

**Somerset Council**

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**Somerset Council**

**Educational Psychologist's Contribution to  
Statutory Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment**

<b>Child/Young person's name:</b>	Gemma Saunders	<b>Date of Birth:</b>	01/01/2019
<b>Address:</b>	123 Any Street, Anytown, ZA1 1AB	<b>Educational Setting:</b>	Anytown Preschool
<b>Date of report:</b>	16.01.2023 (amended)		

**This advice has been written as part of an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (Children and Families Act 2014).**

**This report should be read as a whole, stored and shared in a secure manner. No parts of the report should be duplicated in isolation without prior consultation with, and the permission of the signatory or their line manager. Any quotations from the report should be clearly referenced.**

**Summary**

The reports and information already available for Gemma have been thoroughly reviewed. They are considered to provide enough information

about Gemma's areas of strengths, needs, as well as suggested outcomes and provision to meet the identified needs. Following a discussion with Bernadette Saunders, it has been agreed that no further information is required at this time in accordance with section 9.47 of the code of practice: The local authority **must not** seek further advice if such advice has already been provided (for any

purpose) and the person providing the advice, the local authority and the child's parent or the young person are all satisfied that it is sufficient for the assessment process.

Below is a brief psychological formulation and summary of the information available at this time to support decision making.

### **Sources of Information**

The information in the report comes from the following sources:

- Reading of file notes held by Inclusion Somerset Educational Psychology Service.
- Observation of Gemma at Anytown Preschool on 07.03.2023.
- Discussion with Eileen Woodhams, Early Years Advanced Practitioner and Gemma's Key Person on 07.03.2023.
- Conversation with Bernadette Saunders, Gemma's mother, on 13.01.2023.
- My Early Years SEND Support Review, 15.07.22 and 12.11.2022. (See for needs and outcomes.)
- Early Years SEND Service, Note of Contact 12.10.2022. (See for needs and outcomes.)
- SEN Support Plan 4, 17.09.2022. (See for outcomes and provision.)
- SEN Support Plan 5, 15.11.2022. (See for outcomes and provision.)

Drawing on the information available at this time, alongside observation and conversations with those who know her best, I have summarised Gemma's current educational needs and provided a brief psychological formulation to support decision making below.

<b>Areas of Need</b>
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**Cognition and Learning:**

- Gemma does not consistently join adult directed tasks when invited by a familiar adult.
- Gemma has a very short attention span and will move quickly between different activities.
- Gemma has low frustration tolerance and will not persist with tasks she finds challenging.

**Communication and Interaction:**

- Gemma does not initiate interaction with others.
- Gemma is not yet using functional language to express her wants and needs, for example to say if she is hungry, thirsty or in pain, or to ask for help.
- Gemma displays echolalia and will repeat whole phrases modelled by adults in and out of context.
- Gemma does not consistently respond to adults when they speak to her using her name.

**Social, Emotional and Mental Health:**

- Gemma is not yet showing an awareness of her peers at nursery and does not engage in joint play experiences. Gemma is not yet reacting to other children's voices or actions as they play around her.
- Gemma is not yet seeking out a familiar adult for joint experiences within the nursery setting. Gemma will choose to avoid unfamiliar adults where possible.
- Gemma can become dysregulated within the nursery, and it can be difficult to understand the triggers for this. At home she has started to show signs of aggression when he is frustrated or upset and can pinch, hit, and bite.

### **Sensory, Physical and Health:**

- Gemma has sensory differences. In the classroom, Gemma's auditory and visual hyper(over) sensitivity appear to have the greatest impact on her learning. Gemma finds busy environments overwhelming and will become visibly more withdrawn in settings that are particularly busy or loud.
- Gemma rarely sits still and is always on the move when learning. Movement appears to help her to regulate.
- Gemma is toilet trained and will take herself to the toilet but can have some accidents when engaged in play.
- Gemma wears glasses and has a squint.

### **Psychological Formulation**

This summary should be read in conjunction with all other advice and information gathered as part of the statutory assessment process.

