

Information and Strategies for Children with MLD

Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)

What to look for:

- General developmental delay.
- They do not find learning easy, which affects their self-esteem and may result in poor behaviour.
- They have short attention spans.
- The pupil may present difficulties with basic literacy and numeracy and their reasoning and coordination skills could be underdeveloped.
- They often have poor working memory.
- The pupil may struggle with some social skills when interacting with their peers.
- A pupil with MLD often have an IQ between 50 and 70.

Strategies:

- Use differentiated worksheets, word banks, writing frames and ICT software.
- Allow extra time to complete tasks and tests.
- Improve self-esteem by building on pupils' strengths and interests.
- Break down new tasks into bitesize chunks with plenty of opportunities for reinforcement.
- Make sure that every lesson's learning objectives are realistic and allow some success to be experienced.
- Check understanding, building supportive relationships and using appropriate praise, encouragement and questioning to ensure participation.
- Keep tasks short, build in variety and repeat information in different ways.
- Establish what pupils already knows about a topic and be prepared to go back to the point where their knowledge is secure.
- Show the pupil what to do as well as talking about it, giving concrete examples.
- Rather than having pupils read to the whole class, encourage paired reading so that pupils read to each other.
- Mark 'target' spellings only. Focus on big picture success, rather than word or spelling accuracy and encourage 'thinking', not just 'reading' accuracy - in the right context, 'butiful' is much better than 'nice'
- Often, some pupils feel overwhelmed by having to write essay style answers to show their knowledge. Alternative methods of assessment could be:
 1. Mind maps (including pictures if necessary) showing who, what, why, where, when and how;
 2. Bullet points of the main ideas;
 3. Storyboards including pictures and captions;
 4. Tables showing what, why, where, when and how.