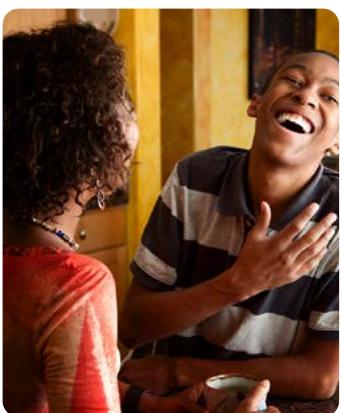




# Graduated Response Guidance 2024 - 2028



**An A-Z of inclusive practice strategies  
and approaches**



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# Introduction

The following A-Z list and the related self-assessment check list, gives an account of a wide range of approaches, strategies and provision that, when introduced in a setting, will create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for children and young people (CYP) with Special Educational Needs Disability (SEND).



## Best Inclusive Practice, Strategies and Provision (A-Z)

### Ensure ACCESSIBILITY

Make reasonable Adjustments in Line with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure appropriate access to facilities and resources for all CYP:

- **Environmental changes:** Ensure that lighting and acoustics can be adjusted as needed.
- **Wheelchair Access:** Ensure that doorways, aisles, and spaces between furniture are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs or mobility aids.
- **Ramps and Elevators:** Where necessary, provide ramps and elevators for easy access to different areas of the school.
- **Adjust Furniture:** Arrange desks and seating to ensure that all CYP can comfortably access learning materials, whether they are seated in a wheelchair, on the floor, or at a desk.
- **Enable access to technology:** Ensure CYP have accessible power sockets, WiFi available and the necessary hardware and software to improve their access to learning whilst ensuring that they are not separated from their peers.

### Use ADAPTATION (Differentiation) to Provide Suitable Learning Challenges

Adaptations should happen based on the child's individual needs. Adaptation ensures that all CYP are appropriately challenged and can succeed, regardless of their starting point. Adaptation can take place by:

- **Level:** Adjusting the complexity of the task.
- **Outcome:** Offer different outcomes for the same task, such as asking some CYP to complete a written response while others may produce a visual or verbal answer.
- **Pitch:** Adjusting the depth or difficulty of content to match the child's learning level.
- **Pace:** Modifying the speed of the task to ensure the child can keep up without becoming overwhelmed.

- **Grouping:** Providing opportunities for individual work or small group activities, based on the child's preferred learning environment.
- **Chunking:** Breaking tasks down into smaller, manageable chunks to ensure learning successes for CYP.
- **Backward chaining:** Build the sequence of a task starting from the final point and working backward to help the CYP experience success and gradually add more elements until they can complete the entire task.

## Concrete Apparatus and ADAPTED RESOURCES Are Available

Concrete resources (tangible materials) are especially important for CYP who require hands-on, multisensory approaches to learning. These tools can help bridge the gap between abstract concepts and practical understanding.

- **Hands-on Learning Tools:** Provide concrete apparatus for CYP who need more tactile, visual, or kinaesthetic learning experiences. For example, manipulatives in math or sensory-friendly objects for CYP with autism can help support engagement and understanding.
- **Adapted Learning Equipment:** Ensure that all CYP have access to adapted tools that meet their specific needs. This might include things like large-print books for CYP with Vision impairments or adapted keyboards for CYP with fine motor challenges.

## Addressing Unkindness and ANTI-BULLYING practice:

### Clear Anti-Bullying Policy

- Have a clear, accessible, and well-communicated anti-bullying policy.
- Policy should define bullying and unkind behaviour, including online/cyberbullying.
- Outline procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents.

### Whole-School Approach

- Promote a positive school culture where kindness and respect are core values.
- Engage all members of the school community (staff, pupils, parents) in anti-bullying efforts.
- Embed respect and empathy into the curriculum and daily interactions.

### Early Identification and Intervention

- Encourage CYP and staff to report bullying or unkind behaviour early.
- Use regular pupil surveys or feedback tools to identify issues.
- Provide support to victims promptly and take appropriate action with perpetrators.

## **Education and Awareness**

- Deliver age-appropriate lessons on bullying, its impact, and how to respond.
- Raise awareness about diversity, inclusion, and respect for differences.
- Teach social and emotional skills like empathy, conflict resolution, and assertiveness.

## **Empower Bystanders**

- Encourage CYP to stand up safely and support peers who are being bullied.
- Promote peer mentoring and buddy systems.
- Create a culture where silence or inaction is challenged.

## **Restorative Approaches**

- Use restorative conversations and mediation to resolve conflicts.
- Help CYP understand the impact of their behaviour and take responsibility.
- Focus on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships where possible.

## **Consistent and Fair Consequences**

- Apply sanctions fairly and consistently when bullying is confirmed.
- Balance consequences with support for behaviour change.
- Keep parents informed and involved in the process.

## **Online Safety Measures**

- Educate CYP and families about safe use of technology and social media.
- Monitor and address cyberbullying incidents promptly.
- Collaborate with external agencies when necessary (e.g., police, internet safety experts).

## **Regular Monitoring and Review**

- Keep records of bullying incidents and outcomes.
- Review policies and practice regularly based on feedback and data.
- Use findings to improve prevention and intervention strategies.

## ASSESS and monitor:

- Assess through observation and teaching to identify areas of need in consultation with the CYP.
- Instead of fixed-point assessment, assess CYPs response to mediation/intervention.
- Use finely grained standardised reading, spelling, and numeracy tests to understand learning needs and measure progress.
- Assess progress with learning skills and behaviours using perception scales (0-10) at different time points.

## Support with ATTENTION and focus:

- **Check attention:** Before speaking, ensure you have the child's attention by using their name. Use the CYP's name followed by key word instructions (e.g., "Jamie, look").
- Explain structure of the lesson using a visual schedule with timings if possible.
- Incorporate regular brief breaks.
- Think about pace and variety.
- **Hearing Check:** ensure the child's hearing has been tested if communication challenges are observed.

## Build AWARENESS of the Additional Needs of CYP

- Understanding the nature and impact of SEND allows practitioners to respond effectively, ensuring that each CYP receives appropriate support.
- All staff to understand that they are responsible for teaching all CYP including those with SEND.
- Staff to understand the social model of disability (needs can only be understood in context and changes to context and approaches are what is needed to meet needs)
- Staff to have awareness and provided with training opportunities to support them in meeting the needs of all CYP with SEND.
- **Plan for adaptation (differentiation):** Ensure that teaching strategies are flexible, and consider the individual needs of CYP.
- Staff should be aware that sensory and physical disabilities may affect how a student interacts with their environment, accesses learning materials, accesses visually presented materials, orientates around the classroom, manages with classroom acoustics, and engages socially. Sensory sensitivities (e.g., sound, light, textures) or physical mobility challenges may influence how a student responds to certain activities, routines, or instructions.
- **Collaboration with specialists:** Work with educational psychologists, SEND coordinators, or speech and language therapists to understand each learner's needs more clearly.

