

Statement of Special Educational Needs - Parental Report

Prepared by the parents of Zoe

Please find below our comments under the prescribed headings as requested.

Section A – Progress

General Health

Zoe generally eats well although she remains a very slow eater and can require considerable help and encouragement to finish her meals. However if Zoe is eating her favourite meal, for example a roast, Zoe will finish her meal first and then attempt to take food from other plates. Zoe usually sleeps well but can often take a long time to get to sleep in the first place. Most nights Zoe sleeps through but can sometimes be heard talking and playing during the night. Zoe seems to be quite healthy but always appears very pale and tired which calls into question how much quality sleep she is actually getting. For the last couple of months Zoe has been complaining of a headache on the right hand side of her head and also a toothache on the same side, in the upper jaw. We have taken Zoe to see our family doctor and a dentist and neither can identify any cause for this apparent discomfort. Zoe does still have her ongoing problem of constipation which has been managed with Lactulose for the last two years.

We have been giving Zoe the Omega 3 / 6 Fish Oil supplement Eye Q since the 29th of August which Zoe is happy to take. It would most likely be premature to state if there has been any noticeable improvement in Zoe's concentration or learning ability as a result of taking this supplement.

Since the summer we have observed that Zoe is showing behavioural traits which look to us like a form of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Zoe has recently developed a fear of certain foods such as any jam with pips, tomatoes and new potatoes. Zoe cannot bear for any of these foods to be anywhere near her or on the table. It will make Zoe very uncomfortable if another person at the table is eating them and she will not start her meal until they have finished.

In addition Zoe is developing habits pertaining to her limbs, for example if Zoe brushes a hand against an object or another person, she will ensure that she performs the same action with the opposite hand. This is the same with her feet and we have also observed increasing behaviour whereby she will blink rapidly and her inappropriate vocal sounds are increasing in frequency. Zoe will indicate distress by constantly repeating a reassuring mantra to herself "its ok" or "its ok Zoe". A recent example of this was encountered when Zoe would not get on an orange bus, this may be because the bus is normally always yellow.

Physical Skills

Zoe's gross motor skills appear to be age appropriate and she is able to climb carefully and reasonably confidently. However she cannot pedal and steer a bicycle at the same time. Zoe enjoys going out for walks and riding her scooter, providing we stick to the same route and she does not encounter any dogs. Zoe still has problems with her fine motor skills and still remains unable to hold a pencil or knife and fork correctly.

Self Help

Zoe is able to dress herself if time permits but will struggle to put on her tights or socks.

Getting clothes on the right way round can also be a problem but she will now try to do this herself. Zoe still needs help with toileting, brushing her teeth and showering.

Zoe is very untidy and will not put her toys away unless specifically instructed to do so. If we remind Zoe and give her a series of individual tasks she will tidy her room quite well.

Zoe likes to have a schedule at home which we do have and maintain as best we can, although with two older brothers in the house this can sometimes be difficult to stick to.

Communication

Zoe's communicative ability varies from day to day. Zoe is able to make observations and share them with us. However, she rarely asks for a drink or something to eat. If we ask her if she would like something she is able to provide a reply. There can be a significant problem with Zoe's answers as she will often say yes or no and actually mean the opposite. An example of this is where we can ask her if she would like a drink. Zoe will answer "No" and promptly consume a drink if one is left nearby. Zoe is able to describe something in response to being asked. Zoe continues to communicate her needs by taking the hand of an adult and moving it towards an item she requires.

Zoe does not volunteer information about her day at school but if prompted she may tell us about something she has enjoyed such as swimming or soft play. Zoe does not join in with conversations although she will talk on the phone if the person on the other end says what Zoe expects to hear.

Playing at home

Zoe rarely sits down to play alone with something but will sit down with her books which she enjoys very much. She also enjoys music and audio books although she will play some parts repeatedly if allowed.

Zoe has recently started wrapping her baby doll up and putting her to bed. In addition she has taken a large hat and cloak and informed us that she is the Fat Controller (from Thomas the Tank Engine). In addition, Zoe has started to dress her dolls. With help, she will enact the story of Goldilocks and the three bears using small puppets and her dolls house.

In the summer of this year, we had a visit from our (Speech & Language Therapist) who kindly compiled an activity book for Zoe which contains images we had taken of virtually all of Zoe's toys and categorised those images into groups of creative, interactive, musical, solitary play, symbolic play and role play. We have called this Zoe's "choosing book".

Zoe is able to sit to task but still has problems with solitary play and continues to require adult supervision.

Relationships

Zoe loves her brothers and enjoys making them laugh. This extends to their friends who are all very understanding. Zoe enjoys visitors, especially adults and also likes going to see people. We are unable to let Zoe out to play with other children outside of our own back garden and in fact, this has never happened since Zoe was born. The other children in the area are largely using bicycles and skates etc, but will acknowledge her when they meet her.

Behaviour at home

Zoe is usually well behaved at home but there are times when she screams and shouts. This is probably in frustration with what she is doing or if she does not want to do something.

However Zoe is very affectionate and loves a cuddle. Zoe usually does what is asked of her and fits in with the rest of the family although she will cope better if she has some warning hence the need for a schedule at home.

At school

Zoe does not mention other children's names at school unless they have been told off or have cried. Zoe does mention the teachers and Learning Support Assistants and she seems to be happy at school. Zoe has now settled down on the taxi again after a particularly bad spell.

Zoe's reading is generally good although we are not convinced that her comprehension matches her reading ability. Whilst she will read at home, she is reluctant to answer questions. Having her Neo computer has made a real difference with her work such as literacy. We do not think

that Zoe enjoys having to sit down and work and having read the booklet on “How to help my child achieve” we don’t feel that the majority of the National Curriculum is appropriate for Zoe because of her inability to apply context to learning.

We do feel very strongly that Zoe has benefited from the small group work in the DSP with numeracy and literacy. We feel that the staff have been helpful with recognising where Zoe’s strengths lie and what she enjoys the most, for example swimming.

We also appreciate how very helpful and approachable the staff have been. This help has extended far beyond the classroom and we both feel that we can look to the school for help and guidance with parenting Zoe. We feel that Zoe feels safe and secure at school which is of primary concern to us.

The home school diary is a lifeline between the school and us as parents and it’s value can never be underestimated. With Zoe’s inability to communicate this is her voice.

Section B – Support for the next 12 months

Zoe will continue to require assistance with self help, communication and peer interaction. In the coming months Zoe will need the same level of support with school work.

The only issue which we as her parents would like to discuss and explore is the appropriateness of the national curriculum for Zoe’s developmental needs.

We do not feel that Zoe is in the wrong school and quite the opposite applies as we are certain that the staff are doing all they can to help Zoe. Our concerns are the same as last year in that we are mindful of the need to focus heavily upon life skills.

We must bear in mind the very echoic nature of Zoe’s speech and be objective when considering whether a lesson has had any meaning to Zoe as her repetition of subject matter does not indicate comprehension and understanding.

We would like to fully discuss and explore all options and we would appreciate an appointment which allows sufficient time for this to take place.

Section C – Your child’s views

We do not feel that Zoe would benefit from attending the meeting.