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**Newcastle SEND Descriptors of Need**

**Part 2.1**

**Guidance for Children and Young People with Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction Needs:**

**Early Years**



Version 3 April 2024

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## Summary of needs

Once you have made your assessment you may wish to complete the grid below

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Ranges | | | | |  |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Comments |
| Early years |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLCN |  |  |  |  |  |  |

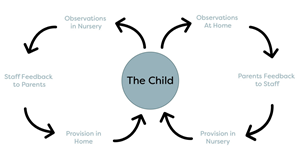
**Introduction:**

Inclusion is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging. Listening to children’s voices and recognising these are expressed in a range of ways, including non-verbally, is central to inclusive practice. -Birth to 5 Matters ([Birthto5Matters-download.pdf](https://birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Birthto5Matters-download.pdf))

**A Unique Child:**

Please consult with the Early Years Screen [Language & Communication (newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk)](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/sites/default/files/SENDOS/early%20years/EYAS%202-5%20A4%20.pdf)for support with identification of the child’s unique needs.

**Positive Relationships:**



(Pen Green Loop – adapted from Pen Green (2018)

Involve all key adults (keyworker, SENCo, parents, extended family etc) in the conversation about the child’s needs.

**Enabling Environment:**

Please consult with the Universally Available Provision on how to create a Total Communication learning environment. [Universally Available Provision.pdf (newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk)](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/sites/default/files/Local%20Offer/Early%20years/Universally%20Available%20Guidance.pdf)

**Learning and Development:**

Follow the Graduated Approach when completing and setting targets in the child’s support plan. [SEND Outreach Service - Early Years | Newcastle Support Directory](https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/send-outreach-service-early-years)

This document provides guidance regarding provision, staffing and identification for children with communication and interaction needs in ranges 1-5.

**Descriptors of need for children and young people who have Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction needs**

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| **Range 1: Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction** | | |
| **Descriptor of need** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies/Curriculum and Interventions** |
| The child’s communication and interaction skills broadly lie within age related expectations as evidenced by the **Early Years Assessment Screen 2022.**  Using the EYFS as a guide and being mindful that every child is unique, the child’s developmental profile may broadly show the following level of delay or emerging needs:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Range 1** | |  | | **Age** | **Development in months** | **Gap** | | 2 years | 16 months or below | 8 months | | 3 years | 22 months or below | 14 months | | 4 years | 32 months or below | 16 months | | 5 years | 40 months or below | 20 months |   Child may develop spoken language at a slower rate than peers.  Some difficulties with understanding of language.  May demonstrate limited understanding of nonverbal cues.  Some immature speech sounds. Requires help with key words.  Requires repetition from an adult.  May have English as an additional language.  Difficulty being understood by adults outside the family.  Some difficulties in interactions with peers; may need adult prompting.  May display shorter attention span in comparison to peers.  Range of noises and sounds in babble limited. | SENDCo and keyworker to liaise with the family/ carer and gather information relating to the child.  Consider relevant referrals to outside agencies e.g., SALT.  Discuss with Health Visitor (with parental permission).  Setting to gather further information about the child through observation, Early Years Assessment Screen 2022.  Termly/ half-termly review of child’s progress towards targets on individualised learning/support plan.  Half-termly review of child’s progress as part of the Graduated Approach.  Good use of the established assessment processes to monitor progress. | Emphasis on providing an enabling environment inside and outside with developmentally appropriate resources.  Use of photographs and pupil learning journal alongside adult observation and assessments to enable monitoring.  Focus on attention and listening activities (this will filter out those children with environmental impact delay).  Ensure all adult language is supported by visual prompts – photographs, pictures, objects of reference, Makaton.  Adults to present high quality expressive speech and adapt levels of language.  Effective differentiation of activities to enable learning at a level appropriate to the child.  Any planned interventions are developed with the parent/carer, child, SENDCo and key person and follow the Graduated Approach.  Flexibility with staffing ratios/ smaller group sizes at identified key times when needed.  Quality of continuous provision with enhanced resources that is directed and targeted to meet the individual needs and interests of the child.  Implementation of reasonable adjustments to the learning environment and curriculum. Refer to the **Universally Available Provision.**  Plan for transition between activities, rooms, or next educational setting, when appropriate.  Access relevant training for staff professional development. E.g., **AET Training**. |

