



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

SECTION 9

RESPONDING TO DIVERSITY

This section aims to advise teachers on how they might meet pupils' individual and diverse needs. It will examine a range of factors that promote effective learning and will suggest strategies that may help.

RESPONDING TO DIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion

Teachers are responsible for meeting a range of needs in the classroom. In their planning they need to be aware of:

- ethnicity;
- culture;
- religion;
- home language;
- family background;
- special educational needs (SEN);
- disability;
- gender; and;
- ability.

Although learners have diverse needs, the needs of all pupils should be considered in the context of curriculum, cognition, management and learning, motivational factors and personal factors. This section focuses on the ways in which teachers might plan to meet a diversity of needs; its particular focus is on pupils with special educational needs.

The Access Statement in the National Curriculum Orders says that the Programme of Study for each subject at each Key Stage should be taught to the great majority of pupils in the Key Stage in ways appropriate to their developing maturity and abilities. This statement provides flexibility to enable teachers to select content from earlier Key Stage Programmes of Study if this is appropriate to meet the needs of an individual pupil.

Creating an inclusive curriculum is a whole-school issue. Schools should consider having a strategy for inclusive practice in the School Development Plan. Time scales and criteria for success should also be included in the strategy. An effective curriculum is one that is continually under review. Schools should nurture and foster the talents and abilities of all pupils in a way which will allow their achievements to be recognised and celebrates diversity.

The Index for Inclusion distributed to all schools in Wales, aims to promote Inclusive policies and practices by way of self evaluation and by providing practical examples and good practice.

The Code of Practice suggests a graduated response¹ to meeting individual needs and stresses the importance of pupil participation² and partnership with parents³. All need to be given consideration when working with pupils with a range of SEN.

Staff Involvement

All those involved in the school must make a contribution to the inclusive curriculum. This might happen through direct training, for example, some schools provide courses for midday supervisors, play scheme leaders and governors, as well as the teaching staff. Schools can also promote inclusive practice in less formal ways by sharing information via newsletters, school brochures, displays etc.

BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND PARTICIPATION

All pupils learn in different ways and so it is important that teachers consider different learning and teaching styles when they prepare lessons. Teachers will need to use a variety of teaching strategies to meet the individual learning styles of their pupils. For pupils with SEN, teachers will need to consider some additional learning needs.

The Code of Practice identifies the following categories of SEN:

1. Communication and Interaction

This range of difficulties includes pupils with:

- speech and language delay, impairments and disorders;
- autistic spectrum disorder;
- specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia; and
- hearing impairment.

It may also apply to some pupils with severe or moderate learning difficulties.

The range of need will include those for whom language and communication difficulties are the result of permanent sensory or physical impairment. Suggestions of how teachers might help such pupils can be found in **Paragraph 7:56** of the Code of Practice for Wales

¹ See Section 4 on Graduated Response

² See Section 3 on Pupil Participation

³ See Section 2 on Partnership with Parents

2. Cognition and Learning

Children with moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties and those with specific learning difficulties will need special programmes to progress in cognition and learning. This category could include pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and those with a sensory impairment. **Paragraph 7:58** of the Code of Practice for Wales offers advice to teachers on helping these pupils.

3. Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development

This group includes children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. They may be:

- withdrawn or isolated;
- disruptive and disturbing;
- hyperactive and lack concentration;
- lacking in social skills; or
- may have challenging behaviour.

Some strategies for helping these pupils are outlined in **Paragraph 7:60** of the Code of Practice for Wales

4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs

There is a wide spectrum of sensory, multi-sensory and physical difficulties. This can range from profound levels of impairment (profound deafness/blindness) to lesser levels of loss or impairment. Physical impairments may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes that only require appropriate access to educational facilities and equipment; others might lead to more complex social and learning needs. Recommendations to teachers on how to help such pupils can be found in **Paragraph 7:62** of the Code of Practice.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND PARTICIPATION

Learning to Learn

Teachers and pupils each bring their own qualities to learning. A pupil's ability to learn is influenced by such outside factors as:

- personal experiences;
- experiences at home;

- relationships with peers;
- relationships with teachers;
- perceptions of potential; and
- self concept.

