

Indicators of Need:

Communication and Language

- Verbally communicates in a meaningful way with some echolalia (echoing of another person vocalisation) or unusual delivery.
- Understanding tends to be literal.
- Has mild difficulty understanding non-verbal communication – for example body language/facial expressions.
- Recognises the need for help but may be unable to seek it effectively.
- May have difficulty following instructions without support.
- May have difficulty sustaining attention for extended periods.
- May make “observational” comments which socially are unacceptable. E.g. The “Fat” lady
- May attend better to non-language based tasks than language based ones.
- May find it hard to listen when engaged in a focus task.

Emotional and Social Development

- Demonstrates some understanding of simple feelings but does not recognise more subtle emotions such as disappointment.
- Has difficulties taking turns and requires support
- Tolerates play/social interaction alongside peers but may not initiate an interaction appropriately.
- Has limited self-confidence in a range of settings.
- May be unusually quiet.
- May exhibit significant anxiety.
- Unclear about the ways to become involved in group activities.
- May have difficulty maintaining a topic of conversation appropriately.

Thinking Flexibly

- Could be distracted from interaction by repetitive behaviours.
- Continues to experience some difficulty with change, even when prepared by adult.
- Displays some repetitive and/or ritualistic behaviour, but can be managed within existing arrangements.
- Can organise materials for a task and follow familiar routines with verbal and/or visual prompts.
- With support can cope with different requirements and routines across a range of subjects.
- May struggle to make choices about their future.

Sensory Needs

- Experiences some discomfort with sensory stimuli and/or may seek out certain sensory stimuli.
- Displays inappropriate behaviours and unusual responses in some settings.
- May well struggle with the demands of group work.

Learning

- Has some difficulties with motivation even with appropriately differentiated materials
- Displays difficulties with following classroom discipline, highly focused on fairness/following the rules
- Requires verbal and/or visual prompts to follow self-care routines such as dressing /toileting.

Pupils may have a high level of need if the following characteristics are evident:

Communication & Language

- Has limited verbal communication and lacks spontaneity.
- Sometimes need visual prompts to support communication.
- Has significant difficulty with understanding non-verbal communication – for example body language/facial expressions.
- Difficulties demonstrating joint attention.
- Communication and understanding are mostly non-verbal with significant difficulty understanding spoken language and gestures.
- Uses augmentative communication for example PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) or Makaton.
- May display extreme, challenging/inappropriate behaviours that can be very difficult to manage, including extremely withdrawn behaviour.
- Displays adverse/extreme or behaviourally inappropriate responses that are very difficult to manage.

Emotional & Social Development

- Unable to take turns unless given significant adult support.
- Has limited understanding of own feelings and cannot recognise feelings in others.
- There is a marked lack of awareness of others.
- Is unaware of the concept of feelings
- Tends to avoid interactions with peers; has little interest in peer interactions.
- Approaches others in odd or unusual manner (e.g. from behind /with poor eye contact).
- Appears aloof or indifferent to others.
- Tends to avoid interactions with peers.
- If interaction is unavoidable, it is usually on his/her terms.
- Can be withdrawn /isolated.
- Demonstrates a high level of anxiety (possibly around self-image), with some verbalisation.
- Extremely negative thoughts about self.
- Displays adverse/extreme or behaviourally inappropriate responses.

Thinking Flexibly

- Has significant on-going difficulties managing change even if prepared.
- Repetitive and/or ritualistic behaviour or special interests interfere with learning or are all consuming.
- Is extremely difficult to motivate – can be totally absorbed in own interests.
- Has significant and persistent difficulties in organising self, (for example, to collect items for a task or follow daily routines), without visual cues/objects and adult modelling.
- Difficulties generalising learning from one setting to another.

Sensory Needs

- Has unusual responses to certain sensory stimuli with some behavioural reactions or signs of stress – may seek sensory feedback such as rocking, mouthing objects.
- Displays stimming behaviours
- Is unable to tolerate certain sensory stimuli. Shows extreme reactions.
- Is difficult to distract from preferred sensory stimuli.
- At risk of self-harm due to sensory needs.
- Has difficulties identifying own needs for sensory regulation

Learning

- Has considerable difficulty with motivation, with erratic response to classroom rewards.
- Tends to flit between activities and is easily distracted.
- Is unaware of the need to ask for help with a task.
- Needs a high level of support to sustain attention in most contexts.
- Has difficulty organising materials for a task even with visual and verbal prompts and adult modelling.
- Requires adult intervention/ close supervision and visual/verbal prompts to support self-care routines.

