

Early Years SEN Support Inclusion Toolkit

Our vision, working together for a brighter future:
A Better Barnsley... An Inclusive Barnsley



BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council

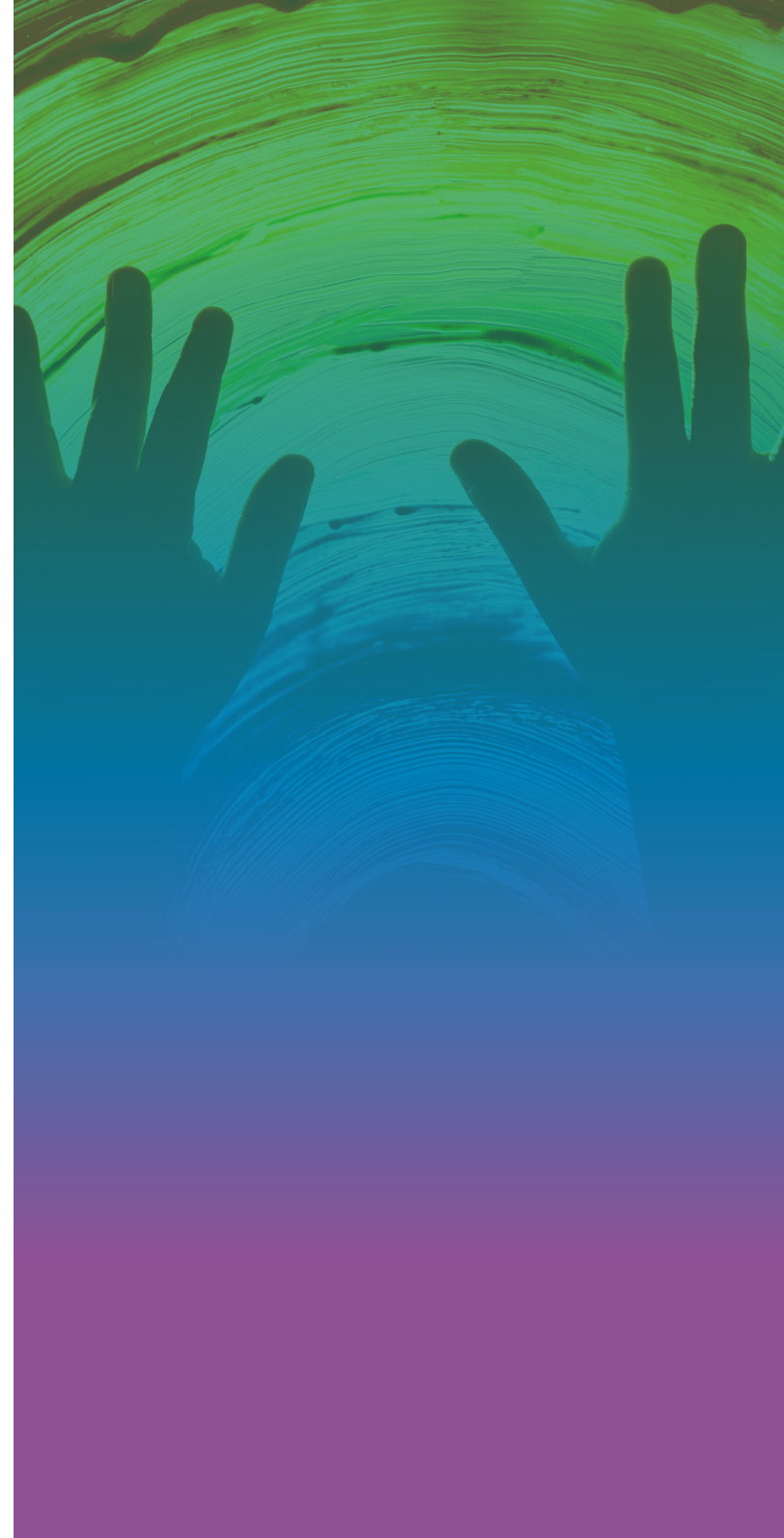
SECOND EDITION

Foreword

“I’m extremely delighted to be able to introduce the Early Years SEN Support Inclusion Toolkit. The toolkit has been developed collaboratively providing guidance to strengthen partnership working with families and further embed our graduated response to SEND. The toolkit reflects our commitment to improving outcomes for children with SEND and provides a framework for a child-centred consistent approach to SEND across Barnsley. I would like to thank all involved in producing the toolkit and look forward to hearing about the impact it will have on practice in identifying and meeting the special educational needs of young children in Barnsley.”

Mel John-Ross

Executive Director Children’s Services



Introduction

The **Early Years SEN Support Inclusion Toolkit** provides guidance for Early Years settings, schools and services on identifying and meeting the special educational needs (SEN) of children in the early years, through quality first teaching and SEN support. The guidance within the toolkit is built around the DfE and DoH 2015 statutory guidance **Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years**, which is underpinned by the **Children and Families Act 2014**.

The toolkit promotes Barnsley's commitment to inclusion. Most children with SEND will have their needs met in mainstream settings within their own communities, and early years settings and schools play a central role in achieving this. Early Years practitioners are skilled and well placed to work in partnership with families to identify need at the earliest point. It is this early identification which then enables practitioners to plan with families and implement provision that reduces barriers to learning and builds on strengths.

The purpose of the toolkit therefore is to provide transparency and guidance for SENCOs, Early Years practitioners in educational settings and colleagues in Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) support services and practitioners in health and social care services. The toolkit aims to build confidence and consistency in further facilitating and enabling educational settings and services to work together and in partnership with parents/ carers to meet the needs of all children. This will enable the implementation of a truly child centred approach to the graduated response to SEND.



Navigating the toolkit

The toolkit is split into two sections.

Section one communicates a shared understanding of best practice in relation to quality first teaching and then in relation to SEN support.

Section two focuses on each of the four broad areas of need identified in the SEND Code of Practice:

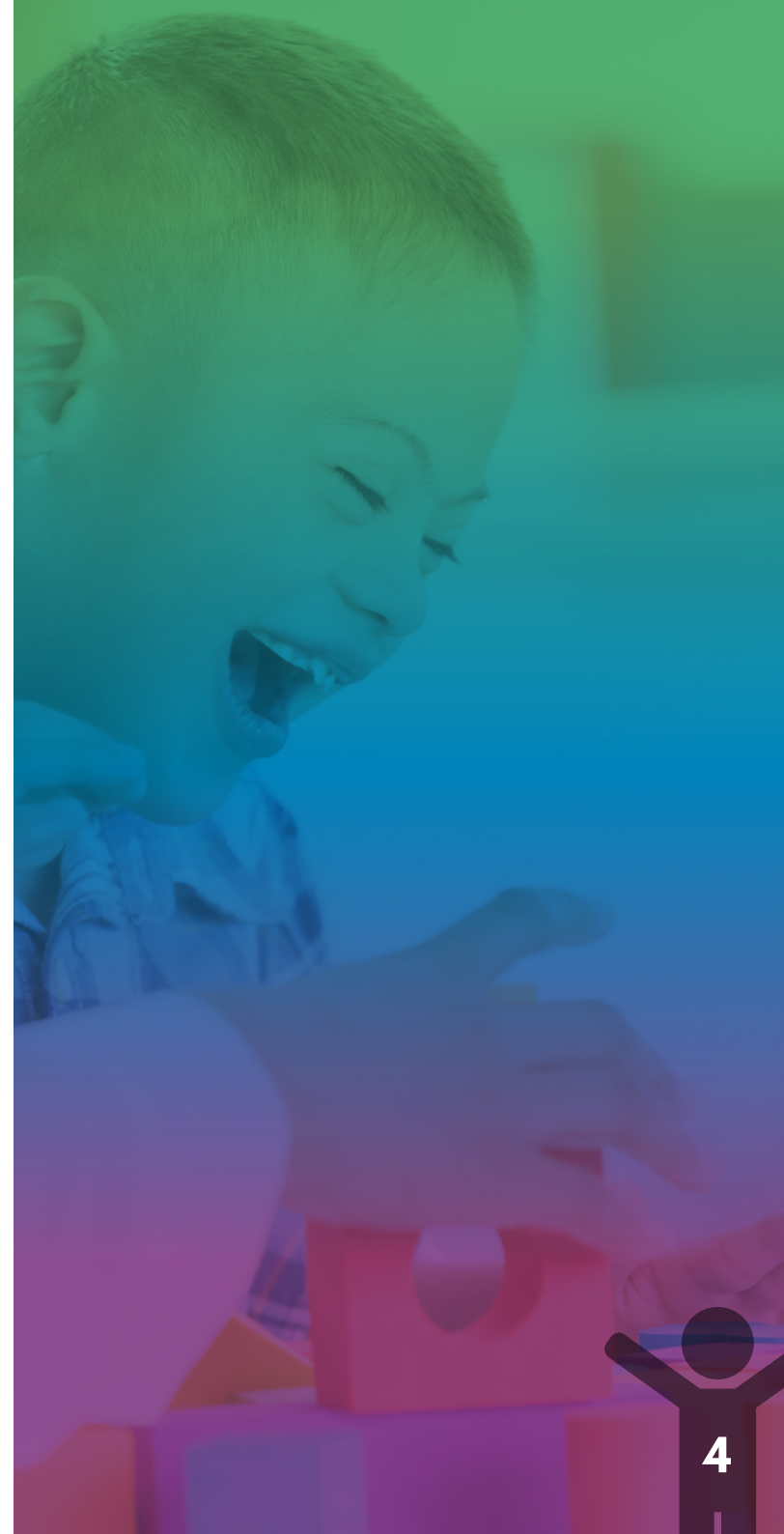
1. Communication and interaction

2. Cognition and learning

3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

4. Sensory and/or Physical needs

Each broad area of need follows a consistent format starting with a description of '**Need**' to support practitioners and families with identification and clarification of an individual child's special educational needs. This is followed by '**Assess Plan**' and '**Do Review**' sections which describe processes for practitioners to consider along with parents/carers in implementing the graduated response. Within the '**What we might see**' section are examples of barriers to learning that may present in early years children in settings as a result of them having a special educational need related to the overall broad area of need. The '**What we can do**' section provides suggestions for provision and practice that can be considered and implemented to reduce those barriers to learning. The '**Useful Resources**' section is the final part within each broad area of need and includes resources and links to useful websites and support services.



Throughout the document there is a lot of crossover between the broad areas of need to promote consideration of the full range of strategies, approaches, services and resources available in planning to meet individual children's needs as we recognise that needs may be complex and multi-faceted. The toolkit is designed to be a working document used by settings and services in partnership with families to provide guidance to support implementation of a robust graduated response to SEND in Barnsley.

The guidance has been developed collaboratively in Barnsley with Early Years SENCOs, Education Inclusion Services, Early Years Consultants team, Childcare Quality Improvement team, Speech and Language Therapy Service and Children's Therapy Services, with input from the Council for Disabled Children, and we would like to thank all for their contribution.



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Section One

Learning and Development



Quality First Teaching

The **Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage** (EYFS) sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). [Link to EYFS.](#)

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

DfE Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage 2021

High-quality inclusive practice is responsive to individual children and differentiates and personalises provision to meet the needs of all children including disabled children and children with SEND. High-quality teaching is key to children's learning and development. High quality teaching is based on the highest expectations for individual children, draws on what practitioners know about children's learning and development, is differentiated for individual children and uses a range of pedagogic approaches.

There are four guiding principles that underpin practice in early years settings:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- children develop and learn in different ways, and at different rates



Unique Child

- Children are valued as unique individuals and inclusive practice is ensured.
- Practitioners are alert to the early signs of needs so they can implement provision to meet those needs at an early stage.
- Inclusive practice ensures accessibility for children with SEND and values and respects diversity.
- Providers have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities to ensure equality of opportunity for all children.

Positive Relationships

- Providers work in partnership with parents and carers to support children's needs.
- Children's interests, feelings and preferences are considered and valued.
- There are positive, trusting relationships between adults and children.
- Each child has a key person to ensure care meets each child's individual needs and promotes learning and development through relationships.

Enabling Environment

- Observations of children in the nursery provision informs understanding of children's interests and approach to play.
- Accurate assessment of children's learning highlights children's strengths and areas for development.
- Environments are reviewed regularly, in light of children's interests and developmental needs.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure the environment is accessible to enable children to explore and take risks.

Learning & Development

- The characteristics of effective learning – playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically – are skills that are developed across all areas of learning and development.
- Systems are in place to monitor the progress of children towards early learning goals.
- Play and learning is planned and based on the child's interests. Needs and concerns about the child's development are identified early.
- Assessment is used to plan next steps in a child's development, alongside the provision needed to facilitate children achieving those next steps.

Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.

DfE Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage 2021 (para. 1.11)

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards for promoting the learning, development and safety of children from birth to five years in Ofsted registered settings.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving. These are the prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social, and emotional development

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

To support the delivery of the EYFS practitioners can refer to non-statutory curriculum guidance which includes Development Matters 2020 and Birth to Five Matters.

[Link to Development Matters](#)

[Link to Birth to 5 Matters](#)

The **Unique Child** reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning.

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Children develop in the context of relationships and the environment around them.

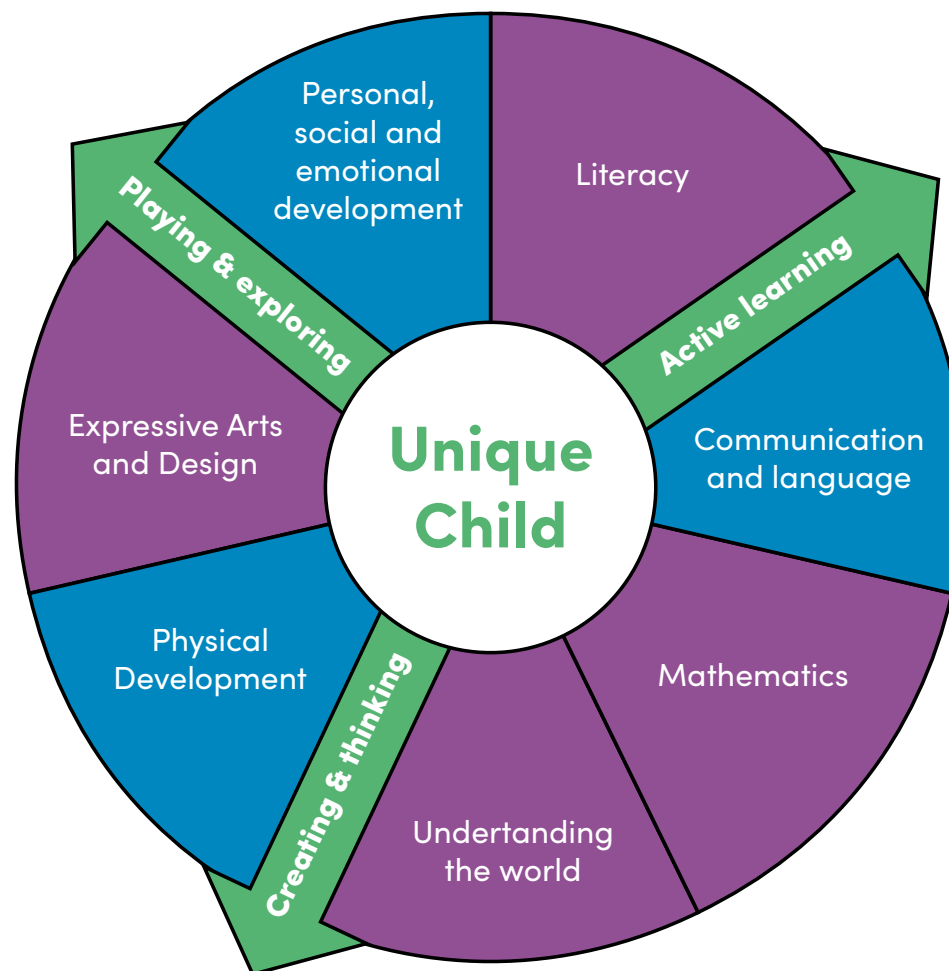
This is unique to each family, and reflects individual communities and cultures.

Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts



Characteristics of effective teaching and learning

Playing and exploring

Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

Active learning

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Creating and thinking critically

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Areas of Learning and Development

Prime areas

Communication and language

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

Personal, social and emotional development

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

Physical development

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

Specific areas

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical patterns

Understanding the world

- Past and present
- People, culture and communities
- The natural world

Expressive arts and design

- Creating with materials
- Being imaginative and expressive

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning as identified in the EYFS framework are:

- **playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- **active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Throughout the early years, if a child’s progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child’s parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

DfE Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage 2021 (para. 1.12)

Ofsted makes it clear that the term teaching should be thought of as being all the ways in which adults help young children to learn. Practitioner interactions with children are key to children’s learning and development within the EYFS.

Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities, communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment that adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, understand and can do, as well as taking account of their interests and dispositions to learn (characteristics of effective learning), and how practitioners use this information to plan children’s next steps in learning and to monitor their progress.

Early years inspection handbook for Ofsted registered provision September 2021

Key areas that Ofsted focus on to notice in terms of the interactions initiated and modelled by EY practitioners with children are:

- engage in dialogue with children
- watch, listen and respond to children
- model language well
- read aloud and tell stories to children
- encourage children to sing songs, nursery rhymes and musical games
- encourage children to express their thoughts and use new words
- support independence and confidence
- encourage children to speculate and test ideas through trial and error
- enable children to explore and solve problems
- behave as an excellent role model for children
- support children to recognise and respond to their own physical needs
- attend to children's personal needs
- deal with children's care arrangements, including intimate care, the levels of privacy afforded to children and the supervision

[Link to EYFS OFSTED Handbook](#)

Through these interactions and the arrangements when undertaking personal hygiene tasks in which a child engages with other people and their environment the child learns and develops within the EYFS. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners consider the different ways that children engage and learn and promote the development of these qualities through the provision.

Settings can use nationally recognised audit tools such as ECERs (Early Child Environment Rating Scales), ITERs (Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scales) and SSTEW (Sustained Shared Thinking & Emotional Well Being) to reflect on provision and practice in order to best meet the needs of all children.

[Link to information on audit tools](#)

Assessment

Observation, assessment, and planning are central to tailoring every child's learning to meet their individual needs. Non statutory guidance such as Development Matters or Birth to 5 Matters can be used to support practitioners' understanding of a child's development and importantly where a child may be at risk of delay.

Both Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters support practitioners in planning ways to extend children's learning and encourage a cycle of action:

- **Observation:** Noticing, listening and describing
- **Assessment:** Deciding what our observations are telling us
- **Planning:** What next? Experiences and opportunities, learning environment, resources, routines, practitioners' role

Assessment: Checking what children have learnt

- **Assessment is noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence**
- **Effective assessment requires practitioners to understand child development. Practitioners also need to be clear about what they want children to know and be able to do.**
- **Accurate assessment can highlight whether a child has a special educational need and needs extra help.**
- **Before assessing children, it's a good idea to think about whether the assessments will be useful.**
- **Assessment should not take practitioners away from the children for long periods of time.**

Working with the revised Early Years Foundation Stage: Principles into Practice Julian Grenier

When a child is aged between two and three, practitioners review their progress, and highlight strengths and any areas of concern in relation to the prime areas of learning, with parents/carers which is then shared with the health visiting team. The 2 year progress check identifies the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, then an Integrated review meeting takes place with parents/carers, health care professionals and the setting. The agreed outcomes are completed using the action plan template.

Where possible, the progress check and the Healthy Child Programme health and development review at age two (when health visitors gather information on a child's health and development) should inform each other and support integrated working. This will allow health and education professionals to identify strengths as well as any developmental delay and any particular support from which they think the child/family might benefit.

