

Planning your child's support

This factsheet explains:

- what planning is
- different types of plans that your child may need
- how local authorities plan children's and young people's support
- how to request a plan for your child.

What is planning?

Planning is an ongoing process involving:

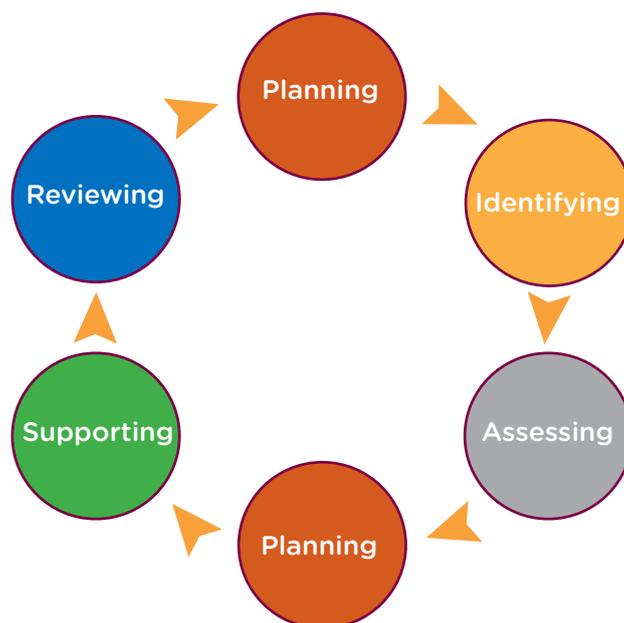
- setting a target or goal
- deciding what needs to be done to achieve that goal
- setting a date for reviewing progress towards the goal
- reviewing progress on the agreed date
- updating the target or goal based on learning from the review.

Personal learning planning

Schools and nurseries should plan and keep under review all pupils' learning and development. This is called 'personal learning planning'. Personal learning planning helps staff to set goals for your child to achieve based on their strengths and development needs. You and the school or nursery staff can then review your child's progress — for example at parents' evenings.

Planning support for learning

Planning for support for learning takes place as part of a cycle of activities:



Once the school, nursery or local authority has found that your child needs additional support for learning (see our factsheet on [Identifying and assessing your child's needs](#)), they should consider how they will deliver that support. They should work with you, your child and, where necessary, other professionals to plan how to give your child the support they need to do the best they can. Sometimes they will suggest a particular type of plan, and at other times it might be a more informal agreement. For more information on types of plans, see '[What type of plan does my child need?](#)', on page 3.

Once you and the school or nursery have agreed the support your child needs, you should agree a date with them for reviewing the support that your child has received. This might be at the end of each term or sooner if necessary.

At the review, you may agree to continue with the same support if it is working, or to change it if your child needs more or different support. You should then agree a new date for reviewing the support.

This process should continue for as long as your child needs extra help at school or nursery and should be documented in your child's written plan if they have one. The next section describes the different types of plan your child may have.

What type of plan does my child need?

Verbal or informal agreements

If your child needs just one or two minor changes to the support they receive at school or nursery, they may not need a written plan. You can agree verbally with the school or nursery what those changes will be and a date for reviewing the changes. This could be at a parents' evening or in a meeting. To avoid any misunderstandings, it can be helpful to email the school or nursery afterwards to confirm what you have agreed.

Written agreements

It can be helpful to have a written agreement about the support your child should be getting if:

- your child needs several changes to the support they receive
- your child needs support from at least one other staff member as well as their class teacher
- you feel the school or nursery is not doing what they have agreed to do.

Written agreements could be an email conversation between you and the school or nursery confirming what has been agreed, minutes of meetings, or a separate document that sets out what has been agreed.

More formal learning support plans

When your child needs more significant support, or support from several staff in the school or nursery and/or from other professionals, they might need a learning support plan.

Learning support plans are standard documents that all schools and nurseries in the same area will use to plan the support of pupils who need a higher level of support. The local authority will have a system in place for deciding which pupils should have this more formal plan, but they do not have a duty under law to put in place this kind of plan. See '**How local authorities plan support for pupils in their area**' on page 5 for more information on this.

