



C CHILD  
I INCLUSION  
R RESEARCH INTO  
C CURRICULUM  
L LEARNING  
E EDUCATION

# INCLUSIVE LEARNING AND COLLABORATIVE WORKING

IDEAS IN PRACTICE

PRIMARY SCHOOL RESOURCE 5 TO 11 YEARS

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The young models Murray and Marsali Hunter who appear in the photos throughout this resource



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# 1

# INTRODUCTION



**This section contains the background and aims of the resource.**

- It describes where the information came from and how it was gathered.
- It provides an overview of the CIRCLE Framework and how this can be used to support the inclusion of learners.
- It contains information on how to use the resource, with a brief description of each section.
- It highlights how the resource can be used to support learners, for professional learning and for service planning.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### This is a resource by education staff, for education staff.

It is designed to complement your own knowledge, skills and experience. The CIRCLE Collaboration resource has been developed to support the inclusion of all learners within the school environment. Some of these learners may have additional support needs which have already been identified, others may have needs which are becoming apparent as they start their school career and others may have needs which are difficult to pinpoint. This resource will help you identify and anticipate these needs and provide strategies to support their inclusion.

Within the context of this resource, additional support needs are considered to be any factor (physical, sensory, psychological, emotional, economic or cultural) that prevents the learner participating fully, being accepted and achieving in school.

This edition builds on the experience and best practice highlighted within the initial resource. It has been updated taking into account experience and suggestions of hundreds of practitioners who have used the resource in schools to support thousands of learners over a period of 3 years. It also reflects the most up to date research findings and policy guidance. In addition, the new edition includes helpful checklists and planning tools to support documentation and professional learning. This is underpinned by the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) and the CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) which was developed with practitioners to support the measurement of progress.

### How did we gather the experience of education staff?

The information in this resource represents the reflective practice of hundreds of expert teachers as well as feedback from learners and parents/carers. It was gathered through 82 contacts with a range of education staff including class teachers, support for learning teachers, school leadership teams, pupil support assistants and visiting specialist support teachers. These contacts included in-depth interviews, observations of classroom practice and analysis of school processes over a period of 12 months, when researchers spent time in primary and special schools.

An updated version was brought together by a collaborative team of education staff (including class teachers, support for learning teachers, specialist support teachers and educational psychologists) and therapists, into a structure that supports the setup of a classroom that is inclusive for all learners and promotes a staged process of intervention.

This most recent edition (2021) reflects a minor refresh of content, based on the reflection amongst CIRCLE partners, ongoing practice use by teachers and consultation with experts.

See <https://www.thirdspace.scot/circle> for all CIRCLE materials.

## AIMS OF THE RESOURCE

- To bring together and share the good practice and ideas of education staff, focusing on advice and strategies for improving the participation, acceptance and achievement of learners who have additional support needs.
- To promote effective inclusive practice using the CIRCLE Framework of inclusion.
- To support the development of Inclusive Classrooms as best practice in all schools.
- To provide a tool, the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) for rating the classroom environment.
- To provide a tool, the CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) for identifying and measuring areas affecting a learner's participation.
- To provide a quick, accessible reference point for education staff which provides practical solutions to address learners' needs.
- To promote a learner-centred approach where learners are listened to and involved in the management of their own learning.
- To provide suggestions for successful collaborative working between school staff, parents/carers and partner services and agencies.
- To provide tools to support documenting evidence of assessment and input.
- To provide a reflective framework and training resource for teachers and other education staff.

### The CIRCLE collaboration ©

This resource was developed by the Child Inclusion: Research into Curriculum, Learning and Education (CIRCLE) Collaboration©. The CIRCLE Collaboration© is a practice/academic partnership consisting of teachers, therapists and academics from the City of Edinburgh Council, NHS Lothian and Queen Margaret University.

The overall aim of the CIRCLE Collaboration© is to generate an evidence base to underpin practical tools which support effective collaboration between school staff and therapists working in primary schools. The CIRCLE Collaboration© has completed a variety of research studies, including qualitative studies of teacher and therapist practice, investigations of collaborative working and systematic reviews of therapy interventions.

For more information about the CIRCLE Collaboration© contact Professor Kirsty Forsyth (CIRCLE Lead) at [KForsyth@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:KForsyth@qmu.ac.uk) or please visit <https://www.thirdspace.scot/circle>

## INTRODUCTION TO THE UPDATED RESOURCE



### THE CIRCLE FRAMEWORK

CIRCLE begins from the stand point that teachers are experts in teaching and that what is required to support inclusion is a framework that allows this expertise to be applied in the most effective holistic way, using a set of general principles.

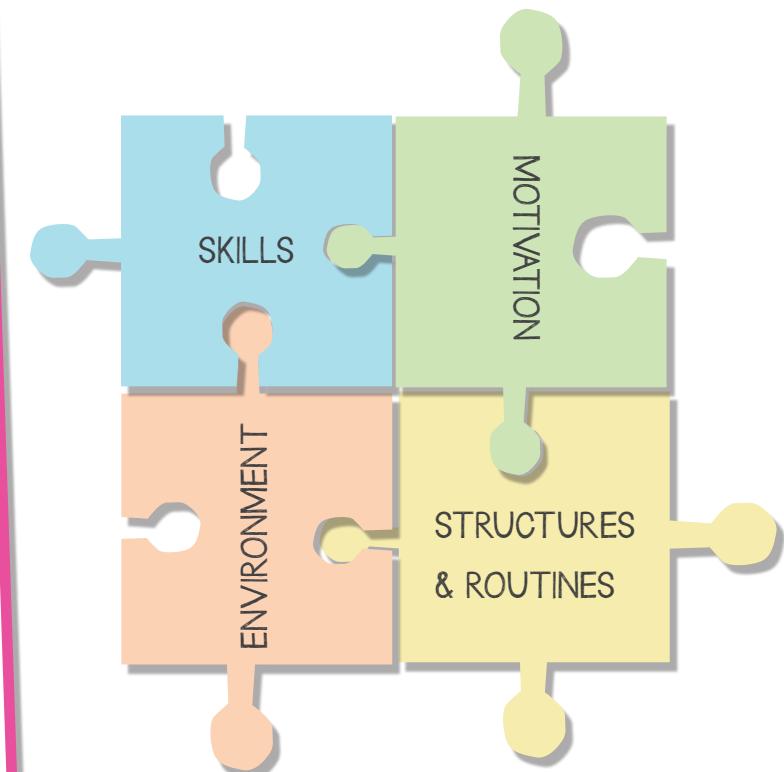
Within CIRCLE we refer to inclusion as the extent to which a learner participates in school life, is accepted by their peers and progresses with their learning.

There can be a tendency to focus on how specific physical, sensory or learning differences can impact on a learner's inclusion in school; however this is usually only a small part of the picture. We know from current research that inclusion is influenced by a combination of factors including the physical environment, attitudes, expectations and opportunities, in addition to the learner's skills and abilities.

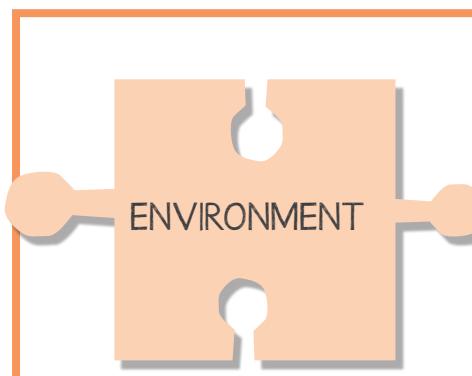
Many resources focus on skill development. However, the CIRCLE Framework introduces the importance of considering inclusion in terms of four main areas:

- The environment (physical and social)
- Structures and routines
- Motivation
- Skills

The jigsaw diagram below represents how these factors are interlinked to support inclusion.

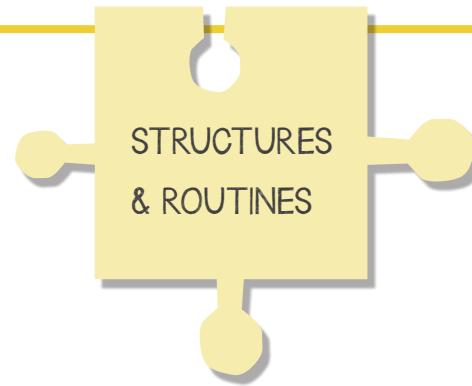


Each of the factors within the CIRCLE Framework are described fully on the opposite page, with an example to illustrate the concept.



The environment includes both the physical and social factors. The physical environment refers to the physical layout of the classroom and the resources used within it. The social environment concerns the attitudes, expectations and actions of peers and adults.

Iggy is very easily distracted which prevents him engaging fully in an activity. He needs careful management of his environment, including seating him away from windows, doors and other distractions and provision of a personalised task list which he ticks off as he completes, to support his learning.



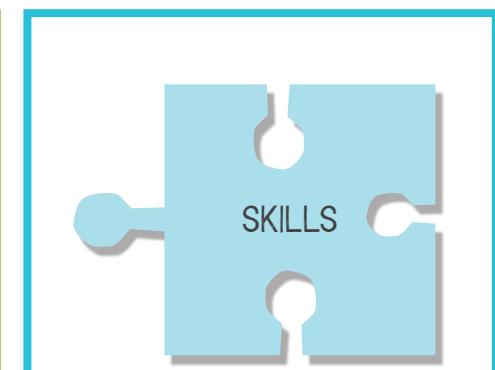
Structures and routines are events that happen in the same way with regularity. The start, middle and end of the routine becomes predictable through repetition. Daily routines help learners to know and anticipate what comes next. Social routines help them enjoy and interact with others.

Anna always forgets what she has to bring to school each day, which means she misses out on learning opportunities. By ensuring that specific activities such as homework are done consistently on the same day each week, she can (with the help of her parents) ensure she is organised.



Motivation gives learners incentive, enthusiasm and interest when engaging with activities and the people around them. Learners can be motivated by their own feelings, desires, self esteem, confidence and the responses of others.

Surdeep is prevented from learning by his fear of failure. He thinks he will not be good at anything, so avoids trying new activities. He needs support and some individual encouragement to be motivated to engage in new activities to develop his skills and to experience the feeling of success.



Skills refer to a learner's ability in the following six areas: attention and concentration; organisation and planning; posture and mobility; dexterity and manipulation; socialising, emotions and relationships; verbal and non-verbal communication.

Kit loves physical education. However, she is uncoordinated in all her movements and struggles with throwing and catching a ball. She will need activities and support at the appropriate level to help her succeed and to learn and develop new movement skills.

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE



### Working Within an Inclusive Classroom (Section 2)

This is the starting point. The Inclusive Classroom is fundamental to inclusion and the core of best teaching practice. It expands on the CIRCLE Framework (physical environment, social environment, structures and routines, and motivation) to help you develop an inclusive classroom which will support all learners. This will reduce the extent to which further additional support is required and allow the implementation of individual support to be minimally intrusive. This section contains examples of supports and strategies, reflective questions, and the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) which will allow you to formally rate your classroom. Together with the Inclusive Classroom Planning Page, this will support you to document, describe and reflect on your practice in this area.

### The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) (Section 3)

This is the next step. Some learners will continue to have additional support needs despite the supports of an Inclusive Classroom. The CPS is a measurement tool which will enable you to identify the learner's strengths and also areas requiring development. Developed from the CIRCLE Framework it enables you to quickly assess barriers to learning in terms of the physical environment, social environment, structures and routines, and motivation and skills. This baseline measure can be used to evaluate input based on follow up assessment and can be used to support discussion with colleagues and parents/carers. It is also designed to help you identify which groups of supports and strategies to try next by directing you to specific sections within this resource.

### Skills Supports and Strategies (Section 4)

The completed CPS will direct you to specific pages in this section. It is divided into the six skills areas of the CIRCLE Framework: Attention and Concentration, Organisation and Planning, Posture and Mobility, Dexterity and Manipulation, Socialising, Emotions and Relationships, and Verbal and Non-verbal Communication. Each area is described and suggestions of strategies are provided. The strategies are split into modifications to the learning environment, establishing structures and routines and approaches to enhance motivation. These checklists can be dated and used as evidence of input; to support discussions with colleagues or parents/carers; as documentation to support a request for assistance from a partner service or agency; or to support your own reflection and professional learning.

### Effective Collaboration (Section 5)

This gives an overview of some of the factors required for successful collaboration between school staff, partner services and agencies and parents/carers which is key to successful inclusion. It highlights specific good practice in relation to collaborating with parents/carers including factors to promote engagement with school and strategies to promote successful communication. These include communication postcards for sharing strategies with parents/carers.

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE



### A Staged System of Support

This structure broadly links to the staged process of support as follows:

- The learner's needs are met and managed within the class by the class teacher.
- The learner's needs are met and managed with involvement from Local Specialist Education Services or school leadership team.
- The learner's needs are met with support from partner services and agencies.

Within this staged system input should be evidenced at each stage before moving on to the next. However advice or support may be sought from colleagues and parents/carers at any stage. The tools in this resource can help provide the evidence.

### Discussion Points

At the end of each section you will find discussion points which have been designed to support reflective practice. You can use these in a variety of ways, for example:

- As a structure to support individual, joint or group professional learning.
- To support discussion with colleagues (e.g. a new member of staff, support for learning teacher, etc.).
- As part of the process of identifying and planning how specific needs experienced by an individual learner (or learners) could be managed in the class.
- To support discussions of whether support from a partner service or agency may be appropriate.
- As a reflective record of experiences - what worked, what did not and what other solutions may be available.

### Appendices

This resource includes several Appendices including a section containing useful local and national policies and resources; and descriptions of the supports and strategies in alphabetical order.



# 2

## WORKING WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM



### This section contains:

- A description of what is meant by an inclusive classroom and why it is important.
- Information on developing an inclusive classroom, including education staff's most valued supports and strategies.
- The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) v1.
- The CIRCLE Planning Page.
- Discussion points to support reflection.



### WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM?

All learners are influenced by the physical environment, the people around them, how they feel about themselves and their interest in the tasks they have been asked to do. An inclusive classroom is one where the teacher routinely incorporates key supports and strategies into their everyday practice which take account of this. These supports and strategies focus on "tuning" the physical and social environment; establishing structures and routines throughout the school day; and implementing learner- centred approaches to enhance motivation and engagement with the learning process.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The supports and strategies which contribute to an inclusive classroom not only benefit those with identified additional support needs, but also enhance the learning and participation of all learners in the class.

Setting up an inclusive classroom is the first stage in supporting learners with additional support needs to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Within every class there are learners with a diverse range of abilities who would benefit from specific support. Individual class teachers are responsible for the learning and inclusion of all learners in their class and together with the school leadership team should ensure that support is in place to achieve this. Setting up an inclusive classroom is a practical way of providing support for all learners in the class by optimising the physical and social environment of the classroom; putting in place structures and routines to support engagement; and by utilising approaches to support motivation.

An inclusive classroom reduces the extent to which further additional support is required for specific learners and allows the implementation of individual support to be minimally intrusive.

# CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SETTING UP AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

**Setting up an inclusive classroom involves implementation of whole school approaches to inclusion, structured preparation and planning and ensuring a learner-centred approach.**

## Whole school approaches

These are approaches which are used consistently throughout the school to support inclusion.

These whole school approaches will support the physical and social environment within the school and the classroom; ensure that structures and routines take place regularly within the school and the classroom; and provide opportunities for school staff to develop their skills to support all learners.

The whole school approach includes policies, procedures and systems which:

- Create an ethos where all learners and families are made to feel welcome and included and cultures and individual differences are normalised and valued.
- Encourage engagement of parents/carers (e.g. processes for effective planning, formal and informal communications, school events etc. - with consideration given to cultural differences and need for interpretation services).
- Provide resources to enable teachers to support all learners in their class (e.g. access to information and communications technology (ICT), specialist groups, equipment, consistent visual supports, culturally inclusive teaching materials, personnel, etc.).

- Be aware of and follow your local anti-bullying guidance.
- Set clear school routines (e.g. for assemblies, physical education (PE), music, etc.).
- Enable two-way flow of communication between staff (both within and external to the school).
- Support professional learning (e.g. structured peer-review, access to courses etc.).
- Make reasonable adjustments to the school environment, routines and practices e.g. handrails, timetables and personalised planning etc.



# CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SETTING UP AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM



### Learner-centred approach

This involves individualising activities and feedback according to need, taking account of the different social and cultural circumstances for each learner.

It requires taking a highly structured and responsive approach to each learner to ensure that the curriculum offers: challenge and enjoyment; breadth; progression; depth; personalisation and choice; coherence and relevance.

It includes:

- Considering and addressing the range of different thinking styles and levels that may be present within the class.
- Spending time getting to know the learners as individuals and anticipating their needs in the learning environment.
- Asking and considering learners' views.
- Personalising support where possible.

Adopting a learner-centred approach is particularly important for engaging the motivation and interest of learners.

### Preparation and planning

The first step to setting up an inclusive classroom is being organised and prepared for each year/term/week/day/lesson.

This includes having a good understanding of the collective (and individual) needs of the learners in the class and a knowledge of which learners require specific supports and strategies. Classroom set up/layout, lessons, activities and resources can then be planned to account for and address these collective needs.

Preparation and planning also involves considering and planning the role of any Pupil Support Assistant (PSA) assigned to the class. Making time to review learner progress, discuss termly/weekly/daily plans and agree assigned roles with the PSA will help with the effective implementation of supports and strategies.

At times of transition it is useful to liaise with the previous/future class teacher to ensure that successful supports and strategies are carried forward into the new class/school.

Understanding specific learners' needs within your class will require reflection on your own knowledge and experience, discussions with colleagues who may have experience in that area and consideration of professional learning requirements.

Preparation and planning are therefore essential prerequisites to setting up a supportive physical and social environment, establishing positive structures and routines and developing approaches to enhance motivation: the Inclusive Classroom.

## SETTING UP AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Teachers use a range of supports and strategies to manage an inclusive classroom. These supports and strategies are recognised as being core to good teaching practice and can be used by any teacher and modified to suit the teaching environment.

Effective teachers adopt reflective and dynamic approaches tailoring these strategies, often in subtle and nuanced ways to reflect their personal teaching practice and the needs of learners. Discussion with colleagues in the school, partner services and agencies, parents/carers, and learners themselves, will help you modify, adapt and refine the supports and strategies in light of changing circumstances.

Keeping a clear record of how you implement supports and strategies which are effective in your class, will provide evidence of your own professional learning and if readily available could also be used to support any teacher who has to take your class at short notice.

### Most valued supports and strategies

Teachers have previously identified the following as their most valued and useful supports and strategies:

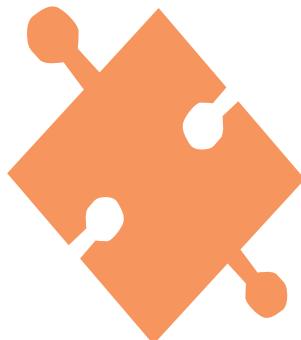
- Peer supports - pairing one learner with another (including same first language pairing) in both academic and social situations to act as a positive role model and to offer support

- Listening and talking activities - routine group activities that can be used for a variety of purposes, e.g. to start the day by sharing news
- Experiential/active learning - learning through 'doing' within the natural context of the school environment
- Information and communication technology (ICT) - use of computers and other technology to support teaching and learning
- Personalised support - focussed attention, encouragement and feedback wherever possible for small groups or individuals
- Low key noticing - notice and acknowledge efforts and achievements
- Sensory supports - activities, objects or environmental adaptations which support different sensory needs e.g. fidget toys, music, movement breaks, quiet areas

The CIRCLE Framework promotes setting up an inclusive environment as the first stage in supporting all learners. The following pages give suggestions of points to consider when optimising the Physical and Social Environment; putting in place Structures and Routines to support engagement; and utilising approaches to support Motivation, within a whole class setting.

# THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The physical environment refers to the physical layout of the classroom and the resources used within it. Within an inclusive classroom environment the following should be considered.



## THE CIRCLE FRAMEWORK AND THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

### Class Layout

- Ensure the class is organised with everything in its place.
- Arrange the class to promote good interaction
  - consider friendships and good working relationships when arranging seating plans. Also consider learners who may have additional support needs - do they need to sit near the door to enable them to leave quickly; do they need to sit away from the window to reduce distractions; do they need to sit near the teacher to maximise attention and concentration or to ensure that they can access resources or clearly hear what is being said?
- Some learners find elements of the physical environment overwhelmingly distracting e.g. peers, lighting levels or noise levels. Occasionally further adaptations over and above consideration of seating position might need to be considered e.g. different types of lighting in the class, additional window blinds, individual work stations or creating 'safe spaces'.
- A reflective approach should be used when considering the use and positioning of visual cues and supports such as posters and charts on walls
  - do these support or distract the learner? Some learners find a visually 'busy' environment difficult to cope with.

### Resources:

- Try to model an organised approach by ensuring that resources are selected and prepared in advance and readily available for the lesson.
- Ensure that resource cupboards/areas are clearly labelled (using words and pictures) and resources consistently positioned.
- Worksheets should be clearly laid out, with page numbers and space for date and name, to support good organisation. Ensure that learners know what to do with the completed worksheets e.g. stick them in their jotter, put them in a specific part of a folder etc.
- Consider using templates to support learners to structure their work e.g. templates which help learners show their problem solving in logical sequences for number work; or essay templates with headings to support writing.
- Ensure that visual cues and supports are clear, contain key information and are understood by all.
- Some learners may require the use of agreed sensory supports e.g. fidget supports or sit-and-move cushions to enable them to focus. Others might use other types of specialist equipment e.g. pencil grips or specialist seating to enable them to access the curriculum or maintain focus. Care should be taken to ensure that these are available and used appropriately.
- Ensure the language used in signs and displays around the school and in the classroom reflect the languages used by learners attending that school.

## THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The social environment is concerned with the attitudes, expectations and actions of those within the class and how these can affect learners either positively or negatively. The following points should be considered.



### THE CIRCLE FRAMEWORK AND THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

- Aim to develop a classroom culture where everyone feels valued and secure, individual differences are respected and diversity is valued and normalised. Multicultural and multilingual signs and displays can help reflect an inclusive ethos.
- We all learn best when we can focus on a task and are not anxious or worried. Reducing negative stress has been shown to improve learning outcomes and is beneficial for general health and wellbeing. The following points should be considered in relation to this:
  - Some learners can feel anxious about performing in front of the class e.g. being asked to read a passage, answer a question or perform a physical activity in front of peers. Reduce this source of stress by considering the learner's competence.
  - An awareness of peer relationships and interactional dynamics will help when considering seating plans, the structure of groups and peer supports. Consider these both in the class and other areas of school (e.g. the playground or lunch hall).
  - Many learners may have difficulty with understanding instructions or the complexities of language used. Consider differentiating language and instructions as a routine part of your practice e.g. say less, slow down your rate of speech, stress key words and use visuals to support understanding.

#### Emotional Regulation:

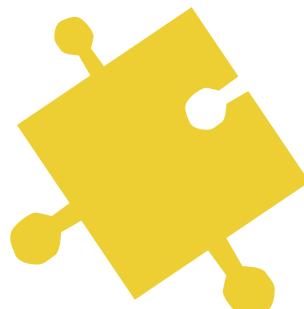
- Learners may not have the language or understanding of their emotions to express themselves effectively: this might manifest itself through behaviour either in school or at home.
- Try to interpret learner behaviour as a way for them to, consciously or unconsciously, communicate how they feel - be alert to the potential for behaviour to represent an indirect message (e.g. distressed behaviour may indicate they are actually feeling confused or overwhelmed).
- Reflecting on what underlies specific behaviour may help with managing and improving learner responses. Remember stress and concerns outside school may impact on learners in school e.g. moving home or bereavement.
- Teaching learners to correctly recognise, understand and express their emotions has been found to be effective in improving long term outcomes.

#### Social skills:

- Social skills are often learned by observing others. Some learners may not have had a positive experience of this.
- Communicating clear and consistent expectations will help learners to understand what you would like them to do.
- Supporting the development of social skills through specific interaction activities, group work and stories will help improve learner understanding.
- Observing adults modelling appropriate emotional and social skills during interactions and responses has been shown to be beneficial.

# STRUCTURES & ROUTINES

Structures and routines are events that happen in the same way with regularity. The start, middle and end of the routine becomes predictable through repetition.



## THE CIRCLE FRAMEWORK AND THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Daily routines help learners to know and anticipate what comes next and social routines help them enjoy and interact with others. Learners benefit from a degree of order and consistency in their lives – for some learners this is mainly achieved in school. It may be useful to consider structures and routines in terms of how the day/week is structured; how lessons are delivered; and how expectations and roles are implemented. Some learners need visual support to help them recognise predictable routines and additional visual support to help them understand changes to those routines.

### Structure of the day/week

- Set days for activities such as assembly, physical education (PE) and music will help learners anticipate and come prepared for these.
- Having a consistent format for the start, middle and end of each day can be beneficial.
- Simple approaches such as having consistent seating plans can help reduce the risk of anxiety or distraction for some learners.
- Building in routine times for movement breaks e.g. used consistently at the end of an activity, can help learners settle and prepare for the next task.

### Routines for lesson delivery

- Using a consistent format for lesson delivery can help learners know what to expect, so that they can be prepared.

- Stating the learning intentions at the start of the lesson, ensuring that these are understood and referring to them regularly may help focus learner attention.
- Using whole class checklists may help to ensure understanding of the task for all.
- Reviewing and summarising learning outcomes will help learners understand if their personal learning targets have been achieved.
- Regularly using multi-sensory approaches can help some learners to maintain motivation and engagement.

### Clear expectations and roles

- Providing clear expectations should help learners understand what is expected of them.
- Agreeing expectations with the class should help to ensure that they are understood by all.
- Displaying class expectations clearly and referring to them regularly will help to reinforce this understanding.
- Encouraging learners to see themselves as respected and useful members of the class can be promoted by regularly assigning positive roles e.g. book monitor, group leader, messenger etc. This can help reduce the negative views that some learners may have of themselves.

# MOTIVATION

Motivation gives learners incentive, enthusiasm and interest when engaging with activities and the people around them. Learners are motivated by their own feelings, desires, self esteem and confidence.



## THE CIRCLE FRAMEWORK AND THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Motivation is also influenced by external factors. These external factors (i.e. the physical and social environment, and structures and routines) can impact positively or negatively on motivation. Focussing on motivation can be a powerful way of engaging interest in activities. Each learner will be motivated by different things which may vary from day to day. A learner-centred approach is therefore crucial when engaging motivation. However it can be useful to think of the following overarching themes for encouraging motivation within an inclusive classroom: values, abilities and interests.

**Values** - This refers to learners' values (what they think of as important and meaningful). This can be positively influenced by:

- Listening to and valuing learners' views, thoughts and ideas.
- Involving learners in target setting and reflection on their learning, thus encouraging them to take responsibility for their work.
- Assisting learners with careful target setting for their personal learning plans so that they can use these to see progress.

**Abilities** - What learners feel about themselves and their belief in their ability to successfully perform tasks affects their motivation: we know that a sense of achievement can be a powerful motivator, encouraging learners to complete tasks and to try out new activities. This can be supported by:

- Differentiating work so that goals are realistic and achievable, whilst still providing challenge and enjoyment.
- Using a variety of teaching methods to address the range of thinking styles within the class.
- Providing constructive feedback framed in a positive way which encourages and reassures learners about their ability.
- Positively affirming learners' abilities, interests, languages and cultures.
- Modelling enthusiasm for tasks; noticing effort and process as well as the product; and finding ways of celebrating this and other success.

**Interests** - Learners are generally motivated by things that capture their imagination or that they find enjoyable and satisfying. The following can help build on this aspect of motivation:

- Utilising learners' interests, cultures or experiences when designing lessons.
- Allowing learners an element of personalisation and choice when addressing specific tasks.
- Utilising experiential learning, multisensory approaches and/or technology can be motivating for many learners.



## THE CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS) VI.I

An inclusive classroom is dependent on the physical environment (objects and spaces), the social environment (people and how they interact) and structures and routines that are in that environment. All of these impact on the motivation, organisation, and participation of learners. Because of the multiple dimensions of the classroom environment, it can impact in various ways: either positively supporting learners or negatively interfering with their participation.

The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) provides a rating of how different aspects of the environment impact on learners in the following areas:

- The physical environment
- The social environment
- Structures and routines

Each of these areas has been further divided into five constituent parts. The CICS enables you to assign a rating to each of these so that strengths and weaknesses within the environment can be easily identified.

The CICS comprises 3 ratings tables (one each for the physical environment, the social environment, and structures and routines) and a summary page (p.28). You will also find a set of reflective questions adjacent to each of the ratings tables which will help you when considering the different aspects of your classroom environment.



### SUMMARY OF CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS) VI.I

Using the information from the previous pages complete the summary score sheet and keep as a record of how inclusive your classroom environment is at a given time in the school year.

This can be used to quickly identify any areas of strength and areas requiring attention. This, along with the previous pages can help you to develop a plan for any improvements required.

You can use the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Planning Page to document your plan for improvement. The CICS provides a score which can be used as a baseline and then repeated to show the effect of any changes made to the classroom.

| RATING SCALE |                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4            | Environment <b>strongly supports</b> participation of learner(s) by providing exceptional opportunities, resources, requirements & structures |
| 3            | Environment <b>supports</b> participation of learner(s) by providing appropriate opportunities, resources, requirements & structures          |
| 2            | Environment <b>interferes</b> with participation of learner(s) by providing limited opportunities, resources, requirements & structures       |
| 1            | Environment <b>strongly interferes</b> with participation of learner(s) by not providing opportunities, resources, requirements & structures  |

|                       | Decision making          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|                       |                          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| STRUCTURES & ROUTINES | Routines                 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Appeal of activities     | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Expectations             | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Activity demands         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Empowerment              | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT    | Provision of information | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Relationships            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Support and facilitation | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Attitudes                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT  | Availability of objects  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Visual supports          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Sensory Space            | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Adequacy of space        | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|                       | Accessibility of space   | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

## THE CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS) VI.I

### THE CICS RATING SCALE



The CICS uses the same 4 point rating scale for all the items to be rated. The 4-point rating scale functions as follows:

- 4 Environment strongly supports participation of learner(s) by providing exceptional opportunities, resources, requirements and structures
- 3 Environment supports participation of learner(s) by providing appropriate opportunities, resources, requirements and structures
- 2 Environment interferes with participation of learner(s) by providing limited opportunities, resources, requirements & structures
- 1 Environment strongly interferes with participation of learner(s) by not providing opportunities, resources, requirements and structures

For each of the items in the CICS you should assign one of the above ratings (1, 2, 3, or 4) as an indication of how the environment supports inclusion.

Assigning these ratings requires judgements to be made that are complex. To make this process easier criteria statements are provided which refer to the item being rated. These relate directly to the CICS rating scale and will assist you to narrow down which rating to use. Additionally, you can refer to the reflective questions which will further support you when considering what is required in an inclusive classroom.

It is important to bear in mind that the CICS is designed to measure a broad range of environmental impact with a wide range of learners (although it could also be used to assess the environment in relation to an individual learner).

## COMPLETING THE CICS

- Work through each of the three ratings pages identifying which of the criterion statements best describes that aspect of the environment.
- Use your professional judgement to decide on the rating for each item.
- Please note that "4" does not represent "good" environmental support, but is indicative of "exceptional" environmental support.
- If it is not clear which of two ratings to use, choose the lower of the two possible.
- It is not anticipated that you will spend a great deal of time selecting the appropriate rating.
- Use your ratings from these pages to complete the CICS summary page.

The CICS can be completed individually, or with a colleague. It can be stored as evidence of your own professional learning; used to share information with colleagues about your classroom; or utilised as a framework to support discussions with student teachers and probationers about setting up an inclusive classroom.

(You may also wish ask a group of learners to rate the classroom environment from their perspective.)

The CICS can be repeated as often as required to demonstrate changes or improvements. This together with the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Planning Page can be used as evidence of reflective practice and your development towards an Inclusive Classroom.

## INTERPRETING AND USING THE RESULTS OF THE CICS

The results of the CICS will help to identify the areas of strength and areas to develop that will make your classroom more inclusive.

It is likely that an average classroom which is operating effectively will receive mainly "3s" with an occasional "2" rating. This environment would not be expected to make significant change, although would need to focus on the "2s" to facilitate improvement.

However if an environment received "1s" for most items, with only a few "2s" or "3s", this would indicate that improvements were needed and an action plan warranted.



It is essential to focus any efforts for improvement on things which are under your control. For example if you have rated "Adequacy of Space" (an item within the Physical Environment) as "1" due to building constraints, this would be outside your control. You could raise your concerns with school leaders, but then focus on other areas requiring improvement which are under your control.

If you identify areas requiring development from the CICS, you can make a plan using the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Planning Page. This provides a structure for you to document and evidence how you are developing the principles of an inclusive classroom.

It can be photocopied and completed individually as evidence of reflection and self evaluation. Or could be completed as part of a joint reflection with a colleague, or group of colleagues, where ideas for setting up an inclusive environment can be discussed and shared.

# THE CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS): THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

| Items and descriptor                                                                                              | Rating | Criteria Statements - Please select the statement that best describes the physical environment                                                                          | Notes |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Accessibility of Space</b><br><br>Barrier free<br>Ease of access                                               | 4      | Accessibility exemplary, exceptional placing of furniture, barrier free                                                                                                 |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 3      | Good accessibility to spaces, barrier free                                                                                                                              |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 2      | Some barriers accessing spaces, some areas inaccessible                                                                                                                 |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 1      | Barriers including clutter, significant challenges accessing spaces                                                                                                     |       |
| <b>Adequacy of Space</b><br><br>Availability of spaces<br>Tailored to needs<br>Set up of spaces including seating | 4      | Exemplary availability of different areas and seating for meeting needs                                                                                                 |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 3      | Variety of areas and seating available when needed, available spaces match requirements                                                                                 |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 2      | Constraints of available space, some needs not met by spaces or seating                                                                                                 |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 1      | Spaces not matching needs, overcrowded, required spaces or seating not available                                                                                        |       |
| <b>Sensory Space</b><br><br>Temperature/noise/lighting/odour<br>Adjustability<br>Self-calming                     | 4      | Excellent sensory conditions, temperature pleasant, lighting and/or noise levels optimised for sensory preferences                                                      |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 3      | Comfortable sensory conditions e.g. temperature, light and/or noise levels adjustable                                                                                   |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 2      | Some challenges with sensory conditions, variable ability to adjust these e.g. unwanted noise                                                                           |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 1      | Hot/stifling or too cold, noisy, poor lighting, distracting odours - sensory conditions not adjustable/adjusted                                                         |       |
| <b>Visual supports</b><br><br>Signs<br>Labels<br>Visual timetables<br>Posters/displays                            | 4      | Excellent use of visual supports meeting individual needs, consistently used and applied                                                                                |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 3      | Effective use of visual supports meeting needs, mostly consistent                                                                                                       |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 2      | Challenges in the number and variety of visual supports, difficult to read/understand, some needs not met, some inconsistency                                           |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 1      | Visual supports are limited/ambiguous/inconsistent, learners cannot understand, needs not met                                                                           |       |
| <b>Availability of Objects</b><br><br>Objects accessible<br>Objects suitable<br>Adaptive devices                  | 4      | Availability of objects exemplary, storage in close proximity, objects matched to characteristics/needs/cultures of learners, independently accessible, well maintained |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 3      | Ease of access to all needed objects when desired, storage adequate, matched to personal characteristics/needs of learners, well maintained                             |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 2      | Challenges accessing objects, variable storage, some objects not matched to personal characteristics/needs of learners                                                  |       |
|                                                                                                                   | 1      | Some objects not available, objects not accessible, objects not adequate for personal characteristics/needs of learners, poorly maintained                              |       |

## THE FOLLOWING REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS MAY HELP YOU WHEN CONSIDERING HOW TO RATE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT.



### Accessibility of Space

- Are there any hazards in the physical space?
- Can learners move around the classroom easily?
- Can learners access other areas of the school with ease?
- Is the space adapted to meet physical needs?
- Is the space organised and uncluttered?

### Adequacy of Space

- Do you think the space suits learners' needs?
- Can you alter your classroom to suit the needs of learners?
- Is the class set up to promote good interaction?
- Does the space facilitate learning opportunities?
- Does the seating plan optimise learning?
- Does the seating plan meet specific needs?
- Is there space to set up an individual workstation or quiet area/safe space if required?

### Sensory Space

- Do you have concerns about the sensory environment (e.g. lighting, noise, temperature, odour etc.)?
- Can the sensory environment be altered easily?
- How do you know the sensory environment is suitable for all learners?
- Are agreed sensory supports available and in place?
- Is the environment adapted to meet sensory needs (e.g. consider lighting and noise levels)?

### Visual supports

- What visual supports are used in the classroom?
- Is a consistent format for visuals used across the school?
- Are visual cues and supports in place?
- Are signs and displays multilingual and multicultural?
- Is clear and consistent labelling used to identify resources and resource cupboards?

- Is a visual timetable used?
- Are any of the visual supports over-stimulating or distracting?

### Availability of Objects

- Do learners have easy access to the equipment or resources they need?
- Are the available objects suited to the needs of learners (consider seat and table height, types of pencils, pens, scissors etc.)?
- Is technology available and fully utilised (e.g. Interactive whiteboard / ICT)?
- Are materials/resources prepared/selected in advance?
- Are objects/resources positioned consistently and appropriately?
- Can learners independently access resources so that they can develop responsibility for these?

# THE CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS): THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

| Items and descriptor                                                                                                                                         | Rating           | Criteria Statements - Please select the statement that best describes the social environment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Notes |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Attitudes</b><br><i>Empathy</i><br><i>Understanding</i><br><i>Non-judgemental</i><br><i>Respecting others</i>                                             | 4<br>3<br>2<br>1 | Staff and peers in environment display, reinforce and value exceptional attitudes, and are highly empathic, non-judgemental<br>Staff and peers in environment are actively developing and modelling empathy and inclusiveness and are non-judgemental<br>Some challenges with negative attitudes and how these are addressed<br>Staff or peers are dismissive/judgemental/exclusionary/condescending/bullying                                                                          |       |
| <b>Support and Facilitation</b><br><i>Verbal support</i><br><i>Non-verbal support</i><br><i>Physical support</i><br><i>Appropriate communication</i>         | 4<br>3<br>2<br>1 | Expert support using variety of prompts/encouragement/demonstration, adapted to individual needs, and promotes independence over time<br>Appropriate support using prompts/encouragement/demonstration, takes account of different needs, and builds confidence in learners<br>Limited support and/or one form of support only/support not personalised to reflect needs/support leads to increased dependence<br>Minimal or ineffective support and/or support does not reflect needs |       |
| <b>Relationships</b><br><i>Staff and peers</i><br><i>Accepting atmosphere</i><br><i>Sense of belonging</i><br><i>Opportunities for relationship building</i> | 4<br>3<br>2<br>1 | Exemplary, with diverse opportunities for positive social interaction and relationship building within class, school and wider community<br>Good relationships and opportunities for social interaction, strong class/school identity<br>Some challenges with relationship building and/or conflict<br>Some learners are isolated, conflict, and/or opportunities for relationship building are poor                                                                                   |       |
| <b>Provision of Information</b><br><i>Accessible</i><br><i>Clear</i><br><i>Variety of formats</i><br><i>Parents/carers and learners</i>                      | 4<br>3<br>2<br>1 | Proactive provision of information, several formats, shared and easily accessible<br>Information provided in a variety of formats<br>Challenges with sharing information, information not always clear<br>Minimal information and/or mixed messages, complexity or quantity inappropriate                                                                                                                                                                                              |       |
| <b>Empowerment</b><br><i>Support for autonomy</i><br><i>Learner-centred</i><br><i>Responding to needs and views</i>                                          | 4<br>3<br>2<br>1 | Excellent promotion of appropriate self-direction, proactive seeking of learners views/choices<br>Learners actively involved in class ethos/target setting/self-assessment, learners desires/views sought<br>Learners inconsistently asked for views, limited follow-through or trust in utility of learners views/choices<br>Learners' views/choices not sought or considered, overprotectiveness, learners preference not considered                                                 |       |

## THE FOLLOWING REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS MAY HELP YOU WHEN CONSIDERING HOW TO RATE THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT.



### Attitudes

- Is a learner-centred approach used consistently?
- Are individual differences respected and diversity normalised and valued?
- Are learners made to feel that their views are valued?
- Is constructive feedback given?
- Is support offered sensitively and timely?
- Are approaches to teaching wellbeing embedded (e.g. social understanding, emotions, mental wellbeing)?
- Is sensitivity used when asking learners to 'perform' in front of their peers e.g. reading aloud?
- Do adults model enthusiasm for tasks?

### Support and Facilitation

- Are the staff responsive to the learners' needs, do they anticipate needs? What kind of support is given to learners (physical, verbal, visual cues)?
- Is the complexity of language used considered?
- Is the pace and quantity of information giving considered?
- Are complex instructions broken into clear steps?

- Are whole class checklists used (e.g. to work through tasks)?
- Is teaching adapted for different thinking styles?
- Is demonstration and/or modelling used?
- Is verbal information supported with non-verbal information (e.g. gesture, pictures or written words)?
- Are templates used to support structure of work?
- Are worksheets clear and organised?
- Is feedback provided and effort acknowledged?
- Does support lead to increased independence and autonomy over time?

### Relationships

- How would you describe the relationship of (a) of learners with staff, and (b) between the learners?
- Are small group activities utilised?
- Are working relationships between learners considered?
- Are peer supports used?
- Are facilitated playground activities used?
- Are groupings for different tasks carefully considered?
- Are activities regularly included to build relationships?
- Do learners feel valued and secure?
- Do staff support one another to address difficult relationships between adults or adults and learners?

### Information

- How is information shared with learners and parents/carers?
- Is information (for learners and parents/carers) easily available in a variety of formats?
- Are "communication postcards" or a home-school diary used?
- Are interpreting and translation used, if required, to make information accessible?
- Is there regular collaboration with parents/carers?
- How do staff know that information has been received and understood by all relevant parties (e.g. parents/carers, learners)?

### Empowerment

- How do staff assist learners in identifying and solving problems and building autonomy?
- How do staff encourage learners to express their needs, take responsibility or be autonomous?
- How is reflection and sense of self nurtured?
- Are learners encouraged to take responsibility for their learning?
- Are learners supported to reflect on their learning?
- Are learners involved in target setting?
- Do learners see progress through personal learning plans?
- Are learners given valued class/school roles and responsibilities?
- Is the use of first language encouraged?
- Do learners see adults responding to their views and ideas?

