

Resources to support inclusive provision

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) makes clear that every child deserves an equal opportunity to learn, develop and thrive, regardless of their individual needs or circumstances.

Creating an inclusive environment is therefore a fundamental aspect of high-quality early years practice. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) further emphasises the importance of identifying and removing barriers to learning, enabling children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to participate fully alongside their peers. An inclusive-by-design approach recognises that environments, experiences and resources should be planned to meet the needs of all children from the outset, rather than relying solely on individual adaptations once barriers have been identified.

The Inclusive Early Years Fund offers providers an opportunity to strengthen this universal provision through thoughtful investment in resources that promote participation, communication, independence and wellbeing. To ensure funding is used effectively, providers are encouraged to begin with a robust audit of their current provision. This should consider the accessibility of the learning environment, the range and quality of existing resources, the experiences they provide, and how effectively they support the diverse needs of both current and future children. It should also consider and align with strategic planning that may include workforce training to be a requirement in relation to resource purchasing to ensure that the use is purposeful and sustainable.

The suggestions within this document are intended to support providers in selecting resources that enhance inclusive practice across all areas of learning and development. They are not a prescribed 'shopping list', but examples of high-quality universal provision. In line with the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance, **resources alone do not improve outcomes**; it is the skilled use of those resources, alongside responsive interactions and effective pedagogy, that has the greatest impact. By making purposeful, well-informed decisions about resourcing, providers can continue to develop enabling environments where every child experiences a genuine sense of belonging, is supported to reach their potential and is able to flourish.

Inclusion in practice



Communication and language:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• home learning bags with activities/books/tips for families• cause and effect toys to suits all ages and stages in all rooms• turn-taking and listening games• limit distractions/background noise in certain areas through sound proofing/zoning/room dividers• appropriate tables/seating for mealtimes to encourage interactions• Early Talk Boost training and resources• 'bucket time' resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• home library to include cloth books, interactive/pop up books, lift-the-flap, touchy-feely, sound books• support the creation of visuals – Widgit/printer/printer ink/paper laminator• invest in visuals training to understand the purpose and use of visuals• musical instruments for indoors and outdoors• accessible storage to encourage independence and engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• range of engaging timers to support listening & attention• develop spaces for listening and attention – smaller zones/soft furnishings/lighting/sensory toys• sound buttons• puppets/toys & resources to support storytelling/songs/rhymes• wide range of books that can be frequently updated and includes non-fiction |
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Personal, social and emotional development:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• developing calm spaces (other than book corners or dark dens!)• review toilet areas and consider supportive resources in relation to visuals/smells/hygiene/noise/routine• equipment to be able to display family photos• community photos to support creating connections with children's experiences beyond the setting• mobile display boards allowing children's work and resources to be at their level indoors and outdoors Easy access to drinks/snacks to support regulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• story sacks/resources to support trauma/bereavement/emotions• prompts to support consistent positive/celebratory language• puppets for interactive role modelling play• cloakroom storage areas having accessible pegs that are named/encourage a calm flow• involving families – fun days/open days/ stay and play sessions• cameras• mirrors• role play resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• resources/books to share with families to support consistency between setting and home ie: visual prompts• small world toys to encourage relationship development• develop transition pathways between indoors and outdoors – clear/accessible/supporting routines and behaviour• 'box full of feelings' resources• comforters• social stories training• key person training• behaviour training• supporting sensory differences training |
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Physical development and sensory needs:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• extensive range of mark making materials/resources for all ages and stages• blowing games equipment – instruments/straws/feathers/tissue paper/ping pong balls/bubbles• post boxes and range of posting resources• clay/dough/malleable materials• scissors – including easy grip and pushdown mounted tabletop scissors• soft play resources• wheeled toys/road equipment• sports games equipment• den making equipment• loose parts equipment• room thermometers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• robust building blocks – large and small for indoors and outdoors• inset puzzles• a range of jigsaw puzzles• peg boards• pegs of various strength/colour/texture• range of threading activities – laces, wooden rods, beads, cotton reels, foam beads, wooden shapes...• large tweezers/tongs/pincer grip activities• treasure baskets• busy boards – locks/keys etc.• device to play music on• daily dance routines• tactile resources/wobble boards• sensory planting• range of sensory toys• sensory circuit training | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• wooden train track• balls/throwing & catching equipment of all appropriate sizes/shapes/weights• bean bags/targets/buckets/trugs• appropriate and accessible storage for fine & gross motor resources to support independence and engagement• easels and range of brushes/rolls of paper• well stocked outdoor/indoor kitchen play• accessible home corner with appropriate/real resources• climbing equipment appropriate for all ages and stages: ie babies pulling up• obstacle course equipment• tunnels• sports/dance/yoga coach sessions |
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Cognition and learning and characteristics of effective learning:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• cause and effect toys for all ages and stages in every room• accessible opportunities for reading/storytelling throughout the environment• accessible opportunities for mathematics throughout the environment• idea cards for activities with families• magnets/magnetic play | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• open ended resources for role play to encourage thinking, creativity and questioning• inclusive days out/visitors to provide breadth of experiences and build knowledge and understanding• 'surprise' items to inspire curiosity• games library for home use• nature scavenger hunt resources• open ended art activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sand/soil trays with accessible, appropriate and inspiring resources to initiate thoughtful interactions• water play
funnels/containers/tubes• furniture to create different play spaces• age/stage appropriate board games• an accessible range of TEACCH style activities• range of toys to engage in 'ready, steady, go' games |
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