

## 4. ATTAINMENT LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

These levels outline eight levels of attainment from Attainment Level 1 to Attainment Level 8 up to Level Descriptor 2 for PSD:

- The Attainment Levels for A1 to A3 are common across all subjects. They outline the types and range of general performance that some students with IEN might characteristically demonstrate. Subject-focused examples are included to illustrate some of the ways in which teachers might identify attainment in different subject contexts.
- From level A4 to A8, it is possible to describe students' performance in a way that indicates the emergence of skills, knowledge and understanding in PSD.
- Level Descriptors 1 and 2 are based directly on the National Minimum Curriculum for PSD.

At the time of publication, the Supplement writing team was aware that the Mainstream school Level Descriptors started to be re designed and new ones were in process of being written. The set of Level Descriptors in this supplement reflect the existing official ones at Level Descriptor 1 and 2. The Levels A1 to A8 are fine. Over the coming year/s the full set of Level Descriptors may be revised in their entirety.

### 4.1 Strand Attainment Levels

There are two main uses of Strand Attainment Levels; one is to inform differentiated learning outcomes and the other is to inform school developmental planning.

#### 4.1.1 Informing differentiated learning outcomes

The Attainment Levels can be used by teachers to:

- decide which description best fits a students' 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 Level Descriptor 1
- identify lateral progress by looking for related skills at similar levels across the subjects.

#### 4.1.2 Informing school developmental planning

The attainment levels can also be used to inform school developmental planning annually. They will be used to assess groups of students and to evaluate where resources need to be placed in future to improve the quality of the PSD teaching and learning.

### 4.2 Attainment descriptions for Personal and Social Development

These outline the types and range of general performance that students with IEN might characteristically demonstrate. Subject focused examples are included to illustrate some of the ways in which staff might identify attainment in different subject contexts. The attainment description indicates the emergence of skills, knowledge and understanding in PSD.

#### 4.2.1 Attainment descriptions across subjects

**A1 (i)** Students encounter activities and experiences. They may be passive or resistant. They may show simple reflex responses, e.g. *startling at sudden noises or movements*. Any participation is fully prompted.

**A1 (ii)** Students 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, e.g. *turning briefly towards another person*. They may give intermittent reactions, e.g. *beginning to tolerate some activities, but 'switch off' if the activity becomes too intense*.

**A2 (i)** Students begin to respond consistently to familiar people, events and objects. They react to new activities and experiences, e.g. *withdrawing from a person who is new to them*. They begin to show interest in people, events and objects, e.g. *watching as they bring their own hands together*. They accept and engage in coactive exploration, e.g. *sharing a hand massage with an adult*.

**A2 (ii)** Students begin to be proactive in their interactions. They communicate consistent preferences and affective responses, e.g. *expressing their immediate needs and feelings*. They recognise familiar people, events and objects, e.g. *vocalising or gesturing in a particular way to another member of the class*. They perform actions, often by trial and improvement, and they remember learned responses over short periods of time, e.g. *making similar responses several times during an interactive sequence with an adult*. They cooperate with shared exploration and supported participation, e.g. *handling personal belongings passed to them*.

**A3 (i)** Students begin to communicate intentionally. They seek attention through eye contact, gesture or action. They request events or activities, *e.g. prompting a peer or adult to continue an interaction*. They participate in shared activities with less support. They sustain concentration for short periods. They explore materials in increasingly complex ways, *e.g. reaching out to touch the hair or face of another person during an interactive sequence*. They observe the results of their own actions with interest, *e.g. listening as an adult imitates their own vocalisations*. They remember learned responses over more extended periods, *e.g. cooperating with support for frequently-repeated personal care procedures from day-to-day*.

**A3 (ii)** Students use emerging conventional communication. They greet known people and may initiate interactions and activities, *e.g. prompting responses from another student*. They can remember learned responses over increasing periods of time and may anticipate known events, *e.g. taking a place at the table when drink time is signalled*. They may respond to options and choices with actions or gestures, *e.g. eye pointing to their choice of a play or work partner*. They actively explore objects and events for more extended periods, *e.g. prolonging an interactive sequence by producing new behaviours and triggering new responses from a partner*. They apply potential solutions systematically to problems, *e.g. vocalising repeatedly to request an interaction with a peer or adult*.

#### **4.2.2 Attainment descriptions for Intrapersonal**

**A4** Students become aware that all people are different and develop an awareness of themselves as individuals, *e.g. by using a mirror to look at their own features and then look at each others faces*. They express their feelings, likes and dislikes using single elements of communication such as words, gestures, signs or symbols. Students encounter the need to make simple choices, *e.g. choosing their preferred food from a choice of two*.

