

Identifying Needs: Cognition & Learning

Observed difficulties may be emerging or fluctuating.



City of
Doncaster
Council



Logo created by "Doncaster Young Advisors"

Definition

Cognitive functioning refers to: executive functions, (thinking, reasoning, attention, working memory, problem solving and decision making), literacy, numeracy and a learners' understanding of the social world (social cognition).

Learning refers to the learners' acquisition, consolidation, retaining and application of previous and new knowledge and skills.

General Cognition and Learning

Learners may have difficulties with

- **Acquiring and using new skills**
- **Imaginative play**
- Having the **skills to access knowledge** and apply their learning
- **Remembering regular routines**
- **Following the daily timetable** or routine
- **Repetitive play** and **restricted interests**
- **Applying knowledge and skills to different situations and contexts.**
- The **pace** of the curriculum
- **Exploring** materials and resources

Executive Functioning

Working Memory

Attention

Response inhibition

Flexibility

Task Initiation

Emotional Control

Goal directed persistence

Metacognition

Planning and prioritisation

Organisation

Time management

Executive Function: Working Memory

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Following instructions**
- **Following multi-step instructions**
- **Remembering answers**
- **Blending and segmenting phonics**
- **Completing mental maths** due to processing demands

Executive Function: Sustained attention

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Completing tasks**
- **Maintaining focus** on an adult-led task.
- **Taking in information** due to inattentiveness
- **Understanding what to do** before starting work

Executive Function-Response Inhibition

Learners may have difficulties with:

- Resisting the impulse to **call out or interrupt**
- **Ignoring distractions** and maintaining focus

Executive Function: Flexibility

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Open ended activities** such as creative writing
- **Managing changes in routines**
- **Accepting alternatives** within a task or situation

Executive Function-Task Initiation

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Starting a task**
- **Making decisions**
- **Procrastination** e.g. leaving homework until the last minute

Executive Function-Emotional Control

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Managing emotions** e.g. around peer disagreements
- **Emotional outbursts**
- **Feeling overwhelmed**
- **Appearing to shut down**

Executive Function: Goal directed persistence

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Starting a piece of work/project with a clear goal in mind**
- **Making choices to stick to a plan**
- **Maintaining focus in the face of challenges**

Executive Function: Metacognition

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Analysing, reflecting and adapting approaches to learning**
- **Knowing how to tackle a task**
- **Knowing what strategies** they can use
- **Knowing what resources** they can use to support them
- **Exploring and explaining their thought processes** in a way that is understood

Executive Function-Planning and prioritisation

Learners may have difficulties with:

- Recognising the **steps to achieve a goal**
- Managing the need for **perfection**
- **Organising their thoughts and actions** e.g. they may not start a task at the beginning

Executive Function-Organisation

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Organising their resources**
- **Losing resources, equipment and belongings**
- **Managing time restraints**
- **Needing to restart** activities from the beginning
- **Categorising** or seeing how things connect with one another e.g. the animals that live on a farm
- **Sequencing information**

Executive Function-Time Management

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Allowing enough time** to complete tasks
- **Sticking to a time schedule**
- **Completing tasks**

Literacy-Reading, Writing and Spelling

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Decoding words**
- **Reading fluently**
- **Understanding what they have read-** may find it easier to understand when read to
- **Mark making** and making purposeful marks
- **Forming letters correctly**
- **Writing in full sentences**
- **Transferring** what they want to say **into writing**
- **Spelling words**, including familiar words, correctly

