



PCC SEND Conference

Date: Thursday 11th
July 2024

Time: 9am-4pm

Location: The Fleet,
Fleet Way, High
Street,
Peterborough, PE2
8DL.

Time	Description
9am - 9:30am	Arrival, registration, refreshments and browse stalls
9:30am	Welcome / opening comments – James Bird (Head of PCC SEND and Inclusion)
9:40am	Keynote Speaker – David Bartram OBE – <i>Leadership in SEND</i>
10:45am	Break - refreshments, networking and browsing stalls
11am	Keynote Speaker – Anne Oakley & Daniel Thrower – <i>Trauma-Informed Teaching - Gain a greater understanding of the children in your classroom; thinking and strategies to better support their emotional wellbeing and learning</i>
12pm	Buffet Lunch, networking and browsing stalls
1pm	Keynote Speaker - Ben Kingston-Hughes – <i>seeing through behaviour to the child underneath</i>
2pm	Workshops (30-minute workshops plus change over time): (Allocated workshops were sent via email) 2pm to 2:30pm 2:35pm to 3:05pm 3:10pm to 3:40pm
3:45pm	Plenary and close – James Bird (Head of PCC SEND and Inclusion)
4:00pm	Finish



HOUSEKEEPING



OUTCOMES FOR THE
DAY



AGENDA

Leading an Effective SEND Strategy in School

David Bartram

David@prescienteducation.co.uk

@davidbartram_



A SENCO trying to fit their to-do list into the working week

Second only to the quality of teaching, leadership makes the biggest difference to pupil outcomes.

Leithwood et al 2008

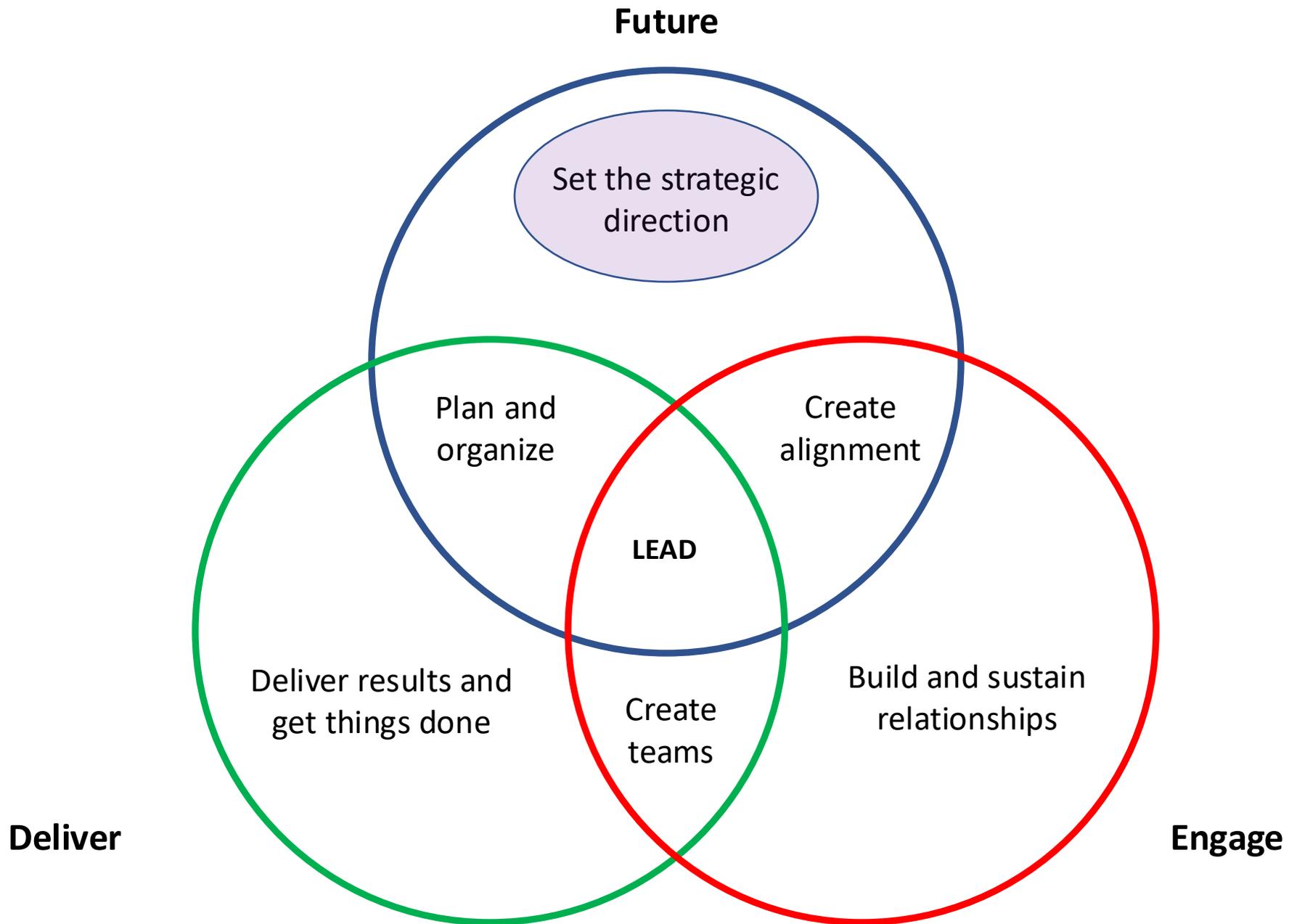


Figure 1: Six key areas for leadership action (Adapted from David Pendleton's *Primary Colours* model and Steve Radcliffe's *Future-Engage-Deliver*)

A model for Trust SEND Leadership

Setting strategic direction:

- Inclusive culture and vision
- SEND strategic planning
- SEND policy
- Governance

Creating alignment:

- Collective responsibility
- Core SEND offer
- Curriculum access and high quality teaching
- Inclusive environments

Building and sustaining relationships:

- Working with parents and carers
- Pupil voice and participation
- Engaging external professionals
- Developing wider partnerships

Team working:

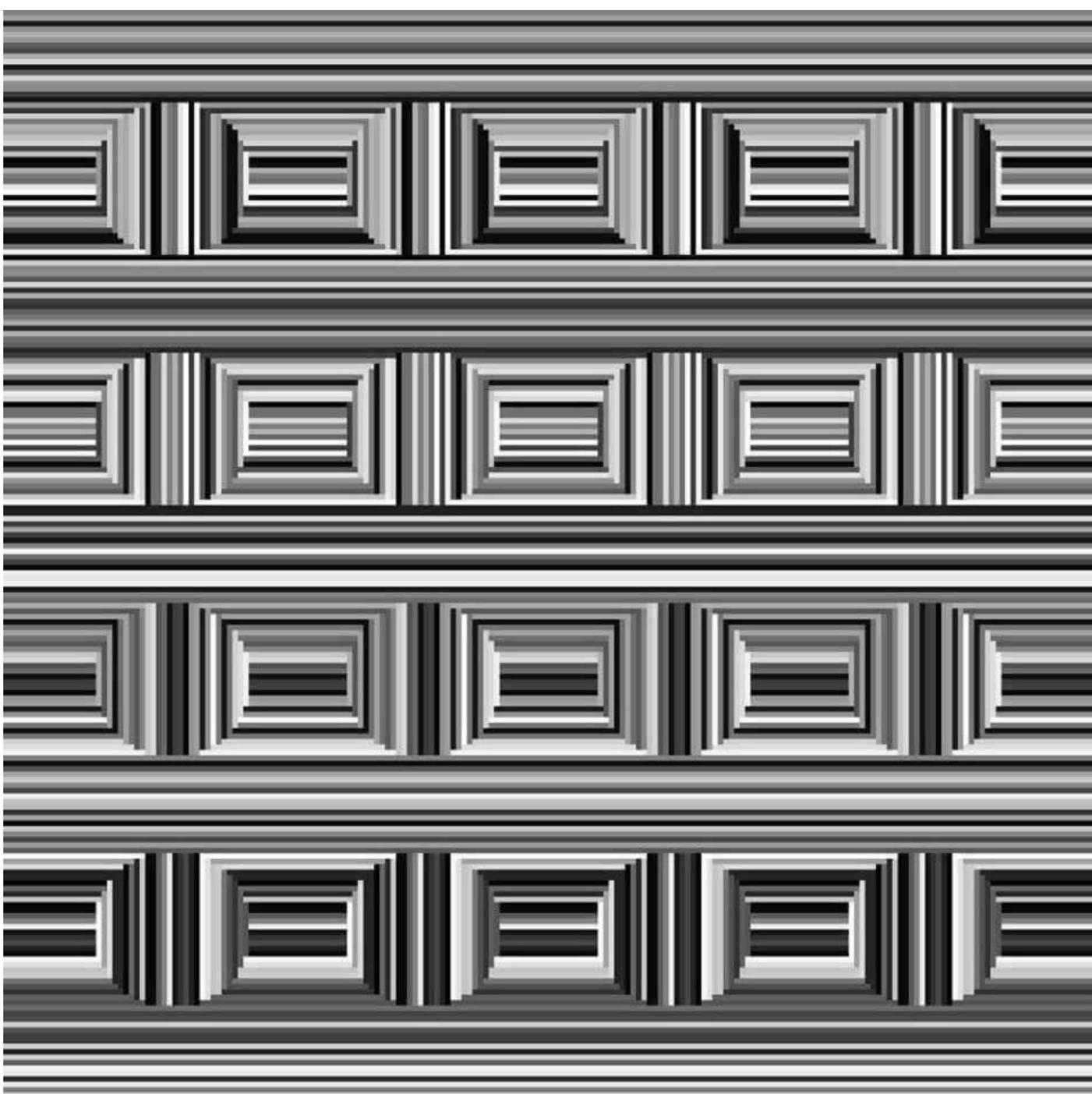
- Establishing SEND knowledge and expertise
- Collaborating with the specialist sector
- Creating SEND teams
- Effective use of teaching assistants

Planning and organising:

- Establishing systems and processes
- Accurate assessment and identification
- Robust provision mapping
- Impactful interventions

Delivering results:

- Securing positive outcomes
- Analysis of SEND data
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation
- Effective use of SEND funding



Why some Children are Backward



IT is often the case that the backward child is not lacking in mental power and equipment. Usually there are other influences at work which give rise to nervousness, undermine confidence and stultify initiative.

In many instances, the fundamental cause of this defective outlook is an insufficiency of certain essential food elements in everyday meals. This is largely overcome when 'Ovaltine' is made a regular daily item of the child's dietary.

Delicious 'Ovaltine' is a scientific combination of Nature's best foods. It provides, in a balanced form, the nutritive elements most required to build up fitness of body, brain and nerves.

Tests conducted among schoolchildren have demonstrated the unique properties of

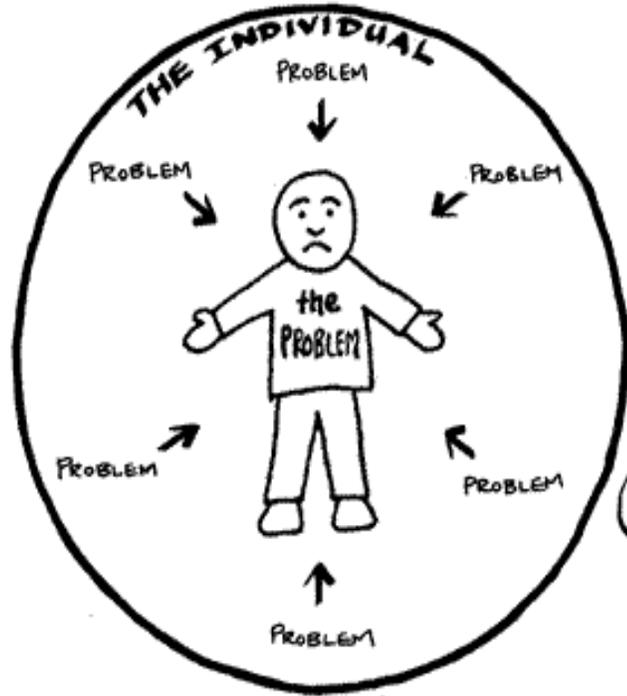
'Ovaltine.' Where 'Ovaltine' was given daily, nervousness diminished by an average of 30 per cent. in two weeks. Highly-strung, excitable children regained nervous poise and became more stable and confident.

The teacher, therefore, can do much to help nervous and backward children by taking a favourable opportunity to acquaint parents with the value of 'Ovaltine' as the regular beverage at mealtimes, at bedtime and during the morning break at school.

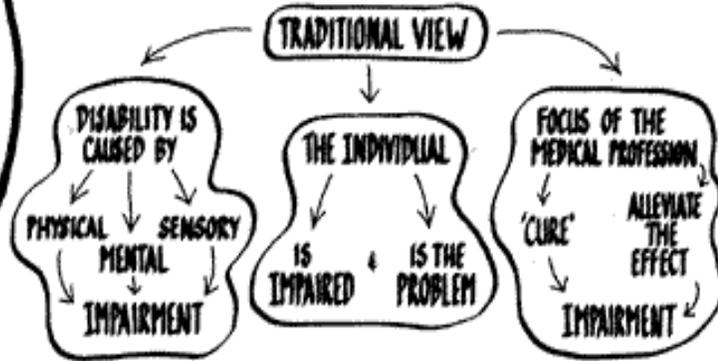
OVALTINE

Builds up Brain, Nerve and Body

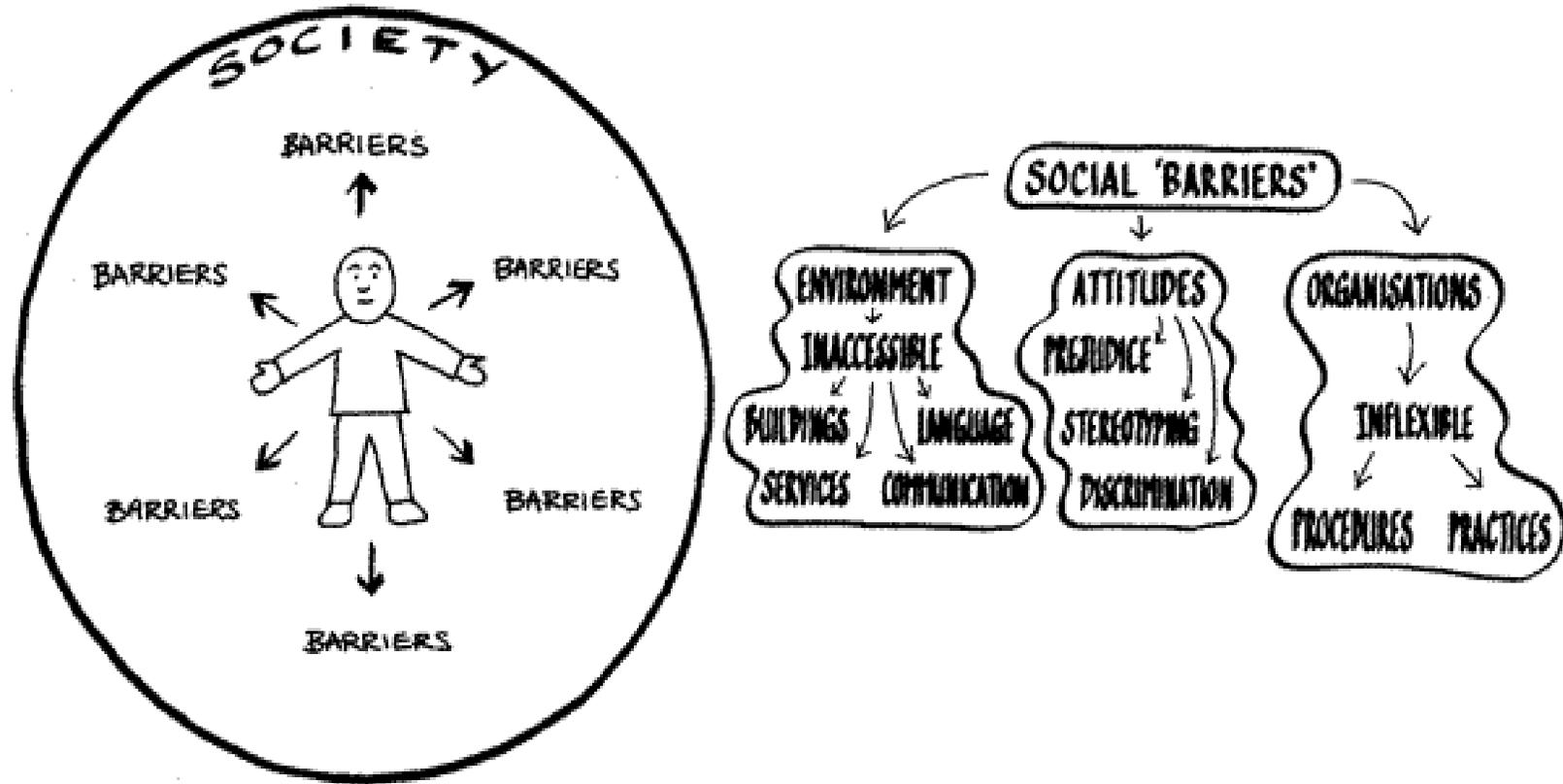
THE MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY



IMPAIRMENTS AND CHRONIC ILLNESS
OFTEN POSE REAL DIFFICULTIES BUT
- THEY ARE NOT THE MAIN PROBLEMS



THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY



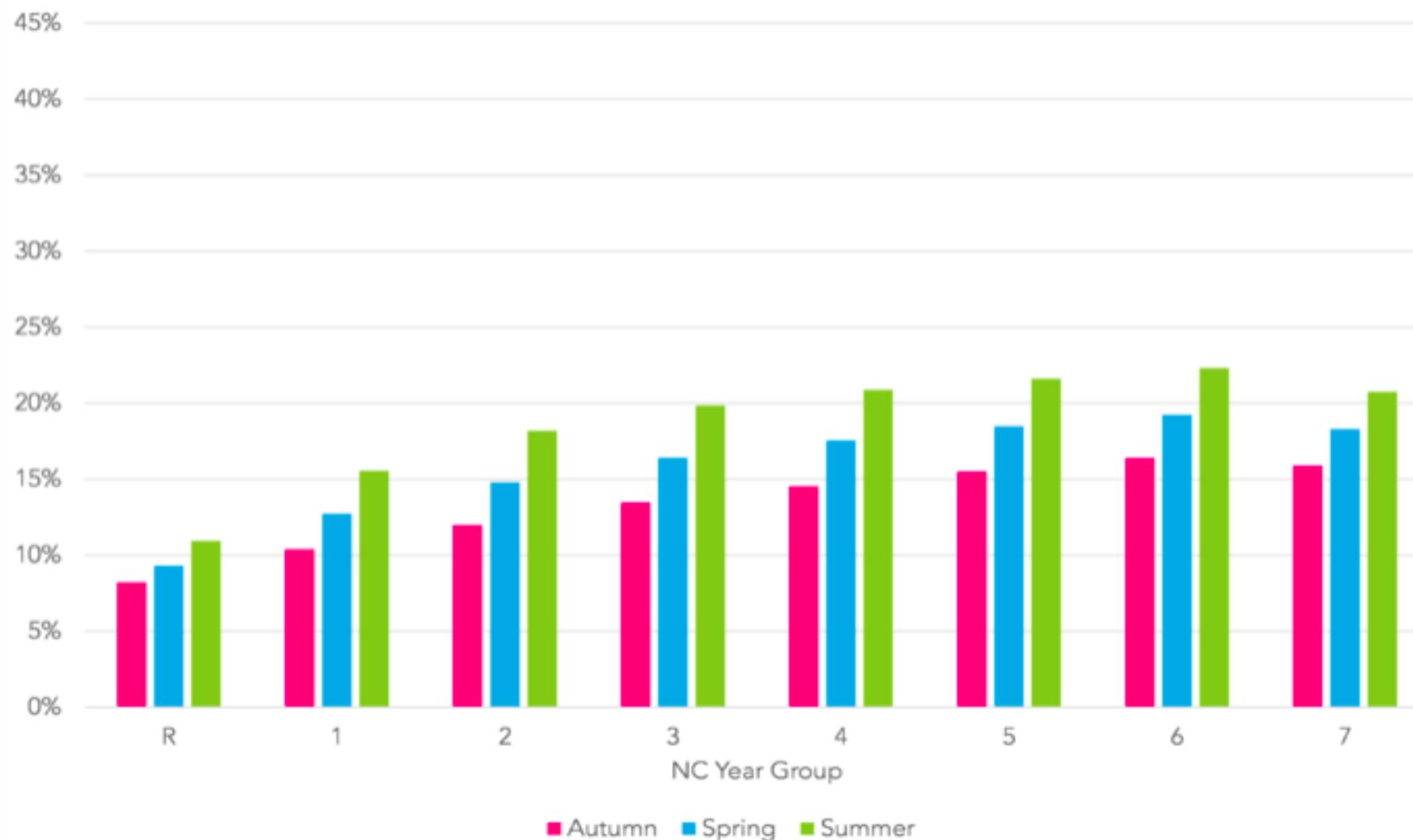
A good life: towards greater dignity for people with learning disability

Ben Newmark and Tom Rees



- **Dignity, not deficit:** difference and disability are normal aspects of humanity – the education of children with SEND should be characterised by dignity and high expectation, not deficit and medicalisation.
- **Greater complexity merits greater expertise:** all children deserve a high-quality education – where extra support is needed, it should be expert in nature.
- **Different, but not apart:** encountering difference builds an inclusive society – children with different learning needs should be able to grow up together.
- **Success in all its forms:** success takes many forms – we should value and celebrate a wide range of achievements, including different ways of participating in society.
- **Action at all levels:** change happens from the bottom up as well as top down – everyone has the agency and responsibility to act.

