



C CHILD
I INCLUSION
R RESEARCH INTO
C CURRICULUM
L LEARNING
E EDUCATION



Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working

Ideas in practice

Secondary School Resource (Ages 12-18 years)

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Authors and Acknowledgements

Academic Team

Professor Kirsty Forsyth (Professor, Queen Margaret University)

Dr. Donald Maciver (Research Fellow, Queen Margaret University)

Cathleen Hunter (Lead Research Practitioner, Queen Margaret University, and Highly Specialist Physiotherapist, NHS Lothian)

Marion Rutherford (Head Research Practitioner, Queen Margaret University, and Senior Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, Clinical Lead for Autism, NHS Lothian)

Amanda Adamson (Research Practitioner, Queen Margaret University, and Highly Specialist Occupational Therapist, NHS Lothian)

Zoe Grayson (Research Practitioner, Queen Margaret University, and Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, NHS Lothian)

Expert Practice Team (Education and Health)

Gillian Barclay (Depute Principle Psychologist, Psychological Services, City of Edinburgh Council)

Catherine Gorry (Lead Paediatric Speech and Language Therapist, NHS Lothian)

Anna Gray (Depute Head, Additional Support for Learning Service, City of Edinburgh Council)

Janie Hongigawa (Service Leader, Additional Support for Learning Service, City of Edinburgh Council)

Alister Landrock (Graphic Designer and Lecturer, Firefly Research, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh)

Mairi McCrae (Head of Children's Physiotherapy, NHS Lothian)

Catherine McDerment (Lead Paediatric Occupational Therapist, NHS Lothian)

Iona McLeod (Additional Support for Learning Co-ordinator, Children and Families Dept., City of Edinburgh Council)

Sandra Milne (Depute Head, Additional Support for Learning Service, City of Edinburgh Council)

Luan Porter (Former Head Teacher, Additional Support for Learning Service, City of Edinburgh Council)

Annemarie Procter (Depute Head, Additional Support for Learning Service, City of Edinburgh Council)

Kirsty Rosie (Head Teacher, Additional Support for Learning Service, City of Edinburgh Council)

Ben Stewart (Deputy Head Teacher, Currie Community High School / Leith Academy, City of Edinburgh Council)

Martin Vallely (Professional Services Manager, Children and Families Dept., City of Edinburgh Council)

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Elsbeth Talbot (Queen Margaret University)

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01 Introduction

This section contains the background and aims of the resource.

- It describes where the information came from and how it was gathered.
- It provides an overview of the CIRCLE Framework and how this can be used to support the inclusion of learners.
- It contains information on how to use the resource, with a brief description of each section.



01 Introduction

This is a resource by those who work in secondary schools for those who work in secondary schools.

Many learners within secondary schools have identified or emerging additional support needs that may impact on their ability to engage with the curriculum and/or to participate fully in school life. This resource will help secondary school staff support these learners.

It is primarily for subject teachers but will also be relevant for any secondary school staff who support learners with additional support needs. It provides an overview of the processes for providing that support and a reflective framework for considering additional support needs. Probationers may find the information particularly helpful and sections of the resource could serve as a valuable part of an induction programme, as a basis for group discussion and/or professional learning. Specific sections of the resource will also provide useful material for practitioners as they encounter learners who have additional support needs in their daily practice.

Additionally, members of the Extended Pupil Support Team may find this resource useful when evaluating their school's overall effectiveness and consistency in supporting learners with additional support needs.

This resource represents the expertise of subject teachers, Pupil Support Assistants, the Extended Pupil Support Team (Support for Learning (SfL), Support for Pupils (SfP) or the school management team), visiting specialist teachers, representatives of partner services and agencies, and learners themselves.

It is designed to build on pre-existing knowledge, skills and experience, support reflection on good practice and develop solutions to meet learners' needs.

This resource is intended to complement other materials and structures already available to teachers - for example, 'Getting it Right for Every Child' and 'A Curriculum for Excellence'.



➤ How did we gather this information?

This resource represents analysis of 164 contacts, including in-depth interviews and focus groups held in 5 mainstream schools, 2 special schools and with other staff groups within the City of Edinburgh.

Data collection was tailored to identify:

- ❑ Additional support needs commonly experienced.
- ❑ General strategies routinely put in place to support learning and participation in school life.
- ❑ Supports and strategies used to address specific additional support needs.
- ❑ When and why additional support is requested.
- ❑ Effective collaboration with colleagues within school and partner services and agencies.

➤ Aims of the resource

- ❑ To bring together and share experience and good practice of subject teachers, Pupil Support Assistants, the Extended Pupil Support Team (Support for Learning (SfL), Support for Pupils (SfP) or the school management team), visiting specialist teachers, representatives of partner services and agencies, and learners.
- ❑ To promote effective inclusive practice using the CIRCLE framework of inclusion.
- ❑ To support the development of Inclusive classrooms as best practice in all schools.
- ❑ To provide a tool, the CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Scale (CICS) for rating the classroom environment.
- ❑ To provide a tool, the CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) for identifying and measuring areas affecting a learner's participation.
- ❑ To provide a quick, accessible reference point for teachers which provides practical solutions to address learners' needs.
- ❑ To promote a learner-centred approach where learners are listened to and involved in the management of their own learning.
- ❑ To provide suggestions for successful collaborative working between school staff, parents/carers and partner services and agencies.
- ❑ To provide tools to support documenting evidence of assessment and input.
- ❑ To provide a reflective framework and training resource for teachers and other education staff.

➤ The CIRCLE Collaboration[©]

This resource was developed by the Child Inclusion: Research into Curriculum, Learning and Education (CIRCLE) Collaboration[©]. It follows the primary school resource "Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Ideas in Practice", which captured and shared the good practice that was already taking place within primary schools to support learners with additional support needs. The CIRCLE Collaboration[©] is a practice/academic partnership consisting of teachers, therapists and academics from The City of Edinburgh Children and Families Department, NHS Lothian and Queen Margaret University. The overall aim of the CIRCLE Collaboration[©] is to generate an evidence base to underpin practical tools that will support more effective collaboration between education staff and therapists working in schools in order to support learners with additional support needs to participate more in school life.

For more information about the CIRCLE Collaboration[©] contact Professor Kirsty Forsyth at KForsyth@qmu.ac.uk.

01 Introduction

The CIRCLE Framework

CIRCLE begins from the stand point that teachers are experts in teaching and that what is required to support inclusion is a framework that allows this expertise to be applied in the most effective way, using a set of general principles.

Within CIRCLE we refer to inclusion as the extent to which a learner participates in school life, is accepted by their peers and progresses with their learning.

There can be a tendency to focus on how specific physical, sensory or behavioural strengths and support needs can impact on a learner's ability to be included in school; however this is usually only a small part of the picture. We know from current research that inclusion is influenced by a combination of factors including the physical environment, attitudes, expectations and opportunities, in addition to the learner's skills and abilities.

Many resources focus on skill development. However the CIRCLE Framework introduces the importance of considering inclusion in terms of four main areas:

- The environment (physical and social)
- Structures and routines
- Motivation
- Skills

The jigsaw diagram (right) represents how these factors are interlinked to support inclusion.

The terminology for the four factors (environment, structures and routines, motivation and skills) comes from the Model of Human Occupation (MOHO). See the following reference for detail: Kielhofner G (2008) *A Model of Human Occupation: Theory and Application, 4th Edition*. Baltimore, MD: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins.



Each of the factors within the CIRCLE Framework are described fully on the opposite page, with an example to illustrate the concept.

The CIRCLE Framework

The Environment

The environment includes both the physical and social factors. The physical environment refers to the physical layout of the classroom and the resources used within it. The social environment concerns the attitudes, expectations and actions of peers and adults.



Example:

Environment: e.g. Iggy is very easily distracted which prevents him engaging fully in an activity. He needs careful management of his environment, including seating him away from windows, doors and other distractions and provision of a personalised task list which he ticks off as he completes, to support his learning.

Structures and Routines

Structures and routines are events that happen in the same way with regularity. The start, middle and end of the routine becomes predictable through repetition. Daily routines help learners to know and anticipate what comes next and social routines help them enjoy and interact with others.



Example:

Structures and routines: e.g. Anna always forgets what she has to bring to school each day, which means she misses out on learning opportunities. By ensuring that specific activities such as homework are done consistently on the same day each week, she can (with the help of her parents) ensure she is organised.

Motivation

Motivation gives learners incentive, enthusiasm and interest when engaging with activities and the people around them. Learners can be motivated by their own feelings, desires, self esteem, confidence and the responses of others.



Example:

Motivation: e.g. Surdeep is prevented from learning by his fear of failure. He thinks he will not be good at anything he tries so avoids new activities. He needs support and some individual encouragement to be motivated to engage in new activities to develop his skills and to experience the feeling of success.

Skills

Skills refer to a learner's ability in the following areas: attention and concentration; organisation and planning; motor skills; socialising, emotions and relationships; verbal and non-verbal communication.



Example:

Skills: e.g. Kit loves physical education. However, she is uncoordinated in all her movements and is very poor at throwing and catching a ball. She will need activities and support at the appropriate level to help her succeed and to help her learn and develop new movement skills.

01 Introduction

How to use this Resource

This resource is designed to support national and local policies and guidelines already in place within City of Edinburgh Schools.

It begins by considering whole school approaches to inclusion (section 3). Using a staged system of intervention it builds on the solid foundation of an inclusive classroom (section 4); then moves on to identifying learners' strengths and support needs (section 5); giving suggestions of practical supports and strategies (section 6); and finally providing information to support collaborative working with partner services and agencies (section 7), and parents/carers (section 8).

It begins from the premise that it is the responsibility of all education staff to consider their role when supporting a learner who has additional support needs: working through this resource will support staff to do this effectively.

preceded by Learners' Voices (section 2) which provides an insight into the perspectives of learners from Edinburgh schools who have additional support needs. It tells us about the nature of learners' strengths and support needs, their feelings about these and the type of support they value.



➤ Whole School Approaches (section 3)
Whole school approaches help to form an inclusive ethos. Examples of whole school approaches are listed, along with practical strategies that exemplify how education staff can contribute towards them or play a role in their implementation.

➤ Working Within an Inclusive classroom (section 4)
This is the starting point. The Inclusive classroom is fundamental to inclusion and the core of best teaching practice. It expands on the CIRCLE Framework (physical environment, social environment, structures and routines, and motivation) to help you develop an inclusive classroom which will support all learners in line with the Curriculum for Excellence. This will reduce the extent to which further additional support is required and allow the implementation of individual support to be minimally intrusive. This section contains examples of supports and strategies, reflective questions, and the CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Scale (CICS) which will allow you to formally rate your classroom. Together with the Inclusive classroom Planning Template, this will support you to document, describe and reflect on your practice in this area.

➤ The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) (section 5)
This is the next step. Some learners will continue to have additional support needs despite the supports of an Inclusive classroom. The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) is a measurement tool which will help you identify the learners' strengths and also areas requiring development. Developed from the CIRCLE Framework it enables you to quickly assess barriers to learning in terms of the physical environment, social environment, structures and routines, motivation and skills. This baseline measure can be used to evaluate input based on follow-up assessment and can be used to support discussion with colleagues and parents/carers. It is also designed to help you identify which groups of supports and strategies to try next by directing you to specific sections within this resource.

➤ Skills Supports and Strategies (section 6)
The completed CPS will direct you to specific pages in this section. It is divided into the five skills areas of the CIRCLE Framework: Attention and Concentration, Organisation and Planning, Motor Skills, Socialising, Emotions and Relationships, and Verbal and Non-verbal Communication. Each area is described and suggestions of strategies are provided. The strategies are split into modifications to the learning environment, establishing structures and routines, and approaches to enhance motivation.

01 Introduction

➤ Collaboration with Partner Services and Agencies (section 7)

This gives an overview of some of the factors required for successful collaboration between school staff and partner services and agencies, and gives an overview of how any support might be provided.

➤ Working with Parents and Carers (section 8)

This section highlights good practice in relation to collaborating with parents/carers including factors to promote their engagement with school and strategies to promote successful communication.



➤ A Staged System of Support

This structure links to a staged process of support as follows:

- The learner's needs are met and managed within the class by the subject teacher.
- The learner's needs are met and managed with involvement from the Extended Pupil Support Team (Support for Learning (SfL), Support for Pupils (SfP) or the school management team).
- The learner's needs are met with support from partner services and agencies.

Within this staged system input should be evidenced at each step before moving on to the next. The tools in this resource can help provide the evidence. However advice or support may be sought from colleagues (and parents/carers) at any stage.



Reflective Questions and ABCDs

All sections contain reflective questions that encourage readers to consider their own practice. These are marked as Discussion Points, indicating that they could form the basis of reflective discussions with others.

At the end of each set of reflective questions it is suggested that readers complete an 'ABCD'. Completing an ABCD involves stepping through a sequence of reflective questions related to a challenge (this could be any challenge at individual, class or school level). The ABCD is a very simple tool for encouraging solution-focussed problem solving. Full explanation and examples are found in the Appendices (section 9).

Appendices (section 9)

The appendices contain the following:

- **Quality Indicators - examples of how the different sections in the resource link to the quality indicators from 'How Good Is Our School'**
- **Examples of ABCDs**
- **An outline of background legislation, policy and guidance**
- **An overview of other useful resources**
- **Additional information of supporting learners who may have:**
 - **Mental Health Concerns**
 - **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**



Discussion Point

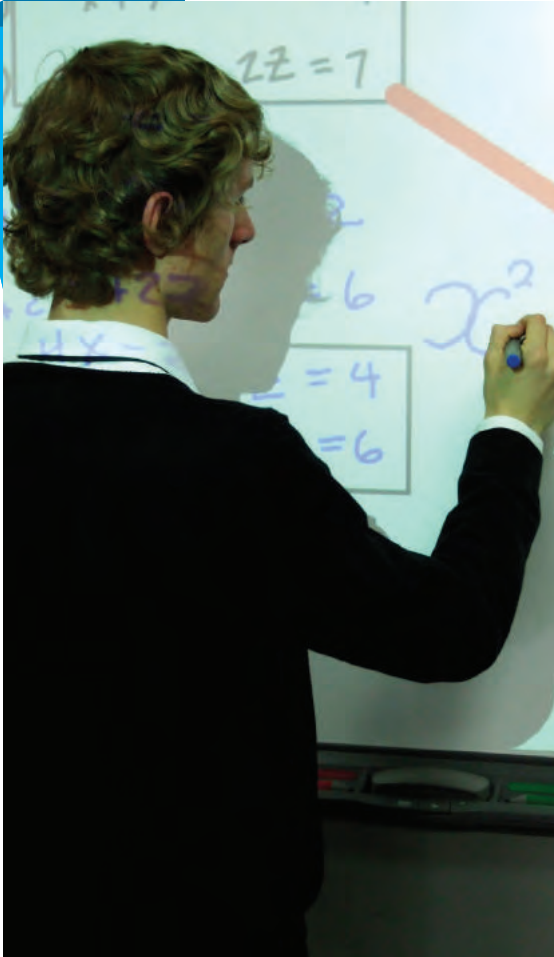


02 Learners' Voices

- As part of the research process which formed the basis of this resource, a number of learners in secondary schools (who receive additional support to address their individual needs) were consulted.
- This section provides a summary of these learners' thoughts, views and ideas around areas such as their feelings, their strengths and support needs and what works well for them in terms of support.
- These views remind us that learners' needs are central to what we do and have been used to help inform the structure and content of this resource.



02 Learners' Voices



Why are learners' voices important?

Listening to the voices of learners provides valuable insight; their perspectives are vital to help us to better understand the nature of their strengths and support needs, their feelings about these and what can be done to support them.

This section provides a summary of their thoughts and feelings.

"I just find it hard when I'm stuck...I don't want to put my hand up because I just want to be like everyone else."

Feelings

Learners talked about how they often experience negative feelings, such as failure and frustration, related to their additional needs. Many felt left out by peers and at times not offered the same opportunities as others. Some described how, when a lesson is moving too fast for them, they are reluctant to ask a teacher for help or to slow down as this draws attention to them and can be embarrassing.

Not keeping up with the pace can lead to feelings of anxiety or lack of motivation, which increase as they perceive they are falling further behind. Shyness, making friends and fitting in socially were mentioned as difficult for some, in particular those with speech and language difficulties. Many said how they just wanted to "fit in" and to "be like everybody else."

Although some learners described being teased or alienated by others, most talked about how they felt that peers were generally very accepting and also how they were less concerned with what other people thought as they got older.

02 Learners' Voices

Strengths and support Needs

As a wide range of learners were interviewed, many different strengths and support needs were mentioned. As well as describing their individual needs, common areas of challenge were identified by the learners.

These included:

- **Pace** - difficulty keeping up with the pace of work in classes, particularly where written work or dictation were involved; and also problems with the speed of processing information around what they had to do.
- **Understanding** - unless timely explanations were given when they didn't understand something, they could be left feeling even further behind.
- **Paying full attention** - often described as challenging, as was following instructions, particularly if several were given at one time.
- **Managing behaviour** - including how they reacted to challenging situations in the class and in the broader school context.

- **Organisation** - of themselves, their belongings and their timetable for example physically getting around school to get to classes.
- **Asking for help** - a common theme of wanting to ask for support but finding this difficult emerged; this was due to a range of factors, from not being sure who to ask and not feeling there was enough opportunity to do so to a general reluctance to have their difficulties highlighted, appearing to be 'singled out' in front of their peers.
- **Homework** - keeping up with the quantity and demands of homework while catching up with work that they had not completed in class. Learners liked it when homework was given at the start of a class rather than at the end, when everyone is rushing to pack up to leave.



"It's quite hard for me in class, if the teacher is saying something and you have to write it down, I can't do it. I ask the teacher to repeat it but often still can't do it and have to ask again... and then everyone thinks, "Oh my goodness, she's already said it three times" ...it makes me feel quite embarrassed."

02 Learners' Voices

Consider the following quotes in light of your own practice. What impact do they have on you and is there anything you would change as a result of these views?

Don't forget me:

"You do sometimes feel that you are forgotten about – the teacher talks to the class as a whole and then you don't understand something, and you put your hand up first and then they go straight over to someone else, and it just gets a bit annoying...you're trying to catch up with everyone else – not to show that you're better than them but just to try and keep up."

Where I sit in class is important:

"The best place for me is in the middle or wherever the teacher stands most because I mostly lip read. In one class he's put me right beside the door and I keep telling him that I can't sit next to the door and I would like to sit back where I was before but he won't put me back...it's a bit annoying and it slows me down."

Other problems make learning difficult:

"Because I had a speech and language problem, it affected my understanding both of what I heard and what I read. I think this made me switch off."

Homework issues:

"Homework's difficult... we get plenty of homework. Keeping up – I mean you want to do it but if you don't do it at once then you get more and it all starts piling up... and more pressure starts getting to you; you are nervous and worried that you've not done it."

I just want to be like everyone else:

"It makes me feel quite sad that I am not like everyone else. It just gets irritating when you get stuck on everything, and everyone is finished, and they are all waiting for you. And you try your hardest but it's not working."

Print-outs help:

"So now I get things printed off, which is easier but it's still hard in class – if there's loads of notes and the teacher forgets and I've got to ask her for a printed copy and people in the class ask why they can't get a printed copy. It's embarrassing."



