

Quality First Teaching at Our
Lady and St Edwards



Over View Of Strategies to support the 4
areas of need



Cognition and learning



Overview of need:

Cognition and learning refers to the way in which we gain knowledge and understanding in the world around us. It is developed through our senses and experiences. For children who struggle with cognition and learning, this can look like:

- Difficulties with memory- long term/ short term recall
- Organisation of equipment, tasks and thoughts.
- Maintaining and managing focus
- Difficulty in completing skills at all or within time restrictions
- Difficulty concentrating
- Applying learning to different contexts
- Being able to rote learn without being able to apply
- Time management
- Unable to self-assess
- Struggle to process information
- Development of number, reading and writing skills behind expected standard.
- Low reading or cognitive processing speeds.

Recommended strategies:

- Voice recording devices- talk-tins
- Visual timetables- overall routine but also to support chunking of tasks.
- Laminated checklists on desks (could be for routine reminders e.g. capital letters/full stops or could be blank for teachers to write down a check list of things to do to complete task).
- Oracy opportunities- time to think and build on ideas before sharing/recording
- Limit instructions- chunk instructions.
- Link concepts to practical activities or experiences
- Offer personal instructions to remind and prompt
- Paper or space for child to record their own checklist or provide one for them to use.
- Incorporate visual stimulus e.g. use image to support vocabulary understanding, word webs to join meanings
- “Park it” systems- children can write all their ideas or questions onto a post-it note for adult to go through with them at a reasonable time.
- Retrieval practice/ plenaries
- Limit copying- provide children copies of information they need.
- Limit movement between instructions and begin tasks – equipment/ books ready before instruction begins.
- Vocabulary displayed
- Equipment checklists to support organisation
- Teach children to note take (Upper KS2).
- Pre-teaching
- Reduce language- focus on what you specifically want to teach and what needs to be made explicit.
- Individual now/next boards

- Timers
- Concentration- fidget toys/ wobble cushions/ weighted resources.
- Record instructions on a talk tin_for pupils to play back.
- Ask child to repeat back instructions to assess understanding.
- Offer motivator for completing each part of chunked task.
- Keep input short- age of child is how long they should be listening e.g. 5 year old can listen for maximum of 5 minutes.
- Reduce visual stimulus around classroom- only display what is necessary.
- Daily repetition of routines and expectations- set out learning patterns (e.g. 4 questions, fluency, problems).
- Demonstrate what a “finished” piece of work looks like.
- Narrate behaviour of others to provide example of expectations.
- Present the bigger picture and then show how each learning experience contributes to this. (E.g. jigsaw visual).
- Ensure clarity when using time phrases- You have 5 minutes- show on the timer.
- Clear, progressive success criteria.
- Debrief with adult- what did they do, what went well, what do they need to add.
- Moving on tasks- only needed to consolidate learning.
- Have best copy of the child’s work laminated on the table so they can refer back to it.
- Use discrete- help required symbol
- Peer and buddy feedback
- Strategy reminder cards e.g. brain (what do you know to help), book (look through your book for prior learning, buddy (ask the person next to you), boss (ask the teacher).
- Limit cognitive load
- Maths resources available to use (even in other subjects).
- Spelling reminder book/ strip
- Dictionaries available and children able to use them.
- Multi-sensory approaches to learning
- Trial coloured overlays
- Develop fine motor skills e.g. dough disco, threading, finger gym etc.



Communication and interaction



Overview of need:

Communication is the ability to share and receive information with other people e.g. telling someone how you feel or understanding when someone tells you how they feel. Interaction is the behaviour of people partaking in a joint activity e.g. working together or playing together.

A child who struggles with communication and interaction may present as:

- Have limited or no pragmatic skills- ability to hold eye contact, conversational skills, asking for/giving/sharing information, turn-taking, introducing or maintaining topics within conversation.
- Limited receptive language (understanding what is said to them)
- Limited expressive language (not having the words to communicate what they want to say).
- Difficulty maintaining attention or demonstrating active listening
- Reluctant to talk/ selective mutism
- Non-verbal
- Parroting, repeating language without functional or contextual meaning.

Recommended strategies:

- Following the stages of talking- objects of reference, pictorial, symbols/sign/ gesture, verbal.
- Display expectations for talking and listening- visuals would support.
- Mark space boundaries on table with masking tape.
- Model and introduce my-turn, your-turn activities (snakes and ladders, puzzles, catching/throwing).
- Teach inference skills explicitly in a range of contexts e.g. "it is hot in here"- what does that mean I may need you to do?
- Give children explicit roles in groups.
- Explain gestures/ facial expressions explicitly- what do they mean?
- Model wondering out loud: "I can see Daniel has tears in his eyes, I wonder if this is because he is sad. I will go see if I can help him".
- Avoid overly wordy or unclear instructions- always be direct.
- Provide conversation starters/ closures- could be modelled or have on laminates during oracy work.
- If idioms occur, explain in context and give examples. Encourage children to practice using in context.
- Remind pupils the topic of the conversation to "bring them back"- refocus.
- Narrate what others are doing and suggest why.
- Structured opportunities for discussion (oracy).
- Use social stories that provide the script for new or challenging situations.
- Explicitly teach classroom expectations... when I say X, I expect X.
- Teach emotions in context.
- Use feeling visuals (e.g. feeling thermometers to explore gradients of emotion).
- Pre-teach subject specific vocabulary.
- Agree discrete signal for child to show they don't understand if reluctant to say.
- Provide personalised vocabulary banks.
- Play simple matching games of vocabulary and visual stimulus
- Use natural gesture during instruction. Be consistent.
- Makaton/ aided communication- work alongside SALT plan