Teachers bring to the learning process such factors as:

- personality;
- teaching styles;
- personal values and attitudes;
- expectations of pupil performance;
- an ability to manage resources; and
- an understanding of the curriculum.

It should be noted that although teaching and learning can be examined independently, they are interrelated. However, the relationship between teaching and learning is not always straightforward and sometimes learning can take place without direct teaching or can be different from that intended by the teacher.

If pupils are to become active and more independent learners they:

- need to be aware of how they learn;
- need to know the learning outcomes of each lesson if they are to make the connection between prior learning and see the value of what they are being asked to do;
- need access to a range of novel activities including multi-sensory input; and
- need attention to the BEM principle (beginning, middle and end) which indicates that pupils retain more information at the beginnings and ends of lessons.

If pupils are to be effective learners they:

- need to feel motivated and in a relaxed state of mind. The reptilian part of the brain is designed for survival and if pupils are feeling stressed, physically uncomfortable or otherwise preoccupied, then little or no learning will occur. A good mind state can be created by using music and movement in the classroom and having strategies in place to promote high self-esteem. Mind mapping and other organisational tools can be useful in this respect.

- need 'Memory hooks' that can prompt them if they have word finding difficulties. It is easier to remember words if they are associated with other words or images in our mind. If words are classified into certain groups, this can often help some pupils. For example, all words beginning with the 'ch' sound could be grouped together or all items of footwear could be placed in a list. Some pupils might find memory cards useful. These can be written using short, sharp bullet points or using speech bubbles or a cartoon like format. Memory cards could be used to help pupils remember the rules of punctuation or what to think about when they want to spell a new word. Other memory strategies include 'chunking' content, personalising/ connecting learning, and using relevant contexts. Using emotions and humour activates the limbic system, helping pupils to remember what they have learned.

Differentiation

Differentiation is about matching the work expected of pupils with their ability to do it. It is about setting appropriate tasks for pupils and assessing the outcomes of these tasks in a flexible way. For pupils with SEN, teachers will also need to consider expectations relating to ability and additional resources and support.

The 'Framework for Differentiation' proposed by Dr Geoff Moss is a useful tool. Any teaching activity has three phases:

- **presentation** (how you present information, or how the learner obtains it);
- **operation** (how the learner will work on the task in order to learn); and
- **response** (how the learner will demonstrate that learning has occurred, so that you can evaluate it).

What happens for different learners at each phase depends on four groups of factors: pupil factors; task factors; teaching style and management; and support and resources.

| | Pupil Factors | Task Factors | Teaching Style & Management | Support and Resources |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Presentation | | | | |
| Operation | | | | |
| Response | | | | |

Pupil factors might be accommodated by:

- how pupils are grouped;
- taking account of learning styles; or
- planning for differences in curriculum access e.g. readability, use of ICT etc.

Task factors will include:

- adjusting the entry skills required and the demands made by the tasks on different skills;
- the number and sequence of steps in different paths through the material for different learners;
- the manner and content of the teaching varied to suit different learning styles; and
- materials and support adjusted to match the requirements of different learners at each of the three phases.

A larger version of the above chart can be found in Appendix 1.

Teaching and Learning

Over the years much work has been carried out on children's learning styles and the impact they might have on teaching. Research has shown that teachers will often teach to their own learning style and sometimes this can have a detrimental effect on some of their pupils' achievements. This section examines learning styles and suggests ways in which teachers can be flexible in their teaching strategies to meet a range of needs.