02 Learners' Voices

Learners were asked about supports and strategies that they found particularly helpful - those which, in their opinion, facilitated their learning and engagement with school life. Although views varied between learners, the following themes were voiced by the majority of the group:

- **Be aware of our individual needs and listen to our views on what works.**
Learners like being part of meetings and having their voice heard, knowing that something was being done to help them. They appreciate when teachers regularly ask and listen to their ideas about what strategies work best for them (as these can change).
- **Be aware that we can't always go at the same pace as others.**
Consider pace of delivery and how fast visuals are presented and be aware that repetition and clarification may be required. Giving additional thinking/ processing time, particularly when reading, can be particularly valuable.
- **Make the objectives of the lesson clear from the start.**
- **Consider presentation of materials for activities and resources.**
For example, consider the use of illustrations, diagrams, colour and different font sizes.
- **Use a mixture of practical as well as written work in lessons.**
Learners felt that listening for long periods of time or spending most of the lesson writing or copying notes were both challenging and not motivating.
- **Give print-outs of instructions and notes where possible.**
Learners felt that keeping up with note taking is often very challenging and means that they cannot pay full attention to what the teacher is saying. Break down instructions into manageable chunks. Where possible, keep instructions short and make sure they are understood.
- **Consider homework demands.**
Not surprisingly, less homework was requested! Learners felt that, where possible, homework should be written down or given as a hand out - often it is put up on the board only briefly and they may not have time to copy it down or to remember it. Learners also reported that it was useful to have a place to go to do homework at school at an allocated time.

"You probably won't believe this but I'm starting to like homework. But sometimes I feel that it is quite a lot. Although I can do it I maybe need to ask my Mum for help, or sometimes if I don't understand it at first I'll ask the teacher...but it is quite a lot."

"I suppose just clarifying what they mean, what the subject is... what they are talking about, recapping."

02 Learners' Voices

□ Use groups.

Learners described situations where the teacher allocated them into groups. This enabled them to help each other out with various things such as copying work down, explaining things to each other, working on tasks together.

□ Plan Pupil Support Assistant time.

Most learners discussed how Pupil Support Assistants provide useful support but prefer it if the Pupil Support Assistants work with the whole class. This avoids the learner being singled out too much – although they know that if they are struggling with anything then the support is available.

□ Provide practical supports.

Several learners talked about the need for practical strategies in classes where they are required to use specific tools or support in recording information.

□ Give us a 'safe' space.

The need for time out or having a place to go was frequently mentioned. It was particularly relevant for learners who were challenged in managing their behaviour but were making attempts to do so independently.

□ Encourage peers to provide support.

Learners talked about having support from other learners, such as those in their class groups or an older learner (as a buddy or as part of a befriending system). This helped them both in class and in the wider school.

The group thought that a lot of these strategies would be beneficial for the whole class – several commented that they knew that other learners in some classes were sometimes struggling as much as they were but did not have 'identified' needs.

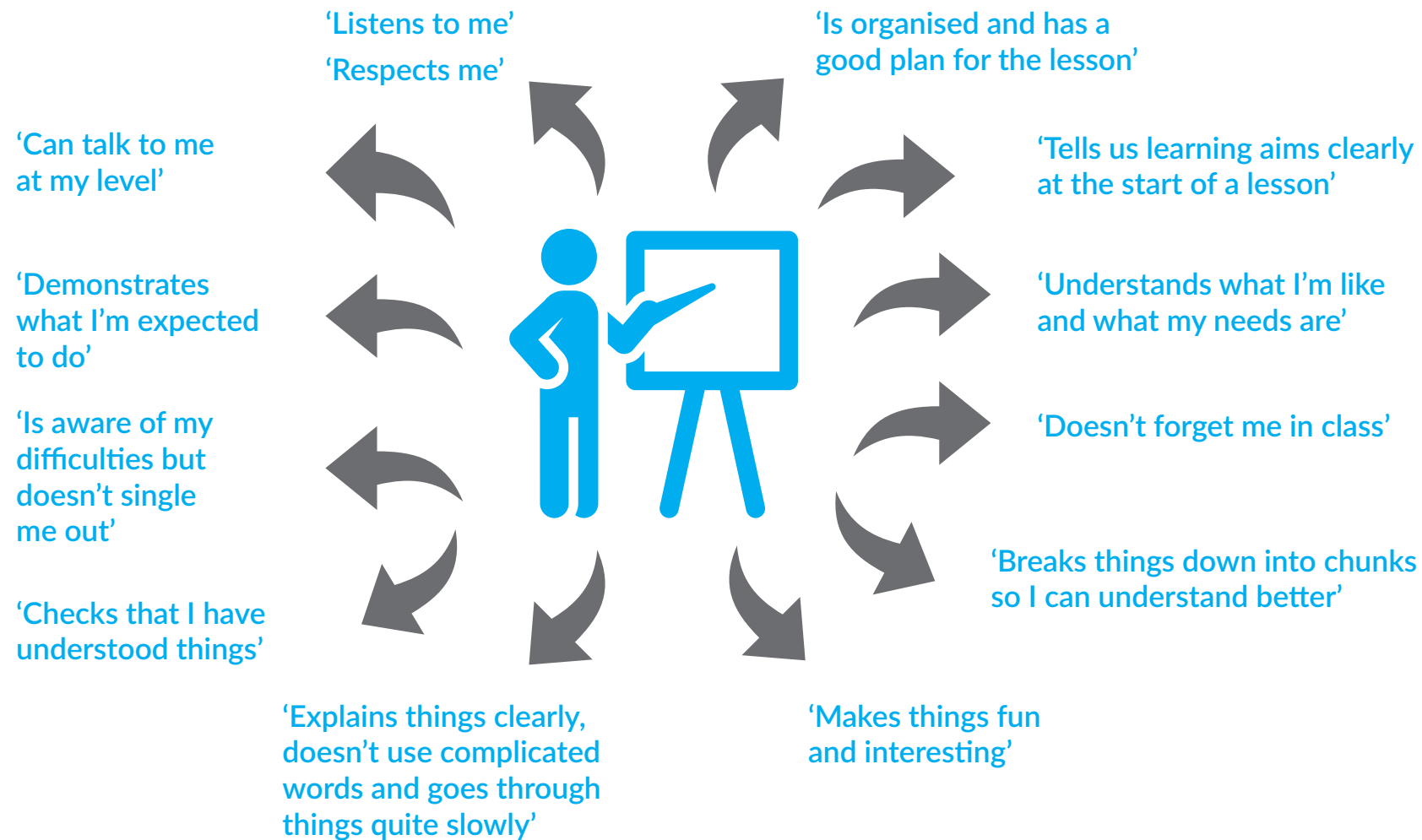
"Well, I actually feel that everyone should be treated the same. So if there are Pupil Support Assistants in the room they don't help just one person. They actually go round the whole class."

"I like how the teacher can explain things to everyone and then he comes round to see me and asks if I understand... and if I say yes, then he'll say 'Fine. I'll go and help someone else'. But if I don't, he'll stay with me for about 5 minutes and go over it again."

02 Learners' Voices

Describing an ideal teacher

Learners were asked to describe the teacher who they felt best understood them and their needs. They described someone who...



02 Learners' Voices

How support could be co-ordinated

Learners were asked how they would like the support that was put in place for them to be coordinated. Although learners may not always be fully aware of or have a lot of involvement in management or coordination decisions, some were able to reflect on this and give insightful suggestions.

- Place learners at the centre of all decision making, for example, involve them in meetings where possible; encourage participation in learner-led councils and committees.
- When sharing information with others, for example, Higher Education establishments, make sure that it is relevant and up to date.
- Provide regular updates and reminders to those with whom you are sharing information about individuals' needs.
- Provide clear channels for learners to seek and/or receive further support if appropriate.
- Ensure that supports or strategies that are put into place are consistently used.
- Use learners who have (or have had) strengths and support needs themselves to support younger learners who may have similar difficulties.

"I went for an interview at college for a catering course. The guy had a copy of my old school file where it said I had difficulty concentrating in noisy backgrounds. He thought this might mean I would find it hard working in a kitchen. That was a problem I had in the past and was no longer an issue...I could not believe that he was bringing it up."

"I've been to a couple of meetings...they make me feel better - if it's about things to do with helping me then I feel much better if I'm involved."

02 Learners' Voices



Reflective Questions

- Consider your own practice with reference to the summaries and quotes provided in the following areas:
 - Learners' feelings
 - Learners' strengths and support needs
 - What works well from the learners' perspectives
 - Qualities of an ideal teacher
 - How support could be coordinated

- How does this relate to your own experience of supporting learners with additional support needs?

- What impact do the summaries and quotes have on you? Do they change your views of what learners might think and feel, or do they reflect what you already thought?

- Are there any strategies that you would try or is there anything you would change in light of these feelings and perspectives?



Discussion Point

03 Whole School Approaches

These are approaches that can be implemented on a whole school basis. School staff talked about contributing towards or playing a role in their Implementation. This section

- Responding to legislation, policy and guidance
- Creating an inclusive school environment
- Keeping the learner at the centre
- Embedding literacy, numeracy, and health and wellbeing across learning
- Managing and disseminating of information
- Managing transitions
- Collaborative working
- Addressing professional development



03 Whole School Approaches



Who is responsible?

Many of these approaches will be more appropriate for the school management team to consider - for example, ensuring that policies, protocols and systems are in place throughout the school. However, there are many ways in which all staff can contribute to these approaches; indeed they will not work effectively as whole school approaches unless they are understood and implemented by everyone.

Why are they important?

When these form part of everyday practice, they support the inclusion, engagement and participation of all learners. In an inclusive school, all learners are made to feel welcome and included, and individual differences are respected and celebrated. Whole school approaches are listed here along with practical strategies which exemplify how subject teachers can contribute towards them, or play a role in their implementation.

03 Whole School Approaches

Responding to Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- Identify how legislation, policy and guidance affect individual practice and how they are implemented across the school. (see Appendices).
- Contribute to the transparency of information relating to legislation, policy and guidance by clearly documenting and providing evidence of all decisions made and actions taken.
- Attend professional learning opportunities relating to pertinent legislation, policies and guidance and how these will be implemented within the school.
- Ensure knowledge of parents/carers' and learners' rights, particularly relating to inclusion, equality and diversity, discrimination and confidentiality.

Creating an Inclusive Environment

- Support promotion of health and wellbeing alongside academic options by considering broader life skills when developing individual learning plans.
- Contribute when whole school approaches are discussed and put into place at a departmental level to ensure consistency of implementation across the school.
- Be aware of processes which help learners to organise and self-manage their resources, deadlines etc. for example, the use of lockers and planners.
- See The Inclusive classroom section for advice and strategies on creating an inclusive teaching space.

Keeping the Learner at the Centre

- Listen to learners and show them respect as individuals. Consider their views, feelings, strengths and support needs (see Learners' Voices), and how your own practice takes these factors into account.
- Ensure that learners are involved particularly with setting their targets, creating their learning plans and managing transitions.
- Provide opportunities for learners to express their views about their school experiences, including their performance within your subject.
- Engage in professional learning opportunities related to individual learners' support needs.

03 Whole School Approaches

Embedding literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing across learning

- Keep evidence of classroom supports and monitor and evaluate progress of learners who have suspected or identified support needs in the areas of literacy, numeracy and/or health and wellbeing. This will provide evidence, if required, to support formal assessment. Liaise with others when required.
- Support and make proactive use of whole school policies regarding the provision of reasonable adjustments for learners who have identified needs in these areas, such as a 'time out' pass, distribution of printed notes, extra time or use of scribes.
- Access available professional learning opportunities in order to develop a good understanding of literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing across learning, and the impact that support needs in these areas may have in specific subjects.

Managing and disseminating of information

- Ensure a knowledge of systems in place for all staff to both share and receive information about learners and their needs - for example, updates on learning, behaviour and attendance.
- Work within the parameters that ensure confidentiality and data protection, in line with school policies and procedures.
- Use documentation templates that provide a clear and consistent format. These will help to provide evidence of the reflective processes used by staff who are involved in the management of individual learners.
- Consider the sensitive use of language and labels. Ask yourself "Would the young person/parents/carers be happy to read this?" "Have I used the appropriate professional language and tone?"

Managing transitions

- Work collaboratively during transitions, sharing good practice for the learner in question. Use information available from all those involved with individual learners during the transition process: the school, the learner, the parents/carers, staff from the previous/future establishments, partner services and agencies.
- Consider how this information relates to your classroom or your subject area and whether any reasonable adjustments or strategies need to be put in place in order to meet the learner's needs.
- Reflect on how well transition processes are working in your class/subject area. Arrange to get feedback from all involved, both informally and formally, as part of a whole school process.

03 Whole School Approaches

Collaborative working

- Support clear and open routes of communication with colleagues in school and from partner services and agencies.
- Use established routes of communication to enable learners and their parents/carers to express their views as part of the collaborative process.
- Use opportunities to work collaboratively on school-wide initiatives such as peer mentoring or literacy; consider opportunities to observe other teachers either within and across departments.
- Develop an understanding of others' roles and responsibilities through discussion or information available related to support services within and external to the school.
- Support requests by others to observe learners in class.

Addressing professional development

- Attend professional learning opportunities within school, based on staff requirements and the needs of learners.
- Share specialist knowledge through delivery of professional learning sessions. Consider joint training with other school staff or with staff from partner services and agencies.
- Ensure that knowledge and skills are up to date and that resources used to support individual learners are shared with others.
- Contribute to disseminating and implementing innovative practice by taking part in working groups - for example, resources developed by a literacy working group should be shared with the wider school.

03 Whole School Approaches



Discussion Point



Reflective Questions

- What do you currently do within your own practice to contribute to each of these approaches?
- Which of the suggested strategies could you add to your practice to support the inclusion, engagement and participation of all learners?
- How do you ensure that you keep abreast of changes to information linked to these approaches?
- How can you influence the implementation of these approaches within your school?

Complete an ABCD (see Appendix) regarding how a whole school approach could be used to support the needs of specific learners.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

Addressing the needs of all learners within the class is the responsibility of every teacher. Creating an inclusive teaching space will benefit all learners. This section contains strategies which can be used by all teachers in any teaching space to ensure their practice is inclusive. It includes:

- ❑ A description of what is meant by an inclusive classroom
- ❑ Why it is important to promote an inclusive classroom
- ❑ How to create an inclusive classroom: the principles of an inclusive classroom with strategies to help put these principles into practice
- ❑ The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) and planning template
- ❑ Reflective questions



04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

What is an inclusive classroom?

All learners are influenced by the physical environment, the people around them, how they feel about themselves and their interest in the tasks they have been asked to do.

An inclusive classroom is one where staff routinely incorporate key supports and strategies into their everyday practice which take account of this.

Supports and strategies focus on tuning the physical and social environment; establishing structures and routines throughout the school day; and implementing learner centred approaches to enhance motivation and engagement with the learning process.



Why is it important?

The supports and strategies which contribute to an inclusive classroom not only benefit those with identified additional support needs, but also enhance the learning and participation of all learners in the class.

Setting up an inclusive classroom is the first stage in supporting learners with additional support needs to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Within every class there are learners with a diverse range of abilities who would benefit from specific support. Individual class teachers are responsible for the learning and inclusion of all learners in their class and together with the school management team should ensure that support is in place to achieve this.

Setting up an inclusive classroom is a practical way of providing support for all learners in the class by optimising the physical and social environment of the classroom; putting in place structures and routines to support engagement; and by utilising approaches to support motivation.

An inclusive classroom reduces the extent to which further additional support is required for specific learners and allows the implementation of individual support to be minimally intrusive. This increases learner's independence and reduces complexity in classroom management.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

➤ Considerations when setting up an inclusive classroom

Teachers talked about a number of key areas when considering the concept of an inclusive classroom. It is recognised that within secondary schools teachers may not have exclusive use of one classroom, however many of the principles used in an inclusive classroom could be used in any teaching space. These are detailed below.



“The kind of things that learners with additional needs find difficult, are often challenging for the rest of the class as well. So by finding ways to support these learners I often find I’m supporting everyone in the class as well.” **English teacher**

Preparation and planning

The first step to setting up an Inclusive classroom is being organised and prepared for each year/term/week/day/lesson. Preparation and planning includes consideration of all the other features of an inclusive classroom.

- Know and understand the collective and individual needs of learners in each class.
- Incorporate reasonable adjustments into the class routine and consider how other suggested strategies could be used to address learners’ needs.
- Consider effective management of resources and Pupil Support Assistants for that lesson.

Preparation and planning are therefore essential prerequisites to setting up a supportive physical and social environment, establishing positive structures and routines and developing approaches to enhance motivation: the inclusive classroom.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

Learner-centred approach

Consider all learners as individuals in terms of their learning, social and cultural circumstances. Reflect on their views and keep these central to practice.

Listen to and respect learners' views - for example, ask individual learners about strategies that they have found useful in the past.

- Encourage learners to understand and manage their own needs independently, where possible.
- Involve learners in setting and reviewing their learning targets to ensure they are meaningful and relevant.
- Understand the impact that specific additional support needs may have on individual learners. For example, a communication difficulty or anxiety may find expression in withdrawal or in challenging behaviour.

Adopting a learner centred approach is particularly important for engaging the motivation and interest of learners.

Accessible curriculum

For each learner the curriculum should offer challenge and enjoyment; breadth; progression; depth; personalisation and choice; coherence and relevance.

- Select and adapt lessons and resources to ensure that each learner is challenged at the right level (consider content, delivery and outcome).
- Make clear the learning outcomes of each lesson and refer back to these throughout. Review and summarise the learning outcomes at the end of each lesson.
- Involve learners in setting and reviewing their learning targets to ensure relevance and create an element of personalisation and choice.

Teaching style

Adapt the teaching style to meet the needs and learning styles of individual learners.

- Use structure and routine - for example, a consistent format for the start and end of a lesson.
- Consider different learning styles - use a mix of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches to address these.
- Use strategies that promote active learning, including opportunities for multi-sensory learning and group work.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

A wide range of technology can be used in the preparation, delivery and assessment of subject material.

- Use ICT to present information in a variety of ways, for example, interactive whiteboards, video clips, internet resources and interactive games, to engage different learning styles and create interest.
- Prepare lessons using ICT to enable you to store, change, adapt or print resources.
- Where possible, allow learners electronic access to key resources, presentations and homework through the school ICT system. Consider allowing learners to present their work using ICT (e.g. a visual representation of a story plan rather than a written account).

Peer supported approaches

Use other learners to support or facilitate a learner's engagement and participation in curricular activities.

- Identify good working relationships between peers. Consider different groups for different tasks.
- Consider using cooperative and collaborative learning strategies: pair learners to work with a partner to explain concepts or ideas. Consider peer marking or peer assessment of specific tasks.
- Support the implementation of peer mentoring. This involves the use of learners who have been selected to model appropriate behaviour or give support to specific learners or groups of learners.

The CIRCLE Framework

The next element of the inclusive classroom is described by the **CIRCLE Framework**. The **CIRCLE Framework** promotes setting up an inclusive environment as the first stage in supporting all learners. The following pages give suggestions of points to consider when:

- optimising the Physical and Social Environment;
- putting in place Structures and Routines to support engagement; and
- utilising approaches to support Motivation.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

The Physical Environment

The physical environment refers to the physical layout of the classroom (or alternate teaching space) and the resources used within it. Within an inclusive classroom environment the following should be considered.

Class Layout:

- Ensure the class is organised with everything in its place.
- Arrange the class to promote good interaction - consider friendships and good working relationships when arranging seating plans. Also consider learners who may have additional support needs - do they need to sit near the door to enable them to leave quickly; do they need to sit away from the window to reduce distractions; do they need to sit near the teacher to maximise attention and concentration or to ensure that they can access resources or clearly hear what is being said?
- Some learners find elements of the physical environment very distracting e.g. peers, lighting levels or noise levels. Occasionally further adaptations over and above consideration of seating position might need to be considered e.g. different types of lighting in the class, additional window blinds, individual work stations or creating 'safe spaces'.
- A reflective approach should be used when considering the use and positioning of visual cues and supports such as posters and charts on walls - do these enhance or distract the learners? Some learners find a visually 'busy' environment difficult to cope with.

