

Sensory Needs Equipment Policy (June 2025)

This document outlines the responsibilities of East Sussex Sensory Needs Service (SNS) and educational establishments in relation to the funding of equipment for children and young people who have a vision impairment or Deafness and meet the SNS criteria for support.

Children and young people with Deafness and / or a vision impairment, who are resident within the local authority (LA) and attending early years provisions, mainstream schools and academies, colleges or non-independent special school within East Sussex, will be assessed on an individual basis for the provision of specialist equipment.

Children and young people will be assessed for suitability and likely benefit from the use of specialist equipment by the SNS. Any equipment purchased by the SNS is provided on a loan basis. It will be returned to the SNS when:

- it is no longer required, or
- when the SNS determine that the equipment is no longer beneficial for the child or young person.

When moving settings, SNS will collect the equipment at the end of the academic year. They can then discuss the reissue of equipment with the child or young person's (CYP) new setting.

The school or setting will be responsible for looking after the equipment and will be asked to sign a loan agreement. This includes the school or setting taking responsibility for replacing any lost equipment. The SNS will be responsible for repairing and replacing any faulty equipment. As per our loan agreement, the educational setting may be charged for the replacement of equipment that has been damaged.

The SNS will provide in service training and support to settings and schools in the use of specialist equipment. This includes 1:1 training with the CYP.

Children and young people with vision impairment

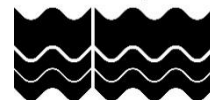
The SNS will provide specialist software and or hardware that they determine will:

- support visual access to the curriculum, and / or
- support access to the curriculum through Braille.

iPad loan scheme:

As a service, we advocate for the use of iPads for students with vision impairments. This is due to their superior screen display and built-in accessibility features. All these features greatly enhance access to learning. Features include:

- **Screen magnification** and **larger font sizes** make reading more accessible.
- **VoiceOver** and **Zoom** can be used concurrently for improved functionality.
- Features such as **Bold Text** and **Button Shapes** improve readability and navigation.
- **Assistive Access** allows for greater personalisation for learners with vision impairments.
- **Guided Access** enables staff to ensure the safe use of the device.
- **Audio descriptions.**



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These accessibility features are integrated into Apple products without requiring additional software purchases or installations.

The Sensory Needs Service offer a loan / hire scheme for iPads. This includes:

- A standard or 13-inch iPad with accessories (e.g., case, stand, keyboard, and pencil, based on individual need).
- Support for setup and training for staff on effective usage.
- Guidance on recommended apps.
- Maintenance and repairs as needed.

Schools are responsible for managing the iPad on their system and liaising with SNS for any technical issues. In the event of permanent loss, the school will be liable for the replacement cost. The replacement iPad will remain the property of the Sensory Needs Service.

The iPad is available for the pupil's use in school and, with agreement between the school and family, may also be taken home to support homework.

The cost of participation in the loan / hire scheme is £30.00 or £50.00. This is dependent on the size of the iPad issued. This cost is per pupil, per term. It is billed three times a year, in arrears. The funds collected are ring-fenced and used solely to support this scheme.

The expectation is that all schools through the Services 2 Schools Webshop.

Hardware loaned by SNS:

- Touch typing program
- Perkins Braille
- Brailenote Touch Plus
- Tablet
- Screen reader
- Embosser
- Electronic magnifier
- Large print calculator
- Specialist living skills equipment e.g. talking scales
- Scientific resources, e.g. scientific calculator and colour indicator.

Software loaned by SNS:

- Magnification software
- Screen Reader software
- Braille embosser software

Miscellaneous equipment provided by SNS:

- Large print rulers
- Large print protractors
- Embosser paper
- Braille Paper
- Canes and other mobility aids are prescribed (as necessary)

Schools are responsible for funding equipment to meet the needs of individual pupils with SEND. This is in line with the:

- SEND Code of Practice ([CoP SEND 2015 - 6.9](#)), and
- the operational guidance for the notional SEN budget.

The following examples of equipment will be funded by the educational establishment:

- Laptop (Microsoft with specialist requirements as recommended by SNS)
- Modified workbooks
- Textbooks
- Reading books

Stationery (including but not limited to):

- Dark leaded pencils
- Black or blue good quality pens
- Contrast colour paper
- Black card (to reduce visual information on page)
- Buff paper
- Matt laminating pouches
- Sloping boards

Children and young people with deafness

Some children and young people with deafness need extra technology so that they are able to access the learning environment. Equipment may include:

- Radio aids
- Assistive Listening Devices
- Focus System
- Soundfield systems

Children with deafness will be assessed on an individual basis by their Teacher of the Deaf.

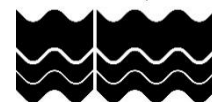
This will help to determine appropriate specialist equipment which will:

- allow access to the curriculum, and
- enable engagement in the school or setting.

Children will be assessed through:

- Observations
- Speech discrimination assessments
- Pupil voice
- Teacher feedback

SNS will also consider providing radio aids for young pre-school children with a moderate to profound deafness. This will be for their families to use in the home and in the community.



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The child's Teacher of the Deaf will liaise with child's Audiologist and family to decide whether a radio aid should be provided for a trial period initially.

SNS will request that, where possible, families add the equipment to their home insurance. This means the equipment will be covered / insured if it's lost or misplaced.

Assistive Learning Device / Radio Aid Loan Scheme:

An assistive listening device for a pupil with deafness consists of a microphone worn by the adult. This then connects to the pupil's hearing equipment along with receivers. This may be integrated into the pupil's hearing equipment.

The assistive listening device facilitates better participation, as it: helps overcome listening challenges:

- in noisy environments, and
- at a distance from the speaker.

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- SEND Code of Practice ([CoP SEND 2015 - 6.9](#)), and
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SNS offers a loan / hire scheme of equipment to schools. This includes:

- Appropriate transmitter and receivers
- 6-week trial provision prior to loan agreement
- Fitting and verification according to the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) quality standards
- Advice / training to staff on effective usage
- Maintenance and repairs as appropriate
- Liaison with the audiology department (RSCH), cochlear implant centre (if applicable) and parents
- Software and hardware updates as appropriate.

If the equipment is permanently lost, the school will be liable for cost of new equipment provided.

The cost per pupil is dependent on the equipment required. The money paid into the scheme by schools is ring-fenced and used only to finance the Scheme. The expectation is that all schools will pay per pupil, three times a year, using Service 2 Schools Webshop.

The assistive listening device will be for the use of the pupil whilst they are in school. The devices should not be used for home use.

Auditory Processing Disorder (APD):

Where a child or young person has a confirmed diagnosis of APD the SNS will offer a six-week trial of an Assistive Listening Device. This will consist of two earpieces and a transmitter.

The setting will be responsible for the safekeeping of the equipment during this time. The setting will be expected to return all equipment in good condition at the end of the trial.

Once the trial has finished, the SNS will not be able to offer any further equipment on a long-term basis.