

# Valuing SEND Guidance for Whole School and Settings Approach

Valuing SEND Toolkit  
November 2021

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# Purpose of Guidance

- This guidance is aimed at **schools and settings**, such as **class teachers and SENDcos**, wishing to develop their understanding of Valuing SEND, and its use to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- These following material is designed to support schools and settings to implement Valuing SEND and can be used as a resource bank for SENCOs in delivering their own training in school.
- Specifically, the guidance will focus on:
  - **Context** of Lincolnshire's High Needs Strategy
  - **How** Valuing SEND developed, **where** it came from and with **whom**;
  - **What** Valuing SEND is, including aims and objectives;
  - **Why** Valuing SEND is beneficial – the positive impact in Lincolnshire
  - **Where** to find further information
  - **Example** group exercises to support further training in schools



A Valuing SEND Toolkit has been developed providing more in-depth on Valuing SEND and can be found on the [Lincolnshire SEND Local Offer](#).

# One Minute Summary

1. Valuing SEND was developed by three county councils in collaboration with IMPOWER in 2019.
2. **The shared ambition for Valuing SEND is to:**
  - Improve children's long-term outcomes and inclusion
  - Improve the experience of families and professionals across the system.
3. **Valuing SEND aims to achieve this by:**
  - Developing a single, rounded picture of the needs of children and the support they need to succeed and prosper
  - Using this as the foundation for planning and commissioning of support, monitoring of progress and evaluation of support at a child and cohort level, and to enable earlier and more co-ordinated intervention.
4. People in Lincolnshire who trialled the approach felt it would help to promote more inclusive and outcomes-focussed decisions about support.
5. The Valuing SEND approach - including the new digital Valuing SEND tool - is being rolled out across Lincolnshire as part of a wider transformation programme which aims to improve outcomes and inclusion for children and young people.
6. A Valuing SEND Toolkit has been developed to support those using Valuing SEND – a directory of resources can be found in this guidance document and is accessed through the [Lincolnshire Local Offer](#).

# Introduction to Valuing SEND

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# Valuing SEND Journey so far

Valuing SEND was developed by IMPOWER alongside three local authorities in 2019 **in response to challenges** in the SEND system.



Valuing SEND was introduced in Lincolnshire in September 2020 **to improve children's long-term outcomes.**



Lincolnshire SENDCOs **triated** the approach **and contributed to its development.**



Increasingly, schools and settings are using Valuing SEND and report that the radar summary of needs **made forward planning more efficient.** One setting described Valuing SEND as **“their one stop shop for SEND”.**

- ✓ Valuing SEND provides a common language for SEND across services
- ✓ School and setting feedback is consistently strong
- ✓ Valuing SEND has become an integral part of the Annual Reviews
- ✓ Valuing SEND is integral to Lincolnshire transitions protocol, supporting children to transition from special school to mainstream where they demonstrate a needs profile that might be suitable

# Vision for Valuing SEND

Valuing SEND was developed by three county councils in collaboration with IMPOWER in 2019.

The shared **ambition for Valuing SEND** is to:

- Improve children's **long-term outcomes and inclusion**
- **Improve the experience** of families and professionals across the system

**Valuing SEND** aims to achieve this by:

- **Developing a single, rounded picture of the needs of children** and the support they need to succeed and prosper within and outside of their education - from birth to adulthood (across early years, primary, secondary, special and post 16 education).
- **Using this as the foundation for planning and commissioning of support**, monitoring of progress and evaluation of support at a child and cohort level, and to enable earlier and more co-ordinated intervention.

“It is straightforward and captures all the information in a succinct, meaningful way. It’s enabled us to sit down with parents and say ‘look, we’ve tried this, but not this, so we’re not ready to apply for an EHC plan yet.’”

*Lincolnshire head teacher*

# Aims and Objectives

## Valuing SEND will:

Provide a single, holistic view of every child / young person's special educational needs from 0-25



Establish a common codification and rating framework to communicate the type and level of need and show changes



Support education and home settings to evaluate readiness to meet need



Allow progress to be monitored through changes in rating – at child-level, school-level and county level



Ensure that planning for independence in adulthood is prioritised alongside other educational support needs



## Enabling:

Clarity and consistency for professionals, parents and children / young people as they grow up and move between settings, anchored in needs

Earlier and more consistent identification of need, to prevent escalation and improve outcomes

Professionals and families are able to work better together to plan actions and support, keep the child or young person at the centre

Professionals and families can see the impact of action, and commissioning agencies can evidence success or understand where there are gaps

Preparation for adulthood is embedded in work with children and young people from an earlier age – shifting the focus from provision to independence



# Valuing SEND is on a New Digital Platform

- The Valuing SEND tool has migrated to a new user-friendly digital platform which previously functioned in Microsoft Excel. The digital tool also has printable capability.
- A series of Valuing SEND training resources have been developed to support those completing the Valuing SEND digital tool for children and young people additional needs, and include:

Guidance on  
accessing the  
Valuing SEND  
Online

Step-by-step  
guide to  
completing the  
Valuing SEND  
Digital Tool

Instructional  
videos on  
completing the  
Valuing SEND  
Digital Tool

These resources can be found on the [Lincolnshire SEND Local Offer](#).

# Valuing SEND Tool at a glance

There are five sequential components to completing a Valuing SEND tool for a child or young person with additional needs using the new digital platform:



# Valuing SEND Tool at a glance

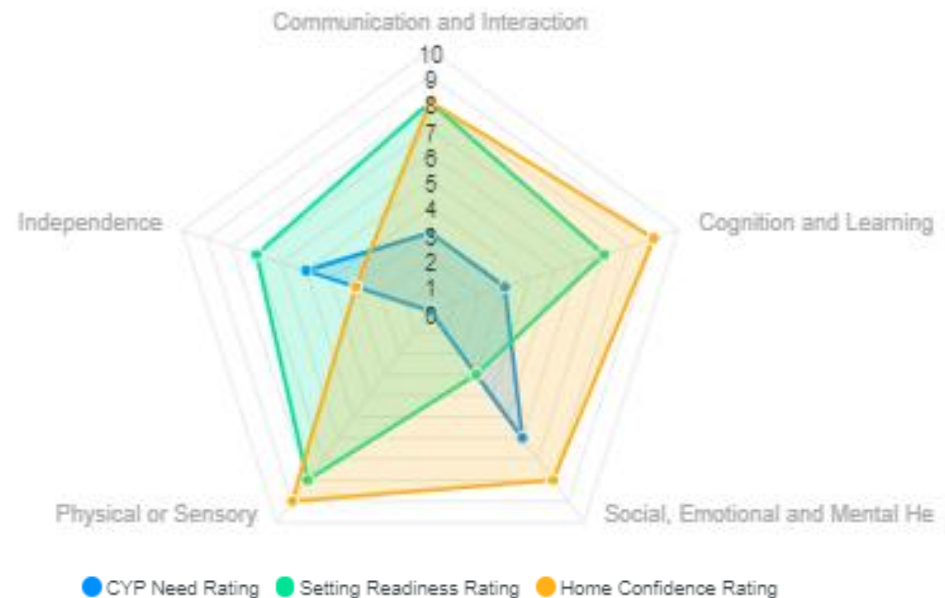
There are two versions of the tool available- one for children aged under 5, and another for children aged 5-25. Both tools include the following tabs:

Introduction	Sets out the tool's aims and how to use it.
Summary	Pulls through key elements from the following sheets to provide an overview. Most text is pre-populated, but this is where you enter the child/ young person's details.
Comms & Interaction needs	The needs sheets ask you to rate the child/ young person's level of need using a set of needs descriptors.
Cognition & Learning needs	
SEMH needs	
Physical or Sensory needs	
Independence needs	
Setting readiness	
Home confidence rating	Evaluate your setting's readiness to meet this child/ young person's level of need using support prompts.
Support planning	A parent, carer or family representative evaluates their confidence in meeting the child/young person's level of need using support prompts
	Use support prompts as a starting point to plan support around needs to work towards identified outcomes.

