



SEND Universal Provision

Provision that the local authority expects to be made available for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Buckinghamshire

Information for professionals

July 2025



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1. Introduction

Buckinghamshire's vision

To build a better future for all children and young people in Buckinghamshire so that they realise their potential, whatever their starting point is.

Buckinghamshire offers a needs led approach upholding the principle that every child or young person (CYP) receives the support they need to succeed in education, regardless of their background, abilities, or whether they have a formal diagnosis.

Buckinghamshire is committed to making education more inclusive for CYP with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), promoting diversity and individual differences through inclusive teaching methods and activities, creating a supportive and welcoming environment for all pupils.

This document updates the 2019 Buckinghamshire Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) after consulting with local partners, including CYP, education settings, and health service providers. It reflects current best practices to meet the needs of SEND pupils in Buckinghamshire.

The updated guidance aims to ensure consistent support across all mainstream settings in Buckinghamshire. It sets clear expectations for the use of the 'Graduated Approach', outlining universally available support and a commitment to neuro-affirmative approaches and language. The Universal Support document will help schools and settings enhance their support for all CYP with SEND, with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The document uses the term 'differences' rather than 'barriers' to emphasise the value of diversity and individual uniqueness, promoting a positive and inclusive perspective.

For details of services and support please visit: <https://schoolsweb.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/send-and-inclusion/>



2. Inclusive Practice

Inclusive Practice is organised into key areas:

- Legal frameworks and responsibilities for supporting CYP with SEND in schools
- Defining Inclusive Practice
- The Graduated Approach
- School Culture and Leadership
- Quality First Teaching

Legal frameworks and responsibilities for supporting CYP with SEND in schools

This section outlines the expectations on all schools and links to legal frameworks and responsibilities for supporting CYP with SEND in schools:

- **The Children and Families Act 2014** [Children and Families Act 2014](#)

This is the overarching legislation that underpins our SEND system providing statutory guidance that schools, local authorities, health bodies, and other professionals must have regard to when making decisions about SEND. It aims to integrate education, health, and social care services to provide a more holistic and person-centred approach to supporting CYP with SEND from birth up to the age of 25. Key aspects covered include:

- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- The Local Offer
- Personal Budgets
- Joint Commissioning
- Parental Involvement

Mainstream schools and other specified educational settings have a legal duty under Section 66 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to use their 'best endeavours' to ensure that appropriate special educational provision is made for CYP with SEN, whether or not they have an EHC plan. This proactive duty requires governing bodies or proprietors to actively ensure provision is in place, including seeking specialist support when needed, and to publish a SEN information report detailing how they meet this responsibility.

- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014**
[The SEND Regulations 2014](#)

These regulations provide further details and procedures for implementing the Children and Families Act 2014, particularly concerning EHCPs and the

assessment process. A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them (Section 20). Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or different from that which would normally be provided for children or young people of the same age in a mainstream education setting (Section 21).

- **The Equality Act 2010** [The Equality Act 2010](#)

This Act prohibits discrimination against disabled individuals, including CYP with SEND. Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with SEND are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to their non-disabled peers. These adjustments can include changes to the physical environment, curriculum, teaching methods, and the provision of auxiliary aids and services. Under Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) elaborates that this definition includes progressive conditions and fluctuating impairments and emphasises that disability should not be narrowly interpreted; it must be understood in the context of removing barriers to learning and promoting inclusive practice.

- **The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years (2015)** [The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years \(2015\)](#)

This is statutory guidance that schools, local authorities, health bodies, and other professionals must have regard to when making decisions about SEND. It defines SEND as a learning difficulty or disability requiring special educational provision and sets out legal duties for schools, local authorities, and health bodies under the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010, and related regulations. The SEND Code of Practice promotes a person-centred approach, emphasising early identification, inclusive education, and collaboration across services. It categorises SEND into four broad areas—communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health, and sensory and/or physical needs—and mandates the use of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) for those requiring more intensive support.

These legal frameworks and guidance documents work together to ensure that schools in England have a clear set of responsibilities towards CYP with SEND, focusing on early identification, inclusive education, collaborative working, and person-centred support.

Defining Inclusive Practice

Inclusive practice means creating spaces where all CYP feel safe: in their environment, in their relationships with trusted adults (co-regulators), and in their own bodies. For all learners but especially neurodivergent learners, this is a prerequisite for engagement, regulation, and learning. A safe and supportive environment is essential for enabling every CYP with SEND to thrive, providing the security and encouragement needed for their growth and well-being.

In Buckinghamshire schools, culture and leadership are fundamental to establishing effective SEND practices. They define the ethos of inclusivity and set the core values and priorities that shape the educational environment. Strong leadership ensures that staff receive appropriate training, resources are allocated efficiently, and policies are implemented consistently. When inclusion is championed at every level, from school leaders to classroom practitioners, it drives meaningful progress and fosters a supportive environment with equitable opportunities for all learners, including CYP with SEND. A positive and inclusive school culture actively promotes collaboration among educators, parents/carers, and learners. This collaborative approach enables co-production, ensuring that the voices and needs of CYP with SEND are central to planning and decision-making.

Most of the provision and strategies outlined in this section will be integral to the school's provision for all CYP, detailing practices and adaptations essential to Quality First Teaching (QFT). QFT emphasises high-quality, inclusive teaching for all CYP and includes adapted and scaffolded learning strategies to support classroom learning, and ongoing formative assessment.

Most children and young people with SEND can have their needs met within local mainstream schools or colleges using the resources already available to them. While schools are not legally required to demonstrate how they have used their delegated budgets, it is considered good practice to do so. An Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) should only be requested when the support required goes beyond what can reasonably be provided through these universal resources, and schools are expected to show that the level of provision needed exceeds what is typically available within their delegated funding.

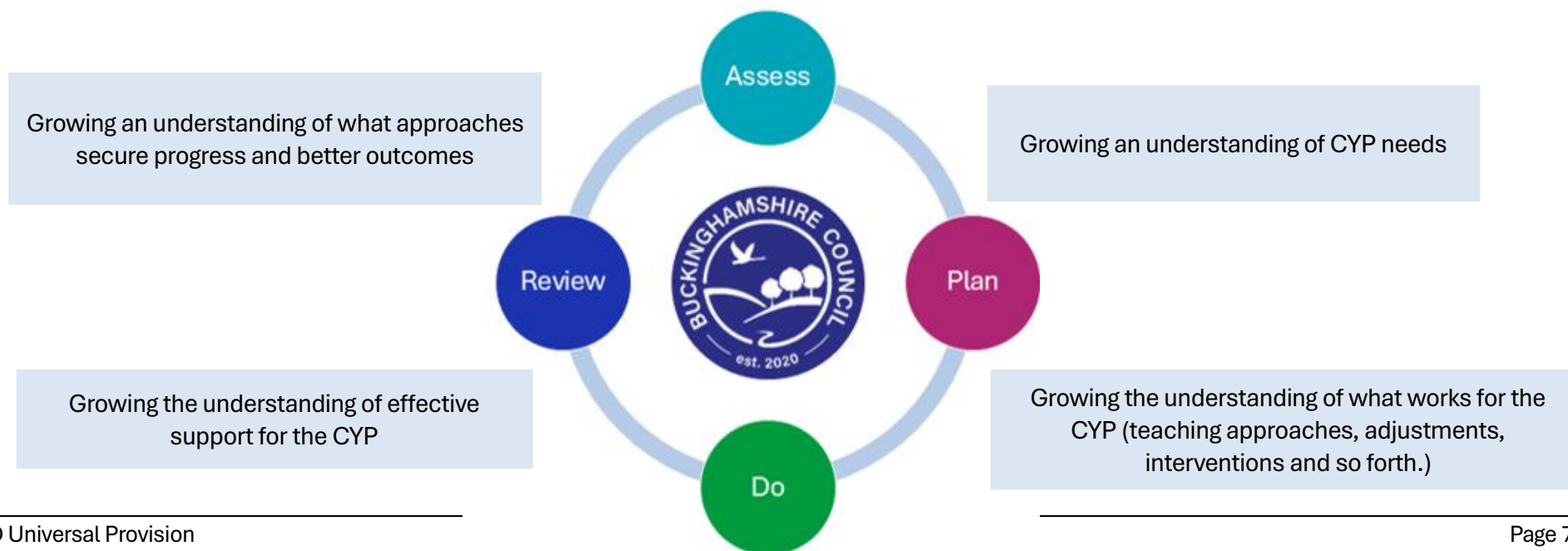
The Graduated Approach

The graduated approach is a structured process designed to address the diverse needs CYP with SEND. Initiated at the whole-school level, it engages all educators in a continuous cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and review. For learners with SEND, this process is further tailored to individual needs. Understanding the needs of pupils is essential for schools to provide effective and timely support to pupils. Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, schools need to take action to remove barriers which prevent pupils progressing (SEND CoP, 2015).

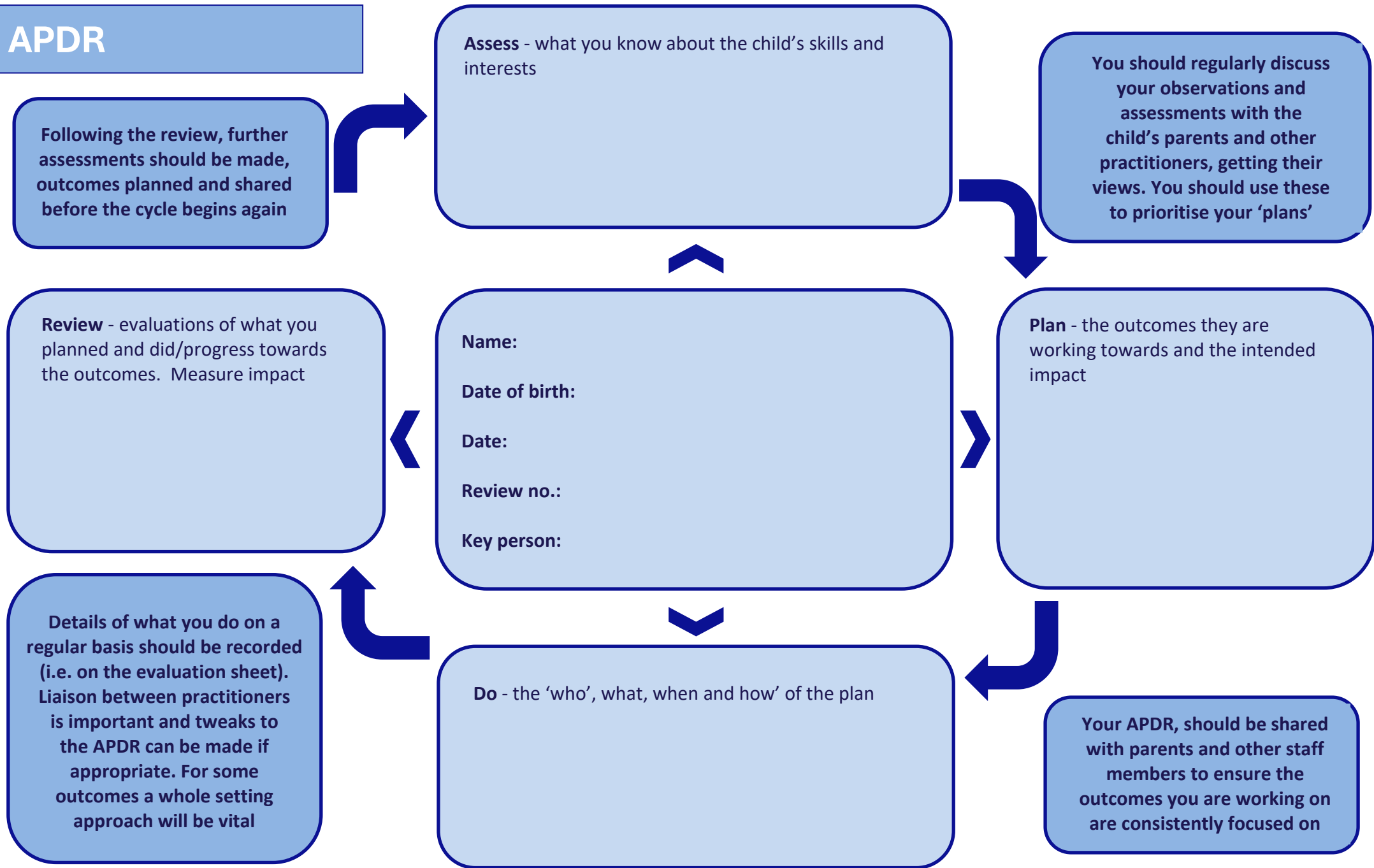
All professionals working with CYP play an essential role in applying the graduated approach, which is based on four key stages: Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR). As the cycle progresses, educators grow their understanding pupil's strengths, needs, and aspirations, allowing for personalised planning. SEND support is delivered through this cyclical model, with each phase building upon and refining previous strategies to ensure approaches remain effective and responsive to each learner, facilitating progress and positive outcomes. The APDR cycle enables accurate identification of needs and provision of appropriate support for CYP with SEND, with progress monitored against clearly defined outcomes.

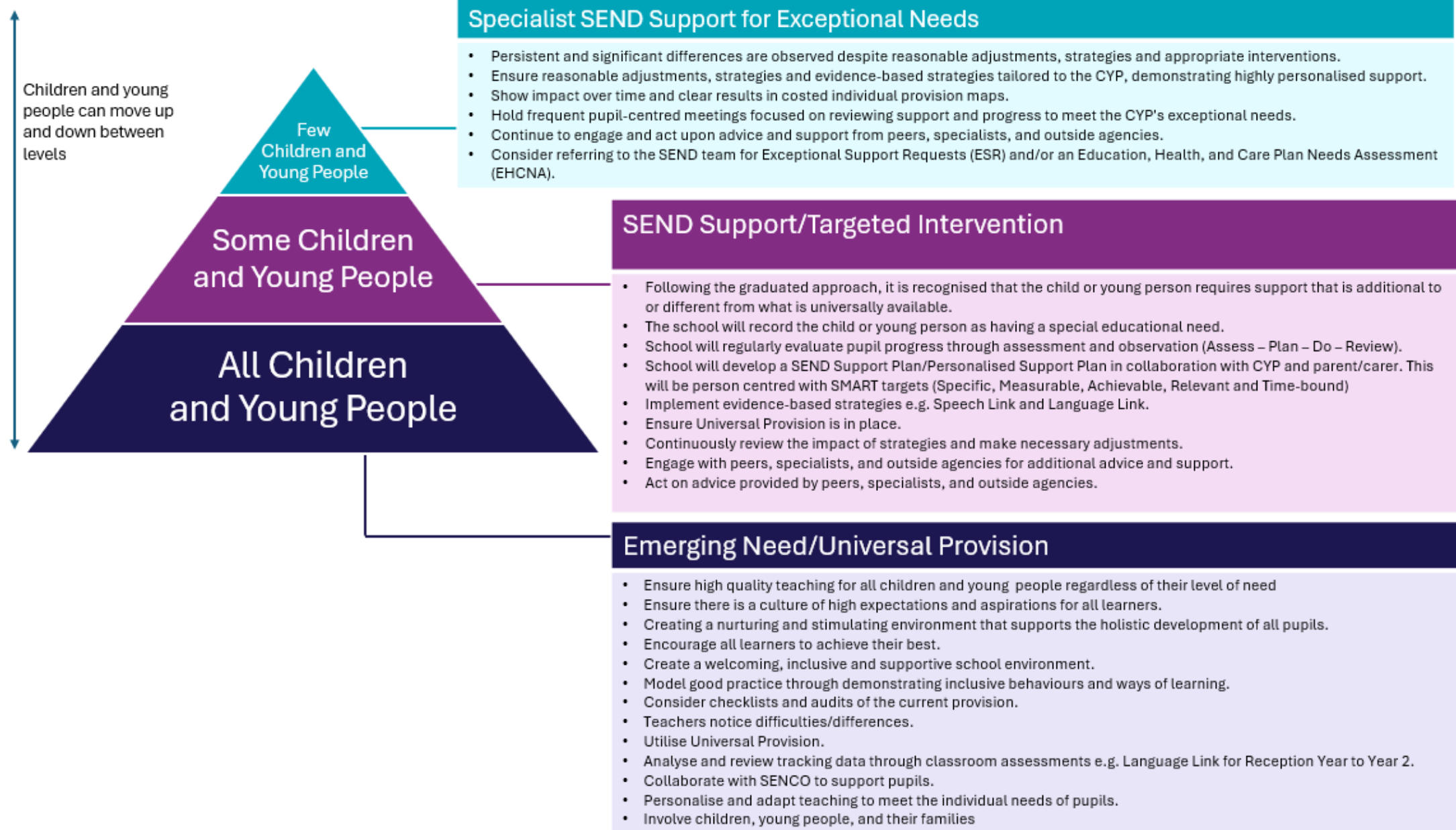
Schools may use editable documents (example below) or electronic provision mapping and APDR (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) tools to record and track interventions, adaptations, and individual progress. These systems promote evidence-based decision-making and support collaboration among school staff, learners, and families. Regular reviews with parents, carers, and CYP ensure their voices are central to the APDR process.