DfE Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage 2021 (para. 2.6)

Further information on the 2 year progress check and how that links with the Integrated review can be found on the BMBC webpage within Early Start and Family Services

[Link to 2 year progress check information](#)

The Integrated Review brings together the EYFS Progress Check at two with the Healthy Child Programme (HCP) 2 – 2½ development review into an integrated process to identify and meet any needs and plan support together. The link below is a guidance document to the Integrated Review

[Link to integrated review practitioner guidance](#)

Bringing it all together

Underpinning quality provision within EYFS is the importance of ongoing assessment of children's progress. Robust assessment can only be achieved by keeping the child at the centre and working closely with parents/carers, practitioners and agencies to ensure information is gathered and that information informs practice and next steps for that child and their family.



The Council for Disabled Children (CDC) are the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector. The CDC Inclusion Policy (2008) can be used to provide a framework for gathering and reflecting on the experiences of disabled children and their families.

Crucial factors to developing an inclusive setting

- a welcome for all children, secure relationships and support for families when they need it;
- respect for difference and a commitment to building friendships and community to the benefit of everyone;
- equality of access to play, learning, leisure and all aspects of life;
- the active participation of children and their families in decision-making;
- a proactive approach to identifying and removing barriers;
- timely access to information and to people with empowering attitudes, supportive skills and expertise.

SEN Support - A Graduated Approach

Children learn and develop in different ways. Children all learn at different rates in some or all areas of their learning. Children may show a slower rate of progress in relation to their peers in some or all areas of learning and development within the EYFS.

The Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) code of practice: 0–25 years (DfE & DoH, 2015) provides the statutory guidance outlining the approach that settings should adopt in relation to identifying and meeting the needs of children identified as having SEND. The SEND code of practice clarifies that a delay in development and/or presenting behaviours that are barriers to accessing the provision, may not necessarily indicate that a child has special educational needs (SEN).

[Link to SEND Code of Practice.](#) [Link to DfE SEND guide for parents and carers](#)

All those who work with young children should be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parents know their children best and it is important that all practitioners listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children themselves.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0–25 years, para 5.5

Concerns should inform assessment that can determine whether there are causal factors that can be addressed. For example, it may be that family or domestic factors are contributing factors and support could be explored through an Early Help Assessment (EHA). The child may have short term emotional, physical or health needs that may be causing a barrier to learning. It may be that observation informed assessments identify where provision can be further developed through positive relationships and enabling environments to promote the child's engagement in the provision and on their development. A range of factors may be impacting on a child's development and progress all of which should be considered and assessed.

Providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children.

...throughout the early years, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

DfE (2017) Statutory framework for early years foundation stage, para 1.6

If there are significant concerns, then an Integrated review meeting takes place with parents/carers, health care professionals and the setting. The agreed outcomes are completed using the action plan template.

[Link to guidance for 2 year progress check and integrated reviews.](#)

Identifying needs

High-quality teaching is the foundation for children's learning and development and is the starting point for any additional or different provision for children with SEN. The Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and the SEN and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 years emphasise the importance of:

- the responsiveness of early years settings to any cause for concern; and
- the setting's approach to identifying and responding to special educational needs

Deciding whether a child has SEN

Key questions to consider in deciding if a child has a special educational need are:

- Does the child have a learning difficulty, that is, a significantly greater difficulty in learning than their peers? A key consideration, but not the sole consideration in this, is whether the child is making expected progress; or
- Does the child have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of the facilities in the setting? and
- Does the learning difficulty or disability call for special educational provision, that is, provision that is additional

In addition to the formal checks, early years practitioners working with children should monitor and review the progress and development of all children throughout the early years.

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, from practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions about whether or not a child has SEN. All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 5.27, 5.28

The SEND code of practice is clear that the setting's approach to assessing SEN should be firmly based on the setting's overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children. The Barnsley Early Years Needs Analysis can be used by settings with parents/carers to clarify needs and strengths to inform strategies and approaches and reduce any barriers to learning. Strategies and approaches can then be mapped out on an Early Years Session Provision Planner. This identifies and clarifies for parents/carers and practitioners the approaches and strategies to be used and any support a child will access each nursery session.

In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the early years practitioner, working with the setting SENCO and the child's parents, will have carried out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 5.39

Further advice in relation to identification of need and/or provision to meet need can be accessed through consultation surgeries with Barnsley Education Inclusion Services (EIS). Details of how to book can be found on the webpage.

[Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services.](#)

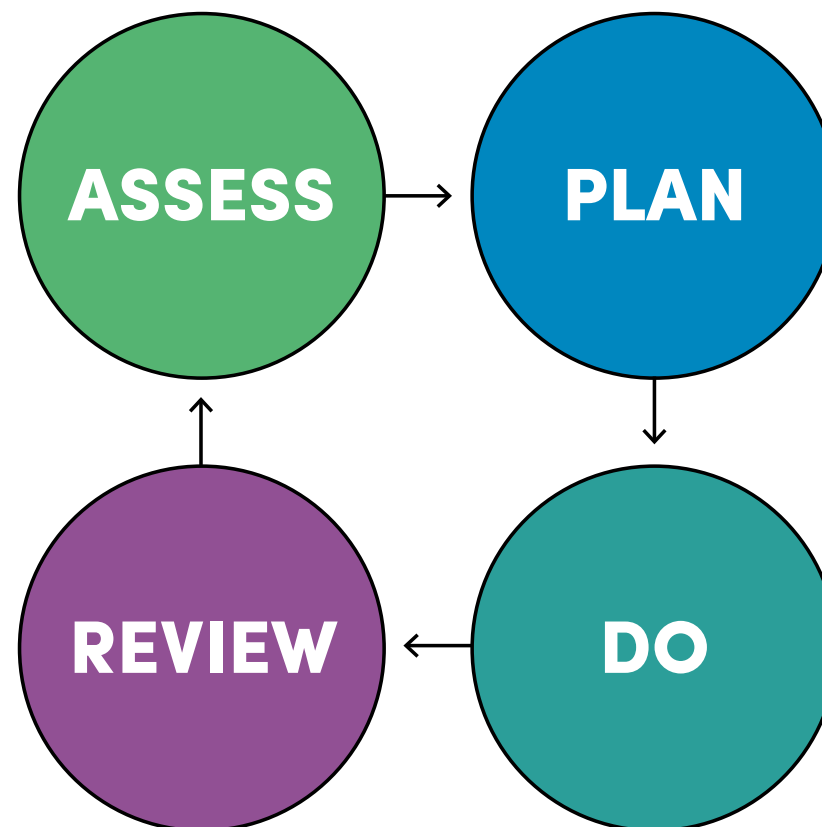
If the advice required relates to a speech and language difficulty, the Speech and Language Checklist can be used to determine whether a Speech and Language referral would be appropriate. Further information regarding the completion of these forms can be found through the following link. [Link to Barnsley Speech and Language Therapy service.](#)

SEN Support and The Graduated Approach

SEN Support builds on high-quality teaching which has been differentiated and personalised for individual children, and should be firmly based in the setting's approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children. The graduated approach adopts a process that includes a cycle of assess, plan, do, review.

This cycle of action incorporates the following features:

- Is usually led by the key person, supported by the setting SENCO
- SENCO supports key person and co-ordinates graduated approach across the setting
- Parents are engaged throughout
- Action is informed by the child's views throughout
- The cycle is revisited in order to identify the best way of securing good progress



Throughout the cycle, children's views can be represented by parents/carers and practitioners, but in order to ensure the child's views inform the process directly, these need to be captured before any discussion. Whether children communicate verbally or by other means, pictures and objects of reference can be used to promote communication with children about their views and their preferences, both at home and in the setting. These views can be brought to inform discussion and decisions at each stage. Parent's views and child's views can be captured using both the Barnsley parent views and child's views single page documents, within the graduated response paperwork. These are working documents that can be regularly updated to ensure that the views gathered are current and relevant and inform future planning. Child and parent views should inform the assess plan do review cycle.

In addition to the formal checks, early years practitioners working with children should monitor and review the progress and development of all children throughout the early years.

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, from practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions about whether or not a child has SEN. All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 5.27, 5.28

SEN Support is designed to provide a graduated approach based on a cycle of action that can be revisited with increasing detail, increasing frequency and increased involvement of parents/carers. The graduated approach should be informed by the statutory framework for EYFS, Development Matters in the EYFS guidance, and the statutory guidance on Assessment and Reporting Arrangements for EYFS.

This cycle of action should be revisited in increasing detail and with increasing frequency, to identify the best way of securing good progress. At each stage parents should be engaged with the setting, contributing their insights to assessment and planning. Intended outcomes should be shared with parents and reviewed with them, along with action taken by the setting, at agreed times.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 5.44

If a child is not making progress despite quality first teaching and as evidenced through tracking progress and Early Years Session Provision Planner then the child's key person with support from SENCO as needed should consider with parents/carers developing an Early Years SEN support plan. The plan should identify SMART child-centred outcomes co-constructed with parents/carers that reflect the child's needs, are informed by assessment data to establish baselines and specifies provision to enable achievement of the outcomes. Provision and interventions should be evidence based and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any staff development needs should be identified and addressed. Where advice has been sought from specialist services then the advice should be used to inform plans.

Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENCO should agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review. Plans should take into account the views of the child. The support and intervention provided should be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related staff development needs should be identified and addressed.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 5.36 - 5.40

The child's key person in setting remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for the implementation of the agreed interventions and provision outlined in the Early Years SEN support plan. The SENCO is key in ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities in meeting the needs of children with SEN, implementing consistent practice in relation to quality first teaching and specific provision and strategies for children with SEN.

Reviewing the effectiveness of interventions in enabling children to make progress can itself be part of the assessment of need, informing the next steps to be taken as part of a graduated approach to support. It may be necessary to test out interventions as part of this process, both to judge their effectiveness for the child and to provide further information about the precise nature of their needs.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 5.34

Consideration can also be given to implementation of provision in relation to funding requirements. SENCOs can access the guidance for the Early Years Inclusion Grant and the Disability Access Fund (DAF) for clarification on eligibility.

[Link to EY SEN funding information.](#)

A process of review is embedded within the graduated approach. The SENCO supports the key person in reviewing the impact of the interventions in relation to meeting the child's needs and on the child's progress and achievement of their outcomes. With parents/carers and informed by child views the impact and quality of the provision on the child's progress is considered. Evidence-based assessment of outcomes achieved is reviewed with parents/carers. In light of progress, outcomes and provision are agreed in line with the child's needs as appropriate.

Good practice in relation to SEND happens in inclusive settings where high quality teaching is key to children's learning and development and forms the basis for any additional or different provision for children with SEN.

The leaders of early years settings, schools and colleges should establish and maintain a culture of high expectations that expects those working with children and young people with SEN or disabilities to include them in all the opportunities available to other children and young people so they can achieve well.

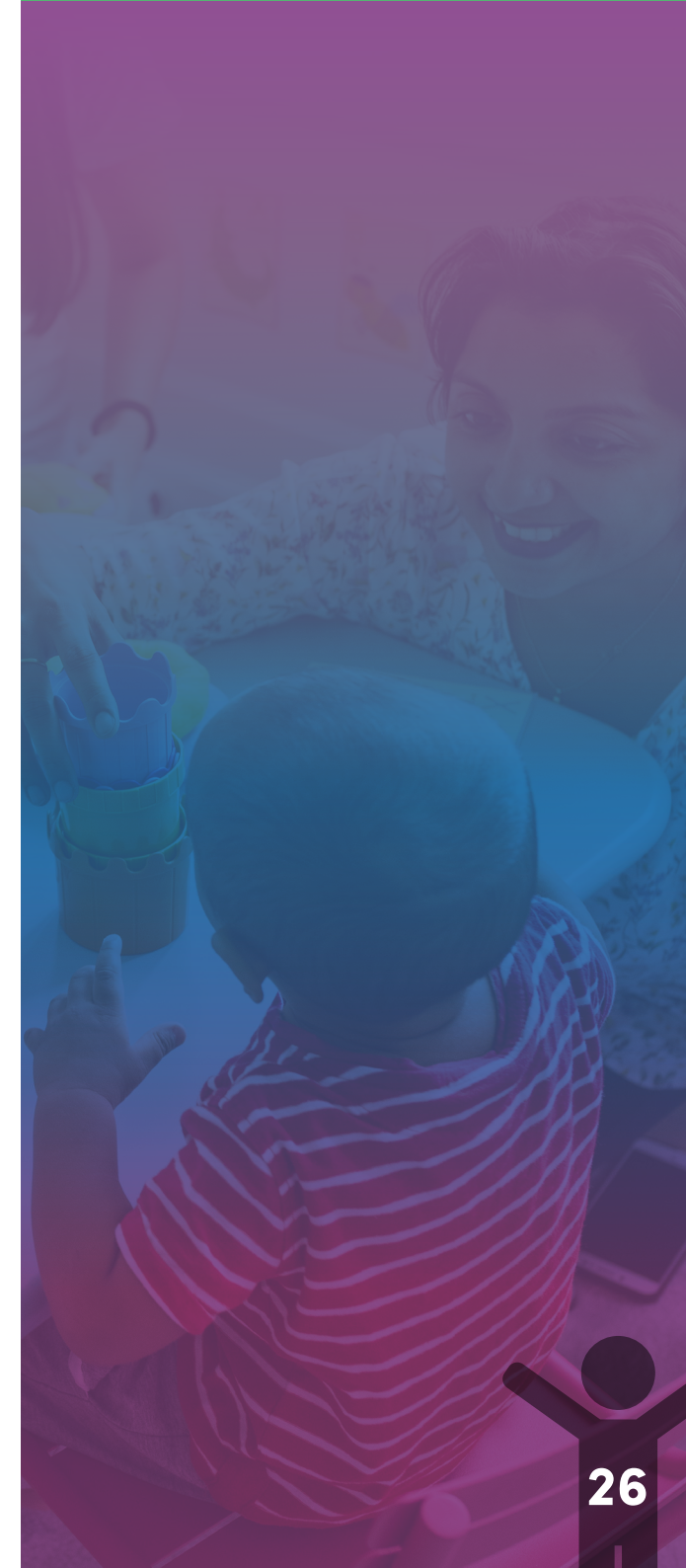
DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 1.31

Section Two

Areas of need



Communication and Interaction



Communication and Interaction

Need

Communication and Interaction is a fundamental life skill and key to learning and development. Communication and Language is a prime area of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework focussing on the aspects of listening, attention and understanding, and speaking.

The way in which children develop communication and interaction skills is very individual with some children acquiring communication skills at a much slower pace than other children. Some children will be working below age related expectations in relation to the prime areas of Communication and Language and Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED), and not making expected progress. This may be impacting on their progress in other Prime and Specific areas of learning and development within the EYFS. Some children may have long term speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) including developmental language disorder (DLD) and language disorder associated with other conditions. Communication and Interaction difficulties may impact upon the child's development of the effective learning skills – engagement, motivation and thinking, and act as a barrier to the child accessing the provision, engaging in learning opportunities and progressing in the EYFS curriculum independently, alongside their peers.

A child may have social communication and interaction difficulties, which impact particularly on their development in communication and language and also on their personal, social and emotional development. Language skills may present as developing atypically with strengths in some areas of language and weaknesses in others. Social communication and interaction difficulties may impact on the development of their play skills, their turn taking skills and their motivation to access the full provision and curriculum. A child with social and communication difficulties may have difficulty developing and maintaining relationships and accessing learning through relationships with peers and adults. Social communication and Interaction difficulties may impact upon the child's development of effective learning skills (engagement, motivation and thinking) and act as a barrier to the child accessing the provision, engaging in learning opportunities and progressing in the EYFS curriculum independently, alongside their peers.

The Graduated Approach

Assess Plan

- Assess and track progress against EYFS to gather attainment and progress information and share with parents/carers. Where progress against EYFS is difficult to measure consider use of the Early Years Developmental Journal. Track and monitor progress in small steps and identify skills for development particularly in relation to Communication and Language and PSED. Discuss any concerns regarding attainment and progress with parents/carers.
[Link to EY Developmental Journal](#)
- Refer to Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters guidance to consider the characteristics of effective learning Playing and Exploring –engagement, Active Learning – motivation, Creating and Thinking Critically – thinking. Use the guidance to reflect on practice in relation to positive relationships and enabling environments to promote and embed effective learning. Focus on the prime areas of Communication and Language and Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED) within the guidance to identify key areas of strength and difficulties within the aspects and to plan provision to the child’s developmental stage when teaching the aspects of listening and attention, understanding and speaking, making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviours. Plan provision considering approaches and strategies identified in positive relationships and enabling environments.
[Link to Development Matters](#)
[Link to Birth to 5 Matters](#)
- Access the Speech, Language and Communication Framework (SLCF) - Developed by The Communication Trust. The SLCF is a free online professional development tool which sets out the key skills and knowledge needed to support the speech, language and communication development of all children. It provides a personalised analysis of competencies and CPD to develop skills in supporting the speech, language and communication development of children.
[Link to SLC framework](#)
- Gather and embed parent/carer and child views to inform strengths, difficulties/needs and provision. Record and update parent/carer and child views in single page profiles and regularly refer to and update to ensure views are current. Identify strengths and need through completing an Early Years Needs Analysis with parents/carers. Where Portage have been involved, for settings to work together with parents/carers and portage worker to plan for transition into setting and inform the Early Years Individual Needs Analysis and Early Years Provision Planner. Match provision to need and outcomes, and map provision on to an Early Years Provision Planner. Key worker and SENCO to work together to identify need and plan for provision with parents/carers.

- Develop aspirations with parents/carers through consideration of developing skills for independence within the wider context of the key aspects of preparation for adulthood – employment, independent living, relationships and health. Develop an outcome focused Early Years SEN support plan where outcomes are developed with parents/carers. Develop child centred SMART outcomes with parents/carers that reflect the child’s special educational needs (SEN), parent/carer aspirations and child’s interests.
- Use the Wellcomm communication screening tool to further clarify need in relation to communication and language development.
- Consider using the observation profile from ‘Autism in the Early Years A Practical Guide’ by Val Cumine, Julia Dunlop and Gill Stevenson to identify specific needs and areas for development in the area of social communication.
- Review the criteria for referral to Barnsley Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service and consider with parents/carers if a referral is appropriate for further assessment of their child’s speech, language and communication skills.
[Link to Barnsley SaLT](#)
- Consider booking on Social Communication and Interaction (SCI) surgery for advice on clarifying need in relation to the child’s social communication difficulties.
[Link to SCI surgery information](#)
- Consider booking on Early Years Area SENCO surgery [Link to EY Area SENCO](#) surgery information for advice on clarifying need and if appropriate to discuss access to consultation with Barnsley Educational Child and Community Psychology Service.
[Link to Barnsley Educational Psychology Service](#)
- Continue to monitor Integrated Review Action Plan.
[Link to Integrated Review guidance](#)
- Consider with parents/carers if there are needs that may be addressed through an Early Help Assessment (EHA).
[Link to EHA information](#)
- Consider accessing additional advice on supporting a family through meeting with social worker from the Assessment and Joint Investigation Team and a member of the Early Help Panel at Early Help surgery.
[Link to Early Help Surgery information](#)

- Co-ordinate as needed, a multi-agency child centred approach to needs analysis and provision planning in conjunction with education and health specialists to assess communication, cognition, independence, physical skills, sensory needs as appropriate. Consider other needs that may be impacting on learning and development and access agencies for further assessment as needed to further clarify need and provision.
- To develop plans for transition within and between settings/schools with parents/carers and child in a timely way, where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. For transition planning to be multi-agency as needed and child centred that is initiated early to enable preparation and planning for provision. Refer to Barnsley's EYFS Transition guidance.
[Link to EY transition guidance](#)

Do review

- Implement provision that enables the outcomes to be achieved and meets the special educational needs (SEN) of the child. Setting staff to develop a consistent approach to implementing provision described in Early Years provision planner and Early Years (EY) SEN support plan. Develop provision with parents/carers based on advice given by specialists involved. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents/carers, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision on outcomes is measured and recorded using the EY SEN support plan. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs and progress made and review regularly (2-5 weeks) with parents/carers. Evidence review of impact of provision on progress through the EY provision planner and the EY SEN support plan. Reviews should be multi-agency as needed and involve the appropriate external professionals working with the child.
- Access Social Communication and Interaction (SCI) team for advice on implementing provision to meet need in relation to social communication difficulties.
[Link to SCI service offer](#)
- Book consultation at SCI and/or EY Area SENCO surgeries to inform planning and implementation of provision within the context of assess plan do review.
[Link to EY Area SENCO surgery information](#)

- Implement and review plans for transition across settings/schools through meetings where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents/carers and key staff. For transition visits and development of skills to prepare for transition to be targeted through provision planning and outcomes in EY SEN support plans. Where Portage are involved, work closely with Portage worker and parents to monitor implementation of plans for transition into setting.
- Where an EHA has been initiated, relevant actions from the action plan should be incorporated into the child's provision in settings and impact monitored and reviewed and fed into the multi-agency Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings.
- Input based on WellComm assessment to be targeted and delivered regularly within a small group intervention.
- Consider provision in the context of resourcing and discuss request for Disability Access funding (DAF) and/or Early Years Inclusion Grant (EYIG) with parents as needed.

