



Ordinarily Available Provision

Early years and primary schools

2026

Southwark
Council

“

I feel proud that
my thoughts were
put in the paper
and I agree with
everything in
there.

”



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Ordinarily Available Provision

Early years and primary settings

‘Ordinarily Available Provision’ is a phrase first used in 2023 by the Department for Education and refers to inclusive, high-quality teaching and everyday adjustments that early years settings, mainstream schools, and colleges are expected to provide for all children and young people, including those who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Southwark’s Ordinarily Available Provision has been developed to support settings and schools, from early years settings to sixth form in order to reflect on and strengthen their core offer for inclusion.

Around 150 children and young people in Southwark mainstream schools participated in workshops led by Southwark’s SEND Participation Officer to develop this guidance. Their views and wishes are incorporated throughout this document, and their voices should be of paramount importance when planning and delivering teaching.

In the recent SEND reform paper Ordinarily Available Provision was defined as: ‘Ordinarily Available Provision is the everyday support and adaptive teaching that all mainstream settings are expected to provide from their own resources for children and young people, including those with SEND, before specialist help is considered’.

All mainstream educational settings should use Ordinarily Available Provision

as part of their focus on inclusion. Ordinarily Available Provision will benefit all pupils, especially those with SEND or who are disadvantaged. Children and young people who consistently struggle and do not make progress with the provision of Ordinarily Available Provision may need to be reviewed to consider further support.

Our guidance gives examples of adaptations and reasonable adjustments that are part and parcel of everyday high-quality inclusive provision.

An effective Ordinarily Available Provision supports settings to create environments where belonging, participation and achievement are prioritised, ensuring that every child and young person feels valued, respected and able to engage fully in school life.

The Ordinarily Available Provision promotes proactive, early support – reducing barriers to learning, supporting early identification, and strengthening the use of evidence informed strategies across all phases. The Education Endowment Foundation states ‘to a great extent, good teaching for children and young people with SEND is good teaching for all’.

The level of support for children and young people in education, starts with universal, Ordinarily Available Provision and moves through a range of other targeted and specialist support. We call this the graduated offer, ensuring that children and young people get the right support at the right time.

Terminology used in this document

- Children and young people as CYP
- Adults who support CYP as staff



Environment and inclusive setting



High quality teaching and interventions



Understanding need



Statutory and policies



Training

Different colours are used throughout the guidance to help you navigate the document – please see the key below:

Universal provision

Available for all students.

+ Available provision

Accessible if it is needed.

✓ Good practice

and exemplification in local Southwark primary schools.

... Voice of CYP

of Southwark.



Environment and inclusive setting



Inclusive setting

All children and young people have the **same opportunities and diversity is celebrated**.

All CYP have access to the **same extracurricular activities and educational visits** as their peers - Extra-curricular activities and educational visits are planned to fully include CYP with special educational needs and disabilities. Reasonable adjustments are made for CYP.

All children and young people have **equal access to qualified staff** who are also subject specialists where relevant, as well as a broad and balanced curriculum.

Opportunities for peer awareness, sensitivity and support for diversity, different needs and disabilities – celebration weeks/days, sharing of stories where CYP feel comfortable.

Peer support: encourage peer mentoring or buddy systems to facilitate social integration and boost confidence in CYP with SEND.



"I have my friends near me so they can comfort me."

All posters, wall displays and role models are **representative of the diversity of the local community and national picture**, therefore pupils can see themselves represented clearly and positively.



"Yes, our book corner has lots [of pictures and stories about many different people]"

- **Top tip:** LEANS is a free curriculum to introduce pupils aged 8-11 to the concept of neurodiversity, and help them explore how it impacts school experiences.
- [About the LEANS resources | Salvesen Mindroom Research Centre | Salvesen Mindroom Research Centre](#)

Safe spaces

+ CYP who find break times/unstructured times overstimulating are able to access alternative quiet spaces and activities such as calm clubs at unstructured times (lunchtimes and/or breaktimes)

... **"I want quiet spaces to be mandatory. There isn't much of a quiet space in the school."**

Ensure staff model and reinforce positive use of safe spaces (e.g., "I'm feeling upset, I'll sit in the calm corner for a moment").

There is a calm and purposeful climate for learning where CYP feel they belong, and their contributions are valued.

+ CYP identify an agreed space

CYP can identify adults they can approach about their concerns and opinions, which are valued.

CYP voice is collected in a range of ways and then acted on.

Staff are aware that some CYP can face additional safeguarding challenges and ensure appropriate support is in place.

CYP are welcomed to the setting and reasonable adjustments are made to ensure sensory safety.

... **"Sadly, I cannot come wearing my sports clothes".**

✓ A Southwark primary school created a calm table, which was themed and had different sensory tools to use. Students could request through a visual symbol/object of reference or verbally, used in partnership with an incredible five point scale.

CPD and attitudes

Leaders ensure there is a planned programme which has identified strengths and gaps to ensure ongoing CPD for the whole setting, departments, teams and individual staff, and liaise with Southwark Council if they require more support. More can be found about the council's training offer in the training section of the OAP.

SENCO to attend the three SENCO forum training days set out by the council.

Any negative attitudes, beliefs and perceptions towards individuals and groups are challenged.

Staff set and maintain clear, predictable routines and boundaries. Rules and boundaries are reinforced positively and empathetically, and the behaviour policy reflects this practice.



"I know the rules regulate our behaviour in the school."

Establish simple rules such as "walk indoors" or "use gentle hands," explained in child-friendly terms.

Emphasis always on the positive, and use of specific praise ("well done sharing ...") and reward systems to reinforce desired behaviour.

All teachers adopt a non-labelling of difference and non-deficit approach to early identification of need and early intervention, always thinking "how can we help" over "what is wrong".

EYFS leaders and may want to explore:

- [Best start in life: a research review for early years - GOV.UK](#)
- [Early years child development training: Home page](#)
- [EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers](#)



Physical environment

The physical accessibility of the building and individual learning spaces is assessed at least annually, and as required.

Sensory and environment audits are used to inform the environment.

Environmental Checklist

Classrooms include low sensory stimulation areas where possible, for example a dark pop-up tent and have a calm corner/area as suggested below.



Sensory sensitivity
Highly aware of sensory input but does not regulate it, noticing small details others may miss.



Low registration
May not notice sensory input unless it is strong, appearing inattentive or unaware.



Sensory avoiding
Highly sensitive to sensory input and actively avoids it, withdrawing from loud, bright, or busy environments.



Sensation seeking
Actively seeks strong sensory input, often fidgeting, spinning, touching objects, or enjoying loud environments.

Here are some suggestions on how you can create a calm space:

- Neutral-coloured cushions and rugs.
- Minimal visual distractions (plain walls or soft tones). Visuals may be used to support regulation.
- Sensory tools such as fidget board, stress ball or fidget items.
- Ensure the area is accessible at all times for self-regulation.
- Use child-friendly signage or visuals to indicate the purpose of the space.
- Rotate calming resources based on children's preferences and needs.
- Position this area away from high-traffic zones and noisy equipment.



Sensory tools, movement, and play-based learning were expressly valued by CYP: "We are not allowed toys in school, but I struggle to focus sometimes."



Displays were found overwhelmingly helpful by CYP, although the word 'display' was not instantly understood by many. Accessibility from the CYP's seat was also a challenge: "Most I can read with my glasses, but others I still can't see."

Schools should ensure displays are meaningful and visually accessible. Some ways this could be considered is as follows, alongside your school policy.

- Keep displays at child's eye level and avoid overcrowding.
- Use clear fonts, simple language, and visuals (e.g., photos of children's work with their names).
- Key vocabulary can be displayed visually (such as using communication and print or widgeit).
- Organise displays by theme or learning area, ensuring they support current topics rather than being purely decorative.
- Involve children in creating displays to make them relevant and engaging.
- Limit the number of colours and patterns to avoid sensory overload.

