

Identifying Needs

In the 'assess' stages of the graduated approach professionals in collaboration with parent/carers and CYP, gain a growing understanding of a CYP's needs or barriers to learning.

A clear understanding of a CYP's needs is essential if the planned support is going to be appropriately targeted and impactful. To understand a CYP's needs, we must understand their story and current context. This can only be understood by securing and interpreting multiple perspectives. Factors that impact on a CYP's needs include:

- Previous and current adverse life experiences.
- The physical school environment.
- The social environment of the school and relationships with CYP and staff.
- The school's ethos, policies and procedures and how these impact on the CYP.
- The home -school relationship including the perspectives of the CYP and their parent/carers in relation to the education system and their educational journeys.
- The impact of health conditions on access to the curriculum.

Assessment processes should include high quality and accurate formative assessment, to gather information about the pupil's progress within the school and alongside national data.

Assessment must include consideration of the perspectives of a range of people who know the CYP well. Most importantly their parent/carers, wider family if involved, professionals involved and the CYP themselves.

Too often for CYP with SEN, the temptation is to move straight to the planning stage – writing targets and identifying provision without spending sufficient time identifying precisely where CYP's gaps in and barriers to learning currently lie.

Identifying needs in the SEND code of practice (Dfe, 2015)

It is helpful to think about needs as sitting under areas as defined in the SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2015).

Statement	Meaning
Communication and Interaction	CYP with communication and interaction needs may find it difficult to understand and use language effectively. This can include issues with speech, language, or social communication, making it challenging for them to express their needs, and thoughts, follow instructions, or engage in conversations. For example, a child may struggle to make friends because they find it hard to understand social cues or express their feelings. These difficulties can impact on their ability to learn and participate in everyday activities. The fundamentals of communication and language are built on the foundations of attention and listening skills and engagement.
Cognition and Learning	Cognition and learning difficulties affect how a child or young person processes and retains information. This may include difficulties with attention, memory, or problem-solving, making it hard for them to understand new concepts or apply what they've learned. A child with cognition and learning difficulties may take longer to master academic skills like reading, writing, or mathematics. They may find it hard to access the curriculum and make progress at school. Learning behaviours such as focus, attention, engagement, independence, motivation and mindset all directly relate to cognition and learning needs.
Social, Emotional and Mental health	Some children and young people may experience difficulties managing their emotions, behaviour, or relationships. They might find it hard to cope with stress, engage in learning, or interact with others in a positive way. They could show unexpected behaviours often as a response to emotional distress. It is helpful to understand that all behaviour is a form of communication. Learning to understand these feelings, manage their emotions and make positive relationships is part of typical development and is fundamental to positive cognitive development. Being able to self-regulate and control immediate impulses is a key skill but one that is often challenging for CYP presenting with SEMH needs.
Physical and Sensory	Physical, health, motor skills and self-care needs can all present as barriers to a child being able to access the learning and environment of an educational setting. Vision impairment, hearing loss and multi-sensory impairment are sensory needs. CYP with Vision Impairment and hearing loss usually have related needs in other areas, for example communicating or learning due to access needs. Other sensory needs that can be described relate to sensitivity to the sensory environment such as noise or texture sensitivity. Some CYP also seek sensory stimulus and feedback.

It is possible to -break down these areas of need further to help pinpoint the barriers to learning for a CYP. Table 3 shows sub areas of need as designed for the SST. These more specific needs are shown in the [Graduated Approach Toolkit](#)  and the SST.

Table 3: Areas of need

Area of need (COP, 2015)	Sub-areas of need
● Communication and Interaction	Expressive language and communication
	Receptive language and communication
● Cognition and Learning	Knowledge and understanding
	Learning Skills and Behaviours
● Social, Emotional and Mental Health	Social understanding and interaction
	Behaviour, emotional and mental health
● Physical and Sensory	Medical, physical, motor skills and mobility
	Vision
	Hearing
	Sensory Needs

Interrelated needs in context

It is important to remember that needs are interrelated and should be considered in context as shown in Figures 6 and 7.

It is usually helpful to talk about primary and secondary areas of need so that support is targeted appropriately. A visual representation of interacting needs can be helpful. Figure 5 shows a CYP whose primary area of need is cognition and learning due at least in part to the impact of the other needs they are experiencing.

Figure 6: Areas of need can vary in prevalence, can interrelate and should be seen in context.