- Use whiteboards to quickly visualise unfamiliar vocabulary or sayings that have concrete meaning.
- Provide visual cues for question words and use consistently through all lessons.
- Build on children's sentences "Year 1 are in the hall". Oh yes, Year 1 and in the hall for their lunch!
- Make parents aware if any concerns with hearing.
- Consistent, calm classroom. Avoid sudden loud noise and provide opportunities for both talk and quiet.
- Allow child extra time to process what is being said- speak slowly, consistently, maintaining tone and volume.
- Offer commentary.
- Go down to child's level when speaking to them.
- Model making eye contact- do not make child uncomfortable. Sit nearer to the front so these interactions can take place.
- Use consistent signals to class that it is time to stop- ensure all children know what it means and what is expected.
- Use pupils names before talking to them to get attention- avoid pet names/ nicknames if they are not consistently responding to own name.
- Regain attention by mentioning name casually during lesson "Let me give an example, if Adam bought two apples and... John gave him one more..."
- Restrict distractions on table.
- Signpost in advance what they need to listen out for. E.g. the video is about volcanoes. I am going to ask, what causes a volcano to erupt.
- Give synopsis of what is to come "In this video we will meet a girl called Lucy who has had a bad day at school..."
- Go for listening walks to listen to environmental sounds- ask children what they can hear in the classroom.
- Play copying, passing and anticipatory games that explicitly practice listening skills.
- Listening checklist- could tick off when you say the vocabulary.
- Give the child a question to ask prior to the lesson or give them an answer to a question that will be asked during the lesson. This can promote active listening.
- Avoid pressuring children to talk- think about the impact on the child.



VISION HEARING SMELL TASTE TOUCH



Physical and/or sensory



Overview of need:

Physical and sensory needs impact how a child interacts with the environment around them.

These needs can present as:

- Development of fine/ gross motor skills
- Hearing impairments
- Visual impairments
- Sensory processing needs

Recommended strategies:

Fine motor skills

- Adapted tools- scissors, pens, pencil grips etc.
- Larger lines/ squares to write in
- Pre-teach/ pre-practice shapes needed to form letters or for drawing.
- Offer tools to support the correct posture for writing (sloped desk supports).
- Non-slipping mats
- Finger gym- warm up finger movement before written activities.
- Allow additional time for changing and toileting.
- Sensory activities

Gross motor skills

- For children struggling to hold up core, allow additional space, sit on a chair, allow to lay down.
- Practice moving round the classroom safely- rehearse when classroom empty.
- St up obstacle courses to practice at points throughout the day.
- Allow movement breaks
- Include large, gross motor breaks in classroom activities to support remembering key content or vocabulary.

Hearing impairment

- Consider seating position.
- Reduce background noise.
- Ensure speakers face is visible.
- One person to speak at a time.
- Pre-post teaching sessions for key vocabulary, instructions and concepts.
- Visual support alongside verbal.
- Use subtitles during videos.
- Provide a note-taker or use technology to transcribe.
- Class understanding of deafness awareness.
- Improve classroom acoustics.
- Allow for processing time.
- Avoid too much talk/ overloading lessons with information- be selective.
- Repetition of key ideas. Repeat what a less visible peer may have said.

- Provide tools or support pupils to self-advocate when they cannot hear. Never make them feel like they have disturbed the lesson for this.
- Use open ended questions to check understanding- not just yes/no.
- Consider pace of lesson and its part in the whole day- deaf students more likely to become fatigued focusing on listening for so long. Be aware of signs of fatigue.
- Reduce oral instructions- chunk.

Visual impairment

- Ensure that you fully understand the learner including: the amount of sight they have, how useful it is and for what activities, any skills in braille or other tactile skills? What is their speed of reading? What is their experience of the visual world if any? Do they tire easily? Are they able to move around the classroom unaided? What aids do they require?
- Consider seating arrangement.
- Modify materials before the lesson- accessible font and size.
- Make use of technology if beneficial.
- Allow extra time.
- Consider the learning environment- is it accessible, potential risks, signage, reduce obstacles.
- Encourage and support child to self-advocate if they cannot see or need adjustments. Never make them feel like they have disturbed the lesson for this.

