Education, Health and Care Plans to support a PDA profile of autism

Contents

Acknowledgements

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a document used in England to outline a child or young person's special educational needs (SEN) and the provision that should be made to meet those needs. It is written in collaboration with the child or young person, their family, all professionals involved with the child or young person and the Local Authority. It is a legally binding document that outlines the provision that must be put in place to support the child or young person and is reviewed annually.

*Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) is widely understood to be a profile of autism which means that individuals **share autistic characteristics**…*

- *"persistent difficulties with social communication and social interaction" and*
- *"restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviour, activities or interests" present since early childhood to the extent that these "limit and impair everyday functioning" (according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual Fifth Edition (DSM-5)), often including different sensory experiences.*

Individuals are also likely to…

- *have a need for control which is often anxiety related*
- *be driven to avoid everyday demands and expectations (including things that they want to do or enjoy) to an extreme extent*
- *tend to use approaches that are 'social in nature' in order to avoid demands*

For more on the key features of the PDA profile, please visit the PDA Society website. It is notable that the drive to avoid demands means that children and young people tend not to respond to conventional parenting, teaching or support approaches.

Not every PDA child or young person will have, or need, an EHCP but for those who do, these examples of good practice will hopefully provide a starting point for families and professionals. In addition, you would not expect an EHCP to cover all the areas identified here; just those which would be of most help for each individual child/young person. This resource intends to provide you with a 'database' of possibilities.

This resource has been compiled from suggestions from both families and education professionals supporting PDA children and young people and in consultation with our PDA adult panel. Many of these suggestions are useful for anyone who would benefit from an EHCP and some relate more specifically to demand avoidance.

We are very grateful to everyone for sharing their ideas and experiences with us.

If you feel your child would benefit from an EHCP you should request an assessment from the Local Authority. As part of this process an assessment from one or more of the following may be beneficial:

1. an Educational Psychologist
2. a Speech and Language Therapist
3. an Occupational Therapist (trained in Sensory Integration)

More information about how to request an EHCP assessment and about the EHCP process can be found on the IPSEA website: https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/education-health-and-care-plans or on the Local Offer page of your Local Authority's website.

There is a standard structure for Education, Health and Care Plans, although individual local authorities have their own forms to gather the information which can lead to some regional variations. You would expect the structure to be as follows:

Section A is an overview of important information about the child/young person. In reality, this section is less important than section B, so make sure all the points are in B-D as well.

Sections B, C and D are a description of the child/young person's needs. Section B outlines the child's/young person's educational needs, Section C outlines their health needs and Section D outlines their social care needs. It may be that the child/young person only has needs in one or two sections rather than all three.

Section E outlines the aimed for outcomes for the child or young person. These may be in the form of overarching themes and more specific targets, or a number of simple statements. These should include any needs relating to Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy as well (these needs do not sit in Section G which covers health related needs).

Section F outlines the educational provision required to meet the child or young person's needs.

Section G outlines the health provision required to meet the child or young person's needs.

Section H outlines the social care provision required to meet the child or young person's needs.

Section I names the educational placement for the child/young person.

Section J describes 'Personal Budget' arrangements where applicable. For more information about personal budgets visit your Local Authority's Local Offer page.

Section K contains Appendices (e.g. professional reports).

Section A

Section A generally contains an overview of important information about the child/young person. Much of this information is very basic (name, address, date of birth etc.) but the section may also include what is called a **One Page Profile** which allows the child/young person and/or those who care for them to express their likes, strengths and interests, what is important to them and how people can best support them. You can find an example on our website here: https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/resources/child-profiles/

When writing a **One Page Profile** and/or a "How to Support Me" section you may want to include examples similar to the following:

- X needs everyone in contact with them to understand and use Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) approaches.
- X needs extra time to process requests – demands/time pressure increase anxiety.
- Communication from school-home and vice versa needs to be regular and ongoing.
- X needs individual attention in the morning to help talk them through the day ahead and set the scene. They need help with forward planning. Changes should be talked through more than once and visual prompts should be used. Staff need to prepare X for changes in their routine.
- X requires a lot of support with making and maintaining friendships.
- X may require support with more abstract vocabulary in the curriculum and they benefit from pre-taught preparatory sessions for vocabulary.
- X needs gentle encouragement in a fun way - for example: 'Bet you can't', or 'I'll do x if you do y'.
- It can be very difficult to assess X's abilities as they usually refuse to use pencil and paper to record their work. A scribe or alternative ways of recording are necessary; they need help to record their ideas on screen. X requires support with their handwriting.

