

Welcome!

**Please help yourself to a drink and
feel free to look at some of the
resources out on the tables.**

SEND Workshop

Thursday 19th October 2026



Intro

The aim of today's SEND workshop is to share the following:

- The strategies and interventions we use in class to support children with SEND.
- How we adapt teaching to support different learning styles.
- Ways to support communication, emotional regulation and independence.
- Practical ideas and resources that can be used at home.

We support children with a wide range of identified special educational needs and disabilities - this includes Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Sensory Processing Difficulties, Speech & Language difficulties (including Developmental Language Disorder) as well as Downs Syndrome, Vision Impairments and Physical Disabilities. It's impossible to cover everything we do in just one hour but hopefully we can give you a snapshot of the support we provide. Ultimately, we hope there will be something you can take away to implement at home.

Strategies & Interventions

High-quality teaching or Quality First Teaching:

- **Explicit Instruction & Modelling:** Break down complex tasks into small, manageable steps. Use "I do, we do, you do" approaches to model learning, ensuring students understand expectations before working independently.
- **Active Questioning and Participation:** Use techniques like cold-calling, mini-whiteboards, and talk partners to ensure 100% participation and immediately assess understanding.
- **Metacognition and Self-Regulation:** Teach students to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning, empowering them to take responsibility for their progress.
- **Adaptive Teaching (Differentiation):** Plan lessons that anticipate misconceptions and offer scaffolding for pupils who need it.
- **Structured Practice (Retrieval/Spacing):** Use regular, low-stakes testing (e.g., quizzes) and spaced practice (reviewing topics after gaps in time) to boost long-term memory.
- **Positive Classroom Environment:** Establish high expectations for all, coupled with strong, trusting relationships, consistent routines, and a supportive, structured atmosphere.
- **Effective Use of Resources:** Employ visual aids, scaffolding tools, and manipulatives to make abstract concepts concrete.

The best way to support children at school is 'in the classroom' and that is what we prioritise. Children learn best when taught by their teacher and when they are with their peers. We refer to this as 'High-quality teaching' or 'Quality First Teaching'. This is an evidence based approach which is designed to be inclusive, challenging and responsive to all learners, including those with SEND. Key strategies include: Explicit Instruction, Structured Modelling, Formative Assessment, Questioning, Metacognition, and High Expectations, aiming for maximum participation and long-term retention.

Strategies & Interventions

Scaffolding:

The term scaffolding refers to the 'temporary support that is removed when it is no longer required providing enough support so that pupils can successfully complete tasks that they could not yet do independently'.

Scaffolding includes:

- A visual scaffold, such as a task planner.
- A verbal scaffold, such as a teacher correcting a misconception at a pupil's desk.
- A written scaffold, such as a writing frame.

When it comes to supporting children with different learning styles, a range of approaches are used.

Strategies & Interventions

Consistent routines:

Routine is incredibly important for children because they provide a predictable, secure environment that reduces anxiety and emotional distress.

At school, we use visual timetables so that children can see the activities and lessons planned for the day. Some children require 'things' broken down further using 'Now and Next' boards.

It's very important to prepare children for unexpected events and changes such as school trips. We do this by:

- Showing children pictures/photos of where they are going,
- Using social stories to explain specifics such as timings.

Strategies & Interventions

Wordshark:

Wordshark features online learning games for reading and spelling - for ages 5 to 16+. It includes a placement test and automatic progression that can be tracked.

Children can login at school or at home - using computers, Chromebooks or iPads.

Wordshark is especially popular for students with Dyslexia.



Our priority is on 'High-quality teaching' but we do recognise that some children with SEND, and even those without, need additional support through specific, targeted interventions. There isn't enough time to talk about all of these interventions (you will have seen some resources on the tables there that we use) so I will just discuss a handful.

Strategies & Interventions

Barrier Games:

Barrier Games are a great oral language tool as they provide opportunity to develop skills for both speaking (composing) and listening (reception/comprehension).

Barrier Games have been in existence for many years, and include games which require players to give and receive directions while being separated by some kind of barrier. A common barrier game many of us will have played is Battleships, a hit/miss game using coordinates.



Our priority is on 'High-quality teaching' but we do recognise that some children with SEND, and even those without, need additional support through specific, targeted interventions. There isn't enough time to talk about all of these interventions (you will have seen some resources on the tables there that we use) so I will just discuss a handful.