It has been a pleasure to speak with the adults around Gemma to find out about her strengths, interests, and challenges. Gemma is described by those who know her well as an independent girl, who will smile, run, and jump around her setting when she is relaxed and happy. Gemma is currently enjoying posting things, jigsaws, magnets, bubbles and Peppa Pig. Gemma loves music and her mother Bernadette explained that she has recently learnt to play

'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' and 'Jingle Bells' on the piano, which she appeared to pick up easily. Gemma has an excellent memory and can accurately recite many of her favourite stories. She can also count to at least 110 and do some simple addition. Gemma can recognise letters, is starting to read some three letter words, and can type some words, including her name, correctly. She can also write some letters and words by hand.

Gemma experiences significant challenges with her language and communication. This is the area of need currently having the greatest impact on her engagement and participation in nursery. Gemma prefers to play alone and does not initiate conversation or interaction with others. She does not communicate to express her wants and needs and will not consistently acknowledge others when they speak to her. Gemma demonstrates echolalia, and will often repeat back learnt phrases, both in and out of context.

Recently, Gemma has begun to engage more with familiar nursery routines. For example, when I visited her in nursery, I saw her join in with the French language part of the group song sung before snack time. She also appears to

be beginning to use language to help others understand her needs. For example, when she was asked if she wanted to join a group activity she turned around and walked away but replied 'play please'. As Gemma speaks very quietly and her body language does not indicate she has heard, these interactions may be missed. It is likely that Gemma is more aware of her environment than is always apparent. For example, she responded to an instruction to put her coat away.

Gemma likes to be on the move and does not often sit down in nursery. She has a short attention span and will often move quickly between activities of her choosing. She does not persist with activities she finds challenging. Gemma is good at finding activities to entertain herself and particularly enjoys being creative and small world play. For example, I witnessed her decorating her trainers with some coloured paper strips and tucking dolls into bed and giving them kisses goodnight. Gemma can take herself to the toilet independently, though I understand she can have accidents when she is busy playing and is not reminded to go.

Gemma appears to find the nursery environment overwhelming and withdraws from her peers and group activities to manage this. The adults around her have observed that she appears happier and calmer in environments that are quiet and less busy. When Gemma is overwhelmed, she has strategies to self-regulate. For example, she will self-soothe by sucking the fingers of her left hand and putting her right to her forehead and will make a bed with blankets and cushions and tuck herself into it. Gemma also makes use of the dark covered den area in her classroom, where she enjoys listening to soothing music and watching a light display.

It is my professional view that Gemma will require high needs support (above SEN support level) when she transitions to school in September. It is likely that Gemma will initially find it challenging to participate in whole class activities or adult-directed tasks, for example, during a whole group carpet time activity. She will need a high level of individual support throughout the school day to deliver a bespoke and personalised curriculum that aligns with her interests, attention span and need to move. She will also need adult support to manage the challenges of a classroom setting, with awareness that she will likely find this overwhelming at times and will need the opportunity to take time out to regulate. She will also require adults to support the development of her language skills to allow her to express her wants and needs, and to model peer interaction and foundational social skills such as sharing and turn-taking.

If there is anything you would like to discuss with me about this report I would be pleased to speak to you.

A **Collaborative Outcomes Meeting (COM)** will take place in due course, facilitated by the Educational Psychologist and will include the young person and their parent carers, the school, the SEND Area Reviewing Officer and relevant professionals as appropriate. The coproduced Outcomes and Provisions for both the EHCP if agreed, or SEN Support if agreed will be written up in a COMs document. This COMs document and the above report provides the full EP advice. Further information can be found on the Local Offer here: <https://beta.somerset.gov.uk/collaborative-outcomes-meetings-guide/>

**Electronically signed by:**

**Dr Catherine Walker**  
**Educational Psychologist**

**Date Sent:** 16.01.2023

(amended)

**HCPC Registration Number: 155468977**

**Distribution:**

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Pupil File