




Ordinarily available toolkit

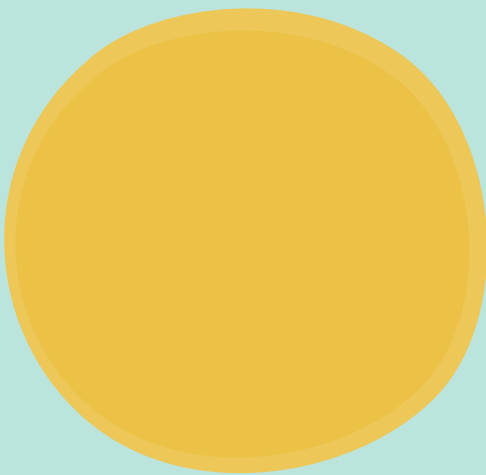
Guidance on the provision that mainstream schools need to make for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Oxfordshire.



Foreword

This guidance is primarily intended for education professionals in primary and secondary mainstream schools and settings. Those who are working in early years settings may find what follows useful but please refer to the specific early years guidance.

It aims to support schools and settings in Oxfordshire to identify, plan for and meet the needs of children and young people (CYP) who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and require reasonable adjustments or additionality at SEND support.



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1) Principles of inclusion

The following principles underpin this guidance:

- Every CYP is entitled to receive a good education that enables them to maximise opportunity and success in learning and life, irrespective of need, prior attainment, background or circumstance.
- Strong pathways for every CYP into further education, training, employment and independent living.
- Successful and fulfilling participation in society, economic prosperity, good physical and mental health.
- Access for every CYP to suitable, high-quality provision, which meets diverse need and diminishes barriers to participation and engagement.
- Equity of access and onward life chances; those who need something more or something different in order to realise this ambition do receive something more or something different.
- A rounded education for every CYP; each having access to and benefiting from a breadth of experience and cultural capital.
- A strong commitment to early intervention and prevention to tackle, diminish or avert potential barriers to success.
- A strong commitment to partnership working which actively seeks and values the contributions of parent/carers and CYP.
- Education in local community wherever possible.

This guidance should be read alongside the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) which sets out the following responsibilities:

Local authority responsibilities

Make arrangements for the statutory assessment of pupils and maintain and review statements of SEND and Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans.

Maintain an overview of how far education settings are accessible for pupils with SEND.

Publish information on SEND funding and provision.

Ensure sufficiency of provision for pupils with SEND and keep under constant review.

Monitor the progress of children and young people with SEND and work with schools to resolve issues regarding the progress of Oxfordshire children and young people with SEND wherever they are educated.

Co-produce provision and policy with families of children with SEND and with children and young people with SEND.

Provide information, advice and support to parents of children and young people with SEND and young people themselves, including the provision of a statutory information, advice and support service (SENDIASS) along with mediation and resolution services, and the local offer.

Prepare and maintain an accessibility strategy to

- increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- improve the physical environment of the schools for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the schools
- improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

Governors, early years providers, schools and colleges¹ responsibilities



Aim to meet the range of CYP's needs in their locality as far as is appropriate.

Work with families of children and young people with SEND and CYP themselves to shape provision and policy.

Publish information on SEND funding and provision and monitor expenditure.

Maintain a record of pupils with identified SEND.

Ensure that staff have the requisite skills, training and understanding to meet the needs of CYP with SEND.

Identify pupils with SEND and ensure provision is made in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and complying with the Children and Families Act 2014.

Publish a SEND information report, a SEND policy and an accessibility plan on the school website.

Appoint a SEND governor and SEND coordinator.

Ensure SEND provision is integrated into the organisational improvement or development plan.

Keep arrangements for prospective and current pupils with a disability under constant review.