[Link to information on funding](#)

- To consider training needs for staff to build capacity in setting for understanding and meeting the needs of children with speech, language and communication needs. Training offered by Barnsley SALT can be found through the following link.
- Barnsley Education Inclusion Services offer a range of bespoke training in relation to understanding and meeting the needs of children with SEN in relation to communication and interaction. For example, Makaton, autism friendly approaches, PECS, intensive interaction, language development. Training needs can be discussed at consultation surgeries and/or with your link practitioner and information can be found on Barnsley Education Inclusion Services webpage.

[Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services events](#)

What we might see

Difficulty listening

Difficulty attending to focused tasks

Easily distracted

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SALT webpage for advice, resources video demonstrations and training information. [Link to Barnsley SALT.](#)

Use visual cues throughout the setting to support the child's attention and listening skills. These may be group or individually focused.

Consider the environment in relation to noise levels and quiet spaces to promote listening and language development.

Consider group size and timing of activities to maximise child's motivation and potential to engage.

Teach 'good listening' skills – identify what children need to do to be good listeners. Reinforce good listening through modelling puppets and visuals.

To engage children before verbal information delivered and don't assume that using general terms of 'Everyone...' or 'Children...' will tune all children in to group listening.

Use of 'Ready... Steady...Go...' to develop motivation and interest to listening. Teach songs, sounds or actions to signal listening time.

Slow the pace of talking, count to 10 before giving the next chunk of spoken information.

When singing/saying rhymes, slow the pace and also pause to help the child process information to ensure language can be accessed.

Reinforce and develop the skills for good listening through targeted activities, games, rhyme and song (examples below):

- Provide high interest objects for the child to follow with their eyes for very short periods of time
- Enhance songs and rhymes with noises, actions, and sound effects at cued times in the songs
- Engage child in 'listening walks' or 'listening moments' to listen, talk about and record the sounds that can be heard
- Play sound lotto games where children match pictures to a recording of a sound or the sound an adult makes
- Model guess the sound. Have a range of items hidden in a box that can be used to make a noise with e.g. keys, instruments, crisp packet etc. The children take turns to guess the item that makes the noise.
- Facilitate follow the leader action or sound games.
- Model fruit salad game - each child is one of 4 fruits and when they hear their fruit, they stand up and wave - this could be developed further by asking them to do a different action for different fruits.
- Make sound shakers from opaque containers using a range of noisy materials. Children take turns to shake the containers and identify items from the sound
- Teach the children the signs for quiet, loud, play, stop. All the children in the group have an instrument and respond to the adult who is acting as the conductor indicating start stop with louder and quieter volume of instruments
- Assign different actions to different instruments so the children match their actions to the sound, and stop the actions when the instrument stops
- Model copying different rhythms, get the children to listen and copy simple rhythms and use words to describe the rhythms e.g. slow, fast, bouncy, long sound
- Tell stories for children to add sounds to. For example, giant stomping, mice scurrying etc.
- Have a set of instruments for a child to take the lead with and copy and repeat back what the child does with the instrument. Use clapping or instruments to make a short rhythm for children to copy
- Talk about and develop vocabulary to describe sounds heard e.g. short long slow fast

What we might see

Weaknesses in understanding (receptive) and processing of language

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SALT webpage for advice and resources. [Link to Barnsley SALT](#)

Match language used to children's developmental stage and their level of understanding of language.

Use commentary and model language through commenting. Ensure children have access to commentary and modelling in small groups.

Implement consistent use of language for instructions, equipment and routines

Use language to communicate what you want children to do rather than what you don't want. For example, instead of saying 'no climbing on the chair' replace with 'sit on the chair'

Language is simplified and consideration given to tone and gesture to maximise children's interest and attention.

Reduce language to 1 or 2 key words as needed.

Visuals used to reinforce and communicate learning areas and equipment.

Visuals and sign used to reinforce verbal information.

Practitioners have key visuals on lanyards or key rings so they can quickly use to reinforce key instructions for groups of children and/or individual children.

Objects of reference and visuals used to support language are matched to child's developmental stage

Rhymes and songs used regularly with intonation, actions, props and pictures to reinforce the language. Homemade books, particularly about the child, familiar settings, familiar routines and familiar people are a good resource to develop language.

Encourage children to communicate when they don't understand or when they need help. Reinforce with praise.

Chunk verbal information in line with developmental stage. Recap Repeat Reinforce.

Deliver instructions in the order that you want the action. So, "wash your hands and then sit down" instead of "sit down after you've washed your hands".

Slow the pace at which language is delivered and give children time to process single pieces of information before giving additional language to process. Counting to 5 or 10 after each instruction to give children time to process.

Consider the questions you are asking children in line with their developmental stage. Refer to Blank's levels of questioning to match questions used with children, to their age and stage and to promote development of comprehension skills.

[Link to Blanks Levels](#)

What we might see

Weaknesses in vocabulary acquisition

Difficulty retaining new words

Difficulty recalling words (word finding difficulties)

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SALT webpage for advice and resources. [Link to Barnsley SALT](#)

Pre teach vocabulary using multisensory approaches.

Introduce games instead of Games matching words to items. Further develop by sorting objects into groups of same set or same initial sound e.g. all farm animals or all items beginning with 'b' sound. Children are shown an item and move to the group they think the item fits with.

Use sets of objects e.g. animals, vehicles, instruments. Describe one of the items and ask the children to name the correct item.

Teach vocabulary that is functional and linked to an activity and/or child's interest.

Implement teaching vocabulary intervention to teach new words. The pre teaching vocabulary resources (PTV) uses visual prompts to support teaching and learning of vocabulary in small group and individual teaching situations.

[Link to pre-teaching vocabulary resource.](#)

Use 'word webs' approach to develop understanding of meaning and sound information to help children learn and remember new words. Resource for word webs is on Barnsley SALT webpage.

Consider accessing SALT 'Building Vocabulary' training for approaches to teaching new words.

Create opportunities for regular revisiting and repetition of language across different contexts of the provision to maximise potential for the child to embed and build on that learning to be able to embed vocabulary.

Ensure books are easily accessible with reading areas conducive to exploring and sharing books.

Story time accessed in smaller groups.

Ensure books and stories are developmentally appropriate.

Facilitate story time being accessed.

Plan book talk to target vocabulary development and listening and attention skills in small group and on an individual basis.

Use picture books to develop vocabulary linked to current themes being explored in setting.

Develop story sacks to share with children and parents in setting and at home.

[Link to story sacks](#)

Links with parents to develop book and story sharing at home.

Develop song sacks with puppets props and objects to reinforce characters and key vocabulary from the songs and rhymes.

What we might see

Weaknesses in expressive language

Difficulty expressing needs, thoughts and ideas

What we can do

Consider accessing SALT Phonology (speech sound training) course. [Link to Barnsley SALT.](#)

Use the match and stretch approach to modelling language back to children.

If a child says car clearly then model this back and add a word e.g. fast car, driving car, blue car, big car. If the child says a word and it is not clear then simply model this word back. Paraphrase and extend one or two word responses into longer phrases or sentences.

If child interested and attending to what adult is doing, practitioners can engage in 'self-talk' to provide a commentary on their actions which they are engaged in with the child. It is important to keep language simple and at an appropriate pace when using commentary, For example, 'Putting the banana on the plate, chopping the banana'.

Avoid asking children lots of questions. Instead comment on what the child is doing, use simple language. For example, if the child is playing in the sand say 'digging the sand, filling the bucket, pat the bucket, look a sandcastle.'

Repetition is important. Copying back and interpreting what a child communicates helps them to know you are listening and will help to encourage them to continue to communicate with other people.

Modelling language enables children to hear language used in a meaningful context in preparation for rehearsing and using it themselves. Much of this is what practitioners and parents will do naturally to encourage children's language learning. It is important to model different types of language. For example, object words (car, ball) action words (driving, catching), descriptive language (big, fast, smooth), place words (in, under).

Model words and sentences back if the child makes an error. For example if the child says 'I goed to the park' the practitioner says 'You went to the park' Do not correct children or make them say the sentence again as this will impact on their confidence and may mean they are reluctant to speak.

Modelling language and use of commentary is the more dominant language tool and be mindful of over questioning.

Teach songs and rhymes, with plenty of repetition, to reinforce language.

Build on all children's responses and interpret the very minimal non-verbal actions or gestures as proper turns in conversations, and use these to provide language. For example a child reaching for a book. 'You want to look at this book?' as you help them get it.

Reduce story time group size. Develop opportunities for children to join in with repetitive phrases and actions.

Focus on developing child led communication with adults using techniques of Commenting, Offering Expansions, Recasts, and Modelling scripts.

Comment and wonder out loud about children's play as a way to model and provide a communication supported play environment.

Support play alongside a reduced number of peers and model play, interactions and language.

Use play equipment meets the needs of children who are developmentally working at an earlier stage than their chronological age.

Develop communication friendly spaces within provision with open ended activities to promote imaginative play and language.

Employ a flexible approach to use of staff to support developing language and communication.

Develop and use the appropriate communication method to facilitate children's communication and interaction skills. Seek advice from specialist services such as SALT and SCI on systems best suited to a child. Approaches may include gesture, signs, symbol systems, object reference, Makaton, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS).

Acknowledge and celebrate and build on non-verbal methods of communication.

Monitor and review snack time to promote opportunities for communication and modelling of language.

Use of concrete items especially at snack times and carpet times to facilitate communicating choices.

Introduce 'special time' for children to access language in a quieter focused interaction.

What we might see

Difficulty developing early phonological awareness
Speech production difficulties

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SALT webpage for advice and resources. [Link to Barnsley SALT](#)

Model words back to children and don't correct words that are mispronounced.

Implement multisensory approaches to developing early phonological awareness. Examples of activities below

Rhyme:

- Have objects that rhyme on the floor. Children take turns to select and say items that rhyme
- Rhyming lotto-have picture cards in a bag to select for children to match to their pictures
- Make 'silly soup'. Using items make a soup with items of the same sound – putting them all into a bowl and mixing them up. Share the recipes with lots of reinforcement and repetition of the words and sounds
- Sing rhymes and songs with alliterative lines. Explore different mouth movements with children and bring them into actions rhymes. Explore different sounds with voices and over articulate the sounds and mouth movements. Pass the sound in a circle. Record voices of children saying names in different voices and guess the child whose voice it is
- Share stories with rhyme. For example Duck in the Truck, Oi Frog, Room on the Broom
- Teach phrases using rhythm or song
- Shared reading of familiar books or rhymes where children speak the missing word at the end of the rhyme or sentence
- Generate rhymes with the children for them to extend

Sound segmenting:

- When adults are giving instructions use opportunities to segment words into phonemes e.g time to get your coat c-oo-t
- Use a shy toy who whispers response into the adult's ears in a segmented format for the group of children to make sense of. For example, Ted likes ch-ee-se and ask the children what Ted likes
- Say segmented words for children to repeat and then blend to match to the objects
- Use a toy robot puppet or laptop 'Metal Mike'. Have pictures of CVC words. Say the word in a robot voice so Metal Mike can understand e.g. c-a-t and feed the word to Metal Mike

Syllable segmenting:

- Select items say the word and try clapping out the syllables of the word. Guess the word from the syllables clapped out
- Clap out names of children in the setting – talk about long names and short names
- Use syllable completion with children; you say the first part of the word and the children have to add the last syllable e.g. teacher holds up a picture of a butterfly and says help me finish my word 'butter...' children add 'fly

Sound identification:

- Play sound lotto games using phonic cards where children have to listen and find the correct sound
- Play I spy for children's initial sound for their names. I spy someone whose name begins with T... they stand up and continue the game
- Find objects in the sand. Group objects with the same initial sound
- Notice sounds at the ends of words with children. For example practitioner says 'House.. did you hear the 's' sound at the end of house?'
- Sort objects/pictures of words according to their final sound

What we might see

Social communication difficulties

Limited motivation to communicate

Poor joint attention skills

Limited awareness of listener's needs

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SALT toolkit resources on 'Intensive Interaction' 'Special time' 'Talking wheel' [Link to Barnsley SALT](#)

Intensive interaction and special time opportunities built regularly into the provision.

Create opportunities for a child to ask for more of something they like by only giving in little bits at a time. For example, turn taking with bubbles or ball rolling waiting for child to initiate 'more' with bubbles.

Give choices to encourage the child proactively communicating their selections. For example, have two items of snack – do you want banana or grape using the snack as objects of reference.

Create opportunities for the child to initiate communication. For example, placing favourite toys or food just out of reach and waiting for child to communicate that they want it by pointing, making a sound or sign etc. then say the name of the item and give it to the child.

Find out what motivates the child and their interests and develop opportunities for play in those areas. Plan role play areas to reflect areas of interest and model and facilitate language within those areas.

Develop reasons for communication through a range of opportunities created in provision. For example, Surprise, Children asking questions, Children giving instructions, Collaborating, Giving opinions, Using technology, Reminiscing.

Targeted programmes to develop communication and interaction skills e.g. Wellcomm, Elklan. Details of training delivered by Barnsley SALT including ELKLAN, building vocabulary, language ladder, phonology, stammering, can be found on their webpage.

Access to learning activities in individual sessions and small groups to maximise engagement and match activities to learning outcome.

Create opportunities for regular revisiting and reinforcement of learning to maximise potential for the child to embed and build on that learning to be able to transfer skills. Develop a 'little and often' approach to interventions to incorporate overlearning and repetition.



What we might see

Over reliance on routine

Rigid behaviours and/or routines

Limited interests in setting

Self-directed

What we can do

Ensure consistent approach to communication with children across staff.

Develop engagement and motivation through developing provision that matches child's interest.

Introduce 'intensive interaction' and/or 'Music Interaction' sessions to the provision to promote interest and engagement.

Use personalised visual support to structure sessions. Use of 'first and then' boards. Use 'finished' and support with a sign to communicate the end of an activity.

Teach sequences of actions and use visual strips to reinforce each action, to enable children to follow routines with increased independence.

Identify difficult transition points. Prepare and manage using visuals, countdown, transition activities and flexible adult support.

Use of 'surprise' cards to prepare children for changes and promote change as positive.

The National Autistic Society provides a range of resources to support settings with developing personalised visual support approaches for children.

[Link to NAS visual supports](#)

Discuss visuals with parents to share 'what works' and further develop communication strategies in home and settings.

What we might see

Play repetitive

Limited interaction with peers

Limited awareness of others needs

What we can do

Develop communication skills and relationships through intensive interaction.

Introduce parallel play alongside a child so children are using the same play equipment alongside and commentary can be given that applies to both play.

Access to peer supported learning where child is grouped with peers that can provide modelling of play and appropriate social interaction.

Access to adult facilitated structured play sessions with another child. Model prompt and reinforce children's positive interactions.

Use of social stories to develop understanding of social situations and teach appropriate behaviours for those situations. There is a website link below for social stories and Barnsley SCI team can also offer advice on developing stories with individual children.

[Link to Social Stories © Carol Gray website](#)

Develop children's emotional literacy using some of the following activities.

- Name feelings and develop language using visuals and pictures to support the language
- Develop and use a Feelings wall as a morning routine



- Feelings corner – check in with Ted
- Model feelings and raise the profile of feelings through characters in stories
- Model and teach actions to help us feel better
- Commenting wondering out loud on children’s feelings
- Making links between behaviours and feelings and thoughts and feelings
- Use Feelings fans and emojis to support understanding of and communication of feelings
- Sharing feelings books
- Drawing out feelings of characters in stories
- Making links to child’s own experiences
- Use feelings words when resolving conflict
- Guess the feelings games
- Show me games with emoji cards or feelings fans

What we might see

Sensory processing difficulties

What we can do

Regular relaxation and low stimulus interventions and space for child to access, to increase opportunity for regulating emotion.

Implement intensive interaction sessions throughout sessions to develop fundamentals of communication developing shared attention and promoting non-verbal communication.

See [Physical needs section](#) for 'what we can do'



Useful resources

- Refer to Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters to support implementation of EYFS. [Link to Development Matters](#)
[Link to Birth to 5 Matters](#)
- Settings access and refer to materials in the SEN and Disabilities in the EY – a toolkit outlining guidance for EY providers on implementing the SEND code of practice. [Link to resources from Council for Disabled Children](#)
- The DCSF document Supporting children learning English as an additional language provides useful guidance for practitioners in Early Years. [Link to EaL guidance](#)
- Refer to Barnsley Children’s speech and language therapy (SaLT) service within South West Yorkshire NHS foundation trust website.
- Information on strategies to develop communication skills can be found in the Toolkit Resources alongside information on Training and referring to SaLT. [Link to Barnsley SaLT](#)
- Within Barnsley Education Inclusion Services, the Social Communication and Interaction (SCI), the Educational Child and Community Psychology (ECCP) Service, Portage and Early Years SENCO, offer advice and support for staff and parents in relation to meeting the needs of children with social communication and interaction difficulties. There is training available for Makaton, intensive interaction, PECS, etc.
- Further information is on the website. [Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services](#)
- Further information on Makaton. [Link to Makaton website](#)
- Refer to the DFE document ‘Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics’ produced as part of the Primary National Strategy with lots of activities to promote listening skills and early phonological awareness. [Link to Letters and Sounds](#)
- Refer to the Universally Speaking – Ages and stage of children’s communication development document, to further clarify developmental expectation and possible areas for development in relation to communication. [Link to universally speaking](#)
- Access resource materials from the Communication Trust to develop best practice in supporting children with speech language and communication needs and in talking to parents about language and supporting them to develop communication with their children. [Link to the Communication Trust](#). [Link to communication trust resources talking to parents](#).

