For primary PGCE tutors and trainees

Including pupils with SEN and/or disabilities in primary English

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Contents

1 Including pupils with SEN and/or disabilities in primary English lessons

Introduction

This booklet gives tutors and trainees information about subject-specific issues in the English curriculum for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. It offers a straightforward introduction to planning inclusive English lessons. There are also suggestions for further reading and support in section 7.

Each booklet in this series contains a self-audit table (section 3). This offers a range of ideas that you can use to check against your practice and the practice you observe. The organisation of information in this table is based on the most recent research evidence and the views of expert teachers.

Recent evidence (eg Davis and Florian, 2004) suggests that much of what has traditionally been seen as pedagogy for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities consists of the approaches used in ordinary teaching, extended or emphasised for particular individuals or groups of pupils. This applies even when teaching approaches may look very different, eg when teachers are working with pupils with complex needs.

Trials of these materials in 2007/08 suggested that grouping teaching approaches into themes helps new teachers and those who work with them to consider and discuss their practice. Therefore each self-audit table is grouped under eight themes:

- maintaining an inclusive learning environment
- multi-sensory approaches, including information and communication technology (ICT)
- working with additional adults
- managing peer relationships
- adult-pupil communication
- formative assessment/assessment for learning
- motivation, and
- memory/consolidation.

There are many overlaps between these themes, but the model offers a useful starting point to help you develop teaching approaches that include pupils with SEN and/or disabilities.

English

"English is a unique form of communication that can change the way pupils feel, think and act. English forms part of an individual's identity and positive interaction with English can develop pupils' competence as learners and increase their self-esteem. English brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. As an integral part of culture, past and present, English helps pupils understand themselves, relate to others and develop their cultural understanding, forging important links between home, school and the wider world."
National Curriculum, QCA, 2009

There are a number of key concepts that underpin the study of English. These concepts promote all pupils' progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing:

- competence – communication through English in a range of contexts and using different modes

- creativity – making connections, creating new effects, using imagination and problem solving

- cultural understanding – gaining a sense of how ideas are portrayed differently in different texts and how English varies locally and globally, and

- critical understanding – engaging with ideas and how they are represented, exploring others' ideas and developing their own ideas.

Pupils with SEN and/or disabilities are likely to demonstrate very different attainments against the different indicators. When teaching pupils with SEN and/or disabilities, it's important to focus on the pupils' strengths as well as identifying areas where they need more help, practice and consolidation.

In general, pupils should have the opportunity to develop all the concepts, regardless of their SEN or disability. However, you need to approach these concepts differently with different groups of pupils. How you do this will depend on the pupil's age, their stage of development, their strengths and any requirements they have in terms of communication – for example, using sign or a communication device.

There are a number of examples in section 3.

Roles and responsibilities

Recent legislation and guidance make clear that **all** the teaching staff in a school are responsible for the provision for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. All staff should be involved in developing school policies and fully aware of the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. Staff should help pupils with SEN to overcome any barriers to participating and learning, and make any reasonable adjustments needed to include disabled pupils in all aspects of school life.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) has substantial implications for everyone involved in planning and teaching the curriculum. Schools have specific duties under the DDA to:

- make reasonable adjustments to their policies and practice to prevent discrimination against disabled pupils

- increase access for disabled pupils, including access to the curriculum, through accessibility planning, and

- promote disability equality and have a disability equality scheme showing how they will do so.

These duties are important and significant. They require schools to:

- take a proactive, systematic and comprehensive approach to promoting disability equality and eliminating discrimination, and

- build disability equality considerations in from the start at every level of activity, including developing and delivering the curriculum and classroom practice.

Schools must address their various DDA duties together in a way that brings greater benefits to disabled pupils, staff, parents and other users of the school. Using the self-audit table in this booklet to develop an inclusive approach to your teaching will help you carry out these duties in your subject.

Modifying the curriculum and the National Strategies to match pupils' needs

Teachers have a statutory duty to modify the programmes of study (or National Strategy materials).

"Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils."
National Curriculum, QCA, 2008

This is more than just giving pupils 'access to the curriculum'. The curriculum is not immovable, like some building, to which pupils with SEN and/or disabilities have to gain access. It is there to be changed, where necessary, to include all pupils.

