

Needs-Based Provision in Mainstream Schools in Darlington

DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Introduction

This guidance has been developed with partners across Darlington.

This guidance is the outcome of an analysis of our current system with parents and carers, who noted that it was difficult to understand what they could expect from schools. We then looked at examples of ordinarily available provision systems and guidance from across the country to understand how our local area would benefit from an additional support document for families and professionals.

We consulted widely across schools to gain a full picture of what is currently available and considered the social care and health offers in terms of supporting children to access school.

What is needs-based provision for children with SEND?

Children go through different types of assessment when they start school and continue to be assessed throughout their school journey. Needs-based provision is the support that is put in place following an assessment of needs.

Education, health and social care all follow a needs-based assessment process, whereby support is allocated once needs are identified.

However, there are always services that can be accessed by families where no needs may have been identified, in order that support can be given at the earliest opportunity. Examples of this would be the Early Help offer through social care, or the emotional resilience, sleep and behaviour offers through the 0-19 service.

In the next few years, services for families will expand through changes to the social care system and to the SEND system. There may also be updated sets of expectations on what schools must provide for children and young people with SEND.

Parents as partners

Parents have the best understanding of the presentation of their child, their skills and their development outside of a formal learning environment. Teachers offer an ability to assess the needs of children within a formal educational setting, and within the context of a child's typically developing peers.

Schools must work with parents and carers to recognise the interplay between these two experiences of a child's needs. A needs-based provision framework is outlined in this document in order that both families and schools can use assessments of needs to consider what could be expected for families.

What does early identification look like?

In the early years, children have statutory contact with health services through midwives and health visitors. There are nationally prescribed checks that enable children to be identified with a developmental delay or disability such as global development delay, physical difficulties, or autism. Any concerns raised through these checks should result in a referral to a specialist service, such as the speech and language service or a paediatrician.

Where children in the early years show some delays in their development, the health visiting service can support families to understand behavioural needs, sleep, eating, speech and language and toileting.

Early years settings have access to assessment tools or can use a developmental journal to track development where there are concerns for children ages 2 to 5 years old.

Once a child starts school, there are additional ways to understand if there are any difficulties in learning. The first of these is the Reception

Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is undertaken in the first 6 weeks of a child starting in reception. A second assessment takes place at the end of the reception year, where the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile is used to assess if a child has achieved the early learning goals (ELGs) and the required good level of development (GLD).

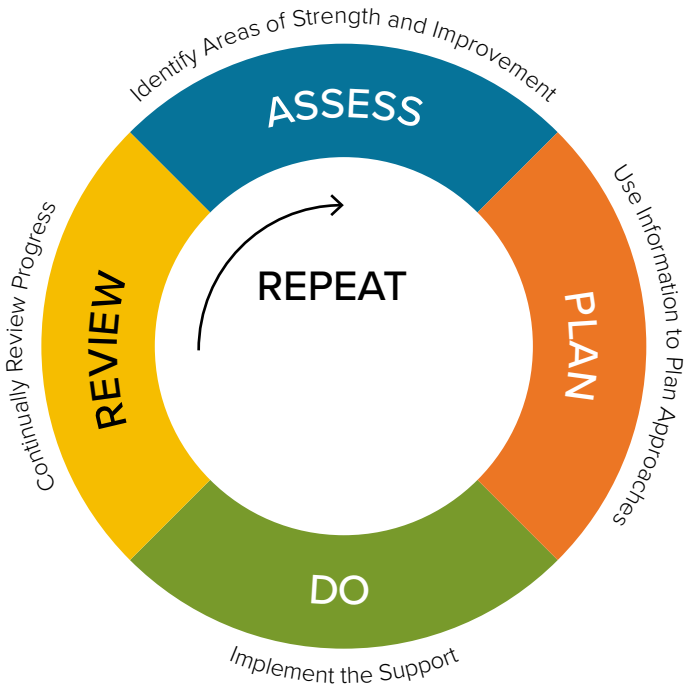
The next formal assessments come in year 4 with the times tables test and then in year 6 with SATS. However, all primary schools undertake a regular assessment cycle which informs their understanding of how a child is accessing the academic and social elements of school. This may lead the school to undertake their own assessments of needs, such as for reading and spelling ages, or the school may seek support from outside agencies, such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or the educational psychology team, to better understand needs.