# Valuing SEND Ratings Chart

The tool produces an 'at a glance' ratings chart which maps:

- A **child or young person's needs** across five key domains – cognition and learning, communication and interaction, sensory and physical, social emotional and mental health and independence
- The **readiness of the educational setting** to meet needs across the five domains
- The **confidence of the home environment** to meet needs across the five domains



# Valuing SEND is a Whole School Approach

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# There is a whole school responsibility for SEND (Code of Practice 2015)

The Code of Practice outlines the responsibilities that schools must follow to best support children and young people.

‘Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN.

Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.

Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement.

This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers’ understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.’

# Valuing SEND is making a difference in schools



The unique approach of VSEND enables schools to analyse the match between their whole school provision and children's needs and to identify and address any gaps.



It is an opportunity to reset the range of interventions in settings and schools and to ensure a common language and whole school approach is in place.



The approach will underpin transition across phases and between mainstream and specialist placements.

# What does success look like For Valuing SEND?

Schools and settings are using Valuing SEND to plan their provision, and both map and meet the needs of all their SEND pupils. Schools and settings may wish to measure their success in implementing Valuing SEND based on the following statements:

Whole setting tool - understood and used by all professionals

Establishes common language when describing levels of need across all areas

Promotes collaboration between staff

Supports the child throughout the transition process

Identifies behaviour associated with learning needs

Active tracking and monitoring from SEND support to EHCPs/ARs

Becomes familiar to parents and assists discussions

Identifies gaps and areas for further development and training

Informs skills required when recruiting staff

Provides feedback on provision and celebrates best practice

Demonstrates SEND provision for Governors, SEN Annual Report

Clarifies requests for support and referrals to specialist services

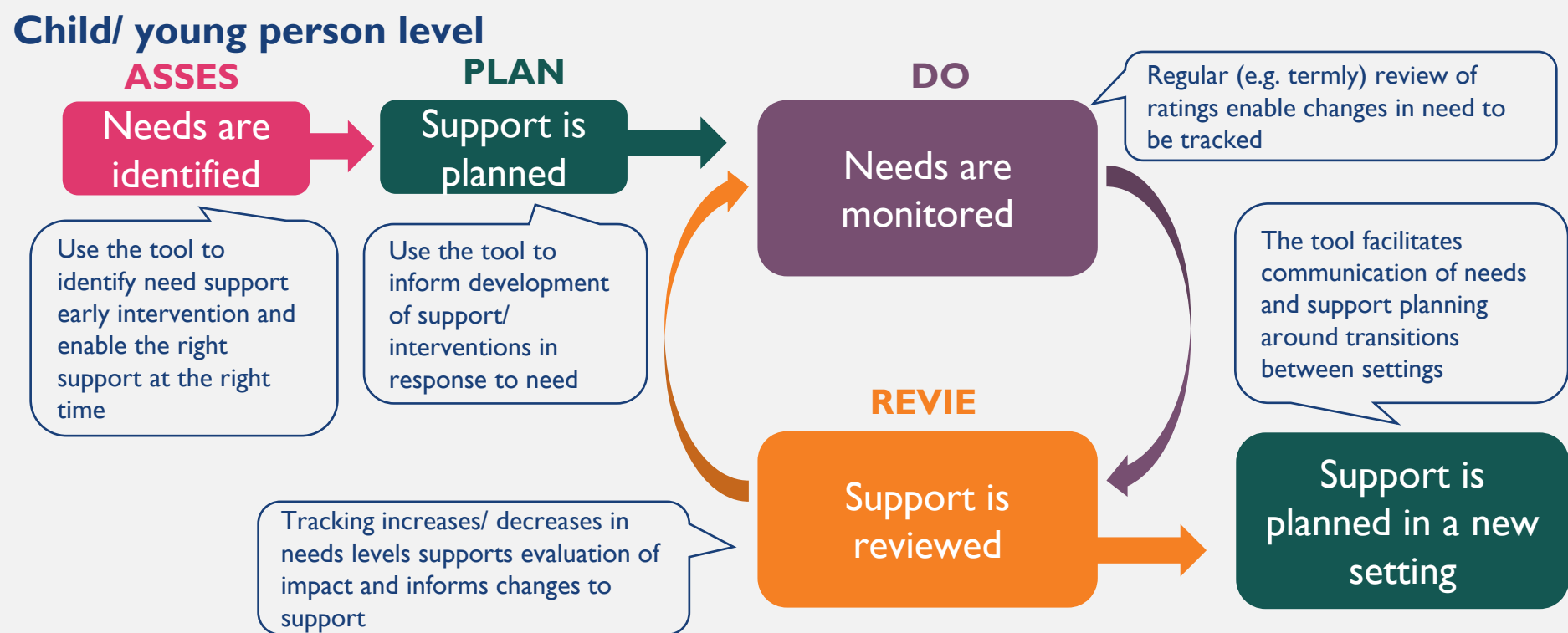
**Supports the strategic and practical role of the SENDCO**



# How and when to use Valuing SEND

“Valuing SEND is simple and strategic. Its scale and statements provide information without jargon and this is crucial for getting parents on board. It really brings clarity to the graduated approach for staff and parents. I’ve only been using it since the pandemic and it’s still been brilliant, when we are able to be face to face with families I imagine the benefits will be even better still.”

- **Lincolnshire SENDco**



# Using Valuing SEND at setting level



- Completion of the Valuing SEND tool for all children/ young people with additional needs will provide a much richer picture of the types of needs present – and therefore of the types of support required.
- Settings should regularly (at least annually) review the needs profiles across the whole setting, within year groups and within classes, to understand the complexity of needs mixes as well as the prevalence of different needs types.
- This information should be used to inform how the setting is planning staff development for the coming year as well as the types of interventions commissioned and where investment is directed.

# Benefits and Feedback

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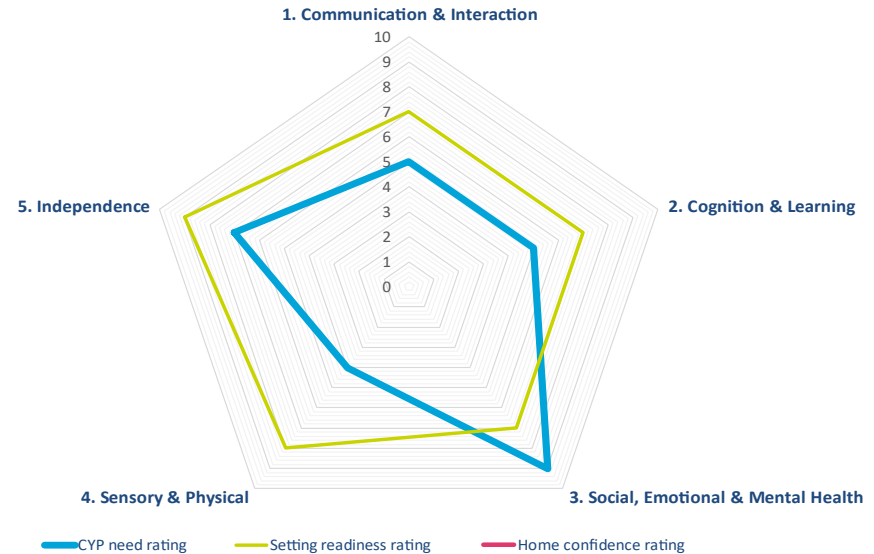
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# Using Valuing SEND to improve outcomes



Tom has a diagnosis of ADHD. He displays highly sexualised language and behaviour. Tom's outbursts include swearing and inappropriate touching of peers. Mother reports similar behaviour at home.

**The SENDCo had significant concerns that Tom is at risk of permanent exclusion.**



## Changing the conversation: Valuing SEND and the strengths-based approach

- The review demonstrated that the school's interventions are meeting most of Tom's needs.
- Tom's behaviour is impacting negatively on his progress
- Tom's behaviour is disrupting the learning of his peers
- School has reported to professionals that Tom is at risk of permanent exclusion
- Tom's parent is struggling to support him with diet and behaviour at home
- School is providing Art Therapy.
- The BOSS team is involved with this case regarding Tom's behaviour.