## Develop an understanding of BEHAVIOURS

- Understanding the story behind the behaviour (e.g., what is the context or history?). Ensure that the whole picture of a CYPs needs and context is understood. Do they have learning needs? Hearing loss? Communication needs? Are they tired? Hungry? Fearful?
- **Understand behaviour as a method of communication:** What is the CYP trying to communicate through their behaviour?
- Ensure that parent/carer voice is heard. Communicate with families about what might be happening at home (e.g., divorce, bereavement, illness) and strategies that work/don't work.
- Unpick behaviours (both positive and negative) to understand what lies behind them.
- Identifying patterns and triggers of behaviour using ABC or STAR charts to record them. Monitor the frequency, location, description, and duration of behaviours to help explore patterns and target support.

## Ensure BEST PRACTICE is Shared Within and Between Settings

Collaboration and knowledge-sharing are essential to improve the quality of SEND provision across different educational settings. By sharing experiences and practices, settings can improve their overall approach to SEND.

- **SENCO Cluster Meetings:** Encourage the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) to organise or participate in cluster meetings where professionals from different schools share best practices, challenges, and successful strategies for supporting CYP with SEND.
- **Inter-School or MAT Collaboration:** Foster opportunities for staff to visit and observe practices in other settings. This cross-pollination of ideas can lead to better support strategies and more consistent practices for SEND CYP across local schools.
- **External Specialists and Continued Professional Development (CPD) Providers:** Involve external specialists in providing CPD, offering advice, and leading training sessions for staff. This ensures that the setting benefits from the expertise of others outside the immediate school community.

## BIAS Awareness

Provide professional development for educators to recognise and address their own unconscious biases, ensuring fair treatment of all students regardless of race, gender, background, or ability.

## COLLABORATE with other agencies and Specialists

Educational settings often need to draw on the expertise of external professionals to fully support CYP with SEND. Collaboration ensures that the setting has access to a wider range of ideas, strategies, and support services.

- **Parent/Carer Collaboration:** When decisions are made to involve external agencies in casework or assessments, this should be done in partnership with parents/carers. The setting should work closely with families to ensure they are kept informed and involved in the process.
- **Effective Liaison with Outside Agencies:** Develop and maintain strong partnerships with external agencies and specialists, such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, educational psychologists, and mental health professionals. Ensure that these professionals are regularly consulted when additional support is needed.
- **Regular Communication:** Keep communication lines open between the setting and external agencies. Regular updates should be shared about CYP progress, changes in needs, and adjustments to interventions. Ensure that all relevant professionals (including external specialists) are involved in planning and reviewing the learner's progress.
- **Integrated Advice and Strategies:** Advice and strategies from external specialists should be integrated into day-to-day teaching practices. This could include specific teaching techniques, strategies for behaviour management, or the use of assistive technology, based on the recommendations of the outside professionals.
- **Documentation and Planning:** Any advice received from external professionals should be clearly documented in CYP planning documents, such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), so that all staff are aware of the strategies and interventions to implement.

## COLLABORATE with parent/carers and families

- Regular review of the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycles for continuous improvement.
- Clear communication of expectations across the setting.
- Professionals meeting to discuss and understand behaviours and strategies, involving parents/carers.
- Communication with other agencies to understand their involvement or potential involvement.
- Feedback used to collaborate with parents to ensure consistency between home and setting.
- Liaison and collaboration with home to understand the wider context and ensure regular communication.

## COLOUR AND CONTRAST Adjustments

Certain CYP with visual processing difficulties or dyslexia benefit from high contrast materials and a well-chosen colour scheme to support focus and reduce visual stress.

- **Contrasting Materials:** Use high-contrast text and background colours on worksheets and resources. For example, black text on a yellow background is often easier to read than black on white.
- **Coloured Overlays or Paper:** Provide coloured overlays or coloured paper for CYP who may benefit from these to reduce visual discomfort or enhance readability.
- **Consistent Colour Scheme:** Use a consistent colour scheme throughout the classroom for labelling and organising materials to help CYP with visual processing difficulties.

## Adapt COMMUNICATION approaches

- **Encourage Communication:** Encourage all attempts to communicate, whether verbal, non-speaking or non-verbal.
- **Multi-Modal Communication:** Create a multi-modal communication environment incorporating augmented and assisted communication, environmental cues, modelling, and ICT.
- Simplify and Chunk instructions and represent visually so that these can be revisited by the CYP.
- Allow take-up/processing time for the CYP to respond.
- Give scripts or sentence starters to help the CYP communicate in a pair or group.
- Pre-teach specific vocabulary.

## Alternative COMMUNICATION Tools and strategies:

Provide alternative communication tools such as:

- ICT tools, devices and software for communication.
- Use symbols and gestures.
- Use approaches which develop the pre-verbal and early communication skills such as shared attention, facial expressions, turn taking vocalisations or non-verbal actions, enjoyment in interactions etc.

## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE Teaching

Integrate students' cultural backgrounds and experiences into lessons to make learning more relevant and engaging. Include diverse voices, histories, and perspectives to reflect the student body.

## DATA collection

Use data from assessments to inform ongoing planning and review.

## Consider the DEPLOYMENT of additional staff

Leaders play a key role in ensuring that the additional support in the classroom is deployed effectively and strategically, to enhance CYP progress without fostering dependency.

- **Strategic Deployment of Support:** School leaders should regularly assess the classroom environment and staffing to ensure that additional adults are deployed in ways that target the specific needs of CYP. This may include rotating teaching assistants through different groups, focusing support where it is most needed, consistency of support if more specialist skills need to be learnt over time (e.g. for Vision Impairment and Hearing Loss) and ensuring that staff work with CYP in a way that encourages their independence.
- **Flexible Grouping:** Grouping CYP flexibly based on their learning needs, rather than fixed groups, can ensure that CYP benefit from the skills and expertise of different staff members at various points throughout the day. The use of mixed-ability groups, peer learning, and differentiated tasks will help promote a range of learning experiences.
- **Promote Autonomy:** While additional adults can support CYP, the focus should be on promoting independence, not dependency. Support should be designed to empower CYP to become more independent, gradually reducing the level of intervention as their skills develop.
- **Regular Reviews of Staff Support:** Leaders should conduct regular reviews of the use of additional adults in the classroom to ensure that their impact on CYP progress is positive. The frequency, duration, and type of support should be adapted according to the needs and progress of each learner.

## EARLY IDENTIFICATION and prevention

Identify any barriers to learning as early as possible:

- Involve parent/carers from the outset. Work collaboratively to support the CYP.
- Think primarily about changes to the context and approaches used that might support.
- Intervene using a graduated approach (assess-plan-do-review cycle).
- Repeat as many times as necessary until the CYP has made sufficient progress.

## De-escalation and EMOTIONAL REGULATION strategies:

- Use of appropriate de-escalation strategies (e.g., a card to indicate the CYP needs some space/time, mirroring, redirection to a safe area, activity, or resource).
- Use of emotion coaching techniques and unconditional positive regard to repair relationships after incidents.
- Flexible and creative use of rewards and consequences (e.g., 'catch them being good' sticker charts).
- Focus on reducing anxiety and, in turn, behaviours.
- Positive reinforcement through verbal scripts & visual prompts.
- Opportunity for time in a quiet area in the setting for regulation.

