



# **Inclusion and SEND Commitment**

## **- B&NES' Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP)**

**Section C - Universal/SEND Support  
strategies for all four areas of need**

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## A Graduated Approach

In line with the Graduated Approach outlined in Section B - A Graduated Approach [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach) and in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015 (CoP), settings should begin with high-quality, inclusive teaching and progress through increasingly targeted support based on the assessed need.

### Universal Level (HQT/QFT):

- Classroom practice: Review structures, routines, and lesson delivery to ensure consistency, accessibility, and emotional safety.
- Expectations: Revisit Section A [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations) and the setting's expectations for universal, high-quality teaching and learning for all. Identify and address any staff training needs.
- Strategies: Universal strategies listed in Section C should be ordinarily available in all settings.

### Targeted Support (SEND Support):

- Assessment: Complete a thorough assessment across all four areas of need. Identify the primary area of need and set SMART targets.
- Provision: Agree on tailored strategies and support.
- Implementation: Deliver targeted interventions and monitor progress using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle.

This approach ensures that a CYP with SEND receives timely, appropriate, and coordinated support. It focuses on identifying and addressing underlying needs through a holistic and inclusive lens.

The following sections provide detailed guidance for schools on meeting needs through both universal and targeted SEND support.



# Communication and Interaction - Universal

## Definition

CYP with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), which includes autism, experience differences in expressing themselves, understanding language and how they interact with others and the world around them. Each CYP's profile is unique and can change over time, with differences potentially affecting one or multiple aspects of speech, language, or social communication at different stages of life (SEND Code of Practice 2015; 6.28 &6.29).

In line with the outlined Graduated Approach (see section B [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach)), settings should begin with high-quality, inclusive teaching and progress through increasingly targeted support (if required), based on assessed and identified need.

These strategies are in addition to the whole-setting expectations in Section A [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations)

## SEND Code of Practice 2015 (CoP)

In addition to high-quality teaching, it is expected that settings will provide some of the strategies below to meet the needs of the CYP.

Some CYP may require more significant adaptations to be made. It is important to consider how a CYP might present in their community and their setting.

This section provides a comprehensive range of strategies across the key areas of using and understanding language and social communication.

Promoting positive communication environments is the responsibility of all members of staff in the setting, and should include strategies to support:

- Focus and Listening
- Understanding Language and Communication
- Expressive (spoken) Language and Communication
- Speech
- Vocabulary
- Social Development, Interaction and Play
- Flexibility of Thought

## Understanding, Speaking, Focus and Vocabulary

### Focus and Listening

- The environment is well organised and calm.
- Flexible seating arrangements are carefully considered to optimise focus.
- CYP's name first, and subtle, non-verbal prompts are used to gain attention.
- Visual supports/prompts are consistently used to gain and maintain class attention, e.g. a 'stop and look' symbol card.
- Clear expectations of lessons/activities/tasks, including the order they will be completed, are established with visual cues.
- Key behaviours for successful listening and focus are taught, explicitly reinforced, and modelled.
- Specific activities that encourage and practise attention and listening skills are implemented, e.g. CYP participate in 'listening pairs' where one CYP shares information, and the other must retell key points.
- Positive reinforcement, alongside visuals (e.g. Widgit symbols), is used to promote good listening behaviour.
- Prior knowledge and interests are incorporated to motivate CYP.
- Understanding is checked through asking CYP to explain tasks back, rather than just repeating instructions.
- Developmentally appropriate instructions are used, e.g. short, simple, direct sentences.
- Opportunities are provided for peer interactions, with scaffolding where appropriate, to maintain CYPs' interest, e.g. "I agree because..." "In my opinion it is...".
- Reward systems that are clear, visual, and consistent are in place to promote focus and attention.
- Quiet workstations, low arousal work areas, or individual desks are available as needed.



## Receptive (understanding) Language and Communication

- Context of learning is clearly established before moving into details.
- Processing time is given by staff, who pause long enough and avoid rephrasing.
- Speed and quantity of language used with CYP are carefully considered.
- CYP understanding is checked by asking them to describe 'what' they are learning.
- Information is given in clear, concise, and accessible language and abstract language is avoided.
- CYP are encouraged to indicate when they have not understood and given ways to do this, e.g. 'I need help' cards or agreed non-verbal signals.
- Multi-sensory approaches to teaching new vocabulary and concepts are used, with opportunities for repetition and reinforcement. Objects of reference are used when appropriate.
- Visuals are used alongside verbal instructions – 'words disappear, visuals don't.'
- Longer instructions are chunked and clearly sequenced.
- Teaching vocabulary is a core part of planning and delivering learning, e.g. using word webs, CYP dictionary etc.
- Command words are explicitly taught to support understanding and processing of instructions.
- Relevant examples support understanding and build on CYPs' differing experiences.
- Questions are adapted to different language levels, e.g. 'what/where' questions are more accessible than 'how/why'.
- Key words are emphasised using slight stress and/ or appropriate non-verbal communication, e.g. showing, gestures, picture supports.
- Negative instructions are avoided, and staff positively reframe what they want to see, e.g. "Don't shout," is replaced with "Quiet voice, thank you,".
- Sarcasm, ambiguities, and idioms are avoided, or explicitly explained where necessary.



## Expressive (spoken) Language and Communication

- Specific praise for clear communication is used to build CYP confidence, e.g. "I really liked how clearly you explained your idea,".
- Stimuli, chosen for interest, are used to encourage engagement in oracy.
- Language is modelled back by staff using correct grammatical structure and content, rather than directly correcting CYP.
- Modelling and expansion of language occur frequently in social and learning contexts throughout the school day, e.g. CYP says, "ball gone," and adult says, "The ball has gone in the box,".
- Scaffolding is provided to help CYP respond and join in with discussions, e.g. prompting questions, encouragement to re-order ideas, visual support.
- Sentence starters, stems, and scripts are used to support spoken language.
- Opportunities for language rehearsal and development are provided before ideas are shared with others (verbally or in writing), e.g. talk partners.
- Word finding strategies are used to support CYP who find word retrieval difficult, such as talking around a word and description techniques.
- Approaches that help CYP structure thoughts and ideas are used consistently, e.g. story planners, narrative templates, concept maps.
- Alternatives to talking are available as communication, e.g. use of gestures, pointing, symbols, writing and technology.



### Speech

- Clear speech and pronunciation are modelled by all staff.
- Rate of conversation is considered to reduce pressure on CYP to respond quickly.
- Language and specific words are modelled back accurately, and the CYP's message responded to regardless of any mistakes with pronunciation, e.g. if a CYP asks, "Where's the dup (cup)?" responding, "The cup is here," rather than directly correcting speech.
- Alternative communication methods are modelled and made accessible by staff, e.g. gestures, showing, communication boards, visuals.

## Vocabulary

- New vocabulary is systematically taught, explained, and rehearsed.
- Whole class pre and post teaching of vocabulary is used to introduce new topic vocabulary.
- Multiple-meaning words are explicitly taught, e.g. words like 'bank' or 'light' are explored in context.
- Specific vocabulary is used and modelled in response to empty words such as 'thing' or 'nice.'
- Word finding strategies are taught to support with vocabulary difficulties, e.g. talking around a word and description techniques.
- A range of actions and visuals are used as part of teaching vocabulary and reinforced using retrieval.
- Opportunities are provided for ideas to be shared that relate to new vocabulary, providing context and making links to existing experiences.
- Vocabulary resources, e.g. word banks and word webs are available to support learning.
- Dictionaries and thesauruses are accessible to CYP, who are taught how to use them.



## Social Communication

### Social Development, Interaction and Play

- Social knowledge is explicitly taught, e.g. staff use structured activities (role-play, social stories, modelling) to teach skills such as turn-taking, personal space, greetings, and active listening.
- Rules of social interaction are modelled.
- Positive reinforcement and redirection are used to encourage social behaviour.
- Specific roles are given in group work to support peer interaction, with explicit teaching on how to work in groups, e.g. roles such as Instigator, Builder, Challenger, Clarifier, Prober, and Summariser.
- CYP voice around what they feel comfortable with is sought, understood and valued by staff.
- Opportunities to share experiences with others are provided, using prompts as appropriate.
- Confidence and self-esteem are developed by providing CYP with opportunities to share their strengths and achievements and take responsibility within tasks.
- Emotion words are taught using visuals, including pictures, photographs, and videos.
- Emotion Coaching is used to help to narrate CYP's experiences and notice what is happening.
- Relational approaches, such as PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) and WINE (Wonder, Imagine, Notice Empathy) are embedded in daily practice.
- Recognition and reflection on emotions in different contexts are encouraged.
- Strategies for calming and self-regulation are explicitly taught.
- Understanding of physical sensations and emotional triggers is encouraged by exploring where emotions are felt in the body.
- Flexible grouping strategies are used, where the CYP can work with appropriate pairings / groups / or work individually if needed. Consider social demands being placed on the CYP, the task, how they are on that day, how they have been prepared for the task.
- Social communication conventions, e.g. impulse control, waiting to speak, turn taking, listening, are taught and reinforced.
- Social Stories/Situational Stories and Social Situation Mapping are used to support understanding and choices.
- A safe space or a trusted adult is accessible to CYP when they are feeling overwhelmed.
- Structured alternatives during unstructured times are available.
- Peer understanding and acceptance of everyone's uniqueness are actively supported, e.g. through whole-class activities, assemblies, and awareness weeks.

## Flexibility of Thought

- Structure of the day is made clear to CYP through an accessible timetable.
- Transition strategies are implemented to support CYP with changes and unexpected events, e.g. advance warning, preparation, change/surprise cards, first-next boards.
- Preparation is made for activities that take place outside of the normal setting context, e.g. homework and educational visits.
- Clear signage is used, and specific areas are labelled clearly and appropriately, e.g. 'Staff Only'.
- A consistent visual cue system supports instructions across the setting, e.g. set signals for 'Listen' or 'Quiet work'.
- Choices are reduced to provide 2-3 positive options.
- Overviews of new learning are shared in advance and opportunities provided for becoming familiar with content; knowledge organisers could be used to support this.
- Sequential language, supported by visuals, is used by staff, e.g. 'First, Next'.
- Time management strategies are implemented to help CYP manage time-limited tasks, e.g. visual timers, task planners, warnings before task completion / pre-warnings of time coming to an end.
- Additional processing time is given to support with planning, organising, and completing tasks.
- Backward chaining strategies are used where appropriate, giving CYP the opportunity to complete the final stages of a task, then gradually complete the earlier steps.



## Sensory

Please see the [Sensory Section in Sensory and Physical](#).

## Resources - Evidence-based advice and interventions

### Receptive and Expressive Language

#### Advice / Links

**Afasic** supports and provides information for families with children and young adults who have Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) with a focus on Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) <https://www.afasic.org.uk/>

**Black Sheep Press** provide resources for teachers and speech and language therapists working with CYP who have DLD and SLCN.  
[https://www.blacksheeppress.co.uk/?srsltid=AfmBOoqfY5VjEhtg3ScZSbAaovihzA-qZQL0F\\_Rbxv4KIm4iPwEzrbE](https://www.blacksheeppress.co.uk/?srsltid=AfmBOoqfY5VjEhtg3ScZSbAaovihzA-qZQL0F_Rbxv4KIm4iPwEzrbE)

**Elklan's Communication Friendly Settings (CFS) Programme** is a nationally accredited training pathway designed to empower educational settings to develop high-quality and inclusive practices to support CYP's SLCN.  
<https://www.elklan.co.uk/Training/Settings/CFSe/>

**The Better Research Programme reviews interventions for CYP with SLCN**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exploring-interventions-for-children-and-young-people-with-speech-language-and-communication-needs-a-study-of-practice>

#### HCRC Children's Speech and Language Therapy

<https://bswcommunityservices.co.uk/services/childrens-speech-and-language-therapy/>

**I-CAN** Information on a range of issues affecting CYP's SLCN in education.  
<https://www.icancharity.org.uk/>

**SpeechBITE TM** [www.speechbite.com](http://www.speechbite.com) Database providing open access to a catalogue of Best Interventions and Treatment Efficacy across the scope of speech pathology practice.

**The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)** Compendium of EBP Guidelines and systematic reviews <https://www.asha.org/>

**The British Stammering Association** <https://stamma.org/>

**The Communication Trust** (Speech and Language UK)  
<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/talking-point-for-professionals/the-communication-trust/>  
 Evidence based interventions for communication and interaction needs.

**The RALLI campaign** [www.youtube.com/rallicampaign](http://www.youtube.com/rallicampaign) Created to Raise Awareness of Language Learning Impairment (RALLI) and includes videos that explain what a language impairment is, the impact it can have and how to get help.

## Interventions

### Backward Chaining

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/249067/backward-chaining-information-sheet.pdf>

**Colourful Semantics** is a language-based intervention designed to support children in developing their spoken and written language skills. It focuses on helping CYP understand and construct sentence structure by using a colour-coded system.

<https://learningjournals.co.uk/colourful-semantics-children-can-develop-language-colour/>

**Concept Cat** is an evidence-based approach that supports Early Years children's vocabulary and language development. It is a whole class approach for children aged 3 to 5 years that teaches important early concepts such as 'next, equal and between.'

<https://thinkingtalking.co.uk/concept-cat/>

**Cued Articulation** is a set of hand cues for teaching the individual sounds in a word. The hand movements are logical – each hand movement represents one sound, and the cue gives clues as to how and where the sound is produced.

<https://www.soundsforliteracy.com.au/cued-articulation.html>

### Independent Word Learning Skills

<https://alexquigley.co.uk/7-strategies-to-explore-unfamiliar-vocabulary/>

**Jolly Grammar** <https://shop.jollylearning.co.uk/pages/sgp?srsltid=AfmBOopKHIOFerIbyCwoPs-7L4MiQ5uDLimrxwyU7bc0RtqGSEZHDnA>

**Language Through Colour** - developed by Speech and Language Therapists, this approach uses a simple colour-coded system to categorise word types and is super-effective in helping CYP to process information; this in turn helps them to develop the skills and confidence needed to make sense of what they are reading – to become fluent readers. <https://www.lgs.kent.sch.uk/language-through-colour/>

### Pre-teaching/ over-learning

<https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/best-practice/teaching-interventions-pre-and-over-learning>

**Word Aware** is a structured whole school approach to promote the vocabulary development of all CYP. Focussed on whole class learning, the resource is of particular value for those who start at a disadvantage – including CYP with DLD, SEND and those who speak EAL, but it will extend the word learning of all CYP.

<https://thinkingtalking.co.uk/word-aware/>

## Social Communication

### Advice / Links

**Ambitious about Autism** [www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)

**Neuroinclusive Education Network** <https://www.nen.org.uk/>

Formerly Autism Education Trust, provides training, resources and standards, competency framework, and progression framework. The majority of materials are free to download and supported by DfE and Ofsted.

### HCRH Needs Led Approach

<https://bswcommunityservices.co.uk/needs-led-approach/>

**HCRG Children's Neurodevelopmental Pathway**

<https://bswcommunityservices.co.uk/services/neurodevelopmental-pathway/>

**National Autistic Society** [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

**New SASS Guide for Education Settings** - <https://padlet.com/SASSBathnes/sass-updated-documents-4fxo0z0f9y5iv5sy/wish/MxrmZY9ElzRdZGOq>

**SASS – The Specialist Autism Support Service for B&NES** -

<https://padlet.com/SASSBathnes>



## Interventions

### 5-Point Scale <https://www.5pointscale.com/>

**Circle of Friends** An intervention aimed primarily at improving the inclusion of CYP with SEND within schools and classes. It works by gathering the CYP's peers in a circle of friendly support to help the CYP with their problem solving.

<https://www.inclusive-solutions.com/circles/circle-of-friends>

**Comic Book Conversations** (developed by Carol Gray) are a visual way to help explore a CYP's thoughts and feelings about a situation.

<https://www.sirona-cic.org.uk/children-services/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/08/TK02-Comic-Strip-Conversations-Top-Tips.pdf>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/about-autism/autism-and-communication>

**Eisenhower Matrix** is a time management tool that organises tasks into four quadrants based on their urgency and importance to help you decide what to do next.

<https://www.eisenhower.me/eisenhower-matrix/>

### Emotion Coaching – <https://www.emotioncoachinguk.com/>

**PECS** - Picture Exchange Communication System. <https://pecs-unitedkingdom.com/pecs/>

**Situational Stories** are short narratives that depict a character within a specific scenario, often for the purpose of teaching, illustrating a point, or developing a character's understanding of the world. <https://tinyurl.com/34u6uz5v>

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/blog/library-lifeline-part-12-using-situation-books-to-support-pupils-and-strengthen-their-capacity-for-empathy/>

**Social Situation Mapping** (formerly Social Behaviour Mapping), is a core teaching framework within the Social Thinking® Methodology that uses visual templates to encourage learners to engage social observation for figuring out what to do and say (or not do and say) based on a particular situation.

<https://www.socialthinking.com/products/social-situation-mapping>

**Socially Speaking** will help you to introduce and practise skills your CYP need to develop and maintain relationships and to lead independent lives outside the school context. It is a unique social skills programme that lasts a whole school year.

<https://www.ldalearning.com/product/fe00000410>

**Social Stories** are a type of social script, a short, personalised narrative used to help CYP, particularly those with autism, understand social situations, new experiences, and expectations by providing clear, descriptive information about what to expect and why.

<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/>

**TEACCH** or Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communications Handicapped Children, is an evidence-based, lifelong program designed to support individuals with autism spectrum disorders by understanding their culture and strengths. <https://teacch.com/>

**Talkabout** is a structured, hierarchical approach to teaching social skills, self-esteem, and friendship skills. Later books include programmes to develop sex and relationship skills, theory of mind, and transition skills.

<https://routledgelearning.com/tass/the-talkabout-resources/>

**Time to Talk** has been developed to teach and develop oral language and social interaction skills to children aged 4 years + to make these aspects of school easier.

<https://www.ldalearning.com/product/fe00000514>

## General

### B&NES' EPS Provision Bank

<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-11/EPS%20Evidence%20Informed%20Assessment%20and%20Provision%20Bank%20November%202025%20V1.pdf>

### EDUCATION Endowment Foundation

Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools  
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send>

Five a day: supporting high-quality teaching for pupils with SEND  
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-high-quality-teaching-for-pupils-with-send?x-craft-live-preview=61bd011dbcab3de68fce89ff8b99b04e4bcf872be96b3d086e964c1d0aec679ggtxqyqavq>

Selecting Interventions for pupils with SEND <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/selecting-interventions?x-craft-live-preview=61bd011dbcab3de68fce89ff8b99b04e4bcf872be96b3d086e964c1d0aec679ggtxqyqavq>

### Whole School SEND Teacher Handbook

<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/resources?title=teacher%20handbook>

### Whole School SEND Interactive Teacher Toolkits

<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/toolkits>

### Whole School SEND CPD and events

<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/events>

## Communication and Interaction - SEND Support

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This section provides a comprehensive range of strategies across the key areas of using and understanding language and social communication.

Promoting positive communication environments is the responsibility of all members of staff in the setting, and should include strategies to support:

- [Focus and Listening](#)
- [Understanding Language and Communication](#)
- [Expressive \(spoken\) Language and Communication](#)
- [Speech](#)
- [Vocabulary](#)
- [Social Development, Interaction and Play](#)
- [Flexibility of Thought](#)



## Understanding, Speaking, Focus and Vocabulary

### SEND Support

Some CYP will need targeted support which is different from and additional to the support provided to the majority of CYP in the setting.

The frequency, duration, context, and extent of universal, HQT strategies may be increased under SEND Support. The individual strategies needed for each CYP will be identified, formally recorded, and implemented on an individual or small group basis. This will be recorded through an APDR cycle.