Resources:

- Try to model an organised approach by ensuring that resources are selected and prepared in advance and readily available for the lesson.
- Ensure that resource cupboards/areas are clearly labelled (using words and pictures) and resources consistently positioned.
- Worksheets should be clearly laid out, with page numbers and space for date and name, to support good organisation. Ensure that learners know what to do with the completed worksheets e.g. stick them in their jotter or put them in a specific part of a folder.
- Consider using templates to support learners to structure their work e.g. templates which help learners show their problem solving in logical sequences for number work; or essay templates with headings to support writing.
- Ensure that visual cues and supports are clear, contain key information and are understood by all.
- Some learners may require the use of agreed sensory supports e.g. fidget supports or sit-and-move cushions to enable them to focus. Others might use other types of specialist equipment e.g. pencil grips or specialist seating to enable them to access the curriculum or maintain focus. Care should be taken to ensure that these are readily available and used appropriately.
- Ensure the language used in signs and displays around the school and in the classroom reflect the languages used by learners attending that school.

Class teachers should liaise with the Support for Learning department or Extended Pupil Support Team regarding any specialist equipment or adaptations to the environment which may be required.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

Social Environment

The social environment is concerned with the attitudes, expectations and actions of those within the class and how these can affect learners either positively or negatively. The following points should be considered:

- Aim to develop a classroom culture where everyone feels valued and secure, individual differences are respected and diversity is highlighted and celebrated. Multicultural and multilingual signs and displays can help reflect an inclusive ethos.
- We all learn best when we can focus on a task and are not anxious or worried. Reducing negative stress has been shown to improve learning outcomes and is beneficial for general health and wellbeing.
- Some learners can feel anxious about performing in front of the class e.g. being asked to read a passage, answer a question or perform a physical activity in front of peers. Reduce this source of stress by considering each learner's competence.
- An awareness of peer relationships and interactional dynamics will help when considering seating plans, the structure of groups and peer supports. Consider this in relation to class work and other aspects of the school environment (e.g. break or lunch time).
- Some learners may have difficulty with retaining information, understanding instructions or the complexities of language used. Consider differentiating language and instructions as a routine part of your practice e.g. say less, slow down your rate of speech, stress key words and use visuals to support understanding. Using a variety of teaching styles and allowing additional thinking/processing time can be valuable.

Emotional Literacy:

- Learners may not have the language or understanding of their emotions to express themselves effectively: this might manifest itself as inappropriate behaviour either in school or at home.
- Try to interpret learner behaviour as an attempt by them to communicate how they feel - be alert to the potential for behaviour to represent an indirect message (e.g. they display aggressive behaviour when they are actually feeling upset).
- Reflecting on what underlies specific behaviour may help with managing and improving learner responses. Stress and concerns outside school may impact on learners in school (e.g. moving home or bereavement).
- Teaching learners to correctly recognise, understand and express their emotions has been found to be effective in improving long term outcomes.

Social Skills:

- Social skills are often learned by observing others. Some learners may not have had a positive experience of this.
- Providing clear and consistent behaviour boundaries (supported by visual cues) and sharing expectations will help learners understand social rules.
- Teaching and developing social skills via collaborative and cooperative learning activities will support this area.
- Observing adults modelling appropriate emotional and social skills during interactions and responses has been shown to be beneficial.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom



Structures and Routines

Structures and routines are events that happen in the same way with regularity. The start, middle and end of the routine becomes predictable through repetition. Daily routines help learners to know and anticipate what comes next and social routines help them enjoy and interact with others. Learners benefit from a degree of order and consistency in their lives – for some learners this is mainly achieved in school. It may be useful to consider structures and routines in terms of how the day/week is structured; how lessons are delivered; and how rules and roles are implemented. Some learners need visual support to help them recognise predictable routines and additional visual supports to help them understand changes to these routines.

Structure of the Lesson/Week

- Having a consistent format for the start, middle and end of each lesson can be beneficial.
- Prepare learners for a change (e.g. clear notification if another member of staff will be covering the class).
- Simple approaches such as having consistent seating plans can help reduce the risk of anxiety or distraction for some learners.
- Setting regular days for giving out and collecting homework can help learners develop good habits for completing it.

Routines for Lesson Delivery

- Using a consistent format to lesson delivery can help learners know what to expect, so that they can be prepared.
- Stating the learning intentions at the start of the lesson, ensuring that these are understood and referring to them regularly may help focus learner attention.
- Using whole class checklists may help to ensure understanding of the task for all.
- Reviewing and summarising learning outcomes will help learners understand if their personal learning targets have been achieved.
- The regular use of active learning and multisensory learning should help ensure that learners know that their particular learning style will be met during the lesson.

Consistent Rules and Roles

- Using a consistent approach to behaviour will help learners understand what is and isn't acceptable.
- Setting clear and specific class rules in collaboration with the class should help to ensure that they are agreed and understood by all.
- Displaying class rules clearly and referring to them regularly will help to reinforce this understanding.
- Encouraging learners to see themselves as respected and useful members of the class can be promoted by regularly assigning positive roles e.g. group leader or peer supporter. This can help reduce negative views that some learners may have of themselves.

04 Working Within an Inclusive Classroom

Motivation

Motivation gives learners incentive, enthusiasm and interest when engaging with activities and the people around them. Learners are motivated by their own feelings, desires, self esteem and confidence. Motivation is also influenced by external factors. These external factors (i.e. the physical and social environment, and structures and routines) can impact positively or negatively on motivation. Focussing on motivation can be a powerful way of engaging interest in activities and influencing positive behaviour. Each learner will be motivated by different things which may vary from day to day. A learner-centred approach is therefore crucial when engaging motivation. However it can be useful to think of the following overarching themes for encouraging motivation within an inclusive classroom: values, abilities and interests.

Values - This refers to learners' values (what they think of as important and meaningful). This can be positively influenced by:

- Listening to and valuing learners' views, thoughts and ideas.
- Involving learners in target setting and self assessment, thus encouraging them to take responsibility for their work.
- Assisting learners with careful goal setting for their individual learning targets so that they can use these to see progress.

Abilities - What a learner feels about themselves and their belief in their ability to successfully perform tasks affects their motivation. We know that a sense of achievement can be a powerful motivator, encouraging learners to complete tasks and to try out new activities. This can be supported by:

- Differentiating work so that goals are realistic and achievable, whilst still providing challenge and enjoyment.
- Using a variety of teaching methods to address the range of learning styles within the class.
- Providing constructive feedback framed in a positive way which encourages and reassures learners about their ability.
- Positively affirming learners' abilities, interests, languages and cultures.
- Providing regular praise and positive reinforcement, using incentives and rewards that are meaningful and valued and applying rewards and consequences fairly and consistently.
- Modelling enthusiasm for tasks; praising effort and process as well as the product; and finding ways of celebrating this and other success.

Interests - Learners are generally motivated by things that capture their imagination or that they find enjoyable and satisfying. The following can help build on this aspect of motivation:

- Utilising learners' interests, cultures or experiences when designing lessons.
- Allowing learners an element of personalisation and choice when addressing specific tasks.
- Utilising experiential learning, multisensory approaches and/or technology can be motivating for many learners.



04 The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

➤ The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS) v1

An inclusive classroom is dependent on the physical environment (objects and spaces), the social environment (people and how they interact) and structures and routines that are in that environment. All of these impact on the motivation, organisation and participation of learners. Because of the multiple dimensions of the classroom environment, it can impact in various ways: either positively supporting learners or negatively interfering with their participation.

The CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Scale (CICS) provides a rating of how different aspects of the environment impact on learners in the following areas:

- The physical environment
- The social environment
- Structures and routines

Each of these areas has been further divided into five constituent parts. The CICS enables you to assign a rating to each of these so that strengths and weaknesses within the environment can be easily identified.

The CICS comprises 3 ratings tables (one each for the physical environment, the social environment, and structures and routines) and a summary page. You will also find a set of reflective questions adjacent to each of the ratings tables which will help you when considering the different aspects of your classroom environment.

Summary of CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale

Using the information from the previous pages complete the summary score sheet below and keep as a record of how inclusive your classroom environment is at a given time in the school year.

This can be used to quickly identify any areas of strength and areas requiring attention. This, along with the previous pages can help you to develop a plan for any improvements required.

You can use the CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Planning Page to document your plan for improvement.

The CICS provides a score which can be used as a baseline and then repeated to show the effect of any changes made to the classroom.

Name of Evaluator: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

STRUCTURES & ROUTINES	Decision making	4	3	2	1
	Routines	4	3	2	1
	Appeal of activities	4	3	2	1
	Rules and boundaries	4	3	2	1
	Activity demands	4	3	2	1
SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	Empowerment	4	3	2	1
	Provision of information	4	3	2	1
	Relationships	4	3	2	1
	Support and facilitation	4	3	2	1
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	Attitudes	4	3	2	1
	Availability of objects	4	3	2	1
	Visual supports	4	3	2	1
	Sensory Space	4	3	2	1
	Adequacy of space	4	3	2	1
	Accessibility of space	4	3	2	1

4	Environment strongly supports learner(s) participation by providing exceptional opportunities, resources, requirements & structures
3	Environment supports learner(s) participation by providing appropriate opportunities, resources, requirements & structures
2	Environment interferes with learner(s) participation by providing limited opportunities, resources, requirements & structures
1	Environment strongly interferes with learner(s) participation by not providing opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

04 The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

➤ The CICS Rating Scale

The CICS uses the same 4 point rating scale for all the items to be rated. The 4-point rating scale functions as follows:

- 4** Environment **strongly supports** learners' participation by providing exceptional opportunities, resources, requirements & structures
- 3** Environment **supports** learners' participation by providing appropriate opportunities, resources, requirements & structures
- 2** Environment **interferes** with learners' participation by providing limited opportunities, resources, requirements & structures
- 1** Environment **strongly interferes** with learners' participation by not providing opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

For each of the items in the CICS you should assign one of the above ratings (1, 2, 3, or 4) as an indication of how the environment supports participation. It is important to bear in mind that the CICS is designed to measure a broad range of environmental impact with a wide range of learners (although it could also be used to assess the environment in relation to an individual learner).

Assigning these ratings requires judgements to be made that are complex. To make this process easier criteria statements are provided which refer to the item being rated. These relate directly to the CICS rating scale and will assist you to narrow down which rating to use. Additionally, you can refer to the reflective questions which will further support you when considering what is required in an inclusive classroom.

➤ Completing the CIRCLE CICS

- Work through each of the three ratings pages identifying which of the criterion statements best describes that aspect of the environment.
- Please note that "4" does not represent "good" environmental support, but is indicative of "exceptional" environmental support.
- If it is not clear which of two ratings to use, choose the lower of the two possible.
- Use your professional judgement to decide on the rating for each item.
- It is not anticipated that you will spend a great deal of time selecting the appropriate rating.
- Use your ratings from these pages to complete the CICS summary page.

The CICS can be completed individually or with a colleague/colleagues. It can be stored as evidence of your own professional learning; used to share information with colleagues about your classroom; or utilised as a framework to support discussions with student teachers and probationers about setting up an inclusive classroom.

You may also wish to ask a group of learners to rate the classroom environment from their perspective.

The CICS can be repeated as often as required to demonstrate changes or improvements. This together with the CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Planning Page can be used as evidence of reflective practice and your development towards an inclusive classroom.

04 The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

➤ Interpreting and using the results of the CICS

The results of the CICS will help to identify the areas of strength and areas to develop that will make your classroom more inclusive.

It is likely that an average classroom which is operating effectively will receive mainly “3s” with an occasional “2” rating. This environment would not be expected to make significant change, although would need to focus on the “2s” to facilitate improvement.

However if an environment received “1s” for most items, with only a few “2s” or “3s”, this would indicate that improvements were needed and an action plan warranted.

It is essential to focus any efforts for improvement on things which are under your control. For example if you have rated “Adequacy of Space” (an item within the Physical Environment) as “1” due to building constraints, this would be outside your control. You could raise your concerns with management, but then focus on other areas requiring improvement which are under your control.

If you identify areas requiring development from the CICS, you can make a plan using the CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Planning Page. This provides a structure for you to document and evidence how you are developing the principles of an inclusive classroom.

It can be photocopied and completed individually as evidence of reflection and self evaluation, or could be completed as part of a joint reflection with a colleague, or group of colleagues, where ideas for setting up an inclusive environment can be discussed and shared.



The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

The Physical Environment



Items and descriptor	Rating	Criteria Statements - Please select the statement that best describes the physical environment	Notes
Accessibility of Space Barrier free Ease of access	4	Accessibility exemplary, exceptional placing of furniture, barrier free	
	3	Good accessibility to spaces, barrier free	
	2	Some barriers accessing spaces, some areas inaccessible	
	1	Barriers including clutter, significant challenges accessing spaces	
Adequacy of Space Availability of spaces Tailored to needs Set up of spaces including seating	4	Exemplary availability of different areas and seating for meeting needs	
	3	Variety of areas and seating available when needed, available spaces match requirements	
	2	Constraints of available space, some needs not met by spaces or seating	
	1	Spaces not matching needs, overcrowded, required spaces or seating not available	
Sensory Space Temperature/noise/lighting/odour Adjustability Self-calming	4	Excellent sensory conditions, temperature pleasant, lighting and/or noise levels optimised for sensory preferences	
	3	Comfortable sensory conditions e.g. temperature, light and/or noise levels adjustable	
	2	Some challenges with sensory conditions, variable ability to adjust these e.g. unwanted noise	
	1	Hot/stifling or too cold, noisy, poor lighting, distracting odours - sensory conditions not adjustable/adjusted	
Visual supports Signs Labels Visual timetables Posters/displays	4	Excellent use of visual supports meeting individual needs, consistently used and applied	
	3	Effective use of visual supports meeting needs, mostly consistent	
	2	Challenges in the number and variety of visual supports, difficult to read/understand, some needs not met, some inconsistency	
	1	Visual supports are limited/ambiguous/inconsistent, learners cannot understand, needs not met	
Availability of Objects Objects accessible Objects suitable Adaptive devices	4	Availability of objects exemplary, storage in close proximity, objects matched to characteristics/needs/cultures of learners, independently accessible, well maintained	
	3	Ease of access to all needed objects when desired, storage adequate, matched to personal characteristics/needs of learners, well maintained	
	2	Challenges accessing objects, variable storage, some objects not matched to personal characteristics/needs of learners	
	1	Some objects not available, objects not accessible, objects not adequate for personal characteristics/needs of learners, poorly maintained	

The following reflective questions may help you when considering how to rate the physical environment.

Accessibility of space

- Are there any hazards in the physical space?
- Can learners move around the classroom/teaching space easily?
- Can learners access other areas of the school with ease?
- Is the space adapted to meet physical needs?
- Is the space organised and uncluttered?

Adequacy of space

- Do you think the space suits learners' needs?
- Can you alter your classroom to suit the needs of learners?
- Is the class set up to promote good interaction?
- Does the space facilitate learning opportunities?
- Does the seating plan optimise learning?
- Does the seating plan meet specific needs?
- Is there space to set up an individual workstation or quiet area/safe space if required?

Sensory space

- Do you have concerns about the sensory environment (e.g. lighting, noise, temperature, odour etc.)?
- Can the sensory environment be altered easily?
- How do you know the sensory environment is suitable for all learners?
- Are agreed sensory supports available and in place?
- Is the environment adapted to meet sensory needs (e.g. consider lighting and noise levels)?

04 The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

Visual supports

- What visual supports are used in the classroom?
- Is a consistent format for visuals used across the school?
- Are visual cues and supports in place?
- Are signs and displays multilingual and multicultural?
- Is clear and consistent labelling used to identify resources and resource cupboards?
- Is a visual timetable used?
- Are any of the visual supports over-stimulating or distracting?

Availability of objects

- Do learners have easy access to the equipment or resources they need? Are the available objects suited to the needs of learners (e.g. consider seat and table height, types of pencils, pens, scissors etc.)?
- Is technology available and fully utilised (e.g. Interactive whiteboard / ICT)?
- Are materials/resources prepared/selected in advance?
- Are objects/resources positioned consistently and appropriately?
- Can learners independently access resources so that they can develop responsibility for these?

The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

The Social Environment



Items and descriptor	Rating	Criteria Statements - Please select the statement that best describes the social environment	Notes
Attitudes Empathy Understanding Non-judgemental Respecting others	4	Staff and peers in environment display, reinforce and value exceptional attitudes, and are highly empathic and non-judgemental	
	3	Staff and peers in environment are actively developing and modelling empathy and inclusiveness and are non-judgemental	
	2	Some challenges with negative attitudes and how these are addressed	
	1	Staff or peers are dismissive/judgemental/exclusionary/condescending/bullying	
Support and Facilitation Verbal support Non-verbal support Physical support Appropriate communication	4	Expert support using variety of prompts/encouragement/demonstration, adapted to individual needs, and promotes independence over time	
	3	Appropriate support using prompts/encouragement/demonstration, takes account of different needs, and builds confidence in learners	
	2	Limited support and/or one form of support only/support not personalised to reflect needs/support leads to increased dependence	
	1	Minimal or ineffective support and/or support does not reflect needs	
Relationships Staff and peers Accepting atmosphere Sense of belonging Opportunities for relationship building	4	Exemplary, with diverse opportunities for positive social interaction and relationship building	
	3	Good relationships and opportunities for social interaction, strong class identity	
	2	Some challenges with relationship building and/or conflict	
	1	Some learners are isolated, conflict, and/or opportunities for relationship building are poor	
Information Accessible Clear Variety of formats Parents/carers and learners	4	Proactive provision of information, several formats, shared and easily accessible	
	3	Information provided in a variety of formats	
	2	Challenges with sharing information, information not always clear	
	1	Minimal information and/or mixed messages, complexity or quantity inappropriate	
Empowerment Support for autonomy Learner centred Responding to needs and views	4	Excellent promotion of appropriate self-direction, proactive seeking of learners views/choices	
	3	Learners actively involved in class ethos/target setting/self-assessment, learners' desires/views sought	
	2	Learners inconsistently asked for views, limited follow-through or trust in utility of learners views/choices	
	1	Learners views/choices not sought or considered, over protectiveness, learners preference not considered	

The following reflective questions may help you when considering how to rate the social environment.

04 The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

Attitudes

- Is a learner-centred approach used consistently?
- Are individual differences respected and diversity highlighted and celebrated?
- Are learners made to feel that their views are valued?
- Is constructive feedback given?
- Is support offered sensitively and timely?
- Are approaches to teaching well-being embedded (e.g. social skills, emotions, mental wellbeing)?
- Is sensitivity used when asking learners to 'perform' in front of their peers e.g. reading aloud?
- Do adults model enthusiasm for tasks?
- Is restorative practice used to address negative attitudes?

Support and facilitation

- Are the staff responsive to the learners needs, do they anticipate needs?
- What kind of support is given to learners (physical, verbal, visual cues)? Is the complexity of general language used considered?
- Is consideration given to the language demands of the curriculum (e.g. provision of supports and scaffolds to support higher order language?)
- Is the pace and quantity of information giving considered?
- Are complex instructions broken into clear steps?
- Are whole class checklists used (e.g. to work through tasks)? Is teaching adapted for different learning styles?
- Is demonstration and/or modelling used?
- Is verbal information supported with non-verbal information (e.g. gesture, pictures or written words)?

- Are templates used to support structure of work?
- Are worksheets clear and organised?
- Is praise and positive reinforcement given regularly?
- Does support lead to increased independence and autonomy over time?
- How are learners supported to meet their cultural and religious needs (e.g. a quiet space to accommodate prayers and fasting)?