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| **Range 2: Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction** | | |
| **Descriptor of need** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies/Curriculum and Interventions** |
| The child has MILD but persistent difficulties, identified using the **Early Years Assessment Screen 2022.**  The child is not making expected progress despite a range of interventions and reference to the **Universally Available** **Provision.**  Using the EYFS as a guide and being mindful that every child is unique, the child’s developmental profile may broadly show the following level of delay:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Range 2** | |  | | **Age** | **Development in months** | **Gap** | | 2 years | 13 months or below | 11 months | | 3 years | 19 months or below | 17 months | | 4 years | 29 months or below | 19 months | | 5 years | 36 months or below | 24 months |   Child has difficulty following or understanding instructions and everyday language without visual supports.  Adults have difficulty understanding speech without it being in context due to enunciation/clarity of speech/making noises/sounds.  Immaturity in socialisation. Older age range looks towards adults rather than peers. Some difficulties with social communication and interaction.  Limited awareness of social space and related social difficulties.  Difficulties forming and maintaining friendships with peers.  Younger age range – not linking with an important adult. Lack of playing with sound/noise/babble. | As Range 1  SENDCo involved in ongoing observation as child is not making expected progress.  Refer and involve other professionals as appropriate e.g. SEND Outreach Service, Speech and Language Team, Health Visiting Team etc. These professionals to input into termly reviews where appropriate.  Consider applying for Early Years Inclusion Funding through the ASAP.  Consider use of Toy Library to access specific resources to meet individual needs.  Support plan with SMART targets in place, developed with parents and carers and taking account of specialist advice where appropriate. Following the Graduated Approach, (plan, do, review cycle)  Keep systematic log of graduated approach, assessment information, review meetings and involvement of outside agencies.  Termly/ half-termly review of child’s progress towards targets on Individualised learning/support plan. | As Range 1  Follow support plan developed with professionals’ advice/ input.  Additional adult support may be required for some activities (group and individual), and to implement support plan targets.  Increased differentiation of activities and materials to reflect developmental and language levels, and a focus on implementing key learning outcomes.  Planned interventions involve as Range 1 + SENCo and other professionals.  Clarity on support given at:   * Continuous provision * Enhanced * Targeted   Implement a Total Communication approach for example, Makaton, Visual Symbols, Objects of Reference, Intensive Interaction and Visual Approaches to support the development of language and interaction skills  Reasonable adjustments are in place and part of everyday provision, using the **Universally Available Provision** where appropriate.  Staff training needs are addressed. E.g., **AET Training**. |

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| **Range 3: Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction** | | |
| **Descriptor of need** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies/Curriculum and Interventions** |
| **The child has persistent difficulties** and is not making expected progress despite a level of focused intervention and implementation of advice and recommendations from external agencies and the provision of quality first teaching.  Using the EYFS as a guide and being mindful that every child is unique, the child’s developmental profile may broadly show the following level of delay:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Range 3** | |  | | **Age** | **Development in months** | **Gap** | | 2 years | 10 months or below | 14 months | | 3 years | 15 months or below | 21 months | | 4 years | 24 months or below | 24 months | | 5 years | 30 months or below | 30 months |   Delay in expressive and/ or receptive language requiring regular SALT input.  Has reduced vocabulary both receptively and expressively impacting on learning and retention of new words.  May display some loss of previously demonstrated communication skills.  Limited ability communicating or expressing feelings or needs.  Limited ability to understand the impact of their actions on others.  Child is becoming increasingly isolated with peers.  Limited initiation of social interaction – limited noises/babble, limited response to adult interactions: physical/verbal responses. | Observations and EYFS developmental assessment identify on-going needs and delayed progress in relation to age related expectations.  SENDCo involved in ongoing observation. Profile shows child is not making expected progress despite significant levels of focused intervention and implementation of advice from external agencies.  Involvement of additional support services as appropriate. This may include Paediatrician or Educational Psychologist where relevant and additional agencies on follow up from these.  Support plan with SMART targets takes account of specialist advice and details additional adult input in relation to staffing ratios for specific time periods.  Plan organises support in:   * Continuous provision * Enhanced * Targeted   Referral submitted for ASAP to enhance in setting provision in key areas.  Interventions are assessed for IMPACT on progress. | Emphasis on providing an enabling environment inside and outside with developmentally appropriate resources.  Use of photographs and pupil learning journal alongside adult observation and assessments to enable monitoring.  Increased differentiation of activities and materials to reflect developmental and language levels, and a focus on key learning outcomes from support plan.  Differentiation may include deployment of additional adults to support planned interventions within:   * Continuous provision * Enhanced * Targeted   Increased focus on planned interventions including any of those from other professionals.  Interventions and staffing ratios evidenced within support plan.  Increased focus on specific activities and/ or use of resources, including ICT and specialist equipment/ materials/ communication aids.  Visual timetable, clear routines, preparation for change and activity transitions.  Use of Makaton, intensive interaction and visual approaches to supporting the development of language and interaction skills.  Access and use of Autism friendly strategies/ social play and interaction skills.  Staff may need access to specific specialist training.  Consideration given to the ‘sensory’ environment and planned sensory breaks following a three-step approach: sensory activity, adult directed activity, and child led activity. Repetition of these steps to enable the child to engage effectively.  Implementation of reasonable adjustments to the EYFS environments and curriculum. |

