What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

Assistive Technology is an umbrella term used to describe technological aids and adaptations to support individuals with a disability. Assistive Technology can help people of all ages who have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, remembering, seeing, hearing, learning and moving. Different disabilities require different assistive technologies. Examples include:

- **High-tech equipment**
- **Specialist software & apps**
- **Aids to control computer**
- **Adapting settings**
- **Low-tech aids**
- **Communication aids**

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How does a child or young person get Assistive Technology support & advice?

For schools in County Durham there are four pathways of provision, dependent on the child or young person’s main area of difficulty. Schools should refer to the appropriate team below.

1. LEARNING
Cognition & Learning Team
Education Development Centre
Enterprise Way, Spennymoor
DL16 6YP
☎ 03000 263 333

2. PHYSICAL
Cognition & Learning Team
Education Development Centre
Enterprise Way Spennymoor
DL16 6YP
☎ 03000 263 333

3. VISUAL/HEARING IMPAIRMENT
Sensory Team
C/O Belmont Primary School
Buckinghamshire Road, Durham
DH1 2QP
☎ 03000 264 530

4. COMMUNICATION
Children’s Speech & Language
Therapy Service
Out of Hospital Care Services
University Hospital of Hartlepool
Holdforth Road, TS24 9AH
☎ 01429 522 717
The Cognition & Learning Team Pathway

The Cognition & Learning Team has a specialist Advisory Inclusion Teacher (AIT) for Assistive Technology who can offer assessment, advice and support regarding appropriate aids and adaptations for children and young people with physical difficulties and/or learning difficulties to support their learning and access to the curriculum.

Following discussions with parents/carers and the child or young person (if appropriate), schools can request Assistive Technology input by completing Package 1 of the Cognition & Learning Team Referral Form available from the following website.

www.countydurhamfamilies.info/cognitionandlearning

You have requested Assistive Technology input, what will this look like?

Assistive Technology assessment, advice and support is bespoke to each individual school, child or young person but input would typically include:

- a multi-disciplinary approach involving information gathering from parents/carers, school staff, therapy departments and other professional agencies
- a brief discussion with school staff and parents/carers to identify key areas of concern
- a Talking Mat© undertaken with child or young person to obtain their views (if appropriate)
- assessment with the child or young person
- a written report including educational outcomes and recommendations
- a feedback meeting with parents/carers and school staff to give advice about appropriate AT provision
- short-term loan of AT equipment (if appropriate)
- a short monitoring visit to review equipment loaned.

Please see diagram on page 8-9 for full details of the Cognition & Learning Team Assistive Technology Pathway.
**Equipment loan**

The Cognition & Learning Team operate a small library of assistive technology aids to be loaned to schools on a short-term basis for trial and evaluation.

Examples of equipment available for short-term loan include:

- Laptops
- Touchscreen devices and tablets
- Eyegaze device
- Alternative keyboards e.g. Big Keys, Kid Glove
- Alternative mouse device e.g. rollerball, joystick
- Switches
- Switch interfaces
- Specialist software to access the curriculum, enhance learning and support the recording of written work.
**Costs**

The Cognition & Learning Team is part of the SEND & Inclusion Service and is a traded service. The cost of an Assistive Technology Assessment is currently £350. This includes a full assessment with the child or young person, a comprehensive written report, a feedback meeting with staff and parents/carers, a short-term loan of equipment (if appropriate) and a short monitoring visit (if appropriate).

Many children and young people, particularly those with high-tech equipment, will require on-going support and advice. Additional or continued assistive technology input can be given at a cost of £175 per ½ day session.

Where a child or young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), schools can include the cost of assistive technology input by itemising it on an individual’s costed provision map. If required, such input can also be included in a child or young person’s EHCP after discussions with the parents/carers, SENCO, AIT for Assistive Technology and other appropriate professionals, including the child or young person’s SEND, Looked After Children & Vulnerable Groups Caseworker.

**Contact**

To discuss your school’s and/or child/young person’s assistive technology needs contact:

Julie Brown, AIT for Assistive Technology
☎ 03000 263 333
[Cognitionandlearning@durham.gov.uk](mailto:Cognitionandlearning@durham.gov.uk)
Feedback from schools, parents and pupils has been extremely positive

I find writing easy to do on a laptop.  Year 5 Pupil

I would just like to say a huge thanks for coming out to see me at school and go over your findings with me. Thank you again.  Parent

Delighted with the outcome. Excited to get going and hopefully a laptop will help my son.  Parent

I love the iPad. It says the words when you’re not sure.  Year 6 Pupil

Really useful input was given. It is very helpful to receive practical advice on how we can effectively meet the needs of our pupils.  Primary School SENCO

The feedback meeting was invaluable. The advice means we have a very real way forward for Joshua, it’s great.  Class teacher

I prefer a laptop to a tablet cos I like to use the actual keyboard not a touchscreen.  Y9 Pupil

A thorough assessment was undertaken. The teacher had a good rapport with the student. A comprehensive report was received and an effective follow-up meeting with parents took place. Many thanks.  Secondary School SENCO
Training

Initial training on how to use recommended equipment will be given to key members of school staff and parents/carers (if appropriate) as part of the assessment process featured in Package 1 from the Cognition & Learning Team. Further assistive technology training can be requested by schools via Package 3 and/or Package 4 from the Cognition & Learning Team.