Learning styles include:

- **Visual learners.** These individuals see the world in pictures and enjoy doodling, drawing and watching television, films and plays. They are the people who often forget names but remember faces.
- **Auditory learners.** They tend to think in sounds and tend to get distracted by noise. They enjoy listening to music and tapes and speaking on the telephone. They are happy to listen to verbal instructions and can attend to the spoken word/teacher talk e.g. story time.
- **Kinesthetic learners.** Such learners, boys in particular, can often appear disruptive in the early years but actually using movement and touch is their way of learning about the world that surrounds them. Kinesthetic learners fidget and use gestures a lot. They

often play with objects when listening. For some of these pupils, for example those with Attention Deficits, it may be necessary to introduce 'movement breaks' into the lesson. Kinesthetic learners usually enjoy sports, games and being on the move. They remember best by 'doing'.

Strategies for helping different learners can be found in Appendix 2.

Multiple Intelligences

Gardner's "Theory of Multiple Intelligences" also has implications for planning to meet individual needs. Gardner states that we all have a preferred way of learning that relates to a set of intelligences. Gardner suggests that there is a set of eight intelligences based on certain established criteria:

- **Linguistic** – learning best through listening, writing and discussion
- **Mathematical/logical** – confident learning about time, space, number, quantity, cause and effect, even from an early age
- **Musical** – an ability to experiment with the patterns in sound
- **Visual/spatial** – an ability to visualise easily, learning best through observation, graphs, maps and other visual aids
- **Naturalistic** – motivated by environmental issues, flora and fauna
- **Physical/kinesthetic** – enjoys learning through exploration, touch and physical exercise
- **Interpersonal** – can see things from a number of perspectives, considering the views and feelings of others
- **Intrapersonal** – shows an awareness of own feelings and is self-motivated, learning best with opportunities to reflect

Teachers need to be flexible in their teaching to meet a range of intellectual needs. Teachers tend to concentrate on teaching styles that favour those pupils with linguistic and logical intelligence. More effective learning would take place if teachers acquainted themselves with the different types of intelligence and planned their teaching so that it appeals to a wider range of learners (see Appendix 3).

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives provides a framework for thinking and learning tasks at all levels.

It comprises the following:

- **Remembering** – learners need to know and recall things as a basis for action
- **Comprehension** – learners need to demonstrate understanding
- **Application** – learners need to use knowledge to create and solve problems
- **Analysis** – learners need to understand overall relationships and patterns
- **Synthesis** – learners need to create something new with the knowledge and skills they have learned
- **Evaluation** – learners need to make decisions and judgements

The Instructional Hierarchy

Haring and Eaton identified five levels of an instructional hierarchy. This is a useful tool for teachers when planning a lesson for pupils who are at different stages in their learning of a skill.

Pupils with SEN often need additional support in taking skills through the last three steps of the hierarchy- maintenance, generalisation and application. Until pupils attain fluency, tasks may require their full attention and so it is important to keep this in mind when planning new learning activities. Consider this in the context of learning to drive a car or first using a computer.

The Instructional Hierarchy can be summarised as follows:

- **Acquisition** – pupils are shown something for the first time and learn how to do it accurately
- **Fluency** – pupils practice the skill until it is easy for them
- **Maintenance** – pupils maintain the skill without the continuation of direct teaching
- **Generalisation** – pupils are able to use the skill in a different context
- **Adaptation** – pupils are able to solve, unsupported, a problem calling for the application of the skill

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Creating the Climate

Learning skills in a 'behaviour curriculum' is essential to teaching and learning. Learning is affected by a child's ability to handle a range of emotions and control and manage their own behaviour. For pupils with SEN, it is important for teachers to be sure about the skills they are trying to teach in the 'behaviour curriculum'. Teachers should acknowledge pupils strengths in all areas of development and give praise and confidence for even small steps of progress.

Whatever the situation all learning should take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. Teachers should ensure that strategies are in place to enhance pupils self-esteem whenever possible, creating a climate of praise rather than reprimand.