## ENGAGEMENT and motivation

- Orientate learning around CYP's areas of interest where possible.
- Be explicit about the function of the learning relating to future goals in this subject or preparation for adulthood and employment.
- Ensure expectations are developmentally appropriate around attention and motivation.
- Consider if extrinsic (external) motivation is needed through rewards systems for example.
- Use structure and ensure lessons have pace and variety.
- Use playfulness in the delivery of the curriculum to support with engagement.
- Think about metacognition (Learning about learning). Explain the function/purpose of the learning. Is it about knowledge? Learning a skill? What are the links to previous or planned learning? What are the links to employability and independence?
- Adapt the way instructions are given to promote engagement (e.g. indirect language, declarative language, offering choice).

## Adapt the Classroom layout and ENVIRONMENT:

- **Ensure Classrooms are Communication-Friendly:** Create environments conducive to communication and engagement.
- Use environmental audits and respond to these accordingly.
- **Limit Distractions:** Reduce external factors such as noise, room temperature, lighting, and room layout that can impact focus and communication.
- **Seating Arrangements:** Consider seating placements to ensure optimal engagement, especially for children with specific communication needs.
- Seating should be arranged to ensure clear visibility and access for CYP with physical disabilities, such as placing them closer to the front of the class or near key learning resources.

- For CYP with sensory needs, seating may need to be further away from noise sources (e.g., windows, doors, noisy classmates), or in a position that minimises visual or auditory distractions.
- Ensure that classrooms and learning spaces are physically accessible. For CYP with mobility issues, pathways should be clear, furniture should be adaptable, and spaces should accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids.
- Access arrangements should be identified for each CYP based on their sensory or physical needs. This could include adjustments for classroom layout, materials, or technology.
- For example, CYP with mobility impairments may need more time to move between activities, while those with sensory processing issues may need a quieter, less stimulating environment.
- Ensure CYP have access to the technology they need. This is to include power sockets and WiFi. IT systems must be compatible with assistive technology and allow for CYP to have individual profiles. The mirroring of Interactive Whiteboards should be possible. IT support is provided to troubleshoot around any issues that occur. CYP should be enabled to access technology without separating them from their peers.

## **EQUIPMENT to support physical, medical needs and access:**

Arrange for the following as needed:

- Lockable medicine cabinets, first aid bags, fridges.
- Rotated medication and/or care training.
- Adapted equipment to access specific tasks (e.g., cutlery, crockery, scissors).
- iPads and grips.
- Extra lighting.
- Work chairs and switch-operated life skills/curriculum equipment.
- Accessible transport.
- Support equipment for specific needs, such as hygiene suites and care training.

## **EVALUATE Quality and Impact of Support**

It is crucial to monitor the effectiveness of the resources and interventions being used. This ensures that support is meeting its intended outcomes and provides the opportunity for continuous improvement.

- Data Collection and Monitoring:** Regularly track and review the impact of interventions on CYP' progress through formative assessments, observations, and feedback. This can include tracking academic progress, social and emotional development, or behavioural improvements.
- Reviewing Interventions:** Regularly review interventions that have been implemented to ensure they are still appropriate for the student's current needs. Adjust interventions when necessary to ensure continued success.

- **Feedback and Reflection:** Gather feedback from staff, learners, and parents about the effectiveness of resources and interventions. Use this input to refine strategies and ensure they are genuinely helping CYP achieve their goals.
- **Evidence-Informed Practice:** Utilise research and evidence-based practices to inform the use of resources. Ensuring that the interventions used are grounded in evidence helps maximize the likelihood of positive outcomes for all CYP.

## Keep up to date with EVIDENCE INFORMED PRACTICE

Evidence-based practice ensures that the strategies and resources provided are proven to be effective in supporting CYP with SEND. It helps prevent the use of unsupported or outdated interventions.

- **Evidence-Based Interventions:** Selection interventions that are evaluated to be effective. Refer to guidance such as the Education Endowment Foundation.
- **Monitor Effectiveness:** Use ongoing data collection and reflection to assess the success of interventions and adapt them based on the results. This includes looking at both qualitative and quantitative data to measure the impact of specific resources or teaching strategies.
- **Collaborative Practice:** Engage with specialists, such as the Bristol Autism Team, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, or occupational therapists, to ensure that the resources and interventions used align with best practices and the latest research in SEND.
- Some interventions and strategies have not been evaluated using comprehensive research methods and studies. In which case, ensure that practice is 'theoretically sound' i.e. based on sound psychological and educational theory and experience about what works to support CYP.

## Set boundaries and clear EXPECTATIONS

- Is important for CYP to have a clear structure to the day.
- Establish clear expectations regarding behaviours and provide a consistent response to behaviours.
- Be aware of times of day that may be more difficult (e.g., before lunch if hungry).
- Ensure that behaviour management approaches focus on reinforcing positive behaviour, 'catching' and noticing any small changes in behaviour rather than a focus on sanctioning negative behaviour.
- Binary approaches to behaviour management (e.g., "ready to learn") may be problematic for CYP with attention, concentration, and emotional needs (as these approaches do not foster a sense of belonging), so reasonable adjustments must be made.
- Engage CYP so they feel empowered to give their voice so their perspective can be understood.

## FEEDBACK Is Clearly Identified as Key to Learning

Constructive feedback helps CYP understand their strengths and areas for improvement.

- **Specific Feedback:** Provide clear, positive feedback focusing on what was done well and what needs to be improved.
- **Immediate Feedback:** Where possible, give feedback as close to the task completion as possible to reinforce learning.

## FIVE-A-DAY Principles of High-Quality teaching (Education Endowment Foundation EEF)

The following teaching approaches are well-evidenced as having a positive impact.

1. **Explicit Instructions:** Teacher-led approaches with a focus on clear explanations, modelling and frequent checks for understanding. This is then followed by guided practice, before independent practice.
2. **Cognitive and metacognitive strategies:** Managing cognitive load is crucial if new content is to be transferred into CYP long-term memory. Provide opportunities for CYP to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning.
3. **Scaffolding:** When CYP are working on a written task, provide a supportive tool or resource such as a writing frame or a partially completed example. Aim to provide less support of this nature throughout the course of the lesson, week or term.
4. **Flexible grouping:** Allocate groups temporarily, based on current levels of mastery. This could, for example, be a group that comes together to receive additional spelling instruction based on current need, before re-joining the main class.
5. **Using technology:** Technology can be used by a teacher to model worked examples; it can be used by a CYP to help them to learn, to practice and to record their learning. For instance, you might use a class visualiser to share CYP work or to jointly rework an incorrect model.

## GOAL SETTING to Promote Independence

Goal setting helps foster a sense of autonomy, self-regulation, and personal growth for CYP with SEND.

