



**ENGLISH NATIONAL
CURRICULUM
HANDBOOK**

GEMS
EDUCATION

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Introduction

1. Vision and Strategy:

Sparkling GEMS is not merely an adjunct to our educational framework; it is a cornerstone of GEMS' School Improvement Framework and our commitment to Excellence for All. This strategy encapsulates our company-wide vision for empowering Students of Determination (SoD) to excel in every aspect of their schooling.

2. Core Ambitions:

At the heart of the GEMS Inclusion strategy lies our unwavering ambition for all students. It is crucial that every member of our staff, from teachers to support personnel, shares this vision. We are dedicated to continuously supporting our educators in their professional development, enabling them to confidently make necessary adaptations and reasonable adjustments for the inclusivity of all students. The core tenets of the *Sparkling GEMS* vision include:

- » Integration with the *Teach Like A GEM* approach.
- » Ensuring all educators are familiar with the needs of Students of Determination in their care.
- » Utilization of high-quality, research-informed adaptive teaching strategies beneficial for all students.
- » Application of personalized teaching methods, including subject-specific adaptations, to facilitate exceptional progress for Students of Determination.
- » Recognition of the impact individual and collective teaching practices have on these students.
- » Expertise of support staff in Inclusion and SEND, employing personalized, research-based strategies to foster student progress and success.

3. Handbook and Toolkit Utility:

The *Sparkling GEMS Inclusion Handbook and Toolkit*, along with the *GEMS Inclusion Policies*, are designed to actualize this vision. These resources provide essential information and practical tools to ensure the success of all Students of Determination.

4. Audience and Usage:

This handbook is a critical resource for teachers to enhance their understanding and develop inclusive practices.

5. Development and Feedback:

Developed through collaboration among various stakeholders, these tools have been rigorously tested and refined within GEMS schools based on outcomes and feedback. The *Sparkling GEMS Inclusion Handbook and Toolkit* will continue to evolve, responding dynamically to the needs of our students, educators, and leaders.

6. Research and Evidence-Based Practices:

The foundation of the *Sparkling GEMS Inclusion* approach is built on evidence and research-informed practices. Resources such as the *Teacher Handbook*, *Special Education in Mainstream Schools*, *EEF*, and the *Maximising the Impact of Teaching Assistants* research have significantly influenced the development of this guidance and its accompanying tools.

Ambition for all – GEMS curriculum

7. Curriculum Adoption and Design:

School leaders rigorously adopt the GEMS curriculum, which is ambitiously designed to provide all students, including Students of Determination, with the essential knowledge and cultural capital necessary for success in life.

8. Adaptation for Inclusivity:

The GEMS curriculum is meticulously adapted to be ambitious and inclusive, tailored to nurture the knowledge, skills, and abilities of Students of Determination. This adaptation ensures that these students can apply their learning with increasing fluency and independence.

9. Comprehensive Curriculum Access:

All students, including those with SEND, engage with the full breadth of the curriculum, relevant to their needs and understanding. In primary education, this includes a broad spectrum of subjects, as exemplified by the national curriculum, consistently taught throughout Years 3 to 6. In secondary education, our curriculum encompasses a comprehensive range of subjects in alignment with the GEMS curriculum model, ensuring full coverage of all National Curriculum subjects at Key Stage 3.

10. Support for Future Opportunities:

Students of Determination receive targeted support to prepare them for their next steps, whether in further education, employment, or training. This support is customized to ensure that each student is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to transition smoothly into their future endeavours.

Sparkling GEMS – Inclusive Pedagogy

11. Quality First Teaching:

As outlined in the SEND Code of Practice, quality first teaching is the initial response to meeting pupils' needs. At GEMS, our approach is built on several core principles:

- » **Inclusive Whole-Class Teaching:** We promote teaching methods that are accessible to all learners, enabling them to keep up, feel included, progress, and succeed.
- » **Understanding Over Expertise:** Teachers aren't expected to be experts in all areas of SEND but should deeply understand each learner's needs and employ evidence-informed strategies that enhance learning.
- » **Subject-Specific Adaptations:** Adaptations should be tailored to the individual needs of pupils, ensuring they are specific and effective.
- » **Confident Learning Environments:** In GEMS classrooms, teachers are equipped to plan, teach, and assess all learners with assured competence and inclusivity.

