



Cumberland SEND & AP Partnership

SEND Needs Descriptors

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SEND Needs Descriptors

Introduction

The Cumberland SEND Needs Descriptors are designed to provide guidance to schools and settings, parents, professionals and children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) about how Cumberland intends to meet its responsibilities for identifying and addressing SEND.

These descriptors have been set out to provide guidance as to when it might be appropriate to request an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA).

It is intended to be read in conjunction with the Ordinarily Available Provision documents. These two documents describe a range of SEND needs, and support Cumberland professionals with identification, intervention and prevention of escalation of needs. They aim to be fair and equitable to children and young people with a wide range of SEND providing a foundation for holistic decision making.

Access to educational provision to meet the special educational needs of most children and young people is **not** dependent on a medical diagnosis. All decisions for EHCNA's are based on a holistic view of the child/young person's needs and a diagnosis does not automatically entitle children and young people with SEND to an EHCNA.

SEND Needs Descriptors

Legislation

“Every school is required to identify and address the SEN of the pupils that they support” and that this means that they will “use their best endeavours to make sure that a child or young person with SEN gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people’s SEN”

SEND Code of Practice, DfE, 2015, p. 92

“Early years providers, schools and colleges should also take steps to ensure that young people and parents are actively supported in contributing to needs assessments, developing and reviewing Education, Health and Care Plans”

SEND Code of Practice, DfE, 2015, p.20

This requires schools *and settings* to demonstrate the use of their own resources using the graduated response.

“Local authorities may develop criteria as guidelines to help them decide when it is necessary to carry out an EHC needs assessment (and following assessment, to decide whether it is necessary to issue an EHC plan). However, local authorities must be prepared to depart from those criteria where there is a compelling reason to do so in any particular case and demonstrate their willingness to do so where individual circumstances warrant such a departure.”

SEND Code of Practice, DfE, 2015, p.146

The Code confirms that local authorities must not apply a ‘blanket’ policy to particular groups of children or young people or certain types of need. Rather, consideration of a child or young person’s needs must be done individually and on their merits.

The descriptors presented are a guide and are not definitive in terms of what is required to meet any particular child or young person’s needs.

SEND Needs Descriptors

Graduated Approach

“Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil’s needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people.”

SEND Code of Practice, DfE, 2015, p.100

Evidence provided when requesting an assessment for an EHCP must clearly show how the graduated approach is being implemented, this applies to all settings across the 0-25 age range.

It is expected that in complying with the above duty schools and settings will only request additional resources when they have used their best endeavours and have demonstrated that they have used available resources, which could include specialist support and information advice and guidance.

There should also be evidence that this has been acted on.

When needs can be met without the provision of the additional funding, the LA will **not** produce or maintain an EHCP. If the child or young person’s disability or outcomes improve sufficiently during the time additional support has been allocated (through an EHCP) and they no longer meet the threshold for such funding, schools and settings must notify the LA. Parents and young people must be fully involved in discussion about any amendments, through the Annual Review process.

A guiding principle is to think about all available resources that children and young people with SEND can use to meet their needs and not **only** in terms of hours of adult support.

SEND Needs Descriptors

Interpreting Descriptors

To support consistency across identification tools and other documentation, the descriptors are presented using the four broad areas of need. It is expected that most children and young people will have a range of needs across these areas, although there will be a specific need identified as their as their Primary Area of Need.

A Primary Area of Need must be identified because the LA is required to provide this data to the DfE. This anonymised data is used at national and local levels to help in planning provision.