- **SMART Goals:** Set Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals to help CYP focus on achievable outcomes.
- **Goal Review:** Regularly review goals to track progress and adjust support strategies where necessary.

## Adaptations for CYP with HEARING LOSS

Classroom environment adaptations including:

- Consideration of acoustics and sound proofing as needed.
- Access to electrical sockets near CYP.
- Access to Wi-Fi.
- IT systems that allow for individual CYP profiles and are compatible with assistive technology.
- Mirroring of the Interactive White Board.
- IT support to troubleshoot any issues that may occur.

## Build INDEPENDENCE

Ensure that a focus of all teaching and learning is to support the CYP on their journey towards independent adulthood and employability.

- Offer all support and adaptations with independence in mind. Avoid over-supporting which can lead to learnt helplessness and dependence.
- Think about transition points a few years in advance. Transition occurs across the school pathway not just at set points in time. Always think about the impact any support will have on independence .
- **Support for Independence:** Seating arrangements and groupings should be designed to encourage independent learning.
- Ensure that staff support is varied and where appropriate rotated to avoid over-dependence on one person.
- **Diverse Groupings:** Mix CYP in both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups, encouraging them to collaborate with different peers.
- **Independent Tasks:** Provide tasks that CYP can work on independently, allowing for skill development and self-reliance. “I do it, we do it, you do it” approach to working independently.
- **Independent Tasks:** Use structured tasks, checklists, and visual scheduling to promote independence in the organisation and sequencing of tasks.

## Giving INSTRUCTIONS

- Instructions are provided using the child's name first to gain their attention.
- Asking the child to repeat back what activity they are going to do to reinforce understanding.
- Clear communication of expectations.
- **Visual Timetables and Cues:** Use visual timetables, "now and next" cards, and other visual aids to support routine and transitions.
- **Auditory Prompts:** Pair auditory prompts (like music or a rainmaker) with visual cues to aid transitions or provide structure.
- **Clear Instructions:** Use concise, explicit instructions and give CYP time to process information before asking them to respond.
- Staff must ensure that all CYP have understood instructions by using visual and verbal cues (e.g., repeating instructions, using visual aids, demonstrating tasks). For CYP with sensory or physical disabilities, instructions should be given in a manner that aligns with their mode of communication (e.g., visual, verbal, tactile).
- Consistent routines to help CYP understand expectations.
- Visual supports for instructions and tasks.

## Targeted INTERVENTIONS

- **Targeted Interventions:** Plan and implement targeted interventions that focus on specific learning outcomes for individual or small groups of CYP. These interventions should be tailored to meet the unique needs of each CYP, whether in literacy, numeracy, social skills, or behaviour.
- **Monitor Impact:** Regularly assess the impact of adult support by observing CYP progress and adjusting interventions if needed. Teachers should assess how well the adult support is contributing to the learners' independence and academic development.
- **Integration into Whole-Class Teaching:** If an intervention strategy is successful for an individual (e.g., visual timetables), it should be integrated into whole-class routines. This ensures that learning strategies are consistent across settings, and CYP who benefit from such support are not isolated.

## Supporting LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT:

- **Positive Body Language:** Use appropriate body language as 70% of communication is non-verbal. Ensure your tone of voice is calm and not too loud.
- **Clear Instructions:**
  - Use simple instructions, avoiding idioms (e.g., "over the moon").
  - Avoid phrasing instructions as questions (e.g., "Shall we...?").
  - Focus on giving positive direction by telling the child what you do want them to do.
  - Use literal language, avoiding sarcasm and figures of speech.

- **Pre-teaching Vocabulary:** Use pre-teaching of topic vocabulary to prepare the child for upcoming lessons.
- **Tailor Instruction:** Adapt your delivery to the learner's needs (e.g., use the child's name, clear and concise instructions, or language modification techniques).
- **Visual Supports:** Provide visual prompts, including key vocabulary and visual timetables.
- **Processing Time:** Allow extra time for the child to process what has been said, following the 10-second rule.
- **Modelling and Scaffolding:** Use modelling and scaffolding to support language development.
- **Introduce Rhymes and Songs:** Use rhymes and songs to expose children to a variety of language.
- **Small Group or Individual Sessions:** Deliver small group or individual language sessions to promote language skills.
- Staff should recognise that sensory and physical disabilities may impact a student's language development and ability to interact socially with peers. For instance, a CYP with a hearing impairment may face difficulties in understanding spoken instructions or may need additional support in social communication.
- Encourage all CYP to use any sensory or physical aids that support communication, such as hearing aids, speech-generating devices, or communication boards. This ensures that CYP can express themselves and access learning opportunities effectively.
- Create a communication-friendly environment by using strategies such as clear and slow speech, visual prompts, and simplified instructions to support understanding.

## Legal frameworks and LEGISLATION

- Ensure all staff understand the key principles from the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibilities and expectations with regards to legislation.
- Ensure school policies align with key legislation.
- Ensure the school has a published SEND Information Summary.

## METACOGNITION and Self-Reflection:

- Support CYP to think about or reflect upon their thinking.
- Talk about the function and purpose of what CYP are learning (relate to preparation for adulthood where possible).
- Model and embed a mindset:
  - Effort leads to growth (hard work not fixed abilities)
  - Mistakes are learning opportunities
  - Feedback helps progress

- Metacognition is important for:
  - Promoting deep learning
  - Developing self-regulated learners who set goals for themselves, learn independently and adapt strategies when faced with challenges

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) makes the following recommendations in its guidance (see EEF-guidance-reports/metacognition)

- Teachers should acquire the professional understanding and skills to develop their pupils' metacognitive knowledge.
- Explicitly teach CYP metacognitive strategies, including how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning.
- Model your own thinking to help CYP develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills.
- Set an appropriate level of challenge to develop pupils' self-regulation and metacognition.
- Promote and develop metacognitive talk in the classroom.
- Explicitly teach CYP how to organise, and effectively manage, their learning independently.
- Schools should support teachers to develop their knowledge of these approaches and expect them to be applied appropriately.

## MODELLING to Aid Understanding

Modelling demonstrates desired behaviours, skills, or strategies, which can help CYP with SEND understand expectations and processes.

- **Teacher Demonstrations:** Show the steps of a task before asking CYP to complete it, using clear language and visual supports where necessary.
- **Peer Modelling:** Use peer support for CYP to demonstrate appropriate behaviours and strategies, allowing others to learn from their example.

## ORGANIZED, Clutter-Free Environment

A cluttered environment can be overwhelming for some CYP with SEND, making it harder to focus or find necessary materials.

- **Clear Organisation:** Arrange the classroom so that materials are neatly organised and easily accessible. Use labelled bins, shelves, or drawers for different resources.
- **Minimal Distractions:** Keep walls and surfaces free of excess decoration or clutter that could distract CYP, especially those with attention difficulties or sensory sensitivities.
- **Designated Areas:** Create clear zones for different activities (e.g., reading corner, computer station, creative arts area) to help CYP understand where to focus and reduce confusion.

