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**Newcastle SEND Descriptors of Need**

**Part 3**

**Guidance for Children and Young People with** **Cognition and Learning needs:**

**The School Years **

Version 1 September 2022

**Guidance for Children and Young People with Cognition and Learning Needs**

The [SEND\_Code\_of\_Practice\_January\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf) defines cognition and learning needs as follows:

* Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.
* Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia. (See Appendix 1 for SEND Outreach Service SpLD team working definition).

Before considering range descriptors for Cognition and Learning, steps should have been taken to ensure regular attendance and consistently high quality first teaching. It is expected that school will have made provision at Range 1 and Range 2 level following the Assess, Plan, Do Review cycle and that limited progress will have been made before requesting formalised assessment for SpLD (dyslexia).

Primary schools will need to make allowances for children who have birthdays in the summer term.

The Sir Charles Parsons School Assessment and Recording Tool will be a useful document to support SENCos and teachers in determining an individual’s level of cognition and learning need.

The summary of needs is not intended to be used as a checklist; teachers and SENCos will need to consider achievement over a range of activities before deciding on the level that best fits an individual at any point in time.

It should be ensured that learning of new concepts is consolidated before moving on.

Teaching and learning should provide an emphasis on literacy, numeracy, PSHEE and ICT alongside weekly access to full curriculum ensuring that child or young person has the opportunity to take part in lessons and activities which play to individual interests and strengths, therefore, maintaining confidence and self-esteem.

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| **Descriptors of Need Overview** |
| **Range 1** | * May be below age related and national expectations.
* Progress is slower than pupils of the same age.
* Some difficulty with the acquisition and use of language, literacy, numeracy skills and/or motor coordination skills.
* Find it difficult to keep up with usual pace of lesson delivery.
* There may be evidence of a mismatch between attainment in different subject areas.
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| **Range 2** | * Attainment at least 1 year below age related and national expectations.
* Well recognised and reliable tests may provide standardised scores below 85 (16th percentile).
* Progress in language/literacy and numeracy continues to be slow despite QFT and a targeted period of support.
* Some evidence of difficulties with aspects of cognition such as memory, concept development, information processing, sequencing and reasoning that impact on learning.
* Processing difficulties limit independence and may require adult support in the classroom.
* May appear more disorganised compared to peers.
* Self-esteem and motivation may be affected.
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| **Range 3** | * Persistent difficulties in the acquisition and use of language, literacy/numeracy skills and appear to be resistant to previous interventions
* Attainment is at least 2 years below age related and national expectations.
* Well recognised and reliable tests may provide standardised scores below 75 (5th percentile).
* Significant and enduring difficulties with several aspects of cognition such as memory, concept development, information processing, sequencing and reasoning that impact on learning.
* Some adult support is required to ensure access to mainstream lessons and learning.
* Unusual profile of strengths and weaknesses requiring a personalised support plan.
* Self-esteem and motivation is affected, and pupil is at risk of developing SEMH needs.
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| **Range 4** | * Significant and persistent difficulties in the acquisition and use of language, literacy/numeracy skills and/or motor coordination skills.
* Attainment is at least 3 years below age related and national expectations.
* Well recognised and reliable tests may provide standardised scores below 69 (2nd percentile).
* Significant levels of difficulty in cognitive processing requiring a high level of alteration to pace and delivery of curriculum.
* Difficulties are likely to be long term/lifelong
* High levels of support including assistive technology.
* May appear increasingly socially immature and vulnerable due to limited social awareness, difficulties with reasoning, understanding and expressing thoughts.
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| **Range 5** | * Cognitive impairment that is a lifelong disability and significantly impacts on social development and independence and requires specialist teaching.
* Moderate or Severe Learning Difficulties
* Complex needs identified
* Very small steps of progress are made.
* Significant and persistent difficulties in the acquisition/use of language/literacy/numeracy skills, with the curriculum and out of school activities.
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| **Range 6** | * Severe and persistent difficulties in acquisition and use of language/literacy and numeracy skills within the curriculum and out of school activities
* Severe or Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties have been identified which are lifelong
* Complex needs are identified.
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**Descriptors of need for children and young people with Cognition and Learning needs**

