

Jargon Buster: SEN Terms Explained

Sosalin Communication Services



Navigating your child's speech, language, or additional needs journey often means encountering unfamiliar terms and acronyms. This guide explains the most common ones you're likely to come across.

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder. Difficulties concentrating or sticking to tasks; children may appear not to be listening and are easily distracted.
ADHD	Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Disorder. Problem behaviours linked to attention span, restlessness and hyperactivity.
Annual Review Report	A written progress report completed by the school for an Annual or Transition Review meeting.
AS – Asperger's Syndrome	A form of autism; average or above-average intelligence with fewer social/communication difficulties than other forms of autism.
ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Term for a range of disorders affecting social interaction, communication and imagination.
CAF	Common Assessment Framework. Early assessment to get a full picture of a child's additional needs.
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Support and care for children with mental health difficulties.
Case Worker	Local authority officer co-ordinating a child's Statutory Assessment and the first point of contact for parents.
Complex Needs	Describes a child with moderate learning difficulties alongside other difficulties (e.g. speech and language, ASD, behaviour, physical).
EHC Plan	Education, Health and Care Plan – sets out a child's educational outcomes and required provisions.
IEP	Individual Education Plan. Short-term learning targets set for a child with SEN, reviewed at least twice a year.
Inclusion Support Service	School-based service helping build capacity to include children with SEN, advising on statemented pupils.
Inclusion	Educating children with SEN in mainstream (local) schools wherever possible.
Independent Parental Supporter (IPS)	Supports parents through the SEN framework, independent of the decision-making process.
LD	Learning Difficulties – significantly harder to learn than most children of the same age.
LSA	Learning Support Assistant (also Teaching Assistant) – supports children with additional needs in class.

Mainstream School	An LA-maintained, non-special school – Infant, Junior, Primary or Secondary.
Maintained School	A state school, including community, foundation and voluntary schools.
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties – greater difficulty learning than 98% of same-age peers.
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties – severe learning difficulties plus other significant needs, requiring high support.
SEBD	Social, Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties.
SEN Co-ordinator (SENCo)	Staff member responsible for co-ordinating SEN provision in a school or setting.
SEN	Special Educational Needs – learning difficulties calling for special educational provision.
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs.
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties – significant intellectual/cognitive impairments, usually needing support across the curriculum.

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