Learning support plans are called different things in different local authorities, for example:

- Additional support plans (ASPs)
- Individual support plans (ISPs)
- Individualised education programmes (IEPs)
- Addressing Barriers to Learning (ABLE) plans.

Some local authorities do not have separate learning support plans. Instead, they use wellbeing plans to plan a pupil's support for learning. See below for more information about wellbeing plans.

To find out what learning support plans are called in your area and how they are used, ask your child's school or nursery.

Co-ordinated support plans (CSPs)

Your child may need a co-ordinated support plan (CSP) if they:

- have a lot of different needs or very complex needs
- need a lot of extra support from at least one other agency as well as from education (for example, health or social work), and
- have support needs that are likely to last for more than a year.

The purpose of a CSP is to co-ordinate the support that different agencies provide to help a pupil do their best at school or nursery.

CSPs are the only type of plan that a local authority must put in place if a pupil meets the criteria. Find out more in our factsheet on [Co-ordinated support plans](#).

A CSP may not contain the level of detail of the education and support plans described above, and is usually reviewed annually, so your child might need a CSP **and** a learning support plan.

Healthcare plans

If your child has healthcare needs that affect them at school or nursery (for example if they need to take medication or need specialist treatment during the day), the school or nursery and your child's healthcare team should draw up a healthcare plan for them. Find out more in our factsheet on [Supporting pupils with healthcare needs](#).

Wellbeing (child's) plans

Children and young people who need specialist support with their wellbeing may have a wellbeing plan. A wellbeing plan is a standard document used within an area by all professionals working to support a child or young person's wellbeing. It helps them understand what their role is and what others are doing to support the child or young person. Wellbeing plans do not just apply to education, but to all aspects of a child or young person's life.

Wellbeing plans are often called ‘child’s plans’ but they might also have different names, for example:

- Wellbeing and Assessment Plans
- Getting it Right for Me (GIRFMe) plans
- Young person’s plans.

Your child’s school or nursery should be able to tell you the name of the wellbeing plan used in your area.

Sometimes wellbeing plans include education plans, such as learning support plans or co-ordinated support plans, and sometimes these are separate documents. Even if your child’s education plan is not included in the wellbeing plan, it should be mentioned so that everyone working with them knows they have an additional, education-specific plan.

Looked after child’s plan

Local authorities must prepare a plan for every looked after child or young person. This must set out who will support the care, health and education needs of the child, as well as contact arrangements with their birth parents.

How do local authorities plan support for pupils in their area?

All local authorities must have a policy for providing additional support for learning and keeping children’s and young people’s needs under review. They must publish information about their policies and arrangements. Your child’s school or nursery should be able to give you this information or you can look on your local authority’s website.

To plan for meeting pupils’ needs, they need to put in place a system for deciding which pupils need what level of support. Many local authorities call this ‘staged intervention’, but it might be called something different in your area.

What is staged intervention?

Local authorities use staged intervention or a similar process to help them plan and budget for providing additional support for learning across the area. Staged intervention provides a standard framework for professionals working with pupils who have additional support needs to decide what level of support and what type of plan each pupil might need.

How does staged intervention work?

Local authorities set out a number of stages and describe the level of support a pupil needs at each stage. There are usually three or four stages. Each local authority's system is different, but here is an example of what a staged intervention framework might look like:

Level	Level of need	Type of support	Assessment and planning
1	Some concern about a child's progress identified by teacher(s) or parent(s).	Usually provided by class or subject teachers, perhaps with some help from a support for learning or guidance teacher.	Ongoing monitoring of progress. Personal learning planning.
2	Higher levels of need that can be met by the school or nursery.	More involvement of specialist teachers, such as support for learning staff or guidance teachers, perhaps with some advice from other services, such as educational psychology, social work, speech and language therapy, etc.	More formal assessment of needs. More tailored plan with specific goals.
3	Higher levels of need that require specialist input.	Ongoing support from specialist services, such as educational psychology, social work, speech and language therapy, etc. In some cases, a child at level 3 might need to attend a specialist unit.	More formal assessment of needs. More formal education and support plan. Child's plan or CSP may also be needed.
4	Multiple or complex needs.	Ongoing, significant support from multiple agencies. Often a child at level 4 will attend a specialist unit or special school.	More formal assessment of needs. Assessment for co-ordinated support plan (CSP). More formal education and support plan. CSP if child meets the criteria. Child's Plan.