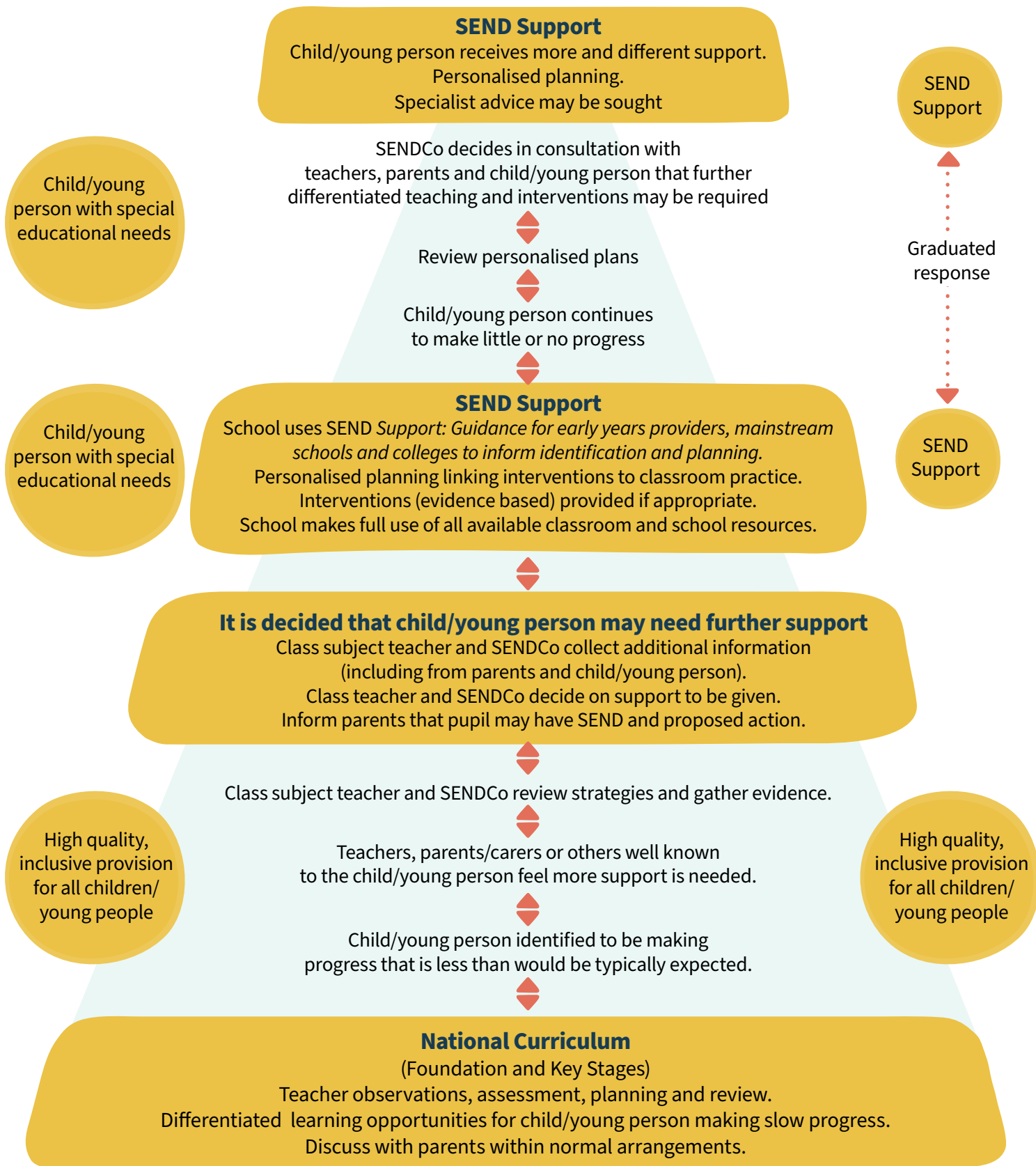
Monitor the progress of CYP with SEND to ensure the provision specified in EHC Plans is in place and the child or young person is making progress.



¹6.79 to 6.83 [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)

2) High quality, inclusive teaching

High quality teaching is effective for all children. All teachers are teachers of CYP with SEND.



Although not exhaustive, the following are key features of high-quality, inclusive teaching and provision:

- High expectations of all CYP.
- Teachers knowing the contexts of CYP and the characteristics of learners with such contexts, whilst not stereotyping or applying a label in a way which might have a negative impact on expectations or opportunities.
- Access to a broad curriculum and to learning which is sequential, cohesive, relevant and contextualized.
- On-going, responsive, diagnostic assessment, monitoring and review that informs and shapes the teaching and learning.
- Use of a wide range of assessment and feedback tools including self and peer assessment.
- Skilled, open-ended questioning; asking the right questions at the right time.
- Skilled pedagogical intervention; using knowledge of how CYP learn to craft and re-shape learning experiences.
- Modelling to reveal the thought processes of an 'expert' learner to aid understanding and help develop metacognitive skills.
- Dedicated teaching of metacognitive skills; helping CYP to understand how they learn and to make decisions about learning, in order to problem-solve and select the most effective learning strategies for different tasks/contexts.
- Building on prior knowledge, understanding, skills and ideas which CYP bring to new and subsequent learning opportunities and experiences.
- Embedding key skills and understandings to gain fluency and mastery across different contexts of learning.
- Opportunities to elaborate on learning; to use describing and explaining which helps integrate new information with prior knowledge and embed it in memory.
- Planned sequences and cycles of learning which facilitate mastery.
- Pre-teaching which acknowledges the different starting points of CYP and attempts to enable all CYP to access the core teaching and learning from the main lesson(s).
- Flexibility in teaching and learning to adjust and personalise in response to CYP, while ensuring that any long-term and generic adaptation is always available, practised routinely and part of everyday adjustment if needed.
- Dedicated subject-specific time as appropriate as well as integrated learning and connecting learning journeys.
- The explicit teaching of key vocabulary to assist in conceptual understanding and building knowledge.
- The impact of any adjustments, personalisation, intervention or support critically evaluated, with these evaluations used to inform subsequent teaching and learning.
- Strong, positive relationships within the learning environment.
- A physical environment which is conducive to learning, taking into account such aspects as sensory needs.
- Effective, skilled classroom management.



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- Skilled deployment of any additional adults with appropriate training and clear, focused remits to support learning, independence, metacognition and self-regulation.
- The use of equipment, visual information, practical demonstration and concrete representation to support learning.
- Explicit teaching of how to use different resources to support learning.
- Appropriate use of modern technology such as programmes designed for problem-solving and open-ended learning for CYP as well as resources to support teaching such as interactive boards and learning platforms.



