The Graduated Response Toolkit

Including Ordinarily Available Inclusive Practice for all learners

The Graduated Response Toolkit supports schools in identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), following the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

It provides a structured approach to inclusive education through three key tiers:

- Universal Provision: High-quality, inclusive teaching that meets the needs of all learners through effective differentiation, classroom strategies including adaptive teaching, and a supportive learning environment.
- Ordinarily Available Provision: Reasonable adjustments and targeted strategies that schools are expected to provide from their existing resources, without the need for additional funding or formal diagnosis.
- Graduated Support: A layered approach that builds on universal strategies with more targeted interventions, ensuring early identification of needs, collaboration with families, and regular review of outcomes.

Each child and young person (CYP) are a unique individual with their own strengths and areas for development. It is not expected that every CYP will require every intervention or strategy outlined in this toolkit. Instead, the toolkit serves as a minimum expectation across CLF academies—providing a consistent baseline of support while allowing flexibility to tailor provision to individual needs.

Families, young people, and school staff will work together to identify the most appropriate support, which will be reviewed and adapted as the child or young person progresses through their educational journey.

Inclusive Education: A Whole School Commitment

- **Creating a Positive Learning Environment:** A nurturing environment that promotes positive relationships, safety, and student voice is essential. Schools should actively remove participation barriers and tailor provision to meet identified needs. All children have access to the wider curriculum and enrichment activities.

- **Assessment and Feedback:** Formative assessment and feedback are consistently integrated into lessons to monitor student progress and identify learning barriers. A comprehensive approach is encouraged, incorporating observations, checklists, diagnostic tools, and input from children, young people (CYP), and their families.

- **Early Identification of SEN**: Academies should have a structured process for the early identification of Special Educational Needs (SEN), using a range of assessments.
- **Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle:** A continuous cycle of assessing, planning, doing, and reviewing ensures that learners with SEND are supported effectively and make measurable progress.

- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Academies must make practical changes to remove barriers for learners with SEND, ensuring fair access to education through tailored support, adapted resources, or changes to the environment.

- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Academies work collaboratively with CYP and their families, ensuring they are active participants in decision-making. Resources and guidance are shared, and families are directed to local support services.

- **Staff Development and Collaboration:** All staff, including Teaching Assistants, contribute to student success. Ongoing professional development is planned, drawing on evidence-based research. Collaboration with external specialists supports staff training and supervision.

- **Supporting Transitions:** Support systems are in place for both routine and significant transitions. Clear procedures help ensure continuity during changes in educational settings, with CYP and families involved in planning and decision-making.

Inclusive teaching is not a separate strategy—it is simply good teaching that recognises and responds to the diverse needs of all learners.

Inclusive Teaching

- Creating learning environments that recognise and accommodate the varied backgrounds, experiences, and needs of all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- An approach that embraces diversity, equity, and accessibility in the classroom
- Adopting flexible instructional methods, providing multiple means of representation and expression
- Fostering a supportive and respectful learning community where every student feels valued and included
- Addresses the diverse needs of learners but also challenges societal norms and systemic barriers
- Engage in reflective practice, continuously evaluating their teaching methods, seeking professional development opportunities
- Adapting their approaches to meet the evolving needs of their students

Good Teaching

- Recognises and accommodates the diverse needs, learning styles, and abilities of students, employing varied instructional methods and strategies to cater to individual differences
- Captivates students' interest and motivates them to actively participate in the learning process
- Adapting their approaches to meet the evolving needs of their students
- Positive relationships enhance communication, foster supportive learning environment, and promote student well-being
- Recognises and accommodates the diverse needs, learning styles, and abilities of students, employing varied instructional methods and strategies to cater to individual differences
- Engage in reflective practice, continuously evaluating their teaching methods, seeking professional development opportunities
- Adapting their approaches to meet the evolving needs of their students

- Five-a-day reflection tool for teachers
- Five-a-day reflection tool for TAs
- Teacher Handbook: SEND

High-Quality Inclusive Teaching is the most powerful tool we have to support all learners.

The focus should be on embedding inclusive, evidence-informed strategies into everyday classroom practice through adaptive practice.

The EEF have identified 5 evidence-based strategies which are impactful for all learning but particularly those with SEND. But it starts with what teachers already know about good, inclusive teaching.

