



Parent support and referral guide



Accessing the right support for your child:

Welcome to our parent support and referral guide. As SENCo, I recognise that every child is unique and that families may sometimes need additional advice, guidance, or specialist support. This guide has been created to help you understand the range of services that schools can access and refer to when concerns arise regarding a child's learning, development, wellbeing, or emotional needs. Within this, you will find information about neurodiversity assessments, mental health and wellbeing support, bereavement services, and occupational therapy advice, along with an overview of how referral processes work.

We hope this guide provides clarity, reassurance, and a helpful starting point for working together to ensure that every child receives the support they need to thrive.

We are aware that some parents and carers are seeking external advice and support through their GP regarding their child's additional needs. In many cases, families are being referred back to the school's SENCo, as the SENCo is responsible for coordinating and managing support within the educational setting. We appreciate that receiving this advice can be frustrating, particularly when families are looking for additional support, and that being redirected can cause delays in accessing the appropriate help and progressing the support process. We therefore encourage parents and carers to contact the SENCo directly in the first instance so that concerns can be discussed and the most appropriate next steps can be identified as quickly as possible.

It is important to note that schools are unable to make direct referrals for the following services or assessments; however, we can provide supporting information and endorse requests where appropriate:

- ADHD assessments
- Autism assessments
- Support relating to intimate care challenges
- Dietitian support
- Occupational Therapy support
- Dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia assessments (these are typically accessed through private assessment providers)

Where families wish to pursue any of the above, the SENCo can help by providing relevant information about a child's needs and the support already in place within school. However, referrals and arrangements for these services are usually made through healthcare professionals, specialist services, or private providers, depending on the type of assessment or support being sought.

Schools can make referrals for the following services where there is clear evidence that a graduated approach has been implemented and reviewed:

- MindMate Support Team
- EPOSS (including counselling and at-home support)
- Bereavement support services

In addition, the school commissions speech and language support through Chatterbugs, which provides three days of specialist support each year. Referrals for speech and language assessment and support can also be made through NHS services where appropriate.

It is important to note that the Right to Choose pathway exists to enable parents and carers to choose from a range of approved providers when seeking support for their child. If you wish to access an assessment through the Right to Choose pathway, you should discuss this with your GP and specifically request a Right to Choose referral. The GP is responsible for processing and submitting the referral and should provide information about the available NHS-approved providers. Families may also choose to pursue private assessments or support services if they prefer; accessing the Right to Choose pathway does not remove this option.

Useful links:

- [MindMate Support Team - MindMate](#)
- [Children and young people's mental health services \(CYPMHS\) - Leeds Community Healthcare](#)
- [Services - Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust](#)