



## Special Educational Needs, Mental Health and Wellbeing

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There is an increase of school aged children being diagnosed with special needs year on year. Information from the Department of Education highlights approximately 14.6% young people were classified as having special needs last year.

There are four distinct categories of Special Educational Needs (SEN) within the Code of Practice, these are Language and Communication, Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Physical/Sensory.

As parents, you know your child best, trust your instinct. If you have concerns speak to the school's Special Educational Needs Co-Coordinator as early intervention is critical.

All schools have a duty to adapt the curriculum to the needs of individual children (differentiation). Most children will progress well using the school's usual differentiation and Quality First Teaching Methods. Some will need more help or different help in order to make good enough progress at school.

Your child may need specific targets which will be outlined within an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and if progress is still minimal, consideration will be given to referral to other agencies (e.g. Educational Psychology, Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service).

There are local parental support agencies that can act as advocates and they will be able to support you when you feel the school is not listening to your concerns (some of these services also have legal training).

One in eight 5 to 19 year olds (12.8%) had at least one mental disorder (NHS Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2017).

Mental health and wellbeing challenges can present in many different forms, for example within the young person's behaviour, levels of anxiety, a presentation of low mood, if they are self-harming or if they are being bullied or bullying others.

Parents can support building resilience and addressing anxiety through spending time with their children, enjoying each other's company and doing things that are relaxing and make both you and your children feel happy and relaxed. It is also very important to listen to their worries and always give them lots of praise when you see them doing the "right thing" to help them feel valued and encourage them to repeat pro-social behaviours (you can never give too much praise).



As parents, it will be important to understand the range of emotions and when you might need to get further support. Local CAMHS can support young people who present with more significant social and mental health needs and where more specific intervention may be required.

Resources to support parents:

<http://www.ace-ed.org.uk>

<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/>

<https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/>

[https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/600981/ite\\_resource\\_1.pdf](https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/600981/ite_resource_1.pdf)

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/c/children-and-young-people>

<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/support-for-parents/children-s-mental-health/>