**Using the Sheffield Support Grid:**

**Guidance November 2016**

**Special Educational Need** is defined in the ‘Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)’in the following terms:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

* has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
* has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

**What is the Sheffield Support Grid?**

* A 5 point grid with 5 levels of need (low to high)
* Offers teaching & learning strategies which might be expected
* Suggests services to go to for advice and support

**What does the Sheffield Support Grid (SSG) offer?**

The grid aims:

* To provide greater *consistency* in the support and resources provided for children/young people with similar needs.
* To offer a *common language* for describing needs
* To support the writing of robust MyPlans (a *tool*)
* To provide a *framework for decisions* about resourcing and meeting needs. As part of this Locality SENCOs moderate decisions across the city twice a year.

The key purpose of the Sheffield Support Grid is to promote better standards of good inclusive practice across all schools in Sheffield and ensure improving outcomes for all children and young people.

**How does it work?**

Schools are using the SSG when planning and reviewing children’s progress. It is part of the conversation about what support is needed and what might be provided to meet unmet needs. Parents and children/young people should be involved in this conversation and know how the grid is being used.

Following a citywide moderation process in June 2016 and a consultation with schools it has been agreed by the Inclusion Board that a stepped approach should be adopted to developing the use of the Sheffield Support Grid.

A dilemma that the city wide moderation group highlighted is that whilst the grid is intended to capture levels of need the only confident evidence that can reliably be used for making judgements of need is current provision. Therefore a process of developing current provision to reliably match to need is needed which fits with the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle used by schools when planning to support children.

**A stepped process for the use and development of the SSG:**

**Step 1) Gaining consistency, clarity and trust** across schools by implementing a prescriptive and clear approach to the use of the grid.

From September 2016 all schools should use **Current Provision** to determine the Sheffield Support Grid level for a child/young person.

Do this by: Highlighting support the child/young person is currently receiving for all categories of need that are applicable. The main area or primary need is the Sheffield Support Grid level that is most highlighted.

**Step 2) Use of the grid by other professionals to identify NEED** and indicate what provision could meet that need.

**Step 3) Establish a citywide Inclusion Task Force** to enhance the moderation process. The purpose of this group would be to develop confidence and trust in the process, in the grid and in the new systems. It would improve consistency and build capacity across the city. It would develop an understanding of what high quality provision looks like and inspire more schools to improve their provision for pupils

This would be achieved through:

* Locality SENCos leading the process of using the SSG for planning and levelling and modelling to school staff how to use the grid.
* Establishing a moderation group made up of locality SENCos, informed HTs, Educational Psychologists and LA representatives. This group would take on the roll of moderation in schools, sampling cases, and providing challenge and support schools.

At the end of this process there should be:

* Consistent use of the SSG across the city
* Embedded moderation
* Use by other professionals