



## Barnet Down Syndrome Leading Edge Group

### Levels of Expertise Supporting Children and Young People with Down syndrome in Primary and Secondary Schools

This document outlines the best practice for schools in supporting children and young people with Down syndrome. It focuses on the following areas of expertise: **Planning, Curriculum, Social, Emotional and Behaviour Needs, Personal Support Needs, and Transition/Activities.**

Bronze is level One and details standards of practice for schools to make sure they have a good offer for their pupils with Down syndrome.

Silver, level Two outlines a more developed offer of support and expertise.

Gold, level Three outlines excellent practice for children and young people with Down syndrome.

Expertise Category Areas	Level One: Bronze		Level Two: Silver		Level Three: Gold	
Planning	Introductory training on Down syndrome profile for targeted members of staff includes training on syndrome specific profile. This is reviewed annually as staff change.		Key staff have training about reading and teaching methods.		Key staff training is completed to include: Speech and language development and interventions, Medical needs Curriculum and teaching methods	
	Basic understanding of medical needs and issues.		Whole school has had introductory training on Down syndrome specific profile		Key staff trained to use bespoke reading programme (such as See and Learn/Reading and Language Intervention,	
	Personal Learning Plan (PLP) includes language, social, independence targets and provision strategies		Regular (for example monthly) short catch up meetings with parent, class teacher and key support member.		Speech and language therapist informs PLP and curriculum generalisation. School and home working on agreed priorities and strategies	
	Progress is recorded using agreed systems. For example: No / occasional / inconsistent / mostly / independent		Timetabled dialogue and record keeping about progress and planning led by class teacher with support .		Home and school use of relevant recording checklists, for example DSEI Language checklists	
	Support is part of a team and there is time for staff to problem solve.		School staff problem-solve to develop plans		School access consultation and advice to problem solve issues as they arise.	
	Pupil is given time to process information and communicate.		There is a plan to support pupil's communication.		Communication skills next steps identified and teaching plan made.	

Expertise Category Areas	Level One: Bronze	Level Two: Silver	Level Three: Gold
Curriculum	Visual timetable is used during the day to indicate sequence of activities (all ages).	Visual timetable, in-task schedules and visual strategies to access curriculum used actively each day.	LSA uses strategies to provide a visual structure for teacher's explanations/carpet talk time.
	Visual curriculum materials are included in most lessons.	Visual curriculum materials are included in lessons and transitions.	The pupil is only given teaching or instructions with a supporting visual structure.
	Photo books are used to supplement reading, personal, and curriculum teaching.	Topic books including a photo and sentence are used to for bespoke teaching and for curriculum teaching	Topic books and other photo books are shared between home and school and given to pupil at end of topic.
	A bespoke reading programme is used and focuses on pupil's interests.	Practical demonstrations are used in lessons. These can be filmed for the pupil to watch for reinforcement and enjoyment.	Activities include practical ways to generalise new concepts.
	Key words are identified in advance by the class teacher and communicated in the home school book.	Key words are identified and used for maths, literacy, class routines and personal interest vocabulary	Key words are identified in each curriculum subject. A visual representation of words is provided.
	Work outside the class room is planned and timetabled with a time frame for any out of class intervention.	The school day is structured to give individual, group and class support according to purpose. In-class support is prioritised.	There is a whole school plan for how LSAs support curriculum differentiation depending on the purpose of the lesson.
	The class teacher and support staff meet weekly to support curriculum planning.	The learning Support Assistant is informed about the lesson content and differentiation methods before the lesson begins.	Planning for the pupil is included in the programme of study for the year group.