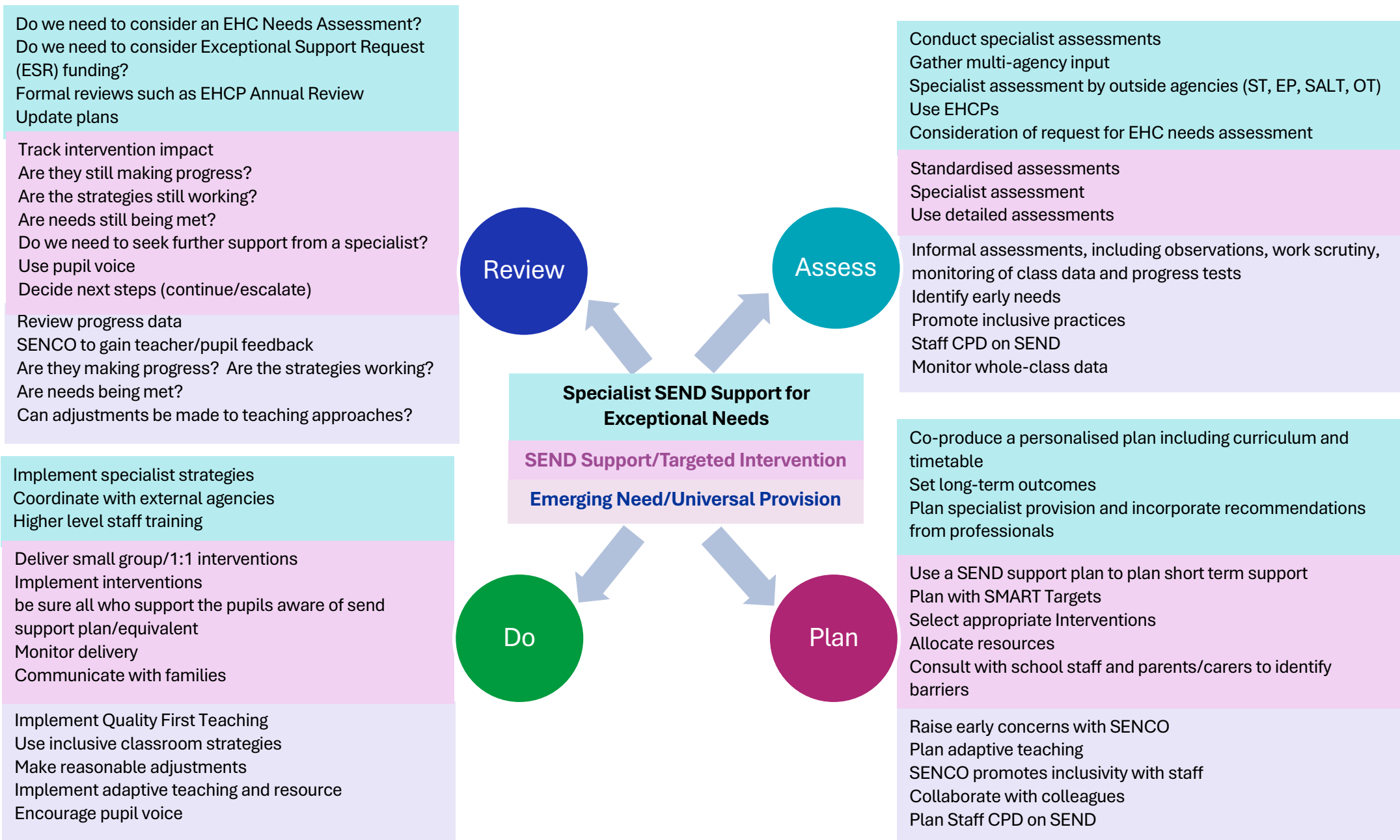
The guidance in this document should be used to support the relationship between learners, parents/carers and schools, enabling a co-produced approach.



APDR







School Culture and Leadership Expectations of all our schools	
• Senior Leadership Knowledge of SEND	Schools ensure that their leaders and SENCOs have a thorough understanding of SEND legislation, policies, and best practices.
	Schools stay updated and informed of current SEND research and best practice to provide effective support and provision, ensuring this is shared with staff.
• Ethos and Culture	Schools cultivate a culture of high expectations, strong values, and a highly inclusive ethos.
	School leaders and SENCOs demonstrate a strong commitment to SEND and inclusion, ensuring these priorities are embedded in the school's vision and values, as well as the School Development Plan.
	Schools foster a collaborative environment where staff, parents, and external agencies work together to support the inclusion of all students.
	Schools are aware of Section 35 Children and Families Act 2014 and their duty to ensure that CYP with SEND can participate in school activities alongside their peers.
• Strategic Planning and Organisation	Schools develop an effective strategic plan to address the diverse needs of individuals with SEND.
	The SEND plan is integrated into the School Development Plan.
	The SEND plan includes a clear vision, achievable goals, and thorough resource planning.
• Developing and Implementing Policies	Schools publish key statutory documents online, including the SEN Information Report, SEND Policy, Behaviour Policy, and Complaints Policy, in line with the requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010 and government guidance for maintained schools.
	Schools develop and implement neuro-affirming policies that promote inclusion, ensuring all students, including those with SEND, have access to high-quality education.
	Schools ensure that the SEND policy is linked with other relevant policies, such as the behaviour policy, PSHE, and school trips.
	Schools keep these policies up-to-date and review them regularly alongside school governors.
	Schools apply neuro-affirming behaviour policies flexibly, recognising that distressed and/or dysregulated behaviour is a form of communication and may signal an unmet need.

• Accessibility	Schools assess the accessibility of buildings and individual learning spaces and make the Accessibility Plan available on the school's website.
	Schools plan ahead for potential needs and adjustments and comply with Public Sector Equality Duty.
	Schools ensure the physical environment is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.
	Schools complete risk assessments for individual CYP to ensure their safety.
	Schools ensure that appropriately sized furniture is available for all learners throughout the school environment, including in classrooms and dining areas, to support comfort and accessibility.
	Schools promote the use of specialist equipment across the curriculum to support diverse needs.
	Schools ensure that pupils wearing glasses or hearing aids are seated in optimal positions in classrooms.
	Schools plan extra-curricular activities and educational visits inclusively for CYP with SEND, making reasonable adjustments where necessary.
	Schools offer an aspirational, broad, and balanced curriculum that is accessible and available to all pupils.
	Schools provide information in formats that are accessible and understandable to all.
	Schools accommodate sensory or physical needs through uniform adjustments or individualised interventions
	Schools ensure sensory-friendly environments, such as low-arousal spaces, are available and accessible supported by tools such as the Buckinghamshire Sensory Behaviour Checklist to identify and respond to sensory differences of CYP.
	Schools create accessible communication friendly environments for pupils with speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) utilising tools such as visuals and Makaton signing to support children's understanding and communication
• Monitoring and Evaluation	Schools regularly monitor and evaluate inclusive practices to ensure they are effective.
	Schools make necessary adjustments based on evaluations of their practices.
	Schools monitor the impact of support adults on learner progress.
	Schools ensure that all practitioners, including Teaching Assistants, make a positive contribution to learner progress.
• Training and Professional Development	Schools conduct regular staff training audits to identify individual, team, and whole-setting training needs related to SEND.
	Schools develop a continuous professional development (CPD) plan focused on fostering an inclusive culture, improving SEND practices and knowledge, and building capacity to meet the specific and diverse needs of all learners.
	Schools include all staff and governors in CPD around SEND.

	Schools ensure that new staff induction includes training on meeting the needs of children and young people (CYP) with SEND.
	Schools train staff on the proactive deployment of support adults in classrooms.
	Schools facilitate opportunities for staff to share good practices and conduct peer observations.
	Schools follow up after training to ensure a positive impact on inclusion for all learners with SEND.
	Schools encourage staff to participate in CPD offered by the Buckinghamshire SEND Service and other relevant outside agencies and specialists.
• Learning Environment	Schools ensure the environment is calm and purposeful, where all learners feel safe, valued, and respected.
	Schools must adopt neuro-affirmative approaches, adapting systems and environments to meet the needs of neurodivergent CYP rather than expecting them to adjust.
• Student Engagement	Schools implement a fair, consistent, and motivating reward system that is easy for pupils to understand.
	Schools actively seek and incorporate the views of SEND students in decision-making processes.
	Schools adopt a person-centred approach that considers and prioritises the views of CYP in all decisions impacting them.
	Schools include CYP in decision-making processes, such as creating one-page profiles or personalised learning plans that outline their strengths and needs.
	Schools ensure that SEND pupils feel they belong and that their contributions are valued.
	Schools encourage pupils to share their opinions and concerns and ensure these are taken seriously.
• Effective Communication	Schools collaborate and communicate clearly and effectively with CYP, their families, staff, and other stakeholders to ensure decisions are made through consultation and partnership.
	Schools establish mechanisms to actively listen and gather feedback from all stakeholders.
	Schools ensure all information is accessible and understandable to everyone involved.
	Schools ensure that staff use language that demonstrates positive regard.
	Schools signpost parents/carers to relevant resources, such as SENDIAS and the Bucks SEND Local Offer Family Information Service
	Schools ensure that parents/carers and the CYP are informed about communication methods, for example, home school diaries, emails, meeting methods and that they know how to communicate with school staff.
• Parent/Carer Engagement	Schools provide regular updates to parents and carers about SEND matters through newsletters, emails, or parent events.
	Schools organise workshops and training sessions for parents and carers to help them understand SEND policies, best practices, and ways to support their children.

	Schools create opportunities for parents and carers to give feedback on SEND provision, such as through surveys or suggestion boxes.
	Schools offer support groups for parents and carers to share experiences and advice.
	Schools host inclusive events that celebrate SEND pupils' achievements and promote disability awareness.
	Schools provide parents and carers with access to resources and information to support their children's development, including links to relevant websites and local services.
	Schools personalise communication methods, such as home-school diaries, texts, or informal discussions, to keep parents informed and engaged.
• Empathy and Compassion	Schools ensure that parents are familiar with the process for raising concerns or questions.
	Schools demonstrate empathy and compassion toward individuals with SEND and their families.
• Engagement within Buckinghamshire	Schools understand the challenges faced by individuals with SEND and provide emotional support, encouragement, and advocacy when needed.
	Schools utilise Buckinghamshire SEND Support mechanisms, following side-by-side principles for sharing good practices, offering peer support, and gaining further information for SEND pupils and families.
	Schools engage with support avenues, including SENDCo Network Liaison Meetings, SENCO Champions, Team Up meetings, the SEND Support line, and various webinars and advice sessions from specialists.
	Schools designate a Mental Health Lead.

- Promoting Personal, Social, and Emotional Development

Schools adopt a whole-school PSHE approach to develop well-being and resilience.
Schools establish effective pastoral support systems that address both social and emotional needs as well as contextual circumstances.
Schools create pastoral and mental health support plans for CYP with SEND.
Schools celebrate SEND role models and promote awareness through events like Autism Awareness Week or the Paralympics.
Schools provide planned opportunities to educate pupils on specific needs and conditions, fostering understanding and sensitivity toward differences.
Schools establish trusted relationships for all CYP with SEND, with named adults or key workers providing stable points of contact.
Schools offer regular well-being check-ins for SEND pupils throughout the day.
Schools empower and support SEND pupils to self-advocate effectively.
Schools offer inclusive activities or clubs based on shared interests.
Schools address distressed behaviours with curiosity and de-escalation techniques, using empathetic language.
Schools provide agreed safe spaces for SEND pupils when needed.
Schools implement restorative approaches to maintain positive relationships.
Schools challenge negative attitudes and perceptions toward individuals or groups in the classroom, school, and society.

• Preparation for Adulthood and Supporting Independence	Schools set ambitious outcomes for children and young people (CYP) with additional needs, aiming for employment, independent living, health, and community participation.
	Schools encourage self-reliance among all pupils including those with SEND, reducing support where appropriate.
	Schools promote a culture that values mistakes as an essential part of the learning process.
	Schools incorporate daily living skills, such as toileting, feeding, dressing, hygiene, healthy eating, and exercise, into the curriculum.
	Schools teach basic financial literacy concepts like budgeting and saving as part of the curriculum.
	Schools consistently use visual supports and effective teaching strategies, such as visual aids and backward chaining, to enhance independence.
	Schools explicitly teach problem-solving skills to encourage critical thinking and decision-making in pupils.
	Schools must ensure that CYP are taught how to care for their specialist equipment early on.
	Schools provide opportunities for CYP with SEND to participate in community activities to build social skills and confidence.
• Making Reasonable Adjustments	Schools offer work experience opportunities and internships to prepare CYP with SEND for the working world, using tailored SEND careers guidance in line with new Gatsby Benchmarks.
	Schools use sensory audits or checklists to inform reasonable adjustments, such as planning seating arrangements and movement breaks for CYP and environmental adaptations in all areas of the school.
	Schools routinely seek the views of learners, professionals, parents, and carers to inform planning for physical or sensory adaptations.
	Schools make reasonable adjustments to the learning environment, such as providing individual workstations and visual supports and timetables.

- Resources

Schools provide access to and maintenance of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) tools so pupils can express themselves and make choices.

Schools identify specific resources and strategies to support SEND pupils and overcome potential barriers to learning.

Schools ensure that appropriate manual handling equipment is available and accessible so that all CYP, regardless of physical disability or mobility needs, can fully access the school environment, curriculum, and wider school life safely and with dignity.

Schools ensure that resources are readily accessible to promote the independence of SEND pupils.

Schools provide easy access to appropriate regulation and access tools, including sensory supports (for example, fidget items, ear defenders, weighted blankets) and motor or ergonomic aids (for example, writing slopes, pencil grips, alternative writing tools, wobble cushions, wedges), based on individual need.

Schools implement sensory strategies and circuits throughout the day to support regulation, attention, and engagement. These may include tools and activities such as Sensory circuits, Move'n'Sit cushions, fiddle items, heavy work input, movement breaks, and calming routines tailored to individual needs.

Schools make additional or adapted resources available for pupils who require them.

Schools liaise with professionals, when appropriate, to ensure the correct use and care of specialist equipment between home and school environments.

Schools use ICT to support alternatives to written recording and foster independent learning for SEND pupils.

Schools provide additional ICT support for children and young people with visual and hearing impairments.

- Transition Support

Schools inform all staff about the varying types of transitions that pupils may face, from daily routines to significant life changes such as moving schools or experiencing bereavement.

Schools create plans to support pupils who require additional help during transitions, including Looked After Children and pupils experiencing social communication difficulties, trauma, or anxiety.

Schools utilise visual aids, such as individualised timetables, checklists, and social stories, Now and Next boards to prepare CYP for transitions.

Schools inform parents and carers about upcoming transitions and make adjustments, such as additional classroom visits or visual transition books, to support pupils effectively.

Quality First Teaching and SEND Expectations of all our schools

- Classroom Layout and Organisation

Arrange desks and seating to provide clear visibility of the teacher, visuals for example, board and ensuring children appropriate acoustic environment, accounting for the individual needs of children.