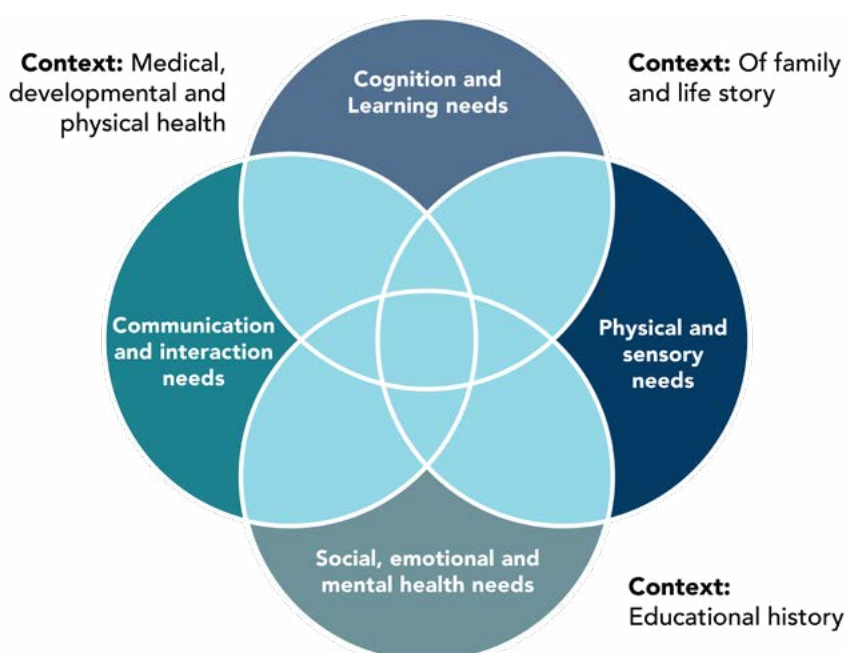
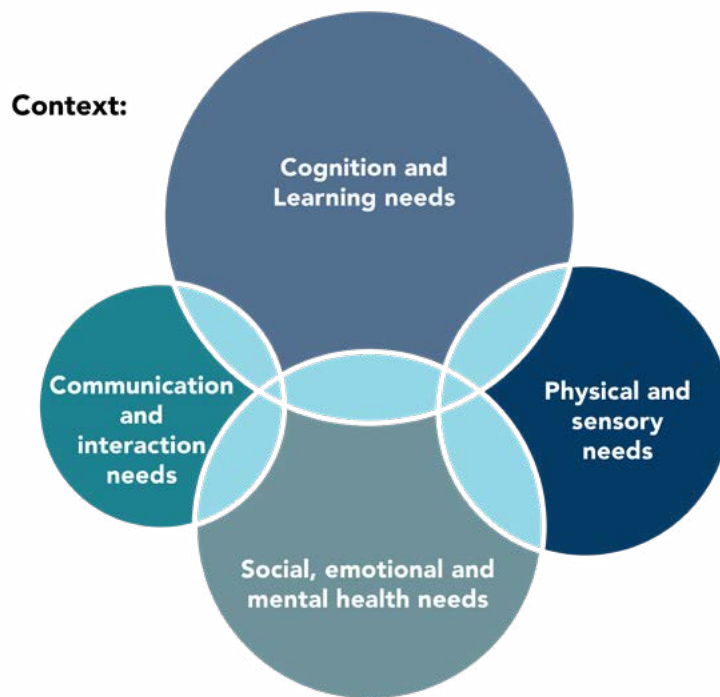


Figure 7: Representing a complex profile of needs visually



Children and Young people with diagnoses and named conditions or disorders

Some CYP are given diagnoses or description of medical needs by Health professionals. These diagnoses provide a useful framework to understand a CYP's situation, however a diagnosis does not always mean that a CYP experiences barriers to learning or special educational needs.

Whether or not a CYP has a diagnosis, the same process of identifying their individual specific needs will be necessary. What the diagnosis means for that CYP in terms of impact on their access to learning, their inclusion and wellbeing will need to be considered.

Needs in Early Years (including Reception Year)

Children develop at different rates, and it is important to think about what would be developmentally appropriate when the needs of children of five years and under are considered. The necessity to relate needs to developmental expectations, means that some needs for children aged four and five years, are described differently. As a result, we should be mindful of using language such as 'age-related expectations', as these vary from child to child and don't exclusively provide an indicator of a learning need. They can also be deficit focussed, looking at what a child cannot do, as opposed to focusing on their strengths.

Needs over transition points

Every CYP has a right to safe transition.

Transitions within a day, during the year or at key stage are points that CYP with SEN can find difficult. These might be planned or unexpected. A new routine, a new lesson or moving to a new class can cause a CYP to feel even more unsettled or even distressed. CYP are affected by transitions in different ways. For some, change is exciting, for some it is overwhelming. Daily transitions mean that CYP need to stop something they might be enjoying or a disruption to their focus. Bigger transitions mean that CYP often need to form new relationships with peers and staff. Identifying and planning wherever possible for transitions is important for all CYP and particularly those with SEND.

