

Croydon LOCALITY SEND SUPPORT IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS A detailed Guide for parents and carers

Details of the Croydon Locality SEND Support service.

Since September 2020, Croydon LA have been rolling out a rapid response Locality SEND Support process to ensure that SEND support provision in schools for Croydon resident children is robust and consistent. This is being done in order to help local schools be better able to support pupils with SEND and their families, from nursery to year 11. From September 2022, all schools in Croydon who have accepted their invitation to be part of LSS have had the chance to access additional resources to support early intervention. From September 2023, this is being extended to children in the early years. Under CLSS, provision for pupils with SEND has improved. CLSS has also developed partnerships and networks that support school-led improvement, promote school collaboration and enhance inclusive practice. Existing EHCPs in schools will continue to be honoured and ELPS and Special Schools are outside of this initiative.

All schools and nurseries have a delegated level of funding which can be used to meet a child's learning needs once the child is identified on the school special educational needs register, this is known as notional SEND funding.

Under CLSS, additional support, which can be given as Locality Funding or early years SEND funding (SENIF), can now be requested by schools, with parental involvement. This local funding may be awarded after schools have demonstrated that they have used resources already available to them and further demonstrated that additional resources are necessary to fully support the child's needs effectively in mainstream schools.

Schools and nurseries will work together in localities of around 15 schools. Each locality will be overseen by an Area SEND Lead, who will be working closely with school SENDCos. The Area SEND Lead will also chair a monthly Locality SEND Support Forum, attended by all SENDCos. A Headteacher from the Locality and professionals including EPs and therapists will also be present. This forum will share best practice and discuss individual cases for Funding.

If a child's needs are deemed as 'exceptional' (complex and severe) at a Locality SEND Support Forum, then the Locality SEND Lead will refer and present this child's case, with the school SENDCo, for an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) assessment. Similarly, if it has been demonstrated that Locality funding is still not meeting need, then a forum could also make the decision to apply for an EHCP assessment.

What is a Locality SEND Support Agreement?

This is an agreement between the locality, the school and the parents where the level of support in school for the child requires additional funding up to the maximum level that can be allocated by the locality.

This enables individual pupils' learning needs to be met quickly, in a targeted way at SEND support level in school.

This is a non-statutory agreement. Although parents do not have the same statutory rights that an EHC Plan brings, the advantage is, that this allows the support to be given in a faster and more flexible way, avoiding the 20-week assessment period.

However, if after a period of locality funded school-based intervention, the resources provided are found to be insufficient, then a review can be undertaken by the school SENDCo, parent and teacher along with child/young person's views. As a result of the review, a decision to apply for an EHCP assessment can be made. In such a case the pupil would still be supported with locality funding during the EHCP assessment period up to the point where the plan is issued.

None of this affects the parent's right to instigate an EHCP assessment, although we would have hoped to have worked closely with parents during the locality process to support children and young people.

Involving you and your child

The council will support all families, children and young people to participate as fully as possible in decisions relating to their lives and to be at the centre of the new system, irrespective of the level of need.

As parents and carers, you will be fully involved in making decisions about the nature of the help and support your child receives.

Croydon Locality SEND Support reflects Croydon's aim to promote early intervention in Mainstream schools through working together with families, children and young people with SEND needs.

Moving to an EHC assessment

CLSS funding is regularly reviewed and an EHC Assessment and Plan may be recommended should your child's needs change.