12. Adaptive Strategies to Scaffold Learning:

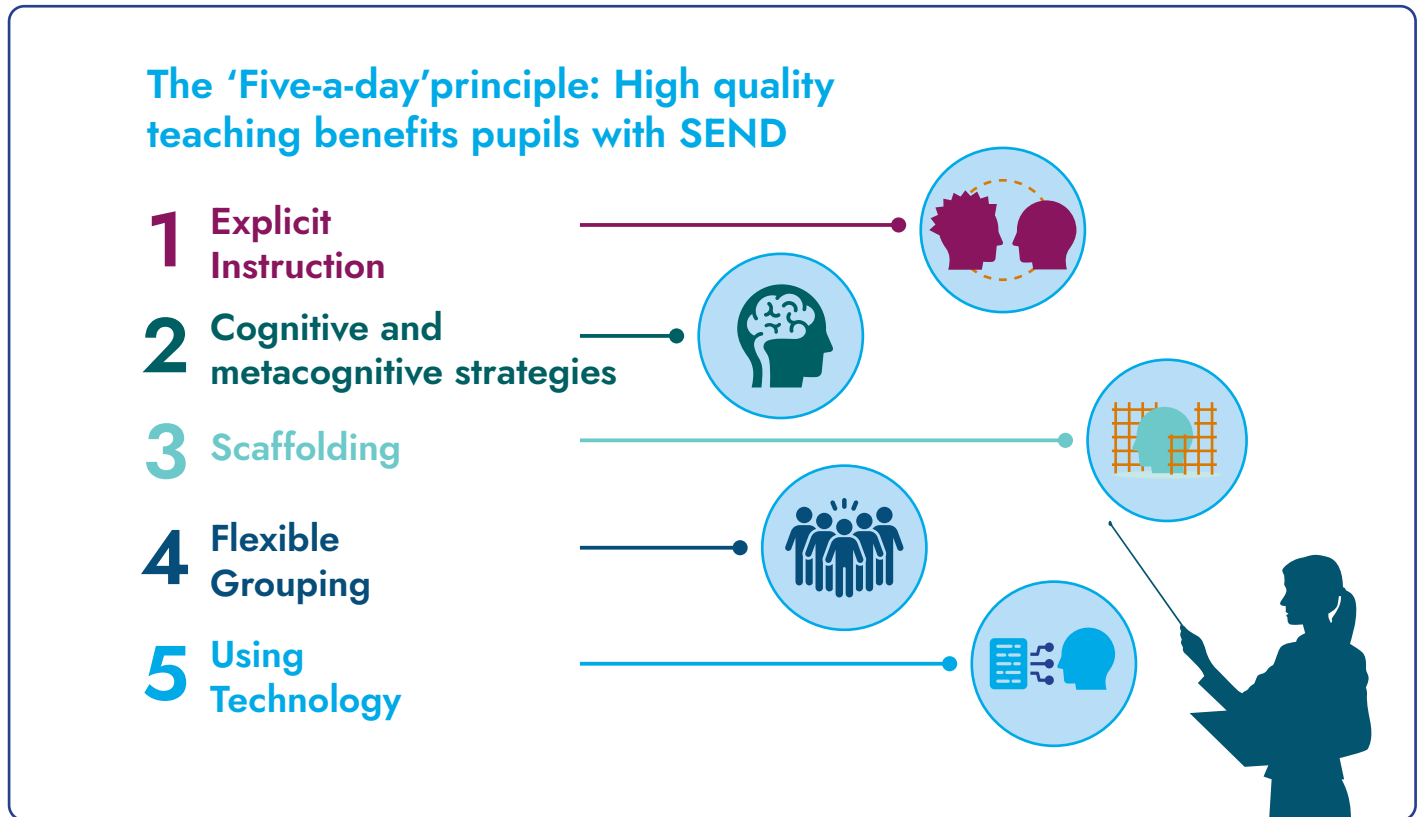
Teachers are encouraged to adapt their teaching strategies and curriculum resources, ensuring that modifications are inclusive rather than segregated, supporting all students, particularly those of determination.

13. Utilizing Inclusive Tools:

Five-a-day Principle, High 5, Sparkling GEMS Subject Charters, and Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP): These tools are integral for teachers to effectively plan and adapt their curriculum delivery to meet the diverse needs of students of determination. Sparkling GEMS utilises the latest research based inclusive tools which help teachers effectively plan and adapt their curriculum delivery too meet the diverse needs of Students of Determination.

The EEF 'Five-a-day' principle

Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools | EEF



High 5 Strategy: *source

13.1. Overview of High 5:

High 5 is a pedagogical framework designed to enhance teacher practice. It consists of five proven strategies that benefit all students and are particularly effective in achieving high-quality outcomes for students of determination.

13.2. Implementation of High 5:

All teachers are expected to integrate High 5 strategies into their daily teaching methods as a starting point for classroom engagement, adapting them flexibly to meet individual student needs.

13.3. Leadership and Support:

The rollout of High 5 should be led by the senior leader in charge of teaching and learning, with the Head of Inclusion providing support to ensure its effective implementation across the school.

High 5 Strategy:

Strategy	Actions	Reflective Question
1. Know the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the GEMS IEP Ensure unconditional positive regard Ensure deliberate 'botheredness' Listen to pupils: ensure they are heard and understood 	<p>How effectively am I using the IEP to tailor my approach to each student's needs?</p> <p>How can I improve my attentiveness to each student's voice and presence in the classroom?</p>
2. Plan creatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group pupils flexibly to teach for specific needs and knowledge gaps Use support staff wisely Ensure access to the teacher 	<p>How can I enhance my grouping strategy to better address individual learning gaps?</p> <p>Am I making the most effective use of support staff in my lesson plans?</p>
3. Clear & consistent language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give 'what to do' instructions and explanations Allow processing time Use, reuse and rehearse subject-specific language Use 'I do, we do, you do' Check that pupils understand then 'stamp' the learning 	<p>How clear is my communication with students?</p> <p>Am I allowing enough time for students to process instructions?</p> <p>How could I improve my checking for understanding?</p>
4. Scaffold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-teach and overlearn knowledge and vocabulary Chunk knowledge Repeat visuals to support remembering Use WAGOLLs, word banks, and writing frames Model the thinking 	<p>In what ways can I improve my scaffolding to ensure all students understand the material?</p> <p>Are there additional tools or strategies I could use to reinforce learning?</p>
5. Know more, remember more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase checks on knowledge Use DNA to retrieve prior learning Use Exit Tickets Use fluency composites to re-teach gaps in knowledge Use summative assessments to check knowledge over time 	<p>How frequently am I checking for understanding in a way that informs my teaching?</p> <p>How can I better utilize assessments to identify and address knowledge gaps?</p>

Teach Like A GEM: Playbook

- The Sparkling GEMS Inclusion Handbook is integral to Teach Like A GEM. Success criteria for adaptive strategies can be found in each step or technique within the Teach Like A GEM: Playbook.
- Read Like A GEM is found within the Teach Like A GEM Playbook and provides additional guidance to support all pupils to become fluent readers.*

Sparkling GEMS Subject Charters

16. Adaptive Strategies in Subject-Specific Disciplines

16.1 Integration with GEMS Curriculum:

The Sparkling GEMS Subject Charter directly connects to a comprehensive Inclusion section of the GEMS Curriculum tailored for each subject. This linkage ensures that subject-specific needs are addressed systematically and coherently.

