

What is a Reasonable Adjustment?

[The SEND Code of Practice](#) says that early year's settings, which includes schools, nurseries, playgroups and childminders, must make reasonable adjustment to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

[The Equality Act 2010](#) says that children with a disability may need settings to do more for that child, than for a child without a disability, to make sure that the child can access the same opportunities.

[The Equality Act 2010 definition of disability](#) says, "You're if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities".

Let us start with what a reasonable adjustment is not. Settings do not have to give extra support just because they believe or can evidence a child will 'do better' or achieve more. Most children would achieve more if they had one-to-one teaching with the highest qualified professionals and latest technology. If settings had to provide more so a child could 'do better' they would need to do this for **all** children.

Reasonable adjustments are the positive steps educational settings must take to allow a disabled child to participate in school life. Setting should ensure that disabled children are not at a substantial disadvantage when compared with other children. Settings must take steps to make sure that disabled children receive the **same** quality of education as all other children.

The question most often asked is, what is reasonable? The term 'reasonable' is not clearly defined in the law. This leaves it up to the discretion of the setting or local authority to decide this. Some (but not all) of the factors that may influence a decision are:

- Financial resources of the school/setting
- Cost of the aid or service
- Effectiveness of the aid
- Effect on other pupils
- Health and safety requirements
- Provisions already made by the setting.

Reasonable can mean different things to different settings. Sometimes this is based on the child's needs, for example, what one child cannot manage without, may only be a small help for another child. Similarly, the design of one setting's building may only need a small ramp up two steps, but the cost to another setting of putting in a lift to the third floor of their building would be unmanageable.

Early years settings cannot say that a child with SEND cannot attend their setting. The setting must seek all the advice and support that they can on what reasonable adjustments they will need to put in place to best support the child. **A setting is breaking the law under the Equality Act to refuse a child a place because of their disability.** The document [The Graduated Approach](#) has lots of examples of reasonable adjustments.

[Solihull SENDIAS \(Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support\) Service](#) aim to enable children and their parents/carers to make informed decisions about their child's education. Information, advice and support for children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers will be impartial. The service is free to access, confidential and provides accurate, comprehensive, understandable information. This organisation will help you discuss if what you want is a reasonable adjustment.