

Right Support, Right Place,
Right Time

The SEND
Assessment and
Provision Journey
for Children and
Young People in
Hertfordshire

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Introduction

Hertfordshire has a number of tools in its SEND Toolbox and this guide attempts to describe those tools and how they support the 'Journey of the Child' in identifying and supporting the needs of the child or young person (CYP). It also sets out how these tools are all linked together to support the best outcomes for the CYP. These tools form part of the Graduated Response in Hertfordshire (appendix 1).

Where a CYP may be presenting with additional needs, it is important to take a holistic approach to meeting those needs. This will include:

- Support for the CYP and their family to understand presenting needs
- The identification and assessment of those needs
- The 'readiness' of a range of provisions to meet those needs
- The specificity of those needs and the profile of the CYP
- The provision to meet those needs

Support for the CYP and their family to understand presenting need

It is vital that, when a CYP first displays additional needs, there is a dialogue between the family and professionals to enable the family to talk about their CYP's needs. This will need to be done in a sensitive and supportive manner. In Hertfordshire, the Valuing SEND Home Confidence tool (appendix 3) provides a framework to guide these ongoing conversations over time. The tool enables the family to share their views of their CYP's needs and begins a dialogue about how these needs can best be supported. It is likely that an Early Years or school setting will be where these initial discussions take place but all professionals in Education, Social Care and Health will know and understand how to get the conversation started.

The identification and assessment of need

In those initial discussions it will be important for everyone to have a shared understanding of the needs of the CYP. The Valuing SEND tool (appendix 2) enables an initial view of the child's needs to be gathered through different areas of need:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition (understanding) and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
- Physical
 - Hearing Impairment
 - Visual Impairment
- Independence
 - Independent Living
 - Good Health

In each of these a value can be attached to the needs of the CYP to develop a full profile of the CYP's needs.

The 'readiness' of a range of provisions to meet need

Schools and settings will want to be confident that they can support the needs of a CYP or have access to support to build their skills to an appropriate level of confidence. The Valuing SEND 'Setting Readiness' tool enables the school or setting to identify its strengths and areas for development in supporting CYP with SEND. This tool helps a 'conversation' to take place between staff to identify the 'readiness' of the school or setting to meet needs in each

of the areas. It enables a school or setting to identify what is 'ordinarily available' to provide a minimum level of inclusivity in the school or setting and what additional skills or training the school or setting has to meet the needs of CYP. It also supports the school or setting in identifying any areas in which further development or training may be needed. Initially, mainstream schools and settings will aspire to reaching a setting readiness score of 5/6 in each area and many will have a setting readiness above this in one, more than one or all areas of need. If there are CYP in the school or setting with higher levels of need, the school or setting will be able to use this information to identify any need for further development of knowledge and skills to enable the school or setting to meet the needs of the CYP.

All three elements of the Valuing SEND tools can be represented on a radar chart where parents and professionals can have a dialogue about the best ways in which a CYP's needs can be met.

It is expected that a Valuing SEND radar will be in place in a CYP's records before specific work using the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need and Provision takes place (as shown in the following section).

The specificity of the needs and the profile of the CYP

Once there is an indicative profile of the needs of the CYP and the readiness of the setting to meet the needs, the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need will be used to develop a greater level of specificity of Need. The matrix in Appendix 4 will indicate how the Valuing SEND profile is linked to the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need. Schools and settings can then use the Descriptors of Need to clearly identify the level of the CYP's needs:

Universal

Universal+

Targeted

Targeted+

Specialist

Specialist+

The provision to meet those needs

Once a level of need is identified, the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need Tool identifies a range of provision to meet that need and, where appropriate, the resources to best meet that need.

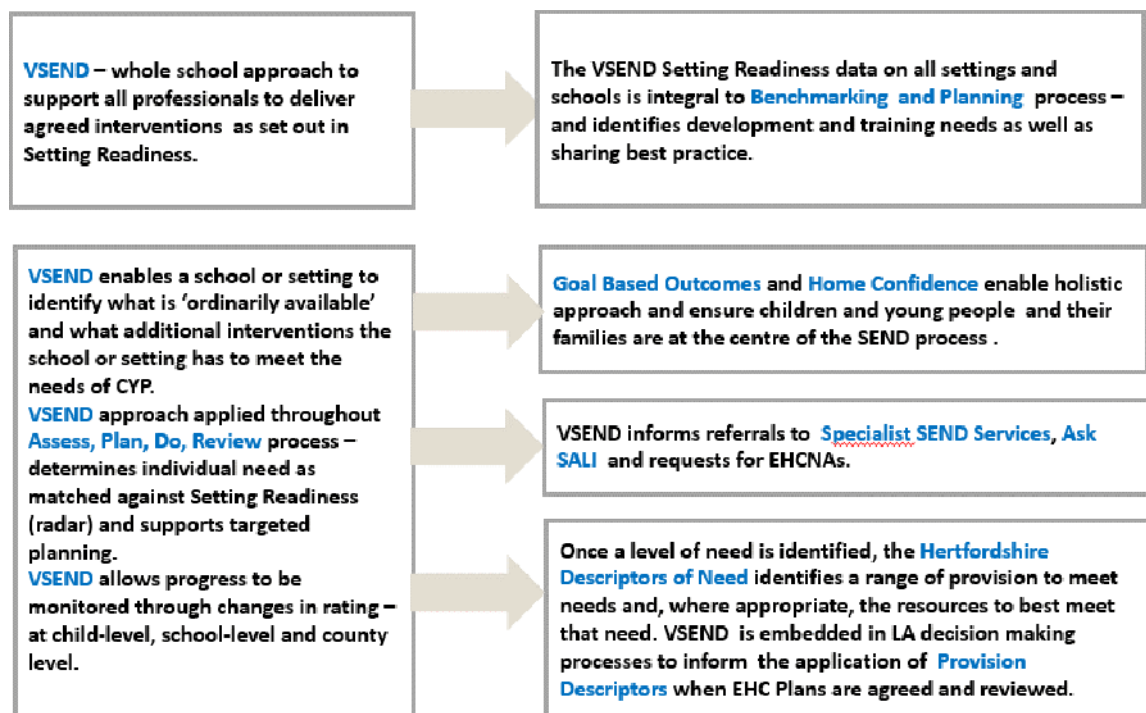
Other elements of the Hertfordshire SEND Toolbox that support the above are:

