Part I

Major Contents

Chapter 1

Principals

The most important person in the life of a special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is the Principal.

It is with well researched intentions that the first chapter of the SENCO Manual is written for the Principal. He or she is the leader of the school in whose hands lies the potential for releasing the power of the SENCO to achieve great things.

It is the Principal whose vision and actions combined, drive the school forward. Gaining a SENCO should first be thought of as gaining a role and not gaining the person. Over the years, Principals will have many teachers who will fulfil the role of SENCO and therefore, to think first about it as an important and unique role helps to structure and define its possibilities.

What does the Principal believe the SENCO role can achieve for his or her school? Will it upskill all teachers so that the ripple of impact from using, for example, the Inclusion Teaching Checklist and Inclusion Learning Checklist (*Practical Toolkit 9.3 & 9.4*) for students with special educational needs (SEN), has an unanticipated positive impact on other students in the class who do not have SEN?

Could it be that by introducing Person Centred Approaches for students with SEN, the ripple of impact created is a further development of metacognitive thinking for all students. As a consequence, the academic achievement for all students increases?

The possibilities are limitless.

This manual contains a wealth of strategies proven to make a positive difference on outcomes and progress in learning for students with SEN. The practical tools linked to each of the chapters provide SENCOs with the resources to facilitate implementation. The views and experiences of the Pilot Project SENCOs along with their case study examples will help each Principal consider what great strategic developments can be achieved through supporting and encouraging the leadership management and coordination potential of the SENCO role (*Practical Toolkit 1.2*).

The SENCO training course is a significant undertaking and requires SENCOs to carry out a series of practical tasks in school to help introduce and embed important strategies. Principals are key to supporting SENCOs in carrying out these activities by jointly discussing their potential impact and planning next steps.

The Importance of the Principal

Working with the SENCO to plan, implement and review the SENCO Annual Action Plan (*Practical Toolkit 1.1*).

Linking the work of the SENCO to whole school initiatives.

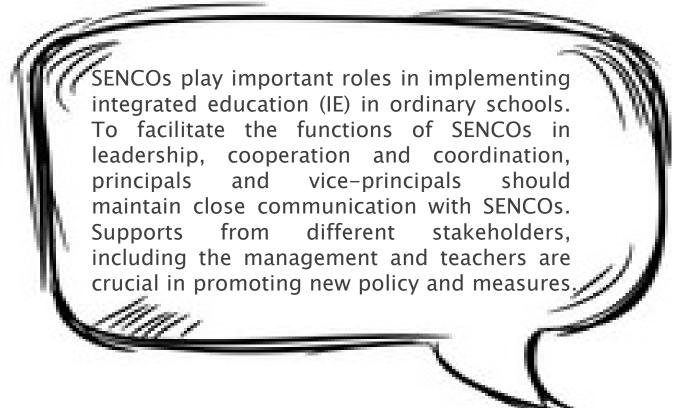
Believing in the power of the SENCO role to bring about positive change.

One of the key tasks for SENCOs is to complete a SENCO Annual Action Plan (*Practical Toolkit 1.1*). This provides a once a year lookback opportunity to record outcomes and impact of work agreed for that year. The greatest impact from the SENCO role will be achieved by setting the strategic course of action for the following year collaboratively with the Principal and linking key developments to priorities of the School Development Plan.

Principals should actively explore the potential of the SENCO role and reflect on ways in which its development can best be supported.

The SENCO role will release leadership, management and coordination (LMC) of SEN skills into each school so that step by step great things will be achieved!

Words from Principals from the pilot project on SENCO.



In our school, SENCO is not only a teacher who coordinates SEN work but also provides appropriate Support to teachers and students. The Expertise of SENCO ensures the teaching staff to work more confidently whenever they need professional advice on their tasks. Networking with related associations and organizations through SENCO enriches school resources for extending our students' learning experiences. SENCO plays an important role to the Coordination of different subjects and committees in school so as to launch suitable measures to enhance the learning of students with SEN. SENCO also helps to collect Other experiences from schools or professionals to improve our service to families with children with SEN. SENCO does make a difference in our school.

Top Tips

- Discuss the statements in the SENCO/School Success Planner (SSSP; *Practical Toolkit 2.1*) with your Principal. This will help to shape your School and SENCO journey.
- Use the letters LMCJ (Leadership, Management, Coordination Journey) with your Principal (see Chapter 16).

This will give you both a shared language for talking about how to develop the strategic and practical aspects of your role.

- Put three dates in both you and your Principal's diary focusing on:
 - 1) SSSP discussion
 - 2) SENCO Annual Action Plan
 - 3) A review of data ready to analyse provision and impact



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 1.1 SENCO Annual Action Plan
- 1.2 The Role of the SENCO Leadership, Management & Coordination (LMC)

Chapter 2

What is a SENCO?

What is a SENCO?

The history of the SENCO in Hong Kong schools dates back to the autumn of 2015 when 124 teachers from both primary and secondary ordinary schools were invited to take part in a three-year pilot to launch, trial and develop the role. Its origins outside of Hong Kong date back to 1994 when the UK established the SENCO role for English schools in its first SEN Code of Practice. Since 2009 it has been law that all 'public sector' schools in England must have a SENCO and if they are new to the role they must successfully complete a nationally recognised training.

The requirement for schools in Hong Kong to have a SENCO is now in place and completion of a comprehensive two-year induction training programme is expected.

The role of the SENCO in Hong Kong is to:

Assume a leading role in coordinating the formulation, implementation and review of SEN support measures in school to enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of IE for the benefit of the students' concerned.

The SENCO is required to lead the Student Support Team to perform the following duties:

According to the five basic principles of the promotion of IE, strategically plan, implement, monitor, review and evaluate various support measures for students with SEN and the resource deployment which includes the appropriate use of the Learning Support Grant and the flexible deployment of the school's manpower and resources, etc.

Promote early identification and early intervention for students with SEN through multi-disciplinary team approach;

Collaborate with other teachers/functional teams in the school through Whole School Approach (WSA) to devise support programmes, curriculum and teaching adaptations, and special examination and assessment arrangements for students with SEN;

Guide fellow teachers in the school to make use of effective support strategies to enhance the learning effectiveness of students with SEN through arrangements such as collaborative lesson planning and co-teaching;

Collaborate with the guidance team in the school to cater for the learning and adjustment needs of students with mental illness by giving input from perspectives of teaching and learning as well as resource deployment, and to strengthen mental health education;



Enhance home-school co-operation and work with parents to support students with SEN;

Review the special education training needs and profiles of teachers in the school, arrange relevant training for teachers in a systematic manner and plan and organize school-based professional development activities to enhance the capacity of the teaching team;

Strengthen external liaison with parties such as professional, community resource providers and parents to better coordinate various parties and resources for supporting students with SEN.



Is a SENCO a leader, a manager or a coordinator? Let's look first at what these words mean.

- To be a leader is to influence others to achieve certain aims and objectives;
- To be a manager is to make the most efficient use of financial, human and physical resources to achieve those aims and objectives;
- To be a coordinator is to make sure everything works together in harmony.

So the SENCO needs to be able to have skills in each of these areas and to believe in themselves as capable of leading, managing and coordinating. This is not dependent upon the ranking of the SENCO in the school, though of course it is very helpful if the SENCO role is positioned at a high rank. It is determined by the knowledge and determination of each SENCO combined with their confident use of the practical tools contained within this manual. Active support from the Principal will help develop leadership, management and coordination (LMC) attributes in equal measure.



Principals are vital to the success of the SENCO role in each school

It is only by working hand-in-hand, sharing professional knowledge skills and experiences that we can make the lives of students with SEN happy, fulfilled...



And aiming for great things for both now and in the future!

To be effective in carrying out leadership of SEN, management of resources and to make things work harmoniously across the school, the SENCO should have the full support of the Principal. Sharing the SSSP (*Practical Toolkit 2.1*) early on in the role and then meeting regularly with the Principal to discuss how good practice is developing across the school is a good way to help them understand the full scope and potential of the role.

SENCO Journey... It's all about outcomes!

Outcomes for the SENCO role are inextricably linked to outcomes woven into the WSA to IE.



The SSSP is organised into two sections:



The first section contains statements about the journey of knowledge and confidence the **SENCO** mapped roles against the kev leadership, management and coordination (LMC). important to recognise that to achieve SENCO practice in the 'very confident' sections of the SSSP would require the SENCO to be operating at a high rank in the school and therefore able to work at a strategic whole school level. Progress towards this level should be the aspiration of all SENCOs in collaboration with support of the the active Principal.



The second section contains statements about impact of improving practice on students with SEN, their parents, teachers and about the development of Person Centred Approaches and student voice.

Finding an honest start point!

Using a highlighter pen and through discussion and by capturing relevant evidence, we will highlight the statements that 'best fit' the start point for the role of SENCO in your school.



A SENCO coming newly to the post should spend some time reading through the SSSP and, using a highlighter pen, should:

Highlight the statements that best describe where they are at the beginning of their role and at the start of the SENCO training. This helps to identify the 'baseline' or 'start-point'.

The SSSP should then be shared with the school Principal and a discussion should take place about how the Principal can best support the SENCO to achieve working practice in first the fairly confident, then confident and over time, very confident sections.

You should also share the second section of the SSSP because this will help the Principal and others to understand that by releasing the 'power' of the SENCO role into the school, great things can be achieved with teachers, other staff, parents and of course students with SEN themselves.

Principal and SENCO

Should work together to set the journey for SEN using the SSSP (*Practical Toolkit 2.1*).

Top Tips

- Read the SENCO role and duties and highlight them in 3 different colours showing which use:
 - *Leadership
 - *Management
 - *Coordination
- Make a grid or a poster listing the SENCO role and duties. Put it somewhere visible so that teachers and others can understand more about your role.
- For your own use, colour code the poster to remind you of the LMC skills needed to carry out the role. Keep a tally of which areas of work are taking up most of your time. Use this to inform the regular discussions with your Principal.
- Highlight the SSSP when you begin your SENCO role and review it during your annual SENCO review and planning process.
- Make a Venn Diagram showing
 - *Leadership
 - *Management
 - *Coordination
- Populate it with examples showing how you have and/or will use LMC skills in your role as SENCO. This will help bring your journey to life!



Part II: Practical Toolkit

2.1 SENCO/School Success Planner (SSSP)

Chapter 3

Whole School Approach (WSA) to Integrated Education (IE)

The History

The following information gives an overview and key milestones for the development of the WSA to IE in Hong Kong.

In the 1970's there was provision of learning support for a small number of students within Hong Kong ordinary primary and secondary schools.

The major initiative in 1994 came via the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Salamanca Statement calling for the international community to make Inclusive Schooling a norm. Schools in Hong Kong were encouraged to promote IE.

To support this international initiative, the following was implemented in Hong Kong:

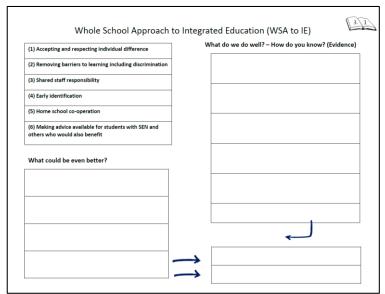
Training and advice for teachers along with the establishment of Education Resource Centres. This was further developed over the next few years and by 2007 it was stipulated that 10% of teachers should receive 30 hours basic training and at least 3 teachers in each school should complete advanced training and one Chinese and one English language teacher in each school to complete a course on learning difficulties.

In 2008, the Education Bureau published two documents: "Catering for Student Differences – Indicators for Inclusion and A Tool for School Self Evaluation and School Development" and the first edition of "Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education".

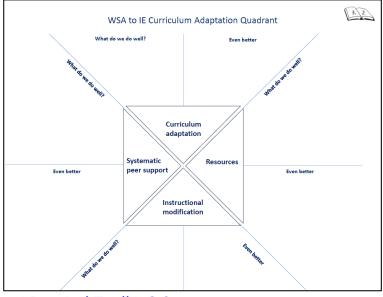
It is important that SENCOs understand the key principles of the WSA to IE and take the lead in auditing provision on an on-going basis, focusing on both the strategic and the practical expectations. This cyclical task should be carried out with other colleagues in the school.

The leadership of the Principal working collaboratively with the SENCO will enable the school to become a happy, thriving and dynamic learning environment for all students including those with SEN.

audit of An how effectively the school is developing its WSA to IE (Practical Toolkit 3.1 should *3.2)* carried out when SENCO comes into role and repeated on a regular basis as part of the SENCO Annual Action Planning cycle.



* Practical Toolkit 3.1



* Practical Toolkit 3.2

Top Tips

- Read through the "Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education"

 https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/tc/edu-system/special/support/wsa/ie%20guide%20_ch.pdf (Chinese Version; November, 2020)
- Find the two Audit tools in the *Practical Toolkit* 3.1 & 3.2.
- Work through the Audit tools with different 'functional teams' across the school:
 - *Student Support Team
 - *Curriculum/Academic Team
 - *Guidance Team, etc.
- Talk through your findings with your Principal.
 This will help to inform: your journey on the SSSP and will be crucial for your SENCO Annual Action Planning process.

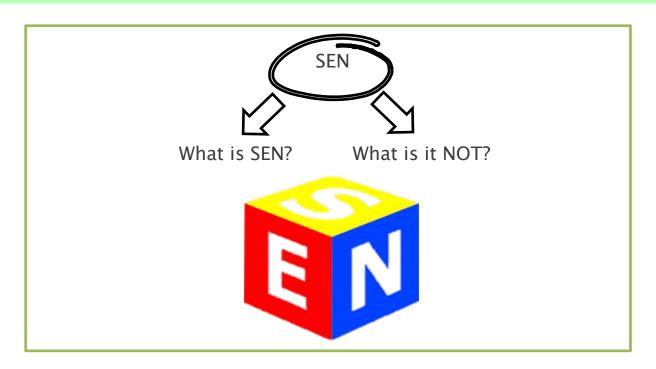


Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 3.1 Whole School Approach (WSA) to Integrated Education (IE)
- 3.2 WSA to IE Curriculum Adaptation Quadrant

Chapter 4

What is SEN?



SENCOs need to have a clear idea of what 'constitutes' a SEN. SENCOs also need to be clear that some students can have diverse learning profiles, or difficulties in learning or social interaction, but that the causal factors are not always SEN. Think for example about those students who are new to Hong Kong and whose first language is not Cantonese or who are not experienced in writing in Chinese. The primary reason why these students might be under-achieving may be because of first language issues and not because of having SEN, although it is possible that some may also have additional underlying SEN.

How should we understand and 'describe' SEN?

Its distinctiveness is that it is a persistent long-term difficulty that is 'within' the child or young person and has a clear organic or neurological cause.

SEN: the international view:

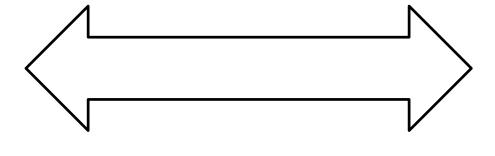
- A clear organic basis for difficulties in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries;
- A result of physical or intellectual disabilities;
- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than peers due to a range of impairments or disabilities.

There are three key principles which relate to SEN of which SENCOs in all schools need to be aware.

The first is what is meant by a SEN 'Continuum'?

The continuum view of SEN

 Continuum means a continuous sequence in which elements are not perceptibly different from each other but the extremes are quite distinct.



This is a particularly important concept given the diverse range of schools from within which SENCOs now carry out their roles. For example, a SENCO may work in a school which has many students who have clear diagnoses of SEN and are receiving provision described within Tier 3.

A SENCO may however work in a school where very few students have diagnoses of SEN. There may be a belief amongst the SENCO's colleagues that the school has few if any students with a SEN for which they need to make adjustments and/or changes to classroom provision. They may even question why the school needs the skills and expertise of a SENCO!

Here are the compelling reasons why all schools need a SENCO and why all schools should expect to have students whose learning and/or social interaction is impacted upon by SEN within the concept of the continuum view.

Dyslexia, for example, occurs across a range of intellectual abilities from average to superior. It is best thought of as a continuum and not a distinct category and there are no clear cut-off points. There are further interesting questions about literacy difficulties which should be considered. Could the student who shows limited signs of reading and writing difficulties when using Chinese script but appears to be under-attaining in English be experiencing phonological awareness and speed of processing difficulties typical of the more 'opaque' irregular languages?

The more we learn about brain functioning, the more questions are raised. For example, recent research suggests that Chinese and Western dyslexics show brain differences in different brain regions, meaning the dyslexic Chinese reader may not experience the same degree of problem with an alphabetic language and some non-Chinese dyslexics can master the Chinese script, but have greater difficulty with script which involves the use of the alphabet. Other research suggests however, that there could be a commonality of difficulties impacting across many areas of the curriculum where efficient verbal and/or visuospatial working memory processes are required. These are often 'hidden' factors which provide mysterious difficulties to students who are trying to learn efficiently and well.

Looking at another 'high incidence SEN': it is estimated that between 1:59 (Baio et al., 2018) to 1:160 (World Health Organization, 2018b) children globally is on the autism spectrum. Note the word 'spectrum' which is synonymous with 'continuum' i.e.; a spectrum is a condition which is not limited to a set of values but can vary without steps across a continuum. So how does this relate to Autism? Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are a class of neurodevelopmental conditions characterised by:

- Communication and language challenges;
- Social interaction difficulties;
- Repetitive-type behaviours and a 'single focused' mind-set.

Recent research (Lawson & Dombroski, 2017) suggests that problems with object permanence and a predisposition for single-focused attention characterise the autistic mind-set which gives an additional perspective to the poor theory of mind view of autism hypothesized by Baron Cohen in the 1980's (Baren-Cohen, 2001).

The above traits are central to ASD, however there is a variability of degree relating to each, and a uniqueness of how the combination of the three affects the individual. Interestingly, almost all genetic risk factors for ASD can be found in individuals who do not have a diagnosis of ASD or other neurological disorders, and this makes the notion of a spectrum operating across a continuum even more powerful.

What are the implications for SENCOs?

You may be a SENCO in a school where a diagnosis of ASD had been given to one or many students, you may be a SENCO where no student has an ASD diagnosis. However, remember there are likely to be students who have similar traits impacting on communication, social interaction and flexibility of thoughts or actions which also require teachers to adjust their practice to make sure all students learn successfully. The skills and expert advice a SENCO can bring to all scenarios involving students who may have an SEN-based difficulty is incredibly important.

The second key principle relating to the understanding of SEN is that of co-occurrence. This is the idea, underpinned by research that because the brain functions in an integrated way, many SEN 'types' or profiles have a significant overlap.

What does co-occurrence mean in relation to SEN?

- To appear together...
- To happen or exist at the same time...

OVER

To overlap...

The work of many researchers including Russel and Pavelka (2013), suggest a strong co-occurrence between some of the more high profile 'types' of SEN such as ASD, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and dyslexia. A common difficulty for some students with dyslexia for example is misinterpretation of spoken language which often shows itself as problems with comprehension. This can produce a clear overlap with pragmatic language impairment which is a feature of ASD. So, as an example, the phrase 'run on the spot' which means to run standing in one place may have both students with dyslexia and ASD looking for a black or coloured spot on which to run.

