



# One minute guide

## Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Team (SENIT)

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### What is SENIT?

The Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Team (SENIT) is a multidisciplinary team of specialist teachers and inclusion workers in Leeds. The team supports children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities to improve outcomes and to realise their potential. They work with staff in schools and education and childcare settings, providing advice and training which builds capacity within settings to support children and young people with SEN.

The team aims to secure better progress, support inclusion in a mainstream setting and improve the school or setting experience for the child or young person.

### How can a child or young person access support from SENIT?

There are a number of ways to refer children and young people with special educational needs for SENIT support. Pre-school children can be referred by a medical professional working with the child and family. Children attending pre-school settings (e.g. child-minder, children's centre, private nursery) and schools in Leeds can be referred by the setting or school. There are criteria for referral which are shared with health and educational professionals.

### How does the team work with children and young people?

When a child or young person is identified as needing support from the team, the SENIT practitioner will consult with those who know the child best, for example their parent or carer, a key worker or their teacher. They may also consult with other professionals involved with the child, for example speech therapists.

The practitioner usually undertakes observations and assessments, which can take place in the home, pre-school setting or school. The practitioner aims to include the voice of the child using a variety of approaches appropriate to their age and maturity.

The practitioner gains a better understanding of the child or young person's strengths and needs from the information they have gathered. They can then agree a planned programme of support and intervention with the parent or carer and setting. The SENIT practitioner will usually be involved in reviewing the child or young person's progress over an agreed period of time.

## How does the team work with schools and settings?

In Leeds, the SEN and Inclusion Team works in three area teams across the city, with a named team leader for each.

The SENIT practitioners work with schools and settings to build their own capacity to better identify needs, plan appropriate provision and support children and young people with SEN. Specialist teachers provide advice on child development during the early years, and on specific and general learning difficulties for school age children.

Early years inclusion workers can model effective strategies to support child development, and inclusion workers in schools advise on strategies and resources to support pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

The team also offers a range of training courses to support schools and settings to develop their capacity to meet SEN needs. A training booklet is circulated to schools and settings each year, and training courses are available to book through the Leeds for Learning [website](#). Bespoke training can be provided to individual schools and settings or clusters of schools on request.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) in schools also have access to a SENCO network and conference; this provides the opportunity to disseminate relevant legislation, research and information and to share good practice across schools.

## Who are the key contacts?

The area SENIT team leaders are:

West/North West Janet Clark [janet.clark@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:janet.clark@leeds.gov.uk)

East/North East Liz Hands [elizabeth.hands@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:elizabeth.hands@leeds.gov.uk)

South/South East Joan Kavanagh [joan.kavanagh@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:joan.kavanagh@leeds.gov.uk)

You can also contact the team directly on tel: 0113 395 1039.

## Further information

There is more information available from the SEN support in schools page on the Leeds City Council [website](#).

For more information and advice about referral criteria for SENIT support, please contact SENIT team leaders via the contact details above.