Parents and carers, children and young people, local authority, health, early years providers, schools, further education, voluntary and community sector working together to raise understanding and improve outcomes for children and young people with additional and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Learning difficulties
Understanding needs and what to do

Part of the Cambridgeshire Local Offer

‘One front door to information on education, health and care provision’
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We appreciate your comments about what is good about this resource and what could be improved. Please contact the Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategic Development Manager, Teresa Grady at teresa.grady@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Introduction

A Local Offer

The Cognition and Learning offer is part of the wider Cambridgeshire Local Offer (www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send). It sets out information on provision for vulnerable groups including those with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 0-25 years.

We are committed to providing easy access to information for parents, carers and professionals who may not be specialist in this field. All Local Authorities are required to produce their Local Offer. A Local Offer has two main purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information about the support and opportunities that are available
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving children and young people with SEN, parents, carers and service providers in its development and review.

We have included the services with whom the child and family may come in contact in health; the local authority; early years settings; schools; Further Education (FE); training; employment and the voluntary and community sector. This is to ensure children and young people and their families can experience a ‘joined up’ approach placing them at the centre of planning and decision making.

We describe how needs are first identified and how they can be supported by providers of universal services. Further information is included on access and eligibility to specialist provision; assessments; wider support for the family and transition into adulthood.

The Cognition and Learning offer is being developed with support from young people; parents and carers and partners across services. It remains open to development in response to changing needs and dialogue with all interested parties.
Our vision

The outcomes that we want for all children and young people are set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Commissioning Strategy. They are:

- Being happy, confident and healthy.
- Having friends and a peer group
- Being ready for and doing well at school
- Having a job and able to pursue interests
- Being as independent as possible, and supported to have choices
- Being safe

‘We want children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) to achieve well in their early years, at school and in college; find employment, lead happy and fulfilling lives; and have choice and control over their support.’

Our commissioning approach is focused around three important features. These are:

- personalisation (the child and the family being equal partners in all that we plan and do),
- integration (the local authority services, health, social care, educational settings and the voluntary and community sector working effectively together), and
- localism (ensuring that high quality provision is designed and delivered locally).

Other strategies that are closely linked are:

- Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Strategy
- Think Family – www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/thinkfamily
- Accelerating Achievement Strategy
- Transforming Lives (Adult Social Care)
- Building Family Resilience (Looked After Children Strategy)

These documents can all be found on www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/families

A working guide. Latest update 6.12.16
How can parents, carers and young people get involved with strategic planning of provision?

If you would like to ‘have your say’ and become more involved in reviewing and developing provision for children and young people with additional and special educational needs and disability (including speech, language and communication needs), please see information on forthcoming events and workshops for parent carers on our Local Offer events page. We include reports from these events and what has happened as a result on the Developing the local offer page. You can also leave comments and queries on the Local Offer webpages at localoffer@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Governance

Provision for cognition and learning is always under review and being developed. The governance of this is through the Children and Families Joint Commissioning Board and the SEND Performance and Commissioning Board.

The accuracy of the information cognition and learning provision published in this resource; and the timely response to comments from parents; carers; young people; partners from health; early years; schools; further education; employment and the voluntary and community sector is managed through the Local Offer Working Group. Membership of this group includes representatives from Pinpoint parent carer forum; Health Designated Clinical Officer (DCO); Local Authority Special Educational Needs (SEND) Specialist Services; SEND Strategy and Commissioning; SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS); and the Family Information Service.
Broad categories of needs

Children and young people with additional and special educational needs and disability are all individuals with their own set of strengths and difficulties. They do not fit into boxes. It can be useful, nevertheless, in terms of identifying the type of support that will best meet their needs to talk about four broad categories of need. Below are the four categories of needs referred to in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 0-25 (2015):

**Communication and Interaction**
Including:
- Speech Language and Communication;
- Autistic Spectrum

**Cognition and Learning**
Including:
- Moderate Learning Difficulties;
- Severe Learning Difficulties;
- Profound and Multiple Difficulties;
- Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia; dyscalculia; developmental co-ordination disorder

**Social Emotional and Mental Health**
Including:
- Withdrawal and isolation; Challenging disruptive or disturbing behaviour;
- Mental health needs such as anxiety, depression, self-harming, eating disorders;
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD);
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD);
- Attachment disorder

**Sensory**
Including:
- Vision impairment
- Hearing impairment

It is important to note that children may have needs in more than one area.
What are Cognition and Learning needs?

Cognition is the term used to describe thinking and learning skills. By learning, we mean the activity or process of gaining knowledge or a skill by studying, practicing, being taught, or experiencing something.

Children and young people with difficulties in these areas have a primary need around their ability to learn in any area of life. They may find it difficult to learn new skills, to cope independently or to understand new information.

A learning difficulty happens when a person’s brain development is affected, either before they are born, during their birth or in early childhood.

Several factors can affect brain development, including:

- the mother becoming ill in pregnancy
- problems during the birth that stop enough oxygen getting to the brain
- genetic factors
- inherited learning disability
- illness, such as meningitis, or brain injury in early childhood

Sometimes there is no known cause for a learning disability.

Some conditions are associated with having a learning disability, such as Down’s syndrome and Autism

Cognition and learning difficulties can be mild, moderate (MLD), severe (SLD) or profound and multiple (PMLD). Some people with a mild learning disability can talk easily and look after themselves, but take a bit longer than usual to learn new skills. In the UK, learning difficulties also include specific learning difficulties (SpLD)

**Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD)**
Children and young people with moderate learning difficulties are likely to have some language skills that mean they can communicate about their day to day needs and wishes. Children and young people may need some support with caring for themselves, but many will be able to carry out day to day tasks with support.

They will find school work challenging, despite appropriate interventions, e.g. they will have much greater difficulty than their peers in learning basic literacy and numeracy skills and in understanding new information. They may also have associated speech and language delay, low self-esteem, low levels of concentration and under-developed social skills.

**Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD)**
Children and young people with severe learning difficulties have significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. This has a major effect on their ability to participate in the home, school and community without support. They may also have associated difficulties in mobility.

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and co-ordination, communication and perception and the acquisition of self-help skills. They will need support in all areas of the development including education, self-help, independence and social skills. Some children and young people may use sign and symbols but most will be able to hold simple conversations and gain some literacy skills.

**Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)**
Specific learning difficulty is an umbrella term which indicates that children/young people display differences across their learning. Children and young people with SpLD may have a particular difficulty in learning to read, write, spell or manipulate numbers. They may also have problems with short-term memory, with organisational skills and with co-ordination. Children/young people with SpLD cover the whole ability range and the severity of their impairment varies widely. Specific learning difficulties include:

**Dyslexia**
Children/young people with dyslexia will have marked and persistent difficulty in acquiring accuracy or fluency in learning to read, write and spell. More information can be found in the local authority guidance on dyslexia which is available from our website, [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send)

**Dyscalculia**
Children and young people with dyscalculia have difficulty in acquiring mathematical skills. They may have difficulty understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers and have problems learning number facts and procedures.

**Developmental co-ordination disorder/ motor co-ordination difficulties**
Children and young people with motor co-ordination difficulties are affected by an impairment or immaturity of the organisation of movement, often appearing clumsy. Gross and fine motor skills are hard to learn and difficult to retain and generalise. They may have poor balance and co-ordination and may be hesitant in many actions (running, skipping, hopping, holding a pencil, doing jigsaws, etc.). Their articulation (speech pronunciation) may also be immature and their language late to develop. They may also have poor awareness of body position.

**Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD)**
Children and young people with profound and multiple learning difficulties have severe and complex learning needs, in addition they have other significant difficulties, such as physical disabilities or a sensory impairment (vision or hearing). They require a high level of adult support.

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support, both for their learning needs and also for personal care and will need a curriculum broken down into very small steps. Most children in this group need support with mobility and many have complex health needs requiring extensive support. They may have considerable difficulty communicating, doing so non-verbally, and characteristically have very limited understanding. In addition, some children/young people may need support with behaviour that is seen as challenging.

**Is there a difference between learning difficulties and learning disabilities?**

The terms learning disability and learning difficulty are often used interchangeably. Learning difficulties tend to be used within educational settings. In the UK, the term ‘learning difficulty’ is also used to include people who have 'specific learning difficulties' but who do not have a significant general impairment in intelligence.

Other terms that are sometimes used to describe a learning disability include ‘intellectual disabilities’ and ‘developmental disabilities’, both of which are used internationally but not commonly used in the UK. It is important to note that all these terms describe one aspect of a person and when providing support, emphasis should be on the strengths, interests, rights and individuality of the child/young person.
What does the data tell us?

To help understand the provision needed for children and young people of Cambridgeshire with cognition and learning difficulties, partners in the local authority, health and parent representatives jointly looked at information available from the school census data; Chi Mat; LAIT; RAISEon line. They have studied 1) trends and 2) compared the outcomes for children and young people with national and statistical neighbours.

Pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulty in Cambridgeshire
Snapshot January 2015 – Statements and Education, Health and Care Plans
(Data – School Census Jan 2015)

Summary - In January 2015 there were 364 pupils in Cambridgeshire with MLD, 2.9% of pupils with special educational needs. This represents 13% of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need (SSEN) or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). Over the last 4 years the number and proportion of pupils with MLD has remained constant. Over the same period the number of pupils with statements or plans has increased.

School Year - The number of pupils with MLD in each year group increases from nursery school through primary school with the peak at year 6. There is a step change in the number of pupils with MLD at year 7, with a higher number in secondary schools.

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Free School Meals (FSM) - Pupils with MLD have a similar rate of FSM provision as those with statements and plans but a higher rate than those without SEND need.

Birth Month - Pupils born in the summer months are slightly more likely to have MLD than those born in spring and autumn months.

Other key points
32% of pupils with MLD also have a secondary SEND need. Top two additional needs are:
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs

In 2015 there were 1971 pupils with School Action plus or SEN Support who had a primary need of Moderate Learning Difficulty.
Pupils with Specific Learning Difficulty in Cambridgeshire

Snapshot January 2015 – Statements and Education, Health and Care Plans

(Data – School Census Jan 2015)

Summary - In January 2015 there were 180 pupils in Cambridgeshire with SpLD, 0.2% of pupils with special educational needs. This represents 6% of pupils Statements of Special Educational Need (SSEN) or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP).

Over the last 4 years the number and proportion of pupils with SpLD has increased. The percentage increase in SpLD is less than the percentage increase across all categories of SEND need.

School Year - The number of pupils with SpLD in each year group increases from nursery school through primary school, with the peak at years 5 and 6. At secondary school level there are more pupils with SpLD, the peak number of pupils is in year 11.

Free School Meals (FSM) - Pupils with SpLD have a similar rate of FSM provision as those with Statements and Plans but a higher rate than those without SEND need.

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**Birth Month** – There are more summer born pupils who have SpLD than spring and autumn born. The effect of birth month for pupils with SpLD is more pronounced than all types of SEND need.

Other key points

29% of pupils with SpLD also have a secondary SEND need. In 2015 there were 1625 pupils with School Action plus or SEN Support who had a primary need of Specific Learning Difficulty.
0-5 years
First concerns – universal provision

Sometimes parents and carers are aware before or soon after birth that their child will have needs that will affect their development and learning. Routine antenatal screening can pick up some chromosome and inherited gene abnormalities. They can identify the risk of a child having disabilities such as Down’s syndrome. If the risk is high, the mother may be offered further diagnostic assessments.

For other families it is only in the following months or early years after birth that their needs become more apparent. It is often a parent or family member who will be the first person to realise that a child or young person has a difficulty. They may be concerned that their child is not developing as others the same age or in a similar way to older siblings.

When should there be concerns?

Young children are individuals; they have different personalities and may develop at different paces. A delay in some areas does not necessarily mean that a child has learning difficulties. The following, however, should be considered as early warning signs of possible learning difficulties. Advice should be sought if the child:

- has trouble nursing as a baby (for example sucking or digesting)
- shows delay with sitting and standing
- is slow to start talking
- has difficulty pronouncing words and sentences or learning new words

Many children experience delays like these in reaching the milestones expected for their age, but this does not always mean they have a learning disability. It is best to seek advice if at all worried.

Who can parents talk to about concerns and what will they do?