% of pupils recorded as having special educational needs in School Census by term of birth and year
Year 7 cohort in 2021/22



In Year 7, 21% of Summer born pupils are identified as having SEND. This compares to 16% of Autumn born pupils.

6%

% of pupils at SEN Support eligible for Free School Meals

38%

Adults with learning difficulties in full-time or part-time employment

40%

Boys in custody with an identified speech and language need

60%

% of pupils that will be identified with SEND during their time at school

18.4%

% of pupils with an EHCP that are boys

72%

Overall % of pupils with SEND in English schools

1 000 000

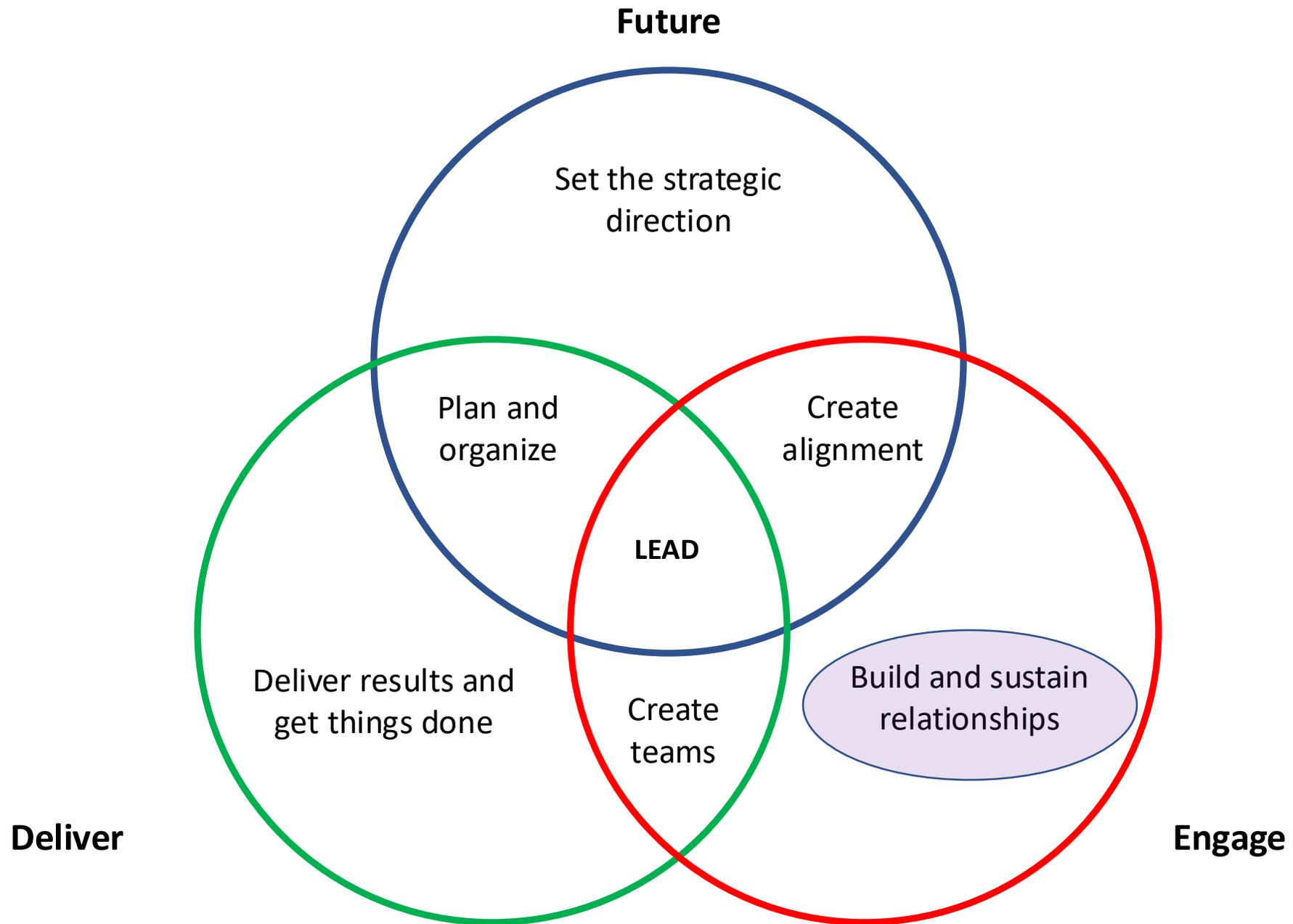


Figure 1: Six key areas for leadership action (Adapted from David Pendleton's *Primary Colours* model and Steve Radcliffe's *Future-Engage-Deliver*)

WWW.WELSHITALIANPIZZA.CO.UK

THE WELSH ITALIAN PIZZA

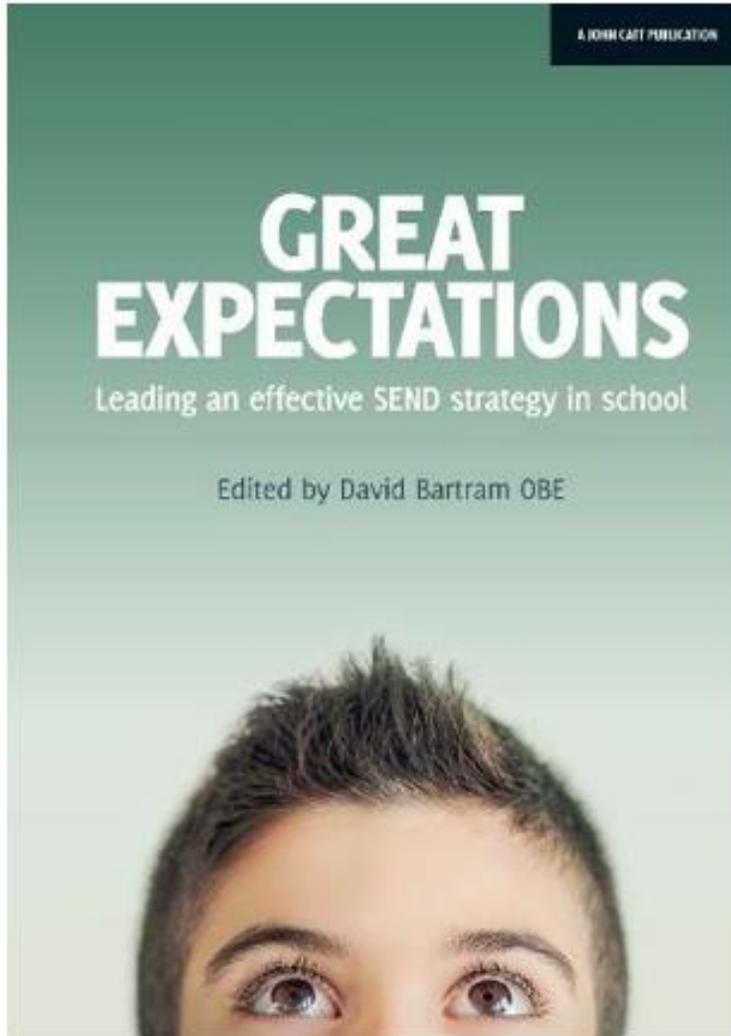


Wood Fired

Made for you

PIZZA





Lose Limiting Labels

Next time a pupil is labeled 'low ability' consider what this means. What group would you place yourself in? Labeling pupils as low ability is demeaning and inaccurate. Mo Farah is a low ability shot-putter.

Marc Rowland in

Great Expectations, Leading an effective SEND strategy in school

Linked to Mastery: Q3

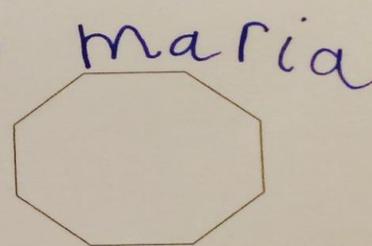
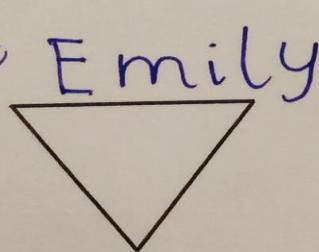
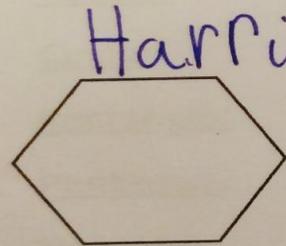
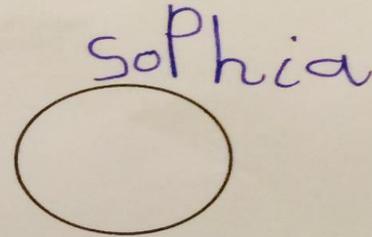
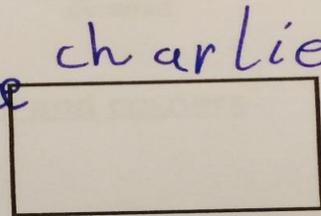
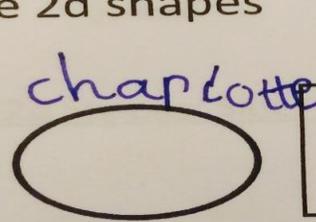
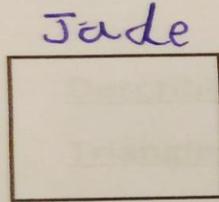
4. Lollies cost 5p each.

A pack of 3 lollies cost 13p

How much money do you save when you buy a pack of 3 lollies instead of 3 single lollies?

Geometry: Shape

Name these 2d shapes



Words of the week

Directions: Write as many words with the same pattern - **uck**.

truck

luck

huck

duck

truck

muck

f word

yuck

stuck

Before, I didn't eat, because I didn't want to be on this earth. But in this school, the teaching assistant sat down next to me and listened to why I didn't want to eat. We ate together at lunchtime and now I eat every day.

Sally, Year 7

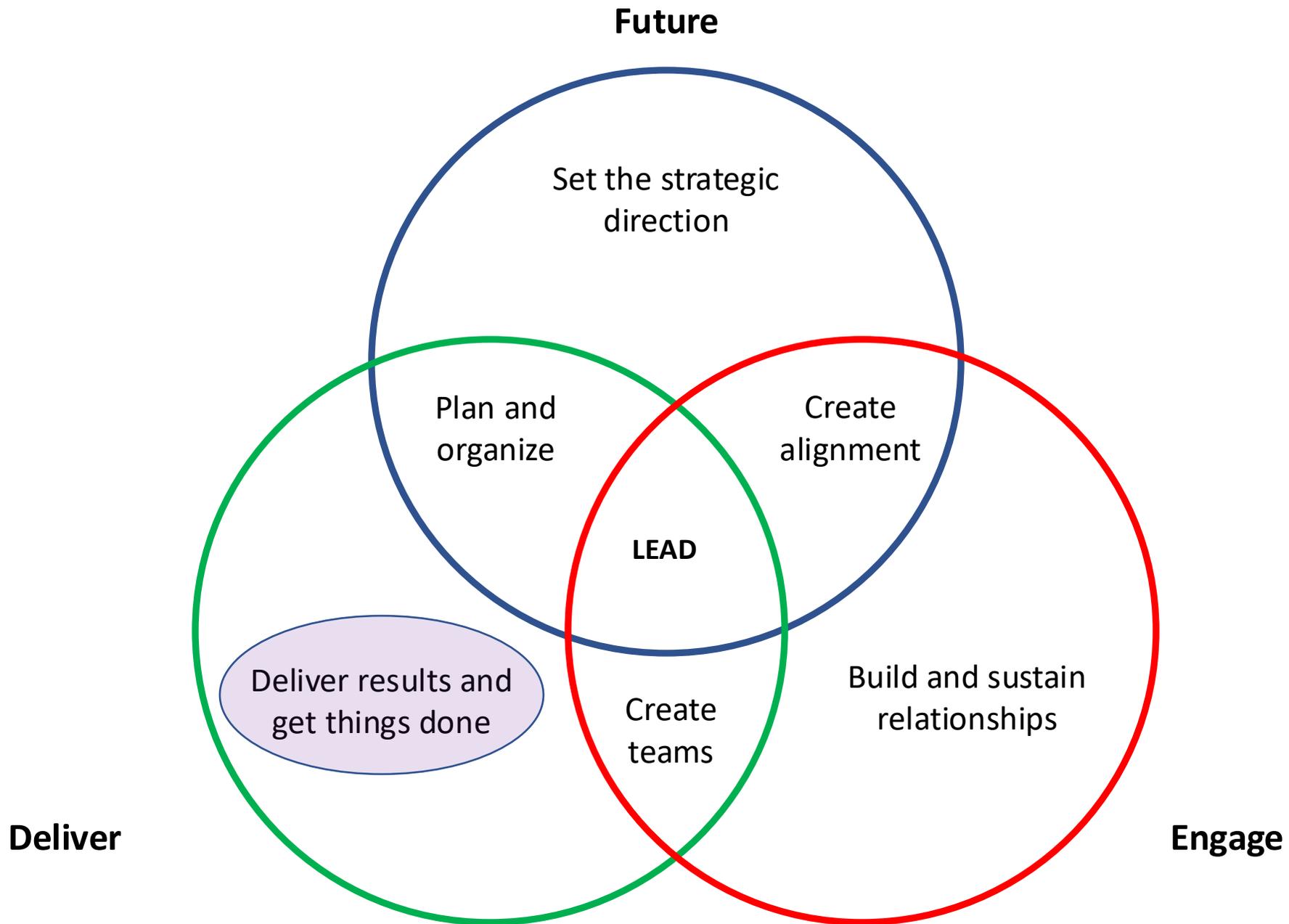


Figure 1: Six key areas for leadership action (Adapted from David Pendleton's *Primary Colours* model and Steve Radcliffe's *Future-Engage-Deliver*)



CURRICULUM PLANNING TOOL

This tool is meant to support Curriculum Leaders in ensuring that learners with SEND are considered at the planning stage, so that they are able to access the learning and achieve success in terms of what they know and how this increases over time.

What knowledge do learners need to know?



Strategies to support SEND Learners Included

- Key Word map / vocab prompt
- Checklist of learning steps
- Practical demonstration
- Visual aid
- Countdown timer on board

Where is vocabulary and language explicitly taught?



Strategies to support SEND Learners Included

- Praise and encouragement
- Repetition of key learning points
- Clear language - no sarcasm
- Say student name for attention
- Enable subtitles on videos

What does Progression Look Like?