Schools should undertake a cycle of 'Assess - Plan - Do - Review'. This allows schools to identify the skills that need to develop and put a planned support package in place to enhance those skills. Schools may then undertake different cycles of support for a child to develop the learning skills needed to progress.

If a child is not making the expected progress, then a school may start a new cycle, working on new skills identified, and should also involve other specialists to better understand the needs that have not been identified through the usual class-based assessment processes.

This cycle must be followed by every school in order to properly evaluate the impact of any support that is given. The use of this cycle is linked to the SEND Code of Practice and is therefore statutory.

Assess, Plan, Do, review (APDR) Cycle



Darlington Inclusion Charter

The principles of the Darlington Inclusion Charter underpin the needs-based provision approach in Darlington schools. All primary schools, secondary schools and colleges have signed up to the Darlington Inclusion Charter.

In particular, schools should give consideration to how children with SEND are supported to feel that they belong and are accepted in settings just as they are.

Schools must provide emotionally safe spaces for children and young people to learn, and this starts with a warm and welcoming environment where inclusivity is actively promoted by all staff in every part of the school or setting.

Please see Appendix E.



The social model of disability in Darlington

Darlington follows the social model of disability which enables a view that places the challenges of accessing learning in the environment and not with the individual person's lack of ability. It is the role of schools, and all professionals, to remove the barriers that exist so that all children and young people can access learning on an equal basis.

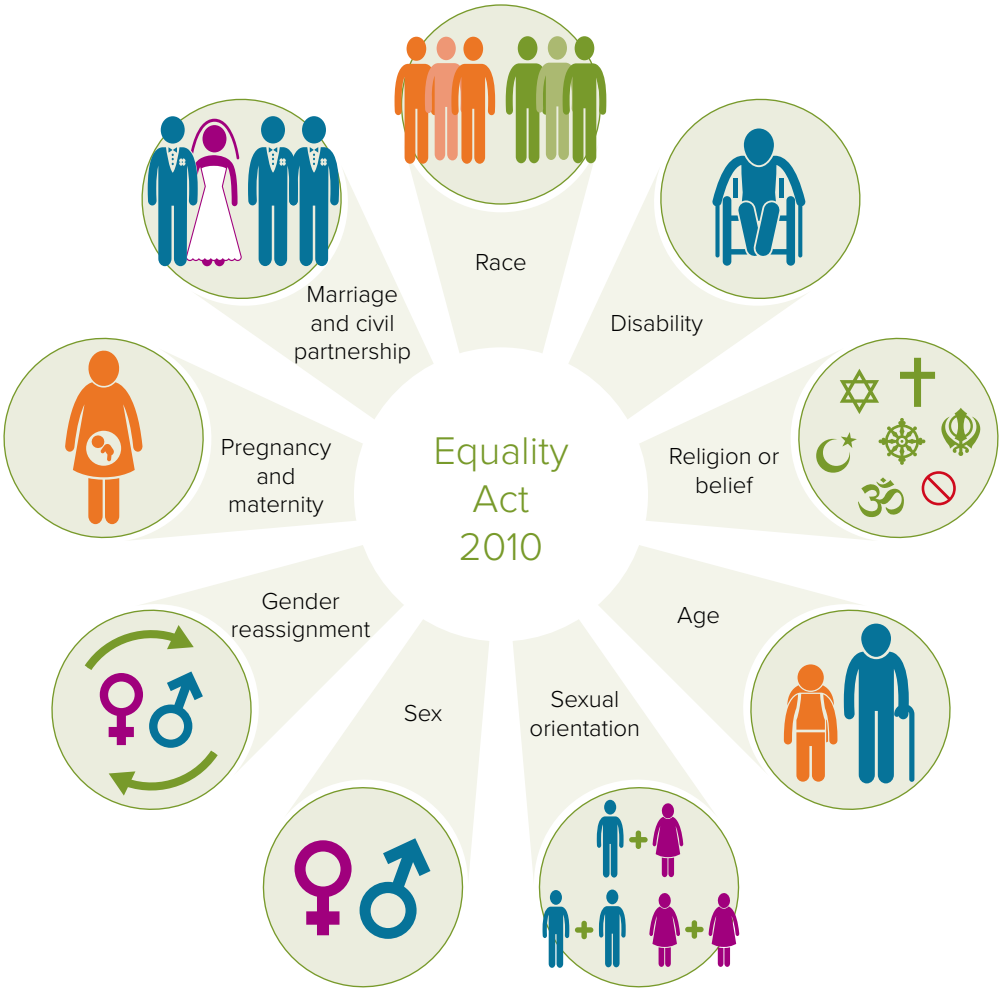
National charity for disabled persons Scope states:

"The social model of disability is a way of viewing the world, developed by disabled people. Scope's strategy, 'An Equal Future', is based on this model of disability.

The model says that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or condition. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets. Or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming that disabled people can't do certain things.

The social model helps us recognise barriers that make life harder for disabled people. Removing these barriers creates equality and offers disabled people more independence, choice and control.

Medical Vs Social	
Views disability as a defect of the individual	Views disability is a social construct
Disability should be fixed, cured, or eliminated	Due to interaction between the person and the environment
Seen in a negative light, with pity and shame at the centre	Focuses on accommodating the individual



In it important to note that the right to be free from discrimination for children with disabilities is enshrined in law through the Equality Act 2010, illustrated in the diagram above.

What do we mean by disability?

A child or young person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial or long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Research suggests that about six to seven percent of children are disabled.

What do we mean by special educational needs (SEN)?

Children and young people who have special educational needs (SEN) do not necessarily have a disability. Some disabled children and young people do not have special educational needs.

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools and post-16 institutions.

Where can families go to start looking at what their schools offer?

Schools are required to publish a SEN information report on their website every year. Parents and carers can find these by checking the school website and should use this if they would like additional information on what is offered by their child's school. This information varies by school setting.

This is a good starting point for families and can help them consider what questions to ask if they are looking at schools.

Regulation 53 of the Children and Families Act states that schools, colleges, early years settings and section 41 independent special schools must explain:

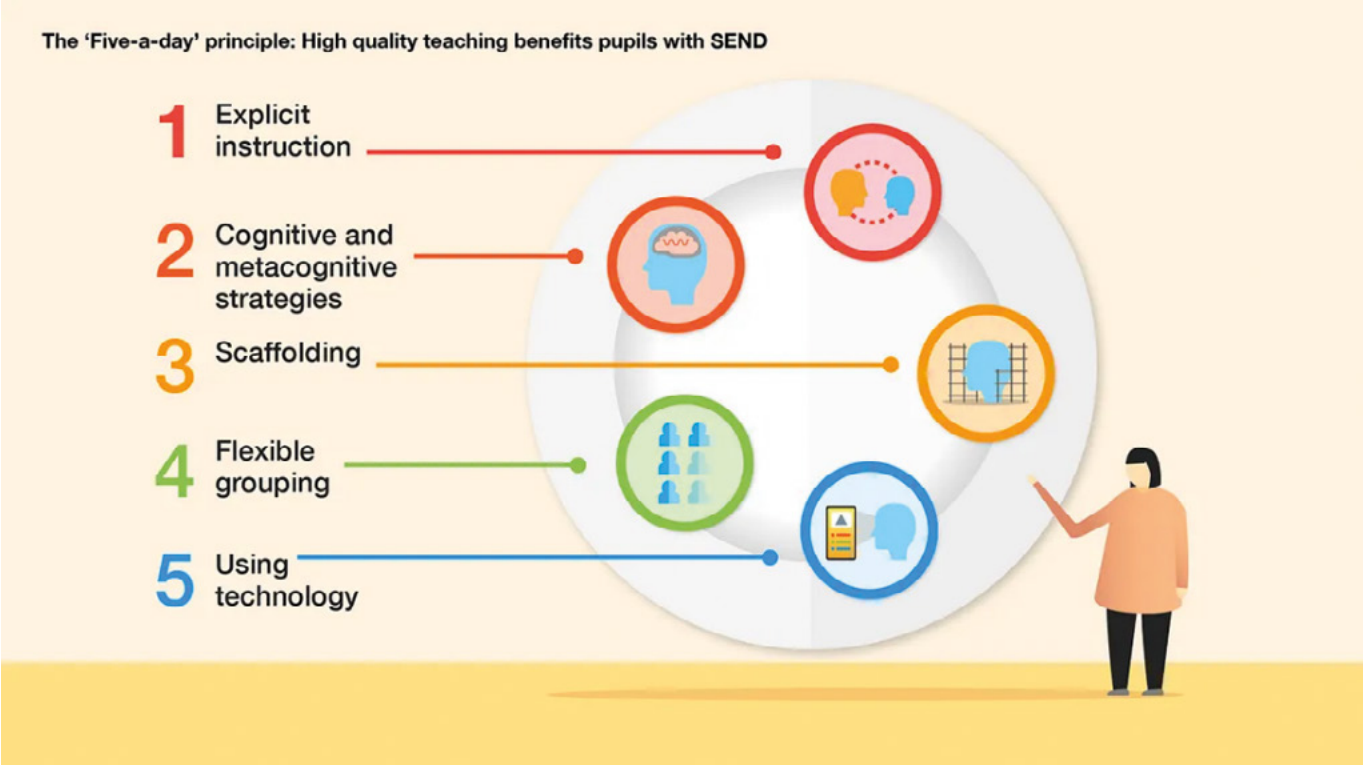
- Their approaches to teaching
- How they adapt the curriculum and learning environment
- Additional learning support available
- How progress towards outcomes identified will be assessed and reviewed, including the part parents and young people play
- How the effectiveness of provision will be assessed and evaluated, including the part parents and young people play
- How facilities that are available can be accessed
- What activities (including physical activities) are available in addition to the curriculum
- What support is available
- How expertise in supporting children with special educational needs or a disability is secured for teaching staff and others
- How emotional, mental and social development will be supported and improved.

The Education Endowment Fund - ensuring all support is evidence based

The Education Endowment Fund has produced an evidence-based approach to SEND in mainstream schools and the principles outlined throughout this document are aligned with this approach.

Evidence informed interventions and approaches should be adopted by all schools in all additional support that they offer. Understanding how support has a positive impact is monitored through Ofsted inspections and is an integral part of helping children and young people progress through additional support cycles.

The 'Five a day' principle is explained in this diagram:



The diagram below outlines each of the areas of the 'Five a day' principle in greater detail.

Schools often weave these approaches throughout interactions, lesson planning and both formal and informal assessments during the learning process across the school day.

Parts of what we consider to be provision that is available to all is through the school-wide adoption of the principles and approaches outlined by the Education Endowment Fund (EEF).

High quality teaching benefits pupils with SEND

The 'Five-a-day' principle



The research underpinning the EEF's guidance report 'Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools' indicates that supporting high quality teaching improves outcomes for pupils with SEND. Five specific approaches—the 'Five-a-day' indicated below—are particularly well-evidenced as having a positive impact. Teachers should develop a repertoire of these strategies, which they can use daily and flexibly in response to individual needs, using them as the starting point for classroom teaching for all pupils, including those with SEND.

1 Explicit instruction

Teacher-led approaches with a focus on clear explanations, modelling and frequent checks for understanding. This is then followed by guided practice, before independent practice.



2 Cognitive and metacognitive strategies

Managing cognitive load is crucial if new content is to be transferred into students' long-term memory. Provide opportunities for students to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning.



3 Scaffolding

When students are working on a written task, provide a supportive tool or resource such as a writing frame or a partially completed example. Aim to provide less support of this nature throughout the course of the lesson, week or term.



4 Flexible grouping

Allocate groups temporarily, based on current level of mastery. This could, for example, be a group that comes together to get some additional spelling instruction based on current need, before re-joining the main class.