The statutory 'inclusion statement' in the National Curriculum sets out a framework for modifying the curriculum to include all pupils. Teachers have to:

- set suitable learning challenges
- respond to pupils' diverse learning needs, and
- overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for particular individuals and groups of pupils.

These principles allow you to:

- choose objectives for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities that are different from those of the rest of the group, or
- modify the curriculum to remove barriers so all pupils meet the same objectives.

Planning for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities should be part of the planning that you do for all pupils, rather than a separate activity. It doesn't need to be complicated or time-consuming. You can simply jot down brief notes in your lesson plans on the learning objectives and approaches you will use to remove barriers for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. Any personal targets the pupil has can inform this planning. At times it may be appropriate to plan smaller steps to achieve the learning goal or provide additional resources. It is often possible to use the support available to do this, either from the SENCO or teaching assistant/mentor.

You should also think about the questions you will ask different groups and individuals and the ways you will check that pupils understand. Some pupils with SEN and/or disabilities will show they understand in different ways from their peers, so you should look at a range of opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they know and can do.

2 Removing barriers to the primary English curriculum for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities

Teaching and learning

To make English lessons inclusive, teachers need to anticipate what barriers to taking part and learning particular activities, lessons or a series of lessons may pose for pupils with particular SEN and/or disabilities. So in your planning you need to consider ways of minimising or reducing those barriers so that all pupils can fully take part and learn.

In some activities, pupils with SEN and/or disabilities will be able to take part in the same way as their peers. In others, some modifications or adjustments will need to be made to include everyone.

For some activities, you may need to provide a 'parallel' activity for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities, so that they can work towards the same lesson objectives as their peers, but in a different way – eg using an ICT-based means of recording information to compensate for difficulties with handwriting.

Occasionally, pupils with SEN and/or disabilities will have to work on different activities, or towards different objectives, from their peers.

There are some examples in the checklist in section 3.

Assessment

When assessing pupils, you need to plan carefully to give pupils with SEN and/or disabilities every opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do, using alternative means where necessary. For example:

- **"where pupils use alternative communication systems, judgements should be made against the level descriptions for speaking and listening. It will be necessary to note any demands that are not met, such as the awareness and use of standard English**

- **for pupils with disabilities who are unable to write by hand, the handwriting requirement of the writing attainment target will not be applicable**

- **for pupils using tactile methods, the assessment of reading will be through the use of materials of equivalent demand presented in the appropriate medium."**
  QCA, 2008

3 Self-audit for inclusive English lessons: planning teaching, learning and support

You can use the following checklist to audit your practice and plan for more inclusive lessons.

The left-hand column of the table suggests approaches that are appropriate for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities in all subjects. The right-hand column suggests extensions and emphases that may be helpful in removing barriers for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities in English.

In most cases, the actions recommended are good practice for all pupils, regardless of their particular SEN and/or disability.

In other cases, the actions taken will depend on the barriers to taking part and learning identified in relation to the lesson being taught and pupils' particular SEN and/or disabilities. For example, the challenges of including pupils with significant learning difficulties in poetry lessons, or lessons about texts that make high language demands, may be quite different from those for including pupils with other SEN and/or disabilities.

Some children with identified needs – such as behaviour difficulties – may benefit from changes in activities or working with selected others or rest breaks. In these cases it is helpful to discuss and plan with a support assistant who knows the child well. The SENCO, subject associations and/or organisations supporting people with particular SEN/disabilities may be able to offer more specialist advice.

These examples are not comprehensive or exhaustive. They are intended to stimulate thinking rather than offer detailed advice on how to teach the subject to pupils with different types of special educational needs and/or disabilities. You will wish to add your own general or subject-specific ideas to the self-audit table.