## Collaborate with Other Relevant OUTSIDE AGENCIES and Specialists

Educational settings often need to draw on the expertise of external professionals to fully support CYP with SEND. Collaboration ensures that the setting has access to a wider range of ideas, strategies, and support services.

- **Effective Liaison with Outside Agencies:** Develop and maintain strong partnerships with external agencies and specialists, such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, the Bristol Autism Team, Sensory Support Service, educational psychologists, and mental health professionals. Ensure that these professionals are regularly consulted when additional support is needed.
- **Regular Communication:** Keep communication lines open between the setting and external agencies. Regular updates should be shared about CYP progress, changes in needs, and adjustments to interventions. Ensure that all relevant professionals (including external specialists) are involved in planning and reviewing the learner's progress.
- **Integrated Advice and Strategies:** Advice and strategies from external specialists should be integrated into day-to-day teaching practices. This could include specific teaching techniques, strategies for behaviour management, or the use of assistive technology, based on the recommendations of the outside professionals.
- **Documentation and Planning:** Any advice received from external professionals should be clearly documented in CYP planning documents, such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), so that all staff are aware of the strategies and interventions to implement.
- **Parent/Carer Collaboration:** When decisions are made to involve external agencies in casework or assessments, this should be done in partnership with parents/carers. The setting should work closely with families to ensure they are kept informed and involved in the process.

## PACE and Order of Activities Are Varied

Varying the pace helps to maintain attention and engagement, especially for CYP with SEND who may struggle with focus.

- **Different Types of Activities:** Alternate between short, high-energy tasks and calmer, more focused activities to maintain engagement.
- **Flexible Groupings:** Offer a mix of whole-class, small group, and independent activities to cater to different needs and keep CYP engaged.
- **Pacing of Activities:** Staff should be skilled in adjusting the pace and order of activities to maintain the child's interest and attention. Activities that are too fast-paced or overwhelming may result in disengagement, while activities that are too slow may lead to boredom.
- **Clear Transitions:** Ensuring that the beginning and end of activities are clear helps CYP with communication and interaction needs understand transitions, reducing anxiety and promoting engagement.

## PEER SUPPORT and group learning

Collaborative learning fosters social interaction, communication skills, and helps build peer relationships, which are vital for personal development.

- **Structured Peer Activities:** Design tasks that require CYP to work together in pairs or small groups, encouraging peer support and communication.
- Explain roles in pair and group work clearly.
- If necessary, practice how to work in a pair or group and the social and learning skills needed.
- **Peer Mentoring:** Implement peer mentoring or buddy systems to support CYP with SEND in forming positive relationships and developing social skills.

## PERSONALISED Learning Support:

- Personalised visual timetables or visual prompts (e.g., task boards).
- Individualised timetables.
- Use of timers, so CYP know they only need to focus for a comfortable amount of time.
- Clear feedback on progress.
- "I do it, we do it, you do it" approach to working independently.

## Incorporate PHYSICAL ACTIVITY and movement

Movement breaks are important to support attention and focus. Active learning can help engage CYP. For those CYP who need a physical programme/exercise it is inclusive to incorporate these activities into whole class learning (and avoids gaps in learning).

- Incorporate motor skills programmes to support physical coordination and learning.
- Use role play, drama, and props (e.g., puppets) to engage CYP.

## Individualised or Small Group PLANNING

Small group work or individualised planning ensures more targeted support, which is often necessary for CYP with SEND:

- **Targeted Interventions:** Provide interventions in small groups where CYP receive more focused support, often in specific areas of the curriculum.
- **Personalised Plans:** Use IEPs (Individual Education Plans) to outline specific goals for CYP and create targeted strategies for support.
- A consistent approach with reasonable adjustments made for each child (e.g., SEMH, trauma, ADHD).
- Differentiated resources and support tailored to the child's needs.

- Personalised visual timetables and visual prompts for transitions and activity changes.
- Regular mentor support, including from adults or peers.
- Positive praise to improve self-esteem and promote positive behaviour.
- Small group and 1-to-1 support for social and emotional development (e.g., friendship or social skills, nurture groups).
- Backward chaining (building confidence by starting with a successful part of the task or activity).
- Modify home learning tasks to build on core skills as needed.

## PROCESSING Information

CYP with SEND may need extra time to process instructions and formulate responses for a range of reasons. This could be to do with their processing speed or other emotional barriers for example.

- **Wait Time:** After giving instructions, allow extra time before asking CYP to respond (e.g., the 10-second rule).
- **Use of visual cues:** These cues can provide additional support to reinforce spoken information.
- **Prepare the CYP for a question:** 'Next I am going to ask you to tell me one thing....'

## REDIRECT SUPPORT and Resources Based on CYP Needs

Not all interventions work for every child, and as CYP progress, their support needs may change. It is vital to evaluate which strategies work best for the individual and adapt resources accordingly.

- **Regular Assessments:** Continuously assess the progress and changing needs of CYP. This helps identify when certain interventions or resources are no longer needed or when new resources must be introduced.
- **Resource Reallocation:** Redirect resources, such as sensory tools or additional staff support, to different CYP who may benefit from them more at different times. This ensures that resources are used effectively and that no CYP is overlooked.
- **Transitioning Support:** As a CYP develops new skills or moves to a different stage in their educational journey, support and resources may need to be adjusted. For example, a child who once needed significant support with fine motor skills might need fewer resources in this area but may benefit from interventions in other areas, such as literacy.

## Positive RELATIONSHIPS Across the Whole Community

Positive relationships are fundamental to emotional well-being, social development, and creating an inclusive school culture.

- **Whole-School Initiatives:** Foster a school-wide culture of respect, empathy, and inclusion, such as whole-school awareness programs on SEND and whole school training on neuro-divergence.
- **Inclusive Activities:** Create opportunities for CYP with and without SEND to engage in collaborative activities, promoting mutual understanding and friendship.
- Focus on building and deepening existing relationships with adults and peers.
- Continued use of unconditional positive regard to ensure a fresh start after each session or lesson.
- Build on preferred ways of learning, subjects, and interests to increase motivation and engagement.
- Giving responsibility (e.g., looking after someone or something else) to build confidence and a sense of responsibility.
- Buddying and/or peer mentoring to support social development.
- Safe place/quiet area identified with clear guidelines for access.
- Use of social stories to identify triggers and ways of overcoming them.

## RESOURCES Are Allocated Appropriately

- **Organised and Accessible Resources:** Ensure that resources, such as sensory equipment (e.g., writing slopes, pencil grips, wobble cushions, fidget toys, ear defenders, and weighted blankets), are within easy reach of CYP to promote independence. This allows CYP to access the tools they need without relying on adult support.
- **Clear Labelling:** Keep resources organised, clearly labelled using both text and images, so that all CYP, including those with communication difficulties or cognitive challenges, can easily locate what they need.
- **Adapting Physical Resources:** Adapt physical learning resources, such as PE and Maths equipment (e.g., using larger or softer balls for children with motor coordination difficulties), to ensure all CYP can participate and engage with learning.
- **Print and Font Adjustments:** Ensure that printed resources are readable, with appropriate print sizes and fonts. For CYP with dyslexia or visual processing difficulties, the use of dyslexia-friendly fonts and high contrast between text and background can significantly improve readability.
- **Coloured Paper and Backgrounds:** Use coloured paper or background materials where appropriate to reduce visual stress for learners, particularly those with dyslexia or other sensory sensitivities.

