

Ordinarily Available Guidance

PRIMARY

Section title	Page number
<u>Introduction</u>	3
<u>Communication and Interaction</u>	6
<u>Cognition and Learning</u>	19
<u>Social, Emotional and Mental Health</u>	30
<u>Sensory and Physical</u>	42

Section One: Introduction

SEND Code of Practice (2015)

It is the education providers responsibility to ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND.

Teachers must:

- set goals and outcomes that stretch and challenge learners of all backgrounds, abilities and needs
- be accountable for the attainment, progress and outcomes for all learners
- be aware of the learner’s capabilities and prior knowledge and plan teaching to build on these
- demonstrate an awareness of the holistic development of learners at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all learners, including those with special educational needs; exceptional abilities; English as an additional language; disabilities and be able to use and evaluate distinctive evidence based teaching approaches to engage and support their holistic development.

“Ordinarily Available Provision” refers to the setting based interventions and services that all Merton schools, early years and post 16 settings should be able to provide for children/young people, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), from within their own resources. By outlining a set of expectations, we are encouraging consistency between schools/settings across Merton.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

This guidance is intended to support schools/settings to reflect and develop their inclusive provision to benefit all the children/young people in the school/setting, including those with SEND. The SEND Code of Practice, 2015 **links high quality teaching with ordinarily available provision:** “(Guidance)...higher quality teaching ordinarily available to the whole class is likely to mean that fewer pupils will require such support.” (Para 6.15).

This document has been co-produced with Kids First (parents/carer forum), Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) and other stakeholders, along with consultation with health and children’s services professionals.

Whilst this document is primarily aimed at professionals, we also intend that this document will support parents/carers and children/young people themselves to better understand the support that will be provided for children/young people with SEND without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Merton’s [Local Offer](#) also provides information and details of support services available for children and young people (aged 0-25) with SEND and their families within the borough.

How to use Ordinarily Available Guidance

This guidance covers four broad areas of need: communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health, and sensory and/or physical needs. For each area, there are suggestions for strategies and interventions that can be used by all members of school staff and families alike, as well as examples of good practice from schools.

Some of these strategies include:

- Adapting the learning materials that some children use because they learn in a different way to others
- Providing visual aids, symbols, gestures or sign language to support communication
- Using positive behaviour management techniques and rewards to promote self-esteem and motivation
- Providing sensory breaks, equipment or adaptations to reduce stress and anxiety
- Collaborating with external agencies and professionals to access specialist advice and support

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

This guidance is not a one-size-fits-all approach. It is tailored to the individual needs and strengths of each child, taking into account their views and preferences, as well as those of their parents and carers. It is also flexible and responsive to changes in circumstances and progress over time. All Merton schools are on a journey towards developing their ordinarily available provision within their settings.

High quality teaching

High quality teaching considers the needs of learners which then informs planning and delivery to make learning accessible - it may include strategies detailed in this toolkit. Ordinarily Available Guidance contains a range of additional strategies and interventions, in addition to high quality teaching, that should be considered for children and young people in line with their assessed special educational needs. It is important to note that all learners are different and not all strategies or interventions will be effective nor can they or should they be provided at the same time. It is important that settings and family carers use this resource to plan the support that is needed and effective.

Graduated response

A graduated response refers to a systematic approach that provides a range of targeted interventions and support, which are carefully tailored to meet the specific needs of individual learners. When additional support is identified as needed for a child or young person the school should apply the “Assess–Plan–Do–Review” model as described by the Code of Practice so that support and actions needed to allow pupils to access the curriculum and make good progress are revisited, reviewed and refined. This approach places the child and family at the centre of the process.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance



CONTENTS – Communication and Interaction (Primary)

Section	Title	Page
1	Identification/ assessment of needs	7
2	Environmental Supports and Adaptations	11
3	Approaches and Strategies	13
4	Useful Resources	18

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Identification/ assessment of needs

Core Knowledge

- Class Teachers should understand that **communication skills underpin learning and attainment in all curriculum areas.**
- They should be aware that children that have experienced **social disadvantage and/or have a family history of language difficulties are statistically more at risk** of speech, language or communication needs (SLCN)
- Class Teachers should understand what is 'typical language development' for the age of the children, **so they can identify children who may have language difficulties**, at as an early stage a stage as possible. (see assessment section below for tools available in schools for teachers to identify potential areas of need)
- Class Teachers should be aware that **speaking more than one language has many benefits for children** and encourage parents to continue to speak additional languages at home. Teaching staff will have a basic awareness of bi-lingual language development and know that being bi-lingual does not mean the child/young person has SLCN. If unsure about a child's language skills it is good practice to find out from parents/carers which languages the child has been exposed to and for how long. It is also very important to find out about the child's skills in their other languages and whether they have difficulties in all their languages or just English.
- Teachers should be aware that many children with SLCN can make progress when they can access universal (things that benefit all pupils) or targeted support and so may not need direct intervention from a speech and language therapist.
- Teachers should understand that when considering a child's communication skills to see what support they may need, they should consider their core abilities in all the of the areas below. Each area is described in general terms. More detailed information is available from free online resources indicated

Links and relevant support available

Free- '**Introduction to supporting Children with SLCN**' training offered at no cost to schools on request from the Merton Language, Behaviour and Learning Support Team, Speech & Language Therapy team

<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/talking-point/cpd-online-short-course/>

<https://www.slcframework.org.uk/the-slc-f-levels/universal-level/>

The links about are free online training at universal, targeted and specialist level developed by the Communication Trust.

Information about norms is also available here:

<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/talking-point/parents/ages-and-stages/>

Also see tables in "**ELKLAN** Language Builder" book 5-11 & 11-16 (most schools have a copy, additional copies available for £22)

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Identification/ assessment of needs

Attention and listening- the ability to attend to verbal information, work at age-appropriate levels of independence and filter out distractions. Difficulties in this area affect all other areas of learning and language development. Difficulties with attention may be due to a range of other factors in addition to language, but the strategies (see approaches and strategies section) can be supportive for all children regardless of the primary cause. It is good practice to check if a child’s hearing has ever been assessed to rule out a potential hearing difficulty, if there are concerns in this area

Receptive language- the ability to understand verbal language. Difficulties with understanding may arise at the word level (understanding vocabulary and concepts) sentence level (understanding grammar e.g. the difference between past and future tense) or narrative level (understanding /remembering information from a number of sentences put together). Teachers often notice difficulties in this area where children find it hard to follow classroom instructions.

Children may also struggle to understand higher level language skills such as inference or prediction or non-literal language such as jokes and idioms. Difficulties with understanding can be supported in many ways for example adults slowing down and repeating information and using visual support. (See **approaches and strategies section for more information**). Depending on the child’s individual circumstances, difficulties with understanding language may indicate more serious or persistent needs.

Expressive language- the ability to use language to say what children want, think and express their views generally. Children may have difficulties at word level (knowing or being able to say the right word), sentence level (using correct grammar or word order) or narrative (putting their ideas together in a logical order and including all the relevant information). Difficulties in expressive language may cause frustration if children cannot get their message across. This may result in negative behaviour (acting out) or withdrawal from situations

Social communication skills- the ability to use language in what is now seen as ‘neurotypical’ social context, e.g. wait your turn in a conversation or understand the ‘unwritten’ rules of communication such as interpreting tone of voice and body language. Expectations around social communication can also vary depending on cultural context. Having differences in social communication abilities can affect a child’s ability to make friends, lead to misunderstandings in social situations and can have a longer-term impact on their well-being and social and emotional development.

Speech sounds - the ability to say all speech sounds correctly so that the people can understand what the child says.

Play-Young children learn language and concepts through play and especially in EYFS play skills can be an indicator of their developmental stage. Play is important for older children as it is when they can cement social relationships and have a break from structured learning. The playground can however be a challenging environment for some children as it may be less structured and more linguistically demanding and so playtimes can be tricky to navigate.

Links and relevant support available

See section below [‘Approaches and strategies’](#) for how to support children with these difficulties in class.

ELKLAN

Merton LBL Speech and Language Therapy team has offered ELKLAN accredited training to school staff on a commissioned basis for a number of years and have trained many teaching assistants, teachers and SENCOs. Some of the staff who have been trained will be delivering interventions and support recommended here.

We are aware, however, that due to staff turnover for example, not all schools will always have an ELKLAN trained staff member in post and that financial and time constraints may mean they cannot always retrain and replace these staff immediately if they leave.

However subject to the capacity of the SLT service, we aim to offer online termly supervision of ELKLAN trained staff (at no cost to schools) in order to support their working in schools.

We continue to run ELKLAN courses on a regular basis, please contact your link teacher if you are interested in this training

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Identification/ assessment of needs

- Given their understanding of the core skills above, Teachers should be able to start to identify areas where children in their classes may be having difficulty and start to put in place some relevant support.
- This may include; differentiate the child's work, adapting the learning environment and the teacher's own communication style in order to support the children's individual areas of need.
- In addition to what they have observed in lessons, teachers should seek other relevant information to inform their planning which is likely to include:
 - reading previous professional reports in the child's file, relevant medical history e.g. hearing status, and what other languages a child may know and how long they have been learning English
 - information from parents/carers
 - information from previous teachers/SENCo as to what has already been put in place and what impact it had.
- Teaching staff should be able to seek more information/support from colleagues in school with more specialist training when necessary. This may include more experienced colleagues, or colleagues that have attended training focusing on SLCN e.g. ELKLAN or English as an Additional Language (EAL) as well as or school SENCos/Inclusion Managers.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Identification/ assessment of needs

Assessment of communication strengths and needs

- Schools should have systems and processes to help staff assess and monitor children's communication skills and language development. Teaching staff should be aware of options/support available in their schools to help them assess children's skills in terms of attention and listening, play, social communication, understanding (receptive language) and talking (expressive language).
- Identified staff should be confident in using their school's assessment tool/processes which will highlight the strengths and needs of the child/young person and, enable the school to provide appropriate early support and strategies and monitor progress.
- The setting recognises, and responds to, the need for learning support for pupils with SEND, taking into consideration individual needs and other relevant contextual circumstances.

Autism Guidance

- The setting recognises, and responds to, the need for learning support for autistic pupils, taking into consideration individual needs and other relevant contextual circumstances.
- Autism acceptance training is undertaken by all staff.
- Staff should be aware of the strengths and differences associated with autism in general and with each individual pupil.
- Individual pupil profile or passports are created for all autistic pupils by the SENCo (using information from their own voice, observations, parents/carers, previous settings and other agencies where appropriate) and these are sent to all relevant staff.
- Pupils' strengths and interests are used in lesson planning and target setting.
- Staff should be made aware of conditions that co-occur alongside autism, and they are aware of how to access support for individual pupils with a range of needs.

