SEFTON'S EXPECTATIONS REGARDING SEN PROVISION IN PRIMARY SETTINGS

Expectations
Every school is required to use their best endeavours to ensure that every child with SEN gets the support they need to make progress take an active part in school life. All children should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and high expectations should be set for all pupils, relevant to their prior attainment. Potential areas for difficulty should be identified and addressed as soon as possible. Lessons should take account of possible areas of difficulty so that any barriers to achievement can be overcome, if possible through good inclusive teaching.

Roles and Responsibilities
Governing Bodies must ensure that a qualified teacher takes the role of SENCO within each school. The SENCO has an important role to play with the headteacher and governing body in determining how SEN is developed in the school and the additional support provided for children with SEN. All teachers are responsible for the progress of pupils in their class, including those who access additional support. It should therefore be the class teacher that parents initially approach if they have concerns about their child's progress or well-being. School leaders should regularly review how the expertise and resources are used to address the needs of pupils within their school, and consider how this can be improved. The Governing body must publish information on the school's website about their SEN policy and how it is implemented.

Identification
The Identification of SEN should be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. All schools should aspire to meet the needs of their school population as far as possible through good quality inclusive teaching. A pupil has SEN when in order for them to make progress they require additional or different support to the schools' quality first offer (that which is available to all children). Regular assessment should help identify pupils who are not making anticipated progress and therefore require more targeted support. When pupils are identified as requiring SEN Support parents must be notified and their views (and those of the child) must be incorporated in any targeted plan.

Types of Need

The Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of special need, under which SEN can be classified

- Communication and interaction
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and / or physical needs
- Cognition and learning

The categories are useful to schools in order to plan provision. However it is important to note that identification of a specific type of need is not necessary to put a support plan into place. Equally the identification of a type of need does not automatically call for the implementation of SEN Support. Frequently pupils have needs across categories and schools' priority should be to gain a good understanding of how the pupil learns to ensure provision is appropriate, rather than focusing on category of need.

Quality First Offer

Primary schools in Sefton have agreed to the provision of a minimum offer in terms of quality first teaching. This ensures that all pupils will access good quality inclusive teaching that provides reasonable adjustments to accommodate learning difference. Schools will be expected to monitor this provision to ensure that it consistently meets the agreed standard.

Some teaching approaches within the quality first offer may be particularly pertinent to individual pupils who have an identified SEN, but are currently making progress. In these circumstances the desired strategies could be listed in the pupil's profile, and it would be expected that these approaches were employed on a regular basis. For pupils accessing SEN support the strategies should be incorporated within their support plan.

SEN Support

Schools must identify pupils within their assessment cycle who are not making anticipated progress. Once identified schools must consider whether they have a full understanding of the pupil's learning profile to identify whether any SEN is impacting on learning. They may wish to consult with outside professionals at this point to help them gain a better understanding of the child's profile. Alternatively they may feel they have enough information to decide next steps internally. They should consider all factors that may impact on learning, such as emotional issues, motivation, appropriateness of teaching and learning environment, in order to decide if the lack of progress is caused by SEN.

If school decides that additional and different provision is necessary for the pupil to make progress they must contact parents and put effective special educational provision into place, as detailed in the graduated approach.

The Graduated Approach

The process for implementing SEN support is described in the new Code of Practice as the Graduated Approach and has a four stages:-

Assess

The school should gather all the information they have about the pupil from a variety of sources (teacher, pupil, parent, outside agencies) in order to develop an accurate picture of the pupils' needs, attainment, projected targets, motivators, and how they respond to teaching approaches, etc.

Plan

A support plan is put together to outline the methods to be used in order to achieve specific outcomes. The plan should include any or all of the following:

a) Quality First Inclusive teaching approaches that are effective to enhance pupil's learning
b) Proven interventions that have been identified to achieve specific targets – and how they will be delivered and monitored
c) Any focused support from a teaching assistant in class. This should be purposeful, with the ultimate aim to develop the pupil's independence and maximise pupils contact with his / her class teacher and other pupils
d) Resources to ensure access to curriculum or environment
e) Suggestions as to how the parent and / or pupil can contribute to the plan

When determining plans across the school leadership will need to be mindful of effective and efficient use of school resources. Schools are responsible financially for up to £6,000 of the additional and different support they action for individual pupils. Although it is expected that the cost of support for most children will be less than this amount.

Do

Once recorded (schools may use paperwork that best suits them in this process) the plan becomes a working document. It may be annotated to show progress towards outcomes and / or adjustments made to determine success.

The class teacher manages the plan and suggested actions. They will be accountable for the outcomes and therefore should discuss with the SENCO if they feel the pupil is not making anticipated progress, for whatever reason.

Review

A timescale must be attached to the plan so that everyone involved appreciates when outcomes should be reviewed. A review should take place within this timescale in which interventions can be evaluated, along with the views of the pupil and the parents. A further plan can then be devised, if required, to enable the pupil to achieve their next steps in learning. Alternatively the pupil may have made sufficient progress for the plan to cease.

Further Options

- Where there are ongoing concerns about progress, despite appropriate intervention, the school should consider involving specialists to gain a better understanding of the pupil's needs. Parents should always be involved in the decision to involve specialists.

- Request top up funding from the local authority if cost of support goes beyond the £6,000 threshold that is the school's responsibility. The school will need to complete a high needs application which shows that their plan is efficient and likely to succeed.

- Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet a child's SEN, the child has not made anticipated progress, the school or parents should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care assessment. To inform its decision the local authority will expect to see evidence of the action taken by the school as part of SEN support. Schools will need to demonstrate that the pupil requires provision that is additional and different from the resources ordinarily available to a mainstream school (including those that can accessed from the local authority).

Tracking Progress
Schools must track progress for all pupils. There should be rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of SEN support. This should include quantative data and progress towards identified outcomes. The code of practice recognises that for some pupils it is necessary to track progress outside of academic attainment. These areas should be outlined in the pupil's support plan. Schools should also outline expected progress, with some explanation if the pupil's expected trajectory is outside that expected from their peers.

Transitions
Schools should have clear procedures for supporting pupils in moving between phases of education.

Building Capacity
It is important that all schools have, or can access, qualified staff to support the range of need outlined in their school community. New SENCOs must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of appointment. School leaders should regularly review expertise within the team to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills required to best support pupils in their class and CPD offered should match identified areas for development. Schools should ensure that classroom teachers have the skills required to fulfil the requirements of the graduated approach, particularly with regard to the deployment of teaching assistants and monitoring of interventions. Schools should be aware of how to secure additional specialist support if they require further advice in the identification of pupil need and how to address it.

Quality of Provision
The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN, and the progress made by pupils, should be a core part of the school's professional development for all teaching and support staff. In addition to SEN support schools should regularly review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This will ensure that schools maintain the minimum quality first offer agreed across the authority

Equal Opportunities
Schools must ensure that children with SEN engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN Schools have duties under the **Equality Act 2010** They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people They must take reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children are not at a substantial disadvantage when compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage.

Social and Emotional Development
Children may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. Schools should have clear processes to support children and with social and emotional needs. These should include how they manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour, so that it does not adversely affect other pupils.