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| **Range 1****Summary of Needs** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies** | **Curriculum/Intervention** | **Resources and Staffing** |
| * May be below age related and national expectations.
* Progress is slower than pupils of the same age.
* Some difficulty with the acquisition and use of language, literacy, numeracy skills and/or motor coordination skills.
* Find it difficult to keep up with usual pace of lesson delivery.
* There may be evidence of a mismatch between attainment in different subject areas.
 | * Quality First Teaching includes planned adjustments and differentiated work to reduce barriers to learning.
* Class/subject teacher plans and oversees small group work or targeted and time limited intervention work.
* Use school checklists to identify strengths and weaknesses.
* Monitor and review progress over specified period of time.

  | * Refer to Universally Available Guidance for Schools.
* Mainstream class with flexible groupings/sets.
* Simplify level and pace of teacher talk.

  | * Small group work or one to one for time limited period.
* Emphasis on identifying and addressing gaps in learning.
* May involve tracking back through earlier learning goals.
 | * Class/subject teacher makes main provision.
* Pupil is in mainstream classroom for most, if not all, of the time.
* Pupil should not routinely be withdrawn and taught by a TA.
* TA may support independent learning in class.
* Some additional resources and equipment to support independent learning.
* CPD opportunities to support school staff understanding of common SENs/ Graduated Response.
* EPS/specialist teacher teams may be consulted at a general level.
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| **Range 2****Summary of Needs** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies** | **Curriculum/Intervention** | **Resources and Staffing** |
| * Attainment at least 1 year below age related and national expectations.
* Well recognised and reliable tests may provide standardised scores below 85 (16th percentile).
* Progress in language/literacy and numeracy continues to be slow despite QFT and a targeted period of support.
* Some evidence of difficulties with aspects of cognition such as memory, concept development, information processing, sequencing and reasoning that impact on learning.
* Some signs of SpLD (Dyslexia) may be evident
* Processing difficulties limit independence and may require adult support in the classroom.
* May appear more disorganised compared to peers.
* Motor coordination needs/handwriting difficulties are beginning to affect progress
* Self-esteem and motivation may be affected.
 | As Range 1 plus:* SENCo/SEN team in school will use school assessment tools to establish a profile of strengths and weaknesses.
* SENCo assessments inform areas for support, intervention and any adjustments required to access curriculum and/or exams.
* Teaching plans reflect recommended adjustments and support strategies including deployment of additional adults.
* SENCo/SEN team in school works with class/subject teachers to oversee planning, review and assessment of any intervention work.
* Interventions are monitored, reviewed and adjusted on at a least termly basis.
* Use of SCART
* SEN Support Plan is completed with input from parent/carers and CYP.
 | * Refer to Universally Available Guidance for Schools.
* Mainstream class with enhanced differentiation.
* Flexible groupings reflective of pupil’s cognitive ability.
* One to one support focusses on specific targets relating to identified weaknesses.
 | * QFT with enhanced differentiation.
* In class tasks are modified to remove barriers to learning.
* May include alternate methods to record and access text including use of ICT as appropriate.
* Will involve tracking back through earlier learning goals.
* Small group support in class for some of the time.
* Regular, targeted small group or one to one evidence-based intervention.
 | * Use of Universally Available Guidance for Schools
* Class/subject teacher makes main provision with support from SENCo/SEN team in school.
* Additional advice from EPS and/or specialist teachers may be provided as part of a ‘drop in’ session or telephone consultation.
* Pupil is in mainstream classroom for most, if not all, of the time.
* Additional trained adult, under direction of teacher, provides sustained and targeted support on an individual or small group basis.
* Short term and targeted intervention programme delivered several times a week directed by class teacher with additional monitoring and evaluation by SENCo and adapted as necessary.
* Additional resources and equipment to support independent learning.
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| **Range 3****Summary of Needs** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies** | **Curriculum/Intervention** | **Resources and Staffing** |
| * Persistent difficulties in the acquisition and use of language, literacy/numeracy skills and appear to be resistant to previous interventions; this may include ongoing difficulties with motor coordination/Handwriting skills
* Attainment is at least 2 years below age related and national expectations.
* Well recognised and reliable tests may provide standardised scores below 75 (5th percentile).
* Significant and enduring difficulties with several aspects of cognition such as memory, concept development, information processing, sequencing and reasoning that impact on learning.
* Signs of SpLD (Dyslexia) are evident over time and progress is slow despite well evidence interventions.
* Some adult support is required to ensure access to mainstream lessons and learning.
* Unusual profile of strengths and weaknesses requiring a personalised support plan.
* Self-esteem and motivation is affected, and pupil is at risk of developing SEMH needs.
 | * Following specialist advice, interventions and support are planned and reviewed by teachers, SENCo/SEN team and possibly LA specialist staff.
* Targets are individualised, short term and specific
* Use of SCART
* Use of SpLD (dyslexia) checklists
* SEN Support Plan is completed with input from parent/carers add CYP.
 | * Curriculum tasks are modified and adapted to address learning needs.
* Daily opportunities for some individualised support focussed on targets within SEN Support Plan.
* Flexible groupings with opportunities to work with positive peer models.
* Teaching and support staff use the developmental level of language appropriate to the child in questioning and explanation.
* Provide additional time for processing language.