- Ensuring child's wellbeing needs are met so that they are in 'the right place' emotionally to learn.
- To foster independence and positive relationships, all parts of the day, structured and unstructured, are important for learning.

3) Identification of SEND

It is a national expectation that all schools and settings have a clear, defined approach to identifying and responding to SEND; good practice would be to use a strengths and needs approach.

If, for example, despite consistently high-quality teaching, a CYP experiences difficulties in accessing the same learning as their peers of a broadly similar age or needs much greater support in self-regulation than peers, or is not as 'emotionally healthy', there may be an underlying need.

Slow progress and/or low attainment may indicate that a CYP has SEND but not necessarily. Equally, attaining in line or indeed above chronological age or attainment of same-age peers should not lead to an assumption of no SEND. Sometimes a CYP may excel in the majority of areas but struggle with one, or may struggle with particular concepts, but not others, within the same subject. Again, this does not necessarily mean they have SEND; they may simply need further adaptations within the universal offer of high-quality teaching. The assessment process to support identification is therefore vital in making a determination.

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a CYP has SEND; however, such behaviours are usually communicative and may indicate an unmet need such as social or communication issues, poor wellbeing or poor mental health.

It is important to remember that if a child's first language is not English, this may be a factor in under-performance, slow progress or challenging behaviours; they may not have SEND but be experiencing language barriers. Contrary to that, however, is the caution not to attribute any difficulties simply to a language issue and therefore to potentially overlook specific need.

In deciding whether to make SEND provision, the school should gather a wide range of information from within the school as well as parent/carers and from the CYP. Other information from specialists may also be helpful.

Good practice is to ask ‘how do I need to change my teaching or behaviours, how might I change the provision or environment/ resources?’, rather than describing how the CYP needs to change. Other questions that a school may wish to consider include:

- How might the classroom environment/ layout be changed to better accommodate the needs of all?
- How might additional resources such as visual representations make learning more accessible to all?
- Is the deployment of additional adults effective; have they had the training they need to enhance learning whilst nurturing the independence of CYP?
- Is assessment effective and leading to an accurate understanding of need, both academically and pastorally?
- Is there consistent, universal high-quality teaching?
- How good are the relationships between adults and the CYP?

4) Talking about SEND

Inclusive schools are positive and ambitious in their aspirations for every CYP. This extends to the language used.

The term ‘SEND’ can have negative connotations and suggest a ‘deficit’. It is vitally important that SEND is seen as a difference in need as opposed to a shortcoming or a weakness. Everyone working with a CYP with SEND must demonstrate high aspirations for and expectations of those CYP, asking the question ‘what is it that I/we need to do differently in order to help this CYP access the learning and achieve success?’

The language used is vitally important; asking a CYP how they describe their own needs is a good starting point. Terms such as ‘the bottom set’ and ‘the low ability group’ are unhelpful and can impact on the self-esteem of those CYP, the perceptions of their peers and the expectations of adults.

5) SEND support²

If assessments indicate that a CYP needs provision beyond universal high-quality teaching, the next level is SEND Support.

This guidance focuses on SEND Support, which is broadly the adaptations, adjustments and additionality that should be ordinarily available within every mainstream school to support CYP with SEND.

There is delegated funding for primary and secondary mainstream schools for SEND. The national expectation that up to £6,000 of additional provision can be made, for those who need it, each year. This funding can be used flexibly by a school to develop provision which benefits a wide group of students, for example a nurture hub.

²Please refer to ‘Inclusive Support’ series for more detail

6) Education, health and care plans³

The vast majority of children will have their needs appropriately met using the approaches and strategies set out in this guidance.

Only those with the most exceptional level of needs will require a statutory assessment of their SEN and provision to be made in accordance with an EHC Plan in order to meet needs.

There is an expectation that the school has already tried to meet the CYP's needs through universal high-quality teaching and through the adjustments and/or additionality offered by SEND Support over a suitable period of time before requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA).

7) Working with parents⁴

Parent/carers know their children in different situations, with different people and across a range of contexts and environments. Their views and insights are invaluable to the identification/assess/plan/do/review process.

Parent/carers must feel involved in processes and empowered to support their CYP's needs. There needs to be acknowledgement from all that a CYP and the perceptions of a CYP's needs may be very different in different contexts but that each context is equally of importance.

Sometimes parent/carers will feel anxious about their child's needs and/or about how their child is perceived by their peers or teachers. Working proactively in partnership with parent/carers to listen and to engage in joint problem-solving/decision-making is effective practice, which can benefit the CYP, family and wider school community.

At times, parent/carers, teachers and others may have differing views about how a CYP's needs are best met and indeed whether those needs are additional and may be identified as SEND. These different perspectives can be very helpful in gaining a full understanding of a CYP's needs, strengths and behaviours, and of the various support strategies that may be helpful to them. Sometimes discussions can be challenging. Being child-centred, flexible, strengths-based and solution-focused is key to any discussion, challenging or otherwise, that parents/carers and schools may have with each other.

8) Voice of the child

Children need to be empowered to express their views and feelings.

Consideration needs to be given to how these are meaningfully gathered on an individual basis, for example an EY children or non verbal child's views can and should still be gathered via observation and talking to parents. These should be given due weight according to age, maturity and capability.