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| **Range 4 - Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction** | | |
| **Descriptor of need** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies/Curriculum and Interventions** |
| **The child has persistent difficulties** and is not making expected progress despite significant levels of focused intervention and implementation of advice and recommendations from external agencies and the provision of quality first teaching.  Using the EYFS as a guide and being mindful that every child is unique, the child’s developmental profile shows at least the following broad levels of delay:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Range 4** | |  | | **Age** | **Development in months** | **Gap** | | 2 years | 6 months or below | 18 months | | 3 years | 11 months or below | 25 months | | 4 years | 19 months or below | 29 months | | 5 years | 24 months or below | 36 months |   Moderate to severe language and /or speech sound disorder/ limited language or babble.  Uses mix of speech and alternative communication methods such as visuals, Makaton, BSL and/or augmented communication systems  Assessments show child is working at least 2 age and stages below chronological age in at most areas of language, communication and social interaction skills.  Child may avoid communication or use limited non-verbal communication when in a speaking situation.  Child avoids interactions with others.  Displays tendency to withdraw from social and group learning activities Appears unaware of others.  Displays difficulties expressing emotions.  Persistent and significant difficulty to engage in social interactions and form relationships with others.  Difficulties in relation to understanding and interpretation of social interactions and social situations. | SENDCo involved in on-going observation. Support in place from relevant external agencies in line with agency referral processes and strategies and support implemented and evidenced within support plans and review documentation.  High level modifications to learning environment and the breaking down of tasks into small steps within an individualised curriculum.  Progress is closely monitored by the school/ setting and recorded using setting tracking systems in line with EYFS, and Early Support Developmental Journals. Outside agency recommendations and careful monitoring of IMPACT of strategies and interventions.  Support plan with SMART targets takes account of specialist advice.  Termly/ half-termly review of child’s progress towards targets on individualised learning/support plan.  Consideration given to application for an Education Health and Care needs assessment on basis of levels of development and complexity of need. Next steps to be determined in consultation with relevant professionals and parents/carers. | Emphasis on providing an enabling environment inside and outside with developmentally appropriate resources.  Use of photographs and pupil learning journal alongside adult observation and assessments to enable monitoring.  Increased differentiation of activities and materials to reflect developmental and language levels, and a focus on key learning outcomes from support plan.  SENDCo and key worker implement advice given by external support services.  Planning of interventions involve all advising agencies and reflect very clear multi agency strategies and approaches.  Planned adult deployment to target support within:   * Continuous provision * Enhanced * Targeted   Increased focus on individualised planned interventions, daily trained adult attention and support for individual/ group activities following specialist advice.  Grouping strategies used flexibly to enhance learning and access to the curriculum.  Increased focus on specific activities and/ or use of resources, including ICT and specialist equipment/ materials/ communication aids.  Implementation of reasonable adjustments to the EYFS environments and curriculum  Multi-sensory approaches used to support access to EYFS. |

