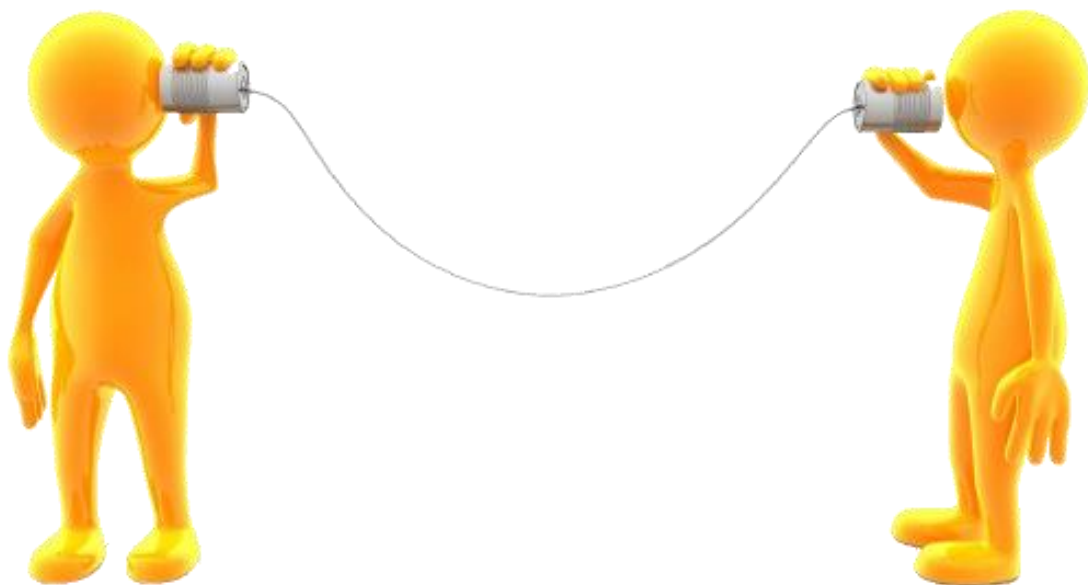




Drumbeat

School & ASD Service

Drumbeat Communication Handbook



Contents

- Communication and the curriculum
 - PECS
 - Functional Communication
 - Aided language stimulation
 - Colourful semantics
 - Attention autism
 - TEACCH
 - Blank's Level of Questioning
 - SCERTS
 - Social stories
 - Comic strip conversations
 - Intensive interaction
 - Objects of reference
 - Makaton signing
 - Superflex and the social thinking curriculum
 - Talking mats
 - Derbyshire Language Scheme
 - Lego therapy
 - Communication and behaviour

At Drumbeat School communication is at core of the curriculum. Communication opportunities are at the centre of all learning activities throughout the school day. Emphasis is placed on the importance of engaging, fun and meaningful interactions and experiences. Drumbeat promotes a total communication approach using specific ASD interventions personalised to each child.

ASD theories and speech and language therapeutic approaches are embedded within the Drumbeat curriculum and assessment model. We aim to set and develop foundations needed for successful learning in literacy; starting from where the pupil is and valuing the pupil's strengths and special interests. We aim to provide skills for life giving self -confidence and promoting independence both in and outside school.

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

What is it?

PECS was developed in 1984 by Lori Frost, MS, CCC/SLP and Dr. Andrew Bondy. It was first used at the Delaware Autistic Program. The goal of (PECS) is to teach children with autism a fast, self-initiating, functional communication system. PECS begins with the exchange of simple icons but rapidly builds "sentence" structure. It based on principles of behavioural analysis. PECS is not about using any symbol indiscriminately, it the process involving social communication development by exchanging a picture or symbol to communicate a want/need or comment.

How do I use it and who is it for?

PECS is used to teach learners to communicate in a social context. Using PECS, learners are initially taught to give a picture of a desired item to a communicative partner in exchange for the item. There are six phases of PECS instruction: (1) "how" to communicate, (2) distance and persistence, (3) picture discrimination, (4) sentence structure, (5) responsive requesting, and (6) commenting. It can be used with pupils that do not have a functional way to communicate, it is particularly useful to teach pupils to initiate communication with another person. It was originally designed to help non-verbal children with autism but it has also been used with adolescents and adults who have a wide range of communicative, cognitive and physical difficulties. PECS uses specific teaching principles such as 2-person prompting strategy, 4-step or back step error correction procedures or correspondence checks.

When and where should I use it?

To start using PECS as a communication method a child needs to have the skills to attempt to access a desired item. Communication partners should be creating at least 40 opportunities for communication exchanges a day. Communication should take place with a range of people in a range of environments.



Why would I use it?

PECS can be used effectively to address social, communication, and joint attention skills. There is a significant amount of research evidence to suggest that PECS is generally positive, with considerable anecdotal evidence from parents and professionals regarding the effectiveness of PECS. There have been several studies that have shown PECS actually helps people develop verbal language, can decrease tantrums and odd behaviors and allows for increased socialization. It is a straightforward and positive approach, cost effective and not overly time consuming to implement. There is, however, much confusion regarding the correct use of PECS and it should only be implemented by appropriately trained individuals.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Speak to Hannah for more information or look at the official website <http://www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com/> or watch this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aouSfDAW-Q8>

Functional Communication

What is it?

Functional communication is the way we communicate basic wants and needs, feelings and choices. Functional communication skills are important for children to effectively express their needs.

Without an appropriate way of expressing wants and needs, communication breaks down. It is when communication breakdown occurs that we see less desirable behaviours. Children use various forms of communication including gestures, verbalisations, signs, words and augmentative and alternative communication. Functional communication includes any of these means of communication in order to convey a message effectively.

How do I use it and who is it for?

Functional communication skills are important for all children to develop in order to effectively communicate. A means of functionally communicating is particularly useful for nonverbal students, who may resort to problem behaviours when they cannot convey their needs. Below is a list of the 9 critical communication skills that are used by the Pyramid Approach to Education which aims to develop functional communication skills:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Asking for a desired item | 6. Responding to "Wait" |
| 2. Asking for assistance | 7. Responding to functional directions |
| 3. Asking for a break | 8. Responding to transitional cues |
| 4. Rejecting | 9. Following a schedule |
| 5. Affirming | |

Children with Autism use a variety of ways to demonstrate the above skills, however these are not always appropriate. Consider a child who may throw things as a form of seeking help. It is important to identify the underlying purpose behind behaviours and teach communication skills that are appropriate and functional. From there, children require opportunities and support from adults to practice across a variety of situations. Consider how you can provide students with opportunities to develop their functional communication in meaningful activities. Choosing time is a perfect opportunity to practise several skills; requesting, rejecting, responding to directions and waiting, asking for assistance. Don't be afraid to manipulate the environment to encourage students to use their communication in a functional way. For example, the use of techniques such as 'sabotage' during activities encourages students to ask for help. Put a preferred item in a container that is hard to open, or give all the parts of a game except one piece to the student and support them to request for help.

