Ordinarily Available Provision in Redcar and Cleveland Mainstream Schools

this is **Redcar & Cleveland**

Contents

Introduction

In Redcar and Cleveland, we are committed to ensuring that every learner has the best possible start in life, through access to inclusive, high-quality education. This guidance, alongside the linked resources, sets out the provision that should be 'ordinarily available' across all our mainstream schools.

This document has been developed collaboratively with our schools, the Specialist Teaching Service, the Educational Psychology Service, Special Educational Need and Disabilities Coordinators (SENDCos), STARS and SEND Family Voice Redcar and Cleveland. This document has also been written with reference to work published by other local authorities.

This guidance should read alongside other key resources such as the SENDCo Handbook and the Reasonable Expectations in Mainstream School documents.

SENDCo Handbook 25-26 and SENDCo Toolkit | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Reasonable Expectations in Mainstream School | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

CLASS WORK:
Ten-year-old pupils enjoying a lesson

What is Ordinarily Available Provision?

Ordinarily Available Provision refers to the support and strategies that all schools, early years settings, and post-16 providers are expected to deliver using their own resources. This document sets out clear expectations for such provision, which will often form part of the everyday practices for all children and young people. It describes the high-quality teaching, adaptations, and inclusive strategies that make up Quality First Teaching (QFT), ensuring all learners are included. While these strategies are particularly important for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), they benefit a wide range of pupils.

Key components of ordinarily available provision include:

- Early identification of SEND to ensure timely support and intervention.

- Effective teaching and learning approaches.

- Focused/targeted interventions.

- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress through the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle.

- Skilled, well-supported staff engaged in continuous professional development.

- Strong pastoral support that promotes wellbeing and inclusion.

- Active collaboration with families and learners to ensure shared understanding and joint problem-solving.

- An inclusive environment, including access to appropriate facilities/equipment.

- Support during transitions and preparation for adulthood.

Legal Duties of Schools Regarding SEND

Schools have clear legal responsibilities under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015. They are required to 'have regard' to the Code, which means that schools should follow its guidance or be able to explain why an alternative approach has been taken.

The law is based on the principle that a child or young person with SEND has the right to a place in a mainstream setting if requested by their parent or the young person themselves. Schools cannot refuse admission on the grounds that mainstream education is unsuitable or that a child's needs are too great or complex. Mainstream schools are required to ensure that children or young people with SEND can participate fully in the life of the school, alongside their peers who do not have SEND (Section 35, Children and Families Act 2014).

Code of Practice, DfE 2015

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at 1 or 2 above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Equality Act 2010

Schools also have a range of duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Key Points:

- The Equality Act 2010 provides a single source of discrimination law.

- The Act requires that schools must not lawfully discriminate against learners because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

- The Act extends the reasonable adjustment duty to require schools to provide auxiliary aids and services to disabled learners or those with additional educational needs.

READY TO LEARN: Students aged 13 in class

What is Ordinarily Available Provision? *continued*

The 'Best Endeavours' Duty

All mainstream and alternative provision settings have a legal duty to use their 'best endeavours' to support children and young people with SEN. This means taking all reasonable steps to ensure that a learner's needs are met.

Section 66 of the Children and Families Act 2014 states: "If a registered learner or a student at a school or other institution has special educational needs, the appropriate authority must, in exercising its functions in relation to the school or other institution, use its best endeavours to secure that the special educational provision called for by the learner's or student's special educational needs is made".

In legal terms, the 'appropriate authority' is the governing body of the school, rather than the Head Teacher. This duty applies to all children and young people with SEN, regardless of whether they have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan.

Using best endeavours involves:

■ Ensuring that provision is in place to meet the learner's needs.

■ Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of provision.

■ Seeking specialist advice and support where appropriate, for example from speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, or other specialists, particularly "where a learner continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions matched to the learner's area of need" (SEND Code of Practice, paragraph 6.58 for schools).

Quality First Teaching (QFT)

High-quality, inclusive teaching forms the foundation of provision for all learners and must be available to every child, without exception. Within a positive and enabling environment, teachers are expected to anticipate and reduce barriers by making reasonable adjustments to ensure every learner can access the curriculum. QFT includes adaptive teaching strategies that respond to diverse learning needs, appropriate scaffolding, use of resources and approaches that remove barriers to learning, and high expectations that recognise and build on each learner's strengths.

Identification of Need and Targeted Support

Some learners will require short-term, targeted interventions alongside high-quality classroom teaching. These interventions aim to close specific gaps in learning or address identified barriers and should be carefully monitored to evaluate their impact.

Where a learner has continuing or more complex needs, schools should:

■ Develop a SEND Support Plan or SEND Support Plan Plus to outline strategies, provision and agreed outcomes.

■ Implement an Individual Health Care Plan where the learner has physical or medical needs.

Further guidance is available here:

SEND Support Plans | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

SEND Support Plan Plus | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Co-Production and Partnership Working

Good practice in SEN support is grounded in genuine partnership with parents, carers and, wherever possible, the learner themselves. Where relevant, schools should also work collaboratively with external agencies to build a shared understanding of strengths and abilities, difficulties, and desired outcomes.

Key elements of effective co-production include:

■ Involving learners and parent/carers in all decision-making, ensuring their voices are central to planning.

■ Seeking and acting upon their views to shape provision.

■ Agreeing realistic, personalised outcomes that are both ambitious and achievable.

■ Ensuring the learner is on the school's SEN register and reviewing progress at least termly.

■ Collaborating with parent/carer and young person when creating the SEND plan.

■ Providing parents/carers with updated SEN plans after each review.

■ Working with local authority education services such as Specialist Teachers or Educational Psychology Service.

■ Working with outside agencies such as CAMHS, Social Care.

■ Annually updating the school's SEN Information Report and SEND Policy so families understand.

■ Signposting families to the Redcar and Cleveland Local Offer and the SEND Disability Register (if appropriate).

■ Sharing details of relevant services, events, and provisions available to support children with SEND regularly.

Early and ongoing co-production helps to remove barriers, strengthen engagement, and ensure provision remains responsive to the learner's evolving needs, supporting them to achieve agreed outcomes.

Teachers' Standards

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all learners in their class. High-quality teaching, adapted to meet individual needs, is the essential first step in supporting learners with SEND. Schools should regularly and systematically review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. The process should include evaluating, and where necessary strengthening, teachers' knowledge and understanding of SEND, alongside their skills in identifying and supporting vulnerable learners.

Teachers should:

■ Promote good progress and positive outcomes for all learners.

■ Be aware of the learners capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these.

■ Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how learners learn and the implications for effective teaching.

■ Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all learners.

■ Differentiate appropriately, using approaches that enable all learners to be taught effectively.

■ Have a secure understanding of the range of factors that can inhibit learning and apply strategies to overcome these barriers.

■ Demonstrate awareness of the physical, social, and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support different stages of development.

■ Have a clear understanding of the diverse needs of all learners, including those with SEND; those of high ability; learners with English as an additional language; and those with disabilities; and be able to select and evaluate teaching approaches that effectively engage and support them.

Graduated Approach

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) recognises that special educational needs exist on a continuum, and that provision should be responsive to a learner's level of need. This is referred to as the graduated approach.

In practice, this involves:

■ Quality First Teaching for all learners as the foundation of provision.