If parents have concerns about their child’s development and learning they can talk to any of the professionals in the local area with whom they are in contact such as the child’s:

- Health visitor
- Child minder or playgroup worker (Early Years provider)
- Children’s Centre worker
- Teacher in their nursery school
- Parent support groups
- GP

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Health Visitors; children centre workers; early years practitioners and teachers in nursery classes, provide for all children. This is called universal provision. All providers of universal provision are required to make reasonable adaptations to ensure their provision is accessible. To do this they will listen, and respond, to parents’ concerns and aspirations. They will observe the child over time and, with the family, make plans to address and overcome the child’s difficulties.

They can support and advise parents and carers in a variety of ways and signpost to additional help in the community:

Two very important checks that health visitors, children centre workers; early years practitioners and teachers in nursery classes will refer to are:

- **The Two Year Old Health Check and Record**
- **The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile**

These checks will indicate if the child is developing and learning in-line with their peers. If it is possible that there are underlying issues such as a hearing impairment, the parent will be advised to take their child for tests.

The two checks are now referred to as the Integrated 2 Year Old Review in Cambridgeshire. Integrating health and education reviews gives a more complete picture of the child through drawing together the detailed knowledge of how the child is learning and developing day to day at their educational setting with the expertise of the child’s health visitor at the health review, along with parents’ views and concerns about their child’s progress. The checks are carried out separately but the findings are looked at together and a package of any follow up support required for family can be delivered by multiple agencies, depending on the needs identified.

The Two Year Old Health Check and Record and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile describe the next ‘step’ to be reached by the child and what actions need to be taken by all to help the child to get there. The actions required will vary from child to child depending on their particular needs. The impact of these actions will be monitored.

Below are links to some useful guidance and resources that should inform practice in early years settings.

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## Guidance and resources

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<td><strong>Foundation Years website</strong>&lt;br&gt;Information and support if you work in the early years and childcare delivering services for children and families.&lt;br&gt;The broad range of information accessible on this site is developed by government, professionals and the voluntary and community sector and is continually updated with the latest news, information and resources.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework/">http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework/</a></td>
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<td><strong>Birth-to-five development timeline</strong>&lt;br&gt;An interactive guide to child development from birth to five years old, including videos and advice to help parents along the way.</td>
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<td><strong>National (NCB) Children’s Bureau</strong>&lt;br&gt;Early Support information about learning disabilities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/923258/earlysupportlearning_disabilities_final2.pdf">http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/923258/earlysupportlearning_disabilities_final2.pdf</a></td>
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<td><strong>NHS website</strong> – information to support parent cares with children with learning disabilities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/childrenwithalearningdisability/Pages/Childrenwithalearningdisabilityhome.aspx">http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/childrenwithalearningdisability/Pages/Childrenwithalearningdisabilityhome.aspx</a></td>
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**What happens if difficulties continue?**

If difficulties continue, despite high quality universal provision, the health visitor, children’s centre worker, early year’s practitioner or teacher in a nursery class may suggest that the child requires some **targeted provision** to address additional needs.
0-5 years
Additional needs – targeted provision

Sometimes a child does not make expected developmental or learning progress despite high quality universal provision (the type of provision that is available for all children) from the health visitor; early years setting or nursery teacher. Parents and carers can talk to their health visitor, early years practitioner or nursery teacher about additional actions (targeted provision) that they can offer.

It is important that the actions (targeted provision) address a specific outcome for the child; are time-limited; and that ‘before’ and after’ measurements are taken to check that the actions have been effective and that the child is making progress.

Practitioners in early years settings and parent carers are well placed to observe the child in different situations and notice what they are good at, what they find difficult and what support works best.

In most cases, carefully targeted provision over a period of time will enable a child to ‘catch-up’ with their peers. Their progress should be monitored to ensure progress is sustained.

Parents and carers should also be informed about

- local support groups
- ways to help their child at home
0-5 years
Complex and severe needs – specialist provision

A small number of young children with more complex, severe and enduring cognition and learning needs will require highly specialist action (provision). These children are likely to have Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND).

Specialist action (provision) is determined by the child’s individual needs. It may be delivered one to one or as part of a group with children with similar needs. It is not necessarily continuous. There may be breaks in which the impact is reviewed before another period of support.

The adaptations and support expected at universal level will continue when children receive specialist support

Early years settings and nurseries can offer some types of specialist provision (actions). Evidence-based examples of actions used by those who work with young children can be found in the local authority resource ‘Improving Outcomes for Children with Additional Needs’. It is important that actions address a specific outcome required for the child; are time-limited; and that ‘before’ and after’ measurements are taken to check that the actions have been effective and that the child is making progress.

Further advice and support with specialist actions (provision) is available from health services and the local authority for those children who meet the thresholds. Please use the links provided to find out more about the provision; eligibility and contact details.

- Local Authority SEND Specialist Services
  Information on Local Authority services can be found at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send)
  - National Health Service (NHS) Speech and Language Therapy Service
  - National Health Service (NHS) Occupational Therapists
  - National Health Service (NHS) Community Paediatric Service

Information on Health services can be found at [www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk](http://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk)

In some cases, where the thresholds are met community paediatricians will provide a medical assessment for children identified in school age as having a significant learning difficulty.
difficulty to explore whether there is a medical or genetic reason for their difficulties. They do not usually offer ongoing advice and support.

**Evidence-based actions (provision)**

To find out more about evidence-based actions (targeted and specialist) that early years settings can offer to support learning and development please see:

- The local authority resource booklet *Improving Outcomes for Children with Additional Needs*

This is available at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send)

**Support in the home**

Children and families with the highest level of need may be eligible for support in the home. The family of a child with cognition and learning needs and other complex needs, may be offered home visits from the **Local Authority SEND Specialist Services Team**

For more information please see [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send)
Inclusion in schools

Schools are expected to provide an inclusive environment for all children, including those with cognition and learning needs. They must make adaptations to ensure children and young people find their schools accessible. The Department of Education (DfE) ‘The Equality Act: Advice and Guidance for Schools’ clearly sets out these requirements.

With additional actions (provision) in place in mainstream schools tailored to the needs of individual children and young people and with outside advice from health and local authority services provided as and when needed, it is expected that most children and young people with cognition and learning difficulties will have their needs appropriately met in their local mainstream school. Other than in exceptional circumstance this is usually the preferred option for the child or young person.