When and where should I use it?

All the time! Functional communication is an important part of day to day life. Children require numerous opportunities to develop their functional communication skills. In order to generalise new skills, opportunities for practice should be provided in every day routines and activities across the day.

Why would I use it?

Developing functional communication skills in children is vital to enhancing communication. When children can express themselves successfully we see less frustration, less problem behaviours and an increase in communication. By developing functional communication skills we can extend children's ability to convey preferences, make choices, socially interact, emotionally regulate and increase independence.

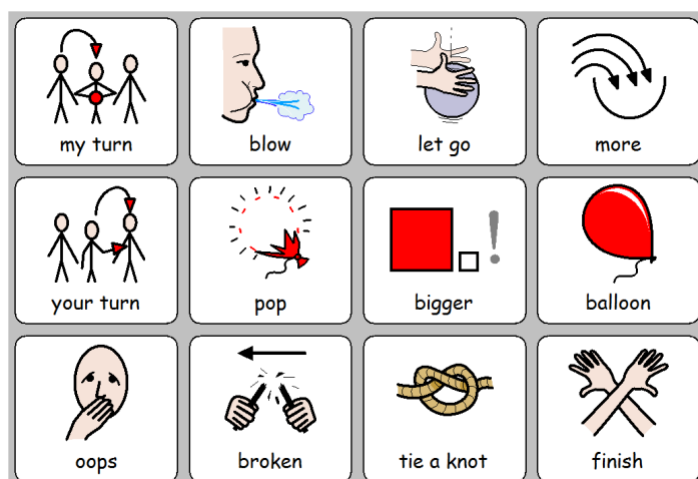


Drumbeat
School & ASD Service

Aided language stimulation

What is it?

Aided language stimulation is a communication strategy, where a communication partner teaches symbol meaning and models language by communicating her pointing to symbols whilst talking. An aided language environment balances the mode used for receptive input and the mode the child is learning to express themselves.



Drumbeat communication keyrings describe the individual symbol cards that ALL staff (and some pupils) carry on them at ALL times. This is usually attached to a lanyard or keyring on clothing. These symbols are designed to aid spoken language. The symbols tend to aid instructions that a child may be finding difficult e.g. sit down, wait etc. The symbol can also be used as reassurance for children who are anxious e.g. great work or visual reminder of what they need to do.

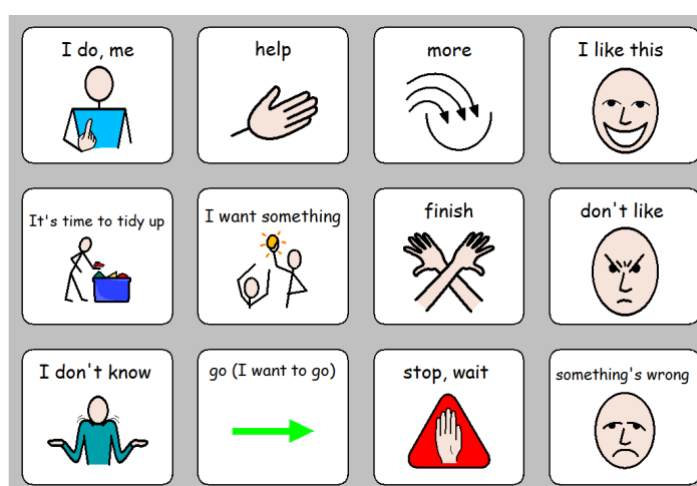
An aided language board provides a concentrated vocabulary of symbols to be used to communicate during a specific routine, story or activity. Vocabulary is included on each display to enable expression of a range of communication intents and messages appropriate to the activity.

General interaction displays look similar to boards but are used to enable communication between activities that have a specific display. The use of a general interaction displays assists people to develop the concept and habit that aided language is used to communicate all of the time (it is the child's method of communication, not just a teaching task or strategy to be used at specific times). The vocabulary included on the templates allows for the expression of a range of communication intents using very general vocabulary such as asking for 'more' or saying 'something is wrong'.

PODD communication books are personalised for specific pupils, they are organised in a special way to include quick chat words, pragmatics branch starters, categories and a range of aided language boards for activities the pupil encounters across the day.

How do I use it and who is it for?

Aided language can be used with anyone to provide visual support to help understanding of verbal language. Aided language boards and books can be given to pupils who are non-verbal as an



alternative form of expressive communication (however pupils would require some symbolic understanding to use these well) or they can be used with pupils with speech to either expand their

vocabulary and sentences or to help the listener understand a pupil's speech that is unclear. Adults need to point to symbols and speak at the same time to interact for genuine communicative purposes throughout the day. The partner actively seeks to understand what the child is attempting to communicate and supports him to communicate his message. Communication attempts and messages should be responded to.

When and where should I use it?

For a child to become a competent user of aided language boards or his own communication book, they will need to be taught and be able to practice all the time and everywhere. Ensure the opportunities are meaningful and make sense to the child: Positioning the aided language display where the child can look at or reach towards it. Try pausing



to create opportunities for communication or to show expectations for a response. Communication books should be available to the pupil at all times and transported between home and school.

Why would I use it?

The aim is to create an aided language learning environment reflecting that which is available to children acquiring spoken language. Children learning aided symbols may rarely have the opportunity to experience how aided language can be used to communicate for a range of purposes in their daily lives. Children learn to communicate in the way they experience their system of communication used. The primary aim is for the child to develop an understanding of how aided symbols can be used to communicate for genuine purposes in his natural environments. For instance, how aided language can help him to get his message across. This involves more than learning the meaning of individual symbols. It involves learning: **What** to say; **When** to say it; **Where** it can be said; **Who** it can be said to; **How** it can be said. These best way to learn how to use aided language is to watch other's use it successfully



Colourful Semantics

What is it?

Colourful semantics is a visual way of coding the information in words and sentences. It helps children to understand how the meanings of words are linked in sentences.

Question words are also used to link to the words to meaning. Each question word has a designated colour.

How do I use it and who is it for?

The approach can be used in a number of ways: To aid comprehension in reading, words can be underlined in specific colours and then coloured questions can be used alongside verbal questions to indicate the type of answer needed. To organise and plan parts of a story, writing key information can be organised in the colourful categories. To aid expression coloured symbols can be cut out to create a sentence about a picture (see image), coloured frames can be used to create structure to aid organisation.