Different SEN 'types' and their co-occurrence with each other mean that students will often experience a range of similar types of difficulties (*Practical Toolkit 4.3*). We shall talk more about why it is important for SENCOs to be knowledgeable about co-occurrence and its effect on learning in the classroom in the chapter about planning and delivering professional development for teachers. It will be an important factor also in the discussion about the use of Lesson Study as a tool for SENCOs.

Primary SEN 'type'	Area of difficulty	Area of difficulty	Area of difficulty	Area of difficulty
	Working memory	Language and information processing	Planning and organisation	Resistance to change/ failure anxiety
AD/HD, ADD	✓	✓	√	Often
ASD	Often	Often	Often	Often
SLI	1	1	√	Often
Dyslexia	√	√	√	Often

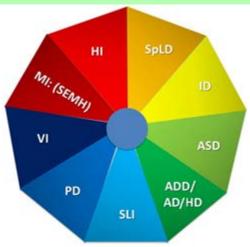
The third key principle relating to the understanding about SEN is the concept of the Iceberg.

SENCOs often report that their colleagues talk about the difficulties they have teaching students with SEN and that conversations they have are based on the teacher's perceptions of what they see and experience of the students' behaviours, work-rate and attitudes. There are some teachers whose 'knowledge' about students with SEN is located solely in the information about their diagnosis. This may adversely influence their attitudes towards them because they do not explore the strengths and difficulties which make individual students unique.

For a SENCO in a school where very few students have diagnoses of SEN, then teacher colleagues may not be aware that some students, based on the continuum of need approach may not be reaching their potential due to an SEN related difficulty. All these various views and experiences are acquired firstly from the perspective of 'above the iceberg' information. This means what is seen, heard, reported and experienced via the students' learning behaviours, their ability to engage socially, information sent to the schools by other professional or through work achieved during lessons and via homework.

The iceberg principle allows SENCOs to introduce the important concept of 'causal factors'. This is the view that there are often multiple underlying causal factors which impact on both the learning and social behaviours and which create diverse learning challenges for students with SEN.

It is through the skill of the SENCO in identifying the right tools to use, that the key strengths and difficulties within each student can be identified. The role of the SENCO in leading, managing and coordinating the right provision to ensure the best progress and outcomes becomes increasingly possible because a much deeper, more investigative view has been gained based on using a wealth of valuable evidence. The 'tools' available to make this possible will be discussed in a number of different chapters beginning with the chapter on Person Centred Approaches.



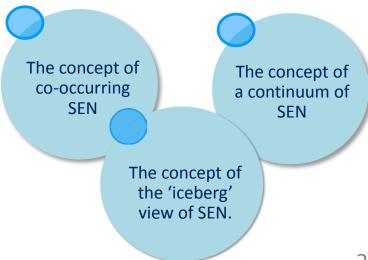
*Please refer to page X.

addition, all **SENCOs** In knowledgeable must be about the three kev principles of SFN: continuum, co-occurrence and the under-the-surface causal factors in order to promote early identification and effective provision includina intervention outlined in the WSA to IF.

The practical tools linked to this chapter can be used with students, their parents and teachers to help promote positive outcomes and progress in learning. So, in summary, each SENCO should have a clear understanding about the different SEN 'types' identified within Hong Kong, and should be aware of both the potential positive and negative attributes of each on learning and life in school.

Introducing the use of the ice-berg to identify underlying causes of SEN

- What we see on the surface ...
- Often has multiple underlying causal factors.
- It is the skill of the SENCO to help identify the key difficulties by using powers of investigation.



Top Tips

- Start an SEN Data File using:
 - *Pie Charts
 - *Graphs
 - *Charts, etc.
- Stop check:Will your Data File enable you to show......
- *% of students with SEN?
 - *% of co-occurrence across different SEN profiles?
 - *Data this year compared to last year?
 - *Trends of SEN in different classes across the school?
- Use the data to inform your regular discussion meetings with your Principal and to plan fit-forpurpose provision.
- Use the Iceberg (Template & Example) from the Practical Toolkit 4.1.
- Use the Iceberg principle in your regular discussion with teachers about students with SEN in their class(es).



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 4.1 Iceberg (Template & Example)
- 4.2 Person Centred Approaches to Agreeing Reasonable Adjustments (Accommodations) (Template & Example)
- 4.3 Co-occurrence



Video List

Through my eyes Rosie's story:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g89YYiC7P6Y

BBC - My autism and me:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejpWWP1HNGQ&t=3s

Can you make it to the end?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr4_dOorquQ

I CAN – helping children develop speech language and communication skills:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NG50fv-B3Uk

ADHD working memory:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nls3wxRZEoE

Dyslexia explained: what it is like being dyslexic: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEpBujdee8M

Chapter 5

Person Centred Approaches

The 'Golden Thread' running through the work of the SENCO in every school is a 'hearts and minds' understanding of what Person Centred Approaches are and how they can be used to promote great outcomes and progress in learning for each and every student. 'Minds' because every SENCO must be secure in the knowledge about what Person Centred Approaches really are, and 'hearts' because they must believe in the power of Person Centred Approaches, use them in day to day work and promote their use with colleagues within and beyond the school.

We shall first look at the theory underpinning the use of Person Centred Approaches.

The Psychologist Dr. Carl Rogers (1902–1987) first developed the theory of Person Centred Approaches (The Person–Centred Association, n.d.) which many considered to be both radical and revolutionary. It is described as a non–directive approach, moving away from the idea that others are the experts and towards the belief that all humans are capable of finding fulfillment of their own personal potential.



An empathetic environment needs to be in place to help each individual reflect upon themselves, and to develop a sense of their own personal 'profile'. This includes interests, strengths, difficulties and identification of those things that are needed to help them achieve good outcomes. This creates the potential for each individual to take control of their lives with the help of others rather than others directing their course of action from a presumption of knowing what is 'best' for them. Crucially it also informs others of a range of actions which might be most effective in facilitating each students' development. It gives rise to a uniquely collaborative, joint 'problem' solving' style of engagement which when done well can lead students to gain a better understanding of themselves and develop a much stronger sense of control over their lives and their aspirations.

I am good at:



The theory and practice of Person Centred Approaches links strongly to recent research into the importance of developing metacognition and self-regulation. This will be discussed in more detail in the chapter on Metacognition and Self-Regulation, but the following is a helpful overall guide to how these important concepts work together.

Who is it that will spend the whole of their lives with themselves? Who is it that will reap the rewards or consequences of their own actions? The answer is obvious of course: it is the person themselves. Who then needs to get to know more about themselves and begin to take responsibility for their own actions? The person themselves. The more a person knows about themselves, even if for some students with SEN this may appear to be cognitively challenging, the more they can learn and the better able they are to self-regulate. If metacognition at its simplest is keeping track of how our thinking is getting us closer or further away from our goals (Larkin, 2010) then students, and most importantly those with SEN should become better informed about themselves to help generate the thinking that influences decisions for learning and life.



So, what are the practical implications of developing Person Centred Approaches? Crucially, we must gain an understanding that it is the quality of what is done and not the quantity measured by the hours and minutes taken to do it. A purposeful, appropriately focused discussion based on great questioning techniques using a range centred tools to facilitate of person conversation is worth far more than going through a 'closed' worksheet process in which students don't have space to develop their own thoughts or reflect on their own experiences. In other words, when using Person Centred Approaches... ask great questions and listen well!

I am interested in:



Person Centred Approaches...why?

- Focuses on the child or young person as an individual;
- Enables children and young people to share their views and feelings;
- Develops an outcomes focused mind-set;
- Encourages students to develop metacognitive and self-regulation skills;
- Provides different perspectives on how to motivate and engage students in their own learning and future plans;
- Provides positive and practical ways to engage parents.
- Gives SENCOs essential knowledge about students to inform thinking and planning;
- Helps develop a strong working relationship between students and their teachers;
- Provides a positive and practical platform for discussion with parents;
- Facilitates and strengthens working relationships with other teachers;
- Provides a mechanism for students to know they are being listened to;
- Encourages students to think for themselves;

 Is a central tool for the leadership, management and coordination aspects of the SENCO role. Person Centred Approaches are intended to celebrate the uniqueness of the individual. The ultimate purpose? To empower students to gain a better understanding of themselves, become active players in a collaborative process aimed at improving learning and social interaction which in turn gives them greater choice and control of their own life journey. This requires careful structuring, work on developing metacognition and a focus on how to practically develop skills of self-regulation.





Warning!

SENCOs need to be aware of the following risks when introducing and developing Person Centred Approaches across the school:

Tokenism:

- Believing only some students can access Person Centred Approaches;
- Listening but not acting. For the students, this means their thoughts and words are not valued because nothing changes;
- Talking to students rather than talking with them;
- Using the approaches only with students and not releasing them as a powerful tool for communicating with parents;
- Allowing them to become an administrative driven process where quantity rather than quality becomes the focus and a 'one-size-fits-all' paper driven mindset;
- Remember: The purpose is to develop rich and reflective discussion which moves learning forward.

How to develop Person Centred Approaches in your school:

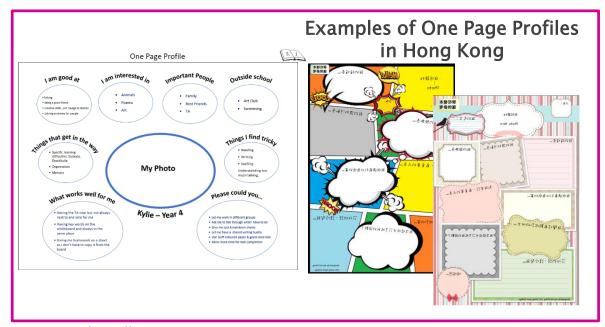
- Select a range of ideas from the example tools in the *Practical Toolkit 5.1–5.5*, but always include the One Page Profile.
- Work with at least one other colleague in your school, focusing particularly on key teachers.
- Together, identify one or two students with SEN to whom you would like to introduce Person Centred Approaches.
- Agree a good time to meet with each student explaining you would like to have a 'chat' about things that are important to them and will bring along some ideas to help make it a really happy, positive discussion. Ask if they would agree a time, place and explain that you will be joined by a colleague and say who. This will be to create a 'listening team' to take their ideas really seriously!
- Encourage the students to illustrate the One Page Profile or other tools and to choose their own background and adapt the conversation if the concepts are too difficult. Support with visual images or choice cards if this would be helpful.

- Highlight key ideas from the conversation and agree manageable actions with the students. Remember not to choose an action that is too big. It is important that what is chosen is 'possible'. Anything too big might not happen, then all we have done is 'disappoint' which ultimately would be worse than not promising any action at all. Encourage students to take ownership of something meaningful and possible that is identified as an outcome of the discussion.
- Agree how the actions will be implemented and by whom. Identify a timeframe to revisit the discussion.
- Use the One Page Profile and other relevant tools with the student's parents and teachers to gain a range of different perspectives. Tell the students you are going to do this as a way of emphasizing how important it is to include people who are important to them in the discussion about what they are good at, what they like doing, what helps them to learn etc.
- Use the information to work towards improving their learning and social opportunities and agree what practical steps they and others can take to make things 'even better'.
- Decide on a timeframe to return to the discussion.

Person Centre Approaches: Practical tools for SENCOs:



The *Practical Toolkit* (5.1–5.5) contains a range of tools available to SENCOs to help develop the use of Person Centred Approaches for students both with and if your school wishes, without SEN. Develop a brave, experimental and creative attitude to help identify the right selection of tools for each and every student, their parents and relevant teachers.



^{*} Practical Toolkit 5.1

Quotes from SENCOs:

After the first experience, we should adopt Person Centred Approaches to facilitate students, parents and teachers to express their point of views.

It helps us to understand and adapt more approaches to deal with students with SEN in their learning.

Next time we can use this at the end of the school year as information for their new teachers for smooth transition.

Top Tips

- Revisit the 10 steps on how to introduce Person Centred Approaches into your school.
- Put the 10 steps into a grid format so you can track the progress of your journey. As you implement each step.
- Add examples of impact to your grid and use to inform the regular timetabled discussions with your Principal.
- Be strategic! Put key actions into your SENCO Annual Action Plan with dates for activities entered into your SENCO calendar.
- Empower teachers to carry out Person Centred Approaches work! Make full use of the variety of tools in the *Practical Toolkit 5.1-5.5*.
- Collect and analyse data to help identify where good practice is happening and where further work should be actioned.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 5.1 One Page Profile
- 5.2 Good Day Bad Day
- *5.3 4+1 Questions*
- 5.4 Child Origami Book
- 5.5 Adult Origami Book



Video List

Person centered vs systems centered with Beth Mount: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y77y7XW8GtE

Person Centred Reviews - Animate: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpRz-YEwkP8

Meet our new ambassadors! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C-OLCI3PTo

Georgie's One Page Profile – from primary school to college: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0DNl8z6xPw

Chapter 6

The Graduated Approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review

Assess, Plan, Do, Review: Using a Graduated Approach to promote good outcomes and progress for pupils with SEN.

This chapter focuses on systemising approaches to:

Identifying the 'under the iceberg' profile of students with SEN

Implementing effective provision

Reviewing outcomes and progress

SENCOs need to know how to do this using the Graduated Approach which consists of a cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review actions.

To gain a high level of understating about how to use this system effectively within Tiers 1, 2 and 3, we shall first focus on each of the three parts within the cycle.

Assess

There are a number of ways of understanding the language of 'assess' when applied to students with SEN. Does it mean getting specialist professionals to assess student needs? Does it mean gaining a diagnosis? Does it mean focusing on what is 'wrong' with a student in relation to their learning and or social interaction?

Good practice suggests it means gathering evidence to help formulate a plan to guide the student forward in their learning, independence and social interaction.

The SENCO needs to lead a process of investigation focused on what might be under the surface, using the iceberg principle. By looking for things which might be impacting both positively and negatively on the individual, the SENCO can guide a process of fact-finding using observation, discussion, qualitative and quantitative data gathering and of course the all-important Person Centred Approaches to gain student views and experiences.

Example of the types of evidence to be gathered includes:

- Information from teachers;
- Information from students via Person Centred Approaches;
- Information from parents also using Person Centred Approaches;
- Information obtained from observations and a review of what's in place and working/not working currently;
- Where relevant, information from other professionals within and beyond the school.

- The teacher's assessment and experience of the student;
- Student progress, attainment, and behaviour;
- Student's development in comparison to their peers;
- The student's views and experiences;
- The views and experiences of the parents;
- A review of any strategies which have been used to-date;
- Collaborative discussion with others professionals within the school.

If the student already has a diagnosis, SENCOs should still carry out as much investigation as possible to find out what impact the factors within the diagnosis are having on the student and seek to discover strengths which will serve as a counterbalance to any difficulties.

A diagnosis of dyslexia for example will probably impact on each student slightly differently and it is by using great investigative skills that the SENCO can help the student, parents and teachers understand what adjustments and strategies will have greatest positive effect on helping learning take place. Similarly, due to a high level of co-occurrence between SEN 'types' it is important for SENCOs to use their knowledge and expertise to help both the student and others understand the complexity of students' under-the-surface profiles. As an example, for the student with co-occurring AD/HD and ASD, self-regulation difficulties due to AD/HD can potentially cause additional difficulties in the area of social interaction which is a factor typically experienced by students with autism.

Located in the *Practical Toolkit 5.1–5.5* are a range of tools to facilitate Person Centred Approaches to help inform the assessment process. Remember also, the EDB assessment tools which can be accessed through the "Operation Guide on the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education".

Plan

The purpose of assessment is to plan and agree appropriate responses. The planning part of the cycle should be coordinated by the SENCO who will gather together a range of views to ensure the plan is:

Collaborative

Focused on positive outcomes and progress in learning

Person centred

Understood and owned by all those who have a role in it, especially the student

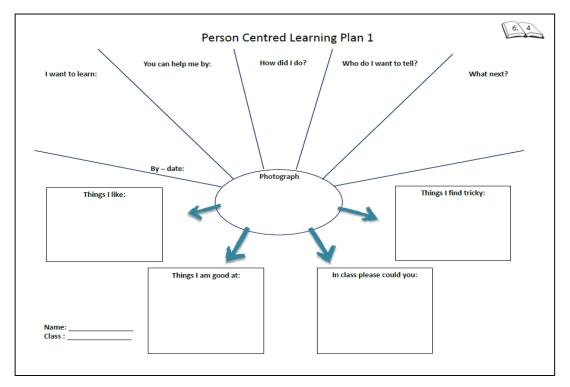
*Note if the plan is being drawn together using an Individual Education Plan (IEP), the above principles still apply.

Planning needs to be:

- Collaborative:
- Well co-ordinated:
- Focused on achieving agreed outcomes;
- Manageable for all;
- Owned by the student and all those who will play a part as active participants.



There is no one perfect planning tool and it is important that the SENCO uses or develops paperwork with the right headings focusing on placing the students at the heart of the process. Make sure too that the plans are sufficiently clear to be easy to use by teachers and parents and that the small step approach focuses on achieving agreed outcomes and progress in learning.



* Practical Toolkit 6.4

Examples of Person Centred Learning Planning tools are located in the *Practical Toolkit 6.4–6.5* and an example of the current IEP proforma is located within the Operation Guide on the WSA to IE in Chapter 3.

Do

This is the part of the cycle during which SENCOs need to fully release their leadership and coordination skills. Agreed timeframes must be adhered to, provision in the form of adjustments and accommodation in the classroom as well as support and intervention must be ongoing. Everyone with a role to play in the plan must use their best endeavors to help the student achieve expected outcomes and progress in learning. Teachers, students and their parents must be central to the actions agreed.

Ensuring all actions take place as planned and ensuring everyone is working towards the same expected outcomes needs a great deal of SENCO energy, skill and coordination.

Key question for SENCO's:

- Who is doing what?
- For how long?
- How often?
- Why?
- For what purpose?
- What are the expected outcomes?
- How is everyone communicating with the student and with each other?
- What recording systems are in place to capture the outcome of what everyone is doing ready for the review?

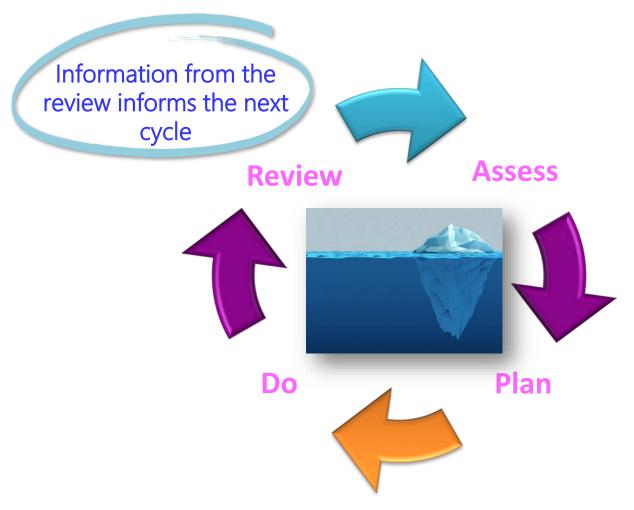


Review

This is not so much the final part of the cycle but the beginning of the next.