See Section B for more information [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach)

### Focus and Listening

- Individualised reward systems are used for specific CYP to promote focus and attention.
- Tasks are broken down into sections based on individual CYP's level of focus.  
*Example: A CYP with limited focus might receive a task in single-step chunks, with each step only revealed once the previous one is completed.*
- Special interests, individualised to CYP, are incorporated into learning, where possible, to focus attention and increase motivation.
- Personalised visual prompts or objects are used to maintain focus, e.g. personalised 'Now and Next' boards, task strips, or object cues.
- Personalised teaching of active listening skills is used then reinforced in the whole class.

*Example: Modelling and role-play activities are used in small groups where staff demonstrate active listening and CYP practise using sentence starters like, "I heard you say..." or "Can you say that again?".*

- Backward chaining is used to maintain interest and achievement.  
*Example: In a Science experiment, the teacher offers a bespoke model of the final result and then works back through the steps to get there.*
- Workstations/designated areas are provided for certain CYP to offer structure, aid concentration, and reduce anxiety.
- Individual workstations/designated areas contain personalised visual supports and reminders to help maintain focus.
- Systems that reinforce working from left to right, e.g. a work tray on the left and finished box on the right, are offered to some CYP to provide a clear, visual workflow.

## Understanding (receptive) Language and Communication

- Assessment of a CYP's receptive language needs is undertaken, particularly for CYP with challenges in verbal reasoning across curriculum areas.
- The number of information carrying words a CYP can access is considered when instructions are given, and they are broken down into clear steps with visual support where necessary.
- Strategies and resources are used to support individual CYP with instructions, e.g. simple choices, reduced complexity and sentence length, 'Now, Next, Then' boards, task lists.
- Interventions, focused on individual language targets, e.g. sentence length, complex instructions, language comprehension, are provided.
- Colours and shapes are used to show CYP how to build sentences and use grammar correctly, e.g. Colourful Semantics, Language Through Colour, Jolly Grammar.

## Expressive (spoken) Language and Communication

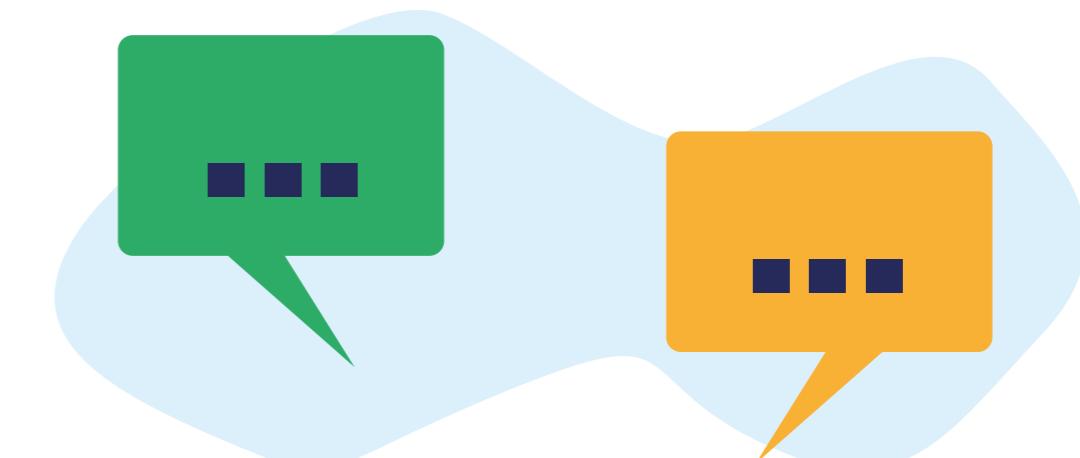
- Assessment of CYP's expressive language needs is undertaken where there are concerns.
- Incident narrative structures are used to support understanding and narrative around social situations, using pictures and diagrams to support with seeing others' perspectives and possible reactions.
- Opportunities to practise giving instructions or verbal descriptions are provided.  
*Example: Barrier Games, where one CYP describes a picture or how to build a structure, while the other follows instructions without seeing it.*
- Narrative skills are built on through additional opportunities and access to small group activities.  
*Example: Small group activities such as story circles, comic strip creation, or drama-based storytelling allow CYP to practise sequencing, character description, and cause-effect language in a supportive setting.*
- Visual schemes, which use colours and shapes, are used to help CYP build sentences and use grammar correctly, e.g. Colourful Semantics, Language Through Colour, Jolly Grammar.
- Explicit small-group teaching is in place for developing age-appropriate grammatical structures.
- Interventions are provided to work on expressive language targets, e.g. expanding sentence structure, using descriptive vocabulary, and improving clarity.

## Speech

- Speech sound and/or phonological awareness interventions are provided to CYP to work on speech targets, which may include adapted phonics sessions.
- Bespoke speech sound phonological awareness programmes are used, as directed by a Speech and Language Therapist (SALT).
- Gesture systems are used to support CYP's specific sound needs, e.g. Cued Articulation. These systems provide visual and kinaesthetic cues that help CYP understand how sounds are made and where they occur in the mouth, as advised by a SALT.

## Vocabulary

- Pre and post teaching of vocabulary is used, with semantic and phonological cues. This can be included in intervention time and sent home if possible.  
*Example: Semantic cues: linking the word to meaning, e.g. "photo" = light. Phonological cues: breaking the word into syllables and practising pronunciation.*  
*The same words are revisited through games, quizzes, or sentence-building tasks, whenever possible (spaced retrieval).*
- Prioritisation of selected, relevant words is used as part of personalised vocabulary support.  
*Example: Staff identify core vocabulary for each unit, e.g. 'evaporation,' 'condensation' and focus on teaching these words explicitly to certain CYP, ensuring they are revisited and used in multiple contexts.*
- Personalised dictionaries and word webs are used to record, learn and recap new vocabulary.  
*Example: CYP maintain their own vocabulary books or digital dictionaries with definitions, pictures, and example sentences. Word webs are used to explore connections, e.g. 'energy' linked to 'power,' 'movement,' 'heat'.*
- Targeted vocabulary support programmes are provided, e.g. Word Aware, Independent Word Learning Skills, Concept Cat, as well as CYP being given opportunities for additional exposure.



## Social Communication

### Social Development, Interaction and Play

- Important skills and rules of social interaction are taught, with modelling and use of key phrases practised with individual CYP, e.g. "Can I join in?".
- Turn taking is taught in small groups and then reinforced in the whole class.

*Example: In targeted intervention groups, e.g. social knowledge or speech and language sessions, staff explicitly teach turn-taking using structured activities like board games, role-play, or conversation circles.*

- A 5-point scale, or suitable alternative, to reinforce self-regulation is used.
- Awareness of potential triggers is recognised and shared with staff, and de-escalation strategies are taught when the CYP is regulated.
- Methods for CYP to communicate when they need help or feel unsafe are taught, e.g. teaching the CYP to use, "Please stop, I don't like that!".
- Interpersonal problem-solving is explicitly taught, e.g. the language needed for negotiation: "I understand your idea, but please can we try mine after?".
- Access to a buddy/peer support system is provided.
- Visuals and scripts are used to support CYP in knowing what they can do when feeling anxious or overwhelmed in social situations.

*Example: Provide a 'What to do if I feel anxious' flowchart in the CYP's planner or on their desk.*

- Personalised Social Stories/Situational Stories and Social Situation Mapping are used to support a reflective conversation once the CYP is regulated.
- Bespoke opportunities to learn what different emotions look like, and appropriate responses are provided - this is reinforced throughout the day.
- Social knowledge is taught explicitly using structured programmes and interventions, e.g. Time to Talk, Socially Speaking, Talkabout.
- A safe space or trusted member of staff is always accessible to CYP, with clear individualised planning on how and when they are accessed. The safe space includes calming tools, e.g. weighted blanket, sensory items, and a visual schedule for returning to class.
- Opportunities to 'check in' regularly with a trusted member of staff are provided, supported by a staff team who understand a CYP's needs (avoiding an over-reliance on one member of staff).
- Bespoke Comic Strip Conversations are used to support CYP to understand the views and actions of themselves and others.

*Example: After a misunderstanding with a peer, the CYP is supported to draw a comic strip showing what they said, what the other person said, and what each was thinking/feeling (using different shaped bubbles). Staff guide the CYP to add alternative responses for next time, supporting perspective-taking.*

- Structured alternatives during unstructured times are available, e.g. following a bespoke schedule or menu of activities; giving some choice is supportive, too much choice can increase anxiety.

### Flexibility of Thought

- Strategies to manage potential stressful events are taught and a plan is in place for if a CYP needs to have some time and space e.g. a selection of activities to support with self-regulation.
- Calm, firm and consistent approaches to managing learning behaviour are used, related to rewards that are motivating for individual CYP where possible.
- Tasks are broken down into manageable steps with a clear start and finish by using individualised and adapted resources.

*Example: For a piece of writing, provide:*

- Step 1: Choose topic (visual choice board);
- Step 2: Write 3 bullet points;
- Step 3: Turn each bullet into a sentence.

- Preparation for transitions is provided and support for managing change is offered using objects of reference, sound cues, visual timetables, and individual schedules.
- Extra support is provided before and after transitions for CYP who experience heightened anxiety levels.
- 'Change' and 'surprise' symbols are specifically highlighted to individual CYP to further support understanding of change to routine.

*Example: A brightly coloured 'change' icon is used on the CYP's visual timetable for any altered activity. Before the change happens, staff show the symbol and explain: "This means something will be different today."*

- TEACCH approaches are used.
- Structured time is scheduled for CYP to explore and develop their special interests (sometimes shortened to 'Spln' - spins), or CYP have access to a space that they can use at break or lunchtimes for this. A visual schedule is used showing when Spln time will happen so the CYP can anticipate and prepare.
- The Pause Button strategy is used: 'press pause' if the CYP is not engaging and present them with an alternative activity, reducing the anxiety of not completing a task in one go.
- Task Prioritising Grids are used to reduce overwhelm and improve task initiation; these can be adapted depending on CYP level (based on the Eisenhower matrix).

### Sensory

Please see the [Sensory Section in Sensory and Physical](#)

# Cognition & Learning - Universal

## Definition

Cognition means the way we think, reason, and learn. It includes the mental processes that help us understand and make sense of the world through our senses, thoughts, and experiences. Everyone's brain works differently, which affects how we take in and use information.

Some children and young people (CYP) have unique strengths and needs that make learning harder than for their peers. This might affect one area, such as reading or maths, or it could impact learning more broadly. For example, difficulties with working memory can make it harder to follow instructions, remember steps, and stay organised both in school and at home. Adjustment, modification, and adaptation of the curriculum, across many or all areas, may be needed to enable the CYP to fully access learning. It is essential to consider the possibility of underlying Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) that may not yet have been identified.

## SEND Code of Practice 2015 (CoP)

In line with the outlined Graduated Approach (see section B [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach)), settings should begin with high-quality, inclusive teaching and progress through increasingly targeted support, based on assessed and identified need.

In this Cognition and Learning section there will be universal and SEND Support strategies for:

- [Attitude and Access to Learning](#)
- [Working Memory](#)
- [Processing Speed](#)
- [Verbal Reasoning](#)
- [Problem Solving](#)
- [Reading](#)
- [Writing \(including handwriting\)](#)
- [Maths](#)

These strategies are in addition to the whole-setting expectations in Section A [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations)

## Attitude/Access to Learning

- The curriculum promotes and celebrates success, resilience, independence, and a growth mindset.
- Self-esteem and achievement are actively encouraged and celebrated.
- Specific praise is shared and reinforced publicly, while reminders or sanctions are applied discreetly to maintain dignity.
- Feedback both celebrates success and informs next steps.
- Cognitive load is minimised and impact on working memory is reduced by teaching and practising set routines and approaches, e.g. following a check-list order to set up an experiment.
- Recording of key points, instructions, and taking notes is encouraged.
- Regular retrieval practice helps embed knowledge.
- The learning environment is visually supportive and avoids overstimulation.
- Processing time or opportunities to talk, e.g. in pairs, is given before answering.
- Language demands are reduced to aid understanding.
- Instructions are clear, simple, and given one at a time, with longer instructions broken down into manageable steps.
- Repetition (rather than rephrasing) is used first to reinforce understanding.
- Flexible groupings are in place to support co-operation, reciprocal teaching, and exposure to different perspectives.
- Dual coding of visual and verbal information to enhance learning.
- Scaffolds (written, verbal, visual) are used to hold key instructions, information, and concepts.
- Sufficient time is allowed to check for understanding, share ideas, review, and monitor progress.
- New content is linked to prior knowledge.
- Models of new concepts are provided, using real-life examples to increase relevance.
- The learning outcome is shared, explained, and explicitly linked to prior knowledge.
- New or complex vocabulary is clarified, displayed, and revisited.
- Resources are matched to CYP's reading level.
- Reduced copying demands and streamlined presentation of information, e.g. templates, partially completed notes.
- Homework is adapted to ensure an equal level of challenge for all CYP.
- A dyslexia screener is considered where appropriate, with discussion involving parent/carers and SENDCo.
- A language and communication assessment is considered where appropriate, with discussion involving parent/carers and SENDCo.

## Working Memory

- New information is chunked into manageable steps to reduce cognitive load.
- Multisensory and/or active teaching and learning opportunities are provided to reinforce understanding.
- Rehearsal and revision strategies are actively taught and practised, e.g. rhymes, acronyms, anagrams, associations.
- Memory strategies such as mnemonics are explicitly taught and used to support knowledge retrieval.
- Re-telling, paraphrasing, and summarising are modelled and deliberately practised to strengthen recall and comprehension.
- Memory aids such as note-taking, making lists, and checklists are taught and encouraged for independent use.
- Reduced copying demands and streamlined presentation of information, e.g. templates, partially completed notes.
- Practical resources, e.g. number lines, multiplication grids, calculators are provided to reduce cognitive load and support independent problem-solving.
- Clear, simple instructions are given and repeated rather than rephrased to maintain consistency.
- Regular review and repetition opportunities are built into lessons to consolidate learning.
- Immediate feedback and next steps are provided, wherever possible, to reinforce memory and understanding.
- Context-led and meaning-based instruction is used to help CYP make connections between new and existing knowledge.



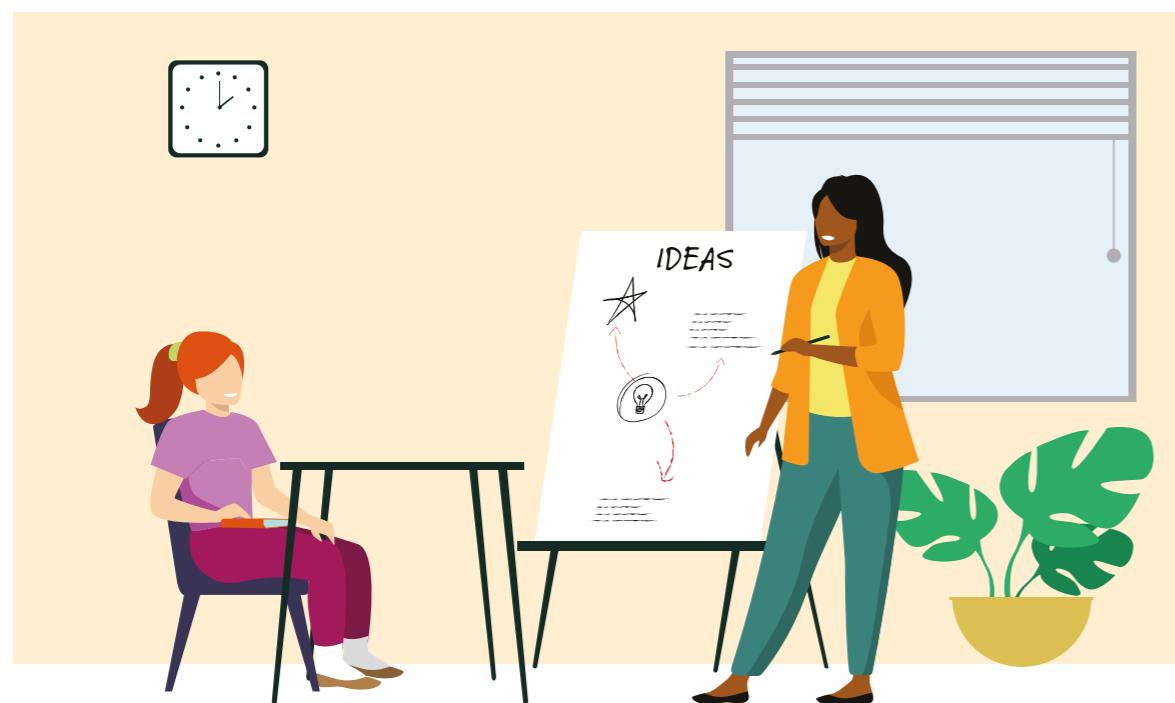
## Processing Speed

- Self-monitoring strategies are used to set goals and rate success on timely task completion, e.g. individual timers, task planners, checklists.
- Resource folders enable independent access to learning, e.g. vocabulary lists, sentence stems, knowledge organisers, visual supports.
- Appropriate, protected processing time before response expectations, e.g. wait time, think time, staggered questioning.
- Real-life and relatable analogies used to teach abstract concepts and anchor new ideas in familiar experiences.
- Explicit linking of new content to prior knowledge, e.g. retrieval prompts, "What do we already know?" starters, concept mapping.
- Quality over quantity of work produced is emphasised, e.g. targeted exemplars, success criteria focused on depth.
- Step-by-step task breakdowns with visual sequencing are used, e.g. 'First, Next, Then' boards, numbered instructions.
- Visual scaffolds and models are used consistently, e.g. worked examples, graphic organisers, flowcharts to speed up understanding.
- Reduced copying demands and streamlined presentation of information, e.g. templates, partially completed notes.
- Flexible response formats, e.g. oral answers, sentence stems, bullet points, voice notes to minimise time barriers.
- Chunked tasks with interim checkpoints and brief refocusing breaks to maintain pace without overload.
- Clear time cues and routines, e.g. countdowns, traffic-light time signals to support pacing and self-regulation.
- Modelling of strategies for efficiency, e.g. skimming for key information, highlighting, using glossaries, followed by guided practice.
- Regular retrieval practice in short, low-stakes bursts to strengthen access to prior learning and reduce processing time.
- Collaborative rehearsal opportunities, e.g. pair-share, rehearsal before whole-class responses, to refine ideas first.



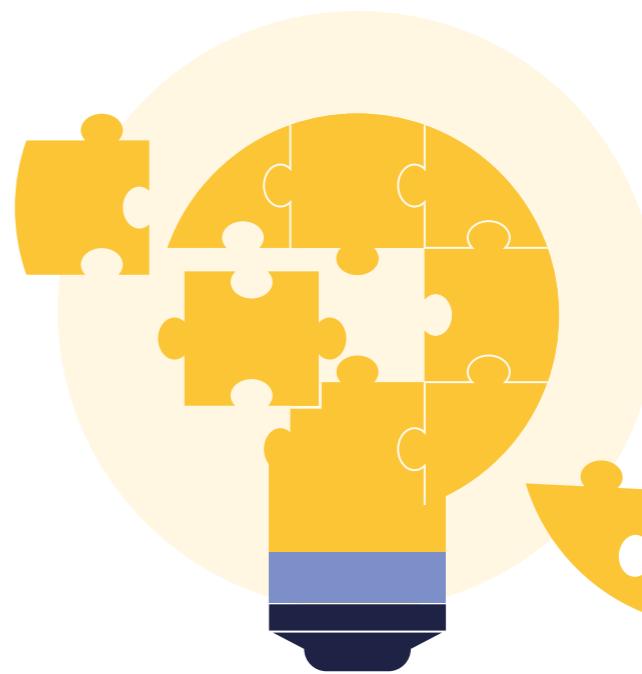
## Verbal Reasoning

- Language and experience filled classroom environments use real-life examples and practical experiences to make abstract ideas concrete.
- Scaffolds such as mind maps, graphic organisers, and sequencing charts help CYP organise ideas logically.
- ‘Thinking aloud’ strategies are used to model verbal reasoning processes, demonstrating how to connect ideas logically.
- Sentence starters, stems, and scripts, e.g. “I think this because...,” or “One reason might be...,” or “This links to...” displayed visually and used consistently to support verbal reasoning.
- Opportunities for language rehearsal through pair-share, small group discussions, and role-play before whole-class sharing, allow CYP to practise answers verbally or in writing.
- Explicit teaching of reasoning elements, e.g. connectives, causal language, comparative phrases, and justification stems.
- New vocabulary is systematically taught, meaningfully displayed, and regularly updated for relevance, e.g. ‘words disappear, visuals don’t’.
- Familiar vocabulary used when introducing challenging or complex concepts, anchoring explanations in everyday language before layering in technical or subject-specific terms.
- Key exam and assessment command words are explicitly taught, e.g. explain, describe, analyse, demonstrate, evaluate, compare, contrast, justify in context, with examples and visual cues.
- Visual supports such as diagrams, flowcharts, and concept maps used to represent reasoning steps, paired with key vocabulary to aid memory and understanding.
- Regular opportunities for reflection, through review and refinement of reasoning after discussions, capture evolving ideas.