Strategies & Interventions

Lego Therapy:

Lego-based therapy is an evidence based approach that aims to develop social communication skills in autistic children, such as sharing, turn-taking, following rules, using names and problem-solving.

In practice, children work in groups of three with each participant having a distinct role to build a Lego model collaboratively:

- Engineers use the Lego instructions and ask the Supplier for the specific pieces of Lego needed.
- Suppliers give the Builder the pieces.
- Builders follow the building instructions from the Engineer in order to construct the model.

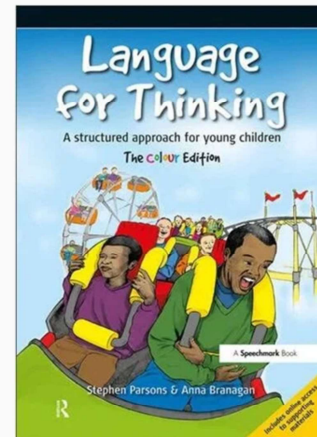


Strategies & Interventions

Language For Thinking:

Language For Thinking is a structured intervention programme used to develop verbal reasoning, inference, and thinking skills in children, particularly those with language delays. Using 50 picture scenarios, it helps children improve their understanding of "why" and "how" questions, rather than just "what" or "who".

It is targeted at children with language delays, autism spectrum conditions, pragmatic language impairment, or moderate learning difficulties.



Strategies & Interventions

Sensory Circuits:

Sensory circuits are similar in function to a gym circuit, but instead of focussing on fitness, they focus on supporting arousal. Arousal is the body's level of alertness and it can range from sleeping, to highly stressed. In order to learn, a student needs to have adequate arousal to focus. Sensory circuits can help students with this. These circuits are especially beneficial for students who may have sensory processing differences or who simply benefit from extra sensory input to help them focus and regulate their emotions.



Supporting different learning styles

Visual Learners: These students learn best through visual stimuli.

Activities: Using graphic organizers, maps, charts, color-coding notes, or watching educational videos.

Auditory Learners: These students grasp information best through listening and speaking.

Activities: Participating in group discussions, listening to podcasts, reading text aloud, or using mnemonics.

Read/Write Learner: These students engage with information through written words.

Activities: Taking detailed notes, reading textbooks, writing essays, or creating lists.

Kinaesthetic Learners: These students prefer a hands-on approach and physical activity.

Activities: Conducting science experiments, using physical manipulatives (like blocks), acting out scenarios, or moving around during lessons.

When it comes to supporting children with different learning styles, a range of approaches are used. As learners, we often consider ourselves as: Visual Learners, Auditory Learners, Read/Write Learners and Kinaesthetic Learners. As teachers, we have to plan, prepare and deliver lessons to support all of these learning styles.

Supporting a child when they are dysregulated

Regulation - allows us to feel calm and alert to participate in daily activities.

Dysregulation - when someone cannot control or regulate their emotions and behaviours

Reasons a child might not be regulated:

- Incidental occurrences e.g. lack of sleep, change of routine,
- Emotional regulation,
- Trauma response,
- Anxiety response - often to an environment or task that is overwhelming (ASD, ADHD, Anxiety)
- Response to overwhelming demands - education,
- Developmentally appropriate to a child's age or stage of development.

When supporting a child with their emotions we often use the term 'regulation'. Regulation or 'being regulated' allows us to feel calm and alert so that we can participate in daily activities. The term dysregulation is used frequently and has become a common phrase when describing when someone cannot control or regulate their emotions. We all experience strong emotions, but for some people, these feelings can seem overwhelming, unpredictable, and difficult to control. Dysregulation involves problems regulating emotional responses, which can result in reactions that seem intense, prolonged, or out of proportion to the situation.

The result? Sudden outbursts of anger, anxiety, or sadness that can have a detrimental effect on daily functioning, relationships, and a person's overall well-being.

