Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties

Information and communication technology

QCA Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QCA wishes to make its publications widely accessible. Please contact us if you have any specific accessibility requirements.
# Contents

**Introduction** 2  
What is the purpose of this guidance? 2  
Who are the pupils? 2  
Who is the guidance for? 2  
What is in the guidance? 3  
What are the subject materials? 3  

**Responding to pupils’ needs when teaching ICT** 4  
The importance of ICT to pupils with learning difficulties 4  
Modifying the ICT programmes of study 4  
Improving access to the ICT curriculum 7  

Opportunities and activities at key stage 1 9  
Opportunities and activities at key stage 2 13  
Opportunities and activities at key stage 3 16  
Opportunities and activities at key stage 4 19  
Performance descriptions 22
Introduction

What is the purpose of this guidance?

This guidance supports the planning, development and implementation of the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties. It draws on effective practice across a range of schools and can be used in mainstream and special primary and secondary schools, specialised units and independent schools. It also provides support to the range of services that work with these schools.

The guidance can be used with the school’s own material, the national curriculum and the frameworks for teaching literacy and mathematics to:

• confirm the statutory entitlement to learning for all pupils and build on the principles of inclusion set out in the national curriculum
• help schools develop an inclusive curriculum by:
  – setting suitable learning challenges
  – responding to pupils’ diverse learning needs
  – including all learners by overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment
• provide a stimulus to revisit and revise existing schemes of work or a basis to develop new ones.

Who are the pupils?

The guidance relates to all pupils aged between five and 16 who have learning difficulties, regardless of factors such as their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background or gender, or the extent of their other difficulties. This includes pupils who are unlikely to achieve above level 2 at key stage 4. (These pupils are usually described as having severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties.) This also includes pupils with learning difficulties who may be working at age-related expectations in some subjects but are well below this in others. (These pupils, along with those with other significant difficulties, are often described as having moderate learning difficulties.)

Who is the guidance for?

The guidance supports the work of a range of adults who are concerned with meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. This includes class teachers, subject coordinators, special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), senior managers, teaching assistants, parents,
carers, governors, therapists, local authority and advisory support services, and professionals from health, social services and the voluntary sector. Throughout these materials, the term ‘staff’ is used to refer to all those concerned with the education of these pupils.

What is in the guidance?
The guidance contains:

• support on developing and planning the curriculum
• support on developing skills across the curriculum
• subject materials on planning, teaching and assessing each national curriculum subject; religious education (RE); and personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. These include descriptions of pupils’ attainment showing progress up to level 1 of the national curriculum, which can be used to recognise attainment and structure teaching.

What are the subject materials?
The subject materials support staff in planning appropriate learning opportunities. The materials do not represent a separate curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties or an alternative to the national curriculum. They demonstrate a process for developing access to the national curriculum and support staff in developing their own curriculum to respond to the needs of their pupils at each key stage. The materials offer one approach to meeting this challenge. Schools may already have effective structures or may wish to adopt different approaches.

The materials identify learning opportunities relevant to each subject. They demonstrate appropriate learning across the scope of the national curriculum from the earliest levels. They are intended to increase schools’ confidence in their capacity to provide appropriate access to the national curriculum.

A common framework for these materials has been used. In each subject, appropriate learning for pupils with diverse needs at each key stage has been identified. Those aspects of the programmes of study that may create particular difficulties are also discussed, as well as aspects that may be unsuitable at a particular key stage. The suggested activities can be used to develop ideas for relevant, accessible and challenging experiences in curriculum plans.
Responding to pupils’ needs when teaching ICT

The importance of ICT to pupils with learning difficulties

Developing capability in ICT helps all pupils become part of the rapidly changing world in which technology is an essential part. ICT helps pupils take greater responsibility for their own learning, plan and organise their ideas, and produce and present work of a high standard. It can also encourage creativity.

In particular, ICT offers pupils with learning difficulties opportunities to:

• work with increasing independence in communication, language and literacy
• work on skills across the curriculum with increased confidence and understanding
• develop and enhance their work in all areas of the curriculum
• become fully involved in physical and practical activities using tools, such as switch technology which allows control of the immediate environment and aids mobility
• work on joint projects with others
• present work of a high standard
• access a wide range of ideas, information and cultures.

In response to these opportunities, pupils can make progress in ICT by:

• experiencing the results of personal actions
• applying technological knowledge and understanding to everyday life
• investigating the familiar and (later) the broader technological environment
• working on smaller and then larger tasks.