## Problem-solving

- Problem-solving steps are explicitly taught e.g. define, plan, solve, review.
- Problem-solving processes modelled aloud to demonstrate reasoning.
- Variation of problem-solving tasks, e.g. by changing numbers, conditions, or methods shows underlying relationships and deepens understanding.
- Metacognitive strategies encourage self-regulated learning.
- Reflection opportunities after problem-solving support to evaluate strategies and outcomes.
- Safe opportunities for normalising and making mistakes promote perseverance and resilience.
- Real-life, relatable analogies used to make abstract concepts concrete.
- Meaningful, real-world contexts are embedded in problems, for relevance and engagement.
- Sort, classify, and categorise tasks strengthen logical thinking.
- Graphic organisers used to unify and break down information for clarity.
- Resources with sequenced prompts guide CYP through problem-solving steps.
- Modelling and practise of different approaches to solving number and word problems.
- Flexible thinking encouraged and praised.
- Oral rehearsal and collaborative discussion utilised before committing to solutions.
- Peer problem-solving opportunities to share reasoning and strategies.
- Scaffolded support with prompts and cues guide thinking without giving answers, scaffold gradually reduces as independence grows.
- Chunking of complex tasks into smaller steps to reduce overload.
- Worked examples and partially completed problems build confidence.
- Choice in problem-solving tasks promotes CYP ownership.
- Key steps and success criteria displayed for easy reference.



## Reading

- Success is promoted and celebrated through approaches to reading, focusing on both meaning and enjoyment.
- Language development and comprehension are central to all reading activities.
- Reading spaces are inviting, with diverse books that reflect CYPs' interests and backgrounds.
- Positivity is fostered through book clubs, book talk, reading games, and author visits.
- Planned, systematic teaching of vocabulary develops oracy skills.
- A DfE-approved Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme is in place, with matched resources and books.
- Opportunities for success with reading are provided, such as reading familiar books and texts with over 90% accuracy.
- Choral, echo, and paired reading, among other approaches are taught and practised.
- Key reading skills are explicitly taught: infer, predict, explain, clarify, retrieve, summarise, and sequence.
- Fluency and prosody are modelled and practised, focusing on speed, intonation, and response to punctuation.
- Dual coding is used, especially for text-heavy resources.
- Visual stress preferences are considered, with coloured backgrounds, gels, papers, and overlays available.
- Digital texts allow for personalisation with adjustable background colours and fonts on tablets or interactive whiteboards, where possible.
- A dyslexia screener is considered where appropriate, with discussion involving parent/ carers and SENDCo.
- Sans serif fonts (e.g. Arial, Verdana) are used in appropriate size (12/14), with adequate spacing to support legibility.
- Resources are adapted/matched to CYP's reading level.



## Writing

- The environment is rich in language and experiences to stimulate ideas.
- Storytelling, drama, and real-world experiences (e.g. trips, multimedia) are used to build background knowledge and increase exposure to language.
- Oral rehearsal is encouraged before writing to develop clarity and confidence.
- Authentic audiences and purposes are used for tasks (e.g. persuasive letter to headteacher, narratives for younger readers), to boost relevance and motivation.
- Different purposes, audiences, and genres in writing are explicitly taught.
- Stages of the writing process are modelled and practised: planning, drafting, editing, and evaluating.
- Topics and themes used reflect CYP interests, e.g. football, animals, space used to increase motivation.
- Model texts are displayed and analysed to illustrate success, supported by sentence starters and word banks.
- Recording of ideas is scaffolded through drafts, writing frames, mind maps, assistive technology, laptops/tablets, adult support, or scribes.
- Alternative methods of recording are offered, especially in extended writing tasks, to reduce barriers.
- Quality over quantity is emphasised; success criteria focus on impact and effectiveness of writing.
- Well-crafted ideas and creativity are praised.
- Chunking, organising, planning, and structuring writing used to reduce cognitive load.
- Visual scaffolds such as checklists and step-by-step instructions support independence.
- Editing checklists, peer feedback, and revision stations utilised to improve drafts.
- Recording and spelling are taught in partnership with the SSP and/or reading scheme.
- Any spelling lists are drawn from decodable texts to reinforce phonics and vocabulary.
- Multi-sensory methods are used to support spelling development, e.g. games, visual aids, technology.
- Morphology (prefixes, roots, suffixes) and etymology (word origins) are taught to deepen understanding.
- Technical glossaries, e.g. in Science and Geography are used to pre-teach and reinforce subject-specific vocabulary.

## Handwriting

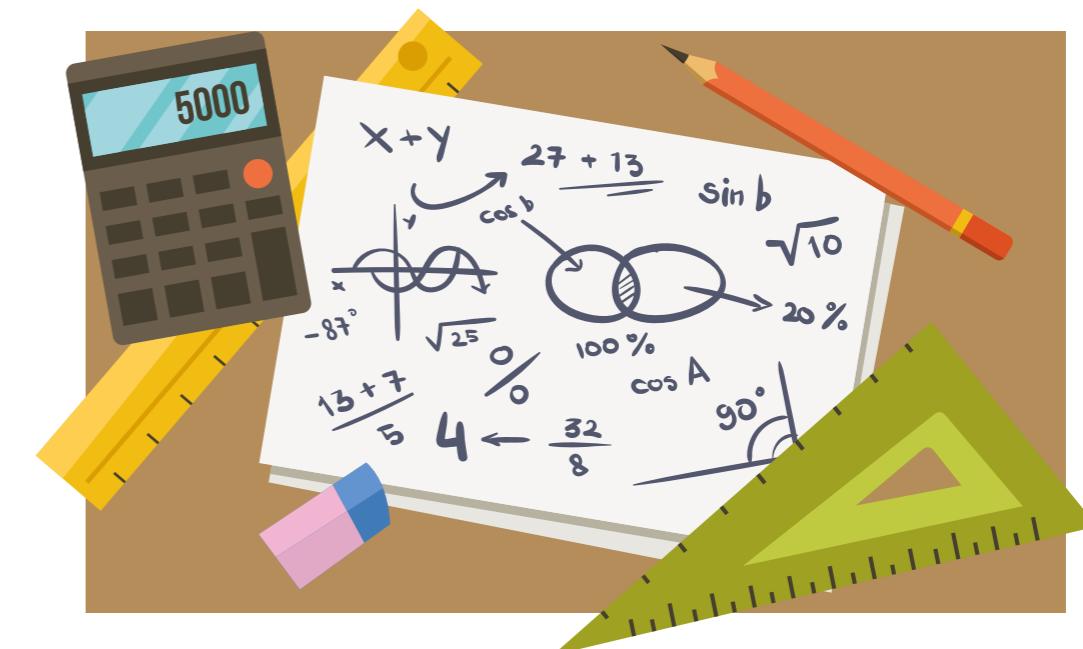
- Gross motor activities are incorporated into PE or sensory circuits to improve posture and control.
- Fine motor skill development is supported through structured activities, e.g. cutting, folding, using rulers.
- Handwriting sessions are modelled and practised with focus on stamina and legibility and gradually increase in duration.
- Supportive resources are trialled early, where needs are evident, for manipulation and control, e.g. writing slopes, wrist supports, pen grips, triangular pencils, short pencils, free-flow pens (less friction and easier to use than pencils).
- Optimal seating arrangements for posture and alignment used during writing tasks, e.g. feet flat, bottom back in chair, table at elbow height and CYP facing front.
- Visual prompts for letter sizing and alignment are used, e.g. boxed or lined paper.
- Alternative recording methods offered where handwriting is a barrier, e.g. laptops, pre-produced notes.
- Worksheets adapted for larger handwriting or scribing, e.g. enlarged answer boxes, Post-it notes.
- Additional time allowed for tasks requiring fine motor skills.

See [Sensory and Physical Section](#)



## Maths

- Positive maths mindset is praised, with mistakes normalised as part of learning.
- Concrete – Pictorial – Abstract approach is in place.
- Concrete manipulatives and resources are embedded and always available.
- Visual resources, e.g. number lines, 100 squares, times-table squares, etc. enable CYP to access key learning concept.
- Memory strategies are taught, e.g. mnemonics, to relieve cognitive load when approaching multi-step problems.
- Key maths vocabulary is explicitly taught before the main content delivery.
- Repetition and deliberate practice of concepts embed learning and develop mastery for all.
- Reasoning and challenge opportunities are available for all CYP.
- Consistent terminology, word banks and visual prompts aid understanding.
- Adapted and scaffolded tasks allow access at current attainment level and focus on key learning objective.
- Worked examples and partially completed problems reduce cognitive load.
- Maths talk develops reasoning and explanation skills.
- Open-ended statements and questions such as 'I wonder...' or 'What if...' are used.
- Investigative approaches are promoted and praised.
- Digital, interactive tools support engagement.
- Step-by-step instructions, checklists and note taking support working memory.
- Practical examples and contexts, e.g. shopping, cooking, measuring, make maths meaningful.
- Variation of problem-solving tasks, e.g. by changing numbers, conditions, or methods shows underlying relationships and deepens understanding.
- Multiple methods and approaches to solving number and word problems are modelled and practised.



## Resources - Evidenced-based advice and interventions

### EDUCATION Endowment Foundation (EEF)

#### Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/send>

#### EEF Five a day: supporting high-quality teaching for pupils with SEND

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-high-quality-teaching-for-pupils-with-send?x-craft-live-preview=61bd011dbcab3de68fce89ff8b99b04e4bcf872be96b3d086e964c1d0aec679ggtxqyqavq>

#### EEF Selecting Interventions for pupils with SEND

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/selecting-interventions?x-craft-live-preview=61bd011dbcab3de68fce89ff8b99b04e4bcf872be96b3d086e964c1d0aec679ggtxqyqavq>

#### EEF Deployment of Teaching Assistants

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/teaching-assistants?x-craft-live-preview=61bd011dbcab3de68fce89ff8b99b04e4bcf872be96b3d086e964c1d0aec679ggtxqyqavq>

#### EEF Metacognition strategies

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/metacognition>

#### EEF Education Toolkit

<https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit>

#### EEF Teaching Vocabulary

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/vocabulary-in-action-poster-a-tool-for-teachers>

#### Whole School SEND Teacher Handbook

<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/resources?title=teacher%20handbook>

#### Whole School SEND Interactive Teacher Toolkits

<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/toolkits>

#### Whole School SEND CPD and events

<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/events>

### B&NES' EPS Provision Bank

<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-11/EPS%20Evidence%20Informed%20Assessment%20and%20Provision%20Bank%20November%202025%20V1.pdf>

### DfE approved Systematic Synthetic Phonics schemes

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/choosing-a-phonics-teaching-programme/contact-details-for-the-validated-systematic-synthetic-phonics-ssp-programmes>

### Growth Mindset

<https://fs.blog/carol-dweck-mindset/>

<https://kss.hee.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2022/08/Growth-Mindset-The-Basics.pdf>

### Dual Coding

<https://www.structural-learning.com/post/dual-coding-a-teachers-guide>

### Cognitive Load Theory

<https://www.structural-learning.com/post/cognitive-load-theory-a-teachers-guide>

### Working Memory

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/improving-working-memory>

<https://caer.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CAER-Working-Memory-Guidance.pdf>

### Chunking

<https://evidencebased.education/resource/chunking-in-the-classroom/>

### Assistive Technology

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/assistive-technology-in-education-and-employment/#heading-4>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-of-children-with-send-to-benefit-from-assistive-tech>

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66ded22ca9ef9bb0060aa640/AssistiveTechnology%20Course%20Evaluation%20Report.pdf>

### Backward Chaining

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/249067/backward-chaining-information-sheet.pdf>

### Pre-teaching/ Over-learning

<https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/best-practice/teaching-interventions-pre-and-over-learning>

**Precision Teaching**<https://www.edpsyched.co.uk/blog/precision-teaching-first-steps-guide-and-faq>**Social Stories**<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/>**Dyscalculia**<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyscalculia>**Capital Dyslexia Links - Made by Dyslexia**<https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia>**Concrete Manipulatives**<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/manipulatives-helping-to-make-problem-solving-concrete>**Low-stimulation Environments**<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/occupational-therapy-for-parents-carers/sensory-regulation/supportive-sensory-environments/>

## Cognition & Learning - SEND Support

**Definition**

Cognition means the way we think, reason, and learn. It includes the mental processes that help us understand and make sense of the world through our senses, thoughts, and experiences. Everyone's brain works differently, which affects how we take in and use information.

Some children and young people (CYP) have unique strengths and needs that make learning harder than for their peers. This might affect one area, such as reading or maths, or it could impact learning more broadly. For example, difficulties with working memory can make it harder to follow instructions, remember steps, and stay organised both in school and at home. Adjustment, modification, and adaptation of the curriculum, across many or all areas, may be needed to enable the CYP to fully access learning. It is essential to consider the possibility of underlying Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) that may not yet have been identified.

In line with the outlined Graduated Approach (see section B [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach)), settings should begin with high-quality, inclusive teaching and progress through increasingly targeted support, based on assessed and identified need.

## 6.31 SEND Code of Practice 2014 (CoP)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

In this Cognition and Learning section there will be universal and SEND Support strategies for:

- [Attitude and access to learning](#)
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- [Problem Solving](#)
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These strategies are in addition to the whole-setting expectations in Section A [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations)

## Cognition & Learning - SEND Support

Some CYP will need targeted support which is different from and additional to the support provided to the majority of CYP in the setting.

The frequency, duration, context, and extent of universal, HQT strategies may be increased under SEND Support. The individual strategies needed for each CYP will be identified, formally recorded, and implemented on an individual or small group basis. This will be recorded through an APDR cycle.

See Section B for more information [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach)

### Attitude/Access to Learning

- All learning is specifically adapted to meet the current attainment level of the CYP, with appropriate challenge considered.
- A personalised relational approach which builds trust and values CYP's sense of belonging and purpose is prioritised, e.g. a specific role of responsibility or bespoke scripted emotion coaching.
- Personalised praise/sanctions, reward systems, or motivation projects, using CYP preferences and context, are planned to celebrate small steps of progress towards personal goals and targets with key adult, class, SLT and parent/carers, as appropriate.

*Example: For a CYP who finds public praise overwhelming or anxiety-inducing, discreet methods of recognition are trialled, such as a private thumbs-up, a positive note in their planner, or a quiet word at the end of the lesson. Similarly, if sanctions are needed, they are delivered calmly and privately, with a clear explanation and opportunity to reflect and repair. This approach respects their emotional regulation needs and avoids triggering shame or escalation.*

- Targeted, small-group pre-teaching of key concepts, visuals, and vocabulary used to reduce anxiety, cognitive load and increase confidence.
- Personalised visual timetables and schedules used to increase predictability and reduce anxiety.
- Assistive technology used to support independence and reduce cognitive load, e.g. text-to-speech, speech-to-text, digital organisers.
- Challenge is adapted with increased time spent on curricular strengths.

*Example: CYP who struggles with extended writing tasks is given planned opportunities to demonstrate their understanding through drawing, discussion, or practical tasks aligned with their strengths and targets.*

- Backward chaining helps CYP succeed at completion of more complex tasks, e.g. completing the final sentence first when learning to write a paragraph, then working backwards with close guidance.

- Planned recognition of sensory considerations, e.g. sensory breaks, fidget tools, ear defenders, wobble cushion, or alternative seating; sensory toolkit planned, recorded, and reviewed regularly.
- Planned access to low-stimulation spaces for regulation and refocus.
- Planned reintegration/ catch up opportunities/ additional scaffolds where CYP has missed learning through absence, intervention, or exclusion.
- Personalised homework adjustments and adaptations, e.g. structured, visually supported tasks; agreed preferred formats such as typing instead of handwriting; consistent submission day and method; option to complete homework at school.
- Small-group interventions to develop resilience, confidence, and social knowledge, e.g. nurture groups, social stories, role-play.
- Targeted assessments and referrals, e.g. dyslexia/dyscalculia screening, speech and language assessment with follow-up plans and parent/carer involvement.

More strategies detailed in [SEMH section](#)



## Working Memory

- Pre-teaching and overlearning of key vocabulary and concepts, e.g. through games, quizzes, and retrieval practice to build confidence and reduce anxiety.
- Chunking strategies are explicitly taught, e.g. breaking down instructions into smaller steps using visual task cards or numbered checklists, or grouping related information such as spelling rules or maths facts to reduce overload.
- Personal copy of notes, presentations and/or lists of steps provided to reduce reliance on memory during tasks.
- Number of new facts, words and concepts is adapted for individuals; depth is prioritised over breadth to support retention.
- Small-group intervention on memory skills and planning tools, e.g. memory games, matching pairs, sequencing activities, and kinaesthetic tools such as movement-based recall or tactile prompts.
- Backward chaining is used to help CYP succeed at completion of more complex tasks and build confidence by reducing cognitive load.
- Assistive technology used to reduce memory demands, e.g. digital organisers, voice notes, text-to-speech tools.
- Targeted teaching of memory strategies, e.g. mnemonics, dual coding, and spaced retrieval practice.
- Planned recognition of sensory considerations, e.g. sensory breaks, fidget tools, ear defenders, wobble cushion, or alternative seating; sensory toolkit is planned, recorded, and reviewed regularly.
- Access to low-stimulation spaces for focused work and memory consolidation.



## Processing Speed

- Personalised pre-warning and oral rehearsal allowed before answering questions, e.g. “Jack, I’ll come back to you for your answer next,” to allow thinking time and reduce anxiety.
- Individual teaching of how to stay focused using concrete measures, e.g. timers, charts, and progress graphs to help CYP monitor and celebrate improvement.
- Individualised agreements of time adjustments are planned for, e.g. extended time for tasks, staggered deadlines, timed work bursts with protected finishing time.
- Targeted pre-teaching and overlearning of key content and vocabulary, e.g. short pre-lesson primers, preview of worked examples.
- Personal copy of notes, presentations, and/or step lists provided to reduce reliance on memory and speed up task initiation.
- Audiobooks, e.g. of class texts, available to support comprehension and reduce cognitive load of decoding.
- Alternative ways of recording, e.g. voice-to-text tools such as dictation on iPad or Google Docs Voice Typing.
- Assistive technology planned and used to streamline input/output, e.g. text-to-speech, speech-to-text, word prediction, digital organisers, timer apps with visual cues.
- Reduced copying demands and streamlined presentation of information, e.g. templates, partially completed notes, skeleton outlines.
- Structured chunking with adult guidance, e.g. breaking tasks into timed micro-steps with quick accuracy checks before proceeding.
- Planned brief regulation breaks to maintain pace, e.g. movement breaks, hydration breaks, “reset” cues, followed by re-entry routine.
- Planned recognition of sensory considerations, e.g. sensory breaks, fidget tools, ear defenders, wobble cushion, or alternative seating; sensory toolkit is planned, recorded, and reviewed regularly.
- Planned access to low-stimulation workspaces for timed tasks, e.g. quiet corner, study booth, headphones for noise reduction.
- Homework adaptations for predictability and pacing, e.g. structured tasks, visual plans, agreed submission day/method, option to complete in school.
- Clear access arrangements explored, as appropriate, e.g. reader/scribe, word processor, rest breaks, extra time in line with setting/awarding body policies.



