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All Schools and Settings – Headteachers /  
SENCoS / Inclusion Leads

Dear colleagues,

We hope you are staying safe and well during these times.

This letter comes with important information for you relating to developments within SEND services in Suffolk. You will be aware from the various communications recently that we have been working together across our teams, namely Specialist Education Services and the Psychology and Therapeutic Service. This is because we recognise how children and young people need carefully co-ordinated support to access and enjoy learning and to thrive in their local school and in the community. We equally recognise, across our services, the need to ensure that support and intervention for a child, young person, and their family, is triggered as early as possible following identification of need. This in mind, we have over the last few months, been working with parent/carer networks, colleagues in schools and many professionals across education, health, and social care services to develop a Graduated Response to SEND in Suffolk. This outlines the SEND journey for children and young people, aged 0 to 25, and describes the stages needed to ensure the right provision at the right time.

You will see in the document within the link above that there are three identified stages to this SEND journey. These stages reflect our joint responsibility in ensuring appropriate and timely provision and in promoting a culture of inclusivity. The three stages also reflect practices identified in the SEND Code of Practice, from the start of the journey at Stage 1 (Assess, Plan, Do, Review), through Stage 2 and seeking external and targeted support, through to Stage 3 where more specialist intervention may be considered appropriate.

More information regarding this Graduated Response (GR) will be shared at the forthcoming virtual SENCo forum on 23 June. For now, we would wish to draw your attention specially to Stage 2 of the GR and the introduction of the new SEND Support Consultations. We will be piloting these in July 2020 with schools in the first instance. Details will follow shortly in Suffolk Headlines with dates and ways to book. We hope the new SEND Support Consultations will be an opportunity for SENCoS and Leaders of SEND to join a team of professionals from across our services to find solutions together – either around individual pupils with additional needs, or around whole school approaches. SENCoS or leaders of SEND in schools will book a half hour slot and an invitation will be sent to join us virtually. The teams will be carefully selected to ensure the right professionals are available in the meeting to offer advice and guidance and to facilitate next steps. As also written in Stage 2 of the GR, this next step could be a support visit to your school to work with the SENCo; it might be access to the AANT (an Educational Psychologist assessment and consultation tool), or it might be further advice from the most appropriate service and a recommendation to submit a referral. We hope this early discussion will enable next steps as quickly as possible and offer a greater degree of clarity around referral processes and criteria. The pilot this term will enable us to work with schools, to seek feedback and to develop the model going forward so it is as productive as possible across all phases.

We hope you will share our passion and commitment to this development of SEND in our county. Our overarching aim is to make systems easy to navigate; to work with you; to share challenges; find shared solutions and enable children, young people, and their families to access the support they need. If you have any questions, please do get in touch with us.



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