

**Gateshead Council Low Incidence Needs Team (LINT)**

**Criteria for initiating assessment for EHC Plan.**

Children and Young People with sensory impairment will have a wide variety of learning needs. Sensory impairment can range from profound to mild (see [NatSIP](#) descriptions). Some students might have temporary, fluctuating or deteriorating sensory impairment which in turn will lead to different provision needs.

Sensory impairments might be part of more complex learning and social needs. Successful inclusion in schools will require attention to the opportunities for students to access all aspects of their school life, academic and social. For some children or young people, emotional stress or physical fatigue may compound the difficulties they might experience from their sensory loss.

A medical diagnosis does not necessarily imply special educational needs or the need for an EHC plan. Some children or young people who experience sensory impairments can access the curriculum with minimum intervention and appropriate teaching strategies and/or adaptations and arrangements in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

For all hearing, visual or multi-sensory impairment EHCP assessments there is an expectation that the process will be supported by a report from an appropriately qualified specialist teacher.

**Hearing Impairment**

**Either criterion A1 OR most of the remaining criteria must be met in order for assessment to be agreed.**

**A1:** The child/YP has a hearing loss of 90 dB or greater or a progressive degenerative hearing condition.

A level of hearing loss that requires hearing aids or a cochlear implant and results in significant speech and/or language difficulties which significantly restrict communication and access to all areas of the curriculum.

Language assessments indicate a significant delay in the acquisition of receptive and expressive language.

A high level of specialist support and/or modification is required to enable the child to access the curriculum and to support the use of additional audiological equipment such as a radio aid system.

The child/YP requires British Sign Language or Sign Supported English to access the curriculum. Assessments indicate that the child/young person is unable to access the curriculum through audition alone.

**A2:** The child/YP has a hearing loss of 60dB or greater and additional difficulties such as:

- Very poor speech and language development. Measured language levels are significantly below chronological age which prevents access to the curriculum without a high degree of differentiation and/or support.
- Uneven loss across the speech frequency range
- Late diagnosis
- Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Difficulty accessing and developing social and emotional wellbeing without training for schools/settings and higher levels of opportunity for 1:1 work to develop relevant child or young person skills.
- Specialist support and/or modification is required to enable the child to access the curriculum and to support the use of additional audiological equipment such as a radio aid system.

**A3:** There is clear evidence from the school and specialist teachers that the hearing loss is significantly impairing the child/YP's educational progress and participation in school life.

- The child/YP requires significant modification to the language used to deliver access to the curriculum. Language assessments show significant delay in understanding of syntax and semantics.
- The child/YP has restricted vocabulary including inappropriate usage.
- The child/YP has difficulty responding appropriately in common social situations and has personal and social learning support needs beyond that normally present in their peer group.
- The child/YP is frequently unaware of when s/he needs to attend to the teachers instructions within the classroom.
- The child/YP is frequently frustrated by the inability to participate fully in the classroom spending a considerable time uninvolved.

**A4:** The child's/YP's assessment profile shows an uneven pattern of progress and attainment.

Attainment in language based aspects of the curriculum is significantly below the child's/YP's ability.

**In addition to the above criteria the Local Authority will take into account evidence of the following:**

- **Stress in school as a result of hearing loss**
- **Significant social, emotional (including low self-esteem and lack of confidence) or behavioural difficulties.**

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## Visual Impairment

**Either criterion A1 OR most of the remaining criteria must be met in order for assessment to be agreed.**

**A1:** There is clear evidence of a visual difficulty resulting in acuity (after correction) of 6/60 or below, a progressive deteriorating condition or other visual difficulties causing equivalent problems for example, cerebral visual impairment.

The child/YP's lack of vision severely impairs their access to the curriculum.

The child/young person has insufficient or no vision and requires an alternative format such as Braille to access the curriculum/the child/YP requires large print (N36) materials.

Specialist equipment is required that requires ongoing daily support for its effective use e.g. Braille, tactile, speech access technology.

The child's/YP's vision significantly affects their mobility in the educational setting. The child/YP requires teaching in mobility and independent living skills by a Habilitation Officer.

**A2:** There is clear evidence of a visual difficulty resulting in acuity (after correction) of 6/36 or below or other visual difficulties causing equivalent problems including visual field defects.

The child/YP has difficulty accessing the curriculum without substantial adaptation of teaching materials resulting in attainment levels significantly below ability.

The child or young person is likely to require specific teaching in mobility and independent living skills from a Habilitation Officer.

**A3:** There is clear evidence from the school and specialist teachers that the visual difficulty is significantly affecting the child/YP's access to the curriculum, educational progress and participation in school life.

- The child/YP requires individual demonstration and explanation of practical activities
- The child/YP shows very poor fine motor skills and manipulation particularly in handwriting, construction and scissor tasks.