Sections B, C and D

Sections B – D are a description of the child/young person's needs. Section B outlines the child/young person's educational needs, Section C outlines their health needs and Section D outlines their social care needs. It may be that the child/young person only has needs in one or two sections rather than all three.

When writing **Section B** you may want to consider the following questions, and for every point identified there should be an outcome in Section E and a provision in Section F:

- What are the child/young person's main strengths in each of these four areas: Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Sensory and Physical? This is not a legal requirement, but some local authorities include this here. Ensure it doesn't deflect from the focus on need for support. An alternative is to ensure balance by including strengths in Section A.
- What are the child/young person's main challenges in each of these four areas: Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Sensory and Physical?
- How does the child/young person's demand avoidance affect their education?
- How does the child/young person feel about themself? How do their needs impact their self-esteem?
- What were the outcomes of any professional assessments undertaken? It may be useful to include the scores of standardised assessments completed by psychologists, speech and language therapists or occupational therapists here.
- Does the child/young person have any formal diagnoses? If so, are they aware of these diagnoses?
- How does the child/young person feel about having their differences documented or known by others?

More specifically, does the child/young person have difficulties with…

- processing information
- executive functioning? If so, what is the impact of these difficulties
- attending school or college? how easy/difficult is it for them to attend school or college
- anxiety, and if so, what are the causes and what is the impact of this anxiety on their day to day life and learning
- receptive language (understanding what people are saying to them)
- expressive language (making themself understood)
- being selectively mute
- making and sustaining friendships
- interacting with peers (for example during group work) or with adults
- social communication techniques
- building and maintaining self-esteem
- emotional regulation
- their vision/hearing
- independent living skills
- fine/gross motor skills
- sensory processing and/or sensory integration
- certain sensory experiences
- masking their difficulties at school

Section E: Writing Outcomes

The outcomes set in Section E should relate to the needs outlined in Sections B, C and D, so include health and social care. They should be centred around the child/young person and their aspirations with a balance between things that are important **to** the child/young person and things that are important **for** them. It is important for families and professionals to work closely together on this section to ensure that the outcomes are meaningful for the child/young person and will make a real difference to their life, either because they are linked to their interests and aspirations or because they are essential skills for living.

It is important not to include any element of improving compliance or learning to manage avoidant behaviours, as this would be counter-productive. Instead, focusing on things like managing stresses, building resilience and building self-esteem are likely to be helpful. From Year 9 onwards, outcomes should focus increasingly on preparing for adulthood and focus on matters such as the qualifications and experience needed for future employment purposes.

Sometimes outcomes are arranged with overarching aims followed by smaller short-term targets.

Section F: Identifying the Provision Required to Meet the Child or Young Person's SEN

Once the outcomes have been set, you can then move on to identifying the provision needed to meet the child or young person's SEN. These provisions are detailed in Section F of the EHCP. When writing recommendations you will want to consider best practice approaches for PDA children and young people while also taking into account the child or young person's individual preferences as not all suggestions will work for everyone.

Suitable provisions are likely to include consideration of: personalised learning; flexible timetables and lesson objectives; trusted relationships with key members of staff; provision of key professional input such as SALT, OT; staff access to ongoing training, guidance and advisory input; a lead professional; and perhaps an emotional wellbeing and social curriculum. The provision in this section is required to be detailed, specific and quantified so avoid using words such as access to, opportunities to, regular, may benefit from – all of which are vague, ambiguous and unenforceable.

When writing or contributing to **Section E** and **Section F**, you may want to consider the following ideas:

Communication and Interaction

Section E outcome: X will develop social interaction and communication skills so that they can interact comfortably and effectively with adults and peers in a range of social and learning situations.