Create designated areas for specific activities, such as concentration stations, calm-down spaces, reading corners, and group work areas.

Incorporate visuals such as timers, timetables, objects of reference, and organised display areas to aid learning.

Ensure pathways are clear and free of obstacles.

Label resources, storage areas, and supplies clearly with text and images, using appropriate print sizes and fonts.

Organise books and resources by subject or theme.

Display a daily schedule in a visible location.

Establish and communicate clear classroom rules and expectations.

Conduct sensory audits of the classroom and other school environments, and make necessary adjustments to create a safe, inclusive, and regulation-supportive environment for all CYP.

Set high expectations and aspirations for all CYP with SEND.

- Planning

Support the metacognition of pupils.

Define clear learning objectives and use appropriate work and pedagogical strategies to achieve intended outcomes.

Plan multi-sensory teaching to cater to different learning styles.

Strategically plan for the use of additional adults to maximise their impact on learning.

Consider specialist advice when planning lessons.

Adapt, differentiate, or personalise learning for SEND pupils across the curriculum.

Adopt a stage-not-age approach for teaching and support strategies.

Plan for interventions specifically designed for SEND pupils.

Structured organisation and support	Offer opportunities for pupils to work independently, in small groups, or in pairs.
	Take individual SEND needs into account when arranging seating plans and groupings.
	Provide timely and effective support to help SEND CYP keep up with learning, offering additional help when necessary.
	Assist SEND pupils with planning written tasks to help organise their thoughts.
	Break tasks into manageable steps to promote independence.
	Allow SEND pupils to record work and respond in different ways.
	Adjust the volume of work, focusing on key learning tasks.
	Build movement breaks into lessons to optimise learning conditions.
	Pre-teach new vocabulary or concepts to enhance understanding.
	Use structured teaching approaches during transitions.
	Modify and enlarge worksheets or presentations to ensure accessibility.
Strong SEND knowledge:	Understand and respond appropriately to the additional needs of learners.
Foster CYP independence	Use scaffolding techniques to promote independence based on individual needs.
	Design tasks that are broken down and tailored to each learner's abilities, ensuring tasks provide the right level of challenge while promoting confidence, skill development, and increasing independence over time.
	Provide differentiated instruction that meets individual learning needs and progressively builds student autonomy.
	Use techniques such as forward and backward chaining to support independence in dressing in the school environment.
	Provide visual, verbal, or written scaffolding.
	Make concrete resources readily available to learners.
	Supply task management boards or to-do lists to support organisation.
	Use real objects and kinaesthetic tools to aid learning.
Support communication and language development	Incorporate timers/countdown warnings to indicate activity durations
	Create a language-rich environment that encourages communication.
	Use strategies to develop communication and language in the classroom.
	Provide non-verbal communication tools, such as visuals or communication cards, for pupils who require alternative methods of expression.

Effective delivery and instruction	Reduce behavioural and emotional difficulties through effective planning and consistent approaches.
	Model desired behaviours and language to facilitate understanding.
	Clearly communicate what pupils need to do and for how long.
	Provide instructions in the order they need to be followed and avoid abstract wording.
	Use visual/auditory demonstrations and cues to aid comprehension.
	Display key vocabulary with visuals.
	Use clear and specific language, avoiding ambiguity.
	Employ familiar vocabulary to ensure accessibility.
	Utilise interactive whiteboards and technology to enhance engagement and learning.
	Explicitly teach study skills and break tasks into manageable chunks.
	Maintain a pace and order that sustains pupil interest.
	Allow sufficient time for pupils to process information before responding.
	Repeat new concepts to reinforce learning and memory.
	Use gestures and body language to support communication.
	Highlight and verify understanding of unfamiliar words.
	Present information in multiple formats to improve retention.
	Reduce the quantity of elements on resource pages and highlight key information.
Assessments and provide feedback	Tailor delivery styles to pupil needs, using effective strategies including directive speech for clarity ('bossy talk'), neuroaffirming approach, and multiple instructional modalities to ensure accessibility for all learners.
	Implement both formative and summative assessments.
	Provide specific and clear positive recognition and praise.
	Follow the school marking policy and offer clear, manageable feedback to guide progress.
Adapt homework	Check understanding by encouraging pupils to explain instructions in their own words.
	Provide opportunities for non-verbal communication, such as visuals and communication tools.
	Ensure homework is tailored to the strengths and needs of CYP.
	Offer homework club or time in school to complete homework.

SEND Processes – The Graduated Approach

Expectations of all our schools

• Knowing the CYP	Schools observe the CYP in various settings (classroom, playground, and so forth,) to gather information about their behaviour, interactions, understanding, barriers to learning, and engagement.
	Schools engage with CYP to ensure they are known, understood, and their views are actively gathered and valued.
	Schools identify the strengths and interests of CYP.
	Schools understand how the CYP learns.
	Schools implement a 'Graduated Approach' to identify and provide appropriate teaching and interventions for CYP with SEND.
• Gathering Assessment Data	Schools screen pupils using tools to identify their SEND.
	Schools conduct further assessments using standardised tools to evaluate specific areas such as reading comprehension, writing speed, decoding, spelling, numeracy skills, and communication skills.
	Schools identify SEND based on formative and summative assessments, focusing on areas where CYP require additional support.
	Schools ensure staff are aware of CYP's starting points to measure expected progress across each key stage.
	Schools offer learners regular opportunities to evaluate their performance and use self-assessment to set individual targets, both non-academic and academic.
• Paperwork	Schools complete, share and update a One-page profiles (or similar) for the CYP with SEND.
	Schools maintain ongoing records of observations and assessments to inform planning for the CYP and to demonstrate the CYP journey.
	Schools co-produce SEND Support Plans or Personalised Learning Plans that includes differentiated instruction and tailored strategies that highlight the CYP's strengths and individual needs?
	Set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic targets) to track progress/impact.

Engagement	Schools engage with families to share concerns and gather insights about CYP's background, interests, and any concerns families may have.
	Schools ensure that children are supported and encouraged to express their views from the early years, and that these views are actively listened to and given appropriate weight in all decisions that affect them, in line with their age, maturity and capability. This includes meaningfully engaging with CYP to co-creating one-page profiles or personalised learning plans that reflect their strengths and differences.
	Schools refer to and/or request support from education and health professionals, such as Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, School Nursing, Educational Psychologists, Specialist Teachers, Virtual Schools, and so forth, to gain a comprehensive understanding of CYP's needs.
	Schools ensure regular communication with all professionals involved in supporting SEND CYP to co-produce targets, review progress, and determine next steps.
	Schools actively collaborate with outside agencies and specialists as part of the SEND support offer, using their recommendations to inform practices and demonstrate impact.
Planning	Schools select interventions and strategies based on assessments that are relevant and allow for benchmarking.
	Schools select evidence-based interventions whenever possible.
	Schools promptly implement advice and recommendations from education and health professionals and share them with staff working directly with CYP.
	Schools incorporate these strategies into provision planning, allocate timeframes for embedding them, and plan to measure their impact.
	Schools map all allocated provision on a provision map or SEND support plan and ensure these plans are costed.
Access Arrangements	Schools plan for, assess and manage examination arrangements (access arrangements) for all formal and informal national assessments, including public examinations.
	Schools ensure that applications formal assessment arrangements are in place in good time for national assessments, including public examinations.
	Schools provide clear, adapted assessment procedures to enable access to all assessments.
	Schools embed adaptations to assessment arrangements into the CYP's 'normal' way of working.
	Schools refer to relevant exam board guidelines, JCQ guidance, and professional advice for examination access arrangements.
	Schools consider arrangements such as rest breaks, extra time, adapted resources, and use of a scribe.

- Monitor and Review

Schools adhere to the Graduated Approach, ensuring a minimum termly cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review to track pupil progress effectively and evaluate support strategies.

Review meetings focus on:

- monitoring the progress of the child or young person (CYP).
- assessing the effectiveness of the SEND Support Plan or Personalised Learning Plan so necessary adjustments to plans and targets can be made.
- critically evaluating the impact of interventions, exploring alternative approaches if needed to achieve better outcomes for the learner.
- communicating progress, impact, and next steps with parents or carers.
- reviewing external advice and strategies.

Schools ensure that staff working with CYP provide regular, specific, and meaningful feedback to support their progress.

Schools measure and report small steps of progress in a detailed manner, avoiding vague summaries such as 'working below.'

Schools gather and incorporate feedback from CYP by supporting them in reviewing and evaluating their own performance and progress and including them in all decisions that impact their lives.

Schools actively involve parents and carers in the planning and review of their child's SEND support plan. In line with the SEND Code of Practice, schools should meet parents at least three times each year. These meetings may take various forms, such as parents' evenings, SEN review meetings, individual planning discussions with the SENCO or class teacher.

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

Education Endowment Foundation (EEF):

- [Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools | EEF](#)
- [Effective Professional Development | EEF](#)
- [Deployment of Teaching Assistants | EEF](#)
- [The 'Five-a-day' Principle](#)
- [Every teacher as a teacher of SEND 'Five-a-day' Reflection](#)
- [SEND IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS 5 key question for school leaders to reflect on](#)
- [EEF Metacognition Summary of recommendations poster](#)
- [Metacognition-A-starter-kit.pdf](#)

National Association for Special Educational Needs (Nasen):

- [Home page | Nasen](#)

Buckinghamshire links:

- [Buckinghamshire Healthy Schools | SchoolsWeb](#)
- [Bucks SEND Local Offer | Family Information Service](#)
- [Buckinghamshire send-support-plan-guidance-oct-2023.docx](#)
- [Buckinghamshire send-support-plan](#)
- [SEND Training for parents, carers, and professionals | SchoolsWeb](#)
- [SENDIAS](#)
- [Sensory-Behaviour-Checklist.docx](#)
- [Home - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)

Assessment Guidance

- [Home - JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications](#)
- [Key stage 2 teacher assessment guidance 2025 - GOV.UK](#)
- [Standards and Testing Agency - GOV.UK](#)
- [Ofqual - GOV.UK](#)
- [Ofqual student guide to exams and assessments in 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

- [GCSE \(9 to 1\) qualification-level conditions and requirements - GOV.UK](#)

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

Council for Disabled Children:

- [Preparing For Adulthood](#)
- [Equality Act 2010 and disabled pupils A guide for governors and trustees.pdf](#)
- [Equality Act Guide for schools - FINAL.pdf](#)

National Career Service

- [Post 16 options | National Careers Service](#)

Safeguarding

- [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK](#)
- [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK](#)

IPSEA

- [The 'best endeavours' duty](#)
- [SEN Support](#)

SEND Careers Guidance

- [1051_send_gatsby_toolkit_refresh_digital.pdf](#)
- [Gatsby Good Career Guidance: The Next 10 Years](#)
- [A new chapter for career guidance: updated Gatsby Benchmarks adopted into government guidance for schools, colleges and ITPs | Gatsby Benchmarks](#)

Department for Education Guidance

- [What maintained schools must or should publish online - GOV.UK](#)

- [Notional SEN Budget Guidance](#)

Core Statutory Guidance

- [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [SEND Guide for Schools](#)

Legislation and Legal Duties

- [Equality Act Advice](#)
- [SEND Amendment Regulations 2024](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [The SEND Regulations 2014](#)

Broad Areas of Need

The following sections aims to support the inclusion and wellbeing of children and young people by highlighting reasonable adjustments that can be made through Universal Provision, as well as other resources available to the school via Buckinghamshire SEND support and health professionals. There are various suggested strategies, but it is crucial to recognise that every learner is unique. This list is not exhaustive, and not all strategies or interventions will be effective or relevant for all learners. Support should be tailored to individual needs, and this resource should be used by settings and families/carers to plan appropriate and effective support.

For ease of use, this section has been arranged into different sections. Focus is on the four areas of need as set out in the SEND Code of Practice. It may be necessary to consult more than one list below when considering individual cases as many CYP have needs across more than one category and their presentation may not fall neatly into one area.

- Communication and Interaction needs
- Cognition and Learning needs
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs
- Sensory / Physical needs

A 'Medical / health needs' section has also been added to support classroom practice. Although a medical diagnosis or disability does not imply that the child or young person has a special educational need, some may have medical conditions or a disability that can impact on their access to education.

Useful Resources

- Buckinghamshire's [SEND Local Offer](#) for more detailed information and guidance.
- [Portal by Autism Early Support](#)
- [Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- [Buckinghamshire Healthy Schools](#)
- [Home - Bucks Mind](#)
- [CAMHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service](#)
- For medical/health needs detailed statutory guidance can be found in the [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK](#) published by the Department For Education.
- [Supporting-pupils-with-medical-conditions-1.pdf](#)

3. Communication and Interaction

Definition against Code of Practice

6.28 Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

6.29 Children and young people with autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Speech, Language, and Communication Needs

Speech, Language, and Communication Needs (SLCN) is an umbrella term used to describe differences across various aspects of communication. These can include:

- Understanding language: difficulty understanding the words and sentences that other people use.
- Using language: challenges in finding words and forming sentences and meaning.
- Producing speech sounds accurately: difficulties with a child's speech making it difficult for others to understand for example, speech sound disorders
- Stammering: speech disorder characterised by disruptions in the flow of speech.
- Selective Mutism: also known as 'situational mutism', it is a condition where children can talk comfortably in some situations, for example, at home, but not others (such as playgroup, preschool or school).
- Voice problems: Such as hoarseness or loss of voice.
- Social Communication: understanding non-verbal cues or using language appropriately in different contexts.
- Differences in understanding and using verbal and non-verbal communication when interacting with others, including how to adapt communications styles for different situations and contexts.
- Level language skills: difficulty using skills like inferencing, reasoning, predicting and understanding non-literal language.

Neurodiversity and Neurodivergence

- Neurodiversity recognises natural variations in the human brain, encompassing a wide range of cognitive, learning, behavioural, and social profiles. This approach affirms that such differences are a typical and valuable aspect of human diversity.
- Neurodivergence refers to individuals whose neurological development and functioning differ from what is considered neurotypical. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), developmental language disorder (DLD), dyslexia, dyspraxia, and related profiles. These conditions often co-occur, meaning a child or young person may experience more than one area of difficulty simultaneously—for example, a pupil with autism may also have ADHD and DLD, which can compound challenges with attention, communication, and sensory processing. Recognising and responding to these overlapping needs is essential for providing effective, tailored support.
- Communication and interaction are uniquely shaped by neurodiversity, as each individual expresses themselves, processes information, and connects socially with others differently. Recognising and celebrating these differences is crucial in creating environments where everyone can thrive, feel valued, supported, and understood.

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) is a specific type of language disorder that affects the way children learn and use language. Two in every thirty children, (approximately 2 in every classroom), has DLD. It is a brain difference that can make it difficult to talk, listen, understand, remember, read, and write. It is not caused by other conditions like hearing loss or autism.

Autism, also known as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a lifelong neurodevelopmental difference that affects how a person communicates, understands social interactions, thinks, and processes sensory information. Communication and interaction can be uniquely shaped by autism; however, there is no "typical" autistic person, and the level of support required may vary from person to person and day to day.

The main areas of difference are:

- Communication
- Social understanding
- Intense and highly focused interests
- Flexibility and desire for sameness
- Sensory processing

General Guidance:

- Adopt strengths-based language using terminology that recognises and values individual abilities rather than focusing on challenges.
- Self-identity should be encouraged with the agreement and collaboration of the parents/carers and the CYP.
- Recognise neurodevelopmental differences and view all neurological profiles as valid aspects of human diversity.

- Promote inclusive practice by adapting environments, teaching strategies, and communication methods to support the specific needs of each learner.
- Commit to neuro-affirming principles to ensure all interactions and documentation are respectful, non-judgmental, and affirming of CYP's identities.
- Use precise terminology and avoid medical terms (for example, anxiety, depression) unless a formal diagnosis has been made.
- Follow the CYP's preferred language and terminology.

