



Supporting children who need individualised approaches in Early Years – Tier 2

This document lists strategies that can be used to support children with different learning needs.

1. Cognition and learning

- Model completing the task and talk through what you are doing.
- Provide pictures demonstrating the task.
- Allow the learner to observe other peers completing the task.
- Play alongside the learner.
- Begin with closed questions.
- Support the child to choose resources.
- Spend time consolidating learning points.
- Ask parents to support in consolidating a particular number or sound.
- Provide writing frames.

2. Physical needs

It is likely the learner will arrive with the physical need already known, and perhaps a professional already involved with advice of how to support them. The classroom should be arranged in a way that allows the learner to move around the room and access all areas of the classroom.

3. Sensory needs

- Speak to parents to find out which senses may cause discomfort.
- Speak to parents to find out if a particular sensory experience is soothing, e.g. playdough/fiddle toy.
- Ensure the child is aware if a loud bell is going to sound.
- Provide other sensory experiences for the child to explore using hands/feet/ears/eyes.
- Provide a safe sensory box the child can easily access such as a container with sensory toys appealing to the individual.
- Provide alternative activities if the child does not enjoy a sensory experience.

4. Communication

Speech

Specific exercises will need to be given by a speech therapist. These will vary depending on what sounds or speech issues the learner is struggling with. It is good practise not to correct the child but instead to repeat back modelling the correct way to pronounce a sound.

Communication and language

- Support verbal explanations using pictures and objects of reference.
- Use simple language and repetition.
- Model functional language such as 'hello', 'please', 'toilet', 'give me', 'milk' 'banana'.
- Consistent use of natural gestures, e.g. pointing, facial expressions, signs and symbols.
- Adult uses child's name to gain attention.
- Use simple choices e.g. 'milk or water?'.
- Repeat key words and phrases.
- Repeat what the child says and add one word.
- Don't ask the child to copy or to say speech, sounds or words that they find difficult.
- Simple instructions e.g. Keep It Short and Simple.
- Staff use consistent language for equipment and routines, e.g. all staff use the term 'play time' rather than 'breaktime'.
- Give time for the child to respond.
- Prepare children for routine changes e.g. change in activity / end of session.
- Develop a Communication Friendly environment with photos / pictures to show routine of setting.
- Use visual timetables, Now and Next boards to show the structure of the day and specific experiences.

Interaction

- Facilitate social groups to practise turn-taking and listening to others.
- Provide phrases to use if a child does not know how to communicate their needs.
- Put together social groups to encourage a child to speak.
- Demonstrate or facilitate a game for a specific group to play.

5. Social and emotional needs

- Model positive interactions.
- Have a specific spot on the carpet or place to line up.
- Discuss shared interests.
- Identify and support peer play focusing on shared interests.
- Support with transitions during the session and day.
- Be aware of the child's space boundaries.
- Be aware of triggers for behaviour.
- Find out what soothes and calms the learner.
- Establish a quiet space if they are feeling overwhelmed.
- Model alternative ways for the child to show frustration.
- Provide a 'safe place' to go to if the learner is overwhelmed.

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