Strategies to support SEND Learners Included

- Memory activities (mnemonics)
- Waiting / processing time
- Uncluttered worksheets
- Advance warning of questions
- Clear demonstration of WAGOLL

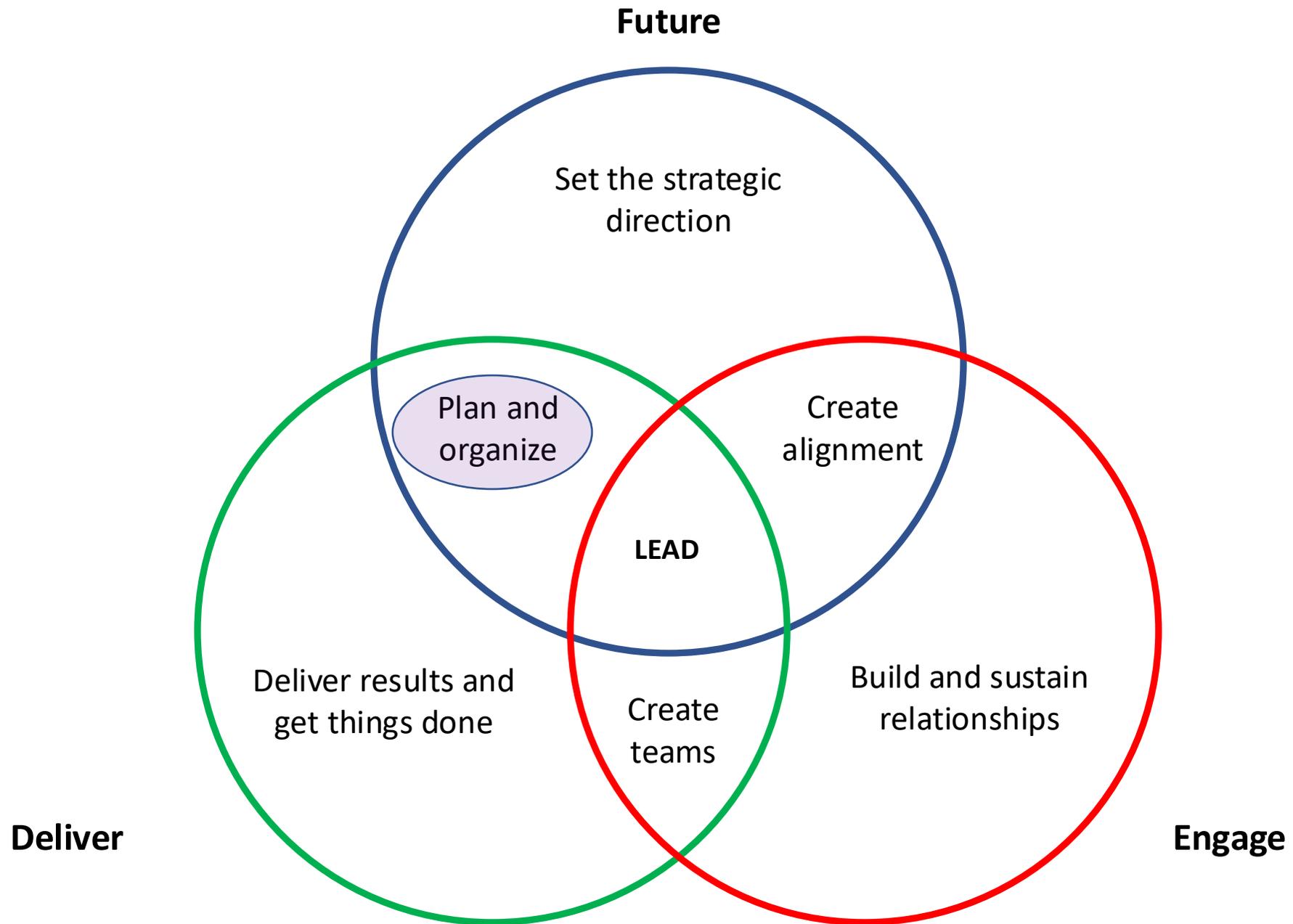


Figure 1: Six key areas for leadership action (Adapted from David Pendleton's *Primary Colours* model and Steve Radcliffe's *Future-Engage-Deliver*)



School placements are the largest determinant of SEND identification

Recent research from EPI found that which primary school a child attends makes more difference to their chances of being identified with SEND than anything about them as an individual, their experiences or what local authority they live in.

[Source: SEND-Identification_2021-EPI.pdf](#)

The logo for the Education Policy Institute (EPI) is displayed on a teal background. The text "EDUCATION POLICY INSTITUTE" is written in a white, serif, all-caps font, arranged in three lines. To the right of the text is a circular graphic element consisting of two overlapping circles, one white and one teal, creating a stylized 'E' or a similar shape.

EDUCATION
POLICY
INSTITUTE

SEND in England's schools 2024

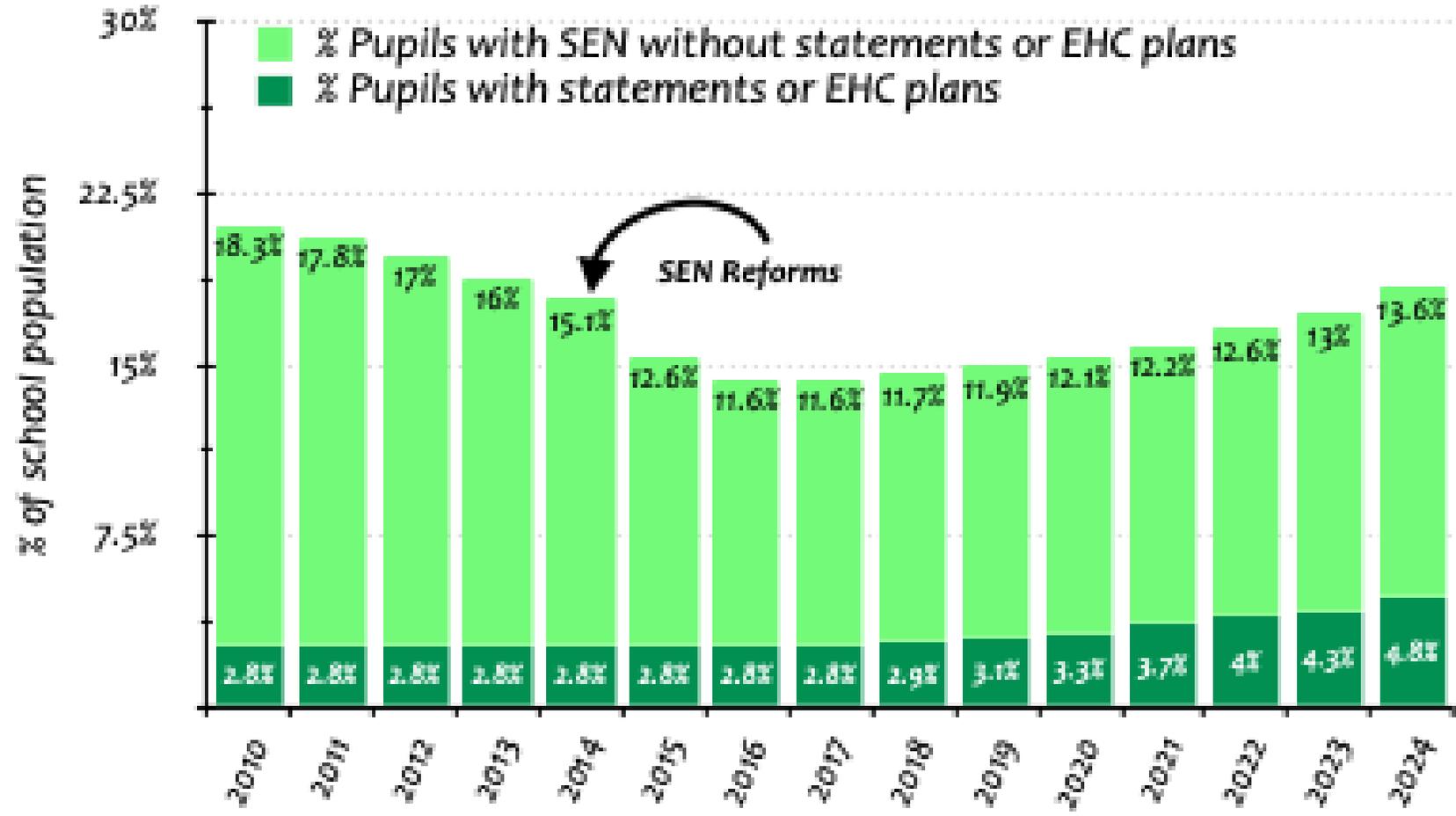
Figures from DfE 2024 school census

2024 **2023**

18.4%  **17.3%**
Of children in England had SEND

4.8%  **4.3%**
Had an EHCP at end of Jan '22

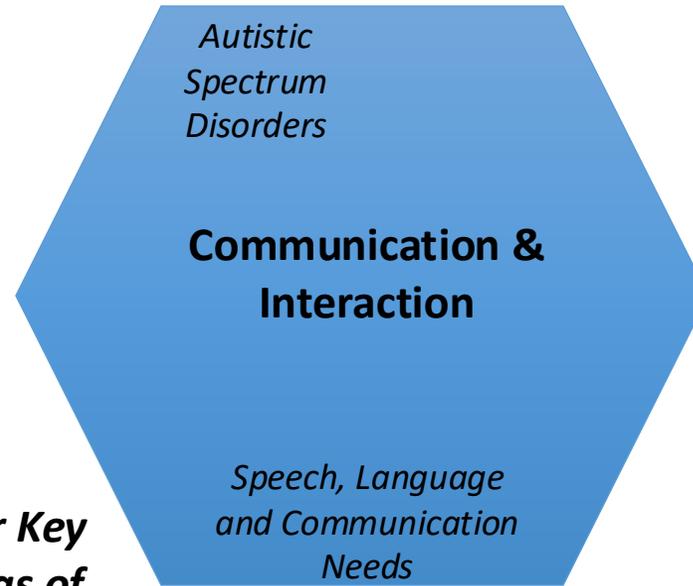
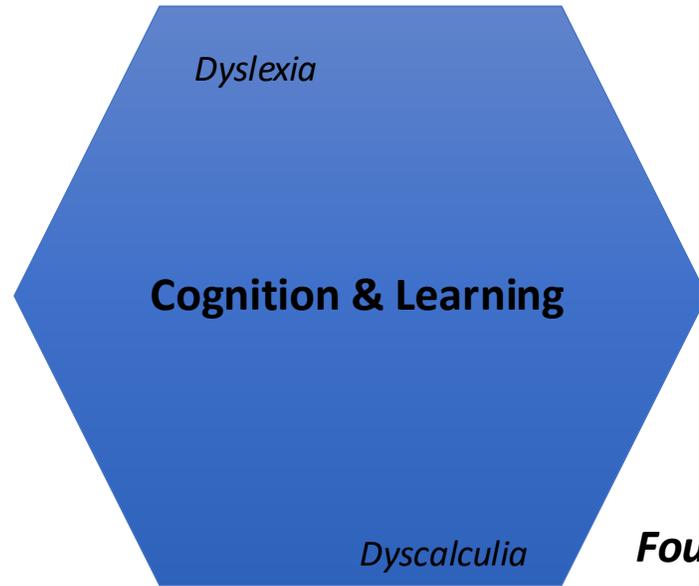
13.6%  **13%**
Of pupils were on SEN Support



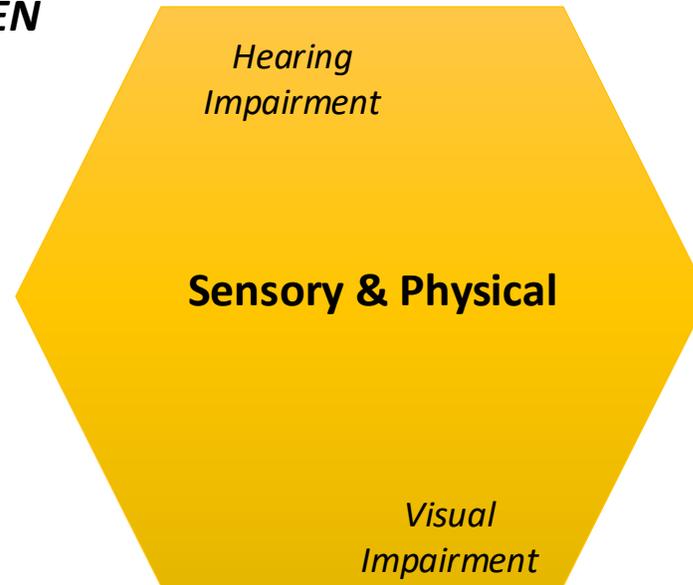
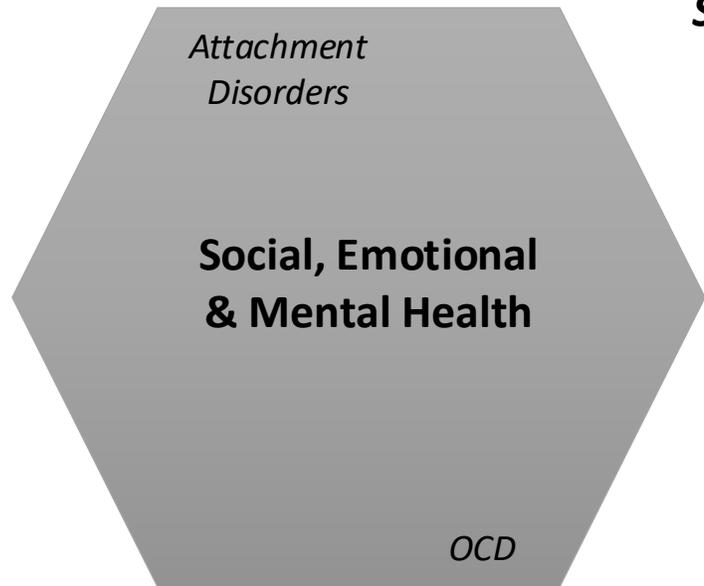
State-funded primary, secondary and special schools: percentage of pupils with SEND by gender and primary type of need in 2023

School A – Pupils with SEND

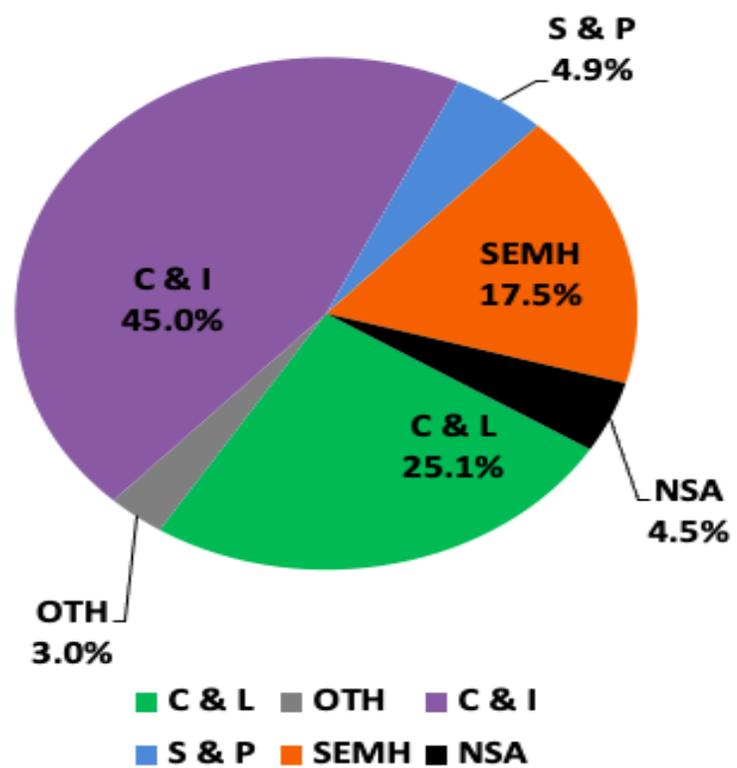
			SEN Support	EHCP
Specific Learning Difficulty			89	2
Moderate Learning Difficulty	-	-	25	15
Severe Learning Difficulty	-	-	0	0
Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty	-	-	0	0
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	-	-	31	5
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	-	-	10	4
Hearing Impairment	-	-	6	3
Visual Impairment	-	-	1	1
Multi-Sensory Impairment	-	-	0	0
Physical Disability	-	-	0	0
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	-	-	8	8
SEN support but no Specialist Assessment of type of need	-	-	0	0
Other Difficulty/Disability	-	-	70	2
School total	-	-	240	40
Percentage of school roll	-	-	14.6	2.4



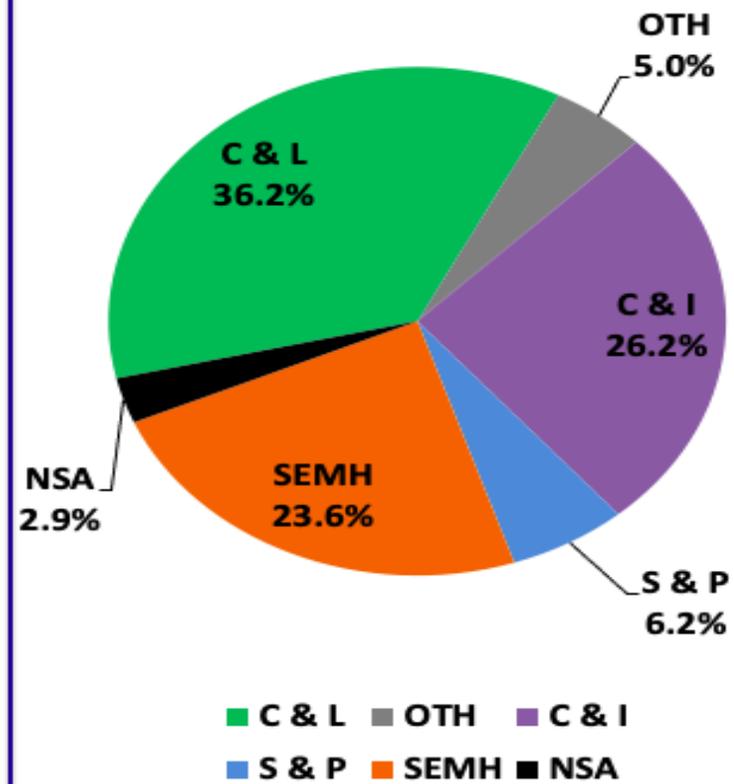
Four Key Areas of SEN

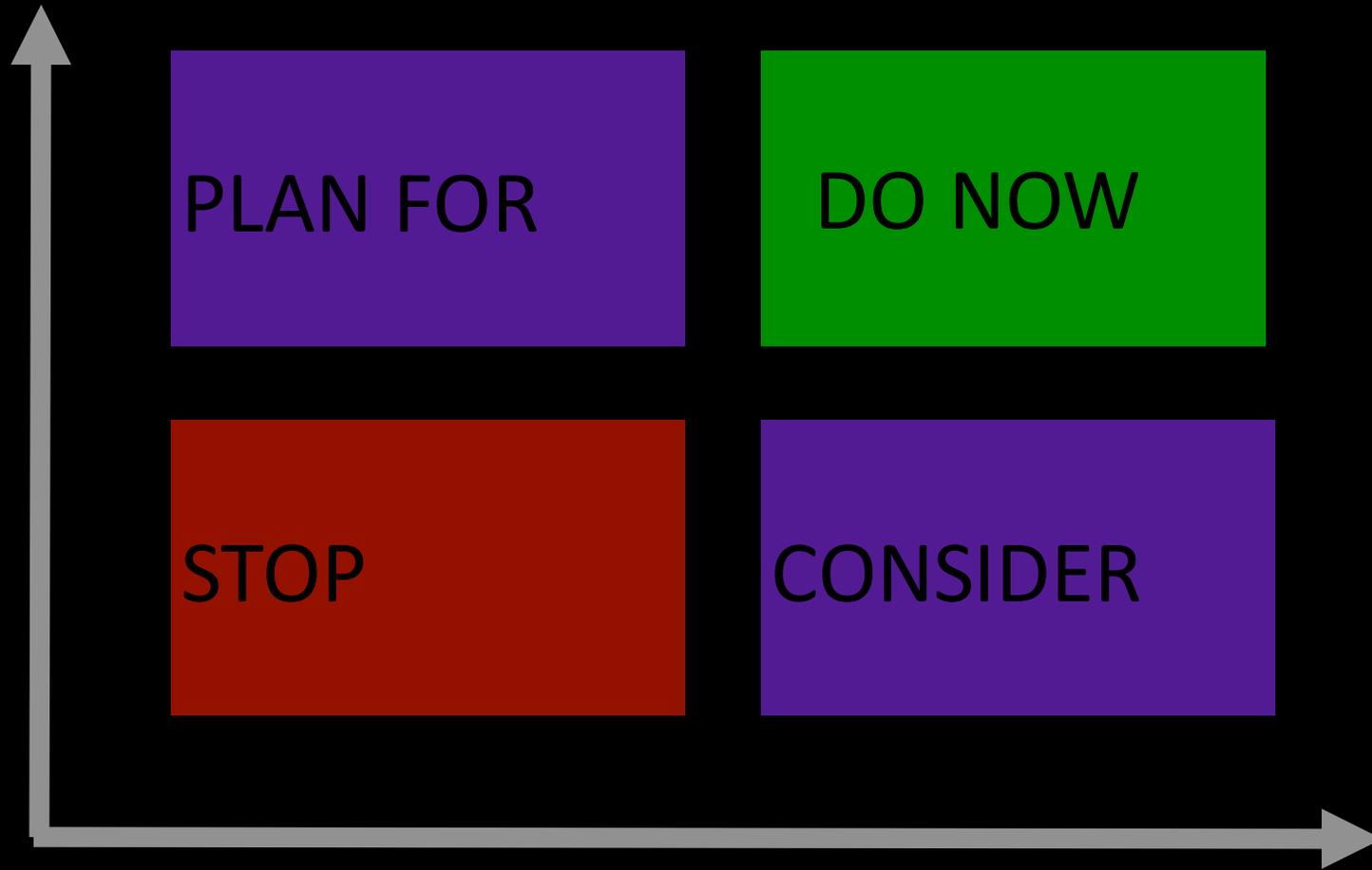


PRIMARY PHASE



SECONDARY PHASE





Where on the prioritisation model might each of these actions go?