## Verbal Reasoning

- Targeted pre-teaching and overlearning of key vocabulary and concepts before whole-class input, e.g. short primers, games, quick quizzes, retrieval practice.
- Personalised scaffolds, sentence frames, stems, and scripts tailored to the CYP's needs.
- Guided "think-aloud" coaching in small group, e.g. modelling how to connect ideas, expanding reasoning skills, e.g. justify, compare, and evaluate.
- Supported backward chaining of verbal tasks to build success with completion of task, e.g. craft the conclusion first, then add reasons and evidence, then a clear opening statement.
- Targeted, small-group interventions focusing on reasoning language, e.g. barrier games, debate circles, structured talk routines, reciprocal teaching.
- Targeted retrieval practice of reasoning elements, e.g. quick drills on connectives, causal language, comparative phrases, and justification stems.
- Planned recognition of sensory considerations that affect verbal performance, e.g. brief movement breaks, low-stimulation spaces, fidget tools.
- Referral and collaboration with Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) where language-processing difficulties are suspected, e.g. SALT programmes integrated into class routines.
- Assessment for underlying literacy or language needs where appropriate, e.g. dyslexia screening, language, and communication assessment with SENDCo and parent/carers involvement.



## Problem-solving

- Targeted pre-teaching and overlearning of problem-solving steps and key vocabulary, e.g. through games, quizzes, and retrieval practice before whole-class tasks.
- Personalised problem-solving planner that sequences the questions, e.g. guiding CYP through steps of understanding the problem, identifying knowns and unknowns, choosing a strategy, solving, and checking.
- Repeated, targeted modelling and narration of problem-solving processes, supporting gradual release of responsibility and encouraging CYP to verbalise their own reasoning.
- Backward chaining to reduce cognitive load and build confidence, e.g. completing the final step first (such as checking the solution) and working backwards with support.
- Individualised scaffolds and visual guides, e.g. colour-coded flowcharts, personalised checklists, and sequenced prompt cards for each step (define, plan, solve, review).
- Targeted, small-group intervention on problem-solving skills, e.g. using memory games, sequencing activities, and kinaesthetic tools like tactile prompts or movement-based recall.
- Referral and collaboration with Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) where language-processing difficulties are suspected, e.g. SALT programmes integrated into class routines.
- Assessment for underlying literacy or language needs where appropriate, e.g. dyslexia screening, language, and communication assessment with SENDCo and parent/carers involvement.



## Reading

- DfE-approved SSP programme interventions are followed with consistency and fidelity over time, before considering an alternative, e.g. sight-reading recognition approach.
- Individualised phonics or decoding intervention.
- Research-led, evidence-informed reading intervention programmes are utilised.
- ICT resources and assistive technology are used to support reading, e.g. immersive reader tools, screen readers, and apps that highlight text while reading aloud.
- Bespoke and planned opportunities to boost engagement and enjoyment of reading, specifically for those who are struggling/ have struggled.
- Targeted pre-teaching and overlearning of key vocabulary and concepts before reading tasks, e.g. through small group/ games, flashcards, and retrieval practice.
- Small-group or 1:1 reading sessions with explicit modelling of decoding, fluency, and comprehension strategies.
- Repeated, targeted reading and fluency practice using high-interest, low-level (Hi-Lo) texts to build confidence and automaticity.
- Targeted precision teaching, e.g. of key vocabulary is used to facilitate access to texts.
- Specially adapted texts for individual CYP needs.
- Referral for specialist assessment where needed, e.g. dyslexia screening, speech and language evaluation, or vision/hearing checks.

## Writing

- Structured, research-informed writing/spelling interventions, e.g. SNIP Literacy Programme or Nessy Writing Beach.
- Special interests are targeted and used to increase motivation.
- A targeted and personalised emphasis on quality over quantity is in place.
- ICT resources and assistive technology are used to support writing, e.g. voice-to-text, typing.
- Voice recognition software is used to support recording, e.g. Dragon Naturally Speaking.
- Touch-typing is a planned and taught intervention, using a structured programme, e.g. BBC Dance Mat Typing or Nessy Fingers.
- Personalised scaffolds, e.g. writing frames, graphic organisers, visual organisers checklists.
- Targeted pre-teaching of personalised sentence stems, key vocabulary, or structures.
- Additional time is given specifically for the editing process, e.g. writing conferencing with appropriate peer or adult prompting support.
- Planned alternative ways of recording or sharing ideas in place.
- Planned recognition of the impact of sensory considerations around the physical process of writing is in place, e.g. writing slopes, suitable seating, shorter bursts of writing.
- Sensory toolkit is planned, recorded, and reviewed regularly.

## Maths

- Targeted use of structured, research-led, evidence-based interventions, e.g. Counting to Calculating.
- Structured, individual pre-teaching and over-learning of specific numeracy skills, e.g. number-bonds, multiplication tables.
- Targeted precision teaching of number facts.
- Maths problems specifically linked to CYP interests/context.
- Repeated, personalised modelling and narration of problem solving, with gradual release to promote independence.
- Focused maths talks and reasoning discussions to allow CYP to talk through their thinking.
- Individualised scaffolds in place, e.g. colour-coded steps, prompt cards, problem-solving planner.
- Patterns and relationships to help learn multiplication facts are taught and practised through small group games.
- Personal resource folder provided, e.g. number lines, hundred squares, Numicon, maths toolkit.
- Size of grid in class books adapted to accommodate writing size.
- More time is spent with manipulatives to help make information concrete and less abstract, e.g. Cuisenaire rods, place value counters, bead strings, before transitioning to pictorial or abstract representations.
- Assistive technology, e.g. interactive maths apps, digital calculators, voice-to-text for recording reasoning, and visual modelling tools.
- Alternative response formats, e.g. oral explanations, diagrams, or practical demonstrations instead of extended written solutions.



# Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) - Universal

## Definition

Children and young people (CYP) can experience a wide range of Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, which may present as withdrawal, isolation, or challenging and distressed behaviour. These behaviours often signal unmet needs and may reflect underlying mental health issues, such as anxiety or depression, language or communication difficulties, sensory processing differences or experiences of trauma and disrupted attachments.

SEMH needs may sometimes be overlooked when behaviours are interpreted without considering underlying emotional or mental health factors, so it is important to explore underlying causes by talking with the CYP, staff, and parent/carers. Staff should take a strengths-based approach, celebrating individual skills and successes to help build a positive sense of self.

## [SEND Code of Practice 2015 \(CoP\)](#)

In line with the outlined Graduated Approach (see Section B [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-graduated-approach)), settings should begin with high-quality, inclusive teaching and progress through increasingly targeted support, based on assessed and identified need.

These strategies are in addition to the whole-setting expectations in Section A [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations)

This section provides a comprehensive range of strategies across key areas, all aimed at supporting CYP with SEMH needs. Creating an inclusive and supportive setting culture is critical and should consider and prioritise:

- [Relationships and Connection](#)
- [Environment, Organisation and Routines](#)

In addition to the above strategies, some CYP may require support to develop skills related to:

- [Emotional Regulation](#)
- [Emotionally Based School Avoidance \(EBSA\)](#)
- [Mental Health](#)

## B&NES' SEMH Additional Resources

### B&NES' Trauma Informed Guidance

<https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Page/38798>

B&NES' Trauma Informed Guidance provides guidance for settings on adopting trauma-informed, relational approaches to behaviour that promote inclusion, support CYP with SEMH needs, and embed whole-school practices for wellbeing.

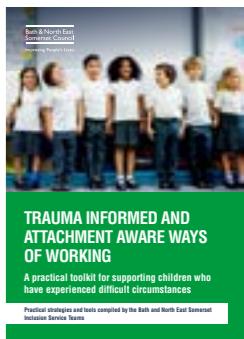


### B&NES' Trauma Informed And Attachment Aware Ways Of Working

Trauma, caused by repeated stress and prolonged activation of survival responses, can impair brain function, lead to toxic shame, and significantly affect behaviour, making trauma-informed educational settings essential for meeting CYP's SEMH needs.

This toolkit has been designed to support settings in reflecting on strategies and practical methods of supporting CYP who have experienced trauma and difficult circumstances. For example:

- Four on the door – support for transitions
- Avoiding shame – parts language
- Building self-esteem
- A calm kit
- Circle of friends
- Drawing and Talking
- Growth Mindset
- The hand of options
- Helping with grief
- Helping with separation anxiety
- Keep me in mind
- The key trusted adult
- Managing worries
- Meet and greet
- Breathing exercises
- Movement breaks
- Now and Next
- PACE Approach
- Presenting choices
- Quick read profiles
- Restorative conversations
- Settled and safe
- Social skills groups
- The Incredible 5 point scale
- The learning environment
- Use praise thoughtfully
- Wondering aloud
- Zones of Regulation



A Graduated Response to SEMH needs should be guided by the B&NES Commitment to Inclusion, Four Tiers of Support <https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Page/38797>

The B&NES' EBSA Guidance provides a structured, evidence-informed framework to support schools in delivering an informed and considered response to CYP presenting with Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

## Relationships and Connection

### Positive Staff-CYP Interactions

- Positive regard demonstrated by all staff towards every CYP, with first interactions prioritised so CYP feel valued and know they are liked by members of staff.
- Meet-and-greet routines and support during transitions, e.g. staff positioned at classroom doors to welcome CYP and provide reassurance during transitions.
- Recognition of individual strengths and interests ensures staff seek opportunities for meaningful connection with every CYP.
- Opportunities for meaningful contribution and positive connections provided regularly across the class and wider community.

### Relational Approaches and Emotional Attunement

- Consistency of relational approach practised by all staff, ensures predictability, reliability, and dependability in actions, communication, and emotions.
- Relational approaches such as PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy) and WINE (Wonder, Imagine, Notice, Empathy) embedded in daily practice.
- ‘Wondering aloud’ strategies used to promote emotional understanding, e.g. “I wonder if you’re feeling frustrated because that was unexpected?”.
- Responsiveness to CYP expression—verbal, non-verbal, and emotional—used to build trust and connection, e.g. staff notice body language and tone of voice, responding with attuned support such as offering a break or check in.
- Repeated relational experiences prioritised with emotionally available adults to support CYP in moving from blocked trust (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from self-help to help-seeking.



## Peer Relationships and Social Development

- Buddy systems and peer mentoring implemented as two-way support, enabling both CYP to develop empathy, understanding, and acceptance of differences.
- Circle time and tutor sessions structured to enhance emotional literacy and foster a sense of community.
- Monitoring and tracking systems used to identify CYP who need extra support with peer interactions and timely, effective help is provided.
- Confidence in supporting peer interactions helps all staff, e.g. teachers, TAs, LBS guide CYP to manage differences of opinion and resolve conflicts effectively.
- Targeted support for developing peer relationships promotes positive and sustained connections among CYP.

### Expression of Concern

- Systems for safe expression of concerns available, e.g. Primary – physical worry box; Secondary – anonymous online form submitted to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL).



## Environment, Organisation and Routines

### Environment

- A predictable, safe, visually calm and well-organised environment is designed to prevent CYP overwhelm and support focus and concentration.
- Distractions minimised to support focus and attention, e.g. reduction of background noise, closing windows/doors, and positioning CYP away from busy areas, where possible.
- Flexible seating arrangements are offered for different lessons and times of day.
- Additional space and seating adjustments, e.g. a double desk, postural support, consistently considered and accommodated to support engagement and focus.
- Access to calm spaces and key adults is available, when needed, for regulation and recovery.

### Organisation

- Clearly labelled, accessible resources, e.g. pots, trays, drawers with photos or drawings added on labels, where appropriate, to support independence.
- Strategies in place for requesting breaks enable CYP to step back from tasks when overwhelmed, e.g. verbal cues, visual cues (break card, discreet gestures).
- Timetables, now-and-next boards, change cards, and sand timers used to reduce anxiety and aid understanding of regular transitions.
- Structured alternatives available during unstructured times with staff trained to respond to CYP needs, e.g. lunch clubs, zoned areas.
- Planned recognition of sensory needs includes sensory breaks, sensory accommodations, fidget tools, ear defenders, wobble cushions or alternative seating.
- Movement and sensory breaks (adapted to age/stage) are used to proactively and reactively support engagement, with older CYP encouraged to develop independent strategies throughout the day.

### Routines

- Teaching, modelling, and reinforcement of setting routines provides predictability and reduces anxiety, e.g. shared language and expectations for lining up, transitions, and break times used across all staff.
- Known visual and non-verbal signals support routines, with time dedicated to ensuring all CYP recognise and understand them.
- Communication of changes to routine with advance notice occurs as soon as possible.
- Consistent scripted phrases support emotional regulation and understanding, e.g. “Now we are finishing... Next we are going to...” during activity changes.

## Emotional Regulation

### Early Identification and Regulation Support

- Awareness of the ‘flight, fight, freeze, or fawn’ responses enable staff to recognise behavioural reactions and implement timely, appropriate interventions.
- Presence of a co-regulating adult who is emotionally available and predictable supports CYP through attuned actions such as making eye contact, positioning nearby without invading personal space, and offering reassurance, e.g. “I am here with you.”.
- Analysis of triggers, underlying functions, and behavioural patterns enables staff to plan proactive regulation strategies and timely interventions.
- Development of scripts and social stories for recurring incidents supports consistency of response and enhances CYP understanding through positive, concise language.
- Explicit teaching of self-regulation strategies to whole classes promotes independence and resilience, e.g. breathing techniques and yoga.
- Emotion coaching implemented across the setting strengthens emotional literacy and coping skills.
- Emotional literacy skills explicitly taught, including recognising and naming feelings, understanding causes, and responding in healthy ways, e.g. Zones of Regulation.
- Resilience and problem-solving explicitly taught to all.
- Visuals and structured emotional check-ins used to support communication and regulation, e.g. Zones of Regulation.
- ‘Leave with Dignity’ options ensure autonomy and safe exits during moments of overwhelm.

### Modelling and Communication

- Modelling of calm, respectful, and positive communication sets expectations and tone, even during challenging situations.
- Narration of healthy emotional responses provides CYP with clear examples of regulation strategies.
- Self-awareness of own emotional state by staff ensures they regulate themselves before responding to CYP, maintaining calm and supportive interactions.
- Slowed pace, gentle tone, and active listening used to promote processing time and build trust.
- Non-confrontational body language and affirming language employed to reduce escalation and foster psychological safety.



## Curriculum and Learning Design

- Resilience, independence, and growth mindset integrated into the curriculum to promote confidence and perseverance.
- Intrinsic and extrinsic rewards considered by staff ensure that intrinsic motivators are prioritised when engaging CYP, fostering sustained motivation and personal growth.
- Recognition that success breeds motivation drives staff to ensure CYP experience daily, independent success, promoting confidence and engagement.
- Lessons designed to stimulate curiosity and engagement encouraging active learning and motivation.
- Effort, process, and learning behaviours celebrated to reinforce perseverance, creativity, and collaboration.
- Safe opportunities to make and learn from mistakes provided, normalising error and building resilience.
- Strengths-based and interest-led learning opportunities enhance relevance and motivation for CYP.
- Meaningful classroom roles assigned to foster sense of belonging and purpose.
- Aspirations and future goals utilised to engage and motivate CYP, strengthening connection to learning.

## Relational and Restorative Practice

- Restorative 'reflect, repair, rebuild' opportunities guarantee a fresh start following incidents.
- Appropriate alignment or allocation of staff to support CYP's needs and preferences, fostering trust and engagement.
- Access to safe spaces and trusted adults for CYP when emotional regulation is needed.
- Buddy systems and peer mentoring promotes empathy, understanding, and acceptance of differences.

## Sensory

- Preventative and responsive planning to sensory overwhelm.
- Alerting, organising and calming activities provided and used proactively to meet fluctuating levels of engagement as a whole-class strategy or sensory circuit, e.g. movement breaks during lessons of prolonged static listening, calming music to support focus.
- Conversations are encouraged about bodily feelings and how these impact emotions and behaviour.
- The potential intensity of the school day is understood and promoted, including sensory demands, and the impact this can have on learning and engagement.
- Sensory breaks used (adapted to age/stage) to support engagement. Encourage older CYP to develop strategies that can be carried out independently throughout day.
- Sensory tools accessible and offered for CYP to use, e.g. fidget tools, chewable jewellery, weighted item as part of their sensory 'toolbox' strategies, to support focus, wellbeing, and engagement. CYP are taught when and how to use tools appropriately, e.g. during independent work, transitions, or when feeling overwhelmed.

## Emotionally Based School Avoidance

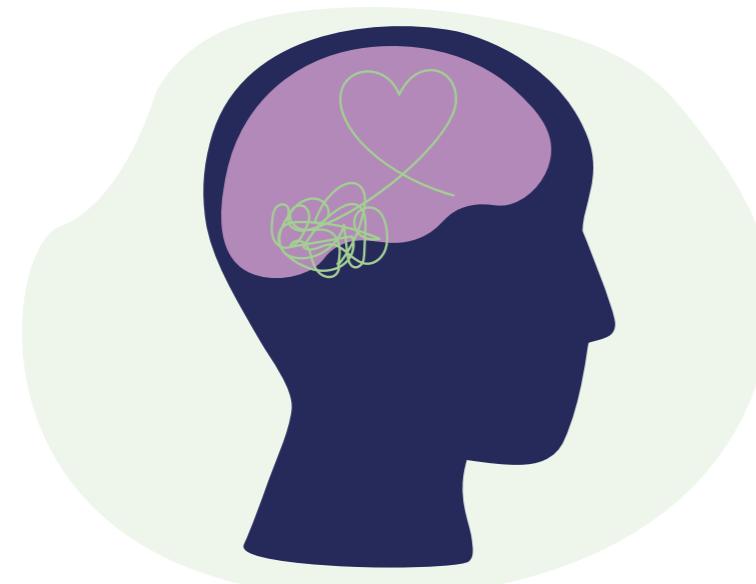
Please read in conjunction with B&NES' EBSA Guidance.

- Emotional wellbeing, inclusion, and a sense of belonging are promoted across the whole setting.
- Early detection of non-attendance patterns and EBSA indicators with proactive support and signposting for parent/carers.
- Early intervention and supportive approaches are guided by an understanding that EBSA is not a behavioural choice but a complex response to internal and external stressors, including (but not limited to) anxiety, trauma, neurodivergence, and environmental factors within the setting or home.
- An EBSA-aware staff member designated as a key point of reference for CYP and parent/carers.
- Consistent, sensitive, and curious language used by all when discussing non-attendance, avoiding judgment and focusing on understanding barriers.
- Reliable follow-through on agreed actions is used to build trust with parent/carers.
- School Aged Health Service resources routinely shared with parent/carers to support understanding and management of anxiety.
- B&NES' Child and Family Health App signposted to parent/carers to enable access to early help services, mental health resources, and local support options.
- Trusted CYP/staff relationships, reinforced by low-pressure check-ins and consistent validation and acceptance of the CYP's feelings.
- CYP voice gathered through gentle, curious approaches, asking questions such as, "What helps right now?" to inform support planning.
- CYP voice centred in planning and decision-making, ensuring support is co-produced and responsive to individual needs.
- Proactive, relationship-based transition planning for CYP with known vulnerabilities.



