

Identifying Needs: Communication and Interaction

Observed difficulties may be emerging or fluctuating.



City of
Doncaster
Council



Logo created by "Doncaster Young Advisors"

Definition

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.

Social Communication and Interaction

Children and young people with Social Communication and Interaction difficulties, including Autism, have a difference in the way they process information which affects how they may communicate and interact with people and the outside world.

The Autism Education Trust describes the main three differences learners may experience:

- **Social Understanding and Communication**
- **Sensory Processing and Integration**
- **Flexible Thinking, Information Processing and Understanding**

Attention and Listening

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Maintaining attention** to a task
- **Switching attention** from one task to another

Expressive Language

Learners may:

- Have **unclear speech**
- Have difficulties **making different sounds** or using sounds correctly in spoken words
- Have difficulties **hearing the difference between speech sounds when speaking** e.g. three and free
- **Stammer or stutter** where sounds, words or parts of words are repeated or may be difficult to produce without effort
- Have **differences in voice quality** e.g. persistently harsh, breathy, creaky
- Have **differences in intonation** so the meaning of what is being said is unclear
- Using **sentence structure or grammar** expected earlier on in a child's development e.g. 'I falled over'
- Using **grammar words** such as 'the', 'but', 'so' or 'then'

Expressive Language continued

Learners may:

- **Sequencing ideas and sentences** e.g. stories long winded or not making sense
- Use **echolalia** (repeating certain words or phrases)
- **Finding the right words** to use at the right time (word finding difficulties)
- **Expressing emotions, thoughts or feelings**

Receptive Language

Learners may have difficulties with:

- **Answering questions** or giving a relevant answer
- **Processing language** or need longer to process
- **Understanding and following instructions** or following what is being said
- **Understanding idioms** such as 'pull your socks up'
- Have **literal understanding** of what others have said
- **Learning and remembering new words** or topic/subject specific vocabulary

Interaction

Learners may:

- **Have sensory sensitivities/differences**
- **Have restricted interests**
- **Present with repetitive behaviours**
- **Have differences in imaginative thought**

Learners may have difficulties:

- **Forming positive relationships** with peers and/or adults
- **Inferring the feelings of others**
- **Working with others on a shared task**
- **Understanding non-verbal communication**
- **Navigating social situations**
- **Recognising danger and hazards**
- **With change and transitions**

Sensory Processing

Learners may:

- **Seek** particular **sensory experiences**
- **Avoid** particular **sensory experiences**
- Show **signs of distress** as a result of sensory input/overload
- Require **access to sensory resources** to moderate their sensory input
- **Show signs of fatigue** as a result of sensory processing differences