■ When a learner does not make expected progress, staff should identify and implement evidence based interventions that are additional to or different from the usual classroom offer.

■ Regular review of provision through the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle, evaluating impact of interventions and informing next steps.

Most learners' needs can be met within mainstream settings using the school's existing resources. If progress remains limited despite targeted, evidence-based interventions, schools should consider drawing on specialist expertise – either from within the setting or via external professionals. This ensures that support becomes increasingly personalised and responsive, as needs are better understood.

ASSESS

PLAN

DO

REVIEW

Assess: Use a range of sources to identify whether a learner shows delay or difficulties, including assessment/information from other sources. Consider strengths, interests, areas of need, types of need, and support from other agencies. Involve learner and parent/carer.

Plan: Work in partnerhsip with learner/parent taking on board external advice where needed to plan what extra support or interventions to put in place for the learner to make progress. Record in a SEND Support Plan.

Do: Put into practice what has been agreed, monitor and record impact. This may be done using a SEN Support Plan or school's own monitoring processes.

Review: regularly review the impact of the support that has been implemented. Is there progress? If not, what are the next steps?

SEND Support in Redcar and Cleveland

In Redcar and Cleveland, for mainstream schools, we have a Resource and Support Panel, which may recommend advice from the Specialist Teaching Service, Educational Psychology Service, Inclusion Service or offer outreach from our Additionally Resourced Provisions..

For children below statutory school age, advice is available from our Early Years SEND Practitioners. Additional support may be sought from other services within the local authority, for example; the 0-19 Service, Early Help, CAMHS: Getting Help/Getting More Help and Kinship Care. Some schools may also seek guidance from advisory services within their multi-academy trust. Where a learner's needs exceed the school's ordinarily available provision, high needs funding may be applied for to support targeted provision.

HAND-UP: Eager pupils answering teacher

External specialists can contribute at different stages of the SEND pathway:

■ Early identification – providing advice on provision designed to prevent more significant needs from developing.

■ Ongoing support – assisting in planning and implementing interventions to overcome persistent barriers to learning and achievement.

If a learner continues to make limited progress despite sustained interventions and external advice, the school may request a statutory Education, Health, and Care (EHC) needs assessment.

Before requesting additional resources or a statutory assessment, schools are expected to show their graduated response to the learner's needs and should be able to evidence that they have:

■ Implemented targeted interventions over a significant period, typically covering at least two cycles of the Assess-Plan-Do-Review process.

■ Sought advice and support from local authority or external agencies.

■ Demonstrated that the learner's needs cannot be met from the school's ordinarily available resources.

The decision to issue an EHC Plan is based on the strength of evidence provided and whether the learner's needs meet the statutory criteria.

Redcar and Cleveland Graduated Response

How are needs met within Redcar and Cleveland for learners aged 0-25 in early years, mainstream school, and post 16 settings.

Tier 3: Element 3 Funding
SEND Support Plan should be in place and school evidence at least 2 cycles of Assess, Plan, Do, Review. If no progress is evident, and school feel unable to meet need within their resources, an Education Health and Care Plan Needs Assessment may be requested.

Tier 2: Element 2 Funding
School implements a SEND Support Plan/Plus and monitors progress on a termly basis. Advice can be sought through the Resource and Support Panel. Early Years Support can be sought via the Early Years Area SENDCo.

Tier 1: Element 1 Funding
School to implement support through their own resources. Advice can be sought from School's SENDCo or support from within their own trust advisory support.

Redcar and Cleveland SEND Ranges

This document should be used in conjunction with Redcar and Cleveland SEND Ranges.

The SEND Ranges can provide guidance on what the level of need is, what resources are available to support them, and guidance on when and how to seek further advice.

To access the Redcar and Cleveland SEND Ranges click this link: SEND Ranges for Redcar and Cleveland | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

GLOBAL LEARNING:
Teacher with young children

Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority Responsibilities for SEND

The local authority is responsible for ensuring that all children and young people – including the most disadvantaged, vulnerable, and those with SEND - can access the education and support they need to achieve positive outcomes and future opportunities.

All schools are expected to meet the needs of learners with SEND and other vulnerable groups within their locality, in line with the Education Act and in partnership with the wider education community.

Key SEND responsibilities of the local authority include:

■ Ensuring sufficient SEND provision is available and reviewing this provision annually.

■ Publishing clear information on SEND funding and available provision.

■ Providing statutory information, advice, and support (SENDIASS), including mediation and dispute resolution services.

■ Coordinating statutory assessment and maintaining / reviewing Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs).

The local authority must also maintain a Local Offer, which outlines the range of provision available locally and beyond for children and young people with SEND.

The updated Local Offer can be found on the Redcar and Cleveland Information Directory: Redcar and Cleveland Information Directory | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Links to useful sites

Redcar and Cleveland Information Directory: Redcar and Cleveland Information Directory | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

RCBC SEND Ranges: SEND Ranges - Guidance for Settings | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Redcar and Cleveland SENDCo Handbook: SENDCo Handbook 24-25 and SENDCo Toolkit | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Childcare Act 2006: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/contents

Children and Families Act 2014 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents

Children and Families Act 2014 Part 3 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/part/3/crossheading/special-educational-provision-functions-of-governing-bodies-and-others

Equality Act 2010 technical_guidance_for_schools_england.pdf

SEND Code of Practice: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Whole School SEND: Whole School SEND Home Page | Whole School SEND

Four Broad Areas of Need

How to use this document

Cognition and Learning

COP 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.

CoP 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.

Communication and Interaction

COP 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 the different aspects of speech, language, or social communication at different times of their lives.

CoP 6.29: children and young people with ASD, including Asperger syndrome and autism, are likely to have difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication, and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Social and Emotional Mental Health

CoP 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 hyperactivity disorder or attachment disorder.

CoP 6.33: Schools and colleges should have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour, so it does not adversely affect other learners. The Department for Education publishes guidance on managing mental health and behaviour difficulties in schools.

Sensory and Physical

CoP 6.34: 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 rehabilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Information on how to provide services for deaf blind children and young people is available through the social care for deaf blind children and adults guidance published by the Department of Health.

CoP 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.

This document is divided into five key sections:

1 General strategies for meeting needs

2 Cognition and Learning

3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health

4 Communication and Interaction, including Autism

5 Sensory and Physical
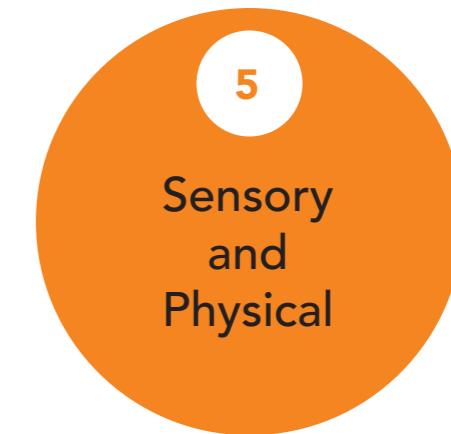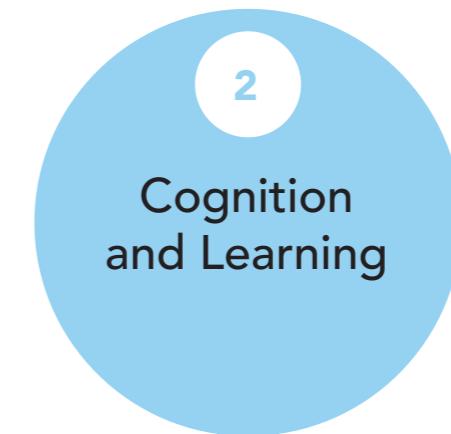
Each section has a 'checked' column, which can be used to identify when this support was implemented for a learner. This can then be used as evidence of a graduated response to meet the learner's needs.