Relationships

- How would you describe the relationship of (a) learners with staff (b) between the learners?
- Are small group activities utilised?
- Are working relationships between learners considered?
- Are peer supports used?
- Are break and/or lunch clubs available?
- Are groupings for different tasks carefully considered?
- Are activities regularly included to build relationships?
- Do learners feel valued and secure?
- Do staff support one another to address difficult relationships between adults or adults and learners?

Information

- How is information shared with learners and parents/carers?
- Is information (for learners and parents/carers) easily available in a variety of formats?

- Are "communication postcards" or a home-school diary used?
- Are interpreting services used if required to translate information?
- Is there regular collaboration with parents/carers?
- How do staff know that information has been received and understood by all relevant parties (e.g. parents/carers, learners)?

Empowerment

- How do staff assist learners in identifying and solving problems and building autonomy?
- How do staff encourage learners to express their needs, take responsibility or be autonomous?
- How is reflection and sense of self nurtured?
- Are learners encouraged to take responsibility for their learning?
- Is learner self assessment supported?
- Are learners involved in target setting? Do learners see progress through individual learning targets?
- Are learners given valued class/school roles and responsibilities?
- Is the use of first language encouraged?
- How do staff make use of learners' previous education and experiences?
- Do learners see adults responding to their views and ideas?

The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

The Structures and Routines



Items and descriptor	Rating	Criteria Statements - Please select the statement that best describes the structures and routines	Notes
Activity Demands Too easy/too hard Enjoyment/ satisfaction Just right challenge Matched to ability	4	Activities promote exceptionally appropriate and creative challenge and enjoyment with excellent engagement	
	3	Activities appropriate to allow for “just right challenge”, almost all learners engaged most of the time	
	2	Activity demands are somewhat high/low, some boredom/stress	
	1	Activity demands too high/too low, causing boredom/stress	
Rules and boundaries Clarity Consistency Effect on learners	4	Exceptionally clear expectations/rules/rewards/consequences provided in a variety of formats and consistently applied	
	3	Expectations/rules/rewards/consequences provided in a variety of formats and almost always consistently applied	
	2	Challenges with expectations/rules/rewards/consequences, some learner disengagement or anxiety	
	1	Expectations/rules/rewards/consequences unclear and inconsistent, learners disengaged or anxious	
Appeal of Activities Value Attraction Interest	4	Very positive perception and understanding of the value of activities offered to learners, variety evident, tailored to interests/cultures	
	3	Attraction to the type of task offered, variety, some tasks tailored to learners’ interests/cultures	
	2	Challenge in how activities are structured which limits their appeal, learners’ interests/cultures not reflected	
	1	Activities are not appealing, learners disinterested, little or no understanding of purpose	
Routines Structure Preferences Consistency	4	Structured routines all exemplary, accommodates for individual preferences, high levels of consistency, promote sense of belonging	
	3	Appropriate structured routine, offers consistency, good preparation for change	
	2	Challenges with how routine is structured, variable consistency, some unpredictability	
	1	Little or no routine or structure provided throughout the class/day/week, unpredictability	
Decision-making Participation in decision-making Encouragement for collaborative decision making e.g. class rules	4	Exemplary encouragement for learners to meaningfully participate in decisions	
	3	Encouragement for learners to meaningfully participate in decisions	
	2	Inconsistency of opportunities being afforded to learners to participate in decisions, participation not always meaningful	
	1	Minimal information and/or mixed messages, complexity or quantity inappropriate	

The following reflective questions may help you when considering how to rate the structures and routines.

04 The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)

Activity demands

- How do you make sure the level of the activity matches the ability of the learners?
- Does work provide challenge and enjoyment for all?
- Is work differentiated to ensure achievable goals?
- Is success celebrated or displayed?
- Is there a focus on praising process as well as product?
- Are different learning styles addressed during lessons?
- Do learners engage with all activities?

Rules and boundaries

- How do you agree and set class rules?
- How do you make sure learners are aware of these?
- Is there a consistent approach to encourage positive behaviour?
- Are class rules clear and specific?
- Are class rules displayed and referred to regularly?
- How do you make sure rewards/consequences are applied fairly, taking into consideration individual additional needs?
- How do you make sure rewards and consequences are effective?
- Are behavioural boundaries clear and consistent?
- Are behaviour triggers recognised and minimised?
- Are roles and routines used to promote learner responsibility?

Appeal of activities

- How do you provide activities that are well matched to the interests of the learners?
- Are learners' diverse lived experiences, interests and cultures incorporated in lesson planning?
- Are learners' individual interests used in lesson planning?
- Are cultural differences considered in lesson planning (e.g. girls-only swimming groups)?
- Is experiential learning utilised?
- Are multisensory approaches used?
- Is technology used to engage interest?
- Is active learning utilised?
- Are incentives and rewards used that are valued by learners?
- Do learners understand the value and purpose of the activities?

Routines

- How do you help learners with their daily and weekly routine?
- Is structure and routine used throughout the lesson/week e.g. set day for homework?
- How do you support learners to understand routines and to understand changes to routines?
- How do you prepare learners for any change to routine?
- How do you support learners to practice and prepare for new experiences?

- Are lessons planned to follow a consistent format?
- Are the learning intentions made clear at the start?
- Are learning outcomes reviewed and summarised?
- Are there routine opportunities for active learning and multisensory learning?
- Are there opportunities for practice and repetition?
- Are there routine opportunities for movement breaks?
- Are consistent /predictable seating plans in place?

Decision-making

- Are learners involved in decision-making about class rules, class ethos, activities, and routines?
- How do you support learners to be involved in decision making?
- How do you ensure that everyone's voice is heard in the decision making process?
- Are class rules set in collaboration with learners?
- Are learners encouraged to share their views about the class layout?
- Are learners encouraged to share their views about activities?
- How do learners know that their views are respected and have been meaningfully considered as part of the decision making process?

Summary of CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale

Using the information from the previous pages complete the summary score sheet below and keep as a record of how inclusive your classroom environment is at a given time in the school year.

This can be used to quickly identify any areas of strength and areas requiring attention. This, along with the previous pages can help you to develop a plan for any improvements required.

You can use the CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Planning Page to document your plan for improvement.

The CICS provides a score which can be used as a baseline and then repeated to show the effect of any changes made to the classroom.



Name of Evaluator: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

STRUCTURES & ROUTINES		4	3	2	1
Decision making		4	3	2	1
Routines		4	3	2	1
Appeal of activities		4	3	2	1
Rules and boundaries		4	3	2	1
Activity demands		4	3	2	1
Empowerment		4	3	2	1
SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT		4	3	2	1
Provision of information		4	3	2	1
Relationships		4	3	2	1
Support and facilitation		4	3	2	1
Attitudes		4	3	2	1
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		4	3	2	1
Availability of objects		4	3	2	1
Visual supports		4	3	2	1
Sensory Space		4	3	2	1
Adequacy of space		4	3	2	1
Accessibility of space		4	3	2	1

4
Environment **strongly supports** learner(s) participation by providing exceptional opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

3
Environment **supports** learner(s) participation by providing appropriate opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

2
Environment **interferes** with learner(s) participation by providing limited opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

1
Environment **strongly interferes** with learner(s) participation by not providing opportunities, resources, requirements & structures

CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Planning Page



Date: _____

You could make a plan below by writing down which areas to target based on the information from the **CIRCLE** Inclusive classroom Scale (CICS).

Classroom: _____

Date for review: _____

From your completed CICS what are the key areas that you have chosen to develop? (Consider those with a score of 2 or less.)

-
-
-
-
-

HOW WILL IT BE ACHIEVED?

Things to implement / change / develop	
Who will be involved?	
Resources / Training Needed	

Write down key strategies that could be introduced or used more consistently to help you develop this area.

-
-
-
-
-

REVIEW

Outcome	
The CICS score in this area has increased / decreased/ remained the same (delete as required).	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 	
Next Steps	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	
Review completed by:	
Date:	

04 The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale (CICS)



Discussion Point



Reflective Questions

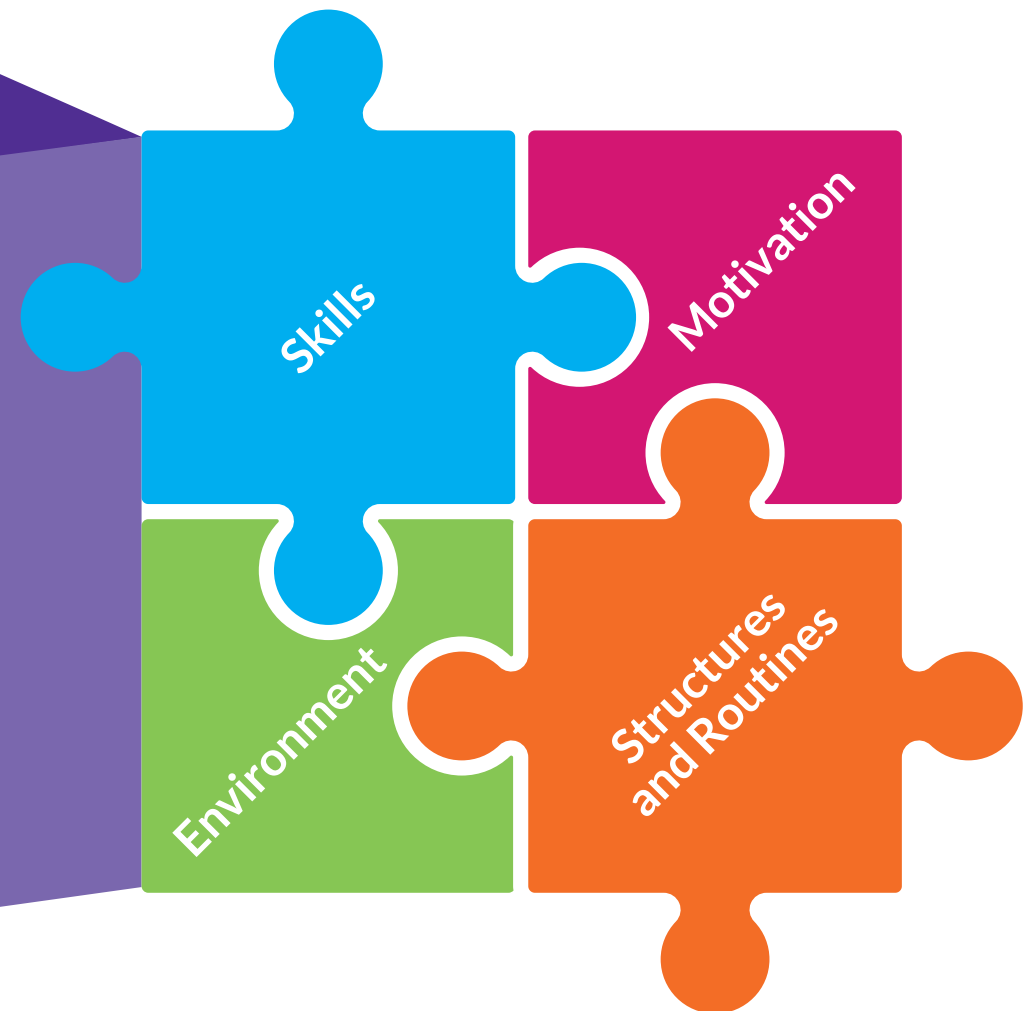
- Considering the features of an Inclusive classroom, how inclusive do you think your practice is?
 - What are you already doing to make the learning environment inclusive for all learners?
 - Which supports and strategies do you currently use to ensure your practice is learner-centred?
 - Which strategies could you add to support learners to engage more effectively?
 - Which strategies would you like to add to or develop in your current practice? How might you do this?
 - Considering learners who already have individual supports or strategies in place, how could you adapt these to make them suitable for the whole class?
 - What steps do you take during the preparation and planning process to ensure that you understand the needs of individual learners in your classes?
 - Where do you evidence your planning for individual learners?
- Who do you (could you) use as a critical friend/peer support to reflect on your practice with?
 - How does the implementation of the supports and strategies by your critical friend/peer support (or another colleague) differ from your own practice?
 - Consider observing a colleague working with a learner or group of learners whose needs you find challenging. Do they have a similar experience? Are there any strategies that they use effectively that you may not have considered before?

Complete an ABCD (see Appendix) around how an inclusive classroom strategy could be used to overcome a particular challenge relating to a learner or group of learners.

05 The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)

This section contains:

- An introduction to the CPS
- An overview of how to use the CPS
- The CPS
- How to interpret the results
- Discussion points to support reflection



05 The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)

Identifying Strengths and Support Needs



Identifying and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of all learners in the class is integral to the daily practice of every teacher. Through routine observation, questioning and assessment, subject teachers monitor progress and adapt their practice to ensure that learners achieve their goals.

However, for some learners a more detailed assessment of their needs is required. This may involve other staff within the school such as the Extended Pupil Support Team (Support for Learning (SfL), Support for Pupils (SfP) or the school management team). For a small number of learners, further specialist assessment may be required from partner services and agencies outside the school.

By the time they reach secondary school, learners' strengths and support needs may already have been identified. In this case, staff have a responsibility to know about and understand these existing strengths and support needs, and how to implement the strategies required by the learners. Subject teachers also have a responsibility to identify and monitor strengths and support needs over time.

The processes of understanding and identifying learners' strengths and support needs are likely to include observing how learners carry out tasks in context, formative and summative assessments, and a review of additional information about learners and their individual circumstances. Interpretation of this information assists in forming conclusions about the nature of learners' strengths and support needs and helps subject teachers plan how to manage these.

05 The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)

➤ Suggestions for identifying strengths and support needs:

- Review information you already have about the learner to inform your understanding of any existing strengths and support needs.
- Consult the learner - what do they think the problem is and what might they find helpful to address this?
- Reflect on lessons that went well – which strategies worked? What does this tell you?
- Collect samples of work (e.g. class work or homework) and identify what the learner can do with and without support.
- Carry out assessments within the subject areas and gather evidence from formal tests or exams.
- Consider other challenge-specific assessments which can be carried out by SfL.
- Consult colleagues who also work with the learner or senior subject colleagues to discuss progress and potentially useful strategies.
- Consider discussion with or referral to the Extended Pupil Support Team (SfL, SfP or the school management team) - e.g. is this a child protection concern?



05 The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)

➤ Immediate risk/child protection concern

This refers to any new, marked, sudden and/or unexplained change in the presentation, behaviour, appearance or circumstances of the learner that might cause immediate risk - for example:

- mental health issues, including self-harming, or talk around self-harming
- inappropriate sexual behaviour
- evidence of substance abuse, including alcohol
- acute physical, social and/or emotional disturbance or distress
- unexpected behaviour such as outbursts or appearing withdrawn
- extremes of behaviour which is detrimental to the individual or those around them
- inappropriate interactions or exchanges with staff or peers
- major social or environment change, or significant family concern
- sudden truancy, erratic attendance, or long periods of absence
- youth offending

Concerns should be formally recorded as per school processes - it is always better to complete this just in case, rather than discovering later on that it should have been done.

These kinds of concerns must be discussed immediately with the appropriate school staff in line with individual school policies, such as risk assessment, child protection or health and safety.

In addition, several services can offer consultation and advice:

- Psychological Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS)
- Social Care Direct

These services are accessed through the Extended Pupil Support Team.



05 The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)



Using the CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)

Most learners progress well with good standard teaching practice within an inclusive classroom.

However, some learners may require further support to enable them to participate fully in school life. Participation in school life is the focus of the CIRCLE Participation Scale.

The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS) is a tool which has been designed specifically to assess and measure participation in school life.

Participation in school life

To participate in school life learners must be able to, for example: attend school and move around the premises; communicate and work cooperatively with others; access and understand curricular material; follow school rules and routines; engage in school-related roles and responsibilities; and organise themselves to study and complete assigned tasks. Some learners require support to do this.

Learners' participation is influenced by a combination of environmental factors (i.e. the physical environment, social environment and structures and routines) and learner specific factors (i.e. their motivation and specific skills). When learners experience high levels of unproductive stress, or are unable to participate in school they tend to have poorer outcomes than their peers. It can be challenging to work out how different aspects of the puzzle are impacting on a specific learner. The CPS can support this.

What is the CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)?

The CPS is a measure of participation in school life. It has been designed as an initial assessment to give an overview of a learner's strengths and potential areas for development.

It assesses the physical and social environment, structures and routines, motivation and skills in the following areas: Attention and Concentration, Organisation and Planning, Motor Skills, Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills, and Verbal and Non-verbal communication.

Why use the CPS?

- The CPS will help you identify and record the learner's strengths and where support and strategies or further specific assessment should be targeted.
- It provides a baseline assessment which will allow you to record and measure progress. This may be particularly useful for evidencing the needs of 'looked after' learners (see p. 115, The Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 amended 2009).
- The CPS provides an easy to use simple visual profile of the learner which can support information sharing and discussions with others.
- It can be used to inform referral when support from others is required.
- It can be used to support personal reflection.
- The completed CPS will direct you to the relevant pages of the resource containing the specific supports and strategies for that learner profile.

05 The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)



Completing the CPS

The CPS asks you to read a set of statements and for each to consider and 'score' the response which is most accurate for the learner you are assessing:

- 4 Strongly supports school participation / Observed almost all of the time
- 3 Supports school participation / Observed most of the time
- 2 Interferes with school participation / Observed some of the time
- 1 Strongly interferes with school participation / Observed hardly any of the time

The scale helps to assess factors that support or interfere with participation in school life and/or the frequency with which it applies to the learner.

The learner doesn't have to be present when you score the CPS, but please try to complete it soon after you have seen them (preferably on the same day) while you have a clear impression of their ability.

You can complete the CPS by yourself or in consultation with others. Please try to answer all the questions. Ensure that you write the learner's name and the date of completion at the top of the page and sign it for future reference. The views of the learner themselves can also help inform the assessment process.

Existing supports and strategies

The CPS should be completed with current supports and strategies which are routinely used with that learner in place. Document these and how they are currently used in the notes section on the back of the CPS. If you are unsure if existing supports and strategies are effective, it might be useful to carry out focussed observation of the learner with and without the supports and strategies in place to determine the difference.

Considerations when completing the CPS

We know that learners respond differently in different contexts and that this may vary from day to day and even throughout the day. It can therefore be useful to observe the learner in a variety of circumstances over several days and then to use your professional judgement to decide which 'score' gives the most accurate overview of the learner. Also consider the previous 4 weeks as a reference period. Discussions with colleagues who are also involved with the learner might help to clarify your thoughts. In some circumstances it might be useful to ask these colleagues to complete the CPS separately and then to meet to compare results, discuss any discrepancies and to agree a team score for the learner based on this.

Examples of current and previous school work, review of any reports and discussions with the learner's previous teachers may also be useful when completing the CPS.

Reflect on any discrepancies in the learner's performance and try to consider why this might be the case - was there anything different which could have accounted for this? If their performance is consistently different in a particular context try to identify which factors are making the difference.

The views of the parents/carers and the learner themselves can also help inform the assessment process, though it is recognised that the learner might respond differently outside the school.

Repeating the CPS

You can repeat the CPS as often as required. It can be useful to repeat it at the beginning of each term to evaluate the impact of any supports and strategies that have been introduced.

05 The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)

➤ Analysing and interpreting the results

Once you have completed the CPS take time to go through the categories looking for patterns in how you have scored the learner. You can do this on your own or in collaboration with colleagues who know the learner.

Look for categories where you have given a score of 4 or 3 - these show areas of strength where things are currently working well. It is important to highlight these, as well as identifying areas of need. Categories where you have given a score of 1 or 2 highlight areas that restrict or inhibit the learner's participation in school life and may require development. Consider if these findings were what you expected and reflect on ways in which you may be able to tap areas of strength to address areas of need.

For some learners the CPS might highlight needs in one particular skill area e.g. Attention and Concentration. The table below gives the pages within this resource where you will find supports and strategies for that particular skill area.