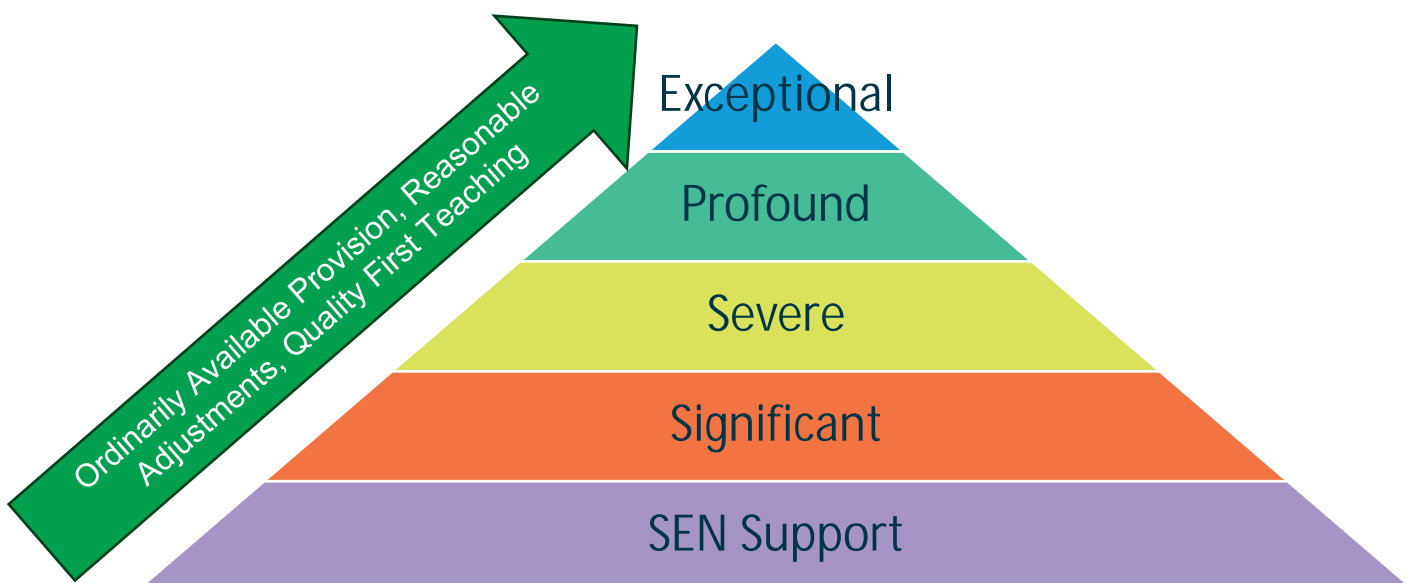
When interpreting these descriptors, it is important to bear in mind the holistic view of the child. Professionals must take into consideration not only the presenting need, but any other factors that may impact on the child.

These include but are not limited to:

- Age and stage of the child/young person
- Care status
- School Attendance
- Involvements with health services
- History of trauma
- A combination of needs resulting higher requirement of support than at first glance

Descriptor Structure

In each area descriptors are provided in ranges representing increasing levels of need. The terms chosen to represent different descriptors are presented below.



SEND Needs Descriptors

- **Significant:** Additional resources may be required to meet needs, and a statutory assessment for an EHCP may be appropriate
- **Severe:** A statutory assessment for an EHCP is necessary and additional resourcing may be required
- **Profound:** A statutory assessment for an EHCP is necessary and additional resourcing will be required

Some children/young people have profiles that fall outside of these descriptors. These needs are not described, due to their inherently unique and/or complex nature.

It is not possible to describe the complexity of all potential needs, and so for specific individual children/young people a fourth descriptor may be used.

- **Exceptional:** Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of these descriptors. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.

SEND Needs Descriptors

Starting a statutory assessment

The Children and Families Act (2014) defines the legal test required to begin an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment:

“(a) the child or young person has or may have special educational needs, and

(b) it may be necessary for special educational provision to be made for the child or young person in accordance with an EHC plan.”

Children and Families Act, UKGOV, 2014, s.36 (8)

It is only possible to make decisions, as to whether a child/young person meets this test, with good quality evidence.

The following evidence helps the local authority to understand the child/young person, and the provision already received, so that a good decision can be made:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ordinarily Available Provision | The school or setting have made reasonable adjustments and put into place Ordinarily Available Provision. There have been Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycles with clear evidence of strategies and support provided. |
| External Advice | The school or setting have accessed external advice from available services such as Social Care, Health, Educational Psychology or Specialist Teaching Support. |
| Use and Impact of advice | Evidence is presented which demonstrates how the external advice has been used and the impact of this on the progress of the child or young person. |
| Progress | Evidence is submitted which demonstrates that the child's progress has not accelerated following the implementation of the ordinarily available provision and external advice. |
| Use of Funding | The school or setting has provided evidence of how the notional SEN budget has been allocated and how this would directly address the child or young person's SEND needs. |
| Attendance Information | Any impact on the child/young person's attendance as a direct result of their SEND needs, interventions to support good attendance and the impact these have had. |