- The School/setting SEN Information Report
- The Benchmark and Planning Tool
- The Local Offer
- The SEND Toolkit
- A range of guidance documents and services for CYP

Appendix 1

Valuing SEND | Graduated Response Approach

- The Graduated Response Approach has been developed to bring Valuing SEND (VSEND) and all tools and services together to clearly outline the recognised assessments, interventions and approaches which are available to settings, schools, and services.
- Aligning these tools will enable a shared language and approach and provide settings and schools with a range of assessments and interventions to support a wide range of needs, at different settings, and at different stages of the child and young person's journey.
- Settings and schools will have a range of options to better support needs, including informing discussions about alternative approaches to address the gaps highlighted by the VSEND tool.
- VSEND promotes a collaborative discussion between the setting, family, and professionals about when different approaches may be needed to meet needs and improve outcomes.
- Families will have an opportunity through VSEND Home Confidence to contribute to a rounded picture of their children and share strengths and any support needed at home.



Appendix 2

Valuing SEND approach

- The shared ambition for Valuing SEND is to:
 - Improve children’s long-term outcomes and inclusion
 - Improve the experience of families and professionals across the system.
- Valuing SEND aims to achieve this by:
 - Developing a single, rounded picture of the needs of children and the support they need to succeed and prosper
 - Using this as the foundation for planning and commissioning of support, monitoring of progress and evaluation of support at a child and cohort level, and to enable earlier and more co-ordinated intervention.

Once the tool is completed, a simple diagram is created, showing where a child’s needs are being met and where additional support could be provided.



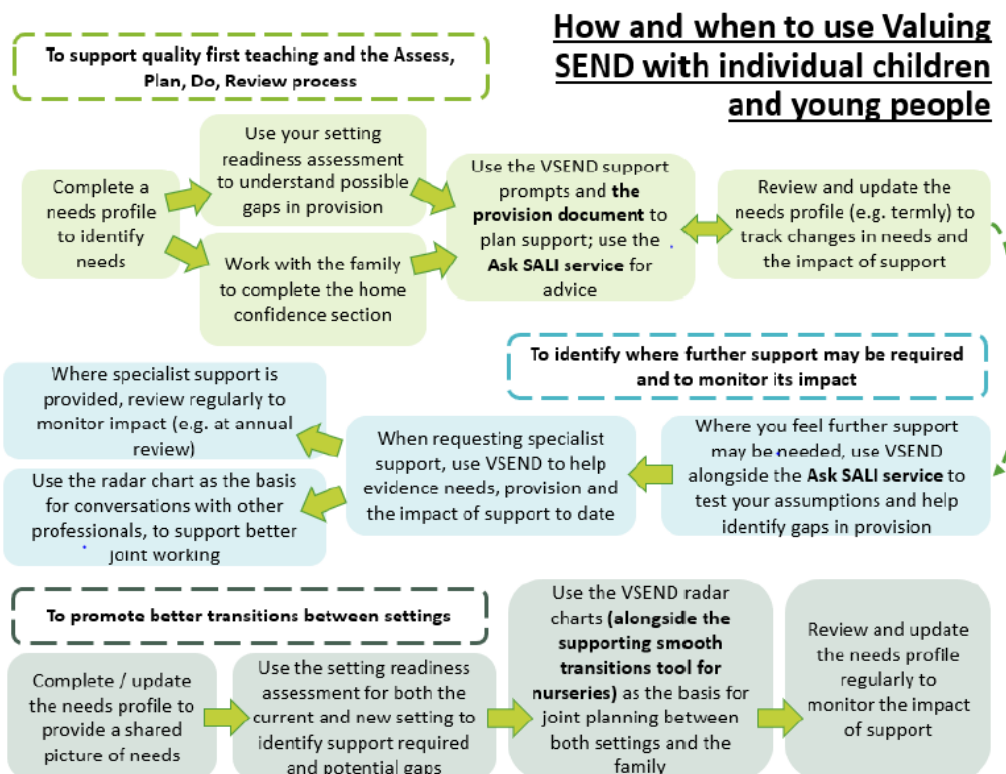
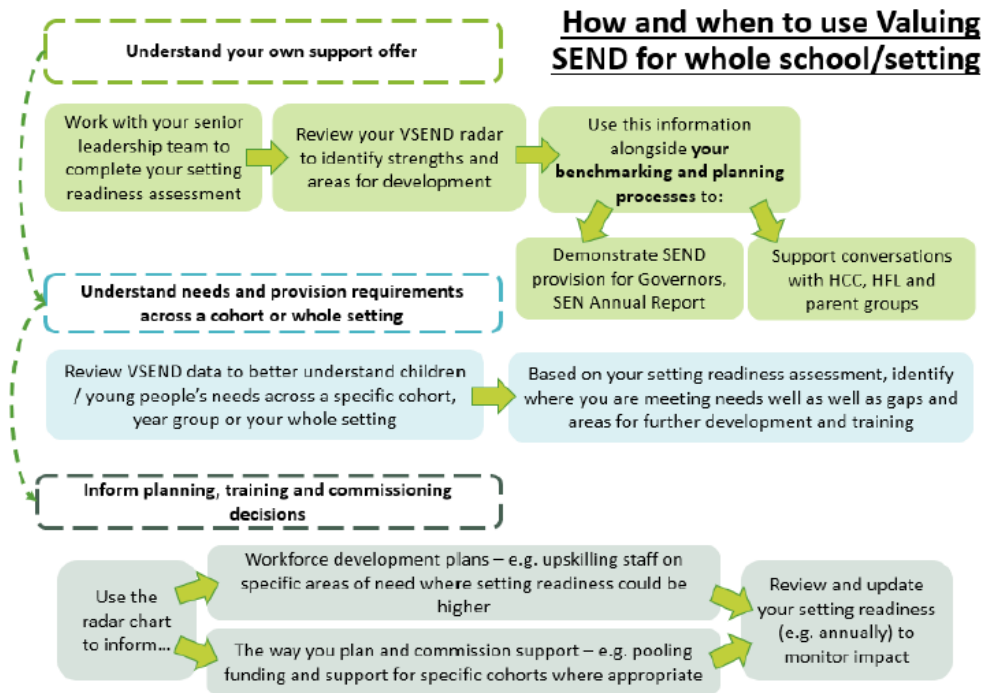
The **blue line** shows the child’s level of need in the following areas:

- 1 Communication and Interaction
- 2 Cognition and Learning
- 3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- 4 Sensory and Physical
- 5 Independence

The **yellow line** shows the school’s readiness to meet the child’s needs across the 5 areas.

The **pink line** shows how confident a parent or carer feels in supporting their child outside of school and helps identify other support that may be of assistance.

Using Valuing SEND





Appendix 3

VSEND Home Confidence IMPOWER Hertfordshire


The tool asks you to score your confidence between **10** (you feel confident to support your child's needs) or **0** (no confidence at all in supporting your child's needs).

The Home Confidence can be completed by parents/carers themselves or during supported conversations over time





Needs	What does this mean?	What should I think about when scoring? Ask myself – am I comfortable in supporting these needs?
Communication & Interaction	Any difficulty your child may have in talking, expressing themselves, understanding others and interacting with others.	Do you change the way you talk, give your child extra time to think and respond, ask your child questions about activities you have done, use any different communication styles?
Cognition & Learning	Any difficulty your child may have in learning, following instructions and remembering things they have been told.	Do you support your child with homework, play games with them to increase their understanding of words and numbers, do you help them plan their day?
Social, Emotional & Mental Health	Any difficulty your child may have with their mental health, coping with change, forming friendships, behaviour and attending school.	Do you have conversations about feelings, talk about your day including things that did not go well, help them have positive routines before and after school?
Physical or Sensory	Any difficulty your child may have from a physical disability, sight or hearing loss and challenges around being in environments they find difficult due to noise, light or smells.	Do you support your child with any equipment they may need, in following activities from other professionals, through using different communication techniques?
Independence	This is focused on Preparing your child for the future and thinking about how they could cope with moving on in education, accessing the local area, building relationships, understanding food & money and talking about their health and wellbeing.	Do you support your child to build their understanding of these areas, cook with them, talk to them about money, take them on public transport, enable them to challenge themselves with activities? How do you build their independence?


Valuing SEND | Resources: [Hertfordshire Valuing SEND training - VSEND](#)




Guidance on accessing the VSEND online tool




Top tips guidance to support whole school setting readiness




Instructional videos for VSEND online



Support prompts and needs descriptors – PDF version



Guidance on conversations with parents and carers (including easy-read version)



Step-by-step guide to completing the VSEND online digital tool

Appendix 4

Valuing SEND and Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need Matrix

The table below can be used to align the VSEND descriptors with the descriptors in the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need Tool