- Access Small Talk project website. Resources and video to help parents/carers develop communication through play with their child. [Link to small talk project.](#)
- Access chatter pack website with resources for families and settings to support children with SEND. [Link to Chatterpack website.](#)
- Refer to Every child a talker (ECAT) materials to develop practise and provision in relation to language development.
- Access the National Strategies Every Child a Talker (ECAT) for resources on ways to support and develop communication. [Link to ECAT practitioner guidance.](#) [Link to ECAT resources.](#)
- Access the DfE Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) 'Supporting children with speech language and communication needs'. [Link to IDP speech language and communication](#)
- Access the DfE Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) materials 'Supporting children on the autism spectrum'. [Link to IDP autism spectrum.](#)
- Access resources on supporting language development on ICan website. [Link to iCan resources.](#)
- Word Aware is a resource and approach for developing vocabulary in Early Years. [Link to Word Aware.](#)
- Access the Barnsley SALT website for helpful links and advice on stammering. [Link to Barnsley SaLT.](#)
- Share resources from small talk with parents to support their communications and interactions with their child. [Link to small talk.](#)
- Explore resources on National Autistic Society (NAS) website in planning to meet needs in relation to social communication difficulties
[Link to NAS visual supports.](#)
- Explore resources on Autism Education Trust (AET) website in planning to meet needs in relation to social communication difficulties. [Link to AET.](#)
- Barnsley Social Communication and Interaction (SCI) Team within Barnsley Education Inclusion Services deliver parent workshops for parents wanting support following their child's diagnosis of autism. Further information can be found on the webpage. [Link to SCI parent workshops.](#)
- Alternative ways of communication. [Link to Communication Matters.](#)

Cognition and Learning



Cognition and Learning

Need

Thinking, engagement and motivation are the key characteristics of effective learning identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, as fundamental to children learning. The ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring (engagement), active learning (motivation), and creating and thinking critically (thinking), underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

One of the key guiding principles of the EYFS is that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. Some children will be working below age related expectations in some or all, of the Prime and/or Specific areas of learning and development within the EYFS framework. Their progress may be slow despite access to quality first teaching. The child's learning needs are at times a barrier to the child accessing the provision and learning opportunities in the EYFS independently alongside their peers. Their difficulties in cognition and learning are a barrier for the child developing skills in the three elements of the characteristics of effective learning – engagement, motivation and thinking which is impacting on their progress. The child may present with difficulties in understanding, problem solving, processing and retaining information, acquiring and embedding general or specific skills and concepts. They may lack independence in exploring the provision through play, attending and focusing, making links and generalising learning.

The Graduated Approach

Assess Plan

- Assess and track progress to gather attainment and progress information and share with parents/carers. Where progress against EYFS is difficult to measure consider use of the Early Years Developmental Journal. Track and monitor progress in small steps and identify skills for development. [Link to EY Developmental Journal.](#)
- Refer to Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters guidance to consider the characteristics of effective learning Playing and Exploring –engagement, Active Learning – motivation, Creating and Thinking Critically – thinking. Use the guidance to reflect on practice and provision in relation to positive relationships and enabling environments to promote and embed effective learning. Observe how a child learns to develop an understanding of their strengths and areas to develop, and plan provision to further build on those strengths to develop the characteristics of effective learning. [Link to Development Matters.](#)
[Link to Birth to 5 Matters](#)
- Gather and embed parents/carers and child views to inform strengths, difficulties and provision. Collect parent and child views in single page profiles and regularly refer to and update to ensure views are current. Identify strengths and need through completing an Early Years Individual Needs Analysis. Match provision to need and outcomes, and map provision on to an Early Years provision planner. Where Portage have been involved, to work together to plan for transition into setting with parents/carers and inform the Early Years Individual Needs Analysis and Provision Planner. Key worker and SENCO to work together to identify need and plan for provision with parents/carers. Develop aspirations with parents/carers through consideration of developing skills for independence within the wider context of the key aspects of preparation for adulthood – employment, independent living, relationships and health. Develop an outcome focused Early Years SEN support plan where outcomes are developed with parents/carers incorporating child views and interests. Develop child centred SMART outcomes with parents that reflect the child's special educational needs (SEN) and parent and child aspirations. Co-ordinate as needed, a multi-agency child centred approach to needs analysis and provision planning in conjunction with education and health specialists to assess specific needs that may impact on learning and development of the individual child
- Consider other needs that may be behind the presenting difficulties and access other agencies for further assessment as needed e.g. SALT, OT, health visitor, Paediatrician, to further clarify need and provision.

- Book on Early Years Area SENCO surgery for advice on clarifying need. [Link to EY Area SENCO surgery.](#)
- Continue to monitor Integrated Review Action Plan. [Link to Integrated Review guidance.](#)
- Consider with parents/carers if there are needs that may be addressed through an Early Help Assessment (EHA). [Link to EHA information.](#)
- Consider accessing additional advice on supporting a family through meeting with social worker from the Assessment and Joint Investigation Team and a member of the Early Help Panel at Early Help surgery. [Link to Early Help surgery information.](#)
- Develop plans for transition within and between settings/schools with parents/carers and child in a timely way, where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. For transition planning to be multi-agency as needed and child centred that is initiated early to enable preparation and planning for provision. Refer to Barnsley's EYFS Transition Guidance. [Link to transition guidance.](#)

Do Review

- Implement provision that enables the outcomes to be achieved and meets the special educational needs (SEN) of the child. Setting staff to develop a consistent approach to implementing provision described in Early Years provision planner and Early Years (EY) SEN support plan. Implement advice and/or provision advised following any multi agency involvement. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents/carers, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured and recorded using the EY SEN support plan. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs and progress made. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured. Review effectiveness of provision and interventions in enabling achievement of SMART child centred outcomes regularly (2-5 weeks) with parents/carers. Evidence review of impact of provision on progress through the EY provision planner and the EY SEN support plan. Reviews should be multi-agency as needed and involve the appropriate external professionals working with the child.
- Book consultation at EY Area SENCO surgeries to inform provision planning. [Link to EY Area SENCO surgery information.](#)
- To implement and review plans for transition across settings/schools through meetings where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. For transition visits and development of skills to prepare for transition to be targeted through provision planning and outcomes in EY SEN support plans. Where Portage are involved work closely with the Portage Worker and parents/carers to monitor implementation of plans for transition into setting.
- Where an EHA has been initiated, relevant actions from the action plan should be incorporated into the child's provision in settings and impact monitored and reviewed and fed into the multi-agency Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings. [Link to EHA information.](#)
- Consider provision in the context of resourcing and discuss request for Disability Access funding (DAF) and/or Early Years Inclusion Grant (EYIG) with parents as needed. [Link to funding information.](#)
- Barnsley Education Inclusion Services offer a range of bespoke training in relation to understanding and meeting the needs of children with SEN which can be developed to meet the needs of your setting. Training needs can be discussed at consultation surgeries and/or with your link practitioner and information can be found on Barnsley Education Inclusion Services webpage. [Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services.](#)

What we might see

Difficulty with engagement

Limited sensory exploration of environment

Lack of curiosity in exploring provision

Limited interest in observing peers play

No evidence of specific interests

Limited engagement in open ended activity

Limited representation of their experiences in play

Little role play or imaginative play

Minimal progression in extending play

Avoids challenge and risk taking

Reluctance to explore new areas of provision

What we can do

Ensure play and learning opportunities are reinforced through multi-sensory experiences across the provision.

Develop sensory baskets of items for a child to explore. Ensure a good range of textures to promote interest in exploration.

Cue children in to engaging. Cues might be auditory, gesture, visual using objects of reference, verbal or physical touch.

Ensure use of name and touch to engage children before verbal information is delivered.

Model and extend play using commentary to engage and to reinforce language. Develop a 'little and often' approach to play and learning through modelling.

Develop joint attention through child led play and incorporating child's interests. The links below contain further detail on intensive interactions and developing joint attention.

[Link to portage resources in developing joint attention.](#)

[Link to Barnsley SaLT resources.](#)

Intensive use of interaction, visuals and multisensory approaches to maximise interest and engagement. Work closely with parents/carers to share practice in play and interactions to promote development and learning of key skills.

Develop a 'copy box' that has two sets of play equipment and objects that are of interest to the child. Follow the child's lead and copy and name what the child does using the same equipment alongside the child.

Incorporate surprise into the routines. For example, pausing and asking what next? Making a different sound before introducing something different.

Use of puppets to engage play and interaction.

Have objects that promote open ended play opportunities. For example, pinecones and egg boxes instead of cups and plates.

Access to peer supported learning where child is grouped with peers who can provide modelling of play and learning.

Ensure teaching provision and play based equipment meets the needs of children who are developmentally working at an earlier stage than their chronological age.



What we might see

Lacking motivation

Poor attention and difficulty maintaining concentration

Fleeting attention difficulty staying on task

Individual interests not present or identifiable

Passive and reduced motivation

Little emotional response to success or failure

Limited involvement in play

Limited perseverance

Reluctant to 'have a go'

Only engaged in tasks by external reward

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SALT toolkit resources on 'Attention Building' and 'Early Communication Looking and Listening games'.

[Link to Barnsley SALT resources.](#)

Refer to 'Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics' produced as part of the Primary National Strategy with lots of activities to promote listening skills. [Link to Letters and Sounds](#)

Teach good listening skills – identify what children need to do to be good listeners. Reinforce good listening through visuals and modelling.

Ensure listening time expectations are in line with child's developmental stage.

Consideration given to noise levels and quiet spaces to promote listening and language development.

Teach song or action to signal listening time.

Develop motivation to listen through use of song, music, actions, visuals and movement. Incorporate games and songs that involve waiting watching and listening for a cue. Use instruments to initiate a sound for children to copy with their instruments.

For the practitioner to adopt the role of a co-adventurer who explores and engages with the provision with the child.

Use of 'Ready... Steady...Go...' to develop motivation and interest to listening. Include a range of activities – knocking down tower blocks, marbles down a tube, rolling a ball, toys in a box, releasing a pop-up toy, going down the slide etc.

Use song and rhymes to build anticipation and engagement. For example, peek a boo, round and round the garden.

Consider the individual child's interests and motivations and incorporate into the provision. Give choices and watch for signs of preferences and build in play that the child finds motivating.

Transfer elements of child's interest to different areas of provision. For example, a child who likes diggers can be encouraged to engage with books through using books about diggers in the first instance.

Have objects of interest in sight but just out of reach to promote the child's motivation to reach to get them.

Find motivating toys that are slightly hidden for child to find. Progress on to treasure hunts in provision.

Provide high interest cause and effect toys and model the action needed to get a result. Support with language of 'ready steady go' to draw attention and interest.

Consider group size, peer group and timing of activities to maximise child's motivation, potential for modelling and potential to engage.

Slow the pace of rhymes and songs to ensure the language can be accessed. Ensure rhymes and songs are used regularly with intonation, actions, props, objects of reference and pictures to reinforce the language.

Use books that are developmentally matched to the child and promote interaction with books through touch and sounds.

Extend existing play through modelling and support with language, introducing variety of objects or toys to further exploration.

Develop confidence in an underused area of provision through teaching and modelling play in those areas.

Raise children's profile and promote a sense of purpose through assigning jobs and responsibilities at key points in session.

Use of regular targeted specific praise for progress in independence.

What we might see

Difficulty applying thinking skills

Little engagement with modelling

Difficulty making choices

Little evidence of transferring or applying learning or skills across different contexts

Not making links between experiences at home and in settings

Skills or learning not retained and built on

Over reliance on same strategy in attempts to problem solve

Little perseverance with problem solving

Not linking cause and effect

Getting stuck in the same play sequence

Inflexible approach to play

What we can do

Create and embed opportunities for high levels of repetition, revisiting, reinforcement and consolidation of skills and learning experiences within the provision across different learning areas of the indoor and outdoor provision.

Use objects of reference to develop understanding of and anticipation of events. For example, nappy for nappy change. Objects of references should initially be objects used in the actual activity.

Engage in backward chaining of sequences of actions required to complete a task to identify the skills and sequence of skills to enable completion of a task. Teach and model each section of the action. For example, for finger food feeding, teach reaching, grasping, maintaining grip, putting to mouth and putting in mouth.

Create opportunities for skills to be practised in different contexts of the provision with different staff or different resources so children can progress from acquiring learning in a specific context to generalisation of that learning.

Embed opportunities for children engaging in repeated patterns of behaviours or schemes to promote the repetition.

The repetition that enables children to build up understanding and develop concepts. Some common schemas to attend to are:

- Trajectory Throwing items in various directions, climbing up and jumping off
- Enveloping Wrapping self in a blanket, covering whole painting with one colour, putting notes in envelopes to post
- Enclosure Filling and emptying containers, climbing into boxes, making dens
- Transporting Carrying small items round in bags and buckets, pushing other children and objects round in prams and pushchairs
- Rotation Rolling and being spun round, playing with wheeled toys

Instructions, information and tasks broken down into small steps with reduced language and key word focus.

Slow the pace at which language is delivered and give children time to process single pieces of information before giving additional language to process.

Deliver instructions in the order that you want the action. So, instruction then action.

Build in pauses to adult instructions and commentary to ensure children are given enough time and space to make a communicative response.

Match language used to children's developmental stage and their level of understanding of language use of objects of reference, visuals, sign. Objects of reference and visuals used to support language are matched to child's developmental stage.

Teaching of vocabulary and new skills taught and reinforced in smaller groups.

Tasks broken down into stepped instructions and consideration given to structuring learning using 'first... and then ...' visuals

Use of books to teach vocabulary through picture naming and reinforce the vocabulary using objects of reference.

Reinforce vocabulary and understanding through songs books stories rhymes and games related to particular topics being explored in provision.

Objects of reference, visuals and sign used to support verbal information.

Access to additional and flexible arrangements in a small group and/or individual basis to support individual outcomes.

Use a variety of developmentally matched resources and play equipment to promote learning in the areas of problem solving, reasoning and concept development.

Ensure opportunities for developmentally appropriate short tabletop play facilitated by adults using jigsaws, beads and patterns, blocks, matching sorting, lotto, etc.

Matching and sorting activities using objects relevant to the child and progress on to pictures of the objects. Reasoning and problem-solving skills through activities which are broken down into small steps, modelled and scaffolded. Investigation of objects and materials to encourage understanding of similarities, differences, pattern and change.

Recap Repeat Reinforce learning and play opportunities alongside language used and vocabulary taught.

Useful resources

- Settings access and refer to materials in the SEN and disabilities in the EY - a toolkit outlining guidance for EY providers on implementing the SEND code of practice.
[Link to Council for Disabled Children EY toolkit.](#)
- Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters in the EYFS guidance material to support implementation of EYFS.
[Link to Development Matters.](#)
[Link to Birth to 5 Matters.](#)
- Early Education The British Association for Early Childhood Education, has a range of downloadable resources in relation to child development and provision in EYFS.
[Link to Early Education Resources.](#)
- Play and development activities for 0-5 year olds.
[Link to hungry little minds.](#)
- Access the National Portage Association webpage for parent resources to support children's development through play.
[Link to National Portage Association.](#)
- The National Strategies Early Years. Learning Playing and Interacting. Good Practice in the EYFS.
[Link to National Strategies Early Years.](#)
- The National Strategies Early Years. Challenging Practice to further improve learning playing and interacting.
[Link to National Strategies.](#)

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties



Social emotional and mental health difficulties

Need

Social and Emotional well-being is key to children being able to learn and develop. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework promotes learning and development through the unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments. A key theme underpinning the EYFS is that children learn through positive relationships and having a sense of belonging. Children's social and emotional well-being will be promoted through positive relationships and interactions that are warm, sensitive, responsive, supportive and consistent. Through a high-quality delivery of the EYFS, children are supported towards independence within a framework that is built on key person relationships that promote both well-being and development of the characteristics of effective learning – engagement, motivation and thinking.

All children require support to develop their resilience, confidence, a positive sense of their own identity and independence. As one of the three prime areas of learning and development within the EYFS, Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is identified as being particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Some children will be working below age related expectations in relation to Personal Social and Emotional development (PSED) and not making expected progress within any of the 3 areas of self-regulation, managing self and/or building relationships. This may be impacting on their progress in other Prime and Specific areas of learning and development within the EYFS. Children's difficulties in communication and language may be impacting on their social and emotional wellbeing, so when assessing need it will be important to consider a child's development in communication and language alongside their progress in PSED. Social and emotional difficulties may also be impacting a child's development in relation to the characteristics of effective learning – engagement, motivation and thinking, and a barrier to the child accessing and progressing in the EYFS curriculum independently. The child's social and emotional needs may be a barrier to them accessing the provision and learning opportunities independently, alongside their peers.

A child with social and emotional difficulties may present with difficulties in making relationships, be low in self-confidence and struggle to manage feelings and behaviour age appropriately. They may struggle to engage with routines, require support to help them settle to engage, and need support to develop positive play and interaction skills that enable them to play and learn successfully alongside peers. They may lack confidence in accessing the provision and at times may seem unhappy, have difficulties regulating their emotions, difficulties settling to play, be low in resilience, become easily upset and/or socially withdrawn in setting. They may struggle at transition points and/or struggle when separating from parents/carers. In relation to their chronological age they may be physically over-active and/or impulsive and engage in behaviours that put themselves or others at risk in terms of their safety in setting. They may avoid seeking out or engaging with adult and/or peer support for comfort or be over reliant on adult support to be soothed when upset. They may at times resort to inappropriate and/or unhelpful behaviours to communicate and interact with peers and/or adults.

The Graduated Approach

Assess Plan

- Assess and track progress to gather attainment and progress information and share with parents/carers. Use assessment information to inform understanding of the child's developmental stage and planning for next steps. Where progress against EYFS is difficult to measure consider use of the Early Years Developmental Journal. Track and monitor progress in small steps and identify skills for development particularly in relation to Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Communication and Language.
[Link to EY Developmental Journal.](#)
- Refer to Development Matters guidance to consider the characteristics of effective learning Playing and Exploring – engagement, Active Learning – motivation, Creating and Thinking Critically – thinking. Use the guidance to reflect on practice in relation to positive relationships and enabling environments to promote and embed effective learning. Focus particularly on the prime area of Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED) within Development Matters guidance to match provision to child's developmental stage when teaching the aspects of making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviours. Consider the child's development in the prime area of Communication and Language within Development Matters guidance to identify areas of difficulties, which may be impacting on a child's social skills and emotional well-being.
[Link to Development Matters.](#)
- Work closely with parent/carers to gather their views on their child's needs to inform assessment and planning for provision. Develop single page profiles and regularly refer to and update to ensure views are current. Gather child views through observation and engagement and embed parent and child views to inform strengths, difficulties and provision. Identify strengths and need through completing an Early Years Individual Needs Analysis. Where Portage have been involved, work together to plan for transition into setting with parents and inform the Early Years Individual Needs Analysis and Provision Planner.
- Match provision to need and outcomes, and map provision on to an Early Years Provision Planner. Key Worker and SENCO to work together to identify need and plan for provision with parents/carers. Develop aspirations with parents through consideration of developing skills for independence within the wider context of the key aspects of preparation for adulthood – employment, independent living, relationships and health. Develop a child centred outcome focused Early Years SEN support plan where outcomes are developed with parents/carers incorporating child views and interests. Develop child centred SMART

outcomes with parents/carers that reflect the child's special educational needs (SEN) and parent/carers. Co-ordinate as needed, a multi-agency child centred approach to needs analysis and provision planning in conjunction with education and health specialists to assess communication, cognition, independence, physical skills, sensory needs as appropriate. Consider other needs that may be behind the presenting difficulties and access agencies for further assessment as needed, to further clarify need.