The Cumberland Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment Request Form covers all of the information above and completing this in detail will enable the local authority to make good decisions

Communication and Interaction

Children and young people experience difficulties with interacting in social situations with or without having speech and language needs. This may be attributed to a different way of thinking and processing information and may particularly, but not exclusively, apply to neurodiverse children and young people. Neurodiversity can manifest as needs falling into some of, or all of, the four broad categories of SEND set out in this document.

| Emotional Expression | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Emotional regulation is problematic and leads to distress and anxiety and is a barrier to learning. Differences with expression of feelings in social and learning contexts is evident.</p> | <p>Emotional regulation is highly problematic and results in heightened levels of distress and anxiety which present serious barriers to learning.</p> <p>Differences with expression of feelings in most social and learning contexts is evident and problematic.</p> | <p>Profoundly complex needs. Child or young person is not able manage own actions and response. Unpredictable and unexpected behaviours causing high level risk to self or others and leading to frequent isolation from others.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Communication and Interaction

Interaction, Relationships and Friendships

| Significant | Severe | Profound |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>May or may not want friends and/but finds making and maintaining friendships difficult.</p> <p>Awareness and understanding of social relationships and expected social behaviour is differently developed or superficial. May present with unexpected reactions / responses to social cues, people and events leading to increased experience of distress, fear and / or anger.</p> <p>Limited initiation of social interaction but can take part in some imaginative play if taught/supported but no indication of developing this independently.</p> <p>May avoid sustained interaction.</p> <p>Regular participation in solitary activity (this can be unusually focused on an intense interest).</p> <p>Finds it hard to see beyond their own point of view- unable to play games or interact on other people's terms. May be controlling and try to impose their own perspective.</p> <p>Limited social interaction with social language difficulties which impact severely on learning in all subjects. Significant difficulty in recognising, understanding and anticipating social and physical risks. Vulnerable to exploitation from less scrupulous others.</p> | <p>Engagement in social interaction is limited, and social language difficulties lead to distressed behaviours and increased anxiety which impacts significantly on learning in most lessons.</p> <p>Unable to sustain attention to an activity not of their choosing.</p> <p>Child or young person is likely to withdraw from communication or interact in unexpected ways in the classroom.</p> <p>Not able to initiate and maintain friendships. Approaches others paying little or no attention to their responses. Unable to engage in most social activities, experiences heightened anxious thoughts and feelings, shows signs of increased distress, confusion or shuts down. Likely to be misunderstood and responds with unexpected action leading to increased isolation from others.</p> <p>Severe and enduring difficulties with understanding social and physical risks, their own vulnerability and ability to understand consequences of their own actions and those of others. Highly vulnerable to exploitation from less scrupulous others.</p> | <p>Unable to tolerate any social interaction other than meeting their own basic needs.</p> <p>No tangible recognition of own or other people's thoughts, feelings and emotions.</p> <p>Unable to engage in almost all social activities remaining highly isolated from other children and young people.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Communication and Interaction

