



Neurodiversity glossary of terms about health and education

Note: This glossary is a guide and is not exhaustive. It should act as a starter to describe some common terms used in health and educational and social settings in relationship to neurodevelopmental conditions.

This should not be used or act as a legal document. It has been compiled from several different sources across United Kingdom.

Different terms may be used in different areas of the UK such as in Scotland England Wales and Northern Ireland. You may want to look at specific guidelines for the area of the country you are living in. Legislation and terms changes from time to time to check the latest legislation in your area.

A

ABA- Applied Behavioural Analysis

ABD – Acquired Brain Disorder

Access Arrangements- Access arrangements are special arrangements, or reasonable adjustments, which a small number of disabled students are entitled to in their public exams. The intention is that students can demonstrate their ability in an area without their disability being a barrier.

Action plan (Scotland) - a co-ordinated, structured plan which sets out timescales, responsibilities and services required to meet a child's assessed needs (personal learning planning, IEP, CSP and Child's Plan).

ADHD – attention deficit hyperactivity disorder includes Attention Deficit Disorder.

ADOS- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule- Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule or ADOS is a form of assessment which looks at communication, social interaction, and play (or imaginative use of materials) to consider whether a child or young person has autism or an autistic spectrum disorder.

Additional support (Scotland) - provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally by an education authority for children or young people of the same age in schools (other than special schools), under the management of the education authority responsible for the school education of the child or young person, or in the case where there is no such authority, the education authority for the area to which the child or young person belongs.

Additional Support Needs –(Scotland) - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/pages/3/>

Advocacy-The action of an advocate, or the services provided by one or more advocates on behalf of another person. It involves taking action to help people to say what they want,

securing their rights, representing their interests, and obtaining the services they need. Advocacy is most effective when carried out by a person who is independent of the services being provided.

Alternative Provision (AP) - An AP teaches children and young people who are not able to attend a mainstream school. This could be because they have behavioural difficulties, a short or long-term illness or have been excluded.

ALN – Additional Learning Needs - The term Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Additional Learning Provision has replaced Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Special Educational Provision in Wales. You might hear teachers and other professionals refer to your child's 'special educational needs' – this means the same as additional learning needs. ([Some more information](#)).

ALNCo (Wales)- All schools have an Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo). The ALNCo is responsible for managing Special Educational Needs (SEN) within the school

ALP (Wales)- Additional Learning Provision - support for children and young people which is additional to what is available to all to help them with their specific need.

APD- Auditory processing disorder

Apgar score- A new-born baby's first test. Given one minute after a baby is born, then again five minutes later. The Apgar assesses the new-born's appearance (skin colour), pulse, grimace (reflex), activity (muscle tone), and respiration. A perfect Apgar score is ten; typical Apgar scores are seven, eight, or nine.

Appeal-An appeal is when you tell a tribunal (SENTW) that you do not agree with the choices your Local Authority have made about the learner's education. This could be about the help at school or the school the learner attends

AR - Annual Review - Under the Children and Families Act 2014 local authorities must carry out a review of every Education Health and Care plan at least once every 12 months.

ARFID- Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (is an eating disorder. Children with ARFID are extremely picky eaters and have little interest in eating food. They eat a limited variety of preferred foods, which can lead to poor growth and poor nutrition.

Articulation – process of controlling speech organs (e.g., tongue, lips, palate etc) to produce speech sounds.

ASC- Autism Spectrum Condition also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder. Includes Autism and Asperger's syndrome under this umbrella term.

ASD- Autism Spectrum Disorder also known as ASC. Includes Autism and Asperger's syndrome under this umbrella term.

Assessment – an ongoing process of gathering, structuring, and taking a holistic approach to making sense of information about a child or young person, and their circumstances, to inform decisions about the actions necessary to maximise children's potential and improve their well-being.

Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) - This hearing test measures whether sound is being sent from the cochlea through the auditory (hearing) nerve to the brain. Three small sensors and a set of headphones will be placed on the child's head. For an accurate result, the child must be very still and quiet throughout the test.

Auditory memory – The ability to remember information that is heard.

B

Baseline Assessment -A standardised teacher assessment designed to establish the attainment level of children at a significant point.