Children work through the 5 levels of the colourful semantics programme usually in the following order to eventually produce grammatical and informational sentences:

- Level 1 – Who? “the man”
- Level 2 – What doing? “is eating”
- Level 3 – What? “the sandwich”
- Level 4 – Where? “in the kitchen”
- Level 5 – What’s it like? “big”



This approach is most effective for children with:

- ✓ Vocabulary Difficulties (Helps students remember/retrieve the words)
- ✓ Comprehension Difficulties (Helps identify key information)
- ✓ Limited expressive language (Helps students to remember to include key information and to combine words)
- ✓ Reading comprehension difficulties (Helps identify key information from text)
- ✓ Difficulties with storytelling (Helps them remember to include all the relevant information in a story in a logical order)



When and where should I use it?

Colourful semantics is most likely to be used in structure learning and lessons times. However it is not just a table top activity for example this approach could be used in PE e.g. colour coded symbols

could be used when giving instructions e.g. 'Tom throw ball', or they could be used to aid commenting in active lessons e.g. 'Tom jumping trampoline'.

Why would I use it?

Research by Alison Bryan has shown that colourful semantics is fun, effective and exciting approach to help children to develop:

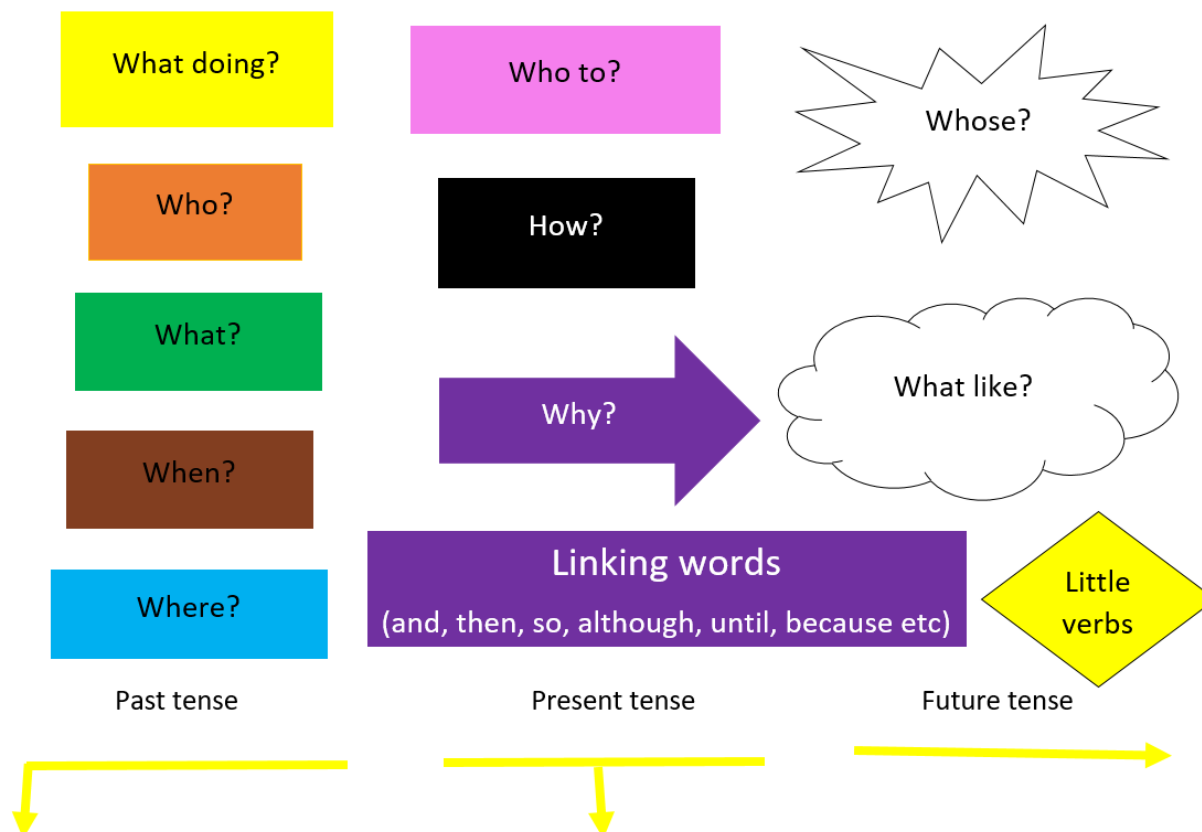
- answering WH-Questions
- learning vocabulary (nouns, verbs, prepositions and adjectives)
- story telling skills and narrative support
- written and spoken sentence construction
- written language comprehension



"It's Snake," said the mouse. "Why, Snake, hello!"
Snake took one look at the Gruffalo.
 "Oh crumbs!" he said, "Goodbye, little mouse,"
 And off he slid to his logpile house."

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Please speak to Hannah Robinson, Mandy or Mollie for more information or examples. Or see <http://www.londonspeechtherapy.co.uk/wp-content/plugins/downloads-manager/upload/Colourful%20Semantics%20Programme.pdf> for resource ideas. To see it in action you could watch: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vx_I_giall&safe=active



Attention Autism

What is it?

Attention autism is an invention and framework created by Gina Davis that aims to inspire and develop shared attention and communication skills in children with autism. The framework for attention autism is divided into four stages that follow a developmental path. At stage one children learn how to focus their attention, at stage two they learn to sustain their attention, at stage three they learn to shift attention and at stage four they learn how to shift and sustain their attention through a transition. The intervention offers activities at each stage that are motivating, create a shared experience, and are worth communicating about. Fun and laughter are also key principals of the intervention working on the knowledge that it makes activities more motivating and more likely to be remembered and repeated by the child. The framework follows a clear visual structure using whiteboards, adult modelling and demonstrations as visual cues to allow children the best chance of getting it right and being successful.



How do I use it and who is it for?

Each stage of the intervention offers an activity design to work on and practise a key skill.

Stage one – the bucket

Pupils are taught to focus attention on adult led agenda by an adult offering a group three highly motivating toys from a bucket. To use the bucket successfully the adult must have the toys at all times sharing them one at a time with the group. In order to experience the toy the child learns to jointly focus on the adult and the toy. The toys must not to be given to the child.

Stage two – the attention builder

Pupils are offered a sequence building activity aimed to sustain their attention. Activities must be highly motivating, visually appealing in order to be worth watching. This is an adult led activity that the children do not touch. Pupils share the experience of the activity with the adult and the group by attending to the adult led agenda.

Stage three- the interactive game

During this stage, pupils learn and practise shifting their attention from their individual participation within a turn talking game back to the group. The interactive game follows the same principles – it has to be fun, follow a clear structure, and have a good ending. These ideas allow the game to be as good to watch as it is to take part in.

