

## Social Communication Descriptors

Front Cover

Key Stage 1, 2, 3 or 4

Circle as appropriate

Name.....

DoB.....

School.....

Date Descriptors  
completed.....

Name of person completing  
Descriptors.....

Parent/Carer's  
permission.....

# **Social Communication Difficulties**

## **Key Stage 1**

# Social Communication Difficulties:

## Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

### Band 1

#### Receptive Language

- Understands most verbal language
- Occasional difficulties understanding ambiguities
- Need for adults to be explicit
- Need for adult to simplify their spoken language

#### Expressive Language

- Can use language for a range of purposes
- Vocabulary may be weak
- Prosody may be unusual

#### Social Interaction

- Does play alongside other children
- Can interact in a structured small group
- Has few friends, or one specific friend, but is interested in other children
- Does not take the listener into account

#### Social Communication

- Functions best with clear rules
- Maybe upset by change in routines or environment.

#### Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour

- Gravitates to the same object
- Talks about the same subject matter
- Limited range of interests
- Has unusual interests

#### Fine and gross motor skills

- Needs help with changing.
- Is disorganised
- Takes longer to get ready for activities

#### Other/Sensory Issues

- May have unusual responses to sensory experiences

#### Support Needs

- Needs visual structure for everyday tasks and lessons.
- May need additional adult support or reminders to stay on task
- Teaching styles accommodate difference
- Links need to be made to past learning
- Behaviour may be unusual or difficult to manage

# Social Communication Difficulties:

## Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

### Band 2

#### Receptive Language

- Difficulties in understanding verbal and non verbal communication
- Understanding tends to be literal
- Some difficulties understanding ambiguities
- Frequent need for adults to be explicit and to simplify their spoken language

#### Expressive Language

- Uses spontaneous language but expressive language is weak
- May express meaning in an unusual form.
- Has difficulty using language for a range of purposes
- Unusual use of prosody becomes more evident

#### Social Interaction

- Does not play with other children, but alongside. / has few friends.
- Sometimes allows other children to join in his activity.
- Limited understanding of the social rules of interaction/does not take turns
- Spontaneous approaches to others may be qualitatively different to norm.
- Does not take the listener into account.
- Can interact in a structured small group

#### Social Communication

- Uses verbal communication
- Needs adult to “interpret” non verbal communications
- Has some awareness of the social purposes of communication
- Limited understanding of the social rules of communication
- Prefers familiar routines and clear rules
- Can accept changes to routine with preparation and reassurances from an adult

#### Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour

- Can be distracted when engaged in repetitive behaviours
- Prefers own repetitive activities
- Difficulties in joint attention.

#### Fine and gross motor skills

- Needs help and extra time with changing.
- Takes longer to get ready for an activity
- Seems clumsy, bumps into others and falls over

#### Other/ Sensory Issues

- Continued unusual responses to specific sensory experiences
- Has some tolerance of the proximity of others

#### Support Needs

- Needs visual support to access environmental and curriculum content
- Needs adult support to access verbal information.
- Needs direct teaching to generalise learning
- Behaviour is predictably unusual or difficult to manage

# Social Communication Difficulties:

## Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

### Band 3

#### Receptive Language

- Limited understanding especially of new vocabulary
- Difficulties following verbal instructions, and non verbal communication
- Significant difficulties understanding ambiguities and continues to be literal
- Significant need for adults to be explicit and to simplify their spoken language
- Visual prompts are increasingly necessary

#### Expressive Language

- Uses a selective range of vocabulary or responses
- Minimal use of expressive language, frequent grammatical errors
- Short sentences used in response to questions

#### Social Interaction

- Has little interest in peer interactions. prefers adult interaction
- Limited understanding of the social rules of interaction i.e. cannot take turns
- May approach others but does so in an odd or inappropriate manner
- Pays little attention to the responses of others

#### Social Communication

- Uses limited verbal communication
- Limited understanding of the social rules of communication
- Significant need for familiar routines and clear rules
- Find changes in routines and environments hard even when prepared for them.

#### Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour

- More difficult to distract from repetitive behaviours
- Prefers own solitary, repetitive activities
- Difficulties in joint attention
- Can be taught rules of games (such as cricket, football) and functional play

#### Fine and gross motor skills

- Takes longer to get ready for an activity such as changing for PE
- Seems clumsy, bumps into others and falls over
- Handwriting may be slow in developing

#### Other

- Continued unusual responses to specific sensory experiences

#### Support Needs

- Needs visual support to access environmental and curriculum content
- Needs adult support to access verbal information & stay on task.
- Needs direct teaching to generalise learning
- Behaviour is predictably unusual or difficult to manage
- May need support with managing unpredictable or unusual behaviour.
- Curriculum will need modification

# Social Communication Difficulties:

## Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

### Band 4

#### **Receptive Language**

Visual prompts, photos, pictures, signs or symbols are necessary for understanding and communication

- Limited understanding of new vocabulary, unable to follow verbal instructions
- Severe difficulties understanding ambiguities and continues to be literal
- Unable to understand unless adults are explicit and simplify their spoken language

#### **Expressive Language**

Visual prompts are necessary for understanding and communication

- Uses a selective range of vocabulary or responses
- May use single words or echoed phrases
- May need an adult prompt to elicit a response

#### **Social Interaction**

- May avoid peer interaction
- May approach others but does so in an odd or inappropriate manner.
- Increasingly accepting of known adults becoming emotionally attached to them
- Has difficulty managing interactions in group situations.

#### **Social Communication**

- Uses minimal verbal communication
- Limited understanding of the social rules of communication
- Reliant upon familiar routines and clear rules
- Reacts inappropriately to changes even when prepared for them.

#### **Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour**

- Repetitive behaviours limit access to the curriculum or daily activities
- Prefers own solitary, repetitive activities
- Severe difficulties in joint attention
- Can be taught rules of games (such as cricket, football) and functional play

#### **Fine and gross motor skills**

- Takes longer to get ready for an activity such as changing for PE
- Seems clumsy, bumps into others and falls over
- Handwriting may be slow in developing: a major ongoing area of difficulty.

#### **Other**

- Continued unusual responses to specific sensory experiences which inhibit access to the curriculum or to daily life activities
- May find environmental changes extremely difficult to tolerate i.e. Friday afternoon assembly in the school hall, or PE in a large ill defined area
- 100% curriculum may be inappropriate

#### **Support needs**

- Needs visual support to access environmental and curriculum content
- Needs adult support to access verbal information and stay on task.
- Needs direct teaching to generalise learning
- Behaviour is predictably unusual or difficult to manage
- Need support to manage extreme, unpredictable and challenging behaviour

# **Social Communication Difficulties**

## **Key Stage 2 Years 3 – 6**

# Social Communication Difficulties:

## Key Stage 2 (Years 3 - 6)

### Band 1

#### Receptive Language

- Understands most verbal language
- Occasional difficulties understanding ambiguities
- Occasional need for adults to be explicit
- Occasional need for adult to simplify their spoken language

#### Expressive Language

- Can use language for a range of purposes
- Prosody may be unusual
- Vocabulary may be weak
- Sophisticated language may hide underlying deficits

#### Social Interaction

- Does play alongside other children, but not with them
- Can interact in a structured small group
- Has few friends, or one specific friend, but is interested in other children
- Does not take the listener into account

#### Social Communication

- Functions best with clear rules
- Maybe upset by change in routines or environment

#### Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour

- Gravitates to the same object
- Talks about the same subject matter
- Limited range of interests
- Has unusual interests

#### Organisation (Fine & gross motor skills)

- Needs help with changing.
- Is disorganised
- Takes longer to get ready for activities

**Other:** May have unusual responses to sensory experiences

#### Support Needs

- Needs visual structure for everyday tasks and lessons.
- May need additional adult support or reminders to stay on task
- Teaching style accommodate difference
- Links need to be made to past learning
- Behaviour may be unusual or difficult to manage



# Social Communication Difficulties:

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 - 6)

Band 2

## Receptive Language

- Difficulties in understanding verbal and non verbal communication
- Understanding tends to be literal
- Some difficulties understanding ambiguities
- Frequent need for adults to be explicit and to simplify their spoken language
- Conceptual language needs increasing explanation

## Expressive Language

- Uses spontaneous language but expressive language is weak
- May express meaning in an unusual form.
- Has difficulty using language for a range of purposes
- Unusual use of prosody becomes more evident

## Social Interaction

- Does not play with other children, but alongside. / has few friends.
- Sometimes allows other children to join in his activity.
- Limited understanding of the social rules of interaction/does not take turns
- Spontaneous approaches to others may be qualitatively different to norm.
- Does not take the listener into account.
- Can interact in a structured small group

## Social Communication

- Uses verbal communication
- Needs adult to “interpret” non verbal communications
- Has some awareness of the social purposes of communication
- Limited understanding of the social rules of communication
- Prefers familiar routines and clear rules
- Can accept changes to routine with preparation and reassurances from an adult

## Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour

- Can be distracted when engaged in repetitive behaviours
- Prefers own repetitive activities
- Difficulties in joint attention.

