

A Guide to Educational Jargon in Primary Schools

An at-a-glance jargon buster to help you understand some of the words, phrases and acronyms used in primary schools.

Academy	An academy is a school that is state-funded, but receives its funding directly from the government, rather than the local authority.
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder. Causes problems maintaining attention and focus. Children with ADD are entitled to additional support from their school and other agencies.
ADHD	Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder. Similar to ADD , but individuals with ADHD also show excessive activity or have difficulty controlling behaviour that is not appropriate for their age. Children with ADHD are entitled to additional support from their school and other agencies.
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder. A range of conditions which cause problems with social interaction, communication, interests and behaviour. Can range from mild to severe, hence the use of the term 'spectrum'. Individuals with ASD or Asperger's Syndrome are entitled to receive additional support from their school and other agencies.
Asperger's Syndrome	A form of ASD/autism where the individual shows autistic tendencies but can still function well in terms of their intelligence, attainment and progress in school and beyond.
Assessment	The ways in which a teacher decides how much progress a child has made and what they have learnt and understood. Assessment happens daily through marking, questioning, discussion and observation. Also measured using end of year/end of unit tests, such as SATs .
Attainment	A measure of a child's achievement in school which compares every child to a standardised expectation for their age level, regardless of individual starting points. Schools are judged by the attainment of their pupils, but also by the progress that the children make.
Autism	See ASD .
Booster group	A small group offering extra support to children who may be falling behind. Often taught by a teaching assistant , under direction from the class teacher. Also known as an intervention .
British Values	A government initiative to promote the idea of what it means to be British. Schools are required to promote and teach the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
CAF	Common Assessment Framework. A system that ensures all agencies involved in a child's care are communicating and working together in the child's interests. Typically seen where the child has additional needs, for example where social services or healthcare professionals are involved and there are concerns about a child's welfare.

CAFCASS	An independent organisation which represents children's rights in family court cases, usually around divorce and separation, care proceedings or adoption.
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Specialist NHS mental health services for children and young people. Accessible to all young people from birth to 19. Children may be referred by school or other agencies if they have emotional or behavioural difficulties, mental health issues or have experienced trauma that has affected their wellbeing.
CE(A)	Church of England (aided). Sometimes also known as 'VA' (voluntary-aided). A school with this in its name has strong links with the Church of England. The governing body will include members of the local diocese (usually the local vicar or priest). The governing body employs the staff and the school is funded via the diocesan board of education. VC schools can amend their entry criteria to make allowance for people that regularly attend church, but must still accept pupils via the usual entry criteria, such as distance from the school.
CE(C)	A school with this in its name also has links with the Church of England, but (unless it is an academy) is more closely linked to the local authority. It will also follow the normal admission policies more closely.
Collective Worship	Also known as 'assembly'. Schools are required to hold an act of collective worship every day, but this does not always mean the whole school meeting in the hall. It often does not have a specific religious content – rather it can be a time for reflection and discussion.
(Pupil) conferencing	A one-to-one or small group discussion between teacher and pupils that takes place regularly to discuss progress, attainment , attitudes to learning, and enables the teacher to give the pupil feedback about their work.
Core subjects	The subjects considered to be at the centre of the curriculum – English, maths and science. All the other subjects are known as the foundation subjects.
Curriculum	A document that sets out the subjects taught in a school and the areas covered within each subject for each year group.
DBS check	A check made by the Disclosure and Barring Service which ensures that all adults working in a school have disclosed any unspent criminal convictions. Formerly known as a 'CRB' check. An essential part of a school's safeguarding procedure.