# THE CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS): THE STRUCTURES AND ROUTINES

| Items and descriptor                                                                                                                             | Rating | Criteria Statements - Please select the statement that best describes the structures and routines                                           | Notes |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Activity Demands</b><br><i>Too easy/too hard</i><br><i>Enjoyment/satisfaction</i><br><i>Just right challenge</i><br><i>Matched to ability</i> | 4      | Activities promote exceptionally appropriate and creative challenge and enjoyment with excellent engagement                                 |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 3      | Activities appropriate to allow for "just right challenge", almost all learners engaged most of the time                                    |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 2      | Activity demands are somewhat high/low, some boredom/stress                                                                                 |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 1      | Activity demands too high/too low, causing boredom/stress                                                                                   |       |
| <b>Expectations</b><br><i>Clarity</i><br><i>Consistency</i><br><i>Effect on learners</i>                                                         | 4      | Exceptionally clear expectations, communicated consistently by all adults in the school, and shared verbally, visually and through modeling |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 3      | Clear expectations, usually communicated consistently by adults in the school, and shared verbally, visually and through modeling           |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 2      | Expectations, sometimes communicated consistently by adults in the school, some learner disengagement or anxiety                            |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 1      | Unclear and/or inconsistent expectations, learners disengaged or anxious                                                                    |       |
| <b>Appeal of Activities</b><br><i>Value</i><br><i>Attraction</i><br><i>Interest</i>                                                              | 4      | Very positive perception and understanding of the value of activities offered to learners, variety evident, tailored to interests/cultures  |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 3      | Attraction to the type of task offered, variety, some tasks tailored to learners' interests/cultures                                        |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 2      | Challenge in how activities are structured which limits their appeal, learners' interests/cultures not reflected                            |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 1      | Activities are not appealing, learners disinterested, little or no understanding of purpose                                                 |       |
| <b>Routines</b><br><i>Structure</i><br><i>Preferences</i><br><i>Consistency</i>                                                                  | 4      | Structured routines all exemplary, accommodates for individual preferences, high levels of consistency, promote sense of belonging          |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 3      | Appropriate structured routine, offers consistency, good preparation for change                                                             |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 2      | Challenges with how routine is structured, variable consistency, some unpredictability                                                      |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 1      | Little or no routine or structure provided throughout the class/day/week, unpredictability                                                  |       |
| <b>Decision-making</b><br><i>Participation in decision-making</i><br><i>Encouragement for collaborative decision making</i>                      | 4      | Exemplary encouragement for learners to meaningfully participate in decisions                                                               |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 3      | Encouragement for learners to meaningfully participate in decisions                                                                         |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 2      | Inconsistency of opportunities being afforded to learners to participate in decisions, participation not always meaningful                  |       |
|                                                                                                                                                  | 1      | No involvement in decision-making, institutional decision-making/inflexible policies                                                        |       |

## THE FOLLOWING REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS MAY HELP YOU WHEN CONSIDERING HOW TO RATE THE STRUCTURES AND ROUTINES.



### Activity Demands

- How do you make sure the level of the activity matches the ability of the learners?
- Does work provide appropriate challenge and enjoyment for all?
- Is work differentiated to ensure achievable goals?
- Is success celebrated or displayed?
- Is there a focus on valuing process as well as product?
- Are different thinking styles addressed during lessons?
- Do learners engage with all activities?

### Expectations

- How do you agree expectations?
- How are expectations communicated to learners?
- Are expectations developmentally relevant for all learners?
- Is your classroom environment set up to support expectations to be met?
- Are class expectations displayed and referred to regularly?

- Do all adults in the learning environment value and model agreed expectations?
- Do you regularly reflect on and review expectations?
- Are roles and routines used to promote learner responsibility?

### Appeal of Activities

- How do you provide activities that are well matched to the interests of the learners?
- Are learners' interests and cultures utilised when designing lessons?
- Do good things just happen - are motivating activities timetabled across the week?
- Are multisensory approaches used?
- Is technology used to engage interest?
- Do learners understand the value and purpose of the activities?

### Routines

- How do you help learners with their daily and weekly routine?
- Is structure and routine used throughout the day/week e.g. set format to the day, set times for PE or music?
- How do you support learners to understand routines and to understand changes to routines?
- How do you prepare learners before each change?
- How do you support learners to practice and prepare for new experiences?

- Are lessons planned to follow a consistent format?
- Are the learning intentions made clear at the start?
- Are learning outcomes reviewed and summarised?
- Are there routine opportunities for active learning and multisensory learning?
- Are there opportunities for practice and repetition?
- Are there routine opportunities for movement breaks?
- Are consistent /predictable seating plans in place?

### Decision-making

- Are learners involved in decision-making about class expectations, class ethos, activities and routines?
- How do you support learners to be involved in decision making?
- How do you ensure that everyone's voice is heard in the decision making process?
- Are class expectations set in collaboration with learners?
- Are learners encouraged to share their views about the class layout?
- Are learners encouraged to share their views about activities?
- How do learners know that their views are respected and have been meaningfully considered as part of the decision making process?



## SUMMARY OF CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS) V 1.1

Using the information from the previous pages complete the summary score sheet and keep as a record of how inclusive your classroom environment is at a given time in the school year.

This can be used to quickly identify any areas of strength and areas requiring attention. This, along with the previous pages can help you to develop a plan for any improvements required.

You can use the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Planning Page to document your plan for improvement. The CICS provides a score which can be used as a baseline and then repeated to show the effect of any changes made to the classroom.

### RATING SCALE

| STRUCTURES & ROUTINES    |   | SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT |   |   |   | PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT |   |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------|---|---|---|----------------------|---|---|---|
| Decision making          | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Routines                 | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Appeal of activities     | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Expectations             | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Activity demands         | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Empowerment              | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Provision of information | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Relationships            | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Support and facilitation | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Attitudes                | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Availability of objects  | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Visual supports          | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Sensory Space            | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Adequacy of space        | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Accessibility of space   | 4 | 3                  | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3                    | 2 | 1 | 4 |

Environment **strongly supports** participation of learner(s) by providing exceptional opportunities, resources, requirements & structures & structures

4  
Environment **supports** participation of learner(s) by providing appropriate opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

3  
Environment **interferes** with participation of learner(s) by providing limited opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

2  
Environment **strongly interferes** with participation of learner(s) by not providing opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

1  
Environment **strongly interferes** with participation of learner(s) by not providing opportunities, resources, requirements & structures



## CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS) PLANNING PAGE

### CIRCLE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SCALE (CICS)

You could make a plan below by writing down which areas to target based on the information from the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS).

Date: .....  
Classroom: .....  
Date for review: .....  
Completed by: .....

From your completed CICS what are the key areas that you have chosen to develop? (Consider those with a score of 2 or less.)

### HOW WILL IT BE ACHIEVED?

Things to implement / change / develop

Who will be involved?

Resources / Training Needed

The CICS score in this area has increased / decreased / remained the same (delete as required).

### OUTCOME AT REVIEW

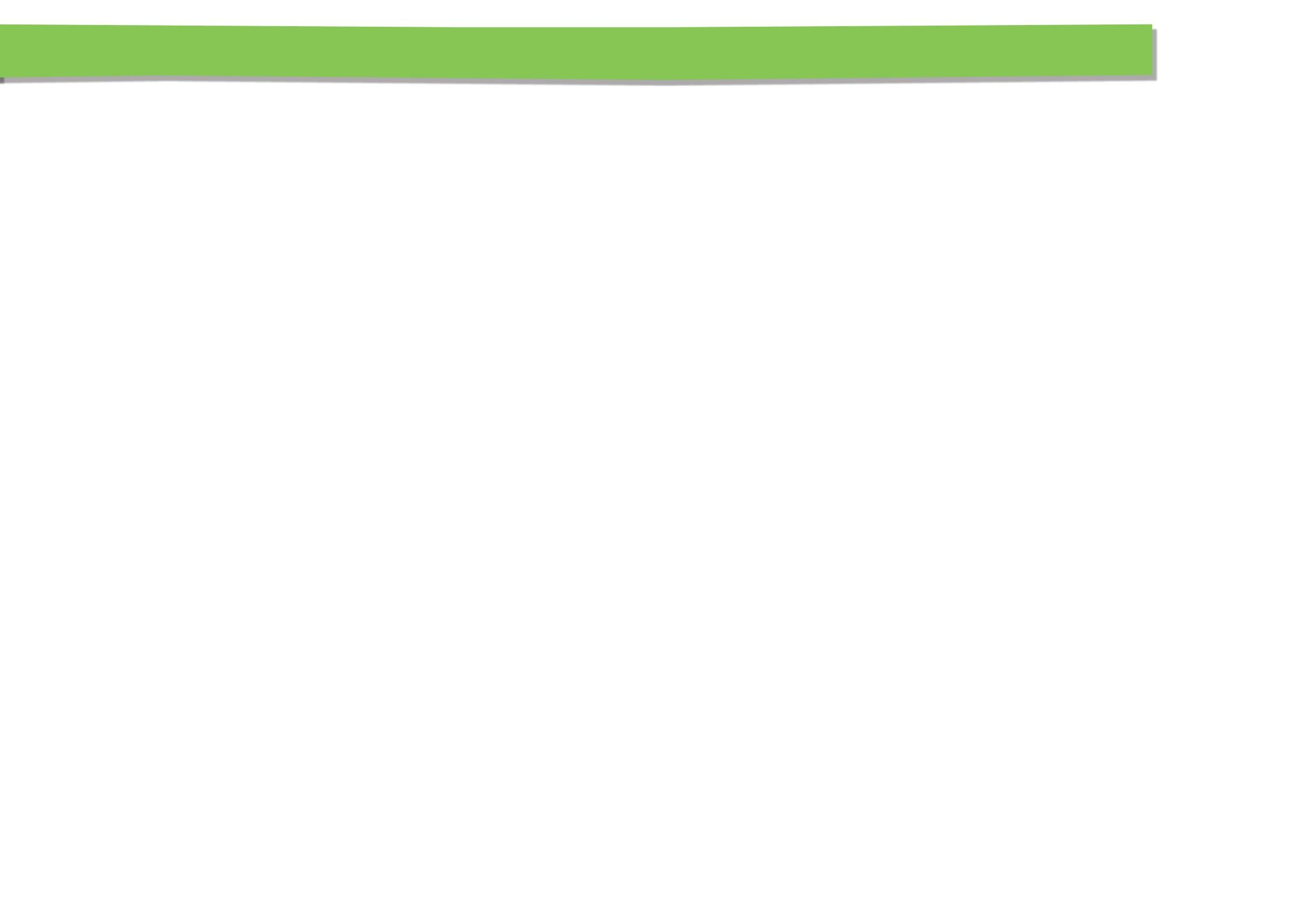
Next Steps



## DISCUSSION POINTS...

- Having completed the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS), how inclusive do you think your practice is?
- Which whole school approaches are in place within your school? How do these impact on setting up an inclusive classroom?
- Which supports and strategies do you currently use to ensure your practice is learner-centred?
- What steps do you take in the preparation and planning process to ensure that you understand the needs of individual learners within your class?
- How do you evidence the supports and strategies that you use?
- Which strategies would you like to add to or develop in your current practice? How might you do this?
- Considering learners who already have individual supports or strategies in place, how could you adapt these to make them suitable for the whole class?
- Where do you evidence your planning for individual learners?
- Who do you (could you) use as a critical friend to reflect on your practice with?
- How does the implementation of supports and strategies by your critical friend/peer support (or another colleague) differ from your own practice?







# 3

## THE CIRCLE PARTICIPATION SCALE (CPS)



### This section contains:

- An introduction to the CPS.
- An overview of how to use the CPS.
- The CPS.
- How to interpret the results.
- Discussion points to support reflection.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE CIRCLE PARTICIPATION SCALE (CPS)



Identifying and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of all learners in the class is integral to the daily practice of every teacher. Through routine observation and assessment, class teachers monitor progress and adapt their practice to ensure that learners achieve their goals. Most learners progress well with this good standard teaching practice within an Inclusive Classroom.

However, some learners may require further support to enable them to participate fully in school life. Participation in school life is the focus of the CIRCLE Participation Scale. The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) is a tool which has been designed specifically to assess and measure participation in school life.

### Participation in school life

To participate in school life learners must be able to, for example: attend school and move around the premises; communicate and work cooperatively with others; access and understand curricular material; follow school expectations and routines; engage in school-related roles and responsibilities; and organise themselves to study and complete assigned tasks. Some learners require support to do this.

Learners' participation is influenced by a combination of environmental factors (i.e. the physical environment, social environment and structures and routines) and learner specific factors (i.e. their motivation and specific skills). When learners experience high levels of unproductive stress, or are unable to participate in school they tend to have poorer outcomes than their peers. It can be challenging to work out how different aspects of the puzzle are impacting on a specific learner. The CPS can support this.

### What is the CPS?

The CPS is a measure of participation in school life. It has been designed as an initial assessment to give an overview of a learner's strengths and potential areas for development.

It assesses the physical and social environment, structures and routines, motivation and skills in the following areas: Attention and Concentration, Organisation and Planning, Posture and Mobility, Dexterity and Manipulation, Socialising, Emotions and Relationships and Verbal and Non-verbal Communication.

### Why use the CPS?

- The CPS will help you identify and record the learner's strengths and where support and strategies or further specific assessment should be targeted.
- It provides a baseline assessment which will allow you to record and measure progress. This may be particularly useful for evidencing the needs of 'looked after' learners.
- The CPS provides an easy to use simple visual profile of the learner which can support information sharing and discussions with others.
- It can be used to inform referral when support from others is required.
- It can be used to support personal reflection.
- The completed CPS will direct you to the relevant pages of the resource containing the specific supports and strategies for that learner.

# COMPLETING THE CPS

The CPS asks you to read a set of statements and for each to consider and 'score' the response which is most accurate for the learner you are assessing:

- 4** Strongly supports school participation / Observed almost all of the time
- 3** Supports school participation / Observed most of the time
- 2** Interferes with school participation / Observed some of the time
- 1** Strongly interferes with school participation / Observed hardly any of the time

The scale helps to assess factors that support or interfere with participation in school life and/ or the frequency with which it applies to the learner.

The learner doesn't have to be present when you score the CPS, but please try to complete it soon after you have seen them (preferably on the same day) while you have a clear impression of their ability.

You can complete the CPS by yourself or in consultation with others. Please try to answer all the questions. Ensure that you write the learner's name and the date of completion at the top of the page and sign it for future reference.

## Existing supports and strategies

The CPS should be completed with current supports and strategies which are routinely used with that learner in place. Document these and how they are currently used in the notes section on the back of the CPS.

If you are unsure if existing supports and strategies are effective, it might be useful to carry out focussed observation of the learner with and without the supports and strategies in place to determine the difference.

## Considerations when completing the CPS

We know that learners respond differently in different contexts and that this may vary from day to day and even throughout

the day. It can therefore be useful to observe the learner in a variety of circumstances over several days and then to use your professional judgement to decide which 'score' gives the most accurate overview of the learner. Also consider the previous 4 weeks as a reference period. Discussions with colleagues who are also involved with the learner might help to clarify your thoughts. In some circumstances it might be useful to ask these colleagues to complete the CPS separately and then to meet to compare results, discuss any discrepancies and to agree a collaborative score for the learner based on this.

Examples of current and previous school work, review of any reports and discussions with the learner's previous education staff may also be useful when completing the CPS.

Reflect on any discrepancies in the learner's performance and try to consider why this might be the case - was there anything different which could have accounted for this? If their performance is consistently different in a particular context try to identify which factors are making the difference.

The views of the parents/carers and the learners themselves can also help inform the assessment process, though it is recognised that the learner might respond differently outside the school.

## Repeating the CPS

You can repeat the CPS as often as required. It can be useful to repeat it at the beginning of each term to evaluate the impact of any supports and strategies that have been introduced.

### ANALYSING AND INTERPRETING THE RESULTS

Once you have completed the CPS take time to go through the categories looking for patterns in how you have scored the learner. You can do this on your own or in collaboration with colleagues who know the learner.

Look for categories where you have consistently given a score of 4 or 3 - these show areas of strength where things are currently working well. It is important to highlight these, as well as identifying areas of need. Consider if these findings were what you expected and reflect on ways in which you may be able to tap areas of strength to address areas of need.

For some learners the CPS might highlight needs in one particular skill area e.g. Attention and Concentration. The table below gives the pages within this resource where you will find supports and strategies for that particular skill area.

If in addition to needs in one particular skill area the CPS also shows a score of mainly 1 or 2 in one of the other categories

|                                                |    |
|------------------------------------------------|----|
| Attention and Concentration Skills             | 45 |
| Organisation and Planning Skills               | 49 |
| Posture and Mobility (Gross Motor)             | 53 |
| Dexterity and Manipulation (Fine Motor) Skills | 57 |
| Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills     | 61 |
| Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills      | 65 |

(i.e. physical or social environment, structures and routines, or motivation) this will indicate which group of strategies to target within that skill area. For example for a learner who scores mainly 1 or 2 in both the Attention and Concentration and the Structures and Routines categories, turn to the relevant page and focus on the supports and strategies in the middle column - Establishing Structures and Routines.

It is possible that a learner has more of a mixed pattern. In this case look for the skill area where there is the lowest total score and begin by looking at that section to see if the outline of the needs corresponds to those encountered by the learner. If so try implementing some of the supports and strategies suggested in that skill area. If not then consider whether one of the other low scored skill sections might be the actual 'cause'. For example, a learner with Verbal and Non-verbal Communication needs may have low scores for Social and Relationship skills, but by focussing supports and strategies on the former skill area, this will improve the latter.

Your skills and judgement in interpreting the results and identifying and addressing the underlying needs are key to supporting participation in school life.

#### Next steps

The dated CPS provides a measure of how the learner is at a point in time and directs you towards the appropriate supports and strategies to consider using within this resource.

It is important to schedule a date to repeat the CPS (e.g. the following term) to assess the impact of the chosen input and make changes as required.



## DISCUSSION POINTS...

- Before using the CPS, which other methods did you use to consider and record the participation of learners in your class?
- How has the completed CPS profile confirmed or changed your views of the learner in question?
- Compare your CPS results for a learner with those of a colleague who has also completed the CPS for the same learner. What similarities and differences were there in the scoring? What could have accounted for these?
- Consider how the parents/carers might complete the CPS for their child. In what ways do you think they might score it differently? What might be the reasons for this and how can you prepare for potential discussions about the results to take account of these?
- How do you ensure that the learner (and their parents/carers) are aware of what they do well, and how could you support and encourage them in this area?
- With reference to the skills areas outlined in the CPS (i.e. Attention and Concentration, Organisational and Planning, Posture and Mobility, Dexterity and Manipulation, Social, Emotional and Relationship, and Verbal and Non-verbal Communication) consider how each of these might impact on the others (e.g. how might Posture and Mobility skills impact on Attention and Concentration?).
- What do you consider to be the biggest barriers to participation for learners with additional support needs in your school? How can these be addressed? What is your role in addressing these issues under current legislation and policy?

| Learning Environments: Physical                                                                     |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Classroom space is suitable and engaging for learner (consider accessibility, furniture, layout)  | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Playground is suitable and engaging for learner (consider safety, accessibility, play)            | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Common areas (e.g. corridors) are suitable for learner (consider accessibility, safety signage)   | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Required tools or equipment have been identified and are available/accessible to learner          | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Sensory elements of classroom space have been considered for learner (e.g. noise, light, clutter) | 1 2 3 4 |

| Learning Environments: Social                                                |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Peers include learner in class activities                                  | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Peers include learner in play/recreation activities                        | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Relevant school staff recognise and understand learners' needs             | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Relevant school staff pro-actively provide support to meet learners' needs | 1 2 3 4 |

| Structures and Routines                                                                 |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner is aware of and adheres to normal school routines                             | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner is able to move between tasks, activities and/or classes during school day    | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner copes well with changes to routine or patterns                                | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner meets relevant school/staff expectations                                      | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner is involved in extra roles/activities in school (e.g. clubs, or after school) | 1 2 3 4 |

| Motivation                                                                   |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner is aware of own skills and abilities                               | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner seeks challenges or new activities and is optimistic about success | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner shows curiosity and willingly engages in activities                | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner shows enthusiasm for activities at school                          | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner shows pride in their achievements                                  | 1 2 3 4 |

| Attention and Concentration                                                  |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner remembers information and instructions                             | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner stays focussed throughout an activity                              | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner starts activities and keeps going until they are finished          | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner maintains a consistent pace when participating in class activities | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner works towards achieving specific goals when required               | 1 2 3 4 |

| Organisational and Planning                                                |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner chooses tools and materials and uses them as they are intended   | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner notices problems and if needed changes actions during activities | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner keeps themselves and their workspace organised                   | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner remembers items needed for day                                   | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner completes tasks in correct sequence                              | 1 2 3 4 |

| Posture and Mobility                                              |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner stays balanced while walking, running or playing        | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner sits well positioned at desk for duration of activities | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner moves around classroom as required                      | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner moves around wider school environment as required       | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner is well co-ordinated when completing tasks              | 1 2 3 4 |

| Dexterity and Manipulation                                                                     |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner can effectively manipulate smaller items (e.g. pencils, scissors)                    | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner can draw/write at a level appropriate for their developmental level/level of ability | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner has good hand-eye coordination                                                       | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner uses both hands well at same time                                                    | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner uses appropriate force and speed during manual activities                            | 1 2 3 4 |

| Social, Emotional and Relationship                                        |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner socialises with classmates and gets along with peers            | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner has a consistent group of friends                               | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner engages in appropriate conversations with peers and staff       | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner cooperates with peers on class tasks or recreational activities | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner seems happy, included and calm                                  | 1 2 3 4 |

| Verbal & nonverbal communication                                                      |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a Learner demonstrates understanding of body language (e.g. eye contact, expressions) | 1 2 3 4 |
| b Learner speaks clearly and changes volume as needed                                 | 1 2 3 4 |
| c Learner verbalises their thoughts, ideas and questions appropriately                | 1 2 3 4 |
| d Learner understands spoken communication                                            | 1 2 3 4 |
| e Learner understands written communication (e.g. from board)                         | 1 2 3 4 |



# THE CIRCLE PARTICIPATION SCALE (CPS): NOTES PAGE

Name .....

