Resource Allocation Criteria

Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Guidance for children and young people with Speech, Language and Communication Needs

Introduction

The term SLCN is used in this guidance to refer to children and young people with speech, language and communication needs as described below.

There are four distinct and overlapping reasons for C&YP to have SLCN[1].

1. **Primary Need**: a persistent developmental difficulty specific to the speech and language systems associated with speech sounds, formulating sentences, understanding, social interaction or fluency
2. **Secondary need**: primary developmental factor related to Autism, physical, hearing or cognitive impairments which affect speech, language and communication
3. Reduced developmental opportunities meaning that language is impoverished or delayed; mainly linked to social disadvantage
4. Speaking and understanding English as an additional language (EAL) does not in itself constitute a SLC difficulty. The varied structures and phonologies of different languages may however cause *initial short term* difficulties. It is important to recognise that C&YP with EAL may also have the above 3 reasons for their SLCN.

Identification:

- There is wide variation in children's early development meaning that SLCN is not often identified before the age of 2, unless due to secondary factors present pre-natal or from birth
- The nature of SLCN can change over time
- A range of interventions, screening, observation and assessment over time, involving both health and education professionals are necessary to establish the nature of the difficulty
- Depending on the nature of the difficulty, pupils' performance levels may range between 'well above average' to 'well below average'.

This document provides guidance regarding funding, provision, staffing and identification for C&YP at bands 1-7. However, for all of the reasons above, when planning provision and personalised learning, it is essential that the strengths and needs of individual C&YP are considered rather than a diagnostic category of need. As such, this guidance should be used flexibly with regard to an individual's need at a particular time. For example, a child at Band 1 may require aspects of provision at Bands 2/3 for a measured period of time.

All C&YP need to be taught in a communication friendly learning environment, reflected in the whole school ethos:
- An understanding of the importance of language skills on social development and attainment
- Structured opportunities to support children's speech and language development
- Effective and positive adult child interaction
- High quality verbal input by adults

At ranges 8 and above, SLCN would be a secondary need. Where applicable, guidance for C&YP with autism, physical, hearing and behavioural and emotional difficulties should also be consulted.

Colleagues consulting this guidance need to use the guidance in conjunction with the SLCN sections in the Early Identification Toolkit and the Mainstream Guidance document.

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[1] Effective and Efficient use of resources in services for C&YP with SLCN (Lindsay, Desforges, Dockrell, Law, Peacey ad Beecham) DCSF 2008 ISBN 978 84775 218 5

Band 1	Need	SLCN may be an emerging but not yet clearly identified primary area of need; the pupil has some difficulty with speaking or communication. Will present with some/all of the difficulties below and these will *mildly* affect curriculum access and social development. • Phonological awareness difficulties (awareness of the sounds in spoken words such as rhyme, alliteration, and syllabification) which impact on progress reading and spelling • Speech is understood by others but has some immaturities, which may impact on social interaction and the acquisition of literacy • Difficulties with listening and attention that affect task engagement and independent learning • Comments and questions indicate difficulties in understanding the main points of discussion, information, explanations and the pupil needs some support with listening and responding • Difficulties in the understanding of language for learning (conceptual language; size, time, shape, position) • Limited vocabulary, both expressive and receptive • May rely heavily on non-verbal communication to complete tasks (adults gestures, copying peers) and this may mask comprehension weaknesses • Social interaction could be limited and there may be some difficulty in making and maintaining friendships. • Behaviour as an indicator of SLCN: difficulties with independent learning, poor listening and attention, frustration, stress, lack of engagement
	Curriculum & Provision in place	• Full inclusion to the National Curriculum • Will be part of school/setting and class teaching and assessments, however SENCo may be involved in more specific assessments and observations • May be categorised as at School Support level • Will be included in mainstream school and class using Quality First teaching approaches with specific support for targets which involve communication and interaction • Have opportunities for small group work within the usual classroom planning and management • Literacy tasks may require some modification • Instructions supported by visual and written cues • Reduction/modification of complex language when giving instructions/information to support attention and understanding • Flexibility in expectations to follow instructions /record work • Opportunities for developing the understanding and use of language across the curriculum with specific targets shared so that all staff can support language development in naturally occurring and meaningful situations

