

Supporting the social and emotional needs of children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)

Children with SLCN require an understanding of the wider impact of their needs - this includes their emotional and social development.

The social and emotional development of children can be affected significantly by a communication need. Children can experience a range of difficulties from expressing and understanding their own feelings to managing disagreements with friends. This [video](#) provides an insight into how SLCN affects feelings and behaviour.

For children whose language follows a typical pattern of development, language becomes a substitute for action as they begin to understand better what is said to them and are able to express their needs verbally. Children with SLCN may feel under pressure to conform when they are unable to respond like other children. This can lead to misunderstandings, attention and self-regulation difficulties that are often not interpreted as signals of distress. Further information can be found in [Don't Get Me Wrong](#).

Children with SLCN are most likely to struggle to learn emotional literacy skills and this can impact on their well-being, social relationships and academic resilience.

They may present as having the following difficulties:

- Failure to understand or pay attention to the rules of conversation ... *so they might interrupt or withdraw.*
- Difficulty using different language for different situations ... *so they might seem rude or inappropriate or become isolated from peers.*
- Poor or limited vocabulary ... *so they might swear, always answer in the same way or withdraw.*
- Difficulty asking for clarification ... *so they might not be able to do the learning or to ask how to.*
- Difficulty organising information ... *so they may forget homework, might be late or be reliant of familiar adults.*
- Problems understanding idiom, jokes, sarcasm and slang ... *so they may be confused or aggressive when these are used.*
- Problems using language to initiate and sustain friendships ... *so they may cling to one or two close friends.*

Provision for the social and emotional needs of the child with SLCN would include appropriate

supporting strategies for communication needs as described in the Provision Guidance.

Through One Planning any additional school provision would be specified according to the child's needs in terms of their areas of difficulty with communication and supporting their well-being.

Children with SLCN need adults to use visual resources to ascertain their feelings and what's working/ not working. Supporting tools may include graphics or [rating scales](#) or tools described in [One Planning](#).

Additional provision may also include:

- Teaching about the language of emotions explicitly through curriculum learning, eg chosen texts in Literacy and activities in PSHE and evidenced-based interventions.
- Visual supports for communicating needs and responses in social situations. Drawing and talking through a social situation can assist the child in understanding a social scenario and learning new responses. Resources such as Social Stories™ and Comic Strip Conversations™ (Carol Gray) and this [Incident Framework](#) can be helpful.
- Adult scaffolding of speaking and listening tasks to enable the child to participate fully.
- Checking in with the child to check feelings and friendships on a regular basis and as needed.
- Mediated learning approaches to help children to think about how they did something, supports learning about cause and effect, personal strategies and generalising their learning to a range of contexts. It can help to develop self-esteem and the child's view of self as a learner.

Date: Time: Start at no. 1 Use post-its to record with drawings and labels

What happened just before? 2	What happened? What did you see? 1	Anyone hurt? Anyone upset? Feelings ? 3	What can we do to help them sort it out? 4
5 What can they do ?	6 What could they do next time? What may happen then ?		