

A circular inset image shows a woman with glasses and a young boy in a nursery. The boy is wearing a striped shirt and is playing with a stack of colorful rings (pink, yellow, green, purple, blue, red) on a table. He is holding a red ring in his right hand. The woman is looking at him. In the background, there are shelves with various toys and a cat.

Early Years Ordinarily Available Provision

Inclusive provision and support available for all
learners in mainstream early years settings



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Foreword

Wokingham Borough Council is committed to ensuring that all children and young people growing up in our borough feel valued, safe, and cared for. We believe that every child should have the opportunity to be healthy, achieve their full potential, and feel a strong sense of belonging in their community.

We are proud to present this new and updated version of our Ordinarily Available Provision guidance. By working together, we can ensure that every early years provider across Wokingham provides high-quality, inclusive support for all learners, particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Our borough is proud of its strong, inclusive education system. We celebrate the excellent outcomes that many children with additional needs achieve, the dedication of our educational professionals, and the growth of our local specialist provision, which enables more children to access the right support close to home.

This document is a key step in our shared commitment to early intervention, inclusion, and continuous improvement. It sets out clear expectations for the support that should be in place in all mainstream settings, promoting consistency and best practice so that families have confidence in the support their children receive.



We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to this guidance, and we look forward to continuing this important work together.

Dr Ming Zhang

Service Director Education and SEND

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Introduction

This Early Years Ordinarily Available Provision (EYOAP) guidance outlines the inclusive provision and support that early years providers in Wokingham Borough are expected to implement from within their own resources for all learners including those with a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). It aims to develop the consistency and strength of local area early intervention so that children and young people with SEND achieve good outcomes regardless of what setting they attend.

It is aligned with the priorities outlined in the Wokingham Area SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2029 and our shared vision:

Wokingham is a borough where all children and young people are visible, valued, and included in their communities, are safe and cared for, achieve their potential, are healthy and feel happy, hopeful, and loved.

The guidance is rooted in principles such as collaboration with families, high-quality adaptive teaching, and a strong focus on inclusive practices. Settings are expected to take a proactive part in inclusion and early intervention and to create environments where every learner feels valued, supported, and able to achieve their full potential.

Developed through a series of workshops and working party meetings, the content has been co-produced with input from key stakeholders including Wokingham Borough Council staff, SENCOs, Early Years Managers, Educational Psychologists, Advisory and Outreach Services, Health colleagues, SEND Voices and the SEND Service ensuring it reflects both national best practices and the unique context of our borough. It takes into consideration information we have received from learners about what reasonable adjustments and support they require from their settings and reflects the good practice that has been observed in Wokingham Borough settings.

The document begins with a Directory of Services followed by a description of the general strategies and reasonable adjustments that settings should implement under different headings. The next part of the document includes more detailed information about the support and provision that should be available to support learners under each of the four broad areas of need - Communication and Interaction, Cognition and Learning, Physical and Sensory, and Social, Emotional and Mental Health - whilst recognising that learners may have needs and strengths across different areas of need. It is not expected that settings will implement all strategies for individuals, and they may also use additional strategies to those described, but it provides a useful guide about the type

of support that settings can be expected to implement. All children will benefit from the strategies and provisions detailed including those receiving SEN Support. Children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) will also benefit from the strategies in addition to the provision described in Section F of their EHCPs.

This guidance reflects national legislation, including the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice 2015, and the Equality Act 2010. It emphasises the duty of settings to make reasonable adjustments and use their 'best endeavours' to meet the needs of all learners. The provision outlined here is needs-led rather than diagnosis-driven, ensuring that learners with SEND do not need a formal diagnosis to access support.



Introduction

The content of this document is informed by evidence-based research, particularly the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Early Years Toolkit, which provides insights into effective early intervention strategies that support children's development and learning. The Early Years Toolkit highlights key approaches that have been shown to enhance outcomes for all children, including those with SEND. These approaches include:

1. Communication and language support -

Strategies that enhance children's language and communication skills, including interactive story time, modelling language, and providing structured opportunities for conversation.

2. Self-regulation and executive function -

Encouraging children to develop attention, working memory, and emotional regulation through play-based approaches and structured routines.

3. Play-based learning - Using high-quality, structured play to develop cognitive, social, and emotional skills in an inclusive environment.

4. Parental engagement - Strengthening collaboration between settings and families to support children's learning and development at home and in the setting.

5. Early numeracy approaches - Embedding foundational numeracy skills through engaging, everyday activities that support problem-solving and reasoning.

These strategies are embedded throughout this document, ensuring that the recommended support is grounded in best practice and research-proven methods to improve outcomes for young children with SEND.



By clearly defining what should be ordinarily available, this guidance aims to promote consistency across all mainstream settings and foster a culture where inclusion is embedded in everyday practice. It serves as a resource for setting leaders, SENCOs, early years practitioners, childminders, parents, and carers, outlining the expectations and provision that should be in place to help all learners succeed.



Directory of Services

This section outlines local and national support that settings can access for advice and support about learners with SEND. A more extensive list of support services for children, young people and families can be found on our SEND Local Offer.