Stage four- Transition to individual task- pupils focus for demonstration, make a transition, refocus to complete individual task, return to group, refocus to celebrate work achieved. To practise these skills children are given a kit with all the resources needed to complete a task independently. The kit is modelled before the group and then individual kits are distributed to pupils and supporting adult who should transition from the circle to the table and complete the task. Once complete pupils bring their work back to the group to share their collative success.

Attention autism can and should be use with pupils with autism of all ages. It can be adapted to meet the needs and interests of a range of learners.

When and where should I use it? Attention autism can be used as an intervention to aid and improve joint attention and communication skills. The clear, visual framework also means it can be used to teach concepts and provide access to range of subjects across the curriculum. It should be used in a distraction free environment and everyone in the room should take part.

Why would I use it? Attention autism can be used to address joint attention, communication, social and independence skills. The framework further provides opportunities to work on key excusive functioning skills such as planning, memory, mental flexibility and organisation.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Please speak to Hannah Robinson, Andrea, Claire or Becca for more information or help planning lessons. Or see <http://www.ginadavies.co.uk/>

TEACCH

What is it?

TEACCH stands for the treatment and education of autistic and communication handicapped children. The programme was initiated and then developed by Eric Shopler and Gary Mesibov in North Carolina, in the USA, in the 1960's as a community based research programme for individuals with an ASD and their families. It then developed into a *cradle to grave* support system for toddlers, children, adolescents and adults with ASD providing support, interventions and services to enhance and develop learning, independence and leisure skills in the home, at school, at work and in the wider community by using structure to enhance meaning.



How do I use it and who is it for?

We use the principles of this approach to focus on the most highly emerging skills of the child or young person and to develop a visually structured, step by step approach to visually sign post **what** is expected, **where** and **how** through the use of physical structure, visual schedules and explicit teaching approaches. For example this approach could be used to teach a toddler to recognise, sequence and match numbers, a child to match number to quantity in counting, a teenager to work through a word sum and an adult to calculate amount needed and change expected in shopping. The TEACCH programme helps practitioners think about the patterns of behaviour and thinking in people with an ASD and works to their strengths while supporting their needs.

When and where should I use it?

We use the principles and concepts of the TEACCH programme in school, in after school club, on school outings and during residential trips to adapt the environment and create structured visual and individualised approaches for teaching and generalising academic skills, life and self-care skills and demonstrating how to use leisure time and have fun with others. So for example we may use a schedule to teach a toilet routine in a toilet, a task sheet to explain the rules of badminton in the sports hall, and how to be a good loser, colour coding to make routines explicit in the dinner hall or a photo sequence to generalise how to do the laundry in school. We could set up a work station in a classroom for set tasks or use coloured tape to mark out where a student is to sweep the floor.

Why would I use it?

This approach is rooted in an understanding of and respect for the way ASD people experience the world. It can be used to teach skills, complete tasks independently and then generalise those skills in different settings and contexts. It capitalises on the strengths in visual processing, rigidity of thinking using special interests and supports the needs in processing information, sensory stimulations and executive functioning.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

There are thousands of examples of TEACCH style activities available on the internet. The following websites may be useful:

- TES - <https://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/TEACCH-activities-6042852>
- ShoeboxTasks: Learning How to Learn
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3pkzfliyW4&safe=active>
- TEACCH - <http://teacch.com/>
- Pinterest - <http://uk.pinterest.com/>



Blank's language for learning model

What is it?

Blank's language for learning model is a framework that categorises questions into levels of difficulty.

- Level One: Questions involve naming skills and matching materials. Examples include: What is this? Show me the cow.
- Level Two: Questions involve describing skills and selective matching. At this level examining detail and concepts are introduced. Examples include: What is he doing? Where are they? What colour is it?
- Level Three: These questions involve retelling and begin to use higher-order thinking skills. Examples include: What happened? What will happen next? How is the girl feeling?
- Level Four: Questions involve justifying and solving problems. They often require own knowledge and thinking about the future and past. Examples include: Why does the girl need an umbrella? How can you tell she is sad?

How do I use it and who is it for?

This model can be used as an assessment tool for adults to establish a pupil's understanding. It can be used to measure progress as well as aiding differentiation in classroom interaction. Application of this model ensures adults are asking questions and testing topic knowledge at a level a pupil can access and show off their knowledge and understanding. Teachers should aim to ask questions at the level the child is working within. Teachers should only ask questions above the level the child is at when talking about familiar content and with the aim to extend thinking skills. This framework will mainly be used for children that communicate verbally or are competent AAC users. For pupils who are unable to achieve level 1 teachers should aim to teach them these skills e.g. labelling and modelling noun vocabulary with object support.

When and where should I use it?

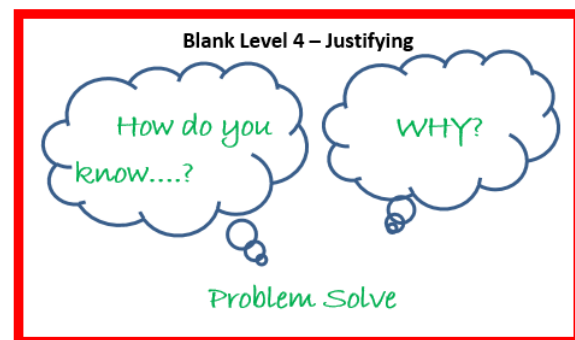
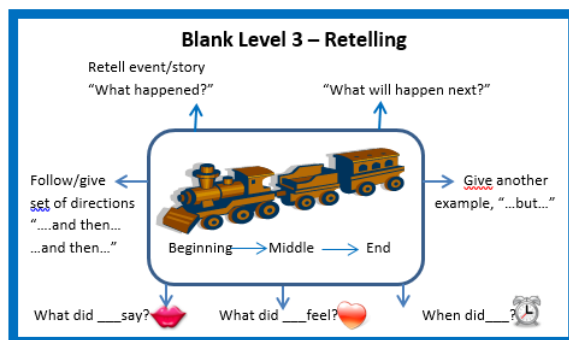
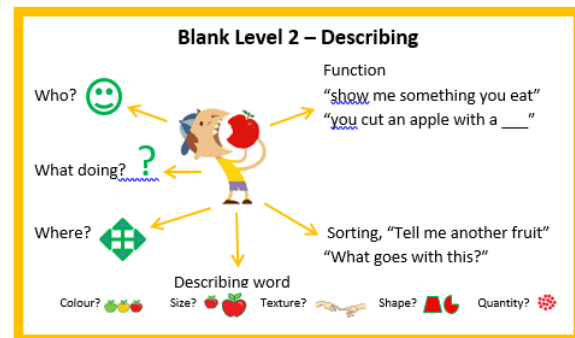
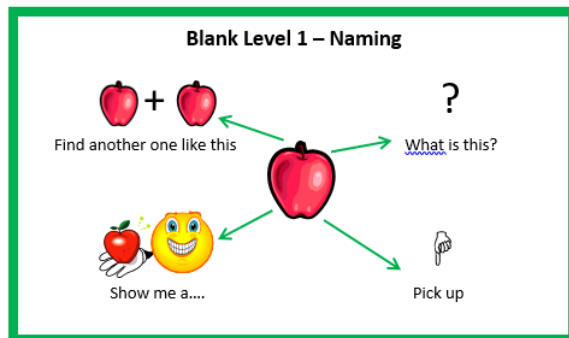
This framework should be kept in mind at all time when interacting with pupils. This will be most useful in lessons but also understanding of language and questions has important implications for the management of behaviour. *When pupils are working at level 1* they will need a very visual and personalised approach to their behaviour that involves minimal language. *When pupils are at level 2* the adult should tell the pupil what happened. They should not ask why questions. The adult should describe appropriate behaviours in a short sentence and use positive statements. *When pupils are at level 3* adults can ask a child what happened and how people felt, but pupils should not be asked to justify their behaviour. An adult can explain the justification for the pupil. When pupils are at level 4 adults can ask pupils why they behaved the way they did and ask them to infer about how others may feel. Pupils could be encouraged to work out what they can do. However if a child cannot answer a question, adults should model an appropriate answer.