Schools should ensure that lighting is considered in classroom and the impact this may have on CYP. For example, some suggested ways to consider is:

- Fluorescent lights are regularly checked and changed.
- The effects of light coming into the room through blinds and creating distracting patterns are minimised.
- Light reflecting on objects such as metal or shiny surfaces in the classroom is minimised.
- Beams of sunlight, reflections on shiny table tops and glare on display screens can all be distracting and confusing. Use low glare light fittings, alongside window blinds to control the impact of the sun's rays.
- Observe children's responses to lighting changes; some may seek bright light, others avoid it
- Adapt lighting for different activities: brighter for group work, softer for calm-down spaces.
- Communicate with families about any sensory sensitivities and adapt accordingly.



CYP valued being asked about lighting for different activities: **"We have the option on or off with the light."**

Top tip: Seasonal changes also impacted a CYP's learning experience.



"On a spring or a summer day, the sun is annoying and gets into my eyes."

"It is too light because we cannot see the board. 🙅"

"It's a little too bright and sometimes it disturbs me, so I'd like if the light were warmer."

Schools should consider the sound in the environment, and the impact on children. Some suggested ways schools can consider this would be to:

- Reduce background noise whenever possible.
- Avoid sitting children with sound sensitivities near equipment which emit noise e.g. projectors or under buzzing lights.
- Consider allowing them to access the toilets at quiet times and make paper towels available for hand drying instead of hand dryers.

+ Ensuring there is availability of additional equipment to support sound sensitives such as ear defenders.

- Plan quiet transitions: Use visual cues or soft music instead of loud verbal instructions to avoid sudden noise.
- Communicate with families: Share noise-reduction strategies and gather information on the child's sensitivities for consistency.



"That is challenging for me as sometimes it's too loud and I can't concentrate."

A gendered perspective emerged in the workshops, with girls often identifying boys as the noisiest.



"It's very loud everyone shouts mostly boys. 😡"



"Sometimes I get distracted by the people on my table."

Equipment and resources

Equipment and resources available in the school should be:

- Alternative methods of communication, for example, Makaton, PECS, Communication in Print, Core Board, Symbols, Objects of reference.
- Visual timetables for the classroom as well as the individual when required, events are removed or ticked off when finished, these may also include an “oops” for when things change unexpectedly.
- Classrooms clearly organised and labelled with images and text, font size is adapted as needed, sensory audit has been carried out by class teacher.



“[I don’t know what happens each day] as it changes throughout the term and based on what we still need to do before the holiday.”



Transitions supported by visual prompts such as

- objects of reference
- photos
- now and next boards
- individual timetables
- task planners and checklists.

Equipment to support learning is readily available in the classroom such as writing slopes, pencil grips, wobble cushions, fidget tools, ear defenders, weighted items, and chewies.

CYP are prepared for transitions throughout the day between activities. The use of timers show CYP how long they need to work for/how long they have to finish and complete their work or the time until the next activity. Equipment is adapted where needed.

Ensuring all sizing of desks, seats and any furniture is adapted for the size of the pupil it is intended for. Ensuring children and young people can sit comfortably at their seat and desk.

- + For example, maths counters are designed to be non-choking hazards where appropriate, and different weighted equipment in PE. Also ensuring left and right-handed CYP can use equipment comfortably and are seated so that they don't knock each other as they write/draw.



**"I love it [where I sit].
Thank you [teacher] for
letting me sit in such a
good place."**



The use of technology tools available to assist access to text, writing and translations and teaching CYP how to use them built into standard software.

Technology should be available as a reasonable adjustment when required for example, free touch-typing programmes, or voice to text access, to improve recording of information, use of magnification and accessibility features in standard IT/technology, visualisers, IWB.



Schools should consider the development of children's physical development, particularly in EYFS, ensuring there are opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills. Schools should have equipment which helps them negotiate spaces and obstacles safely.

This may include climbing frames, stepping stones or other playground equipment.

CYP's safety, privacy, and dignity are at the forefront when intimate care is provided, while incorporating the CYP's voice and preferences.

Sanitary products are made readily available and easily accessible to CYP in a discreet and respectful manner.

Schools have visual guides and sequences displayed to support CYP's independence in hygiene practice.

- **Top tip:** Toilets should include the visuals from 'How to wash your hands' NHS guidance.

Things to consider in planning

- Intimate care of children | NSPCC Learning

High quality teaching and curriculum



All staff should have CPD on high quality adaptive teaching through a planned schedule of CPD, in order to reduce the need for targeted and specialised support. This may include the five Southwark strategies, and other evidence based strategies.



“[My teacher] explains it slowly and steady so we can understand”

This was marked as most important teacher behaviour by this child.

Top tip: [Education Endowment Foundation Blog: Five evidence-based strategies to support high-quality teaching for pupils with SEND](#)



Scaffolding



Explicit instruction



Cognitive and metacognitive strategies



Flexible grouping



Technology

Scaffolding – visual, verbal, written, writing frames, knowledge organisers, essay prompts, bookmarks, sentence starters, checklist, scaffolding discussion, task planners, auditory. Encouraging, modelling, prompting, gesturing, questioning, and repeating help those at pre-NC.

Explicit Instruction – provide clear concise instructions, model first, think aloud, check for understanding, encourage independence and give feedback, dual coding, modelling.

Cognitive and metacognitive strategies – retrieval and recall, organise thinking, asking questions to help support students plan 'what do we already know that would help us?', chunking, prompt sheets.

Flexible grouping – temporary groups for collaborative learning, pre teaching key vocab using Frayer model, students learning from one another, grouping to promote independence. Any seating plans are flexible, opportunity for sharing of ideas, structured conversation.

Technology – using technology where appropriate to effectively scaffold learning, promote engagement, and provide opportunities for practice. For example, visualiser to model examples, technology applications, speech dictation:
[EEF Digital Technology Guidance Report.pdf](#)
[Inclusive Technology – CENMAC](#)



CYP in Southwark were vocal around giving them a greater voice and choice in seating arrangements would be beneficial to their learning. Check back with CYP that their seat is meeting their learning needs.



Reasonable adjustments in line with access arrangements for tests and examinations such as:

- smaller/ quieter rooms
- brain breaks
- use of a reader, scribe, laptop, voice-to-text, text-to-speech, literacy or typing support
- extra time.



A significant number of students identified the test room as their favourite place to be in the whole school.

Curriculum Design

EYFS

The EYFS curriculum is designed to promote inclusion by offering a broad, balanced, and play-based framework that supports every child's holistic development from birth to five. Its structure ensures all children regardless of ability or need can access learning through purposeful play and planned experiences. High-quality continuous provision is central to this inclusive approach, giving children consistent opportunities to explore, revisit, and deepen understanding at their own pace. Practitioners can scaffold learning flexibly, adapting environments and interactions to meet individual needs, ensuring equity and engagement for all.

- [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK](#)
- [Help for early years providers : SEND assessment guidance and resources](#)
- [Help for early years providers : Get help for your setting](#)

Curriculum for all

Inclusive curriculum: design a curriculum that is flexible and accessible, promoting the involvement of CYP in all learning activities where teachers use adaptive teaching approaches to ensure all CYP are involved.

Curriculum promote a culture of 'growth mindset' in the classroom: "I can't do this yet", where 'yet' becomes key.

CYP have regular opportunities to evaluate their own learning. This may include self-assessment to ensure building on self-monitoring and self-instruction: [Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning](#) | [EEF](#)

Curriculum has considered cognitive overload when selecting tasks and materials.

Staff know CYP's starting points and plan from them; identifying gaps in learning, and capturing small steps of progress.

Staff use a wide range of assessment strategies and tools to ensure a thorough understanding of CYP's strengths and needs.



Utilising the PSHE/RSHE and wider personal development curriculum to develop wellbeing and resilience as well as teaching emotional regulation (see further resources below) strategies as part of the curriculum.

All schools and settings have a curriculum and assessment for those who are pre national curriculum. Schools may want to consider the engagement model and Cherry Garden Branch maps to support in designing this curriculum.

- [Branch maps – Cherry Garden School](#)
- [The engagement model - GOV.UK](#)

Schools and settings have integrated and modelled SEL skills through everyday teaching and there is a SEL programme in place which is taught in a dedicated time.

- [Social and emotional learning.](#)
[EEF](#)

Specific teaching of ICT skills should be included as part of CYP learning and accessibility settings should be used where necessary

Teachers and leaders ensure that:

Schools adopt as part of their T&L policy, clear and predictable routines.