Most CYP will find it easier to think about the present rather than far into the future, so it will be most productive to ask them about what they enjoy, what they feel they are good at and anything they find harder, what helps them to learn or behave, what is going well and what could be better. These will be the building blocks for gathering their views for more formal purposes. We need to ask CYP about how they want to be involved and to give their views, offering flexible options as far as possible.

Headteachers will want to think about how the voice of the CYP is an integral part of the school's overall policy, as well as how CYP with SEND are involved in planning and decision-making on the support they receive for needs to be taken broadly to mean ways in which we can gain a perspective from the CYP's viewpoint and their lived experiences.

³ Please refer to Guidance on [‘Requesting an EHC needs assessment’](#) for more detail

⁴ Please refer to SENDIASS guidance

9) School-based roles and responsibilities

Although there are some specific role related responsibilities, meeting SEND is everyone's responsibility.

Governors responsibilities

Strategic oversight of SEND provision.

Includes ensuring adherence to the SEND code of practice and should promotion of best practice in SEND.

Publication of SEND information (including the SEND information report) on the school website about the implementation of their policy for CYP with SEND.

Strategic monitoring and evaluating of budgetary decisions, the quality of provision and the broad educational outcomes for those with SEND.

It is expected that governors regularly receive a range of information specific to the SEND cohort in their school. As well as progress and attainment, this should highlight indicators such as attendance rates, including persistent absenteeism. Use of reduced hours provision (part-time timetables), exclusions and violent incidents should also be reported to governors for various pupil groups, including those with SEND, so that a more rounded picture of inclusivity, effectiveness of provision and impact can be gained.



Headteachers responsibilities

The headteacher leads on the culture within a school; they set the standard, modelling the expectation of inclusivity and meeting the needs of all CYP. In good schools headteachers are the champions of all CYP; good schools are good for all CYP.

The headteacher has overall strategic oversight of the effective and consistent implementation of the SEND policy across the school. This will include ensuring frontline practitioners are appropriately trained and skilled to meet the range of need within the school.

Alongside governors, ensure that SEND provision at a strategic level is monitored and evaluated routinely, within the school's overall quality assurance framework. This should focus on the impact of SEND provision on outcomes and be used to inform subsequent policy, procedure and practice, including the identification of any areas for improvement.



SENDCos responsibilities

Models inclusivity and best practice in teaching, curricular provision, the environment and resources, to support strong outcomes.

Provides leadership and professional guidance to colleagues, working closely with those colleagues, parent/carers and partner agencies, in the best interests of CYP with SEND.

Must be a qualified teacher working at the school and should be part of the senior leadership team

Ensuring all staff are aware of CYP's individual needs and programmes, that there is good, frequent liaison with parent/carers, that the package of support is cohesive and understood by all.



Teachers responsibilities

Deliver universal, high-quality teaching for all.

Meet the needs of all children in their class.

Leader of provision for SEND at the point of delivery in the classroom.

Know which CYP in their class has SEND, the nature and level of that SEND and the current plan to support the CYP's needs.

Have high aspirations for and expectations of CYP with SEND.

Tailor provision to meet need, with expertise and guidance from the SENDCo as and when appropriate.

Identify and effectively use resources to provide the adjustments and adaptations a CYP may require.

Oversight of any additional adults working with the class.

Teaching Assistants responsibilities

Do not replace the teacher for a CYP with SEND but enhance the teaching, with the CYP continuing to retain direct access to the high-quality teaching of the most qualified and lead professional in the classroom.

Support the CYP to be as independent in their learning as possible.

Under the direction of the class teacher, delivery of short, intensive spells of one to one or small group interventions.

Peers responsibilities

A key part of an inclusive culture providing support to each other in learning and development.

10) The graduated response also known as assess-plan-do-review⁵

From the SEND code of practice, schools and settings must:

- Identify CYP who are having difficulties in learning
- Assess the needs of CYP including any special educational need
- Plan and deliver provision to help CYP overcome their difficulties
- Review the provision to understand if adjustments and support have helped or are helping the CYP to overcome difficulties
- Involve parent/carers and CYP in planning and reviewing any adjustments or support that is put in place; securing parent/carer and CYP input throughout the assess/plan/do/review process.

Parents should be actively involved and informed throughout the whole process of planning to meet the individual child's SEN.

(i) Assess

A clear analysis of the CYP's strengths and needs should be undertaken; it is important to differentiate between a learning gap and a learning difficulty. This assessment should include progress and attainment over time and other information from the school's core systems for monitoring and tracking such as information on attitudes and behaviours. Historic information, such as prior attainment, is important in shaping a picture. Assessments also need to draw on response to any previous interventions, comparisons to age-related expectations and other data sets. Assessments will often need to go beyond that which is 'academic' or can be defined in age-related terms.

(ii) Plan

Following on from assessment, if required an individualised support plan should be developed with clearly defined actions, goals, timescales and arrangements for review/subsequent assessment.

The support plan should be a dynamic document that informs what happens in the classroom. All school staff working with the CYP should use the support plan to guide the teaching and provision for the CYP.