| Language Skills | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Standardised Scores for core language, receptive or expressive skills in the range 63–70 when assessed by EP, Speech and Language Therapist or Specialist Advisory Teacher.</p> <p>Cannot follow age-appropriate classroom talk without substantial support.</p> <p>Difficulty with multi-step instructions, understanding usual classroom language or classroom discussions and following stories.</p> <p>Difficulty understanding curriculum content without substantial adaptation.</p> <p>Struggles to follow routines, conversations, or group instructions.</p> <p>Undeveloped grammar and sentence structure. May have telegraphic speech</p> <p>Vocabulary very restricted; cannot recall subject-specific words.</p> <p>Social isolation/frustration may emerge due to communication barriers.</p> <p>Difficulty retelling events, sequencing, or grasping time concepts.</p> <p>Trouble learning new words without intensive repetition.</p> <p>Anxiety creates barriers to verbal and non-verbal communication with the majority of staff and peers</p> <p>These difficulties must not be better explained by hearing loss, general learning difficulties, or other medical conditions.</p> | <p>Standardised Scores for core language, receptive or expressive skills in the range 55-63 when assessed by EP, Speech and Language Therapist or Specialist Advisory Teacher.</p> <p>Cannot retell events in sequence; fails to grasp abstract concepts.</p> <p>Speech may be unclear; listener relies on context to understand.</p> <p>Peer interaction severely affected; requires adult mediation</p> <p>Unable to access much of the mainstream curriculum without major support.</p> <p>Anxiety creates barriers to verbal and non-verbal communication with all staff and peers</p> <p>Frequently misunderstood by peers/adults.</p> <p>These difficulties must not be better explained by hearing loss, general learning difficulties, or other medical conditions.</p> | <p>Standardised Scores for core language, receptive or expressive skills below 55 when assessed by EP, Speech and Language Therapist or Specialist Advisory Teacher.</p> <p>Very limited verbal communication: speech may be unintelligible without familiar adult support</p> <p>May communicate only through AAC systems or signing. Limited understanding of abstract or symbolic language. Very limited verbal skills; may often use single words/short phrases.</p> <p>Cannot reliably follow classroom instructions. Cannot follow curriculum content without major modification.</p> <p>High risk of exclusion from peer interactions due to restricted ability to engage socially without structured support.</p> <p>Speech may be largely unintelligible to those outside family/school staff.</p> <p>Cannot participate in group learning without intensive support.</p> <p>Communication difficulties impact safety and independence.</p> <p>Anxiety creates barriers to verbal and non-verbal communication outside of immediate family.</p> <p>These difficulties must not be better explained by hearing loss, general learning difficulties, or other medical conditions.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Cognition and Learning

| Thinking and Academic Skills | | |
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| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Cognitive assessment by an Educational Psychologist shows significant weaknesses or a markedly atypical learning profile, which is affecting a child or young person's ability to learn.</p> <p>Where standardised tests are used, the overall score will normally be at least 3 standard deviations below the mean/standardised score 55 or below.</p> <p>Progress in reading, writing, mathematics and understanding of time and money occurs slowly and is markedly limited when compared to that of peers.</p> <p>Forgets learning from the previous days/weeks, needing lots of repetition of learning across subjects (overlearning).</p> <p>Learns by rote rather than analysing concepts. Doesn't automatically transfer learning between different contexts.</p> <p>Can deal with concrete facts more easily than abstract concepts.</p> | <p>Attainment of conceptual skills is limited. Where cognitive assessment is possible, this will show highly significant weaknesses which are affecting the ability to learn.</p> <p>Where standardised tests are used, the overall score will normally be at least 3 standard deviations below the mean/standardised score 55 or below.</p> <p>The child or young person generally has limited understanding of key skills e.g., written language and concepts involving numbers, quantity, time, and money.</p> | <p>Conceptual and thinking skills generally involve real objects in the 'here and now'.</p> <p>Learning is primarily based on activities such as those which develop engagement, anticipation, responses to people and experiences, understanding of cause and effect, and concepts such as sorting and matching.</p> <p>Skills are at a very early developmental level and are unlikely to be reliably assessed using standardised measures.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Cognition and Learning

| Communication and Social | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Communication and spoken language are typically much less complex than that expected for age.</p> <p>Has difficulty giving specific answers or explanations, has difficulty sequencing ideas in the right order, stories/conversation may be muddled, making them difficult to follow.</p> <p>Finds longer instructions hard to understand. Better at understanding individual instructions than group instructions. Significant difficulties remembering verbal information.</p> <p>The child or young person may not interpret social cues accurately which could lead to vulnerability. Takes information at face value without critically and independently evaluating it (e.g., can be easily led or influenced). Copies what other children say/do due to lack of understanding.</p> <p>Friendships with peers are often affected by communication or social needs which could result in isolation.</p> | <p>Spoken language is limited in terms of vocabulary and grammar.</p> <p>Speech may be single words or phrases and may be supplemented through augmentative means.</p> <p>Speech and communication are focused on the here and now in everyday events.</p> <p>Language may be used for social communication more than for analysing or developing ideas.</p> <p>Understanding of language is restricted to simple speech and gestural communication.</p> <p>There are marked difficulties with perceiving and interpreting social cues, and with judgment and decision making resulting in vulnerability and social isolation.</p> <p>Friendships with peers are severely affected by communication or social needs.</p> | <p>There is very limited use and understanding of symbolic communication such as speech, signs, pictures, or tactile communication systems.</p> <p>The child or young person may respond to social interactions primarily through gestures and emotional reactions.</p> <p>Co-occurring sensory and physical needs may restrict interactions.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Cognition and Learning