CYP are given time to process information before being asked to respond, there is built in revisits into the curriculum design to support retrieval.

 Homework is adapted or scaffolded appropriately for individuals. This may include time allowed, printed on different paper, font size.

Activities are varied, therefore supporting to maintain interest and attention.

School staff ensure any PowerPoints or other resources displayed on the whiteboard in classes have a pale background and accessible uncluttered font styles.

Worksheets are organised, include visuals and have coloured paper to reduce visual stress.

Top tip: for example thinking about any adaptations to font style and size, line spacing, enlarged texts, consideration of lighting, use of overlays.

Staff use neuro affirmative language and ensure they are speaking to CYP by framing what they want (positive) rather than focusing on what they don't want (negative).

Staff take account of CYP's individual needs when planning seating arrangements for example, emotional regulation (see further resources below) strategies as part of the curriculum.

 CYP who wear glasses and/or hearing aids wear them and are seated in the optimum position in the environment.

Children were also sensitive to feeling different from their peers in order to have their needs met:

 **"When we have to switch [where we sit] and I stay where I am I feel sad."**

All teachers use a robust tracking and monitoring system to identify and address gaps in knowledge as well as measuring progress.

Direct Instruction (DI) is used effectively to teach new concepts. This is also known as model-lead-test, or 'my turn,' 'together,' 'your turn' or 'I do' 'We do' 'You do'.

Break instructions down to smaller achieve steps.

All teachers should plan and resource lessons suitable for learners using EAL within the class or subject curriculum.
New Arrivals - The Bell Foundation

In order to support regulation teachers and leaders should consider the below:

Emotional regulation strategies are part of universal offer ensuring to teach CYP techniques for emotional regulation, promoting resilience and self-awareness. For example, Zones of regulation, calming strategies and building on resilience.

Teachers model resilient attitudes demonstrating growth mindset and skills.

 **"Sometimes I can't express my feelings so I end up being silent."**

Explicitly teach rules and routines, build self-esteem and develop social and emotional skills to all CYP including through use of PSHE, circle time and curriculum approaches.

 **"I struggle with telling people when I am upset or angry."**

+ Movement breaks or sensory breaks are offered at appropriate intervals throughout the day, this may include sensory circuits.

“Some people aren't calm because they are excited and then I can't really learn properly.”

Interventions and targeted support

This section will cover the expectation for additional provision which is ordinarily available in mainstream schools for some CYP who have been identified as having a barrier or additional needs.

Some CYP will require a targeted support, this should be part of a graduated approach, through an assess, plan, do and review cycle. Some CYP may benefit from short-term, targeted interventions to support early needs.

For example, a child who has had a bereavement in the family may benefit from additional emotional or pastoral support such as a check in with a trusted adult with a social story. This would fall into targeted support.

The majority of children and young people do not require provision aligned with an education health care plan but may at times need specific and targeted support.

Schools should carefully choose well-structured interventions for targeted pupils, ensuring staff delivering the programmes have high quality support and training.

The aim should be to complement the overall teaching and learning objectives and minimise the time pupils spend away from the classroom.



- Interventions which could be delivered for groups which are evidenced based include:

EYFS toolkit to support from
EEF [Early Years Toolkit](#) | [EEF](#)

SALT Groups Social skills group,
social communication group, Lego
therapy, Zones of regulation

- [Home | Nuffield Early Language Intervention \(NELI\)](#)
- [Speech and language therapy training | Evelina London](#)
- Attention Autism, Bucket time [Bucket Time – Cherry Garden School](#)
- Mentoring [Future Men – Future Men, St Giles - Turning a past into a future](#)

Literacy interventions; phonics
programme, reading interventions

Numeracy interventions

Pastoral and wellbeing interventions; Emotional Literacy
Support, Boys Space, Girls Space,
check ins with a trusted/key adult,
art therapy, Drama therapy,
Counselling – [Nest Place2Be](#)

EAL Interventions – [EAL Guidance – The Bell Foundation](#)

Support staff deployment is planned to maximise the child or young person's learning. Support staff are not merely 'attached' to an individual but rather add value to the teacher's practice in a variety of ways.

Top tip: for example after the setting of a task, offering floating support to the whole class while the teacher focuses their attention on those with most need.

Targeted support use of technology

Targeted technology support must be purposefully integrated into teaching and learning. Teachers should identify a clear and specific role for each tool in supporting pupil progress, ensuring that CYP are taught how to use these tools effectively.



- Making effective use of technology tools such as Widgeit, Clicker or DocsPlus and accessibility features on Office 365.
- Magnification, screen readers
- Laptops and adapted keyboards
- iPad connected to whiteboard and electronic books.
- Apps for precision teaching and emotional regulation.
- Digital scaffolds (writing frames, visual prompts).
- Flexible grouping supported by tech tools (collaborative platforms).
- Use dyslexia friendly format options onscreen or an interaction whiteboard.

Understanding need



Children and young people (CYP) must be at the heart of decisions about the support they receive. Their views, wishes, and feelings should inform planning and provision at every stage.

Embedding child and young person voice

CYP are helped to understand their own barriers to learning and the strategies that can support them. School staff should seek obtaining the child's viewpoint in scaffolds and support would support them.

Create Safe and Accessible Opportunities:

- Use child-friendly language and visuals.
- Offer multiple formats: verbal conversations, drawings, symbols, or digital tools.
- Provide quiet spaces for discussion to reduce anxiety.
- Allow sufficient time for understanding, processing questions, weighing up information and options, and forming views.

Embed inviting child and young person's voice as part of everyday practice:

- Include CYP in setting classroom expectations and routines.
- Invite CYP to share their hopes and what matters to them, in addition to discussing needs, rules, and improvements.
- Use regular feedback loops: "What helps you learn best?" or "What could make school feel more welcoming?"
- Incorporate pupil feedback into reviews of interventions and provision.
- Embed pupil voice in curriculum planning and enrichment activities.

Use structured tools:

- One-page profiles or "All About Me" sheets.
- Visual scales (e.g., "How helpful is this?").
- Digital surveys
- Support youth voice groups (like school councils) to engage effectively with their peers.
- Choice boards to gauge preferences.

Collaborate and act on feedback:

- Share CYP views with parents/carers and staff.
- Reflect CYP voice in support plans and targets.
- Review and adapt provision based on what CYP say works best.
- Feed back to CYP what has changed and why as a result of their input

Celebrate and validate CYP contributions :

- Acknowledge their ideas and show how they influence decisions.
- Use positive reinforcement to encourage ongoing participation.
- Ensure representation in displays, resources, and school events.



Sound



Lighting



Being heard



Seating

In the workshops around 150 CYP expressed that the following support them the most:



In the classroom, the most important topic was "Where I sit".



For teachers, the most important behaviour was "Giving time to think and answer".



For pupils, the most important topic was "Feeling ok asking for help".



In school, the most important topic was predictability and understanding the timetable.

The most consistent positive feedback:



"My teacher explains things clearly and shows me examples."



"If I don't understand anything about the lesson, [my teacher] will explain it clearly."

“

I want adults to
listen to us because
we have a voice
and we deserved
to be listened to.

”



A primary school in Southwark and designed a landing page on their website to support parents and carers to signpost them to resources and support so there is clear guidance of the support and where to go and get this [Support For Parents](#).

Behaviour

All behaviour should be understood as a form of communication and tracked (for example through ABC charts or STAR charts) to identify patterns and triggers to support with reasonable adjustments and planning. This is reflected in schools' behaviour policy. Schools may also want to consider using positive behaviour plans to support positive behaviour and reduce behaviours which challenge.

Southwark Primary Behaviour Intervention Toolkit

A written positive behaviour plan should be developed based on the shared understanding about the function of the behaviour. This may wish to be included in the Southwark ISP.

- Identify reactive strategies to manage any behaviours that challenge that are not preventable, including how care staff should respond if a person's behaviour escalates and there is a significant risk of harm to themselves or others.
- Incorporate risk management and take into account the effect of the behaviour support plan on the level of risk.
- Be compatible with the abilities and resources of the service, including managing risk, which can be implemented within these resources.
- Be supported by data that measure the accurate implementation of the plan.
- Be monitored, reviewed and updated using the continuous collection of objective data, such as ABCs, incident reports.