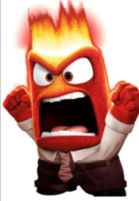
Supporting a child when they are dysregulated

	BLUE	GREEN	YELLOW	RED
WHEN I AM:	tired bored sad	happy calm focused	excited frustrated anxious	out of control angry overwhelmed
I CAN:	drink water, have a snack, go for a walk, take a nap	keep up the good work! 😊	take a break, 3 deep breaths, play with a fidget, ask for help	go for a walk, drink cold water, relax my muscles, 10 deep breaths, grounding

Regulation can be split into 4 different states: Blue (aka Under Alert state), Green (aka Calm or Alert state), Yellow (aka Over Alert state) and Red (aka Fight/Flight/Freeze state). Depending on what we are doing, it might be appropriate to move between these different states. For example, when crossing a road (Green) we might need to freeze if a speeding car suddenly appears (Red). As adults, we need to look for the signs and behaviours associated with dysregulation that children display as some children cannot self-regulate.

Zones of Regulation

ZONES OF REGULATION!

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Good to Go Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Anxious Excited	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Out of Control I Need Time and Space

COPYRIGHT - JULIA WISHEIT, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Zones of Regulation

BLUE	GREEN	YELLOW	RED
			
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Good to Go Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Anxious Excited	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Out of Control I Need Time and Space

Co-regulating with a child

- **Calm Presence:** Sitting quietly near a distressed child, allowing them to feel your steady, calm energy.
- **Deep Breathing:** Modeling slow, deep breaths together during a tantrum.
- **Labeling Emotions:** Saying, "It looks like you're frustrated that the tower fell over," to help them understand their feelings.
- **Physical Comfort:** Offering a "pressure hug," rocking, or stroking their back.
- **Changing the Environment:** Moving away from a noisy, overwhelming situation to a quieter "calm-down corner".
- **Validating Without Giving In:** "I know you wanted more candy. It's hard when we can't have more. I'm going to stay right here with you while you feel sad".
- **Repairing After a Meltdown:** Reconnecting after a tantrum to say, "That was a tough moment, but I'm proud of you for calming down. I love you no matter what"

Young children or children with special educational needs often cannot self-regulate and therefore need an adult to co-regulate with them.

Helping a child regulate after school

Prioritize Physical Needs:

"Hangry" fix: Offer a protein-heavy snack immediately, as blood sugar drops cause mood swings.

Rest: Ensure they can go to the bathroom immediately and have comfortable clothing to change into.

Create a Routine & Environment:

Quiet transition: Limit screen time initially and provide a quiet space or "cozy corner" (e.g., a tent with pillows) to decompress, as seen on Sensory Direct.

Predictability: Stick to a similar routine each day to provide a sense of safety

Helping a child regulate after school (often called "after-school restraint collapse") requires providing a calm, low-stimulation environment, immediate nutrition, and opportunities for physical release. Focus on validating their emotions, limiting immediate questioning, creating a "safe space," and fostering connection rather than demanding instant obedience.

Helping a child regulate after school

Provide Sensory Regulation & Movement:

Heavy work: Encourage activities that provide deep pressure, like jumping on a trampoline, riding a bike.

Sensory input: Utilize putty, playdough, weighted blankets, or water play to soothe nervous systems.

Validate and Connect:

Listen, don't ask: Avoid grilling them about their day. Instead, say "I can see you've had a big day,"

Helping a child regulate after school (often called "after-school restraint collapse") requires providing a calm, low-stimulation environment, immediate nutrition, and opportunities for physical release. Focus on validating their emotions, limiting immediate questioning, creating a "safe space," and fostering connection rather than demanding instant obedience.

Helping a child regulate after school

Validation: Acknowledge their anger or sadness without trying to control it, suggests BBC Bitesize.

Connection: Use the "7-7-7" rule (7 minutes in the morning,, 7 minutes of after school, 7 minutes before bedtime) to help them feel secure.

Helping a child regulate after school (often called "after-school restraint collapse") requires providing a calm, low-stimulation environment, immediate nutrition, and opportunities for physical release. Focus on validating their emotions, limiting immediate questioning, creating a "safe space," and fostering connection rather than demanding instant obedience.

Useful links

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z863cxs#zbt36rd>

<https://www.sensorydirect.com/blog/6-after-school-regulation-strategies/#:~:text=Bubble%20tubes%20are%20perfect%20in,colours%20help%20to%20regulate%20overstimulation.>

<https://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/cyp/occupational-therapy/>

<https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/news/the-parents-portal-by-autism-early-support-aes/>

Thank you.
Any questions?

Next workshop: 30th April, 9am.