Band 2	Need	SLCN is identified as the primary area of need; the pupil has some difficulty with speaking or communication. Will present with some/all of the difficulties below and these will *mildly-moderately* affect curriculum access and social development. • Phonological awareness difficulties (awareness of the sounds in spoken words such as rhyme, alliteration, and syllabification) which impact on progress reading and spelling • Speech is understood by others but has some immaturities, which may impact on social interaction and the acquisition of literacy • Difficulties with listening and attention that affect task engagement and independent learning • Comments and questions indicate difficulties in understanding the main points of discussion, information, explanations and the pupil needs some support with listening and responding • Difficulties in the understanding of language for learning (conceptual language; size, time, shape, position) • Limited vocabulary, both expressive and receptive • May rely heavily on non-verbal communication to complete tasks (adults gestures, copying peers) and this may mask comprehension weaknesses • Social interaction could be limited and there may be some difficulty in making and maintaining friendships • Behaviour as an indicator of SLCN: difficulties with independent learning, poor listening and attention, frustration, stress, lack of engagement.
	Curriculum & Provision in place	As band 1 plus: • Use of more detailed NC assessment tools: see Mainstream guidance and Early Identification Toolkit • Main provision by class/subject teacher with advice from SENCo • Adults routinely used to support flexible groupings and differentiation under the guidance of the teacher • Adults actively support pupils by modifying teacher talk and scaffolding/modelling responses • Regular, planned support to listen and respond to longer sequences of information in whole class situation • Regular, planned encouragement and support to collaborate with peers in curriculum activities • Opportunities for time limited small group/individual work based on identified need • Staff working directly with the pupil should have knowledge and training in good practice for teaching and planning provision for C&YP with SLCN.

Band 3	Need	SLCN will be identified as the primary area of need with the nature of the difficulty clarified from observations and assessments by school, specialist education professionals and health professionals. Will present with some/all of the difficulties below and these will *moderately* affect curriculum access and social development. • Persistent delay against age related language norms • Persistent difficulties that do not follow a normal developmental patterns (disordered) **Speech** • Speech is usually understood by others but has immaturities. Persistent delay/ difficulties against age related speech norms • Difficulty in conveying meaning, feelings and needs to others due to speech intelligibility. • Speech sound difficulties impact on literacy development • Speech sound difficulty may lead to limited opportunities to interact with peers. May be socially vulnerable as a result, may become isolated or frustrated **Expressive** • Difficulties in word storage and retrieval that affect fluency, sentence structure and the quality of vocabulary. This will also be evident in written work and reading. • Difficulties in formulating sentences. May be associated with vocabulary or grammar, such as using immature or unusual verb forms **Receptive** • Difficulties in accessing the curriculum; following instructions, answering questions, processing verbal information, following everyday conversations. Needs regular and planned additional support and resources • Difficulties with listening and attention that affect task engagement and independent learning. May not be able to focus attention for sustained periods. May appear passive or distracted. • Difficulties with sequencing, predicting, and inference within both social and academic contexts. May result in associated behavioural difficulties due to anxiety or lack of understanding (withdrawal or externalising frustrations). May result in difficulties with completing daily living tasks or participating in daily living situations **Social Communication NB: see also C&I descriptors (ASD)** • Difficulties with speech and/or language mean that social situations present challenges resulting in emotional outbursts, anxiety, social isolation and social vulnerability • Difficulties with using and understanding non-verbal communication (NVC) such as facial expressions, tone of voice and gestures • Poor understanding of abstract language and verbal reasoning skills needed for problem solving, inferring and understanding the feelings of others • Anxiety related to lack of understanding of time and inference. Needs reassurance and forewarning of changes to routine or when encountering new situations/experiences
	Curriculum & Provision in place	As band 1 and 2 plus: • Provide evidence of monitoring and identification of pupil's needs before making a referral for assessment and advice from IES • Refer to Speech and Language Therapy Services (SALT) for further assessment and therapy. This must be agreed with the family • Reviews should consider the evidence based need to move towards EHC plan • Additional adult support informed by differentiated provision planned by the teacher • Could include advice from Speech and Language Therapist to inform planning • Additional adult 1:1 support focussed on specific individual targets and any SALT programmes as appropriate • Staff working directly with the pupil must have knowledge and training in good practice for teaching and planning provision for C&YP with SLCN • Inclusion in mainstream class with access to additional adult support to enable the class teacher to make the best provision – this may include targeted individual support, targeted small group support or to release the teacher to provide that support. • Attention to position in the classroom and acoustics • Tasks and presentation personalised to pupil needs • Curriculum access facilitated by a structured approach using visual systems, modification /reduction of language for instructions and information • Consideration to the transference and generalisation of skills

