



# One minute guide

## Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Team (SENIT)

No. 124, April 2021

### What is Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Team (SENIT)?

The Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Team (SENIT) are a multidisciplinary team of specialist teachers and inclusion workers, with expertise in the areas of early years, learning and cognition and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs across all phases of education. They provide advice, resources, strategies and training and, where appropriate, specialist assessment to schools and settings in order to build capacity to identify and meet needs.

### How can a child or young person access support from SENIT?

There are a number of ways to refer children and young people with special educational needs for SENIT support. Pre-school children can be referred by a medical professional working with the child and family.

Children attending pre-school settings (e.g. child-minder, children's centre, private nursery) and schools in Leeds can be referred by the setting or school. There are criteria for referral which are shared with health and educational professionals.

### How does the team work with children and young people?

The SENIT practitioners work with schools and settings to build their own capacity to better identify needs, plan appropriate provision and support children and young people with special educational needs (SEN). The duties of early years settings, schools and post 16 providers for children and young people with SEN is described in the [SEN Code of Practice 2014](#) and is based on high expectations and happy and fulfilled lives.

SENIT practitioners liaise with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) in the school or early years setting and will consult with parents/carers and key staff. There will be an examination of the 'graduated approach' of assess, plan, do and review and how effectively it has been implemented and the impact. The graduated approach is a cyclical and ongoing process:

- **Assess:** identify strengths and needs through observations, tests, pupil work, reports, views of key staff, and with children, young people, and parent/carers.
- **Plan:** plan provision to meet needs with clear and measurable outcomes identified.
- **Do:** implement the plan in the agreed time frame.
- **Review:** share successes and challenges and plan next steps

The team also offers a range of resources and training courses to support schools and settings to develop their capacity to meet SEN needs, these are available through Leeds for Learning. Bespoke training can be provided to individual schools and settings or clusters of schools on request.

Special Educational Needs Co-coordinators (SENCOs) in schools also have access to a SENCO network and conference; this provides the opportunity to disseminate relevant legislation, research and information and to share good practice across schools.

## How does the team work with schools and settings?

When a child or young person is identified as needing support from the team, the SENIT practitioner will consult with those who know the child best, for example their parent or carer, a key worker or their teacher. They may also consult with other professionals involved with the child, for example speech therapists. Consultations are framed around the graduated approach.

The practitioner may undertake observations and assessments, which can take place in the home, pre-school setting or school. The practitioner aims to include the voice of the child using a variety of approaches appropriate to their age and maturity.

From the information gathered the setting staff and the SENIT practitioner aim to gain a better understanding of the child or young person's strengths and needs. A planned programme of support and intervention can then be agreed with the parent or carer and setting. The SENIT practitioner will usually be involved in reviewing the child or young person's progress over an agreed period of time. Please see the [parent/carers information leaflet](#).

## Key contacts and for further information

For more information and advice about referral criteria for SENIT support, please contact SENIT team leaders. SENIT works in three area teams across the city, with a named team leader for each.

West/North West (vacant as of March 2021) please contact [joan.kavanagh@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:joan.kavanagh@leeds.gov.uk)

East/North East Jill Igoe [jill.igoe@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:jill.igoe@leeds.gov.uk)

South/South East Joan Kavanagh [joan.kavanagh@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:joan.kavanagh@leeds.gov.uk)

You can also contact the team directly on tel: 0113 378 5431