

Definition:

A physical need affects the ability to access learning and take a full part in the daily life of a school due to limited function of one or more limbs or fine or gross motor ability. The difficulties can stem from different conditions or syndromes. There is a vast range of difficulties which affect physical functioning and ability from clumsy, untidy writing to being totally dependent on adult support and being unable to speak. There can be associated difficulties with vision, hearing and epilepsy. Visual difficulties can affect how clearly images, including print are seen or amount of peripheral vision. Hearing difficulties can affect loudness and clarity of hearing sounds. A medical need affects the ability to access learning and take a full part in daily life

Characteristics seen in the classroom:

- * Needing a laptop to record, unable to hold a pencil
- * Restricted communication/ speech from inability to be understood to difficulties with articulation (clarity of speech)
- * Fatigue and Endurance Limitations
- * Health Factors may include absence to attend medical appointments & being vulnerable to infections and illness
- * Lacking common experience, making comprehension of some reading material difficult; some pupils will have incorrect concepts due to lack of motor ability to handle items.
- * Perceptual difficulties & learning disabilities will affect learning to read and write.
- * Lack of motivation, poor self-concept and self esteem
- * Sensory difficulties

Where to go for help:

- Speak to class teacher / SENDCo in the first instance
- Educational Psychology Service
- Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services
- Physical and Medical Needs Advisory Service



Physical and Medical needs

**Assessment and Diagnosis:**

- A professional making a diagnosis of physical need should either be Consultant, physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist or GP.
- Difficulties and implications for learning can be assessed and interventions delivered/provided by physiotherapist, occupational therapist.
- A professional making a diagnosis of medical need should either be Consultant or GP. School would be supported by School nurse or community nurse

Frequently used**Interventions:**

- * Programmes drawn-up by a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist
- * Cutting skills
- * Fine motor activities
- * Enlarged worksheets
- * Having a scribe, dictation-based recording
- * Use of ICT programmes
- * Motor skills programmes e.g. Fun Fit
- * Handwriting practise including hand aerobics
- * Thera-putty
- * Trip trail
- * Balance board activities
- * Adapted resources such as pens, pencils, crayons, specialised grips, adapted scissors, not slip matting