

Supporting every child to thrive – A guide to ordinarily available provision (OAP)

Every child is different and learns in their own way. Schools work hard to make sure all children feel included, supported and able to do well.

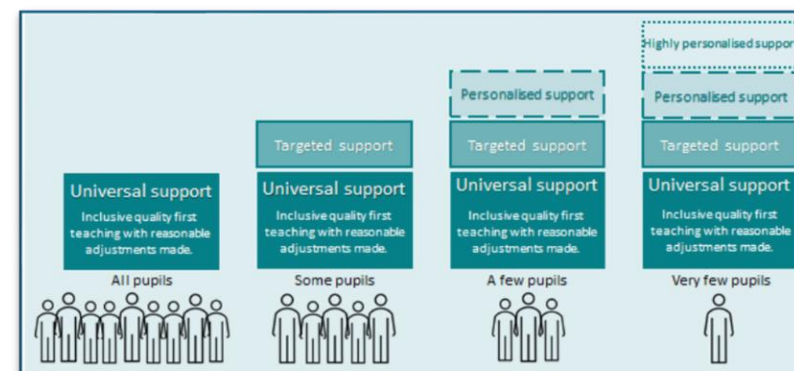
Sometimes children need extra help with learning, making friends, communication, emotions or physical needs. Much of this support can be provided by the school as part of everyday teaching. This is called **Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP)**. You may also hear it called the **Universal Offer** or **Universal Support**.

OAP is the support that schools should provide for **all children**. It includes good teaching, helpful classroom strategies and adjustments that remove barriers to learning.

These approaches are **helpful for everyone**, useful for some children and essential for a few.

Schools regularly **assess, plan, do and review** support to make sure children are making progress. Parents and carers are important partners in this process.

In Lewisham, around **1 in 5 children** have identified special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). **15.4%** of pupils receive **targeted support** (known as SEN Support) in school. Around **3.8%** of pupils in mainstream primary and secondary schools have an **education, health and care plan (EHCP)**.



This guide explains the types of support that are usually available in mainstream schools. The examples are not a complete list, as schools may use different approaches to meet the needs of their pupils.

Learning environment

The environment in which children learn can have a significant impact on their wellbeing, confidence and ability to engage in learning. Schools aim to create welcoming, organised and inclusive spaces that help all children feel safe, supported and ready to learn.

Examples may include:

- visual reminders and prompts, such as timetables, labels and colour-coding
- calm, organised classrooms with clear and predictable routines
- learning environments designed to minimise distractions and support concentration
- consideration of sensory needs, including lighting and noise levels
- individual adaptations, workspaces or regulation supports where appropriate

Teaching and learning

Children learn in different ways and at different rates. Teachers use a range of approaches to ensure learning is accessible, engaging and appropriately challenging for all pupils.

Examples may include:

- building learning around children's strengths, interests and individual needs
- breaking learning into manageable steps and providing clear explanations and demonstrations
- using a range of visual, verbal and practical teaching approaches
- regularly checking understanding and adapting support where needed
- providing additional processing time and support with routines and transitions
- using pre-teaching to introduce and rehearse key vocabulary, concepts and learning before whole-class teaching
- providing opportunities for overlearning through repetition, practice and revisiting key skills and knowledge to support retention and confidence

- offering different ways for children to show what they know and understand

Resources and visual supports

Schools use a range of resources and visual supports to help children understand, organise and complete their learning independently.

Examples may include:

- visual prompts, checklists, writing frames and planning templates
- clearly organised and labelled resources using words and pictures
- practical resources to support learning across the curriculum
- accessible reading materials, displays and presentations
- technology, laptops, tablets or assistive tools where appropriate
- opportunities for children to record learning in different ways

Communication and vocabulary

Language and vocabulary play an important role in children's learning. Schools take steps to help children understand and use new words with confidence across the curriculum.

Examples may include:

- explicit teaching of new vocabulary and subject-specific language
- clear explanations supported by visual examples and practical activities
- vocabulary displays, word banks and language prompts within classrooms
- opportunities to revisit and practise new language regularly
- adapted communication approaches to support understanding where needed

Independence, wellbeing and self-regulation

Schools support children to become confident, resilient and independent learners. This includes developing the skills to manage learning, emotions and everyday challenges.

Examples may include:

- teaching children strategies to manage emotions, solve problems and work independently
- encouraging reflection on learning and helping children identify successful strategies
- celebrating effort, perseverance and progress
- supporting children to ask for help and develop confidence in tackling challenges
- providing movement breaks, sensory supports or regulation resources where appropriate

Assessment and feedback

Assessment helps schools understand children's strengths, identify barriers to learning and plan appropriate support.

Examples may include:

- regular verbal and written feedback that supports next steps in learning.
- recognition of effort, resilience and progress.
- a range of assessment approaches that enable children to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- reasonable adjustments during assessments where appropriate.
- assessment practices that maintain confidence, dignity and wellbeing.
- using assessment information to adapt teaching and support

Homework

Homework can help children practise skills, reinforce learning and develop independence. Schools aim to ensure that homework is accessible, achievable and appropriate to individual needs.

Examples may include:

- clear and accessible homework instructions
- information shared through a range of communication methods and online platforms
- adapted homework tasks where appropriate
- access to additional support such as homework clubs.
- ongoing communication between home and school to support learning and wellbeing

- helping children develop strategies that enable them to feel calm, safe and ready to learn