Links and relevant support available

This may include but not be limited to;

- Home language assessment.
- Knowledge of typical development. See links above to typical ages and stages of language development.
- Communication checklists and screeners (e.g. Progression Tool). The progression tool is a language screener available for around £120 from ICAN. Its implementation has been supported in many schools by the LBL S< team through buyback.
- Informal assessment e.g. Test of Abstract Language Comprehension (TALC)
- Nuffield Early Language Intervention programme (NELI)

- Merton Autism Outreach Service (MAOS) offer support for staff around supporting the needs of pupils with autism (and those with social communication difficulties without a diagnosis). This is a free service to schools.
- MSTA offer staff training on a range of CPD topic including autism.
- Cricket Green School is the Merton Hub for the Autism Education Trust (AET) and are licenced to deliver training to Early Years settings, schools and Post 16 settings.
- Training on developing Autism friendly learning environments is available from LBL S< team on request through buyback.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Communication friendly teaching environments

Teaching staff should be able to reflect on the physical environment in school/class and how that can support Children’s learning especially in terms of supporting attention and understanding. Areas to consider include :

Classroom structure

- Seating plan – away from distractions where possible, near the front in some cases
- Attention enabling posture
- Display of expected voice levels
- Quiet areas for down time for when a child/young person is feeling overwhelmed and for small group work
- Adult sorting out “groups” using strategies to ensure that vulnerable children are in supportive groups and are not left out
- Use of differentiated ways of students receiving the homework which has been set, with clear information and instructions to ensure that children can succeed.
- Good listening skills promoted across the class/school and referred to in lessons – staff to wear good listening skill symbols on their lanyard (such as good sitting, good looking, good thinking) in Primary School settings and at Secondary School, prominent wall displays which are frequently pointed out to young people.

Visual support

- Teaching staff should be able to access training about visual support, understand the importance of visual support and its various functions and consistently use visuals in class depending on the individual needs of pupils
- Visual timetables in classrooms and referred to during lessons. Items completed are removed from the timetable/ticked off. Consistency of format and use between classes (primary), individual checklists at secondary schools
- Written and numbered outline of what is going to happen in the lesson for the whole class. Tasks ticked off as they are completed
- Now and next boards as needed for individual children
- Clear and consistent classroom rules visually displayed age appropriately
- Tasks broken down into step by step written and numbered instructions for the whole class
- Tasks broken down into detailed step by step written and numbered instructions on children’s personal small white board

Links and relevant support available

Audit forms and checklists are available to support schools auditing their practice from the LBL speech and language therapy service, which can provide support in identifying a school’s strengths and needs. Further support and training can be commissioned , e.g. bespoke training to meet those needs.

Active listening resources and training available on request through buyback

Free online training is being developed to support the ordinarily available offer. Initial bite size courses on

- using visual support
 - teaching vocabulary and
 - adapting language for the classroom
- have been developed.

These should go live on the Merton Website early in October 2023

<https://www.elklan.co.uk/Shop/> books (yellow and blue version) for practical examples of visual support.

Introduction to supporting children with SCLN (free)

Hanen courses

Training video on ACI strategies to be developed and added to website (free)

DLD training

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Autism Guidance

- There is an emphasis on visual teaching aids to support learning and social activities.
- Tasks are routinely differentiated by level/outcome/pitch/pace and grouping.
- Staff should be skilled in adjusting the pace and order of activities to maintain interest and attention. This is monitored by the SENCo on a termly basis.
- Specialist resources should be available, such as fiddle toys, stress balls, Occupational Therapy (OT) seating like ball chairs, pencil grips, OT cushions and weighted equipment.
- Consideration is given to the environment to cater for individual needs, such as reduction in distractions, visuals, colour-coding, structured and ordered, low arousal, soft furnishings etc

Links and relevant support available

Merton Autism Outreach Service (MAOS) offer advice for staff around environmental supports and adaptations for pupils with autism (and those with social communication difficulties without a diagnosis). This is a free service to schools.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Approaches and Strategies

Adult/child interaction

School staff should be aware of strategies they can use when talking to children to support their processing of information, understanding and talking. This is helpful for all children including those with EAL.

- **Say less** – helps children pick out key words.
- **Stress** key words- highlights important information.
- **Go slow** - pausing and reducing rate of speech makes it easier to understand and gives the child/young person time to understand what was said and formulate responses.
- **Show - use** of visuals reduces reliance on auditory information and memory.

Other key strategies

- Repeating information, recasting (saying it again with a correct model), asking a question and pausing and if a child can't answer giving them 2 options.
- Chunking and breaking down instructions.
- Matching your level of language to that of the child, using their interests.
- Commenting on what the child is doing.
- Modelling simple language.

Strategies to support regulation and reduce anxiety for children with social communication differences

- Clear routines and warnings/preparations for changes.
- Use of timers to help children know how long they have to complete a task – and to help them transition between tasks.
- “Safe places” to go at break and lunch times for children who find interacting in the playground stressful, for example, lunch clubs, monitor jobs such as tidying the library.
- Use of time-out cards for children before they feel overwhelmed and are at risk of having a melt-down (linked in with below) (junior and secondary)
- Use of Now/Next boards or notes on piece of paper.
- Use of strategies to support emotional regulation and awareness, such as the Amazing 5 Point Scale, Zones of Regulation, Blob tree for use with individual children and whole classes.
- Good transition planning when moving year groups – ensuring that advice/strategies are passed on with the children to the new teacher and child has opportunities to visit new class/setting.
- Transition activities e.g. in groups when moving year groups or schools.

Links and relevant support available

Video reflection such as ‘VERVE’ can support development of these skills – and training is available on request from LBL speech language therapy team

A taster to using these strategies is also included in the free ‘introduction to supporting children with SLCN’ training available through the LBL S< team

Merton Autism Outreach Service (MAOS) offer advice for staff around emotional regulation and anxiety for pupils with autism (and those with social communication difficulties without a diagnosis). This is a free service to schools.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Approaches and Strategies

Autism Guidance (may also be known as Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Autism Spectrum disorder -ASD)

Difficulties saying what they want to and being understood:

- Modelling language without expectation of response.
- Small group or individual language sessions.
- Allow time for child to process and respond (10 second rule).
- Introduce a variety of language through rhymes, songs.
- All attempts to speak are supported. Pupils may communicate (using a total communication system) their needs, wants, opinions, and ideas in the classroom. All teachers/staff will respond kindly and empathetically to child's communication/connection-seeking
- Providing and modelling additional methods of communicating, such as use of ICT, AAC symbol communication (including Signalong, Core Vocabulary Board).

Difficulties understanding what is being communicated to the C/YP:

- Consider how many information carrying words a child can manage when giving instructions.
- Tailor delivery style according to the learner's needs such as direct language (give name and clear short instruction) or language modification techniques.
- Provide visual prompts including key vocabulary and visual timetables.
- Allow take up time to process information.
- Check you have engaged the child's attention before talking to them, use their name.
- Check that hearing has been tested.
- Pre-teaching of topic vocabulary.
- Use of 'first, then, next...'
- Child/young person does not understand or use social rules of communication:
- Modelling/role play/video/soap operas/Disney films.
- Small group sessions (for example, circle of friends, Talkabout).
- Social stories/Cartoon conversations.
- Prompts – symbols, signing systems.
- Now (you are doing this) and Next (you are going to be doing that) boards.

Links and relevant support available

Merton Autism Outreach Service (MAOS) offer advice for staff around supporting and including pupils with autism (and those with social communication difficulties without a diagnosis). This is a free service to schools.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Approaches and Strategies

Autism Guidance (may also be known as Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Autism Spectrum disorder -ASD)

Difficulties with language/Difficulties with communication:

- Use the child's name first to draw their attention, followed by key word instructions, such as Jamie, stop.
- Simple instructions (explaining idioms).
- Using literal language (explaining sarcasm and figures of speech).
- Use of symbol communication such as Core Vocabulary Boards .
- Awareness of what would be an appropriate tone of voice (calm, not too loud).
- Awareness of what would be an appropriate environment (noise, room temperature, lighting, room layout).
- Awareness of use of language (some children may need a language-rich environment, others may need it to be kept simple).

Difficulties with creating ideas:

- Roleplay and drama, use of props such as puppets.
- Modelling.
- Storytelling.
- Photos/pictures/keywords/writing frames.
- Give examples to choose from.

Difficulty with social communication and developing relationships:

- Small group/1 to 1 tasks and activities.
- Lunchtime clubs incorporating their interests.
- Hearing a younger pupil read.
- Buddy system.

Anxiety in busy unpredictable environments:

- Preparation for change of activity or routine.
- Small group/1 to 1 tasks and activities.
- Allocation of a safe space.
- Clear communication of expectations.
- Regular mentor support, including adults or peers.
- Visual timetable to be used in setting/school.

Links and relevant support available

Merton Autism Outreach Service (MAOS) offer advice for staff around supporting and including pupils with autism (and those with social communication difficulties without a diagnosis). This is a free service to schools.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Approaches and Strategies

Autism Guidance (may also be known as Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Autism Spectrum disorder -ASD)

Sensitivity to sensory stimuli:

- Sensory breaks.
- Allow eating of lunch away from the dinner hall.
- Flexibility with uniform policy.
- Consideration to the environment, including noise, room temperature, visual stimuli, proximity, lights.
- Flexible approach to transitions, such as between lessons and to and from school.

Physical outbursts causing harm to others and/or to self and/or damage to property:

- A consistent approach to managing individuals with “reasonable adjustments” made.
- Understanding the frequency and location of triggers.
- Communication with families about what might be happening at home (like divorce, bereavement, illness) and strategies that work/don’t work and relaying this information to staff.
- Safe space.
- Appropriate de-escalation strategies in place (such as time out cards).
- Risk management plan.
- Reintegration plans.
- A clear plan of action, agreed with parents regarding physical intervention.

Staff recognise emotional needs and provide support for emotional regulation using:

- **Teachers/staff will validate and respect all self-advocacy statements/choices communicated by pupils.**
- Emotional regulation schemes, such as The Zones of Regulation or The Incredible 5 Point Scale.
- Mapping The Landscape.
- Access to physical activity/learning breaks.
- Sensory activities.
- Calm/withdrawal spaces.
- Reduced demands/reduced language.