5 Using technology

Technology can be used by a teacher to model worked examples; it can be used by a student to help them to learn, to practice and to record their learning. For instance, you might use a class visualiser to share students' work or to jointly rework an incorrect model.



More information about finding better ways to support pupils with SEND, including these five principles and more specialist interventions, can be found in the EEF's guidance report '*Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools*'.



Cognitive and metacognitive strategies

It is vital that children and young people consider the process of learning how to learn, as this will enhance their ability to work out how to approach any activity they engage in. Explicit teaching of these skills and strategies can enhance confidence, resilience and perseverance in the learning process.

Metacognition refers to a broad set of skills that enable learners to monitor, control, and plan their cognitive processes.

Metacognitive knowledge: This includes what individuals know about their own cognitive processes, and the strategies they can use to enhance their learning.

Declarative knowledge: Understanding what strategies exist and when to use them.

Procedural knowledge: Knowing how to apply these strategies effectively.

Conditional knowledge: Knowing why and when to use specific strategies.

Metacognition plays a crucial role in effective learning and problem-solving. This self-awareness allows learners to identify when they do not understand something and to take steps to address it, such as re-reading or seeking help. Some children need additional help and support to develop these learning skills. The Education Endowment Fund advocates the use of these skills for all learners with additional needs.

Special educational needs in mainstream schools

The EEF has further developed the approaches to individual student support into a set of recommendations for whole school strategic implementation. Schools should carefully consider their response to each of the recommendations.



What support is available to children and young people following an assessment of needs in their education setting?

The four broad areas of need as defined in the SEND code of practice are:

- Communication and Interaction: This includes children who have difficulties with speech, language, and communication.
- Cognition and Learning: This area covers children who learn at a slower pace than their peers, including those with specific learning difficulties.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health: This includes children who may experience difficulties in managing their emotions or behaviour, those with mental health needs such as anxiety and depression and children with ADHD.
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs: This area includes children with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, such as hearing and visual impairments.

These categories help in understanding and supporting a child's individual needs effectively.

The strategies below are categorised across these 4 areas of need, but children may access provision from a range of different areas to support the development of their skills.

Cognition and Learning

The SEND Code of Practice defines Cognition and Learning as follows:

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Please see Appendix A

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

The SEND Code of Practice defines Social, Emotional and Mental Health as:

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Schools and colleges should have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour so it does not adversely affect other pupils.

Please see Appendix B

The Four Functions of Behaviour model

Education staff should refer to 'The Four Functions of Behaviour' model (based on Rudolph & Driekers, 1960) to determine the underpinning functions of behaviour.

We understand that behaviour is a form of communication, and there is always an explanation as to why people behave in the way that they do, including children and young people.

In understanding the principle that 'behaviour is communication', adults in schools must then work to understand what a child or young person is trying to communicate to them, acting with compassion and patience to support the child to regulate in the moment of distress.

The four functions of behaviour are outlined in the diagram below.

SEAT	Function of Behaviour	Explanation
	Sensory Stimulation	The child indulges in a type of behaviour that satisfies their sensory needs.
	Escape/Avoidance	The child indulges in a type of behaviour that can help them get away from a task/situation that they dislike.
	Attention	The child indulges in a type of behaviour that gets them the attention they seek and crave.
	Tangible Objects	The child indulges in a type of behaviour to obtain access to an activity/item that they enjoy.

The four functions of behaviour are essential for understanding why individuals engage in specific behaviours. These functions help teachers and caregivers develop targeted strategies to reduce problem behaviours while promoting positive alternatives.

The role of a pastoral approach in secondary schools in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEMH.

Secondary schools are more likely to have an additional support structure in school through their pastoral teams. Pastoral teams, alongside the roles of year leaders or form tutors, provide a personalised programme of support for children. Some of the provisions through this model are outlined in below:

Strategy/Provision
Key worker approach through year leaders or form tutors
Use of emotional support services such as the Listening Post
Daily check-ins
Attendance support
Support through the Early Help process
Work with social care to support the education of children who are supported through a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan
Work with the Virtual School to support the progress of Looked After Children

Physical and Sensory Needs

The Code of Practice defines Sensory and/or Physical needs as follows:

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age-related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Information on how to provide services for deafblind children and young people is available through the Social Care for Deafblind Children and Adults guidance published by the Department of Health.

Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

Please see Appendix C

Communication and Interaction

The SEND Code of Practice defines Communication and Interaction as follows:

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times in their lives.

Children and young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), including Asperger's syndrome and autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Please see Appendix D

Where else can families get help and support if they need it?

SENDIASS

SENDIASS stands for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service. It's a free, impartial, and confidential service offering information to young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and to their parents and carers.

There is a SENDIAS Service in every local authority in England.

Call: **01325 405878**
Email: **iass@darlington.gov.uk**

Darlington Parent/Carer Forum

Darlington Parent/Carer Forum work with families and for families in order to both support and represent the views of families in Darlington.

Darlington Parent Carer Forum is currently working in partnership with the Darlington Mental Health Support team to offer peer support to parents and carers of children with mental health needs and/or special educational needs.

Families can find out more here:
www.darlingtonpcf.co.uk/social-activities/

Growing Healthy 0 - 19 Service

The role of the 0 - 5 service is to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of children under five and their families. The 5 - 19 team promotes and protects the health and wellbeing of all children and young people aged 5 to 19.

Single point of contact telephone number:
03000 030013

All families with a child under five in Darlington have access to a Growing Healthy 0 - 5 team consisting of health visitors, screeners, early years practitioners and infant feeding specialists. They provide expert health assessments, advice, support and interventions for babies, children and families.

The team encourages and supports parents and carers to develop life-long skills to enable them to make informed choices that affect their family's future health and wellbeing.

Some common areas of information and support:

- Pregnancy and transition into parenthood
- Infant feeding/ specialist breast feeding support
- Growth and nutrition
- Healthy eating

- Dental health
- Development
- Behaviour
- Accident prevention
- Safe sleeping
- Speech and language development
- Immunisations
- Common childhood illness/infection
- Safeguarding
- Postnatal depression and emotional wellbeing
- Parenting

https://hdftchildrenshealthservice.co.uk/ourservice/growing-healthy-0-19-darlington/

Appendices

Appendix A

Strategy/Provision - Cognition and Learning
Chunking of work - this is where tasks are broken down into manageable parts, with a clear understanding of how to tackle each bit at a time
Word mats - high frequency words, or subject specific words, sentence starters or linking words should be available on word mats for all children, every lesson
Scaffolding tasks
Purposeful grouping - this involves the deliberate selection of learning partners so that all children are exposed to peer support and challenge
Small group literacy boost
Speech to text software, e.g. Dragon speak
Reading technology e.g. reading pens
Allow extra time to complete assessments including statutory assessments. Schools must follow the JCQ guidelines in the allocation of support during qualification exams.
Use of computer equipment to record instead of writing
Small group numeracy boost
Structured writing prompts
AI staff trained in understanding cognitive load
Explicit instruction and modelling
Graphic organisers
Personalised and/or differentiated, in-class learning tasks
Small group phonics boost
Planned opportunities for individual reading practice

Appendix B

Strategy/Provision for SEMH
Designated check in every morning
Mindfulness
Classroom jobs or tasks as settling technique or distraction
Purposeful seating
Senior Mental Health Lead
Early Help - Social Care
PSHCE programme
A low stimulus sensory space
MHST in schools for 1 - 1 or group interventions
School nurse drop-ins weekly at secondary schools
Emotional resilience nurse 0 - 19 service
Movement breaks
Visual emotion cards displayed in every classroom
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs Support Plans
ELSA - Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
Bathroom breaks - children who are neurodiverse may not recognise their own internal cues, and so may need to go to the bathroom outside of breaks and lunchtimes
School counsellor
Support from the Virtual School for children who are Looked After by the local authority

Appendix C

Strategy/Provision - Physical/Sensory
A low stimulus sensory space
Use of overlays and accessible technology
Accessibility plans completed with anticipatory overview of what may be needed
Wobble boards
Weighted blankets, jackets or soft toys
Classroom focus aids
Sensory circuits as directed by an occupational therapist or physiotherapist
Sensory and movement breaks on a regular basis to maintain and reset focus
Auxiliary aids, such as radio aids
Accessible spaces on an equal basis for those with physical difficulties
Indoor and outdoor adaptations to the environment are made to ensure full accessibility
Low Incidence Needs Team Children with visual impairments, hearing impairments or physical difficulties may be under the care of the LINS Team. This means that care such as teaching support, radio aids, auxiliary aids and specialist training is available for children in mainstream schools.