Modifying the ICT programmes of study

The statutory inclusion statement of the national curriculum requires staff to modify the programmes of study to give all pupils relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage. Staff should teach knowledge, skills and understanding in ways that match and challenge their pupils’ abilities.
Staff can modify the ICT programmes of study for pupils with learning difficulties by:

- choosing material from earlier key stages
- maintaining, consolidating and reinforcing previous learning, as well as introducing new knowledge, skills and understanding
- focusing on one aspect, or a limited number of aspects, in depth or in outline, of the age-related programmes of study
- including experiences that let pupils at early stages of learning gain knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT in the context of everyday activities
- including experiences that encourage pupils at early stages of learning to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of ICT in the context of other curriculum areas and everyday activities
- letting pupils experience ICT at first hand, for example, by personal exploration of simple communication and technological aids
- exploring planned personal contacts in the school and the wider community.

Finding things out

For all pupils, information that helps them make sense of their world comes from a variety of sources. Teaching this aspect across key stages can help pupils to:

- gather information from a wide variety of sources, for example, books, photographs, objects of reference, television, video recordings, radio, audio recordings, electronic aids
- access information in a variety of ways, for example, by using switches, touch pads and screens, electronically operated toys
- store data in different forms, for example, a computer, print, charts, collections of texts, photographs and artefacts
- use cameras to collect and view images
- use a recording device to record and play back sounds
- understand how to retrieve data
- understand that an object of reference can signal the next activity or everyday activities.
Developing ideas and making things happen

For all pupils, developing ideas and making things happen starts by being aware of how they themselves can affect the environment. This includes how they can use sounds and images to communicate ideas and make choices about what happens to them in their world. Teaching this aspect across key stages can help pupils to:

- combine pictures, sounds, symbols and words to communicate meaning in a variety of contexts, for example, a mode of communication to make a choice about an activity in class, or to show a like or a dislike
- use a variety of equipment to control a range of situations, for example, use switches, turn a television on and off independently, operate an electric wheelchair
- explore, test and develop the information required for problem solving, for example, to manipulate objects, consistently respond to stimuli, anticipate the outcome of an action.

Exchanging and sharing information

Exchanging and sharing information starts with early interaction and communication skills, an awareness that actions, sounds, text, symbols and pictures can convey meaning, and that such information can be shared. Pupils with learning difficulties may need to be taught that they exist in a world that is bigger than they are and that other people also receive information. Teaching this aspect across key stages can help pupils to:

- communicate information in a variety of forms using sound, text and graphics for a range of audiences, for example, use a speech output device to choose an activity, draw a picture of their house using a simple graphics package, write a simple sentence using an overlay package, or an on screen word bank
- produce and present work that is of a high quality and understood by others, for example, work that can be displayed on a classroom wall or a story that can be read by others
- share and exchange information in a variety of forms, for example, gesture, speech output devices, videos, recording devices, letters, telephones and email.
Reviewing, modifying and evaluating work as it progresses

For pupils with learning difficulties, reviewing, modifying and evaluating work starts by recognising that their work is their own and communicating what they like and dislike about it. Teaching this aspect across key stages can help pupils to:

- review what they have achieved as a step towards developing ideas
- repeat a piece of work and demonstrate an ability to make changes as a result of their own, or others’ observations
- identify the use of ICT in their own lives, for example, understand that traffic lights control pedestrians and the traffic, know that the controls on a television or microwave can be used to change what happens, understand that a joystick helps to control a wheelchair.

Improving access to the ICT curriculum

Staff can make ICT more accessible by:

- using materials and resources that pupils can experience and understand through touch, sight and sound
- using a range of activities which offer widely varying experiences, for example, simulated environments, fibre-optics, basic technological devices, direct contact with others
- using ICT software appropriate to the learning needs and age of pupils
- using specialist aids, equipment and software
- using equipment adapted to meet individual needs.