Valuing SEND demonstrates clearly that Tom's needs are being met largely by interventions in his mainstream school

### Actions:

- Tom's sexualised behaviour to be further assessed through re referral to CAMHS
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities between services
- Parents to be supported re on line safety at home
- Review of impact of ADHD medication on his weight and behaviour
- Referral to school nursing re weight management
- The amended EHCP to focus on Tom's SEMH needs through a co-ordinated response from specialist services in school and at home

# Benefits for schools and settings

- Promotes collaboration between staff, establishing common language when describing levels of need across all areas
- Supports the strategic role of the SENDCO
- Active tracking and monitoring of progress during SEN Support and from EHCPs to ARs
- Supports the work of the SENCO when carrying out learning walks and observations and training
- Supports the child throughout the transition process
- Identifies behaviour associated with learning needs
- Becomes familiar to parents and assists discussions with professionals
- Identifies gaps and areas for further development and training, informing training needs.
- Provides active feedback on provision and opportunity to celebrate best practice
- Demonstrates setting SEND provision for Governors, SEN Annual Report, website etc.
- Clarifies requests to AskSALL and referrals to specialist services
- Informs skills required when recruiting staff



# Feedback from schools and settings in Lincolnshire

“[We are] going to do all tracking from the VSEND tool in future. We’re finding it hard to track the SEND children on Tapestry even though using the SEND statements. Will do once a term to see if improved in any area.”

**Early Years SENDco**

“[VSEND has] been a real success at all SEND Reviews so far this term. Makes level of need and provision clear. Great guidance scaffold for staff to plan appropriate support. Gives parents a clear overview of need and why we put certain provision in place. A great tool to justify why or why not an EHC would be appropriate.”

**Mainstream school head teacher**

”[It] reminds you to use visual prompts, useful guidance, reinforces for the other members of staff in the team.”

**Early years SENDco**

“Really good tool and have asked four other members of staff to access the training.”

**Early years SENDco**

“I actually did [a Valuing SEND tool] for the first time last week as a professional, with the school and the parents and we all found the descriptors quite helpful under each of the 5 sections and particularly the visual diagram once completed. We then followed this with a call to askSAL where they signposted one extra service to us that we hadn't incorporated which was also useful. So first experience was a positive one!”

**Parent Carer Forum ‘week of SEND’ participant**

“I like the graph as its easy for everyone to see and understand. Parental part and next steps is good.”

**Early years SENDco**

“I have completed the forms for each child with an EHCP I now need to meet with the individual teachers to share the information and to check they agree with my scaling.”

**Mainstream SENDco**

# Valuing SEND: Setting Readiness

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# The importance of 'Setting Readiness' in the Valuing SEND approach

SENDCos complete whole school/ setting readiness for each domain

All Staff work together or separately to agree setting readiness ratings for whole school, not individual child.

Schools review profile of skills and experience of school staff in order to deliver agreed level of interventions

Schools update SEND Development and Training plans

SENDCos support school staff to use interventions through training, modelling, coaching etc

SENDCos review setting readiness annually or when adding interventions/new skills

Schools share information with parents, Governors and services and include in annual SEND Report etc.

Services will receive information of schools' setting readiness and interventions used to support CYP

Referrals to services will demonstrate interventions used to meet individual needs

School/setting now ready to plan and support individual children and young people



# Completing the Setting Readiness section for your school/setting

This section explains how to complete the Setting Readiness section for your school or setting on Valuing SEND Online.

1. Start by selecting 'Setting Readiness' on the left-hand menu.
2. Please check the following information before you get started:
  - a) If you work with more than one school/setting, ensure that you select the right education provision using the drop-down menu under 'School';
  - b) and ensure that you select the correct version of the Valuing SEND tool – the 'Early Years' version for children under 5 years old, or the '5-25' version.

**IMPOWER** Signed in as: Rachel Angarano LOGOUT

Home  
Users  
**Setting Readiness**  
Children and Young People  
VSEND Tool  
Reports

School:  **2a.**

Look at the types of support set out in each rating level. Which best fits the support you are able to provide, in relation to this child/ young person's needs?

Once you have found a set of support prompts that broadly correspond to the type of support you are able to provide, consider if you are closer to the prompts outlined in the category above or below, and select your rating number accordingly.

**2b.**

# Completing the Setting Readiness section for your school/setting

3. You are now ready to complete the Setting Readiness section - this should be completed in discussion with senior staff members, including the school SENDCO and anyone else you feel needs to be involved.
4. The Valuing SEND tool has five domains of need; you must provide a setting readiness rating for each one. Click on each heading to access the support prompts for five need domains, starting with 'Communication and Interaction'.

The screenshot displays the 'Valuing SEND' tool interface for 'EARLY YEARS' (5-25). A vertical red arrow on the left is labeled 'Domains of Need'. The interface lists five domains, each with a rating given:

Domain	Rating Given
1. <b>Communication &amp; Interaction</b> <small>Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.</small>	6
2. <b>Cognition &amp; Learning</b> <small>Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.</small>	5
3. <b>Social, Emotional &amp; Mental Health</b> <small>Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.</small>	6
4. <b>Physical or Sensory</b> <small>Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.</small>	5
5. <b>Independence</b> <small>Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.</small>	4

A red box highlights the 'Communication & Interaction' domain, and a red '4.' is placed to its right.

# Completing the Setting Readiness section for your school/setting

5. Review the support prompts under 'Communication and Interaction'; these are rated from 1-2 (lowest level of Setting Readiness) to 9-10 (highest level of Setting Readiness).
6. Decide the setting readiness rating that most closely corresponds to the type of support that your school or setting is able to provide.
7. Enter your final Setting Readiness rating using the drop-down box.
8. Click 'Save Changes' and repeat this step in the same way for the other domains of need.

**7.** **Communication & Interaction** Rating Given: 6

Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.

Enter C & I Rating:

6

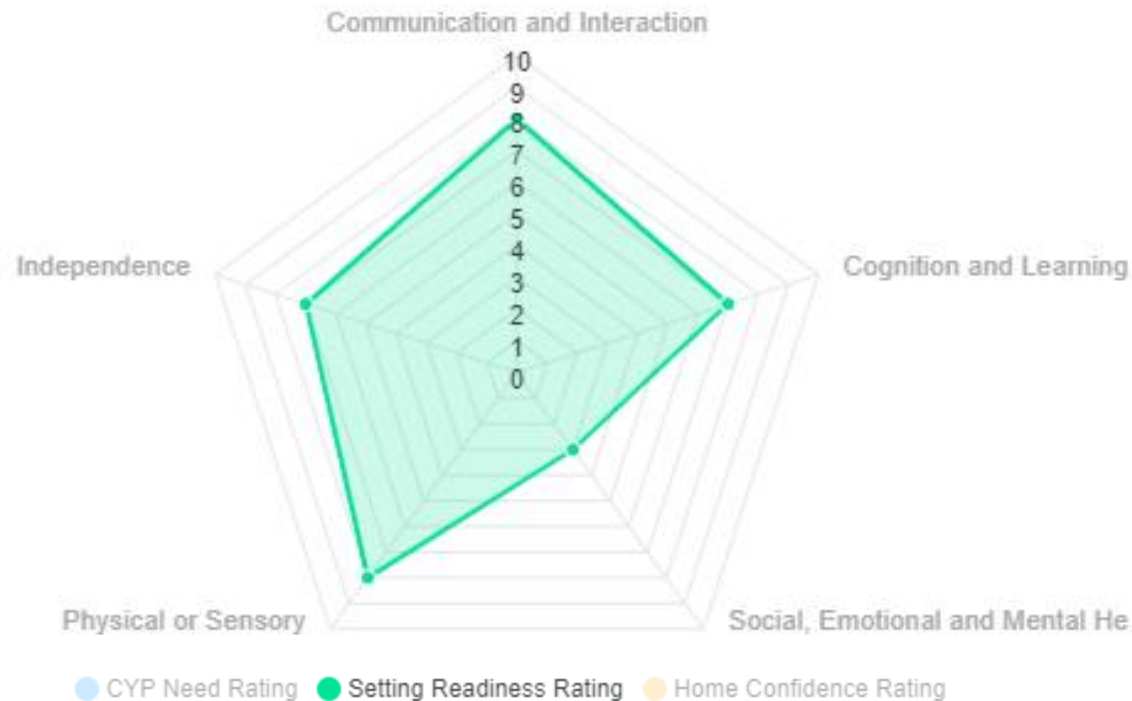
**5.**

Description	Level
Ensure parents are aware of what is being done to support their child/ young person, and how they can support/ reinforce interventions. Quality First Teaching within a broad and balanced curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flexible grouping arrangements.</li><li>• Some differentiation of activities, materials &amp; questioning</li><li>• Awareness that a CYP may need more time to complete tasks and that equality of access may mean that they need to do some things differently.</li><li>• Environmental considerations are made to meet the needs of all pupils.</li><li>• Consideration of c&amp;yp's learning style, such as the need for visual/ kinesthetic preferences.</li><li>• An understanding that the communication need may have a wider impact on a child's social and emotional wellbeing despite the apparent lack of obvious impairment.</li></ul> Strategies to identify whether CYP is vulnerable to bullying or has low self-esteem. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awareness of implications of SLCN on basic skills, i.e. numeracy, reading, writing, following instructions.</li><li>• Consider seeking specialist teacher advice and guidance</li></ul>	

**Important.** Setting Readiness provides a **whole school view** of the type of support that you can provide children and young people with additional needs. Once agreed, setting readiness ratings will remain the same for each child or young person until your setting changes its interventions or level of skill. It is recommended that setting readiness ratings are reviewed annually.

# Completing the Setting Readiness section for your school/setting

Completed setting readiness is visually represented in the form of a simple ratings chart:



**What can this tell us?** The setting indicates higher levels of setting readiness across most domains of need including 'Communication and Interaction' and 'Physical or Sensory'. However, the setting is less able to meet 'Social, Emotional, and Mental Health' needs which clearly highlights the specific areas of focus and development for the setting.

# Valuing SEND: Needs Profile

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# Completing the Needs Profiling Section

This section explains how to complete the Needs Profiling section for a child or young person at your setting on Valuing SEND Online.

1. Start by selecting 'VSEND tool' on the left hand menu. You will be directed to an introduction page reminding you of the aims of the tool and how to use it.
2. Use the 'Summary' tab to check the following before you get started:
  - a) that you have selected the correct child or young people that you wish to complete a needs profile for;
  - b) and that you are using the correct version of the Valuing SEND tool – the 'Early Years' version for children under 5 years old, or the '5-25' version.

2.

The screenshot shows the 'Summary' tab of the Valuing SEND Online interface. The left-hand menu is visible, with 'VSEND Tool' highlighted by a red box and labeled '1.'. The main content area is titled 'Child or Young Persons Information' and contains the following fields:

- Child/Young Person Name:** Rachel Test (labeled '2a.') in a dropdown menu.
- Age:** 0 Years 2 Months
- Tool Version:** Early Years (labeled '2b.') in a dropdown menu.
- Gender:** Female
- Setting:** Test School
- Does the child have an EHCP?:** No
- Is the child receiving SEN support?:** No

At the bottom, it says 'Completed By: Rachel Angarano' and there is an 'EXPORT INFORMATION' button.

# Completing the Needs Profiling Section

3. You are now ready to complete the needs profiling section - this should be completed in discussion with children or young people and their families and anyone else you feel needs to be involved.
4. Click the 'Needs Profiling' tab at the top. The aim of Needs Profiling is to use the Valuing SEND tool and, importantly, your professional judgement to enter a needs rating for each of the five domains of need, these are: Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning, Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Physical or Sensory; and Independence.
5. Click on each heading to access the descriptors for the five need domains, starting with 'Communication and Interaction'.

The screenshot shows the IMPOWER web application interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the IMPOWER logo on the left, the text "Signed in as: Rachel Angarano" in the center, and a "LOGOUT" button on the right. Below the header is a navigation menu with several tabs: "INTRODUCTION", "SUMMARY", "NEEDS PROFILING", "SETTING READINESS", "HOME CONFIDENCE", and "SUPPORT PLANNING". The "NEEDS PROFILING" tab is highlighted with a red box and a red "4." next to it. Below the navigation menu is a main content area with three numbered instructions: "1. Use the descriptors to determine the rating range that is appropriate for explaining the needs of the child/ young person in question (e.g. 3 - 4).", "2. Once you have selected the needs that apply to the child in question - by checking the boxes to the right of each need - a suggested scoring range will appear at the top of that section. Please use your professional judgement to determine your final score. You may decide the occurrence of one or two needs in a higher level are significant enough to warrant selecting a different range. Note: Not all of the descriptors in the rating range will apply to the child/ young person. Sometimes, descriptors in different rating ranges will apply. You must then determine where the majority of descriptors fall, and therefore which rating range is appropriate.", and "3. Once you have selected a range, you should consider whether the child/ young person is closer to the range below or the range above, and use this to determine whether the rating is the lower or higher of the two numbers in the range." Below the instructions is another navigation menu with five tabs: "COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION", "COGNITION AND LEARNING", "SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH", "PHYSICAL OR SENSORY", and "INDEPENDENCE". The "COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION" tab is highlighted with a red box and a red "5." next to it. On the left side of the interface, there is a vertical sidebar with a grey background containing the following menu items: "Home", "Users", "Setting Readiness", "Children and Young People", "VSEND Tool", and "Reports".

# Completing the Needs Profiling Section

6. Enter a 'Brief Outline of Needs' for the child of young person using the free text box. It is important to complete this section to assist others people (e.g. families and professionals) in understanding the specific needs that you have observed and how they are presenting.
7. Review all the descriptors and statements under each sub-section for 'Communication and Interaction' such as 'Understanding of Language'. The descriptors are rated from 1-2 (the lowest level of need) to 9-10 (the highest level of need).
8. Decide the 'Level' that most closely corresponds to the needs of the child or young person, and tick 'Yes' next to all the descriptors that apply.

Enter Rating:  Recommendation: 0

6. Brief Outline of Needs:  
Maximum of 2000 Characters

7. Understanding Of Language

Level	Description	Yes
0	None of the statements below apply	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-2	Child has difficulty following or understanding instructions and everyday language with visual references	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-4	Receptive language delay is more than 12 months.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5-6	Unable to join in with familiar rhymes and songs	<input type="checkbox"/>
7-8	Cannot understand or follow a simple instruction in context e.g. 'come for snack'	<input type="checkbox"/>
9-10	Severe communication difficulties, often presents as non-verbal	<input type="checkbox"/>

8.

SAVE CHANGES



# Completing the Needs Profiling Section

9. As you complete this exercise, the tool will automatically generate an overall range of need 'Recommendation' which is based on all the descriptors that you have selected.
10. Use your professional judgement to determine the final need rating for 'Communication and Interaction' using the 'Enter Rating' drop-down box at the top. E.g. If your need recommendation is a '3-4' to decide whether to enter a 3 or a 4 based on whether you think the child or young person is closer to the level of need above or below.
11. Enter the final need rating using the drop-down box.
12. Click 'Save Changes' and repeat this step in the same way for the other domains of need.

COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

COGNITION AND LEARNING

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

PHYSICAL OR SENSORY

INDEPENDENCE

11.