Numeracy

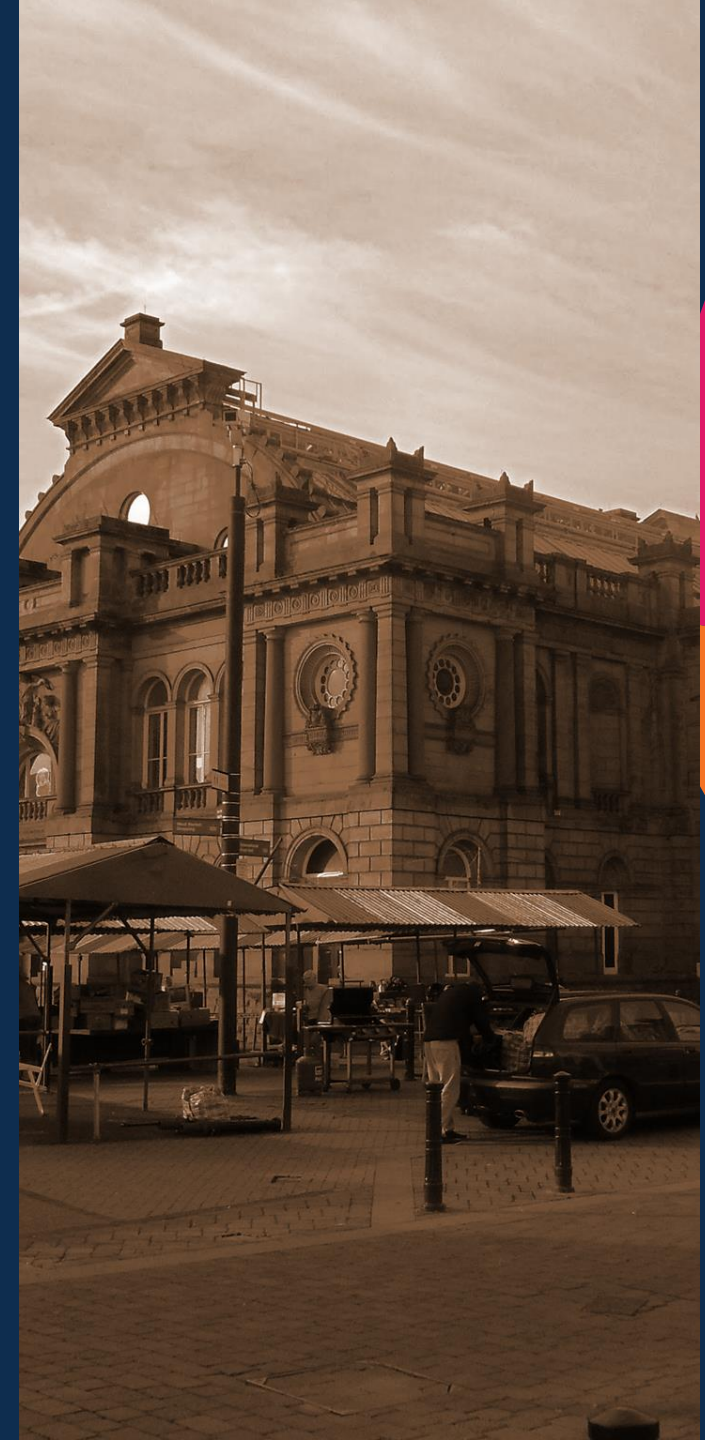
Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Understanding that numbers represent quantity**
- **Understanding mathematical concepts e.g. subitising, cardinality, estimation, sequencing, ordering and place value**
- **Calculating and following mathematical procedures (e.g. addition and subtraction)**
- **Identifying mathematical patterns**
- **Understanding mathematical vocabulary**

Comprehension

Learners may have difficulties with:

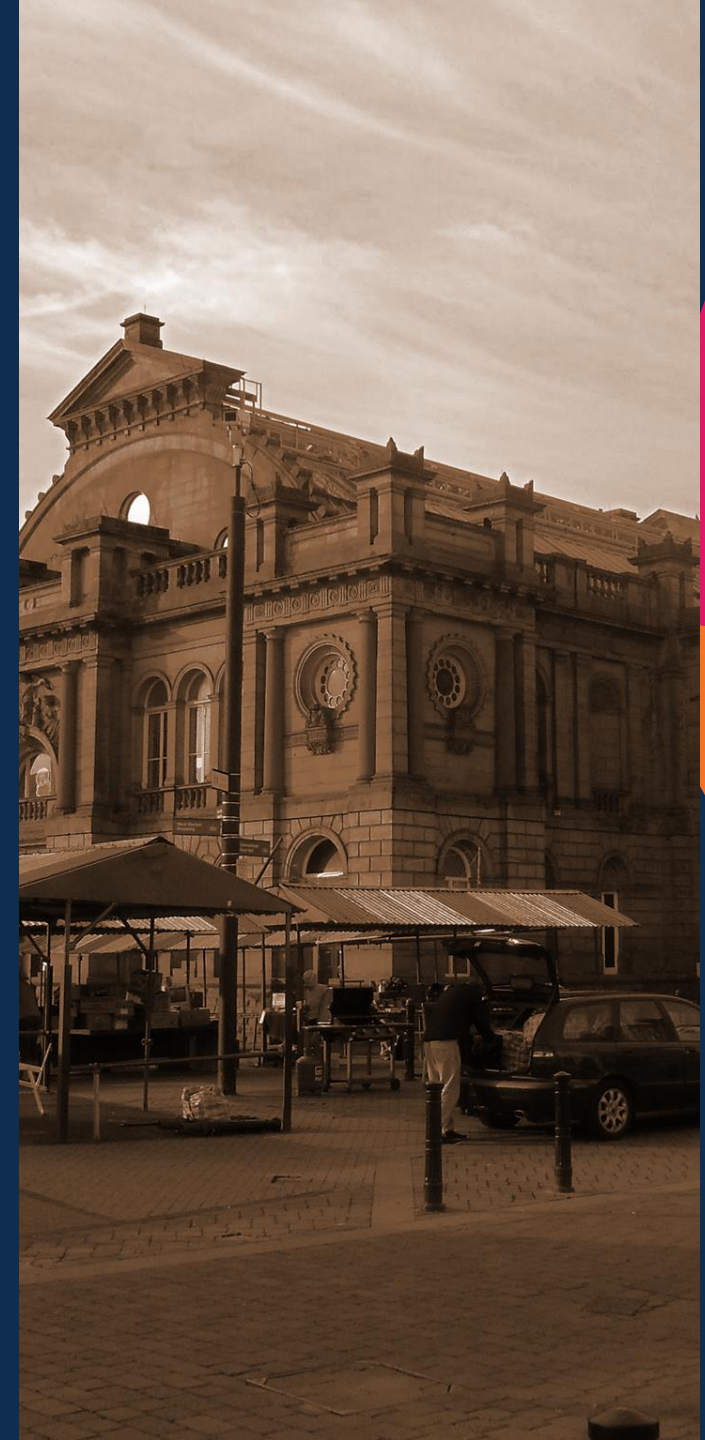
- **Understanding some abstract concepts** such as rhymes, inference and time
- **Interpreting complex social interactions**
- **Understanding instructions**