A commitment for each and every child

- Communities will work together and go the extra mile to ensure every child's right to a safe and effective transition into their next phase of education.
- School leaders will prioritise effective and supportive transitions.
- Children with SEND and their families and those who are vulnerable will be given the opportunity to meet the staff and, where possible, visit their new school in advance of and beyond the full programme of school-based activities available to all children.

How to identify needs

To put in place effective support for CYP, some investigation will be necessary to understand the barriers they are experiencing.

Specific assessment tools to help identify needs

Table 4 below offers good practice ideas to support school staff in identifying a learner's needs in your setting. Any of these will provide evidence to demonstrate type of need and level of severity for a learner.

Table 4: Tools and ideas to support the identification of a child's needs

Tool	Function or application
Classroom/lesson observation (discrete)	Focusing on a specific area e.g. a behaviour in order to understand this better.
Classroom/lesson Observation (continuous)	Focus more on frequency of a behaviour or issue across a period of time.
Observation in unstructured times	Focus on a specific behaviour or area of SEND for example at break/lunchtime
Observation of group session focussing on specific area	Focus on a specific area of SEND e.g. social skills, language, behaviour in a group situation that could be set up for the purpose of the assessment
Conversation with CYP	Structured conversation with specific focus
Conversation with parent/carer	Structured conversation with specific focus
Staff or Parent/ carer perception	Assessment of parent/carer or staff perception of a CYP's SEND with scaling.
External professional consultation/ advice	E.g. SALT, EP, Teacher of the Deaf (ToD), Qualified Teacher for Vision Impairment (QTVI)
Standardised questionnaire or assessment tool	E.g. strengths and difficulties questionnaire, Boxall profile, anxiety questionnaire.
Analysis of school behaviour log	A summary of behaviour organised and analysed to show patterns and trends in behaviour both positive and negative.


Various templates and proformas are included in the [Graduated Approach Toolkit](#) .

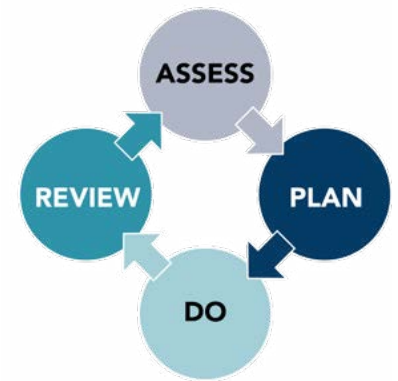


2. Plan

In the 'plan' stages of the graduated approach teachers/practitioners with parent/carers and other professionals in conversation with the CYP, must build a plan for how the CYP will be supported. This will be informed by a growing understanding of what is known to work (according to evidence and theory), to support CYP with this type of need and what works for this individual CYP in this context.

Once the need for SEN support has been identified, the first step in responding to identified needs is to ensure that high-quality teaching, adapted for individual CYP, is in place. The SEND Code of Practice is clear that this is the first step in responding to CYP who have, or may have, an SEN: 'Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.'

An essential next step is to consider this CYP needs against what is in place as part of the school's ordinarily available inclusive practice (represented by the Whole School Provision Map) to identify what elements of existing support could be used or extended to support this CYP. This Whole School Provision Map will be helpful in informing the SEND information report which is a statutory requirement for schools and maintained and nursery schools as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. [Tool kit](#) .



Inclusive Practice and Provision in Educational Settings

The Foundations of Inclusive Practice

Inclusive practice in educational settings in the UK is grounded in the principles of equality, diversity, and accessibility, aiming to provide equitable opportunities for all CYP, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or needs. The foundation of inclusive practice is built on the recognition that every learner is unique and may require different support to achieve their full potential. This involves adapting teaching methods, resources, and classroom environments to accommodate diverse learning styles, abilities, and experiences. Legal frameworks such as the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice (2015) provide the statutory basis for inclusive practice, ensuring that schools are accountable for meeting the needs of all CYP. By promoting a culture of respect, collaboration, and belonging, inclusive practice fosters an environment where every CYP can thrive, participate, and contribute meaningfully to the school community.

Provision to meet individual needs in educational settings

High quality teaching that is adapted (differentiated) and personalised, will meet the individual needs of most learners, however some CYP need educational provision that is additional to, or different. This is described as special educational provision under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Education settings must use their best endeavours to ensure that special educational provision is made for those who need it; special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching and is compromised by anything less.