VSEND Area of Need by Code of Practice	Hertfordshire Descriptors by Area of Need
Cognition and Learning	Cognition and Learning (unless otherwise specified)
1-2 Some difficulties with learning including some misconceptions and/ or taking longer to understand new concepts	Universal Plus Support
1-2 Some difficulties in some aspect of cognitive processing, i.e. slow phonological processing, poor working memory, and difficulties with auditory and visual processing.	Universal Plus Support
1-2 Difficulties are likely to be specific to one aspect of learning, e.g. written/ verbal communication, numbers, appreciating instruction, dyslexia/ dyscalculia/ dysgraphia, and are low level. Evidence of discrepancies between attainment in different core subjects or within one core subject of the curriculum.	Targeted Support
1-2 Difficulties acquiring good learning routines such as concentration and may be resistant to learning. The CYP may struggle with handwriting.	Targeted Support
1-2 Infrequent lapses in memory and/ or longer processing times	Targeted Support
1-2 The CYP is working just below age-related expectations	Universal Plus Support
3-4 The CYP is working outside of the programme of study for their key stage in one or more core subjects and progress is slow	Targeted Plus Support
3-4 CYP often has difficulties with independent working. Has difficulties with reasoning, understanding or expressing thoughts.	Targeted Plus Support
3-4 Low level to moderate but persistent difficulties in acquiring expected literacy and/or numeracy skills, e.g. phonic learning very slow to develop	Early Years = Targeted Primary/Secondary Targeted Plus Support
3-4 Dependent on context there are some difficulties with the pace of delivery, understanding instructions and prioritising/ organising work	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support
3-4 Poor phonological processing, working memory and processing skills	Targeted Support
3-4 Below the average range for attainment with standardised scores of 65- 85	Overall attainment profile: Below 70 – Specialist 71-79 – Targeted Plus 80-85 – Targeted/Universal plus
5-6 Significant and persistent difficulties with concept development and logical thought	Targeted Plus Support
5-6 CYP displays poor learning habits and concentration difficulties, and often resistant to learning.	Targeted Plus Support
5-6 Significant difficulties in tasks involving specific abilities such as sequencing, organisation or phonological awareness, concentration or short-	Targeted Plus Support

term memory and which in turn impacts negatively on literacy and mathematics, significantly greater and more persistent than would normally be expected for students of his/her age.	
5-6 Significant difficulties with pace of delivery, understanding instructions and prioritising/ organising work	Targeted Plus Support
5-6 Significant difficulties with long/ short term memory	Targeted Plus Support
5-6 Below average range for attainment with a standardised score of 65 and below (first percentile or below)	Very low range Specialist Support
7-8 Significant and persistent difficulties in the acquisition and/or use of language, literacy and numeracy skills which affect progress in all aspects of the curriculum.	Targeted Plus Support
7-8 Significant difficulties in tasks involving specific abilities such as sequencing, organisation, or phonological or short-term memory abilities	Targeted Plus Support
7-8 Specific difficulties with an aspect of learning with progress far behind peers in relation to this aspect, which is impacting on progress in multiple parts of the curriculum.	Targeted Plus Support
7-8 Communicates using signs and gestures and some key words	Speech and Language Descriptors Targeted Support or above depending on age
7-8 Significant difficulties generalising or transferring from one context to another	Specialist Support
7-8 Very limited progress with attainment in the bottom quartile of scores below 65	Very low range Specialist Support
9- 10 Profound and life-long learning difficulties impacting on access to learning in range of settings.	PMLD Sector
9- 10 CYP has significant and persistent difficulties with several aspects of cognition e.g. memory, concept development, information processing, understanding, sequencing and reasoning	Specialist Support
9- 10 Very specific and permanent difficulties(dyslexia, dyspraxia) affecting literacy skills, spatial and perceptual skills and fine and/or gross motor skills, Significant and persistent difficulties in the acquisition of reading, writing, spelling number skills, which do not fit his/her general pattern of learning and performance.	Targeted Plus Support
9 -10 Very limited or no understanding of language	Specialist Support (Refer to speech and language descriptors).
9- 10 Significant difficulties with organisational skills and independent learning	Targeted Plus Support
9-10 No evidence of attainment progress with attainment in the bottom quartile of scores below 65 over current academic year	Specialist Support

VSEND Area of Need by Code of Practice	Hertfordshire Descriptors By Area of Need
Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

1-2 The CYP experiences low level/low frequency (once or twice per month) difficulties which impact on their learning.	Universal Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
1-2 The CYP shows some distress when their plans are not followed or when required to take turns	Universal Support
1-2 CYP may experience some difficulties with social /interaction skills.	Universal Support
1 -2 CYP sometimes has difficulties responding appropriately to social situations	Universal Support
1-2 The CYP will become disproportionately agitated and upset and will take longer than peers to calm down	Universal Plus Support
1-2 CYP has low self-esteem and confidence levels and is reluctant to attempt some activities as afraid of failure.	Universal Plus Support
1-2 The CYP has immature social/emotional skills e.g. difficulties with turn- taking, reciprocal attention, sharing resources, etc	Universal Plus Support
1-2 CYP will sometimes isolate themselves e.g. spending breaktimes alone, low-level anxiety in social situations	Universal Plus Support
1-2 CYP has low self-esteem and lacks confidence	Universal Plus Support
1-2 The CYP will sometimes (more than once a month) show signs of low mood and/ or anxiety	Universal Plus Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
1-2 CYP has some difficulties complying with adult direction and are unwilling to acknowledge or accept responsibility for their own actions	Universal Plus Support
1-2 CYP has some difficulties following classroom routines	Universal Plus Support
1-2 The CYP shows signs of anxiety in the classroom environment and reluctance to engage	Universal Plus Support
3-4 The CYP sometimes (weekly) displays distressed or ritualistic behaviours resulting from underlying emotional needs	Universal Plus Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
3-4 CYP struggles with unstructured times and changes in routine, with their response causing interruptions for the whole class	Targeted Support
3-4 The CYP sometimes use non-harmful coping strategies to hide their anxiety, e.g. presenting cheerfully	Targeted Support
3-4 The CYP struggle with self-regulating emotion or experience strong emotions that have no outlet, resulting in inappropriate language or frequent (weekly) angry, emotional or aggressive outbursts, sexualised language, anxiety, mood swings, and unpredictable behaviour, which affect relationships, learning and response to setbacks	Targeted Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
3-4 CYP experiences issues around identity, belonging and body image.	Targeted Support
3-4 The CYP regularly (weekly) fail to engage with appropriate learning tasks and struggle with appropriate learning behaviour e.g. sustaining attention and concentration, motivation to engage with work-related tasks	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
3-4 The CYP struggles forming and sustaining relationships with peers and adults e.g. they are withdrawn, or display a lack of empathy, victim or perpetrator of bullying	Targeted Plus Support
3-4 There are significant self- esteem issues affecting relationships and behaviour patterns ('acting in' or 'acting out'), and they will often pre-empt their own failure in school tasks	Targeted Plus Support

