

GAT SEND Magazine

‘Every Child, in Every Academy, Every Day’

Issue 1, Summer 2024



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Welcome to the first issue of GAT SEND magazine.

The aim of this publication is to collate SEND ‘hot topics’, research, guidance and information that the GAT network has been considering recently in an easily digestible format.

We hope you find it useful and we welcome your contributions for future editions.



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[SEND Network Share Point can be found here](#)

Please note embedded links will only work in the e-version of this publication.

Reflective SEND Support at GAT

We provide regular opportunities for all staff to collaborate and learn so that they can continually improve their practice in supporting children with SEND. These opportunities include:

- **SENDCo networks**
- **SEND conference**
- **Spotlight sessions**
- **Professional development pathways for SENDCos and aspiring SENDCOs**

Our SEND support programme is aligned to the wider trust professional development offer to ensure that developing a firm foundation of high quality, inclusive teaching is always our priority.

Colleagues identify that the areas listed to the right are key issues in which they wish to develop further expertise.

A rise in the number of complex students in mainstream classrooms	An increase in the number of pupils in mainstream classrooms exhibiting neurodiverse thinking patterns
An intensification of communication difficulties and challenges with attention, particularly noted in the early years.	An escalation in the numbers, discussions and unease around SEMH



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Revisiting the SEND CoP

The SEND Code of Practice follows on from the The Children and Families Act (2014) and is the statutory guidance for organisations that work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. It sets out duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations, and it applies to England.

Chapter 6 specifically applies to schools, explaining the actions mainstream schools should take to meet their duties.

Actions recommended include;

Ensure that all pupils with SEND are on the SEN register/record.

Note the provision they are receiving that is additional or different from that made for pupils without SEND.

Consider whether this provision will enable pupils to receive the best possible outcomes.

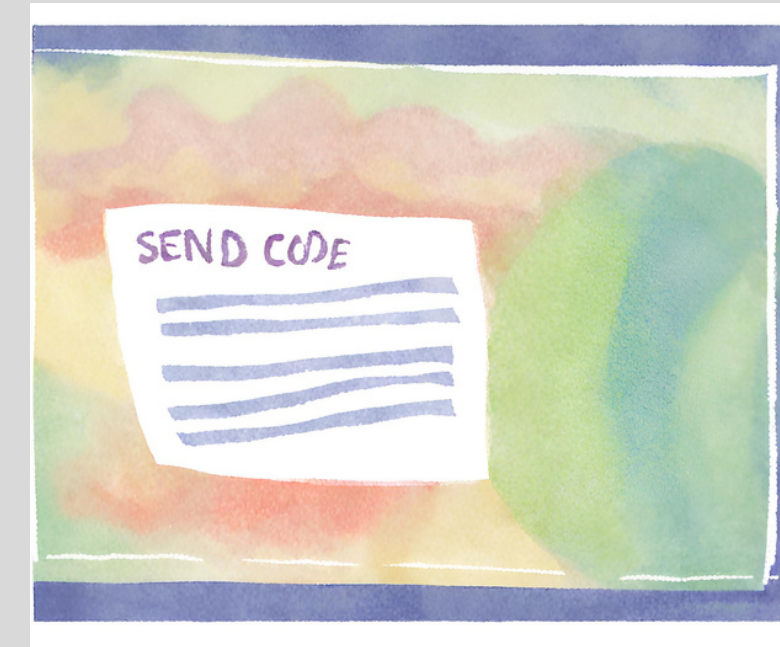
Consider whether any further support from the local authority is necessary to achieve this.

Why not have a read of the NASEN mini guide here

<https://nasen.org.uk/resources/send-code-practice-0-25-years>

GAT colleagues may also like to our session on the Social Model of Disability here

[Social Model Spotlight Session](#)



The key guidance for teachers is that you are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in your class(es), including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.




You are also entitled to training to support the development of ‘high-quality, differentiated teaching, every day in all classes and that specialist provision builds on and feeds into what is being taught in class.’