The class teacher has overall accountability for CYPs progress. All education settings should know precisely where CYP with SEND are in their learning and development, and should:

- Ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of CYP themselves.
- Have high ambitions and set stretching targets for all CYP.
- Track progress towards those ambitions and targets.
- Keep under review the additional or different provision that is put in place for learners to ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress.
- Promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of CYP's personal and social development.

Figure 8 gives examples of questions settings can think about when considering offering universal support to children and young people.

Figure 8: Self-reflection questions for settings about Universal Support offered.



Planning support over transitions

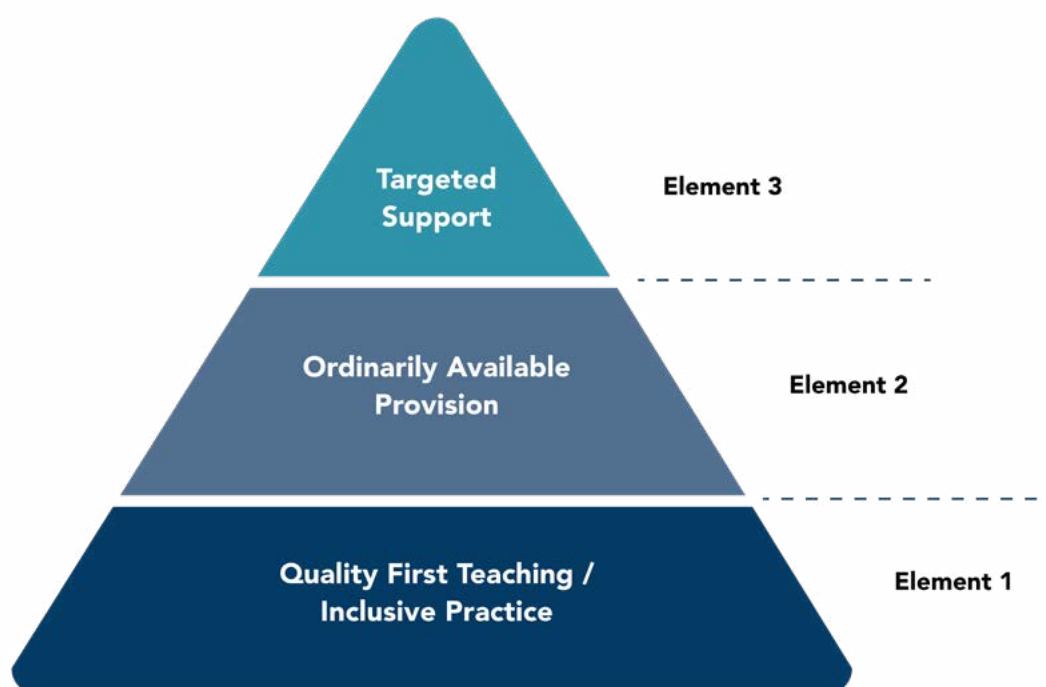
Successful transition is child-centred, providing children and young people with a model of how to manage an ending, which in turn will support them to 'continue in their development, without experiencing too much disruption or the inevitable increase of anxiety associated with change'. Bomber, 'Inside I'm Hurting' 2007 (p273).

To help ensure smooth and successful transitions, tailored support, is essential for CYP with SEND who may experience additional challenges, such as difficulty understanding new environments, struggles with communication or sensory sensitivities. Preparation is key to ensure CYP feel safe, supported and ready to embrace new experiences with confidence. This is true for regular, daily transitions such as having focus or interruptions to enjoyable activity as well as more significant transitions which may require forming new relationships or defining safe spaces in a new location.

Funding of Provision in school settings

Provision for CYP with SEND is funded in different ways. Whether or not support to a child is considered OAP for a setting relates to how that provision is funded as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Outline of types of provision and funding in a setting



Element 1: This is core per pupil funding in all mainstream primary and secondary schools. It is based on the number of CYP in the school. It is intended to cover the cost of education for all CYP. It covers the cost of having a SENCo and Headteacher for the school. Element 1 is allocated according to a funding formula set by the DfE.

Element 2: This funding is provided to mainstream primary and secondary schools to help them meet the needs of CYP with SEN in the setting who require more support than can be provided through Element 1 funding. This is sometimes called the 'Notional SEND Budget'. Element 2 is allocated according to a funding formula set by the DfE. Schools must demonstrate that they have exhausted their use of element 2 funding to provide SEN support and review its impact (Graduated Approach) before requesting additional funding from element 3 which the local authority allocates.

Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) is a term used to describe the additional provision an educational setting is expected to provide to support the CYP in the setting with SEND. This is paid for from Element 2 funding, as part of the setting's Graduated Response. The support available is detailed in the school SEND Information Report, which all schools must create and up date annually; families can access this report via the school website or school office.