Guidance on the use of Terminology

When describing communication:

- Use pre-verbal to describe a child or young person who has not yet developed speech/ verbal language.
- Non-speaking is also preferred over non-verbal.
- Refer to speech and language and communication 'differences' rather than 'difficulties' or 'impairments.'

When describing behaviour:

- View all behaviour as a means of communication and aim to understand the reason behind the behaviour.
- Refer to distressed behaviour(s) rather than challenging or difficult behaviour(s).
- Do not use generic terms to describe behaviour for example, 'kicking off', 'lost it' or 'meltdown' instead refer to the specific behaviours displayed.
- Use terms such as dysregulated, over/under stimulated and sensory overwhelm to describe sensory behaviours for example, sensory 'seeking' or 'avoiding' behaviours rather than 'sensory difficulties.'
- Use 'shows a preference for' rather than 'has difficulty with' for example, shows a preference for averting eye gaze not difficulty with eye contact.
- Be aware there is a distinction between 'self-injurious' behaviour and 'self-harm' and use the correct term when describing these behaviours.

The provision below should be in addition to the Inclusive Practice outlined in section two.

Differences in receptive language (understanding what is being said)

Differences	Strategies
• Attending to what is being said • Processing what is being said • Comprehending what is being said • Following multi-step instructions • Listening in a range of contexts	Use appropriate screening tools, for example, Language Link and Speech Link (for infant/primary schools) to identify learners with speech, language and communication (SLCN) needs
	Reduce the language load, by using clear and specific language
	Allow time for processing and responding
	Use visual cues; gestures, objects, symbols, signing, pictures and words
	Teach new words in a planned, structured way using structured approaches such as Word Aware
	Use visual prompt cards; choice boards; communication boards to support understanding of vocabulary
	Break down instructions into smaller sequential steps and give in the order of completion
	Processing and responding to questions
	Use age and stage appropriate checklists and task boards
	Use evidence-based interventions to help CYP overcome barriers identified through screening
	Model and teach strategies to allow a pupil to seek help and clarification
	Use pre-teaching, scaffolds and over learning opportunities
	Be aware of and explain when using words with multiple meanings (for example, metaphors, homophones, homonyms, similes) and underpin with visual reinforcement
	Help pupils assess their familiarity with words
	Refer to and apply evidence-based language strategies for example, colourful semantics
	Gain the attention of the child before speaking, limit distractions and check understanding through questioning
	Create regular opportunities for listening activities

Differences in expressive language (communicating to others)

Differences	Strategies
- Expressing thoughts and opinions when speaking - Expressing thoughts and opinions through symbolic means - Expressing thoughts and opinions in writing - Expressive language and speech sounds - Requesting help - Have difficulty planning and sequencing language - Developing functional language	Validate, encourage and respond to all attempts at communication without pre-empting or 'filling the language gap'
	Allow processing time for the child or young person to formulate their response
	Use appropriate screening tools, for example, Language Link and Speech Link (for infant/primary schools) to identify learners with speech, language and communication (SLCN) needs
	Use evidence-based interventions to help CYP overcome barriers identified through screening.
	Use pre-teaching and over learning
	Use scaffolds
	Reduce the use of questions and increase comments to encourage natural language use
	Use visual prompt cards; choice boards; communication boards to support communication
	Model and teach strategies to allow a pupil to seek help and clarification
	Provide additional means of communication (for example, use of signing, symbols and software)
	Provide additional means of recording ideas (for example, verbally, via whiteboards, use of software)

Differences in understanding the rules of social communication

Differences	Strategies
- Initiating and responding to contact from other people - Understanding, responding to and maintaining a reciprocal conversation or contact - Understanding social space - Dealing with unfamiliar social situations - Engaging in small-talk and chat - Being able to engage in joint and shared attention with others	Give clear and precise instructions related to expectations and social rules within the school environment
	Be mindful of non-verbal communication and how this may be misinterpreted from both sides for example, volume, tone, gestures and body language, proximity and posture
	Be aware of and explain when using ambiguous language for example, idioms and sarcasm
	Use concrete language, for example, 'put the book on my desk' paired with a pointing gesture
	Use positive and directive language, for example, 'put your feet on the floor' rather than 'stop kicking
	Support social understanding for example, offer opportunities for social activities related to their interests
	Help the pupil to recognise and understand emotions in themselves and others

- Understanding and using facial expressions, body language (such as pointing), and tone of voice. - Understanding the actions and interventions of other pupils. - Perceiving, understanding, and interpreting social behaviour, rules, and conventions. - Understanding what other people might be thinking and feeling - Understanding of classroom rules and expectations	Explicitly teach understanding of social situations and behaviours, individually in small groups, and in situ
	Adults should reflect on social situations to understand how misunderstandings may have occurred to pre-empt and prepare the child for next time Make reasonable adjustments to the learning environment for example, appropriate seating and 'talk partners'
	Adults understand the theory of 'Double Empathy' (Dr Damian Milton), i.e. 'when people with very different experiences of the world interact with one another, they will struggle to empathise with each other'
	Provide structure during unstructured times
	Balance the cognitive, language and social load for example, lower academic demand if expecting to work as part of a group

Differences in developing relationships

Differences	Strategies
- Forming, developing and maintaining friendships - Working and learning in a group - Communicating their own needs or feelings - Understanding relationships in different contexts for example, peers, teachers, strangers - Negotiating conflict situations to prevent escalation	Use their hobbies/interests as a safe topic to talk about
	Provide structure during unstructured times
	Balance the cognitive, language and social load for example, lower academic demand if expecting to work as part of a group
	Build self-awareness and knowledge of others (understanding emotions of self and others)
	Small group / 1 to 1 sessions to explore understanding of relationships. For example: turn taking, sharing, co-operation, different types of relationships, the development of friendships (initiate, repair and maintain) and conflict resolution
	Moving small group/1:1 teaching to 'real-life', targeted situations with supporting adult feedback

Differences with flexibility, information processing and understanding

Differences	Strategies
	Support all transitions (for example, between activities, tasks, lessons, rooms, home to school and moving up

• Difference in the ability to shift attention from one task to another	year groups)
• Preferences and motivation for topics related to own interests (difficulty engaging with unrelated activities)	Use visual supports (Now/Next, timers, visual timetable, checklists and prompts) to support understanding
• Difference in accepting and coping when things go wrong	Have consistent routines and structure in place and share these with the pupil
	Embed 'Sensory Circuits' within the daily routine and ensure the CYP has access to frequent 'Brain' or 'Movement' breaks throughout the day to support regulation
	Teach the concept of 'change' to prepare the CYP for unexpected changes

Differences in processing the sensory environments (refer to section 5 for further detail)

Differences	Strategies
• Anxiety in busy environments • Sensitivity to light, sounds, smells, touch • Differences in proprioception (body awareness) • Differences in vestibular needs (movement) • Differences in interoception (internal body signals) • Ability to sit in close proximity of other pupils • Maintaining an appropriate sitting position • Engaging in repetitive behaviours (stimming)	Supporting feeling safe in the school environment: ○ Use clear labels and visuals around the room ○ Create a safe place or quiet area (or designate somewhere CYP can go away from the classroom) ○ Always consider the environment for example, noise, smells, proximity to others. Think about how the environment could impact CYP who are sensitive to sight, sound, smell, taste and touch ○ Conduct regular sensory audits to identify and address environmental triggers ○ Organise classrooms to minimise overwhelming sensory experiences ○ Safe spaces should be readily accessible and available for flexible use ○ Adjust activities to reduce sensory overload in the following ways: ○ Allow the CYP to access group times such as carpet-time or assembly for a shorter period ○ Visual cues such as regulation card / now and next ○ Stagger the start/end of the day ○ Allow CYP to leave class early to avoid crowds and 'hustle and bustle' ○ Allow CYP to stand at the front or the back of the line so they don't have to worry as much about unanticipated touch. Supporting feeling safe in bodies: ○ Embed 'Sensory Circuits' within daily routines ○ Provide frequent 'brain breaks' and movement opportunities throughout the day ○ Ensure sensory tools are readily available (wobble cushions, fidget toys, ear defenders, weighted items) ○ Allow flexible seating and movement options. Offer body positioning choices - floor cushions, standing options, leaning supports, or alternative seating that supports individual body needs.

- Support vestibular (movement) needs - rocking chairs, balance balls, standing desks, or movement breaks for those who need motion to regulate
- Recognise body signals and teach interoceptive awareness - help CYP identify hunger, thirst, need for toilet, tiredness, and emotional states through body cues
- Provide proprioceptive (heavy work) input opportunities - heavy work activities like carrying books, wall push-ups, chair exercises, or resistance bands to help with body awareness
- Access to oral-motor sensory opportunities such as iced drinks, straws, hard crunchy chewy snacks, chewy tools
- Model body awareness strategies - breathing techniques, progressive muscle relaxation, body scans, or other embodied regulation practices
- Respect and accommodate stimming as a natural regulation strategy

Supporting coregulation and safe adult relationships:

- Model calm, regulated responses during sensory overwhelm
- Use co-regulation techniques: calm voice, steady breathing, predictable responses
- Provide calm guidance and support during dysregulation without forcing compliance
- Recognise that adult emotional regulation directly impacts student regulation
- Offer choices and collaborative problem-solving rather than directive approaches alone
- Build trust through consistent, understanding responses to sensory needs

Differences in maintaining attention

Differences	Strategies
● Maintaining and switching focus ● Knowing where to focus attention ● Processing verbal language for short periods of time	Gain CYP's attention before giving instructions for example, cue in by name
	Give instructions one at a time and in order of completion
	Short, specific, and direct instructions
	Repeat instructions - using precisely the same language (do not re-phrase the original instruction unless it is clear there is a misunderstanding)
	Use visual cues
	Check CYP's understanding
	Avoid giving further instructions / information when a CYP is engaged in a task
	Multisensory approaches for example, use of interactive technology, tactile activities, introducing auditory

	elements such as background music
	Link learning to CYP's own interests
	Chunk longer tasks
	Use timers to help CYP know how long they need to focus for
	Use personalised visual task management board
	Regular planned movement breaks
	Concentration and posture preparation exercises prior to table-top activities
	Narrate the shared activity

Communicating needs through behaviour	
Differences	Strategies
• Withdrawing and disengaging • Masking / camouflaging • Unable to enter or remain in lessons and / or school • Distressed behaviours including verbal and physical aggression • Hypervigilance / high alert • Low level behaviours that distract self and others	Seek advice from parents and possibly the GP to ensure that the child or young person is physically well. Issues such as constipation, tiredness, pain among others, can all have an impact on behaviour
	Remember all behaviour is communicating a need. Consider the child may: ○ not understand what they need to do ○ be unable to express their needs ○ be struggling to complete the task ○ be afraid of failure ○ be experiencing sensory overload ○ be unclear of the expectations ○ be worried about what is coming next or has happened prior to the lesson
	Respond to distressed or demand avoidant behaviour with curiosity and an approach focused on de-escalation and co-regulation use language such as: "I wonder...", "I imagine...", "I notice...", "I empathise..."
	Provide a key adult who has a safe and secure relationship with the student. Listen to the child's view on who they consider would be appropriate – rapport is key to building connections
	CYP can identify their 'Emotionally Available Adults' across the setting who are available to support
	Identify triggers, so that proactive and preventative strategies can be put into place for example, minute-by-minute analysis

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

- Buckinghamshire SEND training [iSEND Free Training | SchoolsWeb](#)
- Autism Education Trust Training ('Making Sense of Autism' and 'Good Autism Practice' Modules are delivered free of charge to all maintained settings and schools)
- Autism Education Trust website and resources [Autism Education Trust](#)
- [The Parent's Portal by Autism Early Support | Family Information Service](#)
- Child and Adult Mental Health Service [Autism \(ASD\) fact sheets | Oxford Health CAMHS](#)
- Pathological Demand Avoidance Society [PDA Society – Pathological Demand Avoidance](#)
- SALT support including webinars [Speech and language therapy - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder [DLD Fact Sheet - RADLD](#)
- Speech Link and Language Link [Speech and Language Link](#)
- Word Aware - a structured whole school approach to promote the vocabulary development of all children. [Word Aware – Thinking Talking](#)
- Widgeit – symbol supported text [Widgeit Online](#)
- OT support including webinars Occupational therapy webinars - [Occupational therapy - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- Sensory behaviour checklist [Sensory behaviour checklist - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- The Double Empathy problem [The double empathy problem](#)
- Whole school SEND Whole School SEND Home Page [Whole School SEND Home Page | Whole School SEND](#)
- Naplic [NAPLIC | NAPLIC](#)
- Afasic [Home - Afasic](#)
- Speech and Language UK [Events Archive - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#)
- DLD and Me [DLDandMe](#)
- RADLD [RADLD - Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder - RADLD](#)
- Nasen [Universal SEND Services | Whole School SEND](#)
- The SpLD Assessment Standards Committee [SASC](#)

4. Cognition and Learning

Definition against Code of Practice

6.30 Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

6.31 Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Working Memory - the ability to hold and manipulate information in a short space of time

Differences	Strategies
Working memory • Daydreaming • Wandering around the room • Inability to recall information • Inconsistent recall of information • Difficulty keeping up with verbal information • Difficulty following instructions • Difficulty completing multistep tasks • Not completing work • Deviating from the task • Task avoidance • Difficulties with organisation	Explicitly teach strategies to support memory for example, memory aids and verbal rehearsal Reducing distractions Chunking verbal and written information Forced alternatives Pre-warning of key information Allow thinking time Avoid speaking whilst pupils are working Avoid saying 'try to remember what I said' Cue pupil in by using their name before giving instructions Make links between previously learnt knowledge with new knowledge Visual prompts Safe environment to make mistakes Opportunities for pre-teaching and overlearning Multisensory teaching Repetition of instructions and information Reduce cognitive load Access arrangements for example, extra time, rest breaks and a prompter, assisted technology Movement breaks Developing metacognitive skills

Literacy skills	
Differences	Strategies
Reading	Sequential, cumulative, and multisensory teaching
• Difficulty with decoding (the acquisition of phonological awareness and phonics) • Difficulty retaining words by sight • Inconsistent recognition of words • Reversal of letter strings/words • Addition and omission of words • Difficulty tracking text • Slow/fast readers (fluency) • Difficulty with reading comprehension	Develop phonological awareness skills through oral activities
	Shared reading activities
	High interest-low level books
	Support words with pictures for example, subject specific vocabulary
	Adjust layout of worksheets for example, headings, bullet points and images,
	Alternative ways to present information for example, video and Mind Map
	Reading buddy
	Pre-teaching of key vocabulary
	Provide comprehension questions at the start of a reading task
	Summaries of class text
	Reading material is at correct readability level
	Use assistive technology for example, reader or speech to text
	Access to audio books
	Support tracking difficulties for example, coloured overlays and reading rulers
	Teach study skills for example, skimming, scanning and summarising
	Explicitly teach comprehension strategies
Writing	Use assistive technology for example, speech to text and reader
• Difficulty spelling words • Inconsistent spelling • Avoids writing • Discrepancy between verbal and written language • Lacks ambitious vocabulary • Limited punctuation and grammar in written work • Challenges with planning, starting a task and monitoring	Scaffolding for example, cloze procedure tasks, graphic organisers, writing frames
	Independence encouraged though supported scribing
	Access to keywords for example, word mats and vocabulary list
	Support with planning
	Focus discussion before writing for example, talking templates or speaking frames
	Provide modelled answers and clear expectations for example, WAGOLL
	Paired writing
	Reduce writing load
	Reduce writing tasks
	Alternatives ways of recording for example, play scripts and annotated poster
	Teach study skills for example, note-taking

