



Ordinarily Available Provision

Early years and primary settings

2026

Southwark
Council

“

I want adults to
listen to us because
we have a voice
and we deserved
to be listened to.

”

Ordinarily Available Provision

Early years and primary settings

Southwark's Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) has been developed to support settings and schools, from early years to sixth form, to reflect on and strengthen their core inclusion offer.

Around 150 children and young people from Southwark's mainstream schools took part in workshops to help develop this guidance. Their views and wishes are woven through the final document and should be central to your planning and teaching.

Ordinarily Available Provision benefits all pupils, especially those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or who are disadvantaged. Children and young people who consistently struggle and do not make progress with the provision of Ordinarily Available Provision may need to be reviewed for further support.

The level of support for children and young people in education starts with Universal, then Ordinarily Available Provision, and moves through a range of other targeted and specialist support. We call this the graduated offer, ensuring that children and young people get the right support at the right time.

Terminology used in this document:

- Children and young people as CYP
- Adults who support CYP as staff



Environment
and inclusive
setting



High quality
teaching and
interventions



Understanding
need



Statutory
and policies



Training

Different colours are used throughout the guidance to help you navigate the document – please see the key below:

Universal provision

Available for all
students.

+ Available provision

Accessible if it is
needed.

✓ Good practice

and exemplification
in local Southwark
primary schools.

... Voice of CYP

of Southwark.



Environment and inclusive setting



Schools should ensure there is an audit of its inclusion and provision at least every three years by their SENCo and other relevant members of the senior leadership team.

The Inclusion and SEND team's guidance and audit can be found on the Southwark Schools website: [Southwark SEND standards for schools and settings](#).

Inclusive setting

All children and young people are fully included and have equal access to opportunities, a broad curriculum, and qualified staff. Diversity is actively celebrated through inclusive activities, peer support, and representation that reflects and values different needs and experiences.

Top tip: Use themed weeks and celebration where pupils can explore and discuss their experiences and identity.

- ✓ A Southwark secondary school uses neurodiversity champions. Posters around the schools show staff members who are neurodiverse.

Safe spaces

Safe, inclusive environments are created where young people can access quiet spaces, feel listened to and valued, identify trusted adults, and receive appropriate support. Staff model positive strategies and make adjustments to meet individual sensory and emotional needs.



"I want quiet spaces to be mandatory. There isn't much of a quiet space in the school."

Top tip: Create a calm corner or quiet club available at breaktimes. Model its use ("I'm feeling upset, I'll sit here to calm down"), ensure pupils know which adults they can talk to, and have them see that their views are listened to and acted on.



A Southwark primary school created a calm table, which was themed and had different sensory tools to use. Students could request use of the table through a visual symbol, an object, or verbally, used alongside an incredible five point scale.

CPD and attitudes

A positive, inclusive ethos is modelled by leaders and reinforced through ongoing training, clear routines, and supportive behaviour approaches. Differences are respected using neuro-affirmative language, negative attitudes are challenged, and staff focus on encouraging, understanding, and meeting individual needs.

Physical environment



"It isn't always calm, but we try our best to keep it tidy"

Learning environments are regularly reviewed and adapted to be physically accessible and sensory-friendly, with calm spaces, clear displays, and adjustments to lighting and noise to support focus, comfort, and individual needs.



Low registration

May not notice sensory input unless it is strong, appearing inattentive or unaware.



Sensation seeking

Actively seeks strong sensory input, often fidgeting, spinning, touching objects, or enjoying loud environments.



Sensory tools, movement, and play-based learning were expressly valued by CYP:

“We are not allowed toys in school, but I struggle to focus sometimes.”

A range of **accessible and adaptable resources**, communication methods, and supportive equipment are used to promote independence, comfort, and successful learning, with clear organisation, visual supports, and appropriate technology to meet individual needs.

To find out more about how to provide an inclusive environment and setting read the inclusive environment section in our [full OAP document](#).



