

The role of the Early Years SENCO in Halton

Maintained nursery schools in Halton **must** ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as the SENCO in order to ensure the detailed implementation of support for children with SEN. This individual should also have the prescribed qualification for SEN Co-ordination or relevant experience.

In accordance with the EYFS framework, Halton requires other early years providers to have arrangements in place for meeting children's special educational needs. Those in group provision are **expected** to identify a SENCO. Childminders are **encouraged** to identify a person to act as SENCO and childminders who are registered with a childminder agency, or who are part of a network, may wish to share that role between them.

The role of the SENCO involves:

- Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN;
- Advising and supporting colleagues;
- Ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform actions taken by the setting; and
- Liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting.

The role of the Area SENCO in Halton

All early years settings have access to guidance and support from Area SENCOs. In Halton, the role of the area SENCO is fulfilled by the Early Years Team.

The role of the Area SENCO includes:

- Providing advice and practical support to early years settings about approaches to identification, assessment and intervention within the SEN Code of Practice;
- Providing day-to-day support for setting-based SENCOs (and childminders) in ensuring arrangements are in place to support children with SEN;
- Developing and disseminating good practice;
- Supporting the development and delivery of training both for individual settings and on a wider basis, including regular SENCO cluster group meetings and training for new SENCOs;
- Working with existing SENCOs to support smooth transitions;
- Providing a link between education, health and social care to facilitate appropriate early years provision for children with SEN;
- Signposting SENCOs to local impartial information, advice and support services, to promote effective work with parents of children in the early years;
- Strengthening the links between settings, parents, schools, social care and health services;

The Area SENCO plays an important part in planning for children with SEN to transfer between early years provision and schools.