Basic Skills- Reading, Writing and Maths

BESD- Behavioural, Emotional and/or Social Difficulties

BECCTS - Benign Epilepsy of Childhood with Centrotemporal Spikes

BP- Blood Pressure

British Sign Language (BSL)- the language of the Deaf community in England, Scotland and Wales. BSL is a visual language system which has its own grammar (including grammatical facial expression) and idioms. It is not a signed form of English.

C

CAMHS - Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service - assess and treats children and young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties.

Capacity -The ability by someone to make a specific decision for himself or herself in a given situation. It is assumed that anyone aged 16 or over has capacity unless proven otherwise

Carer -includes parents and other people with parental responsibilities. The term could also include public foster carers, formal kinship carers (relatives and friends who are caring for looked after children), informal kinship carers (relatives and friends who may be caring informally for a child with parental agreement, and private foster carers (who are not close relatives, care for children with parental agreement, and must be approved as private carers after 28 days)

CCG – Children’s Commissioning Group-A CCG is a group of NHS professionals who are responsible for planning and arranging the delivery of the healthcare provision for people in its area.

CCAMH - Community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

CF - Cystic Fibrosis

Child’s Plan (Scotland)- A Child’s Plan is based on working with children and parents to offer tailored, coordinated support that meets the wellbeing needs of an individual child by taking account of their unique circumstances to help them reach their potential.

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)- CAMHS assess and treats children and young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties.

CDC – Child Development Centre

CIC – Children in Care

CIN- Children in Need

CLA - Children Looked After

CLA review - A Children Looked After review (CLA review) is a statutory meeting that brings together key people and professionals who are closely concerned with the care of the child. It's an opportunity to review the child's care plan, discuss the child's progress and make future plans.

Cleft palate www.clapa.com or www.cleftline.org – a structural abnormality whereby the roof of the mouth is not closed completely during foetal development, which may cause associated problems with eating, breathing, articulation and hearing.

Code of Practice (Wales) -A guide for parents, schools and Local Authorities about the help they can give to children with Additional Learning Needs. Schools, Local Authorities and Children's Social Services must have regard to the Code (i.e. they must not ignore it) when they work with a child with Additional Learning Needs.

Cognitive Ability - Thinking and reasoning abilities. A term often used by psychologists instead of intelligence

Comprehension- Understanding of spoken or written material or practical situations.

Complaint -An expression of dissatisfaction with something. This can relate to any aspect of a person's care, treatment or support and can be expressed verbally, in gesture or in writing.

Commissioner -A person or organisation that buys services on behalf of the people living in the area that the commissioner covers. This may be for a population, or for individuals who need specific care, treatment, and support.

Co-production - Co-production is a practice in the delivery of public services in which citizens are involved in the creation of public policies and services

Co-ordinated Support Plan (Scotland)- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/pages/6/>

Core Assessment (In Wales) - If needed a Core Assessment is carried out by Social Work staff from Children's Social Care following an Initial Assessment. It is a detailed assessment to look at child/family needs significant health needs, physical disability or behavioural problems requiring several different services. It must be completed within 35 working days.

CP – Cerebral Palsy

CPR- Children Protection Register

CT scan- A form of X-ray scan that takes a series of pictures and puts them together to be able to see your insides in 3 dimensions.

CYP – Children and Young People

D

DCD – Developmental Coordination Disorder- also sometimes interchangeably called Dyspraxia

Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO)(Wales)-An officer in the Local Health Board who is responsible for coordinating in relation to children and young people with additional learning needs.

Developmental Delay- A delay in reaching the normal stages of development e.g., sitting or talking.

DfE – Department for Education

Differentiated Curriculum - Children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best. Teachers take account of this when planning their lessons, organising the classroom, and choosing books and materials. They are then able to choose from the range of available approaches and resources to select which best fits the learning styles of a particular child or group of children. This is what is meant by a differentiated curriculum.

Differentiation- Ways in which the curriculum and teaching are adapted to meet a range of needs.

Direct Payment - A payment made directly to a parent or young person to purchase specific services. Under the Children and Families Act 2014. A Direct Payment may be made as part of a Personal Budget so that the parent or young person can buy certain services that are specified in their EHC plan.