16.2 Purpose of the Charter:

Designed to aid teachers in employing adaptive strategies within distinct subject disciplines, the charter simplifies GEMS Subject Charters into manageable components. It emphasizes self-efficacy and prioritizes critical knowledge, making adaptations more targeted and effective.

16.3 Promoting Pupil Self-Efficacy:

Fostering a 'can-do' attitude is crucial for building pupil confidence. Teachers are expected to maintain high expectations and commit to a deep understanding of each pupil's strengths and needs. The Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) facilitates this understanding by providing a structured approach to recognize and enhance pupil capabilities.

16.4 Pedagogical Strategy Breakdown:

It is essential to break down pedagogical strategies, such as disciplinary approaches, to enhance pupils' metacognitive awareness. This process helps pupils not only acquire but also retain knowledge more effectively over time, thereby supporting their long-term academic growth.

16.5 Subject-Specific Adaptations:

While the list of adaptations in the charters is comprehensive, it is not exhaustive. Teachers are encouraged to personalize these strategies based on their intimate knowledge of each pupil's specific needs and learning styles, ensuring adaptations are as effective and relevant as possible.

GEMS Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP): Navigating Success for Students of Determination

17. Introduction to Sparkling Excellence Plan (GEMS IEPs):

The Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEPs) serve as a roadmap to success for students of determination, providing a clear outline of each student's needs along with the strategies and adaptations necessary for their academic progress. Designed as a dynamic working document, they inform daily, half-termly, and termly planning and are integral to the teaching process. Regular reviews and updates are conducted by key stakeholders: teachers, students, parents, and the Head of Inclusion.

18. Scope of Application:

Every student listed on the Inclusion Register from Level/Tier 2 and above will have a personalized Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP).

19. Templates for Different Educational Phases:

Distinct GEMS Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) templates are available for each educational phase and tailored to the specific curriculum, ensuring that the strategies and content are age-appropriate and phase-specific.

20. Contents of the GEMS Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP):

- » **Needs and Presentations:** Detailed descriptions of pupil needs and how these needs present.
- » **Assessment Scores:** Standardized and screening scores relevant to each pupil's educational context.
- » **Strategies and Adjustments:** Adaptive strategies and reasonable adjustments tailored to the pupil's requirements.
- » **Pupil and Parent Inputs:** Views and aspirations of the pupil, alongside perspectives from parents.
- » **Academic Progress:** Detailed reports on progress in core subjects, differentiated by educational phase (e.g., English, mathematics, and science in secondary; reading, writing, and mathematics in primary; alignment with Early Years Foundation Goals).
- » **Target Outcomes and Provision:** Outcomes aligned with specific targets, current educational provision, and subject-specific strategies as appropriate.
- » **Additional Tools:** Utilization of the National Group Reading Test strategy (NGRT) for the secondary phase.
- » **Review Process:** A dedicated section for ongoing reviews.

21. Accessibility and Training:

Sparkling Excellence Plan IEPs are accessible as a Word document or through the Edukey Provision IEP software for schools that use this platform. A bespoke Edukey training webinar is available to assist in setting up and reviewing the IEPs using the software.

GEMS Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP): Early Years and Primary

22. Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) in the early years and primary should be prepared by the classroom teacher and the HoI. Adaptive strategy banks are available to support this process, although strategies should be personalised to the needs of the child.
23. The Inclusion team, working with the team around the child, should arrange for the Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) to be reviewed with parents and the student **termly**. Adequate time should be scheduled in the school calendar to allow for this.
24. The class teacher should lead the review of the Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) supported by the HoI where appropriate for example, when a student has or requires Level/Tier 3 support.
25. The HoI should support teachers to enable a co-productive review process, and there are a series of prompts within the Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) template to enable this process. Pupils and parents should always be included in the process of setting up and reviewing the Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) (Documented Learning Plan). Young children will require support to contribute. Students' views may be gathered by a supportive adult in any means that allows the pupil to express their thoughts. This could be enabled through drawing or play. If the pupil cannot express their views, the section can be left blank.
26. On the GEMS IEP (primary), there is a section to record how views were gathered from the pupil.
27. The Head of Inclusion should ensure that Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) are ready and fit for purpose by the end of each summer term for the following academic year.
28. The GEMS IEP review process will contribute to the graduated approach.

Early Identification and the Graduated Approach

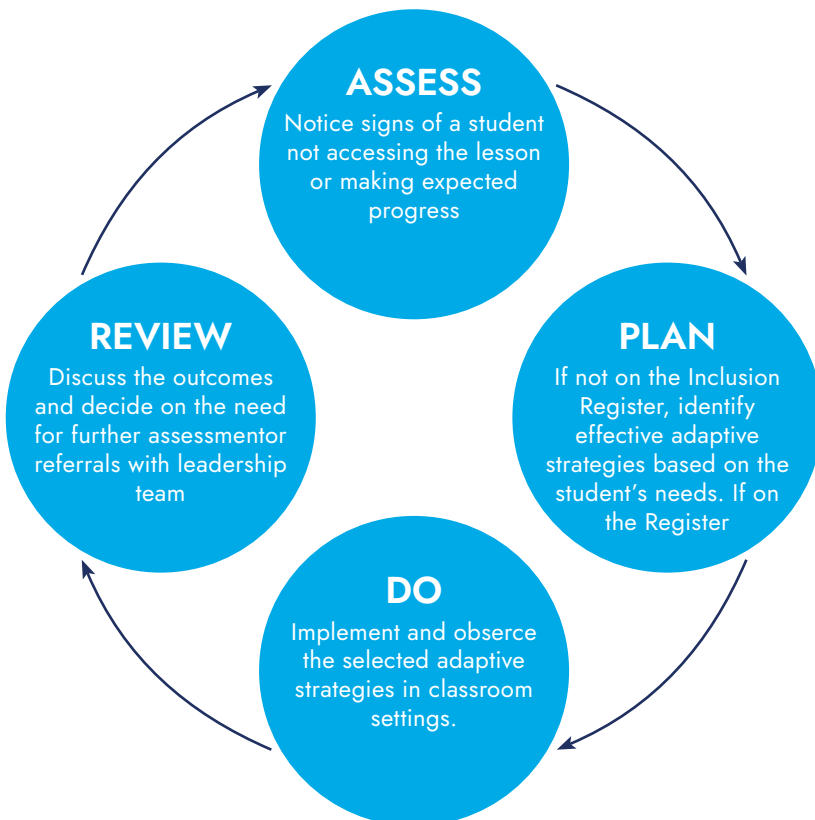
29. The role of the teacher in identification and the graduated approach