  | * QFT with enhanced differentiation.
* Tasks and presentation are increasingly individualised and modified within an inclusive curriculum.
* Alternate methods to record and access text including use of ICT as appropriate.
* Individualised programmes of intervention.
 | * Main provision by class/subject teacher with support from SENCo/ SEN team in school.
* Involvement of education and non-education professionals as appropriate through a request to the SEN Advice and Support Allocation Panel.
* Consistent and structured environment carefully planned and monitored by class/subject teacher.
* Trained adult provides a longer-term intervention programme (during the review process) under the direction of the SENCo/SEN team in school and/or LA specialist staff.
* In class adult support as and when appropriate to support independent learning.
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| **Range 4****Summary of Needs** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies** | **Curriculum/Intervention** | **Resources and Staffing** |
| * Significant and persistent difficulties in the acquisition and use of language, literacy/numeracy skills and/or motor coordination skills.
* Attainment is at least 3 years below age related and national expectations.
* Well recognised and reliable tests may provide standardised scores below 69 (2nd percentile).
* Significant levels of difficulty in cognitive processing requiring a high level of alteration to pace and delivery of curriculum.
* Difficulties are likely to be long term/lifelong
* High levels of support including assistive technology.
* May appear increasingly socially immature and vulnerable due to limited social awareness, difficulties with reasoning, understanding and expressing thoughts.
 | * SENCo takes ongoing advice from LA SEN and Health specialists.
* Targets are highly individualised.
* Use of SCART
* SEN Support Plan is reviewed and adjusted with input from parent/carers and CYP.
* Termly reviews with parent/carer and CYP involvement.
 | * Mainstream class predominately working on modified curriculum tasks.
* Daily opportunities for individualised support focussed on targets within SEN Support Plan.
* Any intervention work is delivered by skilled practitioner best placed to deliver positive outcomes.
* Opportunities for multi- sensory teaching and learning will be in place.
 | * QFT
* Tasks and presentation are increasingly individualised and modified to reduce impact of processing difficulties.
* Alternate methods to record and access text including use of ICT as appropriate.
* Tasks and presentation are personalised to pupil’s needs and monitored regularly i.e., weekly.
* Access arrangements and adjustments are part of everyday learning and practice (normal way of working).
 | * Main provision by class/subject teacher with support from SENCo/ SEN team in school and ongoing advice and support from education and non-education professionals.
* Consistent and structured environment carefully planned and monitored by class/subject teacher.
* Clear monitoring of effectiveness of interventions by SENCo and LA SEN specialists.
* In class adult support as and when appropriate to support independent learning.
* Smaller groupings or higher pupil/staff ratio.
* Additional SEN training relating to general and specific learning needs is accessed from specialist teams.
* Access to assistive technology must be made.
* Concrete objects and visual resources to support learning.
* School may require some additional resource to implement package of support.
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| **Range 5****Summary of Needs** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies** | **Curriculum/Intervention** | **Resources and Staffing** |