(1) General strategies for meeting needs

Within an inclusive learning environment, a range of policies, practises, and strategies are considered part of ordinarily available provision. These approaches are embedded into whole-school and classroom practise to ensure that all learners - including those with additional needs - can access the curriculum and participate fully in school life.

These strategies are not aimed at a single category of need; rather they reflect principles of high-quality teaching, inclusive planning, and responsive support that benefit most learners. This section provides information on these widely applicable strategies, which support a broad range of needs and help to create a consistent, supportive environment where individual differences are recognised, barriers to learning are reduced, and every learner can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Strategies	Checked
Relationships and communication:	
Build strong, positive relationships with pupils and families, establishing trust and mutual respect.	
Put the voice of the learner and their family at the centre of planning.	
Collaborate closely to set aspirational goals important to the learner.	
Promote high expectations for all learners, fostering an inclusive, supportive school culture.	
Ensure consistent communication methods between home and school (e.g. email, letter, or a home-school book to share valuable information and news).	
Use positive, encouraging language to boost confidence and self-esteem. Recognise and celebrate progress.	
Be mindful of tone of voice/communication style.	
Collaborate with specialists and external agencies as needed.	
Explicitly teach safe behaviours (online safety, stranger awareness) using visual supports.	
Create a positive classroom ethos, based on strong relationships, where making and learning from mistakes is accepted.	
Establish clear classroom expectations and routines, supported by tools such as a class charter.	
Listen to the learners regarding their differences and the impact it has on them.	
Ensure learners know how and whom to ask for help if needed.	
Accept and celebrate difference, promoting inclusion in school and the wider community.	
Involving learners and families in planning and preparing for adulthood from an early age.	

Structure, Routines, and Predictability:	
Maintain predictable routines and clear expectations. Pre-warn learners about significant changes.	
Use visual supports/reminders for routines, transitions, and choices (e.g. first/then boards, now/next boards).	
Learning Environment:	
Create low-arousal, tidy learning spaces, with reduced visual/auditory distractions, to reduce sensory overload in the classroom.	
Clearly label learning areas and resources, keep displays uncluttered, and purposefully structure the classroom.	
Consider quiet workstations or flexible seating. Think about how about how your tables are set – in a group, facing forward, paired etc – and consider what works best for a particular class, adapting arrangements to meet learners' needs.	
Instruction and Information Delivery:	
Break tasks and instructions down into small, clear steps. Be mindful of reducing language/ vocabulary and check understanding.	
Use learners' names when giving instructions and face them when speaking. Ensure they understood the instructions and can repeat them.	
Allow time for processing and response.	
Reduce demands on auditory memory by providing printed/visual materials. See Understanding Working Memory: A Classroom Guide from: https://pdnet.org.uk/media/WM-classroom-guide.pdf	
Repeat instructions and information as needed or provide further explanations.	
Provide verbal and visual descriptions and explanations when necessary.	
Reduce unnecessary copying from the board.	
Provide multiple ways for learners to access tasks / information and record information (visuals, verbal, digital, practical).	
Use ICT to enhance access to the curriculum.	
Curriculum access and scaffolding:	
Recognise that needs may overlap (comorbidity) and plan support holistically.	
Consider flexibility in timetabling.	
Use resources creatively to develop and deliver high functioning learning environments that effectively meet the needs of all learners.	
Offer pre- and post-learning opportunities to reinforce key concepts and vocabulary.	

General strategies for meeting needs *continued*

Include short, regular practice sessions to support retention.	
Adapt tasks and teaching methods to accommodate level of understanding, attention, processing, sensory needs etc.	
Plan for movement and active learning opportunities throughout the day.	
Build in rest breaks to manage fatigue. Be mindful that some learners with difficulties will be working much harder than their peers to concentrate/focus and engage.	
Ensure access to necessary resources, assistive technology, and adapted equipment.	
Explain words with multiple meanings and avoid idioms/sarcasm.	
Provide adult support within whole-class or group settings (e.g. scribe, reader).	
Use real life examples and/or situations to provide context to the learning.	
Use the Preparation for Adulthood resources to improve self-organisation and independence for learning e.g. explicit teaching of how to use timetables.	
Use partner talk time to help the learner process and gather their thoughts before sharing with group	
Monitoring, feedback, and staff development:	
Monitor progress regularly and adapt teaching based on assessment and learner feedback.	
Deliver evidence-based interventions regularly and consistently. Monitor progress made and adjust the intervention based on progress. Promising Programmes	EEF	
Implement the assess-plan-do-review cycle consistently.	
Provide high-quality, regular staff training in SEND awareness, inclusive teaching, and trauma-informed practice. This should include governors, site manager, dinner staff, office staff, transport staff, and volunteers in school.	
Maintain robust systems within school for early identification of underlying needs.	
Consider referral to the Resource and Support Panel for support from specialist teachers or educational psychologists - Resource and Support Panel	Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory	
Consider referral to SPoC – CAMHS - CAMHS - Single Point of Contact Referral Forms	Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory	
Support smooth transitions between classes and schools, involving learners, families, and external agencies.	
Promote good attendance and maintain a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parent/carers understand. Follow up absences promptly.	
Maintain a whole school provision map showing what is ordinarily available, targeted provision, and specialist input/interventions.	

(2) Cognition and Learning

This section outlines strategies to support learners with needs in Cognition and Learning. This includes Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia, as well as Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD). Within mainstream settings, there may be some children presenting with SLD/PMLD, particularly in the early years but it is likely that these children will have a SEND Support Plan/Plus or an EHCP in place.

All learners have unique profiles of strengths and areas for development. Some may benefit from additional support within the school environment, such as targeted small-group work or one-to-one interventions, even if they do not meet the threshold for a formal diagnosis. Provision should always be tailored to the nature, severity, and profile of each learner's needs.

SpLD can affect how information is processed and learned. Learners may present with more than one SpLD, and co-occurrence is common. Difficulties may present as persistent challenges in reading, writing, spelling, and numeracy, alongside possible co-occurring difficulties in language, motor coordination, concentration, or organisation. Sometimes the terms 'dyslexia,' 'dyscalculia,' or 'dyspraxia'/'developmental coordination disorder' may be used to refer to children with SpLD.

Learners with moderate learning difficulties (MDL) develop skills at a slower rate than the majority of their peers, often achieving significantly below age-related expectations – often by several years. Signs may be evident from the early years, including delays in general development and the acquisition of key skills. These learners typically require sustained and higher levels of targeted support in school to engage with the curriculum and develop functional skills.