Maintaining an inclusive learning environment

Maintaining an inclusive learning environment	English	Observed	Tried out
Sound and light issues For example: • background noise and reverberation are reduced • sound field system is used, if appropriate • glare is reduced • there is enough light for written work • teacher's face can be seen – avoid standing in front of light sources, eg windows • pupils use hearing and low vision aids, where necessary, and • video presentations have subtitles for deaf or hearing-impaired pupils and those with communication difficulties, where required.	**Sound and light issues** Interactive whiteboards are non-reflective to reduce glare.		
Seating Pupils' seating and the main board position are planned for the shape of the room. Pupils can see and hear clearly, as necessary: • the teacher • each other, and • the board/TV/screens. Seating allows for peer or adult support. There is room for pupils with mobility difficulties to obtain their own resources, equipment and materials. Furniture is suitable. Consider the choice of chairs and desks, eg adjustable height tables, raised boards.	**Seating** In guided reading/writing, place pupils who need most support opposite the teacher so they can hear **and** see teacher prompts clearly. When monitoring class independent reading and writing, make sure the teacher and additional adults position themselves so all pupils are within range of eye contact. Seating should allow all pupils in the class to communicate, respond and interact with each other and the teacher in discussions. Avoid the need for copying lots of information. For example, notes on interactive whiteboards can be printed off for all pupils.		

Maintaining an inclusive learning environment	English	Observed	Tried out
Resources Storage systems are predictable. Resources are: • accessible, eg within reach, and • labelled clearly to encourage independent use, eg using images, colour coding, large print, symbols, Braille, as appropriate.	**Resources** Make available a range of accessible materials including, for example: • chunky pencils • different coloured crayons • individual whiteboards and pens for writing in different contexts • pencil grips for pupils who need them, and • cordless/trackerball mouse for pupils with mobility difficulties. Provide well-maintained and attractive library corner/shelves containing a range of texts that will appeal to pupils who are meeting reading challenges. Include: • highly visual texts • newspapers • comics • instruction booklets, and • texts from popular culture, media and sport. The display should contain pupils' own reading recommendations and include clearly printed directions to help identify where texts are housed. Allocate time for pupils to gather appropriate literacy resources such as dictionaries, spelling cards, etc.		
Displays Displays are: • accessible, within reach, visual, tactile • informative, and • engaging. Be aware of potentially distracting elements of wall displays.	**Displays**		

Maintaining an inclusive learning environment	English	Observed	Tried out
Low-arousal areas A low-arousal area is planned for pupils who may need it and is available for use by all pupils. The area only needs to have immediately relevant materials/resources to minimise distraction.	**Low-arousal areas** Provide a library corner with appropriate seating and/or soft materials conducive to reading.		
Health and safety Health and safety issues have been considered, eg trailing leads secured, steps and table edges marked. There is room for pupils with mobility difficulties to leave the site of an accident. Remember that pupils with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) may have low awareness of danger.	**Health and safety**		
Unfamiliar learning environments Pupils are prepared adequately for visits.	**Unfamiliar learning environments** Make sure pupils are well prepared for visits and trips to the library. Preparation can include using photographs and videos so that pupils are not worried about unfamiliar situations.		

Multi-sensory approaches, including ICT

Multi-sensory approaches, including ICT	English	Observed	Tried out
Multi-sensory approaches Pupils' preferred learning styles are identified and built on: • when teaching – eg visual, tactile, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches are used, such as supporting teacher talk with visual aids; using subtitled or audio-described film/video • for recording – alternatives to written recording are offered, eg drawing, scribing, word processing, mind maps, digital images, video, voice recording, and • to promote security and aid organisation – eg visual timetables are used to show plans for the day or lesson; visual prompts for routines, such as how to ask for help; shared signals are developed so that pupils can convey their understanding, uncertainty or need for help.	**Multi-sensory approaches** Visual prompts and routines are valuable for learners on the autistic spectrum, and many other pupils. Approach English concepts at a level of understanding that is appropriate, eg grammar may be better taught by modelling, rather than through the use of explicit and metalinguistic vocabulary, such as verbs, adjectives, subordinate clauses, which will confuse some pupils. Film and video are powerful tools to support English learning, particularly in relation to storytelling and the study of literature. Deaf pupils and pupils with speech, language and communication needs may require subtitles to gain full benefit from these media. Use visual aids or other concrete supports when dealing with abstract topics – for example, teaching about rhythm in poetry through clapping and pacing. When teaching poetry and texts that make high language demands, use active teaching strategies, such as drama – eg to explore a scene from Shakespeare, or build sound collages for a poem. In reading comprehension activities, ask pupils to illustrate the story setting; draw the main character and annotate with notes on the features and views of the character. Use activities involving drama skills such as hot seating. In drafting, eg for writing a persuasive text, use role-play as part of the preparation. Summarise sequences of events through mind maps, spider plans, role-play, drama etc. Use symbols, pictures, puppets etc to support understanding of character, setting and story events.		