Date of Scoring .....

DOB .....

Class .....

Person Scoring .....

Use this space to record supports or strategies in use during the CPS assessment  
(e.g. a sit-and-move cushion, fidget supports, etc.)

Use this space to record any other comments regarding the CPS score  
(e.g. specific variations in performance, etc.)



# 4

## SKILLS, SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES

Attention and Concentration Skills

Organisational and Planning Skills

Posture and Mobility (Gross Motor) Skills

Dexterity and Manipulation (Fine Motor) Skills

Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

### This section contains:

- An introduction to how the Skills, Supports and Strategies section is structured; how to use this section; and a note on using the supports and strategies.
- The six skills areas.
- A description of the skill area, specific supports and strategies and a planning page for each.
- Discussion points to support reflection.

### INTRODUCTION

Most learners will be sufficiently supported by implementing the strategies for creating an inclusive classroom (see Section 2). However, some learners may require additional support to progress within the curriculum, feel included and participate in school life. This section provides strategies that you can try with these learners. The CPS (see Section 3) helped you to identify and document the learner's strengths and needs and will guide you to specific strategies to support the learner in the following areas:

Attention and Concentration Skills

Organisational and Planning Skills

Posture and Mobility (Gross Motor) Skills

Dexterity and Manipulation (Fine Motor) Skills

Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

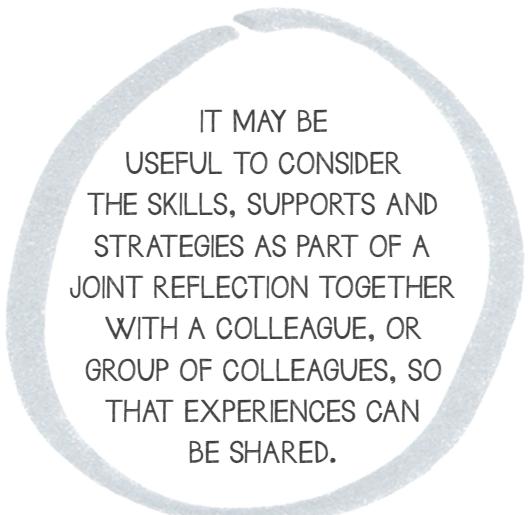
These six areas represent the skills used by learners to make progress within the curriculum and participate in school and wider society. However, as learners engage in school, play and self-care, other factors also maintain, reinforce, shape and change actions, dispositions, behaviours and capabilities. A learner's progress and participation can either be supported or inhibited by:

- **The Environment:** the environment surrounds the learner and enhances or inhibits participation. This includes buildings, resources and equipment (the physical environment) and the attitudes, expectations and actions of others (the social environment).
- **Structures and Routines:** routines are events that happen in the same way with regularity. The start, middle and end of the routine becomes predictable through repetition. Daily routines help learners to know and take part in what comes next and social routines help them enjoy and interact with others.
- **Motivation:** motivation gives learners incentives, enthusiasm and interest when engaging with people and activities. Learners are motivated by their own feelings, desires, self esteem, confidence and the responses of others.

For this reason the supports and strategies suggested for each skill are divided into 3 columns: Modifications to the Learning Environment, Establishing Structures and Routines and Approaches to Enhance Motivation.

## HOW TO USE THE SKILLS, SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES SECTION

- 1. Set up an inclusive classroom (see Section 2) -**  
It is assumed that this is already in place before adding further specific supports and strategies.
- 2. Complete the CPS (see Section 3) -** This will identify the skills area and groups of strategies to target (Modifications to the Learning Environment, Establishing Structures and Routines and/or Approaches to Enhance Motivation).
- 3. Turn to the relevant Skill Area identified by the CPS -** Read through the description to ensure that the concerns described are similar to those the learner is experiencing.
- 4. Consider the Supports and Strategies -** Consider the suggested supports and strategies and identify those already in place and working well and others which could be developed or added.
- 5. Complete the CIRCLE Supports and Strategies Planning Page -** You will find this at the end of each skills section. Use this to document your current concerns and input, your planned intervention, and eventually the outcome and next steps. This information, together with the CPS can be used for your own reflection or professional learning; to provide evidence of input and aid discussions with parents/carers or colleagues; and/or to support onward referral to other agencies.
- 6. Implement the learner-specific supports and strategies -** Remember that in addition to identifying any strategies used, it is essential that you have clear evidence for how you have implemented them.
- 7. Review the CIRCLE Supports and Strategies Planning Page -** Reflect on the effectiveness of the supports and strategies used and consider whether additional ones are required.
- 8. Repeat the CPS -** Consider if the learner is now able to participate more effectively as a result of using the supports and strategies or if minor adjustments and/or further support is required either from within the school or from partner services and agencies. Remember that some learners require implementation of specific supports and strategies throughout their school career and it is essential that these are effectively shared with others and passed on to colleagues during times of transition.



IT MAY BE  
USEFUL TO CONSIDER  
THE SKILLS, SUPPORTS AND  
STRATEGIES AS PART OF A  
JOINT REFLECTION TOGETHER  
WITH A COLLEAGUE, OR  
GROUP OF COLLEAGUES, SO  
THAT EXPERIENCES CAN  
BE SHARED.

## A NOTE ON THE SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES



- This section builds on the Working Within an Inclusive Classroom Section (see Section 2) and assumes that this is in place before additional supports and strategies are added.
- The supports and strategies have been identified by education staff as being useful in addressing needs as part of teacher and school led support.
- The lists of suggested supports and strategies are not exhaustive.
- Not all of the supports and strategies need to be in place to be effective. This would not be practical. Rather, focus on those that you consider to be the most important for that learner and then implement, record and reflect on how you are using these within your work context.
- Examples are given as a way of describing some of the supports and strategies. It is assumed that you will tailor or adapt the supports and strategies as required to meet individual needs.
- A reflective approach which includes regular evaluation of the supports and strategies used is recommended as their relevance is likely to change over time depending on the needs and responses of the learner.
- It is also important to reflect on strategies which may be in place but are not successful. Consider why they are not successful and if they could be adapted.
- You may find that some of the supports and strategies listed can be incorporated into activities for the whole class.
- It may be useful to draw on any experience you and/or your colleagues have of working with learners who had similar needs. Consider which supports and strategies were effective and could be shared with others.
- As well as the implementation of various supports and strategies, differentiation of aspects of the curriculum is likely to be required.
- Descriptions of the supports and strategies can be found in the Appendix.
- Where learners have complex and/or multiple additional support needs, the relevant policies should be followed, in collaboration with the team around the child and parents as appropriate.

# ATTENTION AND CONCENTRATION SKILLS



"**Robbie** just cannot sit still! He seems to have good understanding and has good general knowledge and language skills, but he is all over the place. If the task is something active, interactive, or something he enjoys, then he can focus quite well. He seems to learn by doing rather than listening. But sometimes listening work is inevitable and at these times he has real difficulty concentrating."

"**Aleksy** will look for any excuse not to do his work. He shouts out, fidgets, asks to go to the toilet and gazes out of the window. When he does this it also distracts the others who are trying to work."

Learners may need support with responding to and sustaining focus on activities, which impacts on their ability to learn.





## ATTENTION AND CONCENTRATION SKILLS

### Principle

Use of an organised approach and environment to encourage focussed attention and concentration skills.

- Modification of the environment to promote participation
- Short tasks and repetition to support attention and concentration skills
- Utilisation of learner's motivation to engage and sustain interest in tasks

### Parents say...

He's a whirlwind!

He doesn't sleep much.

I have to tell him a thousand times.

He just can't sit still, he's all over the place.

Does my child have ADHD?

### Education staff suggest...

"With **Robbie** I always use his name to make sure I have his attention. I use short, simple instructions and support them with demonstration when necessary. He really needs to physically move between tasks, so I get him to do things like collect the jotters. I have set up a work station for him and he can recognise when to use it, when he needs to focus on his work."

"One of the occupational therapists explained to me that some of the learners who appear to be fidgeting all the time and don't sit still might actually be using the movement to help them concentrate. One boy in my class now uses a sit-and-move cushion. The slight movement that this gives helps keep him focussed. He also has a bit of blu-tack on his desk which he can squeeze between his fingers when he needs to concentrate - he chooses when to use it - it seems to work."

"With **Aleksy** I have been careful with where he sits - away from the windows and door, close to my desk and with learners who are not easily distracted. I keep tasks for him short and he has a checklist on his table that he can cross off as he completes each short section of a bigger piece of work. It's early days, Aleksey still fidgets but at least he doesn't shout now and he seems to be more engaged in his work."

## ATTENTION AND CONCENTRATION SKILLS SUGGESTED SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES



### Modifications to the Learning Environment

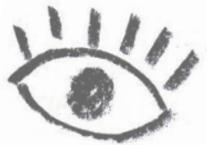
- ◊ Seating arrangements and positioning in class e.g. near teacher to engage attention, away from distracting peers, windows and doors
- ◊ Reduce noise and distractions during lessons
- ◊ Individual workstations for focussed work
- ◊ Sensory supports e.g. use of agreed fidgets
- ◊ Colour coding e.g. to highlight information
- ◊ Visual timetable to highlight times for focussed concentration and times for breaks
- ◊ Demonstration of tasks to encourage attention
- ◊ Simplify language used
- ◊ Written language to support auditory information e.g. tick lists for completion of tasks
- ◊ Visual cues e.g. to gain attention
- ◊ Auditory cues e.g. to redirect attention
- ◊ Breakdown tasks into manageable chunks
- ◊ Information and communication technology (ICT) e.g. interactive whiteboard to engage and maintain attention
- ◊ Collaborate with parents/carer

### Establishing Structures and Routines

- ◊ Organised and planned approach e.g. identify times when the learner is most focussed to inform the structure of the day
- ◊ Structured day to promote routines
- ◊ Short tasks to encourage completion
- ◊ Regular movement breaks between activities
- ◊ Repetition e.g. of instructions to ensure understanding
- ◊ Engage in listening and talking activities and provide opportunities for turn-taking
- ◊ Peer supports e.g. to keep learner on task
- ◊ Checklists for organisation and completion of tasks
- ◊ Routinely supporting the learner to be aware of and adapt their own 'self regulation'
- ◊ Routinely provide meaningful roles for the learner

### Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- ◊ Use learner's name to gain/redirect attention
- ◊ Use experiential or active learning to add collaborative fun to learning
- ◊ Use a variety of tasks to engage interest
- ◊ Utilise learner interest when developing tasks
- ◊ Use personalised support e.g. individualised comments or prompts to support tasks
- ◊ Give individualised attention
- ◊ Notice and acknowledge efforts maintain focus on a task
- ◊ Notice and acknowledge effort not just success
- ◊ Develop positive peer feedback
- ◊ Gradually extend targets and expectations



## ATTENTION AND CONCENTRATION SKILLS

SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES  
PLANNING PAGE

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Summary of concerns from CPS:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

### Plan (What, How, Who, When):

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

### Most successful strategies used:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

### Outcome:

- 
- 
- 
- 

### Strategies to implement or use more consistently:

- 
- 
- 
- 

### Next steps:

- 
- 
- 
-

## ORGANISATIONAL & PLANNING SKILLS

"James misses out on some learning experiences as he cannot get himself organised. His desk is always untidy, he never has a pencil and he is always losing things! He seems very capable of the work but sometimes does not succeed.

I think this is because at times he finds it hard to follow instructions, or to remember what I have asked him to do. He needs visual and verbal prompts to remind him what he is supposed to be doing and where he is supposed to be."

"Sabina is distressed at the start of each day and finds it hard to leave her Mum. She can often be tearful. Each morning she is expected to take her coat off and hang it on the correct peg, change into her indoor shoes, put her lunch box on the trolley, return her reading book to the correct tray and then find her seat in the classroom. She always gets muddled with doing this and invariably puts her lunch box or reading book in the wrong place."

Learners may need support with organising themselves and their environment, planning their time and activities and logically sequencing their thoughts to address problems.





### ORGANISATIONAL & PLANNING SKILLS

#### Principle

Supporting development of organisational and planning skills using techniques and resources tailored to learners' individual needs.

- Consistent layout and organisation of the learning environment
- Provide opportunities for problem solving and utilise resources to help structure tasks and routines
- Ensure that organisational success is achievable

#### Parents say...

She's always losing things.

He never wants to do homework.

He can't find his books, he always leaves them somewhere.

She leaves things to the last minute.

If I don't tidy her schoolbag for her it's a disaster.

#### Education staff suggest...

"**Sabina** found the start of the day overwhelming. I have tried to make it more manageable by organising a 'planning buddy'. This is an older learner who helps her change her shoes and organise herself with the other tasks. I have introduced a visual timetable with photographs of the things she has to do which she ticks off as she completes them. She is much happier and more settled in the class but continues to require this on-going support at the moment."

"Remembering homework was always a problem for **Seb**, but it's better since I put in simple strategies - things like giving it out at the same time on the same day; making sure that he's written it down correctly and understands what is required; and formalising peer support so that he has someone to ask if he's not sure."

"**James**'s parents and I work together to make sure he is as organised as possible in school. We introduced a checklist and timetable in his bag and on his bedroom wall. I am clear about what is expected of the class each day and use a visual timetable to support this. James also has his own list of activities which he can check off, which helps him to focus and gives him a sense of achievement. I try to sit him next to a learner who has good organisational skills and encourage him to use the central desk tidy."

## Modifications to the Learning Environment

- ◆ Organise and de-clutter workspace e.g. use of central desk tidies and/or start and finish trays
- ◆ Clear labelling and consistent positioning of resources
- ◆ Colour coding e.g. to identify specific topics
- ◆ Daily or weekly planning sheets
- ◆ Whole class checklists
- ◆ Good role models
- ◆ Individual workstation to support organisation
- ◆ Simplify and shorten instructions
- ◆ Break down tasks
- ◆ Demonstration
- ◆ Visual mapping of processes and ideas
- ◆ Give thinking time
- ◆ Clear learning outcomes
- ◆ Clear physical boundaries
- ◆ ICT e.g. specific software, tablets or phones to support organisation
- ◆ Collaborate with parents/carer

## ORGANISATIONAL & PLANNING SKILLS SUGGESTED SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES

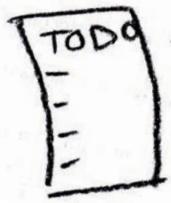


### Establishing Structures and Routines

- ◆ Organise and plan activities e.g. consistent day for homework
- ◆ Structure day to encourage predictability
- ◆ Visual timetables for use both at school and at home to support organisation
- ◆ Personal checklists e.g. tick lists for completion of steps in a task
- ◆ Clear and organised worksheets or Templates
- ◆ Auditory or visual prompts for beginning and end of tasks and for transitions e.g. timers
- ◆ Peer supports e.g. for task reminders
- ◆ Regular breaks
- ◆ Practise use of strategies until routine
- ◆ Provide regular opportunities to practise problem solving
- ◆ Use home/school diary for reminders
- ◆ Homework clubs / consider reducing homework
- ◆ Consider a 'soft start' to the day

### Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- ◆ Encourage learner selection and use of organisational prompts e.g. key-ring prompts or checklists
- ◆ Use backward chaining to allow learner to experience success - break down task and teach steps in reverse order
- ◆ Give regular feedback and acknowledgment of effort
- ◆ Give individualised attention e.g. personalised comments or prompts to support tasks
- ◆ Utilise multi-sensory approaches to engage interest and capitalise on preferred ways of learning
- ◆ Give feedback on effective problem solving
- ◆ Ensure achievable goals
- ◆ Identify learner interests and use these to personalise tasks
- ◆ Notice and acknowledge effort not just success
- ◆ Develop positive peer feedback
- ◆ Gradually extend targets and expectations



## ORGANISATIONAL & PLANNING SKILLS

### SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES PLANNING PAGE

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Summary of concerns from CPS:

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#### Plan (What, How, Who, When):

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#### Most successful strategies used:

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#### Outcome:

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#### Strategies to implement or use more consistently:

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#### Next steps:

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## POSTURE & MOBILITY (GROSS MOTOR) SKILLS



"**Lachlan** just can't sit up straight and still like the other learners in the class. He is either almost lying over his desk or he's rocking on his chair and continually moving - it is so distracting and annoying for me and the other learners in the class. When I ask him to sit up or sit still he will for a few minutes and then he starts again."

"**Vikram** has some stiffness in his legs which makes his walking slow and unsteady and he often falls. His movements are uncoordinated and he really can't run or throw and catch a ball like the other pupils. He told me that sport is his favourite thing but it can be hard to include him in PE."

Learners may need support with moving around the class or school, sitting or standing still during class activities or coordinating themselves in physical education (PE).





### POSTURE & MOBILITY (GROSS MOTOR) SKILLS

#### Principle

Facilitating learners to develop age appropriate or compensatory posture and stability skills through classroom tasks and environmental modification.

- Set up environment, utilising additional physical and/or sensory supports as required, to ensure optimal posture and mobility
- Implement programmes specifically designed to support movement skills
- Provide opportunities for successful participation in physical activities within the school and school trips

#### Parents say...

He's very clumsy.

He can't sit still.

She's uncoordinated and bumps into things a lot.

She just can't keep up with her friends.

He avoids physical play, prefers the computer.

#### Education staff suggest...

"Making sure that **Lachlan's** chair and desk were the correct height made a difference - and also helping him to pull his chair right in to the desk. An OT colleague suggested trying a sit-and-move cushion - what a difference it's made. She explained that some children need to move to know where their bodies are and that they can't sit still without really concentrating. The cushion certainly helps - it allows him to get the gentle movement he needs without being distracting - and I can see that he is listening to me. Setting physical boundaries for all the class, such as including carpet spots to sit on during floor time, has really helped."

"With **Lara** when we are working on throwing and catching I always partner her with someone who has good skills and is also quite patient. Breaking the task down and getting her to talk through the stages also helps. I use a range of different types of balls - larger soft balls and balloons allow her more time to organise herself for catching."

"I arranged a meeting with **Vikram**, his mum, the PE teacher and physio. We agreed a few changes to activities so that he now joins in with PE. For example I 'zone' the gym for running activities with only a small number of learners in each part, so that he is less likely to get knocked over. There are occasionally activities that he can't do but I allocate roles to individuals e.g. referee or team manager, so that he is included. I have given the family details of the disability sports coordinator and they will look into competitive sporting opportunities for him."

## POSTURE & MOBILITY (GROSS MOTOR) SKILLS SUGGESTED SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES



### Modifications to the Learning Environment

- ◆ Seating arrangements and positioning in class e.g. to avoid turning to see the whiteboard
- ◆ Hands-on support to facilitate posture or movement e.g. to assist sitting correctly in seat
- ◆ Suitable furniture e.g. correct height of chair to allow feet flat on the floor with hips and knees at right angles
- ◆ Clear physical boundaries e.g. use a carpet square to identify sitting space
- ◆ Physical supports, equipment, aids and adaptations e.g. seated area in playground
- ◆ Sensory supports e.g. sit-and-move cushions
- ◆ Visual cues and supports e.g. sitting posture 'rules'
- ◆ Auditory cues and supports e.g. "that's nice straight sitting"
- ◆ Additional verbal instructions to support movement
- ◆ Demonstrate desired movement e.g. balance
- ◆ Task breakdown e.g. how to kick a ball
- ◆ Modify task specific to physical ability
- ◆ Collaborate with parents/carer

### Establishing Structures and Routines

- ◆ Verbal rehearsal e.g. talking through tasks in PE prior to doing them
- ◆ Practise recommended movement skills
- ◆ Regular specialist groups to develop movement skills
- ◆ Movement breaks e.g. regular change of position
- ◆ Routine PE specialist time
- ◆ Ensure routine use of recommended specialist equipment e.g. sit-and-move cushion
- ◆ Allow extra time for completion of movement tasks
- ◆ Ensure safety e.g. on stairs or PE equipment
- ◆ Ensure that school events and outings are accessible
- ◆ Use routine peer support for specific activities

### Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- ◆ Adapt tasks to ensure success e.g. use larger ball for football
- ◆ Ensure positive experience in PE e.g. sensitively assign roles in group work
- ◆ Give regular feedback and acknowledgment of effort
- ◆ Use personalised support e.g. individualised comments or prompts to support tasks
- ◆ Give individualised attention
- ◆ Give encouragement
- ◆ Notice and acknowledge effort not just success
- ◆ Identify opportunities for learner to participate in sporting interests e.g. specialist clubs
- ◆ Normalise and value diversity e.g. Paralympic success and opportunities for competitive sport
- ◆ Develop positive peer feedback
- ◆ Gradually extend targets and expectations



## POSTURE & MOBILITY (GROSS MOTOR) SKILLS

SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES  
PLANNING PAGE

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Summary of concerns from CPS:

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### Plan (What, How, Who, When):

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### Most successful strategies used:

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### Outcome:

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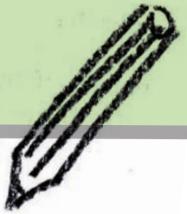
### Strategies to implement or use more consistently:

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### Next steps:

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## DEXTERITY & MANIPULATION (FINE MOTOR) SKILLS



"I first noticed that **Katie** had difficulty with her fine motor skills... things like doing buttons up, writing, cutting and colouring in. It was a big effort for her. When she was writing it was like her brain was working faster than her hand. So although she had good ideas she could not get them down on paper."