Schools may wish to use a person-centred planning approach. A person centred approach is an example of good practice in developing effective support plans, enabling CYP, their families and the staff who know them well to engage in planning and decision-making through a process which actively keeps the CYP at the heart.

(iii) Do

Continued direct access to high-quality teaching is critical, focusing on the adjustments and/or additionality which enable the CYP to continue to access learning through the lead professional(s) for that class.

The SENDCo's role is one of expert adviser and of helping to find solutions to ensure the CYP's needs are met effectively. They should also ensure that once a plan is in place, it will be implemented consistently and given time to have effect. This might include checking in with the CYP to monitor and make adjustments as required, in collaboration with others.

Section 12 offers a range of strategies, adaptations, differentiation and personalisation designed to assist schools with devising the 'do' element of the cycle, according to needs.

⁵6.45 to 6.56 [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)

(iv) Review

An important part of the cycle is the review of impact/effectiveness of the support plan. Reviews should be structured and focused and at least termly.

As for other parts of the process, collaboration between school, parent/carers and CYP, as well as other partners if appropriate, is key to an effective review, establishing a shared, accurate understanding of the impact of support, intervention, adjustments and additionality.

The review stage informs and works in coalition with the next round of assessment within the cycle. However, it is important to remember that this 'specific' review stage does not replace the need for on-going, formative and responsive assessment in real-time. This stage is more summative in nature.



11) The four broad areas of need⁶

(i) Communication and interaction

- includes all CYP who have difficulty in communicating with others, either because they have difficulty saying what they want, understanding what is being said to them, or they do not understand the social rules of communication. This includes those on the autism spectrum (ASD) or with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

(ii) Cognition and learning

- includes moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and specific learning difficulties (SpLD).

(iii) Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)

- may include distractibility, poor relationships with peers, non-co-operation, disengagement, anger, distress, verbal or physical violence, sometimes as a result of an unidentified/unmet communication, interaction or learning need.

(iv) Sensory and/or physical

- children with sensory and/or physical impairment may need additions and adaptations to the environment and to resources including specialist equipment and specialist advice for the school.



⁶Please refer to 6.28 to 6.35 of the [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) for more detail

12) SEND support strategies by category of need

This section clarifies the expectations of special educational provision that mainstream schools and settings can make via SEND Support. Not all schools will make these arrangements all the time but can reasonably do so when required. For commonly occurring difficulties, schools need to be mindful of their anticipatory duties.



(i) Communication and interaction

Modify the language that adults use; avoidance of information overload by reducing and chunking language, use language with simple grammatical structure and support verbal speech with a visual representation of the information (appropriate to the developmental needs of the CYP)

Staff can be supported to better understand the developmental levels of communication and interaction by accessing formal training (e.g. ELKLAN) or informal training

Specific attention and listening activities built into daily learning experiences for CYP. In general, attention and listening skills can be promoted through consistent use of visual support by the adults to assist the CYP's understanding of the expectations, use of specific praise and feedback and consistent access to developmentally appropriate learning resources

Curriculum and time-tabling which provides opportunities for pre-teaching and re-enforcement of vocabulary when new concepts or units of work are introduced

Use of adult/peer facilitator to scaffold and check understanding at key points in learning

Targeted support to make verbal contributions to the group in identified/focus areas

Use of peer mentor and peer support systems

A range of opportunities for CYP to develop their understanding of curriculum specific and general vocabulary, such as digital media, real life experience and visits. This will need to be supported by curriculum and time-tabling at key opportunities (e.g. introduction of a new topic)

Key vocabulary and concepts targeted first with consistent visual representation of vocabulary (e.g. through use of symbolic communication and the written word); this can promote generalisation of understanding across learning opportunities.

Use of tailored support strategies to scaffold oral responses

Targeted support to make verbal contributions to the group in identified/focus areas; this may include providing visual supports to enable the CYP to contribute verbally, such as choice boards, writing frames, story boards, sequencing or cue cards

Symbol support programmes should be considered to adapt resources where literacy levels or comprehension are low (e.g. communicate in print)

(i) Communication and interaction continued



Sensitive grouping to enable social interaction in a secure environment; planned groupings in class enable peers to provide role models re. communication with reference to explicit and implicit information

For some CYP, visual whole word approaches to literacy due to difficulty with sound systems

Enhanced opportunities for guided reading to support decoding comprehension, and inference, with targeted comprehension groups identified through appropriate assessment (e.g. through blank level questioning)

Regular (at least weekly, ideally more frequently) explicit pre-teaching of new vocabulary; this will need to be supported by curriculum and timetabling at key opportunities (e.g. introduction of a new topic)

For CYP with more significant or persistent difficulties, the development of language use and or understanding via targeted interventions should coincide with a SaLT referral

A focus on teaching the use of phonological and semantic cues; this is best supported by consistent visual scaffolds (e.g. word maps and mind maps) which have the added benefit of support for conceptual understanding and generalisation. Use of adult/peer facilitator to scaffold and check understanding at key points in learning

Structured opportunities to learn how to work collaboratively and to practice those skills regularly

Consideration of environment and seating arrangements to support both collaboration and independent working without distractions, as appropriate to the task. Access to a low stimulation workspace or sensory space should be considered if the CYP finds group work challenging

Structured opportunities to interact with different peers and adults in a range of contexts