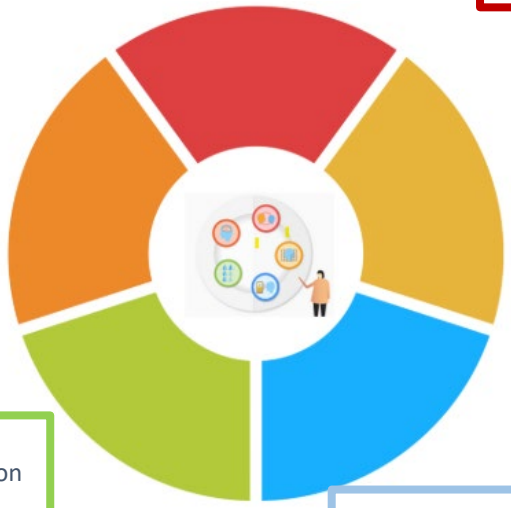
Effective adaptive teaching is grounded in deep knowledge of pupils as individual learners. This means using formative assessment—both formal and informal—to understand each child's strengths, needs, and progress. Teachers who know their pupils well can make timely, precise adjustments to instruction, ensuring that support is targeted, proportionate, and responsive.

Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies: Cognitive strategies include memorisation techniques and subject-specific methods.

- Examples: problem-solving methods in maths, mnemonic devices, graphic organisers.
- Metacognitive strategies involve planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning.
- Examples: modelling thinking, metacognitive talk, checklists, and success criteria.

Explicit Instruction Teacher-led approaches focused on demonstration followed by guided and independent practice.

- Model tasks clearly and check understanding regularly.
- Teach skills and concepts in small steps.
- Use examples and non-examples.
- Use clear and unambiguous language.
- Anticipate and plan for common misconceptions.
- Highlight essential content and remove distracting information.



Scaffolding: Temporary support that is removed when no longer required. Scaffolds may be visual, verbal, or written.

- Visual: task planner, step-by-step lists, model examples, vocabulary-supporting images.
- Verbal: prompts like 'Let's look at this together…', 'What have you done before that will help you with this task?'.
- Written: word banks, writing frames, sentence starters.

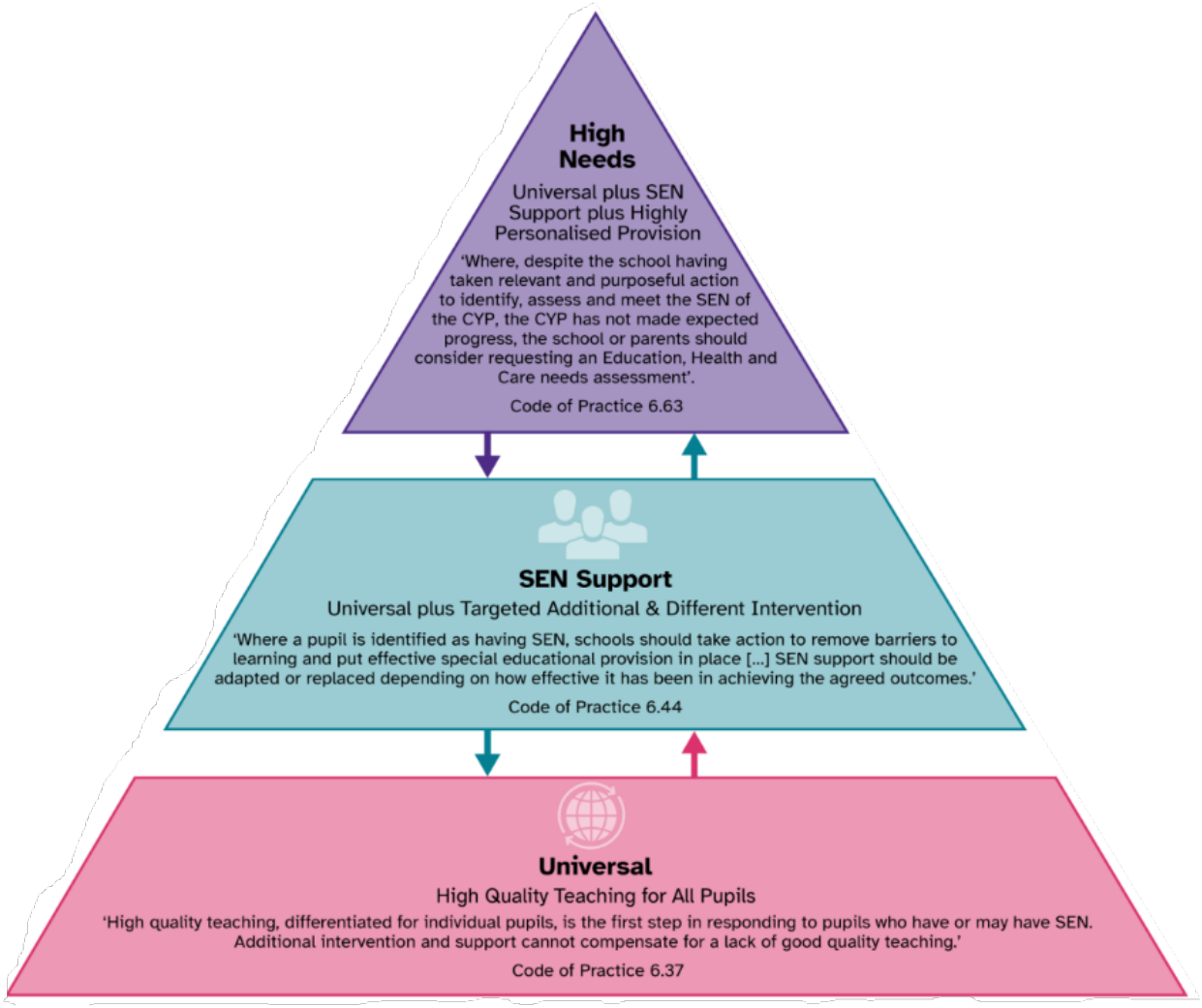
Flexible Grouping: Allocate pupils to groups based on shared needs for specific learning outcomes.