Disability – the code uses the definition of disability, set out in the Equality Act 2010, as being a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person 's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Disagreement Resolution- Local Authorities must provide arrangements to help prevent or resolve disagreements between parents whose children have Additional Learning Needs and the Local Authority or school. Using this service does not affect parents' right to appeal to the SEN Tribunal.

DLA – Disability Living Allowance

DLD – Developmental Language Disorder

DMD- Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

DSA- Disability Student Allowance

Dysarthria -Slurred speech due to poorly coordinated speech.

Dyscalculia – Maths' challenges

Dysgraphia -Specific learning difficulties affecting the written word, with extreme difficulty with fine-motor skills despite having age-typical intellectual abilities.

Dyslexia –Specific learning difficulties affecting accurate and fluent word reading and spelling Includes difficulties with phonological awareness, verbal memory, and verbal processing speed.

Dysphagia – difficulty with eating and drinking in a smooth and coordinated manner.

Dyspraxia – A term relating to coordination often used interchangeably with Developmental Coordination Disorder.

E

EAL- English as an Additional Language

EBD - Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Echolalia - the repetition of words or phrases heard without understanding and may be delayed or immediate.

EDS-Elhers Danlos Syndrome

Education Tribunal Wales (ETW)-The Education Tribunal Wales hears and makes decisions on appeals about additional learning needs and claims of disability discrimination in education settings.

EEG- Electro-encephalogram

EHCP – An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs. [Education and Health Care Plan](#)

EP – Educational Psychologist

EOTAS- Education Other Than At School - ETOAS includes hospital school, online schooling or home tuition. **Expressive Language**- How a child or young person expresses ideas, thoughts, and feelings through speech Government guidance states that:

Where full-time education would not be in the best interests of a particular child because of reasons relating to their physical or mental health, Local Authorities should provide part-time education on a basis they consider to be in the child’s best interests.

[First-tier Tribunal \(Special Educational Needs and Disability\)](#)- responsible for handling appeals against local authority decisions regarding special educational needs, including a refusal to:

- assess a child or young person’s educational, health and care (EHC) needs
- reassess their EHC needs
- issue an EHC plan
- change what’s in a child or young person’s EHC plan
- maintain the EHC plan

ESBD- Emotional, Social and Behavioural Difficulties

ESW -Education Social Worker

Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (EYALNLO)(Wales)- A teacher with specialist knowledge and experience in Additional Learning Needs in Early Years, employed by the Local Authority to provide advice and support to staff in settings on the inclusion of children with ALN. They help schools to plan the move into a Reception class for these children.

Expressive Language- How a child or young person expresses ideas, thoughts and feelings through speech

EYFS- Early Years Foundation Stage -The EYFS begins when children reach the age of three. Many children attend an early education setting soon after their third birthday. The foundation stage continues until the end of the reception year and is consistent with the National Curriculum. It prepares children for learning in Year 1 when programmes of study for Key Stage 1 are taught.

EWO - Educational Welfare Officer - Employed by the LA to make sure that children are getting the education they need. They deal with school attendance.

EWS - Education Welfare Service

F

FASD - Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs) are a group of conditions that can occur in a person who was exposed to alcohol before birth. These effects can include physical problems and problems with behaviour and learning

FE- Further Education

FLO- Family Liaison Officer - Family liaison officers provide accurate and impartial information on a range of options available to parents and carers. They do not 'take sides'. They help families to make informed decisions about the learner's education.

Fine Motor Skills - Small movements of the body for example, using fingers to pick up small items, holding a pencil or doing up zips and buttons.

FSM - Free School Meals

G

GDD- Global Developmental Delay

Governors- A school's governing body that oversees the workings of the school. It includes an SEN Governor and a Parent Governor.

Gross Motor Skills-Whole body actions for example, playing games, riding a bike or swimming.

H

HE- Higher Education

HI- Hearing Impaired

Hypernasal- speech sounds affected by too much air flow down the nose.

I

ICP- Individual Care Plan

Integrated Assessment Framework (Scotland) - a common means for all agencies and professionals to assess children's needs, and to share information about them. Now integrated into the broader Getting it right for every child Assessment, Analysis and Recording practice model that seeks to ensure that assessment leads to an integrated plan (where necessary) leading to improved outcomes.

