

# Identification of SEND Definitions

Confident Place, Confident People.

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Communication and Interaction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Speech, Language and Communication Needs</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Autism</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Cognition and Learning</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Moderate Learning Difficulties</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Severe Learning Difficulties</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Specific Learning Difficulties</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Dyslexia</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Dyscalculia</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Dyspraxia</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Social, Emotional and Mental Health</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Sensory and/or Physical Needs</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Hearing Impairment</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Visual Impairment</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Multi-sensory Impairment</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Physical Disability</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>7</b>

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## Sensory and/or Physical needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties.

Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

*Department of Education (2015)*

### Visual impairment (VI)

VI refers to a range of difficulties from partial sight through to blindness. Pupils with visual impairments cover the whole ability range. For educational purposes, a pupil is considered to be VI if they require adaptations to their environment or specific differentiation of learning materials in order to access the curriculum.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Hearing Impairment (HI)

Pupils with HI range from those with a mild hearing loss to those who are profoundly deaf. They cover the whole ability range. For educational purposes, pupils are regarded as having a HI 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.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)

Pupils with multi-sensory impairment have a combination of visual and hearing difficulties. They are sometimes referred to as deaf blind but may have some residual sight and/or hearing. Many also have additional disabilities but their complex needs mean that it may be difficult to ascertain their intellectual abilities. Pupils should only be recorded as MSI if their sensory impairment is their greatest need.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Physical Disability (PD)

There is a wide range of physical disabilities and pupils cover the whole ability range. Some pupils are able to access the curriculum and learn effectively without additional educational provision. They have a disability but do not have a special educational need. For others, the impact on their education may be severe. Similarly a medical diagnosis does not necessarily mean a pupil will have SEN. It depends on the impact the condition has on their educational needs.

There are a number of medical conditions associated with physical disability which can impact on mobility, such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida and muscular dystrophy. Pupils with physical disabilities may also have associated sensory impairments, neurological problems or learning difficulties.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

## Introduction

This booklet provides definitions of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as identified in the SEND Code of Practice (Department of Education, 2015).

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need. These are:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

## Communication and Interaction

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all areas of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

*Department of Education (2015)*

### Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

Pupils with SLCN cover the whole ability range. Pupils may have difficulty in understanding information conveyed through spoken language. Their acquisition of speech and oral language skills may be significantly behind their peers and their speech may be poor or intelligible.

Pupils with language impairments find it hard to understand and/or use word in context. They may use words incorrectly with inappropriate grammatical patterns, have a reduced vocabulary or find it hard to recall words and express ideas. They may also hear or see a word but not be able to understand its meaning or have trouble getting others to understand what they are trying to say.

Please note that pupils whose first language is not English should not be recorded as SLCN unless they also have a special educational need in this area.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Autism

Pupils with autism are described as having persistent difficulties with social communication and social interaction. Pupils often have restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviours, activities or interests which include sensory behaviour. These behaviours are present since early childhood and may limit and impair everyday functioning.

*American Psychiatric Association (2013)*

## Cognition and Learning

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment. Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

*Department of Education (2015)*

### Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)

Pupils with MLD will have attainments well below expected levels in all or most areas of the curriculum, despite appropriate interventions. Their needs will not be met by normal differentiation and the flexibilities of the National Curriculum.

Pupils with MLD have much greater difficulty than their peers in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills and in understanding concepts. They may also have associated speech and language delay, low self-esteem, low levels of concentration and under developed social skills.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD)

Pupils with severe learning difficulties have significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. This has a major effect on their ability to participate in the school curriculum without support. They may also have associated difficulties in mobility and co-ordination, communication and perception and acquisition of self-help skills. Pupils with SLD will need support in all areas of the curriculum. They may also require teaching of self-help, independence and social skills. Some pupils may use sign and symbols but most will be able to hold simple conversations and gain some literacy skills.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD)

Pupils with PMLD have severe and complex learning needs, in addition they have other significant difficulties, such as physical disabilities or a sensory impairment. Pupils require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and also for personal care. They are likely to need sensory stimulation and a curriculum broken down into very small steps. Some pupils communicate by gesture, eye pointing or symbols, others by very simple language.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

SpLD is an umbrella term which indicates that pupils display differences across their learning. Pupils with SpLD may have a particular difficulty in learning to read, write, spell or manipulate numbers so that their in these areas is below their performance in other areas. Pupils may also have problems with short term memory, organisational skills and co-ordination. Pupils with SpLD cover the whole ability range and the severity of their impairment varies widely.

*Department of Education and Skills (2003)*

### Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points. Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia. A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well founded intervention.

*Rose (2009)*

### Dyscalculia

Developmental Dyscalculia is a specific learning difficulty that is characterised by impairments in learning basic arithmetic facts, processing numerical magnitude and performing accurate and fluent calculations. These difficulties must be quantifiably below what is expected for an individual's chronological age and must not be caused by poor educational or daily activities or by intellectual impairment.

*American Psychiatric Association (2013)*

### Dyspraxia

Pupils with dyspraxia are affected by difficulties in controlling or co-ordinating movement. These co-ordination impairments can make it difficult for children with dyspraxia to write, type and engage in many activities required on a daily basis. In some cases it can also affect a child's speech.

*O'Connell (2015)*

## Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

*Department of Education (2015)*