Use of resources and strategies to alleviate load on auditory memory and organisation of information (e.g. task plans, sequence boards, visual timetables, subject specific word banks and glossaries, post-it notes, digital recorders, smart 'phone apps)

Careful use of language and avoidance of information overload by reducing and chunking language

Using literal language with simple grammatical structure

Modify the language that adults use; address the child/young person by name, reduce, slow down, give take up time, use non-literal language with care

Supporting verbal speech with a visual representation of the information (appropriate to the developmental needs of the CYP)

(i) Communication and interaction

Social communication



Teaching of specific interaction skills and social use of language (e.g. Sulp (Social Use of Language Programme)) with opportunities to generalise skills on a daily basis

Specific teaching of inference

Use of a visual timetable to manage changes and lesson transitions

Visual approaches to develop social understanding (e.g. social stories)

Ensuring that agreed support resources are readily available (e.g. signs, symbols, writing frames, flexible timetable)

Access to low distraction areas

Social/behaviour interventions preferably delivered by staff who have accreditation (e.g. ELSA, ELKLAN)

Consistent and structured routines and organisation

Support to transfer attention from self-selected tasks to those which are directed

Specific, focused teaching of the co-ordination of oral and written language.

Preparing CYP for non-routine events and changes to the norm



Communication and interaction

(ii) Cognition and learning



Curriculum adapted to promote full participation, support experiential learning use talk for learning, promote independence, and support social inclusion

Pre-teaching of vocabulary

Curriculum differentiated so that content can be accessed independently of specific difficulties while supporting the development of key skills

Use of developmental language appropriate to the CYP in questioning and use of skilled explanation

Structured programmes for phonics, comprehension, numeracy

Curriculum provides opportunities for repetition, over-learning and consolidation of skills at an appropriate level

Planned multi-sensory teaching opportunities taking account of differing strengths and interests

Interventions to develop cognitive function (e.g. comparison, categorisation, metacognition)

Questioning supports CYP in their learning and in developing independence/ skills

Strong emphasis on meta-cognitive approaches (e.g. how can you help yourself to remember this?)

Modification of environment and the teaching of skills to develop:

- Attention and on task behaviour
- Memory and retention of information
- Planning and organisation
- Thinking and reasoning

Total communication approach embedded including signing, visuals, objects of reference and verbal support

Cognition and learning

Access to alternative methods of recording (mind-mapping, video or audio recording, posters, dictation, use of ICT)

Use of specialist resources to support the development of numeracy (e.g. Numicon, number frames and rods, counting and number lines)

(ii) Cognition and learning Literacy difficulties⁷



Use whole word reading approach alongside phonics if appropriate

Use ICT to support personalised learning and reinforcement of whole class learning, (e.g. speech to text software, predictive software, photograph of lesson work on whiteboard, whiteboard material on memory stick)

Use individual and small group activities to prepare the young person for the learning that will take place in a later whole class activity and to teach particular skills

Use of strategies for scaffolding of literacy-based tasks (e.g. writing frames, sequencing, cue cards, highlighting)

Use individual and small group work to prepare the child for the learning that will take place in a later whole class activity and to teach particular skills

Encouragement to verbalise, share and develop ideas prior to writing

Have writing supports available on the child's table (not just on the wall): (e.g. phonics and word mats, word banks, personal dictionaries and common spellings)

Use of specific ICT programmes and specialist equipment to enhance recording and presentation of work (e.g. CIP, write on-line, read and write)



Cognition and learning

⁷ Oxfordshire Literacy Difficulties - Policy and Advice 2022

(ii) Cognition and learning Maths difficulties



Use assessment to build on pupils existing knowledge and understanding and to address misunderstandings

Support all topics with manipulatives/real objects and ensure a range of activities to support children in making conceptual links between topics (e.g. Cuisenaire rods/ Dienes blocks)

Use errorless learning techniques to motivate and increase enjoyment of tasks

Use models, representations (such as number lines and graphs) and multi-sensory resources purposefully and appropriately to promote understanding

Emphasise the many connections between mathematical facts, procedures, and concepts

Ensure that pupils develop fluent recall of number facts, games can be an effective way of achieving this.



Cognition and learning



(iii) Social, emotional and mental health

Minimal change of routine, familiar key adults and environment

Trusted key worker in place who forms a genuine and meaningful professional relationship with the CYP

Transitions including changes of staff or peer group notified in advance and planned for, preferably alongside the CYP

Significant preparation for changes using such strategies such as 'social stories'

Specific support for unstructured times within the day

Use of structured assessments, including those commercially produced

Strategies that are successful for the CYP readily available, with CYP given opportunity to select a strategy themselves to support independent learning skills

Planning matched to type of need and presenting behaviours (e.g. withdrawn, physically aggressive, different types of attachment)

Interspersing of non-preferred and preferred tasks

Groupings to maximise a sense of belonging, esteem, communication skills, listening skills, emotional literacy, resilience, social and emotional aspects of learning, self-awareness, self-organisation and independence

Grouping to explicitly promote turn-taking and sharing

Opportunities for taking responsibility, opportunities to take on a role outside current expertise

