

SEND



bitesize

Summer 2021

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plus much more!





Welcome

Where has the time gone? As I sit here writing this edition of Bitesize we are what feels like moments away from completing another crazy, exceptional, challenging but ultimately rewarding school year in the midst of a continued global pandemic. I think you should all raise your right or left hand, bend it at the elbow so that your hand is on your back and then pat that back of yours enthusiastically! You all deserve some sort of amazing award for demonstrating flexibility, resilience, perseverance, courage and a continued unbreakable will to provide the very best education for our tiny humans whilst it feels like everything is on fire and could change at any given time!

This final round up for the year contains a collection of what I hope you will find to be useful resources, research overviews, audit tools and general information about all things SEND.

On behalf of myself and all at SENDgroup we wish you a happy summer holiday. We hope that you all get some time to recharge and refresh by doing something that you enjoy!

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if there is something that you would like to see in future Bitesize editions.

We'll be back in September!

Beccie

The Autism Resource Suite

Approximately one in every one hundred people has autism. Consequently, it is highly likely that our schools will have children and staff who are on the autism spectrum. The Autism Resource site contains resources developed by the Autism Education Trust, along with the Autism Centre for Education and Research (University of Birmingham), the National Autistic Society and Ambitious about Autism through the Whole School SEND DfE-funded schools' workforce contract. At present, the suite contains five resources focusing upon:

- Guidance for school leaders on supporting autistic members of staff: This resource is mainly aimed at senior leadership teams and people with HR responsibilities, and provides ideas for developing an autism friendly working environment.
- A SENCO's guide to supporting learners on the autism spectrum: This is for SENCOs in Early Years, Primary schools and Secondary schools and builds on existing information for SENCOs in developing good autism practice within their settings.
- Supporting learners with autism during transition: This resource focuses on two main stages of transition- from an Early Years setting to Primary school, and Primary school to Secondary school. The resource will be helpful to everyone involved in this process, such as SENCOs, teachers, teaching assistants, key workers.
- Promoting autism inclusive attitudes: In this resource there are various ideas for raising peer awareness in Primary and Secondary school settings, which can be used by SENCOs, teachers and teaching assistants. These resources were co-developed with autistic young people.
- Reasonable adjustments to school behaviour policies: This resource considers the implications of the Equality Act with regards to behaviour and how reasonable adjustments can be implemented within a school setting. This will be particularly useful for senior leadership teams and SENCOs. This resource is currently under review and will be added to the suite soon.

You can find the full documents at:

www.sendgateway.org.uk/resources/autism-resource-suite

Supportive Literacy Teaching Resources

The Driver Youth Trust for Literacy has several free resources which are designed to address common literacy and SEND access challenges and to help teachers better support every learner in their classroom. There is a specific section of resources developed to support teachers in meeting the needs of learners with dyslexia or literacy difficulties who have significant barriers to reading, writing, speaking and listening. The resources are suitable for colleagues in primary and secondary settings. Home learning and top tip guides are included. These resources may be worth exploring and sharing with your colleagues.

They can be found at:

www.driveryouthtrust.com/teaching-resources/

The Buzz

The National Deaf Children's Society has produced a website for deaf young people aged 8 to 18 in the UK. This safe, online space, created by deaf young people offers other deaf children and young people the opportunity to read inspiring stories, make connections with other deaf young people and find the latest information and support, sign up to events, ask questions and get involved.

Visit: <https://buzz.org.uk/>



When I worry about things

When I Worry About Things is a collection of animated films that uses personal testimony to explore mental health issues from the perspective of children. Alongside each, there is more information about the content of the film, and suggestions of how it could be used in the classroom. These resources are suitable for use with pupils aged 8-13. The films are hosted on an external, non-BBC platform. Five videos and accompanying teacher resources are free to access. You can find:

Being a bully - Ariana's story:

- An animated testimony exploring how being undervalued at home drove a young girl to become a bully, and how adult intervention inspired her to stop.

OCD and depression - Annabel's story:

- An animated testimony from a girl who developed nervous tics, OCD and depression after a period of upheaval, and how she learnt to cope.

Anorexia - Kirsty's story:

- An animated testimony based on the first-person testimony of a young girl who developed anorexia as a response to social anxiety.

Being bullied - Jake's story:

- An animated testimony from a boy who suffered severe bullying, and how joining the army cadets helped him cope.