Attention and Concentration Skills	P 71
Organisation and Planning Skills	P 75
Motor Skills (Posture and Mobility, and Dexterity and Manipulation)	P 79
Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills	P 83
Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills	P 87

[NB: For further information on developing bilingual learners refer to the appendices (see p. 125) and local EAL guidance. The appendices also contain further ideas for supporting learners with Mental Health Concerns (see p. 121).]

If in addition to needs in one particular skill area the CPS also shows a score of mainly 1 or 2 in one of the other categories (i.e. physical or social environment, structures and routines, or motivation) this will indicate which group of strategies to target within that skill area. For example, for a learner who scores mainly 1 or 2 in both the Attention and Concentration and the Structures and Routines categories, turn to the relevant page and focus on the supports and strategies in the middle column - Establishing Structures and Routines.

It is possible that a learner has more of a mixed pattern. In this case look for the skill area where there is the lowest total score and begin by looking at that section to see if the outline of the needs corresponds to those encountered by the learner. If so try implementing some of the supports and strategies suggested in that skill area. If not then consider whether one of the other low scored skill sections might be the actual 'cause'. For example, a learner with Verbal and Non-verbal Communication needs may have low scores for Social and Relationship skills, but by focussing supports and strategies on the former skill area, this will improve the latter.

Your skills and judgement in interpreting the results and identifying and addressing the underlying needs are key to supporting participation in school life.

Next steps

The dated CPS provides a measure of how the learner is at a point in time and directs you towards the appropriate supports and strategies to consider using within this resource.

It is important to schedule a date to repeat the CPS (e.g. the following term) to assess the impact of the chosen input and make changes as required.

The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)



Learning Environments: Physical		
a	Classroom space is suitable and engaging for learner (consider accessibility, furniture, layout)	1 2 3 4
b	Playground is suitable and engaging for learner (consider safety, accessibility, play)	1 2 3 4
c	Common areas (e.g. corridors) are suitable for learner (consider accessibility, safety, signage)	1 2 3 4
d	Required tools or equipment have been identified and are available/accessible to learner	1 2 3 4
e	Sensory elements of classroom space have been considered for learner (e.g. noise, light, clutter)	1 2 3 4

Learning Environments: Social		
a	Peers include learner in class activities	1 2 3 4
b	Peers include learner in play/recreation activities	1 2 3 4
c	Relevant school staff recognise and understand learners' needs	1 2 3 4
d	Relevant school staff pro-actively provide support to meet learners' needs	1 2 3 4
e	Family circumstances allow learner to participate fully at school	1 2 3 4

Structures and Routines		
a	Learner is aware of and adheres to normal school routines	1 2 3 4
b	Learner is able to move between tasks, activities and/or classes during school day	1 2 3 4
c	Learner copes well with changes to routine or patterns	1 2 3 4
d	Learner meets relevant school staff expectations	1 2 3 4
e	Learner is involved in extra roles/activities in school (e.g. clubs, or after school)	1 2 3 4

Motivation		
a	Learner is aware of own skills and abilities	1 2 3 4
b	Learner seeks challenges or new activities and is optimistic about success	1 2 3 4
c	Learner shows curiosity and willingly engages in activities	1 2 3 4
d	Learner shows enthusiasm for activities at school	1 2 3 4
e	Learner shows pride in their achievements	1 2 3 4

Attention and Concentration		
a	Learner remembers information and instructions	1 2 3 4
b	Learner stays focussed throughout an activity	1 2 3 4
c	Learner starts activities and keeps going until they are finished	1 2 3 4
d	Learner maintains a consistent pace when participating in class activities	1 2 3 4
e	Learner works towards achieving specific goals when required	1 2 3 4

Organisational and Planning		
a	Learner chooses tools and materials and uses them as they are intended	1 2 3 4
b	Learner notices problems and if needed changes actions during activities	1 2 3 4
c	Learner keeps themselves and their workspace organised	1 2 3 4
d	Learner remembers items needed for day	1 2 3 4
e	Learner completes tasks in correct sequence	1 2 3 4

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____ Class /Subject: _____

Date of Scoring: _____

Person scoring: _____

Circle one answer for each question – try to answer all questions

4	Strongly supports school participation / Observed almost all of the time	
3	Supports school participation / Observed most of the time	
2	Interferes with school participation / Observed some of the time	
1	Strongly interferes with school participation / Observed hardly any of the time	

Posture and Mobility		
a	Learner stays balanced while walking, running or playing	1 2 3 4
b	Learner sits well positioned at desk for duration of activities	1 2 3 4
c	Learner moves around classroom as required	1 2 3 4
d	Learner moves around wider school environment as required	1 2 3 4
e	Learner is well co-ordinated when completing tasks	1 2 3 4

Dexterity and Manipulation		
a	Learner can effectively manipulate smaller items (e.g. pencils, scissors)	1 2 3 4
b	Learner can draw/write at a level appropriate for their developmental level/level of ability	1 2 3 4
c	Learner has good hand-eye coordination	1 2 3 4
d	Learner uses both hands well at same time	1 2 3 4
e	Learner uses appropriate force and speed during manual activities	1 2 3 4

Social, Emotional and Relationship		
a	Learner socialises with classmates and gets along with peers	1 2 3 4
b	Learner has a consistent group of friends	1 2 3 4
c	Learner engages in appropriate conversations with peers and staff	1 2 3 4
d	Learner cooperates with peers on class tasks or recreational activities	1 2 3 4
e	Learner seems happy, included and calm	1 2 3 4

Verbal & non-verbal communication		
a	Learner demonstrates understanding of body language (e.g. eye contact, expressions)	1 2 3 4
b	Learner speaks clearly and changes volume as needed	1 2 3 4
c	Learner verbalises their thoughts, ideas and questions appropriately	1 2 3 4
d	Learner understands spoken communication	1 2 3 4
e	Learner understands written communication (e.g. from board)	1 2 3 4

The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)

Notes Page



Name: _____ Date of scoring: _____

Date of birth: _____ Person Scoring: _____

Class/subject: _____

Use this space to record supports or strategies in use during the CPS assessment (e.g. a sit and move cushion, fidget supports etc.)

-
-
-
-
-
-

Use this space to record any other comments regarding the CPS score (e.g. specific variations in performance etc.)

-
-
-
-
-
-



06 Skills, Supports and Strategies

This section contains strategies to help address the following areas:

- ❑ Attention and Concentration Skills
- ❑ Organisation and Planning Skills
- ❑ Motor Skills
- ❑ Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills
- ❑ Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

The appendix (section 9) contains additional information for supporting learners who may have Mental Health Concerns or English as an Additional Language (EAL).



06 Skills, Supports and Strategies

Introduction

Most learners will be sufficiently supported by implementing strategies for creating an inclusive classroom (see section 4). However, some learners may require additional support to progress within the curriculum, feel included and participate in school life. This section provides strategies that you can try with these learners. The CPS (see section 5) helped you to identify and document the learner's strengths and support needs and will guide you to specific strategies to support the learner in the following areas:

- Attention and Concentration Skills
- Organisation and Planning Skills
- Motor Skills (Posture and Mobility, and Dexterity and Manipulation)
- Social Emotional and Relationship Skills
- Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

These five areas represent the skills used by learners to make progress within the curriculum and participate in school and wider society. However, as learners engage in school, recreation and self care, other factors also maintain, reinforce, shape and change actions, dispositions, behaviours and capabilities. A learner's progress and participation can either be supported or inhibited by:

- **The Environment:** the environment surrounds the learner and enhances or inhibits participation. This includes buildings, resources and equipment (the physical environment) and the attitudes, expectations and actions of others (the social environment).
- **Structures and Routines:** routines are events that happen in the same way with regularity. The start, middle and end of the routine becomes predictable through repetition. Daily routines help learners to know and take part in what comes next and social routines help them enjoy and interact with others.
- **Motivation:** motivation gives learners incentive, enthusiasm and interest when engaging with people and activities. Learners are motivated by their own feelings, desires, self esteem, confidence and the responses of others

For this reason the supports and strategies suggested for each skill are divided into 3 columns: Modifications to the Learning Environment, Establishing Structures and Routines and Approaches to Enhance Motivation.

06 Skills, Supports and Strategies

➤ How to use the Skills, Supports and Strategies Section

It is assumed that you have already implemented the strategies outlined in Working Within an Inclusive Classroom.

Detailed steps

1. **Complete the CPS** - This will identify the skills area(s) (Attention and Concentration; Organisation and Planning; Motor; Social, Emotional and Relationship; Verbal and Non-verbal Communication) and group(s) of strategies to target (Modifications to the Learning Environment, Establishing Structures and Routines and/or Approaches to Enhance Motivation).
3. **Turn to the relevant Skill Area identified by the CPS** - Read through the description to ensure that the concerns described are similar to those the learner is experiencing.
4. **Consider the Supports and Strategies** - Consider the suggested supports and strategies and identify those already in place and working well and others which could be developed or added.
5. **Complete the CIRCLE Supports and Strategies Planning Page** - You will find this at the end of each skills section. Use this to document your current concerns and input, your planned intervention, and eventually the outcome and next steps. There are also sections on this page where you can record the learner's views if appropriate. This information, together with the CPS can be used for your own reflection or professional learning; to provide evidence of input and aid discussions with parents/carers or colleagues; and/or to support onward referral to other agencies.

6. **Implement the learner specific supports and strategies** - Remember that in addition to identifying any strategies used, it is imperative that you have clear evidence for how you have implemented them.
7. **Review the CIRCLE Supports and Strategies Planning Page** - Reflect on the effectiveness of the supports and strategies used and consider whether additional ones are required. Discuss with the learner if appropriate.
8. **Repeat the CPS** - Consider if the learner is now able to participate more effectively as a result of using the supports and strategies or if minor adjustments and/or further support is required either from within the school or from partner services and agencies. Remember that some learners require implementation of specific supports and strategies throughout their school career and it is essential that these are effectively shared with others and passed on to colleagues during times of transition.

It may be useful to consider the Skills, Supports and Strategies as part of a joint reflection together with a colleague, or group of colleagues, so that experiences can be shared and discussed.

06 Skills, Supports and Strategies



What you will find in each skill area:

- A brief description of the area, for example, motor skills.
- Common indicators of problems with this area.
- A 'principle' of good practice summarising what teachers do to address that particular challenge.
- Examples of what teachers said about their experiences with this skill area, in order to illustrate successful approaches.
- A list of strategies that teachers discussed using for each skill area grouped into Modification to the Learning Environment, Establishing Structures and Routines, and Approaches to Enhance Motivation.
- A supports and strategies planning page where you can plan and document your input, and record the results of the input.

At the end of the section you will find reflective questions which can be used for your own reflection, to support peer review with a colleague, or to structure departmental or subject area professional learning sessions.

A note on the strategies within Skills Supports and Strategies

- These strategies are not exhaustive but aim to help identify what you might consider doing to support learners' individual needs. Further useful resources can be found in the Appendices (see p.118-128).
- 'Working within an Inclusive Classroom' (section 4) contains strategies that are central to good teaching practice. It is assumed that these are in place before any of the specific strategies within this section are added.
- A learner-centred approach to using strategies is essential: discuss with the learner what works best for them.
- A reflective approach which includes regular evaluation of the strategies used, is recommended as their relevance is likely to change over time depending on the needs and responses of the learner.
- It may be useful to draw on any experience you and/or your colleagues have of working with learners who had similar needs. Consider which supports and strategies were effective and could be shared with others.
- Where learners have complex and/or multiple additional support needs, they should be involved in the Getting it Right Child Planning Process.

Strategies marked with an * are likely to be considered by the Extended Pupil Support Team (Support for Learning, Support for Pupils staff and/or senior management) but it is important for all staff to be aware of them as they may play a role in their implementation.

Attention and Concentration Skills

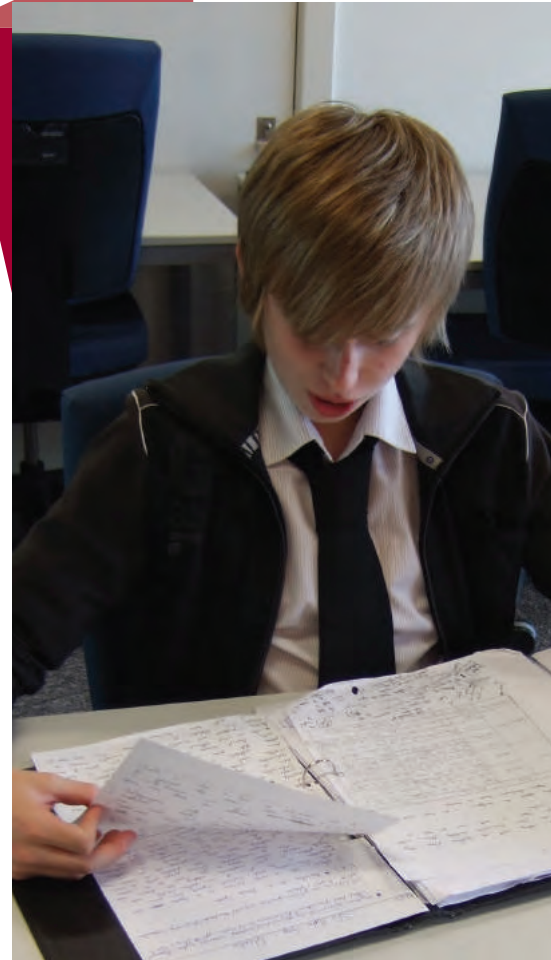


Attention and Concentration Skills

Learner may require support with responding to and sustaining focus on instructions, activities and tasks within the school day.

Learner may require support with:

- Attending to a task and working independently without adult support
- Behaviour (may display overly passive or disruptive behaviour)
- Sitting still or sitting quietly during tasks where that is expected
- Concentrating and maintaining focus for any length of time
- Completing tasks
- Listening to and following instructions



Attention and Concentration Skills

Attention and Concentration Skills

Principle:

Using an organised approach and environment to encourage focused attention and concentration.

- Adapt your teaching methods to support focused engagement.
- Promote listening and attention through use of active and engaging resources and tasks.
- Modify the environment to promote focused participation.



"I'll maybe fold a worksheet into three so that they only see part of it at one time, and focus on that part. Sometimes seeing the whole task is overwhelming."

"Allowing learners to use fidget toys or just saying their name before speaking to them helps. Checking that they are listening: having a sign to use with that learner when you think they have lost focus and agreeing with the learner that you will use that when you recognise that they are finding it difficult to concentrate - it could be something as simple as picking up their pencil case and putting it down on the desk."

"I use short, sharp descriptions followed by very clear demonstrations...also the use of visuals and getting learners to repeat back the instruction to make sure they have understood the task. I also break up the lesson into chunks and encourage learners to mark off what they've done as they go on their individual plans."

Attention and Concentration Skills

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Keep task descriptions short and repeat where necessary.
- Use observation to identify what the potential distractions are.
- Utilise peers for modelling, demonstration and support, which will help to promote focus.
- Be aware of how sensory factors such as noise or visual stimuli may affect attention and concentration.
- Take into account sensory preferences and allow agreed strategies such as fidget supports or doodling, if these aid focus.
- Consider seating arrangements and how these may improve attention and concentration such as proximity to supportive peers, proximity to teacher, position in relation to windows and doors, and consistency of seating.
- Minimise potential distractions in the room where possible.
- Use visual prompts within activities, such as task lists and pictorial representations of ideas, and visual timetables to help maintain attention and concentration.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) e.g. interactive whiteboard to engage and maintain attention.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Provide individual visual or written lesson plans, and encourage learners to mark off each task when completed.
- Chunk (break down) information and tasks into manageable parts.
- Allow movement breaks.
- Encourage physical engagement with tasks.
- Check understanding of task expectations - ask learner to repeat and rephrase instructions.
- Use a previously agreed 'sign' to indicate that a learner needs to focus if their attention is faltering.
- Use reinforcement, repetition and rephrasing.

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Use visual prompts within activities, such as task lists and pictorial representations of ideas, and visual timetables to help gain attention and interest.
- Focus on and reward positive behaviour such as instances of good listening, attention and concentration.
- Keep learners on task by giving individualised attention.
- Use prompts such as saying their name to gain their attention and keep interest.
- Present short tasks and adjust pace to keep learners engaged.
- Use strategies that promote active learning, including opportunities for multisensory learning.
- Involve learner in decision making process about how to progress attention and concentration skills.
- Use a variety of tasks to engage interest.
- When possible, use the learner's own interests to engage them in topics.

Supports and Strategies Planning Page



Learners Name: _____ Completed by: _____
 Class: _____ Position: _____
 Date: _____

Summary of concerns from CPS:	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Most successful strategies used:	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Strategies to implement or use more consistently:	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Plan (What, How, Who, When)	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Outcome:	Learner's views:
•	•

Next Steps:	Learner's views:
•	•



Organisation and Planning Skills

Learner may require support with organisation of self and of the environment (including materials and equipment) that may affect planning and execution of tasks, engagement and learning.

Learner may require support with:

- Organising themselves and their belongings - for example, planners, textbooks, pencil case, equipment
- Getting themselves from place to place on time
- Meeting deadlines, following tasks and completing work in expected timeframes
- Organising and completing school work and homework
- Sequencing (completing pieces of work or tasks within a piece of work)



Organisation & Planning Skills

Organisation and Planning Skills

Principle:

Developing organisational skills in learners using techniques, resources, routines and environmental supports.

- Use a consistent, clear and structured approach to classroom and task management.
- Structure tasks and routines to facilitate organisation.
- Promote organisation through the use of resources and physical organisation within class setting.



“Learners with organisation difficulties require help with homework...We can help by providing consistency and structure and having things displayed on the wall, such as deadlines, as some learners often don't like to ask if they have forgotten...Within the class it's about knowing where resources are kept – ensuring that they are put back correctly and handed out in the same way.”

“I have a learner in 6th year at the moment who has severe dyspraxia and as a result is very disorganised. I have to make sure she has all her notes in her planner and everything organised – she's bright, very artistic and creative, but needs help to be organised.”

Organisation and Planning Skills

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Liaise with parents/carers to facilitate organisation between home and school - for example, use a home/school diary for communication or notes in planner.
- Repeat instructions as appropriate - preface instruction with the learner's name to ensure they are aware it is for their attention (consider giving a printed copy).
- Utilise peers to support organisation through modelling and demonstration.
- Consider seating arrangements (proximity to supportive peers; proximity to teacher; consistency of seating).
- Consider strategies that physically promote organisation - use of specific drawers/boxes for specific resources; visual timetables; labelling; posters depicting timelines for assignments/ deadlines; colour coding according to the task/topic.
- Encourage consistency in classroom layout and organisation of resources.
- Keep books and jotters at school when possible.
- Use visual supports for tasks such as revision timetables.
- Provide supported study or homework clubs*.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Be clear about the objectives of the lesson and learning aims.
- Give learners extra time to support self-organisation and management of belongings.
- Identify those who may benefit from supported study or homework clubs.
- Check understanding of task expectations - ask learner to repeat and rephrase instructions.
- Allow use of appropriate ICT to support organisation such as hand held devices which can give prompts and reminders*.
- Promote use of lesson and homework planners.
- Ensure homework instructions are written (consider giving a printed copy).
- Provide frameworks for completing specific pieces of work such as essay writing templates.
- Support efficient organisation of hand-outs by encouraging learners to date and clearly label them.
- Establish distinct routines in the classroom and be clear about where things go.

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Consider alternative ways of giving homework such as via email or through buddy systems.
- Present instructions in a variety of ways to meet different learning styles.
- Use a nominal deposit system for borrowing items such as pencils, which learners get back on return of the item.
- Provide clear expectations, praise and reinforcement.
- Encourage the learner to use various media (e.g. drawing or ICT) before putting ideas on paper.
- Chunk all information and tasks into a series of logical, manageable sections or steps which ensure success.
- Be clear about task structure – what the learner needs to do, and next steps. Ensure achievable goals.
- Give feedback on effective problem solving.
- Encourage learner to select their preferred organisational prompts e.g. key-ring prompts or check lists.

