



#InclusiveEducation

 **Down Syndrome  
International**



What is the  
role of the  
SENCO?



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A SENCo, or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, is the teacher who is responsible for assessing, planning, and monitoring the progress of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

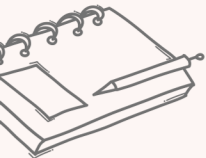


If you think there may be something holding your child back, express those concerns.

If you think things are not progressing as they should, have a meeting with the SENCo. If the needs are likely to be more than a minor concern that can be dealt with by the class teacher(s), the SENCo may observe the child, talk to other staff members, and look at any records that may indicate a difficulty. This may suggest that the child just needs a little extra help (school SEN support), or that SEN professionals need to become involved to diagnose a graver difficulty.



The SENCo will then be the person who liaises with you, the teachers and local authority about your child's needs. This isn't a one-way street – ensuring your child receives the full help necessary to fulfil their potential may require diligent homework, detailed searching, and questions on your part.



A really good SENCo will listen to others, especially parents!

SENcos work to ensure a child with SEN has their needs met as fully as possible. But the reality of budgetary and other constraints can make life hard for both you and them (even if you have a personal budget allocated via your EHC plan – often referred to as a 'plan').

In English state schools a SENCo should ensure that all staff follow the school's SEND code of practice (2015). This may involve identifying, assessing, and planning for needs and developing support programmes to meet those needs and break down any barriers to learning. It may involve calling in outside professionals such as an educational psychologist and hiring a learning support assistant (LSA).

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A child does not need to have a plan or record of need to be supported by the SENCo, who should be aware of any child needing extra help.

SENcos consult and liaise with staff, parents and carers, external agencies, and appropriate professionals and voluntary bodies; they apply for extra funding. They try to ensure that support is co-ordinated and targeted appropriately, and that all are informed and updated about children on the SEND register and understand how best to help. They rely on parents' help and support too: if you are aware that your child has any kind of difficulty, inform the staff at the earliest opportunity (preferably before the child starts at the school) and hand over all relevant documentation. This will give staff time to put plans in place to ensure a smooth integration into the new school environment.