Links and relevant support available

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Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Approaches and Strategies

Autism Guidance (may also be known as Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Autism Spectrum disorder -ASD)

Limited attention span compared to developmentally appropriate milestones:

- Regular, short breaks
- Differentiation
- Chunking, breaking tasks down, listing the steps
- Visual timetables
- Backward chaining – chain parts of the task together (for example, build the sequence at the last part of the task and working back so the child experiences success and then gradually work back to increase more elements until they can do the entire task).
- Named instructions.
- Asking the child to repeat back what activity they are going to do.
- Use of timers, so they know they only have to focus for a comfortable amount of time.
- Individualised timetables.

Links and relevant support available

Merton Autism Outreach Service (MAOS) offer advice for staff around supporting and including pupils with autism (and those with social communication difficulties without a diagnosis). This is a free service to schools.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Useful Resources (such as guidance, parent/family support websites)

[NAPLIC \(charity for professionals and parents to promote understanding of SLCN\) - http://www.naplic.org.uk/](http://www.naplic.org.uk/)

[RADLD.org \(for information about language disorder\)](http://RADLD.org)

[www.engage-dld.com \(for latest research information on developmental language disorder\)](http://www.engage-dld.com)

[Stamma.org \(British stammering association\)](http://Stamma.org)

[Speech and Language UK - Teaching Learning Toolkit - http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/whatworks%20educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidencesummaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/whatworks%20educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidencesummaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/)

Autism Guidance

- [Merton Local Offer - https://www.merton.gov.uk/localoffer](https://www.merton.gov.uk/localoffer)
- Merton Autism Outreach Service (MAOS) – a free service to schools for staff.
- Merton Special School Teaching Alliance (MSTA) – offer CDP on a range of topics including autism.
- Cricket Green School are the Merton Hub for the Autism Education Trust (AET) licenced to deliver training on a range of subjects to Early Years, schools and Post 16 settings.
- National Autistic Society accredited Parent Support Programmes **EarlyBird+ & Teen Life**. Parents need to self-refer by calling Cricket Green School 0208 640 1177 (option 3).
- [National Autistic Society website - http://www.autism.org.uk/](http://www.autism.org.uk/)
- [Ambitious About Autism - https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/coronavirus-and-autism/resources](https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/coronavirus-and-autism/resources)
- Merton Information Advice and Support Service (MIASS) – formerly Merton’s Parent Partnership Service
- Centre for Autism and ADHD Support [Centre for Autism and ADHD Support - https://adhdandautism.org/](https://adhdandautism.org/)
- [Kids First - Parents Forum - https://directories.merton.gov.uk/kb5/merton/directory/service.page?id=SbbK_b4r9IY](https://directories.merton.gov.uk/kb5/merton/directory/service.page?id=SbbK_b4r9IY)

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance



CONTENTS – Cognition and Learning(Primary)

Section	Title	Page
1	Identification/ assessment of needs	20
2	Environmental Supports and Adaptations	21
3	Approaches and Strategies	22
4	Useful Resources	29

Identification/ assessment of needs

General Guidance:

- Knowledge of CYP is thorough e.g. what are their strengths, challenges and how best they learn, and it is recorded in a meaningful way, e.g. Pupil Passport where the voice of the CYP is noted.
- Appropriate information sharing systems should be in place within schools and contain the relevant information for each CYP, e.g. English as an Additional Language (EAL), Pupil Premium (PP), Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- Staff should be aware of the guidance relating to Age Related Expectations across the curriculum for key subject areas and take into consideration other possible influences upon learning progress, such as EAL, expressive and receptive language development, school attendance, childhood trauma, medical (see Social Emotional Mental Health & Communication and Interaction Guidance)
- Staff should be aware of the stages of English acquisition for CYP who are learning English as an additional language – see Bell Foundation . (see Communication and Interaction Guidance)
- Schools should have robust tracking and pupil progress tools in place to pinpoint any gaps in pupils learning and are used to inform future planning which is effective.
- All pupils' learning is reviewed at Pupil Progress meetings - appropriate adults are informed and the SENCo is in attendance where possible.
- Evidence of progress may be gained through other formats e.g. video, photos, QR codes, verbal feedback.
- Appropriate and informed application of recognised individual reading, spelling, and numeracy assessment to gain further insights into a child's difficulties.
- Assessment over time using the 'assess, plan, do, review' process is understood and used appropriately. However, if the adaptations have been made over a period of time, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) should gather information through classroom observation, via the child and parents and investigate any other possible areas of need.
- Extra time and special arrangements are applied to internal assessments as part of everyday adaptations of assessment.
- School staff may seek further advice/information via the SENCo/subject leads/experienced colleagues.

Links and relevant support available

[Gov.uk - List of Phonics Teaching Programmes -
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/choosing-a-phonics-teaching-programme/list-of-phonics-teaching-programmes](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/choosing-a-phonics-teaching-programme/list-of-phonics-teaching-programmes)

Merton Guidance and Assessment support packages for Early Reading, Reading, Writing, Spelling and Mathematics (These can only be accessed by schools who have an SLA for Merton School Improvement).

Oracy Guidance soon to be available.

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/not-permitted/download-id/7634/>

Useful assessments:

<https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/assessments/products/yarc/> -
Early Primary – reading accuracy, single word, reading rate

<https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/assessments/products/phab2/> –
phonological development –

<https://helenarkell.org.uk/product/helen-arkell-spelling-test-hast-2/> – spelling analysis tool

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/eef-blog-the-five-a-day-approach-how-the-eef-can-support>

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

General guidance:

- Classroom rules and expectations are visible, visually displayed and referred to during teaching time.
- Attention and good listening skills are promoted and a consistent approach within the school guidance. (also refer to Social Emotional Mental Health & Communication and Interaction Guidance)
- Staff should understand the effectiveness of adjustments, modifications and adaptations, and share information and good practice across curriculum areas and staff. Have knowledge of the benefits of explicit instruction, metacognitive strategies, scaffolding, flexible grouping, assistive technology for children with possible difficulties
- Flexible groupings and seating so that CYP can learn from their peers across the ability range and have possible workstations/headphones where necessary.
- Making use of learning partners/buddies to promote learning.
- CYP should work in a safe environment where mistakes and errors are considered as a valued part of the learning process.
- Information should be presented in a variety of ways and overlearning opportunities are carried out regularly. Visual aids are used such film-clips, diagrams, timetables, bullet points, YouTube clips, pictures, symbol support (InPrint3) and concrete resources to enable learning.
- Teaching should be as multisensory as far as possible and auditory, visual and kinesthetic strategies used simultaneously to maximise learning
- All resources are easily accessed and clearly labelled (symbol supported) e.g. knowledge organisers, appropriate word banks, topic vocabulary, possibly placed in the learning box.
- Working walls are prominent in the environment and CYP are directed to refer to them for previous and present learning.
- A focus on quality, rather than quantity of work making sure that recording is purposeful and appropriate to the needs of the CYP and the task. Not all work has to be written for evidence and that a CYP can record using different formats such as mind mapping, photographs, pictures, Post It Notes.
- Constructive feedback that allows for strengths to be built upon and illustrates how work could be improved; that supports the young person's understanding of their strengths and what they can do to further improve.
- Use of assistive technology is maximised where possible (and free) e.g. text to speech technology, speech recognition, talking spell checker, word prediction, scan and read text aloud.
- If additional adults are available all staff should be aware of how to use these adults effectively, e.g. see EEF guidance around self-scaffolding, prompting, clueing, modelling and correcting.

Links and relevant support available

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2>

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/posters-and-leaflets/chromebook-apps-and-extensions-for-learners-with-dyslexia/>

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/posters-and-leaflets/a-technology-guide-to-creating-a-dyslexia-friendly-classroom/>

<https://www.popplet.com/> (free mind mapping)

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/assets/files/chromebook-accessibility-and-learning-tools.pdf>

<https://www.lgfl.net/>

Approaches and Strategies

Subject based

Reading:

- CYP should have access to a structured approach to the teaching of reading and phonics with vocabulary teaching.
- Staff should have an understanding of the stages and importance of phonological awareness development and vocabulary needed for reading acquisition. The manipulation of phonemes e.g. isolation/ deletion of phonemes orally is a key skill, the use of blank cards/counters can be used to develop this area.
- Differentiated reading prompts and materials, e.g. visual, phonics, meaning.
- Use a range of metacognitive strategies to work out unknown words (semantic, syntactic and phonetic) and encourage use of context clues and self-monitoring in order to support word identification.
- Explicit teaching of vocabulary linked to the class text and supported by visual cues/symbols.
- Awareness of the hierarchy of questioning linked to Blooms Taxonomy, Blanks Key Stage 1.
- Simple uncluttered worksheets/slides/whiteboards are used, taking note of appropriate font and size, colour background, bullet points, subheadings, jagged edges etc.
- Comprehension strategies are explicitly taught e.g. VIPERS/Reciprocal Reading/Think-Aloud strategies, Think Pair Share strategy.
- Dedicated time for CYP to develop fluency in reading must be offered in small groups where appropriate.
- Awareness of strategies to promote fluency of reading e.g. echo and choral reading, performance reading and re-reading the same text multiple times.
- Text selection is inclusive and representative of CYP's needs and different formats are provided, high interest, low ability books.
- The use of assistive technology is readily available such as text to speech e.g. Helperbird for Chrome, Immersive Reader, Speak for Ipad, Natural Reader for Windows and Select to Speak for Chrome books.

