

March 2022

Safeguarding and SEND updates for colleagues



'Life in all its fullness'

This month's newsletter should be shared with principals, DSLs and their deputies, SENCOs (and deputy / assistant SENCOs), senior leaders and governors.

Upcoming briefing events

Brief outline of sessions on Tuesday 29th March 2022

The focus of the safeguarding briefing session in the morning of 29th March is about how to ensure that the strategic elements are not being missed – what to look for and how to look for it, things like lettings, agency staff, safer recruitment documentation, emergency evacuations, learning reviews etc. As always, our sessions are for DSLs and their deputies – we offer our sessions to both, as KCSIE is clear that all should be trained to the same level (this doesn't mean that they access the same sessions or trainings). This session would also be appropriate for any Principals, Chairs of LGBs and safeguarding link champions who are able to attend.

The focus of the SEND briefing session in the afternoon of 29th March is about evidencing the impact of SEMH and behaviour interventions as part of the graduated response. It is 'easy' or 'more clear cut' to evidence the impact of an intervention about phonics or about basic mathematical operations; however, how do we evidence the impact of a child working with a mental health support worker, or how do we evidence the impact of a child who accesses an anger management intervention, or who accesses CAMHS? How can we support these young people? This session would be appropriate for anyone with responsibility for SEND, behaviour, mental health, or triaging of emotional health and wellbeing interventions. It would also be appropriate for governors who may be called on to attend permanent exclusion committee meetings, as it may help to understand more about the purpose behind the graduated response for children with social, emotional and mental health needs.

The sessions on 29th March take place at the TST offices in Stafford – drinks will be available throughout the sessions. There is a coffee shop for anyone who wishes to purchase lunch if they are staying for the afternoon session as well as attending the morning session. Both events are for our primary and secondary colleagues.

To book on, please follow the link below:

[DSL & DDSL Spring Event | Bookitbee](#)

[SEND and Behaviour leads Spring Event | Bookitbee](#)

Reminder about the behaviour and exclusions consultation

Please be reminded that we are holding a meeting targeting Principals, Governors, SENCOs and Behaviour Leads to discuss the DfE consultation questions. There will be notes taken in the meeting with all notes shared so that, should you wish to respond, you will be able to copy and paste if you so desire. Please contact Megan (mitill@threespirestrust.org) to book to join the Teams meeting on Wednesday 9th March between 10 and 11:30am.

New safeguarding and child protection guidance shared in the past month

The NSPCC has issued new guidance about safeguarding considerations for children and young people getting changed in school. There is some attention given to transgender and non-binary children as well, which may be helpful for colleagues in schools and academies.

[safeguarding-considerations-for-changing-rooms.pdf \(nspcc.org.uk\)](#)

The House of Commons have published a document that covers all of the statutory documentation that a school must now have in relation to sexual harassment in schools and academies – please note that this is about adults as well as children. This is a super summary of all the directives, complete with the relevant legislation highlighted. I haven't felt the need to summarise, as it is excellent.

[CBP-8117.pdf \(parliament.uk\)](#)

The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH) has launched an initiative to enable schools to access research-informed, evidence-based knowledge and practice about current key issues around the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people. The programme includes: a series of webinars discussing the statutory relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) curriculum; and resources for teachers relating to mental health teaching themes in the RSHE framework. This would be a good resource to support the provision of high quality training for staff about RSHE topics.

[Improving research-informed practice in schools – ACAMH](#)

Amongst other elements, the Ofsted school inspection handbook has been updated to reflect their approach to harmful sexual behaviour. The summary of changes document highlights where changes have been made.

[School inspection handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

NSPCC Learning has published content to help professionals safeguard LGBTQ+ children and young people. This is one of a series of pages that highlight the specific vulnerabilities and safeguarding needs of different groups of children and young people. The content covers: safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people; adversities faced by LGBTQ+ children and young people; their increased risk of some forms of harm, taking an intersectional approach; supporting children and young people; and creating policies and procedures. The content also points to legislation.

[Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people | NSPCC Learning](#)

Ofsted has published a report looking at early help and local multi-agency responsiveness to meeting the needs of children, young people and their families. The research carried out by Research in Practice (RiP) reviewed government and agency guidance produced between 1989 and 2021 relating to the provision of early help; and reviewed key policy documents, inspection reports and parliamentary reports. The report covers: what is known about current early help provisions; debates in policy direction; and agency perspectives on early help.

[Early help: concepts, policy directions and multi-agency perspectives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

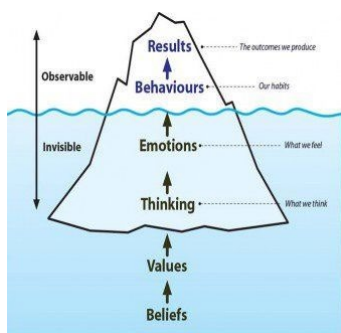
Strategy meetings for children or young people with complex needs

A reminder that you can request a strategy meeting from the DSS in order to review the steps that you have already taken and your planned next steps. In strategy meetings, we discuss the strengths and areas of concern, whilst exploring what needs to change and identifying possible next steps for the school or academy to take. Following the strategy meeting, you will receive a document that can be used to evidence part of the graduated response for the child or young person. Since January, 13 strategy meetings have been held – all have led to productive next steps. Please contact Sarah directly in order to request a strategy meeting about a student. Please allow 30-45 minutes per student – strategy meetings can be booked individually or in half-day blocks with up to 4 young people to be discussed. The focus of these discussions can be safeguarding, SEND or behaviour / inclusion.

How does a strategy discussion differ from 'seeking advice'?

In the event that you wish to seek advice, this can be done by phone, but the advice itself cannot be used as evidence towards the graduated response – it is much more an advisory phone call. In the event that you are building evidence for statutory assessment or a child / young person has received several days of suspensions in a half-term period, you may wish to request a (cost-free) strategy meeting in order to support your evidence building before seeking specialist advice.

Strategy meetings form part of your Trust share as core member schools. Strategy meetings can be booked in half-day blocks by associate member schools and are charged at a half-day rate.



Anger Iceberg

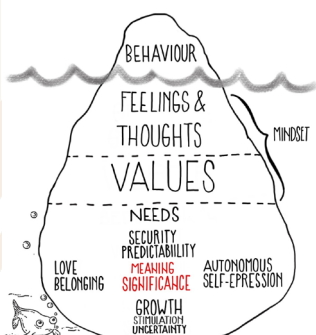
Icebergs are large pieces of ice found floating in the open ocean. What you can see from the surface can be misleading. Most of the iceberg is hidden below the water.

This is how anger works. Often when we are angry, there are other emotions hidden under the surface.

Angry


embarrassed, scared, grief, shame, tricked, overwhelmed, frustrated, depressed, disgusted, distrustful, grumpy, stressed, attacked, rejected, helpless, guilt, trapped, nervous, anxious, trauma, annoyed, exhausted, disrespected, unsure, envious, disappointed, lonely, offended, uncomfortable, worried, insecure, regret, hurt

The Gottman Institute



Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools – summary of recommendations

The EEF report, published in October 2021, can be found in full here: [EEF Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools Guidance Report.pdf](https://www.eef.org.uk/EEF-Special-Educational-Needs-in-Mainstream-Schools-Guidance-Report.pdf) (d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront.net) it is a good document to use hand-in-hand with Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good in order to promote opportunities which allow every child to flourish within your school or academy.