In the minority of cases where the child or young person’s needs are significant and there are other highly complex needs, alternative placements at an Enhanced Resource Centre (ERC) or special school may be considered. For information on Cambridgeshire’s special schools including contact details; eligibility and offer please use the link below.

- Enhanced Resource Centres
- Special Schools

Details of local schools can be found on: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/familiesdirectory
5-16 years
First concerns – universal provision

Sometimes, a child’s cognition and learning needs do not begin to show until the child starts school or even later on in secondary school. Parents may feel that their child is struggling to ‘keep up’ or does not respond in the same way as others their own age or the school may observe signs of difficulties.

When should there be concerns?

Children and young people are individuals; they have different personalities and may develop at different paces. The following, however, should be considered as warning signs of possible needs that have not been previously identified or of another underlying needs such as hearing impairment. Advice should be sought if the child or young person:

- has trouble learning the connection between letters and sounds
- has difficulty blending sounds to make words
- confuses basic words when reading
- consistently misspells words and makes frequent reading errors
- dislikes reading and writing; avoids reading aloud
- has difficulty with reading comprehension or maths skills
- has trouble learning and remembering basic math concepts
- has difficulty remembering sequences
- is slow to learn new skills
- has difficulty with open-ended questions and word problems
- has poor organisational skills
- has trouble following classroom discussions and expressing thoughts aloud

Where there are concerns, other underlying reasons should also be consider e.g. hearing or visual impairment, social and emotional needs.
Who can parents or a young person talk to and what will they do?

If a young person or a parent carer of a school-age child has concerns about their cognition and learning they should talk to the class teacher or subject teacher. Other professionals they could approach include their GP; school nurse; or a local parent support group.

Parents know their children best, and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child’s development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by the children and young people themselves.

All those who work with children and young people need to be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early by identifying and removing barriers to learning and development. They can support and advice parents and carers in a variety of ways and signpost to additional help in the community.

Parents and carers will be invited to give permission for information about their child to be shared between health and education professionals so that a common understanding and approach to their needs is adopted.

Schools are well-placed to observe children day-to-day and identify early signs of possible cognition and learning needs that are impacting on their achievements. Schools are required to track the learning and development of all children/young people. Careful tracking will show if the child is developing and learning in line with their peers. This enables schools to set realistic, but challenging, goals with the child against national expectations. Some important stages that schools will measure against are:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
- Phonics Screening Check (Year 1)
- Key Stage 1 Assessments (Year 2)
- Key Stage 2 SATS (Year 6)
- GCSE and other qualifications at Key Stage 4. (Year 11)

Between these stages, schools will carefully monitor if the child is on track by looking at:
- Termly whole school tracking of attainment in subjects.
- Termly attendance data
- Fixed term exclusions

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Life skills such as participation, self-esteem; independence

**Universal provision in schools**

The provision that is available to all children in schools and other educational settings is called *universal provision*. Schools are required to create a teaching and learning environment that enables all children to access learning, participate fully in the life of the school and community and develop the wider skills needed to for adult life. They are expected to have an appropriate level of expertise to support children with additional cognition and learning needs and remove barriers to learning. This will require making adaptation to teaching and learning. The adaptations required will vary from child to child and over time, depending on their particular needs.

High quality teaching is expected in all schools. High quality teaching is important for all children and young people but it is essential for those with additional and special educational needs.

High quality teaching can be recognised by:

- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives;
- High demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning; High levels of interaction for all children/young people;
- Appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining;
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for children/young people to talk both individually and in groups;
- An expectation that children/young people will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently;
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate children/young people.

**Parent and carers**

If you have concerns, your child’s school or GP will be able to signpost you to further information and support in the local area such as from *voluntary and community parent support groups*. Information can be found on the Cambridgeshire Local Offer at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send)
Guidance and resources for school-age children

There is a wide range of excellent resources available to schools and other partners to develop understanding, knowledge and skills that will best support children and young people with cognition and learning needs. Below are some useful websites and links that should inform practice in schools.

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<tr>
<td>Mencap</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mencap.org.uk">www.mencap.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Institute of Learning Difficulties</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bild.org.uk">www.bild.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire Assessments for Schools</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/SEND">www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/SEND</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tops tips for workforce in schools and other settings

Each child or young person with cognition and learning difficulties has different strengths and needs. Below are some actions that are typically taken by staff in schools. It is not intended that they are all used all the time. The actions should be discussed regularly with the child or young person in context of the particular learning situation.

**Top Tips for staff in schools and other settings (taking from Jean Gross Beating Bureaucracy Toolkit)**

- Use Teaching Assistant for pre-tutoring – preparing pupil for a task so that they come to it already knowing the key vocabulary and concepts.
- Link new learning to what pupil already knows – e.g. start lesson with class mind map of what they already know about a subject.
- Tell pupils the three key points of the lesson, teach them and recap on them at the end.
- Provide multiple examples of new concepts, and take these examples from children’s own real-life experience rather than talking in the abstract.
- Break new learning down into small steps.
- Use visual and kinaesthetic learning – learning from pictures, diagrams, mind maps, using practical equipment, handling objects, moving and doing rather than sitting.
- Use scaffolding – having a peer or adult work alongside the pupil at first, then gradually withdraw as confidence grows, or having pupil finish a task that has already been part-done for them.
- Use short simple instructions. Give one at a time and check for understanding. Write down and leave up instructions after saying them.
- Question pupil after some other pupils have given examples of what is required
- Give pupil time to think, or to talk to a partner before answering a question, or say ‘I’m going to come back to you in a minute to ask you xxxx’.
- If pupil can’t answer a question, scaffold/support till they can rather than saying ‘Can anyone help x?’; echo back the pupil’s answers in expanded form.
- Buddy the pupil with a more able peer.
- Have any text that the pupil will struggle with read to them by a ‘study buddy’ or TA, or appropriate assistive technology.
- Put up a list of key vocabulary for a particular topic or lesson and teach the meaning of each word.
- To help pupil extract the salient points from information that they are given, use highlighter pens or provide cards telling them what they have to look out for on a visit, in a text or from sources such as film.

