BRADLEY BARTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

The Four Main Areas of SEND

At our school, we are committed to supporting all children to reach their full potential. Some children have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), which may affect how they learn, communicate, interact, or manage their emotions and behaviour. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) identifies four main areas of need, and understanding these helps us provide the right support for every child. The table below explains each area, what it means, and examples of conditions or needs that may be included.

The four broad areas of SEND need are:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- sensory or physical needs or both

Area of Need	What this means	Description (What you might notice)	Examples of diagnosis/identified need	Support considerations
Communication and Interaction (C&I)	Difficulties with speech, language, understanding, or social interaction	Children may find it hard to express themselves, follow instructions, understand social rules, or interact with peers. They may struggle with social communication, understanding non-verbal cues, or maintaining relationships.	• Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) • Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) • Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) • Selective Mutism	Support may include speech and language therapy, social skills groups, visual supports, structured routines, or communication aids.
Cognition and Learning (C&L)	Difficulties with learning, memory, or understanding information	Children may learn at a slower pace, have difficulty with literacy or numeracy, or struggle with planning and problem-solving. This may affect one area (e.g., reading) or broader learning.	• Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia • Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) • Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) • Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)	Support may include differentiated teaching, targeted interventions, assistive technology, additional time for tasks, or specialist support staff.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	Difficulties managing emotions, behaviour, or social relationships	Children may experience anxiety, low mood, behavioural challenges, or difficulty forming relationships. They may have difficulties with self-esteem,	• Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD/ADD) • Anxiety Disorders • Depression • Attachment Difficulties	Support may include counselling, mentoring, behaviour plans, structured routines, mindfulness strategies, or small group interventions.

		attention, or coping with change.	• Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) • Other mental health needs	
Sensory and/or Physical Needs (S/PN)	Physical disabilities or sensory impairments that affect access to learning.	Children may have medical conditions, physical disabilities, or sensory processing difficulties. This can include vision or hearing impairments, mobility needs, or difficulties processing sensory information.	• Visual Impairment (VI) • Hearing Impairment (HI) • Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI) • Physical Disabilities (e.g., cerebral palsy) • Sensory Processing Difficulties	Support may include specialist equipment, adaptations to the classroom, physiotherapy/occupational therapy input, or personalised learning plans.