Luke and Jenny's stories:

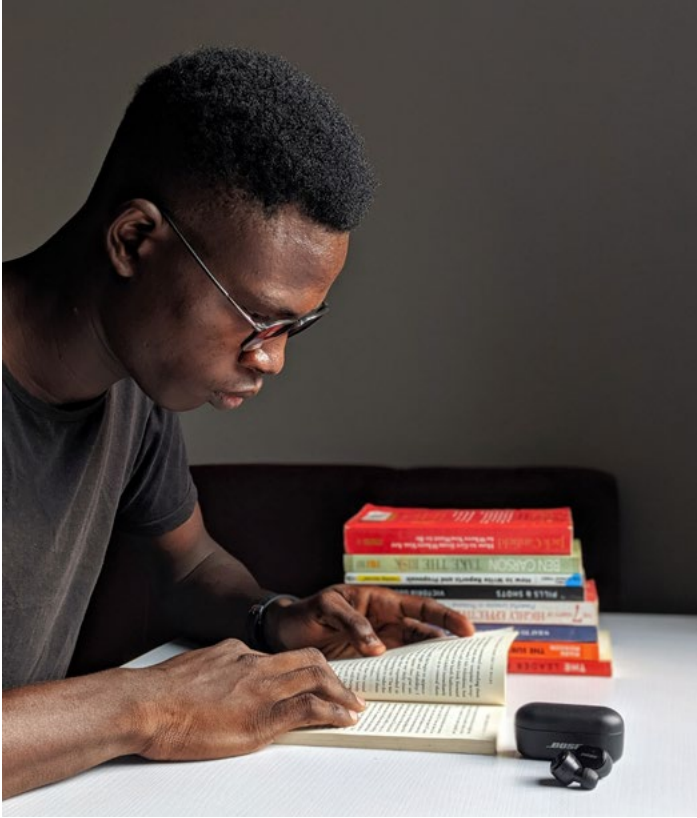
- An animated testimony exploring the stories of two young people suffering from severe panic attacks, and how they learned to cope.

Please remember that the content of each video should be carefully reviewed by the adults using them before sharing with children/young people. The animations can be found at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/5QM6H01X6b3jTQF85GLgbFl/when-i-worry-about-things>

Local Area Inspections - OFSTED

Ofsted have published data on trends emerging from local area SEND inspections carried out since 2016 in 116 local authority areas. 59 of those 116 areas inspected were required to produce a Written Statement of Action. In 51% of area inspections completed, inspectors had "significant concerns about how effectively the local area was meeting its duties or securing better outcomes for children and young people who have SEND". 1 in 4 areas in London were required to produce a Written Statement of Action. 4 out of 5 areas in the East of England were required to do so. 42% of areas inspected in the West Midlands were required to produce a Written Statement of Action (out of 14 areas). Of the 21 areas that had received a re-visit 9 areas were deemed to be making sufficient progress in addressing significant weaknesses. Two thirds of areas in the "most deprived quintile" were required to produce and submit a Written Statement of Action (WSOA), compared to half of areas in the "least deprived quintile".



Research and Analysis: Supporting SEND

The following comes from a new research report released by OFSTED in May 2021:

Although recent reports by Ofsted and others have highlighted some strengths in the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) system, there are also significant weaknesses. These include:

- Gaps in external provision and training.
- Lack of coordination between services.
- Lack of accountability.
- Weak co-production.

The research for this pre-Covid study is based upon qualitative case studying carried out with 21 pupils in 7 mainstream schools. The key findings identified that:

- Schools often took a pupil-centred approach when identifying needs and planning provision, but staff did not always know the pupils well enough to do this.
- Pupils with SEND regularly spent time out of class working with teaching assistants (TAs), but there were some concerns about social exclusion and over-reliance on a single adult.
- Occasionally, schools were teaching a curriculum to pupils that was not properly sequenced or well matched to their needs.
- Collaboration between practitioners and families supported schools in meeting pupils' needs more effectively.
- Mechanisms for co-production with parents and carers were often in place but implementation was not always meaningful. This is likely to impact how far schools can tailor provision to children's needs.
- School SENCOs were essential for mediating provision but experienced a range of challenges in carrying out their role.
- Schools employed a range of tailored strategies to meet pupils' needs, sometimes supported by multi-agency services.
- Local authorities had strong ambitions for multi-agency collaboration, but this did not always translate into improved practice and positive experiences for schools and families.
- Some pupils received support from external services, but not always to the extent they need.

The full report can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-send/supporting-send

NSPCC Safeguarding Self-Assessment Tool

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Learning has relaunched their 'Safeguarding Self-Assessment tool' for schools and voluntary/Community groups. This free self-assessment tool provides a step-by-step guide to help your school or organisation meet best safeguarding and child protection practices.