• Difficulty with producing cohesive writing • Word omissions/additions • Poor editing skills • Unable to read work • Illegible writing • small or big writing • hand hurts • Pen/pencil pressure too light/heavy • Inefficient pen grip • incorrect posture	Access arrangements for example, scribe and word processing
	Handwriting
	Check 4 Ps: posture, pencil, paper and pressure
	Check and support 7 S Factors: shape, space, size, sitting/site, stringing, slant, speed and style
	Ensure appropriate table/chair height (feet flat, elbows at 90 degrees)
	Provide upturned tray or footrest for proper foot positioning
	Use non-slip mats or Blu-Tack to prevent paper/book slipping
	Consider writing slopes/slanted surfaces to improve wrist position
	Adaptations for left-handed pupils: seating position, paper angle, lighting considerations
	Remember prewriting, fine motor skills, hand dominance, and grip strength before writing instruction
	support core strength and gross motor stability and view them as prerequisites for handwriting. Address core strength through targeted gross motor activities
	Provide fine motor warm-up activities before writing sessions
	Use various pencil grips (triangular, cushioned, weighted) as needed
	Consider adapted writing tools: Stabilo pens, triangular pencils, weighted pens
	Offer different paper options: raised lines, coloured lines, different spacing widths
	Write on alternate lines/wider lines when needed
	Provide visual prompts for letter reversals and formation difficulties
	Use multisensory approaches for teaching letter formation
	Break writing tasks into manageable, shorter chunks
	Allow extra time for writing tasks and reduce speed expectations
	Provide alternatives to copying from the board (pre-written notes, templates)
	Accept alternative recording methods: typing, voice-to-text, scribe support when appropriate
	Allow shorter written responses while maintaining learning objectives
	Provide regular movement breaks during extended writing tasks
	Use hand and finger exercises as part of daily routine
	Monitor for fatigue, pain, or discomfort during writing activities
	Adjust writing quantity expectations while maintaining focus on quality
	Allow mixed print/cursive based on individual ability and preference
	Document effective strategies and tools for individual CYP
	Regularly review and adjust supports based on pupil progress and needs

Resources, Advice, Further Support

- bdadyslexia.org.uk/advice/employers/creating-a-dyslexia-friendly-workplace/dyslexia-friendly-style-guide
- theschoolpsychologyservice.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/What-Works-for-Literacy-Difficulties-6th-Edition-2020.pdf
- nha-handwriting.org.uk
- [Occupational Therapy - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- [Orthoptic visual processing difficulties clinic - information for patients and referrers - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust](#)

Maths	
Differences	Strategies
• Difficulty in understanding underlying mathematical concepts. • Difficulty in understanding concepts that are abstract • Difficulty recalling basic facts • Difficulty with spatial awareness and pattern recognition • Difficulty with word problems and mathematical vocabulary • Difficulty reading numbers • Difficulty comparing numbers • Difficulty with transferring prior knowledge to new learning • Difficulty with oral counting, especially backwards • Difficulty completing multistep maths procedure • Lacks understanding of the link between numbers and concepts • Maths anxiety	Use concrete, pictorial and abstract approach (CPA)
	Provide manipulatives and explicitly teach how to use, particularly when introducing new concepts
	Avoid timed activities before accuracy is achieved
	Create a safe space to make mistakes
	Use pupil errors as part of the learning process
	Analyse errors and provide specific feedback
	Observe strategies the pupil uses to answer maths questions
	Identify what the pupil is secure in and build knowledge and skills from there
	Read word maths questions to pupils with reading difficulties
	Chunk instructions and support pupil to identify the maths concepts needed in questions
	Be aware of maths anxiety
	Provide worked examples, particularly for multi-step procedures, for example, long multiplication
	Worked examples should include a breakdown of steps
	Regular counting forwards and backwards in different steps and different starting points
	Regular sequencing activities
	Explicitly link new concepts to prior knowledge
	Reduce cognitive load
	Overlearning and regular practice
	Consolidate with games
	Explicitly teach mathematical vocabulary
Resources, Advice, Further Support	
• What is maths anxiety? What is Maths Anxiety & What Causes It? • understood.org/en/articles/classroom-accommodations-for-dyscalculia • dyscalculiaassociation.uk • dyscalculianetwork.com	

Cognition and Learning for those learners with Learning Disabilities which may include those learners with Down syndrome

Definition:

A Learning Disability is [defined by the Department of Health and Social Care \(DHSC\) \(2001\)](#) as: 'a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), which started before adulthood.

A learning disability is different for everyone. The degree of disability can vary greatly, being classified as mild, moderate, severe or profound. In all cases, a learning disability is a lifelong condition and cannot be cured.'

The National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) states: 'a learning disability is generally defined by 3 core criteria: lower intellectual ability (usually an IQ of less than 70), significant impairment of social or adaptive functioning, and onset in childhood'.

Associated conditions include global developmental delay.

- This is a health- related diagnosis made by a doctor.
- Parents/carers should discuss with the CYP's GP if they believe a CYP meets criteria for a learning disability diagnosis

General Guidance:

If a CYP is making slow progress using the strategies in the Cognition and Learning section above, or they have a diagnosis of a Learning Disability, the following additional strategies should be considered and used in the classroom. Carefully differentiated curriculum- based learning should form the majority of the CYP's education which should take place in the classroom alongside their peers wherever possible. Opportunities for teaching life skills should also be carefully planned for.

Differences in accessing learning	
Differences	Strategies
• Difficulty in understanding a curriculum delivered verbally • Difficulty in 'keeping' up with the pace of the lesson. • Reluctance to engage in learning that is perceived as too challenging.	Consistently provide visual supports to promote understanding of verbal information for all learning and instructions. These could be in the form of, for example, objects of reference, symbols, 'Now and Next' boards, choice boards, task planners, slides from PowerPoint, visual timetables.
	Consider where a CYP is placed within the classroom to ensure that they can see and hear the learning.
	Provide the pupil with good role models from peers both for learning and for behaviour.
	Use strategies that foster self-esteem as a learner such as using 'errorless learning' techniques.
	Identify the 'core' element of the learning in each lesson and make this learning the priority.
	Make explicit links between previous learning and today's lesson. This should include making links to 'real life'

	examples.
	Ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently scaffolded or differentiated to meet the pupil 'where they are at' in their learning.

Differences in accessing Literacy- Reading skills	
Differences	Strategies
- Significant delay in de-coding - Shows a preference for stories/books targeted at younger pupils - Difficulty in verbalising their learning	Personalise the class Literacy topics by giving children the opportunity to explore books that are known to them, favourite books, books with repetition, books that include rhyme and books that use simple language structures
	Consider teaching alternative strategies to reading alongside a phonics-based approach
	A 'whole- word' reading approach could be taught in the form of a daily, targeted reading intervention. For example, the 'Match, Select and Name' approach to whole word reading could be used
	Create personal books for pupils to support engagement and to be able to focus on targeted vocabulary
	Provide opportunities for generalisation of reading skills i.e. once a child can read a word there should be planned for, structured opportunities for the child to be exposed to that word in many different books, contexts and settings

Differences in accessing Literacy- Writing	
Differences	Strategies
- Difference in fine motor skills - Difficulty in organising sentences so that they are grammatically correct - Differences in ability to present their work	Ensure that over the week children are given opportunities to develop the physical skill of handwriting as well as looking at other aspects of writing such as formulating simple sentences and exploring simple grammar.
	Link writing tasks to 'real life' situations such as writing a shopping list or writing cards for a family member.
	Provide sentences openers, visual models of sentences, cloze text procedures, word banks and spelling cues to support writing.
	Consider how best to allow pupils to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge. This might involve using alternative strategies for recording including the use of a scribe or ICT.

Differences in accessing Maths

Differences

- Difficulty in understanding underlying mathematical concepts.
- Difficulty in understanding concepts that are abstract

Strategies

Teach Maths using practical manipulatives, for example, Numicon.

Use 'real life' applications for Maths can be useful. For example, teaching number concepts using money or real-life problems can engage learners and aid motivation.

Teach one 'strategy' or 'process' for solving each type of Maths problem including developing strong skills using devices such as a calculator for older pupils.

Differences in accessing the broader curriculum	
Differences	Strategies
Difficulty in understanding concepts that are abstract.	Ensure all CYP have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Caution should be taken when suggesting any CYP be removed from non-core subjects such as Modern Foreign Languages.
	Children with a Learning Disability may find generalising their knowledge difficult so make explicit links between topics, subjects and real-life applications.

Differences in developing 'life skills'	
Differences	Strategies
Delay in ability to learn how to complete 'every day' living tasks	Teach life skills alongside curriculum- based learning. Life skills lessons should be carefully planned for having first assessed the pupil's ability in any one area. An effective life skills curriculum may include consideration of learning skills in the areas of: - Independent Living Skills - Personal Care - Community Access - Literacy and Financial Literacy
	For older students, life skills should also take into account their personal interests and be aligned with their desired plans for their future.

Further Considerations	
Differences	Strategies
• Delay in the development of social skills • Delay in Attention and Concentration skills • Differences in Sensory Processing	Often CYP with Learning Disabilities, including those with Down syndrome, have a strong desire to be sociable but will require a consistent, structured approach to teaching appropriate social skills. These can be taught both incidentally during learning activities and as part of a structured, planned for intervention. To gradually improve attention and concentration skills school should: ○ Use visual prompts consistently. ○ Provide multi- sensory learning opportunities. ○ Reduce distractions where possible ○ Play attention building games such as memory games, matching activities and turn taking games. ○ Provide a series of short and engaging activities. Consider the classroom environment and position the CYP in the class taking into account their sensory needs. Incorporate sensory breaks throughout the day.

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links
• ASDAN Website Free activity packs • What Is A Learning Disability? See Our Definition Mencap • Learn and Thrive - Free Educational Resources • Successful Strategies for Beginning Readers with Down Syndrome • Children, Families & Education - Downs Syndrome Association • Developing and assessing life skills for students with SEND Optimus Education • Preparing for Adulthood: All Tools & Resources - NDTi • SEND and preparing for adulthood and independence Family Information Service

5. Sensory and Physical

Definition against Code of Practice:

Within the code of practice, sensory and physical needs are defined as follows:

Paragraph 6.34 ‘Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Information on how to provide services for deafblind children and young people is available through the Social Care for Deafblind Children and Adults guidance published by the Department of Health.’

Paragraph 6.35 ‘Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.’

Vision Impairment

Definition

Vision impairment is the term used to describe a loss of sight that cannot be corrected using glasses or contact lenses. There are two main categories of vision impairment for which a CYP may be registered with a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI):

- Registered sight impaired (SI), which means the level of sight impairment is moderate
- Registered severely sight impaired (SSI), which means a severe sight impairment where activities that rely on eyesight become impossible

CYP with vision impairment will experience varying degrees of sight loss; the majority will have some sight.

General principles for inclusive practice

Vision impairment is associated with major obstacles to children and young people acquiring and developing fundamental skills. These obstacles can be reduced or removed with appropriate teaching input in an appropriate teaching environment. Everyone in the school community must understand vision impairment and the impact on learning. Good practice for CYP with VI is good practice for all. Schools should consider the following aspects:

- **Environmental Issues:** Ensure high-quality, controllable, and evenly dispersed lighting; implement measures to reduce glare with blinds; use clear, bold labelling in classrooms and throughout the school; maintain good contrast in décor and furnishings; highlight step edges; and keep the environment tidy, free from hazards and clutter.
- **Learning Resources:** Provide printed materials that are clear, uncluttered, and have good contrast; ensure there are sufficient materials to avoid the need for sharing; and use high-quality interactive whiteboards with bright bulbs.

Most CYP with a diagnosed VI should receive support from a Qualified Teacher of the Visually Impaired (QTVI), known in Buckinghamshire as a Vision

Impairment Specialist Teacher. Not all CYP will meet the criteria for this specialised support.

Access to learning

CYP VI will need to develop specialist skills that enable them to access the curriculum and wider world. These to be achieved through the collaborative delivery of the Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI).

Differences	Strategies
• Squinting, leaning forward or moving closer to the board or materials • Unusual eye movements and/or pronounced head turn when viewing • Rubbing eyes or complaints of tiredness • Not recognising staff or peers, or responding slowly to visual cues • Struggles with tasks that require visual precision, such as reading small print or using rulers/protractors • Slow writing speed, poor handwriting or avoiding writing tasks • Difficulty in locating information and misinterpretation of diagrams • Reluctance to participate in activities such as PE or outdoor learning	Ensure that any prescribed spectacles or lenses are being worn, are well fitting, kept clean and support parents to return to opticians and request adjustments for ill-fitting or uncomfortable glasses.
	Seat the CYP appropriately in the classroom (e.g. to the right or left for CYP with better vision in one eye).
	Introduce yourself by name, especially to students who are severely sight impaired. Address the student by name to get their attention and to ensure that they know they are being spoken to directly.
	Use concrete materials and hands-on experiences whenever possible.
	Use appropriately enlarged and modified materials considering paper size, contrast and font style. Worksheets and PowerPoints need to be decluttered and well-spaced.
	Use clear and succinct verbal explanations and descriptions, particularly for images and diagrams.
	Encourage the CYP VI to use assistive technology/visual aids/resources that have been prescribed e.g. laptop, iPad, glasses, magnifiers, large-print books.
	CYP VI often benefit from using a laptop/keyboard and touch typing as an alternative to handwriting.
	Ensure that the CYP VI can access information displayed on the interactive whiteboard by either using screen sharing software to mirror the content to their laptop or iPad (e.g. using Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom) or sending PowerPoints to the student directly to access.
	Give CYP VI their own copy of materials. Avoid sharing books or monitors so the CYP VI can position themselves in the best angle or distance for them.
	Provide CYP VI with equipment to support access, e.g., emboldened lined stationery, bold handwriting pens (black ink) and/or darker pencil, large print/high visibility ruler and protractor.
	Ask CYP VI direct questions regarding their near and distance vision – What, How many, Who questions, not “Can you see this?”
	Ensure that CYP VI can read feedback/comments when work is marked.
	Give extra time for the CYP VI to complete activities that involve vision. Plan for this.
	Allow rest breaks. It will take CYP VI greater effort to do everyday tasks leading to fatigue.
	Make reasonable adjustments in lessons such as PE, e.g., use high contrast equipment such as footballs with black and luminous orange.

- Ensure CYP VI have full access to school trips and learning outside of the classroom.

Mobility and independence

CYP VI will need to develop specialist skills that enable them to live as independent a life as possible. These to be achieved through the collaborative delivery of the Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI).

Many CYP with VI will benefit from individual Habilitation/mobility lessons for example, independent travel, route learning, road safety skills, practice with public transport. (Contact Buckinghamshire Integrated Sensory Service for information.)

An environmental audit to be conducted by a Habilitation Specialist and the report used by the school/setting to ensure that CYP with VI can navigate the environment safely. (Contact Buckinghamshire Integrated Sensory Service for information.)

Differences	Strategies
• Difficulty performing tasks independently • Frequent falls, bumps and collisions • Confusion or hesitation around transitions • Discomfort in crowded areas • Slow movement through busy spaces	- Use objects of reference to support independence with transitions around the setting or school. - Allow CYP VI to leave lessons early to allow more time to navigate the site whilst less crowded.

Environment

Differences	Strategies
• Difficulty navigating indoor and outdoor spaces • Shows discomfort in bright environments for example, shades eyes • Struggles to see the board • Frequent accidents or confusion • Difficulty in locating items • Disorientation when room layout changes occur	- Ensure that physical and social environments (indoor and outdoor) are accessible for CYP VI. - Ensure appropriate lighting in all student areas. The CYP VI should face away from any windows and blinds should be drawn to avoid direct sunlight and glare. - The CYP VI should have clear line of sight to the board and sit towards the front of the classroom. - Ensure background noise is minimised to allow for the CYP VI to use their hearing effectively. - Provide suitable storage for bags and coats to prevent floor obstructions. CYP to have a peg/drawer/locker on the end. - Ensure that resources are labelled and storage of resources are kept consistent. - Inform and warn the CYP VI of any room layout changes. - Remove trip hazards for example, floor mats that are not flush with the floor level. - Display appropriate signage for example, large print or objects of reference.

Provide easy access to electrical sockets.

If required, provide access to a quieter learning environment for 1-1 work for example, specialist skills development, pre- and post-learning.

Personal, social, emotional development

CYP VI will need to develop specialist skills that support the development of their mental and emotional resilience as well as their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. This to be achieved through the collaborative delivery of the Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI).

