

Northumberland Good Practice Guidance for delivering the Universal Local Offer

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 - 25 Years September 2014 requires Local Authorities to develop and publish their Local Offer. This sets out in one place, information about the provision parents/carers, children and young people can expect to be available helping them to make informed decisions about childcare and education so that their child can flourish. The Northumberland Early Years local offer is based upon 6 'key principles' that summarise the entitlement all children and their families can expect from Early Years providers across the county. These principles were identified through consultation and partnership working with a wide range of professionals and parents with the aim of representing the voice of the child.

This document has been produced by the Northumberland Early Years Team to support providers to reflect on and further develop their inclusive provision. The principles should be used to guide schools and Early Years providers to review, evaluate and describe their arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN.

Collectively this information will show the wide range of inclusive practice that is available across Northumberland to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

How to use this guidance

- Discuss the statements in the good practice guidance sections with all staff. Consider how your current practice demonstrates the principles and reflects the needs and views of the children ([the voice of the child](#), see Section 4).
- Use your reflection to create a statement of what your setting offers to share with parents, demonstrating the inclusive values your setting holds.
- Use this document to identify any gaps or areas for development.
- Identify actions to take to enhance your provision. The SENCO should take responsibility to review these actions annually to ensure your practice adapts to the current cohort.
- Complete the 'Inclusion Campaign' on [Learning Together](#) to share your evaluations of your practice. Use your evaluations to create a '[Mission Statement](#)', shared with the Early Years Inclusion Consultants. This will help the Northumberland Early Years Team to identify any common themes for development and where support and training needs to be targeted.
- Your 'Mission Statement' can be used to update the Local Offer information currently held for your provision on the [Family Information Services website](#).
- Any relevant policies and procedures should then be updated to reflect your agreed 'Mission Statement'.
- The provisions agreed 'Mission Statement' should be shared with all adults who work in the setting, e.g. staff, volunteers, apprentices, governors, parent helpers, management committees. Managers have a responsibility to ensure that the practice described is consistently demonstrated by all and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Your document describes your Local Offer and should be shared with all parents/carers so that they can understand your approach and the support your setting provides to meet children's individual needs.

Universal Local Offer in Northumberland EYFS Schools and Early Years Settings

1.Ethos:	Good Practice Guidance
Respect each unique child and understand their individual needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept each child as an individual and invest the time needed to get to know them and their family • Allow the 'pace' to be set by the family and be sensitive to their needs and views • Adapt your communication approach to each child and family • Provide non- threatening and creative ways to find out about each child • Explore the values, aspirations and concerns held by families so they can be better understood by all
Value what makes each child unique and their contribution to their family and local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make all children and their families feel welcome, valued and respected • Ensure that the child's Key Person acts as their advocate • Find out what a child brings or 'adds' to their own family • Find out more about the family e.g. interests, passions, skills, hobbies, membership of groups and activities etc, and how these are supported within the local community
Promote positive attitudes towards all children within their community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk positively about and with all children and families • Seek out opportunities to celebrate diversity of the 'protected' characteristics and make them 'visible' • Actively look for a wide diversity of local role models • Provide resources that reflect diversity, needs and disabilities and the wider local community e.g. through provision of relevant role play equipment and clothing, books, posters, celebrations etc
Provide inclusive practice for all children, so that they are able to access the whole curriculum and travel towards a positive future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore creative ways to enable all children to take part in all activities in a way that is appropriate to them and their individual needs • Break down barriers to learning in ways that are appropriate to each child's individual needs • Consult with parents and carers to understand their point of view and priorities • Design a curriculum that reflects and balances the objectives of parents and professionals • Promote the voice of the child to teach them to begin to communicate their own needs, desires and interests
Enhance Quality First Teaching (QFT) by differentiating practice and provision in order to meet the needs of all children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff understand that QFT involves being responsive to differing needs. • Regularly review the QFT on offer to ensure it meets the needs of the current children • Provide Continued Professional Development to ensure all staff have the appropriate skills, depth of knowledge and understanding to deliver QFT • Creatively provide a range of activities, resources and approaches that enable all children to make good progress • Ensure that activities are differentiated to include each child, their interests and stage of development • Use QFT to reinforce any child specific targets e.g. from individual plans or from other professionals

