

Communication and Interaction

Social Communication & Autism Spectrum

Universal Descriptor Wave 1	Identification and Assessment	Teaching and Learning Strategies, Resources and Physical Environment	
A student may present with: Difficulty making and keeping friends / loner/ has key friends Okay with adults Possible low level behaviours “Quirky” Conforming – but reported to be unhappy after school Quiet Withdrawn Some identifiable sensory needs ‘Meltdowns’ Signs of anxiety Sickness Some inflexible thinking	Observation Data tracking Teacher assessments Pupil Progress meetings Child/Young Person voice Parent/carer voice Assess, Plan, Do, Review ‘Closing the Gap’ document A monitoring system should be in place to assess pupil’s need, identify outcomes, implement support and monitor and evaluate progress	Within private, voluntary, independent and childminder settings (PVICs), the manager is accountable for the progress of the child within the setting, predominantly working on differentiated activities. Quality First Teaching with a specific consideration for children with communication and interaction difficulties. The class/subject teacher is accountable for the progress of the children and young people within the mainstream class. Curriculum tasks should be modified as required. Staff will: Get to know the child and their triggers and identify/find out about strategies that usually work. Curriculum and Teaching Methods: Staff should consider and implement as appropriate: • Make reasonable adjustments re: classroom environment • Visible timetable – prompts – checklists - plan of the day • Have spaces to support sensory needs. Offer a range of sensory equipment e.g. stress balls • Quiet space available – time out cards / lunch passes • Seating consideration • Consistency amongst staff – include rewards, sanctions, routine, language and approach • Breaking instructions down	Additional advice and support is available from: • SENDCo • SEN Team within school/Learning Community/Academy chain • Consultancy support from: • Speech and Language Therapy • Learning Support Service • Autism Communication Team Blue Book

Avoidance of eye contact Mild difficulties with social communication and getting along with people Some rigidity of thoughts which affects learning & may affect being a member of a group in some contexts Mild difficulty with understanding language and communicating Responds to simple instructions in context/uses simple language to express needs/sustains listening concentration for short periods		• Limiting language – speed of delivery, vocabulary, duration of delivery • Use of name - specific instructions • Adjustment to uniform • Use of 'twiddle items' in learning times. • Use of 'work then reward' routine • Involvement of pupil and family in developing strategies • Specific communication, e.g. positive instructions, praise for specific action, expectations • Use of pupil's special interests as motivation • Increased differentiation of activities and materials by presentation, outcome, timing, scaffolding and additional resources • Differentiated questioning and targeted simplified level/pace/amount of teacher talk • Alternative forms of recording routinely used • Use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches • Small steps approaches • Resources and displays that support independence. • Routine feedback to pupil • Differentiation needed in some subject areas • Emphasis should be placed on developing social and communication skills • Access to appropriate resources • Awareness of the potential need for guidance and support re: social communication and sensory issues Speech, Language & Communication Needs: • Increased differentiation of activities and materials by presentation, outcome, timing, scaffolding and additional resources • Differentiated questioning and targeted simplified level/pace/amount of teacher talk • Alternative forms of recording routinely used • Use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches • Small steps approaches • Resources and displays that support independence	
--	--	---	--

- Routine feedback to pupil
- Advice from Speech and Language Therapy (if involved) is included in the planning

Organisational Adjustments:

- Environmental considerations are made to meet the needs of all pupils e.g. seating position, noise, personal space and classroom layouts, displays and signage.

Grouping:

- Guided reading and writing groups are led by the teacher
- Flexible grouping arrangements
- Child may benefit from some additional small group opportunities to work on effective communication skills e.g. turn taking, listening, selecting appropriate language

Staffing:

- Consideration is given to supporting the pupil to access social situations.
- Adult support for learning as required

Specialist resources and intervention strategies:

- Wide variety of resources appropriate to the task
- Interest boxes specific to pupil for 'downtime'
- Specialist equipment specific to the pupil's learning need i.e. sloping board, coloured paper, pencil grips etc.