Staff teaching ICT can support learning by:

- presenting activities in a structured, incremental manner, for example, specifically teaching pupils the functions of a mouse
- selecting tasks in contexts familiar to pupils
- choosing age-appropriate software
- balancing support from adults or pupils’ peers with space and freedom for pupils to experiment for themselves
- taking into account the pace at which pupils work and the physical effort required
- balancing consistency, familiarity and challenge according to pupils’ needs
- ensuring that pupils reinforce their emerging ICT skills in work across the curriculum.
ICT can help pupils to develop their broader communication and literacy skills through encouraging interaction with other pupils as well as staff. With some pupils, communication and literacy skills will develop through using a range of visual and written materials, for example, symbols, symbol text and large print, as well as ICT and other technological aids. With other pupils, these skills will develop through using alternative and augmentative communication, for example, body movements, eye gaze, facial expressions and gestures including pointing and signing.
Opportunities and activities at key stage 1

Much of the ICT programme of study at key stage 1 is relevant to pupils with learning difficulties. With modification, it can provide stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.

The focus of teaching ICT at key stage 1 may be on giving pupils opportunities to work with a variety of resources which carry information, and to use a range of ICT tools.

Given these opportunities in ICT at key stage 1:

| all pupils with learning difficulties (including those with the most profound disabilities) | have opportunities to observe, explore and experience a range of ICT tools, and explore and respond to a variety of stimuli. |
| most pupils with learning difficulties (including those with severe difficulties in learning) who will develop further skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of the subject | explore information from a range of sources, make choices, and communicate them to others by a variety of means. |
| a few pupils with learning difficulties who will develop further aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject | learn that information can be presented in different forms, and that it can be used to help them make choices and to communicate likes and dislikes. They learn that machines and devices can be controlled and used creatively to develop and express ideas. |

Some parts of the key stage 1 programme of study, such as those involving explorations in imaginary situations, may be too demanding for some pupils. Such parts may become less demanding as pupils get older, but it may not be appropriate to teach these parts to some pupils during this key stage. It may be more appropriate to draw on materials from Practice
The following activities show how this can be done and provide examples of approaches staff can take with units of work in ICT.

Information around us

Pupils learn about a variety of sources from which information can be gathered.

**Pupils carry out short, focused tasks**

They may:

- listen and respond to recordings of sounds that carry information in everyday life, for example, school bells, music used in sensory rooms, recordings of friends’ voices, police sirens
- learn to focus on books or other objects that convey information
- record and listen to voices and sounds in the classroom and their environment, and play ‘guess’ games
- examine photographs of objects, and of themselves and their families, and anticipate what action follows the photograph
- use objects of reference, photographs, symbols and text to identify specific areas in their classroom, and consider what activities take place in those areas
- listen and respond to a story from a talking book.

**Pupils work on an integrated task where they bring together what they have experienced and learned**

They may:

- assemble a class display of photographs based on a sub-theme of ‘ourselves’ and be encouraged to identify themselves and others
- display and use timetables, containing objects of reference, photographs, symbols and text (where appropriate), so that pupils anticipate the routines and activities of the day.
Understanding instructions and making things happen

Pupils experience a range of equipment used in everyday life and learn that it can be switched on and off. They also learn that carrying out a task in the correct sequence makes things happen.

**Pupils carry out short, focused tasks**
They may:

- learn to respond to sounds
- learn to reach out and grasp objects
- use a switch-operated toy, *for example, observe and experience that it can be switched on and off*
- indicate which piece of clothing comes next when getting dressed
- match the sequence of a pattern using an overlay board or a touch monitor
- observe and use a variety of everyday devices and consider how they are operated, *for example, kettle, microwave, cooker, television set, printer on a computer.*

**Pupils work on an integrated task**
They may:

- follow a sequence of coloured arrows on the classroom floor and record their actions using an overlay board or screen grid.
Making pictures

Pupils explore the theme of creating pictures, with an emphasis on the observation and creation of different pictures using ICT.

_Pupils carry out short, focused tasks_

They may:

- look at and respond to colours on the screen
- make simple pictures appear on the screen
- add colour to pictures on the screen
- look at pictures in books
- observe pictures and patterns on posters
- select icons to create shapes on a computer
- use pre-prepared shapes to make a collage
- put features on a face, either on the screen or on paper.

_Pupils work on an integrated task_

They may:

- create a picture of an everyday object by using a simple computer program or by placing shapes on paper.
Opportunities and activities at key stage 2

Much of the ICT programme of study at key stage 2 is relevant to pupils with learning difficulties. With modification, it can provide stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.

The focus of teaching ICT at key stage 2 may be on giving pupils opportunities to:

- work with information from a variety of sources
- use a range of ICT tools
- understand that everyday devices can be controlled
- produce work using symbols, sounds, pictures and text
- review and evaluate their work.