2. Understanding the child and their individual needs:	Good practice guidance
<p>Value and seek information from those who know the child well including parents, previous settings, any other professionals and the child themselves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building positive relationships with parents from the start can help to build trust and overcome barriers to engagement. This could be through face to face conversations, phone calls or written information and will depend on individual family needs. • Initial information gathered about new starters is crucial to get to know children as individuals. ‘All about me’ books are a useful resource for parents/carers to share their views as well as trial visits and home visits where possible. • Sharing information between parents/carers and professionals is essential in promoting partnership working. It may be also necessary to gain consent to obtain and share a wider range of information, (e.g. with previous or current providers as well as health visitors), to build a more comprehensive picture of the child. • Using all information available, identified if the child is on track. If at any point they are not, further information gathered will help establish if an Early Help Assessment (EHA) is required.
<p>Use observation and appropriate assessments to develop an accurate and in depth understanding of the child’s needs and if these include Special Educational Needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers should use their child development knowledge to make a best fit judgement against the Development Matters bands. • Discussions with parents/carers should be ongoing, it should never come as a surprise to them that there are concerns. • If concerns are identified then other assessment tools should be used to obtain a more in depth understanding of the child. • The graduated approach can be evidenced by using the documentation in the Northumberland Early Years Inclusion Toolkit (NEYIT), Northumberland’s policy on SEND.
<p>Use assessment information to inform whether a child requires anything additional to or different from that provided for all children in order to meet their individual needs (i.e. SEN Support).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy referral guidelines are available on the website and include details of typical stages of development. Practitioners can use these to help with assessment and decide if criteria for referral have been met. • The Early Years Inclusion Consultants (EYIC’s) can be contacted if support is needed. They will be able to provide tailored advice and support regarding the child’s individual needs and advise on how to enhance QFT and provision of SEN Support if necessary. • The setting routines and environment may need to be adapted in response to the assessment outcomes. • Including information from all adults involved in the child’s learning will help to moderate and improve the reliability of assessments. It will also help to identify the child’s interests and where they flourish, so planning can be adapted to increase and build on these opportunities.

3. Partnership with Parents/Carers	Good practice guidance
<p>Respect and develop an understanding of parents/carers perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believing what parents say and showing empathy builds trust and respect between practitioners and parents. • Finding time for private conversations gives the opportunity to actively listen to and explore how a parent feels. This gives an insight into their thoughts, concerns and priorities. • Allowing the 'pace' to be set by the family helps them to feel comfortable and more confident when sharing information. However, be persistent if they are reluctant or are not yet ready to talk about the needs of their child.
<p>Value parents/carers knowledge of their child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remembering that parent/carers know their child most intimately helps practitioners to value the in depth knowledge they can bring. • Actively seeking out information about how children behave differently at home and in the setting provides insight into how the child responds to a variety of environments. • Encouraging parents to share information from other professionals helps to build a bigger picture of the holistic child's need than any one person can have on their own.
<p>Treat parents/carers as equal partners when deciding on how best to meet their child's needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing approaches to which the child responds well, can be helpful in developing mutual support and effective strategies. • Consistency between home and setting promotes and consolidates learning which will increase the rate of the child's progress. • Sharing resources and techniques helps the child learn what to expect. • Partnership working with the child at the centre provides a solution focused approach and helps to recognise and celebrate every achievement the child makes.

