**Smart Targets**

When a child needs something additional to, or different from, the majority of children it is important to have documentation in the form of a personalised individual plan (support plan) to ensure that a person-centred approach is adopted. This should form part of the graduated approach to improve outcomes and attainment for children with a special education need or disability (SEND), measure interventions and support parental engagement.

Solihull Early Years Team suggest the Early Years SEND Support Plan (SSP) <https://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2024/02/Solihull-EY-SEND-Support-Plan-BLANK-.docx> which can be used when creating individual plans. Within this document the ‘Plan’ for learning should be set as clear SMART targets. SMART targets are targets that are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound** whilst also being personal to the child. They should be set as small steps towards the child meeting their long-term outcomes and be used as part of a graduated approach to supporting children in consultation with parents and the child.

**Specific**

As part of the planning process, it is important to consider what specifically the child will be accomplishing by their target. The outcome should be broken down into a small ‘next step’ that is personal to the child. Good support resources to use when planning targets are Solihull’s ‘[Graduated Approach](https://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2024/04/EY-Graduated-Approach-Revised-Edition-2024.pdf)’ document and the ‘[Solihull Early Years SEND Assessment Toolkit](https://www.solgrid.org.uk/eyc/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2024/08/EY-SEND-ASSESSMENT-TOOLKIT-2024-Printable.pdf)’. It is important that clear language is used when setting targets. They should describe exactly what the child will be able do to be successful.

These are some words that are often used in targets that are unclear and therefore not specific:

• Understand

• Listen

• Know

• Enjoy

As these words are not specific, they are open to interpretation and cannot be measured. For example, how would we know that a child has understood a concept or has enjoyed a story that has been read to them?

Instead use words that are clear and specific such as:

• Name

• Point to

• Look towards

• Reach towards

• Construct

• Crawl

• Walk

• Run

• Catch

• Find

• Match

• Read

• Recall

• Retell

• Give

• Count

• Label

• Repeat

**Measurable**

To show that children are making progress practitioners must identify that targets have been achieved. Therefore, when setting a target there must be a measurable factor to clearly show during times of review whether the target has been successful. Often the level of success is stated by how many times the child responds successfully out of the number of times they have practised, so the target may include a frequency measure to decide if the target has been successful during the review period. For example, if the target is for Mae to catch a large ball from a distance of two metres the target might be changed to ‘Mae will catch a large ball 3 out of 5 times, thrown to her from a distance of 2 metres’.

**Achievable**

It is important that targets are achievable, and it is possible that the child will be able to reach the target by a given date. Considering this will help in deciding whether the next step is suitable within the given time or in fact a future aim.

**Realistic**

Targets must be developmentally appropriate for the child and therefore a genuine next step for them.

**Time bound**

SMART targets are always bound to a date in which the target will reviewed to assess progress.

It is important to ensure that targets are used when planning for children and not aims. An aim is a long-term goal whereas a target is a statement of what the child can achieve within a given time. For example, if the aim for Clive is to know the names of colours, the target might be for ‘Clive to point to a red wooden block when asked by his keyworker, when presented with 2 red wooden bricks and a yellow wooden brick on 3 out of 5 occasions’.

**Key considerations when setting SMART targets:**

* How many targets will be set?
* Is the target one that can be ‘seen, heard, counted or measured’?
* How often does the target activity need to be carried out?
* What tools/materials/resources do you use to support you to develop these?
* What progress do you hope to see as a result of the action taken?
* How have you reflected the child's voice?
* How will you show the child they are successful? E.g. praise, reward, special activity
* How will you record progress?
* When will the target be reviewed?
* Consider how this approach can be carried out at home?
* How have you involved parents?

Examples of targets that are not **SMART**:

Ben will make a choice.

David will enjoy playing with his friends.

Henry will communicate when he wants more.

Alice will know 2D shapes.

Mark will respond to an adult.

Jason will join in for a short activity.

Laura’s vocabulary will improve.

Examples of target that is SMART:

x’s namewill (describe what the child will do) on how many occasions.

Arlo will request more by using the sign ‘more’, when his key worker blows bubbles to him during 1:1 time, on 2 out of 5 occasions.

Using this simple format will help you ensure your targets are SMART. It is important that clear language is used when setting targets. They should describe exactly what the child will be able do to be successful.

Below are some examples of SMART targets, organised into the four broad areas of need. This is not an exhaustive list of SMART targets as there is an infinite number of targets that could be used as they should be personal to the child. The examples are to give ideas and starting points to writing appropriate targets for the children you work with.