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

Summary of recommendations

<p>1</p> <p>Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils, without exception</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of your pupils and their needs</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Complement high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Work effectively with teaching assistants</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inclusive school removes barriers to learning and participation, provides an education that is appropriate to pupils' needs, and promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential for all pupils. Schools should: promote positive relationships, active engagement, and wellbeing for all pupils; ensure all pupils can access the best possible teaching; and adopt a positive and proactive approach to behaviour, as described in the EEF's Improving Behaviour in Schools guidance report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools should aim to understand individual pupil's learning needs using the graduated approach of the 'assess, plan, do, review' approach. Assessment should be regular and purposeful rather than a one-off event, and should seek input from parents and carers as well as the pupil themselves and specialist professionals. Teachers need to feel empowered and trusted to use the information they collect to make a decision about the next steps for teaching that child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To a great extent, good teaching for pupils with SEND is good teaching for all. Searching for a 'magic bullet' can distract teachers from the powerful strategies they often already possess. The research suggests a group of teaching strategies that teachers should consider emphasising for pupils with SEND. Teachers should develop a repertoire of these strategies they can use flexibly in response to the needs of all pupils. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — flexible grouping; — cognitive and metacognitive strategies; — explicit instruction; — using technology to support pupils with SEND; and — scaffolding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small-group and one-to-one interventions can be a powerful tool but must be used carefully. Ineffective use of interventions can create a barrier to the inclusion of pupils with SEND. High quality teaching should reduce the need for extra support, but it is likely that some pupils will require high quality, structured, targeted interventions to make progress. The intensity of intervention (from universal to targeted to specialist) should increase with need. Interventions should be carefully targeted through identification and assessment of need. Interventions should be applied using the principles of effective implementation described in the EEF's guidance report Using Evidence to Work: A School's Guide to Implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective deployment of teaching assistants (TAs) is critical. School leaders should pay careful attention to the roles of TAs and ensure they have a positive impact on pupils with SEND. TAs should supplement, not replace, teaching from the classroom teacher. The EEF's guidance report Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants provides detailed recommendations.

Report published 20th March 2020

eef.li/send

High quality teaching benefits pupils with SEND

The 'Five-a-day' principle



The research underpinning the EEF's guidance report 'Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools' indicates that supporting high quality teaching improves outcomes for pupils with SEND. Five specific approaches—the 'Five-a-day' indicated below—are particularly well-evidenced as having a positive impact. Teachers should develop a repertoire of these strategies, which they can use daily and flexibly in response to individual needs, using them as the starting point for classroom teaching for all pupils, including those with SEND.

1	Explicit instruction	<p><i>Teacher-led approaches with a focus on clear explanations, modelling and frequent checks for understanding. This is then followed by guided practice, before independent practice.</i></p>	
2	Cognitive and metacognitive strategies	<p><i>Managing cognitive load is crucial if new content is to be transferred into students' long-term memory. Provide opportunities for students to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning.</i></p>	
3	Scaffolding	<p><i>When students are working on a written task, provide a supportive tool or resource such as a writing frame or a partially completed example. Aim to provide less support of this nature throughout the course of the lesson, week or term.</i></p>	
4	Flexible grouping	<p><i>Allocate groups temporarily, based on current level of mastery. This could, for example, be a group that comes together to get some additional spelling instruction based on current need, before re-joining the main class.</i></p>	
5	Using technology	<p><i>Technology can be used by a teacher to model worked examples; it can be used by a student to help them to learn, to practice and to record their learning. For instance, you might use a class visualiser to share students' work or to jointly rework an incorrect model.</i></p>	

More information about finding better ways to support pupils with SEND, including these five principles and more specialist interventions, can be found in the EEF's guidance report '[Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools](#)'.



'SEND is the sole responsibility of the SENCo'

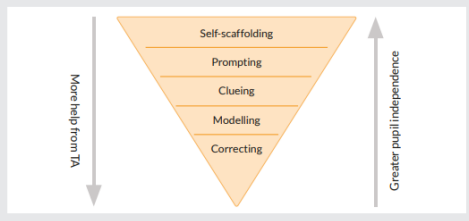
1 All teachers must have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. For every teacher, it is an integral part of planning and teaching effectively. Teachers should be supported to work effectively with teaching assistants and to ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, have access to high-quality teaching.

For example, if a new teacher is preparing for a new class in September, they may do some, or all, of the following:

- Develop a seating plan that considers peer dynamics and support, alongside specific needs.
- Ensure access to high quality learning materials; for example, manipulatives in maths.
- Co-planning with the TA to ensure that high-quality teaching is established for all.
- Personalised communication with the parents of pupils with SEND at the start of the school year.

'A Teaching Assistant (TA) is responsible for a child with SEND.'