Pupils should be encouraged to discuss collaboration/working together if the group work is to be successful. Negotiation needs to be learnt from an early age. Teachers will need to facilitate collaborative work and true pupil participation.⁴

Meeting Individual Needs⁵

A preferred learning style will also impact on how a pupil enjoys working in the context of the whole class. Some pupils will be happy working in a group e.g. the auditory learner, whilst others will prefer to work in pairs or alone. The teacher will therefore need to consider a range of groupings to extend and motivate learning. This might even involve rearranging seating throughout the day. During the school day a range of activities might therefore take place such as:

- Whole class teaching
- Small group work
- Paired work (pupils)
- Pupil –teacher work
- Pupil- other adult (LSAs, parents etc) work
- Resource-led learning
- Individual work.
- Gender groups (same and mixed).

4 See Section 3 'Enabling Pupil Participation'

5 See Section 5'Record Keeping'.

Tim O'Brian states that within a class group who have learning needs in common, there will be a collection of smaller groupings with similar needs (e.g. gender, culture etc) and individuals whose needs are unique.

COMMON NEEDS - everyone is the same.

DISTINCT NEEDS - some pupils are similar.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS - everyone is different.

Working in Pairs

An initial preparation for true collaboration in group work might be to allow pupils to learn to work in pairs. Sometimes teaming an able pupil with one less skilled can have positive outcomes for both. However, pairing pupils of similar ability should also be encouraged. In either situation, the teacher must have assessment procedures in place to ensure that interactive learning is taking place. For example, pupils might be asked to complete a task together but be questioned individually. Alternatively, they might be asked to complete their own multiple-choice questionnaire or written task, following the work in pairs. Paired work might also take place between teacher and pupil or between the pupil and another adult.

Making Group Work Effective

Teachers should ensure that genuine group work is taking place. Effective grouping demands considerable thought and preparation. Although groups are there physically, they can sometimes comprise of a set of individual learners. It is therefore important to ensure that the group has a specific focus on a given task as it promotes the most effective learning. All individual members of the group must be accountable and contribute to the team's success.

Everyone should be challenged but the tasks allocated to individuals must be realistic. Individuals should be encouraged to work to their strengths. For the pupil with difficulties in reading and writing, this might involve carrying out the experiment, whilst another pupil reads the instructions and a third records the results. When a specific task has to be achieved, mixed ability groups might be more appropriate. All group members must be clear of the intended outcome and this might involve the teacher discussing at length individual roles and responsibilities.

Teachers will need to be aware of pupils' interpersonal skills when constructing a group. There may be occasions when a confident and authoritarian pupil might provide the right sort of motivation.

The teacher must also be aware of meeting individual needs in group work. This will involve examining the content of the lesson and considering how it can be matched to pupils' social and intellectual needs. Teachers will also need to make an assessment of whether or not learning is taking place.

Teachers may need to examine classroom groupings to ensure that boys listen and girls participate. They should consider the benefits of structured mixed groupings or single sex groups to encourage boys' and girls' participation in different activities.

Health and Safety

Teachers need to consider health and safety issues for some pupils with SEN. Pupils with communication and interaction difficulties e.g. Autistic Spectrum Disorders may need support in order to adhere to school rules.

USING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Human resources can be used flexibly in the classroom. It is important not to forget that as well as LSAs, teachers and parents etc, children themselves are useful resources e.g. paired reading, peer tutoring and circle of friends.

There are a number of published resources available to teachers, many in the form of ICT software. Videos, audio-tapes and television can be useful multi media resources for auditory and visual learners.

Many teachers prefer to design their own tailor made resources for pupils (See Appendix 4). In doing so, they must ensure that work:

- is relevant to pupils' interests;
- is appropriate to the ability and reading level of the pupil;
- is stimulating, up-to-date and visually attractive;
- has text that is broken by graphics;
- has instructions and tasks that are in different fonts and sizes making them distinguishable;
- offers challenges and is fun e.g. games, puzzles, quizzes, word searches, crosswords with a clear purpose;

- uses a range of activities: gap fill, labeling, true/false etc; and
- gives opportunities for a range of responses, not just written answers.