D&T/DT	Design and technology. A curriculum subject that teaches children about the design of a range of objects, how certain working parts are made and how to join, fix and use materials effectively. Children learn to assemble, disassemble, plan, construct and evaluate. This subject covers work with food, textiles and other materials, and teaches children to use a range of tools.
DfE	Department for Education – the government ministry responsible for education in the UK.
Dyscalculia	A specific learning difficulty that affects learning in the arithmetic aspect of maths, typically in understanding numbers, manipulating numbers and learning number facts such as times tables.
Dysgraphia	A specific learning difficulty that affects written expression. Dysgraphia can appear as difficulties with spelling, poor handwriting and trouble putting thoughts on paper.
Dyslexia	A specific learning difficulty that affects reading, writing and spelling.
Dyspraxia	A specific learning difficulty that causes poor physical skills and lack of coordination, which in turn can affect skills such as writing.
EAL	English as an Additional Language. Used to refer to pupils for whom English is not the main language spoken at home. Schools track such pupils closely and offer additional support if it is needed.
EBD	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Children identified as having EBD are entitled to receive additional support in the same way as children who have other additional needs.
EHCP	Education and Health Care Plan. Formerly known as a 'statement of special educational needs'. A document which sets out the education, healthcare and social care needs of a child or young person for whom extra support is needed in school, beyond that which the school can provide. Children with an EHCP will usually be entitled to extra one-to-one support in school (though not necessarily full-time) and will have outside agencies involved in their support, such as physiotherapists, behavioural experts or sensory impairment teachers.
Enrichment	Activities provided by schools which are in addition to the main curriculum offering. Examples include visitors into school, trips, concerts and sporting activities.
e-Safety	An essential part of the school's computing and PSHE teaching, as well as a safeguarding requirement. Teaching e-Safety involves educating children on safe use of the Internet and technology in general.

EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage – Nursery and Reception. Also known as Foundation Stage (FS)1 – Nursery - and Foundation Stage (FS)2 - Reception. Some schools have their own Nursery; all primary and first schools have a Reception class. The EYFS has its own curriculum , which is different to the National Curriculum taught in the rest of school.
ELG	Early Learning Goals. Each area of the EYFS curriculum has an Early Learning Goal, which is the standard that a child is expected to achieve by the end of their Reception year in order to meet the standards for their age.
Ever 6 FSM	Schools receive Pupil Premium funding to support the learning of pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals . This funding continues for a further 6 years, even if the child is no longer entitled to receive free school meals.
EWO	Education Welfare Officer. A person whose job is to ensure the wellbeing of all children in education. In practice, they are most likely to support schools with issues around attendance.
Feedback	Any way in which a teacher tells a child how they have done in their learning and what they need to do to improve further. Could come from marking of work, or verbal feedback to an individual or a group by the teacher, teaching assistant or peers. Considered extremely important to enable children to make progress .
Foundation subjects	All National Curriculum subjects other than the core subjects of English, maths and science.
FSM	Free School Meals. Parents in receipt of certain benefits are entitled to apply to their child's school for free school meals. This also generates additional funds for the school to use to support that child's learning in school. Schools always keep such information confidential and children in receipt of FSM are not singled out. See also Universal Free School Meals and Pupil Premium .
GLD	Good Level of Development. A measure of attainment at the end of the EYFS . Children are deemed to have achieved GLD if they have achieved the Early Learning Goals (ELG) in the EYFS curriculum areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Communication and Language Development, Literacy and Mathematics.