Why would I use it?

Staff at Drumbeat should use this framework to ensure the communication demands match the communication ability of pupils. Using this will mean pupils remain confident with talking, but teachers also have the knowledge about how to stretch pupil's thinking and reasoning skills.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Please speak to Hannah Robinson, speech and language therapist for more information and help with planning lessons and questions to match communication abilities. There are also some example of planning using this framework on the TES website. You may wish to look at the book 'Language for thinking' for more ideas on question differentiation.



The SCERTS Framework

What is it?

SCERTS stands for **S**ocial **C**ommunication, **E**motional **R**egulation and **T**ransitional **S**upports. It is an ASD specific framework which helps staff to work out what things help a student with Autism to communicate well and manage their emotional and sensory needs. The SCERTS framework helps you to work out what social communication and emotional regulation skills may be useful to target depending on the pupil's level. It also guides adults to which transaction supports and specific ASD approaches might support a child best, eg Attention Autism, TEACCH, Sensory Circuits.

How do I use it and who is it for?

SCERTS is a multidisciplinary approach so you would always be doing this with other members of the school team, usually with at least one therapist. The SCERTS approach divides people into one of three communication stages – Social Partner, Language Partner or Conversation Partner – so can be used across a very wide range of students.

There are various ways to use the SCERTS approach. Most commonly at Drumbeat we are using it to make assessments of the current functioning and how we might best support students, in one of the following ways:

1. Complete a full assessment for students whose progress is difficult to capture using other assessments, or as a baseline for new students.
2. Create a weekly planning grid to design how a pupil is going to work on their social communication and emotional regulation targets. This also includes a list of daily activities and the transactional supports needed for that activity.
3. Complete a Practice Principles Checklist to work out how best to support an individual student or group activity. The checklist looks at what things are working well and what your next steps could be.

When and where should I use it?

If you are wondering how to move a student in your class on in some way – this may be in terms of social communication or emotional regulation (sensory needs or emotional and behavioural difficulties), or just looking for some new ideas of how to support a student. Most commonly we will be using this across a number of different situations, for example in class, in the lunch hall, at playtime, or out on a trip.

Why would I use it?

Because it gives a helpful structure to the sorts of thinking and conversations we often have about students and what works for them, but helps you get support from others, explain to your class team why you are trying (or stopping) a strategy and keep a record of things that have been tried. In most cases, it allows you to build on staff and students strengths, and then to build even further when it comes to review.



Social Stories

What is it?

A Social story accurately describes a situation, skill or concept according to ten defining criteria.

These criteria guide story research, development and implementation to ensure an overall patient and supportive quality and a format, content and learning experience that is descriptive, meaningful and physically, socially and emotionally safe for the child.

How do I use it and who is it for?

Social Stories are used to help students to manage a variety of social situations and experiences, both inside and outside of the school environment. The goal of a Social Story is to patiently share accurate information in order to bring about a positive outcome for both students and staff.

Social Stories can also be written for parents to use with students when they are at home.

A Social Story is only written once a process of research and consultation has taken place with all relevant parties, including parents, staff and other service providers.

A Social Story should be reviewed after an agreed period of time.

When and where should I use it?

Social Stories can be used in a variety of contexts:

- To prepare a student for an outing
- To prepare a student for a medical/dental check up
- To help a student to build and maintain relationships
- To explain expectations, rules and sanctions in the classroom

Why would I use it?

Some students at Drumbeat find it difficult to attend to, understand, remember and process spoken language alone. Research has found that students with ASD have benefitted the use of Social Stories. These also enable students to process and regulate their emotional responses.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Guidance and examples of Social Stories can be found in the staff shared area.

You can also find information at www.CarolGrayStories.com

Please talk to Denise for further help and information.



Comic Strip Conversations

What is it?

Comic strip conversations provide visual representations of the different levels of communication that take place in a conversation, using symbols, stick figure drawings and colour. By seeing the different elements of a conversation presented visually, some of the more abstract aspects of social communication (such as recognising the feelings and intentions of others) are made more 'concrete' and are therefore easier to understand. Comic strip conversations can also offer an insight into how a person with autism perceives a situation.

How do I use it and who is it for?

Comic strip conversations use symbols to represent social interactions and abstract aspects of conversation, and colour to represent the emotional content of a statement or message (Gray, 1994). Comic strip conversations can be used to increase social understanding in young people and adults on the higher functioning end of the autism spectrum.

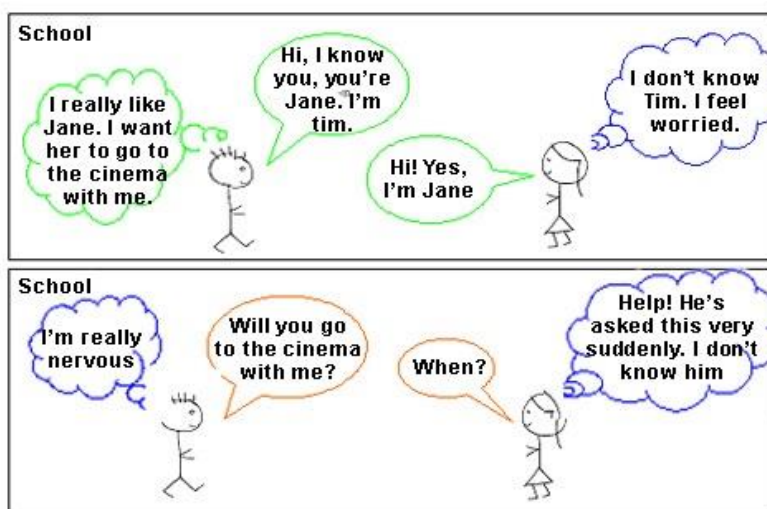
Conversations are usually started with small talk (for example, talking about the weather) to get people familiar with drawing whilst talking and to mimic ordinary social interactions. Following this, the support person may ask a range of questions about a specific situation or type of social interaction. The person with autism answers by speaking and drawing their response. The thought bubbles and speech bubbles can be a great way to show children that people don't always think and say the same thing.