COMPUTER TIME: Students at work

Cognition and Learning *continued*

Strategies	Checked
Scaffolding and Task Support	
Use scaffolds such as writing frames, story maps, mind maps, model examples, and sentence starters. This could be talking through a story plan first and ensuring it has appropriate structure and makes sense.	
Break tasks into small, manageable steps and provide clear, concise step-by-step instructions. Check for understanding.	
Pre-teach vocabulary or concepts; provide opportunities for repetition, overlearning and retrieval practice.	
Use precision teaching and/or pre learning where appropriate and have key teaching staff available to provide this support.	
Encourage use of partner talk before group discussion to aid processing.	
Seek to fully understand the cause of attention, concentration, and processing difficulties as they may present for a number of reasons, including ADHD, ACEs and early trauma, anxiety disorder, autism etc.	
Check in with the learner after setting tasks to recap instructions and check that they have remembered what they need to do.	
Frequently repeat and rephrase key information and use heightened visuals to support the learner's processing and memory.	
Provide real-life examples to give context to learning.	
Make learning relevant to the learner, grounding concepts in everyday experiences.	
Recording and Presentation	
Provide alternative methods of recording, for example mind maps, visual story board, diagrams, bullet points, storyboards, ICT (e.g. iPads, laptops, tablets, speech-to-text, Dictaphones, or voice recorders).	
If handwriting is an issue for the learner, consider support for letter formation/handwriting involving multisensory schemes such as Teodorescu/Write from the Start. Ensure advice is sought from the Occupational Therapy Service if needed.	
Adjust presentation of work / worksheets for readability (clear fonts, larger print, coloured backgrounds/paper, reduced text, use of visuals).	
Ensure whiteboard displays and printed materials have a slightly coloured background wherever possible. White/black print is often difficult for learners with SpLD to read well.	
Provide adult support when available as part of general classroom support, to scribe, read, or support recording.	
Be aware of the language demands of tasks and adapt as appropriate.	

Learning Environment and Resources
Carry out an audit of the classroom setting to reduce distractions e.g. <u>What can I do to make my classroom dyslexia-friendly? - Demystifying Dyslexia</u>
Offer quiet spaces or flexible seating when needed.
Ensure all classes have access to concrete resources matched to ability, where relevant (number lines, calculators, Numicon, yellow or blue overlays, phonics mats, alphabet strips, reading rulers).
Consider the use of exercise books which may have larger/coloured lines or coloured pages. <u>Crossbow Education	Visual Stress	Dyslexia resources</u>
Ensure resources are matched to the learner's ability e.g. Whilst most of the class may be using number squares it might be appropriate for some children/young people to use number lines.
Use visual timetables, timers, 'first-then' boards, and other organisational supports.
Make reasonable adjustments to activities and lessons (e.g. access to sensory resources such as wobble cushion, visual cues, and prompts).
Literacy and Numeracy Support
Provide opportunities for regularly revisiting basic numeracy and literacy skills.
Teach phonics systematically; practice blending and segmenting CVC, CVCC, CCVC words.
Support the learner's understanding of first, middle, last sounds (initial, medial, final sounds).
Develop learner's recognition of rhyming words and understanding of syllables (encourage them to clap out the syllables).
Use multisensory spelling approaches (e.g. 'Look, Say, Cover, Write' to teach spellings alongside the definition of the word, glitter trays, dough, sand, air writing etc).
Provide high frequency words spelling interventions.
Provide punctuation prompt cards.
Actively teach how to use a dictionary – ensuring the learner knows the alphabet well. If not, provide a visual stimulus to help remember alphabetical order. If the learner is unsure of the alphabet and the letter sounds/names practice using alphabet arc/wooden letters. Introduce ACE dictionaries if appropriate.
Focus on basic number skills and key mathematical concepts, visited regularly in age- appropriate formats.
Deliver targeted interventions based on assessment; delivered consistently by trained staff, reviewed regularly.

Cognition and Learning *continued*

Organisation, Independence, and Executive Skills

Explicitly teach organisational strategies (e.g. using timetables, checklists, and visual cues).

Provide supports for working memory (visual aids, repetition, chunking, reducing cognitive load).

Use retrieval practice and regular recap to strengthen long-term memory.

Incorporate rest breaks, movement breaks (this could be allocated school/classroom jobs such as handing out books), and opportunities for active learning.

Support transitions with clear preparation and consistent routines.

Focus the child/young person's attention on relevant aspect of the task e.g., highlighting key words.

Consider providing a whole class digital clock as many find reading an analogue clock difficult. This will help them to understand when to start and finish the given task in time allowed to reduce anxiety.

Feedback, Motivation, and Mindset

Give frequent, constructive feedback with visual and verbal reinforcement.

Praise efforts and strategies rather than simply praising success, to develop growth mindset.

Encourage reframing of challenges (e.g., "I can't do this yet" instead of "I can't do this", or "this might take some time" instead of "this is too hard"). Encourage the learner to try a different approach instead of giving up, promoting their belief that they can improve through effort and get better with practice, and that mistakes are learning opportunities.

Celebrate progress to build confidence and self-esteem.

Actively involve learners in recognising their strengths and setting small, achievable goals.

Encourage learner to ask for help and for forgotten information to be repeated where necessary. Promote that it is acceptable to ask for help multiple times and enable the learner to ask in a discrete way using resources such as a traffic light system/or simple sign such as putting a rubber at the end of the desk.

Assessment and Access Arrangements

Provide extra time, rest breaks, and adapted resources in assessments where appropriate.

Consider IT or scribe support if needed.

Ensure staff are aware of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments.

Helpful websites:
- British Dyslexia Association: http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/
- Call Scotland: http://www.callscotland.org.uk/
- Dyslexia SpLD Trust: http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/
- Education Endowment Foundation: Education Endowment Foundation | EEF EEF_Metacognition_and_self-regulated_learning.pdf
- PATOSS (specific learning difficulties): https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/
- Dyscalculia Association: www.dyscalculiaassociation.uk

3 Social, Emotional, and Mental Health

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs refers to the wellbeing of an individual in terms of their ability to understand, express, and regulate their emotions, develop positive relationships, maintain positive mental health, and cope with the challenges of life effectively. Just as academic skills develop over time, so do emotional and social competencies. Some children and young people may require additional support to strengthen these skills, particularly if they have experienced challenges that make managing emotions or relationships more difficult.

In school, supporting SEMH is essential for both wellbeing and learning. When learners feel safe, understood, and valued, they are more likely to engage with the curriculum, form meaningful connections, and develop resilience. Supporting SEMH is not only about reducing barriers but also about creating opportunities for confidence, self-regulation, and social understanding to flourish.

Difficulties may arise from a range of factors, including adverse life experiences, family circumstances (such as financial poverty, parental imprisonment, or bereavement) neurodevelopmental differences (such as ADHD), mental health needs (such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, or eating disorders), and specific or general developmental delays. SEMH needs may be expressed in a variety of ways. Some learners may appear withdrawn or anxious, while others may show heightened emotional responses or challenging behaviour that communicates underlying needs. These presentations should be understood in context, with schools working to identify strengths as well as areas requiring support. Early identification and a graduated approach are key. All staff play a vital role in recognising emerging needs, embedding universal wellbeing practices, and seeking additional advice where appropriate. Access to specialist services, such as Mental Health Support Teams, Getting Help/Getting More Help, Educational Psychologists, or Specialist Teachers can extend the support available, ensuring provision is timely, responsive, and tailored to each learner. Support is also available from the Family Hubs, Early help, and Family Support Service for the family.