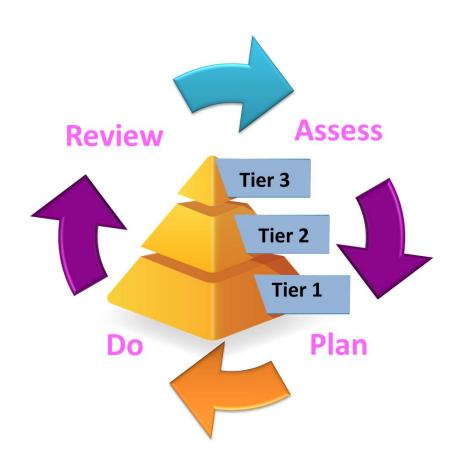
Ideally, class or subject teachers, working with the SENCO should revise the success of the actions outlined in the plan in the light of student outcomes and progress. This analytical process should be led by the SENCO and will result in changes to provision, support and or intervention in consultation with the student and their parents.

Then the next cycle begins.



Using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle at Tiers 1, 2 & 3

The Graduated Approach provides SENCOs with the opportunity to place a clear focus on outcomes. No matter how far along the continuum of SEN needs or how complex the co-occurrence; having a clear structure for assessing the under the surface needs; planning actions to meet agreed outcomes; working collaboratively on agreed plans. Reviewing results in a critically analytical way provides a dynamic structure for SENCOs in each and every school. It is as effective for SENCOs with many students at Tiers 1, 2 & 3 or for SENCOs in schools where the work is focused largely at Tier 1. There are three strategic planning tools located in the *Practical Toolkit* (6.1–6.3). These will help SENCOs work through a robust Graduated Approach for students with SEN at either Tier 1, 2 or 3.



Within Tier 1 it places the emphasis on early identification and responses that are collaborative and evidence based. Within Tier 2 it promotes a cycle of discussion focusing on more intensive provision

Within Tier 3 it ensures Person Centred Approaches are used to get 'under the surface' following diagnosis.

Using the Graduated Approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review to promote good outcomes:

Thinking point for SENCOs

Top Tips

- Use the Tiers 1/2/3 Templates in the *Practical Toolkit 6.1-6.3*. These will help guide you through how to implement the Graduated Approach.
- Be efficient and focused and remember to involve the voice of the student and their parents by using Person Centred Approaches!
- Use Leadership, Management and Coordination (LMC) skills to facilitate your journey.
- Leadership:*Set the vision and map the journey.
- Management: Link the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process for each student to:
 - *Provision Mapping and Management *Student Progress Meetings
- Coordination:
 Ensure the right people at Involved at the right time and in the right place.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 6.1 Tier 1
- 6.2 Tier 2
- 6.3 Tier 3
- 6.4 Person Centred Learning Plan 1
- 6.5 Person Centred Learning Plan 2

Chapter 7

Provision Mapping and Management

This aspect of the SENCO role will be discussed in three sections:



Effective Provision



Provision Mapping



Provision Management

Effective Provision

We shall start by asking what is meant by effective provision for students with SEN? Here are some thoughts:

- Does this mean removing students from the classroom on a regular basis to access bespoke targeted interventions?
- Does this mean giving students regular teaching assistant support within the classroom?
- Does this mean providing students with alternative learning tasks within a whole class teaching session?
- Does this mean expecting them to do what everyone else does and at the same pace with the same expected outcomes?
- Does effective provision mean all, some or none of the above?

Research strongly indicates that effective provision for all students including those with SEN should start with great teaching in the classroom.

If you were to construct a really 'bad' lesson for a student with SEN, what would it look like? Large amounts of information given at speed? Few if any visual cues? Lack of clarity about the main area of learning and maybe too, lack of time for questions asked too quickly so the students with SEN have little time to process in time and find the right vocabulary to offer answers.

Interestingly, there are some key themes which arise out of Person Centred Approaches carried out in both primary and secondary schools about what factors create effective classroom provision for students with SEN.

Person Centred Approaches: What students with SEN say helps them in the classroom.

- A slightly slower pace;
- More time to finish tasks:
- Chances to review key learning;
- Work to be 'chunked' into manageable parts to help with organization;
- Seating position to be reviewed;
- Praise for small achievements;
- To have questions reframed so they have a chance to answer and contribute to discussion;
- A recognition of how tiring learning can be for them.

None of these teaching strategies require additional time or resources. What is required however, is for teachers to have access to the voice of students with SEN who often recognise but frequently can't articulate what they need. This then takes us back to SENCOs developing effective use of Person Centred Approaches outlined in Chapter 5.

It is said that an inclusive school is 'one that is on the move, rather than one that has reached the perfect state' (Ainscow et al., 2006). It could therefore be said that the inclusive classroom is also one that is on the move and the SENCO's leadership role is to provide the insight, knowledge and guidance to facilitate this important journey.

If great teaching is that which leads to 'improved student achievement using outcomes that matter to their future success' (Coe, Aloisi, Higgins, & Major, 2014), then the SENCO role is to help teachers reflect on their skills and apply them effectively to promote the very best progress and outcomes for all students including those with SEN. The great teacher is a teacher who understands that what they do for students with SEN will also impact positively on others in the classroom who may or may not themselves be on the SEN continuum.

Do we assess 'great teaching' as the style that would suit us best as a learner? How objective therefore is the notion of great teaching? Maybe it is more subjective than we think. As adults and professionals, we would be able to describe what helps us to learn best. This is because we have developed metacognitive (learning to learn) knowledge, and of course we have a wellhoned form of self-regulation which helps us adapt and control our responses to any teaching which is not well matched to our own learning preferences. Contrast this the student with AD/HD experiences a low level of self-regulation and not received sufficient scaffolding to articulate what helps them to learn best.



The result is 'learning chaos' both for the student and the teacher. Unpicking learning chaos for students with SEN requires a skilled and determined SENCO working in a Person Centred way and using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle to:

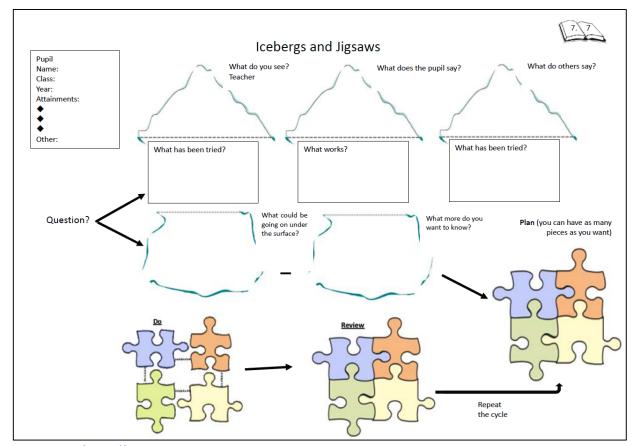
- Celebrate what is working well;
- Build on successes;
- Work collaboratively to make small adjustments;
- Engage with the student to help build problem-solving skills;
- Give consistent and active support to the teacher using a coaching approach.

So in summary, effective provision starts with teaching in the classroom that is responsive to students' views and experiences, alert to what is working and considerate of what could be 'even better'. It is delivered by teachers who are reflective practitioners and who believe that all students belong in their class. It is fueled by having knowledge about what type of teacher they are, how they best like to communicate learning and the extent to which they understand the potential learning diversity in their class.

Great classroom provision flows best from confident, reflective teachers who feel well supported by their SENCO and therefore able to take risks by trying something just a little bit different in the belief that it will make the learning experience better for all students including those with SEN.

The SENCO's ability to harness great teaching begins by valuing each teaching colleague by listening to their experience of working with the student with SEN, finding out what they have tried and celebrating what is working. This leads to a collaborative process of discussion taking the teacher through the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle in order to intensify good practice and introduce small additional enhancements which may make teaching more effective and learning more accessible.

Think of it as a discussion based on the principle of the ice-berg followed by putting together pieces of a puzzle made up of as much information as possible with which to begin the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.



^{*} Practical Toolkit 7.7

Tips to avoid 'learning chaos' for students with SEN:

Give important instructions one–at–a time.	Use clear and consistent visual cues as well as appropriate associated gestural cues.	Give extra thinking time to allow for information to be absorbed, filtered and organised ready for response.
Systemise learning wherever possible.	Identify and build on the small successes and publicly acknowledge when something good happens.	Use a multi- layered approach to assessing learning to avoid writing being the only way students can demonstrate they have gained new knowledge.
Reduce learning anxiety by using Person Centred Approaches.	Engage students in self-regulation strategies by using some of the tools in the <i>Practical Toolkit 11.1-11.8</i> .	Celebrate and share successes with students, their parents and with other teachers to build confidence for all.

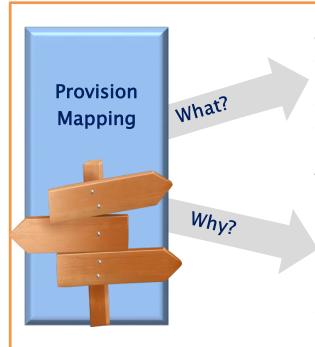
Provision Mapping

Provision Mapping provides SENCOs with a structured way to build and maintain an overview of provision for students with SEN and to record and analyse its impact.

There are a number of important principles to understand before looking at the practical aspects of how to create a Provision Map.

The first principle is that no one has yet, nor maybe ever will, developed the perfect Provision Map. This is because different types of maps generate different outcomes. It is through skilled SENCO leadership that the most effective Provision Mapping processes and systems will be grown and developed using an outcomes-based model of thinking.

Provision Maps are an efficient way of showing provision made by the school for students with SEN working within the context of the three-tiered model.



Provision Maps are an efficient way of showing the provision that the school makes which is additional and different from that which is offered through the school's curriculum.

The use of Provision Maps can help SENCOs to maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions with different groups of pupils and provide a basis for monitoring the different levels of intervention.

Health Warning!

Issues this raises:

- The greater the amount of additional provision and interventions students experience, the greater the amount of time spent out of the classroom.
- This can lead to class and subject teachers failing to teach them often enough to understand their needs, and a consequent lack of consideration for them in terms of planning, delivery of the curriculum, marking and feedback.



Before talking more about how to develop a Provision Map for each school we must also consider the function of Provision Management. This is the strategic evaluation of the type of provision and its impact on outcomes and progress for students.

The time and effort taken to create Provision Maps must equal to the time and engagement spent analysing the outcomes shown on the map, otherwise there is no justification for starting the process at all. Too often SENCOs are driven to develop Provision Maps, but these fail to become working documents and the time taken to create and sustain them is disproportionate to the benefit they give. In other words they make little difference to the lives of students, their parents or their teachers and simply become another bureaucratic burden for SENCOs.

A firm message for SENCOs: Provision Mapping must always link to Provision Management. If your Provision Map is going to help you understand impact on outcomes and progress, whatever format you design, must have within it three key headings, these are:

Effectiveness of interventions

There needs to be a clear evidence base showing the effectiveness of interventions.

- Baselines
- Expected outcomes
- Actual outcomes

These are non-negotiable headings within the provision management cycle.

By considering the start point of students in terms of qualitative (soft measures) and quantitative (hard measures) you can have a much more informed discussion about the provision most likely to move students forward to achieve the expected outcomes and progress. Once the provision has been delivered and impact data collected, you can then analyse the actual outcomes and progress.

When you set up the Provision Map, you also need to think about the meaning of the terms 'outcomes' and 'progress'. Is it good enough, for example for the students to reach the desired outcomes/progress in the small group intervention or in a 1:1 situation? Or is the expected outcome only fully achieved when the student can make use of those same skills in the classroom and/or wider areas of the school away from the support of the 1:1 or small group setting?

One of the huge risks of using out-of-class interventions, is that the learning gained is 'situational'. In other words, progress can be measured in the 1:1 or small group setting but fails to materialise in wider contexts such as the classroom or in unstructured times around the school. Why is this? Because unless a 'bridge' is built between the new learning in one situation, and its application in another. For many students with SEN, it cannot automatically be generalised and put to use in other contexts. So when you build your Provision Map, you need to consider a wide range of headings.

Before we discuss a selection of headings from which you can choose (these can be found in the *Practical Toolkit 7.1*), there is one further decision to make:

Do you want a map that gives you an overview of provision across the whole school? (Strategic Provision Map)

What is the purpose of the Provision Map you are about to develop?

Do you want a map that is jointly owned by class or subject teachers, so they can share accountability for ensuring outcomes and progress from interventions are embedded in the classroom? (Class/Subject Teacher Map)

Do you want to be able to track the different types of provision for individual students over time, so you can analyse impact and ensure you do not repeat interventions that don't work or leave gaps where other interventions could be tried? (Individual Student Provision Map)

Providing a student-specific history of provision over time is particularly useful for secondary school SENCOs at the point of transition so that interventions that have had little impact in primary school years are not repeated in secondary school years. It is also a valuable tool for sharing the outcomes of programmes and interventions with both the student and their parents.

Think outcomes



- I want something or things that shows me provision across the school;
- I want teachers to own the provision for pupils in their class/subject area;
- I want to be able to track provision and outcomes against individual pupils over time.

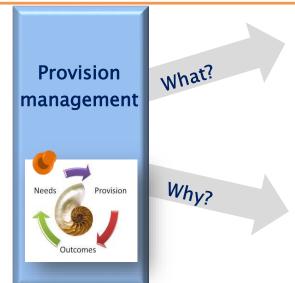
A word about value for time and value for money

The clock ticks! Time taken engaging students in different provision or focused out-of-class interventions can never be put back. Once that hour has gone, it can never be replaced. It is vital therefore that SENCOs:

- Build a Provision Mapping process that takes account of adult and student time as well as material resources.
- Cross reference impact data with time taken and resources given.
- Develop a visual representation which enables the SENCO to lead discussion about the effectiveness of provision for individual students and across the school as a whole.

The same is true when thinking about value-for-time or money principles. What is the most effective way a SENCO can spend precious resources? By selecting the correct Provision Map headings SENCOs can provide a comprehensive collection of data from which discussion about value for time and money linked to consequent outcomes and progress can be carried out.

Provision Management



Used to strategically develop special educational provision to match assessed needs of pupils across the school, and to ensure the impact of that provision on pupil progress.

Contributes to school improvement by identifying particular patterns of need, areas of development for teaching staff and develops the use of interventions that are effective and remove those which are less so.

SENCOs should not try to manage provision alone. It is a collaborative process based on gathering data about what constitutes good quality provision, matching it to the unique profile of the students and evaluating the consequent outcomes and progress. It must be shared, used as a working tool and manageable in term of SENCO time and that of others.

This is a good reminder of why the most valuable thing a SENCO can do is spend time working with class and subject teachers to improve classroom provision for students with SEN. If there are too many programmes and interventions happening outside the classroom, it is difficult for SENCOs to track the effectiveness and impact. In addition, students with SEN, taught largely through out–of–class provision risk being included in the school in only a superficial and tokenistic way which is not the journey of inclusion expected of the WSA to IE. This is neither inclusive nor is it time efficient. Take a moment to explore chapter 8 on Student Progress Meetings. These provide an efficient platform for Provision Management discussions.

How to start the process of Provision Mapping and Management?

One of the best ways to do this is to introduce the idea of a 'trial' or a 'pilot':

- Set up a small working group. Include one or two teachers and/or a colleague with curricular influence such as the Curriculum Leader or Master/Mistress of Curriculum Development.
- Explain the concept and the rationale for the trial. Discuss what outcomes you wish to achieve.
- Decide whether your first trial will be to develop:
 - a) a strategic whole school Provision Map;
 - b) a class/subject teacher Provision Map;
 - c) a Provision Map that tracks individual students with SEN.
- Using flip-chart sized paper and post-it notes, discuss and agree initial headings for the Provision Map then put them in the order you think they would work best on the flip chart paper.

This is now your trial Provision Mapping format.

- Decide when you will start trialing the map and for how long and agree a time to meet to discuss outcomes. Discuss and agree which students and teachers will be involved and define the programmes and or interventions on which you will focus. You now have a firm start point for this most important initiatives. Once the trial is over, review the outcomes and plan how you will further develop the Provision Mapping and Management initiative to ensure you have:
 - A clear strategic leadership of provision for students with SEN;
 - A practical tool to support the effective management of resources;
 - A way to coordinate provision so that it has a positive impact on outcomes and progress for students with SEN.

Use of the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating system

The function of Provision Maps is to give a clear visual overview of provision and its effectiveness and impact. The use of a RAG colour coding system is an important visual guide which serves as a catalyst for discussion.



Think of a school in which a particular intervention is being trialed with a group of students with SEN. Individual student baselines are recorded, expected outcomes and progress measures are agreed. Once the intervention has finished, data is gathered and analysed and if we imagine it shows that only 2 out of the group of 5 students made the expected progress, this is then coloured amber.

This is a cue for discussion as to why some students made the expected progress and some did not. Was it the choice of intervention? Was it the way it was delivered? Was it that the group didn't run as often as expected? Was it that the teachers did not help students to practice skills learnt in the small group intervention back in the classroom? By including the RAG rating system in the overall design of the Provision Map, the SENCO now has powerful visual prompt from which to analyse the impact using value for time and money principles. Following on from this, strong evidence–based decisions can be made about the use of the intervention in the future and most importantly, consideration of different provision that could be put in place to help the students who didn't make the expected progress do so in the future.

This is Provision Management and takes us into the next and very important investigation into the purpose of Provision Maps.

Provision Maps feed the Provision Management process. Provision Management is an active cycle of discussion that helps the SENCO develop provision and particular programmes and interventions that are effective and to remove those that are less so.

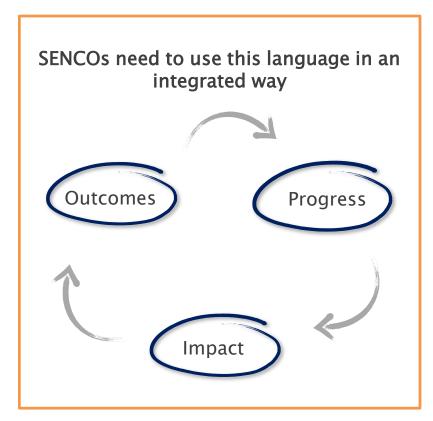
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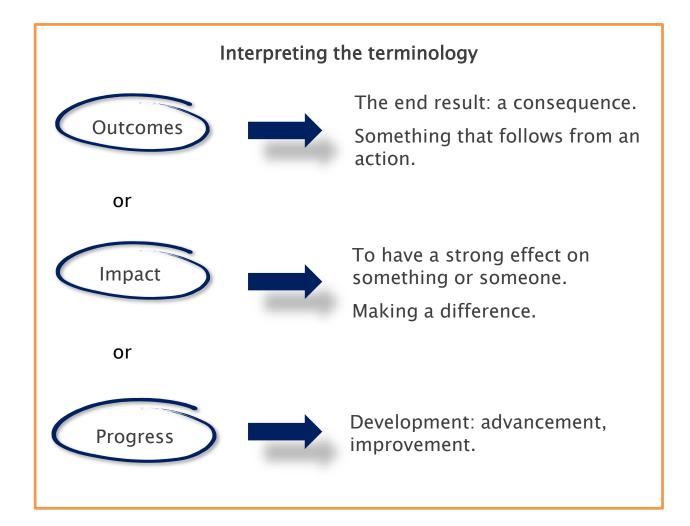
To fully engage in the Provision Mapping and Management process, SENCOs must develop a good understanding of data and apply its use to measuring outcomes and progress.