3-4 They often (weekly) show low mood or refuse to communicate for periods of time. Increasing levels of anxiety are apparent at particular times	Targeted Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
3-4 Relationships with adults in authority are difficult. They sometimes (weekly) challenge rules and show resistance to adult intervention to help them manage their behaviour	Targeted Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
3-4 School/setting attendance is falling below 90%	Universal Plus Support
5-6 CYP has complex mental health needs which impact on their learning or social relationships, leading to incidents or gaps in engagement in the classroom more than once per week	Targeted Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
5-6 The development of habitual behaviours impacts on participation in daily life on a weekly basis	Targeted Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
5-6 Pupil may show patterns of stress/anxiety related to specific times of the day in response to particular activities and instructions.	Targeted Support
5-6 They sometimes engage in harmful coping strategies, e.g. self-harm and activities which deliberately put them in dangerous situations, e.g. leaving school	Targeted Plus Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
5-6 They often struggle to regulate their emotions, to the extent that learning, and progression is limited (more than once per week), e.g. intense emotional or aggressive outbursts, uninhibited unpredictable outbursts, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, high levels of anxiety, hyper-vigilance, mood swings, or difficulties with social relationships.	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
5-6 CYP is over-friendly or withdrawn with strangers, and unaware of vulnerable situations.	Targeted Support
5-6 They show low levels of emotional resilience, meaning that any criticism or unforeseen upset results in high levels of distress or destructive behaviour	Targeted Plus Support
5-6 The CYP is often withdrawn and finds it very difficult to form social relationships or disengages from relationships with most peers.	Targeted Plus Support
5-6 Persistent anxiety relating to separation from parent(s)/ carer beyond age-appropriate expectations	Targeted Support
5-6 Significant trauma has continued to impact on CYP's mental health (e.g. bereavement, neglect)	Targeted Support
5-6 The CYP often struggles to understand the consequences of their behaviour on themselves and others, which may result in aggressive behaviour towards peers or staff, or in unsafe decision-making more than once per week	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
5-6 The CYP finds it difficult to learn from previous experiences, make good choices and understand the consequences of their actions.	Targeted Plus Support
5-6 School/setting attendance is below 75%	Targeted Support
7-8 The CYP experiences significant, persistent difficulties with specific mental health needs, regulating emotions, and/ or understanding the consequences of decisions and actions, leading to high distress levels exhibited through various behaviours on a daily basis, affecting their daily functioning	Specialist Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
7-8 CYP struggle with small changes to routine, which often leads to significant distress	Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support

7-8 CYP unable to manage self in a group or class and displays significant challenging behaviour, engaging in high risk-taking activities .	Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support
7-8 They use harmful coping strategies persistently, e.g. self-harm, substance misuse, eating disorders	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support
7-8 Their high level of anxiety, periods of distress/ heightened emotion or withdrawn behaviours make life very difficult on a daily basis, including acting as a barrier to learning. Distress is unpredictable and extreme.	Specialist Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
7-8 CYP significantly socially and emotionally vulnerable, disaffected, withdrawn and isolated, and their unpredictable patterns of behaviour severely impact on their learning.	Targeted Support
7-8 They show an extreme lack of emotional resilience when faced with challenge or criticism, e.g. flight/ fright/ freeze response, which is impacting on daily life	Targeted Plus Support
7-8 The CYP is withdrawn and does not attempt to form relationships with peers. CYP is increasingly isolated and struggles to maintain positive relationships with adults or peers.	Targeted Plus Support
7-8 They experience very low-mood, and this is impacting on their daily life (including their access to learning)	Targeted Support (depending upon severity)
7-8 They exhibit hyper-vigilance, extreme mood swings and/or other behaviours that damage relationships with peers and adults, increasing the likelihood of social isolation	Targeted Plus Support (depending upon severity)
7-8 The CYP is unable to access learning for the majority of the school day due to resistance to adult direction and resulting escalations of emotion or aggression.	Specialist Support
7-8 CYP has become disengaged from learning, which is having a significant impact on all aspects of learning and behaviour around school.	Specialist Support
7-8 The CYP has very poor school/setting attendance (under 60%)	Targeted Plus Support (depending upon severity)
9 -10 The CYP experiences complex, frequent (daily) and persistent difficulties resulting from mental health problems, which manifest as problems of mood such as anxiety or depression, meaning that they are severely withdrawn from daily life and pose a risk to themselves.	Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
9 -10 The CYP experiences complex, frequent (daily) and persistent difficulties resulting from problems of conduct (oppositional problems and more severe conduct problems including aggressing), self-harming, substance abuse, eating disorders, sexualised behaviour or difficulties with attachment.	Specialist Plus Support Refer to FID Framework (Artemis, 2022)
9 -10 CYP displays extreme violent/aggressive behaviour. CYP refuses to engage in learning activities and shows extreme abuse towards staff and peers.	Specialist Plus Support
9 -10 Self-harm, suicidal ideation is taking place on a near-daily basis, with serious attempts at suicide.	Specialist Plus Support