Although such resources support learning, there is no effective substitute for quality interaction between pupil and teacher.

Using ICT

It is important for schools to carry out an audit of staff use of ICT. The New Opportunities Fund (NOF) is providing training funding for each serving teacher. The audit might be at a basic level e.g. staff complete a questionnaire indicating their competence against professional standards.

SENCOs can search the Internet for a wealth of information relating to SEN, in particular associations and support groups⁶. The Virtual Teacher Centre and the National Grid for Learning share information over the Internet.

A range of software is now available for pupils with SEN. SENCOs can check if software is unacceptable and portrays 'disability' in a negative light by applying an 'accessibility test' to the Website. Such lists can be downloaded from the Internet. There are also websites available which give guidance on producing accessible websites.

The choice of database will depend on the school's circumstances and expertise in the use of ICT. Management Information Systems (MIS) are in operation in many schools and can be very useful to the SENCO. The NCET information sheet 'Recording and Reporting under the Code of Practice' (1997) provides a summary of the technical issues involved.

SENCOs should be aware of data protection issues. Any data collected must be protected from unauthorised use. Schools may wish to consider how parents might access and add to records on their child. Obviously ICT is an invaluable resource for pupils at every key stage and all abilities. It can be used in a number of ways to enhance learning.

⁶ See Section 11 'Useful Information'

APPENDIX 1

| | Pupil Factors | Task Factors | Teaching Style & Management | Support and Resources |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Presentation | | | | |
| Operation | | | | |
| Response | | | | |

Acknowledgement: Ian McNabb, Wrexham Educational Psychology Service.

HELPING VISUAL LEARNERS

- Using icons on worksheets to help pupils understand what is expected of them e.g. a pen for writing
- Using flow charts, maps and diagrams
- Using colour coding whenever possible e.g. in teaching sound patterns
- Using mind maps and topic webs
- Labeling areas and resources in the classroom
- Using visual strategies for gaining attention or to signal when pupils need to be preparing for the end of a practical session e.g. egg timers and traffic lights
- Using ICT, TV, video camera and posters

HELPING AUDITORY LEARNERS

- Taped resources e.g. story book and tapes
- Memory aids to learn spellings such as rhymes and phrases
- Using names as cues for attention
- Encouraging the recall of information, allowing adequate time for a response
- Talking through worksheets
- Using oral signals to gain attention e.g. 'Hands Up', Listen etc
- Allowing children to discuss (hear) mistakes that have been noted in marking
- ICT
- Repetition
- Paired and group work

