



Appendix I to SEND Policy

Reviewed: September 2022
Review Required: September 2024

Adopted Buckinghamshire Council Policy for Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties

This policy should be read in conjunction with Jordans School's SEND Policy, The Accessibility Policy, The Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEN Code of Practice 2015.

Definition

There is a wide spectrum of sensory, multi-sensory and physical difficulties. The sensory range extends from profound and permanent deafness or visual impairment through to lesser levels of loss, which may only be temporary. Physical impairment may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes.

A person has a disability "if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a long-term and substantial, adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities." (Equality Act 2010).

Hearing Impairment (HI)

Children with a hearing impairment range from those with a mild hearing loss to those who are profoundly deaf. They cover the whole ability range. For educational purposes, children are regarded as having a hearing impairment if they require hearing aids, adaptations to their environment and/or particular teaching strategies in order to access the concepts and language of the curriculum.

A number of children with a hearing impairment also have an additional disability or learning difficulty.

Hearing loss may result from conductive or sensory-neural problems and can be measured on a decibel scale. Four categories are generally used: mild, moderate, severe and profound. Some children with a hearing loss communicate through the use of signing instead of, or as well as, speech.

Visual Impairment (VI)

Visual impairment refers to a range of difficulties from minor impairment through to blindness. Children with visual impairments cover the whole ability range. For educational purposes, a child is considered to be visually impaired if they have a medical diagnosis and require adaptations to their environment or modification of learning materials in order to access the curriculum. Children who are severely sight impaired or have very limited useful sight require tactile methods of learning, such as Braille and 3-D representations. Sight impaired children also need modified materials and may use enlarged print access to the curriculum.

Physical Difficulties (PD)

There is a wide range of physical disabilities and children cover the whole ability range. Some children are able to access the curriculum and learn effectively without additional educational provision. A medical diagnosis or a disability does not necessarily imply special educational needs. For others the impact on their education may be severe.

Identification

The Local Authority must comply with the Children and Families Act 2014 in relation to the identification of children with a disability. Local authorities must carry out their function with a view to identifying all children and young people in their area who have or may have SEN or a disability (Children and Families Act 2014 section 22)

“Disabled children, whatever the level or complexity of their impairment, have a right to the same quality of life as all children. Inclusion of disabled children means that all services and the people in them need to change and develop so as to provide a high quality of service which can adapt to meet a range of needs. An inclusive service is one which embraces diversity.” (The dignity of Risk.NCB.2004)

Children with Hearing Impairment

Universal New-born Hearing Screening seeks to ensure early identification of children with congenital hearing impairment. The government guidance on UNHS specifies that children will be aided by the age of 12 weeks. Acquired losses will be identified later.

- Immediately after diagnosis, the Audiology Department notifies both the Specialist Teaching Service – Hearing Impairment Team and the Specialist Speech and Language Therapy Service for Hearing Impairment.
- The government guidelines on UNHS specify that families will be seen within 48 hours of diagnosis after liaison between the 2 agencies to plan the process of intervention, including the use of the Early Support Monitoring Protocol for Deaf Babies and Children.

Children with Physical Disabilities

Early identification of physical difficulties is usually made by professionals from the health services. A range of professionals may be involved, dependent on the level of need i.e. Paediatrician, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Social Services etc.

There is a range of physical difficulties, including:

- Cerebral palsy
- Degenerative disorders
- Post-traumatic disorders - These physical difficulties may lead to a number of functional difficulties.
- Mobility and/or positional difficulties
- Gross and/or fine motor difficulties
- Feeding difficulties
- Communication difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Social and emotional difficulties
- Sensory processing / integration difficulties
- Perceptual difficulties

The Community Paediatrician will alert the LA to those who may have special educational needs, using the CHSU5 process.

Assessment

Children with Sensory and/or Physical difficulties may have special educational needs which impact upon their ability to access the curriculum and consequently their learning. Although diagnosis of any medical conditions will be confirmed by professionals from the health services, the assessment of the impact of the child's Sensory and/or Physical difficulties on their ability to access the curriculum is a matter for education professionals.

In assessing needs, the SENDCo will refer to the guidance in the Buckinghamshire Guidelines for SEN: Handbook for Schools/Settings, and the SEN Code of Practice (2014).

Liaison between VI and HI specialists and professionals from other agencies will inform joint assessments with individuals focusing their input around their own area of expertise. Assessments will lead to written recommendations about practical strategies to be adopted in order to maximise the child's ability to operate within their level of available vision or hearing. Assessments will be ongoing over time and take place in a variety of situations and be reviewed at least annually.

The Specialist Teaching Service PD team may be asked to carry out an observation visit in the home or setting, in order to assess need and make recommendations on future support.

Advice from the service may be sought from early years settings and schools, professionals from the health services, such as occupational therapists and other professionals in the Early Years Development and Childcare Service and Specialist Teaching Service. T

he Equality Act (2010) prohibits schools from discriminating against a pupil or prospective pupil who has a disability. The school also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments and plan strategically for accessibility.

Teaching and Learning

Our aim is to provide learning opportunities and positive outcomes, which meet the needs of all children and young people (0-25) with sensory/physical needs.

In the Child's Home

Until the child is in an educational setting, a qualified specialist teacher for sensory impairments, will undertake regular home visits to advise the parents/family/carers on:

- language and communication
- learning strategies and targets
- developing play skills
- future educational provision
- liaison with other professionals
- information re other professionals and bodies
- equipment

A specialist teacher for physical disabilities will be available to offer the above advice and support, as required.

Early Years Settings, 5-16 Mainstream and Special Schools

In line with Equality Act (2010) requirements, all schools and settings should make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of children and young people with physical and sensory disabilities. Classrooms should be adapted, to create environments in which barriers to learning and development are minimised and opportunities to progress alongside peers are enhanced. Advice and support can be obtained from the Local Authority.

Throughout the different phases of their education, children and young people with sensory and physical needs will require access to a range of approaches and strategies to suit their needs.

Staff supporting and working with children with sensory and physical needs will provide suitable strategies and regular support in a range of settings appropriate to learning needs, according to individual need. Access to the curriculum will be facilitated through:

- the adaptation of materials
- support for assessment e.g. examinations, language and paper modification as appropriate
- monitoring of the use of equipment
- the development of language and communication skills
- liaison with social care and health professionals
- use of an appropriate signing system (augmentative communication)

Professional Development

It is the responsibility of school and settings to seek and provide training on sensory, physical and medical needs. The funds for training have been delegated to schools.

Training is delivered as and when required in the form of advice on meeting the needs of specific children, staff meetings and workshop sessions.

There is a variety of training opportunities available to schools either delivered in schools, central or national courses. Staff in the Educational Psychology Service, Specialist Teachers can deliver training in schools upon request.

In addition to this staff who are supporting and working with a child with sensory, physical or medical needs, will be offered support from either a specialist qualified teacher or support staff, who will provide suitable strategies appropriate to the setting and environment of the child.

Working In Partnership

Children with sensory impairment or physical disability will have access to the same opportunities as their peers. Specialist professional support may be required to enable children's overall developmental needs to be met.