Wokingham Services

Service	Description
<u>Area Senco for Early Years</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and support for SENCOs and other setting staff on meeting the needs of learners with SEND • SENCO Induction programme • SENCO network meetings and newsletters • SENCO surgeries and setting visits
<u>ASD Family Help</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for people with autism and neurodiversity • Support to parents/carers through regular drop in sessions • Free advice and information through email, face-to-face or phone calls • Social activities for learners, young people & families • Training and workshops for parents/carers and professionals • Life and relationships skills for teens
<u>Autism Berkshire</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and advice through a helpline, events, workshops and newsletters • Accessible social and leisure activities for children, adults and families • Autism-specific training and support • Work with education, health, emergency and employment services to deliver autism-appropriate services
<u>ASSIST Team (Autism Spectrum Service for Information Support and Training)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, advice, guidance and signposting in relation to autism • Autism focused workshops for families and professionals • Targeted support for families of learners up to their 18th birthday with a diagnosis of autism or on the pathway for an autism assessment • Focused 1:1 support via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for pupils who meet the service eligibility

<u>Berkshire West Autism and ADHD Support Service</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice, workshops and courses for learners and young people aged up to 25 who are autistic or have ADHD - or are waiting for assessment - and their families
<u>Berkshire Healthcare Children, Young People and Families Services: Therapy Services</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integrated therapy team providing occupational therapy (OT), physiotherapy and speech and language therapy (SALT) for children and young people throughout Berkshire • Information and advice about how to support learners with a range of different needs • Access to online workshops for parents/carers and professionals • Access to the OT and SALT Early Years toolkits (also accessible via the SENCO Hub) • Access to training modules on mental health issues in children and young people • Enquiry line for parents and carers of pre-school children to discuss any concerns about communication
<u>Home in Camp Mohawk</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp Mohawk is a multi-functional day centre for children with special needs and their families, set in 5 acres of beautiful countryside, just outside Wargrave, Berkshire. Throughout the year the centre provides a range of activities, facilities and natural space to encourage children with a variety of special needs to play, socialise and learn in a secure and caring environment.
<u>Disabled Access Funding (DAF)</u> <u>www.wokingham.gov.uk/daf</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settings can apply for Disabled Access Funding for any child in receipt of DLA. • Please contact earlyyears@wokingham.gov.uk with evidence of the award of DLA and the parent declaration form indicating the parent has nominated your setting to receive DAF.
<u>Wokingham - Dingley's Promise</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years SEND provision in Wokingham for nursery places, stay and play sessions and parent support

Directory of Services

<u>Early Help</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for families when they first have challenges, preventing problems from escalating • Parenting and family support
<u>Early Years Support Panel</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years Support Panel considers requests for support from parents, providers and other professionals. It is a multiagency panel who look at the needs of the child and family and signposts families to the support they are eligible to access. This could include Portage, Dingley's Promise
<u>EYIF</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Years Inclusion Funding can be applied for by Early Years providers in the Private, Voluntary, Independent (PVI) sector, Maintained Nursery Classes (F1) and Childminders in receipt of Early Years Free Entitlement Funding to support children with additional needs to enable them to access the curriculum. • Forms to request funding can be found on early years, childcare and play wokingham school hub
<u>Educational Psychology Service</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses psychology and child-centred, evidence-based approaches at an individual, group and systemic level to support educational settings to promote children and young people's learning, development and psychological wellbeing (NB: all work involving children and young people requires informed consent) • Consultation and/or other types of assessments (e.g. observation, play based assessment, surgeries) may be available for some children, via the Early Years SEND setting support service to develop a holistic understanding of their strengths and needs within their environmental contexts • Support to settings if they experience a critical incident • Systemic work across the Local Authority, which includes representation on various working groups and steering groups to support key local priorities • Supports WBC in fulfilling its statutory duties in relation to Education, Health and Care needs assessments, annual reviews and tribunals

<u>Early Years Portage Service</u>	<p>Early Years Portage is the home visiting educational service for pre-school children with complex additional needs and their families.</p> <p>The service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helps families and children learn together • provides strategies and targets to support children's development • provides ideas for play and teaching activities to support parents and carers in stimulating their child's development • supports parents and carers in developing their knowledge regarding special educational needs processes and procedures. Referrals for Portage can be made via the Early Years Support Panel
<u>FIRST (The Family Intervention Resources and Support Team)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, workshops and training for parents and carers of a child with a disability around sleep, anxiety and behaviour
<u>Key Working Team, Berkshire West</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for learners aged up to 25 years old, who have a diagnosis of autism and/or a learning disability, who are at risk of admission to a psychiatric hospital/unit, to give them some extra support
<u>Ladybirds Building for the Future</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgroup for babies and children age 0-5 with their parent/carer. Any disability/additional need welcome, no diagnosis necessary. • A range of structured and free play activities and experiences provided, plus the opportunity to meet and socialise. Siblings under 5 welcome
<u>Emotional Wellbeing Hub</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central point of contact for young people, families, and professionals to access mental health services • Free support and advice to children and young people up to their 19 birthday or up to 25 for young people with SEND

