

Definitions of difficulties

Severe learning difficulty and disability (SLD)

<http://www.education.gov.uk/a0013104/glossary-of-special-educational-needs-sen-terminology>

Pupils with SLDs have significant intellectual or cognitive impairments. This has a major effect on their ability to participate in the school curriculum without support. They may also have difficulties in mobility and coordination, communication and perception and the acquisition of self-help skills. Pupils with SLDs will need support in all areas of the curriculum. They may also require teaching of self-help, independence and social skills. Some pupils may use sign and symbols but most will be able to hold simple conversations. Their attainments may be within the upper P scale range (P4-P8) for much of their school careers (that is below level 1 of the National Curriculum).

Profound and multiple learning difficulty (PMLD)

<http://www.education.gov.uk/a0013104/glossary-of-special-educational-needs-sen-terminology>

Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties have complex learning needs. In addition to very severe learning difficulties, pupils have other significant difficulties such as physical disabilities, sensory impairment or a severe medical condition. Pupils require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and also for their personal care. They are likely to need sensory stimulation and a curriculum broken down into very small steps. Some pupils communicate by gesture, eye pointing or symbols, others by very simple language. Their attainments are likely to remain in the early P-scale range (P1-P4) throughout their school careers (that is below level 1 of the National Curriculum).

Complex learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD)

<http://complexld.ssatrust.org.uk/project-information.html>

Children and young people with complex learning difficulties and disabilities have conditions that co-exist. These conditions overlap and interlock creating a complex profile. The co-occurring and compounding nature of complex learning difficulties requires a personalised learning pathway that recognises children and young people's unique and changing learning patterns. Children and young people with CLDD present with a range of issues and combination of layered needs – e.g. mental health, relationships, behavioural, physical, medical, sensory, communication and cognitive. They need informed specific support and strategies which may include transdisciplinary input to engage effectively in the learning process and to participate actively in classroom activities and the wider community. Their attainments may be inconsistent, presenting an atypical or uneven profile. In the school setting, learners may be working at any educational level, including the National Curriculum and P scales.