The education self-assessment tool provides a step-by-step guide to help you meet best safeguarding and child protection practices. It has been developed for use in UK schools and covers best safeguarding practice in line with the statutory safeguarding and child protection requirements set out in national legislation across the UK. It should be completed by your nominated child protection lead, working with senior leadership.

The tool is organised into five standards:

- Leadership and governance,
- Policies and procedures,
- Recognising and responding to child protection,
- Supporting children and families,
- Adults working with children.

The tool allows you to:

- Work through a set of simple questions to help you identify where you are at.
- Easily identify areas for development based on your responses.
- Get advice and resources to help improve policies and practice.
- Access a tailored action plan to save, print and share

You can revisit the tool as many times as you like to update your progress.

Further details can be found by following this link:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-self-assessment-tool>

The ICAN Developmental Language Disorder Guide

It is estimated that Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) affects approximately 7.6% of all children (two children in every average primary class of 30) in the United Kingdom. Developed in partnership with NASEN and Whole School SEND, and funded by the Department of Education, this practical guide will give teachers and other school-based professionals guidance on how to identify and support children with DLD in mainstream primary and secondary schools.

The guide can be found via this link:

<https://ican.org.uk/educational-support-for-children-with-developmental-language-disorder-dld/>



Pupil and Family Voice: The My World Triangle

If you are looking for a way to support effective coproduction and developing a holistic picture of the child/young person that you support it is worth exploring how you could use the 'My World Triangle' which forms part of the Scottish GIRFEC approach. The Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach has been tested and developed across Scotland since 2006. Based on children's rights and its principles reflect the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It also respects parents' rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The GIRFEC approach:

- Is child-focused - it ensures the child or young person – and their family – is at the centre of decision-making and the support available to them.
- Is based on an understanding of the wellbeing of a child in their current situation - it takes into consideration the wider influences on a child or young person and their developmental needs when thinking about their wellbeing, so that the right support can be offered
- Is based on tackling needs early - it aims to ensure needs are identified as early as possible to avoid bigger concerns or problems developing.
- It requires joined-up working - it is about children, young people, parents, and the services they need working together in a coordinated way to meet the specific needs and improve their wellbeing

The 'My World' Assessment Triangle provides the basis for holistic assessment of a child's or young person's needs. It places the child/young person at the heart of the triangle and provides useful discussion and information gathering prompts in order to explore the following three areas:

- How the child/young person grows and develops.
- How the child/young person is understood in relation to the care he/she is receiving from others.
- How he/she experiences their wider social and physical environment.

The interaction between the three areas and the way that they influence each other can be carefully analysed in order to gain a complete picture of a child's/young person's unmet needs and how to identify the best response to them. It is a proven model of holistic assessment of need and includes identifying strengths, risks and protective factors. It provides a useful framework to support proper consideration of the factors which may be affecting the child's/young person's development so that actions which will help can be taken. It is not a series of boxes to be completed or ticked.

The My World Triangle takes account of the child/young person's strengths and achievements and those of their families, as well as any potential or actual risk of harm. It incorporates the principles of listening to and taking account of the views of children and young people and working in partnership with their parents and carers.

The triangle can be found at: <https://elchighland.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/my-world-triangle.pdf>



Leading on inclusion - The Role of the SENCO

Leading on Inclusion – The Role of the SENCO

Published by Routledge, this new publication from the NASEN Spotlight series is packed with a range of perspectives on: inclusion, giving SENCOs the opportunity to consider the principles and practice through to the role of the SENCO.

Offering a blend of academic and professional knowledge, each chapter explores different aspects of the role of the SENCO and supports areas that will be considered as part of the National Award for SENCOs. A variety of essential topics are covered, from the importance of SEND provision and multi-disciplinary practice, to the role of the SENCO and leadership.

Key features of this book include:

- Contributions by leaders of the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators working with trainee SENCOs across the country
- A focus on encouraging SENCOs to think deeply about their own individual practice through engagement with cutting-edge research
- A flexible structure that can be read as a whole, or dipped in and out of as professional learning needs require

This book provides an opportunity for readers to engage with a multiplicity of voices and approaches, allowing them to critically explore their role as leaders of SEND provision in schools. It is an invaluable resource both for students and those already within the role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

More information can be found at:

www.routledge.com/Leading-on-Inclusion-The-Role-of-the-SENCO/Beaton-Codina-Wharton/p/book/9780367420505

Education, Health and Care Plans: Examples of Good Practice

The Council for Disabled Children have produced resources to help practitioners write good quality EHC plans that meet both the letter and the spirit of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Two resources are available:

1. Education, Health and Care plans: Examples of good practice

The first section of this resource includes excerpts from real EHC plans that were collected through the local Independent Support network. In the second part there are two EHC plans which draw on real examples but the plans themselves relate to fictional children.

