



EARLY STEPS SEND CONSULTANCY

Terms and Conditions

2026

Laura Hanson

Early Years SENCO

1. About Early Steps SEND Consultancy

Early Steps SEND Consultancy provides independent Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) consultancy and professional services to parents, early years settings, schools, and organisations. Services may include advice, observations, written reports, EHCP support, training, provision reviews, and other professional SEND-related support.

The consultancy is operated by:

Laura Hanson

Early Years SENCO

Early Steps SEND Consultancy

Email: laura.senco@earlystepssend.co.uk

Telephone: 07581 208721

By requesting, booking, or using any service provided by Early Steps SEND Consultancy, the client confirms that they have read, understood, and agree to be bound by these Terms and Conditions.

2. Services Provided

Early Steps SEND Consultancy offers a range of professional services relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. These services may include, but are not limited to, SEND consultancy, EHCP support, observations of children or provision, written reports, SENCO support, provision reviews, training sessions, meetings, consultations, written advice, SEND provision audits, quality assurance reviews, and parent consultations.

All services will be agreed in advance with the client before any work begins. The scope of the work, the expected outcomes, and the fee will be confirmed prior to the booking being finalised.

Recommendations made by Early Steps SEND Consultancy are based on professional judgement and current guidance. However, no guarantee can be made that

recommendations will be accepted or implemented by schools, nurseries, local authorities, health services, or any other professionals involved in the child's care or education.

3. Enquiries and Bookings

Enquiries may be made by email, telephone, website contact form, electronic message, or written request. Following an enquiry, information will be provided about the service requested, including the nature of the work, the expected timescale, and the fee where applicable.

A booking will be considered confirmed only when the service has been agreed, the fee has been agreed, and confirmation has been provided by Early Steps SEND Consultancy. Confirmation may be given in writing, by email, or by electronic message.

Early Steps SEND Consultancy reserves the right to refuse a booking where it is not possible to provide the requested service, where there is a conflict of interest, where the request falls outside the scope of professional practice, or where there are concerns regarding safety, safeguarding, or professional conduct.

4. Fees and Payment

Fees for all services will be agreed with the client before work begins. The agreed fee will depend on the type of service, the time required, travel where applicable, and any additional preparation or reporting time.

Payment terms will be confirmed at the time of booking. Payment may be required in advance, on completion, or by invoice payable within 14 days, unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed in writing.

If payment is not received within the agreed timescale, Early Steps SEND Consultancy reserves the right to suspend work, cancel future bookings, or withhold reports and written advice until payment has been made in full.

Once work has started, fees are normally non-refundable, as time will have been allocated and professional work undertaken.

5. Late Payment Charges

Where payment is not received within the agreed payment period, Early Steps SEND Consultancy reserves the right to apply late payment charges.

A fixed late payment administration fee of £40 may be added to any overdue invoice. Interest may also be charged on the outstanding balance at a rate of 8% above the Bank of England base rate, calculated on a daily basis, in accordance with the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998.

Early Steps SEND Consultancy reserves the right to suspend work, withhold reports, cancel future bookings, or refuse further services until all outstanding amounts have paid in full.

Any reasonable costs incurred in recovering unpaid fees may also be added to the balance owed.

6. Cancellation

If the client needs to cancel a booking, as much notice as possible should be given. Where more than 48 hours' notice is provided, no cancellation fee will normally be charged. Where less than 48 hours' notice is given, up to 50% of the agreed fee may be charged. Where cancellation takes place on the same day as the appointment, the full fee may be charged.

If Early Steps SEND Consultancy needs to cancel a booking, an alternative date will be offered where possible. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, any payment already made for the cancelled service will be refunded.

Travel costs may still be charged where cancellation is made late and travel arrangements have already been made.

If a client fails to attend a booked appointment, meeting, training session, observation, or consultation without giving prior notice, the booking will be treated as a non-attendance. In these circumstances, the full fee may be charged. This includes situations where the client does not attend an online meeting, does not attend an in-person visit, fails to make a child available for observation, does not provide access to the setting at the agreed time, or does not respond to attempts to make contact at the agreed appointment time.

Where repeated non-attendance occurs, Early Steps SEND Consultancy reserves the right to refuse future bookings. Work will not normally be rearranged following a non-attendance unless a new booking is made and payment is received.

7. Reports, Observations and Professional Advice

All reports, observations, recommendations, and professional advice provided by Early Steps SEND Consultancy are based on the information available at the time of the service. This may include information provided by the client, observations carried out during visits or consultations, documentation shared by parents or settings, and the professional judgement, training, and experience of the consultant.

Reports and advice are intended to support understanding, planning, and decision-making in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Reports produced by Early Steps SEND Consultancy do not constitute a medical diagnosis, psychological diagnosis, or legal determination, and should not be interpreted as such. The consultancy cannot guarantee that any recommendation will result in additional support, funding, or approval of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), as such decisions are made by local authorities, schools, health professionals, or other relevant bodies.