Schools must use their best endeavours, as stated in the Children and Families Act 2014, to identify and provide appropriate support for children with SEND. This means they must do everything they reasonably can with the resources they have (such as Element 2 funding) to meet a child's needs.

Element 3: This is the funding allocated based on needs assessments, by the local authority, for individual CYP with an EHCP. It is also known as the High Needs Funding Block.

Funding of Provision in Early Years Settings

Funding in the Early Years is different to school funding. In the early years, settings can apply for funding to support children with early and emerging needs via the Early Years SEN Panel Funding. This funding is expected to be spent on delivering graduated approach support for children. This is because early years settings do not receive a formulaic allocation of Element 1 and 2 funding, in the same way schools do.

If, despite support through cycles of graduated approach, a child is considered to need additional support, then either the Early Years SEN Panel Funding or provision that may follow an EHC needs assessment can be requested. Early Years funding can be used up to but not including the start of Reception Year.

Funding Post-16

Post-16 settings are funded differently according to guidelines from the DfE.

Ordinarily Available Provision and Inclusive practice

The Education Endowment Foundation (www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk) states that, 'to a great extent, good teaching for children and young people with SEND is good teaching for all.'

Much of the ordinarily available provision and inclusive practice described in this guidance will already be an integral part of a provider's provision for all children and young people, including those with SEND. However, some providers may need to develop their current provision and practice if they are to meet these expectations.

Individual settings need to put in place inclusive practice in line with fundamental expectations, guidelines and legislation as described on page 3. Fundamentally, the SEND Code of Practice states:

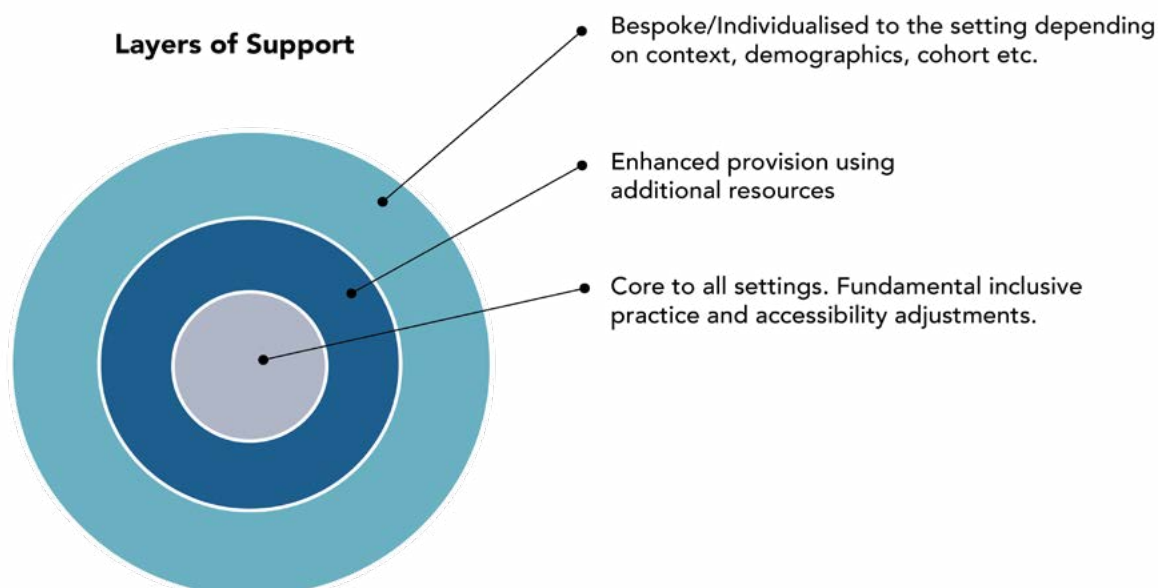
A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning


As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education of disabled children and young people and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation in mainstream education. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures the general presumption in law of mainstream education in relation to decisions about where children and young people with SEN should be educated and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination for disabled people. (SEND Code of Practice, 2015. p25)

The educational setting's OAP should be adapted to that setting depending on:

- The community it supports and their specific context.
- The prevalence of different needs (barriers to learning) in the setting.
- Patterns and themes in the setting's systemic development and what they are choosing to focus on in terms of development.
- Services and agencies available to the setting and where there are gaps.
- The transience of the school population and contingency funding needed for in-year admission