Enter Rating:

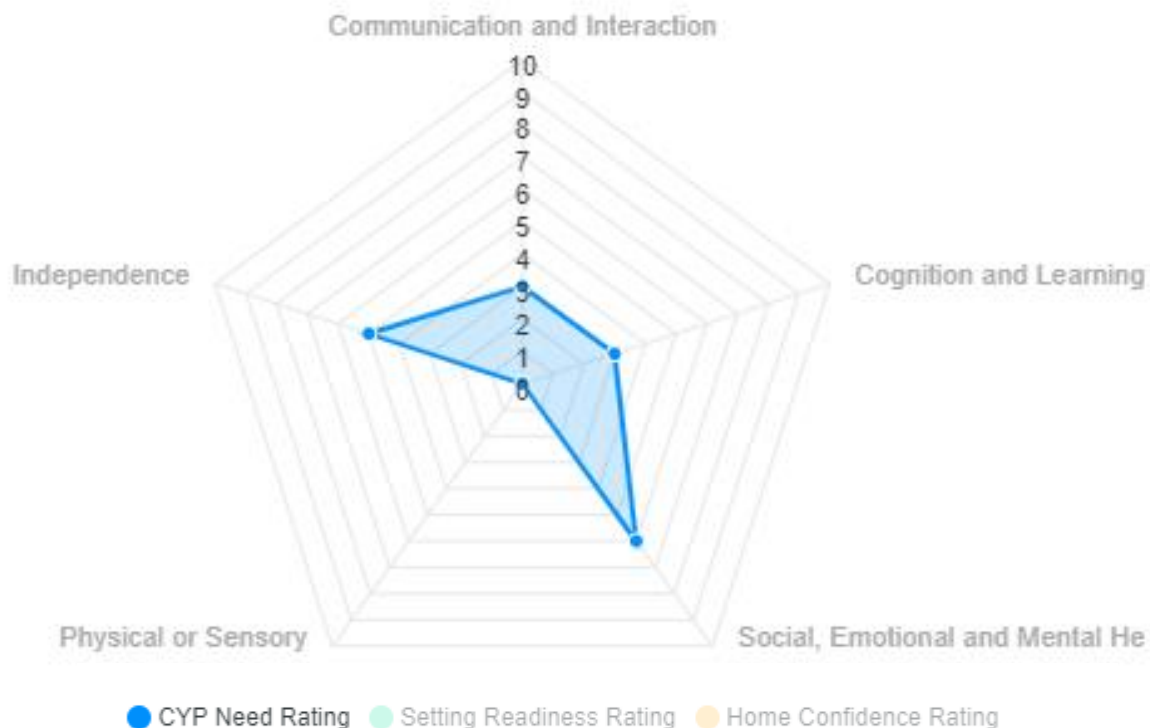
Recommendation: 3-4

9.

**Professional judgement.** You can choose to enter a rating that sits outside of the recommended rating range, e.g. you may decide that the occurrence of one or two needs in a higher level are significant enough to warrant selecting a different range. It is helpful to explain your reasoning in the 'Brief Outline of Needs' box for help others who review the child's profile.

# Completing the Needs Profiling Section

A completed child or young person's needs profile is visually represented in the form of a simple ratings chart:



**What can this tell us?** The child or young person has little to no 'Physical or Sensory' needs and lower levels of 'Communication and Interaction' and 'Cognition and Learning' needs. They have moderate 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health' and 'Independence' needs; this indicates that the child or young person may require greater levels of support in these specific areas.

# Valuing SEND: Home Confidence

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# VSEND | Home Confidence

- Valuing SEND also captures the confidence of parents/carers in meeting the needs of children/ young people with SEN at home across the 5 areas of need.
- Within the **'home setting prompts' document** are a number of ways that home settings can support children in each area of need – but this is not a science and should also reflect how parents/ carers are feeling.
- Consider the questions set out for each area of need and rate the home setting's confidence in supporting this level of need at home.
- **This should be completed alongside parents and carers and may need to be completed over time.**

# Completing the Home Confidence Section

This section explains how to complete the Home Confidence Section for a child or young person on Valuing SEND Online.

1. Start by selecting 'VSEND tool' on the left hand menu. You will be directed to an introduction page reminding you of the aims of the tool and how to use it.
2. Use the 'Summary' tab to check the following before you get started:
  - a) that you have selected the correct child or young people that you wish to complete Home Confidence for;
  - b) and that you are using the correct version of the Valuing SEND tool – the 'Early Years' version for children under 5 years old, or the '5-25' version.

1. VSEND Tool

2. SUMMARY

**Child or Young Persons Information**

Child/Young Person Name: **2a.** Rachel Test

Age: 0 Years 2 Months

Tool Version: **2b.** Early Years

Gender: Female

Setting: Test School

Does the child have an EHCP? No

Is the child receiving SEN support? No

Completed By: Rachel Angarano

EXPORT INFORMATION

# Completing the Home Confidence Section

3. You are now ready to populate the Home Confidence section – this should always be completed by a parent or carer on behalf of families and anyone else involved in supporting children’s needs at home. They may do this independently or through a collaborative discussion with the setting’s SENDCO or another professional.
4. Click the ‘Home Confidence’ tab at the top. The aim is for parents or carers to enter a rating for how confident they feel meeting the needs of their child across each of the five domains of need.
5. Click on each heading to access the support prompts for the five need domains, starting with ‘Communication and Interaction’.

INTRODUCTION SUMMARY NEEDS PROFILING SETTING READINESS **HOME CONFIDENCE** SUPPORT PLANNING

This form is completed by parents and carers on behalf of families and anyone else involved in supporting children's needs at home. It is completed by parents and carers assessing their own level of confidence in supporting needs across five areas of need. Each area of need is explained using the descriptions in Department of Education guidance for parents and carers. In completing this tool parents and carers should consider the questions set out for each area of need. Other general questions to consider are:

- How do you need to be supported to support your child?
- How are things at home? Has anything changed recently?
- What is your child like when they come home from school?

**5.**

1	<b>Communication &amp; Interaction Confidence</b> Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.	Rating Given: 0
2	<b>Cognition &amp; Learning Confidence</b> Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.	Rating Given: 0
3	<b>Social, Emotional &amp; Mental Health Confidence</b> Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.	Rating Given: 0
4	<b>Physical or Sensory Confidence</b> Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.	Rating Given: 0
5	<b>Independence Confidence</b> Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.	Rating Given: 0

# Completing the Home Confidence Section

- Parents or carers should review the support description for 'Communication and Interaction', considering the questions at the top of the page, these are:
  - how do you need to be supported to support your child?
  - how are things at home and has anything changed recently?
  - what is your child like when they come home from school?
- They should decide the Home Confidence rating that most closely corresponds to the type of support they feel able to provide at home. This is represented on a generic scale from 1 (lowest level of Home Confidence) to 10 (highest level of Home Confidence).
- Enter the final Home Confidence rating using the drop-down box.
- Click 'Save Changes' and repeat this step in the same way for the other domains of need.

**1 Communication & Interaction Confidence** Rating Given: 8

Please select the appropriate rating below to update the 'Rating Given'.