Special educational needs can often go undetected or only become apparent at certain points during a child’s school career. A classroom teacher is best placed to observe this and so should be prepared to use the graduated approach.

30. The graduated approach has two purposes:

- » Purpose 1: to support **early identification** of need where a pupil has not already been identified as having SEND.
- » Purpose 2: to **review the effectiveness of adaptive teaching strategies** for a pupil who has been identified with SEND. Using this process will enable higher-quality feedback during the Sparkling Excellence Plan (IEP) review process.

The graduated approach is an assess, plan, do, review cycle. (APDR-Cycle)



30.1 Assess

- » The teacher may notice that a pupil is not accessing the lesson or making progress as they might expect.
- » The teacher should assess the pupil using subject-specific assessment and may also wish to use the *Presentation of Need Checklists* to document their observation of distinct behaviour or responses to tasks or activities in the classroom, implement an APDR and meet with the parents.

30.2 Plan

- » If the pupil is not on the Inclusion Register, the teacher should consider the pupil’s presentation of need and consider which adaptive strategies would be most effective in supporting the pupil.
- » If the pupil does have a GEMS IEP and is not making progress despite selected adaptive strategies, the teacher should consider the presentation of need and consider which adaptive strategies might be more appropriate, particularly in specific subject disciplines.
- » The teacher, supported by the phase/subject leader, should use ‘Five-a-Day’, *High 5*, *the All GEMS Succeed Subject Charters*, and *Adaptive Teaching Strategy Banks* to support this process.

30.3 Do

- » The teacher should trial the selected adaptive teaching strategies during a lesson or series of lessons and observe the outcome.

30.4 Review

The teacher should discuss the outcome with the phase or subject leader. The teacher and leader should decide together

whether the pupil may require further testing/screening or investigation of their needs and, if so, refer to the Head of Inclusion.

The Graduated Response Flowchart

Step 1. Teacher Initial Concern (Universal)

Parent carer or teacher express concerns around child or young person's progress

- Teacher and parent carer meet to discuss concerns and complete Quick Checker in the Sparkling GEMS Toolkit.
- Teacher and parent carer reflect on Universal Barriers to Learning in the Sparkling GEMS Toolkit working through the Identified areas of need where there is a concern
- Teacher completes additional assessments and checklists in the areas identified as a concern (see list of assessments and checklists available in the Sparkling GEMS Toolkit)
- Teacher puts in place targeted high quality teaching to address identified gaps in learning.
- Teacher refers to Universal Provision Barriers and Strategies in the Sparkling GEMS Handbook and Toolkit Implementing strategies appropriate to identified barriers to learning
- Pupil Passport and Universal Barriers and Strategies Record could be created at this stage. (See suggested template)

Parent and teacher meet. Has the child or young person made satisfactory progress through high quality teaching?

YES

Teacher continue with these adaptations

NO

- Teacher completes an Initial Cause for Concern Form with parent consent and sends to the HoI/Link teacher.
- HoI/ Link teacher meets with teacher, parent and child or young person to discuss next steps and begin targeted Inclusion Support.

Step 2. Targeted Support (Inclusion Support)

Teacher, parent carer and Hol complete first cycle APDR captured on an ADPR form agreeing outcomes and targeted provision from the whole school provision map and SEN Support Strategies.

Parent, teacher and Hol meet. Has the child or young person made satisfactory progress through targeted support?

YES

Continue with the targeted support
- further cycle of APDR or maintain Universal adaptations if concerns have reduced

NO

- Hol completes more diagnostic assessment to add to learning profile of the child or young person.
- Hol meets with teacher, parent carer and child or young person to agree further outcomes and targeted provision—further APDR cycle. Review regularly
- Update the pupil passport and ADPR with information from further assessment.

Parent, teacher and Hol meet. Has the student or young person made satisfactory progress through targeted support?

YES

Continue with the targeted support—further cycle of APDR or maintain Universal adaptations if concerns have reduced

NO

- School to seek guidance external service offers.
- APDR and passport updated with further outcomes and targeted provision for Inclusion Support
- APDR cycles completed with termly reviews

Parent, teacher and Hol meet. Has the student or young person made satisfactory progress through targeted support?

YES

Continue with the targeted support—Further APDR cycle or maintain Universal adaptations if concerns have reduced

NO

Step 3. Complex/High Needs Support

If a student or young person is not making sufficient progress despite a graduated response being implemented where the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the needs of the student or young person' (KHDA Inclusion Regulatory Guidance), then individual or alternative pathway could be considered. We encourage parent and child and young person to work with their school or setting when making a request.