**Communication & Language**

# Receptive language:

* x will respond to sounds by turning to look for it on 3 out of 5 occasions in a quiet environment.
* x will respond to their name by turning to look at speaker on 3 out of 5 occasions in a quiet environment.
* x will respond to their name 3 out of 5 times of being called.
* x will respond to simple one-word instruction of sit in context on 3 out of 4 occasions.
* x will follow simple instruction such as get your coat or give me the ball in context when the object is visible on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will follow simple instructions delivered to the whole class in context such as line up or sit on the carpet on 3 out of 4 occasions.
* x will respond appropriately to simple ‘where is’ questions by finding the object when it is visible on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will respond by naming objects in response to ‘what is it’ questions on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will respond to simple ‘why’ questions when given two alternatives on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will ask questions using ‘why’ about the world around them on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will begin to ask and answer ‘how’ questions when exploring how things work on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x stops what they are doing when they are told no/stop, and shown a visual card, on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will follow a two-step familiar instruction, e.g. get your coat and go outside, with a visual prompt (First and Then board) on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will follow a two-step familiar instruction, e.g. get your coat and go outside, without a visual prompt, on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will follow simple 2 step instruction such as ‘Put the balls in the box’, when directed to a small group of children on 3 out of 5 occasions.

# Expressive language:

* x will demonstrate likes and dislikes through body language and facial expressions to a familiar adult on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use eye contact/point/reach to ask for more when playing with a familiar adult on a one-to-one basis with a motivating game on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use gesture or vocalisation to ask for more when playing with a familiar adult on a one-to-one basis with a motivating game on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use the Makaton sign for more to ask for more when playing with a familiar adult on a one-to-one basis with a motivating game on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will pull an adult by the hand to something they want on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use eye pointing to choose between two offered objects on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will point to/reach for a preferred object when offered two alternatives on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will make a choice from two snacks using visual communication cards shown by an adult on 3 out of 5 times.
* x will choose an object or activity by pointing to a photograph or a symbol on a choice board, with 2 choices on, 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will join in with a motivating adult led activity, such as bubbles, by eye pointing/reaching out to indicate they want more on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will say a word to make a choice between two objects, when an adult has named both, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will label objects on 3 out of 5 occasions once an adult has modelled the language.
* x will point to objects/pictures/symbols to communicate what they want, (eg, a toy, book, drink, toilet etc.) with adult support on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will ask for an object they want using one word when it’s a familiar object on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use clear 3 to 4 word phrases surrounding needs/wants, with adult prompts on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will join in with the last few words of a familiar rhyme or song, as part of a small group 60% of the time.
* x will use phrases of more than two words when talking to an adult about something they can see or want to show.
* x will respond to ‘What’s that?’ questions with a plausible answer on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will point to their choice of snack, when shown a choice of two snacks by his key worker in a distraction free environment on 3 out of 5 times occasions.
* x will request more by using the sign ‘more’, when his key worker blows bubbles to him during 1:1 time on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will begin to ask and answer how questions when exploring how things work on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will join in with a familiar rhyme/song, with adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x can give plausible answers ‘Blank Level’ 2 questions beginning with ‘what’ and ‘how’ when describing pictures or objects on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Speech/sounds:**

* x can match a sound they hear to a picture, such as animal noises to photos of animals on 3 out of 5 times.

**Social Interaction**

**Initiating interactions:**

* x will smile at a familiar adult, 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will copy an adult’s facial expression (e.g. sticking out tongue) on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will respond to their name by turning to look at the speaker on 3 out of 5 occasions, in a quiet environment.
* x will look towards an adult who calls their name on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will vocalise or give eye contact to attract familiar adults’ attention, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will seek attention from an adult by reaching out/touching/vocalising on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will show anticipation during a simple game of ‘boo!’ by pausing or looking towards the adult on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will initiate a connection with their key person/familiar adult using gestures/words, 3 out of 5 times without being prompted.
* x will share joint attention with their key adult on a motivating activity for up to 1 minute on 3 out 5 occasions per session.
* x will use gestures such as waving or tapping a familiar adult’s arm to gain their attention, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use a name of their key worker to get their attention on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will engage in an intensive interaction session for 2 minutes, with a key familiar adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will independently copy others’ games, as a way of joining play, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will make suggestions about a game or activity as a way to join in play on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will bring object to show people as a way to initiate interactions on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will ask questions to initiate an interaction on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Turn taking:**