Multi-sensory approaches, including ICT	English	Observed	Tried out
ICT ICT is used to support teaching and learning. Accessibility features are used to include pupils with SEN and/or disabilities, as appropriate, eg: • keyboard shortcuts instead of a mouse • sticky keys • a foot-controlled mouse, a head-controlled mouse or a wireless mouse • screen filters to cut down glare • increased font sizes for screen extension – in any case, fonts used in printed material should not be smaller than 12 pt (24 pt for screen presentations) • clear font type (normally sans serif, such as Arial or Comic Sans) • appropriate contrast between background and text, and/or • a talking word processor to read out text. Pupils with poor motor control may gain confidence and achieve success through writing/drawing on the computer. Predictive text can encourage pupils to use a more extensive vocabulary and attempt 'difficult' spellings. It can be enhanced by using subject-specific dictionaries.	**ICT** Digital image technologies, both still and moving, are useful tools for teaching English and an object of study in their own right in the media elements of the National Curriculum. Pupils can use image technology to support the writing process – for example, by creating a storyboard of pictures as a scaffold for writing a narrative. ICT can be used to offer alternatives to writing as a way of responding to text, eg through creating an electronic presentation, perhaps with images, as a response to text. Use ICT[1] in a focused and structured way, for example: • Wordshark has all the National Strategy phonic patterns and sight words, and a variety of entertaining games for practising them. • Clicker 5 helps with spelling, providing a talking word bank. • Inspiration provides 'interactive concept maps' to help organise thinking and plan for writing. It is excellent for self-confidence and raising pupil profile in the classroom with perfectly presented work. • Dragon Dictate can help with spelling.		

1   Where this booklet refers to a specific product, no recommendation or endorsement of that product is intended, nor should be inferred.

Working with additional adults

Working with additional adults	English	Observed	Tried out
Consulting pupils Wherever possible, pupils are consulted about the kind and level of support they require.	**Consulting pupils**		
Planning support Support from additional adults is planned to scaffold pupils' learning, allowing them, increasingly, to work independently. Planning should identify: • which individuals/groups will receive support • where in the lesson pupils will need support • the type of support pupils should receive, and • when pupils should be allowed to work independently. Additional adults: • are clear about the lesson objectives • know the sequence of the lesson • understand the lesson content • know how to break tasks into more manageable chunks • are provided with key questions to encourage formative assessment, and • where appropriate, are familiar with any ICT used to support pupils.	**Planning support** Allow pupils enough time to complete reading and written tasks with appropriate support, eg a guided writing session or a one-to-one reading conference. Make sure teaching assistants understand the topic they are supporting, have the required subject knowledge, and have read any text being studied.		
Evaluation Additional adults report to the teacher on pupils' progress. The effectiveness of support is monitored and reviewed.	**Evaluation**		

Managing peer relationships

Managing peer relationships	English	Observed	Tried out
Grouping pupils All forms of pupil grouping include pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. Manageable mixed-ability grouping or pairing is the norm, except when carefully planned for a particular purpose. Sequence of groupings is outlined for pupils. The transition from whole-class to group or independent work, and back, is clearly signalled. This is particularly helpful for pupils on the autistic spectrum.	**Grouping pupils**		
Managing group work and discussion Pupils move carefully from paired discussion to group discussion – the language necessary for whole-class discussion work may be a barrier for pupils who find it difficult to express themselves in public. Paired and small group discussions provide opportunities for all to take part. Pupils are assigned specific roles (eg chair, writer, reporter, observer) which gives all pupils something to do and keeps them focused.	**Managing group work and discussion** Ask what role each pupil has taken in a collaborative writing task. Could they work equally well if they changed roles next time?		