"**Lucja** enjoys most activities but does not get on with pen and paper. When talking she is fluent and her understanding seems good... but when she has to write something her ability level is not reflected and her confidence drops. She has a strange pencil grip which we are working on. She seems to do much better when we use the interactive whiteboard. Using different media keeps her focussed and makes the task more enjoyable and accessible for her."

Learners may need support with coordinating their hands to perform functional tasks such as dressing (e.g. fastening buttons), using learning materials and tools (e.g. pencils), or manipulating objects (e.g. toys).





## DEXTERITY & MANIPULATION (FINE MOTOR) SKILLS

### Principle

Develop dexterity and manipulation using clear instruction, task adaptation and environmental supports.

- Consider the learning environment and resources required to support dexterity and manipulation
- Provide clear instructions of the task and regular opportunity for practice
- Ensure tasks are adapted to provide opportunity to experience success

### Parents say...

He's messy and clumsy.

He can't fasten his shoe laces or zip his jacket.

She can't hold a pencil.

She still can't use a knife and fork together.

Do you think he has dyspraxia?

### Education staff suggest...

"For **Katie**... we use things like stencils for letters, different sizes and types of pencils and crayons and I've made specific worksheets for practice of letter formation - I make sure they are things that she can complete. She also attends a small skills group 3 times a week where they work on hand strength - things like manipulating putty, squeezing close pegs, scrunching paper etc. - she really enjoys it."

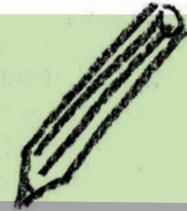
"As **Lucja** is in P7 we are now focussing on developing keyboard skills so that she can use ICT to keep up with peers in secondary school - she still struggles a bit but finds it an easier way to put ideas down on paper. I also give printed hand-outs or worksheets to minimise lengthy note taking."

"**Edward** struggles with using his hands for things like doing buttons and writing. We have tried using different pencil grips and found one which seemed to help, but he still tended to avoid writing tasks. I have recently set up a small group project where I have given him the role of project manager. He has really good ideas which he enjoys sharing with his peers and having them scribed. I have also provided a template to record bullet points from the project and he is now making more attempts to do some of the written work himself. He seems much happier and his self-esteem is being improved by the positive reinforcement he is receiving from his peers."

## Modifications to the Learning Environment

- ◆ Seating arrangements and positioning in class e.g. to ensure learner sits correctly positioned and orientated with chair pulled well into desk
- ◆ Suitable furniture e.g. correct height of chair/desk or angled writing board
- ◆ Physical supports, equipment, aids and adaptations e.g. a range of different widths, weights and textures of pens/pencils/crayons, or a chunky stylus for use with a tablet.
- ◆ Hand over hand support e.g. guide the learner's hands while they fasten their jacket
- ◆ Tactile cues and supports e.g. tracing letters in sand
- ◆ Demonstration e.g. how to catch a ball
- ◆ Break tasks down
- ◆ Additional verbal instructions to support task e.g. talk through tying their lace as they do it
- ◆ Visual cues and supports e.g. use stencils to aid letter formation
- ◆ Modify tasks specific to learner's ability
- ◆ Offer compensatory methods e.g. use of laptop or scribing
- ◆ Collaborate with parents/carers

## DEXTERITY & MANIPULATION (FINE MOTOR) SKILLS SUGGESTED SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES



### Establishing Structures and Routines

- ◆ Verbal rehearsal e.g. talking through how to tie shoe laces prior to doing so
- ◆ Practise desired skills with regular monitoring
- ◆ Regular specialist groups to develop dexterity and manipulation skills
- ◆ Templates e.g. to reduce the volume of written work required
- ◆ Allow extra time for completion of tasks
- ◆ Reduce the amount of work required
- ◆ Handwriting programmes
- ◆ Movement breaks e.g. 'warm up' of hands by pushing them together prior to activity
- ◆ Use routine peer support for specific activities

### Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- ◆ Adapt tasks to ensure success e.g. allow learner to sit down when putting on their coat
- ◆ Use backward chaining to allow learner to experience success
- ◆ Use multisensory approaches to engage interest e.g. modelling with putty
- ◆ Use personalised support e.g. individualised comments or prompts to support tasks
- ◆ Give individualised attention
- ◆ Give regular feedback and acknowledgment of effort
- ◆ Give general encouragement
- ◆ Notice and acknowledge effort not just success
- ◆ Give learners options for presenting homework tasks using different media e.g. a mind map of a story, rather than an essay
- ◆ Use ICT to engage and sustain interest
- ◆ Develop positive peer reporting
- ◆ Gradually extend targets and expectations



## DEXTERITY & MANIPULATION (FINE MOTOR) SKILLS

SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES  
PLANNING PAGE

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Summary of concerns from CPS:

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### Most successful strategies used:

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### Strategies to implement or use more consistently:

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### Plan (What, How, Who, When):

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### Outcome:

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### Next steps:

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# SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS



I am really struggling to support **Billy** just now, he seems angry a lot of the time and he is displaying distressed behaviour. Strategies that work one day don't seem to work the next, it's really difficult to predict what he is going to do in a situation. I know things are difficult at home right now, and that might be affecting him. He struggles to control his emotions. Sometimes he hits out at other children and at other times he withdraws and refuses to engage."

**Karen** is another learner I am worried about. She's very quiet in class, in fact too quiet. She seems anxious a lot of the time and rarely interacts with myself or her peers. I've noticed that she seems pleased when I quietly comment on something she's doing well."

Learners may need support with their interpersonal relationships with peers and adults. They may have difficulty recognising and understanding emotions and behaviour in themselves and others. They often have difficulty forming or maintaining friendships and may lack confidence.





### SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

#### Principle

Supporting learners to interact positively and aiming to ensure their social, emotional and relationship needs are recognised and met.

- Develop a trusting relationship between key adults and the child
- Adults recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication
- Adopt a consistent, calm, non-judgemental approach
- Adults convey 'I am here to help and support you'
- Use positive strategies to support the development of social understanding and emotional regulation
- Focus on the learner's strengths and positive aspects of behaviour and interactions

#### Parents say...

She's immature for her age.

Does he have a behaviour problem?

He doesn't seem to have any friends.

She doesn't listen, she's very defiant.

He's out of control, he has no boundaries.

#### Education staff suggest...

"With **Karen** I've changed the seating plan so that she is sitting with supportive peers. The class have just started paired reading with P1 learners - they each support a P1 learner with reading once a week, which she seems to enjoy. I've also arranged for her and another girl to be playground buddies for a learner in P2 who has additional support needs - she seems really motivated by this and quite confident in the role."

"I noticed that **Billy** struggles when moving between activities, so I introduced a individual visual timetable to support him with transitions and help him to better understand the structure of his day. I ensure that his tasks are developmentally appropriate and meaningful to him – so that he understands why he should do them. Billy loves dinosaurs so I ensure that he has time each day when activities are based around this interest. I have introduced a home-school diary to support communication with his parents."

## SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS SUGGESTED SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES



### Modifications to the Learning Environment

- ◆ Establish and use safe/modified space (the learner can choose to go to this space)
- ◆ Adult regulates their own emotions
- ◆ Adults convey 'I am here to help and support you'
- ◆ Shorten instructions to aid understanding
- ◆ Clearly display class expectations with visual supports
- ◆ Check learners understand expectations
- ◆ Establish positive relationships and trust
- ◆ Normalise and value diversity
- ◆ Break down situations that cause anxiety into small steps
- ◆ Anticipate triggers e.g. use 'ABC'
- ◆ Respond early and use de-escalation tools e.g. proximity, distraction, redirection
- ◆ Reframe incidents
- ◆ Planned ignoring of unwanted behaviour (do not ignore the learner)
- ◆ Plan opportunities for positive interaction
- ◆ Behaviours that are expected are explicitly named and demonstrated e.g. sharing materials
- ◆ Accept and use non-verbal cues
- ◆ Reflect on teaching approaches
- ◆ Provide quiet areas/time
- ◆ Provide good role models (peers and adults)
- ◆ Wonder aloud
- ◆ Create a nurturing environment
- ◆ Identify two key adults
- ◆ Collaborate with parents/carers

### Establishing Structures and Routines

- ◆ Use visual timetable to support understanding of predictable routines and reduce anxiety
- ◆ Use visual cues to support understanding of changes to routines to reduce anxiety
- ◆ Peer supports
- ◆ Use Social Stories
- ◆ Use prompts e.g., Zones of Regulation
- ◆ Traffic light system
- ◆ Regularly engage in listening and talking activities and provide opportunities for turn-taking
- ◆ Consider in school programmes to support social and emotional development
- ◆ Routine emotional regulation activities
- ◆ Learners have visual clues they can use if they are struggling
- ◆ Routines are established for use of safe space
- ◆ Ensure predictable logical consequences
- ◆ Use restorative language and conversations
- ◆ Build in calming activities e.g. calm box
- ◆ Use home/school diary
- ◆ Use a soft start to the day and at transitions
- ◆ Organise a peer befriender for the playground
- ◆ Consider nurturing approaches

### Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- ◆ Practice and prepare for change and/or new experiences
- ◆ Foster sense of responsibility for actions
- ◆ Use facilitated playground activities to encourage peer interaction
- ◆ Use personalised support e.g. individualised comments or prompts to support tasks
- ◆ Give individualised attention
- ◆ Specific and low key noticing of what is going well
- ◆ Provide regular opportunities to engage in interests or favoured activities. Take time to join the learner in these.
- ◆ Reward effort not just success
- ◆ Reflect on positive aspects of friendship
- ◆ Notice kindness and sharing
- ◆ Share achievements with parents/carers e.g. post a good-news postcard home
- ◆ Note and acknowledge positive acts and behaviours
- ◆ Build on interests, strengths and achievements
- ◆ Develop positive peer feedback
- ◆ Gradually extend targets and expectations
- ◆ Use the language of positive consequences e.g. point out the positive outcome when you do this



## SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

### SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES PLANNING PAGE

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Summary of concerns from CPS:

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#### Plan (What, How, Who, When):

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#### Most successful strategies used:

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#### Outcome:

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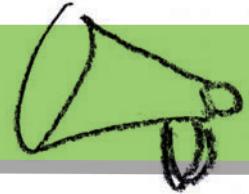
#### Strategies to implement or use more consistently:

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#### Next steps:

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# VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS



"John loves to talk, but he talks too much and usually only about things that he's interested in... which are not always relevant or appropriate. He doesn't seem to notice when the other kids have stopped listening. He has a few friends in the school but generally is quite a loner. He finds it hard to pick up on playground games and sometimes gets teased...He likes order and routine."

"Jasveen has a problem with her speech and language. Her words sound unclear and she is difficult to understand, especially if I don't know the context. She has problems with ordering words correctly in sentences and her use of grammar. English is an additional language for her and she is experiencing similar difficulties in her first language according to her Mum. Her academic and social skills are starting to be affected."

Learners may need support with expressive and/or receptive language, e.g. pronunciation, use of vocabulary, grammar, fluency, expression of thoughts and ideas, following instructions and understanding spoken language. Some may require support with their social understanding of language (e.g. facial expression, tone etc.) across different situations and relationships. English may be an additional language.





## VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

### Principle

Awareness and modification of teacher's own communicative style and provision of opportunities for talking, listening and interacting, in order to facilitate learners' communication.

- Model effective communication and tailor language complexity to meet learners' differing abilities
- Provide opportunities and resources to develop communication
- Permit and encourage a variety of communication methods

### Parents say...

We understand her, other people don't.

She speaks at home but stays silent in the class.

I have to think about how I explain things.

Do you think he has autism?

He won't answer in class because he's frightened of getting stuck on his words.

### Education staff suggest...

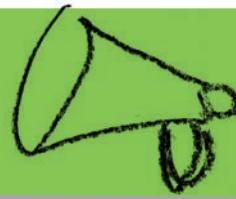
"I keep things in the classroom very visual for **John** so that he does not have to rely purely on language. I make use of non-verbal cues like body language and gesture. Wherever possible I reduce the complexity of the language that I use. This also helps others in the class who have language needs, including those who have English as an additional language. Giving some extra thinking time means John has time to decide what he wants to say and answer at the same time as the rest of the class."

"With **Ben** I have to try to be very clear with my use of language and repeat instructions to ensure he has understood... and support this with visual prompts to ensure there is no ambiguity. We have a system of facilitated playground activities, utilising peer support, to encourage his interaction during break and lunch times."

"I really have to take time to tune into **Jasveen**. I've made sure that she is sitting beside a group of learners who are very supportive and take time to listen to her - one of them also speaks her first language. She attends a small skills group in the school which allows her to practice her language skills with a small supportive group - she seems to enjoy going to it. I also try to adapt some of the lessons so that the learners can present their work in a variety of forms - so she can use ICT to help with presenting her work."

## VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

### SKILLS SUGGESTED SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES



#### Modifications to the Learning Environment

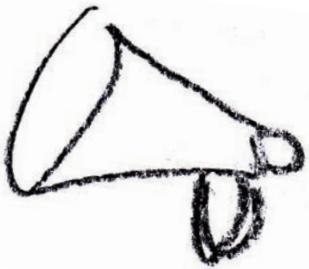
- ◆ Arrangement of class set up to promote good interaction
- ◆ Tune in to learner
- ◆ Simplify and shorten instructions (say less)
- ◆ Reduce rate and complexity of spoken language
- ◆ Stress key words, target sounds, grammatical constructions
- ◆ Use visual cues and supports
- ◆ Use auditory cues and supports e.g. use learner's name at start of sentence
- ◆ Supplement verbal with non-verbal information e.g. use key word signing systems
- ◆ Use modelling e.g. of desired use of a word
- ◆ Allow additional response time/thinking time
- ◆ Cue in sound or sentence
- ◆ Accept and use non-verbal cues
- ◆ Use scaffolding
- ◆ Use ICT to augment communication
- ◆ Use personal or communication passports
- ◆ Collaborate with parents/carers

#### Establishing Structures and Routines

- ◆ Use visual timetable to support understanding of predictable routines and reduce anxiety
- ◆ Use visual cues to support understanding of changes to routines to reduce anxiety
- ◆ Repeat instructions i.e. exact or modified
- ◆ Regularly check the learner's understanding
- ◆ Provide talking and listening opportunities
- ◆ Use turn taking games
- ◆ Use supports for turn taking
- ◆ Provide opportunities for show and tell
- ◆ Regularly engage in listening, talking and turn-taking
- ◆ Use visualisation and verbalisation
- ◆ Regular specialist groups to develop communication
- ◆ Regular planned breaks throughout the day when required
- ◆ Agree a strategy for the learner to indicate when they require support
- ◆ Use a home-school diary
- ◆ Organise a peer befriender for the playground

#### Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- ◆ Give regular feedback and acknowledgment of effort
- ◆ Give general encouragement for communication
- ◆ Use learner's interests when designing tasks
- ◆ Use personalised support e.g. individualised comments or prompts to support tasks
- ◆ Give individualised attention
- ◆ Use facilitated playground activities to encourage peer interaction
- ◆ Notice and acknowledge effort not just success
- ◆ Use experiential or active learning to add variety and fun to learning
- ◆ Facilitate use of first language
- ◆ Develop positive peer feedback
- ◆ Gradually extend targets and expectations
- ◆ Practise and prepare for change and/or new experiences



## VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SUPPORTS AND STRATEGIES  
PLANNING PAGE

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Plan (What, How, Who, When):

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### Outcome:

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### Strategies to implement or use more consistently:

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## DISCUSSION POINTS

**These apply to all of the skills areas within this section.**

- Considering the supports and strategies which have been listed in this section, which do you find most useful and/or effective?
- Provide expanded examples of how each of the supports and strategies could be implemented in practice - do your colleagues use these in the same way?
- From your own experience and discussions with colleagues, are there any additional supports or strategies that you could add to these lists?
- How do you evidence the implementation of supports and strategies that you are using so that this information can be usefully shared with colleagues?
- How can you ensure that supports and strategies which are useful and routinely used with a learner are shared at times of transition and implemented consistently?
- Considering learners in your class who might need support managing/regulating themselves at particular times, can you identify any possible underlying causes or reasons for this which might affect the way you support them?
- A 'solution focussed' approach can sometimes be helpful for particularly challenging situations or behaviours. This is where you focus on times when things went well and try to identify the reasons for this. The following questions might be helpful:
  - What was different about this situation?
  - What did you do differently that might have made a difference e.g. how you organised the classroom?
  - Was anyone else involved who might have changed the social dynamics?
  - Was there anything else influencing the situation e.g. learner interest in the activity?
  - Could you replicate the situation to see if the outcome was as good and then use this as routine practice?



- What could you do to prepare for a learner with additional support needs who is coming into your class? For example:
  - Meet and share information with the previous teacher and with the parents/carers to plan for transitions.
  - Observe the learner in their previous class (or their previous school) and meet them if possible.
  - Discuss the learner's needs with other school staff or colleagues from partner services or agencies who are involved.
  - Discuss with other staff who have experience of this particular area of need and identify resources.
  - Research the evidence based practice for any identified learner needs and take part in related professional learning.
  - Observe or shadow the support for learning teacher or another more experienced teacher when interacting with a similar learner.
  - Observe or shadow a therapist or colleague from another service or agency interacting with a similar learner.
  - Find out information regarding the learner's home circumstances, including their home language and culture.
- What else would be helpful in enabling you to meet a learner's needs once they are in your class (apart from the specific supports and strategies listed)? For example:
  - Ensure opportunities for discussion with colleagues within the school and with partner services and agencies if required.
  - Investigate and discuss with colleagues other specialist resources that are available .
  - Collaborate regularly with parents/carers to help understand the home situation, their concerns and perspective of the learner's needs, to set joint goals and to share any advice about effective supports and strategies.
- Are you aware of and up to date with, the current legislation, policies and guidelines surrounding learners with additional support needs?
  - Which of the legislative documents, policies or guidelines do you feel are most relevant to your practice?
  - How could this resource be used to help meet the aims and objectives of these?





# 5 EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION



## This section contains:

- Factors considered important by education staff in supporting effective collaboration.
- Working with parents/ carers - points to consider when engaging parents/ carers as partners.
- Working with partner services and agencies.
- Discussion points focussed on your role in supporting effective collaboration.

### EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION



All professionals understand the primary importance of effective collaboration. This section examines the factors which education staff described as being important for supporting collaboration in schools. The following were mentioned as being important in supporting effective collaboration. These key factors could be applied to collaborative working with any partner service or agency or member of the school team:

- Access to key personnel, knowledge of each other's roles and responsibilities, and understanding of local guidance and school policies.
- Communication, in particular the effectiveness of a reciprocal flow of information, was identified as highly important. Education staff said that effective collaboration was characterised by direct communication.
- Communication (or its absence) also repeatedly emerged as a prominent feature of awareness, understanding and appreciation of roles and responsibilities.
- In schools, the context of the teacher and the pressures they are under should be considered. Being mindful of these pressures, time for collaboration should be allocated proportionately.
- Education staff find that information and support is most useful when it can be applied within the whole class context.
- Effective collaboration was viewed as most productive when groups and individuals responsible for planning worked together, had respect for each other and reflected on their customary practices.



**Practices which education staff have identified as being supportive of collaboration are illustrated on the following page.**

Many of these practices also apply equally to collaborative working with parents/carers.

What are your views on these - are they reflective of your own experience?