## Mental Health

- Regular assessment of whole-setting provision using the B&NES' Mental Health and Wellbeing Audit <https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Page/11033>.
- Risk factor identification and monitoring of warning signs for mental health issues embedded in staff practice. Staff aware of escalation procedures for concerns regarding CYP wellbeing.
- Screening tools and wellbeing check-ins are utilised to identify needs at the earliest stage.
- Wellbeing provisions are selected for specific impact, with baseline and exit data evaluated.
- Clear pastoral systems ensure CYP are well known to staff teams.
- Acknowledgement and positive greetings for CYP during arrival and transition times.
- Timely support accessible to CYP from an appropriate adult.
- Access to safe spaces and trusted adults for CYP when emotional regulation is needed.
- Emotional literacy skills explicitly taught, including recognising and naming feelings, understanding causes, and responding in healthy ways, e.g. Zones of Regulation.
- Resilience and problem-solving explicitly taught to all.
- Restorative 'reflect, repair, rebuild' opportunities guarantee a fresh start following incidents.
- Proactive internal referrals for support follow clear procedures.
- Wellbeing workshops and information sessions for parent/carers develop awareness.
- The impact of sleep on mental health is considered to proactively signpost for further guidance and support.
- The impact of diet/food on mental health is considered to proactively signpost for further guidance and support.
- Local mental health services are used to enhance provision, e.g. B&NES Get Mental Health and Wellbeing Support for CYP.



## Resources - Evidenced-based advice and interventions

### Relationships and Connection

**B&NES' Trauma Informed Guidance** - This document provides policy guidance on trauma-informed approaches to behaviour for educational settings in B&NES. [https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-10/4083.BNES%20Trauma%20Informed%20Guidance\\_web.pdf](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-10/4083.BNES%20Trauma%20Informed%20Guidance_web.pdf)

**Relational Approaches - Moving from Behavioural to Relational Responses** <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Behavioural-to-Relational-Responses-at-School.pdf>

**PACE - Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy** [https://girfec.fife.scot/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0024/48903/PACE-School.pdf](https://girfec.fife.scot/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/48903/PACE-School.pdf)

**WINE - I wonder, I imagine, I notice, empathy** [https://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk/images/WINE\\_Sentence\\_stems\\_6.pdf](https://www.traumainformedschools.co.uk/images/WINE_Sentence_stems_6.pdf)

**EEF – Supporting Attendance - Build a Culture of Community and Belonging for pupils** <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/leadership-and-planning/supporting-attendance/build-a-culture-of-community-and-belonging-for-pupils>

### Capturing CYP Voice

#### PATH Process

<https://www.kirkleeslocaloffer.org.uk/sendco-professional-information-and-resources-page/support-plans-i-apdr-msp-s-iep-s/path-planning-alternative-tomorrows-with-hope/>

#### The Ideal School

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/media/50ihc0ly/the-ideal-school-resource.pdf>

#### School Wellbeing Cards

<https://www.schoolwellbeingcards.co.uk/>

### Environment, organisation and routines

**Education Endowment Foundation Blog - Routine reset or routine re-teach?** <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-routine-reset-or-routine-re-teach>

## Emotional Regulation

**SASS (Special Autism Support Service - Emotional Regulation)**  
<https://padlet.com/SASSBathnes/emotional-regulation-au5qi87jvh8ac6tr>

### What Survival Looks Like in Secondary School by Mark Thorley and Helen Townsend

<https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Survival-In-Secondary-School.pdf>

The “fight, flight, freeze, and fawn” responses are automatic, instinctive reactions to perceived threats or dangerous situations, rooted in our evolutionary past. For CYP who have experienced trauma, these responses work differently due to their past experiences. Thorley and Townsend explore each one with suggestions about how to manage in the classroom.

### Childhood Trauma and the Brain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYB0Y1kZpf8>

A short animation describing what happens in the brain after CYP face traumatic experiences in childhood, like abuse and neglect. This animation was developed by Professor Eamon McCrory and is a part of the Childhood Trauma and the Brain resource. Great to share with whole staff teams, governors etc.

### Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) Network

<https://www.elsanetwork.org/>

National and local information about the ELSA programme and how it supports CYP with temporary or longer-term emotional needs.

### SEMH

<https://semh.co.uk/>

A site designed in 2016 to bring education staff together on the topic of SEMH and explore the best methods to support CYP with SEMH.

### Comic Strip Conversations

<https://www.sirona-cic.org.uk/children-services/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/08/TK02-Comic-Strip-Conversations-Top-Tips.pdf>

A visual communication tool that uses simple drawings to help CYP understand social situations, different perspectives and emotions.

### Social Stories

<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/>

A type of social script, a short, personalized narrative used to help individuals, particularly those with autism, understand social situations, new experiences, and expectations by providing clear, descriptive information about what to expect and why.

## Circle of Friends

<https://www.edplace.com/blog/send/how-to-create-a-circle-of-friendship> and  
<https://www.inclusive-solutions.com/circles/circle-of-friends>

An intervention aimed primarily at improving the inclusion of CYP with SEND within schools and classes. It works by gathering the CYP's peers in a circle of friendly support to help the CYP with their problem solving.

## Restraint Reduction Network- Post Incident Debriefing Guidance for staff working with autistic young people

<https://restraintreductionnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Post-Incident-Debriefing-Guidance-for-staff-working-with-autistic-people-or-people-with-learning-disabilities.pdf>

The Post-Incident Debriefing and Support Toolkit aims to promote rights respected care by increasing and improving support provided to CYP post-incident.

## Dan Siegel's Hand Model of the Brain

<https://drdansiegel.com/hand-model-of-the-brain/>

## Hand Model of the Brain - Explained for CYP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kx7PCzg0CGE>

## Helping Your Child with Anger written by Rebecca Labrum

<https://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Helping-your-child-with-Anger.pdf>

## Information regarding Therapeutic Stories

<https://semh.co.uk/social-emotional-and-mental-health-semh/therapeutic-stories-semh/>

## Emotionally Based School Avoidance

### EdPSyched Resources - Resources shared by Dr Jerricah Holder (Child & Educational Psychologist)

<https://www.edpsyched.co.uk/ebsa-schools-resources>

### ELSA Support - EBSA Resources

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/ebsa-emotionally-based-school-avoidance/>

### Anna Freud – School Attendance and Mental Wellbeing

<https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/school-attendance-and-mental-wellbeing/>

**Not Fine in School**<https://notfineinschool.co.uk/>

A range of resources for professionals and parent-carers about barriers that lead to school avoidance/attendance.

**SEND and YOU SENDIAS - EBSA - Frequently Asked Questions**<https://www.sendandyou.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/EBSA-Frequently-asked-questions-updated-version-19.09.2024.pdf>**SASS Padlet – Parent/Carers Support including EBSA**<https://padlet.com/SASSBathnes/parent-carer-support-uzhhseaosf0q4r91>**DfE Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance - February 2023**[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63ee20a3d3bf7f62e5f76ba4/Summary\\_of\\_responsibilities\\_where\\_a\\_mental\\_health\\_issue\\_is\\_affecting\\_attendance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63ee20a3d3bf7f62e5f76ba4/Summary_of_responsibilities_where_a_mental_health_issue_is_affecting_attendance.pdf)

This guidance applies to any CYP displaying any SEMH issue that is affecting their attendance. It is not only for CYP who have a diagnosed mental disorder, or a disability or SEND.

**Mental Health – Resources****B&NES' Mental Health Support Team**<https://oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/banes/mhst/>**School Nursing Service**<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/young-people/school-nurses-school-aged-health-service-5-19-years>

Email: BATHNES.schoolnursing@virgincare.co.uk

Tel: 01225 831 666

**B&NES' Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**<https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/bath/>

Tel: 01865 903 889

**Off the Record (counselling service)**<https://www.offthercord-banes.co.uk/about-us>

Tel: 01225 312481

**Beacon House Resources**<https://beaconhouse.org.uk/resources/>

This website offers a wide array of freely available downloadable materials designed to support the healing of trauma and adversity.

**Anna Freud**<https://www.annafreud.org/about/>

Work in collaboration with CYP, their parent/carers and communities and mental health professionals to transform CYP and parent/carers' mental health.

**MindEd (the MindEd programme)**<https://www.minded.org.uk/>

The UK's first comprehensive systematic review of e-mediated therapies and computer-based applications for the prevention and treatment of mental health problems, and substance misuse.

**Young Minds**<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

Provides advice and information on programmes to support positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in CYP.

**Kooth**<https://www.kooth.com/>

Award-winning online supports for CYP to help them better understand mental health. Online counselling and supervised chat rooms. Useful articles, further contact details and easy referral processes.

**Youth in Mind**<https://youthinmind.com/>

Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire to support identification of social, emotional needs.

**Young Minds**<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/medications/>

Various mental health support mechanisms for CYP. Some particularly good resources for understanding medication.

**Relate**<https://www.relate.org.uk/>

Relationships counselling for CYP.

**Beating Eating Disorders UK**<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>

Advice for anyone dealing with eating disorders.

**Child Bereavement UK**<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

Provides information to support bereaved CYP, schools and staff.

**Winston's Wish**<https://winstonswish.org/>

Offers accessible online grief support to CYP across the UK.

**Minds Ahead - Developing CYPs' resilience in the classroom**<https://www.mindsahead.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/How-can-teachers-develop-children-and-young-peoples-resilience-in-the-classroom-.pdf>**General****EEF Selecting Interventions for pupils with SEND**<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/selecting-interventions?x-craft-live-preview=61bd011dbcab3de68fce89ff8b99b04e4bcf872be96b3d086e964c1d0aecd679ggtxqyav>**Whole School SEND Teacher Handbook**<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/resources?title=teacher%20handbook>**Whole School SEND Interactive Teacher Toolkits**<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/toolkits>**Whole School SEND CPD and events**<https://www.wholeschoolsend.org.uk/events>**B&NES' EPS Provision Bank**<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-11/EPS%20Evidence%20Informed%20Assessment%20and%20Provision%20Bank%20November%202025%20V1.pdf>**B&NES Specific****B&NES' Inclusion and SEND Service**<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/inclusion-and-send-advice-service>

Support and training for any professional working with CYP with SEND needs.

**Report a safeguarding concern regarding a CYP in B&NES**<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child>**B&NES' Early Help**<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/get-early-help>

Access to a range of resources and the Early Help Allocation Panel. This can be accessed through the report a concern webpage (as above).

**B&NES' Connecting Families**<https://app.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/childrens-centre-services-request-for-support/>

Support for CYP and parent/carers with multiple needs.

**B&NES' Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service**<https://oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/banes/bsw-spa/>**B&NES' Mental Health Support Team**<https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Page/22333>**B&NES' Virtual School**<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/bath-north-east-somerset-virtual-school>

Support for looked after CYP and those with social care involvement.

**B&NES' Attendance and Welfare Support Service**<https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Page/4919>**B&NES' Traveller Education Service**<https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Article/150142>**COMPASS B&NES**<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Compass%20Referral%20Form.pdf>

For CYP at risk of offending.

**B&NES' Violence Reduction Partnership**<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/violence-reduction-partnership-vrp>

Various services supporting CYP at risk of offending.

**Avon & Somerset Police**<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul>**Referrals for CYP at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) or Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).**<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/your-area/>

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) can deliver in school support through assemblies, classroom visits or work with small groups or individuals.

**Young Victims**<https://youngvictims.org.uk/about-young-victims-service>

Support for CYP who have been victims of crime.

**Black Families Education Support Group**<https://www.educationequals.org.uk/>

Black families' education support group – school-based mentoring for CYP and training for staff. Offer advice to parent/carers.

**SARI**<https://saricharity.org.uk/>

Provides support to anyone who is a victim of hate crime across B&NES. A variety of support options and education opportunities exist.

**Developing Health and Independence**<https://www.dhi-online.org.uk/get-help/young-peoples-drug-alcohol-services>

Includes support for CYP using drugs.

**B&NES' Parent Carer Forum**<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/bnes-parent-carer-forum>

A group of parents, professionals and carers of CYP with SEND within B&NES who meet regularly to discuss improving services for CYP.

**Diagnosed Conditions****About ADHD**<https://adhd.uk.co.uk/about-adhd/>

ADHD support for parent/carers, CYP and professionals.

**Specialist Autism Support Service (SASS)**<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/special-educational-need-or-disability-send/autism/specialist-autism-support-service-sass>

Commissioned by B&NES to support autistic CYP up to the age of 25. The CYP they support must have a diagnosis of Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorder and have a B&NES' home address.

**National Organisation for FASD (Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder)**<https://nationalfasd.org.uk/learn-more/practitioners/educators/>

National FASD, founded in 2003 is a source for information on FASD to the general public, press and to medical and educational professionals. There is a section for Educators and a PDF document with valuable information about how to teach a CYP with FASD.

**SEMH - SEND SUPPORT****Relationships and Connection**

- Key member of staff assigned, with regular time to build the relationship, ensuring the CYP knows they are a main point of contact for support.
- Dedicated connection time scheduled between CYP and key staff members, such as the class teacher/tutor/pastoral lead, e.g. a weekly 'connection slot' is used for informal discussion, shared reading, playing a game, or interest-based activities.
- Small gestures of connection show the CYP they matter, such as staff mentioning something they remember about CYP or asking them to look after a small item.
- Transitional objects like a key ring, note, special pen or small item from home help maintain a sense of connection when parent/carers or key staff are not present. See resources like the book 'The Invisible String' to support.
- Relationship-building prioritised around key transition points, e.g. scheduling regular meet-and-greet sessions with new staff before a transition occurs.
- Home-school communication maintained regularly to support consistency and trust, e.g. weekly updates shared via email/communication books, including positive feedback and key information.
- Specific role and/or responsibility of significance assigned to CYP to promote belonging, mattering, and connection, e.g. a library helper. This role should be linked to an area of strength/interest/target for the CYP.
- Bespoke activities planned to develop self-esteem, e.g. art projects, gardening, coding challenges, or drama performances to allow CYP to experience success and showcase abilities.
- Kindness recognised and celebrated by noticing friendly or helpful behaviour and recording these moments in a 'friendship book' to reinforce positive social interactions.
- Peer relationships and social skills developed, e.g. turn-taking, listening, and extending play routines through bespoke role play, social stories, and positive scripts.
- Structured interventions to develop social skills, e.g. programmes such as Lego Therapy, Talkabout, or Socially Speaking delivered in small groups to build communication and empathy.
- A structured 20/20/20 lunchtime schedule is implemented and monitored, allocating 20 minutes for outdoor activity, 20 minutes for eating (with the option of a quieter space if needed), and 20 minutes for indoor play with a more structured choice of activities.
- Reflective reminders of past successes by revisiting times the CYP made good choices or handled situations well to build confidence and self-esteem.

## Capturing CYP Voice

Capturing the voice of the CYP is a critical component in planning appropriate provision; however, it often requires a skilled and attuned member of staff to achieve this effectively. The cognitive processes involved in identifying personal preferences and articulating them to others can be complex, and many CYP may not yet have developed these skills sufficiently to respond directly to questions about their school or home experiences. Direct questioning can sometimes heighten stress and anxiety, making it essential to use sensitive, CYP-centred approaches.

- PATH Process (Planning Alternative Tomorrow's with Hope): Applied to explore and incorporate CYP aspirations into provision planning.
- Ideal School Exercise: Used to capture the voice of the CYP by exploring their vision of an ideal school environment. This helps staff understand CYP priorities, values, and needs to inform planning and provision.
- CYP Centred Sorting Cards: Implemented to identify CYP views on wellbeing and areas requiring support.
- A 5 Can Make Me Lose Control: Utilised as a visual tool to help CYP communicate emotional states and triggers, supporting self-awareness and regulation.
- Regular Informal Check-In Sessions: Conducted to maintain ongoing dialogue, monitor emotional wellbeing, and capture CYP voice over time.



## Environment, Organisation and Routines

### Environment

- Environment audit undertaken with CYP to identify and support sensory needs effectively.
- Visually calm and uncluttered main learning wall to reduce visual sensory input and prevent overstimulation.
- Strategic seating arrangements position CYP near the front or in clear sightlines of staff, or quiet corners are provided for those who become overwhelmed.
- Specific seating arrangements planned to minimise distractions for CYP and optimise focus, e.g. position CYP away from high-traffic areas to reduce sensory overload/hypervigilance.
- Designated quiet space identified for withdrawal if needed, with a clear reintegration plan. This space may involve support from a specific adult and not necessarily a physical space.
- Sensory tools accessible and offered for CYP to use, e.g. fidget tools, chewable jewellery, weighted items, as part of their personalised sensory 'toolbox' strategies, to support focus and self-regulation.

### Organisation

- Personalised workstation or individual desk available to provide CYP with structure, routine, and a calming environment. Some CYP will benefit from both a workstation and a regular space alongside their peers.
- Personalised visual timetables are utilised to support CYP in understanding the structure of the day.
- Flexible structuring of learning activities, adjusting timings, duration, and providing proactive, regular breaks to meet individual needs.
- Personalised visual planners provided to aid task completion and reinforce daily routines.
- Planned executive functioning provision to support attention, working memory, inhibitory control, planning, organisation, cognitive flexibility, and emotional regulation.
- Adapted homework deadlines for individual CYP facilitated through clear expectations, personalised planning of tasks into manageable chunks, and consistent check-ins to monitor progress and provide support.



## Routines

- Tailored, bespoke support on expectations and routines.
- Bespoke teaching of verbal and non-verbal cues supports CYP understanding of classroom routines and promotes predictable, structured engagement.
- Explicit teaching and practise of alternative strategies to calling out, using visual reminders and tools such as jotters for note-taking, introduced outside the classroom through intervention before applying in lessons. Social stories and scripts can support this.

## Emotional Regulation

### Emotional Regulation and Self-Awareness

- Self-regulation toolkit engages CYP in identifying and practising techniques that promote regulation, supported by visuals or photographs for communication during overwhelm, with triggers and strategies taught and routinely rehearsed when the CYP is regulated.
- Bespoke teaching of what different emotions and responses may look like.
- Small group teaching of recognising, naming, and expressing emotions.
- Potential triggers are recognised, and de-escalation strategies taught, when CYP is regulated.
- Emotional brain responses are explicitly taught, using models like Dr Dan Siegel's 'Hand Model of the Brain' to help CYP understand what happens when strong emotions overwhelm them.
- Structured, evidence-based interventions used to develop emotional literacy and self-regulation skills, e.g. Zones of Regulation, The Incredible 5-Point Scale.
- Anger management strategies (age/stage appropriate) used to help CYP understand and manage anger positively, e.g. A Volcano in My Tummy, Starving the Anger Gremlin.
- Staff model, narrate, and normalise their emotional responses to demonstrate healthy coping strategies.
- Food-based regulation is understood by staff and provided.
- Therapeutic stories and activities are utilised to support CYP in connecting with unresolved feelings influencing their behaviour.

## Safe Spaces and Transition Support

- Clear plans for safe space access and reintegration are provided, e.g. CYP uses a card to leave the room when overwhelmed and follows a reintegration routine afterwards.
- Provision of safe spaces with access to a trusted member of staff, calming tools, e.g. weighted blanket, sensory items, and a visual schedule for reintegration into class.
- Support is provided before, during and after transitions to reduce anxiety and maintain regulation.
- Structured alternatives are offered during unstructured times to reduce anxiety and prevent overwhelm, e.g. bespoke schedules or menus of activities with limited choice.

### Trusted Relationships and Restorative Practice

- Regular 'check in' opportunities with a trusted member of staff (supported by a team approach to avoid over-reliance on one adult).
- Trusted key staff relationship reinforced by consistent validation and acceptance of CYP's feelings.
- Restorative practices implemented which prioritise relationships, give CYP a voice, and create a supportive environment for repairing harm and resolving conflict.
- Emotionally attuned adults available for co-regulation ensure CYP receive timely support to manage emotions and restore regulation when needed.

### Targeted Support and Environmental Adjustments

- Targeted support and environmental adjustments are informed by an identification of triggers, functions and patterns of CYP's responses. This information is shared with all appropriate staff.