Links and relevant support available

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2>

<https://www.utica.edu/academic/Assessment/new/Bloom%20tx%20revised%20combined.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e8liRAzrzE>

<https://www.helperbird.com/features/immersive-reader-for-chrome/>

Apps for reading

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

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/assets/files/addressing-reading-difficulties.pdf>

<https://wordwall.net/>

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

[Librivox Audiobooks](#)

[RNIB Bookshare](#)

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/blog/apps-to-convert-printed-text-to-digital-format-which-one-is-best/>

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Approaches and Strategies

Compositional Writing

- The development of oracy skills is given high importance and writing is supported by high quality talk activities. (e.g. Voice 21, Merton guidance on Oracy development.)
- There is an understanding of the relation between expressive language and compositional writing.
- Awareness of prior experiences when designing writing tasks and what multisensory activities might be needed for first-hand experience.
- Strategies to actively develop learners' imagination through story telling employed such as puppets, story boxes, visual story mats, images and pictures.
- The different genres are modelled by an adult and the features of each genre taught in a structured format. Quality texts/video/YouTube clips are used to inspire CYP's imagination for compositional writing.
- Images used to support vocabulary learning, including the use of Widget/Communication in Print (visual scaffold) and used to encourage/support recording.
- Explicit teaching of the organisational skills required for longer pieces of writing e.g. the structural and grammatical features of particular genres of writing.
- Shared writing strategies are used in the decision processes around composition. CYP are active participants in class composition session.
- A models of examples of works should be available, WAGOLL

Links and relevant support available

<https://www.perceptualliteracy.com/> (This needs a subscription)

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/information/speech-recognition/dictate/>

Oracy Guidance soon to be available

<https://www.lgfl.net/inclusion/includedinfive>

<https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/eal-programme/guidance/effective-teaching-of-eal-learners/great-ideas/speaking-and-writing-frames/>

Approaches and Strategies

Transcriptional Writing

- Explore the reasons underlying any difficulties with recording to identify the barrier, this could be related to physical, emotional or cognitive needs. e.g. poor core strength, fine motor skills, poor formation of letters.
- Have knowledge regarding possible aids or strategies for handwriting e.g. different pencil grips, sloping boards, correct posture
- CYP receive support to use alternative recording which may include speech to text technology or predictive text, Dictate in Word, ReadWrite, Google Voice Typing in Chromebook, Windows 11 includes built in Voice Access plus possible specialist software e.g. Word Q and Speak Q,
- Some CYP may require motivational activities to encourage them to write. Clarity about expectations and some CYP may need to know how much writing is expected of them in a lesson.
- Some CYP may require visual/ kinesthetic support to follow routines in writing tasks and aid memory e.g. 'Think of a sentence', 'Say the sentence', 'Write the sentence', 'Check it makes sense'.
- Scaffolds used to aid CYF should be carefully managed, for example, if picture, symbol, word supports are presented together then one support should be withdrawn at the appropriate time to develop independence
- A structured approach to teaching spelling which includes incorporating a variety of approaches such as analogy, 'identify' tricky parts, mnemonics, syllable training, morphology, etymology.
- Use of phoneme mats to support spelling and appropriate word banks symbol supported if required (written scaffold) to support independent writing.
- Explicit teaching of how to use dictionaries, spell checker and or assistive technology such as Spelling Made Easy App/Read Aloud and or Spell Out in Word, Ipad talking spell checker 'Spell', Chromebook to Settings .
- A structured approach to the teaching of fluent handwriting with appropriate exercises if required.
- Copying should be avoided as much as possible
- Finding the right age and stage to introduce touch typing as a method of recording.
- Alternative ways of recording are available for all CYP and may include drawing, mind-mapping, apps, voice and video recordings as appropriate to the task and the CYP.
- Sentence scaffolds/ talk frames (written scaffolds) to support grammatical organisation of sentences and staff be aware of the different type of scaffolds which are available; visual, verbal, written.
- The use of human scribes is kept to a minimum, particularly in upper KS2 and beyond in order to promote independence and equip CYP for adult life through the use of adaptive technology.
- The use of assistive technology is made available where appropriate, e.g. Word Q, Speak Q, Immersive Reader, Popplet, (Mind Mapping) ReadWrite etc

Links and relevant support available

<https://www.texthelp.com/en-gb/products/read-and-write-education/>

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/blog/the-benefits-of-word-prediction-to-support-learners-with-writing-difficulties/>

<http://wordqspeakq.lgfl.net/>

http://www.snip-newsletter.co.uk/pdfs/downloads/literacy_programme_1.pdf

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pwVgGhXde8>

[Spelling Frame](#)

[ICT Games](#)

[How Words Work, Morphological Strategies by Dyslexia Action](#)

[Dyslexia Action](#)

[How to Teach Left Handed Children to Write Confidently](#)

[Teach Left Handed Child to Write Confidently - 12 Steps](#)

[Intervention Programme 4: Visual Perception](#)

[Typing Club](#)

[Read&Write Education](#)

[Popplet](#)

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Approaches and Strategies

Numeracy:

- Objectives selected to match the needs of the pupil and their prior learning.
- Time will need to be given for the pupil to become familiar with the resource before using it in a meaningful way, e.g. Numicon, ten frames, Cuisenaire, part-whole models. Explore the resource using mathematics they are familiar with, using a fluency range they are securely working within, e.g. numbers to 20, before using it to explore new learning or working within a more challenging fluency range.
- Return to a concrete representation if the pupil is showing confusion when moving to a visual representation too quickly.
- Be aware CYP can often find the step from moving from a concrete or visual representation to a more abstract representation a challenge.
- Combine concrete/pictorial representations with more abstract representations to help CYP notice important learning points e.g. using a number line combined with dienes or place value counters to understand how the sequence affects numbers.
- Use of multiple representations. For some CYP, working with many different representations at once can cause confusion rather than help them make connections. Using a secure understanding of one, familiar representation as a springboard to introduce a different one can be beneficial.
- CYP may need to stay with concrete for longer than expected before moving to a different representation or moving on to working in a more abstract way.
- Where reading is a barrier to solving word problems remove the requirement to read the problem and deliver the task orally with visual, concrete and pictorial support (or assistive technology to support this)

Questioning in numeracy:

- Use questions with clear intentions and supported with concrete and visual representations such as: What is? What's the same? What's different? True or false? Right or wrong? Which one is wrong? Is there a mistake?
- Starting with an open question, then subsequent questions are more closed, then going back to the open-ended question later.
- Repetition of questions in the same style or structure.
- Giving clear parameters to a question or task, e.g. there are three examples, but one is wrong. Which one? Why is it wrong? (Rather than posing the question broadly as, 'what's the mistake?').

Links and relevant support available

[Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3](#)

[I See Maths](#)

[Top Marks](#)

[Ronit Bird resources](#)

[Mastery Explained](#)

[No Need to Differentiate in Primary School Maths Lessons](#)

[Maths Guidance: KS1 and KS2](#)

[Supporting pupils with SEND in a mastery context](#)

[Primary Mathematics in Merton guidance \(LGfL\)](#)

<https://whiterosemaths.com/>

<https://numbersensemaths.com/>

[iPad apps for learners with dyscalculia/numeracy difficulties \(Call Scotland\)](#)

[ICT Games](#)

[MathsBot.com - Tools for Maths Teachers](#)

[Education Endowment Fund: The Five-a-day approach: How the EEF can support SEND](#)

Approaches and Strategies

Language development in numeracy:

- Break longer, complex stem sentences down into shorter statements.
- Use shorter stem sentences alongside concrete and pictorial representations.
- Oral rehearsal of stem sentences with a partner before giving an answer.
- Embedding questioning in every lesson through modelling question and answer stems with the whole class.
- Consistency in the use of language and the structure of the stem sentences.
- Waiting time (10 seconds suggested) for pupil to answer without interruption.
- Using physical signs and gestures.

Curriculum design in numeracy:

- Concept broken down into a series of very small steps.
- Small steps – sculpted with questioning.
- Return to prior learning before moving on.
- Repetition and overlearning.
- Using a fluency range (size of number) that is secure to illustrate a new concept before returning to the expected age-related fluency range.
- Allow more processing and thinking time.
- Consider how learning is presented visually to avoid unnecessary cognitive load.

Approaches and Strategies

Underlying Cognitive Difficulties which may impact learning

Memory (cognitive load):

- **Pre-teaching** key vocabulary and concepts, e.g. word maps with symbols, phonological, gesture etc
- **Pre-read** and or familiarise any text required for the lesson, handout slides, use Immersive Reader
- Link **new learning** to previous learning - revisit previous teaching at the beginning of each lesson,
- Use **retrieval practice** to support the recall of previously learnt facts/concepts/ideas, e.g. low stakes quizzes, brain dumps
- **Modify** the language demands of the tasks, explicit language, firstly, secondly, now, next
- Use of **modelling** with verbalisation –keep examples of modelled writing/worked maths problems up for pupils to refer to WAGOLL
- Use **visuals** (dual-coding) as this supports the ability to remember information, symbols, video clips, diagrams, photographs, pictures
- Use appropriate **scaffolds** to support memory such as **visual**, e.g. task planner, **verbal and written** e.g. writing frame, sentence starters
- Support CYP to be aware of their own **memory strengths** and **needs** and teach strategies to support memory e.g. note taking, mind mapping, subvocalising, nodding, kinaesthetic, visualisation strategies where appropriate.
- Ask the CYP to **repeat back** what has been said in their own words
- Use of **learning partners** e.g. explain the task, the process of task completion to your peer.
- Strategies to **manage anxieties** to reduce the impact on memory and retention.
- Make use of **technology** e.g. Play Button App to record instructions or Word Q Speak Q for compositional writing.