9 -10 Their behaviour is unpredictable and dangerous (either to themselves and/or others), with intense episodes of emotional and/ or challenging behaviour.	Specialist Plus Support
9 -10 The CYP is extremely withdrawn and shows distress at interactions with peers and adults, meaning that participation in daily life is not possible.	Specialist Plus Support
9 -10 CYP lacks motivation and interest in surroundings. May become depressed, disaffected and unable to recover their engagement.	Specialist Plus Support
9 -10 Significant disruption to social situations and periods of heightened emotion or extreme withdrawal, leading to extreme disengagement and isolation.	Specialist Plus Support
9 -10 CYP is unable to co-operate with adults and is not able to plan a way forward on a daily basis or for their long-term future.	Specialist Plus Support
9 -10 CYP presents extreme health and safety risk to self and others due to their significant levels of agitation and avoidance of adult direction .	Specialist Plus Support
9 -10 Long term non-attendance and disaffection.	Specialist Plus Support

VSEND Area of Need by Code of Practice	Hertfordshire Descriptors By Area of Need	Hertfordshire Descriptors By Area of Need
Communication and Autism	Communication and Autism (Social)	Speech and Language
1-2 There is immature understanding of verbal language, with limited vocabulary beyond the everyday context.		Age group Universal Plus Support Targeted Plus Support
1-2 Occasional difficulty in understanding instructions	Universal Support	Universal Support
1-2 Occasionally there are some difficulties with listening and attention	Universal Support	Universal Support
1-2 There is immature use of verbal language, with limited vocabulary beyond the everyday context		Age group dependent Universal Plus Support (Early Years) Targeted Plus support
1-2 Some specific vocabulary takes longer to acquire than for peers		Universal Plus Support (if subject specific) Targeted/Targeted Plus for carrier vocabulary
1-2 The CYP will take longer than peers to find the word they wish to use		Universal Plus Support
1-2 There are concerns about immature speech sound development		Age dependent Universal Support (Early Years) Universal Plus Support
1-2 There is inconsistent and slow progress in phonic development	Universal Plus Support	Universal Plus Support
1-2 The CYP finds social situations confusing and/ or upsetting	Targeted Support	

1-2 They are unclear about appropriate responses and how to form relationships, with limited development of conversational skills	Targeted Support	
1-2 The CYP has a number of specific interests which can infrequently (monthly) impact on engagement in learning activity, as they prefer to follow their own plans	Universal Plus Support	
1-2 The CYP is reluctant to take turns and is unsettled by changes to routine	Universal Plus Support	
3-4 Limited range of vocabulary understood in writing and oral communication, compared to age-expected range	Specialist Support	Specialist Support
3-4 Difficulty in understanding instructions with multiple elements	Age dependent Targeted Support	Age dependent Targeted Support
3-4 Tires easily when listening and can sometimes appear inattentive or distracted	Universal Support	Universal Support
3-4 The CYP sometimes struggles to express themselves verbally	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support
3-4 Most new vocabulary will take longer to acquire than for peers	Universal Plus Support	Universal Plus Support
3-4 The CYP confuses words and will frequently use words out of context	Universal Plus Support	Universal Plus Support
3-4 Speech sounds are consistently immature, with motor difficulties relating to formation of sounds		Targeted Support
3-4 Moderately delayed or disordered speech sounds		Targeted Support
3-4 Unstructured and/ or social times are sometimes challenging and can result in low-level distress - they may isolate themselves	Targeted Support	
3-4 There are sometimes difficulties in understanding and using non-verbal communication, and in understanding social 'rules' (including how to maintain a conversation)	Universal Plus Support	
3-4 The CYP has very strong interests that can sometimes (weekly) take precedence over instructions	Universal Plus Support	
3-4 There is sometimes difficulty in switching tasks, maintaining attention in directed tasks, and in organising/ conceptualising future activity	Universal Plus Support	
5-6 The CYP finds it difficult to understand language (written and verbal), concepts and vocabulary beyond the everyday context – this may result from verbal dyspraxia, disordered language etc - affecting reasoning and predicting skills		Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support
5-6 There are frequently listening and attention difficulties, and associated difficulty in understanding age-appropriate adult instructions	Targeted Support	Targeted Support