*Example: A CYP who kicks when overwhelmed is offered access to a trampoline or a designated movement break to safely release energy.*



## Social Skills and Peer Support

- Explicit teaching of social skills through modelling and practise of key phrases, e.g. “Can I join in?”.
- Small group instruction in turn-taking, reinforced in class using structured activities like board games, role-play, or conversation circles.
- Visual supports and scripts such as flowcharts or prompts used, e.g. “What to do if I feel anxious,” in planners or on desks.
- Personalised social stories and comic strip conversations provided to support reflective conversations and perspective-taking after incidents.
- Instruction in interpersonal problem-solving, including teaching negotiation language, e.g. “I understand your idea, but can we try mine after?”.
- Personal buddy or (rotating) peer support system implemented to provide access to peer support for CYP with SEMH needs.
- Social knowledge programmes delivered using structured interventions, e.g. Time to Talk, Socially Speaking, Talkabout.
- Circle of Friends used as an intervention to improve inclusion of CYP with SEND within settings. It works by gathering the CYP’s peers in a circle of friendly support to help the CYP with their problem solving.



## Regulation and Engagement Strategies

- Calm, firm and consistent approaches to managing learning behaviour are used, related to rewards that are motivating for individual CYP.
- The Pause Button strategy is used: ‘press pause’ if the CYP is not engaging and present them with an alternative activity, reducing the anxiety of not completing a task in one go.
- Deliberate distraction is utilised as a planned short-term response, before regulation and restorative conversations, e.g. staff use planned humour, games, or light-hearted interactions to redirect and calm an overwhelmed CYP.
- Independent success prioritised which ensures provision is planned so that all CYP experience daily opportunities to achieve success.
- Intrinsic motivators are understood for individual CYP and used by staff to inform planning of effective provision which engages, motivates, and builds self-esteem.
- Calm and non-threatening body language implemented, e.g. standing beside the child rather than directly in front or over them, to promote safety and respect.

## Sensory

- Individual responses to sensory systems (Proprioception, Interoception, Vestibular, Olfactory, Gustatory, Tactile, Auditory, Visual) have been identified, with personalised adaptions made, e.g. an alternative space for lunch to avoid smells and sounds of lunch hall.
- Personalised strategies, e.g. sensory circuits, are planned to prevent and respond to CYP when over- and/or under-stimulated, tailored to individual profile.
- Targeted teaching of bodily feelings and sensations support CYP to understand own sensory profile and create methods to support self-regulation.
- Personal sensory demands of day are mapped out and bespoke strategies created to support independence, with recognition of the most challenging times, e.g. lunchtime, changeover of lessons.

## Setting-Based Interventions

Baseline and end-point assessments are in place to measure impact and progress.

- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)** - Targeted support to help CYP develop emotional understanding, resilience, and coping strategies.
- THRIVE** - Structured approaches to promote social and emotional development through tailored activities and relational support.
- Play Therapy** - A qualified Play Therapist delivers sessions to encourage emotional expression, communication, and developmental growth in a safe environment.
- Mentoring** - Guidance, positive role modelling, and connection prioritised to support personal growth and aspirations.
- Forest School** - Integrates nature-based learning to foster engagement, self-regulation, and wellbeing through outdoor experiences.
- Wellbeing Activities** - Gardening, boxing, cooking, or animal care opportunities build responsibility, confidence, and emotional regulation.
- Sports Mentoring** - Opportunities to develop teamwork, resilience, and self-esteem through structured sports activities.
- Counselling** - Professional support available to address mental health needs and promote emotional wellbeing.
- Sensory Circuits** - Implemented as a preventative approach to support regulation and readiness for learning.
- Drawing and Talking Therapy** - Supports emotional processing and communication through creative expression.



## EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) Strategies

- Compassionate, trauma-informed and responsive support that validates the CYP's feelings and tackles anxiety's root causes through relationship-building, gradual exposure, and collaborative, tailored approaches is utilised.
- A lens of risk and resilience is utilised to contextualise EBSA for the CYP.
  - Risk factors: elements that may increase the likelihood of barriers to attendance.
  - Resilience factors: protective elements that can support a CYP's ability to attend and engage with school.
 Understanding of these factors is used to guide a CYP's focused and supportive intervention.
- Belonging and mattering strategies are embedded within a CYP's APDR cycles.
- CYP voice at the centre in planning and decision-making, ensuring support is co-produced and responsive to individual needs.
- Insights from key staff are utilised to build a full understanding of the CYP's EBSA experience and generate ideas for positive change.
- Flexible and personal reintegration planning supports a gradual return to setting, with recognition of potential setbacks, e.g. beginning with short visits and building up attendance.
- Proactive, relationship-based transition planning reduces anxiety during changes in setting, for example through extra visits, visual timetables, and social stories before moving to a new class or setting.
- Flexible adjustments implemented where appropriate, e.g. quieter entrance, visual timetable, ELSA sessions.
- Speech and Language assessment/sensory screener/needs-led pathway considered as a priority to better understand and support CYP's emotional wellbeing and engagement in school.
- Personalisation of CYP and parent/carers' support is tailored to CYP needs and family context, e.g. a flexible start time offered, and a named adult identified to support with transitions.
- Acknowledgement of emotional impact on parent/carers ensures support is offered through a consistent point of contact and relevant signposting, such as directing families to parent/carers' support groups.
- Targeted Anxiety resources are used to support CYP and parent/carers, increase understanding and promote effective coping strategies.
- Grounding techniques are developed and practised (when CYP regulated) to support with anxiety in the moment of transitions into setting.

*Example: 5-4-3-2-1 sensory method: Identify 5 things you can see, 4 you can feel, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, and 1 you can taste.*

*Deep breathing: Slow, intentional breaths calm the nervous system and reduce fight-or-flight responses.*

*Visualization: Imagine a safe place or calming scene in detail, engaging all senses.*

- Scripts and Social Stories ensure a consistent approach is given to CYP during daily transitions.
- Early Help and Multi-Agency Collaboration is initiated promptly when EBSA indicators are present, for example through AWSS or completion of an Early Help assessment.

## Mental Health Support

- Intervention tracking with entry and exit data is implemented to measure progress effectively, with oversight provided by the Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL).
- Clear referral pathways and timely access for internal and external support services and specialist interventions.
- A range of local and national services are available to support the mental health and wellbeing of CYP

### B&NES' Get Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/get-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-children-and-young-people>

### The Hub

<https://thehub.bathnes.gov.uk/Page/20800>

The Hub provides comprehensive resources to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in schools. These include:

- National and local guidance
- Teaching and learning resources
- Staff wellbeing and professional development materials
- Sources of support for CYP.

### Targeted Mental Health Interventions in Schools

- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) / Thrive:** Targeted programmes to develop emotional literacy, resilience, and social-emotional skills.
- Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP):** Provide early intervention and support for mental health and wellbeing within certain educational settings.
- Drawing and Talking Therapy:** Utilises creative expression to help CYP process emotions and experiences in a safe and structured environment.
- Play Therapy:** Delivered by a qualified therapist to promote emotional expression, communication, and developmental growth through play-based approaches.
- Art/Music Therapy:** Uses creative arts to support emotional regulation, self-expression, and mental wellbeing.
- Counselling or Mentoring:** Offers structured emotional support, guidance, and positive role modelling to address individual needs.
- CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy):** Evidence-based intervention to help CYP identify and change unhelpful thoughts and behaviours, improving emotional regulation and coping strategies.

## Alternative Offer/Provision

### Setting Based

- **Nurture Group**

A nurture group is a small, setting-based class for CYP with SEMH needs, providing a nurturing, home-like environment, with tailored support to build skills for mainstream learning. Generally, Nurture Groups use Boxall Profile Assessment and the principles from Nurture UK.

<https://www.nurtureuk.org/>

<https://www.boxallprofile.org/>

- **Internal Alternative Provision**

An Internal Alternative Provision is setting-based, offering structured, on-site support for CYP with SEMH needs and/or learning challenges. It should act as a temporary alternative to mainstream lessons to prevent exclusion and help reintegrate back into regular classes. It is a whole-setting strategy, providing tailored interventions, emotional support, and skill-building in a safe, low-stimulation environment, aiming to address barriers to learning and foster successful reintegration, rather than isolating CYP.

- **Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP)**

An Enhanced Learning Provision is a setting-based provision, offering a quieter, low-arousal environment, with bespoke support for CYP with a range of specific SEND needs, helping them build the skills needed to manage successfully in mainstream settings.

### External Alternative Provision

Alternative Provision (AP) is defined as:

“Education arranged by local authorities for children of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; alternative provision can also be used by schools for children on a suspension (fixed period exclusion); and for children being directed by schools to offsite provision to receive education intended to improve their behaviour” (Arranging Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities. DfE February 2025).

There are different types of AP:

- 1) Short-term, preventative interventions are provided for CYP for a fixed period of time only with the aim of successful re-integration to mainstream or specialist provision. Provision is only for a time-limited period, normally between 6 – 12 weeks and either full-time or part-time, with the remainder of the education offer being delivered by a mainstream/special school.
- 2) Short-term provision for CYP who have been permanently excluded. Provision is from day 6 of the permanent exclusion (sooner for looked after CYP) until the exclusion process is complete and a new placement has been secured.
- 3) Short-term provision for CYP with no school roll or access to education.
- 4) Long-term, full-time individual learning placements for CYP. These placements will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances and likely to be for year 6 or year 11 CYP, to take them to the end of that key stage.

### Lansdown Park Academy (LPA)

LPA is a Pupil Referral Unit / Early Intervention Base in Stockwood, South Bristol.

They offer an ‘Outreach’ programme where CYP are supported through weekly intervention sessions but remain at their home setting.

They also provide an ‘In-reach’ programme for CYP from KS1-3 who require additional support around their behaviour. CYP receive a tailored curriculum that supports them to re-engage with education and helps prepare and plan for their next steps.

### St. Matthias Academy

St Matthias Academy is a secondary AP serving Bristol and B&NES.

CYP are admitted to St Matthias Academy by one of three routes:

- Referral through the LA Fair Access Panel.
- Permanent Exclusion from a mainstream setting.
- Enrolment on a preventative, ‘Revolving Door’ programme.

Settings can contact St Matthias directly if they wish to discuss a potential Revolving Door referral.

### Day 6 Provision

In B&NES, the LA retains responsibility for providing education for CYP who have received a permanent exclusion. This is a commissioned service with registered DfE providers, overseen by the Alternative Learning Team.

Day 6 provision for CYP who have been permanently excluded is provided by the following DfE registered providers:

For Primary: [Lansdown Park Academy](#)

For Secondary: [St. Matthias Academy](#)

### B&NES’ Hospital Education Reintegration Service (HERS)

CYP who are ‘medically unfit’ to attend their registered educational provider can be referred for a placement at HERS. Education will only be arranged for CYP who are not able to attend their education provision at all, due to a medical condition and only for the duration of that medical condition.

HERS can offer a bespoke package which could take the form of on-site learning, 1:1 tutoring, small group teaching and on-line learning.



# Sensory and Physical - Universal

## Definitions

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 (CoP) defines sensory and physical needs as difficulties relating to visual impairment (VI), deaf and/or hearing loss (HL), multi-sensory impairment (MSI) and physical difficulties that may require specialist support and/or equipment. The effects and experiences of disability are unique to each individual and range from mild to very severe or profound.

Under the Equality Act 2010 public sector organisations must make changes in their approach or provision to ensure that services are accessible to disabled people as well as everybody else. Reasonable adjustments can mean alterations to buildings by providing lifts, wide doors, ramps and tactile signage, but may also mean changes to policies, procedures and staff training.

## SEND Code of Practice 2014 (CoP)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

## Physical

Within the Equality Act 2010, a physical disability is a “limitation on a person’s physical functioning, mobility, dexterity, or stamina. It has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on a person’s ability to do daily activities.”

## Sensory

Sensory needs describe how individuals receive, process, and respond to information from their senses and surroundings. While everyone has sensory preferences, those with sensory processing differences may struggle to regulate their responses, affecting daily life, learning, and social interactions.

## The Eight Sensory Systems

All the senses play a key role in how we experience the world:

Visual (Sight): Processing light, patterns, colours, and movement.

Auditory (Hearing): Responding to sounds, volume, and background noise.

Tactile (Touch): Sensations on the skin, including texture, temperature, and pressure.

Olfactory (Smell): Detecting and processing scents and odours.

Gustatory (Taste): Preferences for flavours and food textures.

Vestibular (Balance & Movement): Maintaining balance and coordinating movement via the inner ear.

Proprioception (Body Awareness): Knowing where the body is in space through feedback from muscles and joints.

Interoception (Internal Signals): Awareness of internal states such as hunger, thirst, pain, and emotions.

## Visual Impairment (VI)

The term ‘visual impairment’ is used to describe sight loss that cannot be corrected to a normal level using glasses or contact lenses.

This could be a CYP with significant, uncorrectable loss of sight, ranging from low vision (blurriness, colour issues) to complete blindness, affecting daily life and typically classified by visual acuity (sharpness) and visual field (peripheral sight).

The word “blindness” is commonly used to describe total, or near-total sight loss. ([sense UK](#)).

## Deafness / Hearing Loss (HL)

Deafness or hearing loss is defined as a difficulty hearing or recognising sounds. HL happens when a part of the ear or hearing system does not work properly. This can be temporary or permanent.

There are different levels of HL depending on how loud sounds need to be for you to hear them. There may also be some sounds that you hear better or worse than others. For example, you can be partially deaf (able to hear some sounds), or profoundly deaf (very little or no hearing).

There are lots of different terms for HL, including partially deaf, profoundly deaf, hard of hearing and D/deaf. People with a HL will make their own choice about which term to use.

Some people describe themselves as “Deaf” with a capital “D” to express pride in their Deaf identity. It is important to remember that many do not see their deafness as something they would like to be “cured”.

There are two main types of HL: Sensorineural and Conductive, and it is possible to have both, which is known as mixed HL.



## Sensorineural HL

This is caused by damage to the hair cells inside the inner ear, or damage to the hearing nerve, or both. It makes it more difficult to hear quiet sounds and reduces the quality of sound that you can hear. Sensorineural HL is permanent but can often be treated with hearing technologies.

## Conductive HL

This happens when a problem with the ear, such as ear wax or an ear infection, stops sound from passing through to the cochlea (the hearing organ). Sounds will become quieter and may sound muffled. It can be temporary or permanent, depending on the cause. ([sense UK](#)).

## Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI)

This terminology is for CYP who have a combination of VI and HL. This can cause additional difficulties such as problems with balance and spatial awareness – which is why we talk of multi-sensory impairment (MSI). ([sense UK](#)).

This section provides a comprehensive range of strategies across key areas; all aimed at supporting CYP with Physical and Sensory needs.

- Physical Needs (including physical access, gross and fine motor skills)
- Sensory
- Hearing Loss (HL) / Deafness
- Visual Impairment (VI)
- Personal Care & Hygiene

These strategies are in addition to the whole-setting expectations in Section A [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](#)



## Physical - Universal

### Physical access

See Section A - Environment and Accessibility Expectations [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](#)

- Information about a CYP's physical needs and any involvement from health professionals such as Occupational Therapist, Paediatrician, Physiotherapist is shared in a timely, accurate, and appropriate way, e.g. parents' evenings, transition documents.
- Self-advocacy skills are explicitly taught and practised so CYP can confidently express their needs, e.g. speaking up if they cannot see the board or access an activity.
- Consistently safe, clutter-free environments are maintained and promoted so the CYP can move freely, access learning, and participate fully.

*Example: Staff complete daily environment checks and scans of the classroom. Tidy-up times are taught so CYP can be actively involved in keeping the environment safe and accessible.*

- Clear environmental signage with visuals used to support navigation, highlighting where accessibility challenges exist.

*Examples:*

*Visual Signs with Symbols: Picture-based signs (e.g. toilet, library, playground) used with Makaton or Widgit symbols.*

*Colour-Coded Navigation: Different areas marked with different colours, e.g. red for classrooms, green for outdoor spaces.*

*Accessibility Route Marking: Clear signage with wheelchair icons and directional arrows used to highlight accessible paths and flag areas with limited access.*

- Alternative, accessible routes allowed around the school, ensuring ease of movement and safe access to all areas.
- Physically suitable learning spaces are provided, to support accessibility, comfort, or specific learning requirements.
- Furniture is arranged to allow wheelchair, walking aid or frame access and clear pathways, where possible.
- Differentiation of the day is documented and shared with relevant staff, e.g. rest breaks to reduce physical fatigue, additional time for completion of activities.
- Transition adaptations are in place to reduce congestion and physical strain, e.g. allow queuing earlier or in a quieter space to avoid crowded areas.
- Unnecessary physical exertion is minimised around the school site, e.g. by reducing trips to lockers or cloakroom and providing alternative storage solutions where possible.
- Careers and Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) advice is accessible and inclusive, taking into account mobility, health needs, and reasonable adjustments.

## Resources - Evidenced-based advice, interventions and training

### **RUH Children's Therapies guidance**

RUH physiotherapy links and guidance.

[https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens\\_therapies/physio.asp?menu\\_id=2](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens_therapies/physio.asp?menu_id=2)

### **Wheelchair services**

The Wheelchair Repair Service provides free of charge repairs and maintenance to any NHS issued wheelchair and associated equipment. Repairs and services can be carried out at your home address, place of work, school or day centre.

<https://www.nbt.nhs.uk/bristol-centre-enablement/services-at-centre/wheelchairs-special-seating/wheelchair-repair/wheelchair-repair-bristol-bath-north-somerset-south-gloucestershire>

### **Fizzy Programme**

The FIZZY and Clever Hands Programmes are recommended by occupational therapy as programmes for settings to use to assist in the development of motor skills for those CYP who find this challenging. It can be helpful to use this programme when you are concerned about a CYP's motor skills. It can help you to establish whether or not a referral to occupational therapy is required or can be used while a CYP is waiting to be seen by occupational therapy.

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/4245/a-guide-to-using-fiz-programme.pdf>

Leaflets:

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/4249/0110-balance-level-one-1.pdf>

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/4250/0111-balance-level-two-1.pdf>

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/4251/0112-balance-level-three-1.pdf>

### **BEAM**

Welcome to the balance, education and movement programme, which we call BEAM for short. BEAM is aimed at primary school CYP, ideally in reception year. It was developed by NHS paediatric chartered physiotherapists in Kent.

Website links:

<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/CYPrens-therapies-the-pod/physiotherapy/beam-and-jump-ahead/>

<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/beam-digital-version/the-beam-programme/>

### **Muscular Dystrophy**

Providing support and information for CYP with Muscular Dystrophy.

<https://www.musculardystrophyuk.org/support/information/>

### **Cerebra**

The aim is to provide research-driven, high-quality health and social care advice and support for the families of CYP with brain conditions from birth to the age of 16.

<https://cerebra.org.uk/>

### **Scope**

We create opportunities and provide information and support that empowers.

<https://www.scope.org.uk/>

### **Whizz Kidz**

The UK's leading charity for young wheelchair users.

<https://www.whizz-kidz.org.uk/>

### **Wheelpower**

Providing sporting opportunities for CYP with physical disabilities.

<https://www.wheelpower.org.uk/>



## Gross Motor Skills - Universal

See Section – A: Environment and Accessibility Expectations

[www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations)

- Core stability, balance, proprioceptive, coordination and spatial awareness activities are built into the curriculum with progressive challenge.
- Balance and coordination strategies are included in Physical Education and, where appropriate, other less-active or desk-based learning sessions, e.g. 'stand and stretch' or 'balance on one foot for 10 seconds'.

*Example: Incorporate short, structured activities into lessons that promote balance and coordination, such as standing on one leg while answering questions, passing objects hand-to-hand across the body. These can be embedded into transitions or warm-ups in subjects like drama, Science (lab setup), or literacy (movement-based spelling games).*

- Regular class-based, movement breaks and opportunities to move are adapted to needs of class.