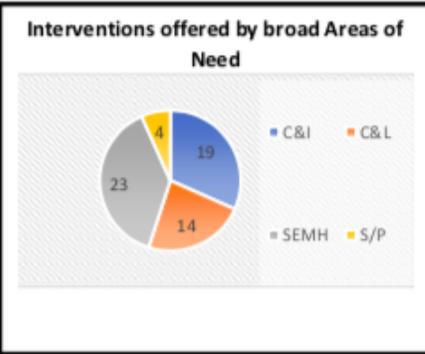
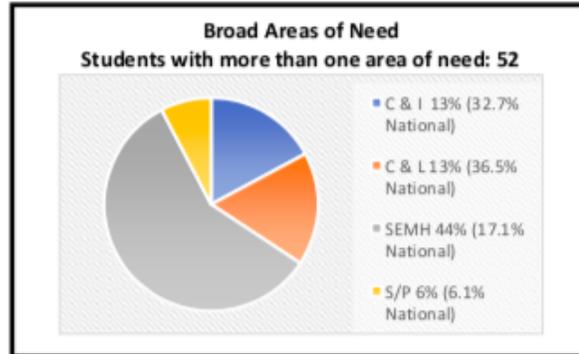
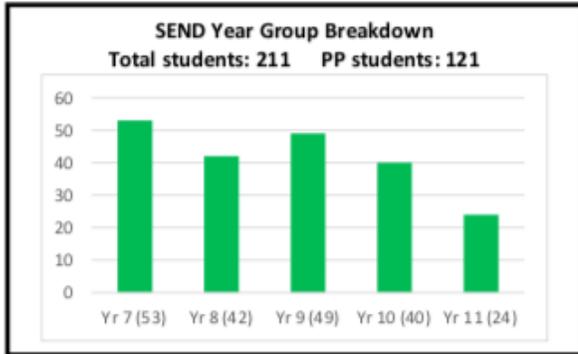
1. To complete a whole school review on the quality of TA deployment

2. To ensure the SEND dept is timetabled to complete at least one learning walk each week.

3. To establish an after-school SENCO surgery

4. To ensure all teaching assistants complete a written record of activity during for each lesson

5. Establish a half-termly SEND Department newsletter

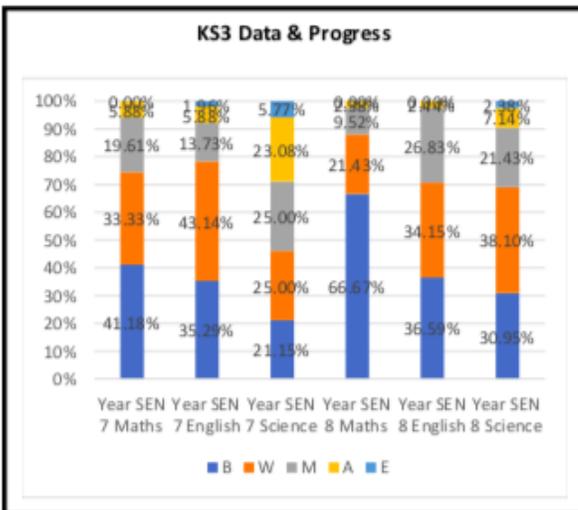
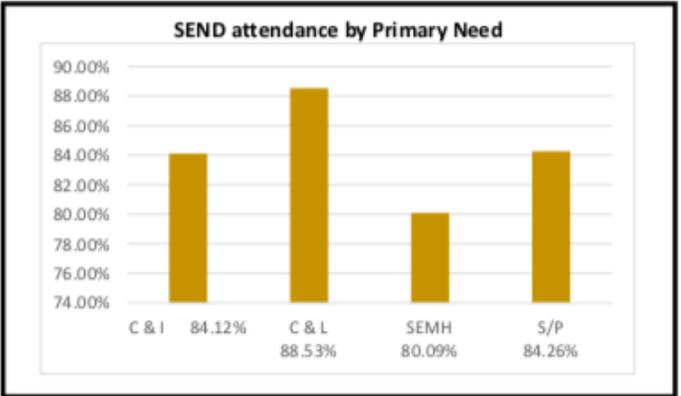
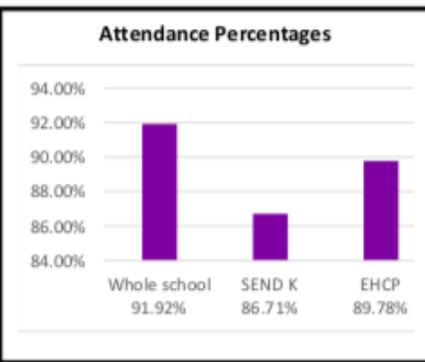
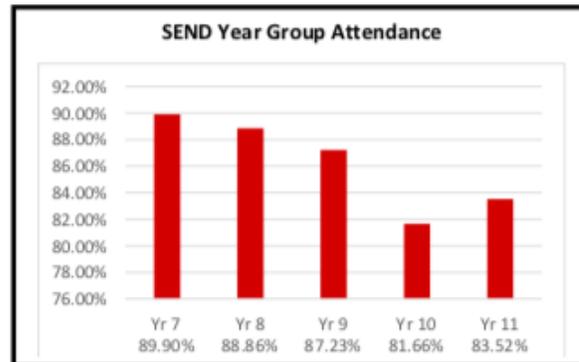
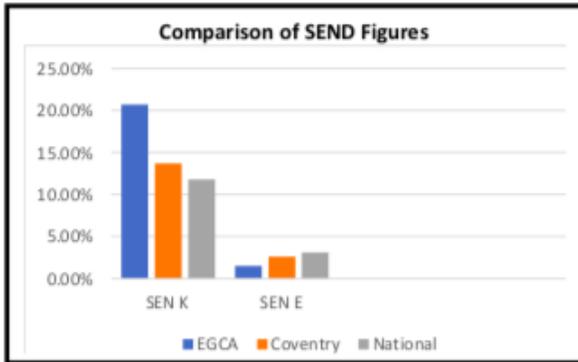


Staff Training

NHS Self-harm training – Inclusion/HOH
 Attachment training – All Staff
 Comic strip conversations- Inclusion, HOH, optional to all staff
 Social Stories- Inclusion, HOH, optional to all staff

Planned

THRIVE – all staff
 Future Planning Pyramid, compromise scale, scaling, blame blocks
 Trauma training - EP



KS4 Progress 8 Data

	Maths	English	Science	Overall SEN P8	Whole Cohort P8
Y9 SEN P8 (Incomplete)	0.44	-0.22	0.3	-0.73	-0.98
Y10 SEN P8 (Incomplete)	-0.61	-0.81	-0.3	-0.52	-0.17
Y11 SEN P8	-0.12	-0.19	0.1	-0.27	0.14



Some Key Strengths

- Links with LA
- Thrive
- School Autism Base
- Alternative Centre for Education
- Mental Health Support

SEND Governor View: Visit to be arranged for Spring Term

Parent View: The school really support my child, they couldn't do anything more (O.H)

External Agency View: EGCA are very reflective they think about what they already do but always think about what more they could do to support

Pupil view: Support is really good and it helps you in lots of different ways and circumstances (M.P)

Improvement Priorities

- Attendance
- Academic progress
- Supporting teachers to develop in class SEND practice
- Inclusion boxes in all classroom with training surrounding strategies
- Development of support for Cognition and Learning
- Alternative Qualification

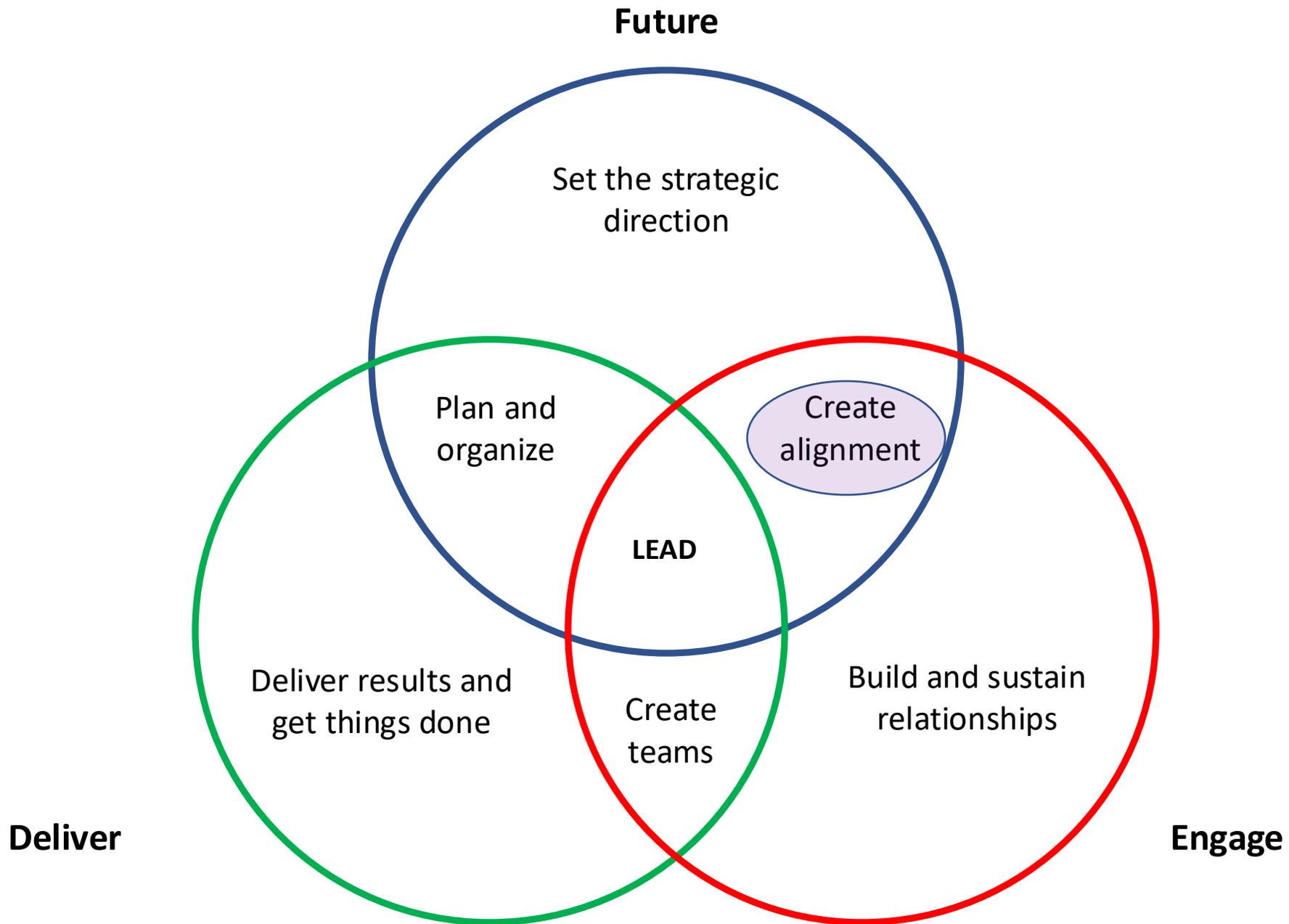


Figure 1: Six key areas for leadership action (Adapted from David Pendleton's *Primary Colours* model and Steve Radcliffe's *Future-Engage-Deliver*)



I was disgusted
to find this was
just a few rocks

High quality teaching benefits pupils with SEND

The 'Five-a-day' principle



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

1 Explicit instruction

Teacher-led approaches with a focus on clear explanations, modelling and frequent checks for understanding. This is then followed by guided practice, before independent practice.



2 Cognitive and metacognitive strategies

Managing cognitive load is crucial if new content is to be transferred into students' long-term memory. Provide opportunities for students to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning.



3 Scaffolding

When students are working on a written task, provide a supportive tool or resource such as a writing frame or a partially completed example. Aim to provide less support of this nature throughout the course of the lesson, week or term.



4 Flexible grouping

Allocate groups temporarily, based on current level of mastery. This could, for example, be a group that comes together to get some additional spelling instruction based on current need, before re-joining the main class.



5 Using technology

Technology can be used by a teacher to model worked examples; it can be used by a student to help them to learn, to practice and to record their learning. For instance, you might use a class visualiser to share students' work or to jointly rework an incorrect model.



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



MAKING BEST USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Teacher-TA agreement template

This Teacher-TA agreement template can help staff specify their coordinated but differentiated roles during lessons. Examples of how TAs might contribute at various stages of a lesson are provided, in such a way that they supplement, not replace, the teacher.

When?	What? (with examples)
During the lesson introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check learning objectives are written in books • Refocus pupils • Ensure relevant learning materials and equipment are out/available
During whole-class work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the 'Scaffolding framework' to ensure pupils are offered the 'least amount of help first' • Encourage responses from [names of target pupils] • Emphasise key vocabulary; record key words • Model or role-play activities with teacher • Ensure pupils refer to success criteria • Observe and note learning difficulties and achievements and feed back to the teacher
In group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If necessary, check pupils understand what they need to do, what they will learn and what outcome is expected by the end of the session • Provide prompts on group objectives and roles required. Give time checks • Note issues, mistakes, misconceptions and difficulties for follow-up by teacher • Encourage interaction with others
In plenary sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage pupils to reflect on their learning. Prompt recall and use of relevant strategies if necessary • Monitor and record responses of [names of target pupils] (note difficulties and achievements)
At the end of the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify next steps in pupils' learning • Ensure pupils understand homework and are clear about any follow-up required. Ensure homework is written in planners
After the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback on any misconceptions, difficulties, etc; issues with behaviour for learning

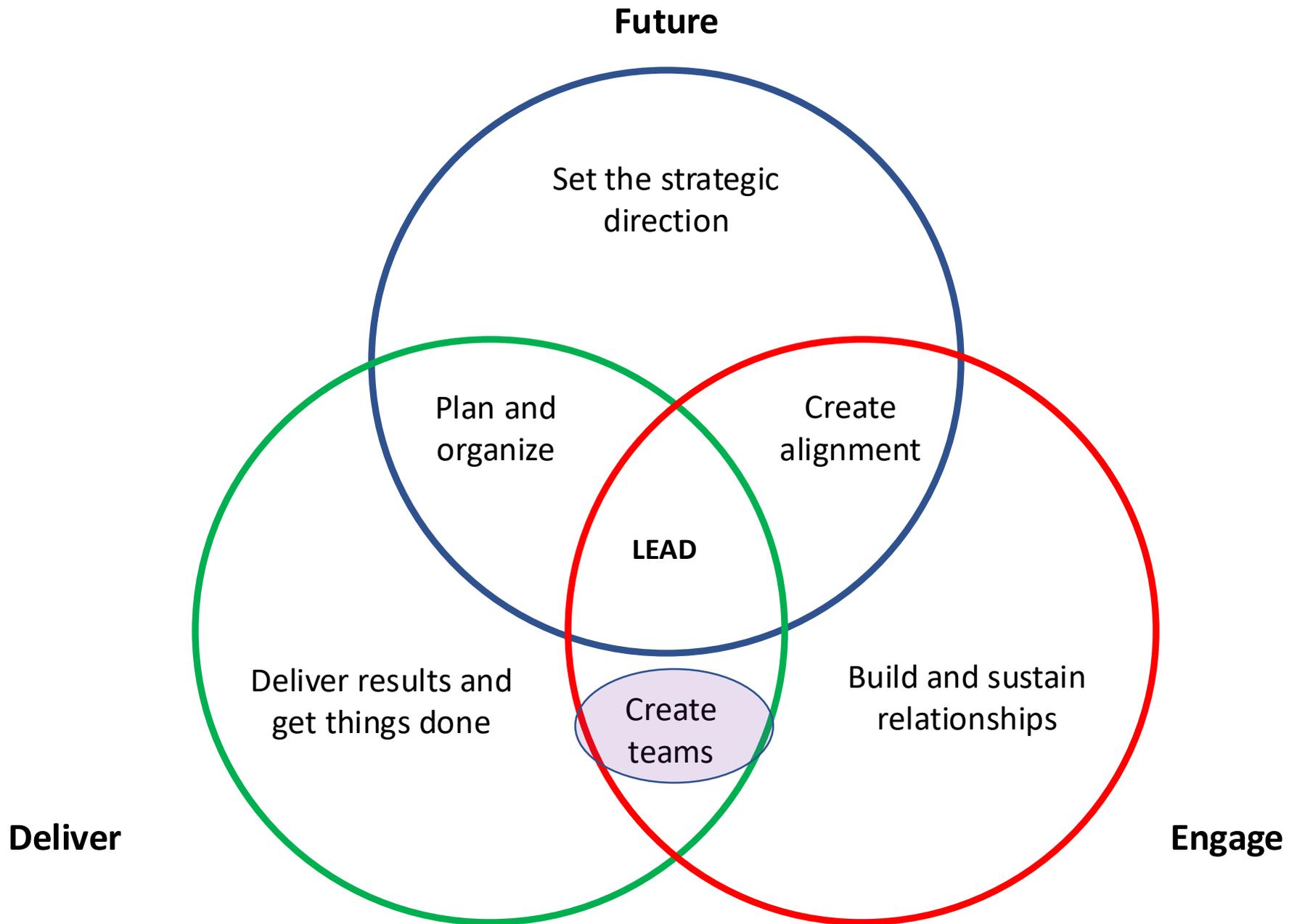


Figure 1: Six key areas for leadership action (Adapted from David Pendleton's *Primary Colours* model and Steve Radcliffe's *Future-Engage-Deliver*)