Section F strategies:

Encouraging communication

- Universal support: ensure all students are equally included in the school community – give prominent positions of responsibility to all students including those with additional needs. Encourage unconditional positive regard to be held by all students and staff for each other (also shown as an option on page 13)

- Whole school training in PDA is required so that all staff understand and accept autistic communication and interaction and what approaches will be helpful; fully integrate this understanding when planning, delivering and assessing learning (also shown as an option on page 13)

- If X says something that is not relevant to the conversation, listen and respond before gently guiding them back onto the topic

- Encourage X's interaction with a range of people and help them to understand how communication style may need to be adapted in different circumstances

- Model communications and interaction skills

- Use role play to help model and practice communications and interaction skills

- Explain context and help 'unpick' misunderstandings

- Try to avoid the use of ambiguous/figurative language or always ensure that the meaning of such expressions are clearly explained

- Provide calm, reasoned explanations about why and how things need to be done, allowing room for negotiation and compromise

- Be aware of slower processing speed and allow take-up time and a chance to process what is being said or asked

- Give praise in a low-key or indirect way

- Try using other communications methods – such as writing, drawing or using messaging technology – in addition to or instead of verbal communications. Adopt a 'mix and match' approach or introduce novelty (e.g. use a 'survey' or multiple-choice questionnaire to encourage communication).

- X will be provided with social stories to show examples of useful behaviour in different social situations

- Staff to adopt a 'life coaching' approach to helping X navigate the social world – looking for in vivo teachable moments and modelling approaches

- Any social skills programmes used with X should be strengths-based, respectful of neurodiversity and capacity-building

Providing a peer group

- Create opportunities for X to work with peers, particularly those with shared interests

- Focus on developing trusting and reciprocal relationships between peers and between adults and students

- Be aware of X's vulnerability to bullying

- Whole class training on diversity in all its forms, with a focus on neurodiversity, to encourage understanding and acceptance

- Introduce a school-wide buddy system to ensure children support one another

- Help X to understand the benefits to them and their peers of social skills such as give and take, turn-taking, cooperation, respect, following rules etc. whilst also encouraging self-advocacy and being accepting of difference

- It may be easier for X to take part in a structured group activity if each child is given a very specific role within the task, and/or if X is given a specific role where they feel in control (e.g. being a time or record keeper)

- Model and explicitly teach the whole class different strategies for when situations with peers become difficult, e.g. walking away, having a named adult to seek out, producing 'scripts' for in the moment and to help in repairing relationships

- Provide optional opportunities to interact with peers. However, there should be no expectations for X to work alongside other children or work at a pace they are not comfortable with

Cognition and Learning

Section E outcomes:

X will be able to access the curriculum and will achieve in line with their potential.

X will learn the life skills required to lead an independent adult life, such as self-care, personal hygiene, independent travel, cooking and managing money.

Section F strategies:

Presenting learning tasks

- Offering X a choice of two tasks that meet the learning objective

- Placing tasks for X in front of them without comment

- Allowing X the choice of working in the classroom or the library

- The use of a visual timetable where X chooses the order in which tasks are completed

- The use of tasks that require X to correct the teacher's mistakes

- Creating a "Projects on Pause" folder for X where tasks can be placed to be completed at a later date and old tasks can be revisited at a more convenient time (see 'Can I Tell You About Pathological Demand Avoidance' by Ruth Fidler and Phil Christie)

- Increase readiness for learning by having movement breaks between every desktop task (which helps to regulate arousal levels)

- A flexible timetable that allows teachers to present activities at times of the day when they are most likely to be successful

- X can be given a key role e.g. time-keeper, scribe or tally counter during activities

- X has pre-teaching so that they are familiar with language and key topics

- Avoid asking X too many questions

- Modify work expectations

- Introduce goals gradually

- Empower X by allowing more choice in their activities

- The class teacher will ensure that X receives additional time to complete work

- The class teacher and/or teaching assistant will provide notes or photocopies of class material where possible

- The class teacher and/or teaching assistant will ensure X is provided with books that are related to their interests to encourage them to read more challenging texts. Spellings will also be taken from topics which draw on X's interests

- The class teacher will offer X opportunities to lead sessions at the front of the class in order to boost their confidence and participation