Package 3: Bespoke School Support

The Cognition & Learning Team offer assistive technology input which is bespoke to each individual school. This may include; school development work, workshops, coaching and personalised support with assistive technology equipment. Schools are not restricted to one half day and can choose as many ½ day sessions as they would like at a cost of £175 per ½ day of input.

Package 4: In-School Training

The Cognition & Learning Team also offer whole school assistive technology training tailored to each individual school. This may include training on specific software such as; Clicker 7, Docs Plus, InPrint 3, CoWriter etc. £500 for full day, £350 for ½ day. Prices cover for up to 20 participants (over 20 participants, additional £5 per person).

Schools should complete the appropriate section(s) of the Cognition & Learning Team Referral Form available from www.countydurhamfamilies.info/cognitionandlearning

Centrally held training

The Cognition & Learning Team also offer centrally held training at the Education Development Centre at Spennymoor for Clicker 7 and InPrint 3 software. Full course details and booking information can be found in the team’s training booklet available from www.countydurhamfamilies.info/cognitionandlearning

Clicker 7 - Full day course £155 (includes lunch + published guidebook)
InPrint 3 - ½ day course £75
# COGNITION & LEARNING TEAM

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT) PATHWAY

### RECOGNISING NEED

**POSSIBLE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY NEEDS FOR CHILD/YOUNG PERSON (CYP) ARE IDENTIFIED**

I. At any time during the academic year by parents/carers and/or professionals involved with CYP e.g. Occupational Therapist (OT), Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT), Educational Psychologist (EP), school staff etc.

II. During the Statutory assessment process.

### REFERRAL TO SEND & INCLUSION SERVICE

Referral made to the Cognition & Learning Team (C&L Team) requesting AT input using Package 1 of the Cognition & Learning Team Referral Form.

### MULTI-DISCIPLINARY ASSESSMENT

**ASSESSMENT**

I. If required, Advisory Inclusion Teacher (AIT) from C&L Team will gather preliminary information from other relevant professionals/parents/carers and arrange a multi-disciplinary assessment team.

II. AIT will contact educational setting to arrange assessment visit.

III. School staff to notify parents/carers of planned assessment visit.

IV. AIT will visit educational setting (with multi-disciplinary assessment team, if applicable) and undertake an AT assessment with CYP.

### WRITTEN REPORT

A report detailing AT assessment outcomes and recommendations will be provided to the educational setting (and multi-disciplinary assessment team, if applicable). Educational setting is required to provide a copy of the report to parents/carers.

### FEEDBACK

A follow up visit will take place within the educational setting to feedback outcomes and recommendations to staff and parents/carers.

### TRIAL OF EQUIPMENT

**SHORT-TERM LOAN**

If appropriate, AT equipment will be loaned to educational settings on a short term basis for trial and evaluation. Roles & responsibilities of the loan equipment will be agreed and Local Authority (LA) paperwork signed.

### REVIEW

AIT will visit educational setting to monitor and review use of AT equipment on loan.
### OUTCOMES OF TRIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 STAGE</th>
<th>EQUIPMENT NOT APPROPRIATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternative strategies will be suggested.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equipment on short-term loan is returned to the C&amp;L Team.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further advice/input can be given (if required) at a cost of £175 per ½ day session.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 STAGE</th>
<th>EQUIPMENT IS APPROPRIATE AND CYP MEETS CRITERIA OF:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I. CYP has an EHCP or Statement of SEND</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II. a communication difficulty and/or</td>
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<td></td>
<td>III. physical difficulty.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AIT to make an application to the Central AT Fund for approval to purchase AT equipment for CYP.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Educational setting will be asked to contribute to this cost.</td>
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<tr>
<th>4 STAGE</th>
<th>EQUIPMENT IS APPROPRIATE AND CYP DOES NOT MEET CRITERIA:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advice is given as to where equipment can be purchased.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational setting will be expected to purchase the equipment for CYP.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equipment on short-term loan is returned to the C&amp;L Team.</td>
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### LONG-TERM LOAN ARRANGEMENTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 STAGE</th>
<th>PROCUREMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the decision to purchase AT equipment is approved the LA will purchase the equipment using Durham County Council procurement procedures. Equipment is</td>
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<tr>
<th>5 STAGE</th>
<th>LONG-TERM LOAN</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AIT will visit educational setting and loan equipment for CYP on a long-term basis. Roles and responsibilities are agreed and LA paperwork is signed once more.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcomes/targets for CYP are set.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On-going support will be required at a cost of £175 per ½ day session. This should be itemised on a CYP’s costed provision map/EHCP.</td>
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<tr>
<th>5 STAGE</th>
<th>MONITORING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational setting staff review CYP’s progress regularly as part of the SEND assess, plan, do, review process.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AIT from C&amp;L Team will give on-going support at a cost of £175 per ½ day session. This should be itemised on CYP’s costed provision map/EHCP.</td>
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<tr>
<th>5 STAGE</th>
<th>TRANSITION</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If CYP moves to a new educational setting, staff must contact C&amp;L Team to ensure provision of AT equipment moves with the CYP to their new educational setting.</td>
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<tr>
<th>5 STAGE</th>
<th>RETURNS</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If equipment is no longer required it should be returned to the C&amp;L Team.</td>
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