

Specialist hub of inclusive practice (SHIP)

Information for professionals working with children and young people with SEND

2025/2026



What is a SHIP?

A SHIP is a specialist provision within a mainstream school that enables children with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities to have access to individualised and small group support whilst also benefiting from inclusive practice within the mainstream setting. SHIPs are part of the local authority programme of specialist resource bases (SRBs).

What is the purpose of the SHIPs?

SHIPs enable children with co-occurring needs to:

- Be placed in a specialist provision while attending a mainstream school, with access to mainstream activities and learning when appropriate
- Attend school close to home where possible so that they are able to take part in activities after school.

Who is a SHIP for?

SHIPs are special provisions for children who find learning in a regular classroom difficult. They support children with significant learning needs, as well as challenges like neurodiversity, social and emotional difficulties, and developmental delays. SHIPs offer a safe, supportive space where children can learn and thrive.

Can I refer a child into a SHIP?

Referrals can be made online to the local authority via the [Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers' website](#)

- It is essential that information requested is submitted to facilitate decision making. This includes recent INDES, current support plan and its evaluation of effectiveness.
- Referral paperwork is added to the SRB Triage Panel agenda
- If this Panel agrees the child is potentially suitable and a SHIP has vacancies the documents will be added to the next SHIP admissions Panel agenda.
- Provided there is a possibility of an offer being made, a SHIP Lead Teacher or Specialist Partner will complete an observation. This will give school an opportunity to discuss current needs and benefits of a SHIP with the observer.
- All information submitted and collated will be considered at the next SHIP admissions Panel where the referral will be accepted and a place offered or stood down.

What happens if professionals agree that a place should be offered?

If the SHIP Admissions Panel agree that a place will be offered, parent/carers will receive a letter that they will need to respond to. The child's current setting/school will also be informed of the offer. Parent/carers may wish to discuss this offer with the child's current setting/school and/or EHCP Coordinator before they accept the place.

What happens if a child is not offered a place?

If a child is not offered a placement in a SHIP, the referrer will be informed. We then ask that they contact the family to let them know the decision, reasons and to discuss next steps. In all our processes the child remains at the heart of our decision making.

There are some factors that will have contributed to the decision made, these include:

- After observation and discussion, the professionals all agree that this would not be the right setting for the child
- The SHIP provision is already full
- Professionals agree the current setting could meet need by implementing suggested strategies recommended by professionals.