Managing peer relationships	English	Observed	Tried out
Developing responsibility Pupils with SEN/disabilities are: • given opportunities to initiate and direct projects, with support as appropriate, and • involved as equal contributors in class/school governance and decision making.	**Developing responsibility** Pupils develop critical understanding as they examine uses of language, not just in stories and texts, but in all forms of media and communication, including information texts, pictorial representations and the spoken or signed word. Developing critical skills along with other skills in English allows pupils with SEN and/or disabilities to develop the skills they will need to challenge ideas, interpretations and assumptions by using evidence or argument. This is essential if pupils with SEN and/or disabilities are to become active citizens, in control of their own lives. Some pupils with more significant learning disabilities may not yet have the ability to analyse language, but can be helped to form and express their own views independently through modelling and practice.		16

Adult-pupil communication

Adult-pupil communication	English	Observed	Tried out
Teachers' communication Language is clear, unambiguous and accessible. Key words, meanings and symbols are highlighted, explained and written up, or available in some other way. Instructions are given clearly and reinforced visually, where necessary. Wording of questions is planned carefully, avoiding complex vocabulary and sentence structures. Questions are prepared in different styles/levels for different pupils – careful preparation ensures all pupils have opportunities to answer open-ended questions. Alternative communication modes are used, where necessary, to meet pupils' communication needs, eg signing, Braille. Text, visual aids, etc are checked for clarity and accessibility. For example, some pupils might require adapted printed materials (font, print size, background, Braille, symbols); some may require simplified or raised diagrams or described pictures.	**Teachers' communication** Introduce key vocabulary explicitly and ensure this includes verbs as well as nouns – for example, as well as teaching **rhythm** and **symbolism** in readiness for writing a literary critical essay, also introduce the common verbs used to develop literary comment, such as **depicts, conveys, suggests, evokes**... Highlight key words for the main message of the text. These could be individual words, but will more often be phrases such as persuasive language, noun phrases, or character portraits. Be aware that metaphor (for example, in poetry) and irony can be interpreted literally by some pupils (including those on the autistic spectrum), creating confusion and/or misunderstanding. Some pupils may need more time to respond and more time to practise a task before they can go on to find creative solutions or ideas. An over-structured environment can reduce a pupil's ability to respond creatively, as can too much talk initiated and led by the teacher or teaching assistant, too much directive talk, or a lack of time to think of a response before a 'correct' or prompted response is given by an adult.		

Adult-pupil communication	English	Observed	Tried out
Pupils' communication Alternative communication modes, such as sign or symbol systems, are encouraged, and pupils' contributions are valued. Advice is sought from the SENCO, a speech and language therapist, local authority advisory staff, and/or the pupil themselves on the best way of using such communication modes in lessons. Discussion of experiences and investigations is encouraged to help pupils understand them.	**Pupils' communication** Develop communication skills in contexts that are relevant to pupils and use communication methods that are useful to them, such as alternative and augmentative communication. In drama, explore non-verbal as well as verbal communication, and make use of drama techniques, such as mime, mirroring or tableau (which require no words), or soundscapes (which require no physical movement). Where pupils are using alternative ways of communicating, such as through visual symbols or sign language, integrate these into language study. Look, for example, at how much the visual is part of the way we all communicate, or how the grammar of a sentence in British Sign Language is different from one in standard English. Some pupils with significant learning difficulties (such as those whose attainments are at the lower P levels) will always need carefully planned activities that enable them to develop and consolidate their receptive and expressive communication skills on an incremental basis.		18

Adult-pupil communication	English	Observed	Tried out
Pupil-teacher interaction Where appropriate, pupils are allowed time to discuss the answers to questions in pairs, before the teacher requests verbal responses. Pupils with communication impairments are given: • time to think about questions before being required to respond • time to explain, and • respect for their responses to questions and contributions to discussions. Additional adults prepare pupils to contribute to feedback sessions, where necessary.	**Pupil-teacher interaction** Use paired talk before and during activities such as shared reading/ writing. This gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on and discuss ideas, before offering them in these contexts.		