The Council for Disabled Children expects these examples to be useful to those contributing to EHC needs assessments and to those writing plans as well as to parents, children and young people and those supporting them. It is intended that this document provokes a debate about the key features of high quality EHC plans.

This resource provides examples for discussion and is not advocating any particular approach to meeting needs. No judgement is made as to whether the particular provision is or is not appropriate for any particular child or young person.

2. Education, Health and Care Plans: examples of good practice from year 9 and beyond

This resource seeks to build on the first resource with a particular focus on how plans should evolve for young people from year 9 reviews onwards, as their journey into adulthood builds momentum. It is recommended that you use this resource to complement the first guide.

The purpose of this document is to support the development of skills in writing good quality EHC plans that meet both the letter and the spirit of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Both resources can be downloaded from:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/help-resources/resources/education-health-and-care-plans-examples-good-practice>

Selecting Interventions

The 'Selecting Interventions' tool produced by the Education Endowment Foundation provides useful insights about how schools can make the most effective use of interventions and provide targeted support to pupils who need it the most.. This is especially important as the SEND Code of Practice (2015) cites the importance of us using evidence based approaches. Whilst high quality classroom teaching is essential some pupils will require additional support. In this case, small group and one-to-one interventions will provide the opportunity to apply effective teaching strategies with a more intense focus on a smaller number of learning goals. These kind of interventions can be powerful tools, but must be used carefully. We are asked to consider the following reflection statements when selecting an intervention:

- Is there ongoing support for staff from trainers or specialists in the approach?
- Will you be able to dedicate the time and resources required to implement the intervention well?
- If pupils spend time away from regular classes, what are pupils missing by doing this?
- Will other children get less support because the teacher or TA is spending time elsewhere?
- Have you identified a tight area for improvement using a robust diagnostic assessment process?
- Does the Senior Leadership Team support strategic and effective deployment of TAs?
- How is this deployment managed and how is impact monitored?

It is suggested that if your setting is using, or considering, programmes that are 'unproven', you should ensure they include the common elements of effective interventions:

T	Timing	Intervention sessions are often brief (e.g. 15–60 mins) and regular (e.g. 2–5 per week).
A	Assessment	Assessments are used to identify pupils, A guide areas of focus and to track pupil progress.
R	Resourcing	The intervention has structured supporting resources and lesson plans, with clear R objectives and possibly a delivery script.
G	Give it Time	Careful timetabling is in place to enable consistent delivery Sessions are typically maintained over a sustained period (e.g. 8–20 weeks).
E	Expert Delivery	Interventions are delivered by a qualified teacher, or if they are unavailable, a trained teaching assistant. The intervention programme is followed precisely and suggested delivery protocols are followed.
T	Teacher Links	If not delivered by the classroom teacher, the intervention deliverer and the teacher/s communicate regularly and make appropriate connections between out-of-class learning and classroom teaching.

The full text can be found at: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Selecting_interventions_tool.pdf

This guidance could provide useful when selecting interventions for deployment and populating our provision maps in the new school year.

Forgotten. Left behind. Overlooked

This report, from the All Party Parliamentary Group for SEND, shares the experiences of young people with SEND and their educational transitions during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The key messages from within the report include:

- The Covid-19 pandemic has amplified the problems and issues that were already present in the SEND system.
- The manner and speed in which the lockdown and closure of school happened had a negative impact of children and young people with SEN and their families. Many were left without support.
- The impact on schools of Covid-19 related costs and losses of income has exacerbated the SEND funding crisis.
- The government guidance for special schools and alternative provision was frequently published later than guidance for mainstream schools. This led settings and young people with SEND to be seen as, and feel like, an "afterthought".
- The Coronavirus Act and the reduction in requirements of local authorities and schools to make 'reasonable endeavours' has had a negative impact of the support available for young people with SEND and their families. There is concern that this impact could be long-lasting.