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If difficulties persist despite high quality teaching and suitable adaptations to remove barriers to learning being consistently in place the school may suggest that the child or young person requires some **Targeted Provision**

A working guide. Latest update 6.12.16
Most children and young people with cognition and learning needs, including many of those with significant and complex needs in this area will have their needs appropriately met in their local mainstream school or setting with support from specialist services as needed. Other than in exceptional circumstance this is usually the preferred option for the child or young person.

Some examples of the type of adaptations that mainstream schools can be expected to make for children with cognition and learning needs include:

- Access to diagrams, mind maps, practical equipment to support their learning.
- Have any text that the pupil will struggle with read to them or provide access to assistive technology.
- Enable pupil to record their ideas using alternatives to writing, for example, PowerPoint presentations, posters, oral presentations, min maps.
- Provide writing frames and templates (e.g. writing up a science experiment) to help structure their thinking.
- Use of visual supports in the classroom, e.g. visual timetable to help organise the day.
- Providing a differentiated curriculum at the child’s level of understanding.
5-16 years
Additional needs – targeted provision

Sometimes a child of school-age does not make expected developmental or learning progress despite high quality universal provision from the school or setting or health service (the type of provision that is available for all children). If a parent or carer is concerned about their child’s progress they can talk to the child's class or subject teacher, school nurse or GP surgery about additional actions (targeted provision) that they might be able to offer or are aware is available in the local area.

These children may not have Special Educational Needs (SEN) but, for a range of reasons, are performing at a level a little below their peers. The school will first check that high quality universal provision is consistently in place. They will then consider, carefully targeted ‘catch-up’ actions. Provision is usually over limited period of time, but may be revisited in stepped stages.

The adaptations and support expected at universal level will continue when children receive targeted provision

It is important that the actions (targeted provision) address a specific outcome for the child or young person; are time-limited; and that ‘before’ and after’ measurements are taken to check that the actions have been effective and that the child is making progress.

Examples of targeted provision that research has shown are effective, can be found in the local authority resource, ‘Improving Outcomes for Children with Additional Needs’. There is a section on cognition and learning.

In most cases, carefully targeted provision over a period of time will enable a child to ‘catch-up’ with their peers. Their progress should be monitored to ensure progress is sustained.

Parents and carers should also be informed about
- local support groups
- ways to help their child at home

A working guide. Latest update 6.12.16
‘Catch up’ support programmes used in schools to support children with additional needs

Where schools have larger numbers of children who are working below national levels, they may offer nationally recognised ‘catch-up’ support programmes across the school or year group.

Consultation and advice is available from the Local Authority to schools from SEND Services and the Learning Directorate to develop targeted programmes

More information on services available can be found on

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/learntogether
5-16 years
Complex and severe needs – specialist provision

A small number of children with more severe, complex and probably life enduring cognition and learning needs will require additional highly specialist actions (provision). These children are likely to have Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

Specialist action (provision) is determined by the child’s individual needs. It may be delivered one to one or as part of a group with children with similar needs. It is not necessarily continuous. There may be breaks in which the impact is reviewed before another period of support.

The adaptations and support expected at universal level will continue when children receive specialist support.

Schools can offer some types of specialist action (provision). Sometimes schools cluster together to share knowledge, expertise and delivery of specialist programmes.

The school will first check that high quality universal provision is consistently in place. They will then consider what further actions to put in place (specialist provision). Specialist provision is usually given over a limited period of time, but may be revisited in stepped stages.

It is important that actions address a specific outcome for the child; are time-limited; and that ‘before’ and after’ measurements are taken to check that the actions have been effective and that the child is making progress.

Further advice and support with specialist actions (provision) is available from health services and the local authority for those children who meet the thresholds. Please use the link provided to find out more about the provision; eligibility and contact details.

- Local Authority SEND Specialist Services

A working guide. Latest update 6.12.16
• **Children’s Social Care Disability Service**
Information on Local Authority services can be found at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send)

• **National Health Service (NHS) Speech and Language Therapy Service**

• **National Health Service (NHS) Community Paediatric Service**
Information on Health services can be found at [www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk](http://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk)

In some cases, where the thresholds are met community paediatricians will provide a medical assessment for children identified in school age as having a significant learning difficulty to explore whether there is a medical or genetic reason for their difficulties. They do not usually offer ongoing advice and support.

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**Evidence-based actions (provision)**

To find out more about evidence-based actions (targeted and specialist) that early years settings can offer to support cognition and learning please see:

• The local authority resource booklet *[Improving Outcomes for Children with Additional Needs]*

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In most cases, children and young people in receipt of specialist provision that is delivered with efficacy (in the way it was designed to be delivered) and reviewed and updated regularly, will make accelerated progress. Their progress should be monitored by schools to ensure it is sustained. For a minority of children and young people who do not make expected progress, further assessments may be necessary to fully understand the complexity of their needs. Please see the section on assessment for more information. (page 35)
A resource to support conversations between parent and teacher

**Early Concerns**
The parents, young person or teacher have noticed that …….

**What will the teacher do in the classroom?**
In the classroom the teacher will ensure that…

**Support and interventions**
Over the next (number of weeks) the teacher will deliver (or oversee the delivery) of ….

This is so that (name) will then be able to……

**Home**
To support this at home parents could……

**Cognition and learning**
We will meet again on (date) to measure progress and plan next steps

A working guide. Latest update 6.12.16
16-25 years
Identifying and supporting needs

Although it might be expected that most cognition and learning needs are picked up at an earlier age, this is not always the case. Professionals working in the 16-25 years age range should consider the possibility ‘hidden’; ‘missed’ or ‘newly emerging’ special educational needs.

When should there be concerns?
Young people starting Further Education (FE); employment or training, or who are preparing for a placement at one of these, are individuals with different strengths and needs. They will develop the new skills they need at different rates. The following, however, should be considered as warning sighs if difficulties persist despite good transition and induction support.

- Difficulties organising self for independent learning
- Difficulties coping with the amount of reading required at college
- Difficulties keeping up with the speed of lessons
- Withdrawal from some subjects
- Emerging behaviour difficulties that may be the result of finding learning difficult.

Who can a young adult talk to if they want advice and support?
If a young adult has concerns they can talk to any of the professionals with whom they are already in contact e.g.

- GP
- Tutor at Further Education institute
- Voluntary and community support groups
- Manager at the young adult’s place of work or apprenticeship
Further Education Institutions

The government has produced general guidance for Further Education institutions and all those who work with young adults 16-25 with Special Educational Needs and disability and their families should have regard to.