How will I know what level of staged intervention my child is on?

The levels are meant to help the people working with your child make decisions about their support. But you might find it helpful to know what level your child is on and what this means in terms of the support they will receive. You can ask the person responsible for additional support for learning at your child's school or nursery about this.

What if I disagree about the level my child is on?

If you think that the level your child is on does not reflect their needs, you can discuss this with the person responsible for additional support for learning at your child's school or nursery. If you feel that the school, nursery or local authority has not fully identified your child's needs, you can ask for their needs to be re-assessed. Find out more in our factsheet on [Identifying and assessing your child's needs](#).

If you continue to disagree about the level of support your child is getting, there are other steps you can take. Find out more in our factsheet on [Avoiding and solving problems](#).

How do I find out more about staged intervention in my area?

Your child's school or nursery should be able to tell you how the local authority plans for providing support in your area. They should also be able to provide you with written information about this.

How can I request a plan for my child?

You can ask the person responsible for additional support for learning at your child's school or nursery to set up a plan for your child. Before you ask for a plan, it would be helpful to think about and write down the reasons why you feel a plan might help. These might include helping everyone involved to:

- agree what your child's needs are
- set out goals for your child to achieve and the support your child needs to achieve them
- understand what actions have been agreed and who will do them
- keep track of your child's progress
- agree when your child's progress will be reviewed
- agree how to keep each other informed about any difficulties that arise.

If you think your child might be eligible for a co-ordinated support plan (CSP), you have the right to request that your local authority assesses whether they need one. Find out more in our factsheet on [Co-ordinated support plans](#).

What if they refuse?

If you are not satisfied with the response to your request for a plan, there are other steps you can take. Find out more in our factsheet on [Avoiding and solving problems](#).

How can my child and I be involved in planning support for my child?

The school or nursery and local authority must ask for your views (if your child is under 16) and the views of your child when they are deciding what support they need. They must take account of any advice or information you can provide.

The school or nursery should work with you and your child to agree any goals they might be able to achieve within a specific timescale, the support that your child needs to be able to achieve those goals and a date for reviewing the support. As planning is an ongoing cycle, the school or nursery should continue to involve you and your child in regular reviews of their support.

Where can I find out more?

Local authority information www.enquire.org.uk/local-authorities

You can find information about your local authority's arrangements for planning pupils' support on its website. You can also ask your child's school or nursery for a copy. Our website has links to the additional support for learning information on each local authority's website.



How Enquire can help

Enquire can help you understand your child's rights to additional support for learning and how to work in partnership with their school or nursery to make sure your child gets the support they need.

Enquire can:

- explain your child's rights to additional support for learning
- listen to any questions and concerns
- advise you on the way forward
- help you find local education and support services.

You can contact our helpline on **0345 123 2303** or **info@enquire.org.uk**
Access to interpreters is available.

You can also find lots more information about additional support for learning, including our full range of publications, at **www.enquire.org.uk**

The information on our website is available in over 100 languages and with a range of accessibility tools, such as text-to-speech.

Reach is our website for children and young people. Reach helps pupils to understand their rights to feel supported, included, listened to and involved in decisions at school: **www.reach.scot**

Enquire is also a partner in the My Rights, My Say service. My Rights, My Say supports children aged 12-15 with additional support needs to exercise their rights to be involved in decisions about their support in school:
www.myrightsmysay.scot

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Enquire is funded by the Scottish Government and managed by Children in Scotland