**8.** Enter C & I Rating:

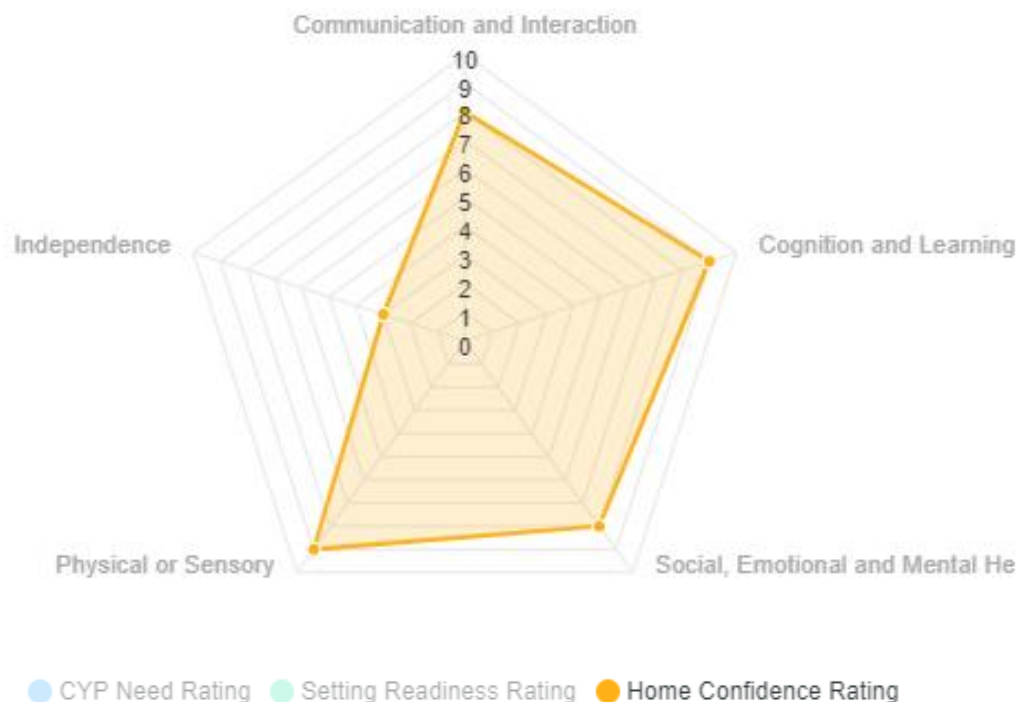
**6.** **Description**

Examples of parents and carers supporting children at home - to guide your answer:

- Use visual clues and reminders to help children follow routines
- Use pictures or photos of the children themselves doing the activities and to help them to make choices
- Slow down the rate of your speech, simplify your language and repeat new words and ideas often
- Make sure you leave gaps for them to fill in - to reduce the number of questions you ask and emphasise the important words in the sentence (the ones that carry the information)
- Use signing system used at your child's setting
- Break down instructions and wait until first is completed before next stage is introduced
- Play word and turn taking games
- Sing nursery rhymes and songs together
- Each day have a time when the noise level is low and distractions are kept to a minimum
- Get your child's attention when talking to them and encourage eye contact
- Praise good attention and listening
- When children are watching TV programme try to spend a few minutes talking with them about what happened, what they enjoyed, what might happen next time.

# Completing the Home Confidence Section

Completed Home Confidence is represented in the form of a ratings chart:



**What can this tell us?** The family provided very high ratings of home confidence across most domains of need, indicating they are largely confident meeting their child's needs at home. However, they feel much less confident in supporting their child with their independence needs; this presents a clear opportunity to further support the family in this specific area.



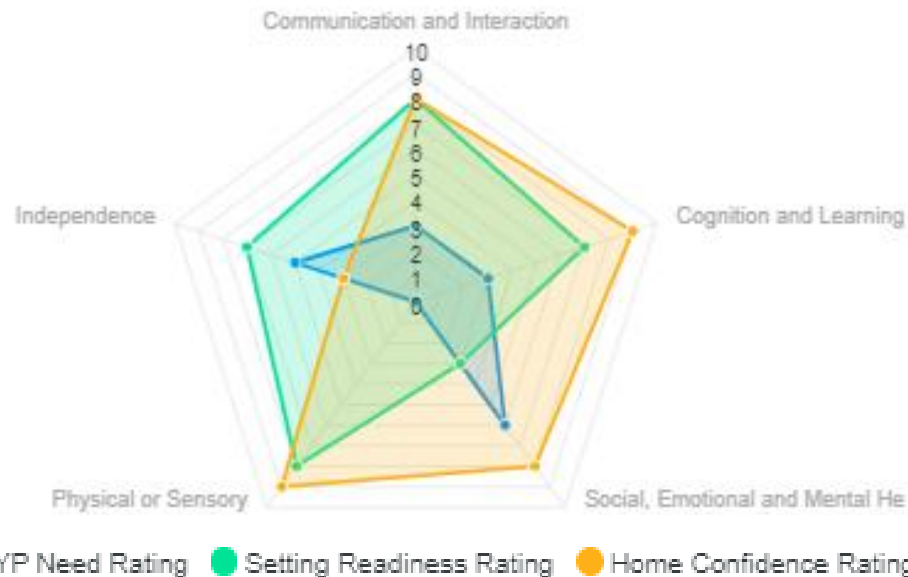
# Example of a completed Valuing SEND ratings chart

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# Example of a fully completed Valuing SEND ratings chart

Once you have completed the Setting Readiness, Needs Profiling and Home Confidence sections, this will produce a complete ratings chart and an overview in numerical format:



## Overview

Summary	CYP Need Rating	Setting Readiness Rating	Home Confidence Rating
Communication & Interaction	3	8	8
Cognition & Learning	3	7	9
Social, Emotional & Mental Health	6	3	8
Sensory & Physical	0	8	9
Independence	5	7	3

# Valuing SEND to help with Support Planning

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# VSEND | Support Planning

- The Valuing SEND tool can be used as a basis for planning support, to ensure that all professionals working with the child/ young person are centered on their needs and how these fit together to create a holistic needs profile.
- The tool includes a number of ‘support prompts’ from Lincolnshire Inclusion Toolkit for each level of need in each domain of need which ‘pop up’ in the support planning section based on the need descriptors selected. These are by no means an exhaustive list of the types of strategies, interventions and ways of working that you might use to work with a child/ young person with this type and level of need – but they should be a helpful starting point.
- Use the ‘Support planning’ tab to record the agreed outcomes that you and other professionals are working towards with the child/ young person and their family. Set out the support in place to make progress towards these outcomes, explain who is responsible for delivering these activities, and when you are all aiming for outcomes to be achieved.

# Supporting meaningful conversations with children, young people and families

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# Putting children/ young people and their families at the centre of personalised planning

The question prompts below can be used at different points in the process of identifying needs and working with children and young people. Step 1 questions form part of conversations when needs are first identified. Step 2 questions underpin planning for short-term support that will make an impact, while step 3 questions shift focus on to outcomes in adult life.

	Example questions
<b>Step 1</b>  <i>Needs first identified</i>	What can be done in the classroom/ within my setting, without external support? How does the family see the child/ young person's needs? How do they 'rate' needs levels? Are needs different in the home setting to the education setting? How can I help the parent(s) to help their child? How can I connect parent(s) to things that will help their daily lives– based on their assets, strengths and those of wider family and community? What do the family want to do? How can I help the family take control?
<b>Step 2</b>  <i>Planning to make a difference</i>	What needs to change in the short term to better enable this child/ young person to access education and work towards a fulfilling adult life? What offers do I have at my disposal to support the family? Where are the gaps in 'readiness', identified by Valuing SEND – and how can I draw on existing resources, other professionals and wider networks (e.g. SENDCo support networks) to address these gaps? How can I help the family to work on skills for independence, that will support your child in a fulfilling adult life?
<b>Step 3</b>  <i>Planning for the longer term</i>	What does a good life look like for this child or young person? How can you help children and families to use your assets and the support provided by professionals to achieve their aspirations? Who do you want to be involved in good support planning?

# Holding meaningful conversations

To have meaningful conversations with children, families and professionals about supporting children/ young people in a way that draws on strengths and positive assets within their networks, you should:

- Start with what's important to them and what they (individuals and families) are able to do well, and use active words to promote action
- Use positive language to reinforce assets and benefits, avoid deficit language e.g. struggle

Avoiding dependency generating words:

- × Need
- × Help
- × Care
- × Assessment
- × Limitation
- × Struggle
- × Services
- × Have to...

Using independence focused language:

- ✓ Independent / secure / well / safe
- ✓ Community / neighbourhood / local
- ✓ Support / assist
- ✓ Network / social network / family and friends
- ✓ Reinforce / maintain / sustain
- ✓ Develop / establish / progress / promote / expand
- ✓ Achieve / Reach / realise / follow through / attain
- ✓ Goal / intent / benefit / thrive / easier / simpler
- ✓ Cornerstone / foundation / underpin
- ✓ Ability / capability / strength / skill
- ✓ Able / ready / capable (help / aid)
- ✓ Know / understand / recognise
- ✓ Confident / sure / positive / self-sufficient / trust (entrust) / expect / assured

## Examples:

× What do you need? ...What services do you think you want?

