

Jargon Buster

An 'at-a-glance jargon buster' to help you understand some of the words, phrases and acronyms used in the world of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)...

ADD - Attention Deficit Disorder. Causes problems maintaining attention and focus.

ADHD - Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder. Similar to ADD but individuals with ADHD also show excessive activity or have difficulty controlling behaviour that is not appropriate for their age.

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder. A range of conditions which cause problems with social interaction, communication, interests and behaviour. Can range from mild to severe, hence the use of the term 'spectrum'.

Asperger's Syndrome - A form of ASD/autism where the individual shows autistic tendencies but can still function well in terms of their intelligence, attainment and progress in school and beyond.

Attainment - A measure of a child's achievement in school which compares every child to a standardised expectation for their age level, regardless of individual starting points. Schools are judged by the attainment of their pupils, but also by the progress that the children make.

CAF - Common Assessment Framework. A system that ensures all agencies involved in a child's care are communicating and working together in the child's interests. Typically seen where the child has additional needs, for example where social services or health care professionals are involved and there are concerns about a child's welfare.

CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Specialist NHS mental health services for children and young people. Accessible to all young people from birth to 19. Children may be referred by school or other agencies if they have emotional or behavioural difficulties, mental health issues or have experienced trauma that has affected their wellbeing.

DBS - A check made by the Disclosure and Barring Service which ensures that all adults working in a school have disclosed any unspent criminal convictions. Formerly known as a 'CRB' check. An essential part of a school's safeguarding procedure.

Dyscalculia - A specific learning difficulty that affects learning in the arithmetic aspect of maths, typically in understanding numbers, manipulating numbers and learning number facts such as times tables.

Dysgraphia - A specific learning difficulty that affects written expression. Dysgraphia can appear as difficulties with spelling, poor handwriting and trouble putting thoughts on paper.

Dyslexia - A specific learning difficulty that affects reading, writing and spelling.

Dyspraxia - A specific learning difficulty that causes poor physical skills and lack of coordination which, in turn, can affect skills such as writing.

EAL - English as an Additional Language. Used to refer to pupils for whom English is not the main language spoken at home. Schools track such pupils closely and offer additional support if it is needed.

EBD - Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.

EHCP - Education and Health Care Plan. Formerly known as a 'statement of special educational needs'. A document which sets out the education, healthcare and social care needs of a child or young person for whom extra support is needed in school beyond that which the school can provide. Children with an EHCP will usually be entitled to extra one-to-one support in school (though not necessarily full-time) and will have outside agencies involved in their support, such as physiotherapists, behavioural experts or sensory impairment teachers.

EWO - Education Welfare Officer. A person whose job is to ensure the wellbeing of all children in education. In practice they are most likely to support schools with issues around attendance.

FSM - Free School Meals. Parents in receipt of certain benefits are entitled to apply to their child's school for free school meals. This also generates additional funds for the school to use to support that child's learning in school. Schools always keep such information confidential and children in receipt of FSM are not singled out. See also Universal Free School Meals and Pupil Premium.

IEP- Individual Education Plan. A plan for any child identified as having SEN, the IEP outlines the child's strengths and areas of difficulty and what the school is doing to support the child. It is also used as a way of closely tracking the child's progress and recording support received. Children whose needs entitle them to further funding will have an EHCP.

Inclusion - The efforts made by a school to ensure that all children attend and are welcomed by their local school and are supported to learn, contribute and participate, regardless of individual need, background or circumstance.

Intervention - This is a small group lesson, usually but not always, taught by a TA which aims to support children who are not making the progress they should.

LA - Local Authority - the local government authority responsible for non-academy schools in its area.

Learning Disability - A condition or difficulty that has an impact on an individual's intelligence, such that their attainment is typically considerably lower than that which should be expected for their age. Should not be confused with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD)/

Looked After Child (LAC) - A child who is in the care of the local authority. This child may be fostered, adopted, in the care of social services, or being cared for by someone (not a close family member) other than their birth parents. It is recognised that these children often experience difficulties with progress in school, and schools receive Pupil Premium funding to enable them to support their learning.

Progress - See also attainment. Progress is a measure of how much a child has learnt within a time period such as a term or year. Since all children have different starting points, progress is considered a more important indicator than attainment.

Provision - What a school provides for its pupils to support their learning and progress in school - the teaching, resources, use of the curriculum, support, and enrichment activities.

Pupil Premium - Funds paid directly to schools to enable them to support the progress, attainment and wellbeing of children who are Looked After, receiving Free School Meals (not Universal Free School Meals unless parents are also entitled to apply for FSM) or who are Service Children. Schools are held strictly accountable for how they spend this money to support learning and wellbeing.

Safeguarding - Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all pupils within a school. Teachers attend compulsory safeguarding training every three years. Safeguarding includes all aspects of what it means to keep children and adults safe in school, for example ensuring all adults in school have undertaken a DBS check, educating adults in school on spotting the signs of abuse, carrying out risk assessments for trips and ensuring there is an adequate number of first-aiders on the school staff.

SALT - Speech and Language Therapy. A specific intervention which supports children's speech development. This could relate to the way that they enunciate sounds and use words ('expressive' speech) or the way they understand what is said to them ('receptive' speech). Teachers will identify early on whether children have speech and language difficulties and will usually make a referral to the Speech and Language Service whose therapists will assess the child regularly and give the school and parents/carers specific exercises and activities to do with the child.

SEN/SEND - Special Educational Needs/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. A pupil is deemed to have Special Educational Needs if they are finding it harder than other pupils to make progress. This may be due to a specific learning difficulty, a recognised disability or speech and language difficulties. Some pupils will only be classified as SEN for a short time, others may remain so for the rest of their time in school. Schools have a SEN register which records all SEND pupils and schools are expected to track the progress of these pupils closely.

SENCo/SENDCo - Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. A member of the school's staff who has responsibility for coordinating support and provision for all pupils on the SEN register.

Service Child - A child with one or both parents in the armed services. Schools are entitled to additional funding to spend on supporting these children with their progress and attainment in school.

SpLD - Specific Learning Difficulty. A difficulty with certain skills that are needed for learning, such as reading and writing.

Special School - A school that caters for children whose needs cannot be met with the provision and support provided by a mainstream school.

Tracking - The process by which schools monitor the progress and attainment of their pupils over time. Teachers will usually assess children's attainment on a termly basis (more often if there are concerns) and monitor this to ensure children are making the amount of progress they should. This enables teachers to identify early on whether children need additional support or extra challenge.

Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) - An ongoing government initiative which provides a free school lunch for all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. This is not the same as the free school meals which are provided for pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits, as UFSM do not carry Pupil Premium funding. Parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 who are in receipt of these benefits need to apply separately to the school to ensure that the Pupil Premium funding is made available to support their child.