Key response

- **C** - Create space
- **A** - Adjust your approach
- **L** - Lower your demands
- **M** - Meet the need

As delivered by Dr Pooky Knightsmith at SEND conference in June 2026
[For more information please see Dr Pooky Knightsmith website](#)

- Identify those responsible for delivering the plan and the designated person responsible for coordinating this.
- The strategies you choose should be different depending on the function of the behaviour.
- Identify any training for care staff or family members to improve their understanding of behaviour that challenges. Some places you could signpost are:

- [Best Start Family Hubs – support and locations | Southwark Council](#)
- [Parenting support programmes | Southwark Council](#)
- [Group learning for families of autistic people | Autism Central](#)

Further information regarding positive behaviour plan can be found:

- Southwark have a community of practice group for people who had the free training in PBS – to find out more please email PBSTeam@southwark.gov.uk

Key response

- Slow - speak more slowly
- Low - lower the volume
- Low - lower your pitch
- Low - lower your body
- Low - lower demands

As delivered by Dr Pooky Knightsmith at SEND conference in June 2026

[For more information please see Dr Pooky Knightsmith website](#)

- ✓ A Southwark Primary school used Positive Handling Academy's accredited course, where the SENCO was trained and took the accredited course to then be able to adapt their behaviour policy to a whole school approach. This work allowed the school to be able to align their behaviour policy and positive behaviour plans to ensure that policies, processes and protocols were proactive and prioritised preventative strategies with a focus on de-escalation and supportive interventions where possible.

+ Risk assessments are in place for students who require this and should be used as a systematic process to identify potential hazards, evaluate associated risks, and implement measures to control them.

- For example, Risk assessments may be in place for pupils include safeguarding risk, mobility aid hazards, challenging behaviour, and individual needs like SEND or allergies.
- [Assure](#)
- [SEND Health and Safety Guidance](#)

As part of all risk assessments schools need to consider the need for effective safety planning. Schools should consider what actions and support is in place to address and mitigate the risk, and ensuring the right people are involved in and aware of this, this may include social workers, families, or specialists such as CAMHS if already involved.

Safety planning is important to ensure that it tries to prevent or minimise risky or harmful behaviour or situations. This should be preventative and responsive and while they can be time limited, safety planning can be considered before an incident (preparation for safety), during (reaction to risk) and after an incident (next steps).

Effective safety planning should:

- be a collaborative process, involving children (where appropriate), families, and agencies and organisations in identifying risks and developing solutions
- be based on children and families lived experience and their views, which are understood clearly
- have the safety of children and families as its central objective
- minimise risk factors and maximise protective factors
- become a roadmap for the journey from danger to safety, outlining steps, tools, and ongoing processes including information-sharing and regular review to ensure that the safety plan remains up to date and relevant
- avoid families having multiple safety plans where possible
- allows people to pause and reflect in order to improve safety.



How to encourage good attendance

Staff should ensure to create a sense of belonging: Where there is a consistent message but flexible approach to learning, e.g. “I want you to be in class learning” is the consistent message.

Understand the balance of risks and resilience

EBSA often happens when a child's stress and worries are greater than the support and coping strategies they have. Mapping out what is going on helps identify where things feel “too big” and where support needs to increase.



A Primary school in Southwark have used trusted adult checks in it is called the ‘end of day chart’, to ask students what went well and any worries they have on a daily basis at the end of the day to support parent and carer communication and so teachers are informed to early identify any concerns to be able to support the child voice being heard and acted upon.

Explore push and pull factors

When a child is not attending regularly, work with them to understand schools may want to use this activity:

- Push factors – things that make school feel difficult or overwhelming.
- Pull factors – things that make staying at home feel easier or safer.

This helps shape a realistic and supportive plan for getting back into school.

Plan a gradual return using an avoidance hierarchy

Work with the child to list school situations from least worrying to most worrying.

Start with the easiest step:

- Help the child plan how they will cope.
- Put support in place.
- Let them practise this step several times until it feels more manageable.

Then slowly move up the list to more challenging situations.

Build confidence step by step

Each time the child succeeds at a step, their confidence grows making the next step feel more achievable.

Resources which may help:

- [School Wellbeing Risk and Resilience Card Set](#)
- [School Exclusions – School stress and anxiety](#)
- School should also liaise with the Education Inclusion team through their consultation service:
 - [Attendance and inclusion support | Southwark Schools](#)
- Schools may also want to consider collaborative working with their EP:
- [Educational psychology | Southwark Schools](#)
 - Schools can contact the EPS through their Southwark link EP
 - Call 020 7525 5798 or
 - Email SEN-EducationalPsychologist&EHO@southwark.gov.uk



Screening and assessment

Schools should ensure there is robust screening and assessment tools to help identify and give confidence in understanding the need of the young person as well as identifying any possible interventions or strategies which should be in place for the CYP. These should include literacy and numeracy screeners as well as screeners for well-being. For example these may include:

- +
- GL assessment
- PASS student survey
- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires
- Southwark Dyslexia advice pack
- Wellcomm screener [Speech and language therapy training](#) | [Evelina London](#)
- NELI – Language Screener – [Home](#) | [Nuffield Early Language Intervention \(NELI\)](#)

Assess, plan, do, review cycle

The SEN Code of Practice (2015) highlights that all schools should have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN (i.e. all children/young people who require support beyond Quality First Teaching approaches), whereby a child or young person (CYP) needs provision that is different from or additional to what is normally available to CYPs of the same age, in order to reduce barriers to learning.

- +
- This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle, through which a CYP's strengths and difficulties are identified, and a plan of interventions and supports (i.e. provision) put in place to address the difficulties. These actions and decisions are then carried out, and revisited, refined and revised based on the CYP's progress, to consider the effectiveness and utility of the provisions (i.e. whether they are still necessary). This is known as the 'graduated approach', or 'assess, plan, do, review'.

- + All CYPs with SEN have a clear, written profile/baseline which identifies their strengths and needs.

All CYPs with SEN have a written plan, shared with parents/carers and staff, with clearly identified targets and provision, which is reviewed at least termly (this may be through the use of group or class plans for some CYPs).

There are tools which schools can use to support their use of the graduated response, either at class or individual level.

Resources which may help:

- Class Support Plan
- Individual Support Plan – EYFS to Year 4
- Individual Support Plan – Year 5 upwards
- Guidance on using the Individual Support Plan
- SMART outcome examples
- PFA Outcomes

English as an additional language (EAL)

- + There is a clear programme in place for children who recently arrived to the country and have English as additional language.

Top Tip:

Using the five principles to develop and embed effective provision for learners using:

- EAL. Effective Teaching of EAL Learners - The Bell Foundation

- Multilingualism as an asset – encouraging learners to use and develop their full linguistic repertoire is highly beneficial.
- High expectations with appropriate support – having high expectations of learners using EAL while offering them the language support that they need is beneficial to their learning.
- Integrated focus on content and language - focusing on language while teaching subject content is crucial to the progress and attainment of learners using EAL.
- Effective and holistic pupil assessment – EAL assessment builds a broad picture of the learner, which enables teachers to plan appropriate and targeted support.
- Social inclusion – including learners using EAL and their family in all aspects of school life improves their wellbeing and motivation for learning and is beneficial for the school.

Top Tip:

Staff should ensure an assessment of the CYP has taken place in their home language to understand their cognition to identify if there are any needs.

- [How to Create an EAL Learner Profile - The Bell Foundation](#)
- [EAL Assessment Framework – The Bell Foundation](#)

Dual multiple exceptionality (DME)

The term dual or multiple exceptionality (DME) is used in the UK to describe children who have both high learning potential and a special educational need because of a learning difference or a disability.

[Continues on next page.]