✓ What's important to you? ...What do you think will help you achieve that? ...What will help you be able to continue to help yourself?

× Tell me what's wrong?

✓ Tell me what's happening? ...what's important at the moment?

# Importance of Strengths Based Approach

## GROWTH MINDSET & INCLUSION

@kluiens62



INSTEAD OF THINKING...  
(FIXED MINDSET)

- HE IS NOT READY FOR SCHOOL.
- WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH RESOURCES.
- SHE NEEDS TO BE PULLED OUT TO A SEPARATE SETTING.
- I NEED MORE EDUCATION ASSISTANT TIME.
- WE HAVE TRIED THIS STRATEGY BEFORE.
- I WASN'T TRAINED FOR THIS.



TRY THINKING...  
(GROWTH MINDSET)

- HOW CAN WE GET SCHOOL READY FOR HIM?
- WHAT CAN I DO WITH THE RESOURCES I HAVE?
- HOW CAN I MAKE SURE SHE HAS A SENSE OF BELONGING?
- WHAT CAN HE DO INDEPENDENTLY?
- DID ANY PART OF IT WORK?
- WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

WHEN A FLOWER DOESN'T BLOOM YOU FIX THE ENVIRONMENT  
IN WHICH IT GROWS, NOT THE FLOWER.

Alex Den Heijer



You can find resources on embedding Strengths Based Approach and Reflective Huddles into the use of Valuing SEND on the [Lincolnshire SEND Local Offer](#).



# Further Information and Support

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# Further Information

Should you require any further assistance, please contact us at:

## **SEND Advice Line for Lincolnshire (Ask SALL)**



Email - [asksall@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:asksall@lincolnshire.gov.uk)



Call - 01522 553199

# Appendix I – Training Resource Bank for SENDcos

Example group exercises to support further training in schools

# Activity | Interpreting the Valuing SEND Ratings Chart

In groups, you will be given a scenario. You have 15 minutes to consider the Valuing SEND ratings chart and answer the following:



- 1. What does it tell us about the setting's readiness to meet needs?**
- 2. What does it tell us about the child/young person's needs?**
- 3. What does it tell us about the family's confidence to meet needs at home?**
- 4. Based on these insights, what key next steps and actions would you suggest?**

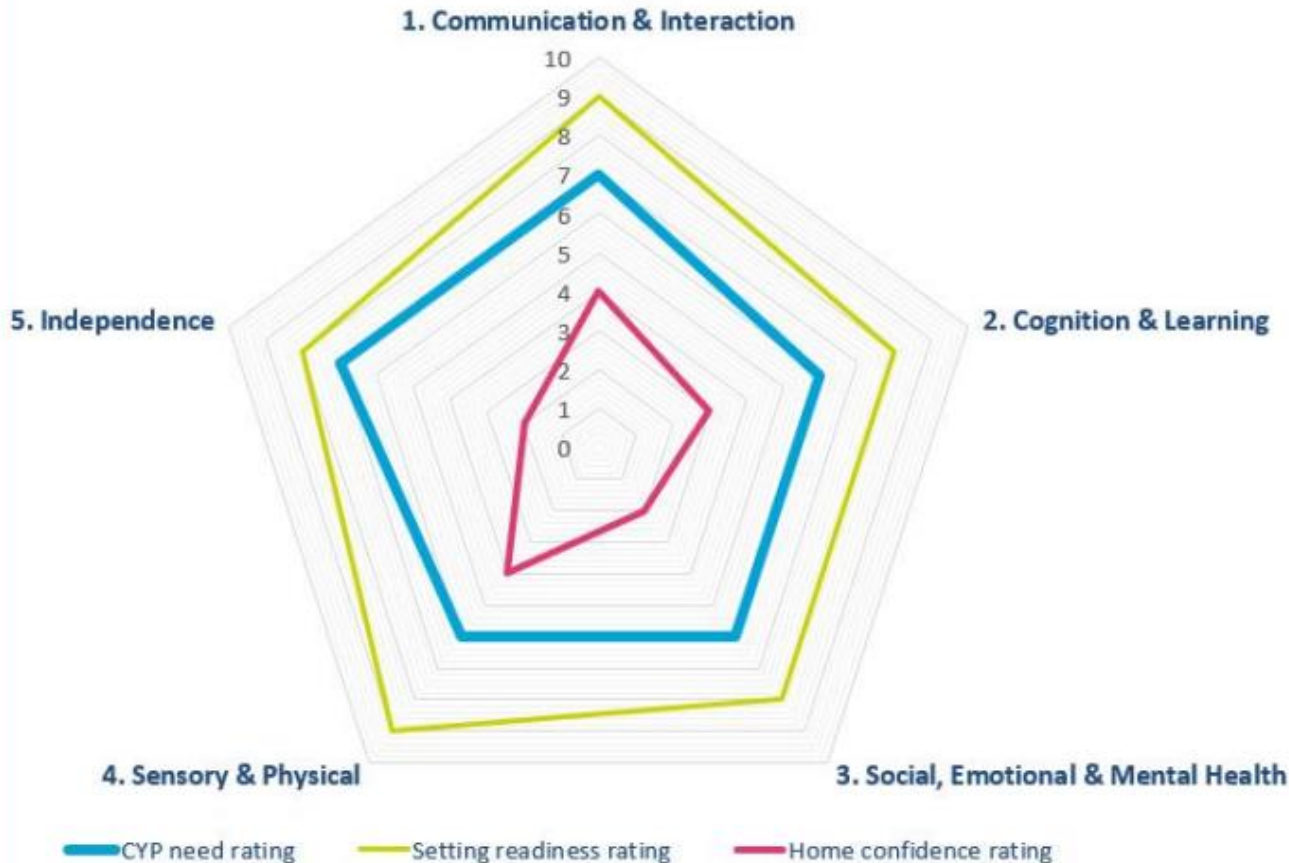


Each group will have a facilitator for the discussion.

Please nominate a spokesperson to feedback to the wider group afterwards.

# Example 1

Scenario 1: 'Ben' is in Year 6 at a mainstream school.