Flexibility built into the behaviour policy to accommodate different SEMH needs, for example, adjustments to behaviour/uniform policies in accordance with the expectations of reasonable adjustments set out in the Equality Act 2010

Staff vigilant to perceived injustice and proactively explicit in how matters are addressed and resolved

Specific teaching of emotional language with opportunity to observe staff and peer modelling of language use

Focused learning of social communication skills

Reduced, chunked language; supported by visual aids appropriate to the reading and cognition levels of the CYP

Direct teaching of active listening strategies

Use of communication and interaction strategies to enhance whole class and small group teaching; including (but not restricted to) visual referencing, questioning, vocabulary development, social thinking and working memory techniques

(iii) Social, emotional and mental health continued



Explicit teaching of emotional vocabulary and specific feedback on the emotions when opportunity arises in context (e.g. when they occur/ are triggered and how they can be managed)

Range of additional opportunities for social and emotional development (e.g. social skills, buddy systems, circle time, circle of friends)

Use of specific attachment and trauma guides/strategies as appropriate to need

Co-regulation techniques leading to self-regulation

Consideration of seating plans according to the CYP's needs (e.g. are they better placed near to the teacher, which peers should they sit with?)

Enhanced supervision in unstructured time or the provision of clubs and adult-led activities

Enhanced PDL programme and re-enforcement throughout the school day

Seating plans and classroom layout adjusted to meet sensory, attention needs

Support periods of transition and other key triggers times for the pupil

Opportunities to explore the development of close relationships, enabling the growth of self-assurance and promoting a sense of belonging, allowing CYP to explore the world from a secure base

Positive behaviour system in place for less structured times of the day and for extra-curricular activities, with planned intervention for identified CYP

Use buddies and peer mentors for support and modelling

Inclusion in nurture groups or intervention set up with nurture principles, run by trained staff, coordinated across the school and seeking to reintegrate CYP by reviewing carefully targeted outcomes

Time out opportunities within and outside the classroom which follow procedures agreed with the CYP and which focus on getting back on track/task completion

Heightened pastoral support with regular sessions for the young person to 'check in' with a trusted member of staff through the day / week to discuss what is working well and provide support for issues that occur

Staff trained in de-escalation strategies and positive intervention

Use an emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA) for specific 1:1 work or small group work

(iv) Physical and/or sensory Vision impairment



Staff aware of CYP's eye condition and the impact it has on their learning, personal development and daily tasks. Learning the CYP's specific vision impairment and its implications will take place before the CYP starts in a new class or setting.

Use an environmental checklist to consider adaptations such as highlighting steps and keeping routeways clear

Multi-sensory teaching approaches that enable the CYP to use their other senses to access learning

Plan and adapt the classroom environment and any group or practical work to ensure that the CYP is in the optimum viewing position; this may change with different activities

Staff aware of the principles of effective task design for CYP with visual impairment and can put this into practice for CYP so they can access learning as independently as possible

Use of real objects and real-life contexts to support learning

Check lighting levels and glare from windows; curtains, blinds (where available) and a consideration of seating position will all be considered to optimise lighting levels and reduce glare. Provide a stand-alone task lamp where necessary to increase illumination of tasks.

Lesson content prepared in advance and presented in a way which meets the individual CYP's visual needs (e.g. preferred large print size and decluttered)

Explicit teaching to develop specialist skills such as touch typing

Repetition and oral clarification of instructions, vocabulary and new concepts

Access to specialist equipment such as technology to replicate the interactive whiteboard on a mobile device, low vision aids and magnifiers, sloping boards, large print materials, as advised by OCC Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS)

Additional time to complete tasks if needed or modification to task (e.g. reduction in number of questions to be tackled) to allow completion at the same time as peers



Physical and/or sensory

(iv) Physical and/or sensory Vision impairment continued



Use of mainstream accessibility options on computers (e.g. enlarged font established on the CYPs profile, enlarged cursor and arrow, preferred colour of screen, preferred speed of movement of arrow, use of 'read aloud' option on webpages and documents)

All off-site activities planned carefully to ensure the CYP has full/appropriate access to be able to participate safely. Sites of visits should be made aware in advance that a CYP with VI will be visiting

Peers may need awareness raising to understand and support the needs of the CYP

Consideration of access arrangements for all school-based and external assessments based on the CYP's usual way of working.

Additional support in new or unfamiliar environments

Appropriate risk assessment in place.

Advice and support for mobility, orientation and independence skills from S&CS VI Team

Individual/small group intervention to help CYP manage their visual impairment and develop a positive self-image

Specialist advice and training on strategies and teaching approaches is provided by the Qualified Teachers for Visual Impairment (QTVI) in the OCC Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS)

Support for social interaction and inclusion



Physical and/or sensory

(iv) Physical and/or sensory Deafness



Staff aware of CYP's hearing impairment and the implications

The speaker should always have the attention of the CYP before speaking

Curriculum differentiated to enable the CYP to access it independently and at a level of appropriate challenge

Adults repeat the contributions of other CYP in lessons as these may be missed or misheard

Consideration of Access Arrangements for assessments and embed these into the normal way of working if required

Support for social interaction and inclusion

Individual/small group intervention to introduce and consolidate new language and concepts

Appropriate risk assessment in place

Additional time to complete tasks as required

Checking understanding of instruction and new vocabulary through open comments with the CYP's name at the start (e.g. "John, show me")