Children with dual or multiple exceptionality need the following support:

- Understanding of their talents and weaknesses.
- Appreciation of the mental energy used in functioning well and the effect that this has on emotional regulation and behaviour.
- Their talents recognised as well as their weaknesses in order that they have a sense of belonging and self-worth.
- The opportunity to experience success through activities such as after school clubs.
- Microsoft Word – F01 Dual or Multiple Exceptionality. 250729.docx
- Supporting Dual or Multiple Exceptionality – Potential Plus UK

Transitions

Information is actively sought and shared about CYP to support successful transitions and manage change both within the setting and beyond. This information is available for the CYP's parents/carers, other colleagues within the setting and receiving or previous settings as required.

Information should be shared where and when a CYP changes settings. Things to share include:

- Recent assess plan do review cycles, needs assessments submitted if unsuccessful, if EYFS any Early Years inclusion or Transition funding awarded, safeguarding file, one page profile, classroom strategies, current provision, interventions, including if previously been at Summer House, health care medical plans, student voice, current targets, any professional reports (CAMHS, EPs, SaLT).
- Information is actively sought and shared about CYP to support successful transitions and manage change both within the setting and beyond.
- This information is available for the CYP's parents/carers, other colleagues within the setting and receiving or previous settings as required.
- Where children are transitioning between settings and may require additional support, the setting engages with the LA services (SENDIPs, Early Intervention Panel, Early Years Inclusion).



- Offer opportunities for transition days and events so new students can understand and see the environment.
- Meet with previous settings and attend any upcoming meetings (ARs, PEPs, TACs).
- Teachers have the right information and resources for when students start to support transition. School should seek this from parents and pupil voice as well.
- SENCO to attend the Primary to Secondary transition SENCO day arranged by Southwark.

Communication and interaction

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's communication and interaction needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Child or young person has difficulties understanding what is being said to them

- Check that hearing has been tested.
- Engage the child's attention before talking to them, use their name.
- Provide visual prompts to support language including key vocabulary, now and next, visual timetables, gesture, signing.
- Allow extra time to process what has been said (10 seconds).
- Repeat your instruction or request if not understood, simplify the language and use additional visuals to support.
- Check understanding by getting child or young person to feedback or by asking questions to clarify understanding.
- Provide an environment that limits distractions.
- Use Pre-teach strategies to help access to new topics and vocabulary.
- Consider how many information carrying words (identified through screening) a child can manage and adjust language level accordingly when giving instructions.
- Avoid use of sarcasm (make sure your words and body language match) and idioms ("it's raining a lot" rather than "it is raining cats and dogs") in general instructions as these can be misunderstood and lead to negative behaviours. Explicitly teach where these occur in curriculum or are featured in a book/text.

Further resources for support:

- Schools may want to look at development of ages and stages: [Ages and stages - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#) to support understanding what is typical for their age.
- School may want to then embed typical talk to support with communication for age related levels [What's Typical Talk at Primary](#).
- Further interventions school can sign up to evidence informed interventions via [Register for our What Works database - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#).
- [Colourful semantics](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- Wellcomm screener [Speech and language therapy training | Evelina London](#)
- NELI – Language Screener – [Home | Nuffield Early Language Intervention \(NELI\)](#)

Communication and interaction

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's communication and interaction needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Child or young person has difficulties being understood or saying what they want to say

- Build in time for child/ YP to try and find the words they want to say.
- Provide opportunities for practising predictable language such as during circle time or registration.
- Encourage talking by commenting and giving choices.
- Repeat back what has been said.
- Model the correct grammar.
- Repeat back and then expand or lengthen the sentence .
- Use alternative methods of communication like signing or pictures.
- Use games that develop vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures such as Improving children's awareness of sounds.
- Don't pretend to understand if you don't. Give reassurance that you want to understand and will try in another way or later if more supportive. Praise all communication attempts. Be clear with expectations and use consistent language to talk about the expectations.
- Parents could be provided with videos to support at home, for example barrier activities like the Demo Barrier Game.

Further resources for support:

- SalT resources for Teachers Black Sheep
- Communication friendly settings
- i can - help children communicate
- Time to talk book – social interaction skills

Communication and interaction

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's communication and interaction needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Child or young person has difficulties being understood or saying what they want to say

- Ensure you are following specialist advice for difficulties with understanding.
- Task planners breaking down the tasks to steps
- Consideration of class seating positions.
- Once you have identified the rule that is not understood through screening you will need to explicitly teach, using visuals, modelling, role play, use Comic Strip conversations or social stories to support. [Comic Strip Conversations](#)
- Use lots of different scenarios of where or when the rule applies to support generalisation.
- Plan opportunities to practice throughout the school day and week.
- Opportunities for learning from role models.
- Use the Audit Tool from The Speech, Language and Communication Framework (SLCF). It is a free online professional development tool, accessible to all, which sets out the skills and knowledge that everyone working with CYP should have in order to support CYP's speech, language, and communication.
(SLC) [SLCF Handbook FINAL.pdf](#)

Further resources for support:

- [Social Stories – Carol Gray](#)
- [How to play at Conversation Keepie Uppie](#)
- [Access the Speech and Language UK Educator Hub](#)
- [Circle of friends](#)
- Social interaction stories, an example [Tricky times](#), [socially speaking](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- [Wellcomm screener Speech and language therapy training | Evelina London](#)
- [NELI – Language Screener – Home | Nuffield Early Language Intervention \(NELI\)](#)

Cognition and learning

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's cognition and learning needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Attention and listening difficulties

- Reduce background noise.
- An awareness that certain times of the day may be more difficult and are planned for.
- Regular short breaks such as brain breaks.
- Visual timetables
- Curriculum adaptations/chunking of tasks and information.
- Provide a reason for listening/praise good listening/provide a listening partner.
- Use visual clues to indicate when it is important to listen.
- Vary intonation, volume and use body language when speaking.
- Focus attention by using the child/ YP's name and coming to their level.
- The use of timers.
- Individualised timetables
- Access to sensory equipment.

Further resources for support:

- [Time management tool](#)
- [Attention Difficulties resource pack](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- Wellcomm screener [Speech and language therapy training | Evelina London](#)
- NELI – Language Screener – [Home | Nuffield Early Language Intervention \(NELI\)](#)

Cognition and learning

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's cognition and learning needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Difficulties with learning – working below age related, with inadequate progress over time despite some differentiation

- Areas of need identified through teacher assessment and in consultation with the learner.
- Pre-teaching activities
- Shared next steps
- Social stories
- Visual clues/prompts/timetable
- Visual word banks and sentence starters.
- Teaching cognitive and meta-cognitive skills to build effective strategies.
- Adapt resources to match the CYP developmental stage, rather than their chronological age.
- Recognising and celebrating success in other areas of the CYP's life – Growth Mindset.
- Adopting a neuro-diverse approach and celebrating the strengths of the individual.

Further resources for support:

- Dual coding
- Support for ECTs
- Pre teaching

Screeners which may be used:

- GL assessment
- Southwark Dyslexia advice pack

Cognition and learning

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's cognition and learning needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Low to moderate learning difficulties

- Adjustment, modification, and adaptation of the curriculum across the board to enable the learner to gain full access.
- Encourage active learning through a concrete, pictorial, and practical approach.
- Focus on helping children reach their full potential by planning activities that build skills for independence.
- Help children build self-esteem by celebrating their strengths and recognising their successes.
- Support to manage self-esteem, celebrations of strengths, reinforcement of success.

Further resources for support:

- [Growth Mindset](#)
- [EEF blog: Modelling Independence - The 'Seven-step Model'... | EEF](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- GL assessment
- Southwark Dyslexia advice pack

Cognition and learning

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's cognition and learning needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Specific learning difficulty

- Focus on high quality, **explicit** and systematic instruction.
- Interleaving – mixing old and new learning to aid CYP long-term memory
- Ensuring sufficient time is given to practice the skills learnt
- Short targeted interventions delivered by an adult who is suitably trained and experienced. Such as **literacy**, **reading** interventions
- Providing opportunities for children to make connections between interventions and classroom teaching
- For peer-assisted learning, please see further [PALS UK programme](#) as well as [EEF Peer Mentoring](#).