*Example: Embed movement breaks into daily routines using age-appropriate activities (e.g. stretching, standing tasks, sensory circuits). Allow flexibility for individual to take movement breaks.*

- Structured task formats, visual timetables, and other appropriate organisational supports, e.g. colour-coded folders, checklists are used to scaffold learning and reduce barriers around coordination, organisation, or perception. Those with gross motor difficulties may also have challenges in other areas such as co-ordination and organisation skills (e.g. structuring work) or perceptual difficulties (leading to challenges in understanding and interacting with the environment).
- Additional space, flexibility with seating and postural adjustments are consistently accepted and accommodated.

*Example: Allow CYP to adjust positions, e.g. standing to sitting during lessons to manage physical discomfort or maintain focus, with clear expectations. To minimise disruption, whole class movement breaks may reduce need for this. For CYP who do require, sit in a position where movement would not distract others.*



## Resources - Evidenced-based advice, interventions and training

### RUH Children's Therapies

We have specialist knowledge and skills to assess and work with CYP from birth to 18 years old (19 if attending a Special School).

[https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens\\_therapies/index.asp](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens_therapies/index.asp)

### Leaflets and guidance, specific to gross motor skills:

Balance and co-ordination

[https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens\\_therapies/documents/activities\\_for\\_home/Gross\\_motor\\_skills.pdf](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens_therapies/documents/activities_for_home/Gross_motor_skills.pdf)

- Exercises to Strengthen core (Postural Stability)
- Activities to improve balance
- Activities to improve core strength

### BEAM

BEAM is a movement screening and development tool for young children suitable for use in primary schools.

Website links:

<https://www.kentcth.nhs.uk/beam-digital-version/>

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/~assets/doc//Edusupport/studentdisability/dyspraxiarecommendedreasonableadjustments.pdf>

### Inclusive sports

CP Sports - <https://cpsport.org/?summary=all>

Nova Sport - <https://www.novasports.org.uk/>

Wheelchair Basketball - <https://www.novasports.org.uk/bath-romans-wheelchair-basketball>



## Fine motor skills - Universal Strategies

See Section – A: Environment and Accessibility Expectations

[www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations)

- Optimal seating arrangements, e.g. feet flat, bottom back in chair, table at elbow height and face forward, used to allow for good posture and alignment whilst engaging in writing or fine motor tasks.
- Fine motor skills development opportunities such hand strength, finger isolation, pincer grasp and dexterity are promoted through age-appropriate and structured activities.
- Bilateral co-ordination tasks are included in everyday learning activities to strengthen hand co-ordination and support fine motor development, e.g. cutting, folding, using rulers, or manipulating materials.
- Backward chaining is used to ensure success with task completion whilst developing fine motor skills, e.g. doing up the final button on a coat.
- Approved, physical support resources are offered to aid manipulation and control when completing fine motor tasks, including writing.

*Example: Using free flowing pens (these have less friction and can be easier to use than pencils), pen and pencil-grips, triangular pencils, short pencils, to encourage correct grasp.*

- Visual sizing and levelling prompts provided to support CYP in maintaining consistent letter size, spacing, and alignment during written tasks, e.g. boxed or lined paper spaced to guide size.

## Recording work

- Alternative methods of recording for extended writing tasks offered, where handwriting may act as a barrier or to reduce stress due to fine-motor challenges, e.g. access to a laptop, highlighting pre-produced notes.
- Wrist positioning supports available, e.g. writing wedges/slopes, ergonomic cushions, Dycem non-slip mats, to help maintain stability and comfort during writing tasks, promoting better control and reducing fatigue.
- Worksheets and handouts adapted to account for larger/less legible handwriting or scribing.

*Example: Boxes for answering questions are enlarged with lines or additional visual prompts for recording. Use of Post-It notes to stick on handouts or boxes where writing would need to be small to fit in.*

- Additional time planned in to allow for recording activities involving fine motor skills.

## Useful Resources, Training and Guidance

### RUH Children's Therapies

We have specialist knowledge and skills to assess and work with CYP from birth to 18 years old (19 if attending a Special School).

Website: [https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens\\_therapies/index.asp](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens_therapies/index.asp)

### Fine Motor Skills

[https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens\\_therapies/documents/activities\\_for\\_home/Fine\\_motor\\_skills.pdf](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens_therapies/documents/activities_for_home/Fine_motor_skills.pdf)

This includes:

- Activities to encourage fine motor skills
- Hand activities

### Handwriting

Handwriting activities and fine-motor development guidance.

[https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens\\_therapies/documents/activities\\_for\\_home/Handwriting.pdf](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/childrens_therapies/documents/activities_for_home/Handwriting.pdf)

### Fizzy – Clever Hands

Clever Hands' Programmes are recommended by occupational therapy as programmes for schools to use to assist in the development of motor skills.

Website links:

[https://onchan.sch.im/site/uploads/pages/163/\\_media/20240927\\_07f6c746/Clever\\_Hands\\_1.pdf](https://onchan.sch.im/site/uploads/pages/163/_media/20240927_07f6c746/Clever_Hands_1.pdf)  
<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/4256/0104-clever-hands-level-two-1.pdf>  
<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/4257/0105-clever-hands-level-three-1.pdf>

### Fine Motor Skills Assessments

South Warwickshire Foundation Skills Assessment- assessment of foundation classroom skills and fine motor skills, all ages, free to access.

<https://www.swft.nhs.uk/our-services/occupational-therapy-children>

### B&NES' EPS Provision Bank

<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-11/EPS%20Evidence%20Informed%20Assessment%20and%20Provision%20Bank%20November%202025%20V1.pdf>

**Resources:**

- **Pegs to Paper** <https://learnplaynexus.com/product/pegs-to-paper-sen-exercises-for-handwriting>  
SEND Exercises for Handwriting – the ultimate resource for developing and evaluating the essential skills children need for speech, reading, and writing – featuring the unique ‘Grippy Peg’ for establishing an ergonomic handwriting grasp.
- **CALL Scotland** [www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/posters-and-leaflets/supporting-writing-difficulties](http://www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/posters-and-leaflets/supporting-writing-difficulties)  
Information and useful poster on using ICT to overcome barriers to learning.
- **Inclusive Technology** [www.inclusive.co.uk](http://www.inclusive.co.uk)  
Supplier of hardware equipment/software that helps CYP with SEND use a computer and communicate.
- **Teodorescu-Write** from the start <https://www.idalearning.com/product/fe00000353>  
Unique Programme to Develop the Fine Motor and Perceptual Skills Necessary for Effective Handwriting.
- **The Handwriting Without Tears®** curriculum draws from years of innovation and research to provide developmentally appropriate, multisensory strategies for early writing.
- **Widgit Software** [www.widgit.com](http://www.widgit.com) Supporting fair and equal access to information.

**Sensory - Universal Strategies**

- Awareness of the potential influence that senses may have on CYP engagement informs adjustments, including visual (sight), auditory (hearing), tactile (touch), olfactory (smell), gustatory (taste), proprioceptive (body position), vestibular (balance and movement) and interoceptive (internal body signals).
- Preventative and responsive planning to sensory overwhelm, including hypo-and hyper-sensitivities, e.g. avoiding visually cluttered boards. Environment and sensory audits could be used to inform this.
- Curriculum activities are sensory responsive and explicitly teach CYP about their bodies and sensory needs.  
*Example: Within Personal Development the teacher introduces sensory processing differences, linking to real-life examples, e.g. how different people might experience touch or sound.*
- Alerting, organising and calming activities are provided and used proactively to meet fluctuating levels of engagement as a whole class strategy or sensory circuit.  
*Examples: Movement breaks during lessons of prolonged static listening, calming music to support focus.*
- Conversations about bodily feelings are modelled and encouraged, e.g. how feelings impact emotions and behaviour.  
*Example: Teacher introduces the concept of sensory sensitivity, e.g. ‘Some people find loud sounds uncomfortable’, and how this might make the body feel. The class discusses strategies to feel calm and focused, e.g. movement breaks, quiet areas.*
- The potential intensity of the school day is understood and promoted, including sensory demands, and the impact this can have on learning and engagement.  
*Example: School integrates sensory-aware spaces. Weekly staff briefings include a ‘sensory spotlight’—a short reflection or strategy to consider sensory load and emotional regulation.*
- CYP empowered to understand their own sensory preferences and needs, and to make autonomous choices about how to regulate and engage throughout the school day, e.g. “When I feel like this.... this strategy/activity might help me...”.  
*Examples: Classrooms and shared areas display sensory choice boards with regulation options CYP can select from independently. These include alerting, calming and organising activities. Sensory awareness embedded into tutor times, Personal Development, wellbeing lessons, and assemblies.*
- Sensory breaks (adapted to age/stage) to support engagement. Encourage older CYP to develop strategies that can be carried out independently throughout day.  
*Examples: Teachers build short sensory breaks into the daily routine—such as lesson focused movement games for younger CYP –while encouraging older CYP to choose and use their own regulation strategies like giving themselves a hand massage, square breathing.*

- Sensory tools are accessible and offered for CYP to use, e.g. fidget tools, chewable jewellery, weighted items, as part of their sensory ‘toolbox’ strategies, when needed to support focus, wellbeing, and engagement. CYP are taught when and how to use tools appropriately, e.g. during independent work, transitions, or when feeling overwhelmed. Examples: CYP adds weight to backpack as part of a proprioceptive grounding strategy during transitions.

- The main learning wall that CYP face is intentionally kept visually calm and uncluttered to reduce visual sensory input and prevent overstimulation.

Example: Displays are minimal and purposeful, using uncluttered layouts and consistent fonts and borders. Essential learning aids, e.g. number lines, vocabulary, sentence stems are placed in clearly defined zones.

- Strategies to ask for a break or time to step back from a task when feeling overwhelmed are created. This should include a variety of methods, e.g. verbal cues, visual cues (break card, discreet gestures).
- Reasonable adjustments to uniform are available.

## Useful Resources, Training and Guidance

### Royal United Hospital (RUH) Children’s Therapies

#### Sensory Padlet

Information on what sensory processing is, the impact of imbalanced senses and includes practical activities and useful guidance to support CYP experiencing sensory difficulties.

<https://padlet.com/ruhtrchildrenstherapiesgroup/sensory-information-ibvrge230v28ltce>

#### RUH Attention and Concentration, Occupational Therapy Advice

<https://padlet.com/ruhtrchildrenstherapiesgroup/sensory-information-ibvrge230v28ltce/wish/goEIQygkN8GnW3yY>

### Specialist Autism Support Service (SASS)

#### Sensory Padlet

How to support CYP who struggle to recognise bodily signals or relate them to emotional states.

<https://padlet.com/SASSBathnes>

### B&NES’ EPS Provision Bank

<https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-11/EPS%20Evidence%20Informed%20Assessment%20and%20Provision%20Bank%20November%202025%20V1.pdf>

## National Autistic Society

### Autism and Sensory Processing

Sensory processing differences mean you experience input from the senses differently to other people. This website provides advice and guidance around Autism and Sensory Processing.

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/about-autism/sensory-processing>

### A Toolkit to Develop a Whole School Approach for Sensory Wellbeing - Tessa Hyde & Alice Hoyle

The book as a whole enables schools to move beyond sensory awareness towards sensory inclusion and sensory wellbeing.

[https://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Becoming\\_a\\_Sensory\\_Aware\\_School\\_Freebook.pdf](https://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Becoming_a_Sensory_Aware_School_Freebook.pdf)

### Blurt Foundation

Sensory Selfcare toolkit (suitable for secondary aged CYP).

<https://uksa.org/create-your-own-sensory-self-care-tool-kit/>

### Children’s Choice Therapy – Sensory Circuits

Sensory circuits are a great way to both energise and settle children so they can focus and engage better in the classroom.

<https://childrenschoicetherapy.co.uk/sensory-circuits/>

### Neuroinclusive Education Network (formerly Autism Education Trust)

If you wish to access the updated sensory resources, you can do so by attending the Good Autism Practice Training.

<https://www.nen.org.uk/sensory-resources>

### Sensory Circuits for older learners

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/sensory-circuits-for-older-learners-t-s-1669115538>

<https://www.dchft.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Sensory-Strategies-for-the-Older-Child-and-Adolescents.pdf>



## Personal Care and Hygiene - Universal Strategies

### Personal care

See Section A: 'Medical' [www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/oap-setting-expectations)

- Personal care and hygiene needs are understood and clearly communicated with relevant staff.
- Visual guides and sequences displayed to support CYP's independence in hygiene practice.

*Example: Toilets include the visuals from 'How to wash your hands' NHS guidance.*

- Independence and autonomy in self-care routines are developed (age and stage appropriate).

*Example: Putting coats on pegs - initially model and guide the routine, then gradually reduce verbal prompts as the CYP becomes more confident, encouraging them to complete the routine independently.*

- Personal development practice supports CYP to manage daily routines, e.g. organising materials, transitioning between classes, or preparing for lunch.
- Strategies that alert staff to CYP's personal care needs are appropriately shared and sensitively approached.

*Example: Sharing of information for CYP with toilet passes is communicated via confidential and non-shaming channels, e.g. digital school systems. Discreet methods of communicating the need to leave lesson is agreed so CYP can signal their needs without stigma, e.g. toilet pass, nod of head.*

- Sanitary products are made readily available and easily accessible to CYP in a discreet and respectful manner.

### Handling of personal equipment or technologies

- Assistive equipment or personal technology is handled safely and hygienically, with appropriate infection control measures in place to protect CYP, particularly when they are unwell or vulnerable to infection, e.g. when a CYP with hearing technology has an ear infection.

*Examples:*

- Handwashing or sanitising before and after handling
- Use of PPE, e.g. gloves
- Cleaning devices or equipment with appropriate methods, if used for multiple CYP, e.g. interactive whiteboards.

## Useful Resources, Training and Guidance

### NHS

How to wash your hands.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

### UKHSA

Handwashing best practice.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/nipc-manual-appendix-1-handwashing.pdf>

### Standard infection control precautions

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/national-infection-prevention-and-control-manual-nipcm-for-england/chapter-1-standard-infection-control-precautions-sicps/>

### HCRG - Integrated Community Based Care

Children's Bladder & Bowel Service.

<https://bswcommunityservices.co.uk/services/childrens-bladder-and-bowel/>

### Eric Charity

ERIC, the Children's Bowel and Charity is the UK's leading charity supporting all CYP with a bowel or bladder problem. A free to access telephone and email helpline.

<https://www.eric.org.uk/>

### Bladder & Bowel UK

Charity to support CYP with bladder and bowel concerns – includes "just can't wait" card.

<https://www.bbuk.org.uk/children-young-people/resources-for-children/>

### Local guidance

Bristol Early Years – self-help toileting.

<https://www.bristolearlyyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/SEND-Self-help-Toileting.pdf>

### DFE guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/toilet-training>

### NSPCC Intimate Care Guidance

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/intimate-care>

## Physical - SEND Support

### Physical Access

Some CYP will need targeted support which is different from and additional to the support provided to the majority of CYP in the setting.

The frequency, duration, context, and extent of universal, HQT strategies may be increased under SEND Support. The individual strategies needed for each CYP will be identified, formally recorded, and implemented on an individual or small group basis. This will be recorded through an APDR cycle.

- Coordination and regular liaison with associated health professionals are organised and settings collaborate to align strategies and share relevant information (with consent).
- Clear documentation of all communications and actions taken is maintained and reviewed regularly to ensure support remains appropriate.
- Timetabling is carefully planned with alternative routes around the site offered, e.g. for step-free access to key areas including classrooms, learning blocks, social areas.
- Timetabling is carefully considered to allow for rest breaks and fatigue management.
- Planned flexibility for transitions and highly crowded areas, e.g. between lessons, lunch breaks, assemblies, is implemented.
- Physical manipulation accessibility is considered and adaptions in place.

*Example: Door handles are at correct height and can be manipulated, e.g. use of twist or grab, handrails correct height, swipe access heights and locations have been thought through.*

- CYP voice is gathered to understand which activities or environments feel most accessible and which present challenges, e.g. through a RAG-rated list or timetable.



## Gross Motor Skills - SEND Support

Some CYP will need targeted support which is different from and additional to the support provided to the majority of CYP in the setting.

The frequency, duration, context, and extent of universal, HQT strategies may be increased under SEND Support. The individual strategies needed for each CYP will be identified, formally recorded, and implemented on an individual or small group basis. This will be recorded through an APDR cycle.

- Specialist advice fully implemented, with recommended resources in place, and reviewed regularly.
- Specialist physiotherapy strategies are integrated into daily routines for whole-class participation, where suitable, so all CYP can take part together, promoting a culture of inclusion.
- Bespoke adaptations provided, where advised by external professionals, to support physical needs and comfort, e.g. adjustable/standing desks and worktops, posture chairs.
- Individualised transition planning is carefully considered, and strategies agreed, to reduce risk and ensure success.

*Example: CYP has additional time during transitions if needed to avoid crowded areas. A rotating buddy system supports CYP to get to next session.*

- Option of arriving in PE kit offered to CYP to avoid physical demand of changing.
- Planning allows for CYP to make valuable contributions to a group's success without needing to perform physically demanding actions, e.g. role of director, strategist, or evaluator.
- Time for specialist intervention, e.g. Physio or Occupational Therapy sessions are planned for, with opportunities to catch up on any missed learning prioritised.



## Fine Motor Skills – SEND Support

Some CYP will need targeted support which is different from and additional to the support provided to the majority of CYP in the setting.

The frequency, duration, context, and extent of universal, HQT strategies may be increased under SEND Support. The individual strategies needed for each CYP will be identified, formally recorded, and implemented on an individual or small group basis. This will be recorded through an APDR cycle.

- Specialist advice is fully implemented with recommended resources in place and reviewed regularly.
- Targeted setting-based intervention to develop fine motor skills such as hand strength, finger isolation, pincer grasp and dexterity are in place.
- Alternative methods of recording regularly and consistently used and formally recorded, e.g. scribe, laptop.
- Range of accessible keyboard and mouse alternatives and/or other suitable software available for CYP to trial, e.g. vertical mouse, enlarged font and colour-coded / lower case keyboard.
- Hand-outs with enlarged spacing to fit larger handwriting available.
- Homework tasks have bespoke adaptations to ensure ease of access and methods of recording are considered with resources / equipment available at home.

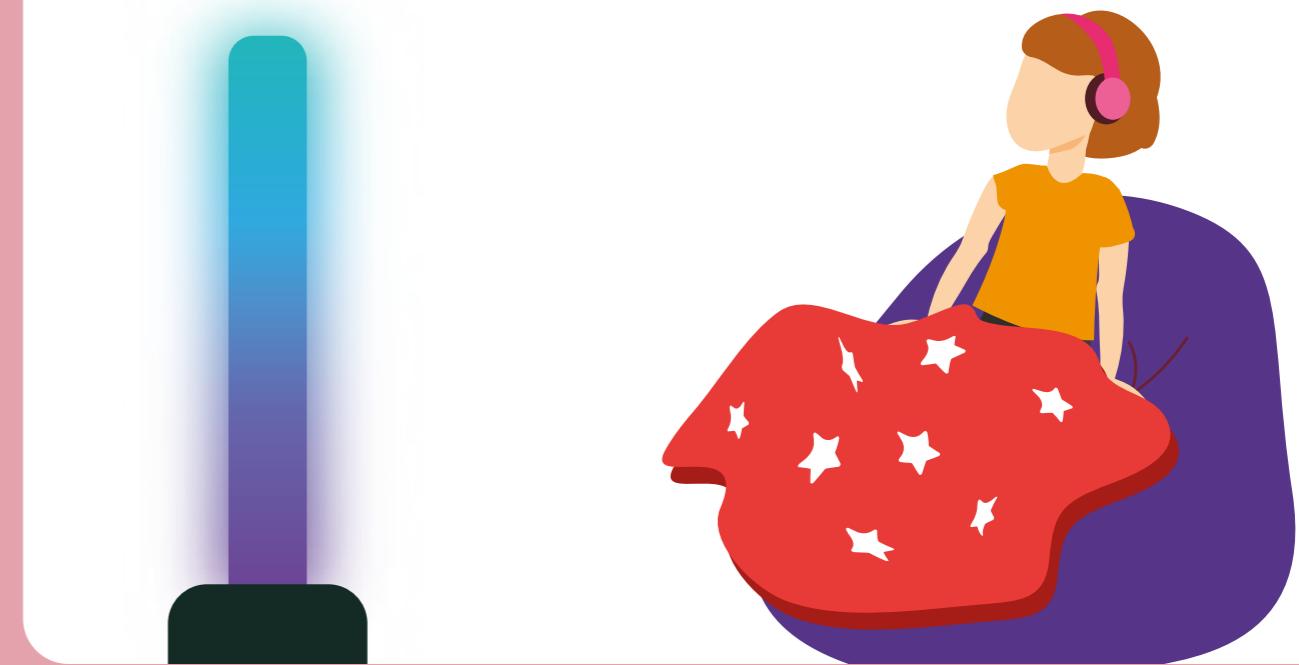


## Sensory – SEND Support

Some CYP will need targeted support which is different from and additional to the support provided to the majority of CYP in the setting.