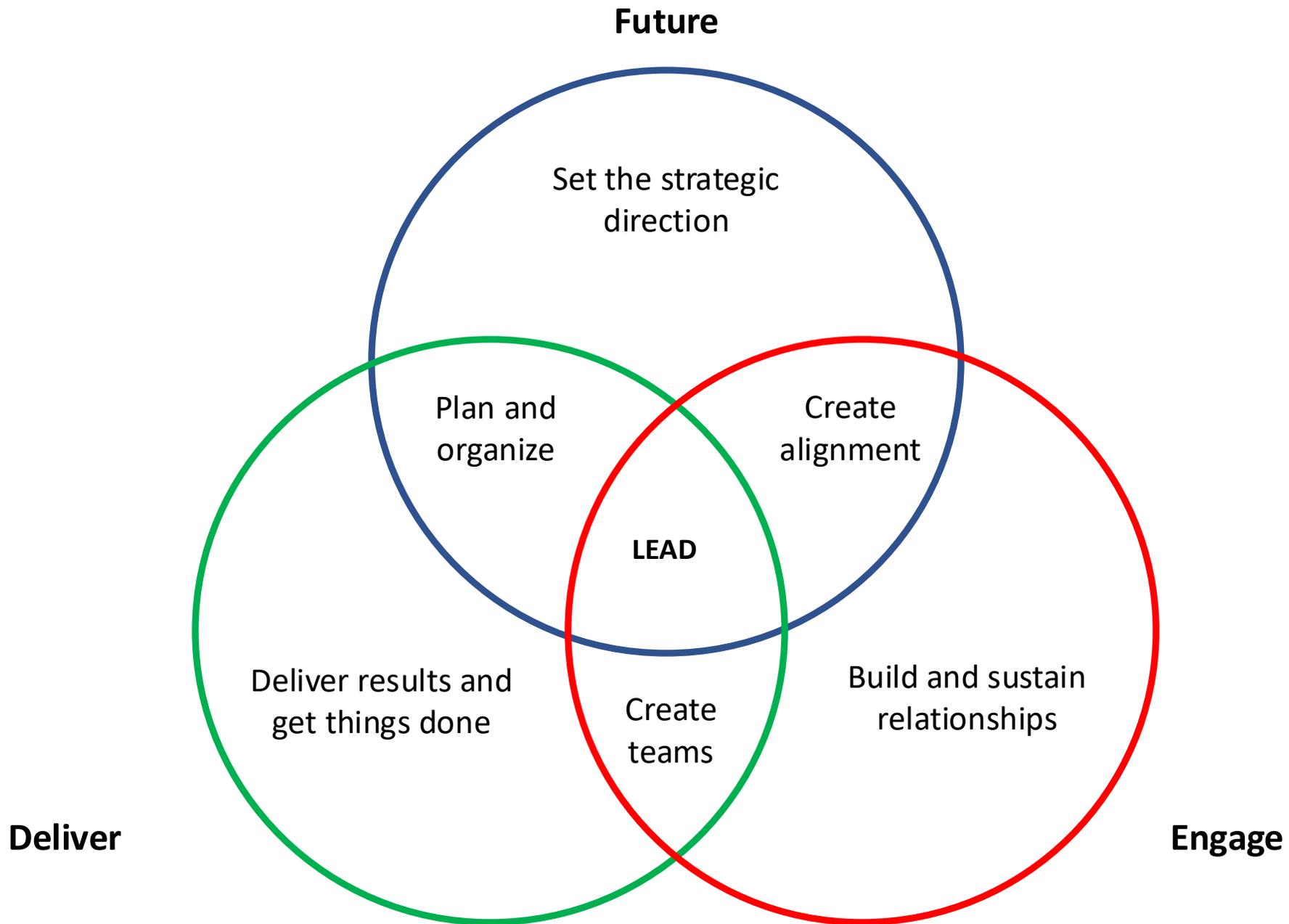


Figure 1: Six key areas for leadership action (Adapted from David Pendleton's *Primary Colours* model and Steve Radcliffe's *Future-Engage-Deliver*)



Leading an Effective SEND Strategy in School

David Bartram

David@prescienteducation.co.uk

@davidbartram_

Break:
Refreshments,
networking and
browsing stalls.
(10:45-11am)



Daniel Thrower and Anne Oakley

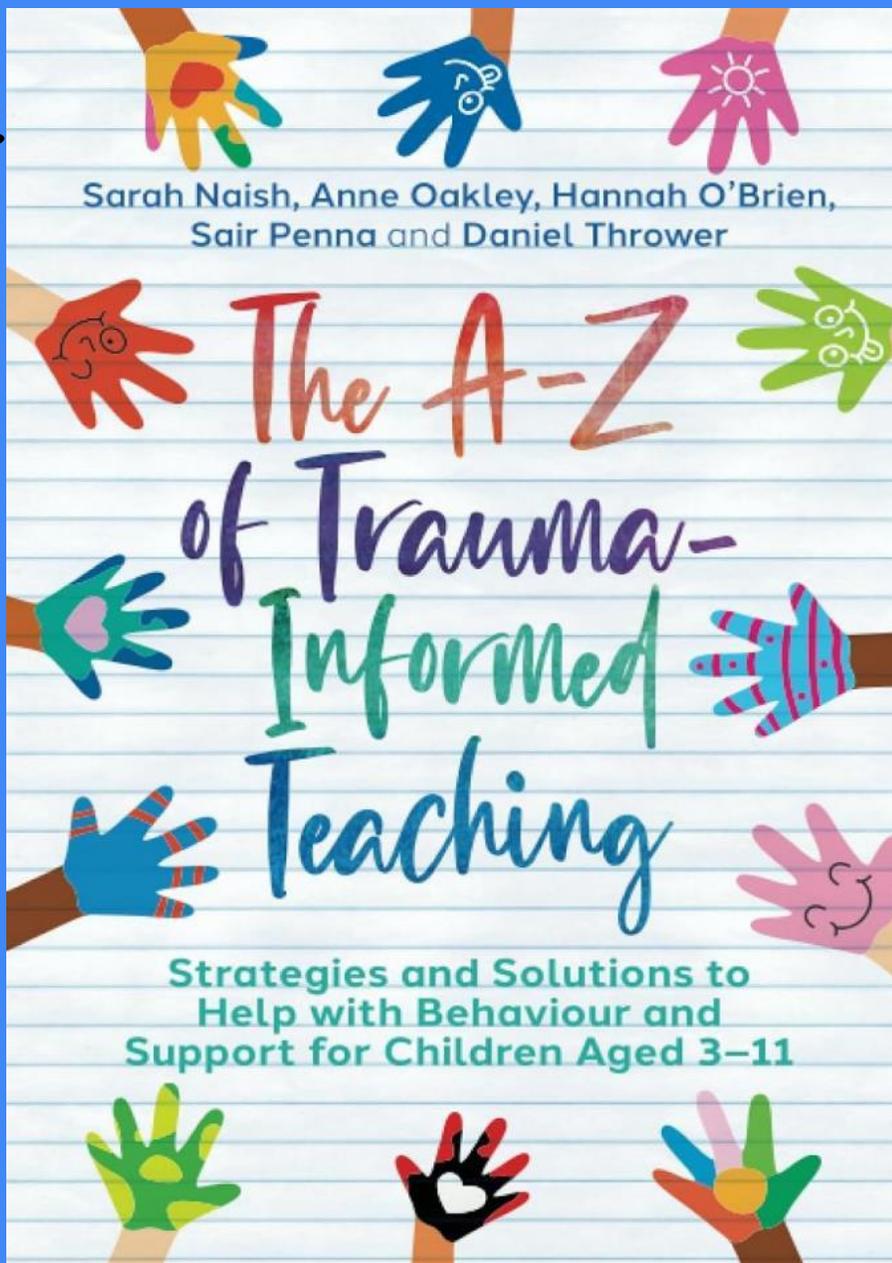


T r a u m a



Informed Teaching

Thinking and strategies to better understand
children in your classroom



02



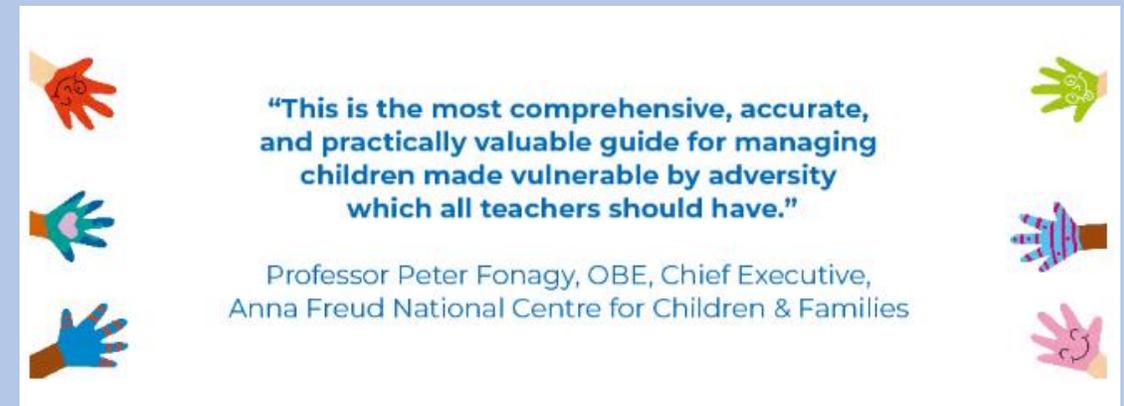
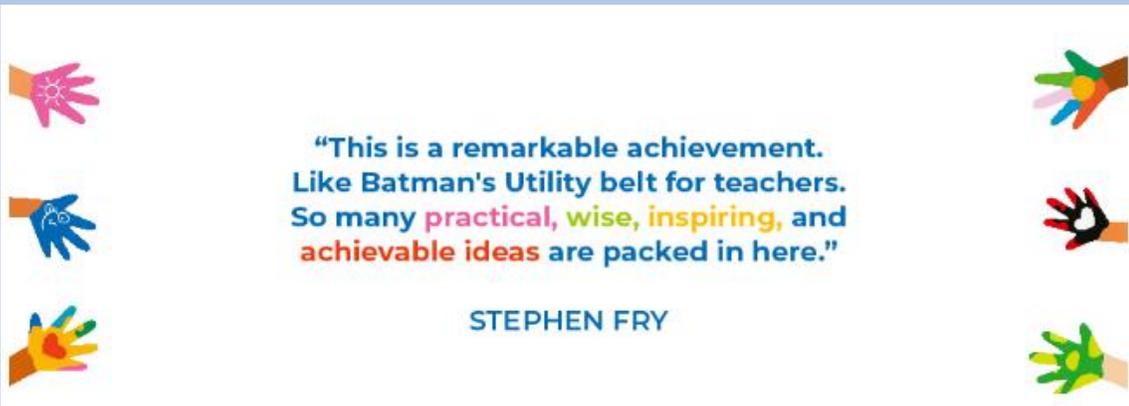
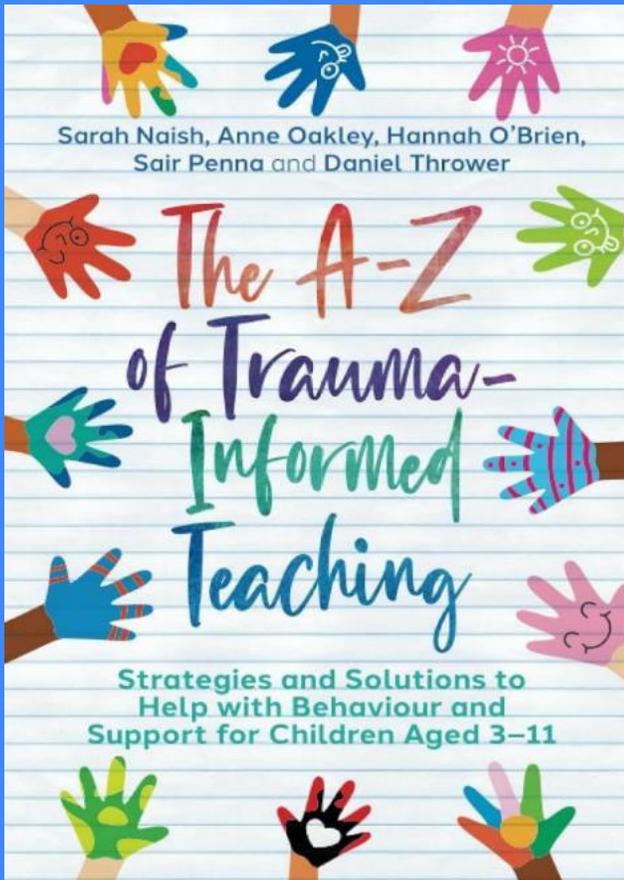
Part 1 -

What trauma-informed teaching involves



Part 2 -

A-Z of issues, behaviours and strategies



This is the book we wished we could have quickly reached for in our lunch hour!



The PLACE

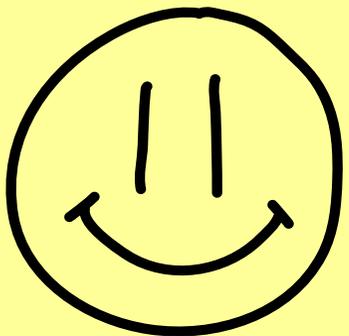
at Arden

Arden Grove Infant and Nursery School

Playful learning with acceptance curiosity & empathy

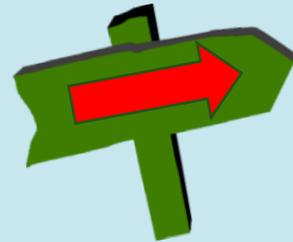
Where all children can flourish...

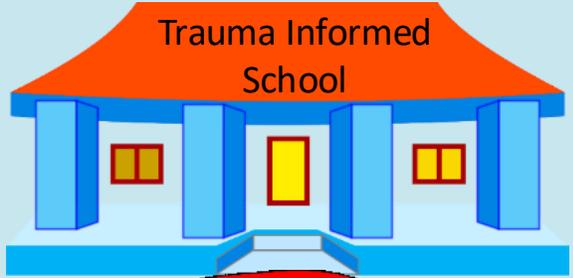
Our Psychological Safety Pledge



- There will be no Ice Breaker activities
- No 'cold calling'
- We will try hard not to shout!
- All contributions valued, and respected
- Mistakes are warmly welcomed
- Please move about if you need to!

In theory it
seems easy!





Wrong Staff

Drop in Academic Results

New Staff

Behaviour Hubs

Funding Limitations

Staff Resistance or Fatigue

Ofsted Inspection



In reality...

Presently out of our control

Funding

Academic
Over Focus

Government
Agenda

Neurotypical
Age Related
Expectations

Environment

WENSUM TRUST

Images Pixabay

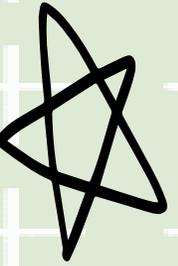
Know that **these things...**



further exacerbate
neurological neglect
for some children.

In our control

Support everyone with
Acceptance
Compassion
Kindness



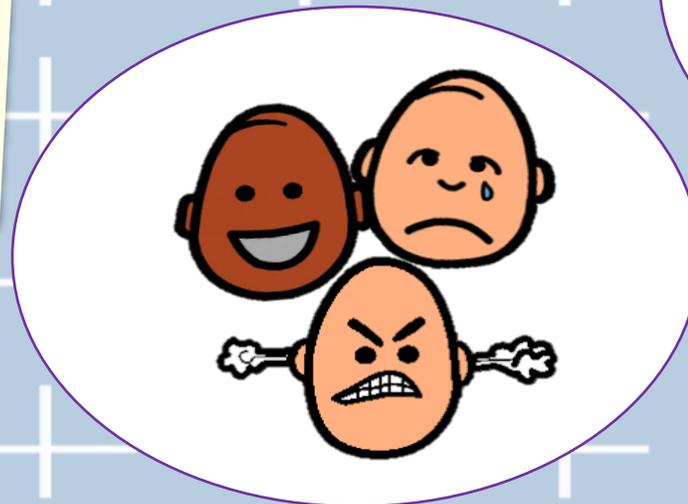
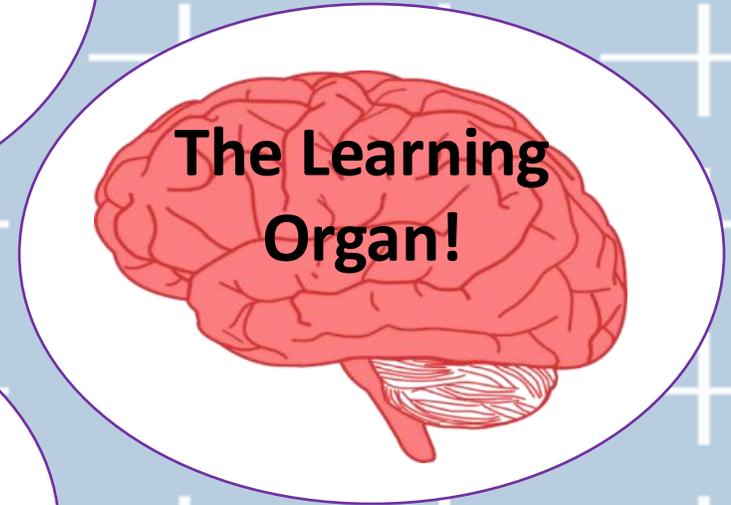
**Unconditional
Positive
Regard**

Positive relationships:
Communicate safety
Trust
Calm
Mutual joy
Facilitate learning

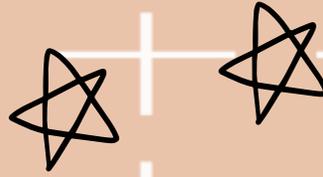


In our control

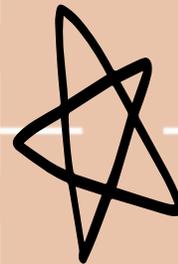
Gain Knowledge
Trauma Attachment
Child Development
Brains
Emotions!



In our control



**Know that we are
all unique-
all different!**



A one-size-fits-all
approach no longer
works...if it ever did!



Early experiences can impact:

Brains

Bodies

Emotional Regulation

Behavioural Responses

Learning

View of self

View of others

View of relationships

**We are all
unique!**

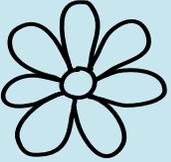
**Internal
Working
Model**

We all have different ...

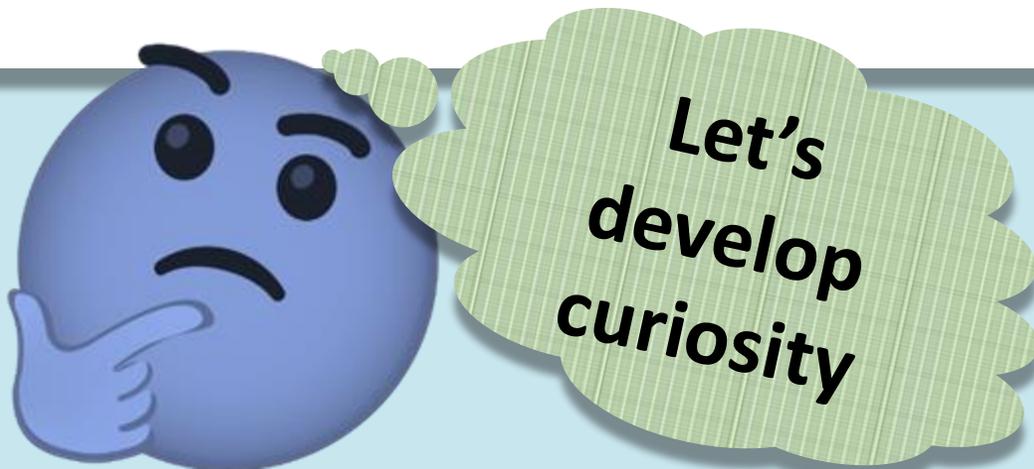
- ✓ Early life experiences
- ✓ Strengths, interests, difficulties
- ✓ Learning styles
- ✓ Relationship styles
- ✓ Psychological safety needs
- ✓ Internal Working Models



13



- Communication?
- Unmet needs?
- Learning delays, gaps, differences?
- Fear response?