Given these opportunities in ICT at key stage 2:

| all pupils with learning difficulties (including those with the most profound disabilities) | experience and explore a range of ICT tools. They use information from the environment to make simple choices. They communicate these choices by appropriate means. They learn that they can have an effect on the environment and on other people. |
| most pupils with learning difficulties (including those with severe difficulties in learning) who will develop further skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of the subject | know that information can be gathered from different sources and that it can be used to help them make simple decisions and choices. They understand that machines can be controlled by instructions and that they can produce work using symbols, sounds, pictures and text. |
| a few pupils with learning difficulties who will develop further aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject | use ICT to develop their ideas and to present them in different forms. They communicate what they like and dislike about their work. |
Some parts of the key stage 2 programme of study may be too demanding for some pupils. These parts may involve:

- predicting
- refining
- answering ‘What if …?’ questions to evaluate the effect of changing values, patterns and relationships.

Such parts may become less demanding as pupils get older, but it may not be appropriate to teach these parts to some pupils during this key stage. It may be more appropriate to teach the more demanding parts of the programme of study for key stage 1. Throughout key stage 2, staff can maintain and reinforce the knowledge, skills and understanding introduced during key stage 1 by applying these in different areas, and introduce new learning. The following activities show how this can be done and provide examples of approaches staff can take with units of work in ICT.

**Combining text and graphics**

Pupils learn about using a computer to convey meanings and ideas.

*Pupils carry out short, focused tasks*

They may:

- respond to bright images on a screen
- track pictures across a screen
- use an overlay board to produce a symbol, a picture or text on a screen
- learn how to use the print function on a computer
- learn how to use ‘clip art’ and to bring a picture onto a screen
- produce and print single words on a screen with or without help.

*Pupils carry out an integrated task*

They may (as a class):

- produce a book of their favourite characters from a reading scheme so that each contains a picture of the character with his or her name printed under it.
Writing for different audiences

Pupils learn how to present their work.

Pupils carry out short, focused tasks
They may:
- learn to produce a response on a computer by pressing a switch
- produce and print symbols or text
- copy phrases using whole-word banks
- consider and create a range of different ‘thank you’ letters.

Pupils carry out an integrated task
They may:
- prepare a ‘thank you’ letter for someone who has given them a piece of equipment for the class.

Manipulating sound

Pupils experience and learn about a range of sound-making equipment.

Pupils carry out short, focused tasks
They may:
- listen and respond to a range of musical instruments
- record sounds using recording devices and play them back to each other
- learn how to change the sounds on a keyboard by pressing the keys
- use a piece of software and choose icons to create musical phrases.

Pupils carry out an integrated task
They may (as a class):
- choose icons to create a musical sequence and, when it has been recorded, listen to and review their work.
Opportunities and activities at key stage 3

Some of the ICT programme of study at key stage 3 is relevant to pupils with learning difficulties. With modification, it can provide stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.

The focus of teaching ICT at key stage 3 may be on giving pupils opportunities to:

- use ICT tools with increased independence to produce and present work
- understand the use of ICT in the wider world for controlling communication devices
- review and evaluate their work.

Given these opportunities in ICT at key stage 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All pupils with learning difficulties (including those with the most profound disabilities)</th>
<th>experience and explore different sources of stimuli. They use the information to make simple decisions and choices and communicate them to others by appropriate means.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most pupils with learning difficulties (including those with severe difficulties in learning) who will develop further skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of the subject</td>
<td>use ICT to develop their ideas and to present them in different forms. They communicate their likes and dislikes about their work. They have the opportunity to operate a range of devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A few pupils with learning difficulties who will develop further aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject</td>
<td>carry out an increased range of tasks using a wider variety of information sources and use ICT to produce high-quality work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some parts of the key stage 3 programme of study, such as analysing and evaluating information or using appropriate technical terminology, may be too demanding for some pupils. Such parts may become less demanding as pupils get older, but it may not be appropriate to teach these parts to some pupils during this key stage. It may be more appropriate to teach the more demanding aspects of the programme of study for the earlier key stages. Throughout key stage 3, staff can maintain and reinforce the knowledge, skills and understanding introduced during the earlier key stages by applying these in different areas, and introduce new learning. The following activities show how this can be done and provide examples of approaches staff can take with units of work in ICT.

**Email**

Pupils explore different ways of sending messages.