## Clear ROUTINES and structures

All CYP including CYP with SEND often benefit from structured routines and predictable environments.

- **Routine Boards and Schedules:** Use clear, consistent routines with visual schedules that outline daily or weekly activities.
- Task checklists for individual activities, sand timers, transitional objects, clear explanation of upcoming changes, unexpected changes are shown on the visual timetable.
- **Task Boards:** Post “now” and “next” boards or task boards that help CYP transition smoothly between activities and prepare for upcoming tasks.
- **Clearly Defined Roles and Instructions:** Ensure that the expectations for each task or activity are clearly defined and visible to CYP, reducing confusion and anxiety.
- Warnings of change including staff changes can be shared through the schedule
- Routines can help CYP feel safe and a sense of belonging to the class group

## SAFE SPACE Available within the Classroom or Setting

For many CYP with SEND, particularly those with emotional or behavioural needs, transitions can trigger stress or anxiety. A “safe space” provides them with a retreat to calm down or collect themselves before returning to their regular activities.

- **Designated Safe Areas:** Set up a quiet, safe space in the classroom or within the school setting where CYP can go if they feel overwhelmed or need a break. This area can be equipped with calming sensory tools, such as fidget toys, weighted blankets, noise-cancelling headphones, or soft seating.
- **Clear Expectations for Use:** Make sure that the use of this space is clearly communicated to CYP. The purpose of the safe space should be understood as a positive option for self-regulation, not a punishment or retreat from learning.
- **Support during Unstructured Times:** Plan for times when transitions are more difficult, such as break times or lunch periods. CYP may benefit from a structured alternative like a games club, use of the library, or small group activities designed to help them feel safe and engaged during unstructured periods.

## SCAFFOLDING

Scaffolding is ‘a metaphor for temporary support that is removed when it is no longer required’, providing ‘enough support so that CYP can successfully complete tasks that they could not yet do independently’.

Scaffolding builds more independence from the teacher by carefully structuring access to a task, using temporary supports and prompts which are then gradually removed as the learner becomes more independent.

# SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Seating arrangements can have a significant impact on the ability of CYP with SEND to focus, participate, and interact with peers.

- **Flexible Seating Options:** Provide a variety of seating options (e.g., chairs, beanbags, standing desks, or floor seating) to accommodate different learning styles and sensory preferences.
- **Seating Positioning:** Place CYP in seats that minimise distractions and offer good sight lines to the teacher, interactive boards, or other CYP. For example, CYP with attention difficulties may benefit from sitting near the front of the classroom.
- **Individualised Seating:** Some CYP may require specific seating arrangements, such as sitting near an adult, in a quiet corner, or in a position that reduces visual or auditory distractions.
- Walk CYP around the room when the class are not present to talk about where feels safe and where they might learn best.
- Arrange seating so that all CYP feel included and can easily pair with others for learning tasks. Do not seat staff next to CYP unless absolutely necessary for safety or medical needs.

## Use of SENSORY AND PHYSICAL Aids:

**Use of Sensory Equipment:** Staff should encourage CYP to wear or use appropriate sensory aids, such as noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, weighted blankets, or communication devices. These tools can help reduce anxiety, improve focus, and facilitate communication.

**Physical Aids:** Encourage the use of any required physical aids, such as mobility devices (e.g., wheelchairs, walking aids), or other adaptive equipment (e.g., hand grips for writing, adapted keyboards). Staff should ensure that these aids are maintained, accessible, and used consistently by CYP.

## Create a SENSORY-FRIENDLY Environment

Some CYP with SEND, particularly those with autism or sensory processing difficulties, may be sensitive to sensory input, such as lighting, noise, and textures. Following regular completion of a sensory environment audit the following should be considered:

- **Lighting:** Use adjustable lighting or natural light where possible. Avoid harsh fluorescent lighting by using soft, warm lights or floor lamps. Some CYP may benefit from dimmer switches.
- **Noise Control:** Provide noise-cancelling headphones or quiet spaces for CYP who are easily overwhelmed by classroom noise. Use soft materials like carpets or curtains to absorb sound.
- **Calm Spaces:** Create “sensory breaks” or “calm zones” where CYP can go when feeling overstimulated. These spaces can have soft furnishings, calming visuals, or low lighting to help CYP regulate their emotions.

- **Fidget Tools:** Have sensory items (such as stress balls, fidget spinners, or textured materials) available for CYP who benefit from sensory input to help maintain focus.

## Provide clear SIGNAGE and Labels

Labels and signage make the classroom environment more navigable for all learners, especially those with communication difficulties or autism.

- **Picture Labels:** Use picture labels alongside text to make it easier for CYP with language difficulties to understand and locate materials and areas of the classroom.
- **Directional Signage:** Place signs to guide CYP to specific areas of the classroom (e.g., the reading corner, the sensory area), making it easier for CYP to navigate and reducing confusion.

## Promote SOCIAL INTERACTION and Peer Engagement

Some CYP with SEND may struggle with social skills and building relationships, so the environment should foster opportunities for positive social interactions.

- **Raising awareness:** Ensure that there is an awareness of individual differences both at a whole school level and targeted for individual CYP with their consent and involvement.
- **Peer Support Systems:** Arrange seating to promote peer interactions, such as having CYP work in mixed-ability groups or pairs.
- **Group Work and Collaborative Tasks:** Design activities that require CYP to collaborate, ensuring that all CYP have opportunities to engage with others and practice social skills.
- **Social Stories and Visual Cues for Interaction:** For CYP with social communication difficulties, display visual prompts or social stories that model appropriate social interactions and classroom etiquette.
- Use a running commentary approach to highlight social and emotional learning opportunities in the classroom.
- Focus on skills such as sharing, turn taking, working as a team that you will be looking for in the classroom. Model and practice these skills and then use positive reinforcement when these are observed.

## Personal, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL Growth:

- Small group or nurture group activities to support personal, social, and emotional development.
- A range of differentiated opportunities for friendship development (e.g., buddy systems, friendship strategies, circle time).
- Restorative approaches to enable repair following relationship fractures.

- Engage CYP to give their voice in social and emotional activities.
- Clear positive support to resolve playground and/or peer group disputes.
- Use of visual tools to develop social understanding and problem solving.

## Use **SOLUTION FOCUSED** thinking

- Focus on solutions not problems. 'What is working well?', 'When does this work better?'
- Set small achievable goals.
- Small changes lead to big changes.
- Build on strengths and successes. Use these successes as clues for moving forwards.
- There are always exceptions to any problem. Identify the times or situations when the problem does not occur and build on these.
- Use scales to help show progress and movement towards shared goals.
- It is not about stopping behaviours – it is about building skills.
- Work together with CYP to find solutions (with them not for them).