Directory of Services

<u>Health Visiting Children Young People and Families Online Resource</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health visitors are registered nurses and midwives with an additional community public health qualification. They offer support and practical advice on many aspects of child development as well as family health. You can also find lots of information and advice for your baby or young child on the <u>Health and Development pages</u>. • If you have a child aged 0-5 and you live in Bracknell, Wokingham, Reading or West Berkshire, it's really easy to get in touch with the Health Visiting team using the ChatHealth service. • Just send a text message to 07312 263283
<u>NHS Berkshire Neurodiversity Service (Autism and ADHD)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the referral process for Autism and ADHD assessments • Strategies for supporting learners with difficulties that may be related to Autism or ADHD
<u>Parenting Special Children</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and advice for parents, young people and professionals about how to support learners with SEND
<u>Promise Inclusion (PINC)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local, independent charity supporting adults and children with learning disabilities and/or autism • Activities for children with learning disabilities and/or autism • Support for siblings • Carer and family support
<u>SEND Local Offer</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about help available for children and young people age 0 to 25 with SEND • Information about local services and how to access them • Information about local support groups, leisure activities and specialist support
<u>SEND Voices Wokingham</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent Carer Forum for parent carers of children aged 0-25 years with SEND • Produce a SEND Local Offer Guide and a SEND Guide for Parents

<u>SENDIASS</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for parents of children and young people up to the age of 25 with SEND • Support for children and young people with SEND • Training sessions on different aspects of SEND, some of which are accessible to professionals
<u>Sensory Consortium Service</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, training and support for pupils with a sensory impairment in local authority settings • Contribute to individualised school education programmes, liaising with Health, Local Authorities and other professionals • Deliver specialist training to mainstream and special school staff • Provide specialist teacher support for planning provision and the placement and monitoring of pupils with a sensory impairment in settings • Loan of specialist equipment for pupils attending mainstream settings
<u>The Grove Outreach</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach support for pupils with speech, language and communication needs in nursery, primary and secondary settings • Universal staff training and access to resources • Targeted support for staff to set up and deliver interventions • In-reach visits to The Grove Speech and Language Resource, parent workshops and SaLT TA drop-ins • Classroom support for memory, vocabulary and phonological awareness difficulties
<u>Wiggly Worms</u>	<p>Stay and play session in a non-judgemental, safe environment for you and your child. For children under 5 years of age who have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum • Referred to the paediatrician for a diagnosis • Or have been identified by a professional as needing an assessment <p>Please contact Kate Fudge on 07900 071 017 Email: katherine.fudge@wokingham.gov.uk to book a place</p>

Directory of Services

<u>Wokingham Schools Hub</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information for school professionals on a range of topics including leadership, management and governance, learning and teaching support, early years, childcare and play and professional development• Access to the Early Years SENCO hub
<u>Wokingham Virtual School</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes the progress and educational attainment of learners who are or who have been in care• Training for settings• Links to resources• Information about funding

National Services

Service	Description
ADHD Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for educators aimed at helping learners with neurodevelopmental conditions to navigate the pressures of education as they get older
Anna Freud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training courses and webinars about mental health • Library of free evidence-based resources including the '5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing framework'
Autism Education Trust (AET)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development programmes on Autism - available through the EP Service and AOIS • Library of free resources for education professionals and parents • Framework documents for assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing the progression of autistic learners for each education phase • Autism competency frameworks for practitioners to use as a self-evaluation tool to rate their understanding and knowledge of Good Autism Practice
Beacon House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A therapeutic service working with individuals who have experienced trauma and loss offering: • Training and consultation for settings to develop trauma informed practice • Library of free resources to support regulation • Information about developmental trauma
Book Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A library of over 1.3 million audiobooks and ebooks that can be customised with assistive reading features such as read-aloud, enlarged text or braille
Council for Disabled Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to a range of information and resources about policy and practice • Includes elearning courses on EHCPs, annual reviews, mental health and supporting children, young people with SEND
	and presenting actionable recommendations for practice

Directory of Services

<u>IPSEA</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on the SEND legal framework • Online legal guides, resources and template letters • Independent legal advice and support for families of children and young people with SEND
<u>Nasen - Whole School SEND</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information, resources and CPD to support a whole school approach to Inclusion • Access to training, webinars and an eLearning training calendar
<u>National Autistic Society</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about neuroaffirmative practice, autism, ADHD and more
<u>RNIB</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to an audio, braille and music library



General Strategies

This section outlines the reasonable adjustments and general approaches that all settings should implement to support the inclusion of all learners including those with SEND.

This section is organised into the following key areas:

- Leadership and management
- Teaching and learning
- Assessment
- Partnership with learners and their families
- Transition
- The physical and sensory environment
- Pastoral

Each section lists between one and three key expectations and describes the strategies that settings need to implement in order to achieve the expectations.





Leadership and Management

Leaders are ambitious for learners with additional needs and provision is well-led and managed.