Approaches and Strategies

Processing difficulties

(a processing difficulty can impact the speed at which verbal information is absorbed and the rate at which information can be retrieved from memory)

- Present the information and task in a **variety of modalities** e.g. verbal, written, graphical, pictorial or a combination of these.
 - Where possible CYP uses visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and spatial techniques **simultaneously**.
 - Carefully planned visual modelling plus verbal explanation of the task.
 - Break the task into **chunks** if appropriate - be aware of the CYP's needs to avoid cognitive overload.
 - Use **thinking/word maps** as a different way of presenting information.
 - Allow the CYP **time to process** the information, e.g. process instructions, answer questions and respond- give thinking time, use partner talk time to help CYP process and gather their thoughts before sharing with the group e.g. Think, Pair, Share approach.
 - CYP with processing difficulties may take **longer** to convey ideas and writing tasks may need additional time so that completed work fully indicates ability
- If processing difficulties are apparent **additional time** for all classroom tasks/formal assessments and statutory tasks should be given. See Access Arrangements

Useful Resources (such as guidance, parent/family support websites)

[The Rose Review - https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5551/2/report.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/5551/2/report.pdf)

[Education Endowment Foundation - https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/)

[List of Phonics Teaching Programmes - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/choosing-a-phonics-teaching-programme/list-of-phonics-teaching-programmes](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/choosing-a-phonics-teaching-programme/list-of-phonics-teaching-programmes)

[NASEN Teacher Handbook - https://nasen.org.uk/news/teacher-handbook-launched](https://nasen.org.uk/news/teacher-handbook-launched)

[Brooks - What works for literacy difficulties - http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/media/downloads/119-what-works-for-literacy-difficulties-6th-edition-2020.pdf](http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/media/downloads/119-what-works-for-literacy-difficulties-6th-edition-2020.pdf)

[Dyscalculia Network - http://www.dyscalculianetwork.com/](http://www.dyscalculianetwork.com/)

[Dyslexia Assist - Guidance for Parents - https://dyslexia-assist.org.uk/for-parents/what-can-i-do-at-home-to-help-my-child/](https://dyslexia-assist.org.uk/for-parents/what-can-i-do-at-home-to-help-my-child/)

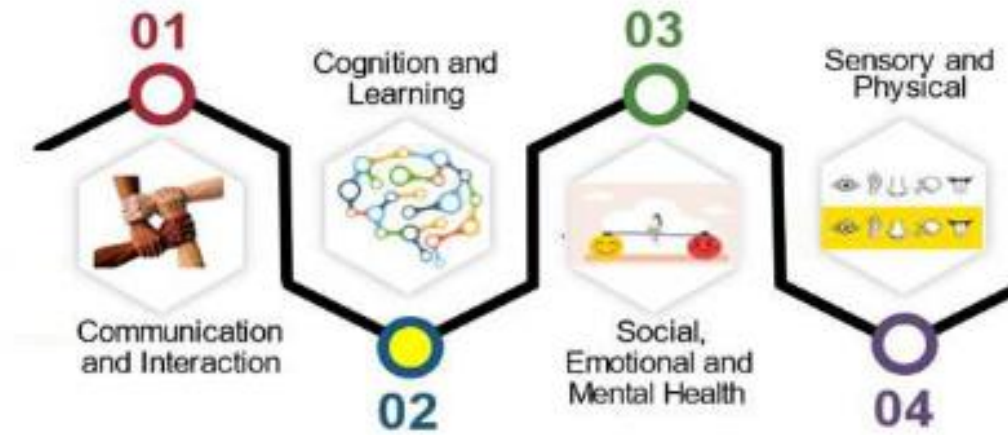
<https://www.ncetm.org.uk/>

<https://www.barringtonstoke.co.uk/books/>

[Handwriting fluency and legibility -- https://www.swft.nhs.uk/application/files/2914/6158/0965/6_handwriting_fluency_and_legibility.pdf](https://www.swft.nhs.uk/application/files/2914/6158/0965/6_handwriting_fluency_and_legibility.pdf)

[British Dyslexia Association - https://www.swft.nhs.uk/application/files/2914/6158/0965/6_handwriting_fluency_and_legibility.pdf](https://www.swft.nhs.uk/application/files/2914/6158/0965/6_handwriting_fluency_and_legibility.pdf)

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance



CONTENTS – Social, Emotional and Mental Health (Primary)

Section	Title	Page
1	Identification/ assessment of needs	31
2	Environmental Supports and Adaptations	34
3	Approaches and Strategies	39
4	Useful Resources	41

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Identification/ assessment of needs

General Guidance:

Staff working with children and young people (CYP) should have an awareness of the risk factors which might make CYP vulnerable to Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs (including Adverse Childhood Experiences – ACEs).

- Staff should understand that CYP can present with SEMH needs without experiencing other Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- Staff can also distinguish between these factors and other factors that may impact on CYP's behaviour and engagement such as persistent absence, social care issues, housing, no recourse to public funds, etc.
- Pupil progress meetings include discussion of CYP's progress in their social and emotional development, in order to target interventions matched to specific areas of need.
- Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or SEND team are involved in termly pupil progress meetings.
- Whole school systems should be in place to identify those CYP who are at risk of social exclusion and/or bullying.
- CYP and parent voice is captured and is central to identifying the needs of individuals and cohorts so that intervention can be planned appropriately.
- Schools are proactive in understanding and responding to the impact that wider community, societal and political events and issues may have on their CYP which may need further consideration.
- Staff should also have an awareness of protective factors and strengths-based approaches that can be utilised to support positive outcomes.
- There is close liaison with CYP, families and relevant professionals and implementation of advice and strategies through the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.
- Staff should be aware that all behaviour has meaning and communicates an underlying need which may indicate an unmet SEMH need. Schools should take steps to explore the underlying reasons for any behaviour.
- Schools should use a holistic, coherent approach using monitoring to enhance understanding of SEMH needs, for example through the use of recording, tracking and analysis of behaviour, such as ABCC, functional analysis, information shared via CYP and families, relevant safeguarding information and an understanding of CYP's individual strengths and needs profile.
- An ongoing and reflective approach is required to gain insight into what is being communicated by the CYP's behaviour and what their needs are. CYP voice should be central to this process.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Identification/ assessment of needs

- Schools should consider that school non-attendance may be anxiety- based (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) and staff should take steps to explore and understand this by working with the CYP and family and by consulting with outside agencies where appropriate.
- The setting recognises, and responds to, the need for pastoral support for CYP with SEMH needs, taking into consideration individual need and other relevant contextual circumstances.

Useful tools that schools can use to identify needs include (but are not limited to):

- Boxall Profile
- Observations
- FAGUS
- SDQs
- Other wellbeing measurements e.g., Leuven, Social Skills audits, Happiness scale
- PASS
- THRIVE
- Executive Functioning Checklists

Appropriate referrals to and advice may be sought from:

- Virtual Behaviour Service
- Educational Psychologist
- Mental Health Professionals (e.g., MHSTs and CAMHS)
- Medical professionals such as a GP, paediatrician
- Early Help Service
- Occupational Therapy
- Traveller Education
- Virtual School
- Merton Sensory Support Service
- Early Years Inclusion Service

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Identification/ assessment of needs

Attention Guidance

- The school recognises, and responds to, the need for support for CYP with SEND, taking into consideration individual needs and other relevant contextual circumstances such as the legal framework around protected characteristics.
- Consideration of discipline procedures and or behaviour policies and any reasonable adjustments that need to be made must be in line with Equalities Legislation.
- Binary approaches to behaviour management such as “ready to learn” will be problematic for CYP with attention and concentration needs and reasonable adjustments must be made.
- There should be strategies in place to develop and extend listening and attention, including availability of low arousal environment for some teaching and learning.

Useful tools that schools can use to identify needs include (but are not limited to):

- Boxall Profile
- Executive Functioning Checklist
- Observations of engagement and emotional wellbeing e.g., Leuven Scale
- Sensory audits of learning environments to be completed
- Whole school observations to monitor attention in order to gain an understanding of individual vs environmental factors.
- Assessment through observation and or teaching (for example, are there parts of the routine/curriculum that they find easier to manage than others?).
- Understanding the reasons; is there a pattern? Use of ABC or STAR chart to identify patterns.
- Engagement with CYP to gain their voice.

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

General Guidance:

There is an agreed whole school behaviour policy based on current research and best practice.

- This focuses on relationships and recognises child and adolescent brain development; it is clear to all members of the school community; it is flexible to adapt to needs and is reflects actual practice within the school. Flexibility is embedded within the policy so that reasonable adjustments can be made to meet the diverse needs of CYP.
- Staff have an understanding of the impact of shame and how this creates a barrier to accountability and learning.
- Regular reviews of policies and practice ensures reflection to avoid shame-based behaviour responses/escalations.
- There is a calm and purposeful climate for learning where the whole school community feel they belong, and their contributions are valid. Individual and group differences are recognised and celebrated in order to create a true sense of inclusion.
- All staff feel confident in having conversations about identity and difference and are sensitive to the way that difference can present within their school community, for example, family make up, separations, cultural differences, intersectionality.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place to support inclusion of all vulnerable groups taking into account gender, race, sexuality and disability.
- There is regular Continued Professional Development (CPD) and discourse regarding the needs of CYP with SEMH needs.
- The social and emotional aspects of learning are understood and valued across all subject areas and can be seen in the school environment e.g., through displays, emotional check ins, etc. Whole school approaches that may be embedded include Emotion Coaching, Zones of Regulation, restorative approaches, nurture, peer mentoring and peer mediation.
- Staff understand the inherent vulnerability involved in learning and consider how best to scaffold and support vulnerable CYP when planning e.g., open ended tasks, writing tasks, assessments, role play etc.
- Peer awareness and sensitivity to difference (including SEND) are promoted at a whole school level.
- Positive role models are identified as protective factors.
- Representation is considered at every opportunity to ensure all CYP feel able to see themselves reflected in school life, e.g., through learning materials, displays etc.

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Feeling safe:

CYP feel safe and valued and are able to share their opinions and concerns.

- Staff understand the difference between actual safety and perceived safety and consider different aspects of this such as physical, social, emotional and cognitive safety.
- The physical space of the school environment is carefully considered and audited for meeting individual needs e.g., sensory needs.
- There are identified places within the classroom or school for withdrawal/calming/respice.
- CYP can identify an agreed safe space. The boundaries around how/when this is available should be agreed, reviewed and communicated on an ongoing basis. Careful consideration needs to be given to how to manage areas where space is shared and may not always be available.
- CYP are aware of the support network available in the school. CYP can identify named adults/key workers when required. CYP can identify who and what, in school, makes them feel safe, and what they should do if they are not feeling safe.
- Risk assessments are in place where needed and reviewed regularly with input from appropriate agencies where necessary.
- Individualised support plans, that take account of specific social, emotional, and mental health needs are implemented and regularly reviewed. This may include after significant incidents, following an increase in defensive/risky behaviours, when there is a risk of exclusion, when there are social care needs or other vulnerabilities identified.
- Physical spaces are audited and adapted to take account of CYP needs, e.g., sensory audits may lead to use of zones, screens, adaption of displays/furniture.
- There are clear policies, understood by the school community to prevent and deal with incidents of bullying.
- Staff are aware that CYP with SEN are more likely to be bullied and are mindful of the impact of bullying on CYP's emotional and social wellbeing and mental health.
- Reasonable adjustments are offered around typical school expectations, e.g., changes to uniform to support sensory needs, toilet pass for anxiety and mental health needs as well as physical needs.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Pupil voice and connection:

CYP feel valued and seen as individuals. There are recognised processes for all CYP to share their opinions and concerns. Consideration is given to how to encourage honest dialogue.