The best place to begin is to think about what it is you want to achieve, then to work backwards to identify the variety of data sources that would provide meaningful evidence. With that thought in mind, there are three key words that must be explored and fully understood.

- Outcomes
- Impact
- Progress

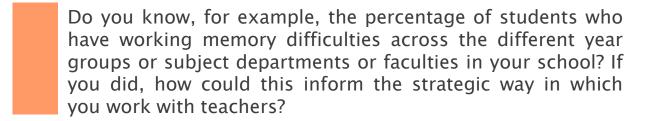
SENCOs need to use these concepts in an interchangeable and integrated way as in truth, one thing leads to another and they cannot sit apart or in isolation.





It is often said that student progress in our schools is measured in a quantitative way: for example, percentages of correct or incorrect answers in tests and examinations, numerical scores for homework submitted, and rankings within standardized test results. Does this place students with SEN at a disadvantage in the way teachers view them because their rate of progress or ability to score highly in tests may be different or less clear that their non-SEN peers? Does this then mean that collecting data for students with SEN too often becomes about attitude to learning, regulation of behaviour or social interaction? This emphasis on qualitative or soft data for students with SEN possibly undermines the attempts that should be being made to show genuine progress in learning. The way we measure outcomes informs the thinking about the progress we believe individual students can make. Too great a focus on qualitative data can mask the real potential all students have whether SEN or not to show real progress in their learning.

SENCOs need to model great practice in the art of collecting and sharing data about outcomes and progress for students with SEN.



- Do you know what the attainment gap is in reading accuracy in English for students with and without SEN in for example P5 or S3?
- Do you know what the aggregate of test scores is in Liberal Studies for students with ASD compared to non-ASD students in for example S4?

The strategic overview of key data is important to SENCOs as part of planning and managing provision. Without it, SENCOs are 'flying blind' and can take only a one-on-one individual approach to planning effective provision rather than looking for trends and patterns of strengths or areas for improvement across the school. Clearly, working with Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development within each school is an important and effective way forward for SENCOs to achieve this.

Data collected for all students including those with SEN: thoughts to help discussion:

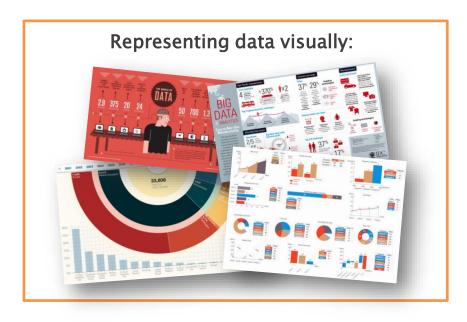
- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Behaviour for learning
- Independence
- Test scores
- Homework results
- Examination data

- Gaps in progress between SEN and non-SEN
- Gaps in progress between different SEN 'groups'
- Progress in different year groups
- Other

Another crucial aspect of working with data is to represent it visually. Great analysis and discussion flows from the power of seeing important information presented visually!

Compare the picture of a SENCO sitting at a table with many pieces of paper on which are listed individual student names, plans, targets, provision statements, multi professionals' reports. Now think about the SENCO who has a carefully categorised a range of data sets showing for example the number of students at Tiers 1, 2 and 3 across the school and how they are scattered, the main needs in each of the class level groups, and the spread of provision across the school.

Add to that a visual approach to recording students with SEN who are performing at less than average attainment and progress in each subject area and suddenly, the SENCO leadership skills are at work! This method of working gives the SENCO a way to evaluate the impact of provision or to target the upskilling of teacher confidence if there is a clear overview of what is happening in the school supported by the right data.



What about collecting and using data for individual students. How can this be done so that it effectively informs the Provision Mapping and Management process?

The start point is to explore ways to collect useful data that is both qualitative and quantitative.

Quantitative data helps SENCOs explore the hard measures of performance or progress relating to a student's profile. For example, attendance, behaviour sanctions or rewards, results of homework where there are a certain number of things to get right and test or examination scores.

Qualitative data helps SENCOs dig deeper into areas such as views, feelings and perceptions and often relates to behaviour for learning, social interaction, self-regulation and wellbeing.

There can be some confusion about the differences between qualitative and quantitative measures of progress. For example, it could be said that the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) collects quantitative data because information from it is represented numerically. However, it is in fact a qualitative method because what it represents is based on views, feelings and perceptions.

The SENCO Toolkit for collecting data to show student progress

Recording on-going discussions with students via the Person Centred One Page Profile work, views from parents and teachers all provide a sound qualitative basis for measuring progress. There are a range of tools to help SENCOs track and measure outcomes and progress located in the *Practical Toolkit* (8.1–8.7).

The SENCO Toolkit



SENCOs should work with teachers to track learning progress by gathering in-class and homework results, test and examination data. This should be plotted visually and used as a platform for discussion about the focus of additional provision as well as manageable adjustments to in-class teaching.

- Observations
- Learning journals
- Photos or video journals
- Homework results
- Test results
- Examination scores
- Student self-checking/monitoring
- Standardised test scores such as reading tests
- Scaling and questionnaire tools

Individual student progress should be measured by information gained from a carefully chosen range of data. The SENCO should always ask challenging questions about how qualitative data relating to, for example improved self-regulation, is impacting positively on progress in learning.



The skill of the SENCO in developing robust fit-for-purpose data gathering tools helps inform the Provision Mapping and Management process. It also ensures that the SENCO can talk knowledgably with students, their parents and their teachers about how provision in the classroom as well as in additional interventions is impacting positively on outcomes and progress in learning.

Top Tips

- Review the 'Top Tips' for avoiding 'Learning Chaos' for students with SEN. Use it as a discussion framework with teachers and combine with the Iceberg Template (*Practical Toolkit 4.1*).
- Turn the 5-point checklist for starting Provision Mapping and Management Into an action grid.
- Discuss this with
 - * Your Principal
 - * Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development to build joint-accountability.
- The Provision Mapping and Management Cycle should not be 'owned' by the SENCO alone!
- It is a collaborative process and the resulting data will inform the SENCO Annual Action Plan (Practical Toolkit 1.1).
- Provision Map data will form the basis discussions between the SENCO and the Principal about the impact of provision.



A Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 7.1 Provision Map Suggested Headings
- 7.2 Provision Map Proforma 1
- 7.3 Provision Map Proforma 2
- 7.4 Class or Subject Teacher Provision Map (Example)
- 7.5 Individual Student Provision Map (Example)
- 7.6 Whole School IEP Audit
- 7.7 Icebergs and Jigsaws

Chapter 8

Student Progress Meetings

Student Progress Meetings are an exciting and innovative way to develop a collaborative approach to manage, and monitor the journey of progress for students with SEN.

An important principle to discuss firstly is that the job of SENCO is a busy and complex one and the establishment of Student Progress Meetings should simplify a SENCO's life, not make it more complex.

So what are they, how do they work and why could they make the SENCO's leadership, management and coordination (LMC) role simpler and more effective?

Think first of the number of meetings that fill a SENCO's day. There could be, multiagency meetings, Provision Mapping and Management meetings, advisory meeting with teacher colleagues, IEP meetings with parents and Person Centred, One Page Profile meetings with students to name but a small selection of what appears in the SENCO's daily diary.

Imagine there is one focused meeting where the information from the various sources; professionals, students, their parents and teachers could be gathered and discussed. Imagine that the focus is progress in learning. Imagine that it provides a central place for the vast array of paperwork and plans to be presented and as discussed. Imagine lastly that this meeting provides a focal point for truly collaborative, solution–focused outcomes–orientated discussion. So that then is the potential power of the Student Progress Meeting.

The ideal time-frame for holding Student Progress Meetings is a minimum of once a term and in the best cases, holding a meeting each half term could be an option where systems have become well developed, efficient and streamlined. The SENCO's role is facilitative, and the emphasis is on Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development and teachers 'owning' the learning and progress of all students including those with SEN.

To best explain the process of organizing and facilitating Student Progress Meetings, envisage a forum for discussion where there is a 'basket' of qualitative and quantitative data about students on the table. In that 'basket' there is information from:

- The Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development about overall progress data for students with SEN.
- The teachers' views about outcomes relating to learning behaviours and data on progress for students with SEN in their class.
- The student views are represented via a range of Person Centred tools including 'I Can' Statement (*Practical Toolkit 8.5*).
- Person Centred Learning Plans (*Practical Toolkit 6.4 & 6.5*) and an up-to-date One Page Profile (*Practical Toolkit 5.1*).
- The outcomes from any interventions shown on the Provision Map(s) (*Practical Toolkit 7.1-7.5*).
- In the case of a student with an IEP: IEP target outcomes.
- Where possible, views and experiences of parents via Person Centred Approaches tools such as Good Day Bad Day or the parent's version of the One Page Profile (*Practical Toolkit 5.1–5.5*).
- Information from other professionals where student progress is the theme.

The SENCO role in facilitating the meeting is to keep the focus on outcomes and progress in learning. There are a range of planners in the *Practical Toolkit* (8.1–8.7) to help guide this process. The information brought to the meeting is used constructively to plan next steps in learning. Where behaviours are a focus for discussion the emphasis should be on the language of 'learning behaviours' and how best to promote positive attitudes and practical support for developing self–regulation.

Next steps following the Graduated Approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review (*Practical Toolkit 6.4 & 6.5*) should be noted and decisions should be made about how best to simplify and streamline any planning documents with Person Centred Planning sitting at the heart of the process. This ensures that students take ownership of their own learning to facilitate development of metacognition and self-regulation skills, which are so essential for their lives now and in the future.

Student Progress Meetings

Benefits:

- Teachers or curriculum leaders take ownership of progress for all students with or without vulnerabilities including those with SEN;
- Comprehensive data is used to analyse provision and progress;
- The SENCO is seen as an essential member of the 'problem solving' way of thinking and can add value to discussions;
- Promotes joint accountability, aspirational target setting and streamlined planning.

The key outcomes to be achieved? Incremental steps towards good outcomes and progress in learning. These must be underpinned by agreement on provision to be continued, any amendments, new adjustments or strategies to be trialed and clear systems to record the impact of provision on progress.

SENCOs, curriculum leaders and teachers need to keep very clear records of progress over time. Ideally these should be presented visually for each student. This can then help create a systematic review of how provision is impacting on individual student progress. This, in turn feeds the cycle of strategic whole school Provision Mapping and Management.

Student Progress Meetings

Provision map

If the student is having any interventions outside the classroom, what progress is shown on the whole school Provision Map?

Student information

One Page Profile.
Person Centred Learning Plan.
My Little Book of Progress.
Other... please state....

Learning and progress

Parent information

Parents views and experiences shared via the One Page Profile using the structured listening conversation.

What progress do the parents see in the student and why do they think this?

Teacher information

Tests?
Observation?
Homework?
Questions answered in the lesson?
Classwork in books?
Other... Please state...

Top Tips

- Audit the number of meetings you are involved in as a SENCO across 1 month. Stop-check: Are they all making best use of your time as a SENCO?
- Could you become more involved in meetings with teachers where student progress is being discussed?
- Review the key principles underpinning Student Progress Meetings from this chapter.
- Stop-check!
 Remember that Student Progress Meeting discussions must be 'hooked' into qualitative and quantitative data.
- Data sources:
 - *Teachers
 - *Students including Person Centred Learning Plans Parents using Person Centred Approaches. Impact Measures shown on the Provision Map.
- Use the planning templates from the Practical Toolkit 8.1 & 8.2 to guide you through the Student Progress Meeting process.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 8.1 Student Progress Meeting Planner
- 8.2 Student Progress Meeting Prompt Sheet
- 8.3 Small Step Tracking Planner 1 (Template & Example)
- 8.4 Small Step Tracking Planner 2
- 8.5 | Can Statement
- 8.6 Progress Rainbow
- 8.7 My Little Book of Progress

Chapter 9

Training and Continuing
Professional Development (CPD) for
Teachers: Leading Change and
Improving High Quality Teaching

The SENCO Role in Providing Training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Teachers

Hartley (2010, p.8) suggests that 'It has become a truism that no education system can be better than the quality of the teachers who operate within it, and this holds if we look at SEN in particular'.

It is no surprise therefore that one of the key duties of a SENCO is to review the special education training needs and profiles of teachers in the school, arrange relevant training for teachers in a systematic manner and plan and organize school-based professional development activities to enhance the capacity of the teaching team. This is a big subject and one which will require a systematic brave and dynamic response from each and every SENCO.

Before embarking upon training and/or CPD, the knowledge, skills and experiences of the teachers within the school must first be reviewed. Along with this comes a difficult but critical question: what are the belief systems of the teachers in your school? Are there some who believe that by becoming 'good' at teaching students with SEN, they run the risk of encouraging more students with SEN into the school and into their classrooms making their teaching lives more difficult? This is an honest question to both pose and discuss as the work of Coe et al. (2014) states clearly that teacher belief does have an impact on outcomes for students. Ideally this should be a discussion led by your Principal. It starts by reviewing the WSA to IE and considering the increasing numbers of students with different profiles of SEN in each community. Their life chances can be enhanced if their local schools embrace an expectation of 'normal' learning diversity.

Think again of the international statistics: 1:160 (World Health Organization, 2018b) people on the autistic spectrum, with an undiagnosed proportion of girls yet to be discovered. Research varies in its statements on the prevalence of dyslexia, but some indicate that the type of language spoken, read or written can influence the statistics. In the UK for example a ratio of 1:10 are likely to be on the dyslexia continuum (British Dyslexia Association, n.d.).

92

Social emotional and mental health difficulties with or without SEN are on an exponential increase world-wide (World Health Organization, 2018a). There is an imperative for all teachers to be teachers of students with diverse learning profiles. It is a fact that the more that is known about the functioning of the brain the greater the recognition of organic 'in child' factors that create brain diversity. For many students this causes difficulties in learning which for some, we describe as a SEN.

The process of up-skilling teachers therefore has to start with a review of the extent of skills, knowledge and talent available within the school in respect of teaching students with SEN. This is where the leadership, management and coordinating skills of the SENCO come into play.

Leadership: Setting the scene for carrying out a review or an audit of knowledge and skills.

Management: Using the best processes and tools to do so.

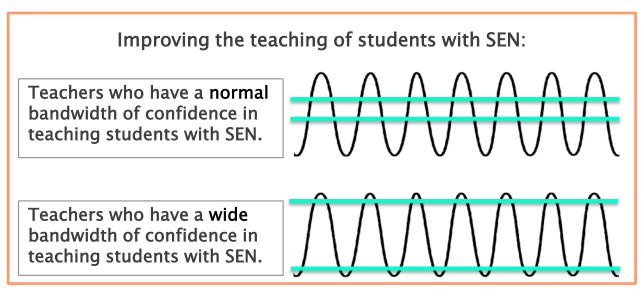
Coordination: Bringing all the information together and using it to formulate a strategic training and CPD plan for SEN which is rolled out on an annual basis. This will form part of the impact measures for progress in learning for students with SEN.

The review or audit of knowledge and skills can be done at a whole school level or in collaboration with Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development, who together with the SENCO carry out an in-depth audit of particular parts or subject areas of the school.

The tools to use are located in the *Practical Toolkit* (9.1–9.11). These can be adapted to suit different purposes, and the impact of their use should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Once the review/audit has been completed, the SENCO working ideally with Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development will collate and analyse the data and use it to formulate a strategic training and CPD plan.

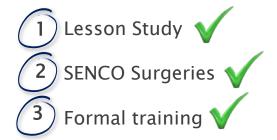
If the drive is to increase the 'bandwidth' of confidence and competence so that fewer students with SEN fall outside of the teachers teaching 'repertoire' is there a preferred way for SENCOs to do this?



The following subsections of this chapter outline a variety of ways for SENCOs to train and professionally develop teachers.

The Role of the SENCO

What is the role of the SENCO in planning and delivering formal and informal training to improve SEN knowledge and skills?



Lesson Study and the power of the Inclusion Teaching Checklist and Inclusion Learning Checklist

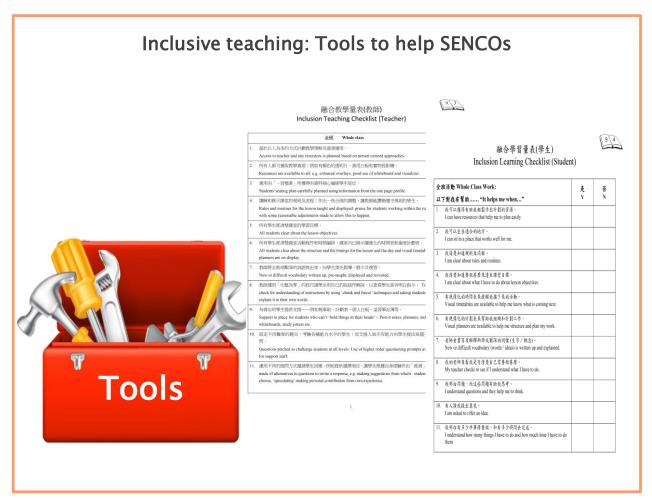
Lesson Study which has its origins in Japan where it was in use as far back as the 1870s, is a professional learning process that focuses on the learning and progress of students through teachers working collaboratively to develop specific aspects of a lesson. It involves pairs or small groups of teachers planning, teaching and analyzing learning with a focus on particular students whose reflections become part of the review process. It is non-judgmental and is based on the principles of joint-problem-solving and educational coaching.

It is a powerful tool for SENCOs because it enables the fusing together of the SEN knowledge of the SENCO with the specific subject knowledge of the teacher. It is additionally enhanced by the voice of the focus student(s) gained through the use of Person Centred Approaches using such tools as the One Page Profile (*Practical Toolkit 5.1*) or the 4+1 questions (*Practical Toolkit 5.3*).

The success of Lesson Study in providing SENCOs with a dynamic, supportive mode of professional development for teacher colleagues is well evidenced. It fits neatly with the learning pyramid theory by National Training Laboratories (as cited in Kumar, 2007) which suggests that learning retention rates are enhanced by 75% when learning is practiced by doing and up to 90% when people are involved in teaching others.

Whilst this theory is potentially controversial in its lack of secure underpinning evidence, the collaborative learning model of Lesson Study is firmly aligned to a variety of change model theories in which planning and participation are central (Fullan, 2006; Kotter, 2012). Furthermore the Standards for Teachers Professional Development (Department for Education, 2016) states that professional development designed to improve pupil outcomes is likely to involve many activities including collaborative teacher activity.

The addition of the Inclusion Checklists; one focusing on teaching strategies, one focusing on student views and experiences provide two enormously practical tools with which to open up discussion between the SENCO and teacher colleagues (*Practical Toolkit 9.1–9.11*).



^{*} Practical Toolkit 9.3 & 9.4

SENCO Surgeries

The section on SENCO Professional Qualities (Chapter 16) will explore the aspect of time management and organization skills. Establishing a regular pattern of SENCO Surgeries is a powerful way to begin to manage the inevitable 'dependency culture' which develops as soon as a school acquires its SENCO!

There are stories from SENCOs about how before they are halfway down the corridor on their way into school in a morning, six or seven teachers have asked their advice or told them they are having difficulties with a student with SEN. The implications? Once the SENCO has been 'spoken to', then the 'problem' has, in the teacher's mind, been handed over and they no longer feel the same weight of responsibility to solve issues. Conversely, SENCOs say the weight of responsibility they feel to solve problems for teachers is huge and they don't want to be seen to be 'failing' as a SENCO. The sum total of this is the potential for high dependency culture. Teachers do not expect to professionally develop to the point that they are part of the problem–solving conversation. SENCOs are unable to give sufficient time or quality of discussion to help develop a solution–focused, jointly accountable environment.