This is achieved by:

- Creating an inclusive culture that is reflected in the vision, values, practices and in all policies and procedures
- Ensuring the senior leadership/managers/childminders are knowledgeable and pro-active about inclusion of learners with SEND, acting as champions
- Allocating funding including SEN funding efficiently and effectively
- Employing a nominated SENCO who has ideally completed the Level 3 SENCO accreditation
- Providing opportunities for the SENCO to be part of, or to liaise regularly with the SLT
- Allocating the SENCO sufficient time to carry out the role
- Ensuring all staff use positive and respectful language when talking about learners with SEND
- Ensuring all children receive a broad and balanced curriculum
- Ensuring all children access high quality, adaptive teaching and provision and that all staff are supported to develop and improve their practice
- Complementing high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions
- Ensuring that effective systems are in place to keep governors/trustees or committee members informed about the impact of provision in place for learners with SEND and that committee members hold leaders to account for provision and outcomes for learners with SEND
- Developing a comprehensive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme that enables all staff to understand their statutory responsibilities and feel confident supporting learners with a range of needs
- Ensuring that appropriate time is set aside in the setting's CPD programme for training related to SEND and inclusion

- 🌍 Implementing a Code of Conduct with clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe with all learners including those with SEND
- 🌍 Deploying support staff effectively so that they have a positive impact on children with SEND, ensuring that learners who struggle the most, spend at least as much time with the teacher as other children



Teaching and Learning

Settings implement an ambitious and inclusive curriculum that is successfully adapted to meet the needs of all learners.

This is achieved by:

- Ensuring that there is clear curriculum progression and that all learners are given the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their potential
- Ensuring that the curriculum reflects the lived experiences of learners
- Planning extra-curricular activities and educational visits to fully include learners with SEND (in line with the Equality Act 2010) including those with SEMH and physical disabilities
- Provide opportunities for repetition and retrieval of key skills throughout the day
- Providing opportunities for learners to develop acceptance of different needs and disabilities
- Planning work of all adults in the setting so that they are effective in supporting all learners
- Quality assuring strategies and interventions to ensure that they are supporting learners to make progress

All children have access to high quality teaching. Staff understand and respond to the needs of their learners and adapt learning approaches accordingly.

This is achieved by:

- Being aware of the nature of the learner's needs, recommended strategies and support
- Allowing processing time before expecting a response
- Breaking tasks into manageable steps that are clearly explained and modelled
- Explicitly modelling tasks and providing additional modelling as needed
- Offering scaffolds (visual, verbal, written) to promote independence; scaffolds are reduced when no longer needed
- Giving learners frequent opportunities to practise taught strategies
- Using clear concise language appropriate to the learner's developmental level
- Supporting understanding with physical/ visual/auditory aids e.g. objects of reference, visual timetables, now/next boards

- Identifying and teaching vocabulary with opportunities for pre-learning or additional practise where needed
- Using additional adults flexibly to reinforce learning, support focus, facilitate groupwork and promote independence
- Using flexible grouping arrangements
- Using technology to scaffold learning and to promote engagement
- Providing opportunities to work in different ways e.g. independently or in a variety of small groups; this may be supplemented with some individualised teaching where appropriate
- Providing opportunities where gaps are identified, for targeted teaching individually, in pairs or in small groups
- Implementing evidence-based interventions to target specific areas where appropriate; interventions are planned to ensure minimal disruption to the learner's inclusion and timetable and monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure they are effective.



Assessment

Assessment is regular and purposeful and enables a thorough understanding of learners' strengths, difficulties and starting points and progress towards agreed goals.

This is achieved by:

- Ongoing assessment and in the moment feedback to children throughout the day
- Ensuring that Early Years Practitioners regularly assess progress and identify children who may need additional support
- Supporting Early Years Practitioners to use assessment data e.g. from the Early Years Developmental Journal (EYDJ) to plan next steps
- Providing learners with opportunities to evaluate their own learning
- Using a range of formal and informal assessment tools to build a thorough understanding of learners e.g. standardised assessments, teacher voice, learner voice, observation and discussions with families
- Applying assessment for learning strategies during adult led teaching and making adaptations accordingly

A regular cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) ensures learners with SEND make progress.

This is achieved by:

- Gathering and sharing information from families, staff and external professionals to build a holistic picture of strengths, difficulties and starting points
- Using varied assessment tools to build a thorough understanding of the learner's strengths and difficulties and using this information to plan support
- Monitoring the impact of provision and interventions and adjusting approaches if progress is slower than expected.
- Keeping clear APDR records, reviewed with parents/carers and learners at least three times per year

Partnerships with learners and their families

Settings work in partnership with learners and families and ensure active involvement in decision making.

This is achieved by:

- Making families feel welcome
- Encouraging learners and their families to share aspirations
- Promoting clear communication with accessible channels for sharing and receiving information
- Ensuring that parents/carers know their child or young person's SEND status and the provision in place
- Discussing how strategies can be reinforced at home and how the setting can use and adapt effective home strategies
- Gathering the views of the whole setting population including those with SEND through formal and informal events
- Helping learners to understand their barriers to learning and the strategies that help them
- Supporting learners to value themselves and their achievements
- Involving learners and their families in planning and preparing for adulthood from an early age
- Ensuring the SEND information report is accessible online and easy to read and reviewed annually with families
- Signposting families to the Wokingham Borough Council Local Offer with a visible website link



Transition

Schools and settings work together to ensure effective and supportive transitions.

This is achieved by:

- Identifying learners who may need additional support with transitions to new settings and planning accordingly
- Actively seeking and sharing information about learners to support successful transitions between settings
- Ensuring that preparation for adulthood is an explicit element of planning and support for learners with SEND
- Collaborating to create tailored transition plans for vulnerable learners which may include:
 - ▲ additional visits to the new setting,
 - ▲ social stories, transition books, video clips,
 - ▲ buddy systems,
 - ▲ identified key adults,
 - ▲ visits from staff from the new setting to the learner's existing setting,
 - ▲ targeted work on independent living skills e.g. self help skills
- Transferring relevant documentation to the new setting



Transitions during the day are carefully planned and well managed.