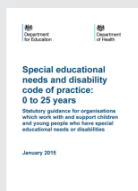
2 Children with SEND should have access to high-quality teaching. Additional, targeted interventions can be delivered by teachers and trained TAs and integrated into whole class learning. TAs can support a range of children in the class using the EEF's scaffolding framework (see below). Crucially though, teaching assistants should supplement support from classroom teachers, not act as substitutes for it.



'If a child has SEND, they automatically need an EHC plan.'

3 The majority of children with SEND make progress with high quality teaching, reasonable adjustments and targeted interventions carefully planned to meet their needs.

An Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is a legal document which could last until the child is 25 years old. EHC plans are for children and young people who have a special educational need or disability that cannot be met by the support that is usually available at their school or college.



'All children with SEND display disruptive behaviour.'

4 Some pupils with SEND may display misbehaviours, but not all. These challenging behaviours may or may not be related to their needs. SEND can affect: how a child behaves; how they socialise and communicate; and their concentration levels.

Challenging behaviours can feel personal to a member of staff and reduce empathy for the learner. Acknowledgement that behaviour could be a form of communication is helpful. Plotting overlapping needs for children with SEND is important to identify appropriate provision.

Some questions to consider may include:

- Are literacy needs creating a barrier for learning and reduced engagement?
- Has learning been supported and scaffolded so the child can succeed?
- Are reasonable adjustments to the learning environment or the routines of the day in place; for example, consistent routines, reduction in visual stimuli, seating arrangements?
- Is there a targeted intervention that can be put in place?
- Have positive communications about the pupil's learning been communicated with the parents or carers?
- Does the pupil have a supportive relationship with a member of staff?

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

Effective parental engagement for pupils with SEND



These questions aim to help schools consider how they can work with parents and carers* to improve the learning of children with SEND. The questions draw on an overview of existing research from the EEF's [Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning](#) guidance report.

1

Critically review how you work with parents

2

Provide practical strategies to support learning at home

3

Tailor school communications to encourage positive dialogue about learning

4

Offer more sustained and intensive support where needed

Questions for reflection

- What tips, supports and resources are shared with parents? Are they personalised?
- When do parents of children with SEND have communication with school? Is the SENCo available at our parents' evenings, as well as the class teacher/s?
- Are personalised messages to parents linked to learning and celebrating successes?
- Are our school communications with parents based upon the best available evidence? How are the effectiveness of our communications with parents monitored?
- Are parents signposted to the Local Offer** so they are aware of wider supports for themselves and their child?
- In what way does our school support parents who might have learning needs themselves?
- Are home visits considered for younger children with greater needs?
- How does parent voice come through for children with an EHC plan? How is this shared across our school?
- How does our school include parents at points of transition for the child? For example, new schools, new teachers/teaching assistants, new Key Stages?
- How does our school encourage attendance at parent events where engagement is low?
- How does our school communicate shared reading with parents?
- How do we encourage summer reading with parents?

* Whenever we refer to 'parents' we mean 'parents and carers', including, for example, grandparents and older siblings when they have significant caring responsibilities for children.

** SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years states: 'Local authorities must publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they expect to be available, local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available.' Department for Education and Department of Health (2015) *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years*, London: DfE.

CPD Directory: safeguarding, SEND and inclusive practices

Our school improvement offer for safeguarding, SEND and inclusive practices is always growing. If you wish to book any of the training sessions, please liaise with Meg (mtill@threespirestrust.org) in order to express interest and to start exploring possible dates for your school or academy. For core member academies, these events are free. There is a cost for associate members and for non-members.

KCSIE for governors and senior leaders

Mode of attendance	Max participants	Audience
Virtual or face to face	20	Governors / SLT

Exclusions – the graduated response and the law

Mode of attendance	Max participants	Audience
Face to face	30	Senior & middle leaders

Exclusions – legislation and accountability

Mode of attendance	Max participants	Audience
Virtual or face to face	15	Governors / Principal

SEND for school leaders – based on every leader a leader of SEND

Mode of attendance	Max participants	Audience
Face to face	10	SLT

Single Central Record – how to use the system

Mode of attendance	Max participants	Audience
Face to face	3	Principal / SCR administrator