| Functional and Life skills | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Independence and personal care skills are slow to develop. Late to achieve milestones such as using toilet and other self-care skills</p> <p>There are significant difficulties with attention control, independent learning, managing daily routines, and personal organisation Forgets equipment (e.g. homework /pencil cases etc.)</p> <p>Not yet able to problem solve in real life situations. (e.g. unsure what to do if the bus doesn't turn up or tell someone if they are being bullied).</p> <p>Needs to take a step at a time with problem solving. Struggles to put information together to solve a problem or to see the "big picture".</p> | <p>The child or young person's independence and personal care skills are markedly limited when compared to those expected for their age.</p> <p>The child or young person is not independent with managing attention, accessing learning tasks, daily routines, and personal organisation.</p> <p>Many children and young people will have associated needs linked to sensory differences, and emotional regulation</p> | <p>The child or young person depends on others for all aspects of daily personal care, health, and safety.</p> <p>Co-occurring physical and sensory needs restrict active participation in home, recreational and other activities.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Social Emotional and Mental Health

| Relationships | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Lacks social skills required for group work and unstructured times.</p> <p>Has not yet developed social skills such as interpreting facial expressions and non-verbal language, understanding other's feelings and point of view, and taking turns in conversation.</p> <p>Often calls out. Wants immediate attention from adults and struggles to wait their turn.</p> <p>Argumentative with others, including adults.</p> <p>Finds it hard to feel accepted and develop a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Craves reassurance.</p> <p>Seeks/rejects/avoids attachments.</p> | <p>Has significant and ongoing difficulties sustaining relationships with adults and peers.</p> <p>May seek to gain a sense of control within relationships and try to influence others.</p> <p>Not able to value the views of others, collaborate, negotiate, and make compromises whilst working in a group.</p> <p>Frequently experiences difficulties in cooperating with trusted adults, following rules, and respecting boundaries.</p> <p>Appears to deliberately do things to annoy or sabotage.</p> <p>Over-friendly or withdrawn with strangers, and vulnerable to being taken advantage of/at risk of exploitation.</p> <p>Severe and repeated behaviours that may be injurious and/or endanger others, resulting in high levels of social isolation and rejection.</p> <p>Issues around identity and belonging.</p> <p>May express or demonstrate they feel unsafe and lack a sense of belonging and connection.</p> | <p>Has significant and persistent difficulties with trusting other people, including familiar adults and peers. Relationships are perceived as threatening.</p> <p>Is not able to/experiences difficulties with engagement and relationships with others.</p> <p>Extremely abusive towards staff and peers.</p> <p>Significant sexualised language and behaviour towards others.</p> <p>Severe and extreme behaviours that result in significant risks of harm to self and others despite close adult support, resulting in extreme social isolation, vulnerability and disengagement.</p> <p>Significantly vulnerable to manipulation by others, for example into criminal or harmful activities.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Social Emotional and Mental Health

| Engagement | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Additional needs impact on engagement with learning on most days leading to under -performance.</p> <p>Finds it difficult to cooperate with everyday instructions/ requests and classroom boundaries.</p> <p>Avoids work or demonstrates reluctance. Has a low concept of themselves as an effective learner.</p> <p>May struggle to accept praise and show pride in their achievements and manage disappointment.</p> <p>Inattentive, easily distracted. Struggles to listen to and follow instructions, settle to and start a task, sustain concentration, and complete tasks successfully.</p> <p>Often not able to sit in class, moving feet under table, squirming and rocking in chair, fidgeting, fiddling, making noises, fingers drumming.</p> <p>May wander about the classroom.</p> <p>Attendance may be reduced. May be reluctant or unwilling to go out or leave the house.</p> | <p>Additional needs impact on engagement with learning during most lessons, leading to significant under -performance.</p> <p>Does not follow usual rules and routines on most days.</p> <p>Regularly unable to engage in tasks that are differentiated to their level of ability.</p> <p>Attention control is markedly weaker than expected for level of development and cannot be sustained without support.</p> <p>May leave the classroom without permission/ wander about the school.</p> <p>Severe and persistent disruption to social and emotional well-being resulting in unhappiness/stress. Possible prolonged periods of absence/alienation.</p> <p>Severe and unpredictable responses to learning tasks, resulting in prolonged periods of uncooperative behaviour and/or emotional withdrawal.</p> <p>Regular school/setting absence despite carefully planned supports.</p> | <p>Additional needs prevent independent engagement with learning during all activities, leading to significant under performance.</p> <p>Requires alternative curriculum to support engagement with learning.</p> <p>Is not able to sustain attention to most/any task independently.</p> <p>Experiences significant and persistent episodes of dissociation.</p> <p>Severe responses, leading to inability to engage with formal learning situations.</p> <p>Long term non-attendance associated with significant anxiety or other mental health needs.</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Social Emotional and Mental Health