This is achieved by:

- Recognising that learners go through a range of transitions e.g. between activities, start and end of day, breaks, staff changes, life events, illness, extended periods of absence
- Supporting learners to manage these transitions with strategies such as
 - ▲ Visuals supports e.g. visual timetables, now/next, schedules
 - ▲ Visual timers to indicate task duration
 - ▲ Calming/distraction activities for learners who struggle with change
 - ▲ Access to respite or safe spaces at all times
 - ▲ Reduced language



The Physical and Sensory Environment

Settings create physical and sensory environments that effectively meet learners' needs.

Physical environment

This is achieved by:

- Providing purposeful, well-resourced learning spaces that encourage independence and engagement
- Regularly reviewing and adapting resources to suit learners' needs

- Ensuring access to equipment as needed e.g. wobble cushions, sensory chew,
- Labelling resources with words and/or pictures and ensuring they are accessible to all
- Assessing and adjusting the physical accessibility of the building and individual learning spaces according to individual need and seeking external advice if required
- Ensuring the accessibility plan is on the setting's website and is regularly reviewed
- Using appropriately sized furniture
- Considering colour, size and font-type of texts presented to learners
- Gathering input from learners and families on required adaptations
- Ensuring that left and right-handed learners can use equipment comfortably

Sensory environment

This is achieved by:

- Planning seating and movement breaks based on sensory needs
- Ensuring that learners who wear glasses or hearing aids wear them and are seated in the optimum position



- Allowing access to sensory aids e.g. wobble cushions, ear defenders and weighted items
- Providing access to low arousal spaces or regulating activities when needed
- Accepting and supporting self-regulatory behaviour e.g. fidgeting and stimming
- Considering the effect of lighting, background noise and smells in the room and adjusting where necessary
- Creating structured, understandable and predictable learning environments
- Removing or reducing sensory stimuli by maintaining low-arousal, tidy, orderly environments with visually accessible displays
- Accommodating individual sensory sensitivities including uniform adjustments
- Offering physical/sensory activities to help learners reach and sustain a calm, alert state e.g. sensory circuits



Pastoral

Settings create an environment that promotes wellbeing and recognises and responds to learners' social and emotional needs.

This is achieved by:

- Adopting a whole setting approach to promoting good mental health including preventative and reactive measures
- Ensuring staff recognise when learners need additional support
- Creating a calm, purposeful and inclusive climate where learners feel they belong and that their contributions are valued
- Maintaining calm and orderly settings, where routines are well established, and behaviour is consistently well-managed
- Fostering an ethos of acceptance and tolerance and challenging negative attitudes towards individuals and groups if they arise
- Encouraging and acting upon learners' feedback
- Ensuring learners know who to approach with concerns
- Providing designated safe spaces when needed
- Supporting learners to understand their own emotions and to develop strategies they can use when they are dysregulated
- Delivering a curriculum that develops and supports wellbeing and awareness and sensitivity towards difference including SEND
- Ensuring that staff are aware that learners with SEND are vulnerable to bullying and that there is an appropriate level of support and monitoring in place
- Planning focused work for groups regarding specific needs where necessary
- Ensuring adults establish supportive, positive relationships with learners, demonstrating compassion, empathy and consistency in their responses

Settings adopt a relational and nurturing approach that considers the impact of individual experiences and trauma.

This is achieved by:

- Ensuring staff understand the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and trauma informed/attachment aware approaches
- Recognising that behaviour is a form of communication and often reflects unmet emotional, physical or educational needs

These could include needs such as

- ▲ frustration, sadness or fear,
 - ▲ hunger, thirst or pain,
 - ▲ learning gaps, difficulties with the task
- Adapting approaches based on individual needs
 - Providing opportunities for all learners to have a supportive relationship with a key adult
 - Using restorative conversations to reflect on behaviours and restore relationships



Support for the broad areas of need

This section details the support and provision that should be available for learners with SEND across the four broad areas of need:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Physical and sensory
- Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)

The strategies outlined in this section should be implemented alongside those described in the General Strategies section. It is acknowledged that these broad areas encompass a wide range of needs, and effective support requires a detailed understanding of each individual learner.

This section focuses on the specific challenges that learners may experience within each area of need, rather than being based on a formal diagnosis.





Communication and Interaction

Learners may require additional support in one or more of the following areas:

- 🌐 Understanding language
- 🌐 Use of spoken language or nonverbal communication
- 🌐 Speech sounds
- 🌐 Social communication and social interaction
- 🌐 Speech anxiety

Resources, advice and consultation available:

Details of all available services are included in the Directory of Services. The following services may be particularly relevant to settings:

- ▲ [ASSIST Team \(Autism Spectrum Service for Information Support and Training\)](#)
- ▲ [Children and Young Peoples Integrated Therapies](#)
- ▲ [Early Years SALT toolkit](#)

Contact: childcaretraining@wokingham.gov.uk to book a Speech & Language Therapy drop in surgery slot