Trauma Informed Teaching is for every child...

We are **all** shaped by our earliest experiences and we **all** have different needs

**A mind-set
change is
needed...**

But here's the problem!



If we do not understand our own emotions, beliefs and responses...

We cannot be curious about others, or understand their perspectives.



We all need an ethos conducive to comfort...

Would I like this?...

Is there another way?...

Is this ok?...



Would I like this?...

How are we all doing?

Capability



Mrs Oakley

Underperforming



Mr Thrower

Good Job!



Mr Richards

Mr Jones

Ms Ortiz

Mr Duke

Ms Morales

Going for Gold!



Ms Rahman

Mr Domingo

My performance management targets displayed in the staff room?

Would I like this?...

If a colleague always shouted in staff meetings?



If I always had to sit next to someone I really didn't like?

If I had to eat in a noisy canteen from tables littered with food remnants?

If I had to call out my exam results in front of the whole team?



Toilets that rarely flush?

Going without a drink all day
because water is the only
option?

The use of lollipop sticks to
randomly ask a question?

Is this ok?...



Is this ok?...

**Often
we are too
'school shaped'**





Images Pixabay

Does it matter that children feel all these things too?

WENSUMTRUST **04**

Our Psychological Safety Pledge

- There will be no Ice Breaker activities
- No 'cold calling'
- We will try hard not to shout or growl!
- All contributions valued, and respected
- Mistakes are warmly welcomed
- Please move about if you need to!
- Please leave the room if you need to



What else is important?





Trauma-informed teaching can never be black and white. At times, it is...



Lots of underlying factors

Blocked trust

Sensory issues

Attention difficulties

Working memory

Big emotions

Hypervigilance

No cause and effect

Poor self-esteem

Shame

Control issues

Literalness

Inflexible thinking

Social difficulties

Impulsive

Connection needing

High cortisol levels

View them as a younger child



View them as a younger child

Phonics

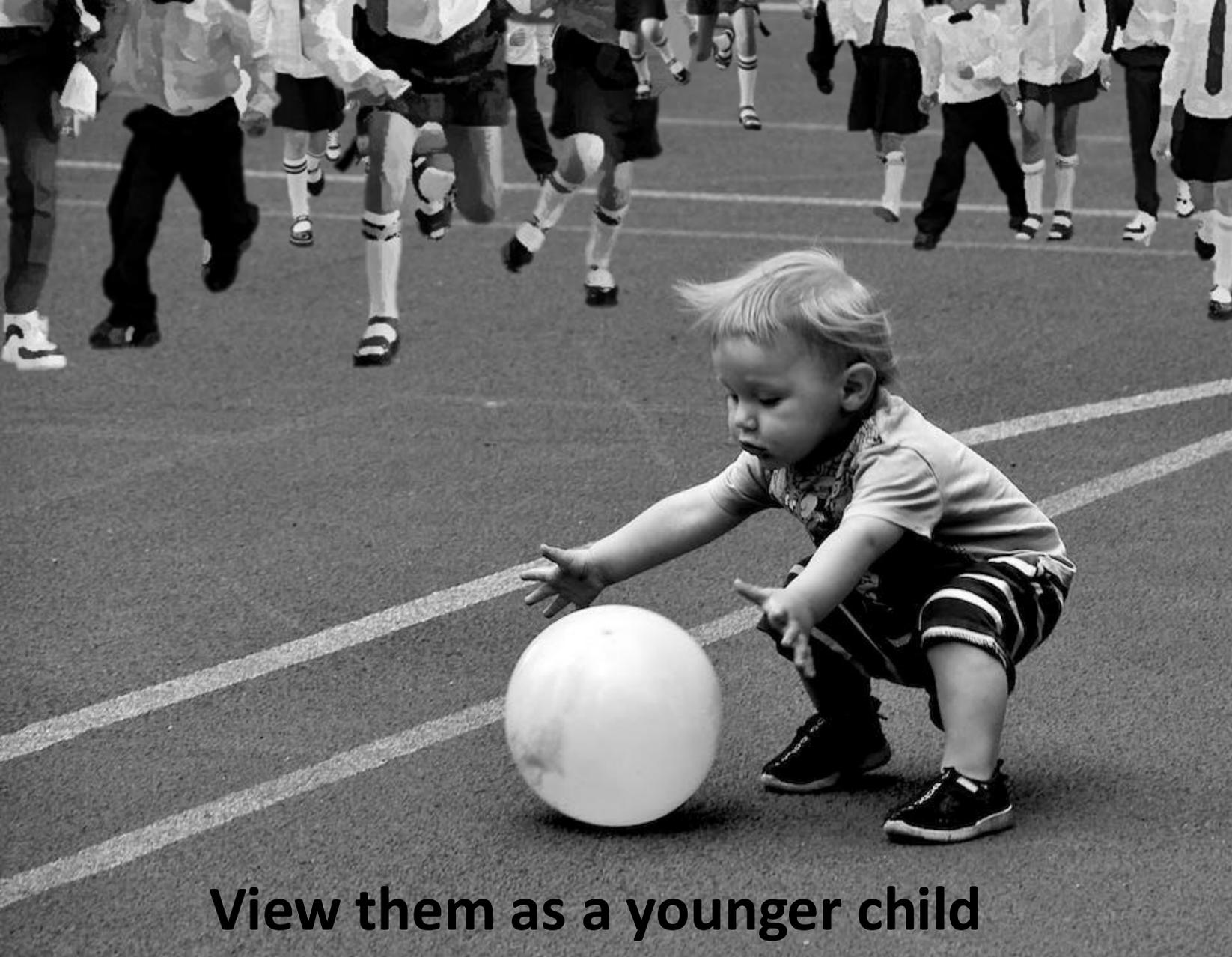
Handwriting

Literacy

Maths

Assembly



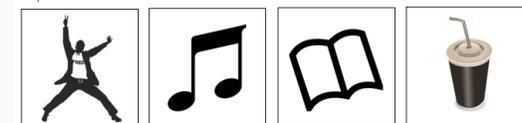
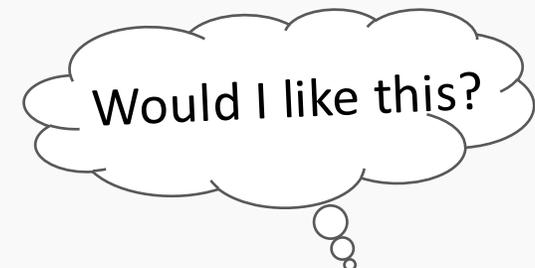
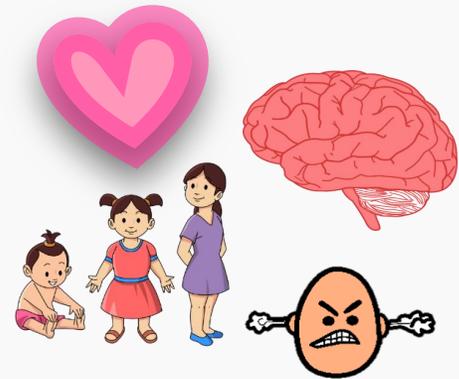


View them as a younger child

*No wonder I
get so
overwhelmed!*

Essential foundations

- ✓ Relationships and mutual trust
- ✓ Child development, brains and emotions
- ✓ Psychological and physical safety
- ✓ Ethos conducive to comfort
- ✓ Filling gaps and bespoke curriculums
- ✓ Predictable routines, safe places



Essential foundations

- ✓ Guided opportunities for expression
- ✓ Thinking out of the box!

- ✓ Whole school approach
- ✓ Teamwork
- ✓ Discipline is learning too



*Safe
Brave
Kind*

Lets start by...

...climbing into their
world on every level

Know the child

Give them a voice

Problem solve with parents



Know their Window of Tolerance

*First stabilise, then support
children to build a wider,
more flexible
Window of Tolerance*

Progress must
and will look
different

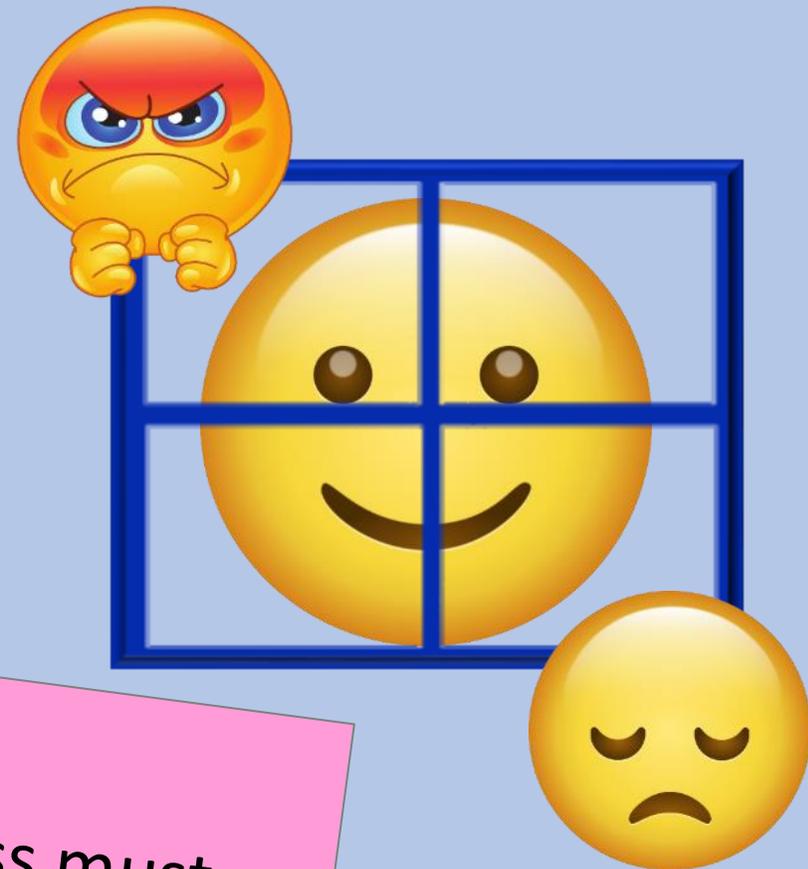
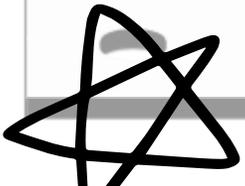


Image Pixabay

What is psychological safety?

- We are accepted and feel we belong in a group
- We are comfortable to be ourselves
- We feel listened to
- We are equipped with what we need
- We feel we can make mistakes and ask for help, without looking stupid!

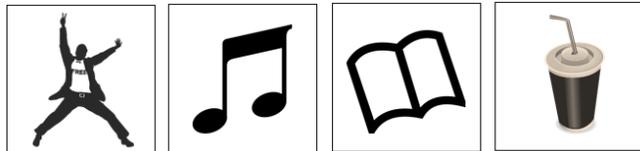
We are all
unique!



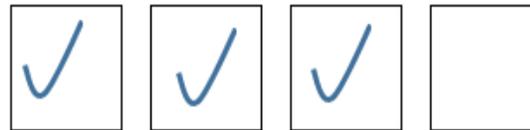


Build Psychological Safety

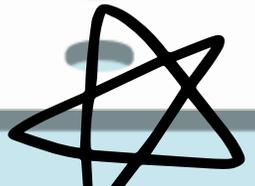
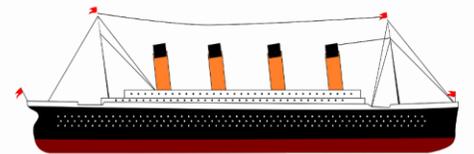
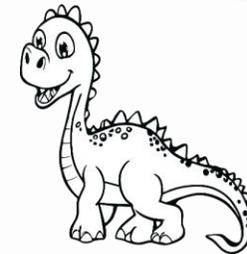
Predictable routines with flexibility!



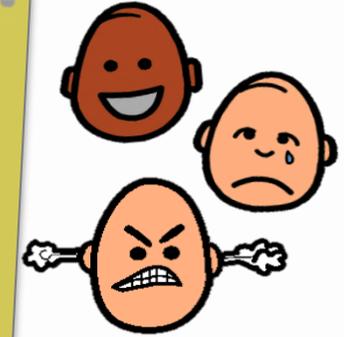
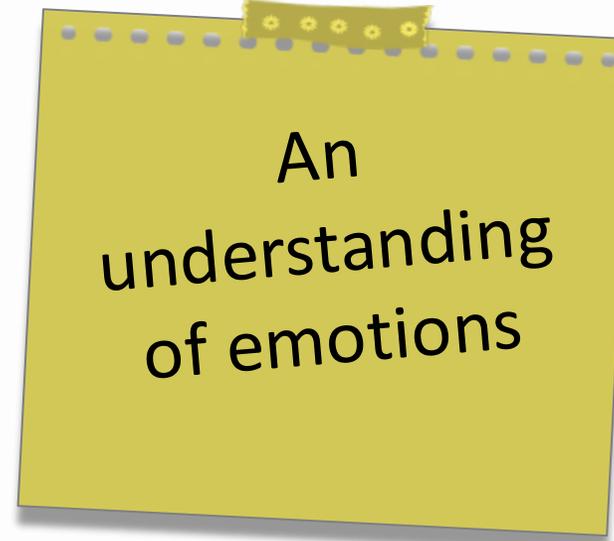
Certainty (builds trust)



Developmentally appropriate expectations
Using strengths and interests



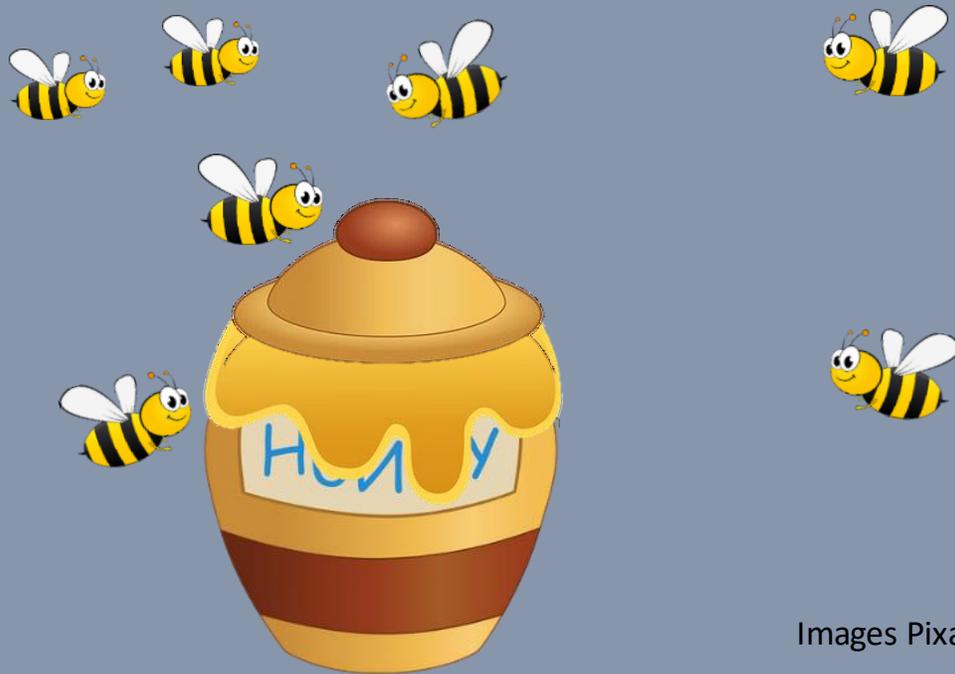
Build Psychological Safety



Images Pixabay



Think of staff who children
always connect with -
like bees around a honey pot



Images Pixabay

Genuine smiles



Warm eyes



Interested

Playful

PACE



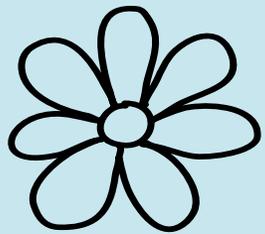
Compassionate

Imperfect

Supportive

**Firm
boundaries**

Love

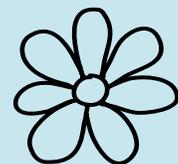


We are:

- Bodyguards
- **Amygdala tamers**
- **Prefrontal cortex surrogates**
- Relationship counsellors,
- Perspective teachers
- Cognitive scaffolders!

Anne Oakley
Prefrontal Cortex Surrogate

Daniel Thrower
Amygdala Tamer



Images Pixabay

Discipline

- When we know emotions drive our behaviour...
- When we know about brain and child development...
- When we know behaviour is about self-regulation...
- When we know we are all different...
- When we know we need to think younger child...

We are
all
unique!



Why do we feel a '*one size fits all*'
approach to behaviour is OK?



View them as a younger child

No wonder school often feels a scary, confusing place.

Behaviour
is about
Self-regulation

*'Self-regulation involves children's developing ability to regulate their **emotions**, **thoughts** and **responses** to enable them to act in positive ways toward a goal.'*



Discipline is learning too

It is not about teaching compliance

Discipline is social, emotional and self-regulation training.

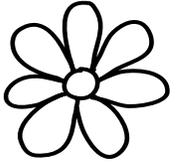
Some children need more support to meet our expectations.