In recent years, we have seen an increase in emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA) due to mental health reasons. Support and understanding in school settings can reduce the anxiety that learners may be experiencing and enable them to feel able to attend and remain in school. Advice and guidance from can be found by accessing Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
continued

Strategies	Checked
Whole-School Ethos	
Promote a culture of inclusion, empathy, acceptance, and emotional safety.	
Embed trauma-informed and attachment-aware practice.	
Ensure staff access ongoing SEMH-specific CPD.	
Implement a whole-school approach to wellbeing through programmes and approaches such as: Thrive ELSA Emotion Coaching (Emotion Coaching - United Kingdom) Zones of Regulation The Zones of Regulation | A Curriculum For Emotional Regulation / Incredible 5 Point Scale THE INCREDIBLE 5-POINT SCALE - HOME. Growth Mindset Restorative practice	
Promote a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.	
Implement early identification systems for SEMH needs and regular reviews of support plans.	
Emotional Literacy and Self-Regulation	
Deliver a PSHE programme that develops resilience, wellbeing, and social understanding.	
Explicitly teach the vocabulary of emotions, problem-solving, and friendship skills. For instance:	
• Use visuals (emotion cards/scales) to teach learners to label feelings.	
• Adults to model naming their own emotions in context ("I feel a bit frustrated because the projector isn't working, so I'm going to take a breath before I start again").	
• Provide a feelings word bank (e.g. tired, excited, disappointed, proud etc) and encourage learners to use it and recognise their own feelings.	
• Use step-by-step frameworks for problem-solving (e.g. What is the problem? What are my options? What might happen if…? What will I try?).	
• Role-play scenarios (friendship conflict, losing in a game, being left out).	
• Model 'think-aloud' where staff demonstrate calm problem-solving in real life.	
• Make the 'hidden rules' of friendships explicit (e.g. turn-taking, respecting boundaries, apologising, showing an interest in others)	
• Use Social Stories to rehearse situations like joining in a game, starting a conversation, or handling disagreement	
• Praise and reinforce positive peer interactions when they occur.	
• Give safe, structured opportunities for practice (buddy systems, Lego Therapy, supported clubs etc).	
Validate emotions ("I can see that you are angry/upset/hurt/sad, how can I help to get you back on track?").	
Model 'courageous coping' by talking about emotions and strategies in everyday contexts and how we manage them.	
Use daily check-ins (e.g. start/end of the day) to normalise talking about feelings, reflect on challenges, and explore strategies that help with regulation.	
Encourage learners to reframe setbacks.	
Support learners to recognise their own regulation needs and develop strategies that work for them (e.g. calming techniques, sensory tools, movement breaks etc).	
Embed emotional literacy across the curriculum.	
Model social interactions; provide prompts where relevant.	
Behaviour as Communication	
Recognise behaviour as a method of communication of unmet need or a regulatory action; respond with empathy and understanding.	
Use PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) and positive, purposeful, and reassuring language ("We need to…. because…"). PACE - a therapeutic approach | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory / PACE - A Therapeutic Approach - Help Children Live Better	
Adapt behaviour policies to reflect the triggers and function of behaviour (what is the behaviour communicating?), using tools such as the STAR approach. STAR Observation Tool for Dysregulated Behaviour - BDSIP	
Use restorative conversations to repair relationships, resolve conflict, and maintain trust.	
Environment and Regulation	
Follow the SPELL framework:	
Structure: predictable routines, clear boundaries, visual timetables, clearly demarcated transitions during the day, and advance warning of changes.	
Positivity: focus on strengths, celebrate successes, and use solution-focused language.	
Empathy: seek to understand the learner's perspective and validate feelings before problem-solving.	
Low Arousal: calm, measured responses, reduce sensory overload, and avoid escalation in times of distress.	
Links: Build strong, trusting relationships with key adults, and make connections with home and outside agencies to support consistency.	
Reduce sensory and environmental triggers (e.g. consider seating, noise, visual distractions).	
Ensure access to quiet, safe spaces, individual workstations, and calming resources (e.g. fidget tools, chewellery etc).	
Build in movement, sensory, and 'energy balancing' breaks.	

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
continued

Reduce the number of staff supporting when the learner is in heightened state – only those necessary and use reduced language. Sometimes it helps to use a fresh face when a child is in a heightened state.

Limit choices to manageable options.

Recognise that a learner may be 'masking' their social and emotional difficulties in school to try to 'survive' and 'fit in' in the environment, but that this may be causing overwhelm and exhaustion.

Recognise the learner's threshold for social interaction; build in opportunities for appropriate breaks or reduced social demands.

Language should be clear and concise, and requests should be made positively– "It is time to…"

Include the purpose of the instruction where appropriate – "We need to … because…"

Consideration of less structured times of the day, particularly play/break times.

Relationships and Social Connection

Ensure learners know who they can talk to if worried.

Identify a triad of trusted adults in school. These should be members of staff that are likely to be available throughout the school day, and with whom the learner has a positive relationship.

Provide meet-and-greet at the start of the day and soft starts/finishes to lessons (access to a calm safe space; sensory/calming box; relaxation activities etc; emotions check-in with key members of staff). Consider implementing a meet and greet at the change of each lesson by a staff member at the door of the classroom.

Provide access to mentoring, consistent encouragement, guidance, and a safe space for reflection.

Be mindful of learners' entry and exit to and from school if on a part time timetable. Plan what this will be like for the learner so they are able to prepare.

Support access to social opportunities through buddy systems, clubs, and shared-interest activities. Match the learner with supportive/appropriate peers.

Use structured interventions such as Lego Therapy, Social Stories, role play, Alex Kelly's Talkabout programme (talkabout alex kelly pdf - Search Videos), and modelling to develop social understanding and cooperative skills.

Offer roles and responsibilities to build self-esteem.

Using language in the classroom that promotes positive relationships and unconditional regard.

Use special interests to engage learning where possible.

Adults to support learner to manage and maintain appropriate friendships.

Ensure there is time to listen and model good listening behaviours

Transitions

Work together to carefully plan for transitions (e.g. new classrooms, trips, supply staff, change of Key Stage, and into adulthood).

Use graded exposure and resources such as photos, maps, and social stories.

Adapt start/finish times to reduce transition stress (e.g. early pass card).

Provide advance notice of changes and communicate clearly with parents/carers.

Family and Multi-Agency Collaboration

Build strong school-home links, co-produce plans with learners and families.

Share changes in routines or circumstances promptly between school and home.

Involve parents/carers and the learner in support planning and reviews.

School may want to initiate a Our Family Plan prior to seeking further support.

Seek support where appropriate from local authority or outside agencies.

Where appropriate, access therapeutic interventions such as Play Therapy or Art Therapy to support emotional expression and processing.

School to consider seeking support from Mental Health Team in School or using school's own counselling service if available. Mental Health Teams in School - Headstart and Inside Out | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Consider safety planning or risk assessments where necessary.

Explicitly teach learners how to safeguard themselves. Ensure the learner knows how to seek support and to whom to report incidences. (See Carol Gray – The New Social Story Book- Chapter 9). Be explicit when teaching learners about safe behaviours including stranger danger, sex and relationships, drugs and alcohol, and internet safety. Provide visual materials/social stories wherever possible. This may need differentiating to the learner's ability and level of understanding.