The frequency, duration, context, and extent of universal, HQT strategies may be increased under SEND Support. The individual strategies needed for each CYP will be identified, formally recorded, and implemented on an individual or small group basis. This will be recorded through an APDR cycle.

- Individual responses to sensory systems (Proprioception, Interoception, Vestibular, Olfactory, Gustatory, Tactile, Auditory, Visual) have been identified, with personalised adaptions made, e.g. an alternative space for lunch to avoid smells and sounds of lunch hall.
- Specialist advice, e.g. Occupational Therapist, is fully implemented with recommended resources in place and reviewed regularly.
- Specialist guidance to support different sensory systems (Proprioception, Interoception, Vestibular, Olfactory, Gustatory, Tactile, Auditory, Visual) is implemented.
- Bespoke uniform adaptations are in place with the impact monitored.
- Personalised interventions and strategies, e.g. sensory circuits, are planned to support CYP when over- and/or under-stimulated, tailored to CYP's profile.
- Targeted teaching of bodily feelings and sensations support CYP to understand own sensory profile and create methods to support self-regulation.
- Sensory demands of day are mapped out and strategies created to support independence with recognition of the most challenging times, e.g. lunchtime, lesson changeover.
- Planned access to low- or high-stimulation space, e.g. library or sensory room.
- A variety of seating considered so those with sensory sensitivities can adjust and position themselves comfortably, considering proprioceptive factors (awareness of body in space).
- Extra time is regularly used and monitored to accommodate sensory fatigue or when a CYP is facing challenges with their sensory needs.



## Personal Care and Hygiene – SEND Support

Some CYP will need targeted support which is different from and additional to the support provided to the majority of CYP in the setting.

The frequency, duration, context, and extent of universal, HQT strategies may be increased under SEND Support. The individual strategies needed for each CYP will be identified, formally recorded, and implemented on an individual or small group basis. This will be recorded through an APDR cycle.

- Assistive equipment or personal technology is handled safely and hygienically, with appropriate infection control measures in place to protect CYP, particularly when they are unwell or vulnerable to infection, e.g. when a CYP with hearing technology has an ear infection.

Examples:

- Handwashing or sanitising before and after handling
- Use of PPE, e.g. gloves
- Cleaning devices or equipment with appropriate methods, if used for multiple CYP, e.g. interactive whiteboards.

- Referrals are made to the relevant professional for personal care and/or hygiene needs beyond universal support, such as continence services.
- Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) are developed and implemented, in collaboration with health professionals and parent/carers, to ensure the medical and care needs of CYP are met effectively and safely.
- Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs) are created, monitored and reviewed following a clear and consistent process, developed in partnership with the CYP, their parent/ carers and key stakeholders, including health professionals and education staff.
- Intimate Care Plans are developed in collaboration with the CYP, parent/carers, and relevant professionals. Plans are individualised, clearly documented, regularly reviewed, and aligned with safeguarding and dignity principles.
- Consistent, named staff members are designated to provide intimate care.
- CYP's safety, privacy, and dignity are at the forefront when intimate care is provided, using 1:1 care whenever possible, while incorporating the CYP's voice and preferences.



## Hearing Loss (HL)/ Deafness

We use the term 'deaf' to refer to all types of hearing loss (HL), from mild to profound. This includes deafness in one ear or temporary HL such as glue ear. All CYP with an identified deafness should be receiving the appropriate OAP provision.

Any CYP who is receiving specialist support, such as from a Teacher of the Deaf (ToD) or Speech and Language Therapist (SALT), is likely to be receiving SEND support. SEND support includes OAP alongside and informed by additional targeted support, recommendations and advice from the specialists. This could be specific to curriculum delivery, teaching and learning or encompass wider development and skills such as language and communication, deaf identity, technology and impact on social, emotional and mental health (SEMH).

This section is not divided into universal and SEND support because all CYP with HL (from mild to profound, unilateral deafness, or temporary conditions such as glue ear) are likely to require specialist input, such as from a ToD or SALT.

### Environment

- Safety plans and procedures are in place and consider the impact HL can have.
- Risk Assessments consider:
  - explicit teaching of fire and lockdown practice, e.g. universal signs (BSL/Makaton);
  - plans for areas where alarms are not heard, e.g. toilet;
  - supply and external staff, e.g. ensure sports coaches have up-to-date information and know risk reduction strategies.
- Non-verbal cues are explicitly taught and practised to help CYP navigate safely in practical environments, e.g. visual environmental markings ('hot' symbol by oven).
- Hearing-inclusive environments are promoted, with a focus on reducing reverberation (echo) and external acoustics, e.g. using carpeting, rugs and soft furnishings.
- Learning resources are reasonably adapted to minimise acoustics, e.g. soft pads on bottom of chair legs.
- Environment audit by ToD considered.
- Background noise is minimised to improve concentration, particularly for activities of high-auditory demand.
- Outdoor sounds, and equipment noise, e.g. fans, heaters, projectors are identified and reduced where possible.
- Feedback systems are used to actively seek input from CYP on distracting sounds and adjustments made to seating or environment accordingly.
- Countdowns or agreed signals are used to lower classroom noise during activities with high-auditory demand, e.g. repeat and recall activities, or to reduce listening stress.

## Positioning

- Feedback gained from CYP on best positioning for learning.
- Awareness of CYP's dominant ear ensures better access to verbal instructions, particularly during outdoor or physical activities.
- Hand gestures that cover the mouth and moving around the room whilst talking are avoided, ensuring CYP can see faces.
- Staff face the CYP directly, ensuring their mouth is clearly visible and well-lit, to aid lip reading.
- CYP's attention is gained before speaking - in a considered, appropriate and agreed way.
- CYP is positioned ensuring that there is a clear view of staff faces, and any visual materials used.
- Whiteboards, screens and learning boards are free from glare or reflections.



## Teaching Strategies

- Clear and precise instructions are reinforced with visual supports, such as written prompts.
- Consistent non-verbal cues are used to support understanding when verbal instructions are harder to follow.
- Instructions are delivered clearly and at an appropriate volume and speed, avoiding exaggerated lip movements or shouting, which can distort lip patterns. For some, usual speaking speed may be preferred as the slowing down of sounds or pace can interfere with lipreading.
- Pertinent comments made by other CYP are repeated and/or rephrased in a clear tone, at an appropriate volume and speed to ensure CYP can access peer contributions.
- Additional time to process auditory information allowed where needed. Repeating or rephrasing too quickly is avoided to give the CYP time to work through the original message.
- Pre-teaching of instructions and demonstrations is provided.
- Structured approaches to pre- and post-teaching vocabulary in place to support accessing and retaining key language used in lessons.
- Cognitive load considered, with an understanding that sustained listening effort can have an impact on fatigue and ability to focus, e.g. build short, planned 'listening breaks' into the learning sessions.
- Visual anchors, e.g. pictures, diagrams, handouts, used to support learning – 'words disappear, visuals don't'.
- Subject-specific vocabulary mats used during lessons to help CYP access and recall key terms, particularly in topics with new or complex language.
- Simple definitions, and contextual examples, used to support understanding.
- A peer support system is offered where a (rotating) trusted classmate is designated as a 'hearing buddy' to help the CYP with HL access spoken instructions.
- Media resources are accessible, e.g. videos are captioned, subtitled or CYP has access to a transcript.
- Homework task descriptions are delivered in written format, and additional methods are considered, e.g. using accessible digital programmes.
- Time for specific interventions is allocated and appropriate environments for these organised.
- Catch-up opportunities are in place where learning is missed due to specialist intervention or targeted support.
- Exam Access Arrangements are in place with guidance from involved professionals.

## Equipment

See Personal Care and Hygiene section for guidance on safe handling of assistive equipment and/or technologies.

- Equipment and personal technology are easily accessible and CYP has a trained person to support if there is a problem with the device. Information around specific technology is clearly stated within documentation – see example in resources section.
- Management and monitoring of equipment storage and charging are in place, following clear systems.
- A clean, secure location for storing hearing devices when removed, e.g. during PE or swimming.
- Safe charging facilities designated for radio aids and other equipment.

## Wellbeing and Mental Health

See SEMH section for further guidance.

- Additional support for transitions is in place, e.g. through additional visits to new setting to help CYP familiarise with new environment, timely transfer of relevant information, specialist assessments and plans.
- Wellbeing and self-esteem are monitored and the impact these may be having on CYP's learning and relationships is reviewed.

*Example: CYP with HL has opportunity for check-ins from a trusted adult and knows how and where to seek support.*

## Implementation of specialist advice

- Advice and recommendations from ToD are obtained, followed, shared with members of staff and reviewed regularly.

These may include, but not limited to:

- Individualised communication support, e.g. access arrangements include having texts read aloud instead of listening to a recording during a listening-based exam.
- Targeted SALT support.
- Targeted social communication and emotional literacy mentoring.
- Modified listening environments, e.g. use of Soundfield systems, microphones and other bespoke, whole-class technologies.

## Resources - Evidenced-based advice, interventions and training

### Bristol Sensory Support Service

Hearing support and training courses from Teacher of the Deaf.

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/sensory-support-service>

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/sensory-support-service/hearing-support> (including glue ear)

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/sensory-support-service/training/training-courses>

### Bath RUH Audiology

[https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/clinics/audiology/index.asp?menu\\_id=1](https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/clinics/audiology/index.asp?menu_id=1)

### Sense

“Over 70 years, we've built extensive knowledge and expertise in supporting deafblind people and disabled people with complex needs”.

<https://www.sense.org.uk/our-services/support-for-children/>

### Deaf-friendly Teaching

Create a more inclusive learning environment where deaf CYP feel supported and ready to succeed.

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/education-professionals/deaf-friendly-teaching>

### Specialist deaf curriculum Framework

Supporting deaf babies, CYP, and their families to develop knowledge and make informed and independent decisions about their deafness, from identification through to adulthood.

<https://www.batod.org.uk/resources-category/specialist-deaf-curriculum-framework/>

### National Children's Deaf Charity

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/>

NDCS Passports – <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/advice-and-support/all-advice-and-support-topics/education-and-learning/personal-passports-and-profiles>

NDCS Free books and resources <https://ndcs-bookshop.myshopify.com/collections/deaf-friendly-teaching>

### NHS Audiology FAQs

<https://www.ruh.nhs.uk/patients/services/clinics/audiology/documents/FAQ.pdf>

### C2Hear

C2Hear is an online service that uses videos to demonstrate how to use and manage your hearing aids and hearing loss.

<https://c2hearonline.com/>

### Tinnitus UK

This is a charity which provides free support to anyone with tinnitus or who is caring for someone with tinnitus.

<https://tinnitus.org.uk/>

## Visual Impairment (VI)

The term 'visual impairment' (VI) is used to describe sight loss that cannot be corrected to a normal level using glasses or contact lenses.

This could be a CYP with significant, uncorrectable loss of sight, ranging from low vision (blurriness, colour issues) to complete blindness, affecting daily life and typically classified by visual acuity (sharpness) and visual field (peripheral sight).

The word "blindness" is commonly used to describe total, or near-total sight loss.

(definition by sense UK, <https://www.sense.org.uk/information-and-advice/conditions/blindness-and-visual-impairment/>).

Any CYP who is receiving specialist support, such as from a Qualified Teacher of Visually Impaired (QTVI), is likely to be receiving SEND support. SEND support includes OAP alongside and informed by additional targeted support, recommendations and advice from the specialists. This could be specific to curriculum, teaching and learning or encompass wider development and skills such as language and communication, technology and impact on social, emotional and mental health (SEMH).

This section is not divided into universal and SEND support because all CYP with VI are likely to require specialist input, such as from a QTVI.

### Environment

- Safe environment orientation across whole setting (internal and external spaces) is considered to highlight potential risks or accessibility barriers.
- Layout of learning spaces is fixed, keeping furniture in consistent positions; avoiding unplanned rearrangements.
- Clear, unobstructed pathways are maintained throughout classrooms and corridors.
- Low-level obstacles are removed, e.g. bags, chairs, bins from walkways.
- Exit routes (including emergency routes) are regularly checked to ensure they are free from obstacles and safe for children with VI.
- Classroom and environment are clutter-free and well organised, especially in areas that CYP with VI regularly access.
- Consistent resource zones and multi-sensory labelling are implemented to support independent navigation and resource use.

*Example: Organise the classroom or social areas into consistent resource zones and label materials using multi-sensory formats such as large print, high-contrast colours, and audio cues. Pair this with a structured access system, e.g. verbal prompts to support independent navigation rehearsal and resource use. Provide orientation sessions to help students learn the layout.*

- Glare management is considered and planned for to ensure clear visibility of staff faces and learning resources.

*Examples:*

- Turn off overhead lighting on bright days.
- Pull blinds to reduce sun glare.
- Change the background colour on the interactive whiteboard (IWB).

- Use matt surfaces for resources, including laminated materials.

- Main board and/or learning area is uncluttered and visual crowding is considered, e.g. using a minimalist layout with high-contrast colours, large print, and clear spacing between elements.
- Structured visual anchors, e.g. consistent placement of key information on worksheets and displays are used to support orientation and focus.
- A clear, planned and practised strategy is in place for CYP with VI to locate peers during transitions, social times and when crowds are increased.

*Example: There is an allocated bench for CYP to meet peers during break times.*

### Positioning

- Seating plans ensure CYP are seated in the optimum position for visibility and classroom engagement.
- CYP face the board directly, avoiding glare from windows or lights.
- Position of sun considered when teaching outside - position CYP with back to the sun and staff facing the sun.
- Consistent seating plans or placements marked with a tactile or visual cue are used.
- Proximity to the teacher is ensured for verbal reinforcement.

### Teaching Strategies

- CYP's name is said before talking to them; staff remember that CYP with VI are less likely to follow non-verbal communication.
- Locations or actions are described and pointing or waving is avoided.

*Example: Avoid pointing or gesturing without explanation. Instead of "Look at this diagram," say, "On the screen, the diagram shows the water cycle starting with evaporation in the top left corner,".*

- Clear verbal explanations provided when giving a demonstration or verbalising what is written on a board, e.g. 'radio teacher'.
- Understanding is regularly checked in an appropriate and non-shaming way.
- Open-ended questions and descriptive prompts are used to check understanding.
- CYP are encouraged to explain concepts in their own words or describe what they have understood to avoid yes/no responses and repetition.
- Sustained visual effort is considered with rest periods or alternative activities provided, e.g. audio practise/ listening to buddy reader.
- Extra time is given to complete tasks to reduce the effects of visual fatigue.
- Pens that provide clear contrast are used consistently, e.g. for board writing, marking, feedback purposes. Use black or dark blue ink on white backgrounds, avoid pale colours or red pens, and ensure writing is bold, legible, and well-spaced. Check with CYP which contrasts work best for individual.
- Curriculum content is made visually accessible, using commercially-available, adapted resources and equipment, e.g. use of coloured number lines, PE balls, contrast rulers.

- Fonts and handwriting are considered for legibility, and clear print is used on displays and worksheets, avoiding cursive or stylised fonts.
- Typed materials follow formatting guidelines as advised by QTVI, e.g. minimum 14pt font, left-aligned, no italics.
- Key vocabulary is displayed using visuals – ‘words disappear, visuals don’t’.
- Spoken definitions and contextual examples are used when introducing new vocabulary.
- Real-time, verbal mediation of visual content is provided and linked to the learning objective, e.g. describing images, diagrams, demonstrations, classroom displays, and gestures using clear, structured language.
- Access to own copy of learning materials, e.g. textbooks, worksheets, and visual aids are provided so CYP can hold and manipulate them at angles to suit their visual field.
- Relevant, real objects used to support concept development and understanding.
- Learning materials that have enlarged print and adapted visuals are formatted consistently on A4 paper to support ease of scanning. When enlarging fonts, be mindful of field of vision and check sizes.
- Concise, purposeful auditory reinforcements used to highlight key learning moments, transitions, and instructions. This includes verbal summaries, audio cues, and spoken prompts that reinforce visual content or replace it entirely.
- Auditory input is clear, relevant, and timely, ensuring CYP can access and retain core information without relying on visual cues.
- Time for specific interventions is allocated and appropriate environments for these organised.
- Catch-up opportunities are in place where learning is missed due to specialist intervention or targeted support.
- Exam Access Arrangements are in place with guidance from involved professionals.

## Equipment

See Personal Care and Hygiene section for guidance on safe handling of assistive equipment and/or technologies.

- Medical advice about the wearing of glasses and/or occlusion (patching) is shared (appropriately) and followed.
- Vision support technology, as advised by QTVI, is fully set up and ready to use, enabling seamless integration into learning and promoting independence across the curriculum.

*Example: CYP have access to default accessibility settings and WiFi are enabled (where appropriate). Technology is charged and available.*

- Equipment and personal technology are easily accessible and CYP has a trained person to support if there is a problem. Information around specific technology is clearly stated within documentation – see example in resources section.
- A clean, secure location for storing devices is allocated.
- Safe charging facilities for equipment are organised.
- Management and monitoring of equipment storage and charging are in place, following clear systems.

## Wellbeing and Mental Health

See SEMH section for further guidance.

- Additional support for transitions is provided, e.g. through extra visits to new setting to help CYP familiarise with new environment, timely transfer of relevant information, specialist assessments and plans.
- Wellbeing and self-esteem are monitored and the impact this may be having on CYP’s learning and relationships is reviewed.

*Example: CYP with VI have opportunity for check-ins from a trusted adult and know how and where to seek support.*

- Non-shaming ways to check understanding are agreed with CYP and shared consistently.

## Implementation of specialist advice

- Advice and recommendations from QTVI are obtained, followed, shared with members of staff and reviewed regularly.

These may include, but not limited to:

- Providing guidance to teaching staff on effective strategies to support learning for CYP with VI.
- Teaching specialist skills such as using assistive technology, developing independent living and learning skills, and learning Braille.
- Advising on special arrangements for exams and assessments, including access technology and adapted formats.



## Resources - Evidenced-based advice, interventions and training

### Sensory Support Service

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/sensory-support-service>

### Training courses

- Supporting CYP with brain-related vision difficulties
- Supporting CYP with a VI

### Royal National Institute of Blind People

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/>

### Curriculum Framework for VI

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/education-professionals/cfvi/>

### Sense

“Over 70 years, we've built extensive knowledge and expertise in supporting deafblind people and disabled people with complex needs.”

<https://www.sense.org.uk/our-services/support-for-children/>

### Thomas Pocklington Trust

Our Education Information Advice and Guidance Service is here for blind and partially sighted students aged 7+, their families and the professionals that support them. We provide expert information, advice and guidance supporting students to navigate primary, secondary school, college and university.

<https://www.pocklington.org.uk/>

### Victa

VICTA organises activities designed to instil confidence, promote independence and build social networks to share information and reduce isolation.

<https://www.victa.org.uk/>