Graduated Approach - A-Z of Terminology

Definition:

"Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach."

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

What Is the Graduated Approach?

As detailed in the SEND Code of Practice, "Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff." While SEN support and provision will be overseen by the SENDCo, the teacher is responsible for the progress and development of children with SEND.

The graduated approach is a four-step cycle which enables teachers to assess individual pupil's needs, put in place appropriate support and assess progress. Good quality teaching is key to a child with SEND making progress and will always be the first consideration for any school. Teachers should receive training, which will support them to identify and support children with SEND.

The graduated approach cycle encourages earlier decisions to be made and actions to be taken for a child to make progress. Being a more holistic approach, it should not be seen as a single process but a continuous review.

The four parts of the cycle are:

Disclaimer: Every child's needs are different and so the recommendations in this resource may not be suitable for every child. It is for you to consider whether it is appropriate to use these classroom strategies within your class. The indicators mentioned are not an exhaustive list, if you are concerned about a child please seek advice from the SENCo.

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Assess

"In identifying a child as needing SEN support the class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, should carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs."

This stage of the graduated approach cycle is about finding out about the child's needs. This can include:

- teacher's assessment and experience of the child
- pupil progress
- attainment
- behaviour
- the child's development in comparison to their peers
- the child's development in comparison to national data
- views and experience of the parents/carers
- the child's views
- advice from external agencies (if relevant)

Assessment should be regularly reviewed to ensure that any support put in place continues to be relevant to the child's needs.

Do

"The class or subject teacher should remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Where the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they should still retain responsibility for the pupil."

Teachers and support staff will deliver support, interventions and adjustments, as detailed in the plan. Teachers should monitor the impact of support and interventions and ensure they are linked to classroom teaching. The SENCo should be available to support further assessment and referral to external agencies, if required.

Plan

"Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEN support, the parents must be formally notified, although parents should have already been involved in forming the assessment of needs as outlined above."

During consultation with the pupil and their parents/carers, the teacher (overseen by the SENCo) should outline the adjustments, interventions and support that will be put in place to support the child. The expected impact should be clearly defined and a clear date for review should be set. Targets should be set (these should ideally be SMART targets) and all staff who work with the child should be aware of their needs, the support they receive and the desired outcome.

Review

"The class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, should revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil."

While no timeframe is stipulated in the SEN Code of Practice for reviews to take place, most are done termly. At this review, the impact and quality of the provision will be evaluated. The teacher, with the support of the SENCo, should make changes to the support plan in reflection of the child's progress and development. This should be done in consultation with the child and their parents/carers.

Further reading

For more information about the graduated approach and SEN support in schools, please refer to the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years. **All quotes used in this resource are extracts from this government document**.

Teacher Handbook: SEND

Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle - SEN Support Resources