When and where should I use it?

Comic strip conversations can help people with autism to understand concepts that they find particularly difficult. People draw as they talk and use these drawings to learn about different social situations. Therefore a comic strip conversation could be used in any situation where an individual is having difficulty expressing their emotions or showing signs of anxiety i.e. meeting new people, transitions etc

Why would I use it?

In a comic strip conversation, the person with autism takes the lead role with parents, carers and teachers offering support and guidance. A comic strip conversation provides an opportunity for the person with autism to provide their perspective.



Intensive Interaction

What is it?

"Intensive interaction is an approach to teaching the pre-speech fundamentals of communication to children and adults who have severe learning difficulties and/or autism and who are still at an early stage of communication development."

It mimics the mother/child responses to those who are new-born; the child "goo-goos" and you "goo-goo" back in response as you want them to repeat this interaction/communication.

How do I use it and who is it for?

It is a way to help those who have social and communication difficulties. There is no right or wrong answer to its process and no one way to carry out *Intensive Interaction*. The premise rests upon the interaction, reacting and responding to that interaction. The approach should be carried out on a regular basis. Most importantly, you do not have to be trained for this approach. Questions may need to be considered about how to interact, how long to interact for, when to stop and when to progress, physical contact as well as the age appropriateness of the interactions.

When and where should I use it?

You can use this approach anywhere; generally where the child is engaged and there is space and time for you to interact with them. You let the child take the lead in the interaction and then mimic their movements/sounds. Using room/space/objects the child is familiar with would also be beneficial to success in this type of interaction.

Why would I use it?

You would use this approach as a way of getting into the world of the child who has social and communication problems and for those who are functioning at the lower end of the cognitive scale. A quote from Caldwell (2006) sums up why we should use this approach in a very clear and succinct way: ***"If I have ASD and SLD, then my inner world objects and behaviours which have significance for me clearly do not resonate in the same way for you who live in the outer world. You see the objects I treasure as a barrier to be dismantled. My sounds and movements are ignored. My fixations are discouraged. What are known as self-stimulatory objects such as a piece of paper to flap, are taken away from me with the intention of forcing me to attend...If you want to communicate with me it has to be worth my while because all that I have learned so far is that if I make a signal, I do not get an answer that is meaningful for me. I need to know that if I send a message you will respond in 'my' language."*** (P100)

Where can I find examples or find out more?

To find out more about this intervention check go to the main Intensive Interaction website www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk

Marina has also written 2 articles on the use of Intensive Interaction, which you can find on the following web links:

<http://www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/InTouch/FullLengthArticles/FullLengthArticlesPre2010/Downloads/IntensiveEducation.pdf> as well as <http://www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/InTouch/2009/InTouchSeptember2009/InTouchSept09.pdf> (Pages 43 and 45)

Phoebe Caldwell (2006) *"Finding you, finding me. Using intensive interaction to get in touch with people whose severe learning disabilities are combined with autistic spectrum disorder."* (Jessica Kingsley Publisher)



Objects of Reference

What is it?

Objects of reference were first used many years ago with children who were both deaf and blind. Now, their use is growing rapidly, particularly with children who have learning difficulties at earlier developmental levels, whether or not they have any visual impairment. Many pupils might start off with these actual objects before moving on to, for example, photographs, miniature representations, line drawings and symbols – whatever works for them. Other pupils will remain using the actual objects. An 'object of reference' is, as the name implies, an object which has a particular meaning associated with it. For example, a fork may be the object of reference for dinner

How do I use it and who is it for?

The object is closely associated with and comes to represent another object, an activity, a person or an event. These objects give the child information about what is going to happen if they are used consistently. They are often used in schools now to represent curriculum activities, or personal care routines, but they can be used at home in the same way. The important thing is that the same objects and methods are used. The objects should have relevance for that pupil, for example, an orange arm band to represent swimming is not suitable if s/he uses a completely different flotation aid. Items are often chosen because of their multi sensory properties – a piece of scented soap to signify washing, a pair of riding gloves that smell of the horse to signify riding – and their link with the activity for example a piece of seat belt/buckle for going in the car. The object may be a miniature version of the real object although this choice may be more for the benefit of the facilitator than the user.

When and where should I use it?

Objects should be chosen sensitively, particularly with reference to personal care, a nappy would not be the best choice to indicate changing time, so perhaps a sponge bag could be used instead. Abstract ideas such as 'finish' could be represented by, for example, a 3-D pyramid – it does not have any direct relationship to its meaning, but, if used with the pupils consistently in that manner, could come to represent that idea. Objects of reference are basically a simple method of communicating, but they can be used at a number of levels.

- Involving an actual object that the child uses in an activity; a cup that is used every time he or she has a drink would become an object of reference for a drink.
- A different cup could become an object of reference, a smaller one perhaps, or just using a part of one, e.g. the lid or handle. (This would be useful if the child uses a large amount of objects to reduce the space they take up).
- If possible, the objects could be used to give him or her an element of choice in their day; once they understand what each object represents, they may be able to indicate a choice, perhaps through eye pointing, reaching, etc.

Why would I use it?

As part of a total communication approach at early developmental levels, the use of objects of reference helps to support students understanding linked to daily routines and structure.



Makaton

What is it?

Makaton is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order. Makaton signs are more or less the same signs as used in British Sign Language (however are used to support speech in spoken word order). With Makaton, children and adults can communicate straight away using signs and symbols. Many people then drop the signs or symbols naturally at their own pace, as they develop speech.

How do I use it and who is it for?

For those who have experienced the frustration of being unable to communicate meaningfully or effectively, Makaton really can help. Makaton takes away that frustration and enables individuals to connect with other people and the world around them. This opens up all kinds of possibilities. Makaton uses signs, symbols and speech to help people communicate. Signs are used, with speech, in spoken word order. This helps provide extra clues about what someone is saying. Using signs can help people who have no speech or whose speech is unclear. Using symbols can help people who have limited speech and those who cannot, or prefer not to sign. When using Makaton signs, sign the key information carrying words to keep things simple. Always encourage speech and bear in mind the following to help convey meaning: Intonation of voice; Facial expression; Body language; Natural gesture.

