BWCET Cognition and Learning Strategy

February 2026

Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in partnership, enabling all to flourish.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Rationale

Following on from the BWCET SLCN and SEMH Strategies, the BWCET Cognition and Learning Strategy is the third element in the suite of materials which underpin the Trust's approach to supporting pupils with SEND.

DfE (2024) statistics have identified that approximately, 300,000 pupils, nationally, have Cognition and Learning difficulties identified as their primary area of need.

The BWCET Cognition and Learning strategy will help to identify effective evidenced-based and informed assessment tools and intervention packages, alongside our existing strong curriculum and teaching practice, so that our pupils who have cognition and learning needs, receive the support they need.

This strategy document should be read in conjunction with other BWCET SEND strategy documents. Often cognition and learning difficulties are not isolated and pupils' difficulties may persist in other areas of the SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2014).

Evidence

Type of need	SEND Support	EHCP
Severe Learning Difficulties	2,193	31,787
Moderate Learning Difficulties	179,554	33,954
Specific Learning Difficulties	158,974	17,361
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	780	10,014
Total number of learners 0-25 recorded, nationally	198,424	93,116

DfE 2023/2024 statistics have identified that, nationally, there are nearly 300,000 pupils who have primary difficulties linked to cognition and learning.

DfE (2025) states:

‘Given that pupils' cognitive abilities are in continual flux, it is expected that their cognitive strengths and difficulties will shift over time and in response to environmental demands. This dynamic nature makes the identification and assessment of SEND particularly challenging, as symptoms and behaviours rarely stem from a single, clearly identifiable cause.

The profile of need is frequently multifaceted, stemming from a combination of cognitive, social, environmental, neurological, and genetic factors that interact in complex ways, sometimes across generations. (Rauch & Lamphear, 2012)

Cognition and Learning

- BWCET SENDCos have identified that it is becoming increasingly difficult to access Educational Psychology time to determine a pupil's strengths and difficulties, in order to gain an accurate understanding of a pupil's cognitive profile.

- BWCET recognises the benefits that rapid and robust cognitive assessments can provide to parents, pupils and staff, alike. It is with this in mind, that the BWCET Cognition and Learning Strategy recommendations should form part of the school's assessment toolkit.

- BWCET has considered research findings, strong practice within our schools and liaised with trusted global assessment providers to ensure we recommend the most appropriate and efficient assessment screening materials.

- The SEND Code of Practice (2014) states:

'Support for learning difficulties may be required when pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.'

Categorisation of Diagnosed Need

Profound and/or Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)

Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)

Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

Gov.uk (March 2025) Appendix 7: Special Educational Needs and/or disability guidance (accessible) -

BARRIERS TO LEARNING

A Working Memory	B Auditory Processing	C Non-Verbal Reasoning	D Verbal Reasoning
E Phonological Awareness	F Long-Term Memory	G Processing Speed	H Spatial Ability

Broad Barriers to Learning

A Working memory

Working memory is a widely-used term in psychology and is related to intelligence, learning, and problem-solving. It's one of the brain's executive functions: it's like a temporary sticky note in the brain.

B Auditory processing difficulties

Some of the most frequently reported symptoms of APD include: significant difficulty understanding speech, especially in the presence of background noise, difficulty following multi-step directions that are presented verbally, without visual cues, pupils being easily distracted by loud or spontaneous (sudden) sounds.

C Non-verbal reasoning

is the ability to analyse visual information and solve problems without the use of words. It is also known as abstract, logical, or inductive reasoning

D Verbal reasoning

Verbal reasoning is the ability to use language and words to solve problems and logically work through concepts. It's a test of a pupil’s ability to process and understand the language, not of learned knowledge.

E Phonological processing/awareness

Phonological processing is the ability to analyse and manipulate the sounds of language, or phonemes, to understand and produce spoken and written language. It's a critical skill for learning to read and write, and for developing strong language abilities.

F Long-term memory difficulties

Long-term memory involves the processes of encoding, storing, and retrieving information. It can store episodic memories, procedural memories, and semantic memory.

G Processing speed impact

Processing speed is the speed at which the brain takes in, interprets, and responds to information. It's made up of several components, including perceptual, cognitive, and output speed.

H Spatial ability

Spatial ability is the capacity to understand and manipulate the relationship between objects and space, including mentally rotating, visualising, and perceiving their dimensions.

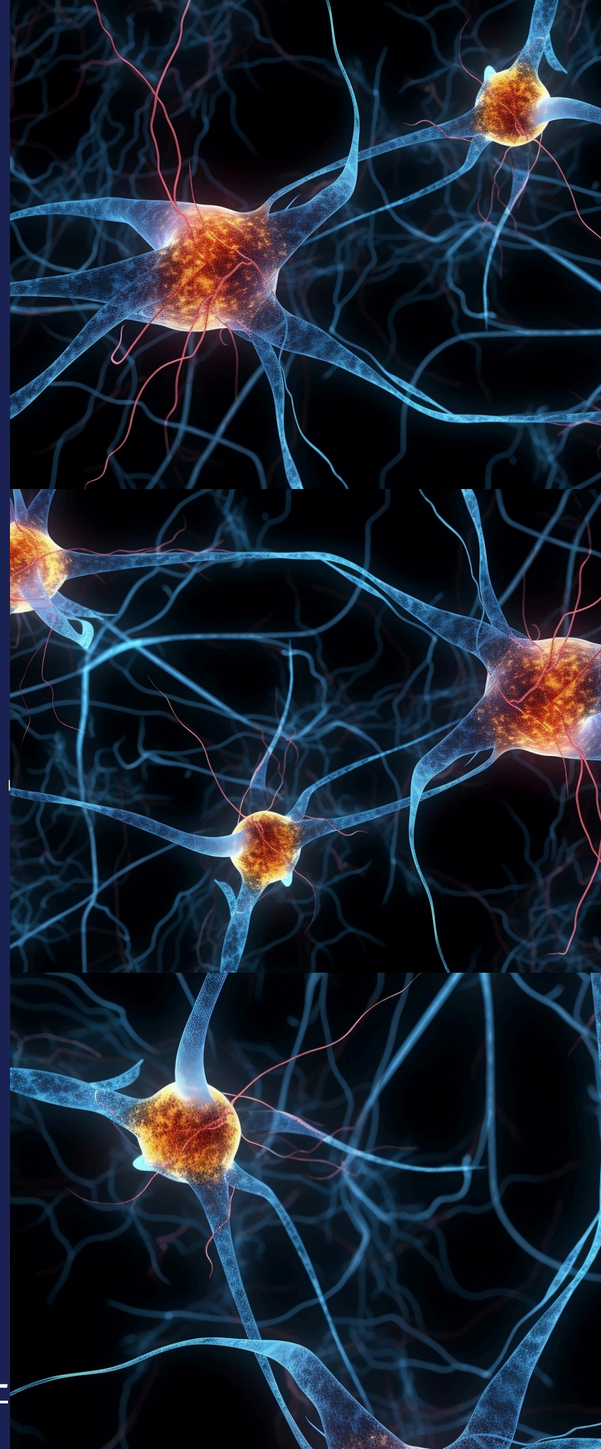
MLD, SLD, PMLD

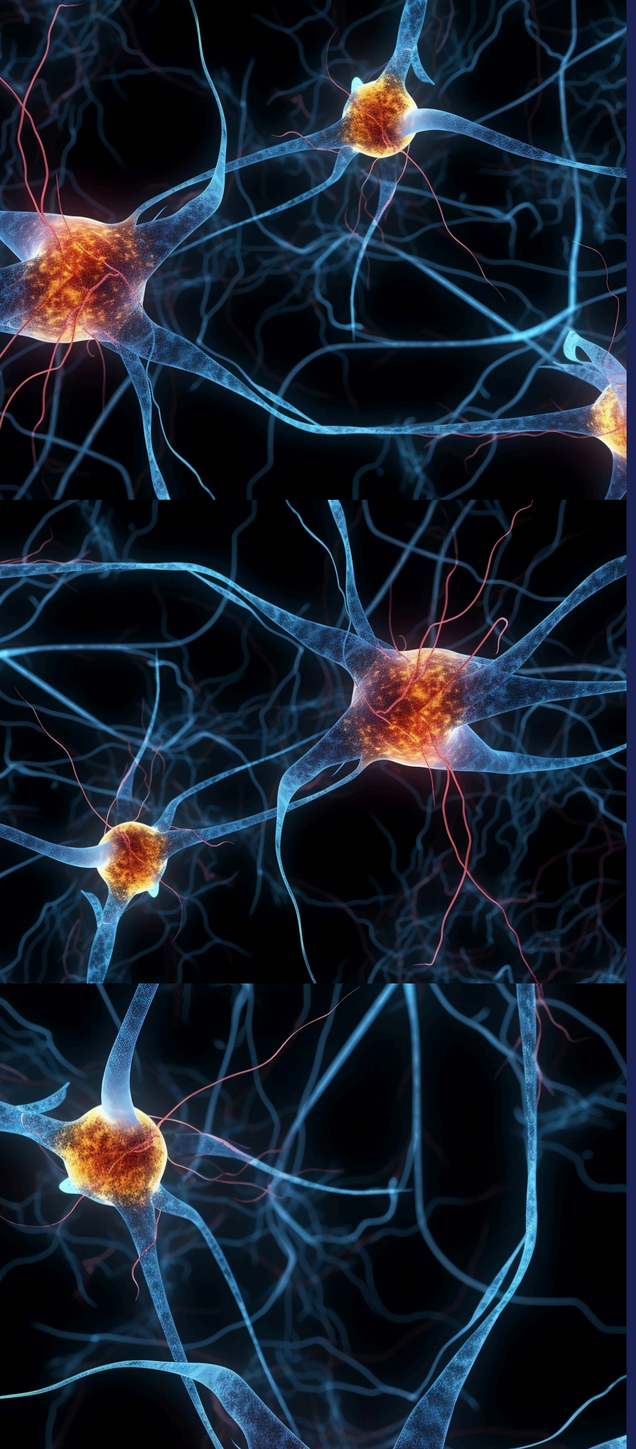
Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) - indicates a pupil working significantly below expected levels in all core areas of the curriculum, despite appropriate interventions. Pupils may display greater difficulty in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills and in understanding concepts. They may also have associated speech and language delay, low self-esteem, low levels of concentration and under-developed social skills.

Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) - significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. This has a major effect on pupils' ability to participate in the school curriculum without support. They may also have associated difficulties in mobility and co-ordination, communication and perception and the acquisition of self-help skills.

Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) - complex learning needs. In addition, pupils have other significant difficulties including physical disabilities, sensory impairment. Pupils require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and also for personal care.

Gov.uk (March 2025) Appendix 7: Special Educational Needs and/or disability guidance (accessible) -





Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) paragraph 6.31 cites:
'Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.'

While a pupil may display traits linked to a SpLD, it is important to note that a diagnosis **must** come from an qualified specialist (e.g. an Educational Psychologist/Clinical Psychologist or those with post-graduate qualifications in Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. PdGrad Dip in Dyslexia/Dyscalculia or further assessment skills Certificate of Competence in Education Testing (CCET) or equivalent).

Pupils with a SpLD may show many strengths in other areas such as reasoning, and in visual and creative fields.

SpLD - Dyslexia

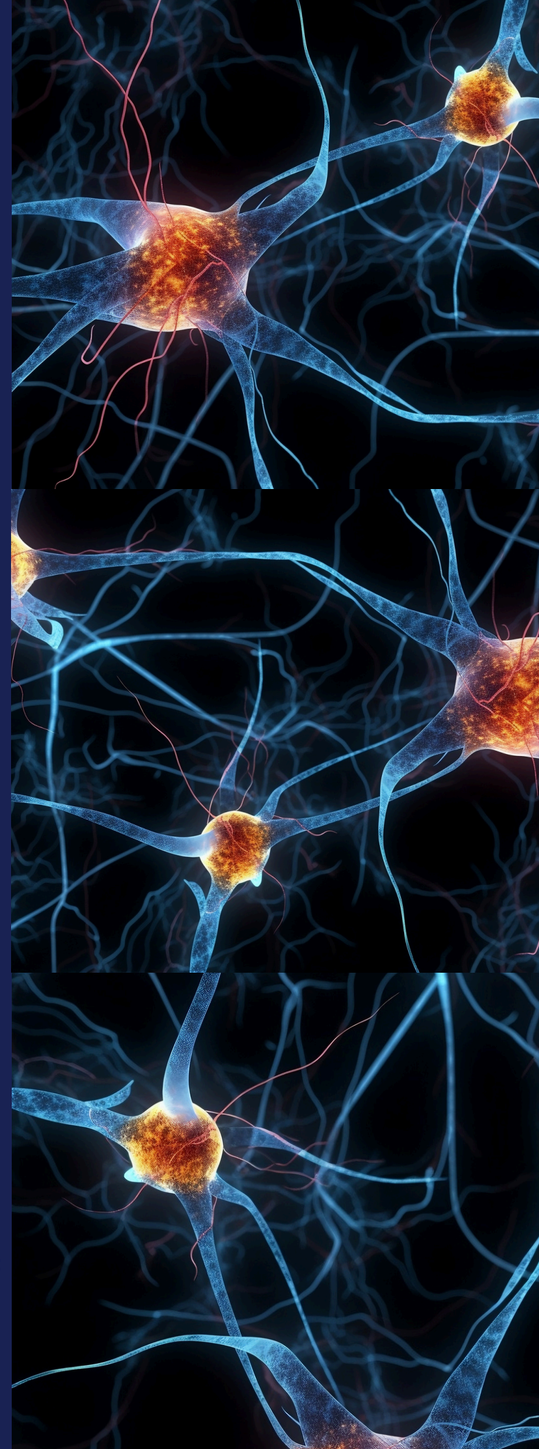
Dyslexia is primarily a set of processing difficulties that affect the acquisition of reading and spelling at word level. Working memory, orthographic skills and processing speed problems can contribute to the impact of dyslexia and should be assessed, alongside specific phoneme and grapheme correspondence.

The most commonly observed cognitive impairment in dyslexia is a difficulty in phonological processing (i.e. in phonological awareness, phonological processing speed or phonological memory).

Considerations:

- Dyslexia frequently co-occurs with one or more other developmental difficulty, including developmental language disorder, dyscalculia, ADHD, and developmental coordination disorder.

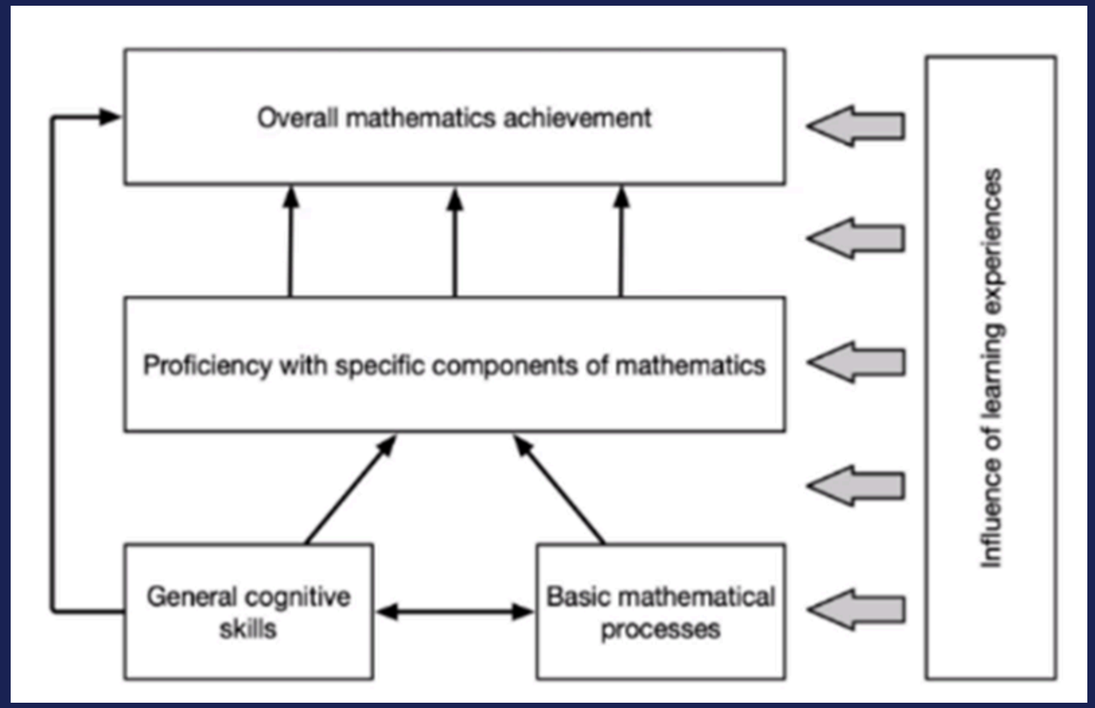
- If a pupil presents with dyslexic tendencies, it is important to consider the impact of this on their holistic attainment. For example, if a pupil has difficulty in reading, or has a slow speed of verbal/auditory processing, this will likely encompass difficulties across numbers and letters without scaffolded support.



SpLD - Dyscalculia

Features: A specific learning difficulty in mathematics is a set of processing difficulties that affects the acquisition of arithmetic and other areas of mathematics.