- To develop plans for transition within and between settings/schools with parents and child in a timely way, where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. For transition planning to be multi-agency as needed and child centred that is initiated early to enable preparation and planning for provision.
- Refer to Barnsley's EYFS Transition Guidance.
[Link to EY transition guidance](#)
- Use observation tools to reflect on behaviours and their context e.g. ABC chart, STAR analysis.
- Book on Early Years Area SENCO surgery for advice on clarifying need.
[Link to EY Area SENCO surgery information.](#)
- Continue to monitor Integrated Review Action Plan.
[Link to Integrated review guidance.](#)
- Consider with parents if there are needs that may be addressed through an Early Help Assessment (EHA).
[Link to EHA information.](#)
- Consider accessing additional advice on supporting a family through meeting with social worker from the Assessment and Joint Investigation Team and a member of the Early Help Panel at Early Help Surgery.
[Link to Early Help surgery.](#)

Do Review

- Implement provision that enables the outcomes to be achieved and meets the special educational needs (SEN) of the child. Setting staff to develop a consistent approach to implementing provision described in Early Years provision planner and Early Years (EY) SEN support plan. Implement advice and/or provision advised following any multi agency involvement. Develop provision with parents/carers based on advice given by specialists involved. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents/carers, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured and recorded using the EY SEN support plan. Review effectiveness of provision and interventions in enabling the achievement of SMART child centred outcomes. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured. Review effectiveness of provision and interventions in enabling achievement of SMART child centred outcomes regularly with parents/carers. Evidence review of impact of provision on progress through the EY provision planner and the EY SEN support plan. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs and progress made. Reviews should be multi-agency as needed and involve the appropriate external professionals working with the child.
- Book consultation at EY Area SENCO surgeries to inform provision planning. [Link to EY Area SENCO surgery.](#)
- Complete a Risk Assessment as needed with parents/carers and regularly review with parents/carers
- To implement and review plans for transition across settings/schools through meetings where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. For transition visits and development of skills to prepare for transition to be targeted through provision planning and outcomes in EY SEN support plans.
- Where an EHA has been initiated, relevant actions from the action plan should be incorporated into the child's provision in settings and impact monitored and reviewed and fed into the multi-agency Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings.
- Consider provision in the context of resourcing and discuss request for Disability Access funding (DAF) and/or Early Years Inclusion Grant (EYIG) with parents as needed. [Link to funding information.](#)
- Barnsley Education Inclusion Services offer a range of bespoke training in relation to understanding and meeting the needs of children with SEN which can be developed to meet the needs of your setting. Training needs can be discussed at consultation surgeries and/or with your link practitioner and information can be found on Barnsley Education Inclusion Services webpage. [Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services.](#)

What we might see

Difficulty building relationships

Little interest in activities or play of others

Limited interactions with peers

Play tends to be isolated

Avoids opportunities to share experiences

Little engagement with key adults

What we can do

Emphasis on the key person role in building relationships with the key child. Key person caregiving and meeting a child's physical needs through personalised interactions that 'tune in' and develop a relationship with the child. For example, nappy change tunes in to the child's preference of how that is done, anticipates needs and promotes opportunities for playfulness and empathic interactions to further develop the relationship with the child.

Communicate and demonstrate warmth sensitivity and availability through the key person role of physical and emotional care. Build trust and ability for a child to develop confidence in relationships through the key person relationship.

Maximising opportunities to develop a secure base through the key person relationships in order for the child to develop confidence to develop wider relationships with staff and peers.

Develop a playful approach with the child and model curiosity and wonder to promote interest in exploring the provision.

Tune in to how a child might be feeling demonstrating that attunement through matching facial expression, body language non-verbal, tone of voice with child's feeling state.

Adults offer containment by holding steady and regulating their emotions when the child expresses extremes of emotion and supporting regulation through soothing and co-regulation. For example the child who hides under the table and shouts at adults to go away may need the key worker to make the space comfortable with cushions (physical containment), get down alongside and acknowledge the child's feelings and reassure the child (emotional containment).

Develop joint or shared interest and attention. Get alongside a child and observe their play and notice and mirror the play. Copy sequences of the child's play, mirror the child's verbal and non-verbal communications and facial expressions.

Introduce items of high interest to the child that incorporate shared play in a staged approach. For example, playing with the same toy alongside and progressing to playing with the same toy together in short turn taking activities.

Incorporate games that promote eye contact or noticing the adult. For example, tickling games that start when the child looks towards you or blowing bubbles that continue when the child looks to you.

Introduce short end goal activities to celebrate success together. For example, dropping the final shape in the sorter. The links below contain further detail on intensive interactions and developing joint attention.

[Link to National Portage Association advice.](#)

[Link to Barnsley SALT.](#)

Model play alongside a reduced number of peers that promotes interactions and language.

Teaching provision and play based equipment meets the needs of children who are emotionally developmentally working at an earlier stage than their chronological age.

Develop personalised provision to match child's interest in group activities. For example, props in rhymes or songs are linked to child's interest. Areas of provision incorporate aspects of the child's interest so other children are engaging in play and reinforcing shared interests.

Access to peer supported learning where child is grouped with peers that can provide modelling of play and appropriate social interaction.

What we might see

Low self-confidence and little self-awareness

Reluctance to explore the provision

Passive and struggles to make choices

Finds transition points and separating from carer difficult

Tends not to respond to praise

Difficulty communicating or expressing preferences

Rarely seeks out help

What we can do

Consider the skills required to enable a child to complete a task. Teach the individual skills and reinforce development of those skills by creating opportunities within the provision. For example, the skill of being able to make a choice at snack time can be reinforced through facilitating choice making across the provision. The skill of being able to hold a piece of fruit in a pincer grip can be reinforced through play requiring picking up and placing items promoted through open-ended play with pine cones, sticks etc. or finding items in sand, decorating cakes etc.

Encourage engagement in provision that the child is less familiar with. For example, replicate play equipment that is highly motivating to a child and have it in an area of the provision less familiar to the child. Another example could be to replicate play equipment in a particular area and observe and replicate peers play alongside the child.

Consider the provision in the context of the child's developmental stage and match provision to the child's developmental stage. Ensure activities are accessible, achievable and well scaffolded by adult to facilitate successful experiences for the child.

Create opportunities for regular revisiting and reinforcement of learning to maximise potential for the child to embed and

build on that learning to be able to transfer skills. Develop a 'little and often' approach to interventions to incorporate overlearning and repetition.

Provide open ended opportunities for explorations to develop problem solving and information gathering. Adults to get alongside the child as a co-adventurer enthusing being curious and commenting on the child led exploration. The adult notices, describes, and offers specific descriptive feedback to the child about their sensations, feelings and behaviour.

Introduce elements of the provision to areas where the child is more confident. For example, bringing small world to the construction area as a way of introducing small world. Introduce role play into bikes by adding a stop sign, traffic lights, petrol station, zebra crossing etc. to promote communication and interaction opportunities.

Develop engagement and motivation through developing provision that matches child's interest.

Use objects of reference and/or personalised visual support to structure sessions and introduce 'first... and then ...' objects or visual boards.

Use concrete objects to promote being able to make choices from 2 options.

Look for opportunities for highly motivating experiences or items to be visible but out of reach so the child communicates through nonverbal or verbal methods an interest in something that the practitioner can notice, verbalises and immediately respond to.

Use transitional objects to help children self soothe if feeling anxious that the usual source for soothing (parent/carer) is not available. The transitional object supports the child to stay connected to the security provided by the parent/carer and helps them self-regulate if upset. The object can be a song, a phrase, a photograph, a toy, a cloth etc.

To tune in to a child and pre-empt or observe when they might need help and comment on that. For example, 'I can see you are struggling to get your wellies on and that you might want me to help – let me help you' and then provide commentary through the task noticing other children who also need help and that being able to help each other is a good thing. Look for opportunities to model help through role play.

Create opportunities for small groups to be involved in doing something together that requires cooperation and helping. For example, den building outside, and use commentary to feedback on specific cooperative behaviours. For example 'I can see Alfie helping Jaden carry those blocks – what a good idea doing it together and helping each other'

Providing children with territorial space, for example, their own sleepmat, peg; helping them feel that they belong by having routines and rituals, for example, welcome and departure songs and greetings.

What we might see

Difficulty managing feelings and self-regulating

Struggles to soothe themselves or accept comfort from familiar adults

Finds it hard to follow routines and cooperate with boundaries

Difficulty identifying and expressing their own feelings

Easily upset and feelings can become overwhelming and a barrier to accessing the provision

Intolerant of needs not being met immediately

Disregarding of/or unaware of others' feelings

Impulsive behaviours making other children wary of them

What we can do

Raise the profile of feelings and teaching vocabulary and understanding of emotions. Embed language about feelings within the provision and through interactions to develop understanding of feelings. Notice how we feel through what we do and use wondering out loud to name and suggest feelings to help children develop links between what they do and how they feel. For example, 'I can see you smiling I wonder if you feel happy'. Talk about how we are feeling through promotion of positive behaviours. For example, 'I feel happy when you wait your turn'.

Have a daily check in of each other's feelings and share as a group. Use puppets or a nursery cuddly toy to tell feelings to. Use emojis and photos to reinforce the language and understanding of feelings. Use feelings walls, photos of emotions communicated facially and non-verbally to support children's understanding and interpretation of emotions. Validate the child's emotional experiences by commenting on possible experiences feelings thoughts, actions.

Consider the environment and ensure provision is in place for children to access quiet calm cosy space.

Identify and teach children actions to help them feel better. 'So, when we feel sad what might help us feel better?' Share ideas and have them on the feelings wall with photos of the actions. 'If I feel sad I can..... have a cuddle, sit with my snuggle blanket, play with my friends, sing a song, go outside etc.'

Use books and stories to make feelings high profile and explore different situations that provoke different feelings for different characters. Make links between characters and ourselves and link to children's own experiences and feelings.

Create personalised stories to explore and validate child's feelings and experiences and also to explore solutions or ways to feel positive or confident etc. Introduce characters in the form of a nursery puppet or nursery teddy that has experiences and feelings similar to the child's and explore through story. For example, Ted feels worried about going to big school and not being able to take his comfort blanket, but he has a school bag and can take it in that and bring it out at carpet time.

Communicate empathy by observing noticing and communicating what you think a child may be feeling. Use wondering out loud techniques where suggestions are made based on what you see. 'I can see you have taken yourself away from the group and sitting on your own. You are looking down at the floor and look a bit fed up. I wonder if you might be feeling a bit sad?'

Plan individual or small group work where strategies for identifying and expressing emotions appropriately can be explored through play and shared story.

Regular low stimulus time to increase opportunity for regulating emotion. For example, sensory exploration using a box of sensory toys for a child to explore alongside an adult through child led play. This could be in a cushioned quieter area of the provision.

Develop and embed a structure to the sessions. Reinforce through visual timetables and regularly refer to the timetables.

Ensure consistency of approach, clear boundaries and specific feedback to promote positive behaviours and to communicate positive regard.

To be a co-constructor of meaning for children's emotions and actions by using facial expression, gesture, then body language and then by translating experience into words. For example 'when something you made gets broken you might feel cross as well as sad....I wonder if that is how you feel?'

Preparation for what's happening and what is next. Use songs or music to cue in children to a transition point in the session and preparation for that transition. For example, bells for get ready for tidy up and then the tidy up song.

Ensure language for communicating instructions is specific and clear. For example, 'Coats on first then outside'

Use age and stage appropriate positive behaviour promotion strategies, e.g. distraction techniques, close supervision for impulsive children, withdrawal to a quiet, calm area.

Work closely with parents/carers to share practice in play and interactions to promote development and learning of PSED skills.

Targeted group work to promote positive social skills facilitated by key person. For example, turn taking singing games, responsibilities at snack time etc.

What we might see

Difficulty engaging with or managing their self-care needs age appropriately.

What we can do

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (nhsggc) has a range of resources and activities to promote independence and self care skills www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids.

Breakdown tasks and identify the sequence of actions and skills required to complete them.

Teach the skills in small manageable steps and then build to link the skills together.

Teach and model skills.

Backward and forward chaining of skills to teach an independence skill. Identify skills to develop. Teach one aspect of the task for a child to achieve and once mastered then move onto the next step.

Use visual sequences to prompt and guide children through a sequence. Reinforce visuals with rhymes or songs and modelling e.g. hand washing, toileting routine.

Create opportunities for regular revisiting and reinforcement of learning to maximise potential for the child to embed and build on that learning to be able to transfer skills. Develop a 'little and often' approach to interventions to incorporate overlearning and repetition.

To support independence at snack or mealtimes:

- ensure table and chair are appropriate height
- feet should be supported (on floor/step/stool) to give stability
- provide a non-slip mat under the plate/bowl (non-slip mats can also be used under resources/toys)
- try to use plates/bowls with raised edges so cutlery can be pushed against it to pick up food use light chunky cutlery or foam tubing can be cut to size and put over cutlery handle.

Consider sensory needs. Could there be some sensory issues affecting the child's ability to undertake self-care needs e.g. dislike of certain clothing textures, food textures, smell in eating areas or toilet/changing areas, noise within the toilet or eating area etc.



Useful resources

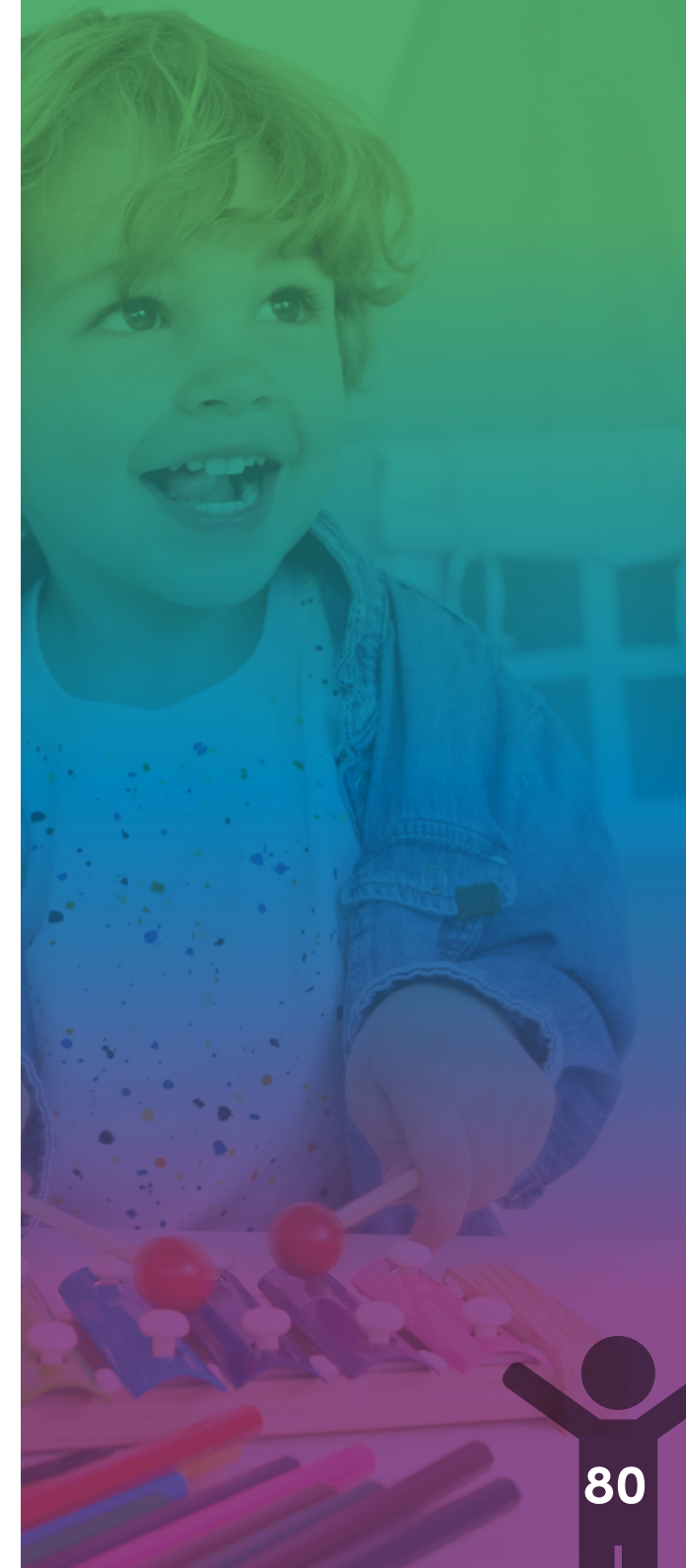
- Development Matters in the EYFS guidance material to support implementation of EYFS. [Link to Development Matters.](#)
- Settings access and refer to materials in the SEN and Disabilities in the EY – a toolkit outlining guidance for EY providers on implementing the SEND code of practice. [Link to Council for Disabled Children EY toolkit.](#)
- Barnsley Education Inclusion Services offer a range of bespoke training in relation to understanding and meeting the needs of children with SEN which can be developed to meet the needs of your setting. Training needs can be discussed at consultation surgeries and/or with your link practitioner and information can be found on Barnsley Education Inclusion Services webpage. [Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services.](#)
- Refer to A celebratory Approach to SEND Assessment in the Early Years for good practice and resources in relation to observation, planning, engaging families, assessment, and the graduated response. [Link to SEND assessment approach.](#)
- Refer to the Social and Emotional Aspects of Development (SEAD) Guidance for practitioners working in the EYFS (DfE 2008). [Link to SEAD guidance.](#)
- Use the audit in appendix 2 of the SEAD guidance to reflect on the emotionally enabling environment and consider how your setting promotes personal social and emotional well-being for staff parents and children. [Link to SEAD audit.](#)
- Access the DfE Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) materials for Early Years ‘Supporting children with behavioural emotional and social difficulties’. [Link to IDP materials.](#)
- Access Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) webpage for resources to promote emotional literacy skills through the provision in setting. [Link to ELSA resources.](#)
- ‘Observing Children with Attachment Difficulties in Preschool Settings A Tool for identifying and supporting emotional and social difficulties’ by Kim S. Golding. [Link to Kim Golding book.](#)
- ‘Venturing into play’ by Caroline Smith. [Link to Caroline Smith book.](#)
- EY Resources to explore feelings and emotions. [Link to feelings resources.](#)
- Refer to Barnsley Children’s speech and language therapy (SaLT) service within South West Yorkshire NHS foundation trust website.

- Information on strategies to develop communication skills can be found in the Toolkit Resources alongside information on Training and referring to SaLT. [Link to Barnsley SaLT.](#)
- Refer to the Universally Speaking - Ages and stage of children's communication development document, to further clarify developmental expectation and possible areas for development in relation to communication. [Link to Universally Speaking.](#)
- Wellcomm 'Early Years Big book of ideas' to further support early social communication development. [Link to Wellcomm big book of ideas.](#)
- Ideas for EY books to use to explore feelings and emotions. [Link to EY books on emotions.](#)
- Resource through which to explore feelings. [Link to feelings resource.](#)

Sensory and/or Physical



Hearing Loss



Hearing Loss

Need

Children's hearing loss ranges from mild short-term hearing loss, to those who have permanent and profound hearing loss. A child's hearing loss is described by the type and degree of hearing loss. The following descriptions of hearing loss are based on the British Society of Audiology definitions of hearing loss.