Formative assessment/assessment for learning

Formative assessment/ assessment for learning	English	Observed	Tried out
Understanding the aims of the lesson Lesson objectives are made clear in pictures/symbols/writing, as appropriate. Objectives are challenging yet achievable. This will promote self-esteem and enable all pupils to achieve success.	**Understanding the aims of the lesson** Make sure pupils know the purpose of the activity, eg that using interesting vocabulary in a story or descriptive piece helps the reader picture things more. Some pupils will only need to provide one or two examples of appropriate or lively vocabulary in their writing to fulfil the task.		
Focus on how pupils learn Pupils' own ways of learning and remembering things are emphasised. Pupils are encouraged to talk about how they achieved something. Dialogue is the key to successful assessment for learning. Teachers communicate in ways pupils are comfortable with.	**Focus on how pupils learn**		
Pupils know where they are in relation to learning aims End-of-lesson discussions focus on one or more of the ideas explored and the progress that pupils have made towards them during the lesson. Pupils are encouraged to look back to previous work/photos/ records to see how much progress they have made. Half-termly or termly self-assessment sheets are used for pupils to assess their progress – a range of recording methods is accepted.	**Pupils know where they are in relation to learning aims** Revisiting a mind map of the same area of learning, say after three weeks of studying an English topic, can be a good way of assessing – through the added 'branches' of the map – how pupils' understanding of concepts is developing. This approach can be particularly valuable for pupils for whom oral and written communication present a barrier, as pictures and symbols can be included.		

Formative assessment/ assessment for learning	English	Observed	Tried out
Giving feedback Marking and other feedback helps pupils improve their performance. Feedback is given in an appropriate form – verbally, in writing. Specific, rather than general, feedback is given. Comments are positive, explicit and evaluative. Emphasis is on the pupils' progress and achievement. Weaknesses are presented as areas for development. Opportunities are offered for pupils to attempt a piece of work again. These approaches are particularly useful for pupils who find it difficult to receive comments about improving their work. Praise is given discreetly where pupils find public praise embarrassing or difficult.	**Giving feedback**		
Understanding assessment criteria The number of goals/assessment criteria is kept small. Teachers talk to pupils about what they are trying to achieve. Pupils are involved in setting their own goals. Some pupils may find it difficult to understand the need for targets. Others may need time and support in target setting. Self-assessment and peer assessment are encouraged. Pupils are taught to use the language of assessment, eg "better…". Peer marking is encouraged, where buddies can evaluate each other's work in relation to success criteria.	**Understanding assessment criteria** Pupils who progress slowly should have longer-term targets easily accessible on personal cards or inside the back cover of an exercise book. In terms of writing development, response to task should be a shorter-term target and punctuation recognised as a longer-term target.		

Formative assessment/ assessment for learning	English	Observed	Tried out
Reviewing progress and helping pupils to improve Teachers' responses to pupils' errors recognise, value and build on the thinking that led to them. End-of-lesson discussion considers the ways of working the class has found fruitful or difficult. Pupils are asked, for example: • which key words, concepts, skills or processes were difficult and why, and how this could be improved • which parts of a task slowed them down, and • what could be done to make things go more efficiently. Some pupils may have anxieties about planning to improve, especially if it involves editing or redoing a task. Pupils are encouraged to see how they've improved on their previous best.	**Reviewing progress and helping pupils to improve** Reinforce the need for all learners to acquire new vocabulary, and model occasions when the teacher also needs to check the meaning of words or factual information.		
Gathering assessment evidence A range of sources of assessment evidence is drawn upon. Assessment looks at what pupils know and can do, not at labels associated with SEN and/or disabilities. Notes made about individual pupils' difficulties/successes in the lesson take account of their oral contributions as well as their written work.	**Gathering assessment evidence**		

