Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

Questions for Governors to Ask

Improving lives of people with SEND

How to use this booklet

This booklet is useful for meetings with your SENDCo, or governors meetings that have SEND on the agenda. Prior to the meeting, take a read of the questions and highlight a small number that are especially relevant.

Outcomes

1. How are children with SEND performing in tests, e.g.:
   o Y1 Phonics
   o Y4 Tables Test
   o Y6 SATs
   o Y11 GCSEs
   o Y13 A-Levels
2. How many SEND pupils have been excluded last year? How does this compare to pupils who have no SEND?
3. Is there any variation between year groups or subjects re SEND progress and outcomes?

School Improvement

1. **Direction:** What are the key areas for improving SEND outcomes? Can I see these evident in our school improvement plan?
2. **Impact:** How have our actions made a difference to outcomes for pupils with SEND?
3. **Barriers:** What barriers have we faced to our school improvement actions?
4. **Attendance:** What actions are we taking to improve SEND attendance?
5. **Accessibility Plan:** How effective has our Accessibility Plan been so far?
6. **Learning from the wider community:** Are there aspects of our SEN work that could be improved by learning from other local schools?
7. **Giving back to the wider community:** Do we have expertise in SEND that we share with other schools?

Our SEND Register

These questions unwrap our SEND profile.

1. How many pupils in each year group are on the SEN register?
2. What is our % of students with an EHCP?
3. What % of our SEND register are boys vs girls?
4. What % of our SEND register fall into each of the four categories (Cognition & learning; Communication & Interaction; Social, Emotional Mental Health; Physical or Sensory Need)?
5. What % of SEND children are BAME (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic)? How does this compare to the proportions of BAME pupils in our wider school?
6. What is the % attendance of SEND pupils? How does this compare to attendance for all pupils?

Teaching & Learning

1. How effective is Wave 1 teaching at including children who have SEND?
2. How well is teaching adapted for learners with SEND?
3. How effective are our interventions? How do we know?
4. Are we seeing the attainment gap closing between our SEN cohorts and everyone else?

Money

1. What funding do we receive for SEND?
2. How do we use our SEND funding?
   - Staffing?
   - Staff training?
   - Resources?
3. How do we know the money is being used effectively?

Staff Training

1. What training have you had recently as SENDCO?
2. What recent SEND training has been undertaken by both teaching and support staff?
3. How are early career teachers (ECTs) supported to meet the needs of children with SEND.
4. How does school ensure that supply teachers and student teachers are aware of the SEND of pupils they work with (and the strategies to use)?
5. How does good practice get shared from one classroom to the next?

Plans for Pupils with SEND

1. Do all pupils with SEND have a SEND Support Plan?
2. When are these reviewed?
3. How are students and parents/carers involved in the review and setting new targets?
4. How does the SENDCo monitor to ensure that plans are a high quality (e.g. targets are SMART, plans are concise and that the same targets are not just rolled over term after term)?
5. Do all of the wider staff team have access to each pupil's plan (e.g. via a network drive)?

Co-Production and Parents

Co-production is the involvement of parents in designing SEND provision – this could be for their individual child or wider school improvement. 'Parents' is used to mean parents, carers or anyone else who has parental responsibility.

1. **Co-production:** How do we know what parents think about our SEND provision and outcomes? And what how do we use this information to inform school improvement?
2. **Co-production:** Give me an example, from the past 6 months, of when parent views have informed how we improved our SEND provision?
3. **Communicating to parents:** How effectively do we communicate with parents about their child's learning? What evidence is there for this?
4. **Supporting Parents:** Do we run sessions to help parents to support child's learning?
   - E.g. (Primary): Helping your Child to Read; Supporting Anxious Children, Online Safety.
   - E.g. (Secondary): Parenting the Autistic Teen; Coping with Exam Stress; Online Safety.
5. **Informing parents:** How do we share info on local services and opportunities for parents to learn more about SEND (e.g. SENDIASS support or Local Parent Carer Forum courses)?
6. **Removing barriers for parents:** Do we offer both face-to-face and remote access to SEND meetings (to make them more accessible to working parents as well as those in digital poverty)?
7. **Removing barriers for parents:** Is our SEND information written in a way that parents with literacy difficulties can actually read?

Transition

Transition is often thought about as "When kids join or leave our school." It can also refer to smaller changes (e.g. moving up to the next year group, moving between lessons). A great time to focus on transition is in Mar – May (so that any actions can easily be included before the new school year).

1. What are the key worries for pupils and their parents at transition points?
2. Who is responsible for transition for SEND pupils joining us or leaving us?
3. How well do we engage the SENDCo(s) of the setting that pupils join from?
4. How are other teaching and support staff involved in supporting transition?
5. Tell me about a recent time when we *proactively* upskilled staff to meet a new pupil's needs?
6. What are the arrangements for transition between year groups and how do we know these are effective for SEND pupils?
7. How do we ensure effective transition for SEND pupils who join the us part way through the year?
8. How confident are we that new staff can access SEND Support Plans or EHCPs well before the term they start teaching any new SEND pupils?
9. What parent or pupil feedback do we have on the effectiveness of our transition work?
10. Do we ever work with other agencies to support effective transition? If so, how and how effective is it?

Quick Fire Questions

These yes/no questions check on some basic SEND rules. Use them to check your school complies with some key laws.

1. **SEND policy:** Is our SEND policy up to date on the website (i.e. reviewed in the last year)?
2. **SEND Information Report:** Is this up to date on the website (i.e. reviewed in the last year. NB This can be merged with the SEND policy as one document)?
3. **SEND Contacts:** Have we published the name and contact for our SENDCO *and* SEND governor? (e.g. in the SEND policy or on a SEND page of the website. NB Governor contact details are normally the main office email and number)?
4. **SEND & LAC:** Have we published how we meet the needs of pupils who are SEND and LAC (Rule 6.80 of the SEND Code of Practice says we have to)?
5. **Accessibility Plan:** Which school leader is accountable for this?
6. **Accessibility Plan:** When was our accessibility plan last reviewed? (Rules are that these should be fully reviewed every three years).