Nine recommendations are made:

1. That the Department for Education ensures that all future guidance pertaining to schools and other educational settings are fully cognisant of the complex range of needs and challenges for SEND children, schools, families and carers. Critically, that such guidance is timely and considered as a priority both during national emergencies and as we emerge from the current lockdown measures.
2. That an urgent and time-bound parliamentary review is undertaken by government in order to assess the impact which Covid-19 has had upon children with SEND in order to ensure that the support provided as we recover from the global pandemic is focussed on the most vulnerable. Such a review to include all stakeholders including children and young people, parents and carers and organisations with a legitimate interest.
3. That new and additional funding is made available in the short, medium and long-term to support SEND children and young people with the Covid-19 recovery
4. Specific funding to be given to addressing the delays and backlog in the process of assessments for Educational and Health Care (EHC) Plans.
5. That the process of applying and assessing for EHC Plans is made simpler and more compassionate so that families should not have to fight for support for their child, even more so in a pandemic.
6. That urgent funding is given to support the mental health of young people with SEND as part of recovery from the pandemic. That all mental health provision is fully accessible for young people with SEND and tailored to their needs.
7. An urgent review of high-needs funding is undertaken. This has been long-called for, but the pandemic has highlighted issues in the funding of provision for SEND. Funding will be crucial in the recovery from the pandemic.
8. That the Secretary of State for Education publishes the long-awaited SEND review and commits to working with the APPG SEND and allied APPG's in order to ensure that SEND Children and Young People are placed at the centre of government's policies and decision making.
9. That support for children and young people with SEND must be a feature of all future pandemic planning.

The full report can be accessed via the following link:

<https://nasen.org.uk/news/forgotten-left-behind-overlooked-appg-report-experiences-young-people-send>



Don't forget to log in to your online edition to be able to click each suggested web link directly from the page.

Resources to Support Effective Transitions

Resources to Support Effective Transitions

As we get ready to welcome new learners to our setting but also say goodbye the following resources and articles may help to make the whole process run smoothly:

Resources to support good mental health during transition:

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/risks-and-protective-factors/school-based-risk-factors/transitions/>

The following offers a parent fact sheet and wellbeing in action self-help booklet:

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/issue/transitions/>

To help students transition from primary to secondary school the BBC has partnered with the YoungMinds Find Your Feet project, aimed at enabling schools to actively support the mental health and emotional well-being of children as they start the next chapter in their lives. This page offers a number of films and teaching resources that can be used as a conversation starter either in the classroom or at home, as well as an explainer film that details how to use the resources:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/transitioning-to-secondary-school/zkc9pg8>

A transition toolkit for autistic pupils:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachemnt/transitiontoolkit.pdf>

Transition tips for pupils with SEND:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/resources/school-resources/transition-tips-for-pupils-with-send/>

Whilst some transition activities may be limited due to social distancing measures you could explore the use of:

- Structured activities to investigate the new setting's website. This could include treasure hunts and quizzes to locate information.
- Regular use of Microsoft Teams and Google Hangouts to meet other pupils and key staff.
- Virtual school tours.
- A pen pal or email buddy project.
- Use of photobooks and videos to share key information and routines in a visual format.
- Photo checklists of key equipment for different subjects.
- Sending timetables in advance.
- A Who's who for each subject department.
- A 'What to do if Prompt Sheet'. For example: What to do if you have forgotten your PE kit.
- Maps of the school.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Learners

A study published by Sullivan and Knutson (2000) found that: 'Pupils with SEND were three times more likely to be abused or neglected than pupils who do not have SEND. Those with behaviour difficulties/conduct disorders were most at risk: seven times more likely to be abused.'

With this in mind it is crucial that we give extra-special consideration to how we meet the needs of our vulnerable learners and those with additional needs.

The 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) document shares that children have said that they want the following to help them feel safe:

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them.
- **Understanding and Action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not.
- **Information and Engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.
- **Protection:** to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.

When considering how you safeguard your vulnerable learners it worth considering how you already meet the needs of your pupils based upon the 'Working Together to Safeguard Vulnerable Learners'. A simple audit using these principles could be beneficial to offer a starting point. **For example:**

What Children have said that they need	What this means	We do...
Vigilance	To have adults notice when things are troubling them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication passports. • Wondering aloud. • Being 'held in mind'.
Understanding and Action	To understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased visual support. • Accessible pupil voice activities. • Pupil friendly policies. • A range of communication options. • You said, we did...
Stability	To be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil advocates.
Respect	To be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A can do culture. • Opportunities to be independent and have control.
Information and Engagement	To be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil voice on APDR documents. • Pupil friendly policies. • Involvement in reviews. • Consent sought.
Explanation	To be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil involvement in reviews.
Support	To be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil friendly support plans with pupil specific actions.
Advocacy	To be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pupil advocate. • Peer advocates. • Peer/adult mentoring.
Protection	To be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding policy. • Information sharing for support outside of school.