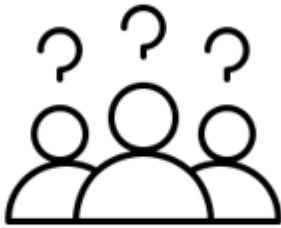
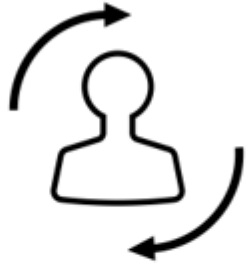
In GAT our focus is on enabling high quality inclusive teaching as a standard approach to provision - speak with your SENDCo or CPD lead if you feel you require support in this area.






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Primary Principles of High Quality Inclusive Teaching

Principle 1: Behaviour and Relationships	Principle 2: High Expectations	Principle 3: Explaining and Modelling
		
High standards of behaviour and positive relationships mean all pupils feel valued and safe and can learn in a calm and orderly environment.	High expectations and high levels of challenge and support help all pupils to achieve their full potential.	Clear explanations and models ensure pupils learn new knowledge and skills effectively, including how to be successful.

Principle 4: Practice and Rehearsal	Principle 5: Questioning	Principle 6: Adaptive & Responsive Teaching
		
Practice and rehearsal help to cement new knowledge and skills into the long-term memory and allow pupils to complete tasks independently.	Questioning is essential to identify prior knowledge, assess learning, adapt teaching, and consolidate and extend learning.	Adaptive and responsive teaching meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND, and ensures teachers respond to pupil learning.

Principle 7: Effective Feedback	Principle 8: Retrieval and Review	Principle 9: Teacher Knowledge
		
Effective feedback is crucial to pupil progress, cementing learning and avoiding misconceptions.	Review, including spaced practice, retrieval practice and revisiting, strengthens long-term memory and retention.	Teacher knowledge underpins all elements of effective teaching and learning.

The Primary Learning Assurance Board, have worked collaboratively on a set of 9 principles to underpin ‘High Quality Inclusive Teaching’ for use across all our primary academies. GAT colleagues can take a look at these principles in more details [here](#)

[GAT Principles of High Quality Inclusive Teaching Wider Information](#)







Speak with your line manager or CPD lead if you want to find out more.

Secondary Principles that Drive Learning

The Secondary Education Assurance Board is a body of skilled practitioners, who drive the direction of learning across our secondary academies. Our skilled practitioners are determined to ensure our pupils leave with academic qualifications and wider skills, characteristics, and experiences, which enable them to lead successful and healthy lives. The purpose of the principles was to provide an overarching framework agreed by the academies which emphasises effective practices to deliver a high-quality education for pupils.

Speak with your line manager or Teaching and Learning lead if you want to find out more.

More Detail Here

High Quality Inclusive Teaching	Curriculum	Lesson Planning	Adaptive Teaching	Literacy	Assessment for and of Learning
					
High quality teaching promotes inclusivity, challenge, and aspirations, recognising making mistakes as part of a learning process. Teaching should be ambitious for all and will meet the needs of the individual learners.	The curriculum decides what pupils should learn to help them flourish through a framework that develops and evaluate pupils' knowledge and understanding at every stage.	High quality planning is inclusive to all pupils, regardless of their starting point. Planning anticipates needs and misconceptions and is engaging and ambitious for all and may be adapted in response to assessments and/or checking of learning.	Adaptive teaching means teaching is appropriate for all pupils in their classroom, responding to the learning and then adjusting the teaching to better match the individual pupil's strength or need.	Literacy is key to learning across all subjects, and a strong predictor of outcomes in later life. It is therefore essential that all pupils are provided with carefully planned opportunities to develop both their disciplinary literacy as well as their general literacy.	Assessment is integral to learning and teaching; it is the crucial process which drives learning. As we identify what it is that a pupils can or cannot do, we then teach gaps in knowledge, thus enabling the pupil to know more, do more and remember more.



‘A’ Trilogy- Autism, ADHD and Anxiety

Autism, ADHD and Anxiety are often identified as co-occurring diagnoses. There are differences between them, yet the barriers created by them often overlap extensively. Another example of why we need to ‘get it right’ for everyone - as the benefits across the classroom can be huge, with ultimately no one losing.

