

Preparing to Speak to Your Child's SENCo

A practical checklist for parents and carers

You do not need to know exactly what is causing your child's difficulties before speaking to school. Clear examples of what you have noticed can help the SENCo understand the pattern and decide what should happen next.

Use this guide before the meeting. Tick the points that apply, then add brief examples in your own words.

Before you contact the SENCo

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| ☐ Write down your main concern in one or two sentences. | ☐ Record support already tried at home or at school and whether it helped. |
| ☐ Note when you first became concerned and whether the difficulty is continuing. | ☐ Check recent school reports, assessment information and attendance where relevant. |
| ☐ Ask your child what feels easy, difficult or worrying at school. | ☐ Decide what you most need to understand or agree during the meeting. |
| ☐ Collect a few useful examples, such as homework, spelling or teacher comments. | ☐ Request enough time for a focused discussion rather than raising everything at collection time. |

Remember: A diagnosis is not required before a school begins identifying needs and providing appropriate support.



What have you noticed?

Look for patterns across time, tasks and settings

Tick only what you have genuinely observed. One sign alone does not establish dyslexia or another condition.

☐ Reading is slow, effortful or avoided.	☐ Instructions with several steps are difficult to retain.
☐ Words are guessed, skipped or misread.	☐ Sequences, facts or routines take longer to become secure.
☐ Understanding is stronger when someone else reads the text.	☐ Homework causes unusual fatigue, frustration or distress.
☐ Spelling is inconsistent or learned spellings are quickly forgotten.	☐ Confidence is reducing despite effort and encouragement.
☐ Writing takes much longer than expected.	☐ There is a marked difference between ability and recorded work.
☐ Ideas are stronger when explained verbally than when written.	☐ Similar difficulties have been noticed by more than one adult.

My clearest examples:

What my child says about learning:



Questions to take into the meeting

Choose the questions that matter most to your child

☐ What difficulties have staff noticed and in which lessons or situations?	☐ How will progress be measured and shared with us?
☐ What are my child's strengths and what helps them engage successfully?	☐ Who will coordinate the agreed actions?
☐ What assessment information is already available?	☐ When will the support be reviewed?
☐ What support has been tried, for how long and with what effect?	☐ Would advice from another professional be helpful?
☐ What additional support or adjustment could be tried next?	☐ What can we do at home without increasing pressure?
☐ How will my child's views be included?	☐ When should we meet again?

My three priorities for this meeting:

A useful outcome: Leave with specific actions, a named person responsible for each action and a clear review date. Ask for the agreed points to be recorded.

This guide supports preparation for a school discussion. It does not replace advice based on your child's individual circumstances.