In dyscalculia, the most commonly observed cognitive impairment is a pronounced and persistent difficulty with numerical magnitude processing and understanding. This can present in age-related difficulties with naming, ordering and comparing physical quantities and numbers, estimating and place value.



Some individuals may not present with a specific cognitive impairment in numerical magnitude processing but have an equally debilitating specific learning difficulty (SpLD in mathematics) due to other processing difficulties. Difficulties in language, executive function (verbal and visuo-spatial working memory, inhibitory control) and visual-spatial processing may also contribute.

This includes executive functioning

A SpLD in mathematics frequently co-occurs with one or more of the following: attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, developmental language disorder (DLD) and developmental coordination disorder (DCD).

Specific Learning Difficulties Assessment and Support Committee (SASC, 2025)

SpLD - Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is a specific learning difficulty (SpLD). Impaired handwriting, orthographic coding difficulties and finger sequencing (the movement of muscles required to write) are often indicators of dysgraphia. As with many diagnoses, dysgraphia can present differently in each pupil, but it often overlaps with other learning difficulties and developmental coordination disorder (DCD). Common features include:

Writing difficulties:

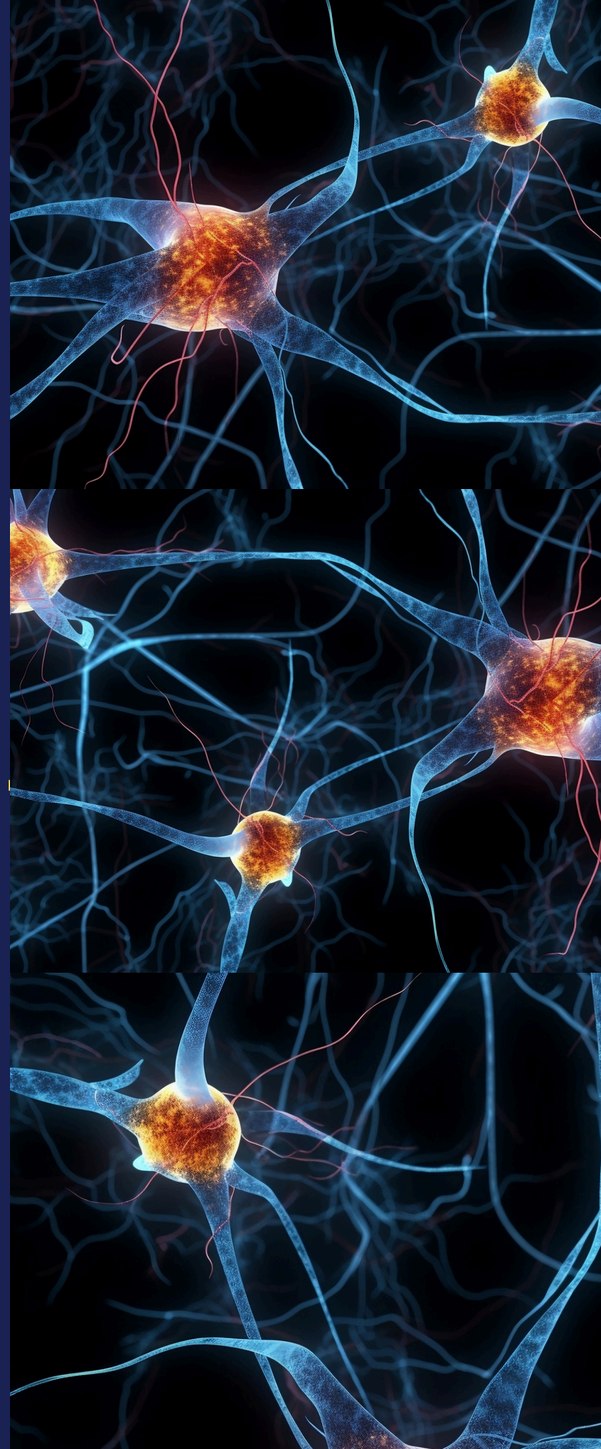
- Illegible or inconsistent handwriting
- Difficulty spacing letters and words correctly
- Trouble forming letters and numbers

Cognitive and motor challenges:

- Struggles with spelling and punctuation
- Difficulty organising thoughts on paper
- Slow or laboured writing
- Hand pain or fatigue when writing

There are, typically, five types of dysgraphia (Click here for further information).

- Dyslexic dysgraphia
- Motor dysgraphia
- Spatial dysgraphia
- Phonological dysgraphia
- Lexical dysgraphia



Executive Function

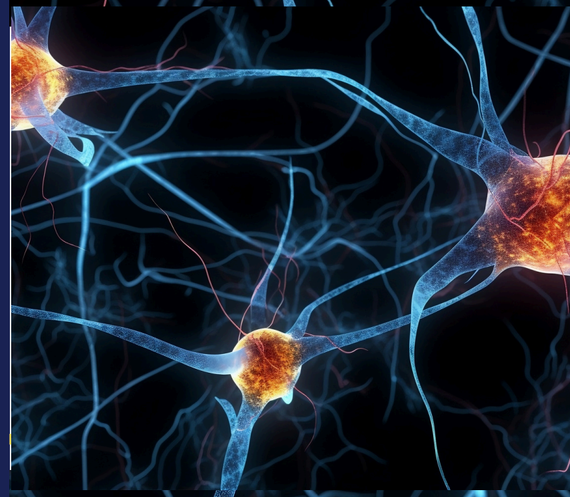
Executive function is a set of mental skills. It includes working memory, flexible thinking, and self-control. We use these skills every day to learn, work, and manage daily life. Trouble with executive function can make it hard to focus, follow directions, and handle emotions, among other things.

The frontal lobe in the brain manages executive function. While anything that affects brain tissue can affect the frontal lobe and a pupil's executive function, some neurodevelopmental (brain development-related) conditions specifically involve frontal lobe effects and symptoms.

There are three main areas of executive function.

- Working memory
- Cognitive flexibility (also called flexible thinking)
- Inhibitory control (which includes self-control)

Research shows that the three main areas of executive function develop in early childhood and reach their peak in early 30s.



PATHWAY

01
High quality teaching

02
Identification of need

03
Teaching adaptions

04
Targeted intervention

05
Specialist support

UNIVERSAL

TARGETED

SPECIALIST

High-Quality Curriculum and Teaching

- At BWCET, we know that our curriculum is a vital tool to ensure that our pupils do well. We have precisely set out the important knowledge that we want pupils to acquire and the order in which we believe it should be taught.

- We need to carefully consider the risks and benefits of pupils missing any aspect of the curriculum in order to receive wider interventions.

- Studies (including the DfE's 2025 Rapid Evidence Review) show that in-class support is often more effective than withdrawal from the classroom, especially when:
  - The teacher is trained in inclusive pedagogy
  - The classroom environment is adapted to meet diverse needs
  - Well considered adaptations are made by teachers

- The first consideration should be given to appropriate adaptations to teaching in order to support inclusive access to the curriculum, alongside in-class support to address specific barriers to learning and gaps in knowledge and skills. However, there may be times where pupils require short-term, precisely focused intervention from a highly skilled member of staff to overcome a barrier which is limiting their ability to keep up with the curriculum.

- Interventions should be regularly reviewed for impact and adjusted where necessary.

Adaptation versus Differentiation

Differentiation has ‘fallen out of favour’ as a term in education, with the focus being on adaptive teaching. So what is the real difference between these two practices?

If we look back, differentiation often meant different pupils working on quite different tasks. It was deemed necessary because the perception was that pupils couldn’t access the core knowledge being taught. In practice, it often meant our lower attaining pupils continually focused on work with less demand in terms of knowledge. Typically, this did not reduce gaps in attainment for these pupils - and in reality, the gaps often widened as pupils accessed less and less of the curriculum compared to their higher attaining peers.

So, if we see pupils working on the same curriculum content, undertaking similar types of tasks, does that mean automatically that we’re not meeting need - that we can’t possibly be giving access to our lowest attaining pupils while also challenging the highest attainers?

Far from it. Pupils doing the ‘same task’ can mean very different things. Sometimes a task can be a ‘one size fits all’ activity where some pupils cannot access the thinking & others finish quickly. Alternatively, it can be an intentionally designed, ambitious task, rooted in the curriculum sequence, where teachers deliberately engineer access and depth so everyone participates in the same learning. The second version is adaptive teaching and adaptive task design.

Pupils with SEND should access the same high-quality instruction as other pupils. Under the Equality Act 2010, schools must make reasonable adjustments so children with disabilities can fully participate in the curriculum.

Adaptation versus Differentiation

Adaptive teaching makes ‘different work’ rare because we anticipate memory and language demands, then build scaffolds into the instruction and task so pupils are able to think about the same content. An excellent example of that would be found in our Trust primary humanities curriculum.

Typically:

- Knowledge is very carefully and precisely sequenced over time so that pupils can hook new learning to prior knowledge - the ground is prepared for the new learning.
- Assessment practice is thorough so that we check pupils have retained the knowledge that is required to access the new learning.
- New knowledge or vocabulary is introduced carefully and in context - through stories that captivate pupils and give them context on which to hook this new learning and give them the best chance of remembering it.
- Pupils are not overwhelmed by too much new content in one go - lessons keep the main thing as the main thing - everything can’t be the main thing.
- Intentional practice is built into lesson design to ensure that pupils have multiple opportunities to use the knowledge orally before they are expected to access it independently in reading or writing tasks.

Adaptive Teaching Design

Reducing memory demands - reducing the number of things learners have to think about at the same time - keeping focus only on the core knowledge and reducing distraction.

Anticipating memory demands - having a curriculum that is sequenced to prepare the ground for new knowledge, then ensuring a focus on strategies to reinforce, connect and deepen understanding.

Supporting memory demands - introducing scaffolding that ‘holds’ some of the memory demands for the pupil, allowing them to think with the same content as everybody else.

Strengthening memory - ensuring a robust culture of retrieval so knowledge is remembered long term and by ensuring learners know enough to access lessons – which may involve teacher intervening if fundamental building blocks of learning are not in place.

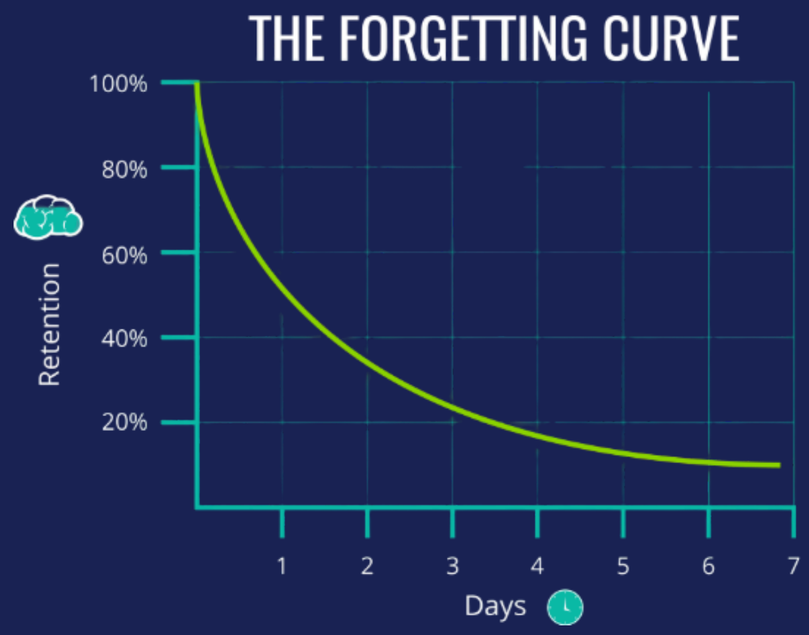
Clare Sealy (*https://primarytimery.com/2024/03/29/adaptive-teaching-the-four-verbs-approach/)*

High-Quality Teaching

- *In order for knowledge to pass from short-term to long-term memory, it needs to be well-taught and then embedded over time.*

- *It can be easy to assume that because we have covered content within the curriculum, it has been learned. However, we know that without regularly revisiting important knowledge it is less likely to be retained.*

The Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve is a psychological model that shows how quickly we forget information over time if we don't make an effort to retain it



Developed by Hermann Ebbinghaus in the 1800s, the curve demonstrates that:

- *We forget most new information within the first hours after learning it.*
- *Memory loss is exponential — very steep at the start, then it levels off.*
- *Without review, people typically forget up to 70–80% of what they learned within 24 hours*

High-Quality Teaching

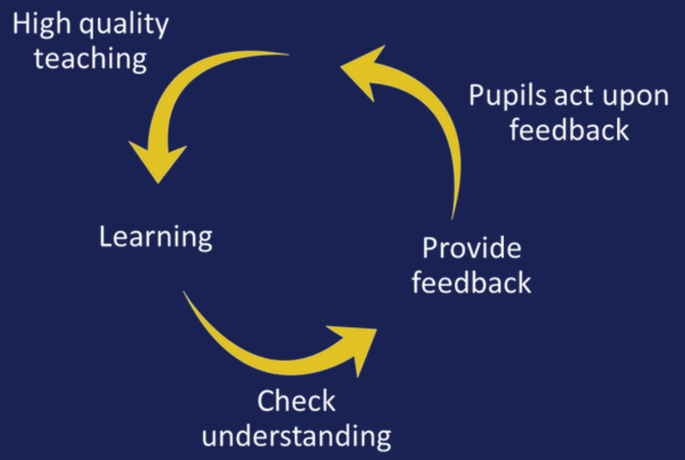
Responsive teaching is the ongoing, day-to-day checking of understanding that enables us to respond to, and meet the needs of, the pupils we are teaching. To do this effectively we must have a clear understanding of the content of what we are teaching, know the best strategies to check what pupils have learned and remembered, and have a clear idea of how to use this information to inform next steps in teaching. This can be summarised as follows:

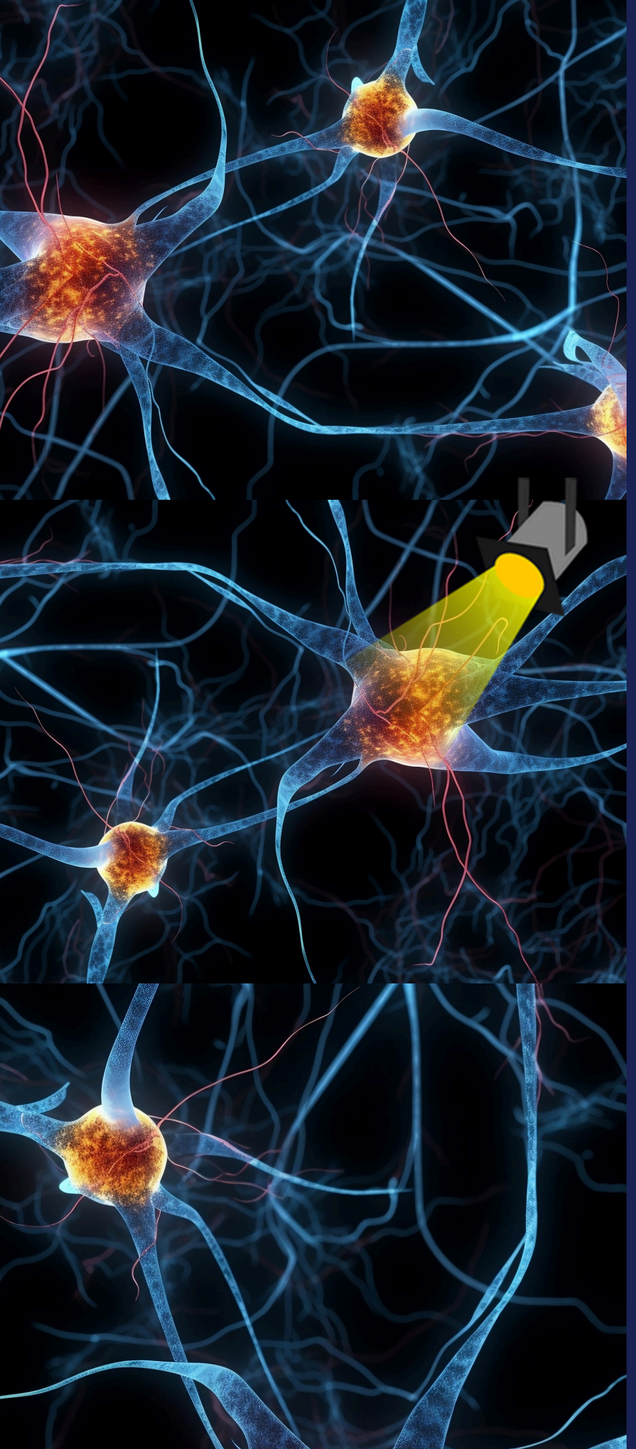
Where the pupil is going	Where the pupil is right now	How to get there
Forming a clear understanding of end points and the components they are made up of	Identifying what has been learned and remembered	Providing feedback to move the learning forward

Responsive teaching helps ensure all learners, including those with SEND, are supported, challenged, and can engage meaningfully with the lesson content. The BWCET Responsive Teaching Toolkit provides an overview of each of these areas including examples and guidance to support the development of responsive teaching strategies across your school.

“Effective feedback needs to be used as a windscreen, rather than a rear-view mirror. In other words, it should be a ‘recipe for future action’.”