Motivation

Motivation	English	Observed	Tried out
Understanding the structure of the lesson Pupils are clear about the duration and overall structure of the lesson. Visual timetables or other devices are used to indicate the structure and progress of lessons.	**Understanding the structure of the lesson**		
Relevant and motivating tasks Tasks motivate pupils. They: • stimulate interest and enthusiasm • are challenging but manageable • draw on real and familiar contexts • are relevant to pupils' lives, and • build on previous learning in the subject and in other areas of the curriculum.	**Relevant and motivating tasks** Build confidence through working from the known. Make books based on pupils' own experiences using familiar vocabulary. Make explicit links between the content of a text and what pupils know already. Choose texts for shared study that represent a range of interests and perspectives. Provide texts and forms of representation that are meaningful to pupils – eg some pupils with significant learning difficulties will not be able to read a story but will be able to follow it, feel its emotional impact and then work on recalling events, describing characters or predicting what might happen next, or on understanding aspects of the narrative. Use performance examples from theatre companies that draw on the specific potential of disabled performers to create unique performance pieces. Use critical literacy approaches to explore how novels, poetry, print and television media portray difference, disability and diversity. Language exploration might include study of how word choices such as **wheelchair user/ wheelchair-bound** or **disabled/ differently-abled** carry different connotations and power relationships.		

Motivation	English	Observed	Tried out
Reward systems Pupils understand reward systems and are motivated to achieve the rewards available.	**Reward systems**		

Memory/consolidation

Memory/consolidation	English	Observed	Tried out
Recapping Recap learning from the previous lesson. Main points from the lesson are fed back by pupils, noted down and saved so pupils can refer to them.	**Recapping**		
Reducing reliance on memory The amount of material to be remembered is reduced. Repeat or display important information. The meaningfulness and familiarity of the material is increased. Mental processing and explanations of complex tasks are simplified. The use of memory aids is encouraged. These can include wallcharts and posters, useful spellings, personalised dictionaries, cubes, counters, abacus, Unifix blocks, number lines, multiplication grids, calculators, memory cards, audio recorders and computer software. Activities are structured so that pupils can use available resources, such as word banks. Strategies, including using ICT-based records, are used to reduce the need for pupils to rely on their short- or long-term memories. New learning fits into the framework of what the pupil already knows. Teaching assistants prepare pupils to contribute to feedback sessions, where appropriate.	**Reducing reliance on memory** Mind maps are excellent for ordering and summarising main and subordinate ideas visually to facilitate memory. The ICT packages Kidspiration for younger pupils and Inspiration for older pupils can be used to convert ideas into writing. Give simple instructions for reading activities, as well as their purpose, eg "Read the next few pages of… and think about why the character acts as he does…". Simple audio records can be used instead of written notes during visits or field trips.		

Memory/consolidation	English	Observed	Tried out
Consolidating learning Pupils' understanding is checked, eg by inviting pupils to reformulate key learning. Using visual or concrete ('real') materials, or activities involving movement, to reinforce or consolidate learning through a range of sensory channels. Reteach or revise material, where necessary, eg post-lesson tutoring. Opportunities are provided for pupils to repeat and reinforce previously learnt skills and processes on a regular basis, in similar and different contexts. Encourage pupils to develop their own strategies, eg an agreed approach to asking for help, rehearsal, note-taking, use of long-term memory, and place-keeping and organisational strategies.	**Consolidating learning**		
Independent study/homework Independent study/homework is explained during the lesson, not at the end, to make sure it is understood and recorded. Teachers check all pupils are clear about homework tasks. Homework tasks are accessible after the lesson, eg published on a noticeboard or on the school learning platform, so pupils can return to them, if necessary, after the lesson.	**Independent study/homework**		

4 English and Every Child Matters

In 2003, the green paper 'Every Child Matters: Change for children' was published. The key outcomes for the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda were drawn up after consultation with children, young people and families. The five outcomes that mattered most to children and young people are set out below. Each of the outcomes can be addressed through the English curriculum.

Outcome	General educational aspects	Through the English curriculum
Be healthy	• Work towards independent learning • Actively enquire about differing environments • Keep mentally and emotionally healthy	Explore emotional responses through shared reading of text, including video. Ask questions about an issue and adopt a stance.
Stay safe	• Keep safe in school and on school trips • Have stability and security • Know about their place in the wider community	Explore safe decision making through drama. Feel safe contributing to class discussion.
Enjoy and achieve	• Achieve personal and social development • Enjoy lessons • Achieve to their potential • Use alternatives to written recording, where appropriate	Take part in class engagement with a novel through oral or visual responses. Develop confidence working with peers.
Make a positive contribution	• Understand issues of difference and diversity through studying other environments and cultures • Understand about, and support, the local community • Involve themselves in extra-curricular activities	Write for community audiences and take part in storytelling sessions. Share reading of texts which explore issues of difference.
Achieve economic well-being	• Learn about ways to ensure their own economic well-being in the future • Experience visits from people who do various jobs • Visit different workplaces • Learn about different economies in different countries	Develop confidence speaking in more formal contexts, such as an interview.