- Pupil voice is at the heart of school development. Voices of CYP within marginalised and vulnerable groups, and those who may not find it easy to vocalise their views, are actively sought e.g., school council, reverse mentoring, involving CYP in monitoring school development and collecting data.
- A range of different ways exist for CYP to share worries and concerns with adults in the school. Staff understand the importance of attachment needs and CYP are encouraged to build trusting relationships with key staff that they feel safe with.
- Groupings and seating plans encourage the maximum social interaction amongst groups of CYP, staff are mindful to ensure that CYP have opportunities to work with a wide range of CYP e.g., by mixed ability groupings.

Curriculum, Provision maps and Process:

- Staff are supported to be aware of the individual needs of the CYP they work with, and the key strategies required to meet their needs. This could include briefings on pupil needs, one-page profiles etc.
- Language used in the classroom promotes positive relationships (such as restorative approaches, emotion coaching).
- A whole school PSHE curriculum supports social and emotional development, and mental health and wellbeing of all CYP and the wider community. There is a clear overview of how issues of diversity and inclusion are taught at each key stage.
- PSHE is used to draw attention to and develop wellbeing, resilience and emotional literacy.
- Pastoral support arrangements (e.g., Learning Mentors / Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) enhance self-esteem, build confidence and enable anxiety management, providing opportunities to use specific approaches, such as buddying, rewards, responsibilities.
- Classroom routines, learning and behavioural expectations are communicated in a number of ways, including visuals (e.g., visual timetables) and are referred to regularly to address CYP anxiety around uncertainty. These may be individualised where needed.
- All staff understand the importance of transitions in CYP's lives and recognise that many CYP with SEMH needs will require additional support to manage these, structures of support are therefore put in place to help CYP to manage these times of uncertainty.
- Staff use a range of resources to support everyday transitions e.g., visual timetables, now and next boards, timers and plan carefully with other staff for more significant transitions including new staff, new year groups, new schools.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Attention Guidance

Class and subject teachers adapt teaching styles to take into account specific needs of CYP within lessons and across different subjects.

Flexibility of approach is demonstrated by making reasonable adjustments to activities, lessons (including Physical Education), timetables and their delivery, as necessary. This may include:

- Have a clear structure to the day.
- Personalised visual timetables.
- Make it clear to CYP what the key focus points will be in each lesson where they will need to focus more intently.
- Use of timers, so CYP know they only have to focus for a comfortable amount of time.
- Individualised timetables, which may feature task checklists and Now and Next boards.
- Space for privacy/quiet areas that can be used for 'down time', smaller group activities and which provide a less visually distracting area.
- Flexibility and consideration of sensory distractions in the environment. The use of support such as ear defenders, working in a quiet space and expecting the class to work quietly during tasks that are more demanding to be trialled to minimise auditory distractions, working while facing a wall, minimise visual distractions at the front of the classroom (surrounding whiteboard) to minimise visual distractions.
- Sit the CYP near good "learning" role models.
- Try differentiated opportunities to develop attention, social and emotional development e.g., buddy system/paired learning activities/scaffolding group work.
- Being aware of times of the day that may be more difficult for example before lunch if hungry.
- Use readiness to learn strategies and routines, for example, after breaks or between tasks.
- Consider the impact of the timetable and how you prepare CYP for transitions.
- Plan for transition between year groups /phases of education, including 'what works well' in terms of in-class differentiation, and support professionals to analyse the behaviour.
- Have a consistent seating plan for all lessons – primary or secondary.
- Have clear expectations regarding behaviours and a clear and consistent response to behaviours.

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

- Record behaviour and remember to analyse and review trends. Think about potential reasons for behaviour and is there a pattern?
 - Allow plenty of time for movement or frequent small concentration periods.
 - Plan lessons in small manageable chunks.
 - Use small group/nurture group activities to support personal, social and emotional development.
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to discipline procedures / behaviour policies and ensure these are in line with equalities legislation.
- Remember to consult with the CYP so they can share with you, their perspective.

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Approaches and Strategies

General Guidance:

- A flexible approach to an appropriately differentiated curriculum, which takes into account the CYP' needs and strengths, cultures, areas of interest, their preferred ways of learning, the range of subjects studied and a more personalised approach to the timetable. This should include opportunities for creative and play based learning and social and emotional development.
- Opportunities to build social relationships naturally as part of the school day, such as shared interest clubs or activities. A range of social and recreational activities are available with supervision and support as required. Additional scaffolding and support are planned for and implemented during less structured times for CYP that need it. Staff are alert to spontaneous opportunities for learning during less formal times/activities.
- Significant thought is given to learning at social times as in formal academic lessons. This includes assessment and planning of the physical space (indoors and outdoors), the organisation of CYP to promote social and emotional learning and develop relationships, what activities are offered, and how staff can model key skills through engagement and interaction at breaktimes.
- CYP are consulted on what to do in their free time (such as at break and lunchtimes) both inside and outdoors, and are supported, as appropriate, by the provision of activities and opportunities for games and interactions with others.
- A reflective practice approach for supporting staff in schools to meet the needs of CYP with SEMH (given the emotional load that this can entail) e.g., through the use of solution circles or circle of adults. It can also support staff to analyse their behaviour management approaches ensuring equity of practice for the diverse range of CYP they support.
- Small group intervention programmes are offered to support self-regulation/self-management skills. Staff understand that some CYP will need to be offered co-regulation before they can progress to self-regulation. Staff understand what this requires of them, and systems are put in place to review the impact of this.
- Access to evidence-based interventions, such as motivational interviewing, mindfulness, pre-teaching of concepts, mentoring, Theraplay, Drawing and Talking, Emotional Logic, Lego therapy, Lego Build to Express, Nurture groups, therapeutic groups.
- Small group interventions support social and emotional learning where developmental gaps have been identified.
- Flexibility within the learning space (e.g., movement, standing up, cushions) and there is a clear rationale for seating plans.
- Key adults identified to support/mentor identified CYP using targeted, evidence-based strategies and interventions.
- Schools should consider the use of visual supports to support emotional regulation, such as the Zones of Regulation and/or The Incredible 5-point Scale.
- 'Social Stories' can be written to support CYP with coping plans.
- Learning breaks and calming activities (such as drawing/doodling/colouring, exercise, listening to music, sensory play, breathing exercises and co-regulation activities).

Approaches and Strategies

Attention Guidance

- Whole setting awareness training on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- Have clear expectations regarding behaviours and a clear and consistent response to behaviours.
- External aids and pre-teaching that sum up key information on a given subject; the CYP can refer to the memory aid as needed.
- A memory aid can take the form of a schedule for the day, a list of criteria for completing a task such as a long-term project, a flow chart for completing a writing assignment, a clock face showing the time that a CYP has to complete a task or even a simple, straightforward poster that is displayed in the classroom.
- Repeat information and make connections to other learning concepts.
- Present learning concepts in a variety of different ways, using visual aids and short sentences / instructions wherever possible.
- Break the information and tasks into smaller instructional units.
- Reduce the volume of work (quality vs quantity) while keeping the conceptual level appropriate to the child's ability - focus on the most important learning tasks.
- Allow the CYP to use reference tools (posters, dictionaries, lists of procedures).
- Activate the CYP's previous knowledge and understanding of a topic by using pre-teaching (e.g., key vocabulary) and over-learning strategies (e.g., repeating information in a variety of ways, making connections to other concepts and visual supports). Make use of the child's interests and lived experience.
- Ask the CYP to reflect back what she/he has just heard; fill in any blanks.
- Personalise reference tools, memory aids, and routines.
- Provide a list of key words.
- Check child/young person's understanding before asking them to start a task.
- Support complex tasks such as writing with concrete/visual materials to establish concepts (e.g., scaffold writing tasks with visuals such as boxing up text and oral storytelling).
- Support child or young person who has difficulty with recording to develop personal organisation in response to timetabling/managing equipment/independence skills (e.g., using a checklist or a diary). Keep a flexible approach to recording evidence.
- Backward chaining – chain parts of the task together (for example build the sequence at the last part of the task and working back so the child experiences success and then gradually work back to increase more elements until they can do the entire task).
- Being flexible around social expectations while the child is working (e.g., allow CYP to move around/stand up in class whilst working).
- Offer movement breaks within periods of more focused work.
- Consider placement on the carpet/classroom e.g., away from particular peers/ sitting near the front/on a chair.
- Use of emotional regulation strategies and check ins such as "Zones of Regulation"
- Present learning opportunities as challenges or as part of a play-based curriculum to encourage engagement.

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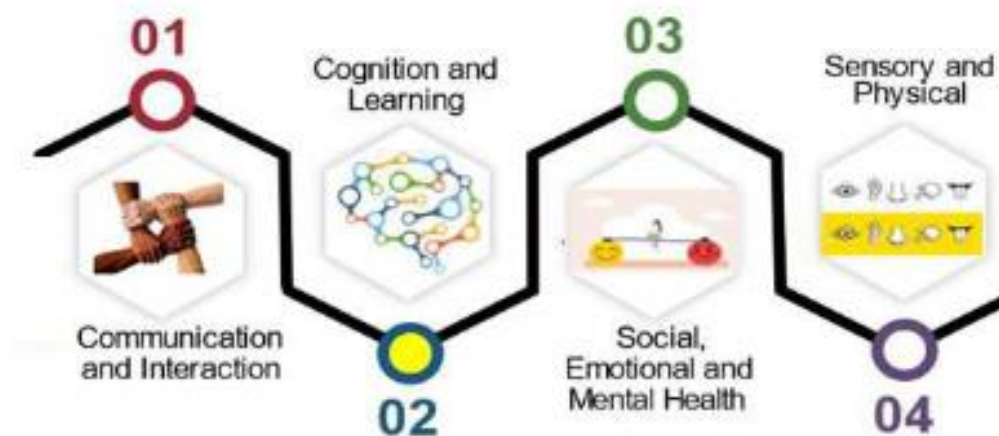
Useful Resources (such as guidance, parent/family support websites)