- Group children in ways that reduce stigma.
- Promote peer tutoring to encourage collaborative learning.
- Use formative assessment to determine grouping for specific tasks.

Using Technology :Use a visualiser when modelling work.

- Support students in recording their learning using speech-to-text software or alternative input devices.
- Use technology to support retrieval practice and self-quizzing to increase retention of key ideas and knowledge.

Education Endowment Foundation



Somerset Graduated Response Toolkit https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/the-local-offer/education/graduated-response/

A Graduated Response:

The needs of all learners are met through a graduated response, starting at a 'Universal Level' through high quality teaching adapted to meet a range of learning needs.

For most children or young people where there is a concern, the school should work through a graduated response 'to ensure the relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child or young person has been taken.' (CoP 9.14)

When learning needs are not able to be met through high quality teaching, and a child is not making progress, further assessment may be needed to identify specific barriers to learning. A pupil may need 'SEN Support', in addition to the universal provision available to all pupils, to overcome identified barriers to learning.

In some cases, CYP needs may be complex and they may require 'High Needs' support through an Education, Health and Care assessment.

Assess Plan Do Review (APDR)

The graduated response is '*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'* – Code of Practice 6.44.

It begins with **high-quality universal provision and adaptive teaching,** ensuring that all CYP benefit from inclusive strategies before any formal SEND support is considered.

Teachers assess individual needs, plan appropriate responses, implement strategies, and review their impact regularly. This approach ensures that support is responsive and proportionate, with more targeted interventions introduced only, when necessary, based on evidence from this ongoing cycle.

When a CYP is not making expected progress despite high-quality universal provision and adaptive teaching, the **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** (APDR) process is initiated to provide more targeted support.

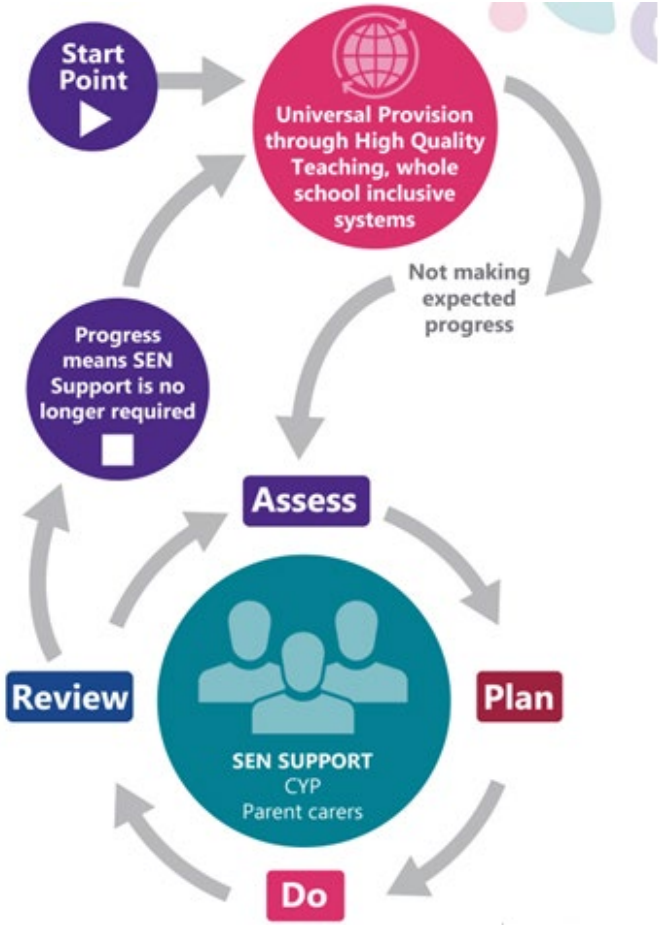
This begins with a thorough **assessment** of the CYP's needs, drawing on observations, further assessments or screener, data, and input from the CYP and their parent carers.