**Pupils carry out short, focused tasks**

They may:

- attend and listen to someone who is communicating with them
- take part in activities that involve turn-taking, for example, games using two switches
- observe and experience different ways of sending messages in the class and the school
- send messages in different ways to another local school, for example, using the post, telephone or text messaging
- open the email box on the school computer to find messages
- reply to emails (with help if necessary).

**Pupils carry out an integrated task**

They may:

- invite a local class to visit the school to see a performance of a school play, for example, working in pairs to send invitations, using different methods of communication.
Information through questionnaires and pie charts

Pupils learn how to enter data into a simple graphics package to create a pictogram and to sort information.

**Pupils carry out short, focused tasks**

They may:
- count, by whatever means, the types of transport that pass the school gate
- create a graph using coloured squares
- input the data, with help where necessary, and produce a pictorial representation on the computer.

**Pupils carry out an integrated task**

They may:
- carry out a survey of favourite foods eaten at lunch time
- make choices from a given selection
- enter the data into the computer
- answer simple questions by looking at a pictogram.
**Opportunities and activities at key stage 4**

Some of the ICT programme of study at key stage 4 is relevant to pupils with learning difficulties. With modification, it can provide stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.

The focus of teaching ICT at key stage 4 may be on giving pupils opportunities to:

- use ICT tools with increased independence to produce and present work
- use ICT in the wider world to control devices
- review and evaluate their work and that of others.

Given these opportunities in ICT at key stage 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>all</strong> pupils with learning difficulties (including those with the most profound disabilities)</td>
<td>explore different sources of stimuli and information. They are helped to use information to make choices and simple decisions and to control the environment using simple devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>most</strong> pupils with learning difficulties (including those with severe difficulties in learning) who will develop further skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of the subject</td>
<td>carry out an increased range of tasks using a wider variety of sources of information. They use ICT to produce and present work of a high standard. They understand the use of ICT in their everyday lives and they work with increased independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a few</strong> pupils with learning difficulties who will develop further aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject</td>
<td>use ICT to enhance their work in vocational areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some parts of the key stage 4 programme of study, such as processing large quantities of data or using advanced ICT tools independently, may be too demanding for some pupils. Such parts may become less demanding as pupils get older, but it may not be appropriate to teach these parts to some pupils during this key stage. It may be more appropriate to teach the more demanding parts of the programme of study for the earlier key stages. Throughout key stage 4, staff can maintain and reinforce the knowledge, skills and understanding introduced during the earlier key stages by applying these in different areas, and introduce new learning. The following activities show how this can be done and provide examples of approaches staff can take with units of work in ICT.

Controlling devices
Pupils learn that a number of everyday devices rely on simple control features.

Pupils carry out short, focused tasks
They may:

• observe a car park barrier opening and closing
• observe a pelican crossing where a button activates a light and then a ‘walk’ signal
• operate lights using a range of switches
• input simple instructions into a microwave or television
• operate a remote-controlled toy.

Pupils carry out an integrated task
They may:

• operate a series of switches, or choose a series of icons to control the movement of a robot.
Using the internet

Pupils are introduced to the internet and use it to find information for a topic they are currently studying.

**Pupils carry out short, focused tasks**

They may:

• observe the internet being used
• print and display information collected from the internet
• use the internet, with help where appropriate, to search for pictures, sounds and information
• research other schools’ websites.

**Pupils carry out an integrated task**

They may:

• create a pupil web page or multimedia presentation (with help where necessary) that gives information about a recent trip, and includes text and photographs.
Performance descriptions

These performance descriptions outline early learning and attainment before level 1 in eight levels, from P1 to P8.

The performance descriptions can be used by teachers in the same way as the national curriculum level descriptions to:

- decide which description best fits a pupil’s performance over a period of time and in different contexts
- develop or support more focused day-to-day approaches to ongoing teacher assessment by using the descriptions to refine and develop long-, medium- and short-term planning
- track linear progress towards attainment at national curriculum level 1
- identify lateral progress by looking for related skills at similar levels across subjects
- record pupils’ overall development and achievement, for example, at the end of a year or a key stage.

The performance descriptions for P1 to P3 are common across all subjects. They outline the types and range of general performance that some pupils with learning difficulties might characteristically demonstrate. Subject-focused examples are included to illustrate some of the ways in which staff might identify attainment in different subject contexts.