Differences	Strategies
• Reluctance to join in social, sport or leisure activities	Provide opportunities for participation in social, sport and leisure activities, to include residential experiences within the school context.
• Struggles to express own needs or preferences	Support and teach good communication skills to empower the CYP VI to articulate their needs in different environments.
• Misinterprets social cues	Teach social skills, including social norms and awareness of nonverbal cues which may be missed. Eye contact, facial expressions, body language and gestures may simply go unnoticed or be misinterpreted.

Access to assessments and exams

Differences	Strategies
• Unable to access standard exam papers	Access arrangements for all assessments will be part of the 'normal' way of working for the CYP VI. Provide exam papers (including past papers) in accessible formats such as modified large print, braille, or accessible electronic formats (adjustments apply to internal and external examinations and practice opportunities).

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

About Vision Impairment:

- rnib.org.uk/your-eyes
- cvisociety.org.uk
- pocklington.org.uk/education/professionals/what-do-we-see-2

Useful tips for auditing the environment:

- rnib.org.uk/professionals/health-social-care-education-professionals/education-professionals/teaching-and-learning-guidance

Buckinghamshire Integrated Sensory Service (BISS):

- bucksvision.co.uk/biss

Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI):

- rnib.org.uk/professionals/health-social-care-education-professionals/education-professionals/curriculum-framework-for-children-and-young-people-with-vision-impairment

For Education Professionals:

- rnib.org.uk/professionals/health-social-care-education-professionals/education-professionals
- pocklington.org.uk
- ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/courses

To purchase products to allow CYP VI to live independently and enjoy everyday activities:

- shop.rnib.org.uk
- partsight.org.uk/shop
- visionaid.co.uk

For accessing reading material:

- rnibbookshare.org/cms/get-started/sign
- guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/help-for-children-and-families/living-independently/customeyes-books
- yourdolphin.com/en-gb/products/education/easyreader-app
- calibreaudio.org.uk
- borrowbox.com

For exam access arrangements:

- rnib.org.uk/professionals/health-social-care-education-professionals/education-professionals/access-to-exams-and-tests

For online touch-typing programs:

- doorwayonline.org.uk/activities/text-type3/text-type.html
- typingclub.com

For advice about access to PE:

- britishblindsport.org.uk

Deafness and Hearing Loss

Definition

The term deafness is used to describe sensori-neural, conductive or a mixed type of hearing loss. The level of loss can be a mild, moderate, severe, or profound level of deafness in one or both ears.

General Principles

Deafness is not a learning disability, and deaf pupils have the potential to attain and achieve the same as any other pupils, given the right support and access to the curriculum.

Deafness may impact on a CYP's:

- Attention and listening skills
- Language development and communication
- Self-esteem and social and emotional wellbeing

Most CYP's who have a hearing loss should receive the necessary support and interventions from a Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (QTOD).

Access to Learning

Differences	Strategies
• Delay in attention and concentration skills. • Difficulty in understanding a curriculum delivered verbally. • Difficulty following multistep instructions. • Slower processing skills.	Preferential seating at the front and slightly to the side of the classroom, this ensures the deaf learner has access to face/lip patterns of the speaker and can scan the room for other contributions
	Understanding that hearing technology does not restore normal hearing and that the technology works best from 1-1.5 metres from a sound source
	Use handouts and visual aids whenever possible, as visual skills are often a strength
	Subtitles should be made available when any videos are being used to support learning. Links sent home at the end of the day
	Teachers to deliver important information from the front of class and avoid walking around
	Pre- and post-teaching opportunities of any new vocabulary
	Ensure the CYP has access to frequent Listening Breaks throughout the day to reduce the possibility of fatigue
	Ensure staff have the correct knowledge of audiology equipment, for example, batteries, how to use assistive listening devices such as radio aids effectively and support the CYP daily to complete a listening check of the equipment
	Use visual cues for example, timers, words and pictures, to support all verbal language

Supporting communication in the classroom

Differences	Strategies
- Difficulty in hearing running speech with background noise. - Difficulty locating source of sounds.	Face the CYP when speaking to them.
	Speak clearly and at a steady pace.
	Locate the speaker during class discussion (point to whoever is talking/state their name).
	Repeat back comments made by students in the class.
	Encourage students to ask for repetition or clarification, as necessary.
	Using visual supports (for example, objects, symbols, pictures, photos, diagrams, natural gesture, signing, written words).
	Having a balance between listening periods and individual or small group activities.
	Outline the main topic at the beginning of a lesson and summarise the main points at the end.
	Ensure that video clips are subtitled.
	Providing vocabulary support (pre-teaching topic words, providing definitions for complex words during the class).
	Speak directly to the student even if an interpreter, Communication Support Worker or Teacher of the Deaf is present.

Access to group learning opportunities

Differences	Strategies
Difficulty hearing when more than one person is speaking at the same time.	Ensure only one person is talking at one time.
	Ensure the deaf child can see the faces of everyone in the group – circular seating arrangement if possible.
	A deaf child may need a quieter space to work with a peer or group of peers.
	Appropriate technology is in place and always used.

Access to an acoustically and visually friendly classroom environment

Differences	Strategies
- Poor room acoustics will impact the quality and level of sounds heard. - Visually busy rooms will be distracting.	Ensure hearing technology is worn consistently for example, Hearing aids, Cochlear implants and Bone Conduction Hearing Aids.
	Ensure that the classroom is adapted to maximise listening access (for example, consistent use of hearing equipment and radio aids if issued, background noise is reduced, the child is seated close to the main speaker).
	Create a good listening environment by keeping background noise to a minimum (turning off electrical equipment that is not being used, putting rubber stoppers on the bottom of chairs/table legs, closing doors).
	Reducing reverberation by using materials which absorb sound waves (for example, increasing number of display boards, soft furnishings, blinds at windows, having carpeted areas).

	Ensure the child is seated closest to the main sound source
	Having good lighting to make it easier to pick up on visual cues.
	Avoiding standing in front of a window or light source as this will cast shadow on your face and make it more difficult to pick up on visual cues.
	Being mindful that it can be more difficult to lip read someone if their mouth is covered or if they have a beard/moustache

Personal, social, emotional development

Differences	Strategies
Difficulty in recognising different emotions in self and others.	- Encouraging open conversations about deafness and encouraging self-advocacy. - Reading books about children who are deaf. - Ensuring language used is always positive (i.e. deafness as opposed to hearing impairment). - Raising deaf awareness (through assemblies and class discussions) - NDCS Healthy minds courses

Access to assessments and examinations

Differences	Strategies
Difficulty in accessing standard exams.	- Access arrangements for all assessments will be part of the 'normal' way of working for the CYP. - Access arrangements that consider jqc.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

- **National Deaf Children's Society's Information for education professionals:** ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/professionals/education
- **National Deaf Children's Society's Supporting the Achievement of Deaf Children in Primary School:** ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/being-deaf-friendly/information-for-professionals/primary-education
- **National deaf Children's Society's Glue ear link:** ndcs.org.uk/family_support/glue_ear
- **National Deaf Children's Society's Supporting the Achievement of Deaf Children in Secondary Schools:** ndcs.org.uk/documents-and-resources/supporting-the-achievement-of-deaf-children-in-secondary-schools
- **Buckinghamshire Integrated Sensory Service (BISS):** bucksvision.co.uk/biss
- **National Deaf Children's Society Helpline (NDCS)** (0 to 25 years) Helpline provides free independent information, advice and guidance on a range of topics relating to childhood deafness. National Deaf Children's Society (ndcs.org.uk)
- glueeartogether.org.uk
- **Books in age category:** Books with deaf characters | Reviews - [National Deaf Children's Society](http://NationalDeafChildrensSociety.org.uk) | [For every deaf child](http://ForEveryDeafChild.org.uk)
- **Apps and websites** useful deaf children and young people | Reviews (ndcs.org.uk)
- **Basic Signing skills British Sign Language** - Online resources, games, and courses. (british-sign.co.uk)

- **Deaf-friendly environmental checklist** Deaf - friendly communication tips | National Deaf Children's Society (ndcs.org.uk)
- **Word Aware** - a structured whole school approach to promote the vocabulary development of all children. Word Aware – Thinking Talking
- **BSL advice videos** - Deaf Zone

Physical Needs

Definition

A physical disability is a condition that limits a person's physical functioning, mobility, dexterity, or stamina, impacting their ability to perform daily activities.

General Principles

- Settings should ensure that they have a clear accessibility plan in place highlighting areas of development for the inclusion of CYP with physical disabilities which promotes fair access and independence
- Staff supporting children and young people with physical disabilities should receive appropriate Manual Handling training to ensure safe and respectful assistance with mobility and transfers.
- Where appropriate, schools must have individual plans for health needs, personal care support and emergency evacuation which is shared with staff, CYP and parent/careers.
- CYP and parents are actively engaged in decision making and planning of their support with a flexible approach to timetabling to ensure inclusion.
- Access to extra-curricular activities/school trips for pupils with a physical disability are planned for in advanced with appropriate risk assessments in place.

Access to setting or school environment

Differences	Strategies
• Difficulty accessing areas of the school site/classroom • Difficulty with mobility particularly when the day requires a lot of movement • Easily fatigued	Access all necessary areas of the school site with appropriate support and adaptations made
	Appropriate layout of furniture to enable safe movement around the classroom
	Appropriate furniture for example, height adjustable tables
	Appropriate support and individual risk assessments to ensure full inclusion on school trips
	Provide appropriate opportunities to develop the use of mobility aids
	Provide rest areas and opportunities for energy management
	Ensure emergency evacuation plans account for individual mobility needs
	PEEP (personal emergency evacuation plan) in place and updated regularly
	A thorough transition carried out which looks closely at access to all areas of the classroom and shared areas such as bathrooms
	Strategies to limit the amount of movement throughout the school day for example, shorter routes, limit number of times stairs used daily, and access to lifts if available
	Careful consideration of timetabling and location of rooms

Fostering Independence

Differences	Strategies
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• Unable to carry out personal care such as toileting and dressing independently • Difficulty with expressing their needs and asking for support	• Focus on steps towards independence at all opportunities, for example, managing own personal care, managing own medication, fostering independence in moving around the setting or school
	• Allow lift access and leave early pass to allow more time to navigate the site whilst less crowded
	• CYP are taught to be confident, to self-advocate and given regular opportunities to express what support they require and what this looks like in practice
	• Adaptations are made to ensure maximum opportunities for independence
	• Use visual schedules and prompts for toileting and dressing sequences
	• Provide alternative communication methods (visual aids, communication devices, signing) to help express needs
	• Adapt changing areas to ensure privacy, dignity, and accessibility

Access to Learning

Differences	Strategies
• Difficulty with writing speed or writing causes fatigue and/or pain • Struggles to use standard equipment • Experiences discomfort when sat for long periods	• Alternative ways of recording are used across the curriculum for example, typing, predictive text programmes, Clicker, speech to text programmes, scribe
	• Adapted equipment to access practical elements of the curriculum such as Food Tech and PE
	• Provision of small support equipment for example, adapted pencils, pens, ruler, writing slope, cutlery, and scissors
	• Consider appropriate timings for therapy programmes to be delivered to minimise disruption to curriculum for CYP. This avoids CYP missing learning and feeling isolated from peers
	• Access to a suitably modified PE curriculum
	• Exam access arrangements for example, practical assistant, scribe, use of a laptop
	• Play and learning activities set at an appropriate height and location
	• Planning may need to include rest breaks or movement breaks

Attending Medical Appointments

Differences	Strategies
• Misses school due to medical appointments • Misses extended periods of schooling due to surgery or hospital stays	• Support to catch up with missed lessons and learning due to attending medical appointments
	• Access to learning or homework that will be or has been missed
	• Phased return to school following medical procedures/surgery as required
	• Flexibility applied to attendance targets
	• Support in place for extended absences to ensure continuity of learning where possible

Support with Personal Care	
Differences	Strategies
- Personal care needs such as catheterisation - Unable to transfer without the use of equipment	Reasonable adjustments are made for CYP who have delay in toilet training, have life-long incontinence or temporary medical needs causing difficulty with toileting.
	Appropriate training for staff who provide intimate care where medical procedures such as catheterisation take place.
	Moving and handling training is undertaken by staff who use equipment to facilitate personal care tasks.
	- Access to a toilet pass, accessible toilet, and additional time to meet personal care needs. - Individualised personal care plan in place which highlights safeguarding of the CYP and staff.
Adjustments and flexibility of policies	
Differences	Strategies
- Difficulties carrying and managing belongings in school environment - Difficulty changing for PE particularly in the standard time given - Difficulty managing the full school day/week due to fatigue and/or pain	Reasonable adjustments are made to uniform (allowing elasticated waist items, trainers instead of shoes, Velcro if not able to fasten buttons).
	Reasonable adjustments are made so that CYP has access to lockers/trays/storage area rather than carrying heavy bags around school site.
	Additional time is given if changing for sport.
	Separate changing area if required.
Reduced timetables where required to manage fatigue, pain, and lack of sleep.	
Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links	
pdnet – a network for those supporting learners with physical disability - Home - WheelPower Shine - Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Youth Sport Trust - Youth Sport Trust Together we are stronger - Muscular Dystrophy UK Activity Alliance Disability Inclusion Sport Back Up Spinal Cord Injury Charity Home Disability charity Scope UK The Ehlers-Danlos Support UK UK Charity for EDS and HSD	

Sensory Processing

Definition

Sensory processing differences refer to variations in the way an individual's nervous system receives, interprets, and responds to sensory information from the environment or the body.

General Principles

- Proactive support for sensory processing differences is most effective when integrated into a whole-school approach.
- The model represents an inclusive learning environment, where every CYP's ability to learn and participate is shaped by three interconnected foundations for regulation:
 - **Feeling safe in relationships** - Safety in relationships is nurtured through social engagement, cultural understanding, attunement, and co-regulation, where trusted adults act as calm, responsive partners to help young people manage their emotional and physiological states. Co-regulation is essential for all children and young people, providing the relational security that underpins self-regulation over time.
 - **Feeling safe in the environment** - Safety in the environment involves predictable, sensory- and communication-friendly spaces that reduce anxiety and promote focus.
 - **Feeling safe in the body** - Safety in the body encompasses the physical, psychological, and neurobiological factors that shape how each individual experiences comfort and control.
- These elements work together to support young people's ability to engage, learn, and thrive and all staff members play a role in creating safety in body, safety in relationships, and safety in environment.
- The ethos of the setting should be one of curiosity, acceptance, and responsive practice, recognising that sensory regulation is one of the foundations for learning, wellbeing, and participation.
- Sensory regulation is just one part of the wider regulation picture: a child/young person may be dysregulated because they are tired, hungry, anxious, experiencing pain, or unable to communicate their needs.



Other considerations for a whole-school approach include:

- **Creating predictable and calming environments:** Use visual schedules, first/then boards, and countdown timers to reduce anxiety and cognitive load;

provide low-stimulation spaces with soft seating, calming colours, and minimal visual/auditory clutter; ensure predictable routines that support a sense of safety.

- **Embedding co-regulation:** Train staff to act as calm, attuned anchors—using slow, melodic voices, open body language, and modelling regulation strategies alongside children. Prioritise connection before correction and teach peers simple co-regulatory scripts. Build consistent, trusting relationships where adults act as safe and supportive partners in regulation.
- **Supporting safety in the body:** Recognise that physical safety and comfort look different for each child. Provide opportunities for both movement and stillness, address basic needs first, and consider interoception, motor development, and trauma awareness in provision planning.
- **Integrating sensory regulation into routines:** Embed sensory breaks, adapted seating, and access to sensory tools across the school day. Include movement-based and calming activities as part of everyday practice to support ongoing regulation.
- **Collaborating with families and specialists:** Work closely with parents/carers and external professionals (e.g., Occupational Therapists) to develop, review, and personalise sensory support plans, ensuring a consistent approach between school and home.
- **Using reflective tools and audits:** Carry out regular sensory environment audits to identify challenges and opportunities for improvement, ensuring the school environment remains accessible and responsive to children’s sensory needs.