*See page 70

Supports and Strategies Planning Page



Learners Name: _____ Completed by: _____

Class: _____ Position: _____

Date: _____

Summary of concerns from CPS:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Most successful strategies used:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Strategies to implement or use more consistently:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Plan (What, How, Who, When)	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Outcome:	Learner's views:
•	•

Next Steps:	Learner's views:
•	•

Motor Skills



Motor Skills

Learner may require support with fine and gross motor skills, coordination, and/or the execution of physical tasks and activities.

Learner may require support with:

- Moving around school: for example, getting up and down stairs or moving from class to class
- Coordination - may be clumsy or appear careless
- Curricular activities that require gross and/or fine motor movements such as physical education, handwriting, drawing shapes in maths, acting in drama, completing experiments in science
- Self-care skills such as toileting, dressing or using cutlery
- Behaviour - they may be disengaged or disruptive, which could be secondary to motor difficulties



Motor Skills

Motor Skills

Principle:

Encouraging learners to develop, maintain or use motor skills.

- Use tailored support, including task breakdown, combined with positive reinforcement.
- Provide opportunities for movement and use strategies to encourage participation in class.
- Adapt the environment where possible, which may include use of physical supports and/or equipment.



“I would talk to the learner about how they felt about their handwriting and whether it was something that they were motivated to get better at.. if they were really struggling with a piece of handwriting I’d look at what type of pens they were using, ask how they would feel about having a scribe, or developing key-board skills or those types of things... I’d always make sure that the learner was involved in the decision making process.”

“I get learners to talk through what they are going to do or how they are going to do it – you need language in order to be able to plan something or to work out physically what you are going to do.”

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Encourage learners to position themselves in the most appropriate position for a task and offer physical support if required.
- Develop alternative methods for recording information including use of ICT or use of scribes*.
- Utilise peers for modelling, demonstration, and support during tasks which involve movement.
- Consider adaptations to classroom furniture where necessary, such as seat and table height.
- Provide accessible storage for books and personal belongings to support organisation and transition between classes*.
- Provide options to support easier movement around school such as toilet/lift passes, and 'get out of class early' passes*.
- Use adapted equipment and aids for practical subjects*.
- Use specialist writing and/or ICT equipment*.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Break down information and tasks that involve motor skills into manageable sections or steps.
- Allow learners to sit during practical tasks if this aids their concentration or fine motor ability for example during science experiments*.
- Consider opportunities to develop motor skills within school, such as taking part in motor skills groups, and sport or leisure activities*.
- Consider limiting amount of writing required by giving hand-outs or worksheets where appropriate.
- Give homework at the start of the lesson if learner needs to leave class early.
- Provide opportunities for physical movement within the class.

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Adapt motor tasks so that all learners are challenged but participate and experience success.
- Encourage learner to verbally rehearse tasks (talk through steps of a task internally if possible).
- Ensure the learner is comfortable asking for help and has an agreed way of doing so.
- Recognise talent and support selection for specialist sporting opportunities, including those for learners with additional needs*.
- Support independence - ensure the learner does as much as possible for themselves; scaffolding (gradually reducing the support given during tasks) can help this.
- Talk through physical tasks - what the learner is going to do and how they are going to do it - using positive language to support motivation.
- Use strategies which promote active learning, including opportunities for multisensory learning.

*See page 70

Supports and Strategies Planning Page



Learners Name: _____ Completed by: _____

Class: _____ Position: _____

Date: _____

Summary of concerns from CPS:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Most successful strategies used:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Strategies to implement or use more consistently:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Plan (What, How, Who, When)	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Outcome:	Learner's views:
•	•

Next Steps:	Learner's views:
•	•

Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills



Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills

Learner may require support with managing relationships and emotions. These may also be related to difficulties outside school.

Learner may require support with:

- Interacting appropriately with others (adults and peers); forming and maintaining friendships
- Self confidence, self esteem and self efficacy
- Attendance and punctuality
- Behaving appropriately
- Organising and presenting themselves appropriately and consistently
- Completing and handing in homework
- Expressing their thoughts and feelings
- Self-regulation and managing their feelings



Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills

Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills

Principle:

Recognising learners' social and emotional needs and supporting these effectively, including promotion of self-management skills.

- Collaborate with colleagues to ensure that there is awareness and understanding of individuals' social and emotional needs.
- Use clear and consistent routines, peers and group work, and tailored support.
- Where appropriate, make changes to the learners' environment within the whole school to promote a sense of security and belonging.



"It's about providing a safe place for learners to go, where they can share their problems if they need to."

"We have a lot of learners who are very angry or very upset. Strategies are really picked up as we work with the learners and get to know their situation."

"Because of the types of social and economic problems in this area, some of our learners come from disrupted home lives...so it is important that we have a knowledge of that...knowing which learners have chaotic lives... so that we can understand their difficulties and make allowances...One of the approaches that we employ is that we are not just teachers...we are role models."

Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Plan and work collaboratively with specialist teachers, the Extended Pupil Support Team, partner services and agencies to ensure that social, emotional and behaviour needs are met*.
- Consider whether learners' basic health and wellbeing needs, such as hygiene and nutrition, are being met*.
- Ensure relevant staff are aware of learners' situations and of appropriate management strategies*.
- Use monitoring systems to track progress of more vulnerable learners*.
- Support access to counselling or other forms of individualised support*.
- Utilise supportive peers and/or friends during group work and class activities.
- Alleviate social isolation by promoting peer interaction, such as using peer mentoring systems, or building on existing social groups.
- Be aware that behaviour change can often be related to home life or other barriers to learning. Consider behaviour as communication - What purpose does it serve for the learner? How could you find out? Who might help?
- Collaborate with parents/carers where possible and appropriate (refer to school policy)*.
- Provide a quiet, calm, predictable and organised learning environment.
- Use individualised or small group supports focussing on positive coping strategies.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Use visual timetable to support understanding of predictable routines and reduce anxiety.
- Use visual cues to support understanding of changes to routines to reduce anxiety.
- Provide 'get out of class early' passes for those who find transition times, such as between classes and end of day, difficult*.
- Predict and plan for regular triggers, e.g. moving around school.
- Practise and prepare for change and/or new experiences.
- Allow learner to leave class if overwhelmed to go to an alternate identified 'safe place' in line with agreed school protocols. Consider use of 'time out of class' cards*.
- Provide structured, adult led break time and lunch time activities and after school activities*.
- Provide enhanced support around transitions*.
- Have a clear plan in place for when behaviour has escalated, in line with school policies.
- Implement consistent behaviour strategies and monitoring systems in line with whole school policies, such as customised behaviour sheets where targets are identified*.
- Identify supportive adults that learners can link with consistently.
- Use opportunities to embed relevant Health and Wellbeing expectations and outcomes into teaching.

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Encourage learners to collaborate with setting class rules.
- Be aware that lack of engagement may be related to social and emotional factors.
- Recognise and reinforce positive behaviour. Encourage trust and responsibility through activities such as group work.
- Use positive reinforcement and a consistent interaction style to promote a safe, stable and secure environment.
- Allow movement breaks if this has been identified as a strategy that will improve a learner's behaviour*.
- Recognise warning signs and triggers of challenging behaviour and engage the learner before they escalate.
- Set consistent expectations and boundaries in line with school policies, such as expecting learners to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Speak with learners individually about expectations and preferences for support.
- Use incentives and negotiation, such as offering tailored rewards in line with school policies. (Seek advice in case it may be appropriate to make reasonable adjustments for a learner with additional support needs e.g. ASD, ADHD.*)
- Use strategies that promote active learning, including opportunities for multi-sensory learning.
- Delegate specific tasks to learners to promote responsibility and encourage feelings of self-efficacy.
- Break tasks down or simplify if you suspect a learner is struggling to focus.

*See page 70

Supports and Strategies Planning Page



Learners Name: _____ Completed by: _____

Class: _____ Position: _____

Date: _____

Summary of concerns from CPS:	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Most successful strategies used:	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Strategies to implement or use more consistently:	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Plan (What, How, Who, When)	Learner's views:
• • •	• • •

Outcome:	Learner's views:
•	•

Next Steps:	Learner's views:
•	•

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

Learner may require support with expressive or receptive aspects of communication.

Learner may require support with:

- Understanding, retaining and carrying out instructions
- Understanding and using conceptual language
- Understanding, using and recalling vocabulary and/or complex grammar that is heard or read
- Clearly expressing thoughts/ideas, verbally or in written form
- Pronouncing sounds and words and/or speaking fluently
- Social interaction, including social use of language (pragmatics) - for example, being aware of non-verbal cues such as body language, facial expression and what is being inferred
- Behaviour that may be related to frustration because of communication difficulties
- Listening



Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

Principle:

Adapting teacher's own communication style; provision of structures and environmental modifications that facilitate learners' communication, literacy and social communication skills.

- Adapt and use your own communication to facilitate that of others.
- Provide opportunities and resources that develop and support communication and social interaction skills.
- Think about how the environment (physical, sensory and social) can be used to facilitate effective communication and to support understanding.



“Every now and again I have to step back and think about the vocabulary that I’m using. I know that at times I’ve lost learners because they don’t understand, and that comes across when they ask something basic - maybe some sort of word that you’d have expected them to know, but they don’t.”

“Break times and other unstructured times are very difficult because of all the social communication parameters that are involved. For some, break times can be the most challenging aspect of the whole day.”

Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Be aware of vocabulary demands of tasks. Teach and reinforce new or unfamiliar vocabulary as it arises.
- Consider reducing the rate and pace of lesson delivery and reducing language demands of tasks - for example, by decreasing length of sentences used in oral instruction and/or written texts.
- Ensure your language is clear and that it is consistent when explaining concepts.
- Explain complex language or concepts and illustrate with examples.
- Supplement verbal instructions with visual cues and demonstration.
- Use peer mentoring and buddy systems within class.
- Consider seating arrangements (proximity to supportive peers, proximity to teacher, position in relation to windows and doors, and consistency of seating).
- Use visual prompts and cues within the classroom setting to promote understanding, such as visual timetables and pictorial representation of subjects.
- Where possible, provide a calm classroom environment, keeping disruptions to a minimum.
- Use of reader/scribe/ICT as appropriate.
- Take into account sensory preferences and be aware of how sensory factors such as noise or visual stimuli may affect communication and interaction.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Use visual timetable to support understanding of predictable routines and reduce anxiety.
- Use visual cues to support understanding of changes to routines to reduce anxiety.
- Provide 'get out of class early' passes for those who find transition times, such as between classes and end of day, difficult*.
- Use consistent, clear classroom procedures, and prepare fully for any changes to regular routines.
- Check understanding regularly by asking learners to summarise what they have heard.
- Encourage use of word banks, subject glossaries and personal dictionaries.
- Use ICT that supports literacy (e.g. specific computer programmes for literacy).
- Provide support at break times to support social communication*.
- Ensure homework is written down (consider giving printed copy).
- Set clear expectations of what is required in a writing task (e.g. full sentences or bullets, specific headings, length of piece, etc.).
- Use consistent roles in group work (e.g. note maker, reporter, discussion leader, etc.).

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Consider literacy demands and differentiate appropriately to ensure engagement.
- Facilitate use of first language when appropriate.
- Use learners interests when designing tasks.
- Encourage learners to monitor their own understanding and to ask for clarification when needed.
- Use effective questioning - for example, consider using graded and targeted questions. Give adequate 'thinking time' before expecting a verbal response.
- Use experiential or active learning techniques, such as building models or drawing, to encourage engagement.
- Use reinforcement, repetition and rephrasing.
- Facilitate positive social interaction (such as peer mentoring) or by building on learners own social groups within the wider school*.
- Give general encouragement for desired communication.
- Practise and prepare for change and/or new experiences.

*See page 70

Supports and Strategies Planning Page



Learners Name: _____ Completed by: _____

Class: _____ Position: _____

Date: _____

Summary of concerns from CPS:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Most successful strategies used:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Strategies to implement or use more consistently:	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Plan (What, How, Who, When)	Learner's views:
•	•
•	•
•	•

Outcome:	Learner's views:
•	•

Next Steps:	Learner's views:
•	•

➤ Reflective Questions

- ❑ Consider the following areas: Attention and Concentration Skills, Organisation and Planning Skills, Motor Skills, Social, Emotional and Relationship Skills and Verbal and Non-verbal Communication Skills.
 - What modifications to your approach do you currently make to support learners who have support needs in these areas?
 - Which strategies are already in place that you know work well?
 - How do you monitor and record what is working well?
 - Which strategies could you add?
- ❑ How are these skills areas supported and developed by colleagues in your own and other subject areas and how is good practice shared throughout the school?
- ❑ How do you involve a learner in agreeing and reflecting on strategies used to ensure that they are implemented effectively?
- ❑ Is there a mechanism to ensure that supports and strategies are implemented consistently throughout the school if required?
- ❑ How do you support and enable learners to communicate their needs in a sensitive and respectful manner (e.g. going to the toilet, feeling overwhelmed, not understanding etc.)?
- ❑ How do you incorporate any aids or adaptations that are required for an individual learner into lesson plans?
- ❑ How do you ensure that instructions provided are clear and understood?

- ❑ What modifications could you make to the social or physical environment to improve learners' attention and concentration?
- ❑ How does the classroom environment (physical and social environment) facilitate social engagement and how could this be improved?
- ❑ How could you adapt lesson delivery to provide consistent structures and routines (e.g. the same format at the start and end of the lesson, or the same procedure when giving homework)?
- ❑ Is there an identified 'safe space' within the school where a learner can go if upset or overwhelmed during your lesson? How is this managed?
- ❑ Consider the immediate risks/child protection concerns identified on p.60. What is your school policy and procedure for sharing concerns about learners with social and emotional needs? Who would you discuss urgent concerns with?
- ❑ Do you know of any other useful resources or guidelines in the school or on-line which are of particular value when considering any of these skills areas?
- ❑ Have you identified any professional learning needs which you would like to address in order to support learners in your class?

Consider completing an ABCD (see Appendix) about a learner who has additional needs in one of your classes.



Discussion Point



07 Collaboration with Partner Services and Agencies

This section contains:

- An outline of how requests for service are made
- Examples of what partner services and agencies are
- An overview of how partner services and agencies operate
- Factors considered important in supporting effective collaboration



07 Collaboration with Partner Services and Agencies

➤ A Staged Process of Support

For most learners, progress through school will be supported by routine good teaching practice. Others may require additional assessment and support from specialist staff within the school. This is in line with the principles of the Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every Child. For a small number of learners this level of support is not sufficient to meet their needs. In these cases collaboration with partner services and agencies may be required to enable them to progress with their learning and/or participate in school life. This will occur, in most cases following an Assessment of Need and a Child Planning Meeting as part of the Getting it Right for Every Child process and will be coordinated by the Named Person or a Lead Professional allocated to the learner. This section gives an overview of this level of support.

➤ Working with Partner Services and Agencies

Support for a learner might have been identified before reaching secondary school, in which case partner services and agencies may already be involved.

Coordinating this support varies from school to school but will lie with a member of the Extended Pupil Support Team, who will ensure that information and recommended strategies are shared with staff through the school information management systems.

Very occasionally partner services and agencies may work directly with subject teachers and other staff groups regarding support for a learner.

➤ Requesting input from Partner Services and Agencies

A request for input from a partner service and agency will usually be considered when strategies have already been implemented but are not fully meeting the learner's needs. Occasionally referral may be the result of an immediate risk/child protection concern (see p60) that requires urgent action and input from a partner service or agency.

Responsibility for initiating this request from school will usually lie with a member of the Extended Pupil Support Team who will have collated relevant information from a range of school staff through the Getting it Right Child Planning process. Prior to referral, this person will liaise closely with the learner and their parents/carers. In most cases agreement from the parents/carers and the learner must be obtained before a referral is made.

The learner may also be referred to a partner service or agency by someone external to the school for example the school nurse, GP or social worker. Some partner services and agencies also accept direct referrals from parents/carers or the learner themselves.

The diagram opposite outlines the process of requesting input from and collaborative working with partner services and agencies. It highlights the importance of communication at all stages (through active dialogue, discussion and collaborative problem solving), where possible and appropriate, between school, the learner, their parents/carers and partner services and agencies.




Alert

Is this a concern requiring urgent referral?


Consent may be bypassed in some circumstances in line with individual school policies and procedures e.g child protection.

Start

Challenge identified and understood? (e.g. see Section 5 - complete the CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS))



Can this challenge be addressed within school using existing strategies? (See Section 4 Working within an Inclusive Classroom and Section 6 Skills Supports and Strategies*)



Continue with existing support*

NO

Key person from Extended Pupil Support Team discusses additional need with learner and their parents/carers and an Assessment of Need meeting is held. If required they will arrange a Young Person's Planning meeting*,

Consent for referral refused

The Extended Pupil Support Team discuss how to proceed*

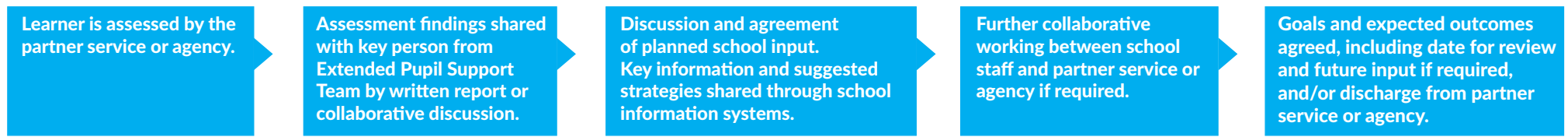
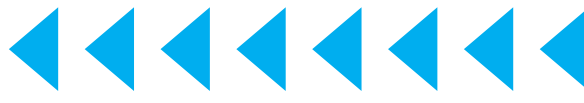
Continue with existing supports*

Key person from the Extended Pupil Support Team completes referral forms/process*

YES

Consent for referral received from learner and their parents/carers

NO



Example: Key person from Extended Pupil Support Team supply therapist with background information, educational assessment results and an overview of the learner's strengths and support needs, including the impact of strategies already tried.

Example: Findings from therapy assessment are discussed with key person from the Extended Pupil Support Team and integrated into what is already known about the learner.

Example: The therapist, together with the key person, the Extended Pupil Support Team, the learner, and their parents/carers, decide on which strategies will be most effective in supporting the learner, for example increasing the use of ICT and allowing the use of templates for essay writing. Following collaborative discussion the therapist agrees to visit the learner in school for a short block of therapy, and may provide further materials for use in school and home.

Example: Clear goals and outcomes are established, as well as ways of measuring how these are met. The therapist agrees contact for informal evaluations of progress and a date for a review meeting with the learner and all those involved through the Child Planning processes*.

*DOCUMENT EVERY STAGE OF PROCESS FULLY



07 Collaboration with Partner Services and Agencies

➤ What are Partner Services and Agencies?

Partner services and agencies are those who are managed from outside the school and work in a targeted way to support specific learners to participate in school life and engage with the curriculum.

These may include the following services:

- Local specialist education services
- Psychological services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Community Child Health Paediatricians
- School Nursing Services
- Specialist Liaison Nurses for example, epilepsy liaison nurse specialist
- Keycomm - Assistive technology for communication
- Therapy services (speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy)
- Social Work
- Voluntary Agencies
- Police

➤ How do Partner Services and Agencies Operate?

Partner services and agencies are most often based outside the school. They may see the learner for assessment and follow-up either in the school, at home or in another location. Input varies depending on the nature of the learner's needs and may involve assessment and advice only, or on-going work either in or outside the school. In most cases information can only be shared with others if consent is given by the learner and their parents/carers. Input from partner services and agencies for a specific learner is likely to be short term targeted support.