Further resources for support:

- [Southwark Advice and Support Pack](#)
- <https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyscalculia>
- [Resources - British Dyslexia Association](#)
- [Manipulatives: helping to make problem-solving 'concrete'](#)
- [Precision teaching - Ed psych](#)
- [Watch the full short film 'What Is Dyslexia?'](#)
- [Resources - Made By Dyslexia](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- GL assessment
- Southwark Dyslexia advice pack

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Difficulties participating and presenting as withdrawn or isolated

- Teacher assessment – are there parts of the curriculum that they find easier to manage than others? Use below ideas to develop confidence.
- Small group work e.g., friendship or social skills, nurture groups.
- Backward chaining – [Backward Chaining Information Sheet](#).
- Play based activities.
- Establish interests.
- Buddying and peer mentoring.
- Giving responsibility for looking after someone else.

Further resources for support:

- [Childhood trauma and the brain](#)
- [Thrive guide: 5 proven strategies for educators to help pupils express their emotions](#)
- [Think Good – Feel Good: A Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Workbook for Children and Young People](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Behaviours that concern

- Consistent messaging is always 'I want you to be in the class learning.' The approach to this will be flexible and vary with need see below for some suggestions.
- Regular communication with home.
- Professionals meeting to understand behaviour.
- Multi-agency joined up working.
- Social stories
- A consideration of timetables and transitions
- Use of choice with pupil – do you want to talk to me now or in 2 minutes?
- Strategies to manage anger:
 - [Supporting CYP with Anger](#)
 - [Self-Regulation Curriculum| The Zones of Regulation](#)
 - [Zones-of-Regulation.pdf](#)
 - [How to Guide - Self Regulation](#)
 - [How to Guide - Incredible 5 Point Scale](#)
- [Social emotional learning interventions and behaviour interventions](#) – [EIF interventions which promote social and emotional learning](#)
- Social skills programme – such as:
 - [Lego therapy](#)
 - [Talkabout series of books](#)
 - [Time to talk](#)
 - [Socially speaking](#)
 - [Circle of friends](#)

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Behaviours that concern

- Risk assessment
- Use of distraction techniques
- Giving responsibility
- Access to a quiet space to support with emotional regulation.
- Staff trained and confident in de-escalation, preventative and self-management strategies and the below are in place.
- Re-integration plans
- Clear plan of action for any physical intervention which is shared with the family, CYP and outlined in school policy.
- ABC/STAR charts are being used:
 - [AST Behaviour working chart](#)
 - [ABC Chart and guidance on how to complete ABC chart.](#)
- Behaviour Support Plans are put in place.
- The school considers times when the behaviour is not occurring and uses this information to inform its approach.

Harmful sexual behaviour resources

- [Harmful sexual behaviour \(HSB\) or peer-on-peer sexual abuse | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [How to manage incidents of harmful sexual behaviour | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [TIGER Service | Barnardo's](#)
- [TIGER Service South East London.pdf](#)
- [Young Londoners Harmful Sexual Behaviours \(HSB\) – Safer London](#)

Further resources for support:

- [Steps to Avoid Exclusion of Autistic Pupils](#)
- [School Exclusions: School Stress and Anxiety](#)
- [Successful Reintegration Following School Exclusion](#)
- [Emotional Regulation](#)
- [Behavioural to Relational Responses at School](#)
- [WINE \(I wonder, I imagine, I notice, empathy\)](#)
- [Microsoft Word - PACE School.docx](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
 - Boxall Profile
 - Strengths and difficulties questionnaires
- 

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Behaviours that may reflect mental health concerns:

- **Anxiety/ depression**
 - **Self-harming**
 - **Substance misuse**
 - **Eating disorders**
- Safeguarding/ risk assessment.
 - Unpicking the behaviours (negative and positive behaviours) what lies behind them?
 - Multi-professional approach. Schools can reach out, to Nest, their educational psychologist, the Inclusion and SEND team for support with early identification and planning.
 - Identifying what is not right through engagement with the learner.
 - Looking at the history, when did the behaviour start to change?
 - Liaison and collaboration with home is essential to understand the wider picture.
 - Substitutes for self-harming behaviours e.g., elastic bands, marbles.

Further resources for support:

- [DisOrdEat 24pp](#)
- [Eating disorders: Mentally Healthy Schools](#)
- [young-people-who-self-harm-a-guide-for-school-staff.pdf](#)
- [Responding to self-harm | Resources | YoungMinds](#)
- [www.kooth.com](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Physical symptoms that are unexplained medically:

- Stomach pains
 - Aches and pains
 - Soiling
 - Wetting
 - Tiredness
 - Headaches
- Keep a log to analyse patterns or trends or to identify triggers
 - Liaise with school nurse to provide support where there is a lack of medical evidence provided
 - [School nursing referrals](#) | [Evelina London](#)
 - Offer stress reducing activities (mindfulness breathing, gardening, colouring, music)

Further resources for support:

- [Supporting children to express their emotions](#)
- [Think Good - Feel Good : A Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Workbook for Children and Young People](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Attachment difficulties (Including Attachment Disorder)

N.B. any provision or support should be provided in line with the needs of the child or young person and is not dependant on any formal diagnosis.

- Nurturing approaches and ethos/ nurture groups.
- Liaise with parents and carers for shared understanding.
- A good transition when the child starts school, including checking the history.
 - [EEF Blog: Supporting pupils through transitions – a trio of... | EEF](#)
 - [EEF blog: School Transitions – reflecting on culture,... | EEF](#)
 - [Transition to primary school – Place2Be](#)
 - [Starting primary school - BBC Teach](#)
 - [Moving up! The transition to secondary school | Anna Freud](#)
 - [Transition to secondary school – Place2Be](#)
 - [Supporting school transitions | Resources | YoungMinds](#)
 - [Transitioning to secondary school - BBC Bitesize](#)
 - [Transition to Secondary School Toolkit | Barclays LifeSkills](#)
- Supportive, structured school curriculum.
- All staff to be trained and aware of any child with attachment difficulties and how to respond to them.
- Consideration of discipline procedures/behaviour policies.
- Consideration of family context and the range of children that may have attachment difficulties e.g., adopted, armed forces children, previously known to social care, CLA.
- Liaison with Summerhouse Behaviour Support Service.

Further resources for support:

- [Childhood trauma and the brain](#)
- [Attachment and child development | NSPCC Learning](#)
- [Childhood trauma, the brain and the social world - UK Trauma Council](#)

Bereavement resources :

- [Grief support for young people | Winston's Wish](#)
- [Bereavement resources for schools | Winston's Wish](#)
- [St Christopher's CYP's Bereavement Service \(Candle\) – St Christopher's Hospice](#)
- [Grief booklets for helping children and young people – Cruse Bereavement Support](#)
- [Grief booklets - Cruse Bereavement Support](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
 - Boxall Profile
 - Strengths and difficulties questionnaires
- 

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health here needs are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Connection seeking behaviours and low level disruption

- Adult awareness of the impact voice, tone, body language and gesture can have on de-escalating behaviour.
- Focus on reducing anxiety and therefore behaviours.
- Flexible use of rewards and consequences.
- Catch them being good:
 - 5:1 ratio theory states once a complaint/correction has been given school staff should aim to give 5 specific positive interactions (comments, non-verbal gestures, positive statements). More can be read on [Improving Behaviour in Schools](#) | [EEF](#).
- Scripts and visual prompts to support with positive reinforcement of expectations.
- Time out / quiet area available.

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Difficulty in making and maintaining healthy relationships

- Small group activities to support with personal, social, and emotional development
- Providing a range of opportunities for social and emotional development e.g., buddy systems, friendship circles, restorative justice, visits, extra-curricular activities
- Social stories, explicit teaching of social skills
 - [Social Stories – Carol Gray](#)

Further resources for support:

- [Social Stories – Carol Gray](#)
- [Circle of friends](#)
- Social situation stories for example:
 - [Tricky Times Social Situation Stories Book | Topics | TTS](#)
 - [Socially speaking book](#)
 - [Talkabout series of books](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Presenting as significantly unhappy or stressed

- Identify and build on preferred learning styles.
- Safe place/ quiet area in the setting.
- Feedback is used to collaborate and plan with parent or carer, to ensure consistency between the home and setting.
- Use social stories to teach different ways of communicating emotions and strategies for overcoming them:
 - Social Stories – Carol Gray.
- Using visuals to show emotions:
 - Express Your Feelings Playing Cards | Social Emotional Learning.