Differences in processing the sensory environments	
Differences	Strategies
• Anxiety in busy environments • Sensitivity to light, sounds, smells, touch • Differences in proprioception (Body awareness) • Differences in vestibular needs (movement) • Differences in interoception (internal body signals – including emotions, hunger cues etc.) • Ability to sit in close proximity of other pupils • Maintaining an appropriate sitting position	Supporting feeling safe in environment: ○ Use clear labels and visuals around the room ○ Create a safe place or quiet area (or designate somewhere CYP can go away from the classroom) ○ Always consider the environment such as noise, smells, proximity to others. Think about how the environment could impact CYP who are sensitive to sight, sound, smell, taste and touch ○ Conduct regular sensory audits to identify and address environmental triggers ○ Organise classrooms to minimise overwhelming sensory experiences ○ Safe spaces need to be readily accessible and access flexibly ○ Adjust activities to reduce sensory overload in the following ways ○ Allow the CYP to access group times such as carpet-time or assembly for a shorter period ○ Visual cues such as regulation card / now and next ○ Stagger the start/end of the day ○ Allow CYP to leave class early to avoid crowds and ‘hustle and bustle’ ○ Allow CYP to stand at the front or the back of the line so they do not have to worry as much about unanticipated touch.

- Use of repetitive movements or behaviours (such as stimming) to self-regulate and manage sensory input
- Fluctuating attention or focus due to sensory seeking or sensory avoiding behaviours
- Unusual responses to clothing or equipment (e.g., tags, seams, footwear, PE kit)
- Strong preference for certain textures, tastes, or temperatures in food and drink
- Distress or withdrawal during specific activities (e.g., assemblies, lunch hall, PE, art) due to sensory load
- Frequent need to move around or fidget to maintain focus
- Apparent 'zoning out' or shutting down in overwhelming environments
- Over- or under-reaction to pain, injury, or temperature changes

Supporting feeling safe in bodies:

- Embed 'Sensory Circuits' within daily routines
- Provide frequent 'brain breaks' and movement opportunities throughout the day
- Ensure sensory tools are readily available (wobble cushions, fidget toys, ear defenders, weighted items)
- Allow flexible seating and movement options. Offer body positioning choices - floor cushions, standing options, leaning supports, or alternative seating that supports individual body needs
- Support vestibular (movement) needs - rocking chairs, balance balls, standing desks, or movement breaks for those who need motion to regulate
- Recognise body signals and teach interoceptive awareness - help CYP identify hunger, thirst, need for toilet, tiredness, and emotional states through body cues
- Provide proprioceptive (heavy work) input opportunities - heavy work activities like carrying books, wall push-ups, chair exercises, or resistance bands to help with body awareness
- Access to oral-motor sensory opportunities such as iced drinks, straws, hard crunchy chewy snacks, chewy tools
- Model body awareness strategies - breathing techniques, progressive muscle relaxation, body scans, or other embodied regulation practices
- Respect and accommodate stimming as a natural regulation strategy

Supporting coregulation and safe adult relationships:

- Model calm, regulated responses during sensory overwhelm
- Use co-regulation techniques: calm voice, steady breathing, predictable responses
- Provide calm guidance and support during dysregulation without forcing compliance
- Recognise that adult emotional regulation directly impacts student regulation
- Offer choices and collaborative problem-solving rather than directive approaches alone
- Build trust through consistent, understanding responses to sensory needs
- Understanding your own and the CYP sensory differences

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

- [Occupational therapy - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- [Sensory regulation strategies - examples - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- [Blank sensory regulation strategies - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)
- [Sensory behaviour checklist - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#)

6. Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Definition

The phrase ‘social, emotional and mental health difficulties’ was introduced in 2014 by the *Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Code of Practice*. This guidance notes that:

6.32 Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

General Principles

As the SEND Code of Practice definition states, social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs may present in a variety of ways – including behaviours that are challenging to manage at school and home. However, based on the understanding that **behaviour is a form of communication**, these challenging behaviours may indicate that there are unmet needs in other developmental areas.

For example, difficulties with language, executive functioning or sensory processing could lead to individuals displaying challenging behaviours in the classroom. Consequently, it is important that settings gain a full picture of a child’s special educational needs to ensure that all areas of their development are appropriately supported. The relevant strategies in other sections of this *Universal Provision* guidance should be adopted to help overcome the barriers to learning that are identified.

Proactively promoting SEMH is best achieved through a **whole-school approach**, with a culture of collective responsibility for everyone’s emotional wellbeing. The ethos of the setting should be accepting and nurturing, where the children’s sense of belonging is fostered, and everyone is confident that any worries will be heard, respected and responded to appropriately. Other considerations for a whole-school approach include:

- Self-evaluation of the school’s emotional wellbeing and mental health provision using the Buckinghamshire [i-Thrive audit tool](#) and resources
- Using the information and guidance from the Anna Freud Centre’s [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) initiative
- Adopting a trauma-informed and attachment aware approach across all staff through whole-school training from Buckinghamshire Council’s Virtual School
- Identification of key pastoral adults, including roles such as the setting’s [Senior Mental Health Lead](#) or Emotional Literacy Support Assistant ([ELSA](#)).
- The use of PSHE lessons to support the knowledge, awareness and self-help skills of children regarding their emotional and mental wellbeing
- Seeking advice and support from linked external agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service and (where applicable) [Mental Health Support Teams](#)

Social Emotional and Mental Health	
Differences	Strategies
Challenges with making and maintaining friendships and healthy interpersonal relationships	Nurture groups available to support personal, social and emotional development
	Restorative approaches are in place, setting-wide, to support CYP when relationships breakdown. Questions you can ask: - What happened? - What were you thinking/ feeling? - What do you think/ feel now? - Who has been affected and how? - What needs to happen to put this right? - What would you do differently next time?
	Adults model how to build and maintain relationships
	A robust PSHE curriculum that supports the development of friendships
	Staff trained in co-regulation strategies and trauma-informed approaches, such as PACE
Difficulties participating and presenting as withdrawn or isolated	Staff are committed to building secure relationships with students – rapport is key to establishing connections and increasing learning, participation and co-operation
	CYP can identify their ‘Emotionally Available Adults’ across the setting who are available to support
	Staff seek support from other services and professionals with expertise in supporting CYP Mental Health, for example, MHST, Educational Psychology and CAMHS
	A neuroaffirmative approach, whereby the team around the CYP consider how the systems and environment around neurodivergent CYP can change to meet their needs, rather than the other way around
	A strengths-based approach, i.e. with the CYP at the centre, identifying their strengths, skills, interests and character, as well as identifying who and what support they have available
	Staff establish the CYP’s interests and use these to proactively implement timely modifications, adaptations and support in the classroom
	A whole-school approach to support strategies, ensuring consistency of experience for the CYP. Structure should be clear and explicit – what are the expectations?
	Assessments through teaching for example, are there parts of the curriculum they find easier to manage than others? Use these to develop confidence
	Small group work for example, friendship or social skills groups, nurture groups
	Play-based activities (appropriate to CYP’s age and stage of development)

	Buddying /peer mentoring schemes
	Giving responsibility for looking after someone else
	Include the CYP in all decisions that impact on their lives, “Nothing about me, without me”
• Attachment Needs	Staff have had attachment-based training; use attachment-informed strategies and attachment aware language within class and across the setting
	Adults have a good understanding of the impact of relational trauma and losses on CYP
	Adults understand distressed behaviour in the context of trauma and attachment
	Nurture groups available to support personal, social and emotional development
	CYP can identify their ‘Emotionally Available Adults’ across the setting who are available to support
	Adults are mindful about the language being used around CYP
	Adults are committed to building secure relationships with students – rapport is key to establishing connections
	Staff know the developmental age of the CYP in their setting, adapting emotional and social tasks and expectations accordingly
	Create a balance between nurturing support and gentle challenge for CYP
	A relationships policy alongside or in place of a behaviour policy, informed by attachment- and trauma-informed approaches
• Maintaining attention and concentration	Ensure a clear visual structure to the day and use of visuals to breakdown tasks and clarify expectations.
	Present clear and reasonable expectations of the CYP regarding expected behaviour with a clear and consistent approach that is understood by, and agreed with, the CYP
	Embed ‘Sensory Circuits’ within the daily routine (morning and afternoon) and ensure the CYP has access to frequent ‘brain breaks’ throughout the day to support regulation and ensure the CYP’s body and brain are ready to attend, engage and learn
	Allow access to resources that support the CYP’s attention and concentration, for example, fiddle toys, doodle books, mindfulness colouring
	Ensure resources used to support sensory processing are readily available and easily accessible, for example, wobble cushion, chew, ear defenders, standing desks, workstations
• Challenging behaviour indicating a potentially unmet need	Following de-escalation strategies as per the Step On training model disseminated by the Buckinghamshire Primary Pupil Referral Unit
	Adults are committed to building secure relationships with students – rapport is key to building connections
	CYP can identify their ‘Emotionally Available Adults’ across the setting who are available to support

	Respond to distressed behaviour with curiosity and an approach focused on de-escalation and coregulation: “I wonder...”, “I imagine...”, “I notice...”, “I empathise...” Approach distressed behaviour from a perspective of finding out what the unmet need is: ○ I don’t understand what I need to do ○ I cannot express my needs; you are not hearing what I am trying to tell you. ○ I don’t like this. ○ I can’t do this; I might fail. ○ I am experiencing sensory overload; I need a break. ○ I am scared about a change in routine; I don’t know what is going to happen next. Identify triggers and functions of behaviours, so that proactive strategies can be put into place
• Patterns of emotionally-based school non-attendance (EBSNA)	Following the advice and guidance in the Buckinghamshire EBSNA Toolkit Staff are committed to building secure relationships with students – rapport is key to establishing connections Close collaboration with CYP, parents/carers and other key family members/friends Support macro and micro transitions by explaining and showing the CYP what will happen; use visual supports (for example, Now/Next, visual timetable, Social Stories) to support their understanding Include the CYP in all decisions that impact on their lives, “Nothing about me, without me” Support for the wider family via Family Hubs and the Early Help Service

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

- [Buckinghamshire Autism Toolbox](#)
- [Buckinghamshire CAMHS Single Point of Access \(SPA\)](#)
- [Buckinghamshire EBSNA Toolkit](#)
- [Buckinghamshire i-Thrive audit tool and resources](#)
- [Buckinghamshire Mental Health Support Teams](#)
- [Buckinghamshire Suicide Postvention Guidance](#)
- [MindEd Hub](#)
- [Thrive Approach training and software](#)
- [Trauma-Informed Schools UK](#)

7. Health/Medical

General Principles:

- Schools MUST refer to and follow the guidance outlined in the '[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#) (2015) document for advice and support. This document outlines support available for developing individual healthcare plans, staff responsibilities and signposting to relevant healthcare professionals.
- Suitable training should be provided for all medical conditions that need to be managed at school.
- Individual healthcare plan should be written with school, parent/carer and healthcare provider.

Medical Need	Strategies, Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links
• Epilepsy	Attend epilepsy training, to enable staff to recognise seizures and support accordingly Individual healthcare plan First seizure or any seizures that is not covered by CYP's healthcare plan will require an ambulance Attend additional training if a CYP requires medication for seizures in school. (Further training in use of medication is available through Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust Community Nurses) ○ Basic epilepsy for schools Epilepsy Action Learning ○ Epilepsy Society Transforming lives through advocacy, research and care ○ Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions SchoolsWeb
• Diabetes	Individual healthcare plan ○ Diabetes in Schools Diabetes UK
• Allergies and Anaphylaxis (life threatening allergic reaction)	Individual healthcare plan ○ Allergy guidance for schools - GOV.UK ○ Welcome to NARF Allergy School, Teaching Children About Food Allergies ○ Schools Allergy Code The Allergy Team ○ For Schools Allergy UK National Charity ○ Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions SchoolsWeb covers training in use of an EpiPen

• Asthma	Individual healthcare plan ○ Resources + projects for schools Asthma + Lung UK
• Toileting and Constipation	Suitable toileting facilities including adaptations as required Support parents with toileting programmes Intimate care policies for all CYP who require toileting support CYP with additional needs may be slower to toilet train but should be given the opportunities to do so Access to water-based drinks throughout the day and encouragement to drink Constipation can impact on a CYP's behaviour ○ Schools and nurseries - ERIC ○ Advice on Bladder and Bowel Problems in Children and Young People
• Tiredness/Sleep	Consider impact of sleep difficulties on behaviour and learning Communicate with parents/carers around sleep/tiredness ○ Get Advice and Support - Cerebra ○ Home - The Sleep Charity

Resources, Advice and Further Signposting Links

- [Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions | SchoolsWeb](#)
- [Home - Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - CYP Website](#) includes:
 - Occupational therapy
 - Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
 - Health Visiting
 - School nursing
 - Community nurses for children and young people with a learning disability
- [Health for Kids | Buckinghamshire](#)
- [Health for Teens | Buckinghamshire](#)

8. Universal Provision Graduated Response Planners

The Universal Provision Graduated Response Planners are not checklists as not all ideas will be relevant or appropriate depending on CYP's age and needs.

School Culture and Leadership - For SENCOs and School Leaders	Notes/Ideas/Observations/Actions
Senior Leadership Knowledge of SEND • Do you (school leaders/SENCO) have a deep understanding of SEND legislation, policies, and best practices? • Do you (school leaders/SENCO) stay updated with the latest research and developments in the field to ensure effective support and provision for individuals with SEND?	
Ethos and Culture • Is there a culture of high expectations, strong values, and a highly inclusive ethos within the school? • Do you (school leaders/SENCO) demonstrate a strong commitment to SEND and inclusion, ensuring it is embedded in the school's vision and values and a key priority in the School's Development Plan? • Is there evidence of your school being a collaborative environment where staff, parents, and external agencies work together to support the inclusion of all students?	
Strategic Planning and Organisation • Does the school have an effective strategic plan to meet the diverse needs of individuals with SEND? • Is this linked to the School Development Plan? • Does the SEND plan include a clear vision, achievable goals, and comprehensive resource planning?	
Accessibility • Is the physical environment accessible to all students, including those with disabilities? • Is there an aspirational, broad, and balanced curriculum available for all pupils? • Is all information accessible and understandable?	
Developing and Implementing Policies • Is there evidence of developing and implementing policies that promote inclusion, ensuring all students, including those with SEND, have access to high-quality education? • Does the SEND policy link with other relevant policies, for example, the behaviour policy, PSHE, and school trips? • Are these policies up-to-date and reviewed regularly?	

Monitoring and Evaluation • Do you (school leaders/SENCO) regularly monitor and evaluate inclusive practices to ensure they are effective? • Are necessary adjustments made based on these evaluations? • Do you monitor the impact of support adults on learner progress? • Do all practitioners, including Teaching Assistants, make a positive contribution to learner progress?	
Training and Professional Development • Are staff training audits regularly conducted to identify individual, team, and whole-setting training needs related to SEND? • Is there a plan for continuous professional development for SEND and Inclusion? Does the plan: - Focus on developing an inclusive culture within the setting and improving practice and knowledge of SEND? - Build capacity? - Focus on effectively meeting the specific and diverse needs of all learners? - Include all staff and governors? - Include training on self-regulation and co-regulation strategies? - Include training on trauma-informed approaches? - Does the induction of new staff provide training for all staff on meeting the needs of children and young people (CYP) with SEND? - Is there training on how to deploy support adults proactively in the classroom? - Are opportunities provided for sharing good practices and conducting peer observations among staff? - Is follow-up conducted after training to ensure a positive impact on inclusion for all children and young people with SEND? • Are school staff encouraged to participate in CPD offered by the Buckinghamshire SEND Service and other relevant outside agencies and specialists?	
Learning Environment • Is the school environment calm and purposeful? • Do learners feel safe, valued, and respected within the school environment? • Are neuro-affirmative approaches in place to adapt systems and environments to meet the needs of	

neurodivergent CYP, rather than expecting them to adjust? Is there an effective reward system in place that is fair, consistent, motivating, and easy for pupils to understand?	
Student Engagement - Is there evidence of you (school leaders/SENCO) actively seeking and incorporating students' views, particularly those with SEND, in decision-making processes? - Do SEND pupils feel they belong, and their contributions are valued? - Are pupils encouraged to approach staff with their opinions and concerns, and are these valued?	
Parent/Carer Engagement - Do you provide regular updates to parents and carers around SEND? This can be done through newsletters, emails, or parent events. - Do you organise workshops and training sessions for parents and carers to help them understand SEND policies, best practices, and how they can support their child's learning and development at home? - Do you have opportunities for parents and carers to provide feedback on the school's SEND provision for example, through surveys, suggestion boxes, or regular parent group meetings? - Do you offer support groups for parents and carers where they can share experiences, seek advice, and offer support to each other? - Do you host inclusive events that celebrate the achievements of SEND pupils and promote disability awareness? - Do you provide parents and carers with access to resources and information that can help them support their child's learning and development. This can include links to relevant websites, local support services, and educational materials? - Do you use personalised communication methods, such as home-school diaries, book bags, texts, emails, and informal discussions, to keep parents and carers informed and engaged? - Do parents know the school process for approaching staff with any concerns or questions?	
Effective communication: Do you (school leaders/SENCO) communicate clearly and effectively with individual CYPs, their families, staff, and other stakeholders?	