Reports must not be altered, edited, or amended without the written permission of Early Steps SEND Consultancy. Reports may only be shared with other professionals where the client has given permission, or where sharing is required by law or safeguarding procedures.

Records relating to services may be retained for professional, legal, insurance, and safeguarding purposes for a period of up to seven years.

8. Use of Reports

Reports produced by Early Steps SEND Consultancy are provided solely for the purpose agreed at the time of booking. They are intended to support the child, family, setting, or organisation involved, and must not be used for any other purpose without prior agreement.

Reports must not be edited, altered, published, or reproduced in part or in full without written permission. Reports must not be used for legal proceedings, tribunal submissions, or formal disputes without prior agreement from Early Steps SEND Consultancy.

With the client's consent, reports may be shared with parents, early years settings, schools, local authorities, health professionals, or other relevant professionals involved in supporting the child. Early Steps SEND Consultancy is not responsible for how reports are interpreted or used once they have been shared with third parties.

9. Confidentiality

All information shared with Early Steps SEND Consultancy will be treated as confidential and handled in accordance with professional standards and data protection legislation.

Confidential information will only be shared without consent where there is a safeguarding concern, where disclosure is required by law, or where disclosure is required by a court order or statutory authority.

Where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable person, Early Steps SEND Consultancy has a duty to share information with the appropriate authorities, even if consent has not been given. This may include sharing information with local authorities, safeguarding teams, schools, or other relevant agencies.

10. Data Protection

Personal data will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Information will be handled in line with the Privacy Notice issued by Early Steps SEND Consultancy.

Information may be collected and stored for the purposes of providing services, maintaining professional records, meeting legal and insurance requirements, and managing business administration. Records may be stored electronically or in paper format and will be kept securely.

Data may be retained for up to seven years where this is necessary for legal, insurance, safeguarding, or professional reasons. After this period, records will normally be securely destroyed.

Clients have the right to request access to personal data held about them, in line with subject access request procedures.

11. Website, Enquiries and Online Contact

Where contact is made with Early Steps SEND Consultancy through the website, email, telephone, WhatsApp, online forms, or any other electronic method, the information provided will only be used for legitimate business purposes.

This may include responding to enquiries, arranging bookings, providing services, maintaining records, or meeting legal and insurance requirements. Personal information will not be shared with third parties unless required in order to provide the agreed service, required by law, or required for safeguarding purposes.

The website may use cookies, analytics, or similar tools where necessary for the operation of the site. Where this applies, it will be done in accordance with data protection and privacy regulations.

12. Safeguarding

Early Steps SEND Consultancy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All work is carried out in line with current safeguarding guidance and legislation, including Working Together to Safeguard Children, the SEND Code of Practice, the Children and Families Act 2014, and other relevant safeguarding laws and guidance.

If concerns arise about the safety, welfare, or wellbeing of a child, information may be shared with the appropriate authorities, including the local authority safeguarding team, school, nursery, or other relevant professionals. This may happen without the consent of the parent or client where it is necessary to protect a child.

13. Liability

All advice and recommendations provided by Early Steps SEND Consultancy are given in good faith and based on professional knowledge, experience, and current guidance.

Early Steps SEND Consultancy cannot accept responsibility for decisions made by schools, nurseries, local authorities, health services, or any other professionals. The consultancy is not responsible for EHCP outcomes, funding decisions, placement decisions, medical decisions, psychological assessments, or any action taken by third parties.

Liability for any claim arising from services provided will be limited to the amount paid for the service in question.

14. Insurance

Early Steps SEND Consultancy holds appropriate insurance to cover the services provided. This may include professional indemnity insurance, public liability insurance, occupational personal accident insurance, and cyber or data risk insurance.

Details of insurance cover may be provided on request where required for professional, contractual, or organisational purposes.

15. Complaints

If a client wishes to make a complaint, this should be done in writing as soon as possible after the issue arises. Complaints will be handled in line with the Complaints Policy of Early Steps SEND Consultancy.

Every effort will be made to resolve concerns fairly, promptly, and professionally. Making a complaint will not affect the client's legal rights.

16. Changes to Terms

These Terms and Conditions may be updated from time to time to reflect changes in legislation, professional guidance, or business practice.

The most current version will always apply and will be available on request or via the website. Clients will be considered to have accepted the current Terms and Conditions when booking or using services.

17. Governing Law

These Terms and Conditions shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of England and Wales.

Any dispute arising from or in connection with these Terms and Conditions, the services provided by Early Steps SEND Consultancy, or any related agreement shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

Where services are provided to organisations, schools, early years settings, or local authorities, this agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with the law of England and Wales regardless of the location of the client.

Nothing in these Terms and Conditions affects any statutory rights of the client.

18. Agreement

By booking or using services, you confirm that you have read and agree to these Terms and Conditions.

Signed: _____

Laura Hanson

Early Steps SEND Consultancy

Date: 27/02/2026