**A5** Students recognise that all people have different qualities and abilities. They develop an awareness of their own abilities and a positive sense of self by recognising their own area of strength, *e.g. being good at painting, in doing crafts, in sports*. Students combine two elements of communication to express their feelings, needs and choices.

**A6** Students recognise the importance of expressing feelings and being in touch with oneself. Through shared exploration, they identify a range of personal feelings, *e.g. by matching photographs of facial expression to a corresponding feeling*. Students continue to develop an awareness of their abilities and can recognise a range of activities they can do in their free time. With the help of pictures and prompting, they identify leisure and fitness activities that they are able to do *e.g. reading, using the computer, sports, walking and swimming*. Students also develop an awareness of the benefits of such activities *e.g. exercise is healthy, relaxing and fun*.

**A7** Students communicate feelings and emotions in simple phrases, *e.g. by reflecting on personal experiences and identifying situations, in which they felt happy, sad, worried etc.* With supported participation, students identify ways of expressing their feelings appropriately in a range of situations, *e.g. by participating in role play activities to demonstrate appropriate ways to express feeling.* Students show a basic understanding of what is right and wrong on the basis of the consequences of their actions, *e.g. by participating in role play activities to demonstrate what is right and wrong in their actions.*

**A8** They become sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for themselves and others *e.g. during a group activity they show appropriate turn taking and sharing with others.* Students recognise that most activities involve making a choice and that all choices have consequences that can affect themselves or others. They are aware of the importance of making decisions themselves and to resist peer pressure *e.g. through watching a video of someone being pressured into making a decision which is wrong.*

#### **4.2.3: Attainment descriptions for Interpersonal**

**A4** Students become aware that there are special people in their lives and with help, they identify who these people are, *e.g. their parents and relatives.* They begin to respond to the feelings of others, *e.g. matching their emotions and becoming upset.*

**A5** Students take part in work or play involving two or three others. They are aware of themselves as part of a family and show recognition of at least one important family member *e.g. by pointing to their mother, father or sibling while looking at photos of their family.* Students become aware of the different functions and roles in the family *e.g. the father and/or mother go to work and take care of their children, while they go to school and respect their parents.*

**A6** Students develop a sense of social interaction. They communicate with familiar adults and peers using any means of communication i.e. verbal and non-verbal. They get to know each other and the teacher better, building a sense of safety, care and respect towards each other, their class and their school. They may show concern for others, *e.g. through facial expressions, gestures and tone of voice, show sympathy for others in distress and offer comfort.*

**A7** Students increase their knowledge on social interaction. Students identify people they like to spend time with and learn how to develop friendship, *e.g. by taking part in role-plays that demonstrate appropriate ways to deal with friends such as helping them*. They make purposeful relationships with others in group activities. They show some consideration of the needs and feelings of other people and other living things, *e.g. watering a classroom plant*.

**A8** Students communicate their understanding of themselves as members of a class group; they recognise the benefits as well as the challenges of being part of a group, *e.g. playing with friends and tolerating other people's wishes*. Students understand the importance of rules in games as well as in groups. They identify that such rules help people work together as long as everyone follows them, *e.g. playing a game and making sure that everyone is playing according to the rules*.

#### **4.2.4 Attainment descriptions for Health**

**A4** Students become aware of their own body image and recognise some features in their body. They become aware of the main differences between a boy and a girl, *e.g. through photographs of familiar and unfamiliar people*. They match appropriate features to male and female images, *e.g. they match beard and moustache to a male and long hair to a female*.

**A5** They become aware of physical changes in their body as they are growing up *e.g. look at pictures showing development of physical features*. Students recognise the value of personal care routines and become aware of their own personal hygiene needs. With help, they participate in a personal care routine, *e.g. brushing teeth after lunch and washing hands before eating*. They recognise a range of appropriate personal care products, *e.g. using shampoo to wash hair, liquid soap and sponge to wash themselves and toothpaste and toothbrush to wash teeth*.

**A6** Students recognise that change also happens internally. They establish and develop independent personal care routines with an understanding for the need of privacy. Students recognise their need to feel safe. They are aware of people who keep them safe in their immediate environment and in the community, *e.g. a familiar adult at home, the teacher at school and the police in the streets*

**A7** Students communicate their preferences in range of situations, *e.g. choosing colours, snacks and drinks*. They make a choice from an increasing number of options and are able to give a reason to back up their decision. They identify hazards in the environment; *e.g. identify dangers in the home and on the street*. Students are aware of things they can do to keep safe *e.g. using a zebra crossing when crossing the streets*.