Dylan Wiliam





Spotlighting

With many demands on staff time and resources, we must ensure we maintain our focus on gaps in knowledge and barriers to learning for our pupils and consider the actions that can make the biggest difference.

We start with a floodlight – reviewing the whole class, then focus our spotlight, considering, in this order:

- Who is not keeping up with the curriculum?
- Who does not appear to have maintained the standards at which they were previously assessed?
- Who has the potential to reach a higher standard?

We consider:

- The **precise gaps** in knowledge that are holding the pupil back.
- How we intend to address these in class.
- How we will keep a close check on progress.

Impact of Difficulties

- The teaching of secure foundational knowledge must be urgently prioritised. Where gaps develop in early reading, transcription and mathematical skills, these should be prioritised, initially, in the earliest years, through staff intervention in the classroom. Evidence demonstrates that when there is a early identification of needs, well focused teaching can make the most difference to the pupil. Where these gaps are identified beyond early years, pupils will need targeted intervention, focusing on these priority gaps.

- Further investigation might be required when consistent patterns of low attainment and limited progress occur. Cognition and learning needs generally account for difficulties in curriculum-related areas including reading, writing and spelling as well as mathematics. Difficulties with reading and processing can also impact more widely on the pupil's curriculum acquisition.

- It is important to consider the impact of verbal/auditory memory, working memory, executive function difficulties and/or processing difficulties such as sequencing, inference, coherence and elaboration, when assessing academic skills.

01 - High-Quality Teaching

INCLUSION BY DESIGN

01A

Inclusive Environment

01C

Deliberate Interactions

01B

Predictable & Consistent Routines

01D

Relational Approaches

Prior to any pupil assessment taking place, we must ensure that the learning is deliberately designed to consciously maximise the opportunities for pupils' development; eliminating barriers to progress.

01A - Inclusive Provision

	Approach	Considerations
Organised Environment	The use of labels supports pupils to understand the learning environment. Pictures/words and audio buttons can help to reinforce key learning areas and tasks, throughout the space.	Are spaces for privacy/quiet areas accessible for pupils to have ‘down time’? Areas that are less visually/aurally distracting may enable some learners to better engage in challenging content.
Considered Displays	Pupil’s own work is displayed and labelled appropriately. Displays provide the opportunity for effective engagement without overwhelming the viewer.	Are some displays interactive - enabling pupils an opportunity to comment upon the content? Is the language-load accessible for pupils? Do displays offer opportunities for discussion? Do displays support intervention content e.g. Colourful Semantics sentence building?
Noise & Lighting	Background noise levels are managed consistently, enabling pupils and adults to hear one another with ease. Lighting is actively considered and is at a good level throughout the space.	The quiet and undistracted environment helps pupils to receive direct instruction. Are transition times managed effectively, so that noise levels are not excessive and pupils know what to expect?
Literacy Focus	Literacy specific areas include a range of books (e.g. traditional stories, bilingual/dual language books and a variety of genres and books related to pupils’ social and cultural context).	Consider how the setting promotes speaking and oral retelling.

01B - Predictable Routines

	Approach	Considerations
Visual Timetable	A visual timetable is a way of helping pupils to predict what will happen, during the course of their day. They can reduce uncertainty, anxiety and stress.	Do all staff utilise them consistently? Are they utilised during periods of intervention? Photographs of activities are often easier to understand than picture representations.
Now and Next Boards	The now and next board is usually a smaller version of a visual timetable with two or three parts. It typically follows a typical structure of: now/next/then.	Are all staff using the now/next/then board, consistently, both in class and within intervention activities?
Transitions	Transitions are often times of uncertainty for all pupils. Each transition should be carefully considered. Calm and orderly transitions support positive behavioural expectations.	Particular attention should be given to those pupils with communication and language needs, ensuring that they actively understand the expectation and are not merely 'following' others, during periods of transition.
I do/We do/You do	Rosenshine's Principles are implemented to ensure that pupils are provided with models to help reduce cognitive load and demand on their working memory. There is a shared understanding that pupils will attempt to copy and trial.	Are language models implemented around the school environment for pupils to follow?
Structured Conversations	Pupils have frequent opportunities to take part in structured conversations with peers, as well as with familiar and unfamiliar adults.	Do pupils have opportunities to interact with peers through a structured approach? Are staff, where possible, rotated to provide pupils with a wider range of conversational inputs?

01C - Inclusive Interactions

	Approach	Considerations
Interactions	Adults consistently use pupils' names, good eye contact and positive social etiquette when interacting with pupils.	Is pace of staff interactions actively considered, consciously building in time for process and thinking? Is subtle sabotage, where staff discreetly provoke communication by placing a low-stakes challenge, routinely used?
Gesture	Natural gestures and some key word signing are used in interactions with pupils, when required. Additional more formalised signing approaches (e.g. Makaton) can be used in a more targeted and consistent way, when required.	Are opportunities for the use of symbols, pictures and props used to reinforce language? If, and when, the pupil becomes more confident in SLCN development, is the need for gesture removed by the adult?
Imitating, Commenting & Extending	Adults take appropriate chances to expand pupils' interactions by imitating, commenting and, finally, extending dialogue - encouraging two-way discussion.	Are opportunities prioritised by staff to label familiar and unfamiliar actions, objects and abstractions (e.g. feelings and emotions)? If the pupil uses grammar incorrectly, does the adult recast the sentence back to them, modelling the correct sentence structure?
Questioning	Open questions are utilised and maximised to extend pupils' thinking (what, where, when, how & why questions).	Are sequenced questions deliberately built into interactions to gradually increase stretch, depth and challenge?
Choices	Adults consciously provide pupils with choices to stretch their interests and interactions, to encourage communication.	Where pupils struggle to cope with demands/requests, are 'this or that' options provided to help guide positive decisions? (For example: "Would you like to read a story or play on the computer?")

01D - Relational Approaches

	Overriding principles	Reflections
Supportive and Empathetic	All adults consistently interact with the pupil to build upon their positive relational experience. Adults empathise with the pupils as and when required, without 'blaming' the pupil for any shortcomings. When implementing disciplinary boundaries, it is important to make sure there are clear explanations offered as to the reasons why such boundaries are needed.	Do staff use empathetic language, where required, as opposed to forceful, punitive language? "Everyone makes mistakes and we are proud of how hard you are trying."
Relational	Adults and pastoral teams take a keen interest in the life of the pupil, both in and outside of school. School-wide, staff demonstrate an appropriate number of relational interactions to make the pupil feel valued and part of the community.	Do staff prioritise building a pupil's self-esteem by actively seeking opportunities to offer praise and support to them in individual/whole-class/whole-school situations? If the pupil has succeeded in a task, does the adult use positive reinforcement to support them in their *next* task?
Body Language	Open body language, hand-shaking, eye contact and one-to-one attention are utilised to support the pupil to recognise effective communication techniques over time.	Staff members model positive body language. They prompt and encourage positive body language both in and outside of the classroom; including yard and playground activities.
Adaptability	Adults consciously provide pupils with PHSE provision, which simulates opportunities to explore emotionally challenging situations.	PHSE sessions should be both pre-emptive and responsive to the needs of pupils. The sessions should cover opportunities for communication, teamwork and problem-solving to support pupils to develop resilience.

02 - Identification of Need

TRUST ASSESSMENTS

- A — Language Screen
- B — Early Mathematics
- C — Reading Fluency
- D — Number Fluency check
- E — Year 5 Mathematics
- F — NCETM Ready to Progress
- G — New Group Reading Tests (NGRTs)

OTHER TARGETED ASSESSMENTS

- H — Cognitive Ability Test (CAT-4)
- I — Working Memory Rating Scale (WMRS)
- J — York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)
- K — Dyslexia Screener
- L — Dyscalculia Screener
- M — New Group Spelling Tests (NGSTs)
- N — Helen Arkell Spelling Test (HAST)
- O — Detailed Assessment of the Speed of Handwriting-2 (DASH-2)

02A - Identifying Need - Language Screen

Language Screen (Ox & Ed)

3 1/2 years to 16 years

Language Screen

Aspects

- Pre-Assessment Scores
- Age-Related Equivalent Scores
- Percentile Rank Scores
- Standardised Scores
- Post-Assessment Scores
- Expressive Language
- Receptive Language
- Listening Comprehension
- Sentence Repetition

Time

- Dependent on age/ability - approximately, 5-10 minutes per pupil assessment

Considerations

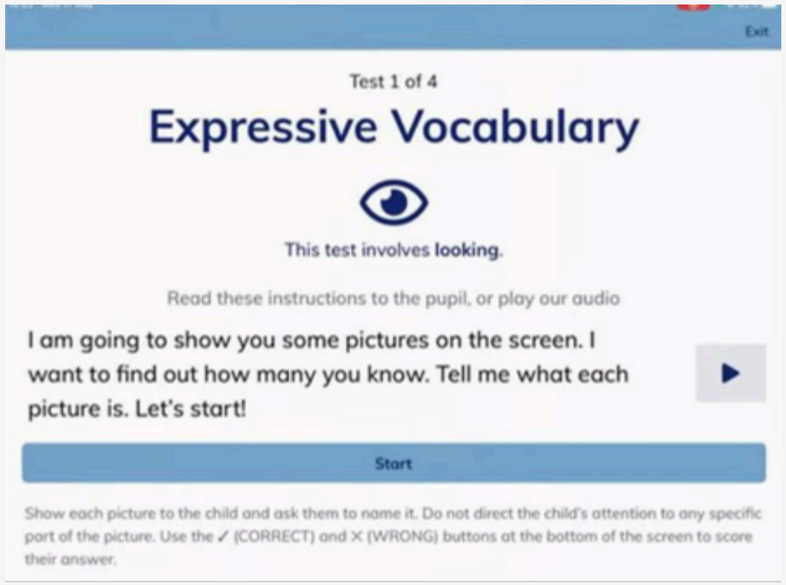
- It is a requirement that all pupils on entry to EY (or new Reception starters) within BWCET are screened using this tool in their first half term. Schools are also encouraged to consider using this tool, in other year groups, where there are concerns development in relation to speech, language and communication.

Cost / Training

- Free with DfE-funded NELI schools
- Free to BWCET schools
- E--training is included as part of NELI training intervention package.
- E-learning available via Futurelearn 10 - 15 hours of CPD.

Good information output for low-cost

Good value for money vs time input



02B - Identifying Need - Early Mathematics

BWCET

Early Mathematics Assessment

Aspects

BWCET assessments can provide a starting point for identifying specific gaps in knowledge. There are 8 key areas in the BWCET Reception assessment tracker that can be used to identify precise areas which pupils are not yet secure with.

This includes:

- subitising
- number bonds to 5 and subtraction facts
- composition to 10
- numbers bonds to 10
- doubles
- counting
- read and recognise
- number formation

Time

20-30 minutes (termly)

Considerations

- To be used with all Reception pupils.
- This assessment can also be used with older pupils who are working significantly below the curriculum expectations for their age in mathematics to identify any gaps in early foundational knowledge.

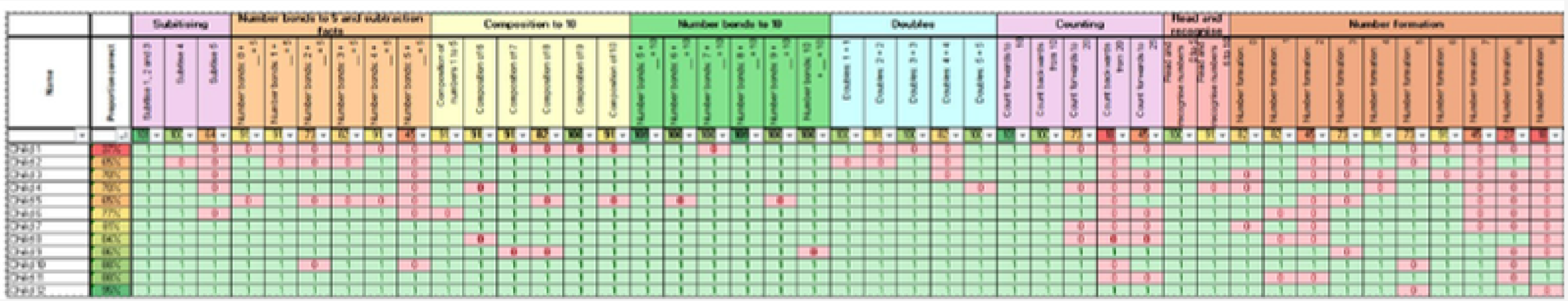
Cost / Training

Please see the BWCET Maths Vault for further guidance on how to administer this assessment.

Please ensure that any staff who administer the assessment have watched the video guidance in advance.

The assessment is freely available to BWCET schools.

Indicates a pupil's understanding of early number including subitising, composition, cardinality and counting.



02C - Identifying Need - Reading Fluency

BWCET

Years 2 - 6

Reading Fluency

Purpose

The BWCET reading fluency assessment focuses on:

- Reading Rate – How many words a pupil reads correctly in one minute.
- Accuracy – How many words are read without errors.
- Fluency – The smoothness and flow of reading, including appropriate phrasing and expression (prosody).
- Teachers use the Fluency Rubric (Rasinski) to assess the different components of fluency to make an overall judgement,

Fluency is a critical component of reading development because it acts as a bridge between word recognition and comprehension.

Time

- Pupil has has 1 minute to read the text out loud.
- The assessments are designed to be delivered three times a year.

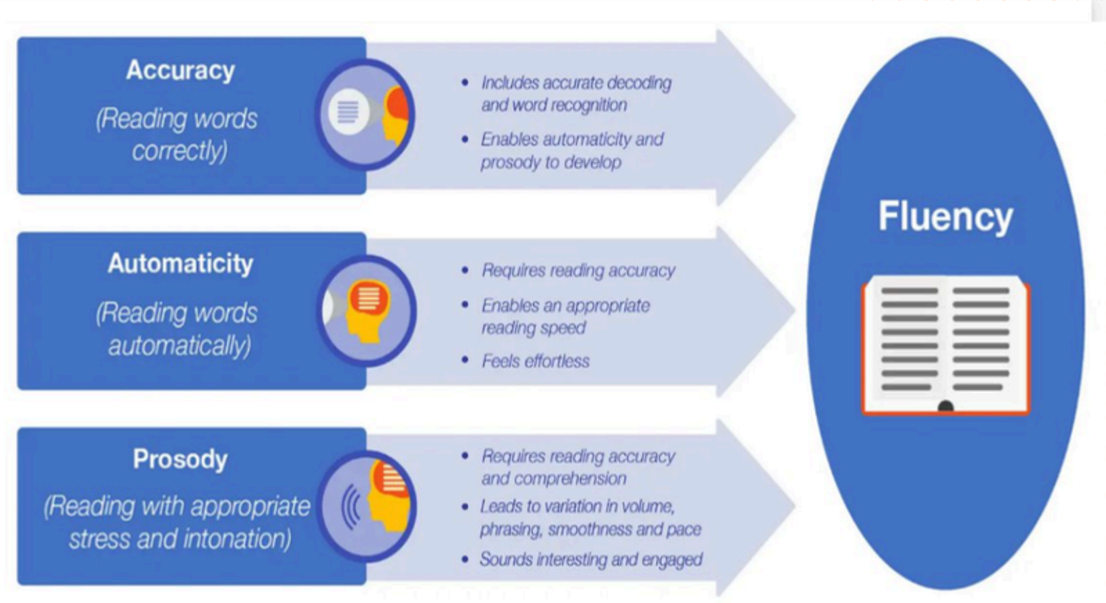
Considerations

- Used as a whole-cohort assessment to identify those pupils who are not reading fluently.
- Texts have been matched to the Lexile reading standards by school year group and term based on national norms from Metametrics and GL Assessment data.
- As it is a repeated assessment, it can be used to demonstrate progress in fluency skills.

Cost / Training

- Freely available to Trust schools.
- Guidance provided to subject leaders to share with staff.
- A rapid (one minute) assessment that enables fast identification of those with barriers to reading fluency.

HGFL study demonstrated **2 years and 3 months** progress in reading comprehension and gain an increase in reading accuracy of **13 months** for a reading fluency intervention of 2 x 20mins



02C - Identifying Need - Reading Fluency (continued)

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL FLUENCY RUBRIC

	1	2	3	4
Expression and Volume	Reads in a quiet voice as if to get words out. The reading does not sound natural like talking to a friend.	Reads in a quiet voice. The reading sounds natural in part of the text, but the reader does not always sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with volume and expression. However, sometimes the reader slips into expressionless reading and does not sound like they are talking to a friend.	Reads with varied volume and expression. The reader sounds like they are talking to a friend with their voice matching the interpretation of the passage.
Phrasing	Reads word-by-word in a monotone voice.	Reads in two or three word phrases, not adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.	Reads with a mixture of run-ons, mid sentence pauses for breath, and some choppiness. There is reasonable stress and intonation.	Reads with good phrasing; adhering to punctuation, stress and intonation.
Smoothness	Frequently hesitates while reading, sounds out words, and repeats words or phrases. The reader makes multiple attempts to read the same passage.	Reads with extended pauses or hesitations. The reader has many "rough spots."	Reads with occasional breaks in rhythm. The reader has difficulty with specific words and/or sentence structures.	Reads smoothly with some breaks, but self-corrects with difficult words and/ or sentence structures.
Pace	Reads slowly and laboriously.	Reads moderately slowly.	Reads generally at an appropriate rate throughout reading.	Reads at an appropriate conversational pace throughout the reading.

