

## **Guidance for schools on School Action, School Action Plus, Early Years Action, and Early Years Action plus**

The Code recommends that, to help match special educational provision to children's needs, schools and LEAs should adopt a graduated approach towards independent learning through **School Action** and **School Action Plus**. In early education settings these are referred to as **Early Years Action** and **Early Years Action Plus**. These replace the Stages 1 - 3 of the former Code of Practice and place the emphasis on the action schools and others should take, rather than stages to be followed or hurdles to be crossed. The Code envisages that many difficulties children may encounter will be resolved by School Action.

### **SCHOOL ACTION (SA)**

The trigger for school action can be a concern expressed by a class teacher or other person, backed up by evidence that, despite having appropriate differentiated learning opportunities, a pupil ...

- 'makes little or no progress, even when teaching approaches are targeted, particularly in a child's identified area of weakness;
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematics skills, which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas;
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school;
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress, despite the provision of specialist equipment;
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress, despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.' (SEN Code of Practice - Ch.5:44).

The code gives guidance on gathering information, the SENCo's role, planning support and the nature of the intervention. As before, the Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a major tool for planning and recording. It should record information that is **additional to** or **different from** the usual differentiated curriculum. Included in the IEP should be...

- the short-term targets set for or by the child;
- the teaching strategies to be used;
- the provision to be put in place;
- when the plan is to be reviewed (ideally termly but at minimum twice a year);
- success and/or exit criteria;
- outcomes (to be recorded when IEP is reviewed).

## **SCHOOL ACTION PLUS (SA+)**

For those children whose progress continues to cause concern, further action, involving specialist support services, will be required as School Action Plus. The following are the suggested triggers where the child...

- 'continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period;
- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age;
- continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills,
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties, which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme;
- has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service;
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.'

(SEN Code of Practice - Ch.5:56)

Working groups are established to develop revised proformas for SA and SA+, including IEPs and Review and these will be available soon for consultation.

### **Transfer of records**

The Code affirms existing good practice by encouraging, where possible, the transfer of records to a receiving school, well in advance of the pupil's admission, to enable appropriate planning. There is a minimum requirement for primary schools to transfer records within 15 days of the pupil ceasing to be registered.

Guidance is in preparation for integrating the above into schools' and pupils' target setting arrangements

## **Guidance on the organisation and management of support for SEN in schools and early years settings**

The following are the fundamental principles which underpin the Code, which should be used to guide the writing and revision of policy, a legal requirement for all schools and early years settings in receipt of government funding...

- 'a child with special educational needs should have their needs met;
- the special educational needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings;
- the views of the child should be sought and taken into account;
- parents have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education;
- children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for the foundation stage and the National Curriculum.'

(SEN Code of Practice - Chapter 1:5)

A working group is established to draft this section which will include guidance on...

- Whole school policies including admissions, the role of governors, the role of the SENCo, the roles of all staff, communication with parents. There is considerable guidance on this in the Code and in SEN Toolkit at

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/sen/viewDocument.cfm?dID=262>

- guidance and proforma on governors' reports to AGM to be included);
- whole school roles and responsibilities for managing SEN
- analysis of data in schools, including patterns of incidence of SEN;
- the range of organisational arrangements for supporting pupils (including groupings, ethos, environment, curriculum, pastoral arrangements).

## **Guidelines on assessment and intervention strategies at SA, SA+, EYA and EY+**

The Code emphasises the importance of curriculum-based assessment, through teaching in the educational context in which the child is learning. A cycle involving **planning, teaching** and **assessing** is seen as important in enabling pupils to make adequate progress.

The Code states, '**Assessment against the National Curriculum level descriptions for each subject will enable the school to consider the individual child's attainment and progress against the expected levels for the majority of their peers.**' (SEN Code of Practice - Ch. 5:5)

There are four aspects to the assessment process. These are:

- the child's learning characteristics;
- the learning environment that the school is providing for the child;
- the task, and
- the teaching style.

The code recognises the importance of the interaction of the child with the learning environment, stating that difficulties in learning may be caused or exacerbated by the school's learning environment or adult/child relationships. Assessment, therefore, must include consideration of classroom organisation, teaching materials, teaching styles and differentiation, in order to decide how these can be modified or developed, to enable the child to learn effectively. An example of a useful approach schools could adopt is the Framework for Intervention in assessing the learning environment.

See [www.frameworkforintervention.com](http://www.frameworkforintervention.com)

Where there is evidence that a child's rate of progress is a cause for concern, action is required, which may be additional to or different from that normally provided, to enable the child to make adequate progress. Detailed records should be kept, not only of the educational assessment and progress of the pupil, but also information from the Health Service, Social Services, if involved, the child's parents and the child's own perception of the difficulties and how these might be addressed.

A working group is established to produce guidelines on a school's or setting's graduated response to children's needs, and methods of assessing the effectiveness of the interventions, particularly focussing on assessment through teaching within the National Curriculum Framework.

This guidance will cover all education phases and will relate to P and NC Levels, Foundation Stage, National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. It will also include recommendations concerning schools' and settings' responses to particular labelled conditions eg: 'dyslexia', 'Autistic spectrum disorders'.