All early years and childcare providers have a responsibility to identify children with special educational needs (SEN) and make sure they put in place support as early as possible to help them learn and progress.

The [Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)](http://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-young-people-health-services/cambridgeshire-0-19-healthy-child-programme/healthvisiting) is the national framework for learning, development and care for children from birth to the end of Reception year. All registered early years and childcare providers (nurseries, pre-schools, childminders) must follow this framework. The identification of SEN is built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children. If your child is falling behind or not making adequate progress, you should be told as soon as possible and involved in discussions about extra help or support needed.

This framework includes two specific points where written assessments or progress checks must be provided to parents/carers – when a child is aged between two and three and when they turn five.

**Progress checks**

When your child is between two and three, their early years and childcare provider must give you a short written summary of their development. Ideally this is completed at the same time as your [health visitor](http://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/what-we-do/children-young-people-health-services/cambridgeshire-0-19-healthy-child-programme/healthvisiting) reviews your child's physical development milestones as part of the Healthy Child Programme. They will identify your child's strengths and any areas where their progress is not as expected. If there are any concerns they will discuss these with you and what support to put in place to help your child.

The progress check at the end of the EYFS is usually completed in the final term of the year in which your child turns five. In September 2015 this changed to a baseline assessment at the start of reception which replaced the end of year profile.

**When children need extra help**

You should be fully involved in the discussions about your child’s needs, the support that is needed and regular reviews of their progress. This will take the form of a four part cycle of assessing needs, planning support, putting the support in place and reviewing the outcomes. This is known as a graduated response.
Help from other services

If your child's nursery, pre-school or early years setting feels that your child needs help from other services they will talk to you about their concerns and may suggest that an assessment called an **Early Help Assessment (EHA)** is completed. This is the way that they can identify strengths and needs with you and consider who else can support your child and family. Professionals from across Education, Health or Social Care may become involved at this point.

Further assessment of needs

If your child needs long term significant extra help, the childcare provider and people working with you and your child, may suggest that a formal assessment of their learning needs is requested. This involves looking in detail at your child’s needs, the extra help that has already been put in place and identifying what extra support they may need. It may result in an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan** (previously a Statement of Special Educational Needs).

People to contact for advice and information

If you have concerns about your child, you can talk with your doctor or health visitor who will be able to look at your child’s development with you in the first instance. Health visitors carry out a Healthy Child assessment when children are 2 - 3 years of age.

**Child and Family Centres** will also support you and can help with information and advice about services.

If your child is already in a nursery, pre-school or other childcare provider, the key person for your child will be able to discuss your concerns and the setting’s Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will be able to plan support for any additional needs.

If your child has significant and complex additional needs and is part of **Early Support**, the Early Support Co-ordinators will also be able to offer advice and information for parents.

Cambridgeshire’s **Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)**, formerly the Parent Partnership Service, can provide help with information, advice and support if you are concerned about your child and the support they need.

**Pinpoint** (http://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/), an independent parent support network, provides support, advice and information to all parents and details of local parent groups.