Sensory sensitivity

Highly aware of sensory input but does not regulate it, noticing small details others may miss.



Sensory avoiding

Highly sensitive to sensory input and actively avoids it, withdrawing from loud, bright, or busy environments.

High quality teaching and interventions



All staff should have CPD on **high quality adaptive teaching** through a planned schedule of CPD, in order to reduce the need for targeted and specialised support. This may include the five Southwark strategies, and other evidence-based strategies.

[Education Endowment Foundation Blog: Five evidence-based strategies to support high-quality teaching for pupils with SEND](#)



Scaffolding



Explicit
instruction



Cognitive and
metacognitive
strategies



Flexible
grouping



Technology



"[My teacher] explains it slowly and steadily so we can understand."

This was marked as most important teacher behaviour by this child.

An inclusive, flexible **curriculum** uses adaptive teaching, promotes a growth mindset, supports wellbeing and self-regulation, and is guided by ongoing assessment to meet all learners' needs and starting points.

Teachers and leaders use adaptive, structured approaches to support all learners, including clear routines, accessible resources, varied activities, and strategies that promote engagement, emotional regulation, and individual progress. To find out more about high quality teaching please see High Quality Teaching and interventions section in our [full OAP document](#).



Targeted support follows a graduated approach, using **evidence-based interventions** and skilled staff to address additional needs, complement classroom learning, and promote progress with minimal disruption.



Understanding need



CYP are helped to understand their own barriers to learning and the strategies that can support them. School staff should seek the **child's viewpoint** in scaffolds and support that would help them.



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CYP in Southwark had four clear themes in their feedback through discussions. These were:



Sound



Lighting



Being heard



Seating

Key resources:

- [Southwark Primary Behaviour Intervention Toolkit](#)
- [Assure – Southwark Council's health and safety management system](#)
- [SEND Health and Safety Guidance](#)

Behaviour is understood as communication and monitored to identify triggers, with clear, data-informed behaviour plans, risk assessments, and collaborative safety planning in place to reduce risk, support needs, and promote positive outcomes.

Encouraging good attendance involves fostering a sense of belonging, understanding barriers and motivations, and supporting a gradual, confidence-building return to school through flexible and collaborative approaches.

Key responses:

- Sometimes it's hard to... let's...
- I didn't really appreciate until now just how... things have been for you. Thanks for telling me.
- Let me see if I can understand what you are feeling...

Robust **screening and assessment** processes identify needs and inform targeted support, using a cyclical '**assess, plan, do, review**' approach with clear plans, targets, and regular monitoring of progress.

A structured **English as an Additional Language (EAL)** approach values multilingualism, combining high expectations with targeted support, and uses effective assessment and inclusive practices to support language development and learning.

Dual or multiple exceptionality (DME) refers to children with both high potential and additional needs, who require support that recognises their strengths and difficulties, promotes belonging and self-worth, and provides opportunities for success.

Effective **transitions** are supported through timely information-sharing, collaboration with families and professionals, and planned opportunities that prepare and support children moving between settings. Information is actively sought and shared about CYP to support successful transitions and manage change both within the setting and beyond. This information is available for the CYP's parents/carers, other colleagues within the setting and receiving or previous settings, as required.

Things to consider through planning:

- Visuals/photographs of new staff or spaces
- Pre-planned visits to new spaces such as classrooms, lunch halls
- Checklists of routines or equipment
- Social stories
- Child views on supportive strategies and things they like and dislike

For more information

For more detailed support including resources and specific support around the four broad areas of need read the [full OAP document](#).

Policies and statutory practices

ensure inclusive, equitable support for all pupils, with non-discriminatory admissions, collaborative health and safeguarding approaches, flexible behaviour policies, and a strong focus on addressing barriers and promoting equality. For further information read the full 'Policies and statutory practices' section in the [full OAP document](#).



Southwark Council services, as well as those from health colleagues, produce an annual training offer. Please see the OAP **training offer** to find out more in the [full OAP document](#).