**A8** Students extend their understanding that all decisions have consequences. Students develop an ability to choose sensibly, *e.g. demonstrate an understanding of what is and what is not suitable to wear on a special occasion*. Students develop an awareness of being healthy and are able to make simple choices that effect/improve their health and well being *e.g. eating healthily and doing physical exercise such as sports and dancing*. Students can communicate their awareness of the benefits of a healthy diet and the dangers of unhealthy diets *e.g. eating balanced meal, fruit and vegetables as opposed to food high in sugars and fats*.

#### **4.2.5 Attainment descriptions for Community**

**A4** Students are aware of a variety of different environments, *e.g. visiting a variety of different public areas such as playground, local shops, and town*. They cooperate with shared exploration in identifying places which are tidy/untidy, clean/dirty. Students show understanding of things they can do themselves to keep the environment clean, *e.g. putting litter in a bin*.

**A5** Students become aware of the social environment and recognise that they are members of a community, *e.g. in the family, in the class and in school*. They respond to familiar images of family members or class members using signs or gestures. Students show basic knowledge of social relationships and behaviour in a community, *e.g. turn taking during communication in a group*.

**A6** Students recognise themselves alongside others in the wider community, *e.g. encountering situations along a variety of people outside school such as in a shopping complex*. They are aware that as a country we are also members of an even larger community, *e.g. by watching videos that illustrate different cultures and beliefs in other countries*. Students show an understanding of cultural diversity, *e.g. differences in clothes, religion and food*. They are aware of respecting the views and beliefs of others.

**A7** Students increase their understanding of being in a community. They recognise that everyone should be treated fairly and communicate feelings and ideas about the consequences of being treated unreasonably, *e.g. when being left out of a game*. Students show an understanding that all people have human rights, *e.g. the right for food and for freedom*. Students become aware of the advantages of democracy, *e.g. having the right to choose and the freedom to speak*.

**A8** Students increase their knowledge on democracy and human rights. They recognise that lack of human rights leads to prejudice, discrimination and poverty. Students demonstrate an understanding of these terms, *e.g. by watching a video of poor people in less developed countries*. They identify feelings associated with prejudice, discrimination and poverty, *e.g. a very poor person would feel sad and hungry*.

#### **4.2.6 Attainment descriptions across strands**

**LD1** Students start developing respect for self and others as well as becoming aware about themselves as developing individuals. They indicate an understanding of emotional and physical changes as they grow older, *e.g. identifying ways they are changing as they are going through puberty*. Students recognise that they do not live alone but are members of school and the larger community. They identify people they like to spend time with and learn how to develop friendship, *e.g. by taking part in role-plays that demonstrate appropriate ways to deal with friends such as helping each other*. Students are aware that as a country we are also members of an even larger community, *e.g. by watching videos that illustrate different cultures and beliefs in other countries*. Students show an understanding of cultural diversity, *e.g. differences in clothes, religion and food*. They are aware of respecting the views and beliefs of others. Students understand the importance of taking care of themselves. They are able maintain personal hygiene and make simple choices that improve their health and well being *e.g. thinking of fitness activities and about healthy eating*. Students recognise the importance of taking care of the environment. They understand concepts such as clean and dirty and understand why it is important to keep public places tidy.

**LD2** Students realise that they are special and appreciate their own uniqueness and that of others, *e.g. they think about their experiences and recognise what they are good at*. They will also identify ways how to strengthen their identity by recognising their likes and dislikes which need not necessarily conform to those of others, *e.g. listening to a particular type of music*. Students become aware of their own feelings, they recognise the importance of expressing feelings and being in touch with oneself. Students are sensitive and are able to recognise needs of and feelings for others through communication. Students need to know the skills that are essential in keeping them safe and healthy. They communicate their awareness of the benefits of a healthy diet and the dangers of unhealthy diets *e.g. eating balanced meal, fruit and vegetables as opposed to food high in sugars and fats*. They are also aware of the dangers of specific habits, *e.g. smoking, drinking alcohol and drug misuse*. With help, students think of the impact they have through their actions on the environment both locally and globally. They communicate ideas of what improves and harms their local and built environments and about things they can do themselves to keep the environment clean. Students participate in group activities to think of ways in which the environment can be improved, *e.g. recycling and waste separation*.