EDUCATION  
STAFF REPORTED  
THAT EFFECTIVE  
COLLABORATION IS  
CHARACTERISED BY:



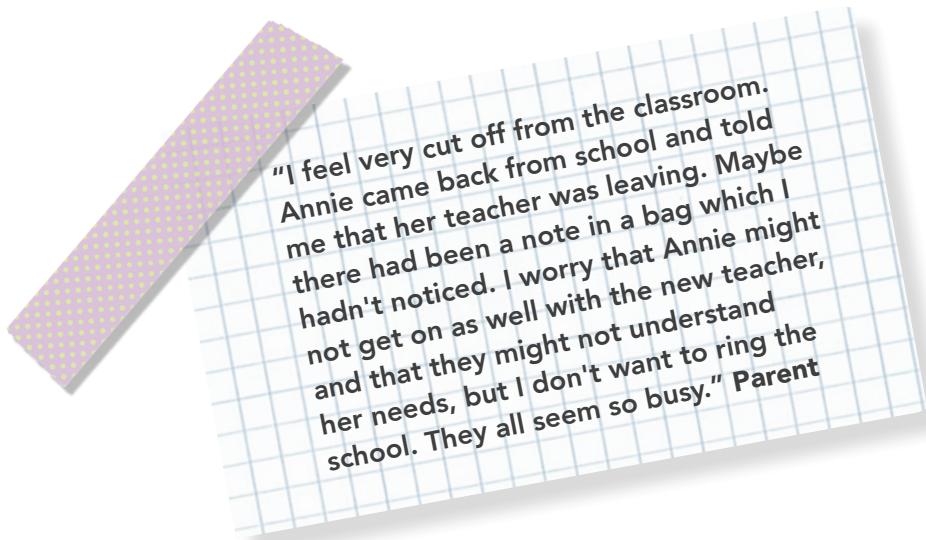
## EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION



Collaborative working with partner services and agencies, and parents/carers is normally the responsibility of a key member of staff.

Supporting learners requires collaborative working at many different levels e.g. between the school leadership team and the class teacher; between the class teacher and any pupil support assistant (PSA) working in the class; between the class teacher and the parents/carers; and often between the class teacher (and the PSA) and partner services and agencies.

In order to support this collaboration, clear lines of communication, and agreement of roles and responsibilities need to be in place. This together with a culture which respects and values the perspectives and contributions of everyone in the team (school leadership, support for learning teacher, class teacher, PSA, parents/carers, partner services and agencies, and the learner) helps lead to effective collaboration.



"I feel very cut off from the classroom. Annie came back from school and told me that her teacher was leaving. Maybe there had been a note in a bag which I hadn't noticed. I worry that Annie might not get on as well with the new teacher, and that they might not understand her needs, but I don't want to ring the school. They all seem so busy." Parent

### Collaboration during transitions

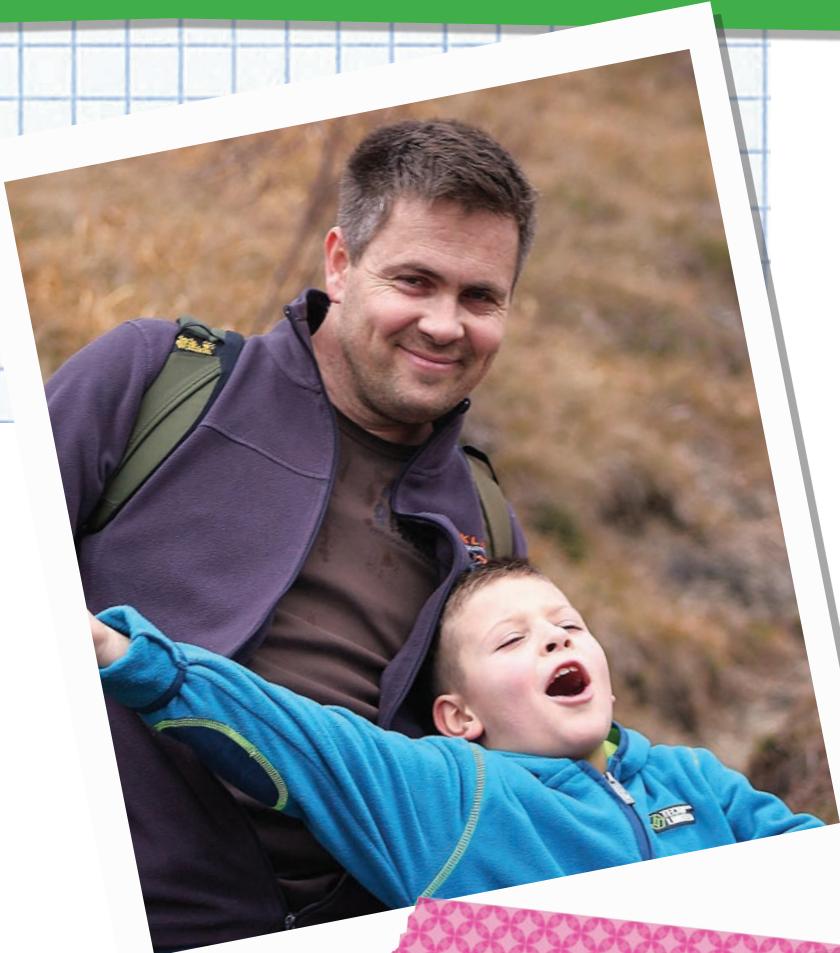
Effective collaboration is particularly important during times of transition. For learners with additional support needs, transition within class (e.g. change of teacher), between classes and particularly between schools requires careful management to ensure that all support information is passed on effectively.

Good practice sets out clear timescales for learners with additional support needs who require support when transitioning between schools. It states that planning should begin one year in advance and that information should be shared no later than six months before transition takes place from primary to secondary school. For learners moving into primary one, planning should begin at least six months prior to transition. This process is coordinated by a member of the school leadership team who identifies learners who may require support during transition, liaises with the parents/carers and with their permission will gather and share the information with the receiving school.

Most learners do not need this enhanced level of support during transitions. However, occasionally there are learners without identified additional support needs who also find transition between schools particularly stressful. It can be helpful to highlight these learners to the receiving school/teacher so that strategies can be put in place to support them at this time.

During these times, working closely with parents/carers is crucial to ensure effective transitions. The following section provides suggestions for working effectively with parents and carers.

## WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS



This section contains suggestions for:

- Working with parents and carers in partnership.
- Engaging parents and carers.
- Communicating with parents and carers.
- Communication Postcards.

### PARENTS/CARERS AS PARTNERS



Parents/carers are often looking for ways to be more actively involved with school to support their child's education. It is known that when schools engage well with parents/carers, outcomes for learners both at school and at home are improved. Regular sharing of information can help support early identification of concerns and lead to implementation of early intervention.

Not all parents/carers feel comfortable in this partnership role for a variety of reasons. For example:

- Parents/carers may have low levels of literacy and/or not be used to having their views heard or respected.
- Parents/carers may have had previous negative experiences of engaging with school and be reluctant to be involved.
- Parents/carers may have difficulty prioritising time to attend meetings perhaps due to other caring responsibilities.
- Parents/carers may have English as an additional language or come from a country that has different educational systems and expectations.

Irrespective of the possible barriers, it is crucial that education staff and schools make every effort to engage parents/carers in order to secure the best outcomes for learners.

Working in partnership is especially important when learners have additional support needs, as parents/carers bring a valued insight into understanding how these additional needs might impact on the learner in school and at home and the wider implications for the family.

Including parents/carers as respected and valued partners in all aspects of a learner's education can also help ensure that successful strategies are shared and implemented consistently at school and home, where possible.

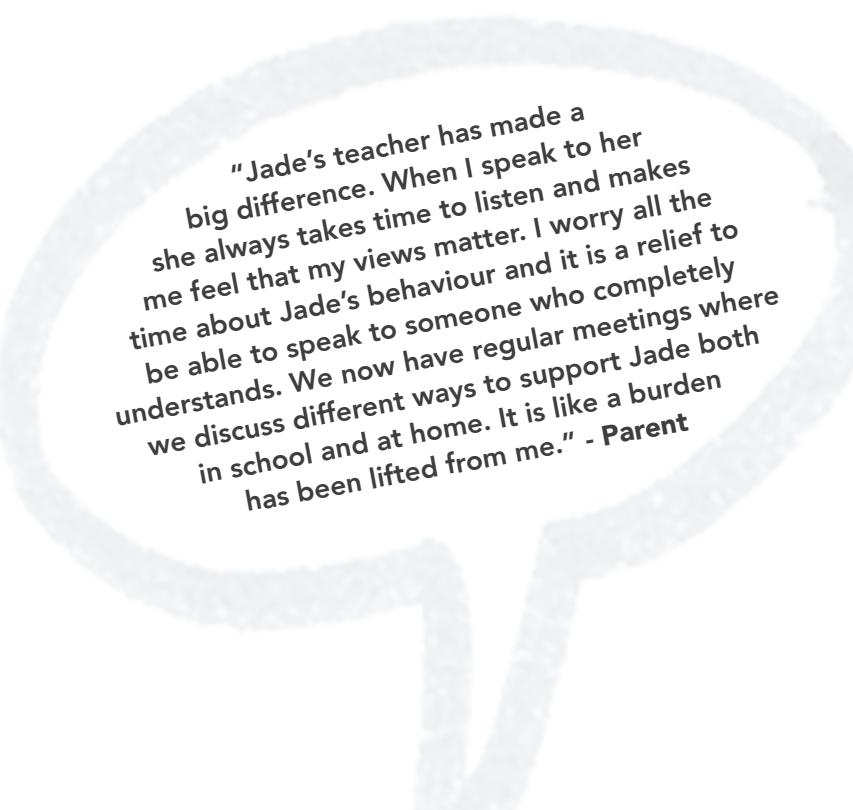
This shared understanding of strategies to support the learner's environment (physical and social) and the routines and structures around them both in school and at home, has been shown to be beneficial in improving outcomes.

Additionally parents/carers can provide insight into a learner's feelings about school and their abilities, their likes, dislikes, interests and hobbies, language and culture, all of which are invaluable when trying to tap into the learner's motivation.

In view of these benefits, good practice aims to strengthen links between home and school, encouraging parents/carers to be active partners in the education process.



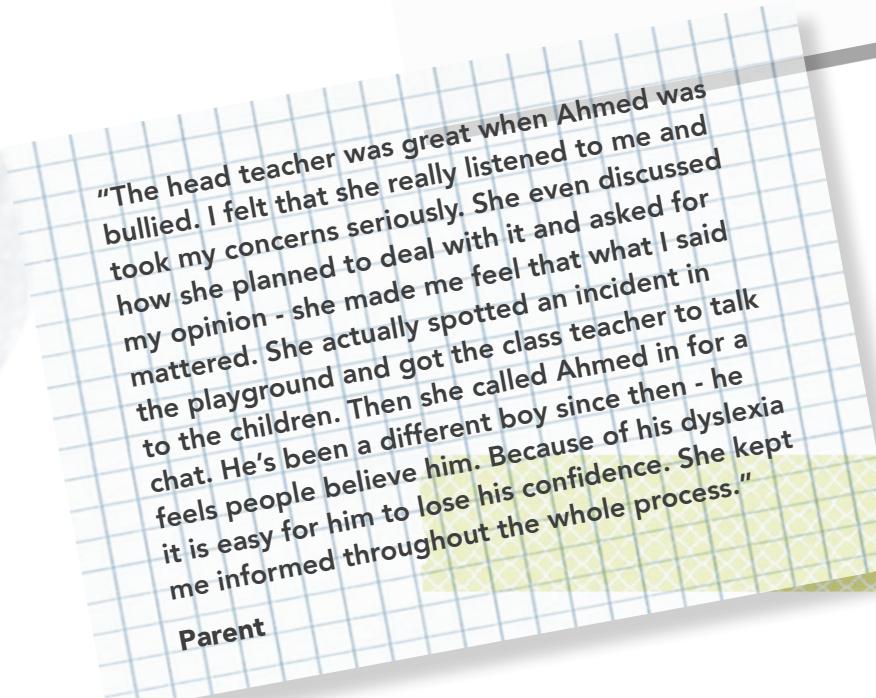
## WORKING WITH PARENTS/CARERS IN PARTNERSHIP



"Jade's teacher has made a big difference. When I speak to her she always takes time to listen and makes me feel that my views matter. I worry all the time about Jade's behaviour and it is a relief to be able to speak to someone who completely understands. We now have regular meetings where we discuss different ways to support Jade both in school and at home. It is like a burden has been lifted from me." - Parent

Working in partnership involves listening to, acknowledging and valuing the contributions that parents/carers make with regard to:

- Sharing information about the learner's abilities and needs and how these impact on home life and education.
- Setting and prioritising shared meaningful targets and goals.
- Sharing and advising on the suitability of specific strategies for use both in school and at home which support the environment (physical and social), structures and routines, motivation and skills.



"The head teacher was great when Ahmed was bullied. I felt that she really listened to me and took my concerns seriously. She even discussed how she planned to deal with it and asked for my opinion - she made me feel that what I said mattered. She actually spotted an incident in the playground and got the class teacher to talk to the children. Then she called Ahmed in for a chat. He's been a different boy since then - he feels people believe him. Because of his dyslexia it is easy for him to lose his confidence. She kept me informed throughout the whole process."

Parent

## ENGAGING PARENTS/CARERS



### Be welcoming, affirming and respectful during all communication.

- Ensure the parents/carers know that they are crucial to their child's progress and that the best outcomes are achieved through partnership working.
- Be sensitive to barriers that might exist e.g. some parents/carers may struggle with their own literacy, have English as an additional language (EAL) or feel their English is not 'good enough'. Try to provide solutions to address these barriers. For example:
  - Use face to face discussions or phone-calls home in addition to notes for parents/carers that you know struggle with literacy.
  - Provide notes translated into the home first language when required.
  - Ensure that parents/carers who have EAL are aware that the school will provide an interpreter for all meetings and discussions if required.
- Be considerate of social and cultural differences - develop avenues for parents/carers to share important aspects of their culture with the school. Provide support as required so that they gain an understanding of the local school systems and curriculum (e.g. translated school information sheets).
- Recognise and respect family needs - try to be aware of events in the family as a whole.
- Create opportunities (formal and informal) for parents/carers to be involved in the school e.g. class outings - make it clear that parents do not need a high level of literacy or English to be involved.
- For meetings, ensure parents/carers are aware that they can bring someone with them for support. Provide an agenda and a list of the names and roles of those who will be attending the meeting in advance. Consider arranging for parents/carers to be seated in the meeting room first, rather than walking into an unfamiliar room full of professionals.
- Consider parents'/carers' needs - ensure that they are aware of support that may be available for themselves e.g. adult literacy programmes, English for speakers of other languages courses, carer support etc.

## COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS/ CARERS



**Set up clear and agreed routes for two-way communication which are suitable for the parents/carers - ask parents/carers how they would prefer to share information e.g. face to face, phone, email, home/school diary or letter.**

- Acknowledge during discussions that you value and respect parents'/carers' contributions.
- Ensure that communication is jargon free and that important points are summarised and reiterated.
- Reinforce key points with written information e.g. use communication postcards to share information on specific strategies with parents/carers.
- Provide bilingual interpreters to assist non-English speaking parents/carers at meetings and ensure written information is translated if required.
- If possible arrange meetings at times to accommodate parents'/carers' lifestyle.

- Be aware of your own feelings, views and judgements during conversations.
- Be aware that parents'/carers' perspectives and expectations may be different from your own and that the home experience of the learner may be different from that at school.
- Involve parents/carers fully in all decisions and ensure you have their permission to share information with partner services and agencies when required.
- Ensure that parents/carers understand the selection of specific strategies and the expected outcome of using these.
- Ensure that parents/carers know who to contact if they need any information clarified.

# COMMUNICATION POSTCARDS

Communication postcards are a simple, easy-to-use way of sharing information about specific strategies which can be used to support a two-way flow of information. They are not intended to replace normal communication routes but to supplement these.

You can use them to encourage (or remind) parents/carers and the learner to try specific strategies at home which are successful in school.

You can use strategies from the Inclusive Classroom or Skills, Supports and Strategies sections or write your own. Provide as much or as little detail as you think is necessary, however it is helpful to minimise the volume of text and keep to key points.

Communication postcards can also be used by parents/carers to share information with school about strategies that they are using successfully at home, which could be tried at school.

When you send a postcard with advice on supports and strategies to the home, consider including a blank Home/School postcard to encourage the parents/carers to share useful strategies with the school.

Blank templates are available at the end of this section for you to photocopy and use as required - the back of the postcard contains a brief description of how it can be used.

Examples are available on the following page.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <h1>SCHOOL --&gt; HOME POSTCARD</h1> <p>Learners Name _____</p> <p><b>Something to try at home ...</b></p> <p>_____</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  <h1>HOME --&gt; SCHOOL POSTCARD</h1> <p>Parent/Guardian Name _____</p> <p><b>Something to try at school ...</b></p> <p>_____</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <p><b>This will help ...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attention and concentration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organisation and planning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Posture and mobility</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dexterity and manipulation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social and relationship skills</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal and non-verbal communication</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Learning Environment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Structures and Routines</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Motivation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## SCHOOL --&gt; HOME POSTCARD

Learners Name ROBBIE



## Something to try at home ...

Identify 15 minutes each evening at the same time when you switch off the TV and computer and sit listening to Robbie do his school reading

Let him know how much you enjoy listening to him read by giving him praise

## This will help ...

- Attention and concentration
- Organisation and planning
- Posture and mobility
- Dexterity and manipulation
- Social and relationship skills
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- The Learning Environment
- Structures and Routines
- Motivation
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## SCHOOL --&gt; HOME POSTCARD

Learners Name VIKRAM



## Something to try at home ...

Spend a short time each evening working on football skills with Vikram – roll a ball to him and get him to stop it with one foot before kicking it gently back to you

Help Vikram to identify and regularly attend one of the after-school activity clubs that he is interested in eg the football skills club on Wednesday nights

## This will help ...

- Attention and concentration
- Organisation and planning
- Posture and mobility
- Dexterity and manipulation
- Social and relationship skills
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- The Learning Environment
- Structures and Routines
- Motivation
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## SCHOOL --&gt; HOME POSTCARD

Learners Name JANE



## Something to try at home ...

Keep one copy of Jane's timetable in her school bag and also stick one on her bedroom wall

Help her to make a checklist of what she usually needs at school each day Encourage her to use the timetable and checklist to pack her bag each night in preparation for the next day

## This will help ...

- Attention and concentration
- Organisation and planning
- Posture and mobility
- Dexterity and manipulation
- Social and relationship skills
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- The Learning Environment
- Structures and Routines
- Motivation
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## SCHOOL --&gt; HOME POSTCARD

Learners Name LUCJA



## SCHOOL --&gt; HOME POSTCARD

Learners Name LUCJA

## Something to try at home ...

Gather together different widths and weights of crayons, pencils and pens into a box

Spend a short time each night drawing pictures with Lucja allowing her to try out the different colouring tools Encourage her by drawing different shapes for her to colour in

## This will help ...

- Attention and concentration
- Organisation and planning
- Posture and mobility
- Dexterity and manipulation
- Social and relationship skills
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- The Learning Environment
- Structures and Routines
- Motivation
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SCHOOL --> HOME POSTCARD

Learners Name



Something to try at home ...

- Attention and concentration
  - Organisation and planning
  - Posture and mobility
  - Dexterity and manipulation
  - Social and relationship skills
  - Verbal and non-verbal communication
  - The Learning Environment
  - Structures and Routines
  - Motivation

[HOME --> SCHOOL POSTCARD](#)

Learners Name



## Something we tried at home ..



SCHOOL --> HOME POSTCARD

On the other side of this postcard is an approach or strategy that we think might be helpful to try at home.

We have outlined a skill area that we think this will help with.

If possible, try this out at home over the next few weeks and let us know how you get on.

We have included a home-school postcard for you to send information back to us at school: either to let us know how you got on with this strategy, or to share approaches which you already use at home which might be helpful for us to use in the school. However you don't need to use this - you can always let us know through the usual systems e.g. home/school diary or meetings at school.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## The Class Team



[HOME](#) --> [SCHOOL POSTCARD](#)

The other side of this postcard can be completed and returned to school to let us know how you got on trying out our suggested approach or strategy at home.

Or you could use the postcard to tell us about any other approaches or strategies that you find useful at home which we could try in the class.

However you don't need to use this to share information - you can also use the usual systems of sharing information with us e.g. the home/school diary or meeting at school - we are always interested to hear your views and learn from your experience.

We look forward to hearing from you.

The Class Team



# SCHOOL --> HOME POSTCARD

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Something to try at home ...**

**This will help ...**

- Attention and concentration
- Organisation and planning
- Posture and mobility
- Dexterity and manipulation
- Social and relationship skills
- Verbal and non-verbal communication
- The Learning Environment
- Structures and Routines
- Motivation



# HOME --> SCHOOL POSTCARD

Learners Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Something we tried at home ...**

**At home this helps with...**

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## SCHOOL --> HOME POSTCARD

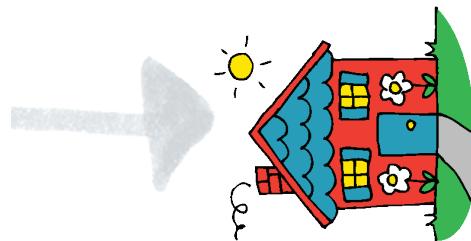
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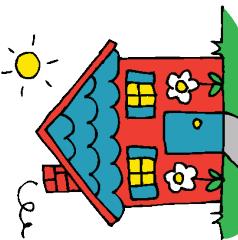
We have included a home-school postcard for you to send information back to us at school: either to let us know how you got on with this strategy, or to share approaches which you already use at home which might be helpful for us to use in the school. However you don't need to use this - you can always let us know through the usual systems e.g. home/school diary or meetings at school.

We look forward to hearing from you.

The Class Team.



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## HOME --> SCHOOL POSTCARD

The other side of this postcard can be completed and returned to school to let us know how you got on trying out our suggested approach or strategy at home.

Or you could use the postcard to tell us about any other approaches or strategies that you find useful at home which we could try in the class.