A collaborative **plan** is then developed, outlining specific interventions and SMART targets.

These **actions** are then implemented consistently, with all involved parties contributing to the support.

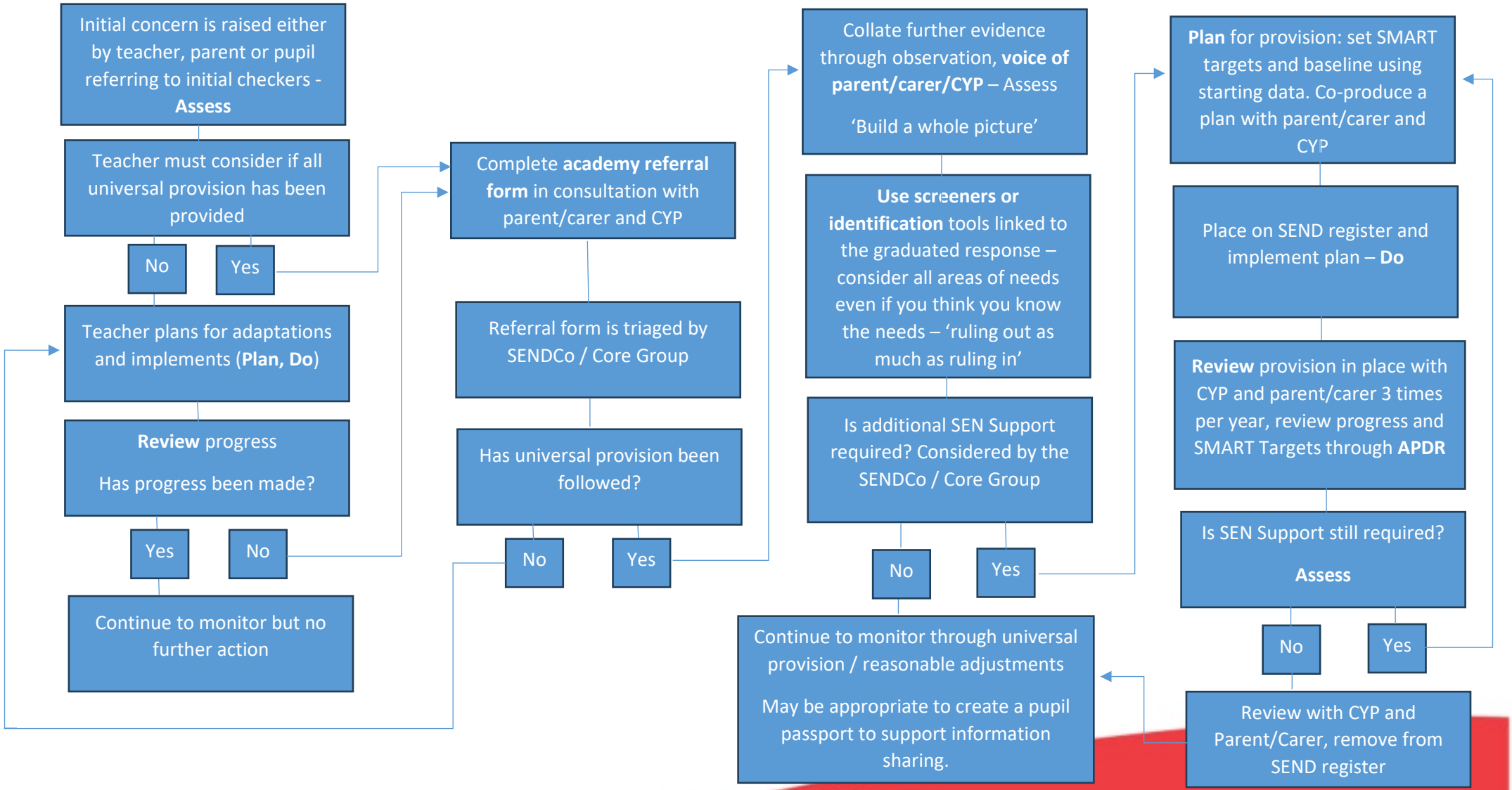
Finally, the **review** stage evaluates progress and determines whether the support should be adjusted, continued, or stepped down.