Band 4	Need	SLCN will be identified as the primary area of need with the nature of the difficulty clarified from observations and assessments by school, specialist education professionals and health professionals. . Will present with some/all of the difficulties as described at Band 3 and these will **severely** affect curriculum access and social development. • Could communicate or benefit from communicating using AAC (Alternative and Augmentative Communication) • Some or all aspects of language acquisition are significantly below age expected levels • Significant speech sound difficulties making speech difficult to understand out of context **Must have a diagnosis of Language Impairment/ Disorder or Speech Impairment/Disorder** ***The main categories are:*** • Mixed receptive/expressive language impairment/disorder • Expressive only language impairment/disorder • Higher level language processing impairment/disorder • Specific Speech Impairment ***Identification*** • Diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist (ideally in conjunction with a specialist teacher or Educational Psychologist to determine cognitive mismatch) • C&YP with a diagnosis of Language Impairment may be of average or above average cognitive ability • C&YP with Language Impairment (LI) often have associated social communication difficulties evident in rigid and repetitive behaviours • C&YP with LI have difficulties with literacy associated with writing fluency, reading comprehension and spelling • C&YP with LI often have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties due to impoverished peer interactions, poor listening and attention and understanding
	Curriculum & Provision in place	**School must make provision as bands 1-3 plus:** • Provide an appropriately trained teacher or teaching assistant to carry out SLT programmes for at least 15 minutes daily or to focus on specific individual targets • Where there is a diagnosis of Language Impairment or Speech Impairment the pupil's individual academic potential should not be underestimated. However, planning must include a significant level of additional adult support and significant personalised differentiation to ensure curriculum access. • Recognise that language impairment is a persistent, severe and lifelong disability • Planning, targets and assessments must address pastoral considerations relevant to the individual pupil (emotional well-being) as well as social and functional use of language. • Provide systematic and intensive mediation to facilitate curriculum access – this may include whole school approaches to giving instructions, providing visual support etc so that in all contexts, the pupil is able to optimally access the curriculum • Ensure specific structured teaching of vocabulary and concepts, in context • Provide intervention for social communication and functional language use • Provide specialist support with recording and communication • Provide specific programmes to develop independent use of ICT, recording skills and communication through AAC as appropriate

Band 5	Need	As Band 4 plus: • The C/YP will have a significant need in another area that is not solely attributed to SLCN need, e.g. Social emotional and Mental Health or Sensory, Physical or Medical or an additional social care need impacting on access / engagement with education
	Curriculum & Provision in place	As Band 4 plus: • Significant adaptations to the curriculum for secondary need, as identified in other PN criteria • Inclusion in mainstream class with access to additional adult support to enable the class teacher to make the best provision – this may include targeted individual support, targeted small group support or to release the teacher to provide that support (up to 16 hours) and differentiation of the curriculum for both primary and secondary needs. If placed in special school, there would be no requirement for anything additional to the core special school offer.