Children need to learn the skills to make good decisions

Policies should reflect this

40

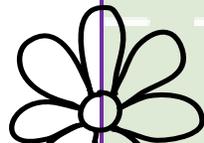
Simple rules



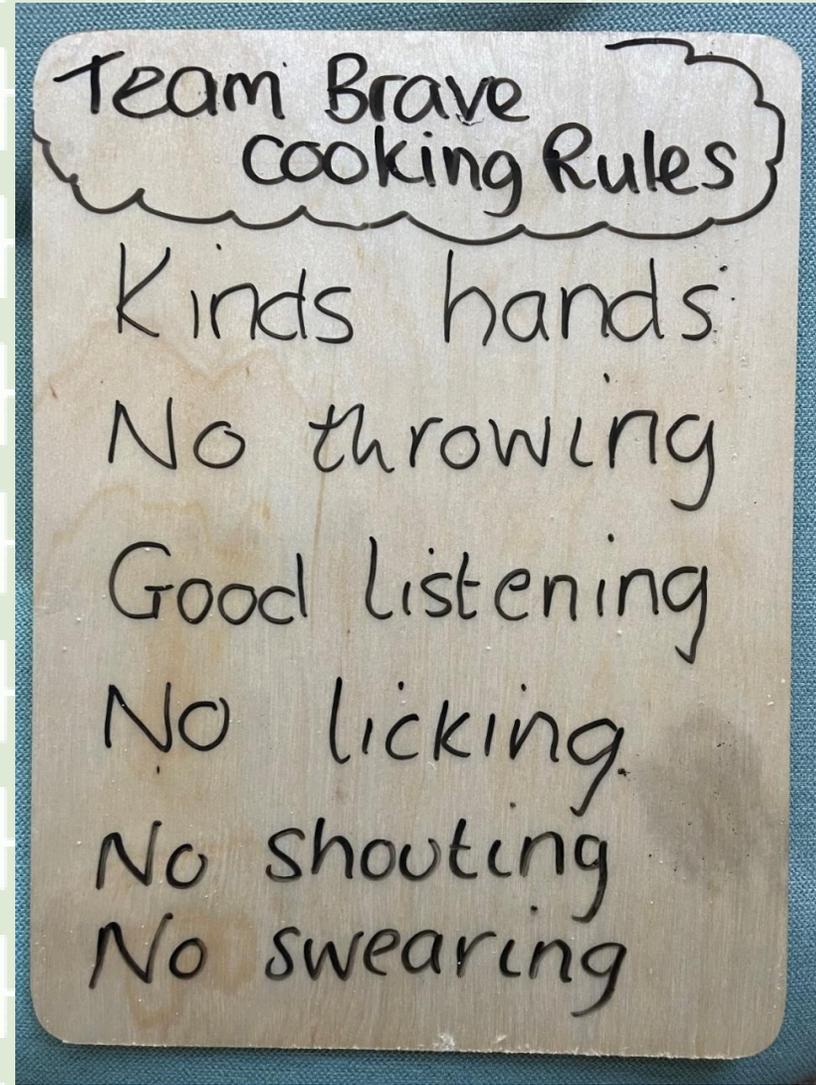
Safe
Brave
Kind

Natural consequences

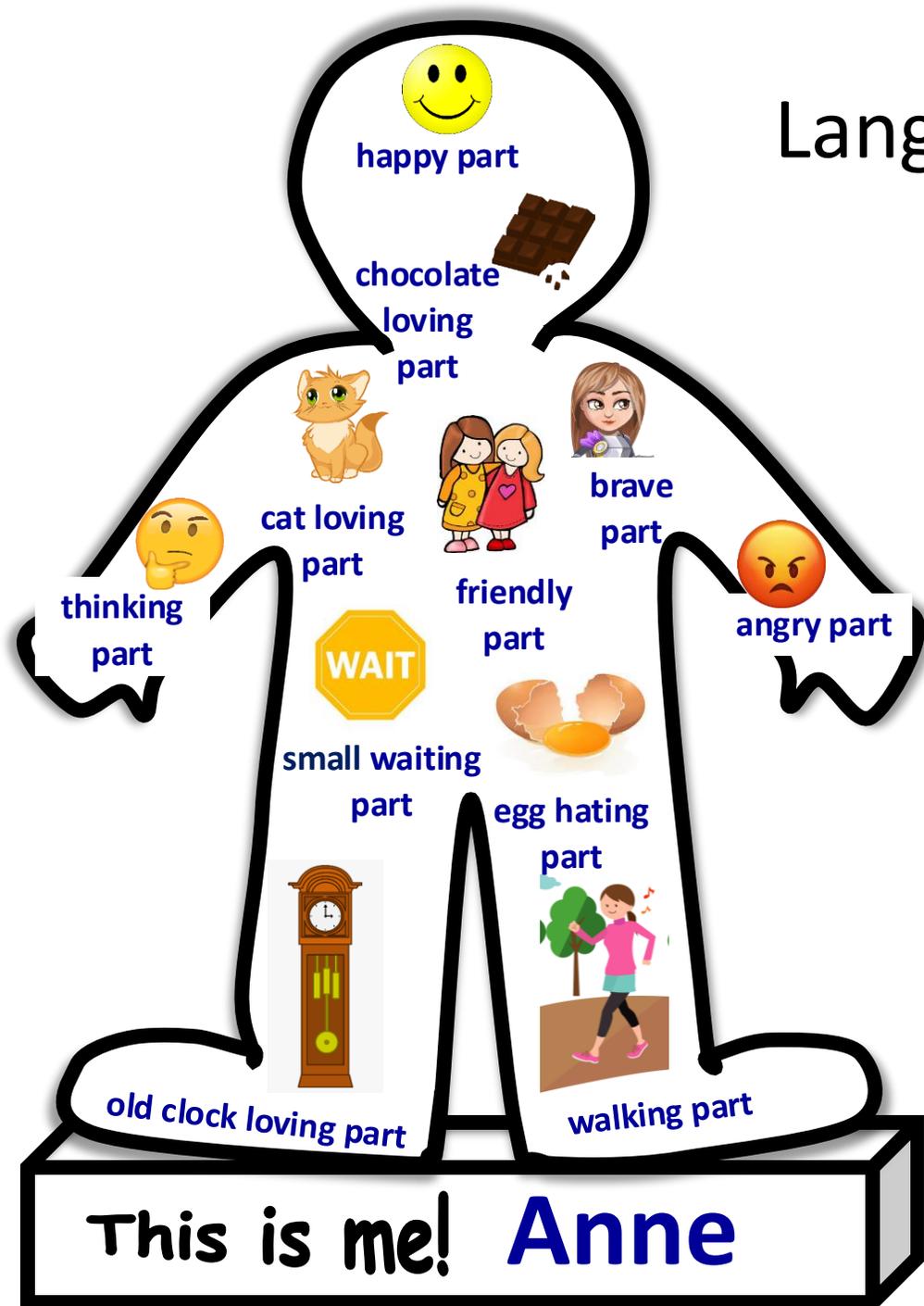
- **Clear up** any mess
- **Fix** any damage
- **Repair** relationships
- **Catch up** with lost learning time
- **Practice** important skills



Clear expectations for each activity

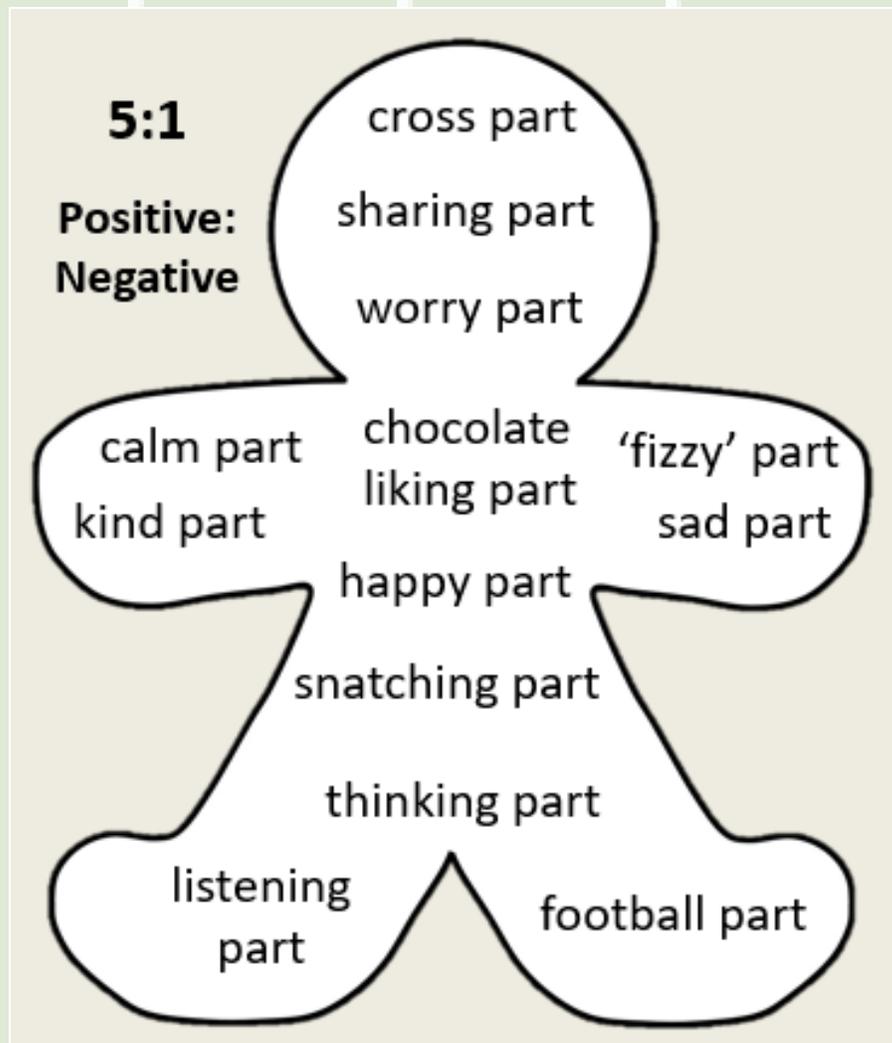


Language of Parts – Holly Van Gulden



- A whole school communication
- Build connections
- Label emotions
- Learn that we are all different
- Learn that we all have strengths, weaknesses

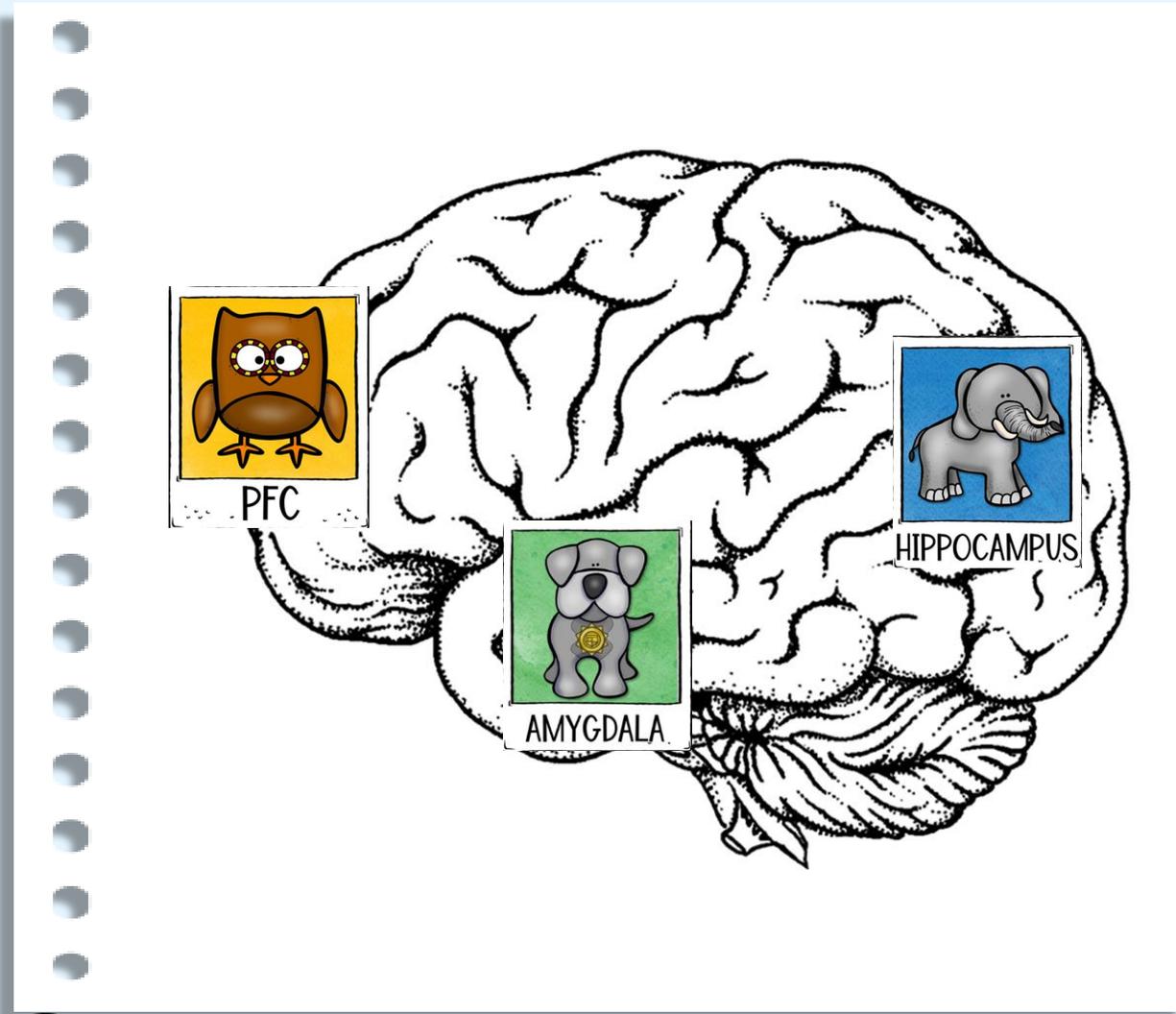
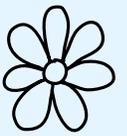
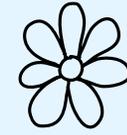




- Learn that it is the behaviour we dislike and not the child
- Learn that we can grow and shrink parts!

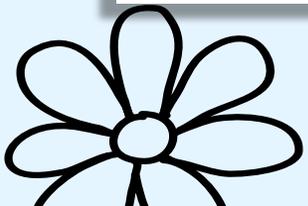
That was your Snatching Part.
 Please use your Sharing Part.

Please contact Daniel and Anne for further information about the Parts Language approach
d.thrower@wensumtrust.org.uk & a.oakley@wensumtrust.org.uk



Teach children about their
brains and their stress
response

<https://kirkleesbusinesssolutions.uk/Page/18303>



Remember

*'No child has ever
been excluded for
poor academic
progress'*



Thank you for listening



Daniel Thrower and Anne Oakley
d.thrower@wensumtrust.org.uk &
a.oakley@wensumtrust.org.uk

Images Bitmoji

Small ripples
make big
waves!



Lunch: Table
discussions,
networking,
browsing stalls.
(12-1pm)



Seeing through behaviour to the
child underneath!



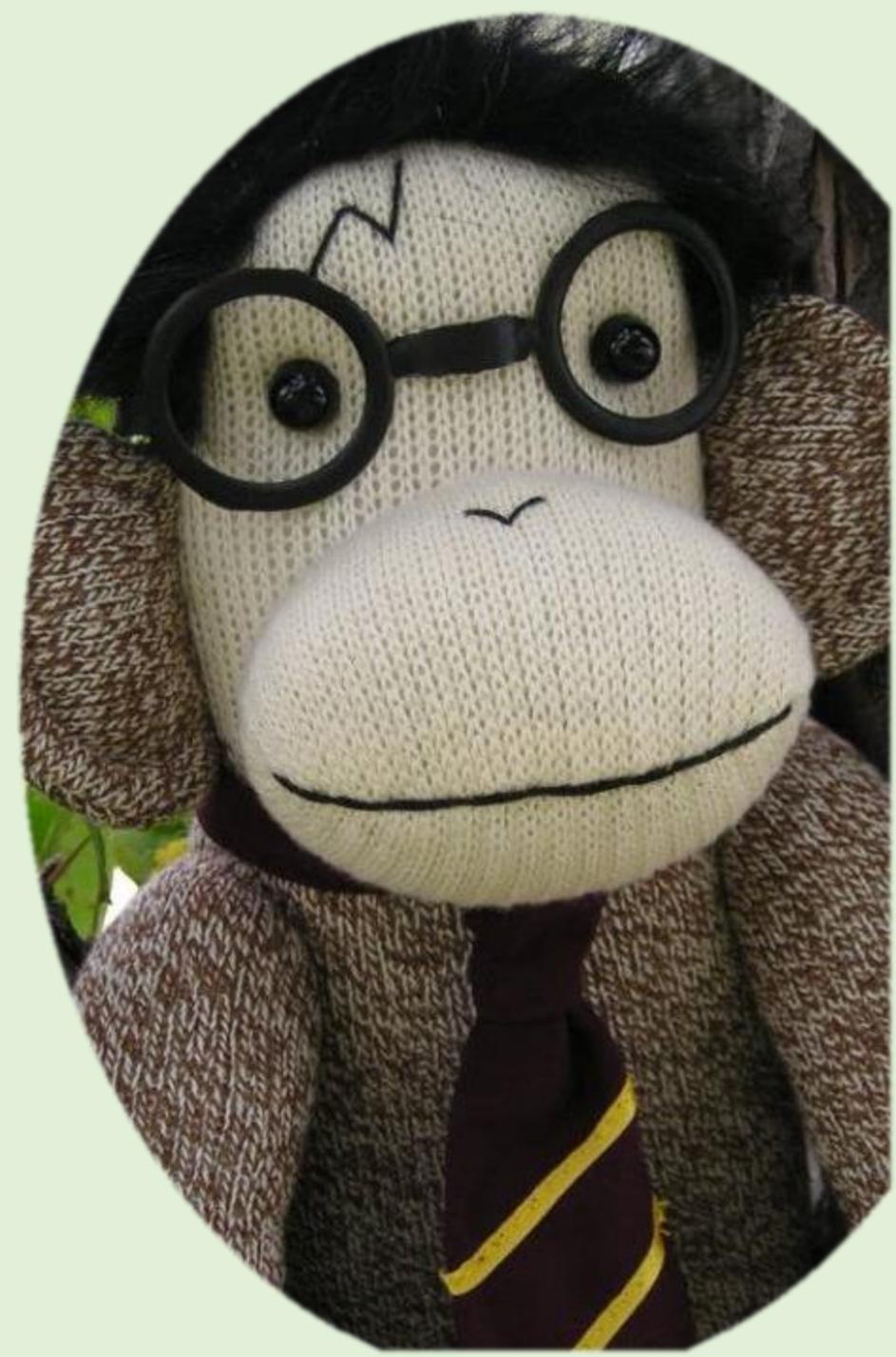
inspired
Children
Play, Nurturing & Curiosity

Ben Kingston-Hughes



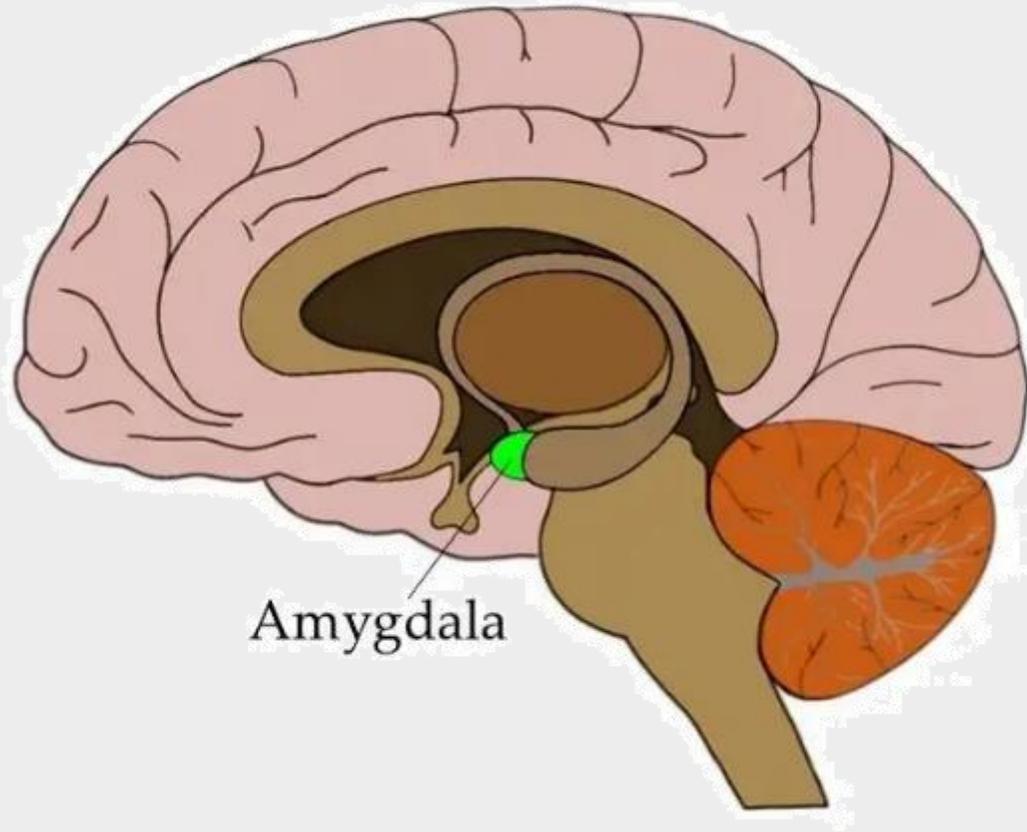
The Smartest Monkey?