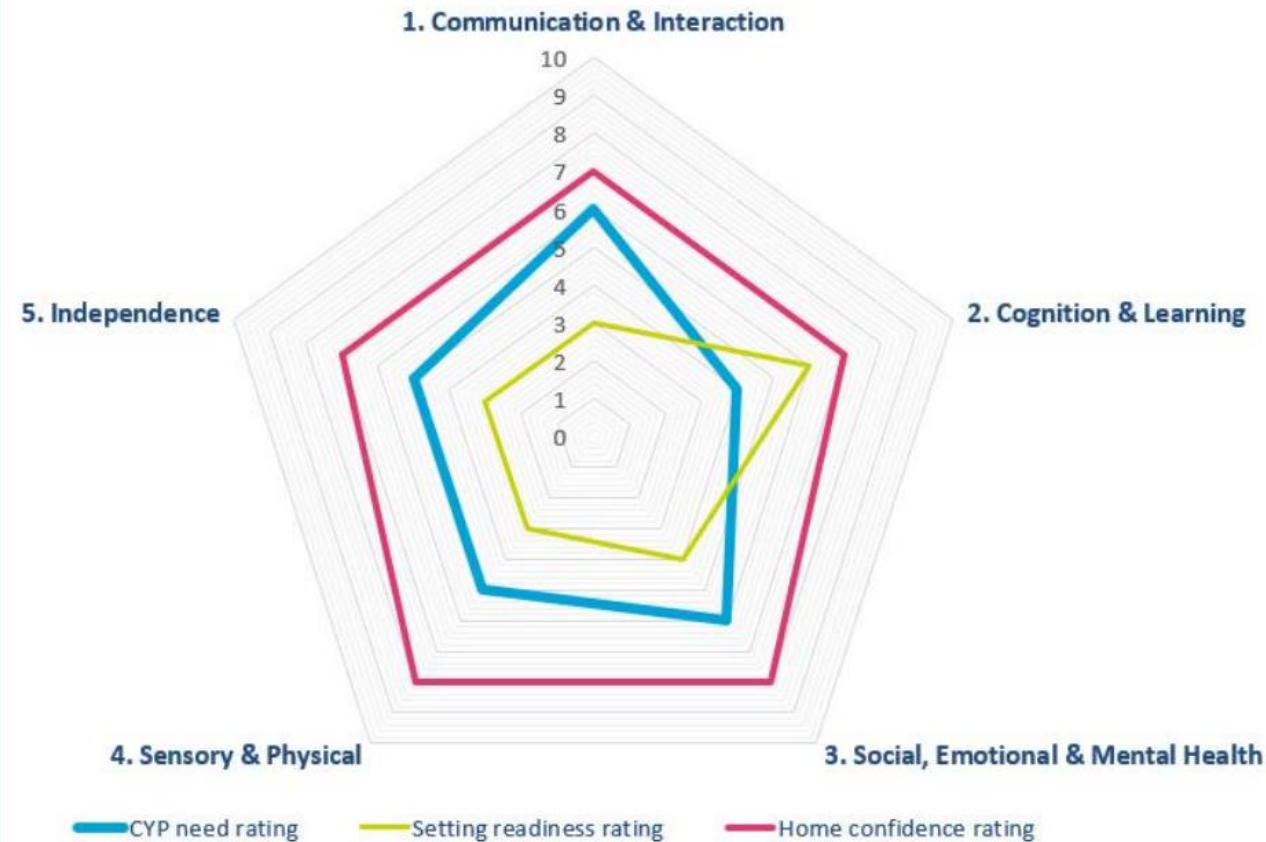


**In your group, consider:**

1. What does it tell us about the setting's readiness to meet needs?
2. What does it tell us about the child/young person's needs?
3. What does it tell us about the family's confidence to meet needs at home?
4. Based on these insights, what key next steps or actions would you suggest?

# Example 2

Scenario 2: 'Alice' is at the start of Year 9 at a mainstream school.

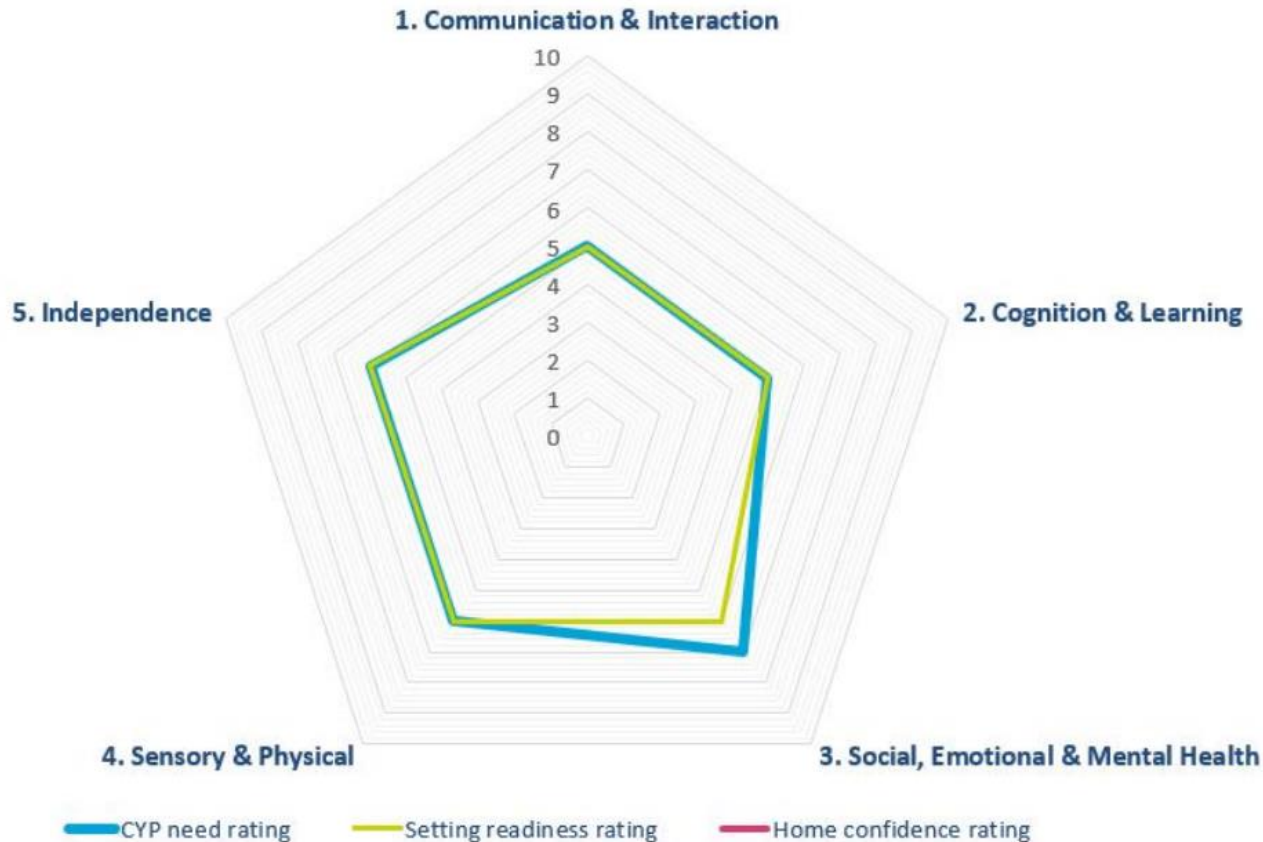


**In your groups, please consider:**

1. What does it tell us about the setting's readiness to meet needs?
2. What does it tell us about the child/young person's needs?
3. What does it tell us about the family's confidence to meet needs at home?
4. Based on these insights, what key next steps or actions would you suggest?

# Example 3

Scenario 3: 'Oscar' is in Early Years mainstream provision.



**In your groups, please consider:**

1. What does it tell us about the setting's readiness to meet needs?
2. What does it tell us about the child/young person's needs?
3. What does it tell us about the family's confidence to meet needs at home?
4. Based on these insights, what key next steps or actions would you suggest?

*\*Home confidence not completed due to parent lack of engagement: new to talking about SEND*



# Activity | Setting Readiness

In pairs, choose a domain in setting readiness. You have 15 minutes to discuss and explore:



- 1. Which interventions best describe the provision in your school/ setting?**
- 2. How confident are you to deliver these interventions?**
- 3. Choose three interventions you would like further support and training to deliver.**



Be ready to feed back to the group.

Are there any similarities? Are there any opportunities to share learning across the group?



# Appendix 2 – Directory for the Valuing SEND Toolkit

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# Directory for the Valuing SEND Toolkit

The Valuing SEND Toolkit is a suite of training materials to support the use of Valuing SEND. Some resources are intended for universal use (i.e. settings, families, champions or wider services), while others are tailored to specific audiences and purposes:

## Universal

## CYP & Families

## Schools/Settings

## Champions

Instructional videos on completing the Digital Valuing SEND Tool

Step-by-step guide to completing the Digital Valuing SEND Tool

Parent/Carer Guidance on Home Confidence

Guidance for Whole School/Settings on Valuing SEND

Training materials for SENDCOs to deliver in schools

Guidance for Valuing SEND Champions

Valuing SEND Summary Guidance Pack

Guide on accessing Valuing SEND Online

Quick Read High Needs Strategy

Valuing SEND summary for school governors

Graduated Approach Briefing on Valuing SEND Video

'Train the Trainer' Materials

Strengths Based Conversations and Establishing Reflective huddles

High Needs Strategy and Inclusion Toolkit

Quick Read Parent/Carer Transitions Protocol

Valuing SEND checklist for headteachers and senior managers

Valuing SEND Champions Training Video

List of Valuing SEND champions (as of Nov 21)

Many of these resources will be available on the [Lincolnshire SEND Local Offer](#).