5-6 Difficulty in processing language in particular settings e.g. in whole class listening and discussions	Targeted Support	Targeted Support
5-6 There are moderate difficulties in expressing themselves verbally, in terms of grammar, word-finding and/ or vocabulary.		Universal Plus Support Targeted Support
5-6 CYP shows poor generalisation of concepts and transfer of skills.	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
5-6 The CYP uses alternative forms of communication on occasion, e.g. when tired or stressed	Universal Plus Support Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
5-6 The CYP has poor speech intelligibility and therefore struggles to make themselves understood		Targeted Support
5-6 Moderate phonological or speech difficulties (including dyspraxia)		Targeted Support
5-6 The CYP struggles to understand social interactions and interpret other people's behaviour, intentions, social cues and norms and non-verbal communication such as eye contact, gesture, and do not always recognise conversational breakdown	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support Specialist Plus	
5-6 The CYP lacks the ability to manage conversations with either adults or peers, and social interactions needed to make and maintain friendships	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
5-6 The CYP displays strong preoccupations or habitual behaviours that impact on their attention to directions and their engaging in expected daily routines, but respond to direction with time	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
5-6 Times of change can trigger obsessive and repetitive behaviours or short-term distress	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
7-8 The CYP has persistent difficulty understanding language in all contexts, including everyday conversation.		Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support
7-8 Questions /instructions / conversations are usually misunderstood		Targeted Plus Support (if adapted) Specialist Support
7-8 Significant difficulty in processing language in a range of settings and contexts e.g. whole class, small group and some 1:1 conversations, impacting on accessing the curriculum. Attention is fleeting and is either unfocused or over-focused on a detail/object.		Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support
7-8 The CYP has persistent, significant difficulty in expressing themselves and understanding others.		Specialist Support

7-8 CYP has a very limited vocabulary that is not developing, and very poor generalisation of concepts		Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support
7-8 The CYP uses sign language/ communication book to assist most communication		Universal Plus (Makaton in Early Years) Specialist Support
7-8 Persistent and limited range of speech sounds, meaning that communication with unfamiliar adults or peers is very challenging. Communication augmented with sign language/ communication book		Age dependent Specialist Support
7-8 Persisting and significant difficulties in phonological processing, impacting on literacy		See Cognition & Learning
7-8 The CYP has persistent, significant difficulty in expressing their wishes and feelings, and in understanding others' emotions – including difficulty in reading facial expressions. CYP has limited motivation to initiate, respond or sustain social interaction	Universal Plus Support Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
7-8 The CYP struggles to make friends and tend to fixate on individuals with a very limited understanding of social norms and cues	Universal Plus Support	
7-8 Interests are likely to become fixations and can interfere with daily life and social interactions. CYP often (daily) either vents frustration and anger in very obvious ways or become very quiet and withdrawn in response to requests/ direction that do not align with their wishes.	Age dependent Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
7-8 Considerable difficulty in dealing with change which can lead to extended periods of anxiety and behavioural changes.	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	
9-10 Very little or no indication that language or visual communication aids are understood, impacting on every aspect of daily life		Specialist Plus Support
9-10 Delayed understanding and persistent difficulties recognising instructions in a range of settings.		Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support
9-10 Difficulties severely affect curriculum access and social development	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support
9-10 Needs are difficult to interpret, even by familiar adults .	Specialist Support Specialist Plus	Specialist Support Specialist Plus
9-10 The CYP can only communicate a very limited range of words or concepts (e.g. choices between options)	Specialist Support Specialist Plus	Specialist Support Specialist Plus
9-10 All communication via body language, emotions and alternative forms e.g. communication book, facial gestures, eye-pointing, body movements	Specialist Support Specialist Plus	Specialist Support Specialist Plus

9-10 Speech is largely unintelligible even in context/ with familiar adults, with frequent use of echolalic language and speech system reduced to a few sounds	Specialist Support Specialist Plus	Specialist Support Specialist Plus
9-10 Child has severe speech and/or language delay/disorder.		Specialist Support
9-10 The CYP has enduring social communication needs that mean participation in daily life is very limited	Specialist Support Specialist Plus	
9-10 They are unable to understand social cues to the extent that they have a very limited number of relationships with adults rather than peers, causing isolation	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support Specialist Plus	
9-10 Rigidity of thought and communications consistently impede learning and lead to severe difficulties in functioning. Interests are intense and limit daily functioning, health and social interaction.	Specialist Support Specialist Plus	
9-10 Access to learning is extremely restricted due to high levels of anxiety and consequent challenging behaviour in familiar surroundings and with familiar support/people. The CYP cannot communicate the triggers for their distress.	Specialist Support Specialist Plus	

VSEND Area of Need by Code of Practice	Hertfordshire Descriptors By Area of Need			
Physical and Sensory	Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI)	Vision Impairment (VI)	Hearing Impairment (HI)	Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)
1-2 The CYP has fine and/ or gross motor skills developing at a slower pace than his/ her peers. They may appear clumsy, poorly coordinated or lack strength.	Universal Plus Support			
1-2 Their mobility is affected by fatigue	Targeted Support			
1-2 Verbal communication is limited for physical reasons.	Targeted Support			
1-2 The CYP has a mild mobility impairment that is easily managed.	Universal Plus Support			
1-2 CYP has a medical condition which they are able to manage with medication, stress relief or time out.	Universal Plus Support			
1-2 CYP may have fluctuating medical need which impacts on their self- esteem and confidence	Targeted Support			