| Emotions | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>Has not yet developed age-appropriate emotional literacy, for example struggles to recognise feelings and emotions and with using words and phrases to describe how they feel.</p> <p>The child or young person may 'see' / 'feel' danger / threat disproportionate to the situation.</p> <p>May appear/present as in low mood/flat facial expressions/bored.</p> <p>Finds it hard to manage feelings of anxiety. Dysregulated on most days (for example, they experience difficulties in being able to remain calm, focussed, engaged and responsive to their connections with others).</p> <p>Experiences difficulties in managing transitions, change or uncertainty.</p> <p>Lack of interest in new experiences.</p> <p>On most days displays inappropriate, aggressive, or withdrawn behaviour.</p> <p>Presents with behaviours that impact on the learning of others on most days.</p> <p>Needs support to calm and regulate following incidents.</p> | <p>Experiences high levels of anxiety and/or dysregulation that presents as withdrawal, or behaviours that challenge during most lessons.</p> <p>Shows verbal and/or physical aggression on most days.</p> <p>Hurts self and/or others. Throws/misuses/damages resources.</p> <p>Presents with behaviours that impact on the learning of others during most lessons.</p> <p>Has difficulties expressing empathy, may seem emotionally detached.</p> <p>Engages in risk-taking activities in school/setting.</p> <p>Struggles to understand the consequences of behaviour.</p> <p>Struggles to resolve conflict and to repair and restore relationships following conflict.</p> | <p>Experiences high levels of anxiety and/or dysregulation that presents as withdrawal, or behaviours that challenge during most activities, even when these are individualised.</p> <p>Lacks insight into own behaviours. For example, struggles to know the difference between the truth and falsehood, fact and fiction, and reality and fantasy.</p> <p>Poses a significant risk to self and/or others for example because of violent behaviour, self-harm/attempted suicide, criminality, mental health conditions.</p> <p>Incidents can be prolonged and may struggle to calm, even with reduced demands and bespoke strategies</p> |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Sensory Impairment and/or Physical

Deaf / Hearing Impairment

Deaf and Hearing Impaired children, whose language is less developed than the average hearing child of 42 - 48 months, will have their provision based on the extent to which their language development is delayed as a result of their deafness.

| Significant | Severe | Profound |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nursery or Reception child who has language assessed as between 12 - 24 months below chronological age. | Nursery or Reception pupil who has language assessed as more than 24 months below chronological age. | Children in Year 1 or above with language levels below those of an average 42 - 48 month child. |

Deaf and Hearing Impaired children, of any age, whose language has developed beyond the level of the average hearing child of 42 - 48 months will have their provision based on the extent of their deafness; any additional factors linked to their deafness and the impact this has on language and communication development and on access to learning and the curriculum. This will be assessed by a Specialist Advisory Teacher DHI/ Teacher of the Deaf.

| Significant | Severe | Profound |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Average hearing loss 56 – 80 dBHL with a score of 16 – 22 on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. | Average hearing loss 56 – 80 dBHL with a score of 23 – 24 on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. | Average hearing loss 56 – 80 dBHL with a score of 25 and above on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. |
| Average hearing loss 81 – 95 dBHL with a score of 16 - 19 on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. | Average hearing loss 81 – 95 dBHL with a score of 20 – 23 on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. | Average hearing loss 81 – 95 dBHL with a score of 24 and above on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. |
| Average hearing loss 96 dBHL or greater with a score of 16 -19 on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. | Average hearing loss 96 dBHL or greater with a score of 20 – 23 on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. | Average hearing loss 96 dBHL or greater with a score of 24 and above on Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework. |
| NB average hearing loss refers to The BATOD document "Audiometric Descriptors for Pure Tone Audiograms" | NB average hearing loss refers to The BATOD document "Audiometric Descriptors for Pure Tone Audiograms" | NB average hearing loss refers to The BATOD document "Audiometric Descriptors for Pure Tone Audiograms" |

N.B: Average hearing loss refers to The BATOD document "Audiometric Descriptors for Pure Tone Audiograms". Scores refer to the Cumberland DHI Eligibility Framework.