Degree of Hearing Loss:		Type of Hearing Loss:	
Mild	21 - 40 dB	Bilateral	both ears
Moderate	41 - 70 dB	Unilateral	one sided
Severe	71 - 95 dB	Asymmetrical	ears differ in the degree of loss
Profound	95 + dB	Progressive	deteriorating

All sounds are made up of different frequencies, measured in Hertz (Hz). The frequency of a sound affects the pitch that it's heard at. It's possible to have the same level of deafness for all frequencies or to have different hearing levels at different frequencies. For example, a child may have more difficulty hearing higher frequency sounds. A child's audiogram will illustrate how loud a sound has to be and at what frequency, for a child to be able to hear it. Sensorineural deafness is a hearing loss in the inner ear. This usually means that the cochlea isn't working effectively. Sensorineural deafness is permanent. Conductive deafness means that sound can't pass efficiently through the outer and middle ear into the inner ear. This is often caused by blockages such as wax in the outer ear, or fluid in the middle ear (glue ear). Glue ear is a very common condition, especially in pre-school children and impacts on the child's ability to hear. Conductive deafness is usually temporary, but it can be permanent in some cases. It is possible for children to have a combination of sensorineural and conductive deafness. This is known as mixed deafness. Deafness in one ear only is known as unilateral deafness. Most deaf children can hear some sounds at certain frequencies and loudness, and with the use of hearing aids or implants they are often able to hear more sounds.

Children with even a mild hearing loss will have difficulty filtering out background noise to enable them to tune into key speakers. As a result, incidental learning experiences that are spoken language based are reduced for deaf children. Early years children are at an early stage of developing their understanding, vocabulary and knowledge of context. Not yet having this knowledge can make it challenging for young children to fill in gaps of missed information which then reduces learning opportunities for new vocabulary and concepts. A child's hearing loss may be impacting on their progress in some or all of the Prime areas of learning and development within the EYFS, but particularly likely in relation to communication and language and possibly aspects of personal social and emotional development. A hearing loss may also impact on the child's development in the characteristics of effective learning – engagement, motivation and thinking, and a barrier to the child accessing and progressing in the EYFS curriculum independently.

The Graduated Approach

Assess Plan

- Assess and track progress to gather attainment and progress information share with parents/carers and discuss any concerns. Where progress against EYFS is difficult to measure consider use of the Early Years Developmental Journal. Track and monitor progress in small steps and identify skills for development. [Link to EY Developmental Journal.](#)
- For all staff in settings to be aware of indicators of a hearing loss. For EY staff in settings to observe and monitor children for any behaviours that may be indicative of a hearing loss. In order to inform observations refer to the Hearing Support webpage for more information on possible signs/indications of a hearing loss. Any concerns to be shared with parents and consider referral to your GP or your local audiology department. [Link to Hearing Support webpage.](#)
[Link to Barnsley paediatric audiology.](#)
- Use Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters guidance to identify the child's developmental stage with particular focus on the areas of Communication and Language. To work closely with Barnsley Hearing Support Service and parents/carers following a diagnosis to understand need and plan provision in line with the child's hearing loss and communication needs. Ongoing assessment by Hearing Support Service as needed, using Success from the Start for deaf babies and children and Cognitive and Listening Links (CaLL). Work with all children in setting to ensure they have an understanding of hearing loss and what they can do to help their peer communicate and make friends. [Link to Development Matters.](#)
- In collaboration with parents/carers, Hearing Support Service, and SALT if necessary, determine a communication approach. Plan for any training needs for staff to be able to implement the communication preferences with a consistent approach across the setting to meet the child's needs. Work closely with the Hearing Support Service to develop a clear understanding of the child's hearing loss and plan and develop strategies to be used to ensure the child's needs are met.
- Review the criteria for referral to Barnsley Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service and consider with parents/carers if referral appropriate for further assessment of their child's speech, language and communication skills. [Link to Barnsley SaLT.](#)
- Setting to work closely with the Hearing Support Service to inform the graduated response to the child's SEN. Consider a child's hearing levels, understanding of language, access to the curriculum, use of equipment and all areas of development to be incorporated into the settings graduated response for the child. Collect parents/carers and child views in single page profiles to inform the graduated response and regularly refer to and update to ensure views are current and embedded. Identify strengths and need through completing an Early Years Needs Analysis with parent/carer. Where Portage have been

involved, for settings to work together with parent/carer and portage worker to plan for transition into setting and inform the Early Years Needs Analysis and Early Years Provision Planner. Match provision to need and outcomes and map provision on to an Early Years Provision Planner. Key worker and SENCO to work together to identify need and plan for provision with parents/carers.

- Develop aspirations with parents through consideration of developing skills for independence within the wider context of the key aspects of preparation for adulthood – employment, independent living, relationships and health. Develop an outcome focused Early years SEN support plan where outcomes are developed with parents/carers. Develop child centred SMART outcomes with parents/carers that reflect the child’s special educational needs (SEN), parent aspirations and child’s interests.
- Co-ordinate as needed, a multi-agency child centred approach to needs analysis and provision planning in conjunction with education and health specialists to assess specific needs that may impact on learning and development of the individual child and inform provision.
- Continue to monitor progress through Integrated Review Action Plan. [Link to Integrated Review guidance.](#)
- Consider with parents if there are needs that may be addressed through an Early Help Assessment (EHA). [Link to EHA information.](#)
- Consider accessing additional advice on supporting a family through accessing Early Help surgery. [Link to Early Help surgery information.](#)
- To develop plans for transition within and between settings/schools with parents and child in a timely way, where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. For transition planning to be multi-agency as needed and child centred that is initiated early to enable preparation and planning for provision. Refer to Barnsley’s EYFS Transition Guidance. [Link to transition guidance.](#)
- Access to Barnsley 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service that prioritises the health and wellbeing of children and their families, for advice and assessment. [Link to 0-19 Nursing Service.](#)

Do Review

- Work closely with Hearing Support Service to implement provision that enables the outcomes to be achieved and meets the special educational needs (SEN) of the child. Setting staff to develop a consistent approach to implementing provision described in Early Years provision planner and Early Years (EY) SEN support plan. Implement advice and/or provision advised by Hearing Support and other agencies as appropriate. Develop provision with parents based on advice given by specialists involved. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents/carers, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured and recorded using the EY SEN support plan. Work with Hearing Support to review effectiveness of provision and interventions with parents/carers in enabling the achievement of SMART child centred outcomes. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured. Review effectiveness of provision and interventions in enabling achievement of SMART child centred outcomes regularly with parents/carers. Evidence review of impact of provision on progress through the EY SEN support plan. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs and progress made. Reviews should be multi-agency as needed and involve the appropriate external professionals working with the child.
- For staff to access advice from the Hearing Support Service in relation to deaf awareness and implementing whole setting good practice. For all staff in setting to monitor and review the listening environment being provided for all children and especially children with hearing loss. For all staff to implement best practice in relation to facilitating inclusion of children with hearing loss. All staff to understand how to use any hearing technology the child needs and how it should be used and monitored to ensure correct use. Key staff should access training from the Hearing Support Service to enable them to support the child to manage monitor and maintain hearing technologies on a day to day basis.
- To implement and review plans for transition across settings/schools through meetings where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. Prepare for transition through provision planning and outcomes in EY SEN support plans. Work closely with Hearing Support Service, Portage (if involved) and parents to monitor implementation of plans for transition into setting.
- Where an Early Help Assessment (EHA) has been initiated, relevant actions from the action plan should be incorporated into the child's provision in settings and impact should be monitored and reviewed and fed into the multi-agency Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings.
- Consider provision in the context of resourcing and discuss request for Disability Access funding (DAF) and/or Early Years Inclusion Grant (EYIG) with parents as needed. [Link to funding information.](#)

What we might see

Difficulty tuning in to and sustaining attention during listening activities

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SaLT toolkit resources on 'Attention Building' and 'Early Communication Looking and Listening games'.

[Link to Barnsley SALT.](#)

All staff to know and understand the type of hearing loss the child has. Approaches to communicating with the child should cue the child in to listening and be informed by the child's needs. For example, if a child has unilateral hearing loss, to know in which ear the hearing loss is and how to communicate with that child to maximise their potential to hear.

Review the setting in terms of the listening environment and complete an acoustic audit. The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) has a range of resources to help settings create good listening conditions. [Link to NDCS acoustic resources.](#)

For staff to be aware of the environmental barriers to good listening. The following resource could be used to develop awareness by demonstrating the challenges for listening in some environments. [Link to NDCS simulation.](#)

Create good listening conditions for learning through play and interactions by reducing background noise, minimising reverberation or echoes and communicating in a style that meets the individual listening needs of the children.

Consider the distance a child with a hearing loss is from the person speaking to enable them to see your face. In this way verbal information can be reinforced with lip reading and facial expression alongside sign and gesture as needed.

When working in groups ensure the child is seated in a position where they can see the adult and the other children. Use an agreed sign or object with the group to indicate who is talking, so the child can make sure they are looking at the person who is speaking. Promote good practise in the group for turn taking to ensure children can focus their listening attention on each speaker.

Regularly check hearing equipment is working and be able to implement troubleshooting strategies as needed.

Reduce noise from outside and around the provision by closing windows, sitting away from noisy boilers, flushing toilets, sink areas opening/closing doors etc. Use sticky soft pads on chairs or equipment/furniture that gets moved about the room.

Provide quiet areas particularly for targeted teaching in small groups or individual work. There are a range of apps available to support good listening conditions. One example is the 'Silent Light' app which uses a traffic light graphic to visually represent the noise level in the classroom.

Cue children in to listening through consistent use of visual cues and physical touch prompts.

Reinforce speaking with modelling, visual prompts, objects of reference, gesture, sign, or Makaton, in line with the child's communication needs.

When using visual support allow time for the child to move between watching your face and the visual support to ensure they have time to process both.

When speaking to a child with hearing loss face the child, ensure you are within a 2 metre distance where any hearing technologies are able to work optimally. Communicate at the same eye level as the child, speak clearly avoiding shouting or whispering, as this can distort the message. Do not cover your mouths look away when you speak or move around the setting. Pause to give the child time to process the information and repeat information where necessary.

Ensure pace and length of communication and listening sessions are matched to the child's needs.

Build in regular breaks to ensure the extra effort required by children with hearing loss to listen does not impact on them accessing the provision.



What we might see

Difficulty understanding verbal information

What we can do

Develop and embed a language rich environment in the settings. Use language at all times to accompany activities and support verbal information with visual and sign where required.

Work closely with Hearing Support Service and SALT if necessary to review the child's communication needs in line with communication approaches and equipment used in setting. Practice in relation to communication should be regularly reviewed with staff and parents to ensure consistency and appropriateness of the communication approach.

Reinforce spoken language with appropriate communication support in line with the child's communication needs.

Use visual timetables and visual sequences to communicate daily session structures and daily routines. Use visual sequences to communicate expectations for routines. For example, snack time.

Sharing books in a 1:1 or small group that reinforces vocabulary. Use books that are repetitive, predictable, sequenced to develop language.

Use props and resources to reinforce understanding of the story. Use facial expression to model and reinforce and make explicit emotions. Use Makaton and sign for children as appropriate.

Depending on the child's language level, check children's understanding by asking open ended questions to give the child opportunity to explain understanding.

Chunk language and give instructions one at a time.

Develop opportunities for children to learn through observation of and modelling from their peers.

Regularly reinforce and repeat verbal information.

Support any on screen learning with additional explanations. Regularly pause DVDs or videos to add explanations, check the child's understanding and extend their learning.

What we might see

Difficulties communicating thoughts and needs

What we can do

Refer to Barnsley SALT toolkit resources on 'Match and Stretch Advice', 'Early communication – early words and actions' and 'Special Time'. [Link to Barnsley SALT.](#)

To work closely with parents/carers to share methods of communication and develop consistency.

Scaffold language by using the matching and stretching approach. For example the child says "car" whilst playing with it so the practitioners response could be 'Yes, you are playing with the blue car'. Paraphrase and extend one or two word responses into longer phrases or sentences.

Practitioners engage in 'self-talk' to provide a commentary on their actions which they are engaged in with the child. For example, 'I'm putting the banana on the plate, now you can help me cut it',.

Provide a commentary on what the child is doing to support actions with language. Talking to children as you play alongside them to develop vocabulary and match language to actions and objects.

Modelling language enables children to hear language used in a meaningful context in preparation for rehearsing and using it themselves.

Model words and sentences back if the child makes an error. For example if the child says 'I goed to the park' the practitioner says 'You went to the park' Do not correct children or make them say the sentence again as this could impact on their confidence and may mean they are reluctant to speak.

Embed opportunities within the daily provision for the child to use and develop their alternative communication skills if appropriate.

Teach peers the communication skills as appropriate, that the child uses to ensure all children can communicate with the child and the child can access communication opportunities within the provision.

What we might see

Difficulties acquiring new vocabulary

What we can do

Use photo diaries and experience books. These can be used to describe and recount the day using written and verbal language with pictures or photographs to reinforce and make links with the language. The books then create opportunities for the language to be shared and repeated in nursery and at home. Language can then be practised reinforced and extended. It is also an opportunity for parents to share experiences and language used in setting providing further learning and embedding of language experiences.

Pre-teach children vocabulary especially when introducing a new topic. Use pictures objects and games to help introduce and establish vocabulary. Access to small group targeted teaching of vocabulary if necessary, which is reinforced and embedded through activities and play in the provision.

Implement teaching vocabulary intervention to teach new words. The Pre-Teaching Vocabulary resources (PTV) uses visual prompts to support teaching and learning of vocabulary in small group and individual teaching situations. This is a suitable approach that uses images and groups vocabulary by topic. This method particularly appropriate for children with a hearing loss who may have gaps in their vocabulary. The following website as details of implementing the approach.

[Link to pre-teaching vocabulary resource.](#)

Create opportunities for regular revisiting and reinforcement of learning to maximise potential for the child to embed and build on that learning to be able to transfer skills. Develop a 'little and often' approach to interventions to incorporate overlearning and repetition.

What we might see

Passive approach to play and learning opportunities and withdraws from social interactions

What we can do

Consider the acoustic environment.

Ensure hearing technologies are working correctly.

Include books and toys that reflect the community of children in setting and include images of deaf children.

Embed and promote opportunities for making choices and communicating those choices.

Teach model and reinforce ways for the child to communicate their needs and their listening and communication needs.

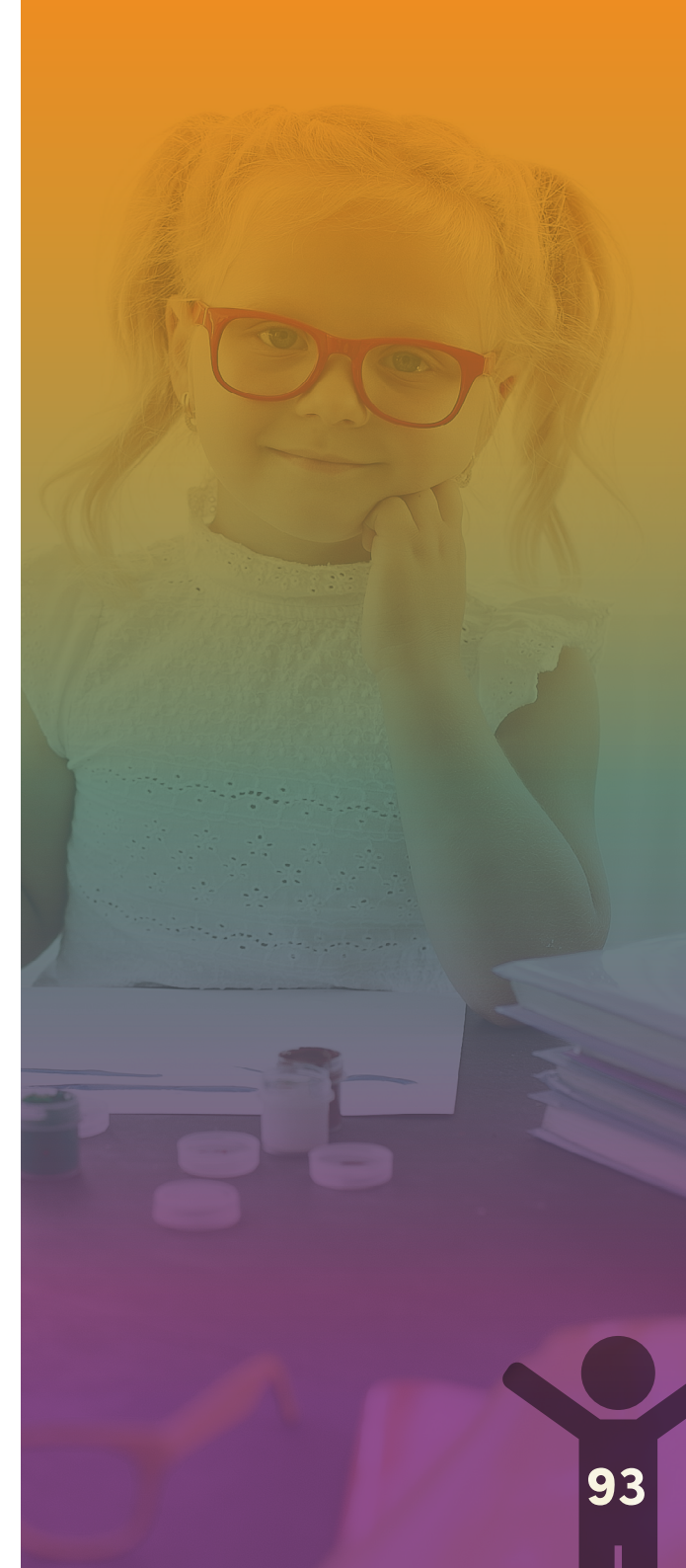


Useful resources

- Refer to Success from the Start for Deaf Babies and Children.
[Link to Success from the Start.](#)
- Settings access and refer to materials in the SEN and Disabilities in the EY – a toolkit outlining guidance for EY providers on implementing the SEND code of practice.
[Link to Council for Disabled Children EY toolkit.](#)
- Refer to Hearing Support local offer page for information on the service and useful leaflets on glue ear and hearing aids.
[Link to Hearing Support local offer.](#)
- National Deaf Children’s Society provide a range of advice and resources for families and professionals.
[Link to NDCS.](#)
- Supporting the achievement of hearing impaired children in early years settings is a useful resource for EY practitioners produced by National Deaf Children’s Society.
[Link to NDCS EY document.](#)
- Advice and support for practitioners on teaching phonics to children with hearing loss.
[Link to NDCS phonics resources.](#)
- The National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP) provide a wealth of advice and resources in relation to sensory impairment.
[Link to NatSIP.](#)
- Sense is an organisation that provides information and advice on children with complex disabilities and multisensory needs.
[Link to Sense.](#)
- Further information on Makaton.
[Link to Makaton.](#)

- Barnsley Hearing Support offer Deaf Friends group open to parents/carers and families for peer support.
[Link to Deaf Friends.](#)
- The Early Support document, Information about deafness and hearing loss is a really useful resource developed for parents/carers.
[Link to Early Support document.](#)
- Refer to the DFE document 'Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics' produced as part of the Primary National Strategy with lots of activities to promote listening skills and early phonological awareness.
[Link to letters and sounds.](#)
- Hungry Little Minds website hosts a range of activities and resources for parents/carers and settings to use in planning activities for play and learning.
[Link to hungry little minds.](#)
- Play and activity ideas to match children's age and stage.
[Link to maketime2play webpage](#)
- Advice for families with disabled children.
[Link to Contact website.](#)

Vision Loss



Vision Loss

Need

Vision loss is a sight loss that cannot be fully corrected by using glasses or contact lenses. A child's loss of vision may be described as mild, moderate, severe or profound depending on the level of the visual impairment. A vision loss may result in a range of difficulties including reduced visual acuity and/or an impairment in field of vision. Children may be born with sight loss or develop sight loss as a result of illness or acquired injury. Ophthalmology services will be involved in assessing a child's visual impairments and consider visual acuity and eye condition in their assessments and inform the practitioners from Vision Support service. Some visual losses will be degenerative, whilst others will be fixed or improving. Ongoing assessments of visual function in a variety of environments and contexts will inform understanding of a child's vision throughout their educational career.