Appendix D

Strategy/Provision
Visual timetables
Visual cues to support attention
Dual coding in every classroom and in every lesson
Social stories
Explicit instruction
Free progress checker for schools to use to assess speech and language needs: https://progress-checker.speechandlanguage.org.uk/
Intensive interaction
Starter sentences
Word mats
Access to dictation software and laptop for longer pieces of written work
Low arousal classroom environments
Explicit teaching of vocabulary and keywords
Support and practice oracy - ‘Can you tell me using different words?’
Classroom strategies to support sequencing and structure writing
I do it, we do it, you do it approach to independence
Teacher consideration of their own verbal and non-verbal cues to pupils

Appendix E

Inclusion Charter



Darlington Inclusion Charter

Darlington education providers are committed to ensuring that all children and young people receive inclusive educational provision which meets their individual needs and helps them to achieve. We recognise that at a time when the needs of children and young people are increasing, a sense of belonging, connection and acceptance alongside high aspirations, quality teaching and appropriate intervention are paramount within and across our schools.

We want to strive to be genuinely inclusive providers, in which all children and young people, including those with SEND, can flourish. We endorse the understanding that inclusion requires children and young people to be present, to engage, to achieve and to belong.

Presence

We support children and young people to be **present** by:

- Empowering and enabling teachers and support staff to adapt their approaches and the learning environment to meet the individual needs, interests and aspirations of their pupils
- Establishing developmentally appropriate learning outcomes and provision for all children and young people, offering an appropriate balance of challenge and support
- Promoting emotional wellbeing, self-confidence and resilience in children, young people and all school staff so they can engage purposefully and meaningfully within the school environment
- Developing rules and boundaries in schools that are meaningful, proportionate and which support learning, social cohesion and a culture of mutual respect
- Ensuring that transitions between stages and settings are carefully planned, well managed and in the best interests of the child

Engagement

We support children and young people to **engage** by:

- Enabling teachers and support staff to develop a genuine understanding of children and young people's strengths, skills, motivations and needs
- Striving to design and implement a curriculum that is relevant, meaningful and inspiring to all children and young people, and to their teachers
- Adapting the learning environment to meet individual physical, sensory, socio-emotional and cognitive needs
- Providing opportunities that equip children and young people with the sense of self-efficacy and confidence needed to solve problems and make decisions
- Providing opportunities that support the development of social and communication skills, to enable children and young people to form positive relationships with their peers and others in school and within the wider community

Achievement

We support children and young people to **achieve** by:

- Establishing and maintaining expectations of children and young people that take into account their developmental stage and their unique circumstances
- Developing equitable systems and approaches for recognising individual progress and success
- Ensuring that we understand individual needs and aspirations, and work together to implement the necessary support and intervention to create positive change and enable progress
- Ensuring that all members of the school community feel valued and nurtured at times of difficulty and challenge as a result of strong, consistent relationships and appropriate support

Belonging

We support children and young people to experience a sense of **belonging** by:

- Providing staff with the time and expertise to establish, maintain and restore relationships with their pupils through nurturing, playful and empowering interactions
- Enabling children and young people to feel known by staff on the basis of their personal strengths, qualities, interests and goals
- Investing in the wellbeing of school leaders, teaching and support staff so that they can provide an emotionally supportive, responsive and safe learning environment for children and young people
- Equipping staff with the knowledge and skills to model and promote an emotionally literate culture within the classroom and wider school environment
- Providing supported opportunities for children and young people to develop social relationships and manage the influence of social media on their relationships with their peers.

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