Exceptional: Some Deaf / Hearing Impaired children and young people may have communication needs that require sign language support (British Sign Language or Sign Supported English) , i.e. bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis

Sensory Impairment and/or Physical

Blind / Visual Impairment

Distance Vision

| Significant | Severe | Profound |
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| <p>Generally 6/36 or less Snellen/Kay (LogMar 0.8) ie : Child or young person can see at 6 metres, what a fully sighted pupil could see from 36 metres. Child or young person would be unable to work from a white board in the classroom without human/technical support.</p> <p>Fluctuating vision impairment.</p> <p>Functional loss due to Cerebral Vision Impairment or other factors such as visual field loss or nystagmus.</p> | <p>Generally, 6/60 or less with Snellen/Kay (LogMar 1.0) ie: Child or young person can see at 6 metres, what a fully sighted pupil can see from 60 metres. Child or young person would be unable to work from a white board in the classroom without human/technical support.</p> <p>Fluctuating vision impairment.</p> <p>Functional loss due to Cerebral Vision Impairment or other factors such as visual field loss or nystagmus.</p> | <p>Generally, 6/120 or less with Snellen/Kay (approx. LogMar 1.3) ie : Child or young person can see at 6 metres, what a fully sighted pupil can see from 120 metres. Child or young person would be unable to work from a white board in the classroom.</p> <p>Very limited useful distance vision for educational purposes.</p> |

OR Near Vision

| Significant | Severe | Profound |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Generally within the range of N24 : ie requires print sizes generally N24 and the equivalent sized detail in pictures. N24 is approximately font size 24 in WORD Arial.</p> <p>Fluctuating vision impairment.</p> <p>Functional loss due to Cerebral Vision Impairment or other factors such as visual field loss or nystagmus.</p> | <p>Generally within the range of N36 : ie requires print sizes generally N36 and the equivalent sized detail in pictures. N36 is approximately font size 36 in WORD Arial.</p> <p>Fluctuating vision impairment.</p> <p>Functional loss due to Cerebral Vision Impairment or other factors such as visual field loss or nystagmus.</p> | <p>Requires Braille and/or print within the range of N48 : ie requires print sizes generally N48 and the equivalent sized detail in pictures. N48 is approximately font size 48 in WORD Arial.</p> <p>Very limited useful near vision for educational purposes/braille user.</p> |

Exceptional: Some Blind/Visually Impaired children and young people may present with vision needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.

Sensory Impairment and/or Physical

Physical Conditions

There are many different types of physical and/or medical conditions. Individual's needs vary and can change over time and, as such, requirement for one child/young person will not be the same for another with the same medical condition.

| Significant | Severe | Profound |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>A physical/medical condition that impairs limb movement, strength and development, impacting on balance and/or coordination. There is evidence-based impact on the access to the learning environment, some areas of the curriculum and progress, requiring a high level of targeted support throughout the day.</p> | <p>A physical/medical condition that severely impairs limb movement, strength and development, impacting on balance and coordination. There is evidence-based impact on the access to the learning environment, the whole school curriculum and progress, requiring a high level and more frequent adult support and intervention throughout the day.</p> | <p>Complex physical disability and/or a serious medical condition that affects quality of life. The complexity of needs has an evidence-based impact on the ability to access the curriculum and/or learning environment, requiring personalised learning tasks and requires constant adult support to maintain safety.</p> |

Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.