Year 6 Fluency Assessment

Name:_____ Date:_____

Adult Script	Reminders
Hand pupil the extract and say "I would like you to read this extract out loud to me." "If you get stuck at any point, I will wait for three seconds and then tell you the word you are stuck with so that you can continue to read." "Start here (point at first word of extract). Are you ready? You may begin."	Begin the one-minute timer when the pupil reads the first word. Mark the point the child has reached after one minute then allow them to continue to the end of the extract. Circle any words the pupil reads incorrectly. If the pupil hesitates, wait for three seconds before reading the word for the pupil. Mark this word as incorrect. Stop the test if the pupil does not read any words correctly on the first line.

The Secret Garden LEXILE 900

It was the sweetest, most mysterious-looking place any one could imagine. The high walls 15
which shut it in were covered with the leafless stems of climbing roses, which were so 31
thick that they were matted together. Mary Lennox knew they were roses because she 45
had seen a great many roses in India. All the ground was covered with grass of a wintry 63
brown, and out of it grew clumps of bushes which were surely rose-bushes if they were 80
alive. There were numbers of standard roses which had so spread their branches that they 95
were like little trees. There were other trees in the garden, and one of the things which 112
made the place look strangest and loveliest was that climbing roses had run all over them 128
and swung down long tendrils which made light swaying curtains, and here and there they 143
had caught at each other or at a far-reaching branch and had crept from one tree to 161
another and made lovely bridges of themselves. There were neither leaves nor roses on 175
them now, and Mary did not know whether they were dead or alive, but their thin grey or 193
brown branches and sprays looked like a sort of hazy mantle spreading over everything, 207
walls, and trees, and even brown grass, where they had fallen from their fastenings and 222
run along the ground. It was this hazy tangle from tree to tree which made it all look so 241
mysterious. Mary had thought it must be different from other gardens which had not 255
been left all by themselves so long; and indeed it was different from any other place she 271
had ever seen in her life. 277
"How still it is" she whispered. "How still" 285
Then she waited a moment and listened at the stillness. The robin, who had flown to his 302
tree-top, was still as all the rest. He did not even flutter his wings; he sat without stirring, 321
and looked at Mary. 325
"No wonder it is still," she whispered again. "I am the first person who has spoken in 342
here for ten years." 346
She moved away from the door, stepping as softly as if she were afraid of awakening 362
someone. She was glad that there was grass under her feet and that her steps made no 379
sounds. 380

Mark the point the pupil reached after one minute and then complete the following:

02D - Identifying Need - Number Fluency Check

BWCET

Number Fluency Check

Aspects

The BWCET number facts check assesses pupils' fluency with number facts within 20.

The assessment includes facts from all of the groups indicated within the table below, with a greater weighting towards the Year 2 facts.

Time

- 5 minutes
- Pupils are given 6 seconds to answer each question to test automaticity.

Considerations

- To be used at the end of Key Stage 1.
- This assessment can also be used with older pupils to test the fluent recall of number facts within 20.
- Following support to consolidate key facts, this assessment can be repeated to track progress in pupils' fluency with number facts over time.

Cost / Training

- Free
- Limited training necessary for staff.
- Rapidly identifies those priority facts that pupils are not fluent with.

Assesses automatic recall of facts within 20, providing an indication of which groups of facts pupils are not yet fluent with.

+	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	0+0	0+1	0+2	0+3	0+4	0+5	0+6	0+7	0+8	0+9	0+10
1	1+0	1+1	1+2	1+3	1+4	1+5	1+6	1+7	1+8	1+9	1+10
2	2+0	2+1	2+2	2+3	2+4	2+5	2+6	2+7	2+8	2+9	2+10
3	3+0	3+1	3+2	3+3	3+4	3+5	3+6	3+7	3+8	3+9	3+10
4	4+0	4+1	4+2	4+3	4+4	4+5	4+6	4+7	4+8	4+9	4+10
5	5+0	5+1	5+2	5+3	5+4	5+5	5+6	5+7	5+8	5+9	5+10
6	6+0	6+1	6+2	6+3	6+4	6+5	6+6	6+7	6+8	6+9	6+10
7	7+0	7+1	7+2	7+3	7+4	7+5	7+6	7+7	7+8	7+9	7+10
8	8+0	8+1	8+2	8+3	8+4	8+5	8+6	8+7	8+8	8+9	8+10
9	9+0	9+1	9+2	9+3	9+4	9+5	9+6	9+7	9+8	9+9	9+10
10	10+0	10+1	10+2	10+3	10+4	10+5	10+6	10+7	10+8	10+9	10+10

Composition of 3, 4 and 5	Composition of 6 and 7	Composition of 8 and 9	Composition of 10
Adding 0	Adding 10	Doubles	Near doubles
Bridging through 10			

02E - Identifying Need - Year 5 Mathematics

BWCET

Year 5 Mathematics assessments

Aspects

Used to assess key mathematical knowledge from Year 2 to Year 5 with a greater weighting towards Year 5 content.

Paper 1 - Arithmetic

Paper 2 - Ready to Progress criteria

Can be used to identify gaps in key arithmetic knowledge, calculation methods and reasoning.

Time

Not strictly timed.

Paper 1: Approximately 30 minutes

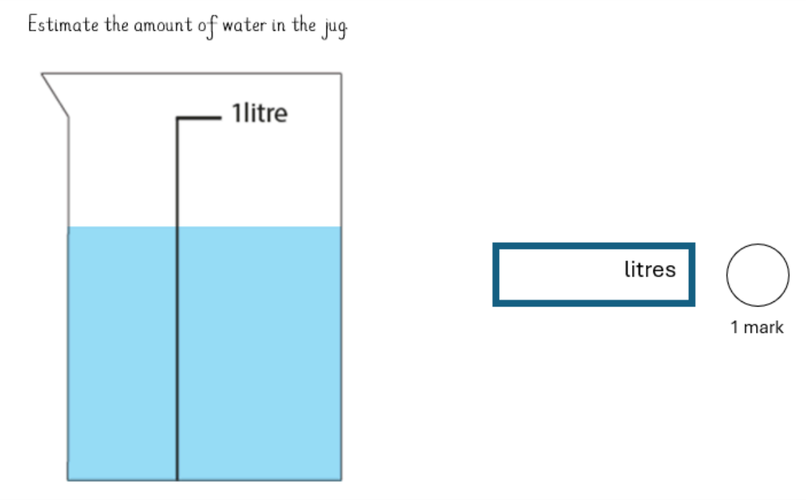
Paper 2: Approximately 40 minutes

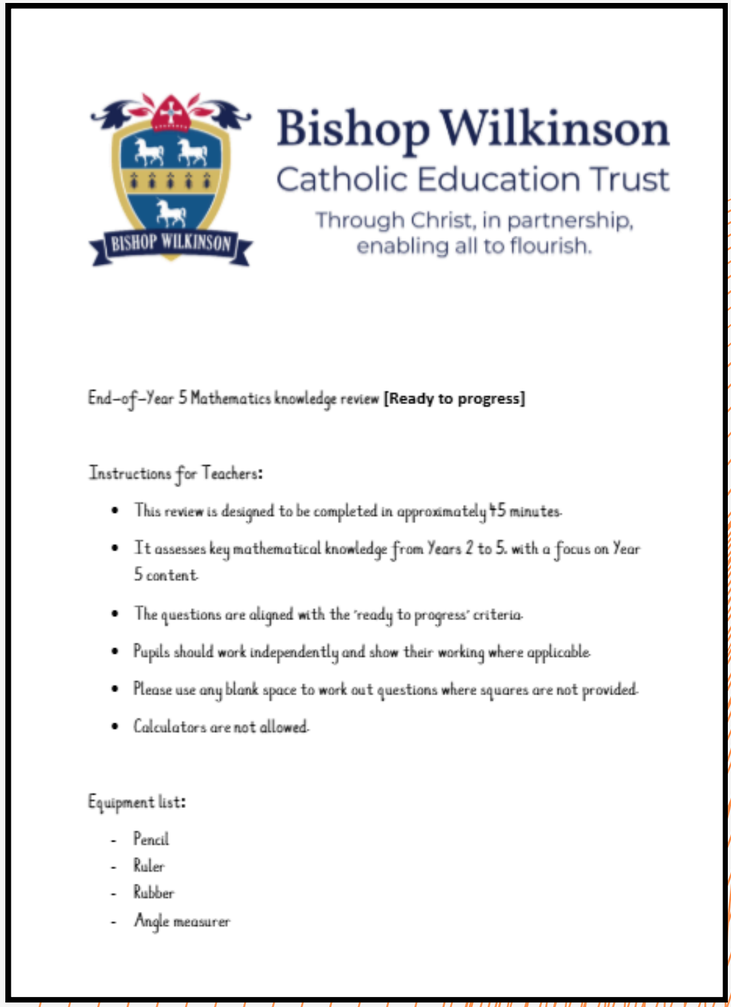
Considerations

- Delivered to all pupils at the end of Year 5.

Cost / Training

Free/marking time





Most suitable for use at the end of Year 5.

Only assesses a small proportion of the domain of knowledge from Year 2 to Year 5.

02F - Identifying Need - NCETM Ready to Progress

NCETM

Ready to Progress assessment questions

Aspects

The NCETM Ready to Progress assessment questions can be used to assess security with priority knowledge from the Maths curriculum.

For any areas that pupils are not yet secure with, the NCETM Ready to Progress materials can be used to revisit and consolidate these key curriculum areas.

Importantly, particularly if pupils have not kept up with the curriculum demands, this assessment helps staff to identify the crucial knowledge that needs to be mastered before pupils can confidently access what comes next. This allows teachers to target intervention and support precisely.

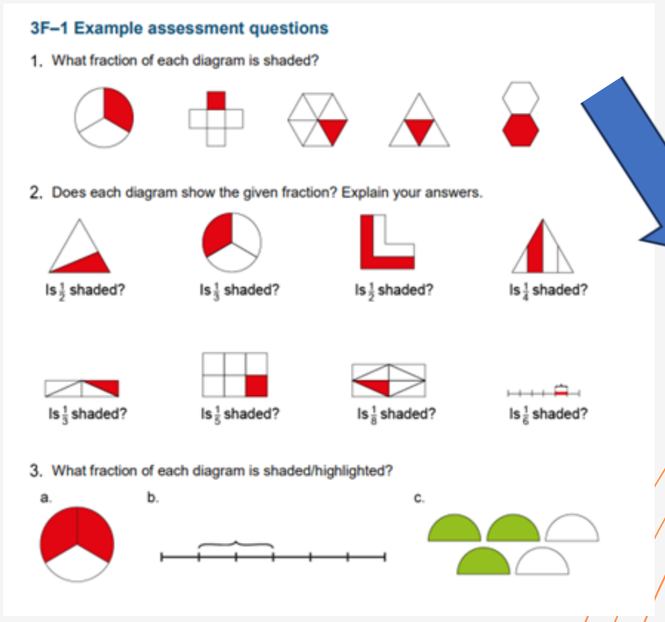
Considerations

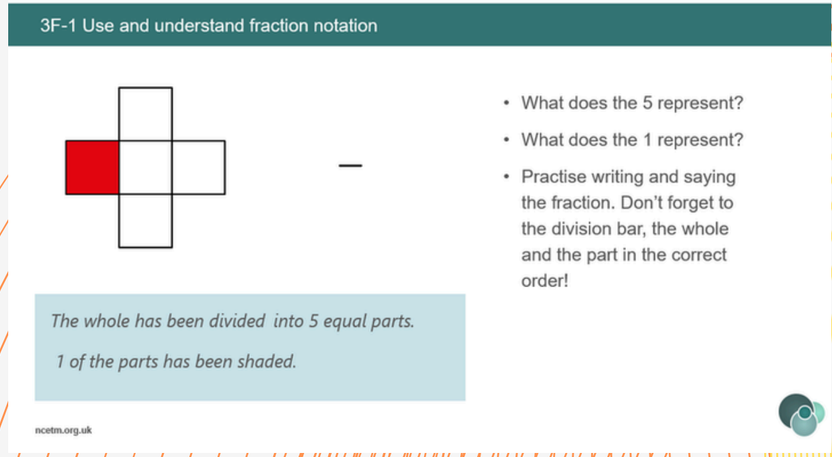
- Can be used whole class to assess security with prior learning.
- Can also be used to diagnose precise gaps for pupils working significantly below.

Cost / Training

Free

The NCETM Ready to Progress criteria are based on research-informed teaching for mastery principles drawn from DfE's 2020 Mathematics Guidance.





02G - Identifying Need - New Group Reading Test (NGRT)

New Group Reading Tests NGRT

6 years to 16 years

Aspects

NGRT is in two parts: sentence completion, which measures decoding with some element of comprehension; and passage comprehension, which measures skills of increasing difficulty.

The difficulty increases beyond the pupil's ability, challenging their understanding, until their scores show that the difficulty level is too high.

NGRT produces scores for sentence completion, passage comprehension and a short-narrative report.

Time

- Dependent on age/ability - approximately, 45 minutes per pupil assessment

Considerations

- Adaptive, responding to a pupil's ability as they complete the test so more able readers are challenged and weaker ones remain engaged.
- Provides a Standard Age Score (SAS), a reading age, Key Stage 2 Reading SAT prediction or GCSE indicators, and progress measures.
- Includes practical guidance for next steps.
- This test is completed by all pupils in BWCET Year 6 who are due to transfer to a Trust secondary school. This facilitates early provision of support and intervention when the pupil begins Year 7. **Schools may wish to use this tool at other times in a pupil's reading journey.**

Cost / Training

- Trust subscription/GL Assessment
- Single £7, twice-yearly £8.75, termly £10.50 (includes free spelling at Primary)

Standardised on over 11,700 pupils with national benchmarks

02H - Identifying Need - Cognitive Ability Test (CAT-4)

CAT4

Young Learners
Primary
Secondary

6 years to 17 years

Aspects

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT4) assesses reasoning and general ability.

Assesses:

- **Verbal Reasoning** – ability to express ideas and reason through words
- **Non-verbal Reasoning** – problem-solving using pictures and diagrams; skills which are important in a wide range of school subjects, including maths and science-based subjects.
- **Spatial Reasoning** – the capacity to think and draw conclusions in three dimensions, needed for many STEM subjects, but not easily measured by other datasets.
- **Quantitative Reasoning** – the ability to use numerical skills to solve problems, applicable well beyond mathematics.

If staff have concerns around a pupil displaying possible dyslexic/dyscalculic traits, then a pupil's general ability should be tested first, before other screening tools are utilised.

Time

- Dependent on age/ability - approximately, 3 x 45 minutes per pupil assessment - digital

Considerations

- Can be used for whole cohort screening or individual pupil analysis, where concerns are identified.
- Pupils require an individual computer with sound/headphones.
- Adult supervision throughout the assessment.

Cost / Training

- MAT subscription/GL Assessment
- £12 per credit
- GL Assessment has a direct support page for training and administration purposes.
- Click here for the GL support page.
- Click here for GL administration booklet

Scores

Battery	No. of questions attempted	SAS	NPR	ST	GR (/1)	SAS (with 90% confidence bands) 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140
Verbal	47/48	**86**	18	3	1	
Quantitative	36/36	**81**	11	2	1	
Non-verbal	47/48	**91**	28	4	1	
Spatial	36/36	**90**	26	4	1	
Mean	-	**87**	-	-	-	

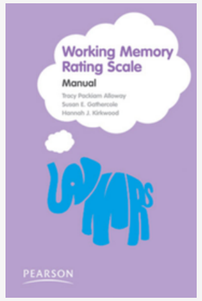
Standardised on 25,000 students and verified every year.

Based on analysis of a quarter of a million students.

CAT4 provides you with valuable baselining data with national benchmarks. It also gives reliable indicators for national tests and examinations, including Key Stage 2 indicators.

02I - Identifying Need - Working Memory

Working Memory Rating Scale



5 years to 11 years

Aspects

Created and devised by Durham University.

Consists of 22 descriptions of cognitive learning behaviour which the user has to 'rate' against a score.

The T-scores can then be converted to percentile ranks, which are RAG rated.

The assessor can calculate if there is likely to be a working memory difficulty *(e.g. 'marked working memory difficulty')*

Time

- 15-minutes to score and total.
- Can be conducted by several teachers across several subjects for a holistic picture.