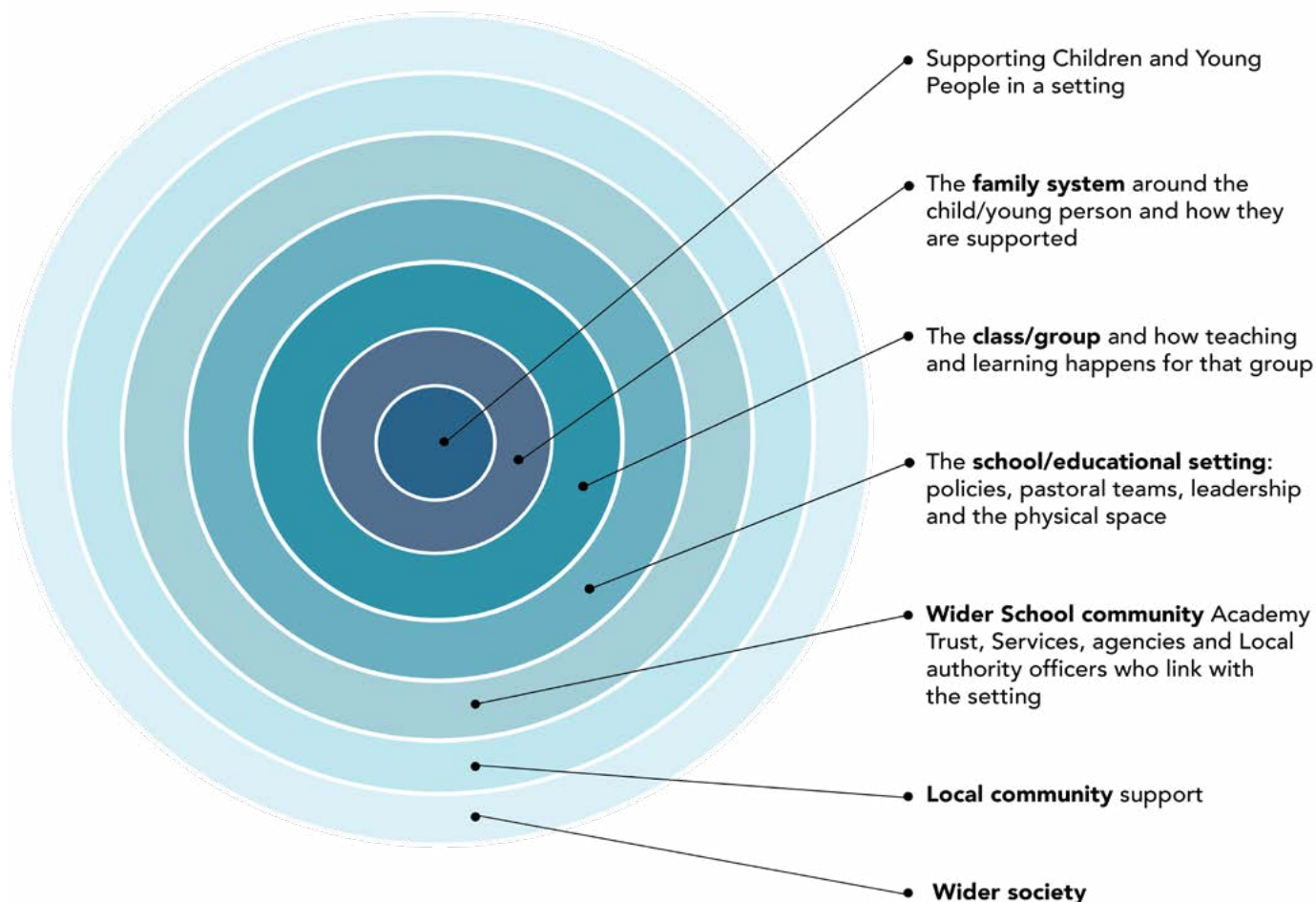
Figure 10: Understanding Ordinarily Available Provision



Schools/educational settings can show their whole school provision map in a format [as included in the toolkit](#) . This can also be used to support in writing the school's SEN information report which is a statutory requirement as outlined in section 6.79 of the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

It is essential to think about practice at all levels of the education system if inclusive practice is effectively implemented. This is represented in Figure 11.

Figure 11: The system of support around a CYP

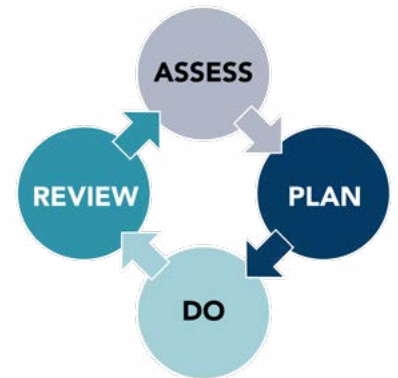


All provision included should have an evidence base (i.e. sound research indicates that it is effective for a comparable population of CYP) or be based on 'What works?...' guidance from a reliable source such as the DfE.