Short Term Memory

Learners may have difficulties with:

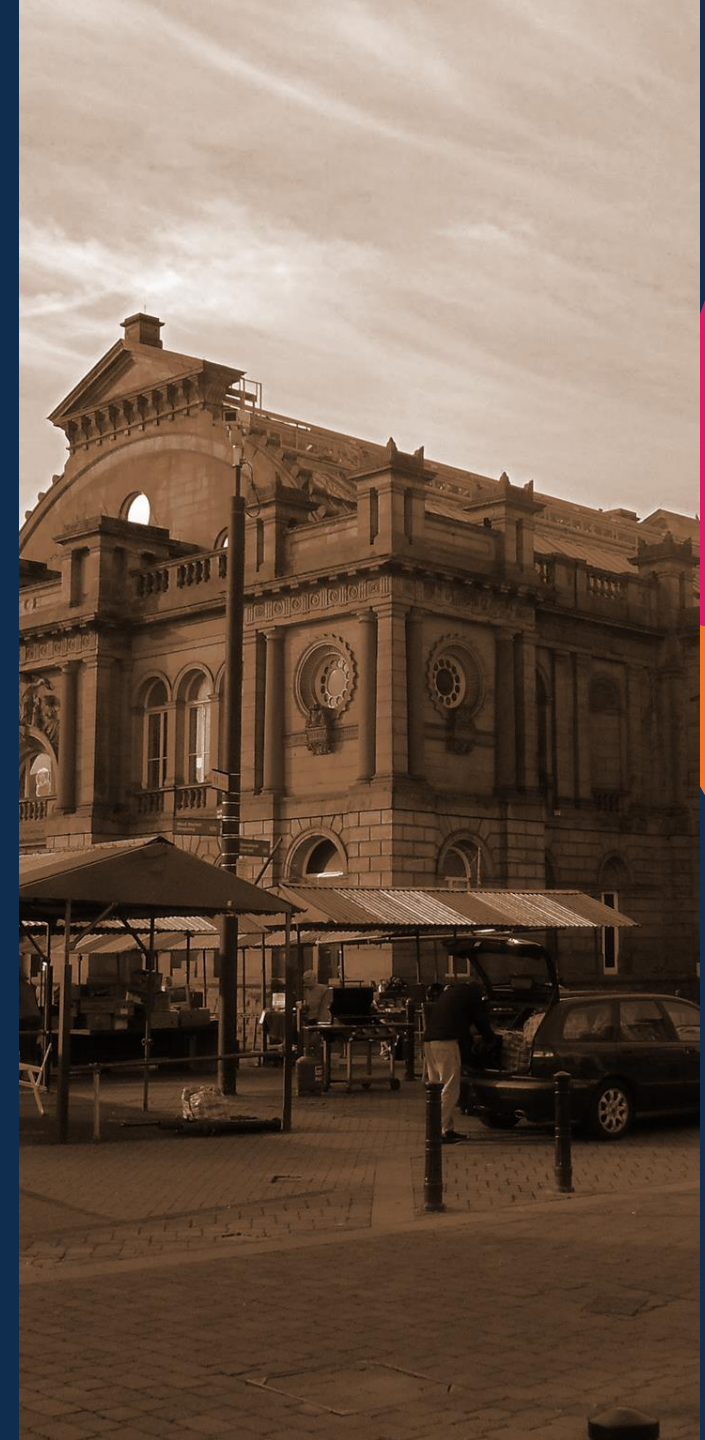
- **Recalling** what has just been said or read
- **Locating something** that they had just a moment ago



Long Term Memory

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Talking about the past**
- **Relating to experiences from their past**
- **Completing multistage activities**
- **Recalling information**
- **Retaining concepts over time**
- **Maintaining previously acquired skills**
- **Making links with previously learnt concepts**



Emotional/Affective learning factors

Learners may have difficulties with:

- Asking for, accepting or responding to **adult or peer assistance**
- **Tolerating frustration** and having the confidence to 'have a go'
- **Self-efficacy**- feeling they can succeed
- **Interest and curiosity** e.g. asking questions to find out new things