

'Every school leader is a leader of SEND'

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) have the greatest need for excellent teaching.

These questions for reflection link to the 5 recommendations from the EEF's guidance report on 'Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools'.

These questions offer a starting point for senior leaders (aside from the school's SENCo) and governors/trustees to review their own knowledge, skills and impact on outcomes for all pupils with SEND.

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EEF guidance recommendation	Questions for reflection
1 Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils, without exception.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In considering the most prevalent area of need in your school—e.g. communication and interaction - does your SEND provision address this? • How do you promote positive relationships, active engagement and well-being for all pupils including for those pupils with SEND and their parents ? • Are materials on paper and online accessible to all? What materials in particular do you refer to—give examples.
2 Build ongoing, holistic understanding of your pupils and their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What percentage of pupils are on the SEND register in your school and how does this compare to local and national averages? • What is the process for a child to be placed on the SEND register? • What are teachers' attitudes and approaches towards pupils with SEND? • How does your school interpret and implement the graduated approach of assess, plan, do, review? How is this communicated between the pupil and their families and teachers in school? • How is support from specialist professionals accessed and monitored?

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

5 key questions for school leaders to reflect on

EEF guidance recommendation	Questions for reflection
3 Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is your SENCo a member of the leadership team and what is the purpose of their role in that team?• How frequently is SEND on the agenda of SLT meetings?• How does the SENCo meaningfully input in to teaching and learning decisions in school?• How consistent is high-quality teaching across the school?• What staff training is required? (Strategies to emphasise for pupils with SEND might include: flexible grouping, cognitive and metacognitive strategies explicit instruction, use of technology and scaffolding.)
4 Compliment high-quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What SEND provision is in place within your school/MAT?• What small group and one-to-one provision is in place?• What is in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of this provision? Are the interventions high quality, structured and targeted?• How do you monitor unintended consequences such as interventions becoming a barrier to inclusion?
5 Work effectively with teaching assistants (TAs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How much of your SEND provision is delivered by highly skilled and qualified teachers?• How much of this provision is delivered by TAs?• How do TAs supplement (not replace) the classroom teacher?• How is TA deployment reviewed each year?• How are TAs involved in training and development in school?