| * Cognitive impairment that is a lifelong disability and significantly impacts on social development and independence and requires specialist teaching.
* Moderate or Severe Learning Difficulties
* Complex needs identified
* Very small steps of progress are made.
* Significant and persistent difficulties in the acquisition/use of language/literacy/numeracy skills, with the curriculum and out of school activities.
 | * Targets are individualised, short term and specific e.g., using the Engagement Model
* Progress is closely monitored and tracked
* Utilise special education settings and outside professionals for assessment and advice
* Further, more detailed assessment by school and from outside professionals across multi agencies may be required.
 | * Modified curriculum tasks
* Frequent small group work with specialist teacher and specialist support staff
* Teaching focus on specific provision targets
* Carefully planned curriculum and targets ensures pupil experiences success
* Simple language level with instructions chunked
 | * Modified curriculum
* Tasks and presentation increasingly individualised and personalised to the pupil’s needs
* Highly adapted teaching methods incorporating the use of learning aids and multi-sensory teaching as standard.
 | * Level of adjustment and specialist teaching across the curriculum is significantly greater than is normally provided in mainstream settings
* Consistent structured environment
* Smaller groupings/higher staff to pupil ratio
* Sometimes pupil is withdrawn from class to access activities; these are carefully monitored and planned by class/subject teacher to meet a specific target
* Additional adult trained to deliver interventions and support
* EPS and/or specialist teachers (in school or from LA) are consulted on a regular basis and may monitor and review progress and set medium- or long-term targets.
* Concrete objects and visuals aid teaching and learning
* Use of assistive technology
* Apply for additional funding from LA if required
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| **Range 6****Summary of Needs** | **Assessment and Planning** | **Teaching and Learning Strategies** | **Curriculum/Intervention** | **Resources and Staffing** |
| * Severe and persistent difficulties in acquisition and use of language/literacy and numeracy skills within the curriculum and out of school activities
* Severe or Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties have been identified which are lifelong
* Complex needs are identified.
 | As Range 5 plus:* Long term involvement of specialist provision and appropriate non- education professionals from Education, Health and Social Care agencies.
* Targets and outcomes may be identified through an Education Health and Care Plan.
 | As Range 5 plus:* Extremely modified and individualised work
* Small group and daily one to one work developing basic skills
 | As Range 5 plus:* Access to aids personalised to pupil’s needs
* Extreme modification of curriculum
 | * Staff need to be trained and have experience working with pupils with high level of cognition and learning needs
* Access to extra staffing to support pupils in times of crisis and accompany pupil on outings and trips
* Appropriately trained staff to deal with medical and physical issues
* Group activities carefully monitored to ensure pupil is not isolated or excluded
* Emphasis on using real objects and experiences for all activities
* Specialist ICT resources
* AAC systems to support communication environment
* Specialist equipment to promote self-help, physical access and mobility
* Appropriate indoor and outdoor provision in a safe and secure setting
* Specialist hygiene facilities if required
* Access to specialist educational and non-educational services in accordance with EHC plan if appropriate