Expertise Category Areas	Level One: Bronze	Level Two: Silver	Level Three: Gold
<b>Social, Emotional and Behaviour Needs</b>	Staff work to understand the pupil's likes and dislikes.	School staff use the pupil's interests to help keep them motivated.	Appropriate strategies are modelled for behaviour and transactional support when needed.
	Adults have age appropriate expectations. For example, in Reception pupil sits on the carpet at carpet time but the duration may be shorter than peers and time is built up.	Behaviour routines are recognised and taught.  Breaks from interactions or activities are provided as needed.	Focused behavioural planning is used when there are concerns (for example using solution circles or Behavioural Analysis).
	The need for the pupil to have the time and space to observe peers is recognised as essential.	Playground peer support strategies are agreed and in place and are reviewed termly to deal with changes for the pupil and peer group	Planning is based on some analysis of peer group and friendships and identifies next steps.
	Adults encourage the pupil to become as independent as possible for each activity and at each stage.	There is direct teaching of appropriate social skills using specified intervention	School staff have a culture of friendly challenge to each other. Staff discuss potential barriers including the adult's behaviour inadvertently undermining learning and independence.
	Strategies are in place to support the pupil to recognise their emotional state (at developmentally appropriate level)	Staff support pupil to regulate their emotions, for example strategies to be able to cope and stay calm.	Skill identification and strategies to support emotional regulation are in place.
	One page pupil profile including pupil's interests, needs and successful strategies used by whole school and reviewed to keep pace with changes.	When things go wrong the teacher and school support work on a plan to identify and address issues.	There are planning and support techniques focusing on communication, developmental level, social transaction, and emotional regulation.

<b>Personal Support Needs</b>	<b>Level One: Bronze</b>	<b>Level Two: Silver</b>	<b>Level Three: Gold</b>
	<p>Arrangements are in place to meet pupil's support needs (e.g. support with eating, drinking, toileting and dressing).</p> <p>Issues with eating, drinking, toileting and dressing are addressed with external advice as necessary</p>	<p>Next small steps towards independence for eating, drinking, toileting and dressing are identified with implementation strategy.</p>	<p>Down syndrome Health Check list is referred to inform Personal Support Needs</p> <p>Health needs such as hearing and sight tests are recorded and referred to as part of review of needs</p>
	<p>Key signing words are identified</p> <p>Signing is used (for example Makaton) with training for key staff.</p>	<p>Signing basics are in place for the whole school.</p> <p>Key signs are identified and communicated to key staff and home.</p>	<p>Signing/Makaton is used to support class curriculum (for example, equals and add in maths)</p>
	<p>Oro-motor and sensory equipment is used as needed</p>	<p>Sex, Relationships Education (SRE) is differentiated and taught.</p> <p>Healthy eating and exercise are promoted.</p>	<p>There is participation in targeted activities to enjoy movement/sport.</p>
	<p>The next steps for independence are identified and promoted.</p> <p>At least one activity is completed independently every day (increasing over time as progress is made).</p>	<p>The next steps for independence are known for learning, in-class, movement around the school, responsibility and friendships</p>	<p>Age appropriate independent travel plan is in place with home and school goals.</p>
	<p>The home-school book focuses on positive feedback</p>	<p>Visual materials (for example, supporting social and emotional development) are shared with parents.</p>	<p>The home-school book is monitored to check it is helpful and effective.</p>
	<p>Use of hearing and sight aids are consistent.</p>	<p>Use of hearing and sight aids are consistent and issues are identified and problem solved</p>	<p>Class issues such as seating and the sensory environment are identified and problem-solved.</p>



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Transition and activities	Daily transitions are supported with visual materials.	Sensory and physical issues associated with transition are identified with problem solving to find ways forward.	
	End of year transition meeting focus on what works, attainment levels and personal needs.	The Down Syndrome Leading Edge Group Secondary School and College Transition booklets are used to support planning from year Five	Every transfer across year group and provision is planned well in advance to allow for placement meetings and visits to be arranged. Placement transfers are planned a term in advance.
	From Year 9 the Annual Review focuses on identifying future employment and practical activities to support this.	Purposeful work experience is offered at Key Stage 4	The Approaches to Adulthood Transition plan is followed from age 14+; this is available on the Barnet Local Offer website.
	There is an identified key worker in school who links with therapies (e.g. SLTs, OTs, EPs).	The key worker/SENCo liaises with therapy services (SLTs, OTs, EPs) and ensures advice is integrated into school planning and strategies	There is knowledge of agencies (for example DSA, DSEI and parent support groups).
	The pupil is included in school trips.	The pupil can be included in school-run clubs.	Information about providers of extra-curricular activities is shared with the family.