- ▲ [Early Years Support Service](#)
- ▲ [Educational Psychology Service](#)
- ▲ [Neurodiversity Service \(Autism and ADHD\)](#)
- ▲ [The Grove Speech and Language Resource Outreach https://sites.reading.ac.uk/slt-clinic/speech-and-language-therapy-clinic/paediatric-clinic/](https://sites.reading.ac.uk/slt-clinic/speech-and-language-therapy-clinic/paediatric-clinic/)



General strategies:

- 🌱 Implement the advice in the General Strategies section
- 🌱 Refer to the CYPF Speech and Language Therapy Information Pack for Early Years (available on the Wokingham Schools Hub) and the CYPF website for further details about the areas outlined below
- 🌱 Parents may contact the speech and language therapy service on their enquiry line, 0118 904 3700, Tuesday and Thursday 9am - 3.30pm
- 🌱 Where learners are assessed by a SALT, settings may be required to implement an individualised programme
- 🌱 Provide a quiet space for delivering programmes or for learners to access Speech and Language Therapy
- 🌱 Settings may complete a Early Years setting audit for a communication friendly environmentt



Communication and Interaction

Strategies for specific areas of need:

Understanding language

- Gain the learner's attention before speaking to them and allow time to process and respond
- Simplify language and regularly check understanding
- Adult modelling to promote communication and Language using simple language and repetition
- Allow processing time and if required repeat instructions and explanations
- Support verbal instructions with visual aids e.g. objects, pictures, gestures
- Monitor and reduce the number of key words in instructions if the learner is struggling to comprehend
- Use visual displays to reinforce key learning points, concepts and ideas ensuring that learners know how to find and use them
- Teach vocabulary explicitly and provide visual reminders; offer additional practice or pre-teaching where necessary
- Break instructions down into smaller chunks
- Implement evidence-based intervention programmes to support language comprehension

Using language (talking)

- Provide frequent opportunities for learners to talk with peers and adults to expand language use
- Support the learner to extend and expand their sentences
- When incorrect grammar is used, adults repeat back the sentence using correct grammar but without telling the learner they are wrong
- Allow sufficient time to respond to questions
- For reluctant talkers, use comments on what the learner is doing rather than asking direct questions
- Use of visual resources to support sentence structure and word order e.g. Colourful Semantics
- Incorporate visuals to support communication e.g. pictures/symbols/photo cards, visual timetables, Now/Next boards, gestures, task planners
- Provide visuals to support requests for help
- Deliver evidence-based programmes to develop and improve spoken language
- Allow learners to rehearse responses so they can join in with group activities
- Use alternative communication methods e.g. PECS, Makaton, communication boards, technology

- Plan peer groupings so that learners have access to good role models for language and communication

Speech sound difficulties

- Value and encourage all attempts to communicate
- Model correct pronunciation e.g. learner says "bider", adult responds, "oh yes, that's a spider"
- Adult can take the blame if they are unable to understand what a learner is saying e.g. "Sorry my ears aren't working well today - can you say that again?"
- Encourage the learner to look at the speaker and themselves in a mirror so they can see the shape of their mouth when they say the sound
- Highlight target sounds naturally during daily routines e.g. if the learner is having difficulty using the 's' sound say: "Here are your socks; teddy is sitting on the seat"
- Targeted teaching of sounds using the CYPF resources

Social communication and/or social interaction

- Use naturally occurring opportunities during children's chosen play to model positive social interactions
- Plan supportive groupings and opportunities for learners to play with peers
- Adults model effective conversation skills
- Accept and celebrate the different ways learners interact
- Teach the vocabulary of emotions (see SEMH section for more details)
- Use social stories or comic strip cartoons to address specific scenarios
- Create opportunities for learners to enjoy their favoured interests to support interaction with others

Communication and Interaction

Speech anxiety (including selective mutism or social anxiety)

- Foster a relaxed and friendly environment where the learner feels valued regardless of verbal participation
- Adults should be positive, reassuring and understanding of the learner's difficulty with speaking
- Allow the learner to communicate through non-verbal methods such as pictures, gestures or writing
- Avoid placing pressure on the learner to speak
- Provide time with trusted staff to build rapport and confidence
- Provide opportunities for the learner to play games with peers that do not require any talking
- Ensure access to the toilet and drinking water without needing to ask
- Praise contributions based on ideas or participation, rather than verbal output
- Additional resources available on the SMIRA (Selective Mutism Information and Research Association) website



Cognition and Learning

Learners may require additional support in one or more of the following areas:

- 🧠 Attention, concentration or processing
- 🧠 Acquiring and developing play skills
- 🧠 Generalising skills that are learnt

Resources, advice and consultation available:

Details of all available services are included in the Directory of Services.