Attendance and Engagement

Support emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA) with graded return-to-school plans agreed with the learner and family. Follow agreed steps consistently and avoid rushing progress.

If child is struggling to attend school, pastoral/inclusion staff should refer to EBSA resources - Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Use realistic and achievable, attendance action plans co-produced with the learner and their family, aimed at reintegrating the learner, and stick to what has been agreed, including when things seem to be going well, as pushing things further than agreed can heighten anxiety and reduce trust. There should be a recognition by all that a 'quick fix' is not always possible.

Provide flexible approaches such as soft landings, gradual reintegration in finely graded steps, or part-time timetables where needed (with a view to extending this over time).

Resources for Supporting Social, Emotional and Mental Health

- **Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS):** CAMHS Home - Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust
- **Headstart:** HeadStart South Tees
- **Youth Offending Service (YOS):** South Tees Youth Justice Service | Middlesbrough Council
- **Education Endowment Foundation:** Education Endowment Foundation | EEF
- **NASEN:** Whole School SEND Home Page | Whole School SEND
- **Anna Freud:** Mental Health And Wellbeing | Anna Freud
- **MindEd:** www.minded.org.uk
- **Kooth:** Home - Kooth
- **Thrive:** Support for mental health and wellbeing in schools | The Thrive Approach

WORLD CLASS: Learning geography

4 Communication and Interaction, including autism

Communication and Interaction needs encompass difficulties in understanding and using spoken language, non-verbal communication, and social interaction. These may include speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) as well as differences associated with autism.

Such needs can affect access to the curriculum, the development of relationships with adults and peers, and learners' emotional wellbeing. Within school, recognising and supporting communication and interaction is essential to reducing barriers to learning and participation. Effective practice involves creating structured, predictable environments, adapting communication to increase clarity, and fostering positive opportunities for social interaction. When these approaches are embedded into daily practice, schools can help learners develop confidence in communication, building meaningful relationships, and engaging fully in school life. There is a degree of overlap with social, emotional, and mental health needs, therefore some social strategies will be included in the SEMH section.

Autism:

Learners with autism experience differences in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, alongside restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, or activities. They may also encounter challenges with flexible thinking and differences in sensory processing, including hyper- or hypo- sensitivities. This section focuses on strategies for communication and interaction which are often relevant for learners with autism. See broader strategies in the other categories of needs to support the additional needs of learners with autism.

HARD AT WORK:
Teenagers concentrating hard

Communication and Interaction, including autism *continued*

Strategies	Checked
Clarity of language	
Use clear, literal language; avoid idioms, sarcasm, metaphors, or ambiguity.	
Keep sentences short and direct, reduce unnecessary language load.	
Chunk instructions into manageable steps to allow time to process each part before moving to next.	
Provide explicit, developmentally appropriate explanations rather than assuming inference skills.	
Supporting understanding and expression	
Support all verbal instructions with visuals (symbols, pictures, written prompts, checklists, Now/Next boards, visual timetables). Ensure consistency.	
Allow extra processing time before expecting responses; avoid pressuring for eye contact.	
Use the learner's name to gain attention before giving instructions.	
Frequently check understanding ("Show me how to…" / "Tell me what you need to do"). Encourage the learner to explain the meaning of targeted words, ensuring meaning is understood.	
Pre-teach new vocabulary and concepts to ensure the learner understands; use mind maps, word banks, and word webs to explore words and word categories.	
Encourage the learner to engage in repetition and oral rehearsal to consolidate learning.	
Adults should 'recast' (repeat and model back words/phrases correctly) if the learner makes an error, rather than explicitly over-correcting errors.	
Allow opportunity for repetition if needed – ensure the learner feels able to ask again for clarity.	
Use comments more than question: reduce pressure by commenting on what the learner is doing ("I can see you're drawing a house") instead of asking constant questions.	
Train peers in communication-friendly strategies (e.g. slowing down, waiting, repeating back).	
Explicitly teach conversation rules (turn-taking, staying on topic, repairing misunderstandings). Resources such as Joel Shaul's 'The conversation train' are helpful.	
Reinforce vocabulary across contexts: plan for new words to appear in multiple lessons and real-life situations.	

| Total Communication Approaches	
Respect and promote all forms of communication (spoken, signed, gestural, written, aided).	
Offer and model use of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) e.g. Makaton, PECS, communication boards.	
Celebrate diverse communication styles to build peer acceptance and confidence.	
Follow Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) programmes/recommendations consistently; make timely referrals when needed. Children's speech and language therapy - South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	
Interaction and Social Communication	
Model positive social language and interactions in natural contexts.	
Use role play, social stories, and visual scripts to support understanding of social situations.	
Scaffold group work with clear roles, structure, and adult modelling.	
Encourage supported opportunities for social connection and interaction at a pace that matches the learner's threshold.	
Fluency and confidence	
Allow time and space for learners experiencing a dysfluency (e.g. stammering) to respond without interruption.	
Offer alternatives if speech is hard to understand (e.g. choice questions, pointing, showing).	
Praise attempts and effort in communication, including production of targeted sounds.	
Provide opportunities to practice communication in low-demand, safe contexts before generalising.	
Environment and culture	
Minimise sensory distractions to support focus.	
Provide access to quiet spaces when communication becomes overwhelming.	
Establish a whole-school culture that values and celebrates different ways of communicating.	
Embed staff CPD on communication and interaction.	
Use the PINS School Self-Assessment Tool for Speech and Language to assess speech and language in school setting. Click this link to access assessment tool: PINS School Self-Assessment Tool for Speech and Language	Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory	

Resources for Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN)

- AFASIC: http://www.afasic.org.uk/
- British Stammering Association: http://www.stammering.org/
- Inclusive.co.uk (talking buttons): http://inclusive.co.uk/hardware/communicators-and-controllers
- NAPLIC (language impairment?: http://naplic.org.uk?
- RADLD (raising awareness of developmental language disorder): http://radid.org/about/did/
- Intensive Interaction, South Tees You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNZAqQzVEx0
- Developing Joint attention skills: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KM-a0rGtHVc
- Barnsley Speech and language therapy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRX2scZ-1zo
- Worcestershire Speech and Language Therapy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z474qZEzWMk
- South Tees Speech and Language Therapy You Tube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/@southteesnhsspeechtherapy8086/videos
- Selective Mutism Workbook: https://www.selectivemutism.org/resources/archive/books/the-selective-mutism-resource-manual-2nd-edition/
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust - Selective mutism online seminar: What is selective mutism?: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdlZ6UqSZhY
- Cumbria Children's SLT - Five top tips to support situational mutism: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSrrFGUCZF4
- Buckinghamshire NHS Trust – Understanding Pragmatic Language - What do we mean by non-verbal communication?: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ny15K1hkY1w&t=60s
- Social communication needs/autism: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPQyHXc1ksA
- For Autism National Autistic Society: www.autism.org.uk
- Autism Education Trust: www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk
- Carol Gray Social Stories: https://carolgraysocialstories.com/
- Reach Out ASC: https://reachoutasc.com/resources/
- Sensory Guide : https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/babcock_l_d_p/SEND/C-and-I/Documents/parents-autism-workshop/Cygnet-Week-3/NAS-Sensory-Guide.pdf
- Witherslack: Training - Witherslack Group
- Autism education trust: Autism Education Trust
- Triple A – Durham University: Triple A - Durham University

5 Sensory and Physical Needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have sensory processing differences or a medical condition that prevents or hinders them from making effective use of the educational facilities and opportunities available. These needs can be present from birth, develop over time, or arise suddenly because of illness or injury. They may be stable, progressive, or fluctuate in their impact. This includes a broad range of needs such as visual impairment, hearing impairment, multi-sensory impairment, and physical or medical conditions that affect mobility, stamina, or health. This section is divided into several parts which highlight needs that are covered within sensory and physical needs.