Governing Body	A group of people responsible for the strategic running of a school. Usually comprised of the headteacher, staff governors, parent governors, community governors and governors appointed by the local authority (unless the school is an academy). Governors carry out their duties voluntarily and their role is to hold the headteacher to account for the running of the school and the progress and wellbeing of its pupils and staff.
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant. This is a teaching assistant who has undertaken additional training and is able to take on greater responsibility, including covering classes, and planning and teaching their own lessons.
ICT	Information and Communication Technology. Now known as Computing under the 2014 curriculum, this includes programming (coding), use of computers and programmable toys, understanding the role of technology and staying safe online (e-Safety).
Inclusion	The efforts made by a school to ensure that all children attend and are welcomed by their local school and are supported to learn, contribute and participate, regardless of individual need, background or circumstances.
Intervention	Similar to a booster group, this is a small group lesson, usually but not always taught by a TA , which aims to support children who are not making the progress they should.
KS1	Key Stage 1. This covers a child's time in year 1 and year 2 . Formerly known as 'Infants'.
KS2	Key Stage 2. This covers a child's time in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 . Sometimes divided into Lower KS2 (LKS2) – years 3 and 4, and Upper KS2 (UKS2) – years 5 and 6. Formerly known as 'Juniors'.
LA	Local Authority – the local government authority responsible for non-academy schools in its area.
Learning disability	A condition or difficulty that has an impact on an individual's intelligence, such that their attainment is typically considerably lower than that which should be expected for their age. Should not be confused with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) .
LSA	Learning Support Assistant. See TA . An LSA is more likely to support an individual child, but may also work with groups, or support the whole class.

Looked After Child	A child who is in the care of the local authority. This child may be fostered, adopted, in the care of social services, or being cared for by someone (not a close family member) other than their birth parents. It is recognised that these children often experience difficulties with progress in school, and schools receive Pupil Premium funding to enable them to support their learning.
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages. Now part of the National Curriculum for all pupils in KS2 . Schools can choose which language they teach, but most choose a European language, such as French or Spanish.
National Curriculum	A government document which sets out what children must be taught at each stage of their education in each subject. Last revised in 2014. Current National Curriculum subjects are English, maths, science, history, geography, art and design, design and technology , music, computing, languages, PE , and citizenship . All schools are also required to teach religious education at all key stages.
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education. The organisation tasked with ensuring standards in school through a regime of regular inspections (usually every 3 years for most schools performing well).
Parent voice	Some schools run an informal group which invites parents to come into school and discuss issues of concern or make suggestions as to how the school can improve.
PE	Physical Education. In primary schools this includes swimming, dance, ball games, athletics, gymnastics and outdoor/adventurous activities.
Prevent Duty	Keeping people and communities safe from the threat of terrorism. All school staff have received Prevent training, which teaches them how to spot the signs that a child or young person may be at risk of radicalisation – religious or political – and what to do if they suspect this.
Progress	See also attainment . Progress is a measure of how much a child has learnt within a time period such as a term or a year. Since all children have different starting points, progress is considered a more important indicator than attainment .
Provision	What a school provides for its pupils to support their learning and progress in school – the teaching, resources, use of the curriculum, support, enrichment activities and resources.
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education. An area of the curriculum which focuses on a child's development on a personal level, and also covers aspects such as staying safe (for example road, safety, e-Safety, 'stranger danger') and sex and relationship education.

PTA	Parent Teacher Association. Sometimes called 'Parent, Teacher and Friends Association' (PTFA) or simply 'Friends of xxx school'. A group of parents, teachers and friends who meet regularly to plan events and activities to raise funds for the school. Often has charitable status.
Pupil Premium	Funds paid directly to schools to enable them to support the progress, attainment and wellbeing of children who are Looked After , receiving Free School Meals (not Universal Free School Meals unless parents are also entitled to apply for FSM) or who are Service Children . Schools are held strictly accountable for how they spend this money to support learning and wellbeing.
Pupil voice	A school's efforts to ensure that its pupils' opinions are taken into account in the way the school is run.
RE	Religious Education. All schools must teach RE, and the curriculum is usually set by the local authority or, in the case of a church school, the diocese. RE teaching in the UK covers the main religions of the world: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism, but also has a focus on Christian values.
Reception	The first year of compulsory primary education. Also known as FS2 (Foundation Stage). Children in Reception are typically aged 4-5.
Safeguarding	Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all pupils within a school. Teachers attend compulsory safeguarding training every three years. Safeguarding includes all aspects of what it means to keep children and adults safe in school, for example ensuring all adults in school have undertaken a DBS check , educating adults in school on spotting the signs of abuse, carrying out risk assessments for trips and ensuring there is an adequate number of first aiders on the school staff.
SALT	Speech and Language Therapy. A specific intervention which supports children's speech development. This could relate to the way that they enunciate sounds and use words ('expressive' speech) or the way they understand what is said to them ('receptive' speech). Teachers will identify early on whether children have speech and language difficulties, and will usually make a referral to the Speech and Language service, whose therapists will assess the child regularly and give the school and parents/carers specific exercises and activities to do with the child.