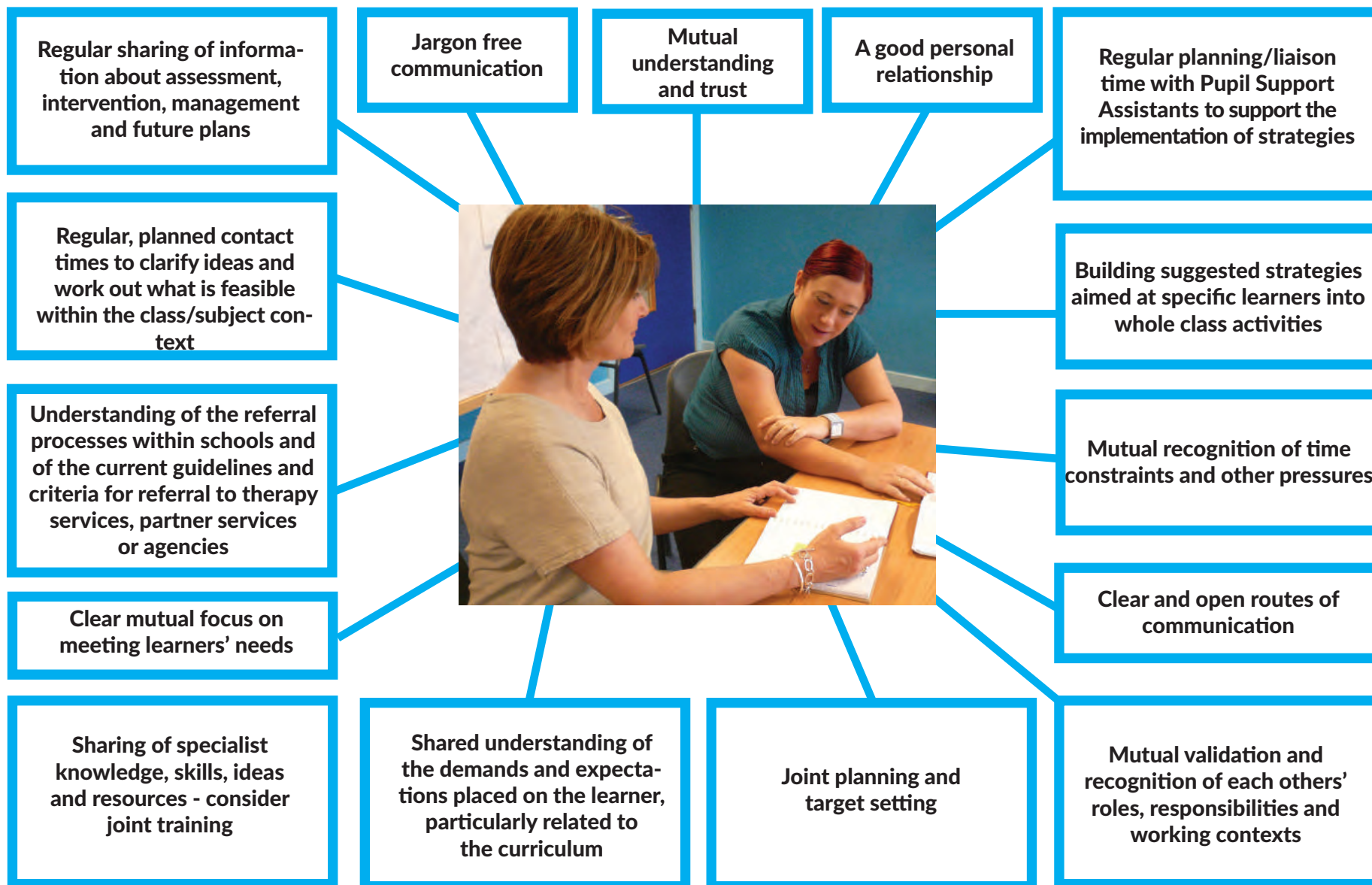
➤ Effective Collaboration

Collaborative working with partner services and agencies, and parents/carers is normally the responsibility of a member of the school management or Pupil Support team. Collaboration is also required in school: within departments, between departments (including Support for Pupils, Support for Learning and school management), with Pupil Support Assistants and with learners themselves.

In order to support this collaboration, clear lines of communication, and agreement of roles and responsibilities need to be in place. This together with a culture which respects and values the perspectives and contributions of everyone in the team helps lead to effective collaboration.

The following page shows factors that were identified as being effective in supporting collaboration between colleagues in school, and with partner services and agencies.

Effective Collaboration



07 Collaboration with Partner Services and Agencies



Discussion Point



Reflective Questions

- How do you currently contribute to the process of referral to partner services and agencies within your current role?
- How does communication and collaboration with partner services and agencies take place within your school? How do you contribute to this process?
- In your school are there any formal processes set up for collaboration with colleagues (within and between departments) or does this happen informally? How could this be improved?
- How could the reciprocal flow of information between all those involved in supporting a learner be improved in your school?
- Reflecting on the features of effective collaboration (see previous page), which work well in your school?
- Can you suggest ways in which any of the features of effective collaboration could be added to or improved?
- Are you aware of the roles and responsibilities of the partner services and agencies currently working with any learners that you teach?

Complete an ABCD (see Appendix) around how collaborating with a partner service or agency could be used to overcome a particular challenge relating to a learner/group of learners.

08 Working with Parents and Carers

This section contains suggestions for:

- Working with parents and carers in partnership
- Engaging parents and carers
- Communicating with parents and carers
- Communication Postcards



08 Working with Parents and Carers

Parents/carers as partners

Parents/carers are often looking for ways to be more actively involved with school to support their child's education. It is known that when schools engage well with parents/carers, outcomes for learners both at school and at home are improved. Regular sharing of information can help support early identification of concerns and lead to implementation of early intervention.

Not all parents/carers feel comfortable in this partnership role for a variety of reasons. For example:

- Parents/carers may have low levels of literacy and/or not be used to having their views respected.
- Parents/carers may have had previous negative experiences of engaging with school and be reluctant to be involved.
- Parents/carers may have difficulty prioritising time to attend meetings perhaps due to other caring responsibilities.
- Parents/carers may have English as an additional language or come from a country that has different educational systems and expectations.

Irrespective of the possible barriers, it is crucial that teachers and schools make every effort to engage parents/carers in order to secure the best outcomes for learners. Although in Secondary School liaising with parents/carers will be the responsibility of the Named or Lead Person or Extended Pupil Support Team, it is important to have an awareness of good collaborative practice when engaging with parents/carers at parents evenings or other school events.

Working in partnership is especially important when learners have additional support needs, as parents/carers bring a valued insight into understanding how these additional needs might impact on the learner in school and at home and the wider implications for the family.

Including parents/carers as respected and valued partners in all aspects of a learner's education can also help ensure that successful strategies are shared and implemented consistently at school and home, where possible.

This shared understanding of strategies to support the learner's environment (physical and social) and the routines and structures around them both in school and at home, has been shown to be beneficial in improving outcomes.

Additionally parents/carers can provide insight into a learner's feelings about school and their abilities, their likes, dislikes, interests and hobbies, language and culture, all of which are invaluable when trying to tap into the learner's motivation.

In view of these benefits, recent legislation and policy has aimed to strengthen links between home and school, encouraging parents/carers to be active partners in the education process.

08 Working with Parents and Carers

Working with parents/carers in partnership

Working in partnership involves listening to, acknowledging and valuing the contributions that parents/carers make with regard to:

- Sharing information about the learner's abilities and needs and how these impact on home life and education.
- Setting and prioritising shared meaningful targets and goals.
- Sharing and advising on the suitability of specific strategies for use both in school and at home which support the environment (physical and social), structures and routines, motivation and skills.

In addition to the characteristics of effective collaboration highlighted on [page 97](#), the following pages have some specific points to consider when working with parents/carers.



08 Working with Parents and Carers

Engaging parents/carers

- Be welcoming, affirming and respectful during all communication.
- Ensure the parents/carers know that they are crucial to their child's progress and that the best outcomes are achieved through partnership working.
- Be sensitive to barriers that might exist e.g. some parents/carers may struggle with their own literacy, have English as an additional language (EAL) or feel their English is not 'good enough'. Try to provide solutions to address these barriers. For example:
 - Use face to face discussions or phone-calls home in addition to notes for parents/carers that you know struggle with literacy;*
 - Provide notes translated into the home first language when required;
 - Ensure that parents/carers who have EAL are aware that the school will provide an interpreter for all meetings and discussions if required.
- Be considerate of social and cultural differences - develop avenues for parents/carers to share important aspects of their culture with the school. Provide support as required so that they gain an understanding of the local school systems and curriculum (e.g. translated school information sheets).*
- Recognise and respect family needs - try to be aware of events in the family as a whole.
- Create opportunities (formal and informal) for parents/carers to be involved in the school e.g. the parent's council or fundraising committees - make it clear that parents do not need a high level of literacy or English to be involved.*
- For meetings, ensure parents/carers are aware that they can bring someone with them for support. Provide an agenda and a list of the names and roles of those who will be attending the meeting in advance. Consider arranging for parents/carers to be seated in the meeting room first, rather than walking into an unfamiliar room full of professionals. Ensure the meeting starts on time and that parents/carers are informed (in advance) of how long it is expected to last.*
- Consider parents/carers' needs - ensure that they are aware of support that may be available for themselves e.g. adult literacy programmes, English for speakers of other languages courses, carer support etc.*

*** These strategies are primarily whole-school approaches which would be implemented by the Senior Leadership Team. Ensure that school policies are followed during all interaction with parents/carers.**

08 Working with Parents and Carers

Communicating with parents/carers

Subject teachers should always discuss with a member of the Extended Pupil Support Team (IST) prior to communication with parents/carers.

- Set up clear and agreed routes for two-way communication which are suitable for the parents/carers - ask parents/carers how they would prefer to share information e.g. face to face, phone, email, home/school diary, or letter.
- Acknowledge during discussions that you value and respect parents/carers' contributions.
- Ensure that communication is jargon free and that important points are summarised and reiterated.
- Reinforce key points with written information e.g. use communication postcards to share information on specific strategies with parents/carers.
- Provide bilingual interpreters to assist non-English speaking parents/ carers at meetings and ensure written information is translated if required.
- If possible arrange meetings at times to accommodate parents/carers lifestyle.
- Be aware of your own feelings, views and judgements during conversations.
- Be aware that parents/carers perspectives and expectations may be different from your own and that the home experience of the learner may be different from that at school.
- Involve parents/carers fully in all decisions and ensure you have their permission to share information with partner services and agencies when required.
- Ensure that parents/carers understand the selection of specific strategies and the expected outcome of using these.
- Ensure that parents/carers know who to contact if they need any information clarified.

08 Working with Parents and Carers

Communication postcards

Communication postcards are a simple, easy-to-use way of sharing information about specific strategies which can be used to support a two-way flow of information. They are not intended to replace normal communication routes but to supplement these.

You can use them to encourage (or remind) parents/carers and the learner to try specific strategies at home which are successful in school.

You can use strategies from the Inclusive classroom or Skills, Supports and Strategies sections or write your own. Provide as much or as little detail as you think is necessary, however it is helpful to minimise the volume of text and keep it to key points.

Communication postcards can also be used by parents/carers to share information with school about strategies that they are using successfully at home, which could be tried at school.

When you send a postcard with advice on supports and strategies to the home, consider including a blank Home/School postcard to encourage the parents/ carers to share useful strategies with the school.

Blank templates are available at the end of this section for you to photocopy and use as required - the back of the postcard contains a brief description of how it can be used. Examples are available on the following page.

It is important to make sure that the learner agrees with using the communication postcards and is fully involved in the process.

School/Home Postcard

Learner's name _____

Something to try at home:



This will help with:

Home/School Postcard

Learner's name _____

Something we tried at home:



This helped with:

School/Home Postcard

Learner's name Robbie



Something to try at home:

Identify 30 minutes each evening at the same time when you switch off the TV, phone and computer and complete your homework or do preparation and planning for projects that are due.

Make sure you check the times and dates that the work is due to be handed in so that you can plan which pieces of work to do first.

This will help with:
*Completing your work
 Organisation and Planning*

School/Home Postcard

Learner's name Jane



Something to try at home:

Keep a copy of your timetable in your school bag and also stick one on your bedroom wall or door.

Make a check list of what you will need for each school day (that corresponds with your timetable) and tick off each item as you pack your bag for the next day.

This will help with:
*Being prepared for the day
 Organisation and Planning*

School/Home Postcard

Learner's name Vikram



Something to try at home:

Spend a short time each evening practising throwing and catching a tennis ball from one hand to the other - remember to watch the ball as you throw it. This will help you with the activities we are doing in PE this term. Consider joining one of the after-school sports clubs.

This will help with:
*Physical Education
 Motor Skills*

School/Home Postcard

Learner's name Lucia



Something to try at home:

Spend at least 5 minutes each evening sharing information about the day or a topic of interest with another person.

Have a think about attending one of the after-school clubs which you might be interested in.

This will help with:
Communication Skills

08 Working with Parents and Carers



Discussion Point



Reflective Questions

- Is there evidence in your school of good partnership working with parents/carers?
- How does partnership working with parents/carers take place? Who coordinates this and how is information shared with subject teachers?
- What are the policies and procedures within your school governing how you communicate with parents/carers?
- With reference to these school policies and procedures how could you encourage parents/carers to be active partners in their child's education?
- At parents evenings:
 - What do you do to show parents/carers that their views have been considered and valued?
 - How do you ensure that parents/carers have understood the information that you have given and agree with how supports and strategies are being implemented?
 - What processes are in place to effectively deal with differences of opinion that might occur regarding the implementation of supports and strategies in your subject area?
- What processes are in place within the school to ensure that information is shared with parents/carers who are unable to attend parents evenings/child planning meetings? Who coordinates this within the school?

School/Home Postcard

Learner's name _____

Something to try at home:



This will help with:

Home/School Postcard

Learner's name _____

Something we tried at home:



This helped with:

School/Home Postcard

On the other side of this postcard is an approach or strategy that we think might be helpful to try at home.

We have outlined a skill area that we think this will help with.

If possible, try this out at home over the next few weeks and let us know how you get on.

We have included a home-school postcard for you to send information back to us at school: either to let us know how you got on with this strategy or to share approaches which you already use at home which might be helpful for us to use in the school. However you don't need to use this format to share information - you can always let us know through the usual systems.

We look forward to hearing from you..



Home/School Postcard

The other side of this postcard can be completed and returned to school to let us know how you got on trying out our suggested approach or strategy at home.

Or you could use the postcard to tell us about any other approaches or strategies that you find useful at home which we could try at school.

Of course you can also use the usual systems of sharing information with us - we are always interested to hear your views and learn from your experience.

We look forward to hearing from you.



09 Appendices

This section contains:

- Quality Indicators
- Examples of ABCDs
- Background Legislation, Policy and Guidance
- Useful Resources
- Additional Areas for Supporting Learners:
 - Mental Health Concerns
 - English as an Additional Language (EAL)



09 Appendices

Quality Indicators for How Good is Our School?*

In Scotland, Quality Indicators (QIs) are tools used to evaluate a school's performance*, including meeting learners' needs. Examples of how this resource may be used to support evidence of meeting these QIs are shown below.

Section or subsection	QIs which they link to / address
Section 2: Learners' voices	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.3
Section 3: Whole School Approaches	1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1
Section 4: The Inclusive classroom	1.2, 1.5, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1
Section 4: The CIRCLE Inclusive classroom Scale (CICS)	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 3.1
Section 5: The CIRCLE Participation Scale (CPS)	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1
Section 6: Skills, Supports and Strategies	2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2
Section 7: Collaboration with Partner Services and Agencies	1.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7
Section 8: Working with Parents and Carers	2.5, 2.6, 2.7

Full details of these QIs can be found within the How Good is Our School guidance*. A selection are listed here, along with examples of how the sections of the resource link to them.

QI 1.1. (Self-Evaluation for Self-Improvement)

Themes: Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation; analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data; ensuring impact on learners' successes and achievements

Examples: The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale and CIRCLE Participation Scale are useful tools for facilitating self-evaluation, with explicit reference to impact on learners' achievements. They can also be used in learning rounds, to support collaborative approaches to self-evaluation and self-improvement.

QI 1.5. (Management of Resources to Promote Equity)

Themes: Management of Finance for Learning; Management of resources and environment for learning

Examples: Whole school Approaches and Working Within an Inclusive Classroom may require support from SMT to finance reasonable adjustments or to coordinate effective use of staff and enable staff to access quality training to meet the needs of learners with additional support needs.

QI 2.1. (Safeguarding and Child Protection)

Themes: Arrangements for safeguarding, including child protection; arrangements to ensure wellbeing; national guidance and legislation.

Examples: The promotion of learners' wellbeing underpins this resource. There is a focus throughout on ensuring that the wellbeing of all learners is supported, through well-planned and inclusive learning opportunities.

QI 2.3. (Learning, Teaching and Assessment)

Themes: Learning and engagement; quality of teaching; effective use of assessment; planning, tracking and monitoring

Examples: The CIRCLE Participation Scale can be used as a measure of a pupil's level of engagement. This, along with the Skills, Supports and Strategies section, can be used to inform teaching approaches to ensure that all learners are supported to engage with learning.

QI 2.4. (Personalised Support)

Themes: Universal support; targeted support; removal of potential barriers to learning

Examples: The Working Within an Inclusive Classroom section, including the CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale, can be used to document approaches to inclusion that are used in individual classrooms and across the school. Targeted use of the CIRCLE Participation Scale enables the identification of an individual learner's areas of need. This should be used in conjunction with the Skills, Supports and Strategies section will help ensure that the learner's need are met, with the Skills, Supports and Strategies planning page providing evidence of this.

QI 2.7. (Partnerships)

Themes: The development and promotion of partnerships; collaborative learning and improvement; impact on learners.

Examples: Section 7 of the resource focuses on Collaboration with Partner Services and Agencies. This section provides advice and strategies for developing positive collaborative relationships. The CIRCLE Inclusive Classroom Scale can be used as a collaborative self-evaluation tool to facilitate improvements in practice and ensure that the needs of individual learners are met. This section is informed by national legislation and local policies.

QI 3.1. (Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion)

Themes: Wellbeing; fulfilment of statutory duties; inclusion and equality

Examples: The purpose of this resource is to promote inclusion, by allowing teachers and school leaders to measure the extent to which their school provides an inclusive learning environment. For example, Section 3 (Whole School Approaches) focuses on whole-school approaches to inclusion. Section 4 (Working Within an Inclusive Classroom) outlines the principles underlying the creation of an inclusive classroom and suggests strategies to improve inclusive practice.

09 Appendices

➤ ABCDs: A Reflective Tool

There are many tools which can be used to support reflective practice. The ABCD is one which provides a simple, quick and easy to use framework to support reflective problem solving on a day to day basis.

Completing an ABCD involves stepping through a sequence of reflective questions related to a challenge (this could be any level of challenge at individual, class or school level):

Activity - what is it you are trying to do?

Barrier - what is the barrier to this?

Changes - what changes could you make?

Direction - what happens next/what is the result?

The result (**D**irection) may be an adaptation to support inclusion of that learner or the decision to provide an alternative approach. This may involve thinking ahead and considering what the desired outcome would be or reporting back on what the actual outcome was.

The ABCD framework can be used as an informal prompt to guide you through a simple problem, can be dated and used to document reflection on practice or used as evidence to support discussions around a more complex problem.

The following pages contain examples of how ABCDs have been used for situations relating to sections of this resource, followed by a blank ABCD for your own use.

ABCD

Whole School Approach

Transition of a Learner with Complex Needs

Activity - what is it you are trying to do?