When and where should I use it?

Most people start using Makaton as children then naturally stop using the signs and symbols as they no longer need them. However, some people will need to use Makaton for their whole lives.

Why would I use it?

Many children's understanding develops ahead of their speech. This can leave them feeling frustrated as they might know what they want but not be able to express it. Using signing can help empower them to express what they want to say and alleviate frustration. Symbols can be used to support communication in many different ways. Using symbols can help people who have limited speech and those who cannot, or prefer not to sign.



Superflex

What is it?

Superflex is a social thinking curriculum to help students increase awareness of behaviour and develop ways of being "super-flexible" thinkers.

How do I use it and who is it for?

At Drumbeat the curriculum is delivered to primary and secondary pupils at the higher end of the spectrum, with adaptations made such as visual support to enable greater understanding and involvement. The sessions are aimed at students with some capacity to take part in discussions and talk / think about behaviour and feelings.

The sessions incorporate videos, discussion, practical exercises, sensory experiences, role play and homework assignments. Initially principles of flexible and inflexible thinking are explored. Then core focus of each session is to explore either the Superflex Superhero or the qualities of the “Unthinkable’s” that get in the way of flexible thinking.

Students are encouraged to understand how “the Unthinkable’s” impact on them personally and develop ways in which to “beat” them. They support each other with this too.

When and where should I use it?

Superflex is run in group sessions which last for around forty five minutes, and run weekly over a 6-12 week period. There are several facilitators across the school who run the groups across secondary and primary. Outside of the sessions, the facilitators may set homework or strategies for students to try out in day to day life, which they would share / develop with class teams and / or parents and carers. This might be about how to manage emotions / develop core social skills etc.

Why would I use it?

Many of our students find it difficult to monitor and regulate their own behaviours. This curriculum provides a fun forum where they can explore their own challenges and identify ways to modify thoughts and related behaviours. It also raises awareness of hidden social rules that our students can struggle to recognise, and develops self awareness.

Superflex is an ASD specific intervention developed by Stephanie Madrigal and Michelle Garcia Winner. The team of unthinkables present with different social and interaction difficulties that children with Autism can relate to. The superhero Superflex helps students finds ways stop their brains getting side-tracked and rigid in unsocial ways. It is a relatively new treatment but grounded in principle of cognitive behavioural therapy for which there is a strong evidence base.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

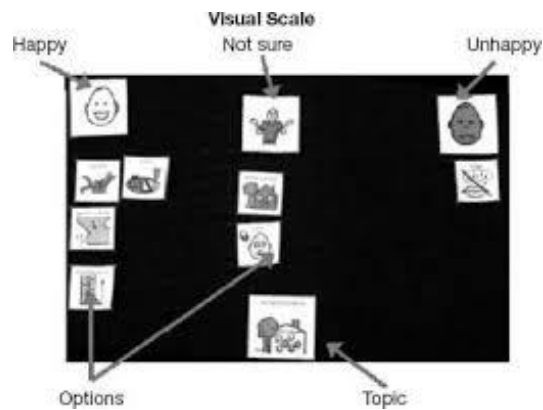
There are various books written by the authors which set out tasks and activities. Lesson plans are also available on the shared drive for reference.



Talking mats

What is it?

Talking mats is an interactive resource than can support pupils with ASD to give an opinion on a topic. It developed from a research project conducted by Joan Murphy, she found that pupils that used AAC didn't always have the vocabulary they needed in their systems and so began drawing and cutting up symbols. Talking mats are easy to make, usually a black felt mat/board with Velcro pictures/symbols &/or words. These can be personalised or there are commercially produced mats and cards, alternatively a door mat is cheap and works well. There is also an app available or the process could be done digitally. There is one topic card symbol placed at the bottom of the mat which shows the theme of the discussion e.g. 'school', there is a visual scale placed at the top of the mat to represent the pupil's feelings on the topic e.g. like/ dislike, there are also option symbols which the pupil places where they choose e.g. 'maths' 'writing' 'lunchtime'.



How do I use it and who is it for?

Talking Mats can be used by any staff member with any pupil that has some symbolic understanding. The topic is usually chosen by the adult and placed on the mat. The visual scale pictures are explained by the adult and placed on the mat. A pupil is given one option at a time and neutrally asked their opinion. The pupil then places the picture under the appropriate visual scale symbol to indicate how they feel. The adult should not alter this placement. Once all the option cards have been placed the adult ask the pupil if they would like to make any changes. Blank symbols should then be provided in case the pupil would like to add any options to their mat that have not been provided. At the end of this the adult or pupil should take a photo of the mat as evidence the pupil's opinion.

When and where should I use it?

Talking mats are used as a tool to help people express an opinion, decision or feeling; they are not a test and there is no right or wrong answer. They can be used in any situation where a pupil needs support to understand, reflect and organise their thoughts and should be used alongside other communication systems. They are particularly suitable for supporting communication for opinions, decision making or future planning. They are being used more and more to support person centred planning and are likely to be an invaluable tool for Education, Health & Care plans that we will have to create with students. They could be used as a tool for annual reviews to allow a pupil to express what they think of school. They can also be used as an evaluation of what pupils feel they are good at or need to improve.

Why would I use it?

Talking mats would be used as a thinking tool to augment communication systems already in place. The simple visual structure aids understanding and organisation of thoughts. The multi-sensory approach also reduces memory demands. It provides pupils with an opportunity to have a voice that can express negatives and positive views.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Hannah can show you how to use Talking Mats or give you more information. There are numerous examples on the Internet and courses, including an online course <http://www.talkingmats-online.com>



Derbyshire Language Scheme (DLS)

What is it?

The Derbyshire Language Scheme is a system of language intervention intended for children who have difficulties in developing language skills, it was originally designed to for children with severe learning difficulties. It can be used to teach, test and record a child's progress.

The language syllabus of the Scheme is split into three main sections:

1. Early vocabulary (no comprehension → single words)

The first section aims at teaching a minimum vocabulary to a child who only uses single words. Activities should use everyday objects in real life activities and play. It focuses on those first words typically

developing children learn such as everyday objects, body parts, action words and early functional vocabulary (no, all-gone, more). Initially words are taught 'it's a ball', then comprehension is checked 'give me the ball?' and then expressive communication is encouraged 'What is it?' By the end of this section a child should have comprehension of 50 to 60 nouns, 20 or so verbs, and functional words.