Considerations

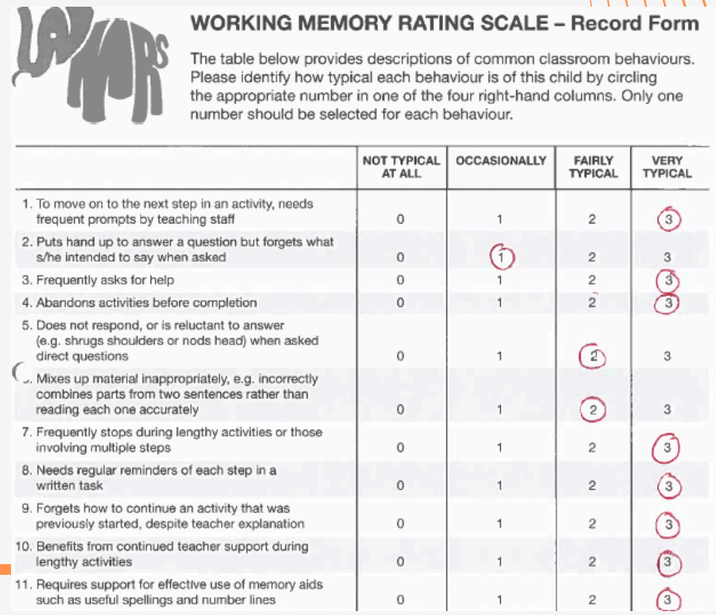
- The findings indicate good internal reliability and adequate psychometric properties for use as a screening tool by teachers.
- Higher (i.e., more problematic) teacher ratings on the WMRS were associated with lower memory scores on direct assessments of working memory skills, as measured by the Automated Working Memory Assessment (AWMA) and the WISC-IV Working Memory Index.
- There is good reliability between the WMRS and clinical tests issued by psychologists e.g. WISC-IV and AWMA, (Alloway et al. 2009)

Cost / Training

- £78 Starter Kit with Digital Version available
- Available via Pearson Education
- Training contained in a small booklet
- Click here for link to Pearson

Internationally recognised tool with good reliability

Click here



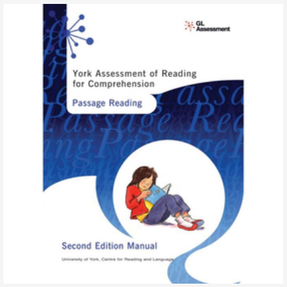
WORKING MEMORY RATING SCALE – Record Form

The table below provides descriptions of common classroom behaviours. Please identify how typical each behaviour is of this child by circling the appropriate number in one of the four right-hand columns. Only one number should be selected for each behaviour.

	NOT TYPICAL AT ALL	OCCASIONALLY	FAIRLY TYPICAL	VERY TYPICAL
1. To move on to the next step in an activity, needs frequent prompts by teaching staff	0	1	2	(3)
2. Puts hand up to answer a question but forgets what s/he intended to say when asked	0	(1)	2	3
3. Frequently asks for help	0	1	2	(3)
4. Abandons activities before completion	0	1	2	(3)
5. Does not respond, or is reluctant to answer (e.g. shrugs shoulders or nods head) when asked direct questions	0	1	(2)	3
6. Mixes up material inappropriately, e.g. incorrectly combines parts from two sentences rather than reading each one accurately	0	1	(2)	3
7. Frequently stops during lengthy activities or those involving multiple steps	0	1	2	(3)
8. Needs regular reminders of each step in a written task	0	1	2	(3)
9. Forgets how to continue an activity that was previously started, despite teacher explanation	0	1	2	(3)
10. Benefits from continued teacher support during lengthy activities	0	1	2	(3)
11. Requires support for effective use of memory aids such as useful spellings and number lines	0	1	2	(3)

02J - Identifying Need - York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC)

York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension



Early Reading - 4-7
Passage Reading - 5-11
Passage Reading - 12-16

Created and co-devised by Margaret Snowling, Stafford, Susan Stafford and Paula Clarke (University of York, Centre for Reading and Language).

Aspects

Early Reading

- Letter sound knowledge
- Early word recognition
- Sound deletion
- Sound isolation

Passage Reading

- Reading accuracy
- Reading rate
- Reading comprehension
- Fluency (Secondary)

Time

- 20-30-minutes to assess.
- Time required to score and total 30-minutes.

Considerations

Offers:

- Standardised scores
- Percentile Ranks
- Stanines

Analysis of reading includes:

- Standardised reading age
- Standardised reading accuracy age
- Standardised reading comprehension age

Cost / Training

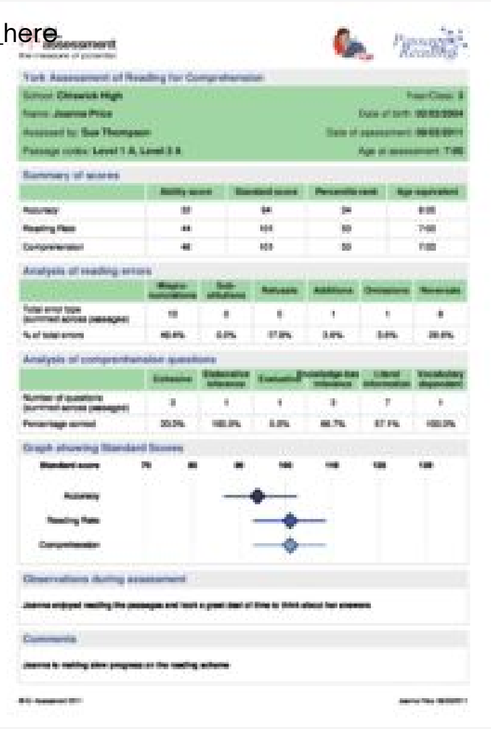
- £182 Early Years Set
- £205 for Primary Set
- £310 Secondary Set
- Available from GL Assessment of Dyslexia Shop
- Access support here.

Internationally recognised tool with good reliability

Click here

There are three parts to YARC:

- Early Reading (age 4 –7): Four short tests assessing a pupil's phonological skills, alphabetic knowledge and word reading. These are among the most sensitive type of assessments for beginner readers and may be administered up to three times during a school year.
- **Passage Reading Primary (age 5–11):** Developed to identify reading (decoding) and comprehension skills using fiction and non-fiction texts. It assesses accuracy, reading rate and comprehension.
- **Passage Reading Secondary (age 12–16):** Fiction and non-fiction passages, designed to be read silently, to assess reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension. There are two supplementary passages for pupils with reading difficulties that are not able to access the texts in form A and B.



02K - Identifying Need - Dyslexia Screener

Dyslexia Screener

4 years to 15+ years

Aspects

The Dyslexia Screener offers an initial assessment to see how far a pupil's abilities and skills match those of people who have been found to have dyslexia.

Further assessments, which focus on specific skills, such as spelling, and the processing of speech sounds, are recommended to determine whether intervention is necessary.

Ability Subtests (Non-verbal reasoning, verbal comprehension)

Diagnostic Subtests (Phonological processing, perceptual speed)

Attainment Subtests (Comprehension, word recognition

Time

- 15-20 minutes to administer
- Can be administered across a number of test sittings.
- On-line, untimed, assessment.
- Can be used in conjunction with the GL Portfolio.

Considerations

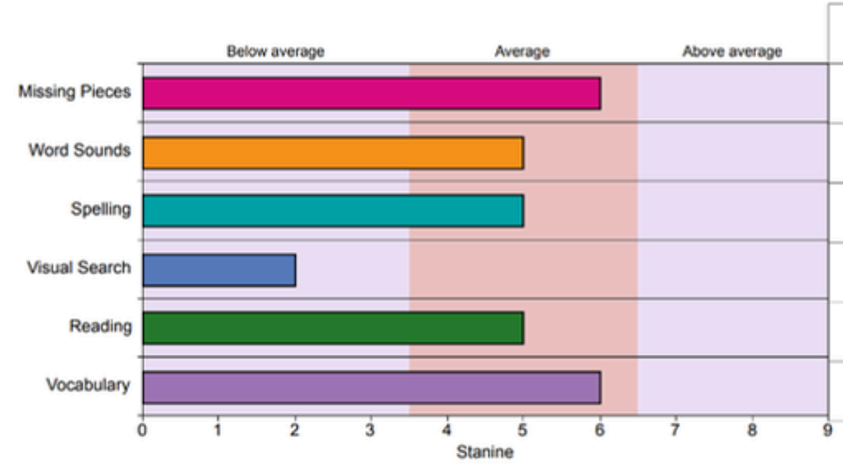
- Parent/carer report available.
- NOTE - this does not provide a clinical diagnosis. If positive results are found, then an educational psychology assessment should be requested.

Cost / Training

- Credits can be bought from GL assessment for £8.50 (minimum order of 10).
- Can be analysed at individual level.
- Click here for further information.

'N.B. Ensure that the administering educator does not diagnose the pupil with dyslexia, but explains 'may show traits consistent with dyslexic presentation...'

The profile produced by Lucy is typical of someone with a few signs of dyslexia.



	Stanine	Standard Age Score	National Percentile Rank
Missing Pieces	6	109	72
Word Sounds	5	100	50
Spelling	5	97	42
Visual Search	2	81	11
Reading	5	99	47
Vocabulary	6	107	68

It must be emphasised that the Dyslexia Screener screens for dyslexic tendencies that may need further investigation.

It does not determine whether a pupil is dyslexic or not.

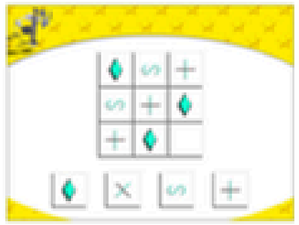
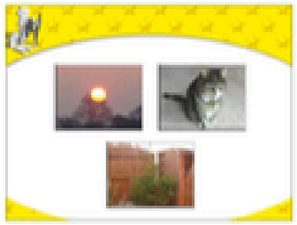
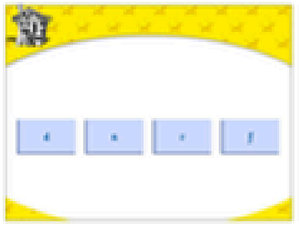
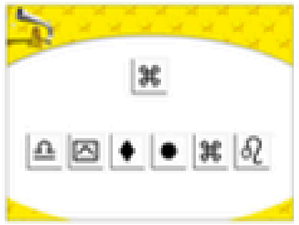
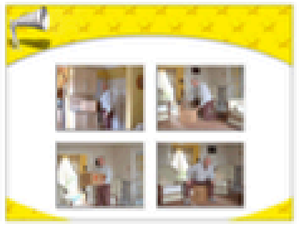
Therefore, the report from the Dyslexia Screener is not sufficient evidence for access arrangements.

02K - Identifying Need - Dyslexia Screener (continued)

Dyslexia Screener

4 to 15 years+

The six sub-tests

Sub-test 1	Sub-test 2	Sub-test 3	Sub-test 4	Sub-test 5	Sub-test 6
Missing Pieces	**Word Sounds**	**Spelling**	**Visual Search**	**Reading**	**Vocabulary**
Tests how well a learner can recognise patterns in arrangements of shapes.	Tests how well a learner can identify individual sounds from within words.	Tests how well a learner can select letters, correctly spelt words and parts of words.	Tests the speed at which a learner can deal with simple visual information.	Tests how well a learner can recognise written words and select the correct word to complete sentences.	Tests the learner's knowledge of word meanings.
Example question:	Example question:	Example question:	Example question:	Example question:	Example question:
					
Audio: Click on the missing shape.	Audio: Look at these pictures. Which one begins with 'S'?	Audio: Which of these comes at the beginning of 'fish'?	Audio: Click on the matching shape as quickly as you can.	Audio: Which word would go best in the sentence?	Audio: Choose the picture that goes best with the word 'carrying'.

It must be emphasised that the Dyslexia Screener screens for dyslexic tendencies that may need further investigation.

It does not determine whether a pupil is dyslexic or not.

Therefore, the report from the Dyslexia Screener is not sufficient evidence for access arrangements.

02L - Identifying Need - Dyscalculia Screener

Dyscalculia Screener

6 to 14 years

Aspects

Indicates whether a student may be experiencing barriers as a consequence of a specific difficulty with number including:

Difficulty in basic number tasks, such as counting backwards or remembering number facts.

Difficulty with processing or working memory, such as a slow performance with calculations or challenges with multi-step problems.

Reaction time (Simple reaction time, capacity, dot enumeration, numerical stroop)

Achievement (Arithmetic achievement – addition, multiplication for students aged 10+ years)

Time

- 30 minutes to administer
- Can be administered across a number of test sittings.
- On-line, untimed, assessment.

Considerations

- Parent/carer report available.
- NOTE - this does not provide a clinical diagnosis. If positive results are found, then an educational psychology assessment should be requested.

Cost / Training

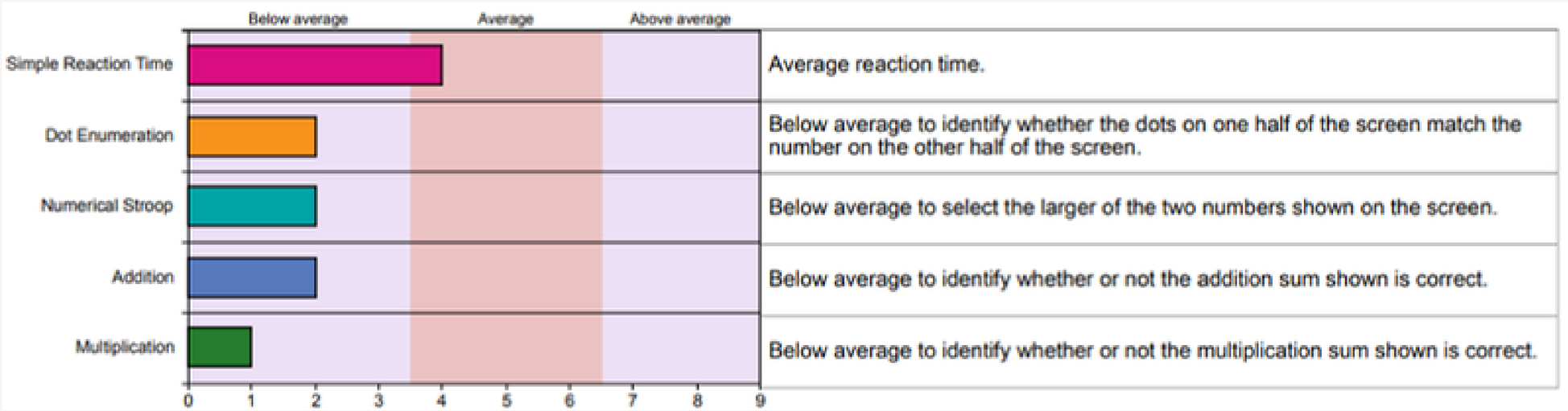
- Credits can be bought from GL assessment for £8.50 (minimum order of 10).
- Can be analysed at individual level.
- Click here for further information.

'N.B. Ensure that the administering educator does not diagnose the pupil with dyscalculia, but explains 'may show traits consistent with dyscalculic presentation...'

It must be emphasised that the Dyscalculia Screener screens for dyscalculic tendencies that may need further investigation.

It does not claim to determine whether a pupil is dyscalculic or not.

Therefore the report from the Dyscalculia Screener is not sufficient evidence for access arrangements.

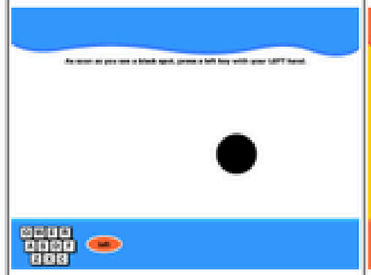
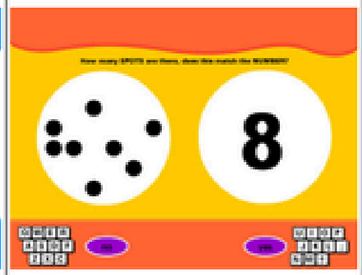
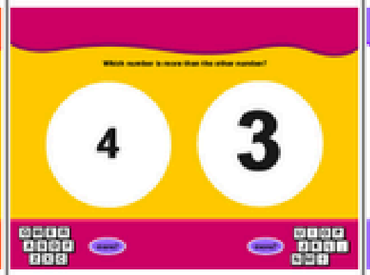
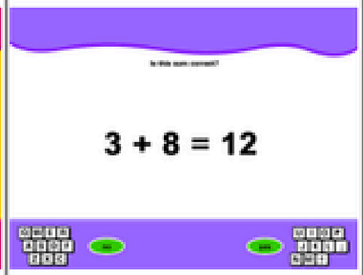
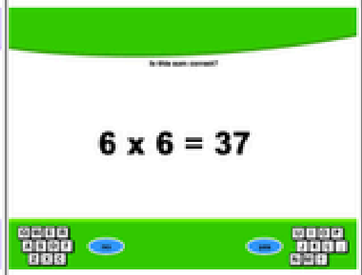


02L - Identifying Need - Dyscalculia Screener (continued)

Dyscalculia Screener

6 to 14 years

The five sub-tests

Sub-test 1	Sub-test 2	Sub-test 3	Sub-test 4	Sub-test 5
Simple Reaction Time	**Dot Enumeration**	**Numerical Stroop**	**Addition**	**Multiplication**
Speed of response is the measure used in the assessment so a test of simple reaction time is shown first. The reaction times of the other sub-tests are adjusted to take this measure into account. Example question:	Asks the learner to compare the number of dots on half of the screen with the number on the other half of the screen, and to press a key to show whether the two numbers match. Example question:	Asks the learner to select the larger of the two numbers shown on the screen. Example question:	A sum is shown on the screen with an answer. The learner has to judge as quickly as possible whether the answer shown is correct. Example question:	A sum is shown on the screen with an answer. The learner has to judge as quickly as possible whether the answer shown is correct. Only those aged 10 or over will see the multiplication sub-test. Example question:
				
Audio: As soon as you see a black spot, press a left key with your LEFT hand.	Audio: How many SPOTS are there, does this match the NUMBER?	Audio: Which number is more than the other number?	Audio: Is this sum correct?	Audio: Is this sum correct?