However you don't need to use this to share information - you can also use the usual systems of sharing information with us e.g. the home/school diary or meeting at school - we are always interested to hear your views and learn from your experience.

We look forward to hearing from you.

The Class Team

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## WORKING WITH PARTNER SERVICES AND AGENCIES



### This section contains:

- An outline of how requests for service are made.
- Examples of what partner services and agencies are.
- An overview of how partner services and agencies operate.

## A STAGED PROCESS OF SUPPORT



For most learners, progress through school will be supported by routine good teaching practice. Others may require additional assessment and support from specialist staff within the school. Both of these are very much in line with good practice principles. For a smaller number of learners this level of support is not sufficient to meet their needs. In these cases collaboration with partner services and agencies may be required to enable them to progress with their learning and/or participate in school life. This will occur, in most cases, following detailed assessment and meetings with the various involved personnel.

### Working with Partner Services and Agencies

Support for a learner might have been identified before reaching primary school, either in early years or nursery, in which case partner services and agencies may already be involved.

Coordinating this support varies from school to school but will lie with a member of the school ASL Team, who will ensure that information and recommended strategies are shared with staff as required.

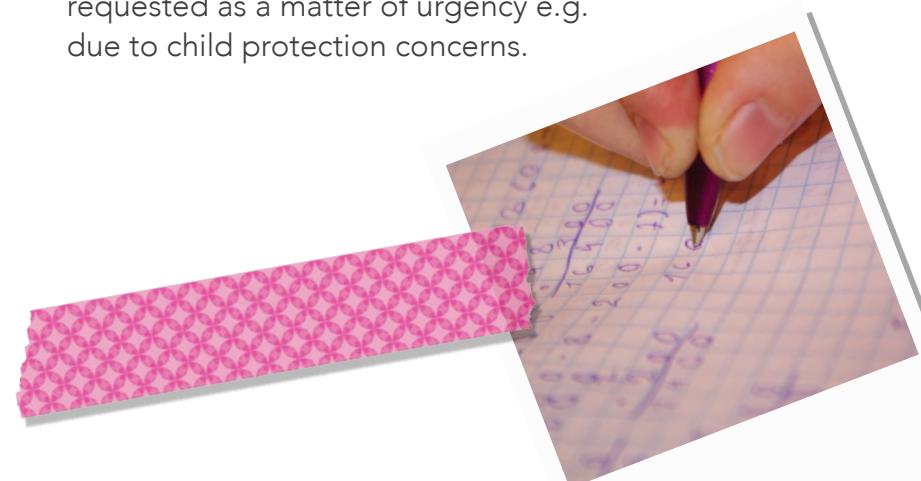
### Requesting input from Partner Services and Agencies

A request for input from a partner service or agency will usually be considered when strategies have already been implemented but are not fully meeting the learner's needs.

Responsibility for initiating this request from school will usually lie with a member of the individuals who will have collated relevant information through the assessment process. In most cases agreement from the parents/carers must be obtained before a request for service is made.

The learner might also be referred to a partner service or agency by someone external to the school for example the school nurse, family doctor or social worker. Some partner services and agencies also accept direct referrals from parents/carers.

Very occasionally support may be requested as a matter of urgency e.g. due to child protection concerns.



## WHAT ARE PARTNER SERVICES AND AGENCIES?



Partner services and agencies are those which are managed from outside the school and work in a targeted way to support specific learners to participate in school life and engage with the curriculum.

These may include the following services:

- Local specialist education services
- Psychological Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Community Child Health Paediatricians
- School Nursing Services
- Specialist Liaison Nurses for example, epilepsy liaison nurse specialist
- Assistive technology for communication
- Therapy services (speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy)
- Social Work
- Voluntary Agencies

### How do Partner Services and Agencies Operate?

Partner services and agencies are most often based outside the school. They may see the learner for assessment, intervention and follow-up either in the school, at home or in another location. Input varies depending on the nature of the learner's needs and may involve assessment and advice only, or on-going work either in or outside the school. In most cases information can only be shared with others if consent is given by the parents/carers. Input from partner services and agencies for a specific learner is likely to be short term targeted support.



## DISCUSSION POINTS ...

Consider the following questions in terms of working with partner services and agencies:

- Can you give examples of it working well?
- Why do you think it worked well and how did your contribution support this?
- What could you do to support future collaborative working?

In your school are there any formal processes set up for collaboration with colleagues or does it happen informally? How could this be improved?

Are you aware of the services offered by partner services and agencies (e.g. therapists) and of their referral systems (including criteria and guidelines for referrals)? Who would you go to for advice on this?

Consider the features of collaborative practice highlighted in this section. Are these reflective of your own practice experience? Which do you consider most important for your own practice context?

Is there evidence in your school of good partnership working with parents/carers?

- Can you give examples of where it worked well?
- Why do you think it worked well and how did your contribution support this?
- How do you ensure that parents/carers are aware of the range of options available to encourage a reciprocal flow of information?
- How could you encourage and support all parents/carers of children in your class to become active partners in their child's education?
- What could you do in future to support/promote partnership working with parents?

What processes are in place within your school to manage conflict resolution, in case of differences of opinion that may occur during collaboration?



# APPENDIX 1



**This section contains:**

- Background Legislation and Guidelines  
On Page 92.
- Details of useful resources  
On Page 94.

The following examples of local and national guidance, legislation and policy, which are shaping the practice of teachers and other school staff, are recognised as being particularly pertinent to this resource.

### **1. Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, amended 2009**

This legislation provides a framework to support children and young people who require some help with their learning. The framework is based on the idea of additional support needs, a term which applies to any child or young person who requires additional support, long or short term, to help them make the most of their school education. The Act also aims to ensure a partnership with parents / carers and collaborative working with professionals from partner services and agencies, to meet the needs of the child or young person. This resource (*Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Ideas in Practice*), supports staff in meeting many of the learning needs of the learners in their school. The amended Act deems that all looked after children have additional support needs unless the education authority has established through assessment that they do not.

### **2. Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice (Revised Edition) 2010**

This provides guidance on the implementation of the Education (ASL) (Scotland) Act, as amended in 2009. It gives a summary of the Act including clear definitions of which groups of learners are covered by the Act and what constitutes additional support needs. The duties under the terms of the Act on education authorities and other agencies with respect to supporting children's and young

people's learning are set out. Examples of best practice are provided with reference to the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach and Curriculum for Excellence framework.

### **3. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**

This legislation underpins the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach and aims to improve the way services work together to support children and young people. It provides a common practice framework and embeds partnership working with families across the full range of services and agencies in order to meet the needs and promote the wellbeing and potential of all children and young people. Key to this are a consistent single planning approach for children who require additional support from services, a Named Person for every child and a holistic understanding of wellbeing. In addition to the Named Person children who have complex needs also have a Lead Professional to coordinate their care. In some cases the named person will also take on the role of the Lead Professional but this role could be taken on by any person who is closely involved with the child and their family, so could be from any agency. Under this legislation there are new duties placed on schools and other public bodies to focus on improving broader wellbeing outcomes for children.

### **4. The Equality Act 2010**

This Act brings together and extends the existing UK equality legislation. The Act introduced protected characteristics (for example a person's disability, race, ethnicity, religion and sexual

orientation) for which discrimination is unlawful. The Act places specific duties on public bodies (including schools) and individuals to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation. In relation to schools this includes, for example, making reasonable adjustments to the school environment, teaching methods, assessment procedures and school trips to ensure that learners with protected characteristics (or learners associated with others who have these protected characteristics) are not discriminated against. Further guidance specifically for education providers, produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, can be accessed at [www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/education-providers/schools-guidance](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/education-providers/schools-guidance).

### **5. Curriculum for Excellence**

The Curriculum for Excellence aims to improve the learning, attainment and achievement of children and young people. It clearly focuses classroom practice on the learner and around developing the four capacities of education: that young people should be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. This resource (*Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Teachers' Ideas in Practice*) aims to help education staff to meet these aspirations by providing supports and strategies which will promote the learning of all learners, by addressing specific areas of challenge and by giving information on how to seek out further support if required.

## 6. How good is our school?

'How good is our school?' is designed to promote effective self-evaluation as the first important stage in a process of achieving self-improvement. It provides a framework for improvement that focuses in particular upon closing the gap in attainment, achievement and wellbeing between children and young people living in our most and least deprived areas in Scotland. Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Ideas in Practice is designed to support self-evaluation for improvement. For example: the supports and strategies detailed in each area of the Skills, Supports and Strategies section could act as a useful guide when evaluating how well the school makes arrangements to meet the needs of learners. The 'discussion points' included in most sections could also be used as a basis for discussions around self-evaluation; at both an individual and a whole school level.

## 7. Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006

This legislation places duties on local authorities to support and strengthen the involvement of parents/carers in their children's education. It refers to the body of evidence that supports the premise that children do better when parents/carers and schools work together. The Act provides a framework which gives parents/carers the opportunity to get the information they need to support their child and encourages them to express their views and have these considered, either at individual meetings or through a school parent forum or parent council. Under the terms of the Act each local education authority must produce a 'Strategy for Parental Involvement' which will outline how parental engagement will be supported and strengthened.

## 8. Included, England and Involved:

### Part 1 (Attendance) and Part 2 (Preventing and Managing School Exclusions)

This guidance seeks to explore the promotion and management of good attendance and the prevention and reduction of absence. Part 2 emphasises the importance on inclusion through effective learning and teaching; promoting positive relationships and behaviour; and employment of preventative approaches to reduce exclusion. The aims of the guidance are to support schools, communities and their partners to keep children and young people included, engaged and involved; and to improve outcomes for all with a particular focus on those who are at risk of exclusion.

## 9. General Teaching Council for Scotland, Professional Standards 2021

The refreshed and revised Professional Standards include details which highlights the professional values of social justice, trust and respect and integrity as being at the heart of being a teacher. This roots the Professional Standards as a frame work that supports what it means to become, to be and to grow as a teacher. Having a strong focus on professional values helps teachers develop professional identity and underpins commitment to learner wellbeing.

1. Scottish Government (2009) Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
2. Scottish Government (2010) Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
3. Scottish Government (2014) The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
4. United Kingdom Government (2010) The Equality Act. London: United Kingdom Government
5. Scottish Government (2004) Curriculum for Excellence: The Curriculum Review Group. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
6. HMIE (2007) How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence: Part 3 (Revised Edition). Livingston: HMIE
7. Scottish Government (2006) Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
8. Scottish Government (2007/2017) Included, Engaged and Involved: part 1 (Attendance in Scottish Schools) and part 2 (Preventing and Managing School Exclusions). Scottish Government.
9. General Teaching Council for Scotland (2021) The Professional Standards 2021. Edinburgh: General Teaching Council for Scotland.

The following local and national resources were highlighted as being particularly useful for supporting learners with additional support needs:

**Learning in 2(+) languages: Ensuring effective inclusion for bilingual learners**  
(<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/learning-in-2-languages>)

This resource highlights good practice for supporting learners who are accessing the curriculum through English as an additional language. It contains an overview of bilingualism as well as strategies to support the development of English and checklists for action.

**Education Scotland website**  
([www.educationscotland.gov.uk](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk))

Education Scotland was set up by the Scottish Government to support quality and improvement in Scottish education to secure better experiences and outcomes for learners. It contains a wide range of information, practical materials and resources to support teaching and learning.

**The GLOW website**  
(<https://glowconnect.org.uk>)

GLOW is a secure national resource which gives intranet access to Scotland's education community, supporting information sharing between colleagues. It contains links to local and national resources, and provides a framework for supporting learners through its virtual learning environment.

**The Autism Toolbox: An autism resource for Scottish schools**  
(<http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/266126/0079626.pdf>)

This resource contains information from research and practical experience to support the inclusion of learners with autism spectrum disorder in mainstream schools.

**The Autism Toolbox website**  
([www.autismtoolbox.co.uk](http://www.autismtoolbox.co.uk))

This website was developed by the Scottish Government in partnership with Scottish Autism and the Autism Network Scotland. It complements the Autism Toolbox providing online information and resources to support the inclusion of learners with autism spectrum disorder in mainstream schools.

**Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour**  
(<http://www.gov.scot/resource/0041/00416217.pdf>)

This outlines new policy guidance in response to the Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research 2012. The Scottish Government and Scottish Advisory Group on Behaviour in Schools (SAGBIS) have identified the next steps and priority actions to support local authorities, establishments, practitioners and partners to further improve relationships and behaviour.

within their learning communities. This is central to the successful delivery of Curriculum for Excellence and the implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). This leaflet also provides information to help establishments and authorities develop and implement robust and effective approaches to promote positive relationships and behaviour.

**NHS Additional Support for Learning website**  
**([www.asl.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.asl.scot.nhs.uk))**

This contains information on specific conditions, suggestions of practical supports and strategies, and contact and referral details for partner services from NHS Lothian.

**Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working in Secondary Schools: Ideas in Practice**  
**(<https://www.thirdspace.scot/circle>)**

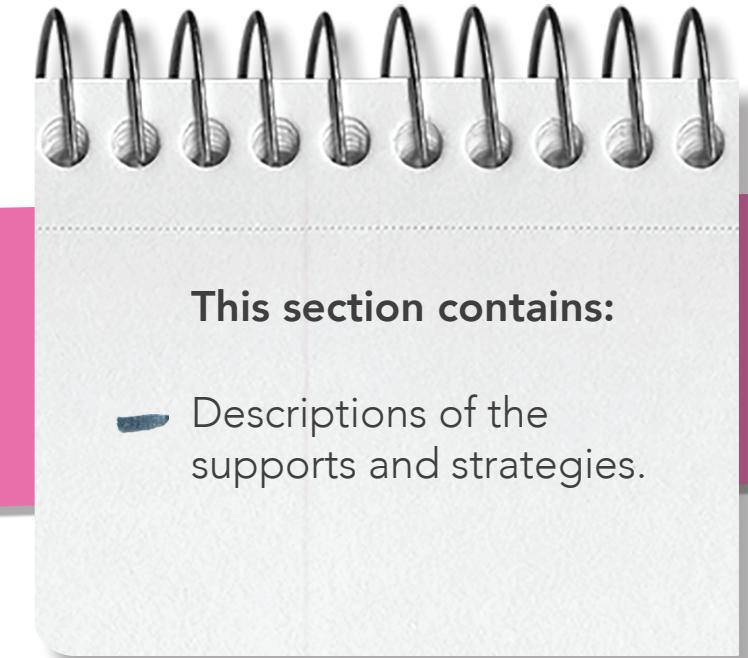
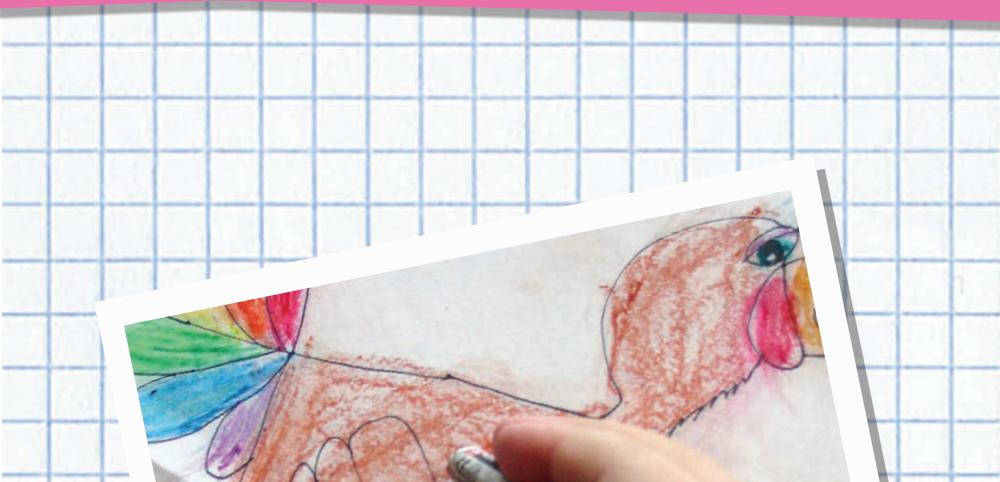
This resource has been developed based on the 'best practice' of experienced education staff working in secondary schools. It contains practical strategies to support learners who have additional support needs.

**Up, up and away: Identifying the Need and Up, up and away: Planning to Meet the Need**  
**(<https://www.thirdspace.scot/circle>)**

These resources were developed for and by staff and carers who work with children before they go to school. The focus is on identifying and supporting children who may be at risk of poor achievement in language, literacy and learning in early years settings.



# APPENDIX 2



### **ABC**

An ABC Chart is an observation tool used to collect information about the events that are occurring within a learner's environment. "A" refers to the antecedent, or the event or activity that immediately precedes the behaviour. The "B" refers to observed behaviour, and "C" refers to the consequence, or the event that immediately follows a response. An ABC Chart is used to record and reflect on patterns of behaviour over time. This allows supporting adults to identify and minimise potential triggers.

### **Acceptance and use of non-verbal cues**

Accept non-verbal communication from the learner as a response, if they are not competent verbally. Use non-verbal communication (e.g. gesture, facial expression, tone of voice, eye contact) to give the learner cues.

### **Achievable goals**

Ensure end results are attainable and realistic so that the learner feels that completing the task is possible. Providing achievable goals will help motivate the learner by allowing them to experience success when they reach their target. Motivation is also enhanced when goals are meaningful and relevant for the learner and set jointly with them.

### **Adapt teaching to accommodate different thinking styles**

Notice and take account of the thinking styles, perspectives, strengths and preferred ways of learning of individual learners. Consider

the ways in which you can adapt your own communication, the physical and social environment or the opportunities being provided to make learning meaningful to the individual.

### **Additional verbal instructions**

Give additional or repeated instructions to help learners stay on task and cater for those who may need extra clarification to understand. Some learners may require the verbal instructions to be modified e.g. broken down or simplified into key steps. However for others it is better to repeat the instructions exactly so that they have one set of information to process, decode and understand.

### **Anticipate triggers**

Learn to recognise what may be the antecedent to a specific behaviour and therefore address or avoid these (where possible). For example some learners have difficulty with understanding routines and particularly changes to routines. Once the trigger is recognised these learners can be supported to regulate their responses e.g. by using visual timetables to support understanding of predictable routines and visual cues to support understanding of changes to routines.

### **Arrangement of class set-up to promote good interaction**

Use classroom arrangement and learner positioning to encourage appropriate interaction between learners. For example: seating learners who require support with attention and concentration away from distracting peers; seating learners who require support with social, emotional and

relationship skills with peers who can model these; and sitting learners who require support with developing English as an additional language with same language peers.

### **Auditory cues and supports**

Sounds or verbal prompts to facilitate engagement and learning. This includes changing the tone, volume or rate of your speech to emphasise or draw attention to specific words or phrases. It can also involve simple strategies such as using the learner's name or gently tapping their desk to gain or regain their attention when required. It should be noted that very occasionally learners may have difficulty regulating their response to loud auditory cues such as the school bell (used to signify break or lunch time) and may require support with this.

### **Avoid distressed behaviour through preparation**

Use effective planning and/or forward thinking, in order to prevent triggering distressed behaviour. For example ensuring that adaptations to resources and tasks are considered in advance so that all learners can be included in activities.

### **Backward chaining**

Progressive completion of task components – starting at the final step, working towards the initial step (giving less support at each stage). That is, encourage the learner to complete the last step of the task only, to ensure success; next time encourage them to do the last two steps, etc., until they have completed the whole task themselves.

### **Breaks**

Time within or between activities, to refocus, regroup, rest, move around, etc.

### **Break words into syllables or sounds**

This is a prompt for literacy work. Individual sounds or syllables can be sounded out, clapped or tapped out by teacher.

### **Buddy systems**

Pair one learner with another (or one group with another group) in both academic and social situations. One learner benefits from individualised attention and support and the other adopts a more leading or supportive role.

### **Calm approach**

Be consistent, supportive, encouraging and facilitative – in a relaxed and composed manner. Try to be aware and reflective of your own feelings and responses so that challenges can be dealt with in an issue-driven, rather than emotion-driven way.

### **Central desk tidies**

Centrally placed container for all stationery materials.

### **Checklists**

Logically sequenced lists of key tasks/instructions which the learner can tick off as they complete. These can be produced by the teacher for the whole class or for an individual learner. Alternatively a checklist can be produced in conjunction with the learner(s).

### **Chunking**

Break tasks down into manageable sections.

### **Clear expectations**

Establish and communicate clear expectations. It can be useful to agree these together with the class.

Some learners may require support to remember these. Having these visually displayed on the class wall and referring to them regularly will help reinforce awareness of these. Reasonable adjustments may be required to ensure that expectations are realistic and achievable for individual learners.

### **Clear physical boundaries**

Set clear physical limits, e.g. tape on floor around a work station, carpet squares for sitting.

### **Clear learning outcomes**

Set clear, agreed Learning Outcomes with the learner and/or group. Support the learner to reflect on their learning and agree next steps.

### **Clear and organised worksheets**

Ensure hand-outs are presented in a clear, unambiguous, uncluttered, easy to follow format.

### **Clear Labelling**

Signs using words and/or pictures to support classroom organisation. For example written or pictorial labels to clearly show the positioning of resources or the contents of a drawer or cupboard.

### **Collaborate with parents/carers**

Involve parents in decision making and information gathering if concerns are raised – establish a two way process between parents/carers and school staff. Communicate and work with parents to form common goals for the learner's progress. Aim to ensure consistent support is in place at home as well as at school; recognising that parents/carers can take an active role in facilitating their child's learning.