2. Simple Sentences (2 → 4 information carrying words)

The second aims at encouraging the child to understand and combine words in simple sentences, moving from two word combinations up to sentences around four to six words in length. An information carrying word (ICW) is a word that a child needs to understand to follow the instruction e.g. 'give the big apple to Tom' contains 3 ICW if there are a choice of different sized objects and a range of people. By the end of this section a children should use and understand commands (Shut the door!), descriptions (John shutting the door), questions (Where the sticky tape?) and negatives (Can't do it!).

3. Grammar and complex sentences

The third and final section is concerned with the child's ability to use different verb forms, pronouns, the definite article, and other aspects of grammar. Comprehension activities in this level include 2 and 3 part commands e.g. put your socks in the cupboard, and bring me the vacuum cleaner.

How do I use it and who is it for?

This scheme can be used as an assessment tool for adults to establish a pupil's understanding. The format allows a teacher to modify both the teaching activities and the pace of presentation to suit the level of ability and interests of the children. It might be that a child is at one level for comprehension and a different level for expressive communication, this is ok, and they can be developed separately, children with ASD often have a pikey profile. At Drumbeat teachers are encouraged to invent new activities as they become more and more familiar with the approach. It is a strategy of teaching, and does not therefore depend on specific 'lessons'. The DLS is intended to act as an organising framework as well as a source of teaching ideas. The scheme can be used with any pupil.

Concepts and understanding of instructions develop in the following order

1ICW – noun, verbs

2ICW - Possession, negatives, functions

3ICW – Prepositions (in, on under), size (big and little)

4ICW - colour

Consequently when using this scheme you would not assess colours in pupils that are working at 2ICW. You would need to teach colours using single words before they are included in instructions containing 4ICW.

For Drumbeat's earlier communicators the scheme can be used to teach children early and motivating vocabulary with object support. For Drumbeat's most advanced learners the scheme can remind us to model and extend grammatical structures in sentences to communicate in a range of tenses.

When and where should I use it?

This framework should be kept in mind at all time when communicating with pupils, particularly when giving instructions to pupils, setting targets. This will be most useful in lessons but also understanding of instructions and expressive language can be worked on throughout the day in a range of places. For example at lunchtime an adult could say 'give the fork to Tom' for a child working at the simple sentence level or in soft play an adult could ask 'who's sliding?' to a child who is working at the early vocabulary stage.

Why would I use it?

Staff at Drumbeat should use this scheme to ensure the communication demands match the communication ability of pupils. Using this will mean pupils can independently follow instructions with little prompting and develop their language skills confidently. Remember instructions can be supported using visuals and expressive communication also means communicating using sign or symbols.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Please speak to Hannah Robinson, speech and language therapist for more information and particularly if you would like any help with planning information carrying word activities to match communication abilities. You could also look at the DLS website <http://www.derbyshire-language-scheme.co.uk/Programme.htm>. Great Western hospital have created some videos to explain how you can use this framework in everyday language learning. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIrx5cbqik&safe=active>



Lego Therapy

What is it?

The purpose of lego therapy is to help students to develop their social and interaction skills, through a highly structured small group activity. The activity involves working together, taking on different roles, to construct lego models following clear diagrams. Once students have mastered how to achieve this together, they can move onto free play activity (creating and constructing shapes together). The purpose of lego therapy is to give a natural opportunity to really work together and help each other – students have to find ways to communicate, to listen, attend together on the task, problem solve together, take turns and share.

How do I use it and who is it for?

They involve working with small groups of children (ideally in groups of three), with an adult supporting them. The children take on three / four roles: Engineer (tells the other children what to do – only the engineer sees the plan), Supplier (finds the bricks the engineer tells them to and gives to builder), Builder (Positions the bricks as instructed by the engineer) and Reporter (spots good team working skills of other students and report back on this). It can be tailored for children of all abilities and communication levels, and the goals and focus of sessions (e.g. from communication

skills up to leadership and supporting others) varied depending on need. The role of adult facilitators is not to get involved with the actual construction, but to work with the children to work out problems they might have, and to develop effective communication together. This might involve reminding children of the rules and roles, helping children to express how they are feeling, “spotting” when children are beginning to have a problem and helping them to problem solve, remembering when children have used good social strategies and highlighting these to the children, supporting children to find different ways to communicate and ask for help, and helping children to praise and support each other.

When and where should I use it?

Lego therapy takes place in specific sessions, which can happen in any quiet space (e.g. classroom). Having a weekly slot is ideal. The groups can be class based, or for children for whom developing social communication and interaction skills has been identified as a particular need. For each group, individual goals are set and focused on within the sessions; trying to find ways to encourage these outside of sessions would enhance learning (although, due to the naturalistic nature of learning, generalisation has been shown to occur anyway).

Why would I use it? Lego therapy can be beneficial in terms of developing a range of communication, interaction and social communication skills. It can also be used to support classroom and peer bonding (helping children who would not usually interact / talk to each other, or who may have relationship difficulties to work through these by understanding each others’ needs better through lego therapy sessions).



Use of Language when managing behaviour

What is it?

The verbal and non-verbal communication used by adults when supporting pupils to manage their behaviour.

At Drumbeat 90% of the pupil population have a diagnosis of autism. We know that children with autism can be very literal in their thinking; this applies to their understanding of language. This means that if they heard the phrase ‘it’s raining cats and dogs’ it is likely that they would expect to see cats and dogs falling out of the sky. We also know that for many children with autism too much language being used can leave them feeling very confused.

Behaviour itself, particularly challenging behaviour, is a means of communication for both verbal and pre-verbal children with autism. During times when children display challenging behaviours they are usually experiencing high levels of anxiety, this means it would be very difficult for them to process lots of language.

How do I use it and who is it for?

All adults working at Drumbeat use language when working with pupils. Each pupil is individual and will respond differently. The key is really knowing each individual pupil you work with and applying this when dealing with behaviour in different situations. You will know the most effective strategies that are written and shared in individual behaviour management plans. The key is keeping language to a minimum and using body language where possible e.g. a gesture or sign to support what is being said.

When and where should I use it?

Staff should be alert to potential situations where challenging behaviour could occur at all times. Again, this is a very personalised approach and is about staff members knowing individual pupils. This will include knowing distraction techniques, motivators and special interests that will help individuals to self regulate their own behaviour and prevent it from escalating in situations they find challenging and are potential triggers for challenging behaviour to occur.

There are some common key times when staff awareness should be even more heightened e.g. times of transition throughout the day, break and lunchtimes, staff changes, unforeseen changes to timetable etc as these can be the most anxiety inducing for pupils with autism.

Why would I use it?

You need to consider the language you use at all times for a number of reasons, including;

- To reduce anxiety.
- To help pupils self-regulate their behaviour and emotions.
- To prevent situations from escalating.
- To ensure maximum access to the curriculum for pupils.

Where can I find examples or find out more?

Class team and department meetings.

Staff training sessions

Team teach instructors

Therapy team