- [The Communication Trust - https://www.slcfamework.org.uk/](https://www.slcfamework.org.uk/)
- [Anna Freud - Schools in Mind - https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/schools-in-mind/](https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/schools-in-mind/)
- [The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health \(ACAMH\) - https://www.acamh.org/](https://www.acamh.org/)
- [MindEd Hub - https://www.minded.org.uk/](https://www.minded.org.uk/)
- [Nurture UK - https://www.nurtureuk.org/](https://www.nurtureuk.org/)
- [Young Minds - Mental Health Charity For CYP - https://www.youngminds.org.uk/](https://www.youngminds.org.uk/)
- [UK Trauma Council - https://uktraumacouncil.org/](https://uktraumacouncil.org/)
- CPD – core reading list for school staff
- [Childhood Trauma, the Brain and Social World - https://uktraumacouncil.link/documents/ChildhoodTraumathBrainSocialWorldv1.0.pdf](https://uktraumacouncil.link/documents/ChildhoodTraumathBrainSocialWorldv1.0.pdf)
- Parents and carers are signposted to the [Merton Local Offer](#) and this is referenced on the setting's website.
- Parents and carers are aware of how they can communicate any information about their child and who they should contact.
- [Early Help Assessment - Effective Support for Families in Merton](#)
- [Merton Children and Families Hub](#)
- Educational Psychology Team – Educational.Psychology@merton.gov.uk / Tel: 020 8545 4810
- Professional consultation with CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA) [Where and how to refer to CLCH Services in Merton](#)
- [School Nursing Service](#)
- [Virtual School for Looked-After Children | Merton Council](#)
- [Merton Virtual Behaviour Service \(VBS\) | Merton directories](#)
- Merton Special Educational Needs Information, Advice and Support Service (MIASS) miass@merton.gov.uk 020 8543 8854
- CORC wellbeing measurements [mwb-toolki-final-draft-4.pdf - https://www.annafreud.org/media/4612/mwb-toolki-final-draft-4.pdf](https://www.annafreud.org/media/4612/mwb-toolki-final-draft-4.pdf)
- [Boxall Profile - https://new.boxallprofile.org/](https://new.boxallprofile.org/)
- [Fagus Educational Resource – Emotional and Social Development - https://www.fagus.org.uk/](https://www.fagus.org.uk/)
- [The Leuven Scale - Emotionally Healthy Schools - https://emotionallyhealthyschools.org/primary/the-leuven-scale/](https://emotionallyhealthyschools.org/primary/the-leuven-scale/)
- [Theraplay](#)
- [Foundation to Drawing and Talking Therapy - https://drawingandtalking.com/foundation](https://drawingandtalking.com/foundation)
- [Emotional Logic - https://www.emotionallogiccentre.org.uk/](https://www.emotionallogiccentre.org.uk/)
- [Lego Therapy](#)
- [Lego Build To Express - https://thinkbrickseducation.co.uk/](https://thinkbrickseducation.co.uk/)
- Nurture groups [NurtureUK - https://www.nurtureuk.org/](https://www.nurtureuk.org/)

Attention Guidance

- [ADHD Foundation - http://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/](http://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/)
- [Foundation Centre for Autism and ADHD Support centre - http://www.adhdandautism.org](http://www.adhdandautism.org)
- [ADDitude - ADD & ADHD Symptom Tests, Signs, Treatment, Support - https://www.additudemag.com/](https://www.additudemag.com/)
- [Mind ADHD and mental health - Mind - https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/adhd-and-mental-health/](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/adhd-and-mental-health/)
- [ADHD UK Support | ADHD UK - https://adhduk.co.uk/support/](https://adhduk.co.uk/support/)

Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance



CONTENTS – Sensory and Physical (Primary)

Section	Title	Page
1	General Guidance including Assessment of Needs	43
2	Environmental Supports and Adaptations	46
3	Approaches and Strategies	49
4	Useful Resources	56

General Guidance including Assessment of Needs

Physical Difficulties (PD)

Settings should provide accessible policies that are reviewed regularly and communicated/distributed effectively to meet the PD needs of their community. All staff, including supply and new staff, should be informed about the needs of CYP with PD and medical needs through an induction programme, ensuring that these staff know how to support the needs of PD child/young person. Personalised plans generated in response to assessments and include as relevant access arrangements, health care plans and risk assessments.

Plans may take into account:

- Supervision arrangements at unstructured times.
- Administration of any medicines.
- Support to address personal needs such as toileting.
- Environmental audit to inform any necessary adjustments (such as ramps or rails).
- Fire evacuation and medical emergency plans to initiate and review a health care plan to address the CYP's needs and emergency procedures.
- The physical difficulties of C/YP are identified effectively, communicated with relevant staff and documented in an appropriate support plan.

Specific assessments should be undertaken to establish the degree of potential implications for and impact on curriculum access.

Assessments may include:

- Physical disability: scope of disability, physical restriction, pain, mobility, independence, self-care, communication, therapy, and sensory needs.
- Input at class and whole school level to raise peer awareness of the nature of different impairments and the support they can offer.
- Children/young people (CYP) and parents are actively engaged in decision making and planning for ongoing provision.

General Guidance including Assessment of Needs

Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)

The setting should recognise, and respond to, the need for learning support for CYP with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), taking into consideration individual needs and other relevant contextual circumstances.

The school should know that advice on support for CYP with MSI should come from a Qualified Teacher of MSI (QTMSI) from Merton Sensory Support Service (MSSS).

All staff working with CYP with MSI needs should undergo specialist training so that they understand the impact of their MSI on their access to the curriculum and learning. This will enable staff to provide the appropriate support and strategies to allow the CYP to reach their potential in the mainstream.

Training must be provided by a QTMSI. MSSS provides a holistic package of support which includes comprehensive training, ongoing support and advice and direct service to CYP and their families.

Following specialist assessment from a QTMSI specific strategies to be employed to allow the best access in a mainstream setting include:

- Advice on optimising the CYP's auditory access to the curriculum such as appropriate seating and use of assistive listening technology.
- Advice on optimising the acoustic environment.
- Advice on optimising the visual environment.

MSSS have a monitoring system in place to assess the CYP's needs, identify outcomes, advise on implementation of support and monitor and evaluate progress.

General Guidance including Assessment of Needs

Hearing Impairment

The setting recognises and responds to the need for learning support for CYP with SEND, taking into consideration individual needs and other relevant contextual circumstances.

The school should know that advice on support for CYP with hearing needs should come from a Qualified Teacher of Deaf (QToD) from MSSS.

All staff working with CYP with hearing needs should undergo specialist training so that they understand the impact of their hearing needs on their access to the curriculum and learning. This will enable staff to provide the appropriate support and strategies to allow the child/young person to reach their potential in the mainstream.

Training must be provided by a QToD. MSSS provides a holistic package of support which includes comprehensive training, ongoing support and advice and direct service to CYP and their families.

Following specialist assessment from a QToD specific strategies to be employed to allow the best access in a mainstream setting include:

- Advice on optimising the CYP's auditory access to the curriculum such as appropriate seating, and use of assistive listening technology.
- Advice on optimising the acoustic environment.

MSSS have a monitoring system in place to assess CYP's needs, identify outcomes, advise on implementation of support and monitor and evaluate progress.

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Physical Difficulties

- Clearly defined spaces/areas for personal equipment and places of withdrawal are identified and available for therapies, developmental programmes, and/or special arrangement for personal hygiene.
- Careful consideration is given to the position of CYP with PD in the classroom to allow for maximum independence of movement/access to resources and equipment.
- Reasonable adjustments and adaptations are made to the curriculum and the school environment including specialist equipment such as specialist seating, height adjustable work benches/ desks to facilitate access.
- Access Audits should be completed. Up-to-date Access Plans are available on the school's website.
- Schools Access Plans are in place, reviewed regularly and available on the school's website, with clear identified actions.
- Furniture should be organised to allow ease of wheelchair access and appropriate proximity to technology.
- Review of CYP seating arrangements should be carried out to ensure good posture management and easy access to support and teacher input.
- CYP seating arrangements also need to be reviewed to ensure good posture management when the child is eating, for example, to avoid the risk of choking.
- Careful positioning of specialist equipment and resources to ensure optimal usage.

Personal Care

- Assistance with the management of toileting needs should be provided sensitively to allow maximum access to the curriculum, the whole life of the school, and dignity in front of staff and peers.
- Responsibility to meet the needs of CYP with delayed personal development; CYP should not be excluded from any activity due to incontinence, sent home to change, or parents expected to attend school to deal with toileting needs.

Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)

In addition to the advice given by QTVI and QToD, work with the QTMSI who can advise on the environment for each individual case

- A familiar and stable environment is required. This includes both the adult supporting the learner and the physical environment.
- The environment both physical and social will need to consider the best possible auditory and visual conditions. Older learners will need support to recognise and make changes to support this.
- Consider an environmental audit from the Habilitation Specialist for more specific advice as recommended by QTMSI.
- The physical environment is adapted to meet the needs of learners.

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Hearing Impairment

Classroom Environment:

- Ensure that background noise levels are kept to a minimum.
- Use soft furnishings to reduce reverberation.
- Avoid seating CYP next to a noisy piece of equipment such as a fan or projector as this will be distracting and make it harder for them to hear.
- Seat the CYP away from external noise e.g. open windows, doors, traffic noise.
- Do not allow other adults to complete noisy activities (resource preparation) during focused listening times.
- Ensure the room is well-lit.

Wider environment- break time, Physical Education (PE), swimming:

- Attract the child/young person's attention before speaking.
- Ensure that you face him/her so that they can lipread.
- The CYP will find it more difficult to hear in the noisy environment of a swimming pool. Hearing aids cannot be worn. Using a handheld white board or flip chart to give written instructions is helpful.
- In field sports, child/young person may not hear their peers calling them to pass the ball etc. Their peers need to be aware of this.
- Creative positioning (e.g. vertical seating) in assemblies so that CYP can access lip patterns and whiteboards more easily without the stigma of sitting at the front with younger children.
- Opportunities to meet with other deaf CYP both in school (where possible) and in social events such as clubs, community groups etc.
- Access to learning materials, books, videos which include deaf characters or themes about deafness.
- Opportunities to meet and engage with deaf role models within the community.
- Access to school clubs and activities with deaf friendly resources and experiences.
- Empower the CYP to understand and learn to manage their own hearing needs and the technology they use.
- Encourage self-advocacy so the CYP can explain their needs to others.
-

Environmental Supports and Adaptations

Visual Impairment

- Ensure lighting is suitable (see advice from QTVI).
 - Eliminate glare – use blinds. ·
 - Consistent and clutter free classroom layout. ·
 - If necessary, get an environmental audit from the Habilitation Specialist for more specific advice on highlighting steps etc.
 - Consider whether an early lunch pass or a quiet space in the playground is needed
 - Many CYP will need to be taught skills to navigate their environment independently and safely.
 - Assess CYP and provide individual Habilitation/mobility lessons as appropriate e.g. independent travel, route learning, road safety skills, practice with public transport.
- Assess if necessary to provide extra support in unfamiliar environments i.e. school trips, even though their mobility may be excellent within the school buildings.