Dr Jacqui Rodgers, Senior Lecturer in Clinical Psychology at Newcastle University (2018) notes that at least half of autistic individuals experience anxiety. She explains that this is usually fuelled by four key areas; difficulty recognising emotions of self and others; sensory sensitivities; difficulty with uncertainty; and performance anxiety. Many of which are also areas that will be captured in pupil voice for our young people with SEND across the board, and beyond. Unpicking them is therefore extremely important. How often are you and your team reflecting on these four areas? Why not take a moment to put yourself in the shoes of the pupils in your classroom. Performance anxiety, for example, can be linked to the amount you role model overcoming failure in your modelling, or simply how you respond to individuals when their progress is not where you expected.

Ravleen Kaur (2021) discusses ways to cope with ADHD in her writing, it is interesting to link the ‘building of self esteem’ also being an area here too. Her top tips for parents include rewards, praise, structure, play and exercise. All key components of a successful ability to attend to the learning at hand. Those sensory circuits, brain or movement breaks can be absolutely essential for our learners with ASD/ADHD/Anxiety and further SEND, but are also very useful for all of the pupils in the room.

Rachael Wise (2021) shares her top tips for the classroom to support in this area. She links this directly back to maintaining a distraction free and organised classroom. She particularly references keeping areas clutter free, clearly defined and utilising schedules. When you reflect on these simple tips, you can see how they support the sensory needs and difficulties with uncertainty. Once again, we can see there is no loss for all students in having these systems set up. When is the last time you reviewed your environment? Can you have a declutter any time soon?

References; <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/professional-practice/anxiety-autism>, <https://psychcentral.com/adhd/best-tips-for-coping-with-adhd?scrllybrkr=1d1cb7ec>, <https://educationandbehavior.com/how-to-set-up-the-classroom-for-students-with-autism/>

GAT Colleagues might like to explore the Spotlight Sessions on ADHD and Autism here:

[GAT ADHD Spotlight](#)

[GAT ASD Spotlight](#)

Author: Amy Baxter, Senior Education Adviser, SEND



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Embedding visuals

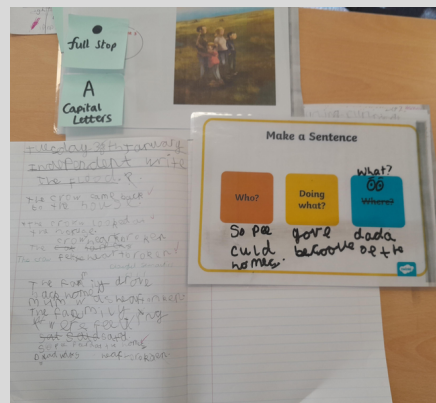
At Seathorne Primary Academy, we strategically use visuals across the school to support all learners, not only with their own communication but also to help structure days and communicate changes. Our approach is consistent throughout nursery to Year 6, using real life photos where possible and making sure that visuals are easily accessible.

We learn Makaton throughout the school, introducing a few themed words a week during assembly and most staff have Makaton signs and symbols on their lanyards. All children are encouraged to use Makaton signs in school and all staff, including those at lunch time, have been eager to learn along with the children.

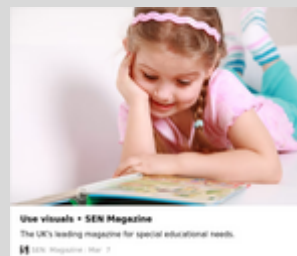
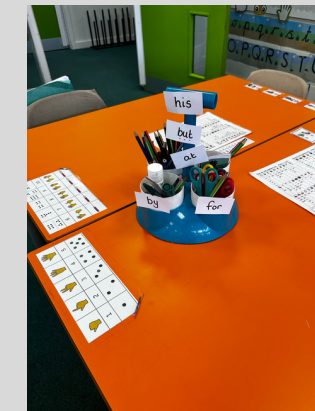
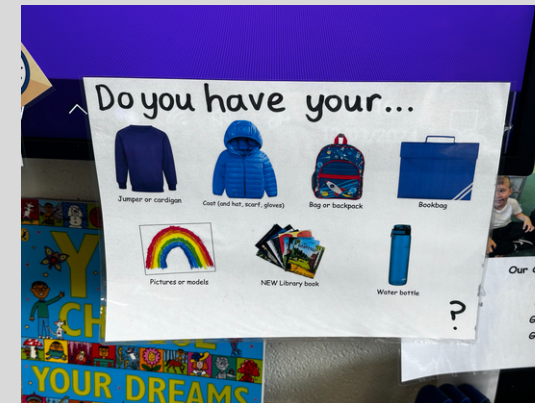
Visual timetables form a consistent approach to communicate daily routines and any changes. All classes have their own visual timetables on display which are updated daily. Some are personalised to meet the needs of individual children and will include their individual tasks such as sensory circuits.