SENCO health warning!

There is a well documented phenomenon that once someone becomes a SENCO others in the school consider them to be the solution to any and every problem about students with SEN.



A word to lose and a word to choose:

- Swap 'I' for 'We';
- Replace 'I can do that' with 'We can work on that together'.

Now for a further SENCO 'push-back'. Rather than trying to solve everything 'on-the-run', SENCOs should establish a specific time in the week or once every two weeks when time is set-aside to be available to teachers to provide joint problem-solving conversations. Many SENCOs also ask teachers bring with them a list of things they have tried with the student before coming to the meeting. Some SENCOs use the ice-berg visual to help teachers prepare for the conversations because it encourages them to consider:

- What they see on the surface;
- What they have tried that might already be working;
- What more they would like to discover to help them teach the student better.

What is a SENCO Surgery?

Specific time set aside when the SENCO is available to meet with teachers to discuss students with SEN in their class.

The focus is always on how to achieve good outcomes and progress in learning.

The SENCO should, where ever possible use person centred information from the student to help fame a solution-focused discussion.

Preparation time prior to SENCO surgery can help also the SENCO revisit or up-date a student's One Page Person Profile so the **Approaches** Centred aspect of the discussion can be brought into the discussion.

SENCO Surgeries

It is wise to use a simple note-taking format to record:

- The agreed focus of the discussion;
- The expected outcomes of the discussion;
- Key actions to be carried out by the teacher/SENCO and/or others;
- Date and time to meet again.

Do SENCOs have to have the answers? No. Be careful about the way SENCO Surgeries are introduced and developed. SENCOs should not over-promise and under-deliver. Maintain a jointly focused language; 'let's work together' 'how can we combine our thinking?' 'what can you and I do to discover more about this student?'

Have tools to hand such as the two Inclusion Checklists, one for the teacher (Practical Toolkit 9.3). for the student one (Practical Toolkit 9.4), and make full use of the toolkit of Person Centred Approaches. **SENCOs** should always make brief notes using focused outcomes headings and agree when discussion will happen again so process becomes a that the somewhat cycle, like the Graduated Approach of Assess, Do, Review Plan. (Practical Toolkit 6.1-6.5).

SENCO feedback on SENCO Surgeries

- I ran weekly after school drop-in surgeries for staff and one for parents.
- I linked our discussion to the person centred plans and the Provision Map.
- A great way to discuss next steps.
- Kettle was always on and the tin of biscuits was helpful too!
- You don't have to be an expert on everything.
- Just good at listening and asking the right questions.

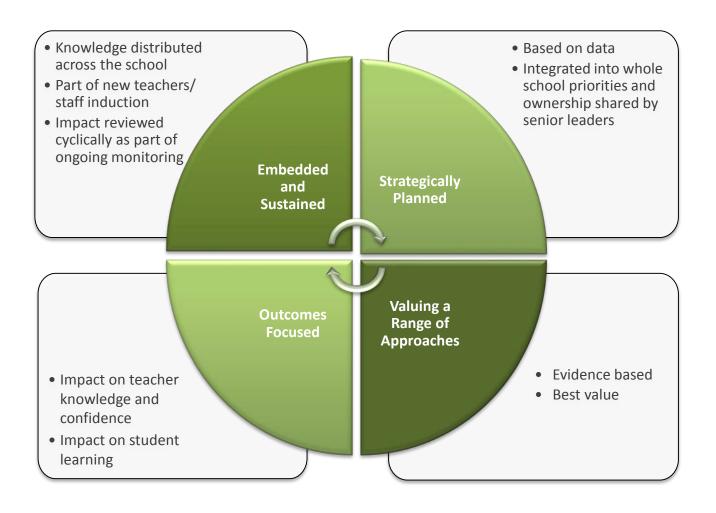
Formal Training

This type of training refers to a planned, timed session carried out with teachers and/or other staff looking in detail at an aspect of SEN. Ideally the area of focus will be agreed following the good practice guidelines for training:

It is important to consider the outcomes you want to achieve as well as the creative ways of engaging teachers in the active learning process. To help think this through there are some training planning tools in the *Practical Toolkit* (9.1-9.11).

The very best training on SEN is that which is inclusive and not discrete. For example, collaborative integrated training that incorporates SEN into other subject specific training is the most persuasive and meaningful. A Mathematics teacher who is introducing a new aspect of the curriculum for example could work with the SENCO beforehand and together they could add a section to explain the implications for students with SEN. Imagine the professional development improvements for the Mathematics teacher in thinking this through before the meeting, and conceptualise the impact of the SENCO standing alongside the Mathematics teacher to jointly present a moment of professional training!

Principles of effective CPD to upskill teachers about how students with SEN learn effectively



Dylan William cited in the Standard for Teachers' Professional Development (Department for Education, 2016, p.3) says that 'Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better'.

The purpose of training and professional development is to improve practice in order to improve student outcomes. This is an inclusive statement intended to apply to the whole school community.

If new learning is to be embedded and sustained, SENCOs must expect that as an outcome of training or CPD, individual teachers or groups of teachers will need to make a commitment stating what they will do differently, or what types of teaching approaches they will intensify: meaning do-more-of.

How best to give value to the implementation of this new learning and to share great practice developing in different classrooms across your school? Now is the time to introduce the concept of Learning Walks.

Learning Walks

The purpose of Learning Walks is to explore what it is like to be a student in your school and in the case of the SENCO, what it is like to be a student with SEN in your school. The practicalities of planning and carrying out Learning Walks are quite simple and require the combined SENCO skills of leadership, management and coordination (LMC) to get this practice embedded in your school.

- Leadership to understand and share the vision of what can be achieved.
- Management to identify the right people, plan, organize and provide the right tools.
- Coordination of teachers to agree the focus for the Learning Walk as well as the collaborative feedback and sharing of good practice following the event.

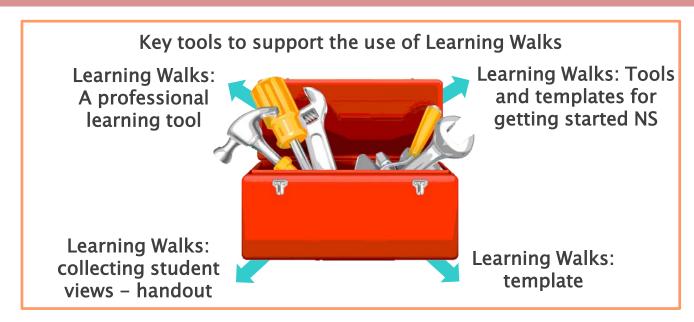
The key principle is that the SENCO along with one or more teachers, ideally the Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development, agree a focus for the walk. For example, it might be to look into the use of a) questioning techniques, b) practical use of visualisers, c) the purposefulness of displays on the walls in classrooms or, d) something specifically agreed as an outcome of a teacher CPD/Training session. Use of the Inclusion Teaching Checklist and Inclusion Learning Checklist for teachers and students are a great way to agree a Learning Walk focus. Investigating the 'what works for me' section of the One Page Profile is another innovative way to agree the focus for a Learning Walk.

Once the focus is agreed, the walk begins and using the recording tools (*Practical Toolkit 9.1–9.11*), several classrooms are visited in a discrete and non-threatening way. Learning is not interrupted, but if possible students are asked to give their views on whatever is the focus of the Learning Walk. It is important to use an inclusive approach and to talk quietly to students both with and without SEN.

The 'walkers' meet outside the classrooms after their visits have taken place. They share reflections on what they have seen using a 'good' and 'even better' language to summarise their findings. They then agree who and how reflections and sharing of good practice will be fed back to the teachers whose classrooms were visited and how great practice will be shared with other teachers within the school.

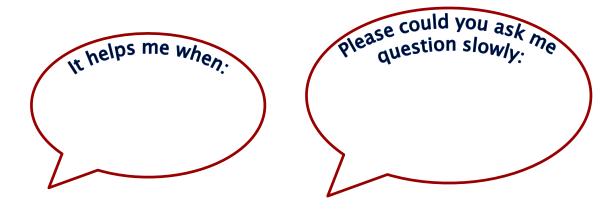
A really innovative approach which can be used by SENCOs is to take students with and without SEN on a Learning Walk. To do this, careful preparation is needed and a clear set of ground rules should be drawn up so that teaching and learning is not interrupted. Whilst this is a development which comes much later on in the process for many SENCOs, it can provide a powerful way to help students consider how learning can best be achieved and provide practical ideas for teachers based on observation combined with knowledge of what works best for them.

A selection of resources and a useful video on how to carry out a Learning Walk are located in the *Practical Toolkit 9.6-9.9*.



A useful adaptation of the Learning Walk approach is something known as a 'Student Walk'. This is where a SENCO identifies a particular student and discretely tracks them through a day to see what their experience of being in the school actually is. Often this will identify lessons that are working well as well as those that are going less well leading to a possible analysis of why that might be. The SENCO knowledge of what works for the student from their perception should be informed by use of the Person Centred Approaches tools including the One Page Profile.

Being more aware of how students are managing both structured and unstructured times of the day by carrying out a student walk can lead to a rich repository of information out of which good problemsolving discussions can take place.



Top Tips

- Stop check! Review the purpose of professional development and training on SEN in your school. Is there evidence of positive changes which increase teacher confidence?
- Use the professional development/training audits located in the *Practical Toolkit 9.1* to help plan a strategic approach.
- Put the Inclusion Teaching Checklist (Teacher) and Inclusion Learning Checklist (Student) located in the *Practical Toolkit 9.3 & 9.4* into regular use to help increase teacher 'band-width' of confidence in teaching students with SEN.
- Revisit your SENCO Annual Action Plan. Do you want to implement SENCO Surgeries? If yes discuss with your Principal and begin a trial. Use the Iceberg Template to help facilitate solution-focused discussions.
- Swap 'I' for 'we' when talking with teachers. Replace 'I' can do that' for 'We' can work on that together'.
- Be co-ordinated in your approach to formal training. For example: Is a Curriculum Leader introducing a new topic to teachers? Ask if you can use your SENCO role to talk through the implications for students with SEN as part of the training.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 9.1 Audit of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- 9.2 Principles of Effective Continuing Professional Development for SEN
- 9.3 Inclusion Teaching Checklist (Teacher)
- 9.4 Inclusion Learning Checklist (Student)
- 9.5 Lesson Study (Guideline & Template)
- 9.6 Steps to Using Learning Walks to Improve Outcomes and Progress for Students with SEN
- 9.7 Learning Walks Notepad
- 9.8 Learning Walks Student Views 1
- 9.9 Learning Walks Student Views 2
- 9.10 Training Plan
- 9.11 Training and Professional Development & Intended Outcomes (Template & Example)

Chapter 10

Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants

The role of the Teaching Assistant (TA) is an incredibly valuable one, but its potential impact on outcomes and progress in learning can be overlooked due to a number of misconceptions by teachers, students and parents, and in fact by teaching assistants themselves.

Teaching assistants provide a precious resource, but often their quick turn-over can make the job of training, deploying and evaluating their impact a particularly challenging one for SENCOs.

Let's look first at the history and background of the teaching assistant. They were employed as far back as the 1960's in special schools to assist teachers with students with complex SEN. They began to appear in ordinary schools in the mid 1990's following the international agreement designed to promote IE known as Salamanca Statement. The pattern of deploying teaching assistants to support students with SEN or those whose first language is not the predominant language of the country is well recognized, and they have earned the title of 'para-professional' internationally as there is no uniformly recognised qualification, career structure or progression route for them. Many use the role to gain experience in schools before moving on into a professional qualification such as teaching or social work.

A recent discussion with local SENCOs suggested that teaching assistant roles are interpreted in many different ways and a perception of what they do ranges from data entry and preparing resources to running after school clubs, working as a tutor and appearing to some students to be a 'super nanny'.

So how can SENCOs work towards getting the very best from this unique and precious human resource? Webster, Russell and Blatchford (2015) signpost us towards three key words: Deployment, Practice and Preparedness. Bosanquet, Radford and Webster (2015) add a further concept into the mix which is that of scaffolding. We will now combine these ideas and frame a clear plan for you as SENCO to maximise the impact of the teaching assistant role in your school.

Firstly: work with colleagues to construct a 'Deployment Statement'. For example: 'In this school we view Teaching Assistants as an integral part of the Teaching and Learning Team, and they have a particular focus on students with SEN. Their role is to work with teachers to:

- Promote positive learning behaviours so that progress in learning can be achieved;
- Help develop independent learning and social behaviours;
- Provide additional scaffolding opportunities within lessons;
- Use appropriate questioning skills to embed learning;
- Provide a listening ear and a solution-focused attitude towards achieving great outcomes.

This then leads to the Practice element of the role.

It is the SENCOs responsibility to construct a fit-for-purpose-professional development strategy for teaching assistants. Given their historically high mobility level, this needs to be structured and ready 'to go' as soon as a teaching assistant joins the school.

- Construct a 5–10 minutes welcome and orientation video.
- 2 Create a Welcome Folder containing all the practical information needed for them to refer to over the first few days and weeks. Ensure it includes the Teaching Assistant Deployment Statement.
- 3 Carry out a knowledge and skills audit.
- Provide the Teaching Assistant with a 'Good Practice' folder containing guidelines about:

- The principles and good practice guidelines of using Person Centred Approaches;
- Higher order questioning techniques (Anderson et al., 2001);
- The Scaffolding, Observation, Assessment, Reflection and Review (SOARR) Approach (more details can be found on p.111-112);
- Strategies to support scaffolding;
- A list of professional behaviours in working with teachers, students with and without SEN and parents;
- Recording and note-taking formats to support effective communication with all stakeholders;
- A CPD plan for the year based on expected outcomes for their role and their knowledge and skills audit.

Now to tackle the Preparedness aspect.

The focus of this work is on the teacher's role in understanding what the teaching assistant is there to do and what they should not do. Using or adapting the poster located in the *Practical Toolkit (10.1-10.3)*, will provide a useful tool for SENCOs to open up discussions with teachers about the expected impact of having Teaching Assistant time in their lesson. Sharing and discussing the Teaching Assistant Deployment Statement is something which should be done at the start of each school year particularly if there are new teachers coming into the school. This is something you should write into your SENCO Annual Action Plan (*Practical Toolkit 1.1*).

SOARR

This is an acronym which is useful to give to the teacher, teaching assistant and also in many cases to the students. It helps operationalize the role of the teaching assistant in the classroom and gives clarity to a good practice cycle of supported learning without generating overdependence.



Scaffolding Observation Assessment Reflection Review

The SENCO should guide teachers and TAs in how to use the SOARR technique

Scaffolding

- Using high quality verbal interaction.
- Using a range of practical resources.

Observation

- Standing back.
- Observing the impact of scaffolding.

$\mathbb{A}_{\mathsf{ssessment}}$

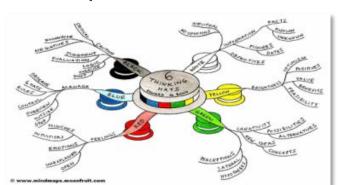
- Assessing the impact of the scaffolding in helping the student to work independently.
- Assessing the impact on learning.

Reflection

- Using questioning to help the student reflect on what helped them to work independently and why they think that.
- Using questioning to help the student reflect on what they have learnt.

Review

- Model how the student could use the successful scaffolding techniques in other lessons.
- Review ways in which the learning links to what has gone before and discuss what the next steps might be.



Summary thoughts

The impact of teaching assistant time on outcomes and progress in learning for students with SEN should always be measured. Use the good practice principles discussed in Chapter 7 on Provision Mapping and Management. Define baseline data qualitatively, quantitatively, expected outcomes and then review actual outcomes. Involve both teachers and teaching assistants in this process and of course seek the views and experiences of the students and their parents through the use of Person Centred Approaches. The student progress meeting provides an excellent platform for hosting these discussions as it is important to streamline processes to avoid SENCO overload!

Summary thoughts

- Provide TAs with resources about SEN.
- Teach TAs how to use the One Page Profile.
- Enhance independent learning of students with SEN.

Top Tips from SENCOs

- Provide TAs with the right toolkit.
- Improve teacher expectation of TAs.
- Keep effective communication with teachers.

Top Tips

- Revisit points 1-4 in this chapter. Use the Quadrant Planning Template located in the Practical Toolkit 10.1 to agree content. Share this with:
 - *TAs
 - *Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development
 - *Teachers
- Use the poster located in the *Practical Toolkit 10.2*.
 Use to inform:
 - *SENCO Surgeries
 - *Lesson Study
 - *Learning Walks
- Trial the SOARR Approach with a teacher, TA and student.
 - Review the impact, focusing particularly on Independent learning behaviours



Part II: Practical Toolkit

10.1 Teaching Assistants Training Plan

10.2 Student Support Team

10.3 Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants – Recommendations Summary



Video List

Ensuring TAs are prepared for lessons:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ow0P4WNiv5U

Enhancing the quality of TA - pupil interactions:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jx1qyOhSrLw

Assessing TA deployment:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuUomND41xU

Scaffolding in Education:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ktXhIPUUPDs

Every Child Needs a Mentor II The Mission:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tyN3qBqwOY

How Coaching Works:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UY75MQte4RU

Chapter 11

Person Centred Approaches – Metacognition, Self-regulation and Multiple Intelligences

Person Centred Approaches - Metacognition and Self-Regulation

The SENCO's understanding of the importance of metacognition and self-regulation will link together many ideas and practical aspects of the role and is a fundamental concept critical for the life chances of students with SEN.

Metacognition

Metacognition means to reflect on our own thinking. In the words of Larkin (2010), it encourages students to slow down the process of learning and actively enjoy the brain's ability to think about different things linked to a key area of learning. It could therefore be understood as a thinking journey, and in educational terms, approaches to help students develop metacognitive skills are focused on teaching specific strategies for planning, monitoring and evaluating learning.

The challenge for students with SEN is that it requires a level of higher order thinking and much time and structure to help recall and reflection to take place (Larkin, 2010). This is where the SENCOs' introduction of Person Centred Approaches becomes so powerful. Not only do Person Centred Approaches seek to value the views of the student and attempt to elicit their own thoughts about the life that is theirs, but they provide a range of tools through which students can be inspired to think about themselves and the ways in which they could experience more successful learning and social interaction.

Why does metacognition and self-regulation often become a linked topic in research terms? The act of thinking about thinking is both unconscious and conscious. If, for example a student has acquired the automatic skills of reading (unconscious thinking) but needs to understand a particular passage from a book in order to answer a question in a test (conscious thinking), they can choose whether or not to go back and use their skills of reading and reflecting. That is a metacognitive process combined with a self-regulatory behaviour.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulation and the executive functioning part of the brain is implicated in some of the inherent difficulties many students with SEN experience in self-managing their learning and social interaction behaviours.

So students with SEN may experience a 'double whammy' of difficulty when it comes to exercising the skills of metacognition and self-regulation.

Applying metacognition and self-regulation in the classroom learning environment is enormously enhanced if the student and teacher have a shared experience of carrying out a One Page Profile or other Person Centred tools focused on learning.