Teacher, SENCO,/Hol parent, student or young person (with guidance from professionals) continue cycles of APDR, making decisions on outcomes and provision

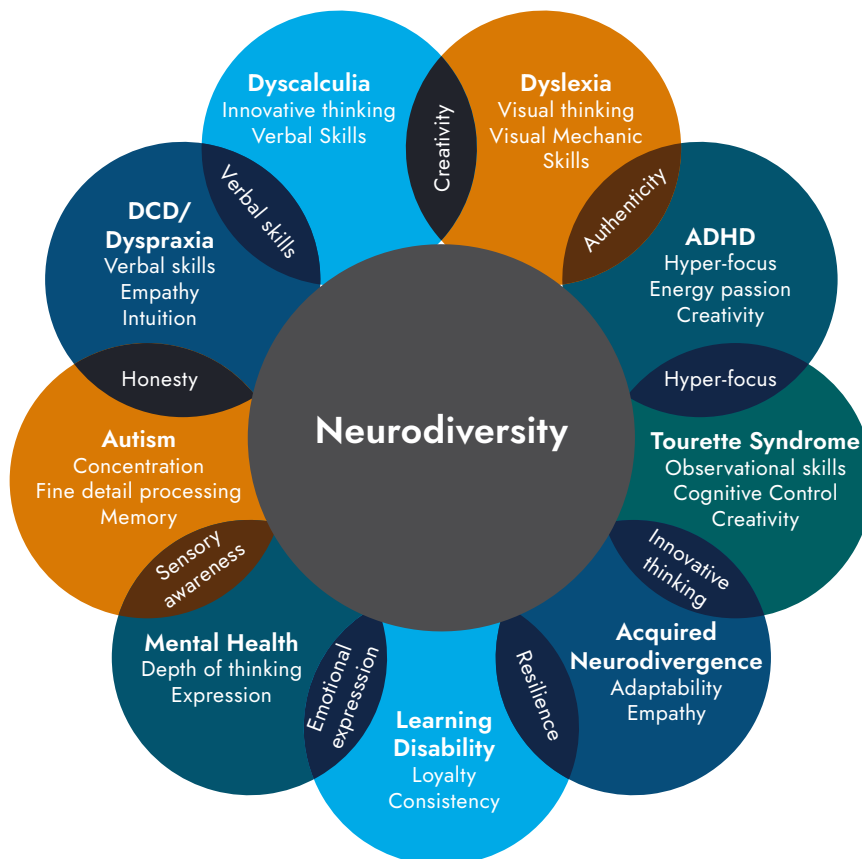
Presentation of need checklists

31. The *Presentation of Need Checklists* are guidance tools to support the identification of need. They should not be used as a diagnostic tool. Each checklist is intended to be a broad (not refined or exhaustive) tool that can be used from the early years through to the secondary phase. Not every descriptor will apply to each phase
- 31.2 If needs are broadly observed using this tool, more targeted testing/screening may be required.
- 31.3 The checklists are intended to be used by teachers and the Head of Inclusion to support:
 - » Early identification of need where a student is not already identified as having additional needs or specific educational needs, including SEND
 - » The graduated approach to monitor pupils who have already been identified as having additional needs
- 31.4 The presentation of need checklists is organized into five categories based on the Regulatory Framework:
 1. Neurodevelopmental Disorders
 2. Sensory Disabilities

3. Physical Disabilities
4. Psychological Disorders
5. Multiple Disability

32. If used regularly, the checklists will enable teachers to develop an improved understanding and identification of needs.
33. Many pupils will have comorbid needs, and so the teacher or Heads of Inclusions, using the checklists, should review all checklists and then use those that apply. The object is to find the Primary presenting need and then the subsequent secondary needs.

Neurodiversity – What is it?—Federated Health Charities



34. The SEMH checklist should be reviewed after the other categories have been considered. It is common for SEMH to be misidentified as a primary need when there is an unidentified need in a different primary area.

Adaptive Teaching Strategy Banks

35. There are five Adaptive Teaching Strategy Banks designed to complement the accompanying Presentation of Checklists. These banks provide practical guidance for adapting teaching and are relevant across all phases – from Early Years to Secondary. Each strategy is a suggestion, not a prescription. Not every strategy will apply to every phase, and professional judgment is essential.

The Five Strategy Banks

- » Neurodevelopmental Disorders (C&L; SLC; AEF)
- » Sensory Disabilities

- » Physical Disabilities
- » Psychological Disorders (SEMH)
- » Multiple Disability

Purpose of the Strategy Banks

36. The Strategy Banks are intended to support:

- » **Head of Inclusion, Inclusion staff and teachers** in selecting personalised strategies for tools such as the GEMS IEP.
- » **Teachers** in trialling and refining adaptive approaches as part of the graduated response, and in feeding back outcomes to the Hol.

37. All strategies should be tailored to the individual student, based on their needs, assessment data, and specialist recommendations. The banks are not exhaustive but provide a practical starting point for responsive teaching that can be adapted as pupil needs evolve.

The Importance of Vocabulary in Adaptive Teaching

38. A key part of adapting teaching is ensuring pupils understand the vocabulary used in lessons.

- » **Vocabulary is foundational to learning.** Gaps in vocabulary can affect every area of the curriculum, including reading comprehension, writing, reasoning, and pupils' ability to follow instructions.
- » **Pupils may be misidentified as having slow processing speeds** when they simply lack the vocabulary to access or respond to learning. In these cases, additional time alone is not enough.

39. Teachers should be aware of the **three tiers of vocabulary**:

- » **Tier 1:** Everyday words used in spoken language (e.g., *book, happy, run*).
- » **Tier 2:** High-frequency, academic words used across subjects (e.g., *explain, compare, develop*). These are crucial for accessing tasks and instructions.
- » **Tier 3:** Subject-specific or technical terms (e.g., *photosynthesis, imperialism*).

40. While the tier categories are not fixed, understanding them helps teachers plan explicit vocabulary instruction and scaffolding.

41. Teachers should actively assess and track which words pupils understand and which they do not and plan adaptive support accordingly.