- The child/YP is very unsure in his/her movements around the school/class.
- The child/YP is affected significantly by glare or low light levels.
- The child/YP has significant difficulty achieving and maintaining a good level of concentration and tires quickly if a task makes heavy demands on sight.
- The child/YP has little ability to appreciate body language, facial expression.
- Personal and social learning support needs beyond that normally present in their peer group.
- The child/YP is frequently frustrated by the inability to participate fully in the classroom spending a considerable time uninvolved.

**A4:** The child/YP's attainment and educational progress are significantly below the expectations of school and specialist teachers.

The child/YP's attainments in National Curriculum core subjects is / or likely to be below potential indicated from other assessments, there may be an uneven pattern of progress and attainment.

Specialist assessment tools (Developmental Journal, Oregon Project) are used to show levels of progress within primary years.

**In addition to the above criteria the Local Authority will take into account evidence of the following:**

- **Stress in school as a result of vision impairment**
- **Significant social, emotional (including low self-esteem and lack of confidence) or behavioural difficulties.**

## Deaf Blind

Children with deaf-blindness have unique educational needs. Although they are deaf the adaptations needed for their learning style will differ from the child who only has deafness. Although they are blind the adaptations needed for their learning style will differ from the child who only has blindness.

*Social Care for Deafblind Children and Adults 2009 definition*

*“Persons are regarded as deafblind if their combined sight and hearing impairment causes difficulties with communication, access to information and mobility”.*

Local authorities are required to act under the ‘Care and Support for Deaf Blind Children and Adults’ guidance 2014 under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 (for children) and section 78 of the Care Act 2014 (for adults).

LA’s should ensure that when a Section 7 assessment is required or requested, it is carried out by a specifically trained person/team, equipped to assess the needs of a Deafblind person - in particular to assess (amongst other things)

- need for one-to-one human contact, assistive technology and rehabilitation; -
- ensure services provided to Deafblind people are appropriate, recognising that they may not necessarily be able to benefit from mainstream services or those services aimed primarily at blind people or deaf people who are able to rely on their other senses;
- ensure that Deafblind people are able to access specifically trained one-to-one support workers if they are assessed as requiring one;
- provide information about services in formats and methods that are accessible to Deafblind people;

This section 7 assessment should be part of the EHCP assessment process.

**Either criterion A1 OR most of the remaining criteria must be met in order for assessment to be agreed.**

**A1:** The learner has a visual acuity of 6/18 or less together with a level of hearing loss requiring cochlear implant or hearing aids. The child/YP has deteriorating condition affecting hearing/vision.

Large print or a tactile curriculum required; difficulty accessing the curriculum without substantial adaptation of teaching resources; reliance on support assistant who will 'listen' for them.

The child's/young person's multi-sensory impairment significantly affects their mobility in the educational setting.

The combination of vision and hearing impairment results in the child/YP having difficulty accessing learning unless substantial adaptations of teaching materials and delivery occurs.

The pupil requires regular 1:1 support (intervenor) to maintain learning and pace relative to potential outcome.

**A2:** Visual acuity of 6/18 or less together with a level of hearing loss .....

The child/young person has a combination of visual and hearing impairment which results in the child/YP having difficulty accessing sign or lip pattern and having to rely on audition alone.

- Modification required to access curriculum materials. A hands on approach to learning is required. Pupils may have difficulty grasping the whole picture or relating one element to the whole.
- Requires support to develop independence and mobility.
- Pupil requires specialist equipment with ongoing support for its effective use
- Needs an intervener for personal and social learning needs to ensure participation and effective communication.

**A3:** There is clear evidence from the school and specialist teachers that the visual and hearing difficulties are significantly affecting the child/YP's access to the curriculum, educational progress and participation in school life.

- The child/YP requires individual demonstration and explanation of practical activities
- The child/YP shows very poor fine motor skills and manipulation particularly in handwriting, construction and scissor tasks.
- The child/YP is very unsure in his/her movements around the school/class.

- The child/YP is affected significantly by glare or low light levels.
- The child/YP has significant difficulty achieving and maintaining a good level of concentration and tires quickly.
- The child/YP has little ability to appreciate body language, facial expression.
- Personal and social learning support needs beyond that normally present in their peer group.
- The child/YP is frequently frustrated by the inability to participate fully in the classroom spending a considerable time uninvolved.
- The child/YP requires significant modification to the language used to deliver access to the curriculum. Language assessments show significant delay.
- The child/YP has restricted vocabulary including inappropriate usage.
- The child/YP has difficulty responding appropriately in common social situations.
- The child/YP is frequently unaware of when s/he needs to attend to the teachers instructions within the classroom.

**A4:** The child/YP's attainment and educational progress are significantly below the expectations of school and specialist teachers.

The child/YP's attainments in National Curriculum core subjects is / or likely to be below potential indicated from other assessments, there may be an uneven pattern of progress and attainment.

**In addition to the above criteria the LA will take into account evidence of the following:**

- **Stress in school as a result of hearing loss**
- **Significant social, emotional (including low self-esteem and lack of confidence) or behavioural difficulties.**