The SENCO role in this process is to ensure that teachers, students and their parents understand the important role metacognition and self-regulation play in embracing progress in learning. This can be achieved through revisiting the principles, practical approaches and tools outlined in chapter 5 on Person Centred Approaches.

To encourage students to find space in their brains for metacognitive thinking, SENCOs should use SENCO Surgeries and Learning Walks to promote the idea between teachers of reducing 'brain clutter' and leaving space for thinking.

What is meant by 'brain clutter?' How much time and brain space is taken up for example within a lesson on instruction about writing equipment, relevant books, page numbers and dates all of which put students with SEN on information overload and prevents them from thinking about learning.

Research into metacognition for students with SEN

 So much of our education is based on understanding instructions, remembering how to do something, using tools such as pencils and pens and paying attention to teachers and peers. This can fill up students' brains especially if they have language processing or working memory difficulties. The outcome? No space for thinking.



(K. Cochrane, personal communication, October 19, 2015)

This takes us explicitly to the subject of self-regulation having established strong links between the two concepts.

Self-regulation can be described as the ability to focus attention, suppress impulses and ignore distractions.

As already stated, self-regulation is influenced by the executive functioning part of the brain, meaning there are clear challenges faced by many students with SEN which impact on learning and social behaviours in school. These often spill over into homework manifested through a lack of well-focused study skills.

It is suggested that for many students with difficulties in this area a flight, fight or freeze 'behaviour' (Shanker, 2016) is often exhibited in response to being unable to find a socially or cognitively appropriate self-regulatory strategy. This can lead to a downward spiral of sanctions and negativity from which they are unable to find an escape route.

Are there leadership, management and coordination (LMC) skills SENCOs can bring to this hugely important subject?



Leadership

Be committed to maintaining a high level of understanding about metacognition and self-regulation by remaining up-to-date with the research into this important area. Once a deep understanding of the importance of teaching metacognition and self-regulation has been gained, share it with students with SEN, their teachers, TAs, the Student Support Team through CPD and with parents through discussion (*Practical Toolkit 12.1-12.5*).

Management

Dig deeply into the Person Centred Toolkit and use a range of tools in addition to the One Page Profile (*Practical Toolkit 5.1*) to help students reflect on how they learn and what helps them interact positively with others.

Develop a poster or a leaflet to explain what metacognition and self-regulation are and how both aspects can help students make progress in learning and social interaction. Further promote the use of Person Centred Approaches as part of this information.

Promote the use of the Person Centred calming tools to support the development of self-regulation and discuss and use the study skills strategies and tools with teachers, students and their parents (Practical Toolkit 11.1-11.8).

Coordination

Ensure that teachers work in collaboration with students when completing the One Page Profile and other Person Centred tools.

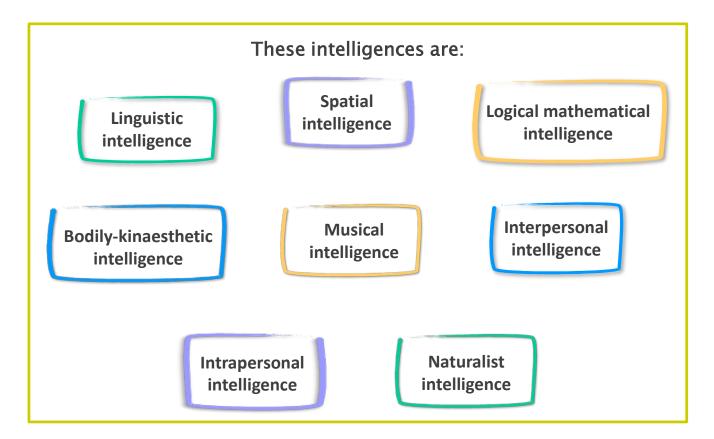
Use the Student Progress Meetings to reflect on progress in metacognition and self-regulation and make it a focus for a Learning Walk to help identify great practice which can then be shared across the school.

Person Centred Approaches and the theory of multiple Intelligences and practical approaches to developing study skills

If students with SEN are to develop metacognitive skills then is there an additional 'hook' we could give them to reflect on the things they are good at? If yes, then this would further enhance the Person Centred work that lies at the heart of the SENCO work.

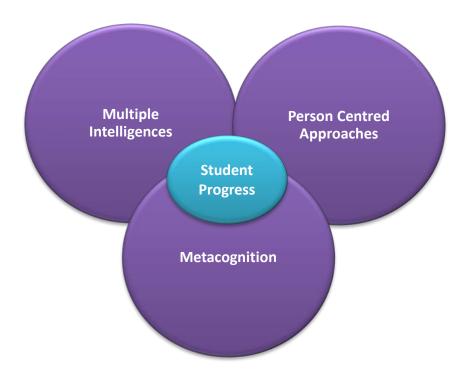
An old, but perhaps still relevant theory is that of Gardner (2011) who suggested that the traditional way of conceptualizing intelligence leaves people whose talents lie in less traditionally measured domains outside of the language of 'clever'.

He proposed a series of intelligences or 'smarts' which give greater scope for articulating learning possibilities and achievements.



The WSA to IE is based on the principles of equality and inclusion. The right for every student to feel valued for who they are, for the unique understanding of themselves and that the world they bring to learning should to be celebrated.

Part of valuing ourselves is to know that we all have 'smart' 'clever' 'intelligent' aspects within our own profile. Because a student has difficulties in the area of working memory does not mean they don't have recognisable areas of intelligence.



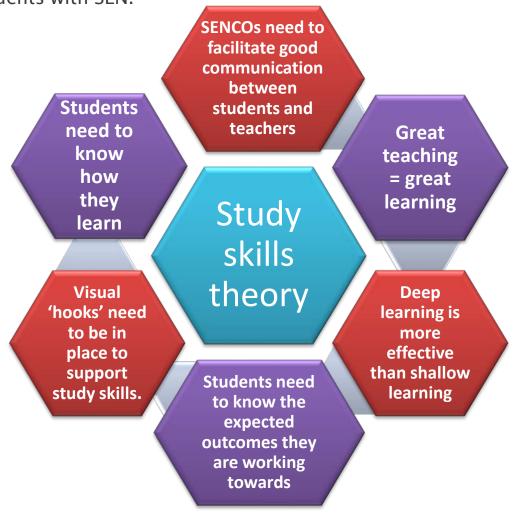
Practical Toolkit (11.1–11.8) contains a number of Person Centred tools for SENCOs to use with students to help them consider in what areas their 'cleverness' lies. This information can then be used to further develop One Page Profiles and to share at Student Progress Meeting or with parents. The possibilities are limitless!

This takes us onto how metacognition, self-regulation and multiple intelligences can be used to develop strategies to help students with SEN develop more effective study skills, so they can be more successful with their homework.

123

Developing Study Skills

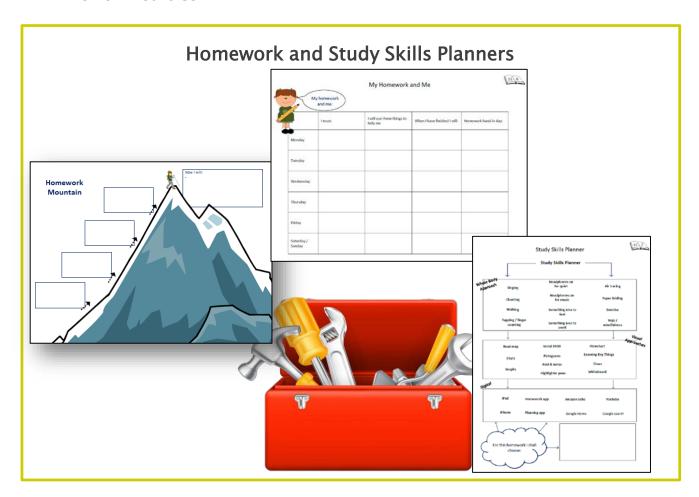
Good quality feedback is essential to promoting good study skills. Often students measure the quality of their study by the time it takes to complete it. This of course is less valuable than the type of learning that takes place. What is actually being thought about whilst study is taking place is the most important factor in achieving good outcomes, and this can prove challenging for many students with SFN.



Providing opportunities for 'deep' learning by taking away peripheral things such as worrying about which pencils or books to use along with providing visual hooks are strategies with which SENCOs should be familiar.

124

So too are the self-regulation aspects of study. Removing distractions, understanding how long a task might take and understanding how to order and sequence a homework activity can add additional complications for students with SEN. Why is this? Many have difficulties with working memory and processing information containing lots of language. Then for students with SpLD, there is the additional reading and writing component factor which adds to the mix of difficulties.



To help SENCOs work collaboratively with students and their teachers the *Practical Toolkit* (11.1–11.8) contains a selection of Person Centred Planning systems which also combine the Multiple Intelligences approaches. These can be used along with Person Centred Learning Plans to scaffold study skills and homework tasks.

Top Tips

- Introduce teachers to the research underpinning metacognition and self-regulation.
- Show how Person Centred Approaches provide practical ways to build student skills in this important area.
- Do the same in an age-appropriate way for students and their parents.
- Make a poster or a leaflet to explain how Person Centred Approaches can help develop metacognitive and self-regulatory skills.
- Select and where needed, adapt in discussion with students, the study-skills tools located in the *Practical Toolkit* (11.1-11.8).
- Share the study-skills tools with parents and encourage them to use them in collaboration with their son/daughter to support homework tasks.
- Combine the use of metacognitive and selfregulatory tools with Person Centred Planning and multiple Intelligence tools.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 11.1 Control Plan
- 11.2 Person Centred Calming Planner 1
- 11.3 Person Centred Calming Planner 2
- 11.4 Multiple Intelligences Explanation Grid
- 11.5 Person Centred Discussion about Multiple Intelligences
- 11.6 My Homework and Me
- 11.7 Study Skills Planner
- 11.8 Homework Mountain



Video List

Introducing metacognitive learning strategies:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKFOhd5sMEc

Self-regulation skills why they are fundamental:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4UGDaCgo_s&t=17s

Self-regulation skills the marshmallow test:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oy9614HQ

The fight flight and freeze response:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEHwB1PG_-Q

Chapter 12

Parents

Parents

This section refers to the SENCO role in working effectively with parents, and throughout when parents are referred to, this language is inclusive of both parents and carers.

When students with or without SEN arrive at school in the morning they do so having spent the previous few hours at home. Home for them may consist of a mix of people: one parent, two parents, brothers and sisters and or other relatives or friends and maybe grandparents. The knowledge about, and effective engagement with these important people is a key driver for SENCOs and requires a high level of leadership, management and coordination (LMC) as well as a strategic well–planned approach.

What does research say about the importance of working with parents?

Parental engagement is a powerful lever for raising student achievement in schools. Where parents and teachers work together to improve learning, the gains in achievement are significant. (Harris and Goodall, 2007)

'Parental engagement is an effective tool for raising student's achievement in schools.' (Harris & Goodall, 2007, p.5) This is true for students with and without SEN, and we shall take a few moments to reflect on the parent perspective.

The SENCO Manual

A common factor which unites most parents is that they want the very best for their son or daughter and hope that through the education they receive at school, life's possibilities will open up for them. For parents with a son or daughter who has SEN, these aspirations can be clouded with doubt, fear, worry and sometimes anger and a sense of loss. Loss, that the child they are sending to school each day is not making the same rate of progress as others and loss in that the future they imagined their child was going to have may not be as they thought.

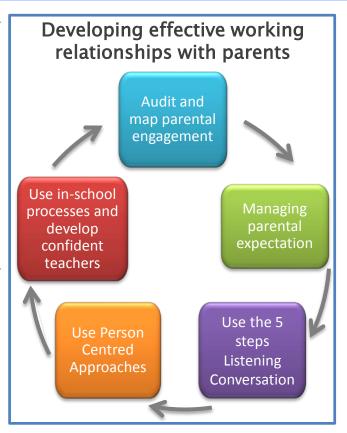
Some parents of students with SEN will also have their own personal SEN experiences. This means memories of their own schooling may be negative and perhaps their ability to help their son or daughter in even the most practical ways may be different from other parents. Then of course, there is the more commonly shared difficulty amongst parents generally, which is the busyness of life and the pressure on time. This can squeeze out opportunities to spend 'quality' time with their child or communicate with their son or daughter's school. SENCOs therefore often face a greater complexity of circumstances when trying to establish systems and practices to communicate regularly and effectively with parents of students with SEN.

The extensive nature of 'stories' from SENCOs and parents about some of the difficulties in communicating effectively and positively suggest this can be a challenging area. It includes schools who feel some parents never engage, and parents themselves who feel that the school never engages apart from with negative feedback on their child's behaviour and/or progress.

On the other end of the spectrum are schools who report that some parents engage too much and present challenges in terms of views and questions which seem loaded with expectations that may be too high or are packed full of blame. Then there are the parents who do not wish to acknowledge their child has a SEN and push back any attempts to involve them in discussion which might mark them and their child out as different.

What about the student in all of this? What is their perfect wish?

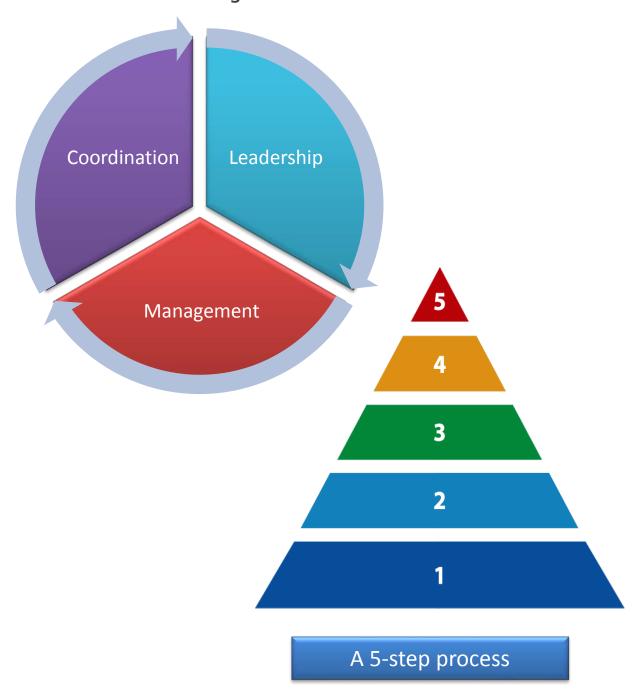
Possibly the need to know that both the school and their parents about them. care want understand them and help them discover the keys that will unlock learning for them now and in the future. If they are experiencing anxiety about aspects of school home life in respect of learning and friendship, what the student may wish for is a calm collaborative and approach between their parents and their school which is focused on them and their future.



To exercise strong leadership, management and coordination (LMC) skills in this area, SENCOs need a framework containing a stepped process so they can build on the 'normal' in-school systems for parental engagement rather than always setting up something separate and different for parents of students with SEN.

So where should a SENCO start? The first resource in the *Practical Toolkit 12.1* is a Parental Engagement Planner. This will take you as SENCO through a solution focused strategy towards developing effective engagement with parents of students with SEN. It is based on a 5 step process.

Developing a strategic approach to working effectively with parents using the SENCOs skills of:

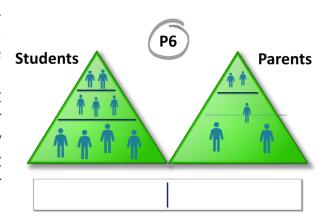


This consists of:

- A parental communication audit
- A mechanism to manage parental expectation of the SENCO role
- The introduction of the 5 Steps Listening Conversation
- The use of Person Centred Approaches
- Professionally develop suggestions on how teachers to become effective communicators with parents of students with SEN
- Be strategic by carrying out an initial audit of contact and communication with parents. How many students with SEN do you have at Tiers 1/2/3? How many parents of these students would you say you have established effective communication with and plan to 'talk' to regularly over the course of the year.

How you manage this will depend on whether you are a SENCO in a school with many students within all three tiers, or a SENCO in a school where there are only a few students with SEN at Tier 1 only. Remember that developing effective communication with parents of students at Tier 1 is vitally important and may prevent both student and parent anxieties and worries escalating students upwards to the higher tiers.

Remember too that if you are a SENCO in a school where it is believed that few if any students have SEN, revisit the chapter on what SEN is and re-fresh your thinking about the SEN continuum of need. Your active response in an anticipatory way could protect a student who might otherwise begin to experience poor mental health where unrecognised SFN is the causal factor for underachievement.



- 2 Manage expectations about the SENCO role. Discuss and clarify with your Principal, teacher colleagues and subsequently with parents the 'can dos' and 'can't dos' of the SENCO role. This will provide a clear framework for future conversations with parents and other professionals and maintain your integrity as a SENCO.
- Develop Listening Conversations. The 5 Steps Listening Conversation is located in the *Practical Toolkit 12.5*. It is based on the principles of good practice in coaching. It can be pivotal in helping frame positive conversations with parents turning worries and high emotions into agreements about practical small steps to move a situation forward.
- Use Person Centred Approaches to engage teachers, students and their parents. The One Page Profile adapted for use with parents is an incredibly powerful platform for conversation. So too is sharing the voice of the student with parents because this helps develop the metacognitive, self-regulatory aspect of the work and places the student at the heart of every discussion.
- 5 Equip teachers with a toolkit of practical strategies for talking to parents. Introduce and provide CPD for teachers on how to communicate effectively with parents of students with SEN. SENCOs cannot, nor should not, do it all. All students including those with SEN belong to the school community and are there to learn. Teachers therefore have as much to communicate about with parents of students with SEN as they do with parents whose son or daughter do not.

Building a teacher toolkit of confidence



SENCOs should use Person Centred tools, SENCO Surgery time, Lesson Study and other CPD opportunities to provide knowledge and structure to help teachers become even more effective at communicating with all parents. Welcome parent's views and experiences as part of Student Progress Meetings.

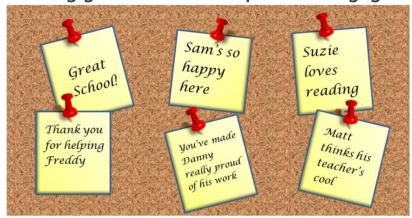
Introduce teachers to the 5 Steps Listening Conversation framework. Because this method is based on the good-practice principles of coaching, it is a powerful tool for teachers. Its carefully framed process helps give value to parents worries, concerns and or wishes, and provides a secure outcomes-focused process for recording manageable actions for both parents and colleagues in school.

Success in this area will improve the confidence of parents which will then have a positive ripple of impact onto the outcomes for students.

And finally:

Create a way to celebrate good thing parents say about your school. This should be done in an inclusive way so that parent anonymity is protected and those with or without a son or daughter with SEN can contribute equally!





Top Tips

- Develop strong and effective **LMC** skills: Leadership: Audit frequency and type of engagement with parents of students with SEN present in a visual way.
- Management: Upskill teachers so that their contact with parents of students with SEN is solution-focused and positive.
- Coordination:
 Provide the right tools to ensure a collaborative, coordinated approach between parents, their son/daughter and teachers in school.
- Review and action the 5 steps implementation process outlined in this chapter. Use the Parental Engagement Planner located in *Practical Toolkit 12.1* to develop your **LMC** skills in this important area.
- Introduce the 5 Steps Listening Conversation for use with parents (Practical Toolkit 12.5).
- Create a platform for show-casing positive comments made by parents. Do this in an inclusive way by using comments and feedback from parents of students with and without SEN.