Distance vision is measured and expressed as a fraction denoting the size of print on a 'Snellen' chart seen at distance, or as a decimal LogMAR score. The definitions below are for broad guidance to inform understanding of need in relation to visual impairments.

Degree of Vision Loss:		
Mild	within the range 6/12 to 6/18 (LogMAR 0.3-0.48)	At 3 metres distance the child would require an enlargement of X2-X3
Moderate	less than 6/19 to 6/36 (LogMAR 0.5-0.78)	At 3 metres distance the child would require an enlargement of X3-X6
Severe	less than 6/36-6/120 (LogMAR 0.8-1.3)	At 3 metres distance the child would require an enlargement of X6-X20
Profound	less than 6/120 (LogMAR 1.32+)	The child would not see any detail and likely to be a tactile learner

Vision is the sense that integrates all the other senses to provide us with accurate information at a glance. A child's vision loss may be impacting on their progress in some or all of the Prime areas of learning and development within the EYFS, but particularly likely in relation to physical development and possibly aspects of personal social and emotional and communication and language development. A loss of vision may also impact on the child's development in the characteristics of effective learning – engagement, motivation and thinking, and a barrier to the child accessing and progressing in the EYFS curriculum independently.

The Graduated Approach

Assess Plan

- For all staff in settings to be aware of indicators of a vision loss and consider against expected development of visual skills to inform observations. (refer to what we might see section). To discuss observations with parents/carers. For children known to the Vision Support Service notify staff of changes to functional vision. For children not known to Vision Support Service discuss observations with parents/carers considering referral to optician or GP for possible ophthalmology assessment.
- Assess and track progress to gather attainment and progress information and share with parents/carers. Where progress against EYFS is difficult to measure consider use of the Early Years Developmental Journal. Track and monitor progress in small steps and identify skills for development, with particular focus on the areas of visual development, play and learning, social/emotional, mobility and independence.
- Refer to Development Matters guidance to consider the characteristics of effective learning. Use the guidance to reflect on practice in relation to positive relationships and enabling environments to promote and embed effective learning. Focus on the prime areas to identify key areas of strength and difficulties within the aspects and to plan provision to the child's developmental stage. [Link to Development Matters.](#)
- To work closely with Barnsley Vision Support Service and parents/carers to understand need in relation to the child's vision loss and plan provision in line with the child's vision loss and any subsequent needs. Ongoing assessment by Vision support in relation to a child's vision levels, access to the curriculum, learning environment and use of equipment to be incorporated into the settings graduated response for the child. [Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services.](#)
- To use the RNIB Focus on Foundation document for advice on assessing needs and planning for blind or partially sighted children. [RNIB Focus on Foundation.](#)
- Review nursery environment and layout to ensure clear of clutter, accessible and reduce glare. All staff in setting assess and plan for a visually friendly environment that maximises the potential for children with vision loss to access the environment on equal terms to peers. Seek environmental audit for children known to the Habilitation Officer within Vision Support Service.

- Setting to consider advice from Vision Support Service to inform their graduated response to the child's SEN. Discuss any concerns regarding attainment and progress with parent/carer. Gather and embed parent/carer and child views to inform strengths, difficulties/needs and provision. Collect parents/carers and child views in single page profiles and regularly refer to and update to ensure views are current. Identify strengths and need through completing an Early Years Individual Needs Analysis with parent/carer. Where Portage have been involved, for settings to work together with parent/carer and portage worker to plan for transition into setting and inform the Early Years Individual Needs Analysis and Early Years Provision Planner. Match provision to need and outcomes and map provision on to an Early Years Provision Planner. Key worker and SENCO to work together to identify need and plan for provision with parents/carers.
- Develop aspirations with parents/carers through consideration of developing skills for independence within the wider context of the key aspects of preparation for adulthood - employment, independent living, relationships and health. Develop an outcome focused Early years SEN support plan where outcomes are developed with parents/carers. Develop child centred SMART outcomes with parents/carers that reflect the child's special educational needs (SEN), parent aspirations and child's interests.
- To develop child centred plans for transition with parents/carers and access advice from Vision Support Service and other agencies as appropriate. Where Portage have been involved, to work together with Vision Support to plan for transition into setting with parents/carers and inform the Early Years Individual Needs Analysis and Provision Planner. Refer to Barnsley's EYFS Transition guidance.
[Link to BMBC EY transition guidance.](#)
- Assess needs to inform health and safety risk assessment policies in relation to vision needs and accessing provision safely. A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) assessment should be carried out. The Habilitation officer for Vision Support Service can advise on this where necessary.
- Access to Barnsley 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service that prioritises the health and wellbeing of children and their families.
[Link to 0-19 nursing service.](#)
- Consider with parents if there are needs that may be addressed through an Early Help Assessment (EHA). [Link to EHA information.](#)
- Consider accessing additional advice on supporting a family through meeting with social worker from the Assessment and Joint Investigation Team and a member of the Early Help Panel at Early Help surgery. [Link to EH surgery information.](#)

Do Review

- To work closely with parents/carers and vision support as needed to monitor and review advice in relation to child's use of prescribed glasses or patching in settings and ensure a consistent approach is implemented in setting. For staff in setting to monitor and review the environment in terms of accessibility for children with a vision loss. Key staff should access training from the Vision Support Service to implementing whole setting good practice.
- Work closely with Vision Support Service to implement provision that enables the outcomes to be achieved and meets the special educational needs (SEN) of the child. Setting staff to develop a consistent approach to implementing provision described in Early Years provision planner and Early Years (EY) SEN support plan. Implement advice and/or provision advised by Vision Support Service and other agencies as appropriate e.g. ophthalmologist. Develop provision with parents/carers based on advice given by specialists involved. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents/carers, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured and recorded using the EY SEN support plan. Liaise with Vision Support Service to review effectiveness of provision and interventions with parents/carers in enabling the achievement of SMART child centred outcomes. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs and progress made. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents/carers, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured. Review effectiveness of provision and interventions in enabling achievement of SMART child centred outcomes regularly with parents/carers. Evidence review of impact of provision on progress through the EY SEN support plan. Reviews should be multi-agency as needed and involve the appropriate external professionals working with the child.
- To implement and review plans for transition across settings/schools through meetings where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents/carers and key staff. Prepare for transition through provision planning and outcomes in EY SEN support plans. Work closely with Vision Support Service, Portage (if involved) and parents/carers to monitor implementation of plans for transition into setting.
- Where an Early Help Assessment (EHA) has been initiated, relevant actions from the action plan should be incorporated into the child's provision in settings and impact should be monitored and reviewed and fed into the multi-agency Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings.
- Consider provision in the context of resourcing for specialist equipment and reducing significant barriers to learning, and discuss request for Disability Access funding (DAF) and/or Early Years Inclusion Grant (EYIG) with parents/carers as needed.
[Link to funding information.](#)

What we might see

Possible reduced vision or vision deteriorating

Holding objects very close, or very far, to see them

Squinting to get an object in focus

Trouble locating familiar objects in a familiar environment

Accident prone

Missing targets when placing or reaching for items

Rubbing their eyes or flickering of eyes

Turning or tilting head when using eyes

Looking above, below or off to one side of an object, rather than directly at it

Having difficulty correctly identifying faces or objects

Not responding to non-verbal instructions

Difficulty finding all the pictures on a page

Poor hand/eye co-ordination

Having trouble identifying colours

Having trouble seeing in poor light

Re-occurring headaches

What we can do

For children not known to the vision support team, discuss observations with parents/carers requesting they contact GP or optician for further advice. All children at FS2 receive formal vision screening by orthoptists in setting.

Consider:

- Has the child had a recent eye test? Has there been a deterioration since the last eye test?
- Have there been Hospital Eye Department or Orthoptist appointments in the past or planned?

For children known to the Vision Support Team notify of changes to functional vision. Settings should work with vision support team to complete the National Sensory Impairment partnership (NatSIP) eligibility criteria at least annually.

For children not known to the vision support team, discuss observations with parents/carers requesting they contact GP or optician for further advice. All children at FS2 receive formal vision screening by orthoptists in setting.

All staff to know and understand the type of vision loss the child has and for approaches and strategies to be informed by the child's needs.

Work with all children in setting to ensure they have an understanding of vision loss and what they can do to include their peer in learning and play

Include books and toys that reflect the community of children in setting and include images of blind and partially sighted children.

Assess the environment for suitable lighting appropriate to individual needs.

Try out different paper/Smartboard colours to try to find best contrast for individual need

Ensure Health and safety and risk assessment policies are in place.



What we might see

Inconsistent use of prescribed glasses

What we can do

Ensure all staff know when a child should be wearing their glasses and work closely with parent/carers to ensure glasses wearing matches orthoptic advice.

If child is not wearing glasses in setting in line with orthoptic advice then discuss with parents/carer and child to explore why.

Considerations:

Are the glasses comfortable and the correct fit/size?

Are the glasses facilitating the child's vision?

Are the glasses being worn correctly?

If any concerns encourage parents/carers to seek advice from orthoptics

If needed, access support from the Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO). The ECLO provides a link between parents/carers, professionals and hospital, giving practical advice to settings and parents/carers about vision loss and impact.

[Link to Barnsley eye health and ECLO information.](#)

What we might see

Difficulty accessing play and learning experiences

What we can do

Describe the things you or others are doing (verbal commentary)

Embed regular routines with warnings of change

Provide familiar, safe and secure space to play

Encourage independent exploration in a familiar environment

Give children time to explore new toys and activities

Take care not to overprotect as this may become a barrier between them and others

Provide visually stimulating experiences

Vision loss can have a huge impact on incidental learning. 85% of learning is visual but children with vision loss cannot learn in the same way as their sighted peers by watching and therefore need opportunities for 'doing' as well. The environment, play and activities should be planned taking into account a hands on kinaesthetic learning style which stimulates all the senses. This can be achieved by providing a 'multi-sensory curriculum'. See resources section for multi-sensory resources.

All children will benefit from a multi-sensory curriculum but bear in mind that children with vision loss won't experience the same aesthetic experience with a toy or activity.

Consider the following:

- Use of Treasure baskets to promote play and learning through a range of sensory experiences
- Use of sensory resource boxes to motivate children to notice changes in their environment and explore these changes through their senses.
- Activities which draw upon all the senses
- Children with vision loss tend to mouth objects far longer than their sighted peers so ensure that toys and activities are safe for them to handle
- Making wall displays colourful, clear and uncluttered
- Provide toys which good colour contrast/noisy toys/tactile toys/toys with light/toys with cause and effect
- Provide books with simple clear illustrations and text

What we might see

Difficulty accessing and navigating the EYFS environment

Leaning or brushing against walls when walking

Running into objects

Difficulty walking on uneven surfaces

Frequently tripping over obstacles in pathway

Walking or stepping hesitantly

Going up and down stairs slowly and cautiously

Missing objects by under-reaching or over-reaching

Feeling for objects on the ground instead of looking with her eyes

What we can do

Environmental Audit is completed by a qualified member of staff from the vision support team which considers the individual needs of the child.

Provide an environment which is clutter free, predictable with clearly labelled resources which foster independence and access to continuous provision. Keep the layout consistent to enable the child to become familiar with where areas of provision are.

Bespoke risk assessment that identify control measures to keep the child and peers safe whilst fostering independence and risk management skills. Consider and remove any trip hazards e.g. rug edges.

Place the child's peg and personal belongings in an accessible position such as the first peg to aid independence.

Ensure glare is kept to a minimum through using blinds/curtain. Ensure lighting remains consistent throughout the setting.

Sharing personalised books that depict and explain routines within nursery to reinforce processes and the language associated.

Provide verbal commentary when moving within an environment.

Consistent routines which promote anticipation and familiarity.

Build in regular breaks to ensure the extra effort required by children with vision loss to listen does not impact on them accessing the provision.

Talk about sounds we can hear in the environment, link to an experience or locate the sound source.



What we might see

Difficulties accessing visual information and/or print

Holding objects/books close to their face

Limited interest in engaging with books

Needing better lighting for reading and other activities

What we can do

Short spells of visual activity should be interspersed with less visually demanding activities.

Give 1:1 demonstrations of tasks/activities with verbal commentary.

Ensure that fonts are in the correct size (reformatted) and only enlarged on a photocopier that is of a standard that will not pixelate the text or alter the quality.

Consider positioning within the setting when accessing adult input. For example some children may need to sit close to the front whereas as others may need to sit further back or to the side depending upon their eye condition and need. Ensure the reading materials are appropriate for visual need. Ensure low vision aids such as magnifiers and task lights are available if required.

Support any on screen learning with additional explanations. Regularly pause DVDs or videos to add explanations, check the child's understanding and extend their learning.

Ensure a range of mark making media is available to enable access.

Consider high contrast glue (purple glue).

Self-advocacy – create an environment where the child can take control of part of their learning journey; this will improve not only their academic progress, but also their self-confidence in learning and wider life.

Real objects that can be handled by the learner, to support the teaching of concepts should be used wherever possible.



What we might see

Child misses non-verbal cues such as facial expressions

What we can do

Consider the distance a child with vision loss is from you when communicating with them to enable them to see your face so visual information can be accessed and reinforced with auditory and other senses information.

Develop and embed a language rich environment through language use alongside activities and supporting visual information with verbal information and physical prompts.

Teach model and reinforce the communication skills to the child alongside peers and adults in setting so everyone is able to communicate with each other including emotions and facial expressions.

Staff consistently name key landmarks in the environment such as areas or provision, equipment within the provision using clear descriptive language. Saying the child's name to gain their attention before giving instructions.

Ensure the child is seated in a position where they can see the adult and the other children. Use an agreed sign with the group to indicate who is talking so the child can make sure they are looking at the child who is speaking. Promote good practise in the group for turn taking to ensure children can focus their listening attention on each speaker and don't get distracted by more than one person speaking.

Provide quiet areas particularly for targeted teaching in small groups or individual work. Cue children in to listening through consistent use of auditory cues and physical touch prompts. Ensure pace and length of communication and listening sessions are matched to the child's needs.

Sharing books in a 1:1 or small group that reinforces vocabulary and understanding of areas of learning. To use books that are repetitive, predictable, sequenced to develop language.

Use props and resources that make full use of all the senses to reinforce understanding of the story. For example first hand experiential learning.

Using songs rhymes and action rhymes to communicate instructions and/or transition points and actions needed for those transition points. For example getting ready for outside play, hand washing for snack, apron on for messy play. Simple rhymes can be made using familiar tunes.

Check children's understanding by asking open ended questions to give the child opportunity to explain understanding.

Chunk language and give instructions one at a time so that each instruction corresponds to an action.

Give children the opportunity to lead actions for their peers following instructions.

Scaffold language by matching and stretching/extending approach embedding across the provision. For example the child says "car" whilst playing with it so the practitioners response could be 'Yes, you are playing with the blue car'. Paraphrase and extend one or two word responses into longer phrases or sentences.

Practitioners engage in 'self-talk' to provide a commentary on their actions which they are engaged in with the child. For example, 'I'm putting the banana on the plate, now you can help me cut it',

Provide a commentary on what the child is doing to support actions with language. Talking to children as you play alongside them to develop vocabulary and match language to actions and objects.

Useful resources

- Settings access and refer to materials in the SEN and Disabilities in the EY. [Link to Council for Disabled Children EY toolkit.](#)
- Links to ideas for sensory activities and play. [SSC - Sensory Play.](#)
[Victa - Early Years Sensory Toys and Play.](#)
- Links for tactile toys and tactile/large print books. [RNIB- Let's Play.](#)
[RNIB Lending Library.](#)
- Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) provide a range of advice and resources for families and professionals. RNIB Bookshare is a free service providing accessible textbooks to support visually impaired learners. Settings can gain free membership by contacting the vision support service to set up a log. [Link to RNIB EY education advice and guidance.](#)
[Link to RNIB parent/carer resources.](#)
- The National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NatSIP) provide a wealth of advice and resources in relation to sensory impairment. [Link to NatSIP.](#)
- Sense is an organisation that provides information and advice on children with complex disabilities and multisensory needs. [Link to Sense](#)
- Within Barnsley Education Inclusion Services the Vision Support Team for useful resources and accessible books, audio, large print or braille information. [Link to Barnsley Vision Support Service.](#)
- Advice for families with disabled children. [Link to Contact](#)
- Advice support and services for families of children with SEND. [Link to SEN direct.](#)

Physical



Physical

Need

Physical development is one of the three prime areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework focusing on gross and fine motor skills. Children will develop physical skills at varying stages of their development and at varying rates. Some children will be working below age related expectations in relation to the prime area of Physical Development and not making expected progress. This may be impacting on their progress in other Prime and Specific areas of learning and development within the EYFS. The child's physical needs may be a barrier to them accessing the provision and learning opportunities independently alongside their peers.

A child may have some gross motor skill difficulties which impact on their independent movement around the setting. They may struggle to plan their movement and navigate safely through space. They may be below expected in developing gross motor skills of running jumping throwing and/or have weaknesses in core strength that impact on balance and sitting. They may struggle transitioning from one position to another and/or have difficulty weight bearing independently. They may have fine motor skill difficulties demonstrated through poor manipulation of items and control in handling objects which may impact on development of play, mark making and self-help skills.

A child may have visual perceptual difficulties. This is the ability to recognise, recall, discriminate and make sense of what we see. This could impact on spatial awareness to be able to negotiate around the environment, development of shape and colour matching skills, completing a jigsaw and development of mark making skills.

A child may have sensory processing issues which means they have difficulties with organizing and responding to information that comes in through their senses. A child may have sensory processing difficulties related to sight, taste, smell, touch, auditory, proprioception and/or movement. They may be oversensitive (hypersensitive) to sensory input, under-sensitive (hyposensitive), or both. Hypersensitivity to sensory input leads to sensory avoiding behaviour because it can be too overwhelming e.g. avoids touch or struggles in crowded/busy situations, dislikes messy play, avoids hugs, dislikes new foods, certain textures or smells, is bothered



by bright lights, struggles with loud noises etc. Hyposensitivity to sensory input leads to sensory seeking behaviour because they need more sensory information in order to register the sensory feeling e.g constantly moving, fidgeting, touching objects, playing roughly, no sense of danger, often gets distracted, or struggles to focus/follow instructions etc.

To access the curriculum the child may need support and interventions advised by medical professionals in relation to sensory processing, mobility, movement and handling, toileting, feeding or medical procedures. The child's physical difficulties may require mobility aids, equipment and/or adaptations to the environment.