IEP – Individual Educational Plan – sometimes called IDP/PDP/PCP -A document that schools can use to outline and monitor the support they provide to a child or young person. It is a non-statutory document meaning that schools can choose if and how they use it. They can also have different names such as SEND Support Plans, Pupil Passports or One Page Profiles.

IPSEA - Independent Panel for Special Educational Needs

IQ- Intellectual Quotient

J

JHS- Joint Hypermobility Syndrome

K

KS – Key Stages in school

- Key Stage 1, 5-7 years old, school years 1 and 2
- Key Stage 2, 7-11 years old, school years 3 – 6
- Key Stage 3, 11 – 14 years old, school years 7 - 9
- Key Stage 4, 14 – 16 years old, school years 10 - 11
- Key Stage 5, 16 – 18 years old, school years 12 - 13

L

LACYP - Looked after Child and Young person. The term 'looked after' refers to children, under 18, who have been provided with care and accommodation by children's services.

LA - Local Authority

Language Delay – an individual with language delay presents with language development that follows the normal sequence and pattern but at a slower rate.

Language Disorder – an individual with language disorder presents with language development that does not follow the normal pattern, giving rise to complex language problems in one or more specific areas of language.

LD - Learning Disability/Learning Difficulty

LOC – Learner of Concern

Local Offer-Local authorities will be required to publish a 'local offer'. A local offer is intended to provide information about provision it expects to be available to children with SEN and disabilities in their area both in and outside of a school.

Looked after at home (Scotland): where the child or young person is subject to a compulsory supervision order made by a Children's Hearing. The child or young person continues to live in their normal place of residence (i.e., often the family home).

LSA- Learning Support Assistant

M

Maintained school -Schools in England that are funded by a local authority including any community, foundation or voluntary school, community special or foundation special school.

Makaton - Makaton is a language programme designed to provide a means of communication to children and young people who cannot communicate efficiently by speaking.

MAT – Multi-Agency Team

MDT- Multi-Disciplinary Team

Mediation -Every local authority must provide independent mediation to help parents and young people resolve disputes with local authorities about:

- a decision not to carry out an EHC needs assessment
- a decision not to draw up an EHC plan
- the content of a final EHC plan or amended plan
- a decision not to amend an EHC plan
- a decision to cease to maintain an EHC plan.

Mediation must also be provided on the health and social care elements of an EHC plan.

MENCAP – Charity supporting people with learning disabilities

MLD- Moderate Learning Difficulties

Modified Curriculum- Changing the curriculum in some way to meet a child or young person's individual needs. Examples include increasing/decreasing the difficulty level, length, or pace, alternating easy and difficult tasks, alternating preferred and less preferred tasks, teaching the skill within daily routines, using materials that are interesting to the child or young person, etc.

Morphology – the grammatical rules of words and parts of words including patterns of inflections and derivation.

Motor- refers usually to co-ordination skills.

MRI - Magnetic resonance imaging is a medical imaging technique used in radiology to form pictures of the anatomy and the physiological processes of the body.

MSI- Multi-Sensory Impairment – combination of visual and hearing difficulties. May also have additional difficulties. Requires teaching approaches that utilise residual hearing and vision, together with their other senses. May need alternative means of communication.

Multisensory – using two or more senses simultaneously so that the stronger sense can support the weaker.

N

Neurodisability -Neuro-disability can be described as any restriction or lack of ability caused by injury, disease or disorder affecting the brain, spinal cord, or muscles.

Neurodevelopmental- Neurodevelopment is a term referring to the brain's development of neurological pathways that influence performance or functioning (e.g., intellectual functioning, reading ability, social skills, memory, attention or focus skills). When you learn to do just about anything, you are improving neurodevelopment.

NF1 - Neurofibromatosis type 1. Neurofibromatosis is the general name for a number of genetic conditions that cause tumours to grow along your nerves

Non-verbal Communication- the parts of communication which are not verbally language based, but which rely on the individual's understanding or use of gesture, body language, facial expression, eye contact etc

Non-Verbal Skills- Skills which do not require spoken or written language, but use other ways to communicate, e.g., gesture, facial expression.

