

Supporting the learner with CHARGE syndrome

Potential learning characteristics (Deuce 2017)	Points for consideration <i>Ask yourself, how does this apply to the learner with CHARGE?</i>	Possible responses <i>How should we respond?</i> <i>Identify helpful strategies – see the checklist below</i>
A combination of sensory impairments (true MSI)		
Behaviours arising from poorly developed or under-stimulated vestibular and proprioceptive systems		
Sensory integration/processing difficulties and poor self-regulation		
Additional time to process information		

High levels of fatigue, stress and anxiety		
A preference for using different communication modes for both receptive and expressive communication		
Easier to form relationships with adults than peers		
Difficulty understanding/ expressing own emotional state and empathising with peers		
Additional time to process information		

Development of concrete concepts a strength		
Abstract concepts more difficult		
Problem-solving a relative strength		
Needing high level of routine and structure, and use of concrete cues to support transitions		

<p>Executive function difficulties. May include difficulties with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flexibility/coping with unexpected changes • initiating activities • independent play • self-organisational skills • transitions • shifting attention • poor memory • transferring/generalising skills • environmental distractions 		
<p>A need to be in control and a requirement for a level of negotiation</p>		
<p>Fine motor difficulties and poor pencil/handwriting skills</p>		

Possible helpful strategies

<p>Sensory responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A combination of sensory impairments (true MSI) • Behaviours arising from poorly developed or under-stimulated vestibular and proprioceptive systems • Sensory integration difficulties and poor self-regulation • Additional time to process information 	<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place a priority on <u>all</u> the child's sensory needs • Ensure against sensory overload • Respond to their sensory integration difficulties • Work closely with the QTVI/ QTHI/ QTMSI
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A preference for using different communication modes for both receptive and expressive communication 	<p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensitive communication partner and contingent responses to all communication attempts • Support for receptive and expressive communication • A Total Communication environment • Access to sign language/sign support and appropriately skilled adults • Recognition of child's preferred communication modes • Use of a concrete component to overcome executive function difficulties
<p>Conceptual development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of concrete concepts a strength • Abstract concepts more difficult • Problem-solving a strength- adaptive behaviours 	<p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant and meaningful experiences presented in context • A balance between familiar and unfamiliar activities • Monitoring to protect against development of 'splinter skills' • Use of strategies to keep child on task • Use of concrete components

<p>Orientation, mobility and movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviours arising from poorly developed or under-stimulated vestibular and proprioceptive systems • Sensory integration/processing difficulties and poor self-regulation • Fine motor difficulties and poor pencil/handwriting skills 	<p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities to support development of gross motor skills and body awareness • Regular opportunities to engage in large movements and large movement play activity • Structured support to explore new environments and route planning • Active/supportive seating and different working positions. Time to adopt a horizontal position if needed • Assessment of hand function and fine motor activities • Alternative recording methods made available
<p>Ownership of learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A need to be in control and a requirement for a level of negotiation 	<p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing control with the child and supporting active involvement • Regular choice making opportunities throughout the day • Working at the child's pace (considering burst-pause style) • A flexible approach responding to child's changing needs/ recognition of levels of responsiveness • Not placing too many demands on the child when a 'difficult' day • Recognition of executive function difficulties • Support to develop self-help and self-organisational skills

<p>Responses to routines and changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needing high level of routine and structure, and use of concrete cues to support transitions- difficulty coping when not established 	<p>Strategies</p> <p>Clear structure and routines implemented consistently throughout the school day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of mini routines • Awareness of the impact of change • Use concrete cues to support sequencing an activity, transitions and daily routine • Consistent approach adopted by all adults
<p>Social relationships and emotional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of fatigue, stress and anxiety • Easier to form relationships with adults than peers • Difficulty understanding/expressing own emotional state and empathising with peers • 	<p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key people with whom strong, trusting relationships are formed • Structured programmes to support peer interactions • Support to develop understanding of emotions • Activities to ensure success and therefore build confidence • Recognition of the impact of fatigue • A safe rest area