APart II: Practical Toolkit

- 12.1 Parental Engagement Planner
- 12.2 Tools for Progress Learning or Communication (Template & Example)
- 12.3 SENCO Role
- 12.4 Meeting Outcomes Planner for Parents
- 12.5 5 Steps Listening Conversation

Chapter 13

Transition

Transition

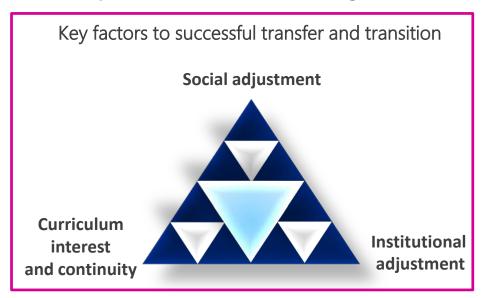
There is a certain inevitability about the months of July, August and September. Each year during this time, students, their parents and of course teachers, prepare for change. The change involves students moving to a new class, a new school or moving on from school into further training or employment. This for many is a time of anticipation and adventure, but for some it is a time of uncertainty and worry.

Researches (CUREE, 2012; Evangelou et al, 2008; Learning Cultures, 2017) suggest some key themes which schools need to consider, all of which have direct and important implications for SENCOs.

For students with SEN and for their parents, transition can be a particularly anxious time. For those moving from Kindergarten there can be concerns about the formalities of schooling and the expectations of new types of school-related behaviours. For those moving class, there can be the upheaval of new beginnings and the well-recognised risk factor of the 'learning dip' which occurs during the summer months, making re-connecting with a more advanced curriculum at the start of the autumn term even more challenging. And for those moving from primary to secondary there can be a feeling of loss about leaving behind familiar places, people and routines combined with a high level of anxiety about the complex mix of 'unknowns'. This too is true for those students moving on from school into further training or employment.

Students with SEN who may already have experienced difficulties in learning or with friendships can find even minimal changes challenging, so it is no surprise that moving class or school can exacerbate feelings of uncertainty, and for some cause extreme anxiety. The report by the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides (2016) cites points of transition as times of particular concern for students with poor mental health. Whilst poor mental health can affect any student with or without SEN, SENCOs need to be aware of these additional risk factors as part of their SEN leadership, management and coordination (LMC) responsibilities.

So what are the key factors central to achieving successful transition?



Social Adjustment

This opens up the discussion about transition being a time of social change. A new mix of friendships, a changing expectation of social 'norms' and exposure to older students, whether it is in primary, secondary or for those leaving school, becoming involved in the complex world of adult relationships. This is also a time where many students with or without SEN can become vulnerable to fears about being bullied.

The skill of the SENCO is to recognize this area of challenge and use their leadership management and coordination skills to empower teachers, parents and the students themselves to talk about these risks in a solution-focused way. SENCOs can guide this process through the active use of the Person Centred Approaches tools and by using the toolkit for Transition (*Practical Toolkit 13.1, 13.2 & 13.7*).

An additional **must** for SENCOs is to build strong and active partnerships with SENCOs from other nearby schools. Students and their parents will then have the confidence to know there is a network of SENCOs who know each other. This can smooth the way for students moving from one school to another because of professional trust between SENCOs.

Primary school SENCOs should assess how much time and what human resources will be needed to establish a strategic approach to ensure successful transition. This should be written into the SENCO Annual Action Plan (*Practical Toolkit 1.1*) and priority should be given to establishing One Page Profile (*Practical Toolkit 5.1*) use at the beginning of P1, and updates for all students at a key point in the year, to prepare for moving to a new class or school.

Secondary school SENCOs should have the same strategic plan in place for students arriving in S1. Carrying out a One Page Profiling exercise with all students arriving in P1 and or S1 would ensure the school has committed to a truly inclusive approach which will be of benefit to all students and not just those with SEN. Ensure the process is supported by good quality discussion and not just given as a worksheet activity.

Institutional Adjustment

This is a potentially challenging area for many schools, particularly at secondary level where the pace of learning is fast and the curriculum content is more complex. A student with SEN moving from primary to secondary school levels may not have sufficient planning and organisation skills nor yet developed efficient metacognitive abilities to know how they learn. They may have specific executive functioning difficulties which make it difficult for them to self-regulate. This impacts particularly on independent study skills required to plan, organise and complete homework tasks which can then result in poor results consequent sanctions and a potential cycle of failure.

The SENCO response? Primary school SENCOs should plan ahead, talk to their secondary school SENCO colleagues about homework expectations and begin to prepare students with SEN by scaffolding their independent study skills using the tools from the *Practical Toolkit* 11.1–11.8.

Secondary school SENCOs should talk with their primary school SENCO colleagues to find out which tools are being used successfully to scaffold independent study-skills, so that they can provide the same tools for the students on arrival in S1.

This is just one example of how SENCOs can provide a 'bridge' between phases of education to address institutional adjustment. Combine the use of the Transition tools (*Practical Toolkit 13.1–13.7*) with the efficient and early use of One Page Profiles at the point of transition. This will give SENCOs the beginnings of a manageable process to facilitate student transition in which they themselves are active participants.

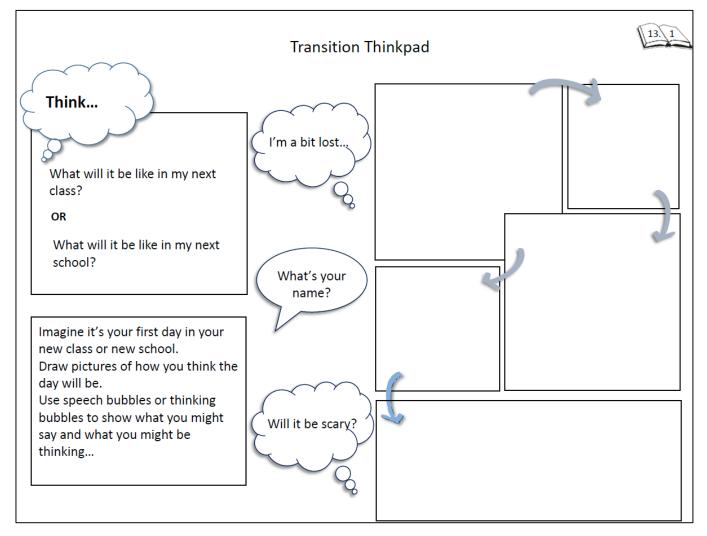
Curriculum Interest and Continuity

All students including those with SEN have a range of subject preferences, as well as interests and activities which they describe as being 'good at'. Explicit discussion about the curriculum and how it will continue and develop is a practical and valuable thing to do. Support for this process can be given by showing students in primary some of the content of the secondary curriculum in the areas in which they feel most successful. This can help to provide curriculum continuity and reduce student anxiety.

In addition, capturing student interests and talents is achieved through the Person Centred work carried out by teachers and others and developed through the strategic leadership of the SENCO. This will provide a useful tool for talking with the student and their parents about how to maintain and further develop interests in a new class or school environment.

One of the reported fears of students in preparing for transition, particularly between primary and secondary school levels is that they will no longer be able to meet with friends who share their interests or take part in activities which they find interesting and enjoyable. Again, having regular on-going communication between networks of primary and secondary school SENCOs helps each talk knowledgably about what is available in another school, even down the specifics of day place and time. This can then be mapped and associated photographs supplied so reducing anxiety of students with SEN, particularly those with a more logical mind-set!

The range of Transition tools in (*Practical Toolkit 13.1–13.7*) provides a practical way to prepare all students including those with SEN for times of transfer from class to class and transition from one school to another. Using them will give each SENCO the opportunity to lead on an inclusive approach to transition that works for all students including those with SEN. This may reduce any worries or concerns felt by parents generally all of whom want the very best for their son or daughter.



^{*} Practical Toolkit 13.1

Top Tips

- Develop great links with primary/secondary school SENCOs so that you can refer to them by name! This will give confidence to both students and their parents in preparation for transition.
- Include transfer and transition planning in your SENCO Annual Action Plan (Practical Toolkit 1.1). Put dates and key activities securely in your diary for the year ahead.
- Talk to your primary/secondary school SENCO colleagues about the tools you intend to use to help students prepare for transition.
- Use tools located in the Practical Toolkit (13.1-13.7). SENCOs report that the Transition Thinkpad and the Coping Planner (Practical Toolkit 13.1 & 13.5) are particularly useful.
- Update Students' One Page Profile in preparation for moving to a new class or a new school.
- Collect views on transfer and transition in September. Include views of students, teachers and parents. Use to inform planning for the next year.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 13.1 Transition Thinkpad
- 13.2 Student Forum for Transition & Moving
 On Ideas That Will Help!
- 13.3 General Additional Risk Factors for Students with SEN
- 13.4 Moving Class or Moving School (Template & Example)
- 13.5 Coping Planner
- 13.6 Risk Solution Grid
- 13.7 Person Centred Transfer & Transition Planning



Video List

Advice for New Year 7 students:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7QqVXBwqxc

Year 7's first week at Shelfield Academy 2016:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJLLH__aPDY

Chapter 14

Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) and/or Mental Illness (MI)

Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) and/or Mental Illness (MI)

One of the duties of the SENCO is to use their expertise in a supporting role to provide effective provision for students who may have difficulties in the area of social, emotional mental health and or who have mental illness.

This is a fascinating, but often challenging area for all professionals working in schools, and it presents opportunities for SENCOs to use their leadership, management and coordination (LMC) skills.

SENCOs need to be familiar with the different aspects of social and emotional skills, and develop a confident understanding of how to use the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process (Chapter 6) to identify causal factors that may be impacting on learning or social behaviours of students with SEN. As an example, inherent anxiety and the single focused mind–set of a student with ASD can show itself in 'flight fight or freeze' behaviours so often reported by teachers. Therefore, having a good knowledge about how to systemize the teaching of social survival skills to students with ASD for example, might have more impact than using 'standard' social skills group provision. This is where the SENCO needs to guide wise decisions by coordinating the problem–solving skills of teachers and other professionals within the school.

So, what is mental health? Just like physical health, it is something we all have. And just like physical health there are times when mental health can be in a positive place and times when it can be in a less than positive place.

It is suggested that approximately one in four people in the world will be affected by a mental or neurological disorder at some point in their lives. (World Health Organization, 2018a). As we learn more about the importance of creating a climate of positive mental health, whole school provision will become more innovative and dynamic in this area. The suggestions for Universal, Selective and Indicated provision (Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides, 2016), gives schools a structure within which to plan and measure the impact of provision.

The EDB has links to a range of documents which provide information to increase SENCO knowledge in the area of SEMH and/or MI. The experience of using Person Centred Approaches in a powerful and meaningful way will help SENCOs bring new perspectives on behalf of students and their parents to help promote positive mental health. There is also a wide range of tools in the SENCO toolkit from which to draw (*Practical Toolkit 14.1–14.6*). These are aimed at growing a range of reflective and practical skills targeted on developing:

- Self-regulation
- Self-efficacy
- Resilience
- Personal sense of control

 And on:
- Reducing anxiety
- Promoting happiness



Mental Health: an important message for SENCOs:

SENCOs have mental health too. Make sure you maintain a strong and purposeful approach to your supportive role for social emotional, mental health/mental illness work focusing on the coordination skills you bring to discussions. Work collaboratively with your Guidance Team colleagues, teachers and other professionals, keep good networking links with other SENCO colleagues and look after your own mental health too!

For SENCOs, the important message is that of a 'supportive role' working particularly with guidance team.

It needs to be noted that students with SEN and particularly those with co-occurring SEN profiles where ASD is a factor are at greater risk of poor mental health and that the potential impact of co-occurring difficulties needs to be well understood by SENCO. An example would be the high incidence of anxiety experienced by students with ASD as part of the SEN itself. (Communication and Autism Team, n.d.; National Autistic Society, 2017) This is where the knowledge of the SENCO is at its most valuable and can bring insights from up-to-date research about different SEN profiles to inform the thinking of others. The end result is an increasingly knowledgeable, more cohesive group of professionals able to work collaboratively to promote the positive mental health of all students in the school including those with SEN.

Additional Risk Factors for students with SEN?

AD/HD

Medication for students with AD/HD can cause a range of problems including:

- Decreased appetite
- Sleep problems
- Tics
- Personality changes
- Increased anxiety
- Stomach aches
- Headaches

PD/HI/VI

Research shows that feeling different can isolate students and prevent meaningful communication with peers.

This can make students anxious, and can impact negatively on friendships. Self-efficacy and resilience factors can be at risk as a result.

ID

Research in the UK suggests that an estimated 25 - 40% of people with learning disabilities have mental health problems.

Levels of anxiety are similar to those in the general population (though higher in people with Down's Syndrome).

Additional Risk Factors for students with SEN?

SLI

Speech and Language Impairment makes it difficult for children to formulate positive self-talk and to carry out problem solving activities using fluent language concepts.

SLI can result in difficulties additional anxiety in learning and in making and maintaining friendships.

SpLD, Dyslexia

Research shows that difficulties making progress in core skills such as reading, writing and mathematics can lead to a feeling of isolation, poor self-image and result in a lack of resilience.

Children and young people with specific learning difficulties are at particular risk from anxiety about learning and poor mental health.

ASD

Anxiety disorders are common for students with ASD. Approximately 40% can have symptoms of at least one anxiety disorder at any time which can lead depression. Biological difference brain in structure and function plus social difficulties lead to decreased selfesteem and a tendency to think of threats as greater than they are.

SENCOs must be keen researchers. It is important to read widely on all SEN related subjects, but aim high with this subject in particular: the more a SENCO understands about the causal factors linked to underlying SEN on the SEMH of students, the better able they will be to provide a wise, problem-solving, 'supportive role'.

Top Tips

- Know and apply your knowledge about additional SEMH risks for students with SEN.
- Meet with Guidance Team colleagues early on in your role. Discuss and agree your working relationship.
 Review this at least twice a year.
- Discuss the working relationship priorities with Guidance Team colleagues before updating your SENCO Annual Action Plan (Practical Toolkit 1.1) and share these with your Principal.
- Make good use of the fantastic selection of SEMH tools in the *Practical Toolkit* (14.1-14.6)!
- Ensure students are well prepared and supported through changes of both class and school. This is a time of particular vulnerability for students with SEN.
- Link the SEMH tools located in the *Practical Toolkit 14.1–14.6* with Person Centred tools in *Practical Toolkit 5.1–5.5*. Work collaboratively with guidance team using the tools from both sections.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 14.1 Actioning Happiness
- 14.2 Behaviour for Learning & Classroom Resilience Planner (Template & Example)
- 14.3 Happiness Planner
- 14.4 Locus of Control
- 14.5 RCSA Rainbow Scaling Tool
- 14.6 Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH)
 Provision Mapping



Video List

Emotional development:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDs6r9_Fzxw

Brain Developments in Teenagers:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dlSmdb5zfiQ&t=2s

Too much information and us/meltdowns:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXKJ33Z7unl

Too much information and us/ anxiety and social situations:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1100VAmU89g

Self Efficacy: Its role and source:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrzzbaomLmc

We should be talking about mental health in school:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wziaKWe9oZ4

Mindfulness for children:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUJs0fXTWTE

What is Mindfulness to Kids:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jCKOA7lB-w

Chapter 15

Bullying and SEN

Bullying and SEN

This is another important area about which SENCOs need to be knowledgeable and for which a good toolkit of strategies is vital.

Experiences of being bullied particularly if it is systematic and sustained can lead students with or without SEN to be at greater risk of anxiety, depression and poor mental health.

Bullying is best understood as the exploitation of difference and the consequent exertion of power. For students with SEN, this resonates particularly strongly. Research (McLaughlin, Byers & Oliver, 2012) indicates that students with SEN are far more likely to experience bullying than their non-SEN peers. For those with co-occurring SEN profiles which is the case for many, the risks of experiencing bullying and victimisation are even greater. Of course, students with SEN can be bullies too and there are many reports from SENCOs about their experiences of the exploitation of difference and exertion of power being exercised by students with SEN on other students often who themselves have SEN.

There is a wide recognition that bullying takes different forms and that exploitation of difference and exertion of power can be manifested in a number of different ways. To help think through

strategies and solutions to prevent bullying or if it has occurred, to resolve it, we shall use four key headings to frame our thinking.

False Friendships, Manipulation

Cyber

or Coercion

Physical

A study carried out by the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society in 2010 gave rise to the following findings: 70.8% of 1800 students across 8 secondary schools said they had been the victims of bullying with incidents such as hitting and tripping-up being cited as examples of physical bullying.

Verbal

A UK annual survey Ditch the Label (2017) carried out with over 10,000 students 12 years and over provides data which seems to correlate with many recent studies in Hong Kong. 20% of respondents said they experienced verbal bullying 'often' and 15% reported 'constant' verbal bullying. A high incidence of verbal bullying towards onlookers seems to be another factor worthy of some reflection.

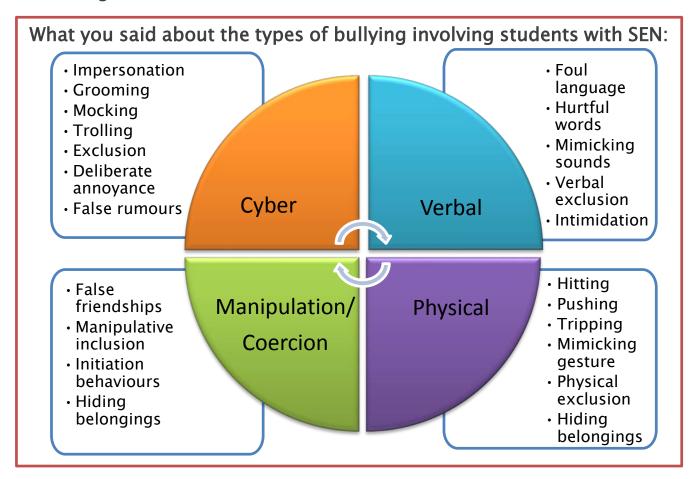
False Friendship, Manipulation or Coercion

This is a particular issue for students with SEN. Research (McLaughlin et al., 2012) suggests that the risk factors for students with SEN are particularly high, with extortion, and 'initiation ceremonies' being included as the types of experiences students report or SENCOs observe.

Cyberbullying

The Annual Bullying Survey (Ditch the Label, 2017) contains some interesting information about cyberbullying broken down in a number of different topics. For example, of the 76% who regularly use Snapchat, 31% reported having been cyberbullied compared to 12% out of the 58% who use WhatsApp. However, 69% of respondents stated they had 'done something abusive' towards another person online. Additional risk factors for students with SEN are great. Not only are they at more risk of being coerced or manipulated online, but the 'exploitation of difference' factors can impact on them more. The risks of not knowing who is a 'friend' and who is not can also make them more vulnerable to grooming.

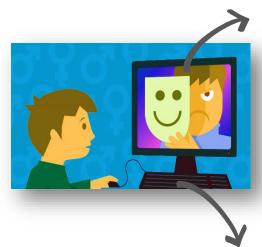
There are a number of different approaches and strategies SENCOs can use to mitigate the risk of bullying happening in the first place and resolving it when it does.