Now and next boards are personalised to each child where needed. We use real life pictures where possible and often give children limited choices in their ‘next’ to support independence and allow them ownership. Where appropriate these are portable, and cards can be taken to a different room to remind a child what they will be doing after their current activity has finished.

Personalised visuals are used around school, often on tables and display boards depending on the needs of learners. Some children have key words or sounds stuck to their tables while others may have learning prompts on a display. Our displays are updated regularly, showing links to prior skills and learning and sharing how children can build up new knowledge. Children are familiar in using these boards to support their learning as well as equipment around each classroom.



Academy staff have also utilised colourful semantics training to scaffold and enhance literacy sessions. The photo on the right shows a young man's independent efforts after being taught to use this scaffold.



The consistent provision and ongoing review to the provision seen here has created a calm working environment for all, supportive of many of our pupils with SEND, including many with communication and interaction or social emotional and mental health as their main area of need.

GAT colleagues can watch the PD session on colourful semantics here

Author: Rianna Hunt, SENDco, Seathorne Primary Academy



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Emotionally based school avoidance

What is it?

Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA) refers to a situation where a child or young person experiences severe difficulty attending school due to emotional factors. This can lead to prolonged absences from school.

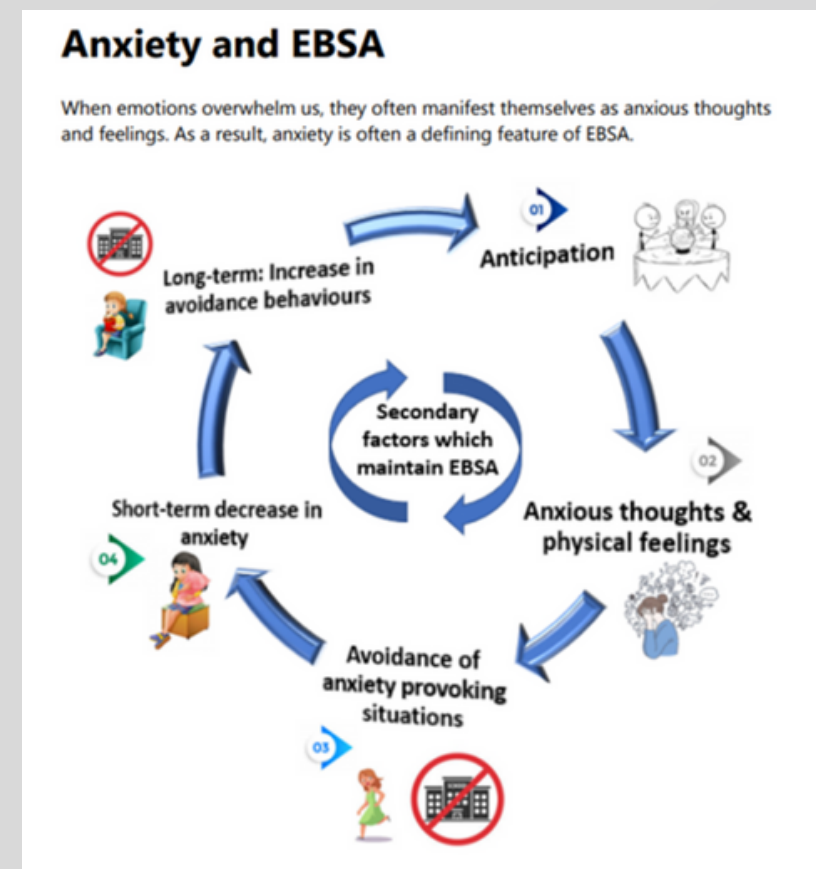
What could it look like?