Quality First Teaching to meet need:

Communication and Language

- Keep language clear and avoid sarcasm, ambiguities and idioms.
- Clear introduction of key topic specific vocabulary.
- Language should be clear and positive.
- Teaching colloquial language.
- Teaching language for sexual awareness and relationships.
- Pupils should have key language supported visually.
- There should be visual support such as: class visual timetable to prepare for change; task planners; prompts to show good listening and sitting.
- Pupils should be cued (by using their name) into instructions and key pieces of information.
- Adults should provide time for the processing/understanding of the language.
- Teacher could use pointing or similar to help cue and maintain pupil's attention to a focus item.
- Regular opportunities to listen to adults reading to them in a quiet environment.
- Adults take time to listen to what pupils are saying and modelling positive listening behaviours.
- There should be clear classroom routines to establish good listening skills.
- Pupils may benefit from use of IT or exploration of alternative means of recording.

Emotional and Social Development

- Pupils are seated in a position with a good view of the teacher to enable use of non-verbal communication such as gesture and facial expression
- Group learners appropriately – working alongside good role models and pupils they are likely to socialise with on the playground.
- Staff should affirm appropriate social interaction working alongside good role models.
- Staff should support self-esteem with working on and emphasising abilities/interests/social skills
- Provide opportunities to take part in learning discussions with peers and adults.
- Provide opportunities to be able to socially interact with peers and adults.
- Offer buddy support to facilitate peer interaction.
- Adults to model good social interaction skills
- Adults to label their own emotions to support understanding

Thinking Flexibly

- Clear class rules and routines which have been written by the class, understood and displayed visually.
- Clear rules and routines for moving around the school.
- Clear routines for homework developed in conjunction with parents/carers.
- Clear identification of the purpose of activities and links to previous learning.
- Tasks broken down into manageable steps with a clear start and finish.
- Tasks show a finished example wherever possible.
- Pupils should be given time to process information/expectations.
- Clear separation between visual timetable and 'First, Then' (or similar) as they serve different purposes and should not be confused by the pupil.
- Structured rehearsals for further education/life skills.

Sensory Needs

- A well-organised classroom – equipment easily accessible, drawers for equipment labelled clearly, furniture arranged to best effect.
- Learners should have a quiet area within the classroom, where possible
- Pupils should work in an environment that is as calm and quiet as possible.
- Staff to be aware silence may also be challenging for those with sensory processing difficulties
- Age appropriate strategies for obtaining time out, as necessary
- Allow learners to use “fidget aids” with clear guidance for appropriate use

Learning

- Provide encouragement and motivation of learners by meaningfully using their strengths, favourite activities and special interests.
- Involvement of learners, at a level relevant to them, in formulating their learning goals.
- Support equality of access including to the extended curriculum
- Application for appropriate exam access arrangements and opportunities to develop this as a normal way of working

Additional and Different Support; Targeted and Specialist Support

Communication and Language

- Tasks should be rehearsed or modelled, showing a finished example wherever possible.
- Staff to focus on language being reduced, chunked and simplified to support accurate retention – verbal bullet points.
- Provide a visual means to request help.
- Explain idioms and non-literal language.
- Colloquial and idiomatic language is explained.
- Pre-teaching of topic-specific vocabulary takes place.

Emotional and Social Development

- Pupils will have access to a buddy/peer support system.
- Partner work with supportive peers is arranged.
- Phrases about safety and help are taught and modelled.
- Pupils should be taught to understand the passage of time.
- Staff need to provide inclusion in a social skills group.
- Pupils are taught strategies to help them to manage their anxieties.
- Staff support skills for preparing for adult life, including around dating and sexual health.

Thinking Flexibly

- Staff teach what the rules are and who polices them.
- There are clear expectations of rules and routines shown which are shown visually.
- There should be a calm, firm and consistent approach to managing learning behaviour related to rewards that are motivating for the learner
- Learners are taught skills to make their own visual cues.
- Use of visual prompts to support organisational skills.
- Learner should have tasks broken down into manageable steps with a clear start and finish by using task planners that have been personalised for the pupil.
- There should be personalised visual supports – visual timetable to prepare for change, task planners, prompts to show good listening and sitting.
- Young people need to be taught how to cope with “free” lessons in a timetable.
- Young people need to develop an awareness of the law and what they can and cannot do.

Sensory Needs

- Distractions to be minimised within the classroom – the pupil being sat away from strong visual stimuli.
- There should be a place of calm within the class or school – book corner or library
- There should be a designated space for sitting either on the carpet, in the assembly hall, dining hall, classroom
- Movement breaks are provided.

- Supportive equipment is provided such as, sit and move cushion/writing slope/pencil grip
- Use of a privacy board in classrooms if appropriate.
- A distraction-free area (within the classroom) such as a workstation if possible.
- Allowance to transition between learning spaces at a time different to peers to avoid busy or crowded spaces.