42. All pupils, especially those with SEND, benefit from opportunities to:

- » Practise saying new vocabulary aloud
- » Hear new words enunciated clearly and slowly
- » Link new words to phonics and spelling patterns
- » See and use vocabulary in multiple contexts (e.g., visual aids, real-life examples)

43. Adaptive Teaching and High Expectations

Adaptive teaching is not about lowering expectations. It is about removing barriers so that every pupil has equitable access to high-quality learning. Many strategies in the banks represent good practice for all learners, particularly beneficial for students of determination and alternative needs, but also helpful across the wider classroom.

The Role of the Head of Inclusion

44. The Head of Inclusion plays a pivotal role in ensuring the school meets the needs of Students of Determination. The statutory responsibilities of the role are outlined below.

45. Core Responsibilities

The Head of Inclusion (HoI):

- » Works with the Principal and LAB (Inclusion Governor) to determine the strategic development of the school's Inclusion policy and provision.
- » Has day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of the Inclusion policy and for coordinating specific provision to support individual Students of Determination.
- » Provides professional guidance to colleagues and works closely with staff, families, and external agencies.
- » Is familiar with the support available and collaborates with professionals to ensure that students and their families receive appropriate support and access to quality first teaching.
- » Liaises with class and form teachers.
- » Advises on the use of the graduated approach to Inclusion support.
- » Guides the deployment of the school's delegated Inclusion budget and resources to meet pupil needs effectively.
- » Maintains strong, regular communication with parents of Students of Determination.
- » Liaises with other schools, settings, education providers, educational psychologists, healthcare professionals, social care services, and the voluntary sector.
- » Acts as the key point of contact for external agencies, including the local authority and support services.
- » Supports smooth transitions by working with future education providers to inform pupils and parents about their options.
- » Works with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team to ensure the school complies with all regulatory expectations under UAE laws and decrees, including making reasonable adjustments and ensuring access arrangements.
- » Ensures accurate and up-to-date Inclusion records are maintained, including the Inclusion Register.

The Inclusion Register and Regulatory Portals

46. All GEMS schools are required to maintain an Inclusion Register. This is a vital strategic document that:

- » Records clear and accessible information about students identified with additional needs.
- » Communicates key information to teachers, governors, and other relevant stakeholders.
- » Acts as a tool for analysing Inclusion needs and informs planning, staffing, CPD, and resource allocation.

Each school's Inclusion Register should be maintained as an Excel spreadsheet (see Toolkit) and include the following information:

46.1 Required Fields

- » Student's forename, surname, gender, year group, class, and date of birth.
- » Contextual indicators (e.g., nationality, EAL, etc.), as relevant to the school.
- » Primary, secondary, and, where applicable, tertiary needs, using the four broad categories:
 - *Cognition and Learning (C&L)*
 - *Communication and Interaction (C&I)*
 - *Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)*
 - *Physical and Sensory (P&S)*
- » Defined diagnosis or, where unavailable, a clearly described presentation of need (e.g., "dyslexic traits: slow verbal processing"). Use consistent terminology to support accurate filtering and analysis.

- » Standardised test scores (e.g., CATs, NGRT, PASS).

46.2 Usage

- » The Register must be centrally stored, easily accessible to relevant staff, and regularly updated.
- » It should be used to:
 - *Analyse and publish Inclusion cohort data.*
 - *Break down needs (e.g., % of pupils with C&L needs and their subcategories).*
 - *Inform strategic planning for provision, staffing, and professional development.*
- » Inclusion Register figures should be cross-checked with SIMs to ensure consistency of numbers, noting that SIMs categories may be broader.

46.3 Regulatory Portals

As per statutory requirements in the UAE, all Inclusion data and data on Students of Determination must be recorded on the Emirate-based portals as per the regulatory framework for that emirate (ADEK – eSIS; KHDA -KHDA Portal, etc.). This has to be done termly and updated regularly.

The Graduated Approach and Provision Mapping

47. The graduated approach (see visual on page 10) underpins Inclusion support across all GEMS schools. While teachers play a central role in its delivery, the Head of Inclusion is responsible for coordinating and oversight.

47.1 Purpose of the Graduated Approach

The assess–plan–do–review cycle serves two core purposes:

- 47.1.1 Early Identification:** To support the timely identification of Students of Determination or those with emerging needs.
- 47.1.2 Monitoring Effectiveness:** To evaluate the impact of interventions and support provided to identified students.
 - » For students at **Level/Tier 3**, the graduated approach is used to monitor progress against planned outcomes.
 - » For students at **Level/Tier 2**, the approach supports intervention planning, and the development of evidence should a Level/Tier 3 placement be considered.
 - » For students at **Level/Tier 1**, the approach is used as part of the identification process, where evidence is gathered for referral to Tier 2 if required. If not, then the adaptive strategies have removed the barrier.

47.1.3 Tools and Templates

- » The **GEMS IEP** supports the graduated approach process.

- » A **Graduated Approach Cycle with Individual Costed Provision Map** template is provided in the Toolkit. Alternatively, schools may opt for a suitable software platform.
- » A **Provision Map** can be used at whole-school, year group, class, group, or individual level to:
 - Identify and cost provision
 - Track impact and value for money

48. While GEMS do not mandate a specific platform, each school **must** have a process in place. A costed provision map template is included in the Toolkit, and some schools use systems such as **Edukey Provision Map**.

In-School Referral System

49. Each school must have a robust referral system to allow staff to raise concerns about individual students to the Head of Inclusion.

Key Expectations

- » Staff must be able to refer students through a consistent process. The **Presentation of Need** and **Adaptive Strategy Checklists** can support this process.
- » A school-based referral form is recommended (template provided in the Toolkit).
- » The Head of Inclusion should regularly review referral patterns to:
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of the referral system.
 - Identify where additional training or support may be needed.
- » While the Head of Inclusion holds oversight, the leadership of Inclusion should be distributed. Planning and response should be collaborative and involve senior leaders.