If the core of bullying is exploitation of difference, then students with SEN need to understand more about themselves in order to 'educate' students who do not have SEN about their personal strengths and areas of challenge. Setting up SEN and non-SEN Student Research Groups where key topics such as autism and how it impacts on individuals is a great way for SENCOs to educate and inform everyone and will ultimately lead to the next generation being even more inclusive. The 'This is me' tool in *Practical Toolkit 15.2*, used in a Person Centred way to help a student with SEN become involved in a Student Research Group approach.

Cyber grooming change the picture

The befriending of someone with the intention of exerting power over them.



Typically, this is thought of in terms of sexual manipulation.

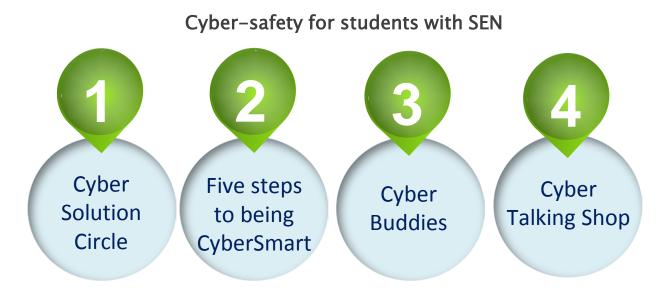
However, there are other forms of grooming where power is exerted over someone who is younger or more vulnerable. This can include grooming for the purpose of crime or for religious radicalisation.

There has been a recent investigation into how grooming can be used to manipulate vulnerable young people into self harm or guide them towards suicide.

Researches (McLaughlin et al., 2012; Wong, 2004) suggest that punitive, sanctions-based strategies are less effective than whole school peer mediation/buddy approaches. To prevent or resolve cyber bullying issues as far as that is possible, use the toolkit (*Practical Toolkit 15.1–15.9*) to select the appropriate tools and combine them with Person Centred tools such as the One Page Profile, Good Day/Bad Day and the 4+1 Questions (*Practical Toolkit 5.1–5.5*). There is also a list of videos which will be useful on opening up discussion between students with and without SEN.

SENCOs need to stay alert to the latest trends in online and social media use. Talk with other SENCOs through local SENCO networks and share experiences of using the tools (*Practical Toolkit 15.1–15.9*) focusing on their impact. By doing this in an open and active way, students with SEN can be provided with the physical, verbal and cyber–savvy survival skills they need now and for the future.

Introducing four key strategies for SENCOs to use to keep students with SEN cyber-safe:





Inviting students with and without SEN to work together to solve 'fictional' problems that have real life meaning. Ideally, the students themselves host and run the meetings. Ground-rules are agreed.

Practical Toolkit 15.5:

This can be used to guide and report back on discussions.

2

Five steps to being CyberSmart Use *Practical Toolkit 15.7* with students with SEN to help them work towards being CyberSmart using a systemised approach



Practical Toolkit 15.4:

Inviting students with and without SEN to be trained to provide a listening ear to others.

This needs to be carefully scaffolded so they do not take on more responsibility than they should.

Carefully chosen 'trusted' adults should provide a clear support structure for students.



Providing a platform for discussion about real life benefits and problems of living in the cyber world.

Every school should have a Cyber Box into which good and not so good experiences questions or worries can be posted.

These can form the basis for discussion in the Talking Shop events.

Top Tips

- Be brave.Be innovative!
- Use the 'This is Me' tool from the *Practical Toolkit* 15.2 to help students with SEN understand more about themselves and to share that information with others.
- Set up student research groups focusing or finding solutions to bullying.
 Mix up students with and without SEN!
- Choose from the selection of videos listed to create solution focused discussions with students, teachers and others.
- Review the Cyber-safety ideas and tools in both the chapter and in the *Practical Toolkit 15.7*. Introduce your Guidance Team colleagues to these tools and use your coordination skills to provide a collaborative approach for their use.
- Introduce appropriate tools from the *Practical Toolkit* (15.1-15.9) to parents who may be worried about cyber-safety for their son or daughter.



Part II: Practical Toolkit

- 15.1 Bullying
- 15.2 This Is Me
- 15.3 Am I a Good Friend
- 15.4 Cyber Buddies
- 15.5 Cyber Solution Circle
- 15.6 Good Language Bad Language Continuum
- 15.7 Cybersafe
- 15.8 Is This a Friend Practical Planner
- 15.9 Effective Strategy



Video List

National Autistic Society - Anti bullying:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WLQjGpGUvc

Emotional Bullying Short Film - Friends Can Be Bullies Too:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-hozTI6PvA

Animated explanation of autism:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fy7gUlp8Ms

A Day in the Life of someone being bullied:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkB-8erpnS4

Chapter 16

SENCO: Personal and Professional Qualities for Leading Change

SENCO: Personal and Professional Qualities

This chapter will provide insights into leading change, building effective teams and coordinating and facilitating meetings as on the SENCO Annual Action Plan (Practical Toolkit 1.1).



'It all happened in a day!'

Many SENCOs say that on the day they were given the job everything changed! Suddenly others expected them to wave a magic wand and make everything to do with SEN either go away... or get instantly better.

Many say that as they begin on their leadership, management and coordination journey (LMCJ) they experience strange happenings in their professional lives. For example, if a student has even the smallest hint of having SEN, a quick conversation on the school stairs will signal to the teacher that the 'problem' has been handed-over to the SENCO. This can be described as SENCO dependency, or at worst, SENCO over-dependency.

In contrast, SENCOs talk about the strange phenomenon that is 'SENCO Jealousy', where even though other teachers would possibly resist taking on the role themselves, they convey a jealous attitude towards SENCOs, thinking that any time spent not teaching must be some sort of open-ended luxury of time and space.

Leading and Managing Change

There is much research into the theory of change. A useful tool for SEN is the 8 step model of managing change (Kotter, 2012) as it contains important themes for SENCOs. Creating a sense of urgency by developing a strategic approach to the role as soon as it is yours. Forming a 'team' made up of the key leaders including the Principal, Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development and leaders of the Guidance and Behaviour and Discipline Teams. Your ultimate aim is to develop the SENCO Annual Action Plan (*Practical Toolkit 1.1*) which links forward thinking SEN priorities to those of your School Development Plan. This method will enable you to work towards embedding a truly inclusive approach to achieving great outcomes and progress in learning for students with SEN.

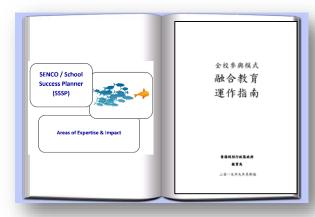
Building Effective Teams

Section 16 contains a number of practical tools to enable you to audit the knowledge and skills of colleagues in your Student Support Team as well as in the wider team networks you are building across your school.

As you move your leadership, management and coordination (LMC) of SEN forward, you will come up against inevitable obstacles. The Fishbone Analysis tool (*Practical Toolkit 16.3*) will help you capture those things that get in the way of your strategic SENCO journey. Work with others to scope ideas to move things forward in the right direction, and use the SSSP (*Practical Toolkit 2.1*) to help you on your way!

The SSSP... It's all about outcomes!

• Outcomes for the SENCO role are inextricably linked to outcomes woven into the WSA to IE.



You need to be clear about your leadership strengths and skills. The Leadership Framework Grid in the *Practical Toolkit 16.1* contains descriptors in nine key areas which you should read and highlight, using the judgement of which statement best fits your current description of yourself. Be brave and consult other trusted colleagues to help confirm or challenge your own perceptions. Commit to the 'next steps' to help move your leadership skills forward.

The second personal professional activity you should complete is the Leadership Audit (*Practical Toolkit 16.2*). This helps you to reflect on your leadership skills and styles in relation to many aspects of the SENCO role including leading teams. As you work through it, you should consider the range of teams you work with; for example, senior leaders, teachers and Curriculum Leaders or Masters/Mistresses of Curriculum Development, as well as the Student Support Team and other professionals within and beyond the school. Think 'outside the box' and factor–in 'teams' of students as well as their parents. By doing this you will fully release the powerful combination of leadership, management and coordination (LMC) skills.

Leadership Audit

Focus Area	Emerging	Sometimes	Consistently	Next Steps
I help my team to develop and focus on outcomes for students with SEN	1		10	
I make sure all members of the team are clear about how they will contribute to the SEN vision in my school	1		10	
I give prompt feedback on performance both as a team and on individual work	1		10	
I ensure agreed actions are implemented	1		10	
I modify plans to deal with change and communicate these to my team	1		10	
I ask questions and am able to accept help to find solutions	1		10	
I encourage new ideas and am happy to try new things	1		10	
I ensure people have the right information to do their job well	1		10	

^{*} Practical Toolkit 16.2

Facilitating Meetings

One of the inevitable roles and duties of a SENCO is to organize and facilitate meetings. These could involve senior leaders within your school as well as teacher colleagues. They could also be meetings involving other professionals within or beyond your school and many of these meetings may involve the participation of parents. And of course there are meetings involving students with and without SEN.

The SENCO's role in facilitating meetings

Using skills of

- Leadership
- Management
- Coordination



Facilitation involves a number of different skills. To guide an event through to a successful conclusion (Mindtools, 2018) there are a number of factors about which a SENCO should be familiar. First of all, you will need a good understanding of what facilitation is.

What is facilitation?

Keeping the meeting to time and ensuring a written summary of decisions is kept and next steps are confirmed.

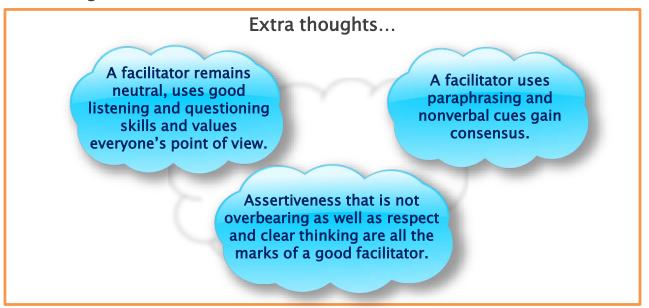
Helping to establish a structure and process for the meeting and keeping it focused until an outcome is achieved.

Facilitation: assisting or making easier the progress or improvement of something

Clarifying and summarising points, clarifying ideas and dealing with conflict.

Regulating the flow of discussion, drawing out quiet people or those with expertise and limiting those who want to do all the talking.

There are choices that can be made to help determine which sort of process you should use to achieve the very best outcomes. The various methods available to you such as brainstorming, prioritisation and concept attainment all deserve some research before moving ahead with a meeting.



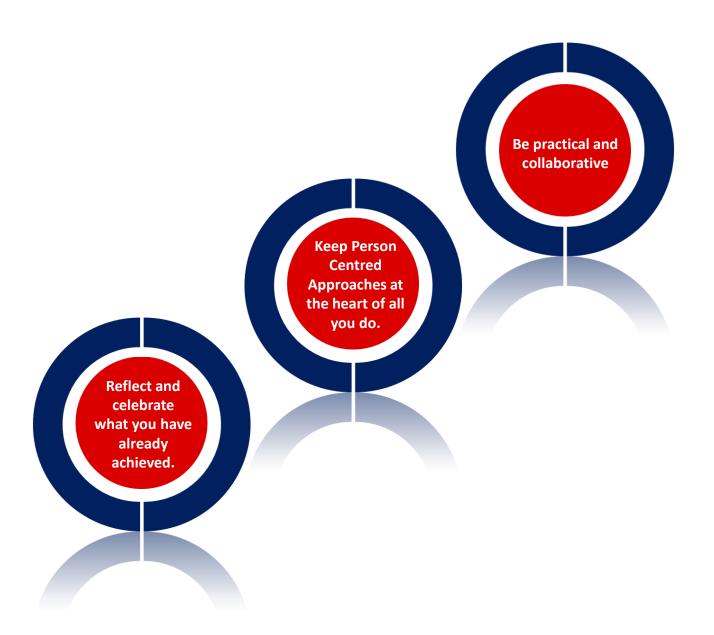
On a practical note, the world of communication is changing! As more sophisticated forms of communication become available to schools it is likely that we may begin to use virtual platforms such as Skype, Facetime and the new and upcoming equivalents to facilitate groups of people coming together for discussion. SENCOs should be ready to actively embrace these communication platforms particularly to help parents engage when they may be otherwise unable to because of work commitments. However, as a SENCO you should ensure you maintain a professional approach by using school-based addresses or Facetime links and not personal ones.

Yet again the 5 Steps Listening Conversation tool (*Practical Toolkit 12.5*) provides a useful vehicle for SENCOs who are seeking to bring people and ideas together in order to solve problems, generate ideas and improve outcomes and progress in learning for students with SEN.

It is always a good idea to agree 'ground rules' at the beginning of the meeting and to put up flip chart paper with useful headings on the wall in the room. This allows you to create a little movement during the meeting as the facilitator when you need to capture important thoughts or note something important from a discussion. This aspect of 'movement' can be helpful in breaking 'deadlock' when agreement seems very far away. It can also help to move the discussion on if things become difficult and emotions start to run high. Saying... 'let me just capture the important points of what we have just said'... standing up and writing them on the flip chart paper can help to break an atmosphere of stalemate, allowing you to take the initiative and move the discussion forward.

Start a meeting with parents in a Person Centred way by inviting people to write things on a flip chart which shows how the student is appreciated. This can be a powerful way to facilitate a positive outcomes meeting when parents and/or the students themselves are present.

SENCOs should always keep the student at the heart of any meeting by making sure there is a meaningful range of Person Centred Information on the table which fully shared with participants to keep the discussion focused on positive outcomes and how best to achieve them.



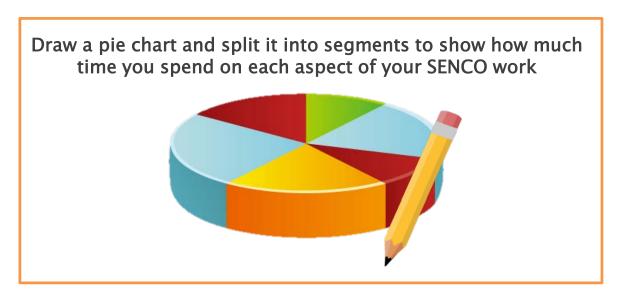
The SENCO Annual Action Plan

How to describe the SENCO role to other people? Here are a few thoughts from Pilot Project SENCOs:

Remember that when you describe your role, think of the letters

LMCJ because the role involves Leadership, Management and Coordination and it is a Journey!

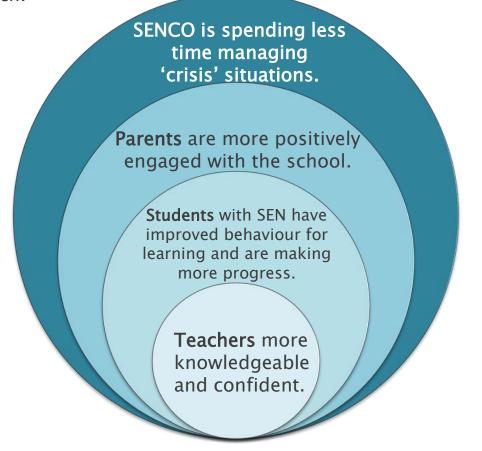
As an activity in your head, or maybe on paper, list all the things you do in your SENCO role on a typical day. Now draw a pie chart and split those things into segments of the pie.



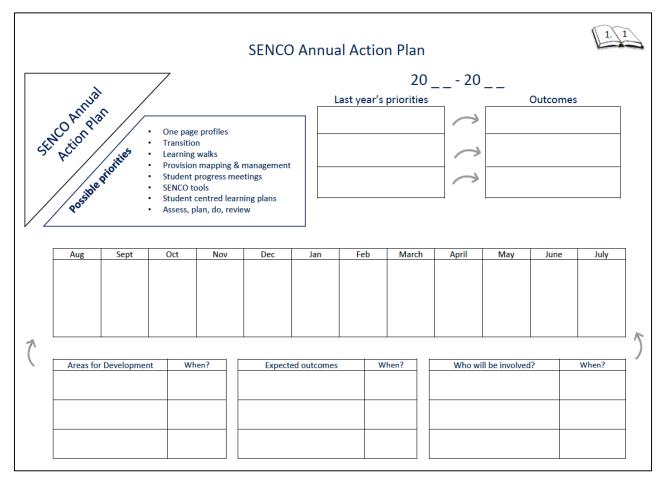
Now think about the strategic journey you are on and consider whether there is time in the pie chart for aspects such as further development of Person Centred Approaches, up-skilling teachers by carrying out more Lesson Study work, rolling out the Inclusion Teaching Checklist (*Practical Toolkit 9.3 & 9.4*) to different teachers across the school and mapping and managing the impact of provision. Look back at Chapter one for Principals where the potential of the role of SENCO is discussed. Together, move towards a position where the SENCO pie chart for your school has an increasingly strategic, developmental feel to it.



Each year SENCOs should plan a time to review the current year's action plan and record the outcome by using a ripple of impact approach.



By working collaboratively with your Principal and linking the SENCO Annual Action Planning process to the Annual School Plan a dynamic and inclusive process will be put in motion. The SENCO Annual Action Plan is located in the *Practical Toolkit 1.1*. Because it includes a calendar, you will be able to set out a clear time-frame for embedding developments achieved in the current year and look ahead to planning new initiatives for the next. Make sure you set small steps that are achievable and always involve others... the SENCO cannot and should not try to take this important work forward alone!



^{*} Practical Toolkit 1.1

Top Tips

- Review your leadership styles and strengths by completing the:
 - *Leadership Framework Grid
 - *Leadership Audit
 Both located in the *Practical Toolkit 16.1 & 16.2*.
- Find a mentor to help you on your **LMC** journey
- Find a mentor to help you on your **LMC** journey. Either someone you trust in school or a SENCO from another school with whom you can share thoughts and ideas.
- Develop a pie chart approach to managing your workload. Prioritise activities that have the maximum impact.
- Play an active role in local SENCO networks.
 Put yourself forward to mentor a new-to-role SENCO. Working with others will build your confidence!
- Keep the SENCO Annual Action Plan alive and forward thinking. Don't add new things to your workload without stopping or changing something else. Look after your own mental health.
- There is no single way to carry out the SENCO role. Develop your own **LMC** style by using the core principles and practical tools contained within this Manual. Celebrate your successes both in school and with other SENCOs in your network!



Part II: Practical Toolkit

16.1 SENCO Leadership Framework Grid

16.2 Leadership Audit

16.3 Fishbone Analysis

16.4 Meetings Planner



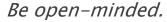
Video List

8 great tips for effective leadership:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9h3Jo4rhRv4

Chapter 17

Top Tips from SENCOs from the Pilot Project



Get the trust of your Principal!

Best relationship to develop is with school curriculum leader!

Go step-by-step!

Give positive feedback to colleagues.

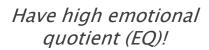
Choose the right people to work with and the right time to do it. Invite teachers who have vision, mission and passion!

Think big... do small!

Heart not job!

Be student centred!

Look for good practice and share with others



Stay healthy physically and mentally!

Good time management!

Good leadership!

Excellent relationships with everyone!

Good management - well planned.

Be brave!

Being a SENCO is a point of no return.

Positive thinking!

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