- Introduce a learner with complex needs and who is using a communication aid to a mainstream secondary school.

Barrier - what is the barrier to this?

- General lack of knowledge and previous experience of secondary school staff in managing the needs of learners with complex needs. Difficulties in secondary school due to frequent changes in class and subject teacher throughout the day.

Changes - what changes could you make?

- A DVD film was made, with the learner's permission: "This is me...this is what I enjoy, this is what I find hard...". All staff were able to see this and consider what adaptations may need to be made in their subject area. The primary school teachers did an In-Service for the secondary school staff near time of transition. Two Pupil Support Assistants were given additional training to support the use of the communication aid.

Direction - what happens next/what is the result?

- School staff felt less anxious - they knew about the learner and their communication aid and how they might support its use on a daily basis.

Support for Learning teacher

ABCD

The Inclusive Classroom

Use of Interactive White board to Engage Interest

Activity - what is it you are trying to do?

- Explain the use of a protractor to a group of learners who are struggling with the concept.

Barrier - what is the barrier to this?

- A few of the learners are struggling to focus on what they think of as a “boring” concept and are putting the others off.

Changes - what changes could you make?

- Try making the lesson more interactive by using the SMART board tools to show a large protractor, plus sourcing online videos of how to use it and interactive learning games.

Direction - what happens next/what is the result?

- The learners sustained their attention for longer with most of them now able to use a protractor in a basic way.

Maths teacher

ABCD

Skills Supports and Strategies

Peer Support

Activity - what is it you are trying to do?

- Ensure understanding of task, encourage active learning and cater for different learning levels within a class.

Barrier - what is the barrier to this?

- Some learners have a better understanding of the task and finish sooner than others.

Changes - what changes could you make?

- Encourage the ones who finish sooner to move around the class, explaining the task to those who may be struggling, and asking them to discuss each others' work.

Direction - what happens next/what is the result?

- Some learners take on a more active role in the class. Doing this gives them more responsibility, helps them to improve and consolidate their own learning, and encourages them to use their skills to help others. The others get more time and also gain the support of their peers.

English teacher

09 Appendices

ABCD

Activity - what is it you are trying to do?

Barrier - what is the barrier to this?

Changes - what changes could you make?

Direction - what happens next/what is the result?

➤ Background Legislation and Guidance

The following examples of local and national guidance, legislation and policy, which are shaping the practice of teachers and other school staff, are recognised as being particularly pertinent to this resource.

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, amended 2009¹

This legislation provides a framework to support children and young people who require some help with their learning. The framework is based on the idea of additional support needs, a term which applies to any child or young person who requires additional support, long or short term, to help them make the most of their school education. The amended Act deems that all looked after children and young people have additional support needs unless the education authority has established through assessment that they do not. The Act also aims to ensure a partnership with parents/carers and collaborative working with professionals from partner services and agencies, to meet the needs of the child or young person. This resource (*Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Ideas in Practice*) supports staff in meeting many of the learning needs of the learners in their school.

Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice(Revised Edition) 2010²

This provides guidance on the implementation of the Education (ASL) (Scotland) Act, as amended in 2009. It gives a summary of the Act including clear definitions of which groups of learners are covered by the Act and what constitutes additional support needs. The duties under the terms of the Act on education authorities and other agencies with respect to supporting children's and young people's learning are set out. Examples of best practice are provided with reference to the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach and Curriculum for Excellence framework.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014³

This legislation underpins the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach and aims to improve the way services work together to support children and young people. It provides a common practice framework and embeds partnership working with families across the full range of services and agencies in order to meet the needs and promote the wellbeing and potential of all children and young people. Key to this are a consistent single planning approach for children who require additional support from services, a Named Person for every child and a holistic understanding of wellbeing. In addition to the Named Person children who have complex needs may also have a Lead Professional to coordinate their care. In some cases the Named Person will also take on the role of the Lead Professional but this role could be taken on by any person who is closely involved with the child and their family, so could be from any agency. Under this legislation there are new duties placed on schools and other public bodies to focus on improving broader wellbeing outcomes for children.

09 Appendices

The Equality Act 2010 ⁴

This Act brings together and extends the existing UK equality legislation. The Act introduced protected characteristics (for example a person's disability, race, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation) for which discrimination is unlawful. The Act places specific duties on public bodies (including schools) and individuals to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation. In relation to schools this includes, for example, making reasonable adjustments to the school environment, teaching methods, assessment procedures and school trips to ensure that learners with protected characteristics (or learners associated with others who have these protected characteristics) are not discriminated against. Further guidance specifically for education providers, produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, can be accessed at

www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/education-providers/schools-guidance.

Curriculum for Excellence ⁵

The Curriculum for Excellence aims to improve the learning, attainment and achievement of children and young people. It clearly focuses classroom practice on the learner and around developing the four capacities of education: that young people should be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. This resource (*Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Ideas in Practice*) aims to help teachers to meet these aspirations by providing supports and strategies which will promote the learning of all learners, by addressing specific areas of challenge and by giving information on how to seek out further support if required.

How Good is Our School? ⁶

'How Good is Our School?' is designed to promote effective self-evaluation as the first important stage in a process of achieving self-improvement. It provides a framework for improvement that focuses in particular upon closing the gap in attainment, achievement and wellbeing between children and young people living in our most and least deprived areas in Scotland. *Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Ideas in Practice* is designed to support self-evaluation for improvement.

For example, the supports and strategies detailed in each area of the Skills, Supports and Strategies section could act as a useful guide when evaluating how well the school makes arrangements to meet the learning needs of learners. The 'discussion points' included in most sections could also be used as a basis for discussions around self-evaluation; at both an individual and a whole school level.

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 ⁷

This legislation places duties on local authorities to support and strengthen the involvement of parents/carers in their children's education. It refers to the body of evidence that supports the premise that children do better when parents/ carers and schools work together. The Act provides a framework which gives parents/carers the opportunity to get the information they need to support their child and encourages them to express their views and have these considered, either at individual meetings or through a school parent forum or parent council. Under the terms of the Act each local education authority must produce a 'Strategy for Parental Involvement' which will outline how parental engagement will be supported and strengthened.

09 Appendices

1. Scottish Government (2009) Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
2. Scottish Government (2010) Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
3. Scottish Government (2014) The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
4. United Kingdom Government (2010) The Equality Act. London: United Kingdom Government
5. Scottish Government (2004) Curriculum for Excellence: The Curriculum Review Group. Edinburgh: Scottish Government
6. Education Scotland (2015) How Good is Our School? 4th Edition. : Education Scotland 2015
7. Scottish Government (2006) Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

09 Appendices

Useful Resources

The following local and national resources were highlighted as being particularly useful for supporting learners with additional support needs.

Learning in 2(+) languages: Ensuring effective inclusion for bilingual learners

(www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/LearningInTwoPlusLanguages_tcm4-306089.pdf)

This resource highlights good practice for supporting learners who are accessing the curriculum through English as an additional language. It contains an overview of bilingualism as well as strategies to support the development of English and checklists for action.

Education Scotland Website

(www.educationscotland.gov.uk)

Education Scotland was set up by the Scottish Government to support quality and improvement in Scottish education to secure better experiences and outcomes for learners. It contains a wide range of information, practical materials and resources to support teaching and learning.

The GLOW website

(<https://secure.glowscotland.org.uk/login/login.htm>)

GLOW is a secure national resource which gives intranet access to Scotland's education community, supporting information sharing between colleagues. It contains links to local and national resources, and provides a framework for supporting learners through its virtual learning environment.

The Autism Tool Box: An autism resource for Scottish Schools

(www.gov.scot/ and www.educationscotland.gov.uk)

This resource contains information from research and practical experience to support the inclusion of learners with autism spectrum disorder in mainstream schools.

The Autism Toolbox Website

(www.autismtoolbox.co.uk)

This website was developed by the Scottish Government in partnership with Scottish Autism and the Autism Network Scotland. It complements the Autism Toolbox providing online information and resources to support the inclusion of learners with autism spectrum disorder in mainstream schools.

Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour

(www.gov.scot/)

This outlines policy guidance in response to the recent Behaviour in Scottish Schools Research 2012. The Scottish Government and Scottish Advisory Group on Behaviour in Schools (SAGBIS) have identified the next steps and priority actions to support local authorities, establishments, practitioners and partners to further improve relationships and behaviour within their learning communities. This is central to the successful delivery of Curriculum for Excellence and the implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). This leaflet also provides information to help establishments and authorities develop and implement robust and effective approaches to promote positive relationships and behaviour.

NHS Additional Support for Learning website

(www.asl.scot.nhs.uk)

This contains information on specific conditions, suggestions of practical supports and strategies, and contact and referral details for partner services from NHS Lothian.

Guidance on partnership working between allied health professions and education

(www.gov.scot/)

This guidance aims to improve partnership working between allied health professions, education staff and parents/carers, in order to improve the experience of children and young people in reaching their potential.

Inclusive Learning and Collaborative Working: Ideas in Practice - Primary School Resource

(CIRCLE Collaboration 2015. City of Edinburgh Council, Queen Margaret University and NHS Lothian. Available from CIRCLE Collaboration, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh.)

This resource has been developed based on the 'best practice' of experienced education staff working in primary schools. It contains practical strategies to support learners who have additional support needs.



Mental Health Concerns



Mental Health Concerns

Learners may require support with low mood, obsessive or compulsive behaviours, excessive levels of stress and anxiety, attempts to self-harm and/or disordered thoughts.

Learner may require support with:

- Behaviour which may be disruptive, non-participative, inappropriate, bizarre, withdrawn or out of character
- Physical health and appearance - for example, may appear uncharacteristically unkempt, exhibit injuries that appear to have been self-inflicted or display unusual eating patterns or changes in weight
- Engaging fully with school life, in both curricular and extra curricular activities; may be tired or distracted; attendance and homework affected
- Managing emotions; may present as tearful or emotionally unstable
- Interacting appropriately with others (adults and peers); forming and maintaining friendships
- Stress and anxiety, including emotionally based school refusal
- Alcohol and/or drug misuse
- Coping with traumatic events such as bereavement

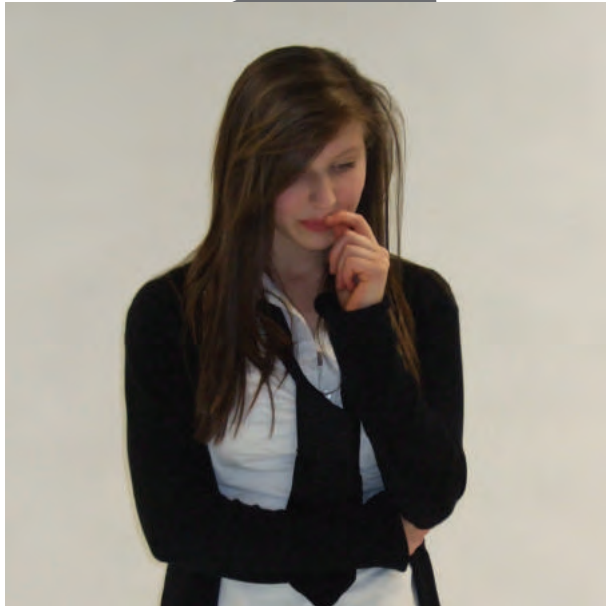


Mental Health Concerns

Mental Health Concerns

Principle:

The overall management of learners with identified mental health issues is likely to be coordinated by the Extended Pupil Support Team. Due to the confidential, sensitive and sometimes hidden nature of these issues, it may not always be possible for details to be disseminated. However, all staff are responsible for adapting their teaching style, structures and routines and the physical environment in order to manage mental health concerns which they are aware of.



“We do have learners with mental health issues ... self-harming, maybe suicidal tendencies, maybe depression, or saying that they feel very depressed. We are told to be mindful and careful about how we approach these learners and to liaise closely with Support for Learning or Support for Pupils staff, who can help us with strategies on how to deal with situations if they arise.”

“When learners with mental health issues attempt to return to school after an absence, it is vital to make sure that all the teachers know what’s been going on (on a ‘need to know’ basis). Otherwise, it could take one wrong word, or one question about why they’ve been off, to send them back out the door again.”

Mental Health Concerns

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Collaborate with parents/carers where possible and appropriate (refer to school policy)*.
- Ensure all staff involved are aware of learners' situations and management strategies through school-wide information systems and discussion with colleagues*.
- Plan and work collaboratively with specialist teachers, partner services and agencies, to ensure that mental health needs are met*.
- Provide a safe, stable and secure environment within school, ensuring that staff understand learners' needs and are aware of their circumstances*.
- Provide supported study or homework clubs*.
- Utilise supportive peers and/or friends during group work and class activities.
- Alleviate social isolation by promoting peer interaction/building on existing social groups. A peer mentoring or buddy system may be helpful*.
- Offer tailored support, which may require limiting the number of teachers involved and classes attended*.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Ensure the learner has strategies for dealing with questions they may be asked about their situation or absence*.
- Consider reduced or flexible timetables and review regularly*.
- Develop short term plans in collaboration with the learners to manage difficult periods.
- Allow learner to leave class, if overwhelmed, to go to an alternate identified 'safe place', in line with agreed school protocols. Consider use of 'time out of class' cards*.
- Facilitate supported reintegration into school and classes after extended absences*.
- If applicable, provide a regular point of contact for the learner, on a daily or weekly basis, with whom they can discuss their needs and work through any strengths and support needs*.
- Consider late starts if sleep is an issue or mornings are challenging*.
- Consider reduced or flexible timetables and review regularly*.

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Allow transfer between class or learning groups where required*.
- Give praise and positive reinforcement.
- Give responsibility/active roles in the classroom if appropriate and motivating for the learner.
- Provide safe places where learner can go if distressed or needing to access support*.
- Support any strategies that the learner may use to manage their own needs, such as calming or self-soothing techniques.
- Ensure work is differentiated to build confidence and sense of success.
- Try to facilitate an experience of success in an element of the learners' day or routine.
- If you notice any changes in behaviour and/or relationships consider speaking to the pupil, following advice from the Extended Pupil Support Team.

*See page 68

Mental Health Concerns



Discussion Point



Reflective Questions

- What modifications to your approach do you currently make to support individual learners who have mental health concerns? Which strategies could you add?
- What information is available in relation to understanding the impact that this may have on their learning and how this may manifest for a particular learner?
- How can a general awareness of the individual learner's needs be managed without drawing attention to them?
- What is your school policy and procedure for sharing concerns about learners with mental health concerns? Who would you discuss urgent concerns with?
- How are mental health concerns managed by colleagues in your own and other subject areas and how is good practice shared throughout the school?
- Are there any skills that you would like to improve or develop in order to effectively support learners with their mental health? What training or support could help?

Complete an ABCD (see Appendix) around a situation which involves a learner who has strengths and support needs in this area.

Notes

Are there any useful resources or guidelines, particularly relevant to this skill area, which can be found in the school?

English as an Additional Language (EAL)



English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The term “English as an Additional Language” recognises that some learners already know one or more languages and are adding English to that repertoire. Learners described as bilingual may be beginners in using English, at the early stages of acquiring English or may speak English fluently in day to day social contexts but require support with academic language. Bilingualism brings many advantages: it enhances learners’ cognitive ability, facilitates acquisition of other languages, develops a broader view of the world, and opens up wider employment opportunities. However, those with emerging bilingualism may require support. Some learners may also have other barriers to learning in addition to emerging bilingualism.

Learner may require support with:

- Confidence in their ability to use English
- Adapting to the educational culture and class routines
- Acquiring basic social communication skills
- Contributing to group and class discussions in an academic context
- Understanding increasingly complex academic texts and discussion
- Listening to and working with more complex and abstract ideas in English
- Expressing and developing ideas in a written text
- Choosing subjects - learners may choose subjects that are less dependent on highly developed language skills rather than selecting on the basis of interest and aptitude for subjects
- Dealing with added stress linked to communication and managing social and emotional needs related to this



English as an Additional Language (EAL)

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Principle:

Supporting learners who have English as an additional language to access the curriculum and engage with school life.

- Adapt your teaching style and teacher language to meet the needs of bilingual learners. Value the importance of first/home language for inclusion and learning.
- Incorporate strategies into your usual structures and routines that promote and consolidate the learners' use of English. Encourage group work and use of dual language dictionaries.
- Modify the environment at a school and class level to promote cultural inclusion and make it 'language-friendly'.



“Give the learner the opportunity to sit with a peer who can provide a good model of English...one who can paraphrase, repeat instructions, demonstrate tasks and model good English in terms of the answers they give and the sentences they formulate. Use visual supports to reinforce key vocabulary, such as putting new vocabulary on a board or using pictures and glossaries. Scaffold and model the kind of language you are expecting learners to use.”

“It may be about making sure that the school has a culturally inclusive curriculum and recognises and uses the cultures and religions found in the school population.”

“Having learners with EAL is a very positive thing for the whole class. Not only does it increase learners' awareness of language, culture and tradition of people beyond their immediate environment but this early level of understanding can impact on their attitudes towards diversity for the rest of their lives.”

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Strategies

Modification to the Learning Environment

- Be aware of the difference between the language demands of everyday communication, and the literacy and language demands of the curriculum.
- Identify the language demands (vocabulary and grammatical structures) of spoken language and written tasks in the classroom.
- Consider the cultural demands of the curriculum; contextualise culturally unfamiliar topics; and consider developing a more culturally inclusive curriculum.
- Model and support use of expected language. Reinforce key vocabulary.
- Create opportunities for learners to hear and use language in a 'safe' environment – pair/small group activities.
- Use strategies to enable access to the curriculum (e.g. resources in first language or bilingual Support Assistants where necessary and possible*).
- Use reading comprehension strategies
- Ensure clear labelling of resources - consider using pictorial as well as written labelling.
- Use visuals that both support language development and promote cultural inclusion within classrooms and around the school*.

- Where possible, seat early stage learners beside learners with the same home language and near peers who provide a good model of English. Facilitate gradual independence.
- Provide inductions to the school that take into account the needs of the learners and their families*.

Establishing Structures and Routines

- Encouraging learners to practise:
 - identifying areas they do not understand
 - requesting help
 - Pre-reading
 - Identifying key vocabulary
 - using visual cues and context cues
 - predicting what will happen next
 - identifying key points
- Check understanding regularly by using techniques appropriate to the learner's stage of English, especially graded questioning i.e. yes/no questions, oral/multiple choice questions, open questions.
- Use dual language dictionaries and monolingual English dictionaries - ensure that the learner knows how to use these.
- Use appropriate digital technology (e.g. iPad dual language dictionary apps).

Approaches to Enhance Motivation

- Clearly value the learners' first or home language, cultures and skills. Include culturally inclusive references in your resources and tasks.
- Encourage and facilitate the use of first or home language in class to promote engagement in learning.
- Place learner in a class/group/set that suits their cognitive ability*.
- Provide a welcoming environment where it is clearly visible to newcomers that cultural and linguistic diversity is valued and promoted*.
- Support engagement with visuals.
- Use effective, graded questioning, matched to the learners' stages of English and interests.

➤ Reflective Questions

- 'What modifications to your approach do you currently make to support individual learners who are beginners in using English, at early stages of acquiring English, or may speak English fluently in social contexts but require support with academic language? Which strategies could you add?
- What information is available in relation to understanding the impact that this may have on their learning and how this may manifest for a particular learner?
- How are learners who are developing English supported by colleagues in your own and other subject areas and how is good practice shared throughout the school?
- Are there any skills that you would like to improve or develop in order to effectively support learners who are developing English? What training or support could help?

Complete an ABCD (see Appendix) around a situation which involves a learner who has strengths and support needs in this area.

Notes

Are there any useful resources or guidelines, particularly relevant to this skill area, which can be found in the school?



Discussion Point