- The teacher and/or teaching assistant will consistently provide X with alternative ways to record their work. This could include use of a tablet or computer, X dictating or typing responses, or practising spellings using magnetic letters, for example

- All staff will offer X alternatives and be flexible about what X can do, and when

- A selection of project work activities to be available on a daily basis, allowing choice between which are worked on at a given time

- A visual timetable, broken down into 'now' and 'next' within each session. Provide X with some choice, where possible, for example, allowing them to choose the order in which they will need to complete the tasks

- Lessons need to be presented in a variety of learning styles based on X's levels of anxiety and motivation to learn. At times X requires and benefits from a planned/template support and at other times a more flexible visual approach, depending on their tolerance at any given time

- There will need to be a commitment from teaching, support and management to work with X on the exploration and development of a highly individualised teaching approach and teaching style. There will need to be detailed record keeping, monitoring and reviewing in order to highlight what works when and why in engaging X in learning

- Provide a highly individualised style, based partly on the understanding of demand avoidance/PDA but partly on X's personality and tolerances

- Facilitate additional processing time for X in lessons

- Structured writing tasks needs to be linked to X's interests wherever possible and be differentiated appropriately for X to access

- Continual use of practical, flexible and visual learning activities to engage and motivate X

- Breaking instructions down into small manageable tasks with enough detail that X knows what will be coming next but with minimal language. Having instructions already written down or visual cues to refer to helps X to complete a set task

- X will be supported to develop strategies to enable them to process what they have heard in lessons so that they are able to retain and act upon what they have heard

- Use visual aids when giving instructions to X

- Ensure X has understood what is being asked of them by the use of sensitive questioning

- De-personalise demands and requests

- Disguise demands by playing games

- Use language that feels like an invitation is being offered

- Use indirect language to encourage engagement, e.g. 'I wonder if?' 'Let's see if we can' 'Maybe we could investigate...'

- Allow take-up time, i.e. the adult to 'plant the seed' of what they would like to happen at the start of the session, but avoid expecting it to happen straight away

- Introduce techniques such as distraction or humour, when appropriate and with caution

- Introduce goals gradually, building on positive experiences and ensuring X gets some sort of acceptable achievement out of every encounter. Avoid a sense of failure. Limit adult expectations, whilst being mindful of ensuring X ultimately is able to reach their potential

Staffing requirements
- X will be supported by staff who have an understanding of autism and pathological demand avoidance who can be flexible in approach and use alternative learning opportunities to engage X
- X will have a key adult whom they can link with and who X trusts will listen to them and support in problem solving
- X has light touch support from an adult who can ensure X remain focused and can judge when they needs an alternative approach
- X will benefit from support from a member of staff who
  - attunes to X's emotion and pace
  - responds appropriately to X's signals to foster a sense of communicative competence
  - recognises and supports X's own strategies, behaviour, language and metacognitive strategies to self-regulate
  - recognises dysregulation and mindfully offers support
  - offers breaks from interaction when necessary
  - facilitates re-engagement unobtrusively
  - offers choices verbally and non-verbally
  - waits for and encourages initiation
  - provides a balance of responses
  - respects X's wish and need for independence, but equally is available to respond and offer assistance before X becomes overwhelmed
  - is flexible and offers solutions
  - allows for breaks
  - offers time for problem solving, task completion, mistakes to be made and recovered from
  - interprets "behaviours" as communication
  - honours X's protests, requests or refusals when appropriate
  - uses appropriate proximity, non-verbal behaviour to encourage engagement
  - provides guidance for interpreting the feelings and opinions of others
  - models appropriate behaviours
- Ensure all of the team working with X know the adjustments they should make when communicating with X
- Teachers and TAs to be creative and resourceful in the development of activities, using surprise as a positive engager
- Teaching staff to be skilled at negotiating and suggesting rather than expecting participation
- Teachers and TAs to give X some choices so that X can feel some sense of control
- Key professionals whom X knows well and trusts and who understands X's complex needs, and are flexible in their pedagogic and therapeutic interventions and topics
- Ensure X is taught by teachers and TAs who have received specific in-depth PDA training and have experience in working with pupils with PDA
- It is important that staff promote a sense of belonging within the school and that X feels they are working in collaboration with staff and the school
- Confident and familiar staff team working with X at all times
- Staff to be flexible and adaptable in their approach, providing X with a balance of control within the parameters they can meet