It must be emphasised that the Dyscalculia Screener screens for dyscalculic tendencies that may need further investigation.

It does not claim to determine whether a pupil is dyscalculia or not.

Therefore the report from the Dyscalculia Screener is not sufficient evidence for access arrangements.

02M - Identifying Need - New Group Spelling Test

New Group Spelling Tests NGST

6 years to 8 years
6 years to 17 years

Aspects

NGST features three equivalent forms A, B and C, so it can be used in each term of the year.

Single word section – tests five or six spelling rules in line with the new curricula.

Spelling in context section – tests a variety of different spelling rules using sentence completion tasks.

Group report for teachers – a summary of the age-standardised scores for the chosen group of pupils, presented in rank order and compared to the national population (national percentile rank).

Individual report for teachers – offers a detailed analysis of responses to the two sections of NGST, a profile summary and tailored implications for teaching and learning of progress is coming soon.

Time

- Dependent on age/ability - approximately, 30 minutes per pupil assessment

Considerations

- Can be used as a whole-cohort screener or for pupils who may need additional diagnostic assessment, or support for specific literacy difficulties.

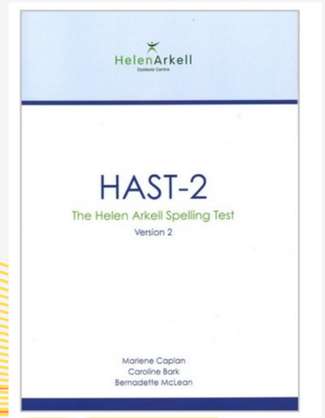
Cost / Training

- Trust subscription/GL Assessment
- Click here for further information
- Free with NGRT but when bought independently single £3.
- Discounts can be applied for twice-yearly £4.75; termly £5.75.

Good information output for low-cost providing credits are being purchased. Individual reports for parents/ teachers.

02N - Identifying Need - Helen Arkell Spelling Test (HAST)

Helen Arkell Spelling Test



Aspects

The Helen Arkell Spelling Test (HAST-2) is a single-word spelling test developed for teachers, specialist teachers, and educational psychologists to use with individuals from five years to adult.

Two parallel forms and a combined form

Standardised scores, confidence intervals, percentile ranks, and age equivalents.

Diagnostic grids to chart error types.

Suitable for both individual and group administration.

Time

- Dependent on age/ability it will take roughly 15 minutes to administer.

Considerations

- Can be used as a whole-cohort screener or for pupils who may need additional diagnostic assessment, or support for specific literacy difficulties.
- Diagnostic grids that help identify specific spelling error types, which can inform targeted teaching strategies.

Cost / Training

- £60 for the manual
- Click here to purchase:

Awaiting results from independent peer review

02O - Identifying need - Detailed Assessment of the Speed of Handwriting (DASH-2)

DASH-2

8 to 25 years

Aspects

The DASH-2 can be used to identify a pupil's handwriting speed difficulties.

The SASC Test Evaluation Committee (STEC) has approved the Detailed Assessment of Handwriting 2 (DASH 2) for inclusion on the Pre-16 and Post-16 test lists.

Offers reliability, based on nationally stratified normative samples of over 1000 pupils and young adults collected across the UK and Australia between 2021 and 2023.

Scaled scores and percentile ranks.

Time

The DASH-2 subtests:

- Copy Best (2-minutes)
- Alphabet Writing (2-minutes)
- Copy Fast - (2-minutes)
- Free Writing - (10-minutes)
- Graphic Speed - (1-minute)

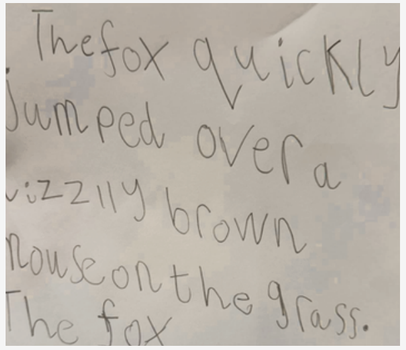
Considerations

- DASH-2 includes 5 subtests that are administered and scored by hand and allow comparison of handwriting performance during written tasks with varying demands.
- The DASH-2 can be used to support evidence for access arrangements for end of KS2 assessments.
- Can be administered 1:1 or as in a small group.

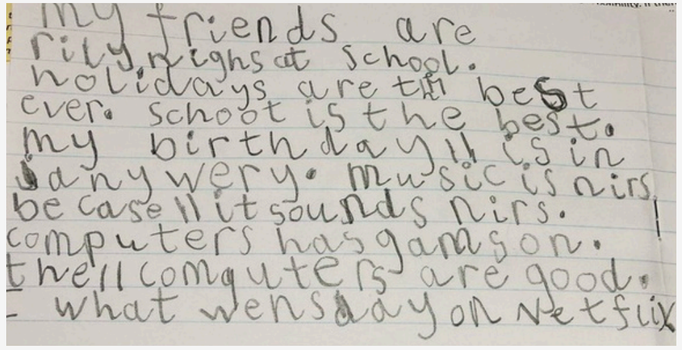
Cost / Training

- Available from Pearson Assessment
- £210 for starter kit
- Click here for further information
- Click here for training video from Pearson Clinical
- BWCET training videos available here:
- Alphabet Writing
- Copy Fast

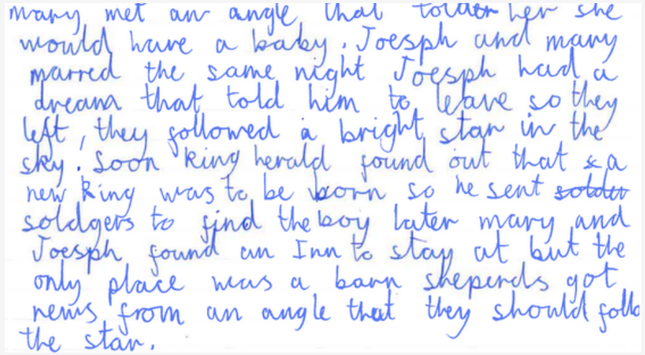
Studies consistently show high inter-rater reliability, meaning different evaluators will likely produce similar scores when assessing the same pupil with the DASH.



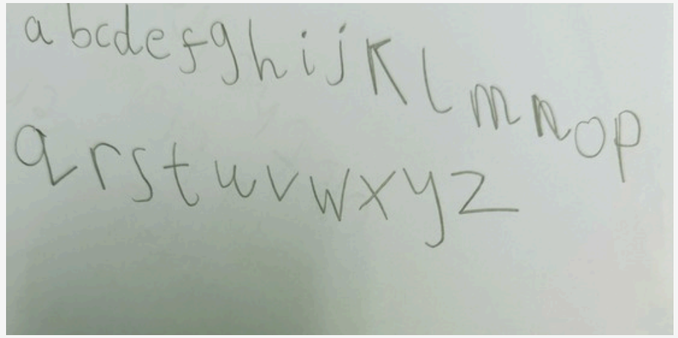
Copy Best (2-minutes)
Copy Fast (2-minutes)



Free Writing (10-minutes)



Free Writing (10-minutes)



Alphabet Writing (2-minutes)

03 - Teaching Adaptations

There are numerous approaches that can be deployed to support pupils with cognition and learning challenges within the classroom.

Whilst not an exhaustive list, the following is an amalgamation of typical/common issues, and suggested strategies, designed to act as a signpost for staff when considering how they might specifically adapt their teaching in order to address particular needs.

03A Cognitive Processing

03B Language Difficulties

03C Phonics

03D Phonological Awareness

03E Reading

03F Writing

03G Vocabulary Development

03H Mathematics

03I Executive Function

Teaching adaptations

Adaptations to teaching and other aspects of provision ensure that all pupils, especially those with SEND, can access the same ambitious curriculum by intentionally designing the curriculum to support access, providing additional scaffolding, support, equipment and, where necessary, adjusting the design of tasks.

The most powerful driver for improving pupil outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, is the ambition we have for them to achieve well and the quality and consistency of the experience they have with their teachers. Ensuring high quality teaching is our primary focus. By making short-term adjustments, proactively and responsively, teachers can address key gaps in foundational knowledge that reduce the need for pupils to be withdrawn from classrooms for intervention. Keeping our pupils with their teacher in the classroom promotes equity, belonging, and engagement, ensuring that all pupils benefit from high-quality teaching, fostering a culture where diversity is valued and every child can flourish in line with our vision as Catholic educators.

Pupils with SEND should access the same high-quality instruction as other pupils. Under the Equality Act 2010, schools must make reasonable adjustments so children with disabilities can fully participate in the curriculum.

03A Cognitive Processing

How these difficulties might present

A pupil with difficulties in relation to cognitive processing might have one or more of the following distinct issues:

- Slow processing - taking longer to understand, respond, and complete tasks compared to their peers.
- Working memory limitations - struggling to retain and use information long enough to follow multi-step instructions, complete tasks, or recall recently taught concepts or content.
- Long-term memory challenges - difficulty recalling previously learned information, retaining facts over time, or connecting new learning to prior knowledge.
- Challenges relating to establishing attention and /or maintaining concentration - appearing easily distracted, having difficulty starting tasks, losing focus during activities, forgetting instructions, and showing inconsistent engagement with learning.
- Verbal reasoning - difficulty understanding complex language, following detailed instructions, interpreting figurative or abstract language, and explaining ideas clearly.
- Non-verbal reasoning - difficulty interpreting visual information, recognising patterns, solving puzzles, understanding diagrams, or making sense of spatial relationships.

Practical classroom adaptations

Slow processing

- Give extra time for tasks, tests, and responses.
- Break instructions into smaller steps and check understanding after each.
- Provide written instructions alongside verbal ones.
- Avoid time pressure activities; allow flexible deadlines where possible.

Working memory limitations

- Reduce multi-step instructions; give one step at a time to avoid cognitive overload.
- Use visual aids (checklists, diagrams, flowcharts).
- Repeat and rephrase instructions frequently.

Long-term memory challenges

- Regular focused retrieval practice - little and often.
- Link new learning to prior knowledge explicitly.
- Revisit and review content in different contexts.

Attention and concentration challenges

- Minimise distractions (quiet workspace, seating away from high-traffic areas).
- Use short, focused tasks with clear goals.
- Incorporate movement / sensory breaks.
- Provide visual cues for task transitions.

Verbal reasoning

- Simplify language; avoid figurative or abstract phrases.
- Provide written and visual supports for oral instructions.
- Model responses before expecting independent answers.
- Encourage use of sentence starters for explanations.

Non-verbal reasoning

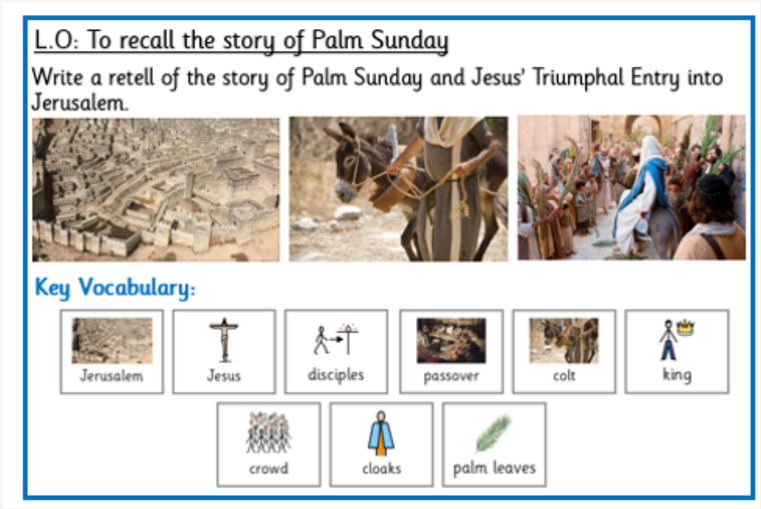
- Explain diagrams and visuals explicitly rather than assuming interpretation.
- Use step-by-step guides for puzzles or spatial tasks.
- Allow verbal explanations instead of relying solely on visual reasoning.
- Teach strategies for pattern recognition (e.g. colour coding, grouping).

03B Language Difficulties

How these difficulties might present

Pupils with challenges in relation to language might need support with:

- **Understanding and following instructions** – difficulty processing multi-step directions.
- **Expressing ideas** – limited vocabulary, incomplete sentences, or reliance on gestures.
- **Social interaction** – challenges in joining conversations or interpreting tone and context.
- **Learning tasks** – slower pace in reading comprehension, writing, and problem-solving.
- **Behaviour** – frustration leading to withdrawal or disruptive behaviour.



Practical classroom adaptations

Simplify and structure language

- Use short, clear sentences and avoid idioms or figurative language.
- Break instructions into small steps and check understanding.
- Pair verbal instructions with visual cues (pictures, diagrams, gestures).

Pre-teach and reinforce vocabulary

- Set the foundations for introducing new vocabulary by considering the underpinning knowledge that will support understanding of the new vocabulary.
- Put new vocabulary in context through placement in stories and narratives that support understanding and retention.
- Additional practice of key words before lessons using word banks or visuals can be useful, unless explicit vocabulary teaching is already built into the lesson.
- Revisit and use new vocabulary in different contexts to deepen understanding, encouraging pupils to use it widely.

Scaffold communication

- Model sentence structures and encourage pupils to repeat or rephrase.
- Provide sentence starters or frames for speaking and writing tasks.

Use multi-sensory approaches

- Combine visuals, actions, and objects to support meaning.

Questioning

- Use 'Don’t ask one, ask five', scaffold questions, and rephrase to support understanding.
- Encourage full sentence answers where relevant, providing models for this.

Build in processing time

- Allow extra time for pupils to think and respond.
- Avoid rushing answers; use prompts like: ‘Take your time.’

Monitor and adapt

- Observe for signs of misunderstanding and rephrase if needed.
- Regularly check understanding, using open-ended questions.

03C Phonics

Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) as the core

Those with cognition and learning difficulties may find phonological acquisition a challenge. Research demonstrates that Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) taught through direct instruction enables pupils to understand the relationship between letters and sounds in a carefully sequenced way. **All pupils** need to be taught decoding skills (knowledge of the alphabetic code) in order to read; however, some pupils might require additional and/or adapted support to achieve this objective.

Tailored support and adaptations

While the content of the curriculum for phonics (the alphabetic code - letters and the sounds they represent) remains the same for all pupils, pedagogy may differ for pupils with cognition and learning challenges. Schools should assess individual needs and use this to target teaching precisely. This can include:

- Breaking learning into smaller incremental steps.
- More repetition and overlearning - extra practice.
- Smaller group work or one-to-one support.
- Addressing specific barriers such as working memory or attention needs.
- Age-appropriate materials for older pupils who are late to catch up.
- Adjusting the pace of teaching.
- Reducing distractions during phonics sessions.

In all cases, the ambition should be that children learn the phonics curriculum and this should be prioritised urgently, as reading with fluency is the gateway to all curriculum learning. The importance of this should be reflected in the deployment of specialised teaching staff with strong phonics expertise to support those who struggle most with learning to read. Any staff member teaching phonics should have accessed appropriate professional training.

03C Phonics

Pupils with a diagnosis of dyslexia attempting to access phonics

Core needs: slower processing, difficulty with phoneme–grapheme mapping, poor automaticity.

Practical strategies

- **Overlearning and repetition**
  - Revisit previously taught GPCs daily.
  - Use cumulative practice rather than moving on too quickly.
- **Smaller teaching steps**
  - Introduce fewer graphemes at a time.
  - Delay introducing alternatives (e.g. ai / ay / a-e) until secure.
- **Multisensory reinforcement**
  - Say it → hear it → see it → write it.
  - Tracing graphemes in the air, on tables, or with textured letters.
- **Immediate corrective feedback**
  - Correct errors straight away so misconceptions don't embed.
- **Extra decoding practice**
  - Short, frequent reading of fully decodable texts.
  - Re-reading the same text to build fluency and confidence.
- **Age-appropriate resources**
  - Especially for older pupils: decodable texts without infantile content.

Pupils with working memory difficulties access phonics

Core needs: difficulty holding multiple sounds, instructions, or steps in mind.

Practical strategies

- **Reduce cognitive load**
  - Fewer graphemes or words per session.
  - Shorter phonics sessions, more often.
- **Chunking**
  - Blend phonemes in stages (e.g. s–t → st → stop).
- **Visual supports**
  - Sound mats, grapheme charts, blending strips always visible.
- **Consistent routines**
  - Same lesson structure every day so pupils don't need to remember "what to do".
- **Model → practise → repeat**
  - Teacher models first, pupils repeat multiple times.
- **Repetition before independence**
  - Choral response before individual response.

03D Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to reflect upon and consciously manipulate the sound structures of language at each level—word, syllable, and phoneme. Phonemic awareness is one aspect of phonological awareness and refers to the skill of manipulating the smallest unit— phonemes. Training phoneme awareness can improve word reading.

- **Phoneme isolation**
  - Recognise alliteration
  - Recognise when words have the same final phoneme.
  - Isolate the first phoneme in words.
- **Phoneme isolation examples**
  - Support pupils to correctly identify that ‘cat’ and ‘cot’ start with the same phoneme when also given the word ‘dig’.
  - Correctly identifies that ‘top’ and ‘cap’ end with the same phoneme when also given the word ‘pig’.