Support Staff

50. Across GEMS and the different phases of education, a range of support staff roles exist — including Teaching Assistants, Inclusion Assistants, Individual Assistants, Learning Coaches, and Specialist Support Assistants. For this document, they are collectively referred to as **support staff**.

50.1 Support staff are vital members of the school community. They should be encouraged and supported to become experts in Inclusion and additional needs in schools.

50.2 The structure of the support staff team should be strategically planned based on the needs of students, as indicated by the school's Inclusion Register.

50.3 All support staff should have clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

51. Support Staff in the Classroom

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) states that teachers should “use support staff wisely” and “ensure access to the teacher.” Schools should follow the recommendations outlined in **Deployment of Teaching Assistants | EEF**, based on research-led practice.

<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">1</p>	<p>Deploy TAs in ways that enable all pupils to access high quality teaching</p>	<p>TAs should supplement—not replace—the teacher. This means that pupils who struggle most should spend at least as much time with the teacher as other pupils, if not more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ensure working relationships between teachers and TAs meet all pupils’ needs, with the teacher retaining responsibility for all pupils. · Equip TAs with a range of scaffolding strategies appropriate to the age, subject, and specific individual needs of pupils they work with. · Support teachers and TAs to identify practices which inhibit pupil learning and engage in effective alternatives.
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">2</p>	<p>Deploy TAs to scaffold learning and to develop pupils’ independence</p>	<p>Leaders should ensure TAs are prepared to engage in scaffolding practices that support pupils’ learning and ability to learn independently. Supporting pupil independence should be a key consideration of TA deployment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Equip TAs with a range of scaffolding strategies appropriate to the age, subject, and specific individual needs of pupils they work with. · Remove scaffolds over time to promote independent learning, with teachers supporting TAs to make those judgements. · Ensure pupils have the opportunity to attempt tasks independently before intervening appropriately when they can’t proceed.
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>Deploy TAs to deliver well-chosen, evidence based, structured interventions where appropriate</p>	<p>The evidence shows that TAs can support pupils effectively through structured interventions. However, these need to be carefully considered, monitored, and linked to the classroom to ensure positive outcomes for pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reflect on the purpose of interventions and engage with the evidence base before deploying TAs to deliver structured interventions. · Monitor progress to be sure the benefit of the intervention outweighs time away from the classroom. · Support teachers and TAs to engage in bridging practices that connect learning between interventions and the classroom.

Effective Implementation

<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>Prepare and train staff around effective TA deployment</p>	<p>School leaders should ensure staff are on the same page about the role of the TA and how they can most effectively support pupils. Ensuring teachers and TAs are well prepared to work in these roles increases the likelihood that TA deployment can have a positive impact on pupils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide clarity on the role of the TA for all in the school. · Enable TAs to be effective in their role and teachers to work effectively with TAs, through effective professional development. · Develop ongoing coordination and communication so that teachers and TAs are prepared for their day-to-day roles.
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5

Engage all staff in the process of implementing effective TA deployment

Effective TA deployment is complex and dependent on a range of factors. School leaders should focus on implementation as they look to embed effective practices.

- Ensure TA deployment is informed by both the underpinning evidence and the challenges of putting it into practice.
- Engage and align the school community to build a shared understanding of good TA practice.
- Be deliberate about deployment decisions, which should be taken in the context of the school and its current priorities.

52. At GEMS, this means:

- » Support staff should not be used as an informal teaching resource.
- » Their role is to **add value to** — not replace — what teachers do.
- » Support staff should work in partnership with teachers, with **clearly defined roles**.
- » They must be well-prepared and briefed for their roles within the classroom.
- » Teaching Assistants can work with any pupil, as directed by the teacher, not exclusively with Students of Determination.
- » They should support pupils in developing **independent learning skills** and managing their own learning.
- » Support staff should be trained in effective **questioning, coaching, and scaffolding** strategies, the GEMS support staff training module.

53. Support Staff and Withdrawal from Lessons

Students should **not** be withdrawn from mainstream teacher-led lessons to be taught by support staff unless an **evidence-based intervention** is in place and agreed upon.

If support staff deliver the intervention, the following must be in place:

- » A clear understanding of the student's needs, baseline, and desired outcomes.
- » Appropriate training for the intervention.
- » An understanding of how to measure and track outcomes.
- » Clarity on how the intervention links to wider learning and supports progress.

The Head of Inclusion is responsible for monitoring, tracking, and reviewing interventions.

- » An **Intervention Monitoring Record** sheet is provided in the Toolkit.
- » A **Costed Provision Map** Excel template is also available.

54. Support Staff and Professional Development

Support staff should be included in all relevant staff CPD sessions.

A bespoke CPD programme should be in place for all support staff to upskill staff and ensure the best possible support is in place for all students:

- » Upskill staff to meet the needs of students with complex or emerging needs.
- » Build expertise in supporting identified groups based on Inclusion Register analysis.