It will look different for every child.

Persistent challenges in attending school over a period of time due to negative feelings Avoidance not truancy Social, Emotional and Mental Health factors: Emotional and physical distress Anxiety disorders Phobias Depression Separation anxiety COVID-19 anxiety.

GAT colleagues - read our more in depth update on this area [here](#)

Full EBSA Article - GAT



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Disadvantaged pupils and SEND-the impact of poverty

More than half of pupils with SEND across our Trust are eligible for the pupil premium grant. This grant is available to support children from families with very low incomes.

A significant number of children living in poverty are also experiencing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). These can include violence in the home, parents who may have mental health challenges, alcohol abuse and instability.

Where children are facing more than four ACEs statistics indicate concerning potential longer term impacts -see infographic on the right.



Children in such circumstances often exhibit behaviours that are actually coping mechanisms to manage their immediate environment. (See also page 14) These are often about:

- Learning to survive on a daily basis
- Use available resources to mitigate or tolerate the adversity
- Establish a sense of safety and control
- Try to make sense of their experiences

Pupils with SEND and living with ACEs often require additional support with their SEMH and Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).



Understanding how the brain behaves

A child living in poverty and experiencing ACEs can suffer from impaired executive functioning which is associated with the pre-frontal cortex. Brain scans of children living in severe poverty also reveal reduced brain volumes.

Executive Functioning contributes to children's ability to plan, organise, prioritise and manage their emotions. Where children's executive functions are impaired, they tend to more readily experience an 'acute stress response' ('flight or fight'). In these circumstances, hormones such as cortisol and adrenalin are released from the adrenal glands which results in the child having a raised heart rate, increased blood pressure, dilated pupils, rapid breathing rate and sometimes physical shaking. A child can stay in this state from 20-60 minutes.

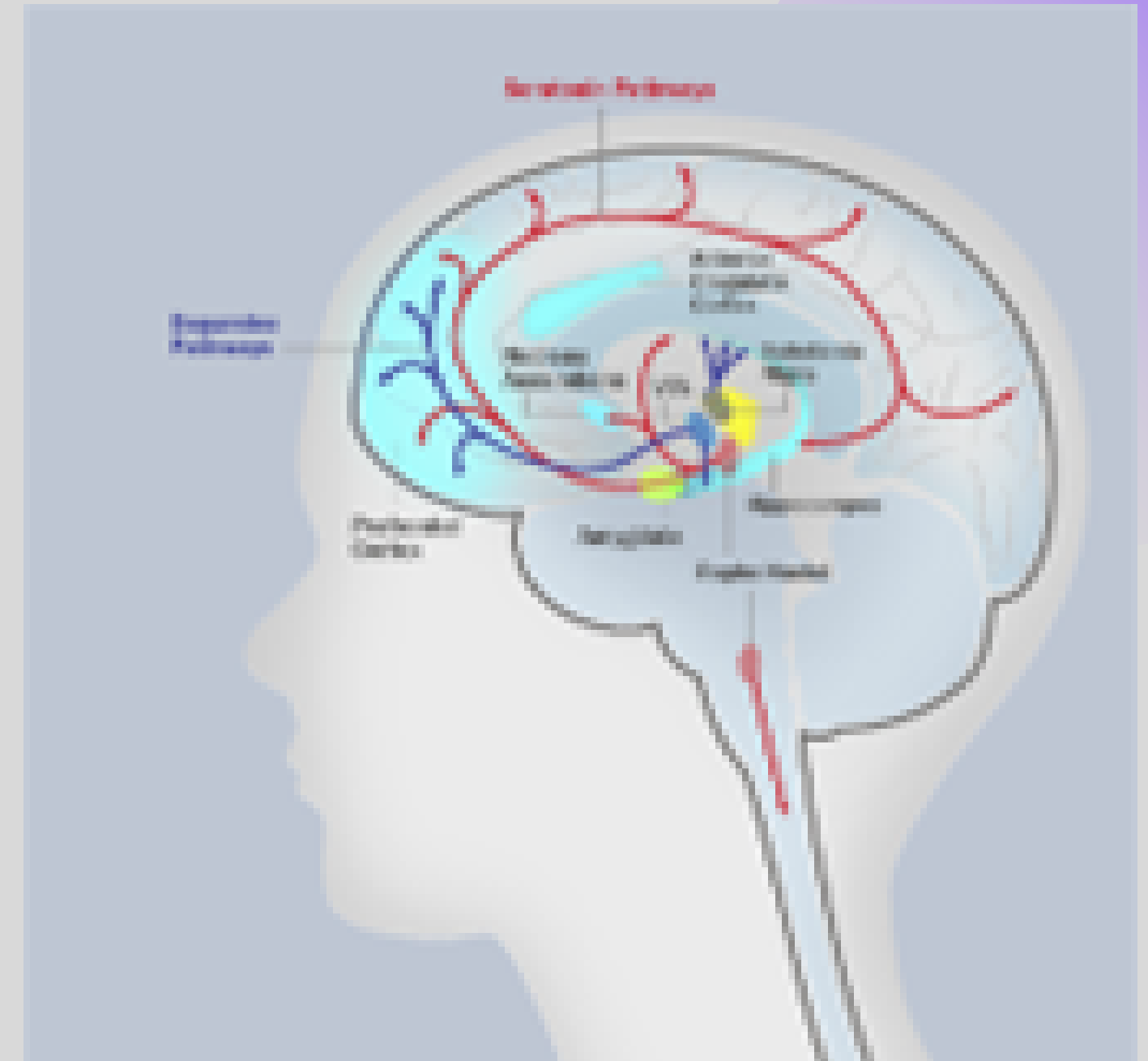
See also: Family Poverty Affects the Rate of Human Infant Brain Growth - PMC (nih.gov)