- 1:1 support should be delivered by a key member of staff who can develop a rapport with X such that X is and feels understood and that X is respected as an equal. Staff should focus on supporting X to build trust in themself and the school. It is important that the key adult builds up an intimate knowledge of X such that they know when to pursue an objective and when to reduce pressure, making continual adjustments as needed. It is also important that the relationship develops such that X builds up and accumulates trust in the individual worker, becoming more confident in their ability to adapt accordingly. The quality of relationship(s) is fundamental
- Adults working with X will use negotiation and humour to effectively manage X's needs

The learning environment

- X will be offered a small and safe learning space where X is able to rebuild their self-esteem and confidence
- The SENCo will ensure X is provided with an appropriate classroom environment where noise levels are kept to a minimum and a quiet personalised space away from distractions is made available when required
- X will be provided with a peer group they can identify with
- A learning environment which takes account of X's sensory needs
- Access to a safe base
- Access to a quiet area when needed in order to enable regulation and encourage focused work
- Minimise distractions and provide an environment with reduced sensory stimulation, when required
- X to have access to a quiet space to rest between intense listening and learning times to manage overload

Curriculum/learning programme

- X has an individualised learning programme that builds on their interests/bases itself on active learning activities and X's special interests and strengths
- Provide X with a curriculum that is matched to their needs and abilities, based on learning tasks that are short, visual and interactive with a clear beginning and end point
- Provide stimulating and exciting opportunities linked to X's interests, strengths and experiences. Provide opportunities for incidental learning. Novelty and variety may be effective
- As X becomes more able to engage, provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum, ensuring that this process follows X's lead. Ensure the curriculum is fully modified to meet X's individual needs, taking into account their specific motivations, variable concentration, and in particular X's social and emotional needs
- Continued access to a personalised, flexible and differentiated curriculum, taking account of X's individual learning style and strengths
- Using a stepped approach to learning with activities broken down into small steps
- Personal tutorial time
- A flexible approach

Interaction, praise and sanctions

- Be cautious about rewarding success
- Ignore negative behaviours
- Stay calm and neutral
- Use a soft slow and calm tone of voice

- Use X's body language and demeanour to ascertain if they would like to be praised for something
- Use indirect praise
- Staff to analyse X's presentation and responses on an ongoing basis and make reasonable adjustments as needed
- X requires staff to support them to make decisions and avoid coercing or encouraging. It is important that X does not feel they are being pressured into following another person's ideas
- X should be fully included in all decisions such that they feel able to make suggestions, participate in discussions and have the final say
- Respect and valuing X is particularly important and this should be communicated by all adults working with X
- All staff to have positive interactions with X whenever possible, with an unmentioned emphasis on X's academic potential, to collaboratively develop a range of activities that will provide positive experiences

Preparing for learning

- The teacher and/or teaching assistant will talk X through daily and weekly activities which will include assembly, playtime and lunchtime arrangements
- The class teacher will utilise a variety of stress toys for X when necessary to help X to pay attention
- Daily access to flexible visual prompts to help X understand the structure of their day i.e. timetables so X knows what is happening in a day and timers so they know when activities start and finish
- Follow a sitting task, with one that involves X moving around. Provide regular breaks, as required

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Section E outcome: X will have opportunities to develop emotional regulation skills and strategies to manage their anxiety.

Section F strategies:

Anxiety Management

- Staff to adopt a 'low arousal' approach when working with X
- X's assistant will try to find out what causes their anxiety and what motivates X, to help develop strategies and give X time to discuss their anxieties and interests. Interests can be used as motivators by offering time spent researching them or incorporating them where possible into the curriculum – creative techniques or observation may be required rather than direct enquiry as X may not acknowledge their anxieties nor know the causes, and may be selectively mute.
- Staff will model and teach strategies on how to recognise, monitor and manage X's anxieties, in order to develop X's self-awareness, self-regulation and self-expression
- Time for activities that reduce X's anxiety will be built into their schedule
- A flexible approach, all adults will be creative and responsive to X's anxiety levels and current needs
- Opportunities to explore a range of calming strategies with X to identify something X feels they could use to reduce their anxiety
- All staff to monitor X's stress levels and identify signs of increased anxiety. Adults to decrease demands in response

