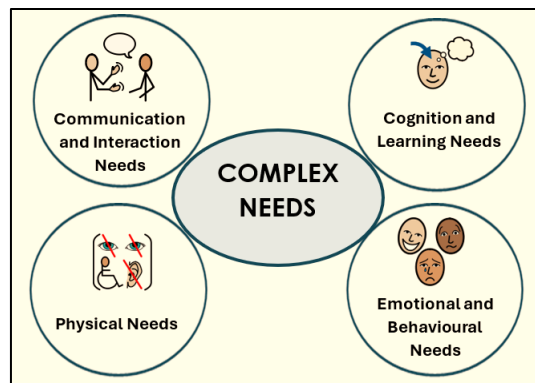


# Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

## Supporting Pupils with Complex Needs in Mainstream Settings



### Why?

- For some pupils, the level of support required goes beyond ordinarily available provision and adaptive teaching.
- Pupils with significant learning needs require an engaging, motivating, and personalised curriculum that is inclusive and promotes a sense of belonging and self-efficacy.
- This approach should be underpinned by the understanding that learners may have different individual outcomes within shared educational experiences.

### You will need;

- **Observational assessment** linked to the Engagement Model and Pre-Key Stage Standards (where appropriate) to identify:
  - established schemas (ideas and concepts pupils are currently exploring),
  - interests and motivators,
  - current learning levels, and
  - next steps for learning.
- [The Engagement Model Help Sheet](#)
- **A core story text** and appropriately matched resources (for example, a story sack and visual supports).



### How?

- Use whole-class topics to select a focused, play-based and story-led curriculum that supports the development of early literacy and numeracy skills.
  - For example: *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

- Select one core text per half-term that best aligns with pupils' interests, curriculum themes, and key concepts. Examples may include:
  - *Each Peach Pear Plum* (Victorians),
  - *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*,
  - *Handa's Surprise* (Africa),
  - *Lost and Found*.
- Use the planning sheet to plan activities (see example planning sheets). Then use the blank weekly record to choose/ select activities to work on and make comments on the child's engagement.
  - [Blank Planning Document with EHCP targets.doc](#)
  - [Blank Weekly Planning Record.docx](#)
  - [Example Year 1- Lost and Found- Planning Document.doc](#)
  - [Example Year 2 - Super Worm - Planning Document.doc](#)
  - [Example Year 2 - The Very Hungry Caterpillar planning document.doc](#)
- Develop Tier 1 and Tier 2 vocabulary to support early conceptual understanding linked to the chosen story text.
  - [Tier 1 2 3 words .doc](#)
  - [Resource Tier 1 and Tier 2 words Lost and Found Oliver Jeffers.doc](#)
  - [Resource Tier 1 and Tier 2 words The Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle.doc](#)
  - [Tier 1 and Tier 2 words Whatever Next by Jill Murphy.doc](#)
- Plan learning opportunities that align with pupils' schemas. Refer to Birth to 5 Matters website - [Resources – Birth To 5 Matters](#)  
[Birth to 5 Matters Schemas.pdf](#)

### Things to note

- Avoid introducing learning that exceeds pupils' current level of conceptual understanding.
- Consider Blank Levels of Communication:
  - keep instructions simple and clear,
  - utilise multiple communication systems where appropriate such as PECS, Makaton, BSL, AAC, gesture, visuals, and choice boards.
- Move at the child's pace. Progress is not always linear; meeting the child at their current stage of development is essential.
- Prioritise connection before correction.
- Use consistent adults where possible to support emotional security and learning continuity.
- Tune into the child's cues, including non-verbal communication, behaviours, and communication patterns.

### Reference / Evidence base – informed by:

The Engagement Model DfE  
 Birth to 5 Matters.org.uk  
 C&I SCIL Team Engagement Model Toolkit  
 Elklan [Elklan Training Limited](#)