Northern Ireland SEN- <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/special-educational-needs-sen>

NQT- Newly Qualified Teacher

NVLD- Non-Verbal Learning Disorder

O

OCD- Obsessional Compulsive Disorder

ODD- Oppositional Defiant Disorder

OT-Occupational Therapist

P

Paediatrician-A doctor specialising in the needs of babies and children.

PDA - Pathological Demand Avoidance

PECS - Picture Exchange Communication System

Personal budget - A Personal Budget is money set aside to fund support as part of an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) for a child or young person with special educational needs. It can include funds from Education, Health and Social Care.

PCP-Person Centred Planning

Person Centred Review (Wales)- <https://gov.wales/person-centred-reviews-guidance-families>

Plagiocephaly- Plagiocephaly, also known as flat head syndrome, is a condition characterized by an asymmetrical distortion of the skull.

PMLD - **Profound and Multiple Learning Disability**

Pragmatics – the use of language in social situations, including conversational skills and the understanding and use of non-verbal communication.

PRU – Pupil Referral Unit - A school which is specially organised to provide education for pupils who would otherwise not receive suitable education because of illness, exclusion or any other reason. Also called an alternative provision.

PT - **Physiotherapist**

PV- **Parent Voice**

R

Reasonable Adjustments - Reasonable adjustments are changes schools and other settings are required to make which could include changes to physical features – for example, creating a ramp so that students can enter a classroom or providing extra support and aids (such as specialist teachers or equipment).

Receptive Language-The ability to understand what is being said.

S

Scottish glossary of terms- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/pages/16/>

Selective Mutism – A psychological problem where children avoid speaking in certain 3 situations as a result of extreme anxiety

SLT – Speech and Language Therapist

SCLI – Speech Communication and Language Impairments

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SEND Code of Practice - This is the statutory guidance that supports Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 in England. It tells local authorities, early years settings, schools, colleges, health and social care providers and others what they must and should do to identify, assess and provide for children and young people with SEN or disabilities.

SEN – Special educational needs

SENCo -Special Educational Needs Coordinator

Sensory Impairment - Partial or complete hearing loss

Special Educational Provision - Special education is any educational or training provision which is extra to or different from what is needed by other children or young people the same age. This covers many different things including communicating through sign language, having worksheets in a larger font, needing one-to-one or small group support. Some children and young people may need extra help which is not special educational provision such as having medication at school. As this is not support with education or training it would not be classed as special educational provision

SLI- Speech Language Impairment

SMO- School Medical Officer

Special School- A school which is resourced and organised to provide for the education of pupils with an Education, Health & Care Plan who need a high degree of support in the learning situation and in some cases specialist facilities, equipment and teaching.

SPD - Sensory Processing Disorder

SpLD – Specific Learning Difficulties

SW – Social Worker

T

TA- Teaching Assistant

TAC- Team around the child

TAF-Team Around the Family

TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury

ToR- Terms of Reference

Tourette Syndrome www.tourettes-action.org.uk – a neurological disorder, characterised by involuntary movements or sounds called tics.

Transition- Movement between different environments, rooms, or settings. All transition involves change and it is vital to prepare children, no matter how young they are, for this. When children are prepared for transition, they adapt more easily to changes.

TTOs -The drugs that you are sent home with on discharge from hospital.

U

Universal Services (Scotland) – services which all children and young people have access to throughout their childhood i.e. health and education provision.

V

VI- Visual impairment

Visuals/visual aids – pictures, photos or real objects to support communication and learning.

Visual timetable – a visual timetable enables children to understand what they are doing over a period. It gives structure to the day and can reduce anxiety levels. Symbols are used to represent the tasks, activities, or lessons.

Y

YOT – Youth Offending Team

Young carer (Scotland) - A child or young person aged under 18, or who is 18 and still at school, who provides or intends to provide care for another individual.

Young person (Scotland) – A young person is now defined in the Act as a person who is aged 16 years or over, who is a pupil at a school, and has, since attaining the age of 16 years or over, remained a pupil at that or another school. In practice, it is unlikely that a young person will remain in school beyond their later teenage years. The new definition removes the difficulties which have arisen when a young person has remained in school between the age of 18 and 19 years. Throughout the code the term young people is used instead of young persons, for ease of understanding.

YJB – Youth Justice Board