The following services may be particularly relevant to settings:

- ▲ [Children and Young Peoples Integrated Therapies](#)
- ▲ [Early Years Support Service](#)
- ▲ [The Grove Speech and Language Resource Outreach](#)



General strategies:

- 🌀 Implement the advice in the General Strategies section
- 🌀 Adapt teaching approaches and activities where necessary
- 🌀 Provide a range of scaffolds to support learning
- 🌀 Incorporate technology to enhance learning opportunities
- 🌀 Employ the 'I do, we do, you do' model to support learners to develop mastery



Cognition and Learning

Strategies for specific areas of need:

Attention, concentration or processing

- Minimise the distractions in the learning environment
- Provide low distraction areas that children can access freely
- Gain attention by calling the learner's name before giving instructions or spoken information
- Break instructions into manageable steps and provide visual prompts if required
- Use voice, facial expression and gestures to keep the learner's attention
- Incorporate visual supports and movement breaks as described in General Strategies section
- Set realistic attention expectations - start with the amount of time they can manage and gradually increase
- Vary activities and pace to sustain engagement, alternating listening tasks with doing tasks
- Implement activities to develop attention e.g. through the Attention Autism programme
- Use timers to indicate task duration
- Break tasks down into manageable steps using back or forward chaining techniques

Developing Play Skills

- Create learning environments where children learn, discover, explore and play
- Allow children to explore different types of play through a variety of open ended resources
- Allow children to engage in their preferred interests and drive their own learning
- Play alongside children in their self chosen play using modelling techniques to extend and generalise their play skills
- Encourage children to engage in a variety of activities, supporting them to plan their time using visual choice boards
- Use now/next boards and timers to help children transition between activities
- Modelling new skills to introduce children to unfamiliar resources/toys
- Free access to different types of play throughout the day

Acquiring literacy skills

- A direct teaching approach which focuses on high quality, explicit and systematic instruction
- Use assessment to identify strengths and gaps
- Provide opportunities throughout the day to develop phonological awareness
- Provide opportunities for repetition of modelled skills during child led play
- Opportunities to engage in looking at books within continuous provision
- Have a variety of print available within the environment
- Use multi-sensory approaches to reinforce learning
- Develop a love of reading and books through engaging and interactive storytimes, inviting book corners and sharing books with parents
- Develop an understanding of rhythm and rhyme using familiar nursery rhymes and songs
- Provide opportunities for varied materials for mark making, including in the outside environment
- Model writing regularly
- Encourage staff to access bite-size training

Acquiring maths skills

- Use concrete and pictorial resources to support understanding of abstract concepts and support the learner to use them with increasing confidence
- Use clear and descriptive language with visual models to explain mathematical concepts
- Introduce number concepts through engaging activities such as stories, counting songs and nursery rhymes
- Provide opportunities and resources to explore mathematical concepts during free play
- Encourage mathematical games at the setting and home to reinforce concepts
- Integrate maths into daily routines, e.g. counting out the snacks



Physical and Sensory

Learners may have needs in one or more of the following areas:

- 🌐 Physical needs
- 🌐 Hearing loss or deafness
- 🌐 Vision impairment
- 🌐 Sensory processing

Resources, advice and consultation available:

Details of all available services are included in the **Directory of Services**. The following services may be particularly relevant to settings:

- ▲ [Berkshire Sensory Consortium](#)
- ▲ [Children and Young Peoples Integrated Therapies \(CYPIT; occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy\)](#)
- ▲ <https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/health-and-development/>
- ▲ [Early Years Support Service](#)

General strategies:

- 🌐 Implement the advice in the General Strategies section
- 🌐 Ensure staff understand and plan for individual learners' physical or sensory needs - gather information from the learner, families, previous teachers, specialists and external agencies
- 🌐 Make adjustments to buildings, classrooms, seating plans, layout of the classroom where needed to ensure full access
- 🌐 Discreetly adapt activities, tasks and resources where needed without drawing unnecessary attention to the learner
- 🌐 Seat learners in positions best suited to their needs
- 🌐 Provide access to assistive technology and tactile resources
- 🌐 Encourage the use of sensory equipment or physical aids, ensuring functionality

- Follow advice and individual programmes from outside agencies
- Use technology to support learning where appropriate
- Implement Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) where needed



Physical and Sensory

Strategies for specific areas of need:

Physical needs

- Allow additional time for movement between areas of the setting with access to ramps and/or lift where needed
- Train relevant staff to use specialist equipment
- Provide additional time and support for participation in practical activities if required
- Assign a key worker to ensure all equipment is available and activities are accessible
- Encourage and support independence
- Keep rooms and corridors clear and uncluttered, allowing for safe movement pathways
- Adjust the language that is used e.g. 'move to' rather than 'stand up and line up'
- Offer individual or small group activities to develop gross or fine motor skill

Hearing loss or deafness

- Staff access appropriate training from the Sensory Consortium Service for learners with a confirmed medical diagnosis

- Access the Sensory Consortium Service Deafness/Hearing loss factsheets
- Minimise background noise as far as possible e.g. close doors and windows, turn off unnecessary equipment, use rubber feet on furniture
- Speak clearly, naturally and at a normal pace facing the learner
- Try to avoid moving around the room when speaking to the learner
- Repeat questions and contributions from others to ensure clarity
- Ensure consistent use of hearing aids and/or radio aids
- Use subtitles for video or audio clips and ensure discussions do not take place with the lights off
- Gain the learner's attention before speaking - use their name or touch them on the shoulder if approaching from behind
- Reinforce key vocabulary visually e.g. write on the board, use pictures or artefacts
- Offer quiet area if required

- Encourage good listening behaviours that reflect the child's stage of development