Levels P4 to P8 describe pupils’ performance in a way that indicates the emergence of skills, knowledge and understanding in each subject. The descriptions are characteristic of the types of attainment the learners are likely to demonstrate.

P1 (i) Pupils encounter activities and experiences. They may be passive or resistant. They may show simple reflex responses, for example, startling at sudden noises or movements. Any participation is fully prompted.

P1 (ii) Pupils show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. They may have periods when they appear alert and ready to focus their attention on certain people, events, objects or parts of objects, for example, attending briefly to lights, sounds or patterns of movement. They may give intermittent reactions, for example, sometimes becoming quiet in response to the vibration of a bubble tube.
P2 (i) Pupils begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences, for example, enjoying the movement of air as a nearby electric fan is switched on. They begin to show interest in people, events and objects, for example, tracking moving images briefly across a television or monitor screen. They accept and engage in coactive exploration, for example, being encouraged to handle fibre-optic strands.

P2 (ii) Pupils begin to be proactive in their interactions. They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, for example, turning towards the source of preferred music. They recognise familiar people, events and objects, for example, moving towards the television in a familiar room. They perform actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time, for example, pressing a switch repeatedly to turn on a light or sound source. They cooperate with shared exploration and supported participation, for example, working with an adult or a peer to operate a touch screen.

P3 (i) Pupils begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action. They request events or activities, for example, pushing another person’s hand towards a switch. They participate in shared activities with less support. They sustain concentration for short periods. They explore materials in increasingly complex ways, for example, moving in and out of a sound beam to create different effects. They observe the results of their own actions with interest, for example, feeling the changing vibrations as they switch a massage table on and off. They remember learned responses over more extended periods, for example, returning to a favourite item of equipment in the multi-sensory environment from session to session.

P3 (ii) Pupils use emerging conventional communication. They greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities, for example, switching on a tape or CD player. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events, for example, looking at the monitor screen as they activate a concept keyboard. They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures, for example, operating one switch rather than another to achieve a desired result. They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods, for example, creating effects using a touch screen. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, for example, pressing a switch repeatedly after the power source has been turned off.
P4 Pupils make selections to communicate meanings, for example, identifying a symbol or creating a sound. Pupils make selections to generate familiar/preferred sounds or images. They know that certain actions produce predictable results, for example, using a switch to activate an audio recorder. The assumption is that the pupil will use their preferred method of access throughout.

P5 Pupils use computer programs, for example, to move a device to manipulate something on screen. They make connections between control devices and information on screen, for example, pressing a specific graphic on a touch screen.

P6 Pupils use ICT to interact with other pupils and adults, for example, touching the screen to respond to another’s action in an on-screen game. They use a keyboard or touch screen to select letters and/or images for their own names. They show they understand that information can be stored on a computer, for example, they ask to see a picture saved earlier. They respond to simple instructions to control a device, for example, using a photocopier to duplicate their work. They operate some devices independently.

P7 Pupils gather information from different sources. They use ICT to communicate meaning and express ideas in a variety of contexts, for example, choosing digitised photographs or video clips for their personal profiles. They begin to choose equipment and software for a familiar activity, for example, using a writing-with-symbols programme to send a message home.

P8 Pupils find similar information in different formats, (photo in paper, in book, on website, from TV programme). Pupils use ICT to communicate and present their ideas, for example, recording sounds and replaying them or taking photographs of their own work. Pupils can load a resource and make a choice from it, for example, a particular game on a CD, a section of a DVD, tracks on a music CD, a game on a PlayStation 2. They communicate about their use of ICT.
About this publication

Who’s it for?
This handbook is for all those who work with pupils with learning difficulties. This includes pupils who are often described as having severe, profound and multiple, or moderate learning difficulties. The guidance relates to all pupils aged 5 to 16 who are unlikely to achieve above level 2 at key stage 4.

What’s it about?
It provides support materials to schools for planning learning opportunities and activities in information and communication technology for pupils in each key stage. It includes performance descriptions of early learning and attainment in the national curriculum.

What’s it for?
It will be useful in developing an inclusive curriculum. It can be used in mainstream schools, special primary and secondary schools, specialised units and independent schools. It can also support the range of services that work with pupils with learning difficulties.

Related material
This handbook is part of a set of guidance on planning and teaching the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties. The entire set, which includes general guidance, guidance on developing skills and subject guidance, can be found on the QCA website at www.qca.org.uk/ld.