Further resources for support:

- Supporting children to express their emotions
- Think Good – Feel Good: A Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Workbook for Children and Young People
- The Nest | Mental Wellbeing Support in Southwark
- Schools | Mental Health Resources | YoungMinds
- Whole School Approach – Healthy Schools
- Support for mental health and wellbeing in schools | The Thrive Approach

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires

Social emotional and mental health

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's social, emotional and mental health needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Patterns of non-attendance and emotionally based school non-attendance (EBSNA)

- Home- school meeting to establish a shared understanding of the factors contributing to non-attendance .
- An understanding of best practice guidance by settings .
- Pupil's views around non-attendance are recorded and reviewed.
- Named key adult to maintain daily communication including a wellbeing check and provision of appropriate work if not in class.
- Support Plan, co-written by pupil, school and home in place and reviewed regularly.
- Reasonable adjustments in place based on the needs of the pupil and the factors contributing to their non-attendance.
- Example of activity to be done is Push-pull activity.
- Consider using transitional objects such as teddies, hair ties, photos, keyring that the CYP can take from home into school. Allow them to text or phone home during the school day if needed.

Further resources for support:

- [EBSNA resources](#)
- [Emotionally based school non attendance](#)
- [ELSA support EBSNA](#)
- [ESBNA - Ed psych resources](#)
- [Anna Freud - School attendance and mental wellbeing-](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- PASS student survey
- Boxall Profile
- Strengths and difficulties questionnaires
- [EBSNA Toolkit](#)

Sensory and physical

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's sensory and/or physical needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Hearing impairment

- **Temporary loss**
- **Unilateral loss**
- **Mild or moderate loss**
- **Severe to profound loss**

- Work collaboratively, seek advice from the HI Team.
- Deaf Awareness Training.
- Ensure appropriate and consistent use of hearing aids and assistive technology.
- Check that hearing aids are working.
- Seat in class with clear view of teacher's or communicator's face and any visual material used (this may not be the same fixed place for all activities).
- Ensure that the child or young person is face on when you are giving instructions. Try not to move around the room whilst talking as they may use lip-reading and visual clues to support their hearing.
- Instructions delivered clearly and at an appropriate volume. Use sign and gesture to support what is being said
- Check the lesson content has been heard and understood, particularly when delivering new information, instructions, or homework; and/or using unfamiliar vocabulary. Teacher should ask open questions to check understanding.
- During class discussions allow only one student to speak at a time and indicate where the speaker is. e.g. you could pass around a classroom microphone to make class discussions more accessible for a deaf/ hard of hearing child.
- If students are asked to work together, arrange the seating so that the students can see everyone by putting chairs in a circle or horseshoe shape.

Sensory and physical

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's sensory and/or physical needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Hearing impairment

- **Temporary loss**
- **Unilateral loss**
- **Mild or moderate loss**
- **Severe to profound loss**

- Repeating or rephrasing pertinent comments made by other learners ensuring the student accesses those comments.
- Visual reinforcement (pictures and handouts), to support learning.
- Be aware that during PE or games lessons it will be more difficult to follow instructions.
- Signing such as Makaton
- Words spoken on an audio/ visual recording may need a person to repeat what is being said, provide written copy and, or use subtitles.
- Carpeting, soft furnishing, rubber feet on the table and chair legs etc. will reduce noise.
- Seat away from any source of noise e.g., window, corridor, fan heater, projector, the centre of the classroom, etc.
- Encourage good listening behaviour: sitting still, looking, and listening.
- Encourage CYP to ask when not sure what to do.
- A quiet working environment, particularly for specific listening work.
- All staff who work with a learner with HI should be made aware how best to support in school.

Further resources for support:

- [Deaf-friendly communication guidance](#)
- [Sense support](#)

Sensory and physical

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's sensory and/or physical needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Visual impairment

These suggestions are for general use when working with a student with a vision impairment.

- Encourage pupils to use any prescribed aids or resources like magnifiers, glasses.
- Ensure suitable lighting – if possible, lights should come from behind or to the side of the pupil.
- Ask the student where they obtain the best view.
- Seat pupil appropriately in the classroom as advised by the Qualified Teacher of Children and Young People with Vision Impairment (QTVI).
- Ensure pupils have the appropriate communication medium for example, braille, dictation, touch typing as advised by the QTVI.
- Ensure good visual contrast between foreground and background when presenting text on the board or for close work.
- Minimise any risk of glare from the whiteboard, e.g by closing blinds or curtains.
- Give clear verbal instructions.
- Clear signage and arrows for directions in communal areas.
- Clear pathways in corridors and communal area.
- Use the pupil's name when needing to engage their attention.
- Use enlarged print if required (seek advice from your QTVI).
- Printed materials should be of good quality with a clear dark font.
- Use clear font such as Arial or Comic Sans.

Sensory and physical

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's sensory and/or physical needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Visual impairment

These suggestions are for general use when working with a student with a vision impairment.

- Keep copying from the board to a minimum.
- Allow for rest breaks and additional time to complete tasks, especially during focused work.
- Keep the classroom environment tidy and well organised, keep walkways and floors clear of obstacles.
- Give the student their own copy of textbooks and worksheets.
- Increase hands-on experience.
- Keep expectations high.
- Encourage the use of buddies and peer-groups.
- Supported by the QTVI.
- Where appropriate provide mobility and orientation training to support with independent movement around the provision and outside environment. Your QTVI can provide more information on this.

Further resources for support:

- SEND Gateway have a very useful free video [Condition-specific video: Visual Impairment | Whole School SEND](#)
- [Professional support royal national institute of blind people](#)
- [Education support for royal national institute of blind people](#)
- [Thomas Pocklington Trust](#)
- [VICTA](#)
- [Sense support](#)

Sensory and physical

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's sensory and/or physical needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Physical disability

- Encourage independence.
- Remove obstacles so that the pupil can move freely around classroom, playground and wider setting.
- Encourage support from peers.
- Address physical access issues such as ramps, toilets, lifts, and classroom layout.
- Incorporate advice from the occupational therapist in the student's programme.
- Encourage use of any specialist equipment that the learner has.
- Allow extra time to complete tasks.
- If pupils use wheelchairs, where possible place yourself at their eye-level when talking to them.
- Where possible, locate classes for pupils with mobility difficulties on the ground floor.

Further resources for support:

- [BEAM and Jump Ahead | Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- [Home - WheelPower](#)
- [Whizz Kidz | Children's Wheelchair Charity | Whizz Kidz](#)
- [0110 balance level one.indd](#)

Sensory and physical

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's sensory and/or physical needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Sensory differences

- **Sensory seeking**
- **Sensory sensitive**

- Seat pupil facing away from seeing others enter and leave the classroom.
- Reduce exposure to bright colours, displays and lighting.
- Use fidget toys
- Provide access to a sensory space for planned activities.
- Create specific movement breaks like sensory circuits or 10 star jumps to avoid over stimulation examples could be found [mini brain break examples](#).
- Teach ways to ask for help or manage sensory sensitivities.
- Use 'Mov n Sit' cushions
- Promote the use of ear defenders.
- Create a calm corner in the classroom.
- Provide regular opportunities for movement like handing out books.
- Position pupil in the middle of groups or lines
- Help CYP find alternative sensory seeking behaviours allow to build up tolerance to environment.
- Create a sensory toolbox with the child: complete pupil sensory profile to teach ways to manage own needs e.g. requesting movement break.
 - for example, [AET sensory assessment checklist](#),

Further resources for support:

- [OT pre-school age resource pack](#)
- [OT school age resource packpack.docx](#)
- [Sensory Information](#)
- [Sensory Circuits | Children Young People and Families Online Resource](#)
- [CYP-OT-Sensory-Circuits.pdf](#)

Screeners which may be used:

- [OT sensory checklist](#)
- [Sensory screener](#)



Sensory and physical

Where a barrier or need has been identified which may be linked to the child/young person's sensory and/or physical needs here are some suggested steps school staff could try.

