



BARNSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council

SEN Threshold Descriptors

GENERAL LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

(to be used with Nursery Education Funded Children only)

S2-6

Range	General Learning Difficulties Descriptor for NEF Children (Apply 'Best Fit')	Assessment & Planning	Groupings For Learning	Curriculum & Teaching Methods	Resources
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level difficulties in the acquisition and/or use of language, early literacy and numeracy skills. • Aware of familiar routines and activities. • Able to locate resources for familiar activities. • Difficulties with pace of curriculum delivery. • Working below national developmental expectations in several areas. 	<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of setting's and EYFS assessments. SENCO may be involved in more specific assessment and observations. • Consider use of WELLCOMM pack or any other language screening tool. • Use of Up and Away programme • Early Support materials for advice and guidance on next steps. <p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting's curriculum plans including individual/group targets. • Parents/carers involved regularly and support targets at home. • Child involved in setting and monitoring their targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream setting with flexible grouping arrangements • Opportunities for small group work based on identified need e.g. listening/attention skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased differentiation by presentation and/or outcome to facilitate small step learning. • Use of activities and equipment appropriate for the development of the child. • Preparation and/or reinforcement for larger group sessions. • Simplification and reduction of adult language. • Increased emphasis on identifying and facilitating preferred learning style. • Opportunities for skill reinforcement/revision/transfer and generalisation. • Some use of specific group programmes. • Strategies employed to encourage independence, confidence, self-esteem, communication, and learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main provision by early years practitioners with advice from SENCO. • Additional adults routinely used to support flexible grouping and differentiation. • Positive setting ethos, environment and relationships. • Effective pastoral system. • Positive behaviour management. • Planned support/guidance opportunities to develop personal, social and emotional skills. • Also see Social and Emotional Aspects of Development Guidance (Developmentally from ages 30-50 months) • Early Years Inclusion Development Programme.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate difficulties in the acquisition/use of language/early literacy/ numeracy skills. • May struggle with some familiar routines and activities • Some difficulties with locating resources • Increasing difficulties with pace of curriculum delivery. • Working well below national developmental expectations in several areas. 	<p>Assessment As Range 1 plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCO will be involved in more specific assessments and observations • Use of Early Support Developmental Journals to identify targets and measure small stepped progress. • Involvement of education and non-education professionals as appropriate. • Common Assessment Framework (CAF). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream setting with regular targeted small group support. • Time limited programmes of small group work based on identified need. • Time limited 1:1 programme based on a specific IEP target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasingly individualised programme including modified activities within an inclusive curriculum. • Simplification and reduction of adult language which matches the identified needs of the child • Approach and teaching methods adapted to suit individual's identified learning style. • Emphasis on learning, social, self help and communication targets as appropriate. • Opportunities for repetition and over-learning. • Individual teaching programmes directly targeting child's particular difficulties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main provision by early years practitioners with support from SENCO and advice from specialist practitioner as appropriate. • Additional adult, under the direction of SENCO, provides sustained targeted support on an individual/ group basis. May include withdrawal for short periods. • Positive setting ethos, environment and relationships. • Targeted positive behaviour management.

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2		<p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum planning reflects levels of achievement and includes individually focused IEP targets. Additional steps taken to engage child and parents as appropriate. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targets within group programmes and/or 1:1. Additional individualised strategies to encourage independence, confidence, self-esteem, communication and learning competence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned support and guidance through IEP to promote personal, social and emotional development. Also see SEAD Guidance (Developmentally from ages 30-50 months) Early Years Inclusion Development Programme.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant difficulties in the acquisition/use of languages/early literacy and numeracy skills. Struggles with familiar routines and activities Significant difficulties with independently organising resources for familiar activities. Significant difficulties with pace of the curriculum and may require further adult support to access group activities Working substantially below national developmental expectations in several areas. 	<p>Assessment As Range 2 plus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> more systematic application of other assessment tools. Involvement of education and non-education professionals as appropriate. <p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum planning closely tracks levels of achievement and all IEP targets are individualised, short term and specific. Additional steps taken to engage child and parents as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstream setting, mainly working on modified curriculum activities. Frequent opportunities for small group teaching based on identified need. Brief daily 1:1 teaching with support focussed on specific IEP targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities and presentation personalised to child's needs. Individualised level/pace/amount of adult talk. Learning style determines teaching methods. Emphasis on consolidation and lateral progress before introducing new skills. Small steps targets within group programmes and/or 1:1. Additional individualised strategies to encourage independence, confidence, self-esteem, communication and learning. Effective deployment of additional adult support at identified times of the day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main provision by early years practitioner with support from SENCO and advice from education and non-education professional as appropriate. Additional adult, under the direction of the SENCO, supports child working on modified curriculum activities, provides regular opportunities for small group work and daily opportunities for 1:1 teaching and support. Positive setting ethos, good relationships. Targeted positive behaviour management. Planned support and guidance through IEP to promote personal, social and emotional development.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Range 3 with high needs which require high levels of adult support in order to access mainstream group activities Levels of development fall within the earliest stages of national developmental expectations in several areas. 	<p>Assessment and Planning As above but also involve supporting adults as appropriate</p>	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion in mainstream activities as appropriate 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater focus on life skills. Increase in 1 to 1 interventions. Additional adult support during most of the day. 	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist resources to allow child to access particular activities e.g tactile letters, numbers, shapes etc.

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5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe and/or complex needs which require high levels of adult input in order to facilitate therapy or personal care needs and in order to access most aspects of learning. • Will need considerable support to engage with most routines and activities. 	<p>Assessment and Planning Specialist to advise on assessment and planning to ensure appropriate to needs of the child</p> <p>Highly personalised assessment and planning carried out by a teacher with specialist knowledge of complex learning difficulties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of time spent in small groups with a greater adult to child ratio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly personalised curriculum and teaching methods matched to child's preferred learning style. • Additional adult support needed to allow access to most activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to a more specialised learning environment e.g. sensory room, movement area, soft play area etc.