Planning ahead

Useful guidance and resources are available for young people 16 years and over with additional and special educational needs to help make decisions and plan ahead.

Moving On

The Local Authority has produced a list of post-16 courses available to children with SEND. Moving On – Options for school leavers with additional needs. The booklet is available on www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/preparingforadulthood

The Papworth Trust

The Papworth Trust has useful information for teenagers, adults and their families with additional needs. For more information visit: www.papworthtrust.org.uk

Transfer to adult services

Most children with cognition and learning difficulties, will have their needs addressed appropriately in their younger years and will not need continuing support from adult services. Early intervention is essential. It has been proven that if the right support is received at the right time this will have the best impact on achievements in adult life. For young people, however, with the most significant and enduring needs the following teams will become involved:

Preparing for Adulthood Additional Needs team

The local authority Preparation for Adulthood Additional Needs team will become involved when the young person is in Year 9 (14 years) if they have a level of enduring

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special educational needs and disability that will require support in adulthood. Referrals may be made to the Learning Disability Service.

Information on the team, the support they can provide and eligibility can be found on the local offer web pages.

**The Learning Disability Partnership Young Adults Team (LPDYA)** is a countywide team, which supports people with a learning disability to lead as full and independent a life as possible. The team is part of the wider Learning Disability Partnership that brings together social care and health professionals in integrated teams. Further information can be found at:


**Adult Social Care**

Support may be available from Adult Social Care if eligibility criteria are met. For further information, please visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/careandsupport](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/careandsupport)
Assessment

An Integrated Approach

Parents are encouraged to share any concerns about their child’s cognition and learning development with the professionals with whom they are in contact e.g. the Health Visitor, GP, child’s early years setting or school. With the parent, they can identify and address emerging needs and put in appropriate support to overcome difficulties without waiting for a formal diagnosis.

In the age-linked sections in this resource (0-5 years; 5-16 years; 16-25 years) we have described how professionals working in universal services such as schools, early years settings and Further Education are expected to use early screening and assessment tools to identify needs. The use of screening and assessment tools should always be accompanied by actions to address the identified needs. Parents, carers, children and young people need to fully involved in the process. Pre and post measures should be taken so that progress can be measured and next steps planned.

It is only when the child or young person’s has not responded as expected to consistent high-quality actions (targeted and specialist) provided in schools, early years settings or Further Education and their needs remains severe, that they are likely to require further more specialist assessment. In these cases, the professionals and parent carers should discuss involving one of more of the following services if they have not already been involved.

Assessments used will depend on the needs of the child, but may include standardised tests (Tests that put an individual or group of students in the context of their peer group and provides age equivalent and standard scores).

The community paediatric service role in assessment

Children and young people with significant cognition and learning needs may require an assessment from a community paediatrician, for example:

- to provide a diagnostic assessment of developmental delay/learning difficulties in preschool aged children
- to provide advice as part of a statutory assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- to provide a medical assessment as part of a statutory assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) i.e. those children who meet the criteria for an EHC plan. A medical assessment will be offered to those families as part of the EHC

A working guide. Latest update 6.12.16
process (if they have not previously been seen) to explore whether there is a medical or genetic reason for their difficulties.

Community paediatricians do not offer cognitive assessments on school age children and would expect that the nature and extent of a child’s learning needs and appropriate investigation of any specific learning difficulties would already have been undertaken by the school or the SEND Specialist Service.

Community paediatricians will provide a medical assessment for children identified in school age as having a significant learning difficulty. They will explore whether there is a medical or genetic reason for their difficulties. For more information on the access to a community paediatrician and the route through assessment (pathway) please see:


Before seeing a child and parent in clinic the community paediatrician will:

- have information available from the professional who made the referral or referral letter
- request additional information from the child’s school or setting and other professionals who are involved with the child if it is not already available. This may include records of personalised plans showing the support implemented to date and progress made
- request additional information from the parent (e.g. questionnaires)
Assessing additional, complex needs

If the needs of the child and family are seen to be significant and there are other unmet complex needs, a **Early Help Assessment (EHA)** is the appropriate route to bring together the support of various services around the child and family.

**What is an Early Help Assessment (EHA)?**

An Early Help Assessment (EHA) is a way of gathering information to assess the needs and plan responses for children and young people and their families. Any professional with whom the family is in contact such as the GP, Health Visitor, early years setting or school staff may initiate an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

A Think Family approach underpins this way of working. It ensures that any professionals involved work, in a joined-up way, with the child and family at the centre. A ‘lead professional’ is identified.

**Think Family**

The Think Family approach is being embedded across all local authority Children and Family services and Health services for those who work with children, young people and their families. If the needs of the child and family are seen to be significant and there are other unmet complex needs, an **Early Help Assessment (EHA)** is the appropriate route to bring together the support of various services around the child and family.
Early Support 0-5 years.
In the most significant, complex cases and probably life enduring cases in the 0-5 age range the Early Help Assessment may immediately progress to assessment and support through the Early Support 0-5 years programme. Children and families with the highest level of need, will be supported by a team of specialist who will work with the whole family to assess and meet need over time. This may include home visits from the Local Authority SEND Specialist Services Practitioners.

For more information on Early Support 0-5 years please see www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/early-support
Special Educational Needs

A Graduated Approach

Cognition and learning is one of the recognised areas of Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) identified by the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2014). This does not mean that all children and young people who present with cognition and learning needs have special educational needs – but it may be the case.