Sensory Impairment and/or Physical

| Physical Conditions | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Significant | Severe | Profound |
| <p>The child or young person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may have significant difficulties with purposeful arm/hand function, impacting on manipulative skills, independence, self-care, recording and access to practical subjects. • may need to use aids to support mobility e.g. walking frames, manual or powered wheelchair, requiring targeted supervision and support for some aspects of aided mobility. • requires adult supervision for transfers between pieces of equipment/furniture/toilet, or support to develop independence with transfers. • may also use an aid to toilet, e.g. catheter or stoma, requiring adult support with toileting and developing independent use of the aid. • may require support with P.E. and/or other practical areas of the curriculum. • may also experience some episodes of fatigue throughout the week. | <p>The child or young person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may need to use aids to support mobility e.g. walking frames, manual or powered wheelchair, requiring adult support to move around school/setting environment. • may also have significant difficulties with arm/hand function, impacting on manipulative skills, independence, self-care, recording and access to practical subjects. • may lack independent seated stability, requiring adult support for transfers between pieces of equipment/furniture/toilet. • may require hoist assistance for all personal care needs and transfers. • may also use an aid to toilet, e.g. catheter, requiring continuing adult support with toileting where independence in this area is limited. • may also need nutritional support, e.g. requires a gastrostomy/nasogastric tube feed in school. • requires support to access P.E. and other practical areas of the curriculum. • may require therapy and/or medical interventions in school. • may also have a long-term impact on language acquisition and speech production. • may use technological support and/or alternative methods to assist with communication - verbal and/or written, requiring adult support to develop independence in its use. • may experience levels of fatigue that vary throughout the day/week. | <p>Child/young person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may have a life-limited, deteriorating condition or critical medical needs. • may require adult support for all daily routines, personal and intimate care, mobility, movement and hoist assistance. • may also need nutritional support e.g. requires a gastrostomy/nasogastric tube feed and hydration support in school. • requires medical input, therapy and interventions in the school/setting. • may have persistent difficulties in the acquisition of language and speech production with limited capacity to communicate effectively. • may be reliant on the use of assistive technology and/or alternative methods to assist with communication. • may experience levels of fatigue that impacts on everyday activities. • social opportunities and emotional development, lead to concerns about social isolation, emotional wellbeing and/or vulnerability within the settings |
| <p>Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.</p> | | |

Sensory Impairment and/or Physical

Medical Conditions

The Cognition and Learning descriptors should always be considered when a medical condition is life long and impacts on cognitive skills, learning and progress.

The child or young person has a serious health condition that is life long and may be life threatening. There is evidence-based impact on the access to the learning and progress, requiring a high level of targeted support throughout the day.

- The child or young person requires regular monitoring and targeted support to carry out health tasks, outside that which is typically routine.
- The serious health condition impacts on learning, and participation in learning tasks is regularly interrupted due to the severity of the condition.
- The child or young person has regular periods away from learning tasks due to the required interventions to support the health condition.
- There may be additional identified needs which compound the barrier to learning.
- Learning and progress will be affected by time out of class as a result of the severity of the child or young person's condition.
- The child or young person may also experience some episodes of fatigue throughout the week.
- Attendance may be reduced as a result of the severity of the condition.

The child or young person has a serious health condition that is life long and may be life threatening. There is evidence-based impact on the access to learning and progress, requiring more frequent adult support and intervention throughout the day.

- The serious health condition impacts on learning, and participation in learning tasks is frequently interrupted or discontinued due to the severity of their condition.
- The child or young person requires a high level of supervision due to the symptoms, frequent monitoring resulting in frequent intervention throughout the school day.
- Due to the severity of the health needs, the child or young person will not be able to manage their health tasks in the setting independently.
- There may be additional identified needs which compound the barrier to learning.
- Learning and progress will be significantly affected by frequent time out of class, reduced access to learning tasks and reduced attendance as a result of the severity of their condition.
- The child or young person may experience levels of fatigue that vary throughout the day/week.
- Attendance may be reduced as a result of the severity of the condition.

The child or young person has a serious medical condition that may be life-limited, may deteriorate or they may have critical medical needs. The complexity of needs has an evidence-based impact on the ability to access the curriculum, requiring personalised learning tasks and constant adult support to maintain safety.

- The child or young person is likely to require adult support for most daily routines, including personal and intimate care, mobility, movement and hoist assistance.
- The child or young person may also need nutritional and hydration support in school.
- The child or young person is likely to require medical input, therapy and interventions in the school/setting, with support and advice from a multidisciplinary team.
- The child or young person may experience levels of fatigue that impacts on everyday activities.
- Attendance may be significantly reduced as a result of the severity of the condition.

Exceptional: Some children and young people may present with learning needs that require bespoke and/or specialist approaches that fall outside of the descriptors above. Provision for these needs will be decided on an exceptional basis.