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**Cognition and learning: PfA Outcomes and provision**

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|  | **PfA Outcomes** |
| **Employability/Education** | **Independence** | **Community Participation** | **Health** |
| **Reception to Y2 (5-7****years)** | Child will have the listening skills and concentration to increase the amount of time they are able to maintain focus upon learning tasksChild will be developing early concepts of literacy and numeracy skills to enable them to lay the foundations of later learning.Child will have an awareness of ‘growing up’ and beginning to have some ideas of what they would ‘like to be’, when they are older. | Child will understand the concept of time and will develop the skills necessary to access digital and analogue clocks.Child will understand the concept of cooking and the contribution of ingredients to produce different foods. | Child will have an understanding of the concept of friendships and will be applying this in their approach to shared play with peers. | Child will understand the concept of being healthy, including the benefits of exercise and making healthy food choices and will begin to apply this in the context of mealtimes and attendance at clubs and sports activities.Child will understand the need for regular dental, vision and hearing checks to maintain good health. |
| **Y3 to Y6 (8-****11 years)** | Child will understand and be able to talk about different careers and education options so that they are able to make choices about what they will do next.Child will begin to develop a profile of interests and aspirations in order to demonstrate individual strengths and skills. | Child will understand the concept of money, demonstrating awareness that different objects are of different monetary values and beginning to use money to pay for items such as snacks in school.Child will begin to understand concepts relation to travel and transport including paying for a ticket/pass, timetables, and road signs and will be aware of the role of these in facilitating independenttravel. Child will understand the concept of recipes relating to preparation of food and will be able to follow these with adult support to make simple foods (cupcakes, sandwiches etc.) | Child will understand the importance of being safe within the local community, including online, and will begin to understand potential areas of risk, e.g., strangers, online hazards, bullying and ways to take steps to avoid these.Child will be familiar with the local area, including particular places, routes of travel to enable them to begin to understand where they are going and methods to get there. | Child will understand the purpose of vaccinations and will cooperate with these to ensure good medical health.Child will understand changes to their body associated with puberty and will be aware of self-care routines required to maintain good physical health.Child will understand minor health needs that they may have, asthma, eczema, difficulties with visionand/or hearing; they will understand the strategies and resources to manage these. |
| **Y7 to Y11 (11-16****years)** | Child will be able to understand information relating to course options (GCSE, NVQ, Entry level qualifications, vocational options etc.) including the requirements for access to a range of HE options to enable realistic and informed choices.Child will be able to think about subject option choices alongside longer-term career goals and will be able to choose subjectsand course options to enable next steps in their chosen direction.Child will begin to think about and plan work experience/part-time opportunities to enable them to understand workplace demands and requirements and to gain early experience in areas of interest for future employment.Child will continue to develop a profile of interests and achievements in order to demonstrate individual strengths and skills. This will be used in accordance with careers sessions and guidance. Child will understand supported employment options e.g., Access to Work. | Child will understand monetary value, how much money they have and how much money items cost and will be able to make decisions in relation to what they spend their money on as a first step towards financial budgeting.Child will demonstrate skills in accessing local transport services, buying a ticket/pass, understanding bus times, using these systems of travel to access school, for example.Child will understand information relating to different food groups and meal planning and will be able to understand instructions within a recipe card/book to enable them to cook simple meals with support. | Child will understand risks associated with social media, online gaming and online communities and will be increasingly competent in understanding how to keep themselves safe.Child will understand social norms and conventions in relation to a variety of friendships and relationships and will be able to use this knowledge to enable them to engage appropriately within a range social contexts.Child will understand options in relation to a range of leisure and social activities available and will be able to use this to make informed and positive choices about how they want to spend their free time.Child will show increased understanding of the wider picture and will build resistance to support emotional wellbeing. | Child will understand information relating to sex education and sexual health in preparation for adulthood.Child will understand the role of the GP and the support available to them.Child will understand the risks associated with drugs and alcohol and will apply information learned to keep themselves safe.Child will have a more active role in understanding and managing more complex health needs to facilitate greater independence. |
| **Provision** | Please refer to detail provided within the Teaching and Learning Strategies and Curriculum/Interventions sections of the School Age Ranges Guidance: Cognition and Learning. |

**Appendix 1 SEND outreach service working definition of SpLD (Dyslexia) is from the British Dyslexia Association (2010)**

The BDA has adopted the Rose Review (2009) definition of dyslexia:

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved inaccurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as its continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut off points. Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor coordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia. A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.

In addition to these characteristics:

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) acknowledges the visual and auditory processing difficulties that some individuals with dyslexia can experience and points out that dyslexic readers can show a combination of abilities on difficulties that affect the learning process. Some also have strengths in other areas, such as design, problem solving, creative skills, interactive skills and oral skills.