IDENTIFYING COGNITION AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

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| What you might observe | What strategies could be used? |
| * Child shows little involvement and low levels of concentration
* Child gives up easily and shows a lack of persistence
* Child shows little motivation, enjoyment or sense of achievement
* Child seems unable to express/explore their own ideas and thinking
* Child does not make links (e.g. between experiences at home and nursery)
* Child shows rigidity in play and does not choose how they would like to do things.
 | * Review planning and provision to ensure that play opportunities and resources are interesting to the individual child and match their interests.
* Show a playful attitude and sense of fun when playing with children
* Play alongside the child, copying and modelling extended play.
* Use reassuring physical cues – facial expression, body language, gesture, sign etc. to encourage effort.
* Provide simple play narratives using key words (teddy jumps)
* Visual support: photos, symbols, choice boards, now/next boards to suggest and support development of play sequences or routines.
* Provide a range of resources that offer an extension to the play (small world, toy animals, mark making)
* Use specific motivators: learn what the child really responds to and include it in play situations (food in the home corner etc.)
* Provide time for a child to become immersed in an activity
* Model the use of simple statements such as “I wonder’ or “what if?’ rather that question.
* Make links between experiences or objects explicit using simple language, Makaton signs or photographs.
* Be patient with repetitive play – some children need to ‘over learn’ before they are ready to move on.
* Always offer a choice (when appropriate) e.g. bubbles or glittery water – even if you know the child will always choose the glittery water!
* Use objects or picture to make the choice if the child is non verbal
* Ensure that the child sees other children playing in different ways.

**Possible resources:**Leuven Involvement ScaleChoice boards/ Now and Next Boards/ Visual cues/ Makaton |