Sensory needs: visual

- Be aware of lighting and adjust where necessary
- Allow child to wear sunglasses.
- Access to low arousal areas (darkened area of room).
- Uncluttered and clear displays- think about low arousal colours
- Individual tables/ individual desk light
- Matt surfaces to avoid glare.
- Roller blinds/ blackout curtains.
- Use light to draw attention
- Light sensory.

Sensory needs: Auditory

- Ear defenders
- Earphones and calming music
- Use of furniture, rubs, rubber stopper etc to reduce back ground noise
- Check for buzzing from electrical equipment
- Reduce echoes
- Small groups rather than whole class activity if likely to be loud.
- Allow for short breaks to quiet room.
- Sit child near to person talking, facing them. Gently touch the child and say name before talking to them.
- Use signs, objects of reference and images to support.
- Use repetition throughout lesson.

Sensory needs: taste

- Model eating- eat alongside child.
- Allow them to have small amounts and interact with food before eating.

- Praise for good eating/drinking
- Do not insist meal is finished.
- Introduce new foods using steps to eating.
- Lip balms to allow children to experience different flavours.
- Crunchy snacks or chewable toys. Chew ice.
- Chewing/sucking hard sweets (choking risk).
- Range of textures of foods.
- Blowing bubbles.
- Sucking things through straw.

Sensory needs: smell

- Avoid strong smelling perfumes.
- Explore which scents calm or stimulate child.
- Create smell tubs.
- Use rub under nose to distract from unavoidable smells (use Vicks- need parental permission).
- Replicate home smells at school e.g. washing powder, air fresheners.
- Take child on smell walks

Sensory needs: Proprioception

- Heavy work activities such as climbing, sweeping, pushing and pulling games.
- Show boundaries using masking tape
- Provide sitting spot.
- Use of a buddy to model and lead.
- Chunk activities
- Stretchy band play or band on bottom of chair.
- Weighted equipment
- Use larger, more forceful movements before refining patterns.
- Select heavy objects for playing
- Sensory circuits/ sensory breaks
- Touch, pushing on arms, forehead etc.



Social, emotional and mental health



Overview of need:

Social refers to the interactions between children and their peers and key adults. Emotional needs are around understanding and management of emotion. Mental health relates to children's mental wellbeing and their ability to sustain positive mental health. These can include difficulties around:

- Self-monitoring and regulation skills
- Self-esteem
- Attachment and relationship building
- Anxiety
- Resilience
- Self-confidence and self-awareness

Recommended strategies:

- Explicitly teach the different emotions and use visuals to support understanding that emotions are a sliding scale.
- Introduce self-soothing breathing activities
- Offer classroom safe space for withdrawal or self-regulation space.
- Provide pupil with exit strategy- ensure clear, safe "flight path" out of classroom and a safe space to retreat to.
- Brief and debrief the pupil- discuss what is going to happen, how they might feel and what strategies they can do to manage the situation/ their reaction. Discuss the situation- what they may have learnt. Develop coping plan for dealing with feelings.
- Emotion coaching
- Personalised mental first aid kits
- Support pupil to develop personalised daily diary of accomplishment.
- Offer small private praise.
- Encourage other pupils to compliment the target pupil.
- When approaching new learning, get children to think about what knowledge/skills they already have to support them with it.
- Offer child responsibility to elevate their sense of worth within the class.
- Acknowledge and model that it is okay to make mistakes. Model and talk through how to recover.
- Allow for differentiation so that children do not feel they are not making progress/ unable to achieve any independence.
- Use a peer to model new activities.
- Positive affirmations
- Use of keyworker for check-ins.
- Planned quiet times throughout day.
- Play turn taking games and introduce peer
- Circle of friends
- Model appropriate social behaviour.
- Direct coaching of social norms and interactions.
- Small group work if whole class is overwhelming.
- Avoid direct intervention or proximity where possible- teach about personal space and boundaries.

- Structure and routine to avoid anxiety.
- Task slicing- offer small achievable tasks and celebrate small wins.
- Shared focus task- non-threatening, collaboration.
- Demonstrate the pupil is in mind. "I was thinking of you when..."
- Gently encourage child to seek help from adults- helping hands or going to get something from adult or showing good work.
- Encourage pupil to take part in game where there is not a strong element of winners and losers.
- Praise for effort when not directly engaged with them.
- Learning hooks which reflect personal interest/experiences
- Scaffolding with a clear progression to no longer needing them.
- Ensure all basic needs are met (Maslow's hierarchy of needs).
- Build and maintain relationships- fair and trusting
- Support transitions- visuals
- Class worry box
- Mindfulness activities
- Celebrate failure! Wonky work displays- celebrate having a go and making improvements
- Celebrate successes with key adults.

Full document and resources: [send-quality-first-teaching-toolkit.pdf \(sensiblesenco.org.uk\)](https://www.sensiblesenco.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/send-quality-first-teaching-toolkit.pdf)