Vision impairment

- Staff working with learners with a vision impairment receive advice and training from a Qualified Teacher of Vision Impairment (QTVI)
- Access the Sensory Consortium Service Vision and Multi-Sensory Impairment Factsheets
- Consider lighting and potential glare from windows
- Ensure all writing (whiteboard/printed) is clear and bold in black on a contrasting background
- Use of enlarged/magnified materials as advised
- Offer additional verbal commentary and explanations
- Use names before addressing learners so that everyone, including the learner with VI, knows who is being spoken to
- Provide specialist equipment or resources for practical subjects where appropriate e.g. bright balls, larger bats, large print, tablet
- Access to allocated staff to support and to modified and adapted resources if required
- Offer support with mobility around the setting if required
- Offer support during unstructured times to promote inclusion and engagement



Physical and Sensory

Strategies for specific areas of need:

Sensory processing

- Refer to physical and sensory environment guidance in General Strategies section
- Access the CYPF Sensory Processing Online Workshops
- Consider sensory needs when planning, lunch and snack times, transitions and activities, (see Transitions Guidance in General Strategies section)
- Monitor and adapt visual and auditory input e.g. by avoiding too many items hanging from ceilings or on the walls, preparing the learner for planned loud noises such as fire alarms, lockdown drills, the computer starting up
- Monitor the learner's alertness levels to reduce anxiety and sensory overload
- Incorporate movement breaks into daily routines as needed
- Teach self-regulation and coping strategies e.g. through individual sensory diets, calming corners or regulation stations
- Ensure learners have ongoing access to ear defenders, plugs or loops if noise sensitive
- Ensure that learners have ongoing access to the use of sensory oral chew aids if needed
- Provide a calm corner or sensory space





Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Learners' difficulties may manifest themselves in the following ways:

- 🌐 Signs of distress e.g. withdrawing, refusing, avoiding interaction
- 🌐 Difficult or dangerous behaviour
- 🌐 Difficulty forming or maintaining healthy relationships
- 🌐 Masking behaviours and over compliance
- 🌐 Separation anxiety when leaving parent/carer
- 🌐 Difficulty expressing or regulating emotions

Resources, advice and consultation available:

Details of all available services are included in the Directory of Services. The following services may be particularly relevant to settings:

- ▲ [Early Help Service](#)
- ▲ [Early Years Support Service](#)
- ▲ [Emotional Wellbeing Hub](#)
- ▲ [Health visiting service](#)
- ▲ [Neurodiversity Service \(Autism and ADHD\)](#)
- ▲ [Wokingham Virtual School](#)

General strategies:

- Implement the advice in the General Strategies section
- Model and encourage positive learning behaviours throughout the day
- Apply the behaviour policy consistently and fairly, maintaining a calm and measured approach
- Reinforce and celebrate positive behaviours
- Consider learners neurodiverse needs and appropriate strategies to support them
- Establish consistent routines including clear expectations for transitions, accessing resources, requesting support
- Consider whether the learner is having difficulty with the task and if they require scaffolding or support



Social, Emotional and Mental Health

- Support development of emotional literacy skills through planned activities and in the moment opportunities which focus on recognising and expressing emotions
- Observe and analyse behaviour and consider what the learner may be trying to communicate, use resources such as ABC charts/STAR charts to identify triggers, consequences and rewards
- Provide designated safe spaces for learners to regulate emotions in a comfortable, supportive environment
- Offer sensory or regulatory breaks as required
- Ensure all staff receive training on SEMH needs and support strategies
- Ensure opportunities are available for supervision of staff particularly following incidents

Strategies for specific areas of need:

Demonstrating signs of distress e.g. withdrawing, refusing, avoiding interaction:

- Ensure learners know who they can go to for support and how they can access it
- Implement a clear policy on preventing and responding to bullying
- Key adults check in regularly with identified learners
- Prioritise building trusting relationships with staff to ensure the learner feels safe and secure in the setting
- Conduct an anxiety analysis to explore reasons for the behaviour

Displaying difficult or dangerous behaviours:

- Notice and praise positive social or learning behaviours
- All adults respond to incidents calmly through a lens of curiosity and care rather than one of blame and shame
- Use behaviour records to explore causes and identify patterns or triggers e.g. through ABC charts, frequency charts, observations
- Provide support for managing unstructured times such as free flow, child led play
- Recognise that some learners need more support and comfort than others, just as they might with learning

- Implement a personalised behaviour plan, Pastoral Support Plan and/or risk assessment when necessary
- Ensure all adults have a strong understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and the role of emotionally available and attuned adults
- Offer limited choices to allow learners some control
- Use scripts to redirect, reinforce expectations or de-escalate situations
- Apply the PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy) approach
- Ensure all adults implement de-escalation techniques to restore calm and prevent further issues
- Adults monitor how learners' behaviour is affecting their own regulation and swap with another adult if required

Difficulty forming or maintaining healthy relationships:

- Facilitate small group nurture activities to support social and emotional development

- Provide opportunities for group work or social activities guided by an adult
- Use restorative approaches to enable repair following incidents
- Consistent adult to meet and greet when separating from their parent/carer

Difficulties expressing or regulating emotions:

- Focus on developing learners' emotional vocabulary, literacy and agency
- Provide opportunities for learners to identify their feelings and to learn strategies for managing them
- Allow time to regulate before engaging in discussions about behaviour
- Offer opportunities to co-regulate with an adult
- Small group or individual work on emotions

Notes...

Notes...



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