5 Early development in the National Curriculum: the P scales for English

For pupils working below level 1 of the National Curriculum, performance descriptions (P scales) for English can be used to describe a 'best fit' for a pupil's performance.

All schools must report on pupils' attainment at the end of each key stage in terms of both P scales and national curriculum levels.

P scales 1–3 address very early levels of learning and are the same in all subjects, but illustrated with subject-specific examples.

As a trainee teacher, you may not meet pupils assessed at these very early levels very often. If you have to teach these pupils during your placements, you should expect a great deal of support in differentiating teaching and learning.

From **P4**, each subject has its own progression.

For example, the speaking (expressive communication) P scales take progression from **P1** "Any participation is fully prompted" through to **P8**, where the pupils "take part in role-play with confidence" and "use conjunctions that suggest cause (for example, 'cos,' to link ideas)".

Similar assessments are set out for listening (receptive communication), reading and writing. The separation of the listening scales from the speaking scales illustrates the likely difference in level that a pupil may be given in these areas. Comprehension typically develops ahead of expression: for example, you are likely to understand elements of a foreign language before you can put those elements together in speech.

The full P scales for English are set out in QCA's Planning, Teaching and Assessing the Curriculum for Pupils with Learning Difficulties: English (please see section 7).

While a typically developing child will have achieved **P8** by the age of four, some pupils will take considerably longer.

At all times you should be aware of the need to respect the developmental maturity of the pupils you are planning for. Choose materials and tasks appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. This is a particular issue when using software and other published resources.

6 Bilingual learners

"Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught."
SEN Code of Practice (DfES, 2001)

Pupils must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty because they are learning English as an additional language (EAL).

Bilingual learners take up to two years to develop basic communication skills (street and playground survival language).

Some pupils may take a long time before they feel confident enough to actively take part in classroom activities and use the English they have learnt. A 'silent' period is typical of this learning and should not be seen as a learning difficulty.

Many learners with EAL do not acquire language in the same way as first language learners. A pupil may be fluent orally but struggle considerably with reading or writing; or a pupil may be very literate in written English, but lack confidence in the rapid flow of speech required in conversational dialogue. It is therefore important to assess language competence in all language modes and not to assume a level of competence based on performance in one mode.

'A Language in Common' (QCA, 2000) is a common assessment scale that can be used to gauge where pupils are in their acquisition of English. It gives assessment steps for pupils with EAL working below national curriculum level 1 and is useful in helping teachers reach a common understanding of the nature of each step or level of language acquisition. It also shows how the information can be used for target setting and what support may be needed to ensure progress.

Another useful resource is 'Assessing the Needs of Bilingual Pupils: Living in two languages' by Deryn Hall.

When a class or subject teacher feels that a lack of progress in a bilingual pupil's learning may be due to a learning difficulty (SEN or disability) they should consult the SENCO or inclusion manager and work with them to develop an appropriate response.

7 Sources of information and advice

Publications

Davis, P and Florian, L, 2004, Teaching Strategies and Approaches for Pupils with Special Educational Needs: A Scoping Study, DfES Research Report RR516

Hall, D, 2001, Assessing the Needs of Bilingual Pupils: Living in two languages, David Fulton Publishers

QCA, 2000, A Language in Common: Assessing English as an additional language

QCA, 2009, Planning, Teaching and Assessing the Curriculum for Pupils with Learning Difficulties: English – available online at: **www.qcda.gov.uk/libraryAssets/media/P_scales_English.pdf**

Websites

The new British Paralympics pack for schools: 'Ability vs. Ability' is a cross-curricular resource for any subject area and includes specific links to curriculum content. There are links to the ECM and Pupils First initiatives.
www.abilityvsability.co.uk

www.immersiveeducation.com (for Kar2ouche) – a selection of resources to aid teaching

www.widgit.com – a selection of resources to aid teaching

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