## Organisation / Fine & gross motor skills

- Needs help and extra time with changing.
- Takes longer to get ready for an activity
- Seems clumsy, bumps into others and falls over

## Other / Sensory Issues

- Continued unusual responses to specific sensory experiences
- Has some tolerance of the proximity of others

## Support Needs

- Needs visual support to access environmental and curriculum content
- Needs adult support to access verbal information.
- Needs direct teaching to generalise learning
- Behaviour is predictably unusual or difficult to manage

# Social Communication Difficulties:

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 - 6)

Band 3

## Receptive Language

- Significant difficulties understanding ambiguities and continues to be literal
- Visual prompts are increasingly necessary
- Difficulties following verbal instructions, and non verbal communication
- Significant difficulties storing new curriculum specific vocabulary.
- Continued need for adults to be explicit and to simplify their spoken language
- Increasing conceptual language needs additional explanation

## Expressive Language

- Uses a selective range of vocabulary or responses
- Minimal use of expressive language, frequent grammatical errors
- Short sentences used in response to questions
- May dominate conversations with (his) familiar subject
- May adopt a specific accent or dialect i.e. cartoon American accent, or learnt phrases

## Social Interaction

- Has little interest in peer interactions, prefers adult interaction.
- Limited understanding of the social rules of interaction i.e. cannot take turns
- May approach others but does so in an odd or inappropriate manner
- Pays little attention to the responses of others

## Social Communication

- Uses limited verbal communication
- Limited understanding of the social rules of communication
- Significant need for familiar routines and clear rules
- Find changes in routines and environments hard even when prepared.

## Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour

- More difficult to distract or move on from repetitive behaviours
- Prefers own solitary, repetitive activities
- Significant difficulties in joint attention
- Can be taught rules of games (such as cricket, football) and functional play

## Organisation / Fine & gross motor skills

- Takes longer to get ready for an activity such as changing for PE
- Seems clumsy, bumps into others and falls over
- Handwriting may be slow in developing

## Other / Sensory issues

- Continued unusual responses to specific sensory experiences
- May find environmental changes extremely difficult to tolerate i.e. Friday afternoon assembly in the school hall or PE in a large ill defined area.

## Support Needs

- Significant need for visual support to access environmental and curriculum content
- Significant need for adult support to access verbal information.
- Needs direct teaching to generalise learning
- Behaviour is predictably unusual or difficult to manage
- May need support with managing unpredictable or unusual behaviour.
- Curriculum will need modification

# Social Communication Difficulties:

## Key Stage 2 (Years 3 - 6) Band 4

### Receptive Language

Visual prompts, photos, pictures, signs or symbols are necessary for understanding and communication

- Severe difficulties storing new curriculum specific vocabulary.
- Unable to understand unless adults are explicit and simplify their spoken language  
Increasingly conceptual language needs additional explanation
- Severe difficulties in understanding lengthy verbal and non verbal communication
- Continued difficulties understanding ambiguities and continues to be literal

### Expressive Language

Visual prompts are necessary for understanding and communication

- May use a wide range of vocabulary or responses which fails to communicate meaning
- May use single words in reply, or fail to recognise the importance of a reply
- May need an adult prompt to elicit a response
- May adopt a specific accent or dialect i.e. cartoon American accent
- May use learnt (cartoon) phrases as replies

### Social Interaction

- May avoid peer interaction, or approach others in an odd or inappropriate manner
- Has difficulty managing interactions in group situations
- Increasingly accepting of known adults becoming emotionally attached to them

### Social Communication

- Uses minimal verbal communication
- Severely limited understanding of the social rules of communication
- Reliant upon familiar routines and clear rules
- Reacts inappropriately to changes even when prepared for them.

### Play, Imagination & Repetitive stereotypical behaviour

- Repetitive behaviours limits the child's access to the curriculum or daily activities
- Prefers own solitary, repetitive activities
- Severe difficulties in joint attention
- Can be taught rules of games (such as cricket, football) and functional play

### Organisation / Fine & gross motor skills

- Takes longer to get ready for an activity such as changing for PE
- Seems clumsy, bumps into others and falls over
- Handwriting may be slow in developing and be a major ongoing area of difficulty.

### Other:

- Continued unusual responses to specific sensory experiences which inhibit access to the curriculum or to daily life activities.
- May find environmental changes extremely difficult to tolerate i.e. Friday afternoon assembly in the school hall, or PE in a large Hall.
- 100% curriculum may be inappropriate

### Support Needs

- Need for visual support to access environmental and curriculum content
- Needs adult support to access verbal information.
- Needs direct teaching to generalise learning
- Behaviour is predictably unusual or difficult to manage
- Need support to manage extreme, unpredictable and challenging behaviour.
- Curriculum will need modification