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| **Range 5 - Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction** | | |
| **Descriptor of need** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies/Curriculum and Interventions** |
| **The child has complex and multiple communication and interaction needs.** Significant and sustained levels of focused intervention have been implemented. Advice and support from EY SENDOS and Speech and Language has also been implemented.    Progress that is made is gradual and in small increments. Using the EYFS as a guide and being mindful that every child is unique, the child’s developmental profile shows at least the following broad levels of delay:      Receptive and/ or expressive language is not yet established.    Child communicates by gesture, eye contact, pointing or supported picture exchange.    Not yet demonstrating an understanding of what is said or signed.  Despite the use of visuals/objects of reference the child is not able to follow one word level instructions.    The child engages only in solitary play that can often be repetitive and more focused on accessing desired sensory feedback than playing with purpose.  Forms relationships with familiar adults to get needs met. Little to no engagement with peers.  Highly anxious in social situations, particularly large group activities. Requires small group interventions throughout the academic day.  Requires an intensive, specialised and robust personalised curriculum to make progress within the scope of the EYFS curriculum. | As range 4.    SENCo actively involved in on-going observation. Support in place from relevant external agencies in line with agency referral processes and strategies and support implemented and evidenced within support plans and review documentation.    High levels of modifications to learning environment and a highly individualised curriculum established.    Progress is closely monitored by the school/ setting and recorded using setting tracking systems in line with EYFS, and Early Support Developmental Journals.  Outside agency recommendations and careful monitoring of the impact of strategies and interventions.    Support plans are detailed, and SMART targets are well established.    Termly/ half-termly review of child’s progress towards targets on individualised learning/support plan.    Consideration given to application for an Education Health and Care needs assessment on basis of levels of development and complexity of need. Multi agency SEND support planning meeting arranged in line with EHC needs assessment processes.    Continued with planned strategies and interventions in accordance with recommendations from relevant professionals as detailed within child’s individualised support plan. | Emphasis on providing an enabling environment inside and outside with developmentally appropriate resources.  Increased focus on specific activities and/ or use of resources, including ICT and specialist equipment/ materials/ communication aids.  Multi-sensory approaches used to support access to EYFS.  High levels of differentiation of activities and materials to reflect developmental and language levels, and a focus on key learning outcomes from support plan.    SENCo and key worker implement advice given by external support services. Extensive specialist input and advice followed.    Planning of interventions involve all advising agencies and reflect very clear multi agency strategies and approaches.    Planned adult deployment to target support within:   * Continuous provision * Enhanced * Targeted     Increased focus on individualised planned interventions, daily trained adult attention and support for individual/ group activities following specialist advice.    Implementation of reasonable adjustments to the EYFS environments and curriculum. |

## Speech, Language, Communication and Interaction: Self Help Skills Outcomes and Provision

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|  | **Self-Help Outcomes** | | | |
| **Employability/Education** | **Independence** | **Community Participation** | **Health** |
| **EY (0-4**  **years)** | Child will be able to follow an adult’s direction within routines and respond to simple instructions.    Child will show increased listening skills, attention and task focus.    Child will have the communication and interaction skills to facilitate joint play with peers. | Child will have the communication and interaction skills required to request objects or help as required.    Child will have the language and communication skills necessary to support their understanding and ability to make choices between options offered (indoor/outdoor play, snack time, mealtime, activities to access within free play etc.). | Child will have the communication and interaction skills required to support the development of shared interaction, friendships and play with peers. | Child will be able to alert an adult at times when they are hurt or feeling unwell.    Child will have the communication skills required skills to convey basic feelings (happy/sad) to others to facilitate emotional well-being. |
| By the end of the EYFS key stage, children that have achieved the self-help outcomes will be able to follow routines, make choices, follow a simple adult direction and communicate when they are hurt or upset. | | | |
| **Provision** | Please refer to detail provided within the Teaching and Learning Strategies and Curriculum/Interventions sections of the Early Years Ranges Guidance: Communication and Interaction. | | | |