What might a physical or sensory difficulty look like?

Diagram showing "You might see difficulties with..." connected to: Multisensory Impairment (HI and VI), Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Fine and/or Gross Motor Skills, Physical Health, Sensory Processing
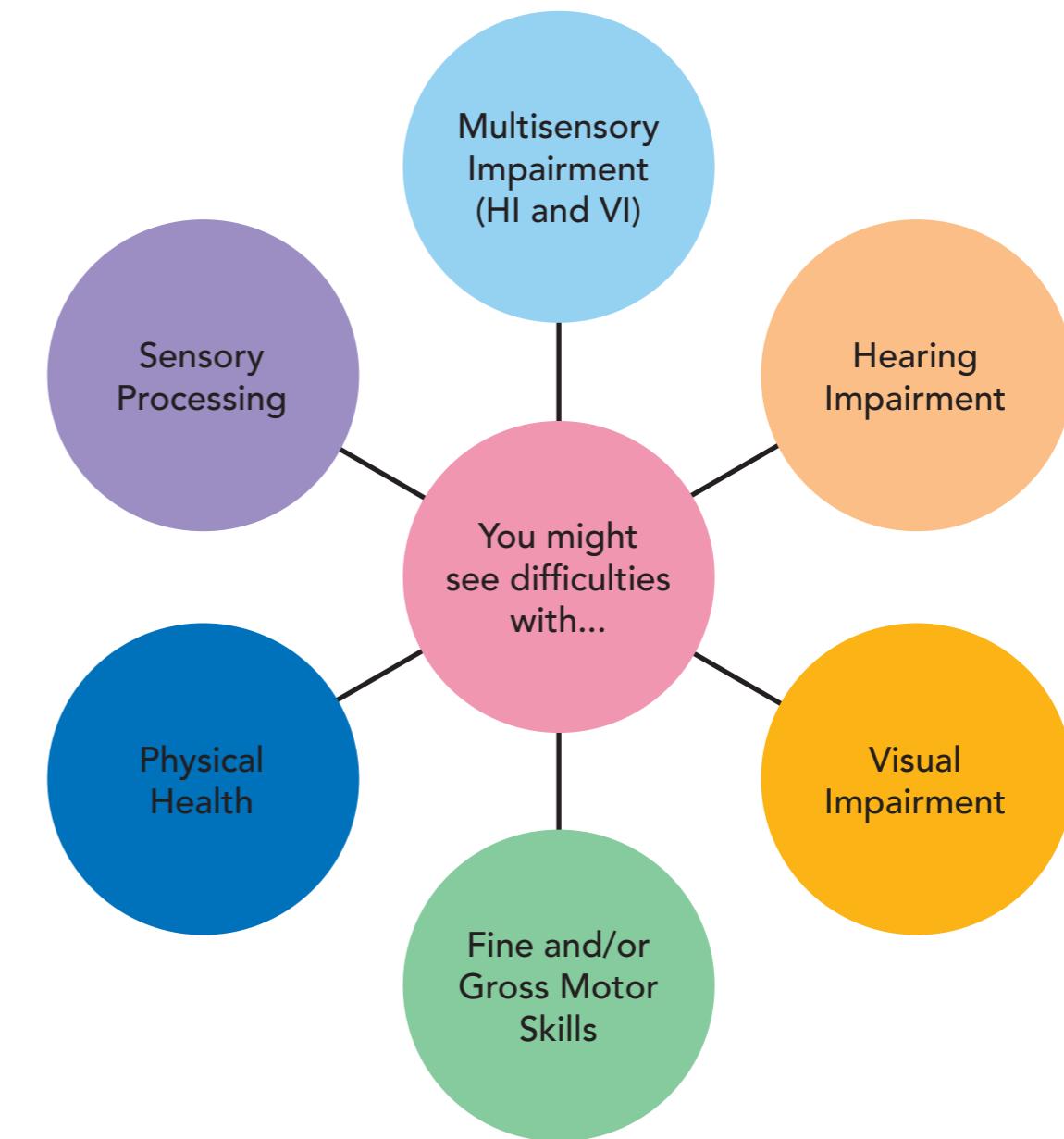
Sensory and Physical Needs
continued

Strategies	Checked
General Sensory Processing	
Work with parents/occupational therapists to develop an individual sensory profile to understand triggers, preferences, and calming strategies.	
Recognise that learners may have hyper- and hypo-sensitivities.	
Accept and support self-regulatory behaviour such as fidgeting or 'stimming.' This can frequently be observed with autism and can be signs of sensory overloading. Adults should try to reduce sensory input and language and encourage use of safe/quiet space if needed.	
Provide access to sensory tools (e.g. wobble cushions, fidget items, chewellery, ear defenders, resistance bands, writing slopes, or adapted pens).	
Build sensory breaks and 'sensory diet' opportunities into the school day (e.g. running, jumping, pushing, pulling, crawling, weight-bearing activities).	
Provide sensory play (sand, water, dough, messy play) where appropriate.	
Offer low-stimulus spaces and quiet areas to reduce overload.	
Reduce unnecessary sensory triggers (e.g. strong smells, background noise, flickering lights, and cluttered displays).	
Consider uniform/clothing adaptations for comfort.	
Facilitate peer support in less structured environments (e.g. dining hall and playground).	
Model acceptance of differences and promote independence in self-regulation.	
Consider learner's seating position to maximize learning. Do they need to be at the front/back. Is lighting / sound an issue?	
Allow learners to handle artifacts and get close to displays.	
Keep pressure to eat low, especially when trying new foods. Allow learner to bring food from home.	
Be aware that the learner may find sitting for long periods challenging; they may swing, rock on chair, place legs of chair on their feet.	
Encourage classmates to use inclusive strategies (e.g. face the learner when speaking, reduce shouting over each other).	
Provide social stories to help with target areas i.e. toileting, trying new foods, managing diet, hunger/thirst.	

Safety and Risk Assessments	
Generate bespoke risk assessments for fire evacuation and unfamiliar environments.	
Ensure learners are explicitly taught and regularly reminded of evacuation procedures. Provide additional support during drills and emergencies, including visual alarms for learners with hearing loss and adapted guidance for those with vision or mobility needs.	
Provide clear, explicit health and safety instructions for learners with hearing or vision loss across all contexts (e.g. PE, food technology lessons, school trips). Where necessary, generate a bespoke risk assessment to ensure the learner's individual needs are met and safety is maintained.	
STARS – Sensory Teaching Advisory and Resource Service	
Where a hearing loss or visual impairment has been identified by an NHS professional, school should liaise with STARS. STARS can:	

- Allocate a Qualified teacher of the deaf (QToD) or a qualified teacher of vision impairment (QTVI)

- Offer training, modelling, and advice on teaching strategies to be used in the classroom.