Band 6	Need	SLCN will be identified as the primary area of need with the nature of the difficulty clarified from observations and assessments by school, specialist education professionals and health professionals. Will present with some/all of the difficulties as described at Band 3 and 4 and these will *severely* affect curriculum access and social development to the extent that needs cannot usually be met in a mainstream setting without significant differentiation and moderation and a targeted provision may be appropriate. • Could communicate or benefit from communicating using AAC (Alternative and Augmentative Communication) • Some or all aspects of language acquisition are significantly below age expected levels • Significant speech sound difficulties making speech difficult to understand out of context **Must have a diagnosis of Language Impairment/ Disorder or Speech Impairment/Disorder** ***The main categories are:*** • Mixed receptive/expressive language impairment/disorder • Expressive only language impairment/disorder • Higher level language processing impairment/disorder • Specific Speech Impairment ***Identification*** • Diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist (ideally in conjunction with a specialist teacher or Educational Psychologist to determine cognitive mismatch) • C&YP with a diagnosis of Language Impairment may be of average or above average cognitive ability • C&YP with Language Impairment (LI) often have associated social communication difficulties evident in rigid and repetitive behaviours • C&YP with LI have difficulties with literacy associated with writing fluency, reading comprehension and spelling • C&YP with LI often have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties due to impoverished peer interactions, poor listening and attention and understanding
	Curriculum & Provision in place	As band 4 plus: • Provide an appropriately trained teacher or teaching assistant to carry out SLT programmes for at least 15 minutes daily • Planning must adhere to the targets set within the EHC plan and include reasonable adjustments to support the mainstream classroom where possible • Where there is a diagnosis of Specific Language Impairment (now known as Developmental Language Difficulty or DLD) or Specific Speech Impairment the pupil's individual academic potential should not be underestimated. However, planning must include a significant level of additional adult support and significant personalised differentiation to ensure curriculum access • It must be recognised that language impairment is a persistent, severe and lifelong disability • Planning, targets and assessments must address pastoral considerations relevant to the individual pupil (emotional well-being) as well as social and functional use of language • Should have a placement with access to specialist teaching and non-teaching support within the classroom and wider setting (targeted provision or specialist outreach on a regular basis as determined by the C&YP EHCP) to facilitate access to the curriculum and social communication These staff will support mainstream staff in planning and delivering appropriate, inclusive and structured interventions and a differentiated curriculum • Ensure additional training is available for mainstream staff to support curriculum modifications • Inclusion in mainstream class with access to an enhanced level of adult support a significant amount of which may be 1:1 support – this will include targeted individual support, targeted small group support or to release the teacher to provide that support (20 - 25 hours).

Band 7	Need	• Has SLCN needs that profoundly affect their access to the National Curriculum, including the social emotional curriculum and all aspects of school life, even in known and familiar contexts and with familiar support/people available • As band 6 however the C/YP will have a significant need in another area that is not solely attributed to SLCN need, e.g. Social Emotional and Mental Health or Sensory, Physical or Medical or an additional social care need impacting on access / engagement with education
	Curriculum & Provision in place	As Band 6 plus: • Significant adaptations to the curriculum for secondary need, as identified in other PN criteria • Inclusion in mainstream setting. However, there will be a need for an enhanced level of individual targeted support (25 hours plus) and significant differentiation of the curriculum for both primary and secondary needs • Needs can be met within a special school setting with some adaptation to the core offer or within an enhanced or targeted mainstream provision

Band 8	Need	SLCN primary needs would not satisfy the criteria for Band 8 funding however, SLCN needs as described above may be part of the secondary or additional needs and should be considered alongside primary need guidance.
	Curriculum & Provision in place	SLCN primary needs would not satisfy the criteria for Band 8 funding however, SLCN provision as described above may be part of the secondary or additional needs and should be considered alongside the guidance given for provision for the primary need.

Band 9	Need	SLCN primary needs would not satisfy the criteria for Band 9 funding however, SLCN needs as described above may be part of the secondary or additional needs and should be considered alongside primary need guidance.
	Curriculum & Provision in place	SLCN primary needs would not satisfy the criteria for Band 9 funding however, SLCN provision as described above may be part of the secondary or additional needs and should be considered alongside the guidance given for provision for the primary need.

Band 10	This band will be allocated and moderated on an individual case basis through a Resource Allocation Panel.