- Encourage X to begin to identify their own stress levels and what they need, and model/teach X the skills to communicate this
- Look ahead, anticipate predictable triggers and plan strategies in advance
- Model/teach relaxation techniques - such as use of guided imagery, music etc.
- X will need help to develop anxiety-management techniques suited to PDA, including new ways of thinking about their own expectations – for example, avoiding one thing to do another, developing choices within tasks, accepting some things can't be done (which may then make it possible)
- Providing daily access to a quieter working area for times when X's anxieties are high and they find whole class learning stressful
- Staff will support X in developing routines for when the usual routine changes, to develop X's ability to cope with change, and offer scripts for X to use when they are beginning to feel upset
- Having daily clear routines that are planned/discussed with X, offering some flexibility/choice to try to keep anxiety low. Having a flexible and negotiable visual timetable that is discussed in collaboration with X and has some flexibility to support X's demand avoidance profile and to prepare X for any unavoidable change
- Time out of structured lessons each day to enable X to reflect on and regulate their sensory system
- Where unexpected changes or events occur, ensure X's key adult can provide them with reassurance and a 'running commentary' as to what is happening and why
- School will identify a support assistant with good knowledge of PDA with whom X can build a trusting relationship
- The SENCo will ensure that X has individual adult support for any irregular on and off site activities, such as class trips

Managing demands to reduce anxiety
- The teacher will ensure X is provided with a limited number of achievable activities to complete each day. Tasks will have a clear beginning and end point and should be modelled first. These activities will be presented on a written 'to do' list and X can choose the order in which they complete them
- Work beside or even slightly behind X, rather than face to face
- Adults working with X will need to work sensitively to help them to manage demands and to choose language which does not, in itself, cause additional anxiety

Reacting to distress
- If X becomes distressed, all staff will give X the opportunity to calm down in a quiet place without further questioning at that time, and discuss antecedents at a later, more suitable time
- X to have an identified safe space in school where they can work with adults on a 1:1 basis or independently if they become overwhelmed being in a classroom/group learning environment. X should be supported to access this by a trusted adult
- Adults to keep calm and level in their own emotions, including facial expressions
- Avoid confrontation
- Do not restrict X's movements or prevent X from leaving a classroom as this is likely to exacerbate their distress
- Use Dr Ross Greene's Collaborative & Proactive Solutions model to identify X's lagging skills and solve problems together once X is calm

Modelling and teaching emotional regulation/emotional literacy

- The teacher and/or teaching assistant will provide a system to enable X to communicate how they are feeling such as the use of a scale from one to ten or a traffic light system associated with pictures of facial expressions

- Adults to model noticing and talking about theirs, X's and other children's emotions, explicitly linking cause and effect

- Activities that increase emotional literacy (reference the resources that would be used)

- Engaging in work on recognising and understanding emotions; including work on calming strategies by an PDA trained adult who has a positive relationship with X

- X will be provided with videos, mirrors and stories to teach the tone of voice, facial expression and posture associated with different emotions. Adults will exaggerate their facial expressions in real life situations to make links for X

- Weekly dedicated sessions to work on social and emotional curriculum e.g. personal tutorials

- Daily opportunities for individual and small group work to develop positive social and learning experiences supported by a PDA trained adult who has a positive relationship with X

- Continued opportunities to meet with a key worker for discussion in order to address issues as and when they arise

- Planned time with a trusted PDA trained adult to talk through worries to help X learn ways of managing their feelings

Effective support from staff

- Universal support: ensure all students are equally included in the school community – give prominent positions of responsibility to all students including those with additional needs. Encourage unconditional positive regard to be held by all students and staff for each other (also shown as an option on Page 6)

- Whole school training in PDA is required so that all staff understand and accept autistic communication and interaction and what approaches will be helpful; fully integrate this understanding when planning, delivering and assessing learning (also shown as an option on Page 6)