A child or young adult is said to have special educational needs if they require provision that is additional to or different from that available to others of a similar age despite high quality teaching and support that is differentiated and personalised. Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the school curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

If it is suspected that a child or young person has (or may have) special educational needs then the parents and child or young person will be invited by the professionals whom they see regularly (such as the health visitor, early years provide, class or subject teacher or college tutor) to meet to plan how they will work together to reach the goals to which they aspire. Alternatively parents or a young person with concerns can approach any of the professional with whom they are in contact. The child or young person’s strengths as well as difficulties will be taken into account and supported. The local authority has prepared a list of recommended early assessment or screening tools to help identify needs and plan what needs to happen. View recommended assessments for schools on www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send

If a child or young person will need provision additional or different to that which is available to their peers then they will be placed on SEND Support. A cycle of ‘Assess, Plan, Do, and Review’ will be started. Decision will be made together and actions shared. The length and regularity of the cycle depends on the needs of the child and family or young person at the time. This is called the A working guide. Latest update 6.12.16
graduated approach in the **SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2014)**. Children and young people and their parent carers will be central to this process. Most children and young people on SEND Support will make accelerated progress and will not always need to receive SEND Support. A very small number of children and young people who have severe and complex needs and who do not, over time, respond to additional support and actions, may need an assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan. Parent carers or young people who would like more information should speak to any professional with whom they are in regular contact and who is currently delivering SEND Support to the child or young person. e.g. a class or subject teacher; early years practitioner or tutor in Further Education. Further information on eligibility for an assessment for an Education, Health and Care assessment can be found at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ehcplan](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ehcplan) or by contacting the SEND Information and Advice Service (SENDIASS) on 01223 699 214.

The table below show the role of schools (or other educational settings) and other professionals from health and the local authority, work together to support children with speech, language and communication special educational needs.

## Roles: Health, Local Authority, schools and settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>School or setting</th>
<th>Local authority</th>
<th>Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Universal | Early Years Settings  
Mainstream Schools and Academies  
Special Schools  
Hospital Schools  
Independent School  
Further Education  
Training  
Apprenticeship | SEND Specialist Services  
Children’s Centres  
Locality Teams  
Looked After Children Statutory Assessment and Resourcing Team (START)  
Disability Social Care | Speech and Language Therapists  
Occupational Therapists  
Paediatric Service  
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School or setting</th>
<th>Local authority</th>
<th>Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Universal | • Early Identification and response to SEND  
• High quality teaching;  
• Adaptations to remove barriers to learning (Equality Act 2010)  
• An inclusive environment and ethos | • Training opportunities for early years settings, schools, colleges and Further Education from specialist services  
• Advice and signposting from SEND Specialist Services | • Advice and signposting to parents and young people form school nurses, Health Visitors, and GPs |

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEND Support</th>
<th>As above and also:</th>
<th>As above and also:</th>
<th>As above and also:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) but not an Education, Health and Care plan.</td>
<td>- Child/young person and family centred ‘Assess, Plan, Do, Review’ using structured approaches to conversations.</td>
<td>- Support and advice on evidence based practice and interventions to meet the needs of children and young people and their families who meet thresholds for involvement.</td>
<td>- Training opportunities in for schools colleges and parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Short term intervention programmes aimed at helping the child/young person catch up with their peers.</td>
<td>- Medium and longer term intervention programmes to address specific needs.</td>
<td>- Personalised interventions to meet the needs of children and young people and their families who meet thresholds for involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Health and Care (EHC) plans</th>
<th>As above and also:</th>
<th>As above and also:</th>
<th>As above and also:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and young people with statutory provision - specified in a EHC plan</td>
<td>Joined up working with the child/ young person, family and all professional partners to ensure delivery and monitoring of the EHC plan</td>
<td>Joined up working with the child/young person, family and all professional partners to ensure delivery and monitoring of the EHC plan</td>
<td>Joined up working with the child/young person, family and all professional partners to ensure delivery and monitoring of the EHC plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wider support

Parents and carers have told us that it is very important to know what wider support is available for their child and the family. They stressed the value of being put in contact with other parents of children with special educational needs and disability as early as possible. This included drop in coffee mornings at the nursery, school or clinic and events held by local parent forums and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

A full description of provision for children with additional and additional or special educational needs and/or disability is published in the Cambridgeshire Local Offer which can be found at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send Some examples of provision from the local authority, Health, social care and voluntary agencies are listed below.

If you have any queries about the support available please do not hesitate to contact the provider or phone the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service on 01223 699 214.

Parent to parent support

Parents tell us that meeting other parents of children with special educational needs or disability to talk with can be invaluable. Any professionals who are in contact with the family e.g. via a school or early years setting; GP surgery; or at the point of diagnosis in a speech and language clinic, should check that the parent knows how to get in contact with other parents or support groups in the area.

Pinpoint

Pinpoint is a Cambridgeshire charity supporting and informing parents of children with special educational needs, disabilities or additional needs. It is run for parents by parents. Pinpoint holds regular events and meetings for parents of children of all ages with any disability or additional need, including cognition and learning. Parents can get involved in shaping services and developing information for parents, as well as meet other parents in a similar situation.
Contact a Family

Contact a Family is a national charity for families with disabled children.

They provide information, advice and support and bring families together so they can support each other.

Parent Partnership Service providing Cambridgeshire’s SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

SENDIASS offer confidential and impartial advice and support to make sure that parents, carers and young people get information and guidance on SEND matters, eligibility and entitlements.

Local social care short break offer

The Disabled Children’s Early Help Team supports disabled children and young people to develop the skills to Prepare for Adulthood, to access community activities, to increase independence skills and to do enjoyable activities away from their main carers. This is achieved through an allocation of early help funding that can be used for agreed activities or support. These activities or support will provide the carer with a short break.
For more information on short breaks please see the Cambridgeshire Short Break Duty Statement on www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/short-breaks or contact the Disabled Children’s Early Help team on 01480 379 800 or email dceh@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

### Activities and groups for children and young people

The following websites and groups can provide information on activities, support and events across Cambridgeshire for children and young people with additional needs or disabilities including autism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who/ What</th>
<th>Contact details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Societies, Clubs and Information Point (SCIP) | [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/scip](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/scip)  
Email: scip@cambridgeshire.gov.uk  
☎: 01480 379 827 |
| Pinpoint | [www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk](http://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk)  
Email: information@pinpoint-cambs.org.uk  
☎: 01480 499 043 |
| Cambs.net | [www.cambridgeshire.net](http://www.cambridgeshire.net) |

### Children’s Centres

If parents/carers are worried about their child and think that they are not developing in the same way as children of a similar age, they can speak to a health visitor or family worker at a local Children’s Centre. Further information, addresses and contact details can be found at [www.cambridgeshirechildrenscentres.org.uk/](http://www.cambridgeshirechildrenscentres.org.uk/)

**Children’s Centres may offer the following:**

- health services – midwives and health visitors
- family support services – trained staff who can support, advise and provide information
- family events and activities
- early years education/child care and advice about costs
- employment, training and benefits advice
- information for parents/carers and families
Information on venues and contact details is available at local Children’s Centres or on
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/childrenscentres

Benefits and other financial help

Parents and carers of a child with special educational needs and disability, including speech,
language and communication needs may be entitled to benefits to help with the extra costs as a
result of their needs. These include the Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Personal
Independence Payment (PIP) (for over 16s), Carer’s Allowance and Child Tax Credit.