It may be helpful for adults working with children living in these conditions to be aware of:
Best Start in Speech, Language and Communication: Supporting evidence
(publishing.service.gov.uk)

EEF | Communication and Language (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

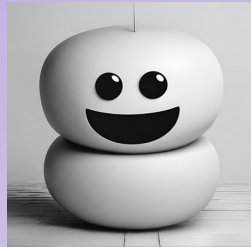
EEF | Personal Social and Emotional Development (educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)

Improving Social and Emotional Learning in Primary Schools | EEF
(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)



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It's Ofsted, no need to panic!



When you get that call, stop and breathe. Easier said than done, I admit, but take stock and remember to be positive.

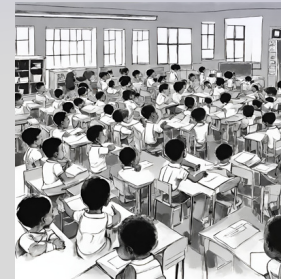
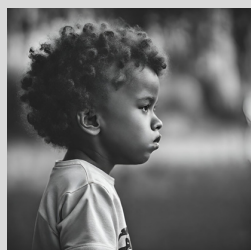
We use Insight for all things SEND. This helped as learning plans were easily accessible and provisions clearly outlined. Just check you're happy with how they look; our learning plans were in the process of being updated as it was the end of term. I didn't rush to ask teachers to complete them; just tell the inspectors. Explain your processes and be confident in how you do things as this does differ from school to school.



Have a SEND in a nutshell document; this doesn't have to be anything too detailed, just an overview of what SEND looks like at your school. The one for my school gives percentages of SEND against national average, the percentages for each area of need, what SEND attendance looks like, a summary of the support in place, our strengths and key priorities. Having this to hand helped, especially when they started asking me for data.

1.5	13	61	4.8	9/0	114	117	38
11.4	213	213	10	164	416	46	13
0.7	2	304	4.3	10	6	7	2.3
5.3	7	321	266	304	47	47	2.5
3.4	20	11415	5.6	307	37	12	38
5.3	16	174	04	159	127	10	6
10	05	174	40	100	127	04	15
4.2	00	01110	14	92	196	27	47
44	57	24	70	84	12	6	117
37	10	1110	710	31	20	12	17
16.7	76	6113	15	922	674	3	30
50	6	121	440	714	133	78	17
13	13	137	11	11	11	11	11
16	17	158	137	11	11	11	11
46	07	16	190	141	22	704	14

There will be a child that will be playing on your mind when it comes to their behaviour. If, like me, you're on a learning walk and a child is struggling, just talk through what support etc is in place for that child (not in front of the child) and what their next steps are. Be confident in yourself that you are doing the right thing by that child, and following a graduated response.