* x will respond to an adult who initiates an interaction, by smiling pulling a face or vocalising on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use vocalisation, eye pointing or movement to indicate they want more of an interaction they enjoy, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will pause to wait for an adults turn in simple interaction games, such as ‘boo!’, showing anticipation on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will take turns vocalising or doing simple actions when playing one to one with an adult on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will turn take with adults prompts on a one to one during familiar simple games on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will turn take on a one to one with an adult, without a prompt, during simple familiar game on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will share an item through ‘trading/swapping’ with an adult, for 2 minutes, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* With adult support, child will share an item through ‘trading/swapping’ with another child, for 2 minutes, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will turn take with an adult during a familiar simple game, when prompted by an adult – saying my turn, your turn, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will roll a ball back and forth with an adult on 3 out of 5 occasions daily.
* x will take part in a sharing activity with another child, with the support of a familiar adult on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will successfully take a turn in a shared activity with one other child 2 out of 3 times each week.
* x will be able to take turns with one other peer once a day in a structured turn-taking game with adult support for up to 3 minutes.
* x will wait their turn in small group of children, with adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will wait their turn in small group, without adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* With adult support, child will initiate simple cooperative play with another child, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will initiate simple cooperative play, e.g. running, to another child, on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Playing alongside others:**

* x is aware of other children around them and will watch them play on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will tolerate an adult playing next to/alongside them, if they each have their own set of resources, for 1 minute on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will play cooperatively with an adult, using shared resources, for 2 minutes, on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will tolerate anther child playing next to/alongside them, if they both have their own resources, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will look towards a peer playing alongside them on 3 out 5 occasions daily.
* x will play alongside a group of other children if they each have their own resources on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will play with one other child cooperating with the same game i.e. building a tower together, when supported by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will independently play with one other child cooperating with the same game i.e. building a tower together, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will adapt their play by sharing resources to include another child with adult prompting on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will play in small group sharing resources on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Physical and motor co-ordination skills**

**Gross motor:**

* x will roll from their front to back/back to front, when encouraged by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will cruise/walk, whilst holding one hand of the adult, for 2 minutes on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will stand up from the floor/chair without support on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will correct their w-sit position to a straight leg sit/side sit, when prompted by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will kick a large ball, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will catch a large ball, when it is rolled towards them along the floor, 3/5 tries.
* x will participate in OT exercises for 5 minutes, when supported 1:1 by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Fine motor:**

* x will make marks on paper with a crayon, when placed in their hand, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will build a tower of 4 bricks on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will pick up small objects, e.g. rice, with a pincer grip, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will copy simple patterns using a paintbrush and water on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will thread up to five beads onto a rigid lace on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will put a six piece puzzle together, without adult help, 2/3 tries.

**Self-help and Independence**

**Independence:**

* x will cooperate with nappy changing/dressing on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will push their arms/legs into clothing, when prompted by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will take off their own coat, with adult prompting, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will indicate when they have soiled their nappy, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will enter the toilet area, when supported by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will sit on the toilet, when supported by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will indicate they need the toilet by words/pointing to symbol, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* With the support of an adult, x will use the toilet, flush and wash their hands on 2 out of 3 occasions daily.
* x will open their mouth for the spoon, when an adult feeds them, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will feed themselves finger foods on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will wash their hands, with adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will wash their hands independently, when an adult reminds them of the routine, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will scoop food using a spoon, and feed themselves, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will drink from a cup with a spout at least twice per meal time.
* x will drink from a flexi-cup, when an adult supports them to hold it up to her mouth, at every snack time.
* x will hold a cup and drink from it at snack and lunch times independently every day.
* x will drink from an open cup using two hands, with minimal spillage, on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Sensory Processing**

**Sensory avoiding:**

* x will tolerate sand on their hand for 3 seconds, before asking for it to be washed off, on 4 out of 5 occasions.
* x will keep ear defenders on for 1 minute on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will sign stop to indicate they are finding noise overwhelming and need a break, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will actively explore dry sensory activities for 5 minutes, with adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will go to their designated quiet area, when prompted by the adult, 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will choose to use their quiet tent when they are overwhelmed, rather than running outside, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will tolerate keeping their shoes on during outside play, for 10 minutes, on 4 out of 5 occasions.

**Sensory seeking:**

* x will accept redirection to chew’lry, from jumper sleeve/toy/biting, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will complete 5 minutes of sensory circuits, when supported by an adult, 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Routines/flexibility**

* x will respond to visual prompts, at key times of the day (ie nappy at nappy time, plate at dinner time, etc) with adult prompts on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will follow a one-step instruction during a transition period, with adult support, 3 out of 5 times per session.
* x will follow the snack time routine, with adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will follow the lunch time routine, with adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will independently hang up their coat, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will follow the Now & Next/First & Then board with support from an adult to move on to the next activity on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will stop an activity at a directed time indicated by a timer/visual cue, with the support of an adult on 3 out of 5 times.