SATs	Standard Assessment Tests. These are compulsory tests that children are expected to take at the end of year 2 (end of KS1) and end of year 6 (end of KS2). Children are tested in reading, SPaG and maths, and teachers also have to submit their own assessment of each child's writing. Results are reported to the LA and published as a key performance indicator of schools.
School Council	A group of pupils which acts as representatives of their classmates in discussing school issues with the headteacher and staff, helping to make decisions about how the school is run and taking on projects that support the children's learning and development, such as organising charity events, representing the school at outside events or ensuring the school is environmentally friendly. Usually elected annually by the other children.
SEN/SEND	Special Educational Needs/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. A pupil is deemed to have Special Educational Needs if they are finding it harder than other pupils to make progress . This may be due to a specific learning difficulty , a recognised disability such as a hearing impairment, emotional or social difficulties, or speech and language difficulties. Some pupils will only be classified as SEN for a short time, others may remain so for the rest of their time in school. Schools have an SEN register which records all SEND pupils, and schools are expected to track the progress of these pupils closely.
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator. A member of the school's staff that has responsibility for coordinating support and provision for all pupils on the SEN register.
Service Child	A child with one or both parents in the armed services. Schools are entitled to additional funding to spend on supporting these children with their progress and attainment in school.
SFP	School Focused Plan. A plan for any child identified as having SEN , the SFP outlines the child's strengths and areas of difficulty and what the school is doing to support the child. It is also used as a way of closely tracking the child's progress and recording support received. Children whose needs entitle them to further funding will have an EHCP .
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty. A difficulty with certain skills that are needed for learning, such as reading and writing.

SPaG	Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. A new focus since the introduction of the 2014 National Curriculum . Children are taught specific skills in these three areas, and are tested on them in the SATs at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 .
Special school	A school that caters for children whose needs cannot be met with the provision and support provided by a mainstream school.
TA	Teaching Assistant. A member of the school's staff with responsibility for supporting learning, usually under the direction of a teacher. TAs may work with whole classes, small groups or individuals, and often offer support and booster classes for pupils who are struggling to make progress.
Tracking	The process by which schools monitor the progress and attainment of their pupils over time. Teachers will usually assess children's attainment on a termly basis (more often if there are concerns) and monitor this to ensure children are making the amount of progress they should. This enables teachers to identify early on whether children need additional support or extra challenge.
Universal Free School Meals (UFSM)	An ongoing government initiative which provides a free school lunch for all pupils in Reception, year 1 and year 2 . This is not the same as the free school meals, which are provided for children whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits, as UFSM do not carry Pupil Premium funding. Parents of children in Reception, year 1 and year 2 who are in receipt of these benefits need to apply separately to the school to ensure that the Pupil Premium funding is made available to support their child.
Year 1	The second year of compulsory primary education, first year of the National Curriculum and Key Stage 1 . Children aged 5 to 6.
Year 2	The third year of compulsory primary education, last year of Key Stage 1 . Children aged 6-7. Children sit SATs at the end of this year.
Year 3	The fourth year of compulsory primary education, first year of Key Stage 2 . Children aged 7-8.
Year 4	The fifth year of compulsory primary education. Children aged 8-9.
Year 5	The sixth year of compulsory primary education. Children aged 9-10
Year 6	The final year of compulsory primary education. Children aged 10-11. Children sit SATs at the end of this year.