## Use of additional **SUPPORT STAFF**

Additional staff can provide extra support but must be used effectively to avoid fostering dependence. A balance of independent and collaborative work helps CYP with SEND to develop both autonomy and social skills. The following 3 Effective practices Deployment of Teaching Assistants | EEF must be supported by Effective implementation:

1. Deploy Teaching Assistants (TAs) in ways that enable all CYP to access high-quality teaching
  - TAs should supplement – not replace – the teacher. This means that CYP who struggle most should spend at least as much time with the teacher as other pupils, if not more.
  - Ensure all CYP have access to high-quality teaching with their class teacher.
  - Ensure working relationships between teachers and TAs meet all pupils' needs, with the teacher retaining responsibility for all pupils.
  - Support teachers and TAs to identify practices which inhibit pupil learning and engage in effective alternatives.
2. Deploy TAs to scaffold learning and to develop pupils' independence
  - Leaders should ensure TAs are prepared to engage in scaffolding practices that support pupils' learning and ability to learn independently. Supporting pupil independence should be a key consideration of TA deployment.
  - Equip TAs with a range of scaffolding strategies appropriate to the age, subject, and specific individual needs of CYP they work with.

- Remove scaffolds over time to promote independent learning, with teachers supporting TAs to make those judgements.
- Ensure CYP have the opportunity to attempt tasks independently before intervening appropriately when they can't proceed.

**3. Deploy TAs to deliver well-chosen, evidence based, structured interventions where appropriate**

- The evidence shows that TAs can support CYP effectively through structured interventions. However, these need to be carefully considered, monitored, and linked to the classroom to ensure positive outcomes for pupils.
- Reflect on the purpose of interventions and engage with the evidence base before deploying TAs to deliver structured interventions.
- Monitor progress to be sure the benefit of the intervention outweighs time away from the classroom.
- Support teachers and TAs to engage in bridging practices that connect learning between interventions and the classroom.

## Teachers' role with SUPPORT STAFF

Engage all staff in the process of implementing effective teaching assistant deployment.

- **Purposeful Deployment:** Plan the role of additional adults carefully, ensuring that their support enhances independence, rather than diminishing it. They should have clear roles with well-defined learning objectives and success criteria aligned with the individual needs of CYP.
- **Gradual Release of Responsibility:** Encourage CYP to complete tasks independently with support gradually faded over time, promoting autonomy. Even when additional adults are present, CYP should be encouraged to engage with their peers, solve problems, and take ownership of their learning.
- **Time-Limited Support:** Ensure that additional adult support is time-limited and reviewed regularly. The goal is to promote CYP independence, and continuous, long-term reliance on additional adults should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Periodically reassess whether the intervention is still needed or whether the CYP can manage without this level of support.
- Provide training in the effective use of feedback to support learning, including how to offer constructive, targeted feedback that motivates and guides the student.
- Offer training in mediated learning, which involves guiding CYP through problem-solving, promoting independent learning, and encouraging self-regulation.

## Structure of TASKS

Breaking tasks into smaller steps makes them less overwhelming and more accessible for CYP with SEND.

- Tasks are broken down into manageable steps
- Use Step-by-Step Instructions: Provide clear, manageable steps for each task, possibly using visuals or written checklists.
- **Use of prompts:** Include visual or auditory reminders (e.g., "step 1," "step 2") to guide the process.
- **Instruction and Support Techniques:** Clear and simple instructions, breaking down longer instructions and giving them one at a time.
- Give time before a response is needed.
- **Pre-teaching:** Provision of interventions to help prepare the CYP for a new topic.
- Clear Structure in Activities: Structured Teaching emphasises the importance of clear beginnings and endings of activities. Each task should have a well-defined start and finish to aid transitions and ensure a sense of closure.

## Use of Assistive TECHNOLOGY and Devices

Technology can help CYP with SEND engage more fully with the curriculum and compensate for areas of difficulty. Technology can offer alternative ways of interacting with the curriculum and promote independence.

- Use technology to support CYP in a way that promotes independence and inclusion.
- Provide access to assistive technologies, such as text-to-speech or speech-to-text software, to help CYP with difficulties in reading and writing. Screen readers, speech-to-text software, or text-to-speech software for CYP with reading, writing, or vision impairments.
- **Interactive Whiteboards:** Use interactive whiteboards or smartboards to make lessons more engaging. These can include visual, auditory, and touch-based learning activities that cater to different needs.
- **Recording Alternatives:** Use audio recorders, voice-activated devices, or digital note-taking tools to help CYP who struggle with handwriting or need an alternative method of recording and organising their ideas.
- **Tablets and Laptops:** Provide tablets or laptops with a choice of software individualised for the needs of the CYP. Use these to enable access to whole class and independent learning.

## Staff Skills and TRAINING

Unfocused or generic support is not effective for CYP with SEND. To ensure progress, additional adult support must be targeted, purposeful, and aligned with the learning needs of the student. The strategies and interventions for CYP with SEND evolve, and all staff must stay informed about new research, practices, and tools to effectively support CYP.

- **Planned Continued Professional Development (CPD) Programmes:** Implement a structured and ongoing CPD programme focused on SEND, ensuring that it includes opportunities for the entire setting, specific teams, and individual staff members to learn about new strategies and best practices.
- **Focus Areas in CPD:** CPD should cover a range of topics such as differentiation, behaviour management, effective communication with SEND learners, the use of assistive technology, and understanding different types of SEND (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, dyslexia, ADHD).
- **Sharing Best Practice:** Foster a culture of collaboration where best practices are regularly shared within the setting. Encourage staff to reflect on their practices and share successful strategies. This could include informal peer observations, collaborative planning sessions, or mentoring from experienced colleagues.
- **External CPD Opportunities:** Offer opportunities for staff to attend external workshops, conferences, or seminars related to SEND. This can help keep staff up-to-date with the latest research and strategies.
- **Monitoring CPD Impact:** Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of CPD by seeking feedback from staff and observing improvements in practice. Ensure that what is learned through CPD is implemented in the classroom and benefits CYP with SEND.

## Supporting TRANSITIONS

Change, whether routine or significant, can be difficult and anxiety-inducing for all CYP and especially those with SEND. The following principles are key for successful transition:

- **Planning and preparation:** Start early and use visual aids, visits and other familiarisation techniques.
- **Communication:** Keep it clear and simple with CYP, families, settings/ schools and peers.
- **Emotional support:** Acknowledge feelings, encourage expression in a safe space and involve peer support where appropriate.
- **Individualised support:** Adapt to CYP's needs, make a plan, assign a key person.
- **Planning for Transitions:** Ensure that staff are aware of which CYP require additional support during transitions. This includes CYP who might experience heightened anxiety or distress during periods of change, such as:
  - Children in Care (CiC), children in need (CIN), or those subject to child protection plans (CP).
  - CYP with autism spectrum condition (ASC) or other social communication difficulties.
  - CYP who have experienced trauma, loss, or bereavement.