Severe and complex medical needs including a life-threatening diagnosis or condition

- Reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Support equipment such as lockable medicine cabinets, first aid bags, fridges.
- Rotated medication/ care training.
- Liaising with specialist colleagues for up-to date training.
- School Individual Health Care Plan (IHP)
- Regular home school contact when/ if learner is not in school to maintain a 'sense of belonging' with peers and school community.
- Clear bereavement training and policies.
 - [Grief support for young people | Winston's Wish](#)
 - [Bereavement resources for schools | Winston's Wish](#)
 - [St Christopher's CYP's Bereavement Service \(Candle\) – St Christopher's Hospice](#)
 - [Grief booklets for helping children and young people – Cruse Bereavement Support](#)
 - [Grief booklets – Cruse Bereavement Support](#)

Further resources for support:

- [School nursing referrals | Evelina London](#)
- [Support pupils with medical conditions](#)

Statutory and policies



Admissions ensure all students with additional needs for example SEND or medical needs or are considered vulnerable are considered and not discriminated against.

There is a policy for medical conditions and school collaborates with school nursing team or health teams for individual health care plans where needed.

There is a policy for intimate care, and staff recognise that intimate care is a reasonable adjustment:

- Intimate care policy for nurseries, school and colleges - ERIC

Parents are informed on any provision their child may receive.

The DSL has specific training to understand the additional risks and ensure no unconscious bias which may be associated with some children and young people for example those who have SEND needs, history of trauma, adverse childhood experiences, known or previously known to social care, socioeconomic disadvantage, race and ethnicity minorities to ensure a diversity and equitable environment for parent and CYP. Equality Act 2010: guidance – GOV.UK.

The behaviour policy is inclusive and flexible, ensuring that the policy can be flexible in application to take into account a CYP need and circumstance. The policy clearly states that behaviour is everyone's responsibility and there are a shared language and approach across the school where pupil voice is at the centre ensuring that the policy is not just understood but actively supported across the community.

- For further information please see Southwark Primary Behaviour Intervention Toolkit
- Schools are expected to apply behaviour policies in ways that are fair and inclusive, taking into account pupils' individual needs. This includes a duty to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

Schools collate and analyse their data such as behaviour data to ensure that all professionals are working collaboratively to address any disproportionality where CYP needs may intersect between race, medical needs, SEND, known or previous known to social care to ensure an equitable holistic understanding and reasonable adjustments.



There is an embedded culture in which staff understand the range of barriers that pupils may face to their learning, well-being, including those specific to their community and the school's context; they quickly and accurately identify pupils facing these barriers.

Settings proactively identify and address racial discrimination, promote racial literacy, and create belonging.

Staff CPD on racial literacy, bias-aware practice, and responding to racist incidents; use of audit tools to evaluate provision.

Action is taken for race inequality. Research shows that Black children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face systemic barriers to receiving adequate support. Despite being more likely to be identified as having SEND, Black students are less likely to get the help they require.

Key resource:

[READ REPORT | Black Child SEND GBMH SEND Report v2.indd](#)

Training



Inclusion and SEND team can provide training in:

- Trauma informed practice
- Sensory difficulties
- Behaviour as communication
- five Southwark strategies / Adaptive teaching
- Processing difficulties – Working Memory
- Complex needs in EYFS
- Supporting intimate care

Other services which have delivered training as part of Inclusion and SEND training offer in webinars or training offer for 2025/26:

- Sickle cell and Thalassaemia
- Dyslexia
- Outcomes for complex needs
- Developmental Coordination Disorder
- Personal outcome setting for CYP with Complex needs
- CENMAC

Autism Support team can provide training in schools for:

- Autism and girls
- Use of visuals
- Structured teaching
- Social Narratives
- Adapting the curriculum
- ABC charts
- Making sense of Autism
- Good Autism Practice

Cherry outreach

- Complex needs in EYFS
- Developing Communication skills
- Makaton Level 1 Workshop (Small cost)
- Developing early literacy and maths skills

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) can provide training for schools with a Southwark link Educational Psychologist (EP). Schools without a Southwark link EP can commission training from the EPS. EPS training is offered on a bespoke basis across all aspects of learning and development, including executive functions, social, emotional wellbeing and communication differences. Recent examples of training packages and psychological support offered:

- ADHD/ASD in girls
- Attachment and Learning
- Culturally responsive approaches to assessment
- Emotion Coaching
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) intervention
- Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA)
- Executive Function & Trauma
- Neurodiversity and Emotional regulation
- Oracy in the classroom
- Precision Teaching
- Reflective Practice - intervention for groups of staff
- Solution circles
- Supporting attention needs / working memory in the classroom
- Supporting pupils or colleagues following loss, trauma and bereavement
- Supporting SEMH needs

For further information please contact the EPS:

SENEducationalPsychologist&EHO@southwark.gov.uk

Visual impairment team offer training in:

- General VI awareness
- Subject specific guidance
- Aspects of visual impairments such as cortical visual impairment or complex needs with VI
- Emotional aspects of a VI
- Adapting resources for VI
- Doing an environmental audit of your school
- Assessing VI in children with complex needs
- Working with other professionals including speech therapists
- How visual impairment could be experienced
- We have a set of SIM specs which enable the participant

Hearing Impairment team offer training in:

- Deaf awareness
- Classroom strategies and language modification
- Personal amplification devices
- Impact of specific hearing loss
- Auditory surveys and advice on modifications
- Impact of hearing loss on social communication and integration
- Creating a supportive inclusive environment for a deaf learner

Speech and language therapists

can provide training for a small cost:

- Working with autistic children and understanding neurodiversity
- ASD in girls
- Getting pupils views
- Identifying SLC in schools
- Introduction to Zones of Regulation
- Language development in bilingual children
- Lego therapy
- Makaton Level 1, 2, 3, 4
- See behaviour think communication
- Supporting children with restrictive eating
- Using visuals to support communication
- Supporting vocabulary development
- Selective mutism
- Enabling environments for EYFS
- In tune interactions for EYFS

For more information please see [Evelina Community SaLT Service](#)

School nursing has a half termly schedule of training sent for schools to access. Please liaise with them to see their current offer:

- Email: gstt.schoolnurseadmin@nhs.net
- Phone: 020 3049 4777

CPD for staff through spotlight sessions and online CPD units:

- [Events listing](#) | [Whole School SEND](#)

Further resources

Evidence based strategies and guidance

- [Improving Behaviour in Schools | EEF](#)
- [EEF Social and Emotional Learning.pdf](#)
- [Early Years | EEF](#)
- [Primary | EEF](#)
- [AaA ambitious approach 2020 v5.pdf](#)
- [Toolkits | Whole School SEND](#)

Technology

- [EEF Digital Technology Guidance Report.pdf](#)
- [Resources – CENMAC](#)
- [CENMAC Exams and Technology](#)

EAL

- [EAL Strategies and Great Ideas – The Bell Foundation](#)
- [Effective Teaching of EAL Learners – The Bell Foundation](#)
- [EAL in Early Years Settings: Guidance and Strategies – The Bell Foundation](#)
- [How to Provide Multilingual Support in the Classroom – The Bell Foundation](#)

Refugee and Asylum-Seeking CYP

- [Refugee Education UK | Welcome to the UK!](#)
- [Welcoming Refugee and Asylum Seeking Learners – The Bell Foundation](#)
- [Childhood Trauma, War, Migration and Asylum – UK Trauma Council](#)
- [How to support refugee and asylum-seeking CYP who have experienced trauma – UK Trauma Council](#)
- [Supporting refugee children | Resources | YoungMinds](#)
- [Talking to children about war and conflict](#)

Mental Health

- [UK Trauma Council | Anna Freud](#)
- [MHFA England](#)

Culture, diversity and equality

- [Celebration events and special awareness days for schools](#)
- [The Black Curriculum](#)
- [Embracing Difference, Ending Bullying Classroom Resources 2024](#)
- [What is autism?](#)
- [Resources to Support Autistic CYP](#)
- [All resources | Autistic Girls Network](#)
- [Neurodiversity \(ADHD and Autism\) – A guide for teachers: Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- [LGBTQ+ inclusive education Best practice, toolkits & resources | Stonewall](#)
- [LGBT school resources – Just Like Us](#)
- [LGBTQ+ – Healthy Schools](#)
- [Content Hub: The Difference](#)