



SENDCO Guides – Working with parents and carers

Our statutory commitments

- Inform parents when making special educational provision for a child (6.2) and agree the types of support, the expected impact and the expected review date (6.48).
- Help parents to understand what they can do at home to support any school-based interventions (6.51).
- Involve parents in decision-making (6.19).
- Listen to parents' concerns about their child's development (6.20, 6.45).
- Involve parents in a discussion around strengths, needs and outcomes and share a brief record of discussions (6.39).
- Formally inform parents if a child is going on a SEN register (6.43).
- Seek parental permission before contacting external professionals (6.47).
- Feedback to parents about the progress being made and consult parents about any changes to provision (6.54).
- Schools should meet parents at least three times per year (6.65).

What does best practice look like?

- Ensuring the communication essentials are done well, using the list above as a guide.
- Moving beyond 3 times per year, to regular, positive and purposeful communication.
- Co-producing with parents, perhaps about changes to provision, about interventions you plan to offer or whole-school changes that may affect pupils with SEND.
- Educating and supporting parents. This might mean providing opportunities for parents to meet each other and/or to learn more about a particular type of SEND.
- Showing flexibility with parent communication. This might mean understanding which parents require reasonable adjustments; it might mean asking whether in-person or remote meetings are more convenient for certain parents.

SENDCO tips

- Be systematic about communication – brief but regular contact can maintain a better relationship than high-stakes, occasional meetings.
- Keep the narrative positive. Celebrate pupils' successes with parents as frequently as possible, using the team around you to support this.
- Signpost where useful. It can be helpful to have at your fingertips a list of services, agencies and networks that parents can tap into/get support from, should they need it.
- Block out your time. Keep 2-3 points in the week blocked out for parent meetings. That way, parents can see you at short notice but in a way that is realistic for your time.

Special educational needs and disability code of practice.pdf



Special Needs Jungle Website



NASEN - Working_in_partnership_with_parents_and_carers.pdf



For answers to over 300 questions that busy SENDCOs need to find answers to quickly, look at The Lone SENDCO