3. Do

In the 'do' stage of the graduated approach teachers/practitioners gain a growing understanding of effective support. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) emphasises that the teacher/practitioner has day-to-day responsibility for the learning and progress of all CYP. It is important that teachers/practitioners work closely with support staff or other specialist staff to plan, monitor and assess the impact of targeted interventions. Staff generalising and reinforcing any learning across contexts will be key to the success of any intervention.



Quality first teaching and Ordinarily Available Inclusive Practice

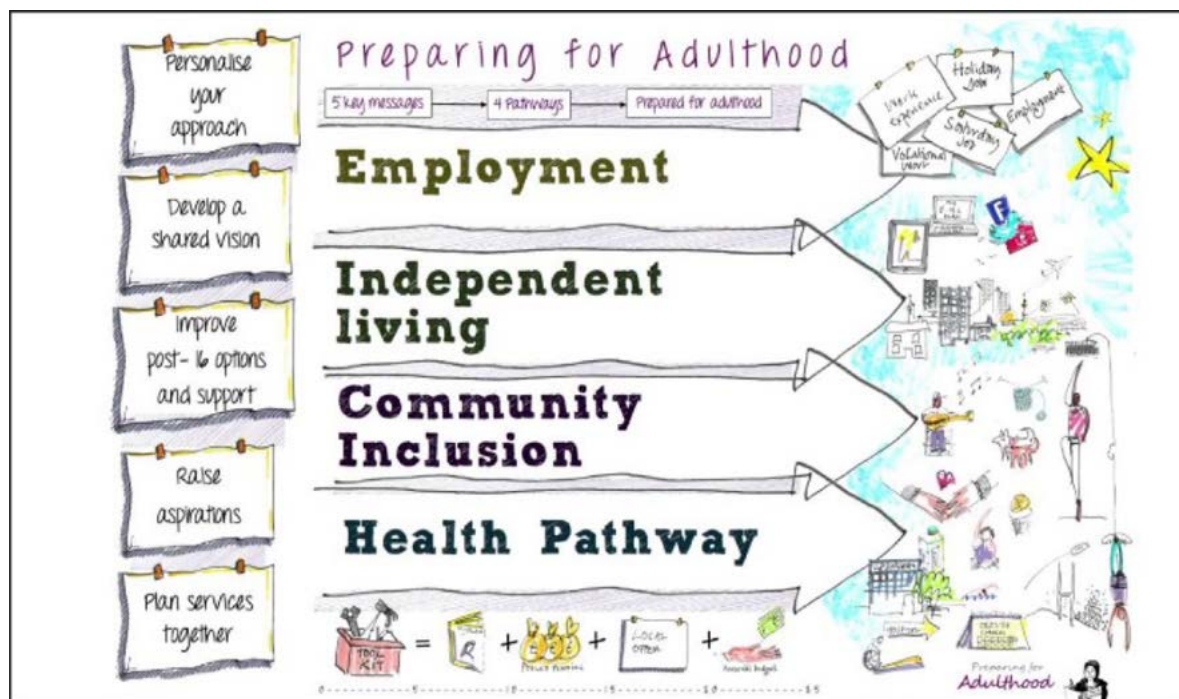
The Graduated Response A-Z list and the related self-assessment check list document, provides an account of a wide range of approaches, strategies and provision and when introduced in a setting, will create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for CYP with SEND.

A setting's OAP will be an enhanced version of this inclusive practice. For example, delivered in a more focused way, in smaller groups and with additional staff support at times. A setting's whole school provision map can represent this OAP and relevant costings. [Toolkit](#)

Transition to Adulthood

There is typically a greater focus on preparing for adulthood and independence once a CYP post-14 needs are identified. However, we must consider the transition to adulthood as a pathway not a step or jump. CYP need support along their educational journey which enables them to become engaged and healthy members of their communities once they leave the education system. Decisions made at school around how CYP with SEND are supported, will have a significant impact on their developing skills, level of engagement and the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes in adulthood. The Preparing for Adulthood desired outcomes are shown in Figure 12 (<https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources>). These outcomes need to be at the forefront of thinking and conversations for all CYP.