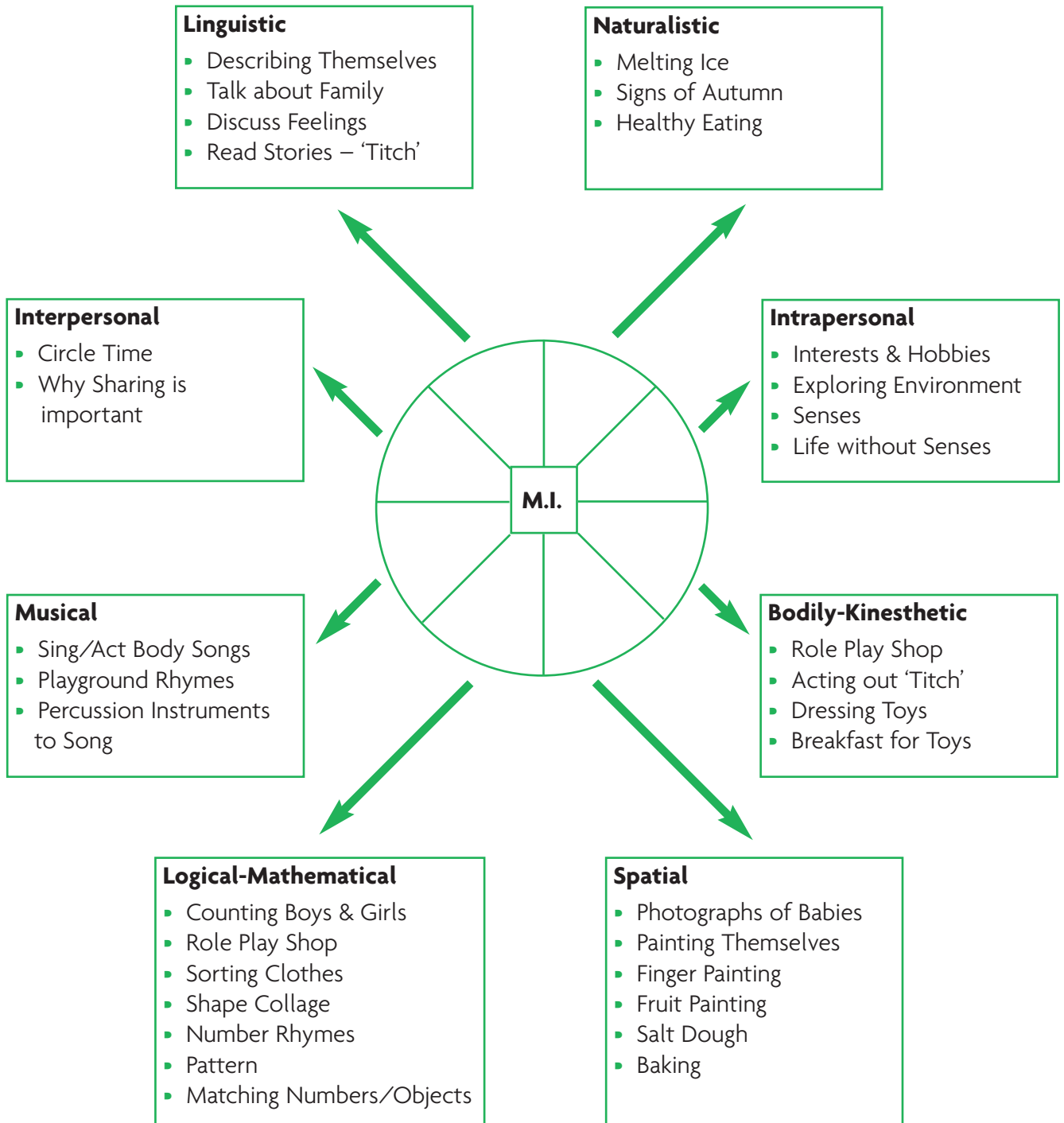
HELPING KINESTHETIC LEARNERS

- ICT
- Physical activity e.g. brain gym, role play
- Experiments and field trips
- Hands on tactile activities
- Moving book from side to side when reading or following words with a finger or pointer
- Moving when learning e.g. tapping out sounds, syllables, discussing prepositions
- Writing out words in the air or on other pupils' backs
- Allowing pupils to have something to feel/fiddle with during periods of listening e.g. stress ball
- Learning through play and demonstration
- Relating activities to real experiences
- Using keyboard

APPENDIX 3: USING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES TO PLAN LESSONS

TOPIC: ME (NURSERY CLASS)

Acknowledgements: Emma Ellis, Educational Psychologist/Ysgol y Gaer, Gwersyllt.



APPENDIX 4: CHECKLIST FOR THE EVALUATION OF RESOURCES

- Are the materials relevant to the pupils and the context?
- Are they fit for purpose?
- Do they require prior knowledge, skills and experience?
- Are they suitable for use by groups and/or individuals?
- Are they appropriate in terms of language, graphics, medium and layout?
- Is there flexibility to allow learners to start at different places and work at a different pace?
- Do they cater for a variety of levels?
- Do they support different learning preferences?
- Do they facilitate transfer of knowledge and skills?
- Do they reinforce prior learning?