Gov.uk (www.gov.uk) contains up-to-date information about all welfare benefits.

Contact a Family offer benefits advice & information on conditions & support groups -
www.cafamily.org.uk/

Independent living and housing

Housing and independent living

Supported housing is managed by District Councils; support provided varies between schemes.
General information is available from the relevant district council.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Contact details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire County</td>
<td>General information on housing and links to</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/careandsupport">www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/careandsupport</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>district councils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridgeshire County</td>
<td>General information on housing for young</td>
<td><a href="http://www.youthoria.org">www.youthoria.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Living near Local Authority borders

Families living near Local Authority borders may find that some services will be provided by one
Local Authority and other services by another. The Cambridgeshire Local Offer at
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send will be the ‘front door’ into information from Education,
Health and Social Care in Cambridgeshire and other Local Authorities from which children and
young people from Cambridge with SEND and their families can access support. The Local Offer Directory allows you to search for information by topic or location. By putting in a home postcode parents (or professionals on their behalf) can access this information. If parents would prefer to speak to someone please phone the Families and Childcare Information helpline on 0345 045 1360

Professionals working with a family who is receiving support from more than one Local Authority must ensure that communication channels are clarified and agreed between the family and other professionals. A lead professional should be identified who can coordinate the work of those involved. The lead professional could be an Early Years practitioner, Health Visitor, School SENCo, Speech and Language Therapist, a chosen advocate of the family or any other professional with whom the family is in regular contact. This person may change over time and any changeover should be planned in advance so that families do not have to repeat the same information and so that there is no loss of continuity.
Transitions

Preparing for times of change

Transitions (times of significant change) can be difficult for all children and young people but can be especially so for those special educational needs and disability including cognition and learning needs. The professionals working alongside the child or young person and their family will identify ongoing and new needs prior to the transition and ensure support arrangements are in place.

Below are some points of change that will need special consideration:

- into Reception
- into Key Stage One
- from primary to secondary school
- into Key Stage Four
- into further education
- to a new teacher or support professional
- to a new school
- to independent living
- to training or employment
- to adult services

We have listened to children and young people with special educational needs, including cognition and learning and their families and those who work with and support them. They recommend the following guidance at times of change of phase of education:

- prepare well in advance, even several years beforehand for a move to further education, training or employment
- ensure that parents and young people have enough information to make informed choices
- ensure information on strengths, difficulties and effective support is shared in advance with all those who will be contact with the child or young person
- plan the first weeks following change very carefully and ensure the child or young person has a ‘buddy’ and named member of staff or work colleague to support them any issues that may arise.
- ensure channels of communication with parents are agreed e.g. home-school booklet, email contact, mobiles. Pre-empt and address any possible difficulties that might be foreseen due the child or young person’s particular type of needs.
• Use structured approaches to conversations with children, young people and families – as part of excellent communication at all times.

Other times of transition, or change that will need careful consideration and possibly specialist support include:
• moving to a new home
• moving in or out of hospital care
• moving in or out of Looked After care
• through a change in family circumstance
• through bereavement

Parents and young people are invited to discuss these changes with the professionals who they are most in contact with (e.g. the visitor, GP, school nurse, children’s centre worker, early years setting or school’s Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or college learning support staff). They will work alongside the child or young person and family to plan actions to help them through the changes. They will also be able to signpost to any other specialist support where relevant. Information on specialist support at these of change can be found on the Cambridgeshire Local Offer www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send

For information on transition events run by Pinpoint please see their website www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk or contact them by email at information@pinpoint-cambs.org.uk or telephone 01480 499 043.

Further information on preparation for adulthood and transition to post 16 education, employment and training can be found in the section 16-25 years.
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/preparingforadulthood
Training and support for professionals

The workforce in the local authority

With the help of parents, carers and professional partners, the local authority have developed a set of **Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disability Competencies** (the knowledge and skills expected of the local authority workforce who work with children, young people and families) These are reflected in the local authority induction programme for new staff and in continuing professional development. In addition, services organise in-house and external training tailored to the needs of their service e.g. Social Care, Locality Teams, Looked After Children and SEND Specialist Services.

The workforce in schools, early years, Further Education (FE) and other settings

The local authority **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Specialist Services** provide a range of professional services for children and young people and families in a wide variety of educational and community settings. A multi-professional service (consisting of psychologists and educational professionals) offer schools and settings a bespoke approach to removing barriers to learning (including academic, social and emotional barriers)

Additionally SEND Specialist Services, offer a range of packages that schools and settings can commission. They work collaboratively with schools, drawing upon theory and research of ‘what works’ to develop an understanding of complex situations. The current offer can be found at [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/learntogether](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/learntogether)

Further information about the support to schools and settings from SEND Specialist Services can be obtained by contacting the numbers below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Contact Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Cambs and Fenland area</td>
<td>01353 612 802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huntingdon area</td>
<td>01480 373 470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Cambs and City area</td>
<td>01223 728 311</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The local authority Learning Directorate offer courses, conferences and briefings around whole school improvements. A number of these have a specific focus on improving provision for children and young people with additional and special educational needs and disability. The current offer can be found at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/learntogether
And finally

This document is intended as an initial guide to provision for cognition and learning needs in Cambridgeshire. For further information and wider topics relating to Special Educational Needs and Disability, we invite you to refer to the Cambridgeshire County Council website www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send or if you would prefer to speak to someone, please see the contact details in the box below.

We welcome your thoughts and comments on provision for Cambridgeshire children and young people with cognition and learning needs and their families. We are keen for young people, parents, carers and professionals across services to become involved in decision making about current and future provision. To find out some of the many ways to get involved please go to www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send or contact one of the services at the end of this section.

We look forward to hearing from you

We appreciate your comments about what is good about this resource and what could be improved. Please contact the Special Educational Needs and Disability Strategic Development Manager, Teresa Grady at teresa.grady@cambridgeshire.gov.uk