- **Blending**
  - Orally blend isolated phonemes together to hear words.
  - Orally blend longer words with consonant clusters.
- **Blending examples**
  - Says ‘clip’, ‘sift’, ‘splat’, ‘sprint’, when presented with their isolated phonemes. Words with consonant clusters at the beginning may be initially easier to blend than those with clusters at the end.

- **Segmentation**
  - Orally segment words into their component phonemes.
  - Orally segments longer words with consonant clusters.
- **Segmentation examples**
  - When given ‘slop’ can hear and isolate each of the word’s phonemes ‘s-l-o-p’. Words with consonant clusters at the beginning may be initially easier to segment than those at the end

---

- **Phoneme addition**
  - Manipulate words by adding phonemes in different locations.
- **Phoneme addition examples**
  - Adding ‘c’ to the word ‘am’ to create ‘cam’, or adding ‘t’ to the word ‘bel’ to create ‘belt’.

- **Phoneme deletion**
  - Manipulate phonemes by deleting them from the beginning or ends of words.
  - Manipulate phonemes by deleting phonemes with consonant clusters.
- **Phoneme deletion examples**
  - Removing ‘c’ from ‘cup’ to get ‘up’
  - Removing ‘n’ from ‘long’ to get ‘log’.

- **Phoneme substitution**
  - Substitute initial phoneme with another to make rhyming strings.
  - Substitute a phoneme within a word.
- **Phoneme substitution examples**
  - Deleting ‘s’ from ‘sit’ and adding ‘p’ instead to get ‘pit’.
  - Deleting the short ‘a’ in ‘fad’ with the long ‘a-e’ to get ‘fade’.

Taken from EEF Improving Literacy: Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness (2021)

03E Reading

Adapt access to the text, not the curriculum content

Pupils with cognition and learning challenges must be supported to engage with age-appropriate texts, through the use of classroom adaptation.

- Adaptations should enable pupils to access the age-related text, wherever possible.
- Texts are adapted to reduce cognitive load, while maintaining curriculum ambition.
- Pupils access the same texts through scaffolded reading approaches.
- Reading adaptations support fluency, comprehension, and independence.
- Participation should be scaffolded, not optional.

Tailored support and adaptations

This might include:

- Enlarged font or dyslexia-friendly layouts
- Increased spacing between lines and paragraphs
- Coloured backgrounds or overlays
- Individual copies of texts (not copying from the board)
- Digital texts that allow zooming or highlighting
- Text-to-speech or audiobooks alongside print
- Pre-teaching key vocabulary in context
- Explicit teaching of Tier 2 and Tier 3 words
- Visual prompts and images
- Paraphrasing complex sentences
- Vocabulary mats or glossaries
- Chunked texts
- Visual supports
- Frequent summaries
- Shorter reading bursts

03E Reading

Pupils with dyslexia

Presentation: Slow decoding, reduced fluency, fatigue, weak automaticity.

Practical strategies

Pre-teach key vocabulary

- Introduce tricky words before reading unless vocabulary is being specifically taught as part of the session.
- Explicitly teach pronunciation and meaning.

Chunk the text

- Break reading into short sections.
- Pause frequently to summarise and check understanding.

Use alternative formats

- Dyslexia-friendly fonts and spacing.
- Larger font size without simplifying language.

Model fluent reading

- Teacher reads aloud first.
- Pupils track the text while listening.

Paired or supported reading

- Read with a peer or adult.
- Echo reading (teacher → pupil).

Reduce copying from the board

- Provide printed copies to avoid overload.

Allow assistive technology

- Text-to-speech.
- Audiobooks alongside print.

Pupils with working memory difficulties

Presentation: Often loses losing meaning over longer texts; finds holding information tricky.

Practical strategies

Shorter reading bursts

- Read a paragraph at a time.
- Pause to recap key points.

Use visual scaffolds

- Highlighted keywords.
- Sentence starters for responses.

Summarise as you go

- ‘What is the main idea of this paragraph?’
- Oral summaries before written one.

Keep questions visible

- Display questions while reading so the pupil does not need to retain the question.

Re-read key sections

- Purposeful re-reading to reinforce meaning.

03F Writing

Same Curriculum Intent, Adapted Access

A pupil with cognition and learning barriers associated with writing, might require tailored support and classroom adaptation. The focus should remain on how pupils write and not whether they write.

Tailored support and adaptations

Transcription (Handwriting & Spelling)

Purpose: Remove mechanical barriers so pupils can focus on ideas.

Examples

- Lined or adapted paper (wide lines, coloured lines, slopes).
- Pencil grips or alternative writing tools.
- Reduce any copying from the board/resources.
- Word banks, spelling mats, sound mats.
- Desk prompts with key graphemes to aid accurate and speedy transcription.
- Spellcheckers or electronic dictionaries.
- Keyboard or speech-to-text where appropriate.
- Adult scribing (used strategically to enable currriculum access ONLY where a pupil is receiving additional precisely targeted intervention to develop their own writing skills).

Planning & Organisation

Purpose: Support idea generation and structure.

Examples

- Writing frames and graphic organisers.
- Story maps or flow charts.
- Sentence starters and paragraph scaffolds.
- Model texts and shared writing.
- Clear tasks/instructions broken into steps.

Language & Vocabulary Support

Purpose: Reduce language load and support expression.

Examples

- Build carefully sequenced vocabulary into curriculum design
- Use storytelling techniques to introduce vocabulary in context.
- If necessary, pre-teach vocabulary if it is not being explicitly taught in the lesson
- Vocabulary mats or glossaries.
- Sentence stems using subject-specific language.
- Oral rehearsal of sentences.
- Teacher modelling by ‘thinking aloud’.

Cognitive Load Reduction

Purpose: Support working memory and processing.

Examples

- Breaking writing into short tasks.
- One instruction at a time.
- Visual reminders and checklists.
- Highlighting key parts of the task.
- Repeating instructions verbally and visually.

Time & Stamina

Purpose: Acknowledge slower processing and fatigue.

Examples

- Extra time to complete writing.
- Reduced quantity with the same level of challenge.
- Regular movement or sensory breaks.
- Focus on quality rather than volume.

03G Vocabulary Development

Teaching vocabulary is inseparable from building schema.

Vocabulary is understood when it sits on top of a rich web of prior knowledge.

Pre-teaching vocabulary isn't a separate intervention — it is the outcome of:

- sequencing knowledge and vocabulary
- building concepts gradually and cumulatively
- creating common reference points
- embedding words in stories and examples

This means that 'pre-teaching' vocabulary is woven into the curriculum itself.

Curriculum design itself is the pre-teaching. For example, in history children can understand the term government only because earlier units have already built the "small building blocks" such as:

- ruler
- ruling
- monarch
- caliph
- stories showing different types of ruling

Inclusive curriculum planning is making sure that the small building blocks are in place to lead up to the introduction of the word government. This example demonstrates how pre-teaching through sequencing the necessary prior knowledge and vocabulary is not a one-off vocabulary session.

Children need repeated, in context, joyful practice with the word before they are expected to use it independently. This means that vocabulary is effectively pre-taught through multiple rehearsals long before pupils encounter it in more independent reading or writing tasks.

Pre-teaching means positioning vocabulary carefully in the curriculum, not giving definitions in advance. It is is not enough to:

- 'park' a word as a fact
- give children a list of definitions
- try to impart a series of new words out of context as a 'pre-teach'
- rely on retrieval practice alone

Instead, meaningful pre-teaching happens when vocabulary is introduced in the right narrative or conceptual moment. So pre-teaching = placing the word where the story, image, or explanation will make it stick.

Vulnerable learners especially need this kind of curriculum-embedded pre-teaching. It is clear that children with concentration difficulties, children with unfamiliar language backgrounds, children with SEND cannot learn vocabulary through simple exposure or one-off teaching.

They need:

- more deliberate placing
- more practice
- more contextual revisiting
- more teacher enthusiasm to hook attention

Pre-teaching, in this sense, is a form of inclusion.

03H Mathematics

How these difficulties might present

Number fact fluency

- Gaps when recalling facts to 20 automatically or relying on inefficient strategies such as counting on fingers or putting number in heads and counting on, including times tables recall in KS2 and beyond.

Procedural fluency

- Finds following calculation methods tricky.

Conceptual understanding

- Relies on unrelated rules (such as 1, 2, 3, 4, round to the floor, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 go up on the number line).

Spatial reasoning

- Requires support to visualise, rotate or move objects in your mind.

Working memory limitations

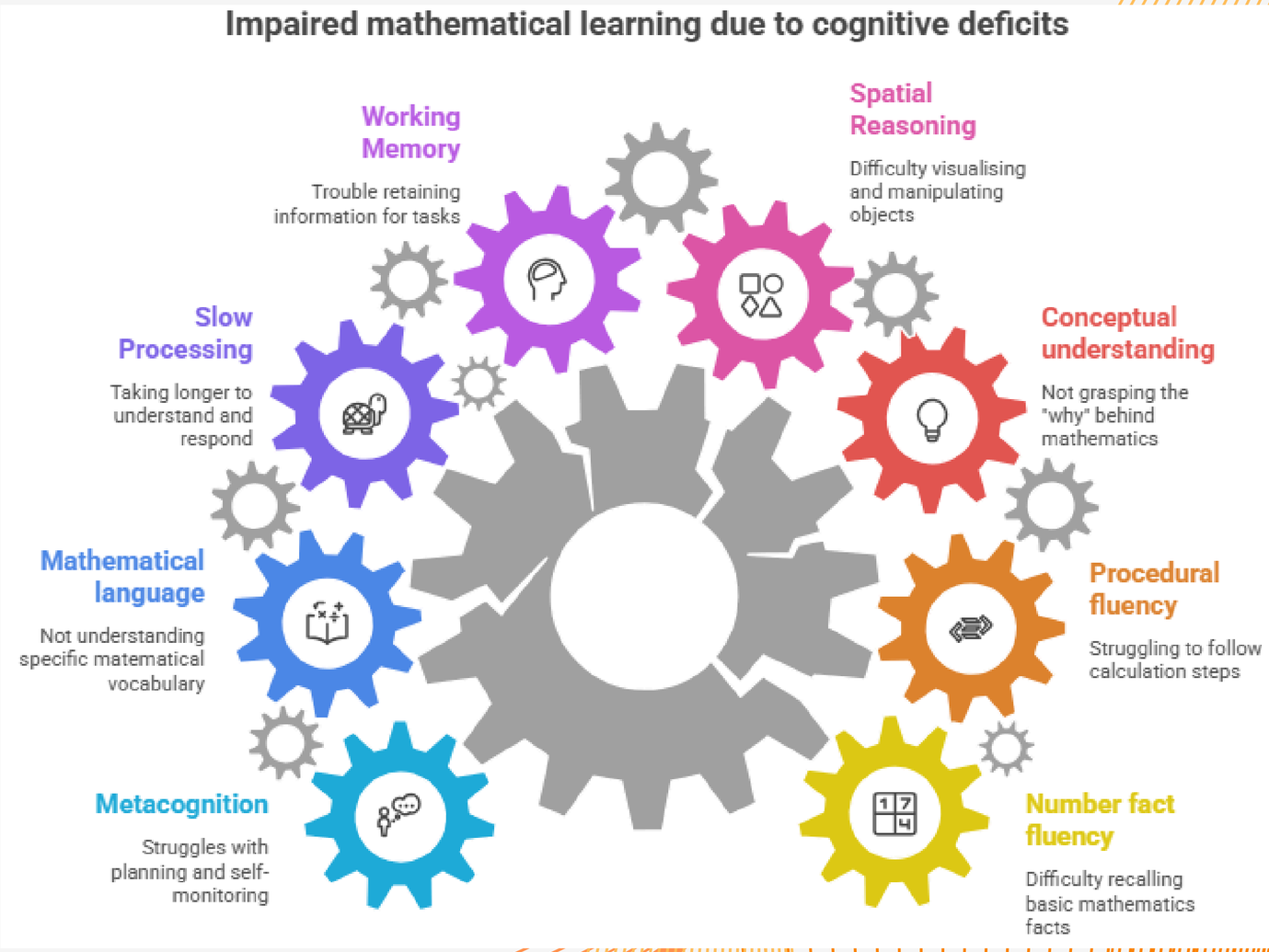
- Difficulty in following multi-step instructions, completing tasks, or limited recall of recently taught concepts, content or facts.

Slow processing

- Takes longer to understand, respond, and complete tasks compared to their peers.

Mathematical language and vocabulary

- Limited understanding of mathematical vocabulary (such as numerator and denominator, factor and product, equation and expression.)



03I Executive Function

How these difficulties might present

A pupil with executive function challenges might have one or more of the following distinct areas:

Working memory limitations

- Ability to hold and manipulate information for a short amount of time, like remembering key facts or trying to hold several steps in their heads at once.

Cognitive flexibility

- Ability to switch between tasks, adapt to change and challenges, take multiple perspectives and adapt our beliefs in the light of new evidence.

Inhibitory control

- Ability to control impulses and focus on a task while filtering distraction.

Practical classroom adaptations

Working memory limitations

- Ensure the pupil focuses on the specific cognitive task and is not tasked to complete unnecessary activities e.g. writing the date/learning objective.
- Reduce multi-step instructions; give one step at a time.
- Structure learning so that pupils record answers systematically.
- Use visual aids (checklists, diagrams, flowcharts).
- Repeat and rephrase instructions frequently.
- Use mnemonics (for example, rhymes and acronyms).
- Provide memory aids e.g. checklists to enable systematic checking.

Cognitive flexibility

- Offer multiple representations - use concrete, pictorial, and abstract models side-by-side (e.g. base ten blocks, number lines, symbolic equations) so pupils learn to shift between perspectives.
- Make thinking routines explicit - use prompts such as “What’s another way to see this?” or “How else could we solve it?” to encourage pupils to switch strategies rather than rely on a single approach.
- Rule-switching - Incorporate tasks where the rule changes mid-activity (e.g. maths games where the operation or representation shifts; literacy tasks where pupils change perspective or text type).
- Model flexible thinking aloud - demonstrate moments where you revise an idea, change approach, or reframe a mistake—this normalises adaptation and shows that flexibility is mathematically and academically valuable.
- Use comparison tasks - ask pupils to compare two methods, examples, or representations. Comparison naturally requires flexible switching and supports deeper conceptual understanding.

Inhibitory control

- Reduce the distractions whilst increasing the capacity for the pupil to maintain focus.
- Consistent routines reduce the need for impulsive decisions.
- Scripts like ‘Stop, think, do’ help pupils to pause for acting and can build awareness to control impulses.
- Structured lesson designs such as ‘I do, we do, you do.’ can be helpful.
- Demonstrate talking through tricky moments such as ‘I am really stuck on this but I’m not going to give up’.

04 - Targeted Intervention

AN EVIDENCE-INFORMED APPROACH

04A
Phonics

04B
Reading

04C
Number Fact Fluency

04D
Verbal Reasoning

Targeted intervention is any specific strategy or approach designed to help a pupil make progress. This includes the targeted 'intervening' that a teacher may do routinely during lessons if they identify a pupil with a misconception or with a gap in a foundational skill, or the targeted in-class 'intervention' they provide as part of a spotlight plan or a SEND support plan.

The use of interventions **beyond** the classroom to support pupils with cognition and learning needs should be carefully and purposefully planned. While this type of intervention plays an important role, particularly where pupils have significant gaps in foundational knowledge, research indicates that pupils make the strongest progress when they are taught by their own teacher through high-quality, inclusive teaching.

The more frequently pupils are removed from class for additional support, the greater the risk of developing gaps in curriculum knowledge, missing key instructional sequences, and becoming disconnected from the core learning experience and peers. Interventions beyond the classroom should therefore complement—not replace—effective classroom provision.