SEN Support is not a fixed or permanent label, as progress is made or circumstances evolve, the level and type of support may be adjusted, reduced, or even removed entirely.



Somerset Graduated Response Toolkit
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Identification and APDR: Identifying special educational needs early helps CYP get the right support at the right time. By noticing signs through observation, simple assessments, and working closely with families, academies can put support in place quickly, helping to prevent small challenges from becoming bigger barriers to learning. Provision should always be needs-driven rather than label or diagnosis-driven.



To Identify additional learning needs, learning need is broken down into the 4 broad areas of Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Sensory and Physical, and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).

Communication and Interaction	Cognition and Learning
Children and young people with speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) struggle to communicate due to difficulties in expressing themselves, understanding others, or using social communication rules. Each child's SLCN profile is unique and may change over time, affecting various aspects of speech, language, or social communication at different stages. Those with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, often face challenges with social interaction, language, communication, and imagination, impacting their relationships with others.	Support for Cognition and Learning difficulties is needed when children and young people learn significantly more slowly than their peers, even with scaffolding. Identified needs may range from moderate (MLD) to severe (SLD), requiring support in all curriculum areas, to profound and multiple (PMLD), involving severe learning difficulties in addition to physical or sensory impairments. Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) affect particular aspects of learning, including conditions like dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia.
Sensory and Physical	**Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH)**
Some children and young people need special educational provision due to disabilities that prevent or hinder their use of standard educational facilities. These difficulties can vary with age and may change over time. Many with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), or multi-sensory impairment (MSI) require specialist support, equipment, or habilitation assistance. MSI involves both vision and hearing difficulties. Additionally, those with physical disabilities (PD) often need ongoing support and equipment to access the same opportunities as their peers.	Children and young people can face various social and emotional difficulties, such as withdrawal, isolation, or displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These reflect underlying mental health issues like anxiety, depression, self-harm, substance misuse, eating disorders, or unexplained physical symptoms. Others may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder

Learners may have needs across more than one category and certain conditions may not fall neatly into one area of need.

The following is not an exhaustive list of provision that may be available in academies across our trust. It is essential to understand the unique strengths and needs of each child or young person and plan support accordingly within the context of each academy.

Communication and Interaction			
Universal	**Identification Tools**	**SEN Support**	**High Needs (Specialised)**
• **Consistent high quality adaptive teaching** • Communication Friendly Classrooms • Autism Champion Guidance • Visual aids/timetables /Key words/word banks created from Widget • Pre-teaching vocabulary • *Word Aware Vocabulary (whole school approach)* • *Colourful Semantics (whole class)* • Modelled speech/language-sentence stems • Clear routines, sequencing activities-start and end of tasks communicated • Appropriate level of language-short, simple sentences • Clear routines, expectations, with visual clues • Modelled interaction • Targeted questioning • Talk partners	• WellComm Speech and Language Tool Kit • NHS Screeners • Progression Tools • British Picture Vocabulary Scale • Autism Education Trust Progression Framework • NHS Greater Glasgow Interactive Child Development Questionnaires – suggests strategies and activities	Targeted interventions in small groups or one-to-one using evidence-based learning principles such as: • WellComm Speech and Language toolkit and intervention • Talkboost • Language for Behaviours and Emotions • Word Aware groups • Language for Thinking • Block Therapy (NHS training) • Narrative Therapy (NHS Training) • Talkabout Social Communication • You are a Social Detective • Superflex • Comic Strip Conversations • Attention Autism: Attention Bucket • Individual visual timetables • Targeted recommendations from Speech and Language therapist • Access to quiet spaces, movement / sensory breaks • Sensory Circuits • Transition support	A highly personalised curriculum delivered in line with recommendations from an EHCP. This may include: • Targeted work from Speech and Language therapy - Therapy blocks • ASC Outreach support from LAs • Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) • TEACCH approach

