



Questions to the Early Years SENCO – A guide for Parents/Carers Emma Weaver



This document has been created to support parents and carers of children in the Early Years (0-7 years) who have an identified Special Educational Need (SEN) or who may have an emerging SEN.

What is this guide about?

This guide will support you to understand the role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in your child's early years setting and will help you to think about questions that you may wish to ask to gain further understanding of how they plan to meet your child's specific needs.

What is meant by the term Special Educational Needs?

Special educational needs, often referred to as 'SEN' or 'SEND' (Special educational needs and disabilities), is a term used to describe learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for a child to learn compared to children of the same age.

What is the SENCO's role?

Every Early Years setting has a SENCO and it is their job to ensure that your child's Special Educational Needs are being met.

It can be useful to get to know the SENCO in your child's setting as it will be this person who you contact to discuss your child's individual learning needs and what support is in place.

When meeting with the SENCO it's important that you share relevant information about your child. This information might include any reports that have been written or referrals that have been made to outside agencies, for example; Speech and Language Therapy, Paediatrician. Before the meeting, it may be helpful to write a list of questions that you would like to ask. Below are some examples.

Questions for the SENCO

1. Where can I gain access to the settings SEN policy? - Every setting will have an SEN policy. This is a document that details how the setting meets the need of children with SEN.
2. How much experience has the setting had with children with SEN?
3. How does the setting provide support for children with SEN? What access to training have the staff in the setting had?
4. Do you have access to any outside agencies? - some settings have access to specialist outside agencies who can guide them in their support for children.
5. How do you monitor children's development? - all Early Years settings will monitor development using the Early Years Foundation stage. For children with SEN there is further monitoring that takes place including through the implementation of individual play plans.
6. How do you update parents/carers on their child's development?

After the meeting, you may wish to plan for another meeting in a few months' time to discuss how your child is doing and how the support is being implemented.