- Provide and advise on effective use of specialist equipment such as radio aids.

- Give advice on how to develop the listening and language skills of learners with hearing loss.

- Provide an annual student profile and report.

- Offer advice on reasonable adjustments and exam access arrangements.

- Provide advice on the deaf specialist curriculum.

- Carry out specialist assessments which are used to track progress and inform next steps for those areas known to be impacted by a hearing impairment such as listening skills, language development, social and emotional wellbeing, and auditory memory.

School to consider developing a Sensory Teaching Advisory and Resource Service (STARS) Champion within their setting – contact STARS for further details.

Sensory and Physical Needs
continued

Hearing Impairment	
Liaise with STARS and involve a QToD for specialist advice and staff training. All staff should be supported to understand the nature of hearing loss and its impact.	
School to provide a quiet environment for the QToD to work with the learner in school.	
Reduce background noise (close doors/windows, minimise echoes, use noise monitor apps) and carry out acoustic audits of classrooms and communal areas.	
Create a quiet area for access if needed.	
Ensure clear face visibility for lipreading and get the learner's attention before speaking.	
Use visual supports for verbal instructions (e.g. captions, subtitles, written prompts).	
Allow extra processing time and repetition of instructions.	
Provide assistive listening devices (e.g. radio aids) and check they are in good working order.	
Provide alternative communication methods if required (e.g. signing, speech-to-text).	
If learner has involvement from ENT e.g. glue ear or repeated ear infections, school should follow NHS guidance and advice from the National Deaf Children's Society website.	
Staff should be aware that there may also be an emotional wellbeing need and advice can be sought from STARS on ways to develop identity and self-advocacy.	
Always allow for extra processing time in all teaching and learning activities, particularly where a response is required.	
Ensure all instructions are given clearly and simplified wherever possible. Repeat if necessary.	
Ensure correct seating position, ensuring the learner feels their position is maximising their learning.	
Always have visual material available.	
Offer pre and post learning opportunities for reinforcement of key concepts and vocabulary. The learner can do this within the classroom within a small group that need this support and does not need to be withdrawn from class/group.	
Be aware that additional issues may arise from being taught in large/open spaces e.g. for PE where it is more difficult to hear spoken instructions. Adapt teaching delivery accordingly.	
Minimise background noise made by projectors, heaters, music etc as far as possible, along with scraping sounds.	

Visual Impairment	
Liaise with STARS and involve a QTVI for specialist advice and staff training. All staff should be supported to understand the nature of vision loss and its impact	
Work with mobility specialists to help learners navigate the school grounds.	
Avoid moving furniture unexpectedly.	
Ensure uncluttered, well-lit environments with reduced glare from windows	
Provide large-print, appropriately sized, and high-contrast resources. Avoid pale pens/markers.	
Make work displayed on interactive whiteboards accessible via handouts, laptops, iPads, or mirroring software.	
Introduce new vocabulary, equipment, and concepts prior to lessons.	
Provide specialist equipment, for instance screen readers, Dictaphones, adapted pens, laptops, tablets, balls with a bell, science equipment, and adapted measuring tools.	
Ensure correct software is available. Make sure devices are fully charged and available.	
Allow handling of artifacts and close-up access to displays.	
Offer bold / coloured paper (must be >120 gsm), overlays, or reading rulers as required. Provide wide-lined paper.	
Plan seating to maximise access in classrooms, assemblies, and PE.	
School to use Reasonable Adjustments in School England 2024 Guide Dogs in Partnership with NATSIP	
Staff should follow the curriculum framework for vision impairment. Launched in 2022, the CFVI supports learners with a vision impairment to access appropriate and equitable education. It consists of eleven teaching areas that learners with VI may need support with. The use of the framework would be led by the QTVI. For link click Curriculum Framework for Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (CFVI)	RNIB	
Consider that learners with nystagmus or head tilt may need extra processing time.	
Check advice from STARS regarding font sizes, ICT accessibility, and reasonable adjustments.	
If a learner is seen by Ophthalmology, school could follow NHS and RNIB guidance for conditions such as squint and lazy eye.	
Teachers to ensure that the learners can access work displayed on interactive whiteboards in the method identified by the QTVI e.g. handouts, emailing presentations to be accessed via laptop /iPad or use of mirroring software	

Sensory and Physical Needs
continued

Resources for Sensory and Physical Needs

Physical and Medical Needs

Implement Individual Health and Care Plans (IHCPs) and bespoke risk assessments (classrooms, trips, PE, fire evacuations). Regularly update these.
Ensure full access to all school areas (e.g. ramps, lifts, toilets).
Provide specialist / adapted equipment (e.g. writing slopes, pencil grips, adapted scissors, footrests, ICT aids etc). Be aware of the learner's preferences as different equipment is available.
Ensure supportive furniture (chairs/desks of correct height) to maintain posture.
Develop buddy systems for transitions around school, carrying equipment, or ensuring inclusion in play.
Provide rest breaks and spread physically demanding tasks to manage fatigue. Stagger cognitively/physically demanding tasks across the day/week.
Support fine/gross motor development (structured interventions, touch-typing, therapy exercises).
Liaise with Occupational Therapy/Physiotherapy for an environmental audit and training.
School leaders to ensure staff are trained appropriately and time is given to undertake any support packages as directed by OT/Physiotherapy Service.
Train staff in medical procedures and allow time for care packages to be delivered to learners where needed.
Promote independence whilst ensuring safety and dignity.
Ensure extra adult support during transitions, evacuations, and trips.
Where needed, ensure there is multi-agency collaboration.

Examples of Resources

- Therapy balls
- Lycra tunnels and socks
- Wobble and movement cushions
- Scooter boards
- Visual tools
- Pressure vests
- Ear defenders

- Sensory kits
- Vibrating tools
- Tools for handwriting
- Writing slopes
- Dycem
- Spring loaded scissors
- TheraBand

- Thera putty
- Stickers and stamps
- Pencil grips
- Stabile easy graph pencils
- Light up pressure pens

Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service: Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service (OT) | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Paediatric Physiotherapy Service: Paediatric Physiotherapy | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

0-19 Health Visiting and School Nursing Service: 0-19 Health Visiting & School Nurse Service | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

STARS: Sensory Teaching Advisory Resource Service: STARS (Sensory Teaching, Advisory, and Resources Service) | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Speech and Language Therapy Service: Speech and Language Therapy Service - SaLT | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Family Hubs: Family Hubs | Redcar and Cleveland

Early Years SEND Practitioner Service: Early Years SENDCo and the Early Years SEND Practitioner Service | Redcar & Cleveland: Information Directory

Council for disabled children: http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/ Microsoft Word - Early Support Multi-sensory impairments FINAL.doc FINAL.Sensory_differences.pdf

British Association Teachers of the Deaf: https://www.batod.org.uk

National Sensory Impairment Partnership): http://www.natsip.org.uk

National Deaf Children's Society: http://www.ndcs.org.uk/

Royal National Institute of Blind People: https://www.rnib.org.uk/vision-england/

Sense: Sense | For disabled people

Book share: Bookshare

Deafblind UK: Deafblind UK | Supporting Deafblindness in the UK

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council