4. Building Staff Knowledge, and Skills	Good practice guidance
<p>Ensure that all staff understand that they have a role in supporting every child, including those with SEND.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff within the setting have responsibility for the learning of all children e.g. know individual children and their unique character. • All staff contribute to building up a comprehensive picture of each child, sharing information and recording observations. • Children's individual learning plans (which may be drawn up by other professionals) are shared and integrated into daily practice by all staff.
<p>Identify individual staff strengths, enabling them to use these skills to role model and further develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge of other staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditing staff skills will allow managers to draw on the expertise and skills of different practitioners. Sharing these skills with other members of staff, will help to increase overall staff knowledge and skills, e.g. through team teaching, team meetings, taking on a mentor role etc. • Disseminating information from training and courses attended will maximise the impact of the training. • Ensure that information from professionals supporting the setting is shared with all staff.
<p>Provide CPD so all staff are skilled in providing Quality First Teaching and differentiated support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting coaching and mentoring staff will enable them to use their knowledge to differentiate planning to include all children (APDR). • Staff skills are audited in response to the needs of specific children and areas for training are identified. Supervision provides one opportunity to support this • Relevant training and guidance documents should be provided to support the growth of staff skills, e.g. Northumberland LA EY SEND Guidance and NEYIT. • Inviting professionals involved with specific children into the setting to model effective inclusive practice, e.g. portage workers, SLT, Health Visitors and other healthcare professionals. • Seeking and using parent knowledge of how best to meet their child's needs will provide consistency of approach and practice.

5. Providing Additional Support	Good practice guidance
<p>Agree with parents how best to support their child's needs and offer consistency between home and the setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing effective transitions, e.g. transition meeting, home visits etc. allows information to be gathered and used to improve the provision in the setting. • Allocating time for regular, confidential conversations with parents to keep them updated and informed will facilitate the sharing of achievements, strengths successful interventions. • Involving parents in identifying priorities will aid the planning of appropriate strategies and activities.
<p>Use a range of strategies, actions and interventions to meet the child's identified needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the graduated approach to identify what strategies, actions and interventions need to be implemented. • Involving all staff will help them to understand their role in supporting every child. • Giving more opportunities and time will allow children to learn, practice and transfer skills. • Implementing advice from parents on the practice used successfully in the home environment will increase the range of strategies available. • Providing advice and support for parents on ways to complement and support the approaches used by the setting helps to increase the range of strategies available.
<p>Monitor the outcomes and impact of this graduated approach, regularly evaluating and adapting plans where needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving parents in the APDR cycle enables all views and priorities to be considered. • Actively seeking ways to understand the views of the child allows these to be incorporated into future plans. • Keeping robust actions plans with 'SMART' targets, monitoring and evaluating them at half termly intervals, identifies progress and next steps. • Reviewing and resetting priorities and targets enables optimum progress to be made.

6. Partnership with other professionals and sources of support	Good practice guidance
<p>Identify and involve other professionals if needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing your QFT helps identify opportunities for adapting your practice. • Using the Northumberland Local Offer page will help to ensure you are up to date with the range of professionals that are available for support. • Actively seeking advice appropriate agencies and professionals e.g Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, School nurses etc will help with early identification of need. • Ensuring all staff use referral guidelines from appropriate agencies helps to identify if the criteria for referral have been met. • Making referrals in a timely way supports early intervention.
<p>Develop a coordinated approach which is tailored to meet all aspects of the child's needs through an Early Help Assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating all staff to undertake EHA training raises staff awareness of the process and when it should be initiated. • Actively seeking out assessments carried out by others e.g. Health Visitor 2 Year developmental check, summative assessments from other settings attended by the child etc helps to build a holistic picture. • Initiating an EHA and ensuring it is put into practice as soon as the need becomes apparent, builds up a partnership approach and supports effective communication. • Reviewing the EHA at regular intervals keeps everyone on track and leads to best outcomes.
<p>Implement advice and targets from other professionals, using the principles of Quality First Teaching.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and information received from other professionals should be integrated at the earliest opportunity into your daily practice, helping to continually improve your quality first teaching. • Planning specific actions, strategies and interventions allows you to integrate targets from other professionals into the daily curriculum. • Ensuring all staff understand how they contribute to supporting individual children's targets supports inclusive QFT across the provision.