**Cognition and Learning**

# Attention and Focus:

* x will look in the direction of or use their periphery vision in response to a familiar adult talking to them on a one-to-one basis for a few seconds on 3 out of 4 occasions.
* x will look towards an adult who calls their name on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will show anticipation during a simple game of ‘boo!’ by pausing or looking towards an adult on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will maintain focus on an activity they chose for up to a minute on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will maintain focus on a motivating activity for up to 5 minutes, with adult support, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x can maintain attention at a highly engaging, motivating activity for at least (30 seconds, 1 minute, 2 minutes, 5 minutes) on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x maintains joint attention with a familiar adult for up to (30 seconds, 1 minute, 2 minutes, 5 minutes) when engaged in an activity of their choice, at least once per session
* x will maintain focus on an adult directed task for a minute with adult support on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will maintain focus on an adult directed task for a minute without adult support on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will maintain focus on an adult chosen task for up to 5 minutes on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will maintain focus in a small group session, with an adult talking, for up to 3 minutes on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will copy the action movement for rhymes/songs such as ‘round and round’ & ‘The Wheels on the Bus’, when an adult models the action on 4 out of 5 times.
* x will respond to one question about the story shared at group time on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will maintain focus on an activity they chose for over 5 minutes on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will persevere at a task they find difficult, for 3 minutes, with adult support and reassurance, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will persevere with a task they find difficult, for 3 minutes, without adult support on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Sorting/matching:**

* x will recognise familiar people on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will recognise their own possessions i.e., coat, shoes etc on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will be able to find the same object from a choice of two with adult support on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will complete a simple shape sorter through experimentation on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will sort two objects, on one simple concept ,when all other variables are the same e.g. red or green teddies, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will match simple pictures on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will sort by more than on concept i.e., colour and size on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will indicate the big and little object on request from a choice of two objects, on 4 out of 5 occasions.
* x will sort by more abstract concepts, such as farm or zoo animals, on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Sequencing:**

* x will show anticipation of favourite activities on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will be able to say or point to what is happening next in the lunchtime routine, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will say what will happen next in a familiar story on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will sequence three things from a familiar story on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will put a six piece puzzle together, without adult help, 2/3 tries.

**Play**

**Early Play skills:**

* x will explore objects by bringing them to their mouths on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will visually explore objects they hold in their hands on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will watch and show interest in things happening around them on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will point to object or activity of interest on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will explore messy play activities with their hands on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will engage in independent self-led play for 5 minutes on 4 out of 5 occasions.
* x will explore objects by bringing them to their mouths on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will visually explore objects they hold in their hands on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will watch and show interest in things happening around them on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will point to object or activity of interest on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will explore messy play activities with their hands on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will demonstrate they understand object permeance by looking for an object hidden on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will repeat the same action over and over, and enjoy the same reaction each time, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will show interest in and explore a variety of different toys on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will show a preference for some activities or toys over others on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Developing play skills:**

* x will demonstrate they understand cause and effect i.e., know if they press a button a sound will happen, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will begin to experiment with cause and effect trying different actions to see what will happen on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will use simple real objects for their purpose in play i.e., put spoon to mouth or use hairbrush on hair on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will play with small world or transport toys by putting them in appropriate places i.e., train on a track or dolls in the house.
* Supported by an adult, x will select ‘Duplo’ bricks and place them on the board on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x can copy simple play routines with adult support i.e., feeding the baby or putting doll to bed on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will play simple imaginative play routines they have learnt independently on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will extend imaginative play in to new and different scenarios e.g., baby is naughty and does not want to go to bed or food is making baby sick etc on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will talk about imaginative situations telling stories about what is happening in their play on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will be able to make simple predictions about what will happen next when playing with familiar resources on 3 out of 5 occasions.

**Emotional Development**

**Regulating emotions:**

* x stops what they are doing when they are told no/stop, and shown a visual card, on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x stops what they are doing when they are told ‘stop’, and shown a visual sign such as Makaton, on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* When upset, child will calm after 2 minutes when the adult provides a distracting activity, 3 out of 5 times.
* When upset, x will access their quiet area to calm, when directed and supported by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* When upset, x will access their quiet area to calm, when prompted by an adult, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* When upset, x will independently access their quiet area to calm, on 3 out of 5 occasions.
* x will tolerate a delay of 1 minute, before their general needs are met e.g. wanting a toy on 2 out of 5 occasions.
* x will accept comfort/support from an adult, when emotionally dysregulated, on 3 out of 5 occasions.