Appendix A: Document list and Phase Specific usage

Document	All Phases	Primary Specific	Secondary Specific
High 5	✓		
Sparkling GEMS Subject Charters (for each subject)	✓		
Sparkling GEMS IEP Secondary Blank Template			✓
Sparkling GEMS IEP Secondary Review Guidance			✓
Sparkling GEMS IEP Secondary Examples x 3			✓
Sparkling GEMS IEP Early Years Template		✓	
Sparkling GEMS IEP Primary Template		✓	
Sparkling GEMS IEP Primary Example		✓	
Early Years and Primary Review Guidance		✓	
Adaptive Teaching Strategy Bank: Cognition and Learning (C&L)	✓		
Adaptive Teaching Strategy Bank: Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)	✓		
Adaptive Teaching Strategy Bank: Attention and Executive Functioning (AEF)	✓		
Adaptive Teaching Strategy Bank: Physical, Sensory and Mobility (PSM)	✓		
Adaptive Teaching Strategy Bank: Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	✓		
Presentation of Need Checklist: Cognition and Learning	✓		
Presentation of Need Checklist: Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN)	✓		
Presentation of Need Checklist: Attention and Executive Functioning (AEF)	✓		
Presentation of Need Checklist: Physical, Sensory and Mobility (PSM)	✓		
Presentation of Need Checklist: Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	✓		
Graduated Approach Cycle with Individual Provision Map template	✓		
Intervention Monitoring Record	✓		
Provision Map Excel template	✓		
SEND Register Excel template	✓		
Microsoft Form Referral Example	✓		

Appendix B: Legislation & Guidance Inclusive Education Provision

<p>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</p> <p><i>International framework emphasising the rights of persons with disabilities.</i></p>	<p>https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html</p>
<p>Federal Law (29) 2006 and 2009</p> <p><i>Guarantees equal opportunities in education for Persons of Determination within all Educational Institutions.</i></p>	<p>https://www.abudhabi.ae/portal/public/en/citizens/religion-and-community/people-of-determination-le/federal-law-no-29-of-2006-concerning-the-rights-of-people-of-determination</p> <p>Guarantees a person of determination access to equal opportunities of education within all educational institutions</p>
<p>Ministerial Resolution No. (647) of 2020 on the Policy of Inclusive Education.</p> <p><i>Establishes a policy framework for inclusive education</i></p>	<p>https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/education/education-for-people-with-special-needs/inclusive-education-for-people-of-determination</p>
<p>Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law.</p> <p><i>Addresses legal aspects related to inclusive education.</i></p>	<p>https://www.wam.ae/en/details/1395303086458#:~:text=31%20of%202021%2C%20promulgating%20Penal,such%20a%20seal%20shall%20be</p>
<p>Ministry of Education (2010) School for All: General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programs and Services (Public & Private Schools).</p> <p><i>Sets forth rules for providing special education programs and services.</i></p>	<p>https://www.moe.gov.ae/English/SiteDocuments/Rules/SNrul_esEn.pdf</p>
<p>Department of Education and Knowledge Inclusion Policy (2023).</p> <p><i>Outlines the commitment to inclusive education.</i></p>	<p>See handbook</p>
<p>Abu Dhabi Strategy for People of Determination 2020-2024 'We are One'.</p> <p><i>Promotes a culture based on the social and human-rights perspective of disability. Supports equal and improved access to rights, opportunities, and services across all life stages.</i></p>	<p>https://www.addcd.gov.ae/-/media/Project/DCD/DCD-v2/POD-Booklet/Abu-Dhabi-Strategy-for-POD-Booklet-English.pdf</p>
<p>Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC). Child Protection.</p> <p><i>Emphasises child protection measures within the educational context.</i></p>	<p>https://www.adec.gov.ae/en/Education-System/Private-Schools/Child-Protection</p>
<p>National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions in United Arab Emirates.</p> <p><i>Emphasises child protection measures within the educational context.</i></p>	<p>https://www.moe.gov.ae/En/Legislation/Documents/National%20Child%20Protection%20Policy-EN.pdf</p>
<p>U.A.E Universal Design Code.</p> <p><i>Promotes universal design principles for inclusivity.</i></p>	<p>https://www.bimmates.com/regulation/uae-universal-design-code</p>
<p>The National Policy for Empowering People of Determination</p> <p><i>Based on six pillars including health, education, vocational rehabilitation, accessibility, social protection, and family environment</i></p>	<p>https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/policies/social-affairs/the-national-policy-for-empowering-people-with-special-needs</p>
<p>'We are the UAE 2031' Vision</p>	<p>https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/strategies-plans-and-visions/innovation-and-future-shaping/we-the-uae-2031-vision</p>
<p>UAE Centennial 2071 Long Term Government Plan</p>	<p>https://uaecabinet.ae/en/details/news/mohammed-bin-rashid-launches-five-decade-government-plan-uae-centennial-2071</p>
<p>Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030</p>	<p>https://www.actvet.gov.ae/en/media/lists/elibraryld/economic-vision-2030-full-versionen.pdf</p>
<p>Quality Standards of Services for Persons with Disabilities in Governmental and Private Institutions (2016).</p> <p><i>Establishes quality standards for services catering to persons with disabilities</i></p>	<p>https://government.ae/information-and-services/education/education-for-people-with-special-needs</p>

<p>The National Project for Inclusion for People of Determination (2008) <i>A national initiative promoting inclusive practices</i></p>	<p>https://www.abudhabi.ae/portal/public/en/homepage/religion-and-community/people-of-determination-le/the-national-project-for-inclusion-of-people-of-determination</p>
<p>Abu Dhabi Education Council Special Education Policies and Procedures Handbook (2012) <i>Outlines the commitment to inclusive education.</i></p>	<p>http://dbkschool.net/wp-content/uploads/%D9%83%D8%AA%D9%8A%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A1%D8%A7%D8%A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%A9-2012-%D8%A7%D8%AC%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%B2%D9%8A.pdf</p>
<p>The IB Access and Inclusion Policy <i>Guides the implementation of inclusive practices within the IB education framework.</i></p>	<p>https://resources.ibo.org/ib/topic/Access-and-inclusion/works/edu_11162-53587?lang=en</p>
<p>The IB Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes Guide <i>Guides the implementation of inclusive practices within the IB education framework.</i></p>	<p>https://resources.ibo.org/ib/works/edu_11162-38434?lang=en&root=1.6.2.2.5</p>



**NC EYFS INCLUSION
HANDBOOK**

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