Identify any specific training needs for staff

Transitions: thorough and timely preparations made for transition, both between year groups and between settings

Targeted Descriptor Wave 2	Identification and Assessment	Teaching and Learning Strategies, Resources and Physical Environment	
A student may present with: Dual diagnosis Additional speech and language difficulties More prominent sensory needs Additional family difficulties More intensive rigidity/single minded Difficulties with change, even with forewarning Struggle to make / maintain relationships with adults/peers May have one or two friends High anxiety manifested in avoidance or stress indicators Experience meltdown regularly Frequent moderate difficulties with getting along with people Can be quite literate in interpreting situations	Observation Data tracking Teacher assessments Pupil Progress meetings Child/Young Person voice Parent/Carer voice Evaluate support plan Outside agencies' advice and recommendations, if involved Consider Access arrangements Multi Agency Planning Assess, Plan, Do, Review 'Closing the gap' document	Quality First Teaching with a specific consideration for children with communication and interaction difficulties. The class/subject teacher is accountable for the progress of the children and young people within the mainstream class. Curriculum tasks should be modified as required. Curriculum and Teaching Methods: Staff should consider and implement as appropriate: • Meet with parents and possibly SENCO • Talk to child/young person • Set up an individual learning/support plan • Use Social Stories • Involve Learning Mentors/Key Worker • Carry out lesson observations • Seek further advice from other agencies • Consider access to a social skills/ nurture group • Adjustment to uniform if required • Access arrangements • On-going opportunities for individual support focused on specific targets with reinforcement in whole class activities to aid transfer of skills • Further modification of level, pace, amount of teacher talk to address pupils' identified need • Advice from external agencies is implemented in the classroom • There may be need for very structured and multi-sensory approaches to learning • Enhanced opportunities to use technological aids • Use of visual reminders, timers, resources and rewards to develop independence	Additional advice and support is available from: • Autism Communication Team • Learning Support Service • Educational Psychology Service • Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) • Social Emotional Mental Health Team (formerly Behaviour Support) • Speech and Language Therapy Team (SALT) Specialist Training • ASD Central CPD programme • SLICE Training Referral pathway: Referral to Speech and Language Therapy for individual 1:1 therapy may be appropriate for children

Prefers to play alone and tends to focus on own choice of activities Has difficulty understanding other people's feelings Finds change difficult to cope with Has some sensory issues such as over-sensitivity to noise May show signs of stress and anxiety Possible mental health difficulties Moderate difficulty with understanding language and communicating Pupil's language difficulties affect curriculum access, indicated by attainments below expected level, and poor social relationships	A monitoring system should be in place to assess pupil's need, identify outcomes, implement support and monitor and evaluate progress, for example an Individual Education Plan or One Page Profile.	Speech, Language & Communication Needs: • Classroom visuals which support a clear daily routine • Pupils are taught strategies and provided with resources to assist with the development of independent learning • Alternative ways of recording include electronic devices • The pupil may benefit from a predictable environment and routine within a highly structured curriculum • Access to appropriate resources • On-going opportunities for individual support focused on specific targets with reinforcement in whole class activities to aid transfer of skills • Further modification of level, pace, amount of teacher talk to address pupils' identified need • Advice from external agencies is implemented in the classroom • There may be need for very structured and multi-sensory approaches to learning • Pre and post tutoring is used to enable the pupil to engage with learning in the classroom • Enhanced opportunities to use technological aids • The teacher takes responsibility for supporting others to devise, deliver and evaluate a personalised programme that accelerates learning • Pupils are taught strategies and provided with resources to assist with the development of independent learning Organisational Adjustments: Grouping: • Planned time for small group working • Flexibility of groupings allows for buddy support / good role models / focused teaching • Mainstream class but advice from the Speech and Language Therapy Service is included in the planning and support is delivered through access to small group support on a regular basis	who have specific speech and language needs in addition to their difficulties due to ASC and learning/cognitive skills.
---	---	--	--

Timetable:

- Awareness of the potential need for guidance and support to develop specific interventions re: social communication and sensory issues
- Sensory breaks built into the timetable to respond to anxieties and over stimulation

Staffing:

- Some adult support for learning and to aid the development of positive relationships
- Pre and post tutoring is used to enable the pupil to engage with learning in the classroom