Approaches and Strategies

Physical Difficulties

- Class and subject teachers should adapt teaching style to take into account specific needs of CYP within lessons and across different subjects.
- Flexibility of approach should be demonstrated by making reasonable adjustments to activities, lessons (including PE), timetables and their delivery, as necessary.
- CYP should have full access to school trips/learning outside of the classroom.
- Flexible grouping arrangements to facilitate both peer and adult support to improve access to the curriculum and encourage independent learning.
- Teaching should take account of physical and medical needs, and outcomes are differentiated to allow for a focus on developing their targets.
- Adults should look for signs of fatigue or frustrations during different lessons or subjects or at parts of the day or week.
- Ability to develop positive peer interactions, especially during unstructured times such as the lunch break. Specific activities are in place to overcome physical difficulties, for example alternative ways of recording are used across the curriculum including the daily use of laptop/tablets.
- The curriculum actively should promote positive attitudes to disability.
- Additional access to ICT, specialist aids and adaptation to facilitate access to the curriculum. Pace of lessons adjusted with rest breaks built in as required.
- Differentiation techniques are widely used to promote full access to practical activities. The curriculum addresses learning needs (including styles of learning and uneven ability profiles) as well as their emotional wellbeing, their communication needs and life skills.

Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)

Access to the curriculum:

In addition to the advice given by Qualified Teacher for Visual Impairment (QTVI) and Qualified Teacher of the Deaf (QToD), work with the QTMSI who can advise on access for each individual case.

- CYP with multi-sensory impairment (MSI) have impairments of both sight and hearing.
- Many CYP also face other challenges, such as medical conditions or physical disabilities.
- Hearing and sight are our primary means of gaining information from the environment, particularly beyond arm's reach. MSI, therefore, creates enormous disadvantage for children in terms of knowing where they are, and what is happening to and around them.
- Providing opportunities to establish concepts introduced and hands-on activities to develop the concepts and grasp information other CYP pick up indirectly.
- Opportunities across the curriculum to generalise concepts in a range of ways. This will include repetition and variety but will support a reduction in dependency on prompts and context.
- Incorporating pre-learning (preparation) and post-learning (reinforcement) strategies.
- Effective use of assistive devices, IT, and other specialist equipment.

Approaches and Strategies

Classroom Management:

In addition to the advice given by QTVI and QToD, work with the QTMSI who can advise on classroom management for each individual case.

- Small group work facilitated by an adult, within the classroom or on a withdrawal basis.
- Visual/audio demonstrations and visual cues/audio commentary are used.
- Tasks are broken down into small manageable steps. These steps are shown explicitly.
- High staffing ratios from a small consistent group of key adults who can develop trusted relationships with effective communication.
- The use of an intervenor - the role of the intervenor is to effectively facilitate access to information usually gained through sight and hearing and other senses that is incomplete or missing for the child who is MSI.
- A multi-agency approach to support from across health, therapy and education services will be essential to meeting the complex needs of individual learners

Communication:

In addition to the advice given by QTVI and QToD, work with the QTMSI who can advise on communication for each individual case.

- Supporting the development and use of communication skills and facilitating effective communication (expressive and receptive)
- Assisting the CYP to anticipate events – use of calendars and timetables and ‘Now and Next’ boards.
- Routines to be consistent with appropriate cues used to develop learners understanding of anticipation, communication, and control.
- Once established mis matches or deliberate mistakes can be introduced to encourage spontaneous communication from the learner.
- Communication may include, sign, speech, symbols and pictures, gesture, and nonverbal communication. Expressive and receptive methods may be different and varied.
- Learner’s behaviour should be regarded as communication, even if it is not seen as intentional.
- Learner’s receiving distorted sensory information through their vision and hearing will take longer to process interaction. Ensuring the pace of learning matches each learners’ sensory needs will be essential.

Approaches and Strategies

Mobility/Independence:

In addition to the advice given by QTVI and QToD, work with the QTMSI who can advise on mobility and independence for each individual case

- Encouraging and facilitating independence and providing opportunities to make choices and decisions (maintaining a sense of control, self-determination)
- Learning through movement and shared experiences will be essential. For example, acknowledging an action, reflecting the learner's movement, modelling the next step. Intensive interaction will be a key part of this process.
- Strategies from a Habilitation Specialist with experience in MSI.
- Supporting the development of motor skills, independent mobility, and orientation
- Implementing individual programmes devised by involved therapists, with appropriate training and supervision

Personal, Social and Emotional:

In addition to the advice given by QTVI and QToD, work with the QTMSI who can advise on PSE for each individual case

Promoting social and emotional well-being

- Supporting positive interactions with others and teaching acceptable strategies

Approaches and Strategies

Hearing Impairment

Access to the curriculum:

Technology:

- Ensure that any personal hearing technology (hearing aids, speech processors etc.) are worn and working well.
- Use radio aids and/or Soundfield systems as advised by QToD.
- Complete daily checks of technology including functional listening checks to ensure it is working as it should.
- CYP should be seated towards the front of the class in a position in line with advice from the QToD. For hearing aid users this should be no more than 1.5 metres from the teacher.

Classroom Management:

- Give an outline of the content of the lesson at the beginning.
- Briefly recap the main points of the lesson at the end.
- Write key words / ideas on the whiteboard.
- Clearly signal changes of topic.
- Use handouts and visual aids whenever possible.
- Rephrase rather than repeat information that has not been understood
- Re-present comments made by other CYP.
- Check that CYP have understood the work by using open questions.
- Use subtitles for videos.
- Do not ask CYP to make notes while listening to/watching a video clip or a live speaker.
- Where possible, provide opportunities for pre-teaching
- Eliminate unnecessary interruptions during focused listening times
- Work with the QToD who can advise on classroom management for each individual case.

Approaches and Strategies

Group conversation management:

- Ensure that only one person talks at a time.
- Repeat what others have said.
- Ensure questions and answers have been heard and made clear.
- Identify the next speaker to allow the CYP time to turn and watch.
- Summarise or review the main points that have been discussed.

Communication:

- Stand where CYP can see your face. Avoid standing in front of a window/with the light behind you which causes your face to be in shadow and prevents access to lip-patterns
- With young children, get down to their level so that they can see and hear you more clearly.
- Face the class whenever giving information; do not talk while writing on the whiteboard or facing away from the CYP or class.
- Avoid walking around whilst talking to the class. Speak clearly and naturally, do not over-exaggerate lip patterns or speak too slowly.
- Make full use of natural gesture and facial expression.
- Use visual aids to support understanding.
- Regularly check for understanding using open questions. Avoid questions that can be answered with a yes/no response.

Approaches and Strategies

Visual Impairment

Access to the curriculum:

Learner characteristic:

- Learners may have missed out on incidental learning which is vital for concept development · Don't ask the CYP if they can see something - they will usually say yes.
- Use concrete and hands-on experience whenever possible.
- Slanted desks can aid posture and make learning more comfortable.
- Allow more time to complete tasks and provide rest breaks. ·
- Do not lower expectations because the CYP has a visual impairment.
- Be discreet - the CYP may dislike being seen to be different.

Learning Resources:

- Use large print on A4/modified large print worksheets.
- Printed materials should be clear and high contrast.
- Avoid clutter on visual materials.
- Arial font is preferable, avoid italic or ornate script. Lower case letters are easier to read than capitals.
- Supplement any visual information with clear verbal explanation.

Technology:

- Some learners will need to learn specialist skills (Extended Core Curriculum) such as touch-typing, braille, ICT, all of which require specialist support and training.
- Encourage the CYP to use assistive technology, visual aids, resources that have been prescribed such as iPad, magnifiers, glasses, large print books, e-books. · Use digital and audio versions of curriculum texts and reading materials using RNIB Bookshare, RNIB Digital services, National Accessible Library.

Approaches and Strategies

Classroom Management:

- Use the CYP's name when seeking their attention.
- Seat CYP in seat advised by QTVI.
- Give clear instructions as the CYP may not see gestures and facial expression

Mobility and Independence:

Many CYP will need to taught skills to navigate their environment independently and safely.

- Assess CYP and provide individual Habilitation/mobility lessons as appropriate e.g. independent travel, route learning, road safety skills, practice with public transport.
- Assess if necessary to provide extra support in unfamiliar environments i.e. school trips, even though their mobility may be excellent within the school buildings.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

Growing up with a visual impairment can affect a CYP's self-esteem. Be aware of strategies that tackle this, including raising awareness amongst peers.

- Visually impaired CYP can miss non-verbal cues and may benefit from being deliberately taught social skills.

Encourage self-advocacy so that the CYP can explain their needs to others.

Useful Resources (such as guidance, parent/family support websites)

Physical Difficulties

- Training
- Parent support

Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)

Advice and support can be found by contacting: Merton Sensory Support Service - sen@merton.gov.uk

- A Curriculum for Multi-Sensory Impaired Children from MSI unit, Victoria School Birmingham:
- [MSI curriculum - Sense - https://www.sense.org.uk/information-and-advice/for-professionals/resources-for-education-and-early-years-professionals/msi-curriculum/](https://www.sense.org.uk/information-and-advice/for-professionals/resources-for-education-and-early-years-professionals/msi-curriculum/)
- SENSE provides information, advice, and support for Multi-Sensory Impaired CYPs, their families and settings:
- [Sense | For people with complex disabilities - https://www.sense.org.uk/](https://www.sense.org.uk/)
- Early Support provide information about multi-sensory impairment for parents and carers:
- [Early Support Multi-sensory impairments \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](https://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/early-support-multi-sensory-impairments)

Hearing Impairment

Advice and support can be found by contacting: Merton Sensory Support Service - sen@merton.gov.uk

- The [NDCS](https://www.ndcs.org.uk/) (National Deaf Children's Society) provides information, advice and support for CYP with hearing needs, their families and settings.

Useful Resources (such as guidance, parent/family support websites)

Visual Impairment

Advice and support can be found by contacting: Merton Sensory Support Service -
sen@merton.gov.uk

Further help for families:

➤ **RSBC Family Support Service**

Telephone no: 020 3198 0225

Email: enquiries@rsbc.org

Website: www.rsbc.org.uk

For audio books:

➤ Calibre Audio Library www.calibre.org.uk

Further help for education professionals:

➤ [RNIB Bookshare](#)

➤ Further information for all stakeholders:

[RNIB](#)