### **Colour coding**

Colour parts of the classroom environment and resources to provide visual cues to support organisation.

### **Constructive feedback**

Provide constructive information to a learner about their performance, which can be used to influence or modify their future performance and learning.

### **Cue in sound or sentence**

Help a learner by providing the first sound of a word, or the first word of a phrase.

### **Demonstration**

Carry out an action or task yourself, as a visual cue to support the learner's understanding of it.

### **Develop and implement whole school policies**

Support the development and implementation of school wide approaches for the management of support for all learners, including those with additional support needs.

**Develop positive peer feedback**

Establish a structure to encourage and support positive comments and feedback for learners from their peers to develop positive peer interaction.

**Differentiate resources, materials, activities and tasks**

Adapt resources, materials, activities and tasks to suit the level, ability or needs of individual learners.

**Early Intervention**

Identify needs and put in place supports and strategies in a timely manner.

**Emotional regulation**

Provide anticipatory support, routines and activities which are regulating for the learner. Where developmentally appropriate, support and encourage the learners' understanding and use of self regulation strategies.

**Encourage expression**

Promote and allow time for thoughts, feelings and ideas.

**Ensure learner-centred approach**

Listening to and respecting learners' views and recognising and responding to their needs. Involving learners in problem solving, decision making and target setting will encourage and support them to be involved in and take responsibility for their own learning. For all learners the curriculum should offer: challenge and enjoyment; breadth, progression; depth; personalisation and choice; coherence and relevance.

**Establish positive relationships and trust**

Construct mutual trust and respect as appropriate. Create a non-judgemental and nurturing relationship with and between learners and an environment where learners feel safe and can express themselves openly.

**Experiential learning**

Learning through 'doing' within the natural context of the school environment. This supports learners to make discoveries and experiment with knowledge first-hand, instead of hearing or reading about others' experiences.

**Facilitated playground activities**

Use planned activities during break times – activities that are usually initiated and supported by an adult.

**Facilitation**

Enabling a learner to do a task or making the task easier by providing support e.g. providing hands-on support to help a learner sit straight in their chair (usually used with learners with more complex physical needs).

**Foster sense of responsibility**

Encourage learners to develop an intrinsic desire to be accountable for and proud of their own actions and work e.g. by joint target setting.

**General encouragement**

Develop a supportive and encouraging classroom environment. Use low key noticing of effort and achievements.

**Give adequate response time**

Leave plenty of time after asking a question for the learner to process the information and formulate an answer.

**Good news assemblies**

Use of whole school occasions to celebrate the full range of learners' achievements. It is important to ensure that learners' achievements out of school are also acknowledged.

**Good role models**

Learners who exhibit desired characteristics for a given task. Seat learners near, and encourage interactions with, other learners who provide a supportive model e.g. seat learner who requires support with their organisation and planning skills with a peer who is organised and can model these skills.

**Hand over hand support**

Use physical prompting, your hand over the learner's, to promote and encourage the correct movement.

**Handwriting programmes**

Published therapy and school-based programmes designed to develop and support handwriting skills.

**Homework club**

A structured group time offered by the school, at lunch-time or after school, to encourage and enable learners to complete homework tasks in an organised and supported environment.

### **Home-school diary**

A diary system which relays information from school to home and from home to school. This can be used to keep parents/carers informed about school activities, homework tasks or learner performance. It can also be used by parents/carers to inform the teacher about out of school achievements, successful strategies used at home and/or to ask questions about school activities. The home-school diary can be completed by the learner or by the teacher.

### **ICT (Information and Communication Technology)**

Use of computers and other technology (hardware and software) to support teaching and learning. This could include the use of for example:

- Interactive whiteboards
- Laptops or tablets to support individual learners (e.g. for note taking or for engaging attention)
- Mobile phones with specific apps (e.g. to support organisation)
- Specific hardware to enable learners to engage with ICT (e.g. a large rollerball mouse, a chunky stylus for use with a tablet etc.)
- Computer programmes to engage learner interest and support development of specific skills
- Computer technology to develop, store and adapt lesson plans
- Secure ICT systems to access and share information (e.g. about supports and strategies used with a learner) with colleagues

### **Identify and act on child protection concerns (e.g. unexplained change in behaviour)**

Ensure that staff are aware of the child protection policies and procedures and are trained and supported to implement them.

### **Imitation (elicited imitation)**

Encourage learner to copy a target word or grammatical structure after you model it clearly.

### **Individual attention**

Specific one-to-one interaction with a learner. This can be focussed on a piece of work or might be a more general conversation about what the learner did at the weekend.

### **Individual workstations**

A clearly identified space set up for a learner to do specific work, which is distraction and clutter free and organised to support focussed learning.

### **Individualised reading schemes**

Reading programmes tailored to individual learners' ability levels, e.g. easier decoding, harder content etc.

### **Interactive whiteboards**

Computer based visual support for class activities. The wall mounted screen is touch controlled so the teacher and learners can control applications using fingertips or special pen.

### **Key adults**

Two designated members of school staff who have been identified as points of contact for a specific learner. The role of the key adults will vary depending on the particular scenario, but they should have a clearly defined remit, be aware of the limits of their responsibilities and have an identified pathway for sharing information and receiving further support for the learner. Ideally one key adult will be from the school leadership team.

### **Key word signing systems**

Specific hand gestures used alongside key words to support understanding and development of language.

### **Learner-centred responsibility for learning**

Involve learners in setting and reviewing their own targets and learning outcomes.

### **Learner reflection**

Support learners to develop skills so that they can reflect on their own learning (in terms of what they have learned, what they found difficult, what they could do to improve, next steps etc.).

### **Learning intentions**

This refers to ensuring that learners know what the purpose of a lesson is and are aware of what they should have achieved or be able to do at the end of it (in terms of having increased understanding, knowledge or being able to perform a new skill). Clearly highlighting the

learning intentions will help the learner(s) to develop a picture of what is expected of them from their learning. Learning intentions can be set with an individual, group or whole class.

### **Listening and Talking Activities**

Group activity used for a variety of purposes, e.g. to start off the day, for whole class reflection, for development of solutions, for sharing news and ideas, for modelling desired behaviour.

### **Modelling**

Clearly demonstrate a desired activity or behaviour for the learner. For example, if the learner is struggling with a particular sound or grammatical structure, improve it by using this sound or structure more frequently yourself and putting emphasis on it.

### **Modified or assisted tasks**

The task is changed by the teacher to be more manageable for the learner; sometimes with physical support from an adult or peer.

### **Modified space**

Adapt the immediate learning environment to suit the individual needs of the learner, e.g. dim lighting, more space on left side for learners who write with their left hand.

### **Monitor and track learners' progress**

Use of a system (usually employed by the whole school) to record and follow all learners' progress.

### **Movement breaks**

Short breaks before, following or during an activity, where learners can engage in movement activity. It can improve focus and attention and increase energy levels. This can involve the whole class or can be learner specific.

### **Multi sensory approaches**

Provide sensory rich learning experiences through touch, hearing, vision and movement, using everyday activities.

### **Normalise and value diversity**

Model an inclusive mindset where difference is expected and valued. Ensure that your learning environment and teaching materials reflect society as a whole and highlight the value of living in a multi-faceted society.

### **Nurturing approaches**

Use the 'Six Principles of Nurture' to provide a supportive learning environment that promotes emotional development.

### **Offer compensatory methods**

Promote use of another method to perform an activity, e.g. using a laptop or an adult scribe to record work rather than writing.

### **Organised and planned approach**

Present activities in a clear, structured and logical manner. Prepare and plan ahead so activities are presented clearly and incrementally. An organised and planned approach also involves

adapting/differentiating tasks and activities to meet the range of abilities within the class and structuring the lesson/day/week to support those who benefit from routine.

### **Organised classrooms**

Efficient and structured use of space, adapted to all learners' needs, to promote concentration and learning. This might involve for example:

- trying to keep the room clutter free
- having a clearly labelled consistent place for commonly used objects
- ensuring that the physical space is accessible to all
- clearly delineating key areas in the class for different types of activities, such as 'story corner', 'group work', 'individual work'.

### **Organised workspaces**

Ensure working areas are clear, tidy and ordered.

### **Paired reading**

Pair a learner with a partner (either an adult or a peer). The partner reads alongside the learner (at the same time) or the learner reads alone and the partner gives support. Support learners with additional support needs to take the role of the assisting partner.

### **Physical education (PE) specialist time**

Seek the opinion of the PE specialist (if available in school) for advice, or for support in running groups focusing on specific motor skills.

## **Peer supports**

Use other learners as positive role models and to offer support. Ensure that all learners are assisted to experience the role of peer supporter.

## **Personal checklists**

Keep learners on track by giving them or helping them write their own list of what they need to do, e.g. for a specific task, or for the whole day. Breaking tasks down into small component parts or stages and ticking them off as they are completed is a skill which is beneficial for a wide range of learners with additional support needs, particularly those who require support with organisation and planning and attention and concentration skills.

## **Personal passports or communication passports**

These are usually used to assist the transition (class to class or on to a new school) of learners who require support with verbal or non-verbal communication skills. They contain a profile of the learner's strengths and needs, as well as some information about them, e.g. their likes and dislikes. Given to adults who are unfamiliar with the learner.

## **Personal reflection (teacher)**

Reflection on your own approaches and situations – time set aside for self appraisal with a view to changing an approach as and when required.

Your own reflection on the effectiveness of teaching methods and approaches used or how specific situations were managed. Reflection can be used to acknowledge what worked well and

should be used again, what could be changed or adapted, to consider further strategies to try, or to plan to gather further information.

## **Personalised support**

Focussed attention, encouragement and feedback wherever possible, for small groups or individuals.

## **Physical supports, equipment, aids and adaptations**

Changes to the learner's physical environment to facilitate their engagement and promote independence in tasks where possible. This may include the use of a piece of equipment, product or system to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of the learner. For example it may include the following:

- Sit-and-move cushion
- Angle board
- Specialised seating
- Various pencil grips and different sized pencils/pens
- Laptops/tablets
- Bespoke work stations

## **Planned ignoring of inappropriate behaviour**

A structured and planned approach of not reinforcing negative action, by not providing focussed attention. It is important to remember that it is the behaviour that is being ignored, never the child.

## **Positive peer feedback**

Establish a structure to encourage and support positive comments and feedback for learners from their peers to develop positive peer interaction.

## **Practice**

Encourage learners to repeat, rehearse and exercise a particular skill in various contexts, in order to master it as well as they can.

## **Practice and prepare for change and/or new experiences**

Spend time with learner/learners introducing proposed changes/new experiences (e.g. change of teacher, change of class, going to school camp) and practicing or rehearsing what this might involve (e.g. using a visual timetable or social story or role play).

## **Quiet areas**

Specially assigned areas for focussed quiet work, reflection or self regulation. Could be in or out of the classroom (e.g. a staff member's office, a resource base).

## **Quiet time**

Specially assigned time for focussed quiet work, reflection or self regulation.

## **Reduce amount and complexity of language**

Keep language structures short, simple and easily understandable – appropriate to the needs of the learner. Frequently check to ensure that the learner has fully understood what has been said and to clarify misunderstandings.

### Reduce amount of work

Ensure the amount of work you expect from a learner is achievable within a given time frame. This may require decreasing the amount of work given to a specific learner (e.g. the learner has to complete every second question). Consider this in respect of both work that is done in the class and work that is given as homework.

### Recognised literacy and numeracy programmes

Literacy and numeracy programmes which have been shown to work and are commonly used within schools.

### Reduce noise and distractions

Limit visual and auditory diversions in the school environment to enable learners to ‘tune in’ and learn successfully. This might include ensuring that a learner is seated in an optimal position to limit distractions (e.g. seating a learner with a hearing impairment away from the doorway to reduce extraneous noise). Some learners may be hypersensitive to specific noises and/or lighting (e.g. fluorescent lights) and may require specific adaptations to address this.

### Reframing of incidents

Explaining or expanding on reasons for an event or behaviour often by presenting information in a different light.

### Repetition

This can apply to adults and learners and may involve the repetition of information or a task. For example a teacher might

reiterate verbal instructions as necessary; or learners may need to perform a task several times in order to learn effectively.

### Restorative language and conversations

This solution focussed approach can be used to model effective communication and to resolve conflict and manage incidents. For example a playground argument could be resolved by engaging the involved parties in a meeting with an adult mediator who would listen in a non-judgemental way as all parties described their version of events. Rather than apportioning blame, the group would be supported to recognise how their actions are perceived by others (and the effect they have on others) and to identify a solution. The approach can help to develop self-awareness and an awareness of how actions can affect others.

### Role play

Act out scenarios or events to practise or rehearse how to act and react in specific situations. This can also be used to support learners to develop strategies and responses to awkward social situations.

### Routines

Repetitive and predictable patterns of activities and events. Most learners benefit from a degree of structure and routine within their day/week. They can be particularly beneficial for those who require support with organisation and planning, or with verbal and non-verbal communication. Some learners require specific support to help them understand and cope with changes to routines.

### Routinely providing meaningful roles

Assigning roles within the class (e.g. book monitor, peer supporter) or during group work (e.g. scribe, leader, reporter, designer/visual support) which support learners to feel valued and to contribute effectively.

### Safe Space

Provide a recognised ‘safe space’ where learners can choose to go when they feel overwhelmed and/or need time and space to regulate their behaviour. Teach the learner to use this in preparation for times of distress.

### Scaffolding

Instructional supports put in place which are gradually removed as the learner develops the desired skill. Scaffolding involves breaking tasks into discrete parts and providing support for the learner in a specific part to enable them to achieve their target. As they become more proficient the support is reduced until they can complete the task unaided.

### Scribing

Teacher or another person records (writes or types) what the learner says.

### Seating arrangements and positioning in class

Position learners in class to optimise their learning and participation. Consider friendship groupings in addition to the learner’s physical and sensory needs. For example position learners who require support with attention and concentration close to the teacher and good role models and away from distractions.

## **Seek guidance from the school's support network**

Approach others in school (e.g. colleagues, Support for Learning Teacher or School Leadership Team) for advice and new ideas to inform and support you to meet individual learners' needs.

## **Self-regulation**

Self-regulation relates to the learner's awareness of how they are feeling in relation to their emotional state and their ability to change or modify this e.g. being aware of and adjusting their body/emotions to be ready to learn.

## **Sensory supports**

Activities and/or objects which meet different sensory needs, e.g. fidget supports, music, objects which produce sound/light, objects which apply pressure, movement breaks.

## **Setting**

Learners are grouped into sets according to ability. Shorten instructions to aid understanding. Saying less and reducing adult language to allow the learner time to process information.

## **Short stories written to address social situations**

A story (which follows a specific style and format) produced to prepare a learner for a particular event, activity or concept (often relating to a social situation) which may be new or challenging for them. These should not be used to address behaviour.

## **Short tasks**

Keep tasks short and achievable, allowing learners to feel a sense of achievement and success. This is particularly beneficial for learners who require support with attention and concentration.

## **Show and tell**

Learner shares and/or talks about something of interest. Use this activity to practise talking and listening (questions and answers) with other learners.

## **Simplify language used**

Reduce complexity of language to match learner's ability.

## **Simplify and shorten instructions**

Ensure instructions are concise and easy to understand. Regularly check the learner's understanding of what has been said and clarify misunderstandings.

## **Small group activities**

Use small groups of learners to encourage team working, peer support and interaction. Small group activities with supportive peers can provide a safe environment to practice skills (e.g. communication or motor skills) and can help learners develop friendships and a social peer group.

## **Social stories**

A story (which follows a specific style and format) produced to prepare a learner for a particular event, activity or concept (often relating to a social situation) which may be new or challenging for them. These should not be used to address behaviour.

## **Soft start**

This involves a less formal and structured start to the day where learners benefit from a period of around 20 minutes to settle in to class each morning which can be used to orientate themselves, play, organise themselves, complete pieces of work if required etc.

## **Specific and low key noticing**

Noticing and acknowledging strengths and effort of individual learners; quietly letting them know that you have noticed when things are going well.

## **Specialist groups/programmes to support social and emotional development**

Small group to support a vulnerable or emotionally fragile learner to engage. A small group of supportive peers can be selected to provide a safe environment to develop social skills and friendships.

## **Specific motor skills and/or movement groups**

Specific motor skills groups designed to develop learners' motor abilities and to improve spatial perception. A small group of supportive peers provides a safe environment for learners to practise movement skills without feeling anxious.

## **Specialist groups/programmes to address communication**

Small group work to develop talking, listening and/or interaction skills. A small group of supportive peers provides a safe environment for learners to practise communication skills without feeling anxious.

### **Start and finish trays**

Identified trays or baskets which contain work to do and finished work.

### **Structured day**

Keep the layout of the day prepared, ordered and predictable. Most learners benefit from a degree of structure and routine within their day/ week. They can be particularly beneficial for those who require support with organisation and planning, or with verbal and non-verbal communication. Some learners require specific support to help them understand and cope with changes to routines.

### **Stress target sounds, words or grammatical constructions**

Place emphasis on sounds, words or grammatical constructions which you are working on with the learner.

### **Suitable furniture**

Ensure furniture (chair and table height and design) are adapted where required to help learners access learning. Ideally learners should be able to sit with their back against the chair and their feet flat on the floor with their hips and knees at approximately right angles. The desk should be high enough to allow the learner to sit with their chair under the desk and low enough to allow them to rest their elbows comfortably on it. Some learners require movement to help them know where their body is in space - they might benefit from using a sit-and-move cushion. Some learners

who continually slump at their desk might benefit from a sloping angled board on their desk. Some learners who have difficulty with balance may benefit from a chair with sides to help them feel secure.

### **Supplement verbal with non-verbal information**

Add non-verbal cues (e.g. gestures, facial expressions, key word signs) to spoken language when communicating with a learner.

### **Supporting learner to be aware of their own self-regulation**

Supporting learners to be aware of their own feelings and emotions particularly in relation to readiness for learning. This can be supported by clearly stating what is expected of learners and verbally asking them to listen and concentrate. It can also be supported by specific movement activities which can support focus and attention.

### **Supports for turn taking**

Use a physical prompter as a cue to help learners' understanding of turn taking (e.g. only the person holding the doll is allowed to speak - when it is physically passed to the next person it is then their turn to speak).

### **Tactile cues and supports**

Use sense of touch to aid learning (e.g. tracing letters in sand, feeling shapes of letters, using physical shapes for maths or objects for counting).

### **Talking and listening opportunities**

Provide as many opportunities as possible for communication and verbal interaction.

### **Target setting**

Make aims and expected end results clear and achievable for learners. Setting targets in collaboration with learners so that they are meaningful for the learner will help them have a sense of ownership and responsibility for them and may help motivate them to achieve their targets.

### **Task breakdown**

Break tasks into smaller component parts, which can be completed separately and when put together form the complete activity. Allowing the learner to feel a sense of achievement at each stage can be particularly helpful for learners who require support with attention and concentration.

### **Templates**

Use an actual template (stencil) during handwriting work.

### **Thinking time**

Time for learner to think before giving an answer or completing a task. Many learners benefit from additional time to process information and compose a response.

### **Thumbs up/thumbs down system**

Use thumbs up/down/in the middle to represent various things, e.g. how learners are feeling, how easy or difficult they found a task, how well they understood something.

## **Timetables**

These can be used for the whole class or for an individual learner. They can use either written text or pictures, or a combination of both. Providing learners with a consistent timetable either for the week or day can help with their organisation and also support the understanding of the structure of the week/day and what to expect/what comes next. Providing specific learners with laminated copies of their weekly timetable (one for their school bag and one for home) can help support organisation.

## **Timers**

Use timing equipment (e.g. clocks, egg timers etc.) to give a visual representation of the passing of time and how much time is left on an activity.

## **Traffic light system**

Using a red/amber/green system of grading feelings, e.g. frustration, anger or confidence.

## **Tune in to learner**

Pay attention to, familiarise yourself with and respond to individual learners' styles of communication.

## **Turn taking games**

Provide formal and informal opportunities for turn taking.

## **Use learner's name**

Use a learner's name to cue them in and/or keep them focussed.

## **Variety**

Mix up activities and include elements of novelty to maintain a learner's interest level. However be aware that some learners benefit from routine and consistency and may require support to cope with change.

## **Verbal rehearsal**

Talk through the steps of a task and if required encourage the learner to do so, e.g. what they need, how they will do it, what will be the end result.

## **Visual cues and supports**

Use gestures, pictures and signs to facilitate engagement and learning.

## **Visual mapping of processes and ideas**

For example when creating a story represent and organise thoughts and ideas as a diagram or 'map', consisting of branches and sub-branches around a central theme.

## **Visual timetables**

Use of pictures to show the format and sequence of the day's activities. This can be done at an individual or whole class level.

## **Visualisation and verbalisation**

Visualisation: thinking about/imagining what is required in a task. Verbalisation: talking through what is going to happen in a task, how they will do it, what the outcome will be, etc.

## **Weekly or daily planning sheets**

Visual resource for the whole class showing the plan of activities or routines for that day or week.

## **Whole class checklists**

Checklists displayed on classroom walls which set out the tasks to be completed, as well as agreed expectations.

## **Written language to support auditory information**

Provide visual representations alongside spoken language, e.g. written instructions to support verbal instructions.



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