• Are there mechanisms in place to actively listen and allow for feedback from CYPs, their families, staff, and other stakeholders? • Is all information accessible and understandable to everyone involved? • Do all staff members use language that demonstrates positive regard?	
Empathy and compassion: • Do you (school leaders/SENCO) demonstrate empathy and compassion towards individuals with SEND and their families? • Do you (school leaders/SENCO) understand the challenges faced by individuals with SEND and provide emotional support, encouragement, and advocacy when needed?	
Engagement within Buckinghamshire • Do you utilise Buckinghamshire SEND Support mechanisms, following side-by-side principles to: - Share good practices? - Offer peer support? - Gain further information for SEND pupils and their families? Key support avenues include: - SENDCo Network Liaison Meetings - SENCO Champions - Team Up meetings - SEND Support line - EBSNA Support - Forums - SaLT webinars and advice sessions - OT webinars and advice sessions - Social care referrals - School nursing - Specialist Teachers - Early Years Teams - Family Support Services - Mental Health Practitioners	

- Virtual Schools

Promoting and supporting the personal, social and emotional development of all CYP

- Is there a designated Mental Health Lead within the school?
- Has a whole-school PSHE approach been adopted to develop well-being and resilience among pupils?
- Is there an effective pastoral support system in place for learners with SEND that considers their social and emotional needs alongside their contextual circumstances?
- Are pastoral and mental health support plans established for CYP with SEND?
- Are SEND role models celebrated, and are events such as Autism Awareness Week and the Paralympics used to highlight disability awareness?
- Are there planned opportunities to look at specific needs or conditions to build awareness, sensitivity towards difference and an understanding of protected characteristics?
- Have trusted relationships been established for all CYP, with named adults or key workers providing stable points of contact when required?
- Are regular well-being check-ins provided for pupils throughout the day?
- Are CYP empowered and supported to self-advocate effectively?
- Are social opportunities and inclusive activities or clubs offered based on shared interests?
- Are distressed behaviours addressed with curiosity and de-escalation techniques, using language such as "I wonder...", "I notice...", and "I empathise..."?
- Do pupils have access to an agreed safe space when needed?
- Are restorative approaches implemented to build and maintain positive relationships across the school?
- Are negative attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions towards individuals or groups actively challenged in classrooms, the wider school, and society?
- [Buckinghamshire Healthy Schools | SchoolsWeb](#)

Identification of SEND and Assessment- For the SENCO and class teacher	Notes/Ideas/Observations/Actions
Knowing the CYP • Have you observed the CYP in various settings (classroom, playground, and so forth) to gather information about behaviour, interactions, understanding, barriers to learning, engagement, etc.? • Do you know the CYP strengths and interests? • Do you understand how the CYP learns? • Have you used the Graduated Approach to identify and provide appropriate teaching and interventions for CYP with SEND?	
Assessment Data • Have you screened the pupil using tools to identify their SEND? • Have you completed further assessments using standardised tools to evaluate specific areas such as reading comprehension, writing speed, decoding, spelling, numeracy skills, and communication skills? • Have you identified a SEND based on formative and summative assessment, focusing on areas where the CYP may require additional support? • Are staff aware of CYP's starting points so that expected progress can be measured across each key stage? • Do learners have regular opportunities to evaluate their own performance? Is self-assessment routinely used to set individual targets, both non-academic and academic?	
Paperwork • Have you completed a One-page profile (or similar) for the CYP? • Are you maintaining records of observations and assessments to inform planning for the CYP? • Have you created a co-produced SEND Support Plan or Personalised Learning Plan that includes differentiated instruction and tailored strategies that highlight the CYP's strengths and individual needs? • Have you set specific, measurable goals to track progress/impact and adjust the plan as needed while promoting independence?	
Engagement • Have you engaged with families to share concerns and gather insights about the CYP's background, interests, and any concerns the families may have? • Have you referred/requested support from education and health professionals such as Speech Therapists,	

Occupational Therapists, School Nursing, Educational Psychologists and Specialist Teachers, Virtual Schools and so forth, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the CYP's needs? • When there is a team around the child, do staff communicate regularly with other professionals involved to co-produce targets, review progress and determine next steps? • Do you actively seek to collaborate with relevant outside agencies and specialists as part of the SEND support offer, and are their recommendations used to inform practice and target setting?	
Planning • Have you selected interventions and strategies based on assessments that are relevant and allow for benchmarking? • Have you selected interventions that are evidence-based, where possible? • If advice and recommendations have been received from education and health professionals: - has this been shared with staff who work directly with the CYP? - have these been implemented promptly? - are the strategies mapped within provision planning? - have you allocated time scales for embedding new strategies? - have you planned to measure impact? • Have you costed all the allocated provision on a provision map/SEND support plan?	
Access arrangements • Do you have expertise to manage reasonable examination arrangements (access arrangements) for all formal and informal national assessments including public examinations? • Have you applied for and ensured formal assessment arrangements are in place in good time for national assessments including public examinations? • Are clear, adapted assessment procedures provided to enable access to all assessments? • Are adaptations to assessment arrangements made and embedded within the CYP's 'normal' way of working? • Have you referred to the relevant exam board guidelines/JCQ guidance and relevant professional advice for examination arrangements? • Have you considered arrangements such as: - Rest breaks?	

- Extra time? - Adapted resources (for example, enlarged text and braille, laptop or scribe) used in class and assessments? - Assistive Technology - Scribe? - Reader?	
Fostering Independence • Have ambitious outcomes been set for CYP with additional needs, aiming for employment, independent living, health, and community participation? • Is support being gradually reduced to encourage self-reliance? • Is there a culture that promotes the idea that making mistakes is an essential part of learning? • Are daily living skills like toileting, feeding, dressing, and self-care including hygiene, healthy eating, and exercise, being taught/incorporated into the curriculum? • Does the curriculum include basic financial literacy concepts, such as budgeting and saving? • Are visual supports and effective teaching strategies, such as visual aids and backward chaining, being consistently used to enhance independence? • Are problem-solving skills explicitly taught to encourage critical thinking and decision-making? • Are CYP being taught to care for their specialist equipment early on? • Do CYP have access to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) tools for expressing themselves and making choices? • Are opportunities provided for CYP to participate in community activities to build social skills and confidence? • Are work experience opportunities and internships available to prepare CYP for the working world?	
Making Reasonable Adjustments • Is the physical environment accessible and adapted to meet the needs of all learners? • Has the accessibility of the building and individual learning spaces been assessed, and is the accessibility plan available on the school's website? • Is the furniture appropriately sized for the learners? • Are the views of learners, parents, and carers routinely sought to inform planning for physical or sensory	

adaptations? • Have risk assessments for individual CYP been completed? • Are smells and noise in the learning environment managed to cater to sensory needs? • Is a sensory audit or checklist used to plan seating arrangements and movement breaks? • Are pupils wearing glasses or hearing aids seated in optimal positions? • Are classroom displays meaningful and lighting considerations addressed for all learners? • Is the environment organised with clearly labelled areas, such as literacy corners and sensory zones? • Is there an agreed signal for gaining whole-class attention? • Are extra-curricular activities and educational visits planned inclusively for pupils with SEND, with reasonable adjustments made? • Are sensory or physical needs accommodated through uniform adjustments or individualised interventions advised by specialists? • Are behaviour policies applied flexibly, understanding that distressed behaviour often signals unmet needs? • Are sensory-friendly environments, such as low-arousal spaces, available and accessible? • Is specialist equipment promoted across the curriculum to support diverse needs? • Are settings making reasonable adjustments to the learning environment, such as providing individual workstations and visual timetables?	
Resources for SEND pupils • Are specific resources and strategies identified to support SEND pupils and overcome potential barriers to learning? • Are the resources readily accessible to promote independence? • Do SEND pupils have easy access to necessary sensory equipment, such as writing slopes, pencil grips, wobble cushions, fidget toys, ear defenders, and weighted blankets? • Are known/advised sensory strategies and circuits in place to support individual attention and regulation throughout the day, such as Move'n'Sit cushion, fiddle tools, heavy joint activities? • Are additional or adapted resources available for pupils who require them? • If appropriate, do you liaise with professionals to ensure the correct use and care of specialist equipment between home and school environments? • Is ICT employed to support alternatives to written recording and to foster independent learning? • Is additional ICT support provided for children and young people with vision impairment and hearing loss?	

Transition Support • Have all staff been informed about the varying types of transitions, from daily routines to significant life changes such as moving schools or experiencing bereavement? • Are plans in place to support pupils who require additional help during transitions, such as Looked After Children or pupils experiencing social communication difficulties, trauma, or anxiety? • Are visual aids like timetables, checklists, and social stories being utilised to prepare CYP for transitions? • Are timers and structured plans for unstructured times available for SEND and vulnerable pupils? • Is there a system for creating individualised Now and Next boards with real-life photographs for supporting transitions during the school day? • Have parents and carers been informed about upcoming transitions, and are adjustments like additional classroom visits or visual transition books being made?	

Review and monitor the progress of SEND pupils and the impact of support For SENCOs	Notes/Ideas/Observations/Actions
The Graduated Approach • Is there evidence of a minimum termly cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review to ensure that pupils with SEND are making progress and to look at the impact of support? • Are regular and timely reviews planned to: - monitor the CYP's progress? - review the effectiveness of the SEND Support Plan or Personalised Learning Plan and necessary adjustments made to plans and targets? - critically evaluate the impact of interventions, ensuring that alternative approaches are explored, which may result in better outcomes for the learner? - clearly communicate with parents/carers regarding progress/impact and next steps? - ensure external advice and strategies are implemented and reviewed? • Do school staff working with the CYP provide regular, specific and meaningful feedback? • Are small steps of progress measured and reported, for example, not just recorded as 'working below'? • Is regular feedback obtained from the CYP, including: - reviewing and evaluating their own performance/progress? - including them in all decisions that impact their lives? • Are parents and carers included in the planning and review of their child's SEND support plan?	

Quality First Teaching -Teacher Self-Evaluation	Notes/Ideas/Observations/Actions
Classroom layout/Organisations • Have you arranged desks and seating to ensure clear visibility of the board taking into account SEND differences? • Have you created designated areas for different activities (for example, concentration stations, calm down spaces, reading corner, group work area)? • Have you ensured pathways are clear and free of obstacles? • Have you labelled resources, storage areas, and supplies clearly with text and images, using the appropriate print size and font? • Have you organised books and resources by subject or theme? • Do you have a daily schedule in a visible location? • Have you established and communicated clear classroom rules and expectations? • Have you completed a sensory audit of your classroom?	
Planning • Does your planning set high expectations and aspirations for all CYP with SEND? • Are you supporting CYP's metacognition? • Do your lessons have clearly defined learning objectives, appropriate work, and pedagogical strategies to facilitate intended learning outcomes? • Are you planning multi-sensory teaching that considers different learning styles? • Is the use of additional adults planned to maximise their impact on learning? • Have you taken into account any specialist advice in your planning? • Have you adapted, differentiated or personalised learning for SEND pupils across the curriculum? • Are you adopting a stage-not-age approach in your teaching and support strategies? • Have you thought about incorporating visuals such as timers, subtitles, timetables, choice boards, objects of reference, and organised display areas to aid learning? • Have you planned for SEND pupils' interventions?	
Organisation/Support • Do learners have opportunities to work independently, in small groups, and/or in pairs?	

• Do seating plans and groupings take account of individual needs, providing opportunities for access to role models, mixed-ability groups, structured conversations, and additional adults? • Are you providing timely and effective support from school staff to ensure CYP keep up with their learning, and extra support if required? • Do you help CYP with the planning stage of written tasks to organise their thoughts and where to start? • Are tasks broken down into small manageable steps to promote independence and support learners? • Can CYP record their work and respond in different ways? • If appropriate, are you adjusting the volume of work to focus on the most important learning tasks (quality versus quantity)? • Are movement breaks built into lessons to provide an optimal state for learning? • Is pre-teaching of new vocabulary or concepts integrated into your practices? • Are structured teaching aspects used according to pupil needs, particularly during transitions? • Are worksheets and PowerPoints modified and enlarged up to size 14?	
SEND Knowledge • Are you aware of the additional needs of your learners and how to respond to them?	
Delivery/Instruction • Are you reducing behavioural and emotional difficulties through QFT, effective classroom planning and consistent approaches? • Is modelling used to aid understanding? • Are all adults modelling the effective language use consistently? • Is it clear to the CYP what they need to do, and for how long? • Are instructions given in the order they need to be followed, avoiding abstract words such as 'before' and 'after'? • Are visual/audio demonstrations and visual cues/audio commentary used? • Is key vocab displayed with visuals? • Are you using clear, unambiguous, and specific language in your interactions? • Do you use familiar vocabulary that pupils can easily understand? • Is the interactive whiteboard used effectively to promote engagement and scaffold lessons? • Is technology used effectively to aid learning, modelling, and following instructions, as well as alternative	

method/s to explain new concepts and reinforce learning? • Are study skills explicitly taught? • Are backwards chaining strategies used to break tasks into achievable chunks? • Is the pace and order of activities relevant to maintain pupil interest and attention? • Do learners have time to process information before being asked to respond? • Are you giving appropriate processing time by pausing between key points and avoiding lengthy explanations? • Do you repeat new concepts sufficiently to embed learning and support working and long-term memory? • Are gestures, facial expressions, and body language being used effectively to support understanding? • Do you explicitly highlight new or less familiar words and verify pupils' understanding of them? • Do you present the same information in multiple formats, such as vocal cues, written instructions, pictures, and physical objects, to aid retention? • Are you reducing the quantity of elements on a single page and highlighting key words and information to support understanding? • Is your delivery style tailored to pupils' specific needs, using techniques such as 'bossy talk' or language modification methods?	
Independence • Are you using 'the stages of scaffolding' to foster independence tailored to the needs and progress of the CYP? • Have you included scaffolding (visual, verbal or written)? • Are concrete resources supplied and within easy reach of learners to promote independence? • Do you use task management boards or age-appropriate task/tick lists to support CYP's organisation and independence? • Are real objects and kinaesthetic means used to facilitate encoding of learning concepts? • Are timers used to indicate when activities will start and finish to promote independence?	
Homework • Is homework adapted to suit the strengths and needs of CYP?	

Assessment and Feedback • Do you use checklists for SEND? • Is formative assessment used? • Is Summative assessment used? • Do you provide positive recognition and praise that is specific and clear? • Does your marking match the school policy? • Do you provide regular and meaningful feedback that is specific, clear, and manageable, helping a pupil make progress? • Are you checking understanding by encouraging pupils to explain instructions or demonstrate concepts in their own ways? • Do you provide opportunities for non-verbal communication, such as visuals, communication books, boards, or cards, for pupils who require alternative methods of expression?	
Language • Are you using strategies to support the development of communication and language in the classroom? • Is the environment language-rich and conducive to promoting communication and language development? • Do you provide opportunities for non-verbal communication, such as visuals, communication books, boards, or cards, for pupils who require alternative methods of expression?	