Bespoke Descriptor Wave 3	Identification and Assessment	Teaching and Learning Strategies, Resources and Physical Environment	
A student may present with: Doesn't have friends or has one friend Doesn't want to be part of a group - socially isolated / conflict with peers/staff Sensory needs act as a major barrier School environment difficult to manage Conforms mostly or doesn't conform at all Hates school, sees no point in attending Possible mental health difficulties Significant 'meltdowns' at home. Significant difficulties with receptive and/or expressive language Severe speech and language difficulties	Observation Data tracking Teacher assessments Pupil Progress meetings Child/Young Person voice Parent/carer voice Evaluate support plan Outside agencies' advice and recommendations, if involved Consider Access arrangements Multi agency planning Assess, Plan, Do, Review 'Closing the gap' document	Quality First Teaching with a specific consideration for children with communication and interaction difficulties. The class/subject teacher is accountable for the progress of the children and young people within the mainstream class. Curriculum tasks should be modified as required. Curriculum and Teaching Methods: Staff should consider and implement as appropriate: - Teaching approaches that place a high emphasis on direct training, are very finely graded and offer practical tasks which provide opportunities for frequent repetition and reinforcement - Additional adults support the pupil individually, under the direction of the teacher to: - work on modified curriculum tasks - access regular individual support - encourage independence - Create frequent opportunities for peer to peer interaction - Monitor the progress of the pupil using structured methods - Enhanced use of individual visual timetables/workstations, resources and rewards to develop independence - Provision to meet sensory needs, as appropriate and advised - The curriculum should be significantly modified and place high emphasis on social communication and social skills development, with specialist advice - Access to appropriate resources and specific interventions - Use of a personalised timetable and bespoke programme - Alternative Communication systems e.g. PECS, Makaton may be considered	Additional specialist support should be sought from: Autism Communication Team (ACT) Educational Psychology Service Speech and Language Therapy Learning Support Service Social Emotional Mental Health Team (formerly Behaviour Support) Specialist Training: - ASD Central CPD programme - SLICE TRAINING - School/settings can buy in additional bespoke training for specific children Referral pathway Referral to speech and language therapy for individual 1:1 assessment and therapy may be appropriate for children who have specific speech and language needs in addition to their difficulties due to ASC and learning/cognitive skills

Pupil uses a combination of verbal and alternative communication Language impairment affects access to all aspects of the curriculum Very slow response to verbal stimuli, low retention of abstract concepts Speech very hard to follow, reliance more on gesture/pointing Struggles to appreciate the needs of the listener Severe and complex speech and language difficulties that also include other areas of significant difficulty such as sensory or learning difficulties	A monitoring system should be in place to assess CYP need, identify outcomes, implement support and monitor and evaluate progress, for example an IEP or One Page Profile. Planned regular, i.e. at least termly reviews including the parent and pupil should take place	• Create opportunities for peer to peer social interaction • Monitor the progress of the pupil using highly structured methods • Provide opportunities for pupil to develop independent living skills through access to targeted interventions • Provide opportunities for the pupil to engage in community activity Speech, Language & Communication Needs: • work on modified curriculum tasks • access regular individual support • encourage independence • create frequent opportunities for peer to peer interaction • monitor the progress of the pupil using structured methods • work on significantly modified curriculum tasks • create opportunities for peer to peer interaction • monitor the progress of the pupil using highly structured methods • The pupil accesses daily small group and individual interventions to work on programmes as advised by the Speech and Language Therapy Service • To provide opportunities for the pupil to engage in community activity • As above through a highly individualised curriculum approach and planned opportunities to access specific individual programmes of support Organisational Adjustments: Grouping: • Planned time for small group and individual working with some light touch adult support • Planned time for small group and individual working with intensive adult support • Access to daily group and individual support to	
--	---	---	--

		extend social skills and social use of language Timetable: • A significantly modified specialist curriculum which places high emphasis on social communication, social skills development and sensory needs, in an adapted teaching environment • An alternative specialist social communication, social skills and possible sensory needs curriculum may be appropriate, delivered in a specialist teaching setting, as recommended by the appropriate specialist services • The pupil access small group support, as advised, to work on targets as advised by Speech and Language Therapy • Access to regular group support to develop social skills Staffing • Access to appropriate resources and guidance and support to develop specific interventions • Access to Speech and Language Therapy and an appropriate level of adult support for learning, whilst ensuring the development of independence • Use of appropriate resources and access to specific interventions from specialist staff Specialist resources and intervention strategies: • A monitoring system should be in place to assess the pupil's needs, plan and identify outcomes, implement support and monitor and evaluate progress, for example an Individual Education Plan, Multi Element Plan, SEN Support Plan or One Page Profile • Regular, i.e. at least termly, planned reviews including the parent and pupil should take place • Identify any specific training needs for staff	
--	--	--	--

Transitions: thorough and timely preparations made for transition, both between year groups and between settings

For further information:

Service Leader: Autism Communication Team

lianne.morewood@rotherham.gov.uk

Speech and Language Therapy Service