04A Targeted Intervention - Phonics

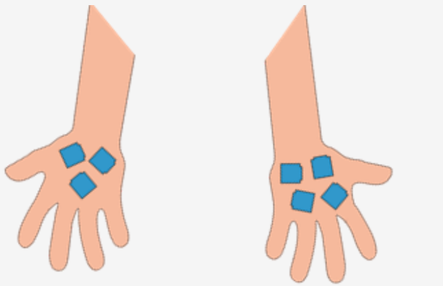
	Approach	Timescale	Training	Cost	
RWInc One-to-One Tutoring	This intervention is designed to help close literacy gaps and accelerate progress for pupils who are struggling with early reading, including those with SEND or who are new to the school. The Read Write Inc. One-to-One Tutoring programme provides targeted phonics support using structured, age-appropriate resources.te.	Daily 15 minutes	Training typically lasts one full day delivered by Ruth Miskin Training	Most resources within a RWInc programme Training is £260 for a day	EEf study shows +5 progress
RWInc Fresh Start	This intervention is designed to support older pupils who are still learning to read, including those with SEND or EAL. Read Write Inc. Fresh Start uses age-appropriate phonics materials to build reading fluency, comprehension, and confidence. It is delivered face-to-face in small groups or one-to-one.	Daily sessions 30mins minimum 33 weeks	Training lasts one full day delivered by Ruth Miskin Training	£260 for a training day Fresh Start Portal £300	EEF Evidence of +3 months of additional progress
Little Wandle Rapid Catch Up	A structured phonics intervention designed for pupils in Year 2 and above who are not yet reading at the expected level for their age. It mirrors the main Little Wandle phonics programme but is delivered at a faster pace to help pupils catch up quickly and access the wider curriculum	Daily sessions 15-20 minutes 30 minutes	45 minute online video	Available freely to current users of Little Wandle	No current evidence of impact available
Little Wandle SEND Programme	The Little Wandle SEND Programme offers a highly structured phonics approach for pupils with complex learning needs. Breaks learning into small, manageable steps and follows a flexible, graduated model to ensure each pupil progresses at their own pace.	Daily sessions	Four hours of online training	Available freely to users of Little Wandle	No current evidence of impact available

04B Targeted Intervention - Reading

	Approach	Timescale	Training	Cost	
Reading Plus	This online program adjusts to each pupil's reading level, pace, and comprehension ability. This ensures that learners with SEND are not overwhelmed and can progress at a comfortable rate.	3 sessions per week 30-minutes per session Over 24 instructional weeks	Initial set up of an hour Schools assigned a Reading Development Consultant	One form entry schools usually £7000 for a 3-year subscription.	Limited evidence of improving reading fluency and comp. but cost is substantial
Lexia	This intervention is designed to help close literacy gaps, support SEND and EAL learners, and build confident, independent readers. It is an online based programme. Each pupil needs own laptop or desktop PC.	Flexible programme 30-minutes 2-4 times a week	Training involves three one-hour sessions.	£41 per pupil per year, based on recent Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) evaluations. School Licenses (UK): Approximately £3,690 for 30 licenses over three years.	EEF evidence of only +1 month of additional progress
Accelerated Reader	Software screens pupils according to reading levels using Star Reading Assessment and suggests books that match their reading age and reading interest.	2x 30-minute sessions 10-weeks minimum	Schools receive three one-hour remote training sessions and six-hours of whole school training.	Cost of programme is £450 per year for 50 pupils or or £9 per pupil per year.	Evidence of 0-3 months' progress noted by EEF

04C Targeted Intervention - Number Fact Fluency

Mastering Number



3 + 4 = ✹

4 + 3 = ✹

Approach

The Mastering Number Year 3 programme is specifically designed to build pupils' fluency with number facts within 20.

The BWCET end of Year 2 number facts check can be used to determine how secure pupils are with different groups of facts. This can be used to determine which blocks of the programme pupils should access.

The Mastering Number Year 3 programme can be used with the whole class or as an intervention to provide targeted support for older pupils who are not yet fluent with these facts.

Timescale

Daily 10-15 minute sessions.

Full programme would take approximately 2 terms to complete.

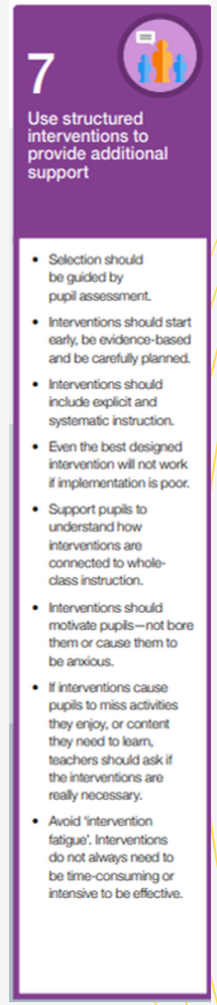
Training

Online via maths hubs

Short training videos are provided at the start of each block.

Cost

Free for BWCET schools



7

Use structured interventions to provide additional support

- Selection should be guided by pupil assessment.
- Interventions should start early, be evidence-based and be carefully planned.
- Interventions should include explicit and systematic instruction.
- Even the best designed intervention will not work if implementation is poor.
- Support pupils to understand how interventions are connected to whole-class instruction.
- Interventions should motivate pupils—not bore them or cause them to be anxious.
- If interventions cause pupils to miss activities they enjoy, or content they need to learn, teachers should ask if the interventions are really necessary.
- Avoid 'intervention fatigue'. Interventions do not always need to be time-consuming or intensive to be effective.

Mastering Number is highlighted as an example of effective practice in the Ofsted subject report for Maths.

The EEF guidance report for improving mathematics in KS2 and KS3 also advocate the use of structured interventions to provide additional support.

04D - Targeted Intervention - Verbal Reasoning

Blank Levels

Approach

Verbal reasoning refers to the ability to understand and analyse language-based information in order to solve problems or draw conclusions.

1. Regular conversation and discussion can help by providing opportunities to practice analysing and interpreting language-based information.

2 Engage pupils in activities that require problem-solving, such as puzzles or riddles, can help them to develop their verbal reasoning skills.

3. Read with your pupil provides an opportunity to practice verbal reasoning skills by analysing and interpreting information in texts.

4. Use open-ended questions encourages pupils to think critically and express their opinions.

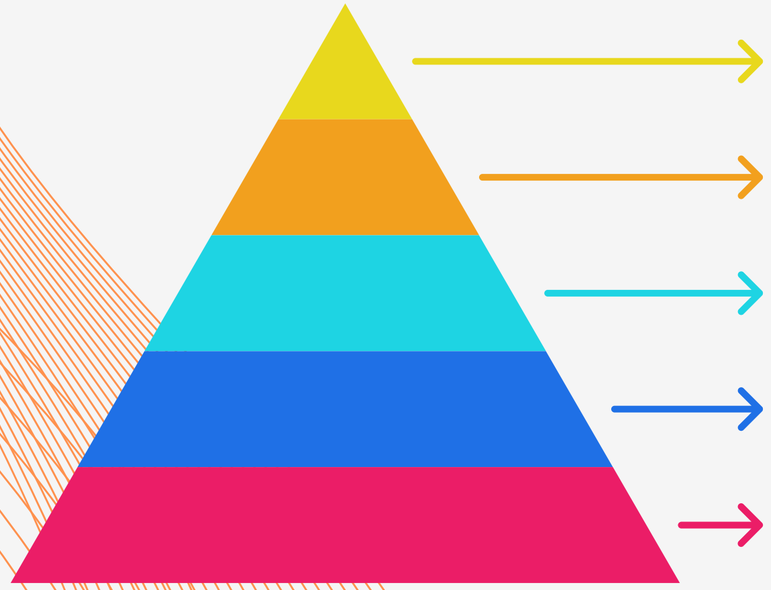
Training and Outcomes

What are Blank Levels? - Resource Library - Sheffield pupils' NHS Foundation Trust

LD-Blanks-level-of-questioning.pdf

The findings of the reviewed research articles indicate that students with ASD are generally successful with tasks that involve Blank Levels 1 and 2, but typically have difficulty with tasks that involve Blank Levels 3 and 4.

Limited impact based on research.



BLANK Levels of development

Level 4 (Justification): "What would happen if everyone could fly?"

Level 3 (Inference): "Why do you think the boy is sad?"

Level 2 (Analysis): "How are a car and a bus similar?"

Level 1 (Concrete): "What color is the ball?"

05 - Specialist Support

AN EVIDENCE-INFORMED APPROACH

05A
When to refer

05B
Considering evidence

When to refer?

There will be occasions when assessments will indicate that our pupils require specialist support.

- School staff should make onward referrals to the relevant professional (CAMHS/CYPS, SaLT, educational psychology, SEND Inclusion Teams and/or paediatrics via GP) when they are confident that barriers to learning can not be addressed through quality first teaching, with targeted adaptations.

SENDCos and teachers should consider the following:

- Is a pupil's SLCN, executive function, processing speed, working or long-term memory resulting in them *working significantly below that of their peers and/or making little or no progress? [COP 2014]*
- Do the cognition and learning assessment results match in-class performance? Is the pupil's perception (where able) an accurate interpretation of their ability?
- Be critical when interpreting assessment results - recognise that this is a small part of the jigsaw.
- Is intervention required while the pupil awaits an initial assessment from the multi-disciplinary team?

Considering evidence

Before a SENDCo initiates a specialist referral for a pupil with significant cognition and learning needs, the school must be confident that the difficulties observed represent persistent barriers to learning, rather than temporary or contextual issues. This guidance outlines the required preparatory steps and provides links to relevant statutory expectations.

Evidence schools MUST consider prior to a referral:

Attendance and Engagement

Schools must review:

- Pupil's attendance pattern over time, noting any significant absence or factors that may temporarily affect progress (e.g., illness, family changes)
- Pupil's attention, concentration and engagement through classroom observation.

Academic Progress Over Time

Staff should analyse:

- Attainment and progress data
- Standardised assessments
- Curriculum-related difficulties (e.g., reading, writing, spelling, numeracy)
- Processing difficulties (e.g., inference, sequencing, working memory).

Environmental and Contextual Factors

Staff must explore whether external factors are influencing learning, such as:

- Recent bereavement
- Family difficulties / dynamics
- Mobility between schools
- Health, sensory or communication needs.

Appendix

A1 - Steps to Effective Cognition and Learning Support

A2 - Cognitive Processing (Case Study)

A3 - Language Difficulties (Case Study)

A1 - Steps to Effective Cognition and Learning Support

Step 1

High-quality curriculum and teaching, including formative and summative assessment strategies are in place.

Step 2

Where a query arises around a pupil's cognition and learning needs, a more holistic review is undertaken involving the SENDCo. Typically a pupil would then be placed on Wave 1 - Monitoring.

Step 3

Assess if 'universal provision' and high-quality responsive teaching are effective in managing the cognition and learning difficulties. Check on other environmental barriers that may be impeding achievement and engagement.

Step 4

If high-quality teaching fails to address the issues, consider if additional assessments may be required and whether targeted intervention is appropriate. If so, the pupil is placed at Wave 2 - Short-term intervention

Step 5

Ensure that there is a systematic approach to intervention delivery and monitoring.

Step 6

Conduct post-intervention assessment. Does the support need to continue long-term and/or, are alternative interventions or approaches appropriate?

- If no, the pupil may be returned to Wave 1 - monitoring, or removed from the SEND Register if leaders are confident the needs have been addressed.
- If yes, the pupil should be placed on Wave 3 - SEND Support

Step 7

As part of the Graduated Approach, the SENDCo must, in colaboration with relevant teaching staff, review a pupil's progress and consider whether the listed provision is addressing the identified needs.

Step 8

Should difficulties persist and limited progress evidenced, staff should consider additional assessments and/or, a referral to the multi-disciplinary team for specialist support e.g. Educational Psychology/LA services.

Step 9

Through the termly cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review, pupil progress (in relation their special educational needs) must be evaluated and support plans updated in response.

If leaders believe that a pupil's needs cannot be met without a) exceeding the budgetary limitations of SEND Support, or b) an acute level of adaptation that requires ongoing specialist guidance, then consideration of statutory assessment (COSA) must be made.

The SENDCo and class teacher should always use their judgement, when identifying the best time to refer a pupil to an external agency.

Inevitably, there will always be exceptions to the suggested rule/pathway.

UNIVERSAL

TARGETED

SPECIALIST

A2 - Cognitive Processing (Case Study)

Case Study: Using step-by-step checklists and worked examples in KS2

Ella is a Year 6 pupil who experiences slow processing. She takes longer to understand multi-step problems and often feels overwhelmed when instructions are given quickly.

During maths lessons, Ella struggles to keep pace with her peers, especially when solving word problems that require several operations.

When the teacher explains the steps verbally and writes them on the board, Ella can't process the information fast enough before the class moves on. This leads to incomplete work and reduced confidence.

The teacher introduced printed step-by-step checklists for problem-solving. Each checklist included:

- Clear numbered steps (e.g., "Step 1: Read the question carefully," "Step 2: Highlight key numbers," "Step 3: Decide which operation to use").
- Worked examples showing a similar problem solved correctly.
- Space for Ella to tick off each step as she completed it.

Impact

- Ella completed more problems independently and accurately.
- Her anxiety reduced because she had a clear structure to follow.
- She began to participate more confidently in class discussions.

Case Study: Using AI to adapt 'The Railway Children' for a Year 3 pupil with SEND

Liam is a Year 3 pupil with significant cognition and learning needs, working well below the expected standard for his age. His reading age is several years lower than his peers, which makes accessing age-appropriate texts extremely challenging. During English lessons, particularly when studying class novels, Liam often feels left behind because he cannot read or understand the original text independently. This affects his engagement and confidence, and he frequently relies on adult support to follow the plot or contribute to discussions.

Prior to the class studying 'The Railway Children', the teacher identified that the vocabulary, sentence structures, and length of chapters were far beyond the level Liam could decode or comprehend independently. Without adaptation, he would have been unable to meaningfully participate in the learning about character, setting, and plot.

To support him, the teachers used AI tools to adapt the text to match Liam's reading level. The AI-generated version significantly simplified sentence structures, reduced vocabulary demand, and shortened each chapter while retaining key events and characters. The teachers also used the tool to generate brief chapter summaries, accessible questions, and visuals to support understanding. This allowed Liam to read the adapted text independently.

Impact:

- Liam began engaging enthusiastically with the story and was able to follow the plot alongside his peers.
- He demonstrated secure understanding of the main characters and key events.
- His independence improved markedly because he no longer needed continuous adult support to access the text.
- Liam took part more confidently in whole-class discussions, responding to questions about the story and offering ideas that showed genuine comprehension.
- The use of AI made the curriculum text accessible, enabling Liam to participate fully and meaningfully in the class novel study.

A3 - Language Difficulties (Case Study)

Case Study: Using Picture Symbols to Support Science Learning in KS2

Amira is a Year 4 pupil with receptive language difficulties. She often struggles to understand spoken instructions and scientific vocabulary during lessons. English is her second language, which adds an extra layer of challenge when accessing new content.

In science lessons, Amira finds it difficult to follow explanations and remember key terms like “evaporation” or “condensation.” This impacts her confidence and engagement.

The teacher introduced Widgit Online, a tool with over 20,000 picture symbols linked to vocabulary. Each key term in the lesson was paired with a simple, clear symbol. For example:

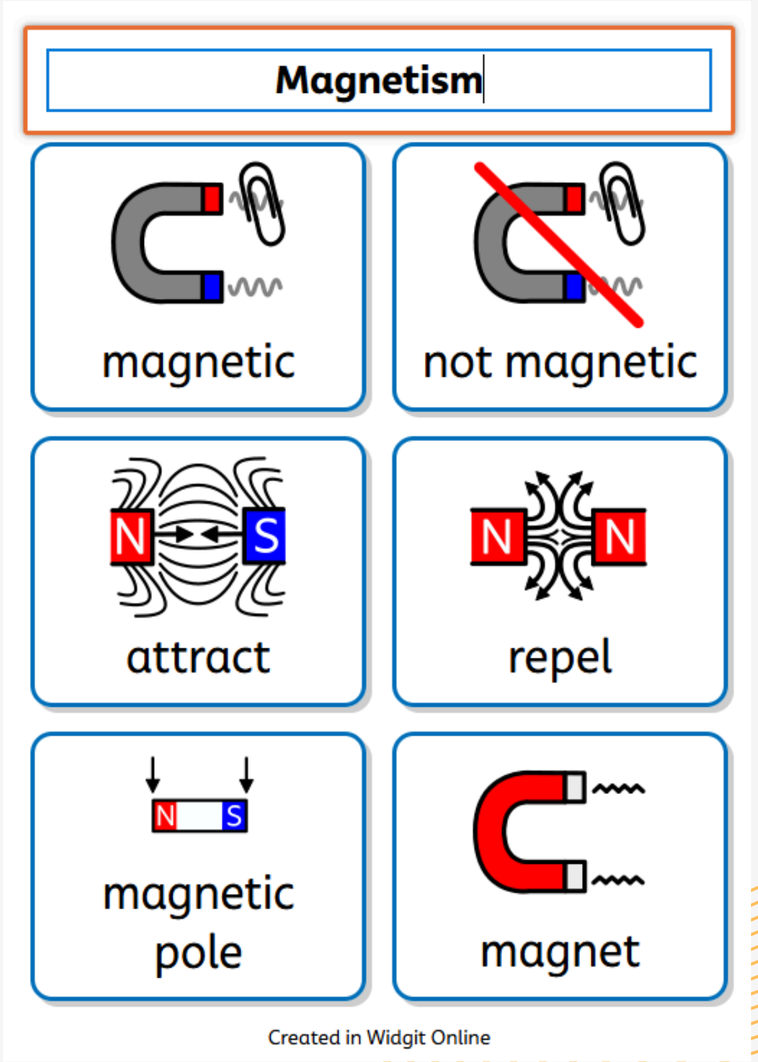
- “Evaporation” → image of water turning into steam
- “Condensation” → image of droplets forming

Symbols were displayed on the interactive whiteboard and included in Amira’s worksheet.

Impact:

- Amira could decode meaning visually, reducing reliance on complex written explanations.
- She began to participate more confidently, using symbols to recall and explain processes.
- Her written work improved because she could reference the symbol-supported vocabulary list.

Why It Worked:
Picture symbols provided a bridge between spoken language and understanding. They supported receptive language and gave Amira a visual anchor for abstract scientific concepts. This approach is particularly effective for pupils with EAL or language processing difficulties.



Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust
0191 823 9333 info@bwcet.com

Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in partnership, enabling all to flourish.