Interventions – these are all part and parcel of the job we do. Just be able to articulate how interventions support a child and how they do not affect the curriculum offer; you could even explain how it may enhance the offer, e.g. use of Word Aware for pre teaching subject specific vocabulary.

You do not need to know every target for every child on the SEND register. If an inspector asks what targets are in place, feel confident to refer to learning plans or EHCs. It is the teacher's responsibility for writing appropriate targets, not yours. Be confident in your quality assurance cycles.



You may get asked to comment on SEND and the local authority you work in. As a professional it is important to explain what you do to ensure you are still giving the children within your school the best offer, including how you might be meeting needs present due to the lack of resources from other services.

Finally, be confident in the work you do. The SENDco role is a tough role in any school, but you know your stuff and you know your children. Say it with confidence even if you don't feel it! Reach out to other SENDCos in the trust or in your local area, it's surprising when you talk to others that the challenges you face aren't as unique as you first thought.



Author: Rebecca Clements, SENDCo
Woodvale Primary Academy



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Using your SEND Register effectively

I have recently written some advice around utilising SEND Registers as analytical tools which you can find in **SEN Magazine Issue 129, Pages 17 and 18**. You can find more about the magazine [here](#).

What are the main tips?

Use your existing systems to maintain, export and analyse your SEND Register - don't duplicate the places you store it - this only adds a layer of confusion and information being out of date somewhere.

Use technology - such as excel -to help with your analysis. A simple filtering column can show you a lot of information in terms of patterns and trends.

Make the register accessible to all parties and share it regularly - we reap the benefits of working as a team around our children.

Ask all the questions you can think of, if you are not using the information to ask questions and inform changes to provision, what's are you tracking all this information for?

Don't be afraid to make some changes based on your analysis. Early identification is powerful and changing your action plans based on it is much needed.















Update, analyse, discuss and change your provision regularly and consistently to see impact.

If you would like some support with maximising the use of your SEND Register please contact me directly.

Author: Amy Baxter, Senior Education Adviser, SEND



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 <p>Maximising the use of TAs- train the trainer session</p> <p>Wed, Apr 17, 12:30 PM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>	 <p>Primary SENDco Network E</p> <p>Mon, Apr 22, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Newark Hill</p>	 <p>Aspiring SENDco - 1 of 5</p> <p>Wed, Apr 24, 9:30 AM</p> <p>TEAMs- link in description</p>	 <p>SEND Spotlight 9 - Sunshine Support - Masking and Fawning</p> <p>Wed, Apr 24, 3:00 PM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>
 <p>Primary SENDco Network A</p> <p>Mon, Apr 29, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Hazel Lays Academy</p>	 <p>Primary SENDco Network B</p> <p>Tue, Apr 30, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Queensmead</p>	 <p>Primary SENDco Network C</p> <p>Wed, May 1, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Skagness Infants and Juniors</p>	 <p>Primary SENDco Network D</p> <p>Thu, May 2, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Woodvale</p>
 <p>Aspiring SENDco - 2 of 5</p> <p>Tue, May 7, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>	 <p>SEND Spotlight 10- Down's Syndrome</p> <p>Tue, May 7, 3:30 PM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>	 <p>Aspiring SENDco - 3 of 5</p> <p>Thu, May 23, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>	 <p>Aspiring SENDco - 4 of 5</p> <p>Mon, Jun 10, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>
 <p>SEND Spotlight 11 - Dyslexia</p> <p>Wed, Jun 19, 3:30 PM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>	 <p>Aspiring SENDco- 5 of 5</p> <p>Thu, Jun 27, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Teams - link in description</p>		

Check the SEND Networks Sharepoint here

Don't forget to check the SEND Support Professional Development Offer in the SEND Network. Speak with your SENDCo for access.



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If you would like to contribute to a future issue of our GAT SEND Magazine please send your initial pitch to amy.baxter@greenwoodacademies.org

We are looking for Curriculum and SEMH based content in the upcoming issues.