- Personalised Transition Plans: Develop individualised transition plans for CYP who experience difficulty with transitions. These plans can include:
  - **Visual or Written Preparation:** Use visual aids or written descriptions to help CYP anticipate and understand what will happen during the transition. Visual timetables or "Now and Next" boards can help structure the change.
  - **Pre-Transition Preparation:** Prepare CYP in advance for changes in routine, such as moving from one lesson to another, or for larger transitions like the beginning of a new term, holiday breaks, or moving to a new class.
- Targeted Support for Specific Transitions: Some transitions require extra planning. For example:
  - **Transitioning between lessons or settings:** Ensure CYP know where they are going, what will happen next, and who they will be with.
  - **Changes in staff:** When new staff are introduced (permanent or temporary), ensure CYP are introduced to them slowly and given a chance to build familiarity.
  - **Life Events and Personal Changes:** Support CYP through significant personal transitions such as a change in family circumstances (e.g., parental separation, loss, or birth of a sibling). Special support might be needed around periods of anxiety or grief.
  - **Major School Transitions (e.g., Moving Schools):** Provide additional planning and support for major transitions, such as moving between schools or adjusting to a new class. This can include visits to the new setting, introduction to new staff, peer mentoring, and creating a transition booklet for CYP to familiarise them with what to expect

## Visual Support for TRANSITIONS

Visual supports are crucial for many learners, particularly those with SEND, as they provide a clear structure and reduce anxiety by making abstract concepts, like time, more concrete.

- **Visual Timetables:** Display visual timetables in a consistent and accessible location. For CYP who struggle with time management or anxiety around transitions, these timetables can be used to show the structure of the day and highlight upcoming changes in activities.
- **Personalised Timetables:** If necessary, create individual visual schedules that break down the day's transitions into manageable chunks for CYP with more specific needs, such as those with autism or anxiety disorders.
- **Timers and Countdown Tools:** Use timers (e.g., visual countdown clocks) to show how much time CYP have left before a transition occurs, which helps them prepare mentally and reduces stress. This can be especially useful in lesson endings, during breaks, or at the start of new activities.
- **"Now and Next" Cards:** Use "Now and Next" cards to provide CYP with a clear understanding of what activity is coming next. This is a great tool to help ease transitions, particularly for younger children or those with communication or learning difficulties.

- **Changing Between Structured and Unstructured Times:** Breaks or unstructured times can be difficult for CYP with SEND, as they might struggle with social situations, managing free time, or transitioning between high-structure activities to low-structure ones. Consider providing structured alternatives such as a supervised break, sensory breaks, or access to calm spaces.
- **Changes in the Class Environment:** If there is a change in staff or classroom routines, give CYP notice, and gradually introduce new elements to avoid overwhelming them. Consistency and familiarity are key to supporting CYP with SEND through these changes.

## Adopt a TRAUMA-INFORMED Approach:

### Whole-School Approach

- Trauma-informed practice is embedded across the entire school culture.
- Staff at all levels (leadership, teaching, support) are trained and committed.
- Policies, behaviour strategies, and relationships are aligned with trauma-aware principles.

### Staff Training and Development

- Continuous professional development (CPD) on trauma, ACEs, attachment, and mental health.
- Staff understand signs of trauma and its behavioural manifestations.
- Emphasis on self-care and wellbeing for staff to manage vicarious trauma and burnout.

### Relationships at the Centre of all practice

- Strong, trusting relationships between staff and CYP are prioritised.
- Show CYP that they are kept in mind. They are missed if not in the classroom learning.
- Relational approaches replace punitive discipline.
- Staff use co-regulation strategies to support emotional development.
- A consistent message with flexible approaches (e.g., “I want you to be in class learning” but adapting strategies to the individual’s needs).

### Safe and Predictable Environment

- Classrooms and school routines are consistent, calm, and structured. Predictability helps reduce anxiety and increase emotional safety.
- Within an overall structure with clear expectations – also offer some flexibility and choice.
- Physical spaces are designed to be welcoming and non-threatening.

## **Behaviour as Communication**

- Challenging behaviour is seen as a communication of unmet need or distress.
- Interventions are restorative, not punitive.

## **Pupil Voice and Empowerment**

- CYP are given agency, choice, and a sense of control.
- Opportunities to express feelings and experiences in safe, supported ways.
- Inclusion of pupil perspectives in decisions affecting them.

## **Emotional Literacy and Regulation**

- Programmes and curricula (e.g. Zones of Regulation, Thrive, Nurture) support emotional development.
- Time and space for CYP to process feelings.
- Staff model and teach self-regulation techniques.

## **Family and Community Engagement**

- Partnership with families to support consistency between home and school.
- Trauma-informed schools work to understand the home context.
- Connections with external services (CAMHS, social care, etc.) are facilitated.

## **Early Intervention and Support**

- Focus on identifying and supporting needs early, before they escalate.
- Use of graduated responses (e.g. SEN support) to provide tailored help.

# **Adaptations for CYP with VISION IMPAIRMENT**

Classroom environment adaptations including:

- Consideration of acoustics and sound proofing as needed.
- Access to electrical sockets near CYP ensuring that they can access technology without needing to be separated from their peers.
- Access to Wi-Fi.
- IT systems that allow for individual CYP profiles and are compatible with assistive technology.
- Mirroring of the Interactive White Board.
- IT support to troubleshoot any issues that may occur.

## VISUAL/AUDIO SUPPORTS and Alternative Recording Methods

Visual and auditory supports can provide additional pathways for learning and make tasks more accessible. Visual supports can provide clear, consistent guidance for CYP with SEND, especially those with communication difficulties, autism, or attention challenges.

- **Visual Timetables:** Display daily schedules, routines, and lesson plans with images, symbols, or Colour codes to help CYP with SEND understand and anticipate what will happen next.
- **Visual Instructions:** Post step-by-step instructions or learning goals on the wall to support CYP in following tasks independently.
- **Colour-Coded Resources:** Use colour-coding for different subjects, areas of the classroom, or learning materials to help CYP with SEND quickly locate what they need.
- **Key Vocabulary Boards:** Display important vocabulary, with visual cues or pictures, to reinforce understanding, linking words and concepts and retention of new terms.
- **Alternatives to Writing:** Allow CYP to record their thoughts via audio, videos, or through technology, such as speech-to-text software.
- **Visual Teaching Aids:** Provide visual resources such as visual timetables, pictures, and social stories to support both learning and social activities. These visual aids help children with communication and interaction needs better understand instructions and routines.
- **Classroom Resources:** Ensure that children can access a wide range of resources, with a strong emphasis on visual supports to enhance comprehension and engagement.
- **Simple presentation changes:** For example, font, coloured paper, line spacing, lighting, overlays, adaptation, and technology.



**We experience many of  
the same challenges and  
struggles as other children  
and young people.**



**We want, and have the  
right to, the same  
opportunities in our  
lives.**



**We have the same hopes  
and aspirations for our  
future as all children and  
young people in  
Bristol.**