Cognition and Learning			
Universal	**Screeners**	**SEN Support**	**High Needs**
• **Consistent high quality adaptive teaching** • Knowledge and understanding of barriers to learning • Dyslexia friendly classrooms • Knowing pupil starting point and next steps to develop learning • Activate prior learning • Teaching using a multisensory approach • Teaching is sequential - builds on what the pupil knows • Model and scaffold to independence • Use of effective questioning • Regular assessment informing next steps • Opportunities for partner talk • Visual dictionaries and word mats • ICT to support learning • Writing scaffolds and sentence stems • Use of manipulatives -concrete to conceptual • Pre-teach vocabulary	• Unlocking letters and Sounds (Primary) • NGRT (GL) Primary • Dyslexia Screener (GL) • Dyscalculia Screener (GL) • Graded Word Spelling / Helen Arkell • Basic Number Screening Test (Hodder)	Targeted interventions in small groups or one-to-one using evidence-based learning principles such as: • Unlocking letters and Sounds 1:1 targeted intervention (Primary) • Precision teaching • Inference Training • Literacy / small group targeted English • Switch On Reading • Number Stacks • Number sense • Numeracy / small group targeted Maths group • Write from the Start • Write Dance • Touch typing	A highly personalised curriculum delivered in line with recommendations from an EHCP. This may include: • Higher level of adult and group support using strategies at SEN Support for core and foundation subjects • Targeted learning Support from Educational Psychology (EP) to inform provision • Highly adapted curriculum for some CYP

Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH)			
Universal	**Screeners**	**SEN Support**	**High Needs**
• **Universal provision for mental health and wellbeing** • **Consistent high quality adaptive teaching** • Clear routines and expectations • Relational behaviour policies • Whole class strategies: safe, predictable classroom, growth mindset, Zones of Regulation, calming & relaxation activities • Individual strategies- classroom role/responsibility • Positive language scripts • Problem-solving approach • Social stories as group • Targeted PSHE curriculum • Whole school assemblies and celebration • Praise and high expectations • Access to safe spaces, especially at unstructured times • Peer groups or buddy systems • Ensure opportunities to have access to the wider curriculum • Pastoral support	• Boxall profiling • Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire • Pupil Attitude to Self and School (GL) •	Targeted interventions in small groups or one-to-one using evidence-based learning principles. • Hamish and Milo • Boxall Interventions • Emotion Coaching • Regular daily check-in, meet and greet • Talkabout intervention- social skills, friendships, self-awareness and self-esteem • Play therapy • Social stories and cartoons 1:1 • Specific support for social times • Structured and supported play opportunities • Transition support • Regular and planned time with an emotionally available adult • Starving the Anger Gremlin / 5 Point Scale • Nurture group provision • Mentoring group / 1:1 • Outdoor learning activities small group 1:1	A highly personalised curriculum delivered in line with recommendations from an EHCP. This may include: • Personalised plan and highly adaptive curriculum • Targeted work informed by CAMHS, Educational Psychology

Sensory and Physical			
Universal	**Screeners**	**SEN Support**	**High Needs**
• Adaptions to the classroom • Sensory Audit of classroom and school to inform adaptations • Reasonable adjustments – presentations, font size, environment, lighting. • Additional movement breaks • Classrooms have age-appropriate furniture and environments • Visual prompts, pictures and assistive technology used to aid learning • Alternative forms of recording • High quality resources are readily available and organised to enable independence • Consideration of seating plans • Wobble or wedge seating cushion • Wobble stool • Gym ball • Writing slope/ pencil grips • Lesson organised to maximise active learning providing time for concentration, discussion, thinking, reflecting and questioning • Outdoor learning opportunities	Sensory checklist • ITS fact files – Somerset Partnership • Visual/Hearing /Physical screening may be informed by questionnaires or assessments in collaboration with specialist teachers and healthcare professionals, occupational therapist or paediatrician.	Targeted interventions in small groups or one-to-one using evidence-based learning principles. • Gross motor skills programme • Fine motor skills programme • Dance Mat touch typing • Sensory Circuits • Professional advice around physical access to the school • Access to dedicated technological equipment laptop or iPad to record work • Individual workstation • Social stories/Sensory stories • Occupational Therapy assessment, recommendations and support plan. • Physiotherapy assessment, recommendations and support plan.	A highly personalised curriculum delivered in line with recommendations from an EHCP. This may include: • Targeted work from Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Habilitation Team, Outreach Team & School Nurse Team • Individual support with self-care where appropriate • Personalised plan and highly adapted curriculum