- Ensure good communication links with home to allow for strategies that are positive for X to be shared and ensure they have a good start to the school day

- All staff will adopt a similar approach to supporting X. For example:
  - provide choices
  - provide additional take-up time
  - reduce the amount of staff talking and avoid staff asking too many questions

- The class teacher will ensure that all staff on playground duty are aware of X's needs so that they can be helped to achieve an appropriate balance between playing as they choose (including by themself if they wish) and being supported to join in games with their peers if they chose to

- Confident and familiar staff team working with X at all times

- Familiar trusted keyworker(s) whom X can build a positive relationship with to minimise their anxiety when in stressful situations

- Access to an appropriate level of support from trusted adults to enable X to begin working on identified small step targets to regulate their emotions

- All staff working with X must have received in-depth training and experience in supporting children with PDA and with any associated anxieties and sensory needs

- Seek and act on advice from mental health professionals, as deemed appropriate by those agencies

- Provide daily access to key adult mentor, with whom X has developed a close, positive relationship. This should be someone X likes and trusts and who communicates to X a sense of valuing them as an individual
- All adults who work with X need to have an understanding PDA
- Ensure staff are aware of X's needs so that expectations are appropriate and demands minimised
- Ground rules need to be as few as possible (i.e. linked to safety) but then maintained using techniques such as passing responsibility (e.g. "I'm sorry but it's a health and safety requirement") de-personalising (through the use of imaginary characters, visual clarification etc.) and giving choices that allow a feeling of autonomy

Section E outcome: To develop X's self-esteem.

Section F strategies:
- Using indirect strategies to increase self-esteem and engagement such as games and challenges built on interests
- X is given responsibilities that raise their self-esteem and build on their strengths
- The teacher and or teaching assistant will use lots of humour and ensure any demands are made indirectly. For example, the use of methods and phrases such as 'Please can you help me with this?', 'Please could you teach me?', 'I think I've made a mistake, can you help me find it?', 'Bet you can't…..' and 'I'll do x if you do y.'
- The teacher and/or teaching assistant will ensure that opportunities are provided in whole class and small group situations to reinforce that we all make mistakes
- Completing self-esteem activities with X to help them recognise their own individual strengths and interests
- Encourage X to increase their involvement in activities which are strengths, in order to boost X's sense of achievement and self-esteem
- Positive encouragement is required, however, this also needs to be carefully phrased so that it does not become demanding. "I" statements are likely to be helpful as they are harder for other people to argue with and do not carry demands e.g., "I like the way you have carried on trying with this, even though it's tricky."
- Adults working with X will need to provide positive feedback, particularly if X achieves something without, or with minimal, adult support. This will need to be presented in a way that X can hear e.g. via indirect affirmation rather than direct praise
- A regular updated passport or pen portrait for X, describing what they feel is important information about themself
- Both school and home to capitalise on X's strengths and provide X with opportunities to demonstrate this so that they experiences success frequently, which in turn will help improve their self-esteem

Sensory and Physical

Section E outcome: For X to be able to manage and meet their own sensory needs.

Section F strategies:
- A sensory diet with a menu of activities for X to choose from
- X should also be provided with a sensory box that they can access at regular intervals throughout the day
- A visual timetable, broken down into 'now' and 'next' within each sensory session. Provide X with some choice, for example, allowing X to choose the order in which they will need to complete the tasks

- X to have access to daily sensory activities, based on sensory assessments
- Develop X's ability to support others younger than them so that X can model self-regulation strategies
- X will be provided with short tasks with plenty of movement breaks. Whenever possible, activities should be physical and interactive
- Staff to be aware of X's lack of interoceptive awareness – noticing body signals and connecting them to their meaning so that they can react in an effective way - and how this may vary according to their anxiety levels; offer appropriate support may be required from an Occupational Therapist

Section E outcome: For X to develop the necessary fine and gross motor skills needed to engage in a broad and balanced curriculum.

Section F strategies:
- Purposeful and indirect physical tasks that improve co-ordination and build physical strength
- X should have access to a choice box of fine motor activities, to develop their hand strength and coordination
- A clear plan of daily fine and gross motor skill activities which are sensory of nature to be developed