

Specialist Units for Cognition and Learning (C&L)

Description:

Within the SEND Code of Practice cognition and learning is defined as follows:

Paragraph 6.30

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

Paragraph 6.31

‘Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.’

Definition of need:

Children with cognition and learning difficulties may have difficulties as follows:

- They learn at a much slower pace than their peers, despite appropriate differentiation.
- They will be working at a level well below that of their peers across all or most areas of the curriculum. Progress will be slower over time.
- Standardised scores of <70 (1st/2nd percentile) in tests relating to reading, writing, comprehension skills, working memory and processing.
- Learning difficulties may be generalised, or there may be specific areas of difficulty. Areas of difficulty are likely to be reading, writing, manipulation of number, comprehension, processing difficulties, working memory, short-term verbal memory, visual and auditory memory, sequencing skills.
- Difficulties with self-organisation and routines, as well as understanding instructions and processes.
- In addition to the above cognition and learning difficulties they may have limited communication and difficulty with social interactions and understanding social cues.

Description of provision:

Children with this profile are likely to benefit from the following interventions:

- A personalised plan for learning adapted, evaluated and then developed through cycles of ‘Assess, Plan, Do, Review’ with parents/carers, the pupil, and any external experts working with the child.

- Highly differentiated literacy and numeracy programmes at an appropriate developmental level.
- Individualised intensive interventions to address additional long-term learning and skill development, planned and differentiated by the class/subject teacher following specialist advice.
- Personalised timetable but with opportunities for whole class integration. At KS4 this may be access to an individualised curriculum and appropriate accredited qualifications.
- Access to small group work to develop literacy and numeracy skills and to provide overlearning and consolidation.
- Additional time to process information and complete tasks.
- Pre and post teaching to assist understanding and skill development.
- Organisational / environmental changes – for example, a designated working area with few distractions.
- Access to additional equipment, for example, word-processors, iPads and tablets, laptops, and Dictaphones. In addition, access to additional supportive software, for example, Write Online, Clicker, voice to text support.
- High level support for personal care, organisation, and independence skills.
- Support for social inclusion to develop communication, language and listening skills. For example, a buddy system, opportunity to learn alongside more able peers, extra-curricular opportunities.
- Access to learning aids, including visual aids and kinaesthetic resources. For example, dictionaries, writing frames, handwriting guides, task boards, cubes, magnetic letters etc.