Figure 12: Preparing for Adulthood Outcomes (DfE, 2015)



National Development Team for Inclusion (www.ndti.org.uk)

Function of education

The Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) outcomes can be used to provide meaning or function to education. If a CYP is finding it difficult to engage with the curriculum, or expectations in a setting seem abstract or difficult to a CYP, considering the pathway to adulthood can help with engagement and motivation. Some ideas are shown in Table 5:

Table 5: How skills learnt at school support on the pathway to adulthood

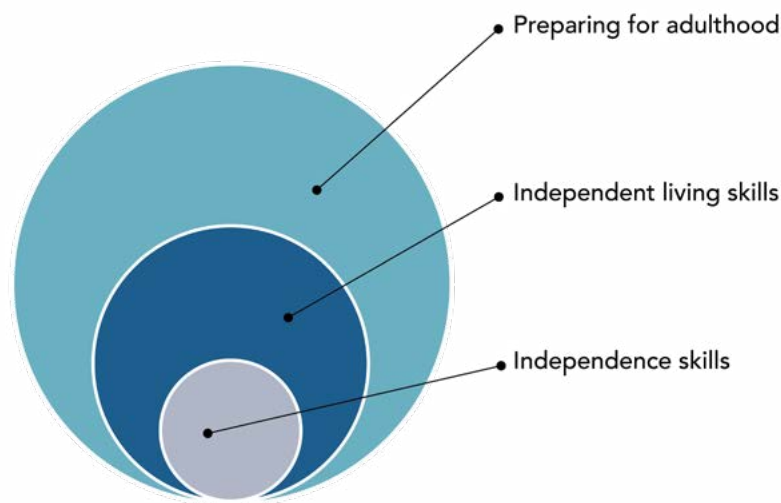
Outcome	Skills
Employability	Learning skill for a job
	Getting qualifications to get a job
	Learning the behaviour you need to keep a job
	Following rules and meeting expectations
	Following a dress code
Independence skills	Organising yourself
	Giving things a go.
	Looking for clues – problem solving.
	Knowing how to ask for help

Outcome	Skills
Community inclusion	Meeting lots of different people
	Understanding that you communicate differently to different people
	Learning that you can build different types of relationships
	Feeling a sense of belonging
Health	Physical and mental health
	Being active is important for mental and physical health

Independence

Supporting CYP to develop their independence skills is an essential function of the education system. Independence Skills are fundamental to prepare CYP for adulthood as shown in Figure 12.

Figure 13: Independence skills are essential in preparation for adulthood



There are a range of skills that can make CYP more independent including:

1. Motivation and engagement with being independent (wanted by employers)
2. Organisational and time management skills
3. Problem Solving Skills
4. Working with others
5. Functional maths skills
6. Functional literacy skills
7. Functional computer skills



4. Review

In the 'review' stages of the graduated approach teachers/practitioners gain a growing understanding of where the CYP is making progress, where they are still out of step with their peers and what approaches secure better outcomes. Teachers/practitioners continually review CYP's progress, formally and informally, and this should be no different for CYP with SEN.



It is not necessary for teachers/practitioners to wait for formal review meetings before reviewing and, if appropriate, making changes to teaching approaches and other provision. However, the SEND Code of Practice states that progress towards meeting planned outcomes should be tracked and reviewed at least once a term. The outcomes of the review should feed directly into the next planning phase of the graduated approach.

The SEND Code of Practice puts an emphasis on the contribution of parents/carers and CYP to the graduated approach. The school/setting will need to ensure that systems are in place for the voice of CYP to be heard and for the development of self-advocacy to be part of a truly person-centred approach.

Impact

Review is fundamentally about measuring impact. It is essential that the impact of support is measured so that the support can be adjusted if the CYP is not making the expected progress. Sometimes it is difficult to measure impact as standardised, or curriculum measures are not finely graded enough. It can be helpful to use scales (0-10) to measure teacher, parent/carer or CYP perception of a situation before and after the intervention. Using scales, important features can be captured such as:


- Level of engagement.
- Well-being or happiness.
- Level of independence.
- Level of perseverance.
- Resilience in the face of mistakes.

Sometimes, education staff will need to review your SMART target. If a SMART target is measurable then it should be possible to measure impact. [Toolkit](#)

Seeking additional advice and support

Bristol City Council has a range of teams and services who can offer support to settings to build on graduated response and inclusive practice for the setting or individual graduated approach for CYP. These include:

- Bristol Educational Psychology Service.
- Inclusive Learning Service.
- Bristol Autism Team.
- Sensory Support Service.
- School Improvement Service.

Other local authorities have collated information which could potentially be a useful resource. A list of sources of information and advice are included in the [Graduated Response Toolkit](#) .



We experience many of the same challenges and struggles as other children and young people.



We want, and have the right to, the same opportunities in our lives.



We have the same hopes and aspirations for our future as all children and young people in Bristol.