The Graduated Approach

Assess Plan

- Assess and track progress to gather attainment and progress information and share with parents/carers. Use assessment information to inform understanding of the child's developmental stage and planning for next steps. Where progress against EYFS is difficult to measure consider use of the Early Years Developmental Journal. Track and monitor progress in small steps and identify skills for development particularly in relation to Physical skill development.
[Link to EY Developmental Journal.](#)
- Refer to Development Matters guidance to consider the characteristics of effective learning Playing and Exploring – engagement, Active Learning – motivation, Creating and Thinking Critically – thinking. Use the guidance to reflect on practice in relation to positive relationships and enabling environments to promote and embed effective learning. Focus particularly on the prime areas of Physical Development within Development Matters guidance to identify key areas of strength and difficulties within the aspects of Moving and Handling and Health and Self Care to plan provision to the child's developmental stage. [Link to Development Matters.](#)
- Refer to Movements Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS) to review provision in relation to children's physical needs and development. [Link to MOVERS information.](#)
- Work closely with parent/carers to gain their views on their child's needs to inform assessment and planning for provision. Record parents/carers views using single page profiles and regularly refer to and update to ensure views are current. Gather child views through observation and engagement and embed parent/carer and child views to inform strengths, difficulties and provision. Identify strengths and need through completing an Early Years Needs Analysis. Where Portage have been involved, work together to plan for transition into setting with parents and inform the Early Years Needs Analysis and Provision Planner.
- Consider with parents/carers referral to Barnsley Children's Therapy service (physiotherapy and occupational therapy) as needed. Referral guidance can be found on the website link below. Incorporate advice following any involvement to needs analysis and provision planning. [Link to Barnsley children's therapy.](#)
- Match provision to need and outcomes and map provision on to an Early Years Provision Planner. Key Worker and SENCO to work together to identify need and plan for provision with parents/carers. Develop aspirations with parents through consideration of developing skills for independence within the wider context of the key aspects of preparation for adulthood

- employment, independent living, relationships and health. Develop a child centred outcome focused Early Years SEN support plan where SMART outcomes are developed with parents/carers incorporating child views and interests and reflect the child's special educational needs (SEN).
- To develop plans for transition within and between settings/schools with parents/carers and child in a timely way, where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents and key staff. For transition planning to be multi-agency as needed and child centred that is initiated early to enable preparation and planning for provision.
- Access to Barnsley 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service that prioritises the health and wellbeing of children and their families. [Link to 0-19 nursing service.](#)
- Consider with parents/carers if there are needs that may be addressed through an Early Help Assessment (EHA). [Link to EHA information](#)
- Consider accessing additional advice on supporting a family through meeting with social worker from the Assessment and Joint Investigation Team and a member of the Early Help Panel at Early Help Surgery. [Link to Early Help surgery](#)
- For information on moving and handling training contact Greenacre School. [Link to Greenacre inclusion network](#)

Do review

- Implement provision that enables the outcomes to be achieved and meets the special educational needs (SEN) of the child. Setting staff to develop a consistent approach to implementing provision described in Early Years provision planner and Early Years (EY) SEN support plan. Implement advice and/or provision advised following any multi agency involvement. Develop provision with parents/carers based on advice given by specialists involved. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents/carers, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured and recorded using the EY SEN support plan. Review effectiveness of provision and interventions in enabling the achievement of SMART child centred outcomes. Consider appropriateness of outcomes and provision in relation to needs. Embed a robust cycle of assess plan do review with parents, where progress towards outcomes and impact of provision is measured. Review effectiveness of provision and interventions in enabling achievement of SMART child centred outcomes regularly (2-5 weeks) with parents/carers. Evidence review of impact of provision on progress through the EY provision planner and the EY SEN support plan. Reviews should be multi-agency as needed and involve the appropriate external professionals working with the child.

- Create opportunities for regular revisiting and reinforcement of learning to maximise potential for the child to embed and build on that learning to be able to transfer skills. Develop a 'little and often' approach to interventions to incorporate overlearning and repetition.
- Complete a Risk Assessment as needed with parents/carers and regularly review with parents/carers.
[Link to BMBC risk assessment information.](#)
- In planning intimate care procedures refer to Continence Guidance in Early Years Foundation Stage Settings.
[Link to information and guidance documents.](#)
- To implement and review plans for transition across settings/schools through meetings where needs and provision can be shared and plans for those needs to be developed with parents/carers and key staff. For transition visits and development of skills to prepare for transition to be targeted through provision planning and outcomes in EY SEN support plans.
- Where an EHA has been initiated, relevant actions from the action plan should be incorporated into the child's provision in settings and impact monitored and reviewed and fed into the multi-agency Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings
- Consider provision in the context of resourcing and discuss request for Disability Access funding (DAF) and/or Early Years Inclusion Grant (EYIG) with parents/carers as needed.
[Link to funding information](#)
- To consider training needs for staff to build capacity in setting for understanding and meeting the needs of children with needs in relation to communication and interaction. Training offered by Barnsley Children's therapy (Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy) services can be found through the following link.
[Link to Barnsley children's therapy.](#)
- Monitor and review use and impact of specialist equipment, mobility aids with specialist health professionals and parents/carers.

What we might see

Weak Gross Motor Skills

Difficulty moving around the setting

Difficulty transitioning between and holding different positions

May appear weaker or seem to have difficulty coordinating their movements

What we can do

Use Up and Away motor skills programme or similar to develop a range of gross motor skills. Up and Away can be found via [Link to Up and Away programme.](#)

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (nhsggc) has a website with a range of resources and activities to promote motor skills. www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids.

Different muscles work in different positions so vary the positions that babies lie in and are supported in.

Promote a range of positions for play and engagement as appropriate for developmental stage for babies and young children:

Tummy time, propping on forearms, reaching for toys, kneeling, four point kneeling, rolling, sitting with legs outstretched, sitting and reaching behind for toys, sitting on a block and reaching, play in kneeling, position, moving from sitting on a block to standing, moving from squatting to standing, cruising to standing, standing at furniture, sitting cross legged.

Support play and physical activities alongside a reduced number of peers, model play, and monitor facilitate and review access to provision and equipment.

Build in regular rest breaks to allow for tiredness and/or muscle fatigue.

Provide experiences which support body awareness and relationships. For example, round and round the garden (on hands and feet), rough and tumble play, hand/head/back/foot massage 'Heads shoulders knees and toes', 'Dingle dangle scarecrow', 'Hokey cokey'.

Tummy/back circling – have the child lie on a slippery floor on tummy/back whilst someone pulls them gently or gently spins around whilst on a sheet/lycra or parachute so the material is pulled.

Play parachute games requiring different ways of travelling and different holding of different body positions e.g stand on one leg, tall shape hands reaching tall.

Use of simple yoga poses to help develop balance, strength and co-ordination. For example Cosmic Kids Yoga on you tube

Negotiating obstacle courses encouraging children to travel around, under, over, through items such as chairs, trees, cones whilst crawling, shuffling and walking forwards and backwards.

Promote and model use of outdoor equipment that encourages children to balance, climb, jump, slide, lift, pull, push, hang, spin and swing.

Provide opportunities to use a range of bikes, trikes and scooters.

Create a path with things to step on to, using carpet mats for no height or blocks/logs for height. Create paths with defined sections to step in to. For example, using hoops, ladder on ground, tiles, stepping stones.

Provide opportunities for jumping activities initially off a low block or step, then forwards, backwards, side to side and onto targets. Progressing onto hopping and skipping as able.

Plan opportunities for full use of the feet and toes through bare feet exploration on different surfaces and in a range of mediums (wood, carpet, sand, grass, paint, mud, water).

Encourage walking along or next to lines (tape, ribbon, string or marks on the ground) which are straight (easiest) then progressing to wavy, circular and zigzag. This can be a 'Follow my leader' game, alternating who is the leader.

Introduce Stop/Start games which can include suggestions for body movements and using music/instruments to denote stop and start. Incorporate hopping, standing on one leg. Kneeling, knee walking, crawling, walking on hands and feet.

Play 'Simon says' games using large body movements Stretch up like a giraffe...Curl up like a ball...Put one arm up and one arm down...Put your feet together...Put your feet apart...Step to one side, etc..'

Provide opportunities to build balance and coordination using rockers, see-saws, roundabouts, ride on toys and balance/wobble boards. Balance boards provide opportunities for slow controlled exercises which can be carried out sitting and then progressing to kneeling or standing on the board. Time how long a child can balance on the board and try to extend this. Rock from side to side, backwards and forwards and in circular movements.

Play games requiring stretching out on the floor and curling in hugging knees. An adult can provide some resistance by gently rocking the child to see if they can still maintain their shape.



What we might see

Weak fine motor skills

Difficulty grasping and/or gripping

Difficulty manipulating objects and handling tools e.g. paintbrush, spoons, crayon, scissors etc.

What we can do

Use Up and Away motor skills programme or similar to develop a range of fine motor skills. Up and Away can be found via the [Link to Barnsley children's therapy](#). [Link to Up and Away programme](#)

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (nhsggc) has a website with a range of resources and activities to promote motor skills. www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids

Use a variety of different tools and surfaces to make marks e.g. crayons, paints, lolly sticks, feathers, fingers and toes; on surfaces such as newspaper, wrapping paper, wallpaper, fabric, corrugated card, foil, sandpaper. Try drawing in sand, mud, shaving foam and gloop. Use play dough to promote squeezing, squashing and pinching to make shapes.

Create opportunities for mark making in a range of positions. For example, standing up, lying down on backs or and tummy, kneeling using easels.

Create indoor and outdoor opportunities for mark making and different reasons for mark making. For example, leaving clues in the mud/sand to help our friends to find us, playing pavement chalk games.

Use squeeze water bottles to make patterns against outside walls, fence, paths etc.

Model and facilitate threading using a range of objects and materials for different purposes e.g. necklace, bunting.

Promote and model play-dough activity. Rolling, flattening, squeezing into balls, squashing and pinching, wrapping play-dough between fingers and stretching out to break dough.

Use baking activities that require mixing, rolling and squeezing.

Using bubble wrap to pop bubbles and develop finger strength. Popping bubbles with whole hand and also one finger to encourage finger isolation.

Using tools to bang objects e.g. sticks on pans, musical instruments etc. Can they do it fast/slow, loud/quiet, stop on command etc.

Cut a slit into a tennis ball and decorate with eyes and hair to make a squeeze ball buddy. Teach children to squeeze the ball to open the ball buddy's mouth and feed with a counters or beads for each squeeze.

Use tweezers or tongs to move objects from one place to another.

Use pegs games to create a variety of activities e.g. hanging the washing out, craft activities. Pegs for children to access during open ended play. Add pegs alongside socks, gloves and tights in the sand tray for children to fill with sand and then 'contain' the sand by putting a peg on the end.



What we might see

Problems with unilateral and bilateral (2 handed) play and eye-hand coordination

Difficulties drawing, writing, cutting, dressing, feeding, threading, banging blocks or construction activities.

Difficulties crawling, walking, climbing stairs, riding a scooter, trike etc.

What we can do

Drumming using two hands and alternate hands, spoons and sticks on pots, pans and drums use a range of shakers – in one hand, in both hands (at the same time – both hands up, both hands down, both hands out to the side, both hands to the right, both hands to the left, one hand up and the other hand down), then alternate hands.

Use a range of media including playdough, clay, cornflour, shaving foam etc. to squash, squeeze, prod, poke and pinch and include the use of tools e.g. cutters and modelling tools.

Use a range of media including cornflour, shaving foam, sand, paint, glue etc. to encourage mark making with both hands and also holding the container still whilst using fingers or tools to mark make.

Threading activities e.g. pasta, straws.

Snipping cooked pasta, cardboard, straws.

Water and sand play to encourage digging, filling and pouring to help develop strength and bilateral coordination.

Use construction equipment e.g. different size blocks/objects/Duplo etc. Initially using larger items working towards smaller items that may have some resistance e.g. Duplo, stickle bricks, popoid, click and link toys and magnetic blocks to develop strength, dexterity.

Use bubbles – encourage clapping to burst or encourage pointing index finger to pop.

Encourage throwing (two hands and then one, also try kicking).

Roll or throw a large ball at skittles.

Throw balls/beanbags into a large bucket or hoop.

Introduce a rolling to each other game with feet touching so the ball will be contained. Start with a slower moving larger ball with sounds/lights/texture inside to gain attention. As the child progresses advance to smaller, faster moving balls and/or moving further apart.

Scooping and spooning - encourage holding a container in one hand and scoop sand, porridge oats, water, pasta with a spoon or other container.

Tear and scrunch paper to make into balls to then flick into a goal. Make collages with the crunched paper.



What we might see

Problems with crossing midline

Difficulties with sitting cross legged, scratching the opposite elbow, intersecting lines to draw a cross, reading left to right

Difficulties crawling, walking, climbing stairs, riding a scooter, trike etc.

What we can do

Use ribbons on the end of a stick or scarves to make large movements with the whole arm and shoulder encouraging moving in a variety of directions.

Using chalks on a wall or mark making equipment on a large piece of paper – encouraging a variety of marks and shapes, changes of direction and crossing the middle of the body.

Encouraging play with objects that pull apart or push together or banging two bricks together e.g. Duplo, stickle bricks, velcro food, Russian dolls, popoid or click and link style toys.

Clapping, action and finger games – i.e. 'Pat-a-cake' 'Two Little Dicky Birds'.

Provide opportunities to catch light items using both hands such as balloons, scarves, large soft balls and feathers.

Use bubbles – encourage clapping to burst.

Target games – throwing bean bags or balls at skittles, bucket or hoop.

Use toy musical instruments e.g. drums, triangle, symbols.

Finding hidden objects in play dough using a variety of tools.

Snipping or cutting with scissors.

Lacing activities.

Set up a hand to hand passing and catching game where child passes a beanbag or ball from one hand to the other, holds a piece of string/ribbon/spaghetti with one hand then taking it by the other end with the other hand then let go with first hand.

What we might see

Poor body awareness

Difficulty knowing where your body is in space without using your vision e.g. how high to lift your leg when climbing stairs.

Children may appear clumsy, be cautious with movement, fearful with their feet off the ground, seek deep pressure or be rough with their peers or toys.

What we can do

Use of action songs e.g. head, shoulders, knees and toes, dingle dangle scarecrow, hokey cokey, ring o roses etc.

Use of action games such as Simon says – that includes symmetrical movements (both sides of the body doing the same thing) and asymmetrical movements (both sides of the body doing different things).

Climbing playground equipment – slides, climbing frames, up and down steps, on and off equipment.

Use of trampolines, swings, balance boards, beams or stepping stones.

Pushing/pulling weighted objects e.g. pushing chairs into and out of tables, carrying books, pushing equipment round e.g. sliding box of bricks across the floor, moving the PE mats etc.

Yoga e.g. You tube Cosmic Kids Yoga.

Play tug of war.

Model and facilitate ball games.

What we might see

Difficulties with visual perception

Problems with shape and colour matching and sorting, recognising letters and numbers

Difficulties mark making and letter formation

Struggles finding an object in a hidden background

Difficulties understanding positional language e.g. on, under, over etc.

Difficulties understanding cause and effect and object permanence

What we can do

Make up treasure boxes or baskets with different objects of different size and texture for children to explore.

Tactile games - Hide small objects in sand, rice, pasta, play dough for children to find. Can they describe how the object feels e.g. hard, soft, rough, squidgy etc.

Selecting and posting varying sizes of objects.

Matching games that involve shapes, colours, objects.

Copying patterns in a variety of media e.g. sand, glitter, cornflour etc.

Following a given sequence to thread beads, blocks.

Sorting objects by size, colours.

I spy games - can you guess the object by seeing just part of it.

Spot the difference.

Simple dot to dot and maze pictures.

Finding objects in a hidden background e.g. Where's Wally?



What we might see

Sensory processing difficulties

Constantly moving, impulsiveness or restless

May be sedentary, easily upset or emotional outbursts

May be sensitive to noise, touch, movement, smell, taste, or busy environments

Disinterested, disengaged, passive or tires easily

What we can do

Further information about sensory processing can be found on the Barnsley Children's Therapy webpage.

<https://therapy.barnsleychildrenshealth.co.uk/>.

Movement – Use of regular movement breaks particularly prior to and following periods of focused activity. Regular whole body aerobic movements. Use carpet dots or wobble cushions to sit on to reiterate where children need to sit and allow a constant sense of movement. Use fiddle toys that children can squash, squeeze, twist, manipulate and provide some resistance to help with concentration.

Heavy work/proprioceptive activities – These can be really useful particularly after movement activity or to act as a calmer. Activities should include anything that involves pushing, pulling, squeezing and squashing. For example, pushing equipment around outside, tidy up time, tidying the book corner, carrying the paint bottles to the paint table, handing out the water bottles, pushing the chairs into the table, pushing the Hoover, sweeping up, digging in the sand or outside in the soil, helping get the mats out for P.E, moving soft play equipment. Having an area where children can squeeze themselves into a box filled with cushions or a large cushion or beanbag can be really calming too. Using some resistance or weight can be useful e.g. using stretch bands, lycra, stretchy lycra tubes.

Tactile/Touch – use a variety of multi-sensory messy play activities starting with dry textures, moving to wet then sticky, e.g. exploring dry pasta, lentils then cooked, introducing glue, paint using tools initially before asking them to explore with fingers, hands, feet. Deep, positive pressure is much more tolerable than light tickly touch. Use examples of massage on themselves and within a group. Exploring a variety of textures using sensory baskets.

Taste – use a variety of messy food play games, encourage pretend play with food. Planning and preparation with meal and snack times and baking activities can help increase interest in a variety of food. Discuss aspects of different food tastes e.g. sweet, bitter, sour, spicy etc.

Smell – use scented play dough, smell lotto games, use of preferred scents on a scarf or aroma ball, use of different scents on materials, discussion around different smells and what emotions that brings e.g. freshly cut grass – summertime, smells of flowers – spring, food cooking- nearly dinner time, citrus – fresh and clean etc.

Auditory/Hearing – use of listening games listening for noises, sounds, words etc. Discussion around different noises that can be heard and listening to sounds in nature. For example, what can we hear along the high street or in the outdoor space? Use of sound books and listening to music describing sounds using fast, slow, loud, soft sounds and rhythms. Play games using instruments and music – can they stop when the music stops, can they complete different movements depending on the noise heard?

Visual – use toys that are brightly coloured, contrasting colours, glitter in sand trays or play dough, coloured water or play dough, sensory light toys, I spy bottles or bags for exploration. Model moving the objects around to identify what is hidden inside. Use plates and cutlery of visual contrast to each other and against the table background. Engage children in finding hidden objects in a book or picture. Play games identifying what can we see outside or inside describing shape, shade etc.

Oral motor activities – use of crunchy or chewy snacks, drinking through a straw or sports top bottle, blowing bubbles, bubble painting, blowing musical toys (whistles, harmonica, recorder etc.), party blowers, blow football, blowing objects through a straw, use of chewelry.

Sensory retreats – regular opportunity for quiet time in low stimulus e.g. reduced noise, low lighting, less people around, reduced visual information meaning less stimulating resources on walls, floors etc. Use of dark dens, play tent, book corner etc.

Useful resources

- If you require assistance or feel further assessment and advice is required please contact Barnsley Children's Therapy:
[Link to Barnsley Children's therapy services.](#)
- Advice for families with disabled children.
[Link to Contact.](#)
- Within Barnsley Education Inclusion Services, the Social Communication and Interaction (SCI), the Educational Child and Community Psychology (ECCP) Service, Portage and Early Years SENCO, offer advice and support for staff and parents/carers in relation to meeting the needs of children with special educational needs. Further information is on the website.
[Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services.](#)
- Example Continuous learning plans for physical play and for developing independence
[Link to example continuous learning plans](#)
- Active matters – resources and ideas to promote early years physical development.
[Link to active matters.](#)
[Link to active matters movement games resource.](#)
- Early Movers website providing developmental information on physical skills and activities to promote physical skill development in young children.
[Link to Early Movers.](#)
- Access nhs support on healthy eating and weaning.
[Link to nhs weaning advice.](#)

- Angie Voss website with information and strategies on identifying and understanding children's sensory needs and developing sensory environments.
[Link to AngieVoss A Sensory Life](#)
- Developmental Dyspraxia: Identification and Intervention: A Manual for Parents and Professionals by Madelaine Portwood.
- Scale to reflect on the quality of environment and pedagogy in which children are encouraged to be physically active.
- Movements Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS) for 2-6-year-olds provision: Improving physical development through movement and physical activity (2017) by Carol Archer and Iram Siraj.
[Link to MOVERS book](#)