Training and advice from SENSS Hearing Impairment Team on appropriate strategies, teaching approaches and implication of the CYP's hearing loss

Attention to positioning in class; CYP with mild or fluctuating hearing loss may need to read the lip pattern of the speaker to supplement their auditory access, therefore position when speaking to CYP is significant

A multi-sensory approach including the use of visual aids and contextual cues. This is especially important during phonics sessions when CYP are establishing their phoneme-grapheme correlation and may mis-hear sounds or not have access to the sounds due to their hearing threshold

Training in how to manage the CYP's hearing aids and any additional equipment

Consideration given to the CYP's access to spoken language in large group situations such as assemblies

Individual/small group intervention to help CYP accept and manage their hearing loss and develop a positive self-image

Monitoring of and support for the use of hearing aids and any additional equipment

Consideration given to the CYP's access to spoken language in large reverberant rooms such as school halls, gyms, science labs

Other CYP may need awareness raising to understand and enable greater inclusion of their deaf peers' needs

Appropriate risk assessment in place.

Use of subtitles and or a written script when being shown video clips, DVDs etc. (CYP with hearing impairment should not be asked to take notes when they are watching a clip)

Specialist advice and training on strategies and teaching approaches is provided by the Qualified Teachers for Visual Impairment (QTVI) in the OCC Special Educational Needs Support Service (SENSS)



(iv) Physical and/or sensory Multi-sensory impairment MSI (reduced hearing and vision)

Staff involved are aware of CYP's multisensory impairment and the impact it has on their learning, personal development and daily tasks

Plan and adapt the classroom environment and any group or practical work to ensure that the CYP is in the optimum seating position; this may change with different activities

Well organised classroom to avoid obstacles such as bags on the floor or furniture, which may cause trip hazards

Check lighting levels and glare from windows; CYP should sit with their back to the window (use classroom blinds and lights to optimise learning environment)

Ensure background noise is kept to a minimum (e.g. noise from corridor)

Consider checklist to consider environmental adaptations such as highlighting steps and keeping walkways clear (checklists are available from the SENSS teams)

Lesson content should be prepared in advance and presented in a way which meets the individual CYP's needs (e.g. large print, decluttered)

Planning to ensure full participation in class activities and allowing additional time to complete some tasks

Multisensory teaching approaches that enable the CYP to use their other senses to access learning

Use of real objects and real-life contexts to support learning

Repetition and oral/visual clarification of instructions, vocabulary and new concepts

Training in how to manage the CYP's hearing aids and any associated additional equipment from SENSS

Consideration of access arrangements for all school-based and external assessments based on CYP's usual way of working

Use of sensory motor-based activities (e.g. movement breaks, fidget toys)

Advice and support for mobility, orientation and independence skills

Off-site activities need to be planned carefully to ensure the CYP has full/appropriate access to be able to participate safely

Additional support in new or unfamiliar environments

Individual/small group intervention to help CYP manage their multisensory impairment and develop a positive self-image

Peers may need awareness raising to understand and support the needs of the CYP

Appropriate risk assessment in place.

Specialist advice and training on strategies and teaching approaches is provided by the SENSS teams (vision impairment, deaf and hearing support or multi-sensory impairment) depending on the child's needs

(iv) Physical and/or sensory Physical disability



Staff aware of the nature of the physical or neurological difficulty and the impact it has on a CYP's learning, personal development and/or access requirements

Off-site activities planned carefully to ensure the CYP has full/appropriate access to be able to participate fully and safely

Resources chosen to limit need for manipulation if appropriate

The CYP may require emotional support with regards to their understanding and acceptance of any physical limitations imposed on them by the effects of their disability

CYP's attention should be gained before adults or peers start speaking

Written recording demands reduced as appropriate; alternative means of recording made available

Plan and adapt the classroom environment and any group or practical work to ensure that the CYP is in the optimum seating position; this may change with different activities

Extra time allowed for thinking, processing and formulating responses

Regular rest breaks to reduce mental and physical fatigue

Make adjustments and adaptations to the environment to allow independent access and mobility

Access to therapeutic programmes as appropriate

Additional support for self-care provided by trained staff when required/requested

Well organised classroom to avoid hazards such as bags on the floor or furniture, which may be difficult to manoeuvre around

Staff will need to follow advice from therapists regarding management of the CYP's programmes of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and self-help skills

Safe, accessible storage, ensuring all parts of equipment are kept together and charged ready for use, as appropriate

Additional support in new or unfamiliar environments

A personalised emergency evacuation plan in place as appropriate.

Access Arrangements for assessments

Specialist advice is available from the SENSS Physical Disability team

Access to a range of alternative recording methods, including a scribe, the use of ICT, rest breaks and extra time as appropriate

13) Resources

Legislation, statutory guidance and Department for Education guidance

- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#)
- [The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [The Department for Education SEND pages](#)

Overarching SEND

The [Nasen SEND Gateway](#) is supported by government and designed to be a 'one stop shop' or repository of relevant information and support.

Local Resources

- [Early Years SEN toolkit](#)
- [Quality First Teaching](#)
- [Oxfordshire School Inclusion Team website](#)