e.g. weight difficulties, incontinence,				
1-2 The CYP has a physical or medical condition	Universal Plus Support – Specialist Plus Support depending on severity			
Hearing Impairment 1-2 The CYP has a reoccurring conductive deafness (may be associated with middle ear infections, temporary perforated eardrums)			Universal Plus Support	
1-2 Vision Impairment The CYP is diagnosed as having mild vision loss within the range 6/9.5 to 6/19 (Snellen/Kay)		Universal Plus Support		
3-4 PD The CYP has fine and gross motor difficulties – their physical condition varies from day to day. This impacts on their ability to record their work	Targeted Plus Support			
3-4 They have difficulties with their core stability	Targeted Support			
3-4 Physical difficulties impact on their spoken language	Targeted Support			
3-4 Their mobility is moderately impaired, causing difficulties on stairs, with spatial orientation and in crowded areas or uneven ground	Targeted Support			
3-4 They have an unpredictable long-term medical condition, e.g. they experience fluctuating levels of pain, which at times impacts on their ability to access daily activities	Targeted Plus Support			
3-4 The CYP's growth is impacted by their diet (either under or over-eating)	Refer to health advice			
3-4 Their physical health/ medical condition has a moderate impact on their self-care functions	Targeted or Targeted Plus Support			
3-4 Hearing Impairment The CYP has moderate long-term conductive hearing loss, unilateral hearing loss, mild – moderate sensori-neural hearing loss, functional moderate hearing loss due to auditory neuropathy			Universal Plus or Targeted Support	

3-4 Vision Impairment The CYP is diagnosed as having moderate vision loss within the range of 6/19 to 6/38 (Snellen/Kay)		Targeted Support		
5-6 PD The CYP has moderate difficulties with fine and gross motor	Targeted Support			
5-6 They show signs of fatigue during the school day, which may impact on their attendance or engagement at school	Targeted Plus Support			
5-6 The CYP has physical difficulties with eating and/ or drinking	Refer to health advice			
5-6 They require equipment in order to walk	Universal Plus Support Targeted Support			
5-6 The CYP has a medical condition that is increasingly difficult to manage and CYP is experiencing considerable pain and disruption to their ability to focus.	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support			
5-6 Their ongoing medical needs restricts C&YP's confidence and resilience and may result in poor attendance	Targeted Support Reasonable Adjustments duty			
5-6 They have difficulties resulting from a medical condition in communicating, addressing self-care needs, moving independently, managing a medical condition (including self-managing when appropriate)	Specialist Support			
5-6 Hearing Impairment The CYP has a severe sensory- neural hearing loss, moderate hearing loss with conductive overlay, functional severe hearing loss due to auditory neuropathy			Targeted or Targeted Plus Support	
5-6 Vision Impairment The CYP is diagnosed as having moderate to severe vision loss (within the range of 6/19 to 6/60 (Snellen/Kay)		Targeted Plus Support or Specialist Support		
7-8 PD They have very limited fine motor skills and require significant time to complete simple motor tasks	Targeted Plus Support Reasonable Adjustments			

7-8 Fatigue resulting from underlying health conditions is routinely impacting on attendance and meaning a significant proportion of school time is missed	Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support			
7-8 They have significant communication needs resulting from their physical disability	Targeted Plus Support Specialist Support			
7-8 They have severely limited mobility, including being dependent on others/ equipment for mobility and being unstable when seated	Specialist Support			
7-8 The CYP has significant medical needs impacting on their ability to access daily life safely, including schooling. When these conditions are at their most severe, they may be life-threatening	Refer to health advice			
7-8 The CYP has one or more health domains assessed as 'severe' as part of a continuing healthcare assessment	Refer to health advice			
7-8 The CYP's health is negatively impacted by their weight (either under- or over-weight) or delay in development of other areas of independence.	Refer to health advice			
7-8 The CYP has a medical condition that impacts on personal hygiene (i.e. a catheter, colostomy bag)	Refer to health advice			
7-8 Hearing Impairment The CYP has profound hearing loss, profound functional hearing loss due to auditory neuropathy, or cochlear implant functioning as profound hearing loss			Specialist Support Specialist Plus Support Exceptional Support	
7-8 Vision Impairment The CYP is diagnosed as having profound vision loss Distance vision: functional vision acuity range of approximately 6/60 (Snellen/Kay) or above representing little or no useful vision		Specialist Plus Support Exceptional Support		
9-10 PD Fine and gross motor difficulties limit access to daily life including participation in the classroom	Targeted Support Targeted Plus Support			

9-10 The CYP is not managing to access learning due to fatigue resulting from underlying health conditions	Refer to health advice Reasonable Adjustments			
9-10 They are unable to chew food or take food orally	Refer to health advice			
9-10 The CYP has severely limited head and trunk control	Specialist Support Specialist Plus Support			
9-10 The CYP has severe and complex medical needs, that seriously limit their ability to access daily life safely and may be a persistent, life-threatening or life-limiting condition, or a degenerative condition.	Specialist Plus Support			
9-10 The CYP has one or more health domains assessed as 'priority' as part of a continuing healthcare assessment	Refer to health advice			
9-10 C&YP believes they cannot access learning and community environments due to nature of their health condition.	Refer to health advice			
9-10 The CYP has a complex medical need requiring frequent monitoring and medical intervention throughout the school day.	Refer to health advice			
9-10 Multi-Sensory Impairment The CYP has profound multi-sensory impairments				MSI Descriptors Specialist Support Specialist Plus Support Exceptional Support