## 5. OPPORTUNITIES AND ACTIVITIES

### 5.1 Opportunities at Primary Level

Most of the syllabus of PSD at Primary Level is relevant to students with IEN. With modification, it can provide stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.

The focus of teaching PSD at Primary Level may be on giving students opportunities to:

- develop self-awareness, recognise and communicate their likes and dislikes
- join in and contribute to the life in class through regular routines and shared experiences
- develop awareness of their bodies
- recognise that there are differences and similarities between people and that each person has a different identity
- recognise that there are views other than their own
- recognise that they are growing and changing and to learn how the body changes in preparation for puberty
- develop social skills necessary to form relationships both with peers and adults

Given these opportunities in PSD at Primary Level:

All students with IEN (including those with the most profound disabilities)
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ develop an awareness of themselves and their bodies, as individuals and as members of their class by building on their own experiences and personal, social and emotional development</li><li>■ learn about themselves as growing and changing individuals with their own experiences, feelings and needs, and as members of their school community</li><li>■ have opportunities to show their feelings, their likes and dislikes</li><li>■ experience a range of interactions with familiar people.</li></ul> |
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Most students with IEN (including those with severe difficulties in learning) will develop further skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of the subjects
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ learn social skills such as taking turns, playing and working with others and taking an active part in the life of their class</li><li>■ make choices and recognise and communicate their likes and dislikes</li><li>■ show preference for objects, events, people and places</li><li>■ begin to be aware of other people's feelings as well as their own, and recognise that people have different likes and dislikes</li><li>■ learn the names of different parts of the body.</li></ul> |
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**A Few** students with IEN who will develop further aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject

- learn to develop friendship and negotiate with friends, e.g. choose which friends to play with
- can take some responsibility for themselves
- are able to reflect on their own learning and set personal targets
- are encouraged to develop a sense of fairness and learn to resist bullying
- learn to take more responsibility for themselves and become active participants in the school community
- are encouraged to develop a sense of right and wrong and understand that their own choices and behaviour can affect others
- learn basic rules for keeping themselves safe and for behaving appropriately in familiar circumstances
- are able to identify some similarities and differences between people.

## **5.2 Opportunities at Secondary Level**

Most of the syllabus of PSD at Secondary Level is relevant to students with IEN. With modification, it can provide stimulating and challenging learning opportunities.

The focus of teaching PSD at Secondary Level may be on giving students opportunities to:

- learn about the nature of friendship and relationships, including sexual relationships
- recognise the risks in some situations, making safe choices and communicating the need for or refusal of help
- appreciate what makes a healthy lifestyle
- prepare for adult life by thinking about post-16 choices available
- be aware of their personal qualities, skills and achievements
- find out about and be part of their local community

Given these opportunities in PSD at Secondary Level

**All** students with IEN (including those with the most profound disabilities)

- continue to develop awareness of themselves and their bodies by approaches and contexts appropriate to their age as young people and as members of their communities
- have support to meet new challenges and to cope with transitions in school life
- make or are helped to make choices and make their views known on issues important to them with help from an adult who can interpret their behaviour or by using a communication passport
- have opportunities to take part in the life of their school and local community
- are exposed to learn about the diversity of people's lives, e.g. family relationships, lifestyles, and cultures.

**Most** students with IEN (including those with severe difficulties in learning) will develop further skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of the subjects

- become more mature and develop in confidence and independence
- take on greater responsibility for themselves in preparation for adult life
- are encouraged to learn how to cope with a wider range of relationships and to respect the views, needs and rights of others
- learn to cope with their changing bodies and feelings and with changing relationships
- recognise that there are risks in some situations
- have opportunities to make choices about their future possibly with the help of an adult
- know where to obtain help and understand some ways of dealing with risky situations
- learn to express their opinion and take part in discussions on topical issues, problems and events
- learn about fairness and diversity at school e.g. by taking part in school activities such as in sports day.

**A Few** students with IEN who will develop further aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject

- learn new skills in making decisions
- have the opportunity to use their developing personal power responsibly, and to make choices about their health and their immediate environment
- make informed decisions/choices about their future and learn how to plan for their future and their careers by setting personal targets
- begin to consider the consequences of their decisions
- can develop skills to help them actively seek information and advice and deal with changing relationships in a positive way
- are helped to develop greater knowledge and understanding of topical issues, problems and events
- listen to others' views, take part in discussions and debates and learn how to become more effective in public life.