Between 2,000,000 and 200,000 years ago something weird happened in a group of primates' brains.

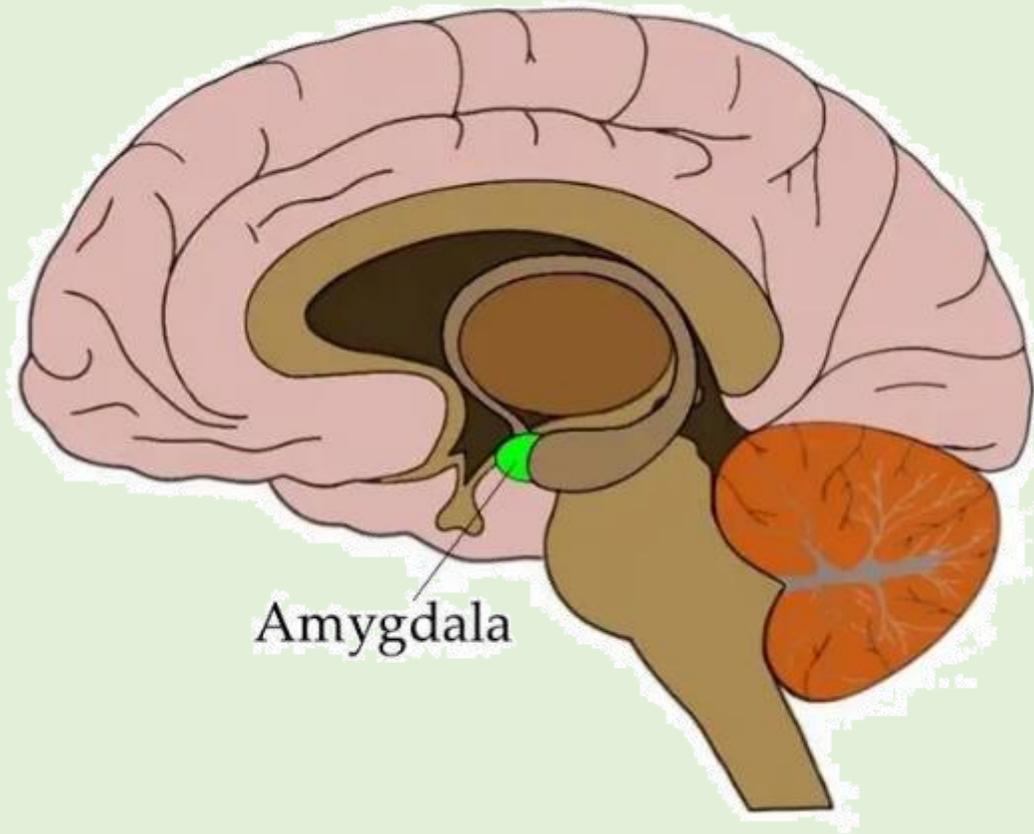




Welcome to the Amygdala



No longer fit for purpose?



Dissociation

When you can't resolve a threat through fight-or-flight your body sometimes decides it's better to physically and mentally "check out."

When a child is dissociated, they feel powerless and hopeless, their upper brain disengages and their overall capacity to learn is dramatically reduced.

It's like the body and brain has begun to decide it's trapped.



How Fear Works

Amygdala Response to a threat

- **Faster Shallower breathing to oxygenate blood**
- **Heart rate increases**
- **Blood sugar levels spike for more energy**
- **Muscles tense for action**
- **In primates fingers tense in preparation for forming fists**



How Fear Works

Amygdala Response to a threat

- Increased aggression levels to prepare for fight action
- Increased Cortisol production
- Narrowing of focus on the immediate threat
- Unnecessary brain functions disconnected

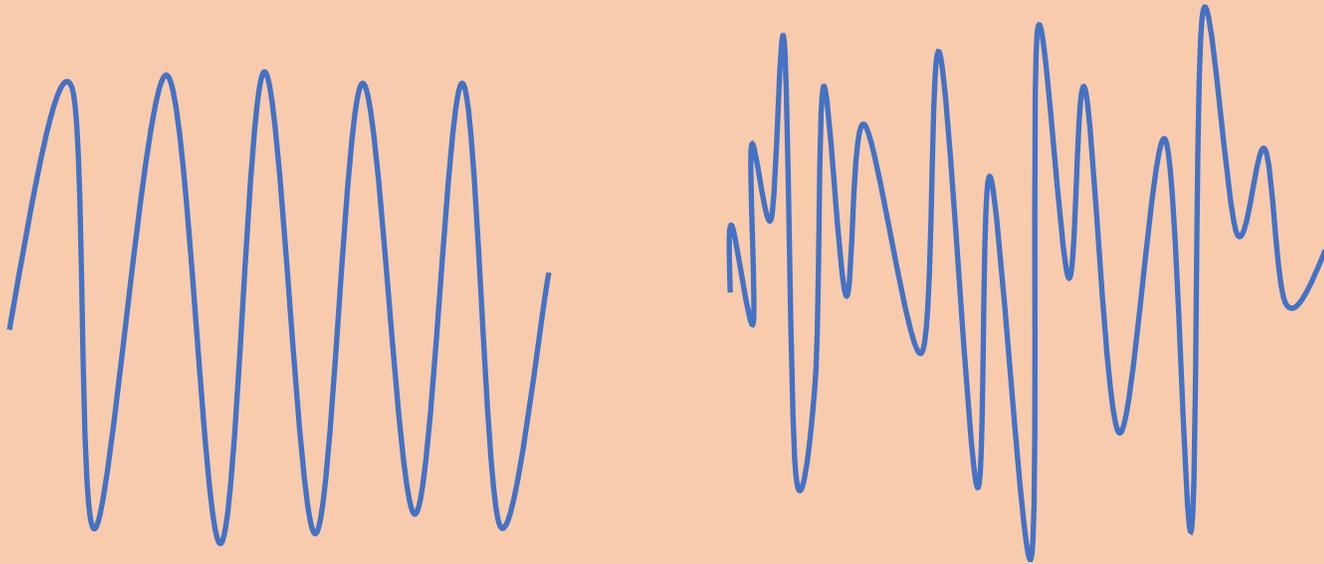


Mirror neurons

- They enable humans to emulate others and thereby empathise & understand intent
- Essential for the socialisation of children



Children from a very young age
“imprint” on the brain signature of an
adult synchronising their brains with the
more mature brain waves of their
carers.



In the moment and mini mindfulness

- **Attunement Play**
- **Breathing**
- **Finger massage**
- **Presence and attentiveness
(Stephen Grosz)**
- **Laughter**



What is
Negative
Behaviour?

**Children do
what works!**



Power over life
Emotional Gain
Attention
Misinterpreted play cue
Physical Gain
Peer Standing
Excitement
Rebelling against the
established order
Revenge
Avoiding a negative
experience

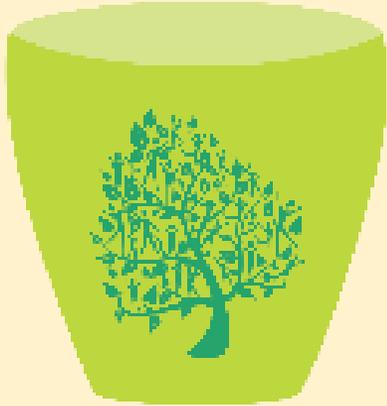


Sandi Phoenix

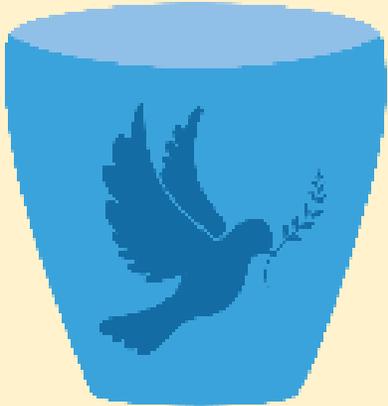
Mastery



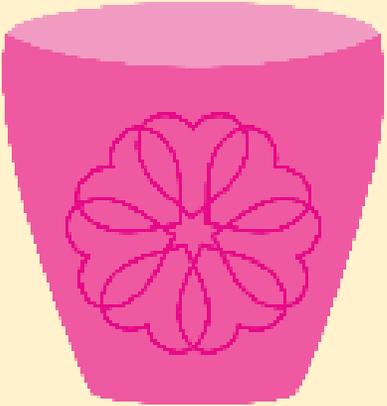
Safety



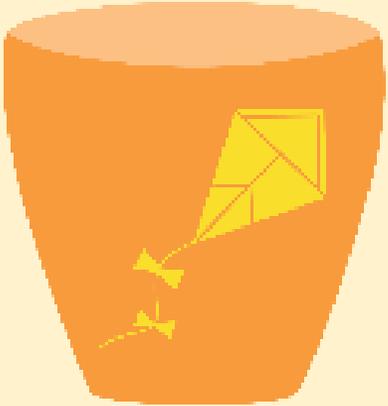
Freedom



Connection



Fun



Coping with “Negative Behaviour”

- 1) Discover the reason for the behaviour – why does the behaviour work? – what does the child NEED?
- 2) Understand and label feelings and motivations
- 3) Steer the child towards a positive expression or strategy that gives the child what they need in a positive way



Example

A child in the nursery repeatedly spills their drink despite “sanctions” and being made to clean up afterwards.



When a child plays this is so important for survival that the brain rewards the child by releasing chemicals into the brain. In exactly the same way as we feel good when we eat nice food we feel good when we play. These brain chemicals are the equivalent of prescription drugs and have a street value.

PLAY
NURTURING
CURIOSITY

- **Oxytocin**

(anti depressant, promotes bonding)

- **Opioids**

(similar effect to morphine)

- **GABA**

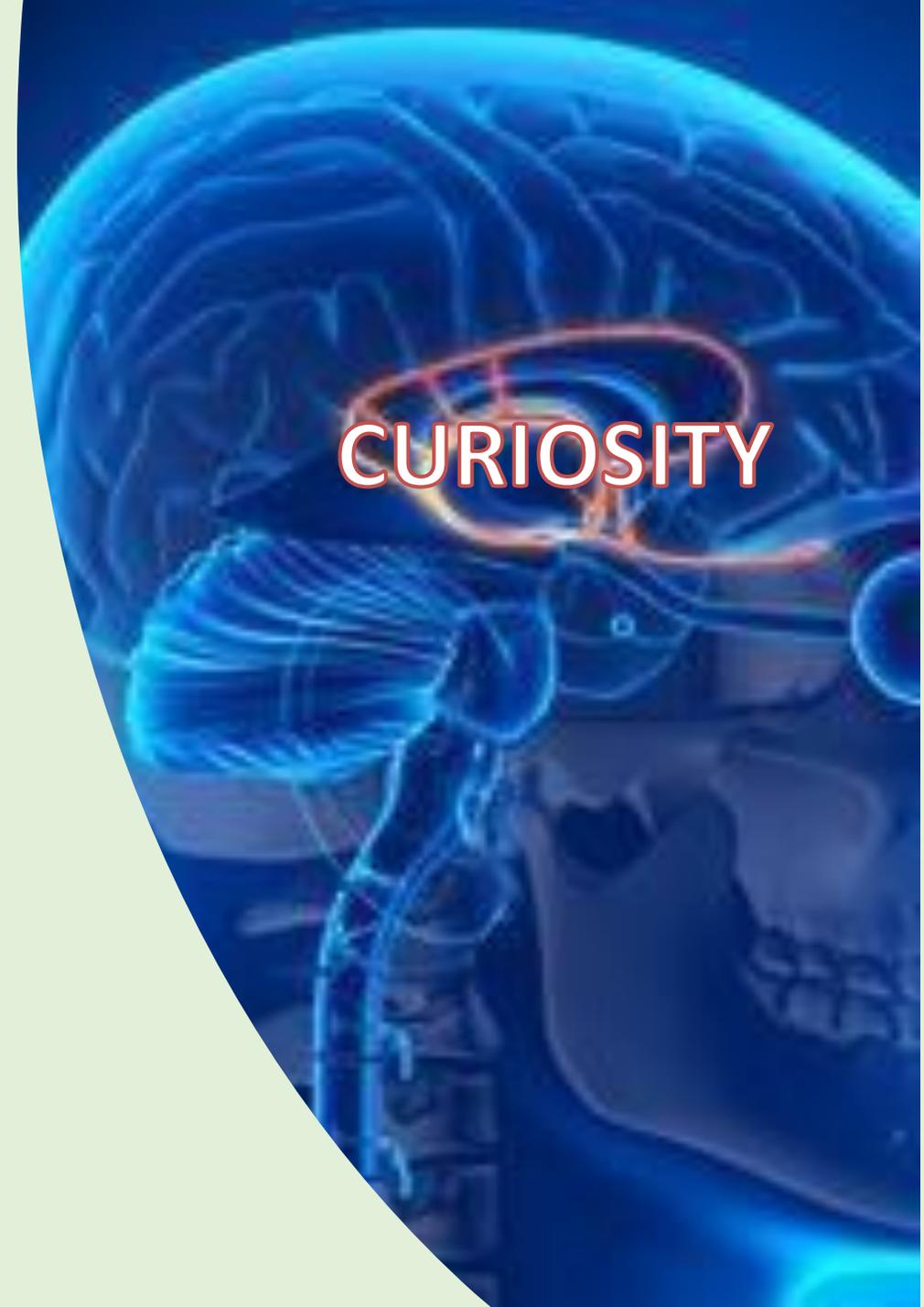
(anti depressant)

- **Benzodiazepines**

(anti anxiety - brain's natural valium)



Curiosity also sits within the Limbic System and just like play is a biological and evolutionary survival process.





Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF)

Brain-Derived Neurotrophic factor (BDNF) is a brain growth hormone that plays a significant role in the growth and health of brain cells. BDNF is essential for the growth and maintenance of brain cells throughout our life.

After bouts of play and exploration rats show increased levels of BDNF in their brains. BDNF levels are hugely increased after rats are allowed to explore their environments and forage.

In the brain, it is active in the hippocampus, cortex, and basal forebrain—areas vital to learning, memory, and higher thinking.



Nurturing is an instinctive need to protect and care for our vulnerable young. It is a two-way process producing a biochemical response in both the carer and the child.



How do we experience Nurturing?

There is no special receptor for love, a feeling of safety, or any other emotion to enter the child's brain. The only way information about attachment quality can be transduced to enter the brain is through our five senses. This pattern of sensory stimulation is how experience enters the brain and changes its development via changing chemicals and individual neural activity. Healthy attachment naturally provides the developing brain with the appropriate sensory stimulation and neural activity.



The Emotional Systems

Anger (Rage)

Fear

Anxiety (Panic/Grief)



Negative - Alarm

Curiosity (Seeking)

Nurturing (Care)

Play



Positive – Pro-social

Affective Neuroscience – Jaak Panksepp



Stress poisons the brain!

Anger, Fear and Anxiety are Toxic

THE BRAIN CHEMICALS OF INSECURE ATTACHMENT

When cortisol is injected into animals: depression, anxiety, aggression increases in heart rate, disrupted digestion, decreased appetite, disruption of sleep, suppression of exploratory activity, startle responses, freezing and fighting behaviour (Margot Sunderland)

- Humiliation is the most biochemically toxic emotion a child can experience.
- Excessive Cortisol causes physical damage to the Hippocampus causing it to atrophy which impairs learning and development.



Brain-Derived Neurotrophic factor (BDNF)

Part 2 – this time its personal!

If exposure to cortisol is persistent, this leads to an atrophy of the hippocampus. This impairs learning and behaviour.

Damage to the hippocampus and other structures has also been shown in humans suffering from chronic depression.

BDNF is a critical mediator of vulnerability to stress, memory of fear/trauma, and stress-related disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

BDNF is as effective as low doses of Ritalin in regards to positive behaviour and helps with the development of the dopamine and noradrenaline systems (often poorly developed in ADHD).



A well behaved Rat?



I love cheese and I really hate electric shocks – of course that is going to change my behaviour!!!!!!

Children are not Rats





When a child plays this is so important for survival that the brain rewards the child by releasing chemicals into the brain. In exactly the same way as we feel good when we eat nice food we feel good when we play. These brain chemicals are the equivalent of prescription drugs and have a street value.

PLAY
NURTURING
CURIOSITY

• **Oxytocin**

(anti depressant, promotes bonding)

• **Opioids**

(similar effect to morphine)

• **GABA**

(anti depressant)

• **Benzodiazepines**

(anti anxiety - brain's natural valium)





Thank You for Watching

Yes Ben does come to settings! Please get in touch if you need any more information or if you want Ben to come to your setting and inspire your team.

ben.kingston@inspiredchildren.org.uk

www.inspiredchildren.org.uk

www.facebook.com/inspiredchildrentraining

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3dHVawJf8hErfpYRZrm9iQ>

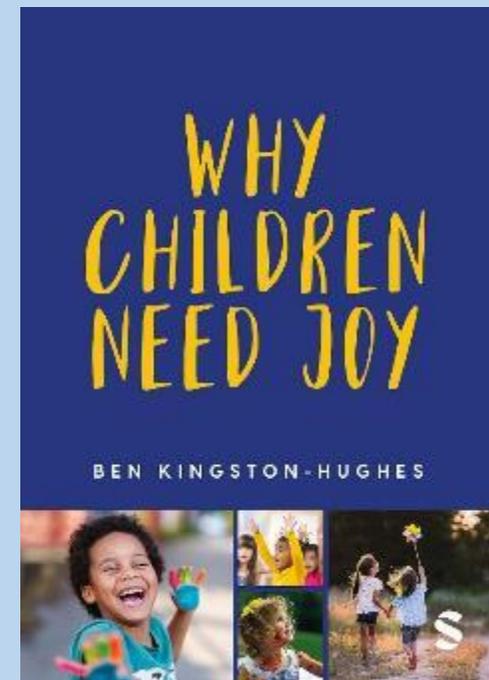
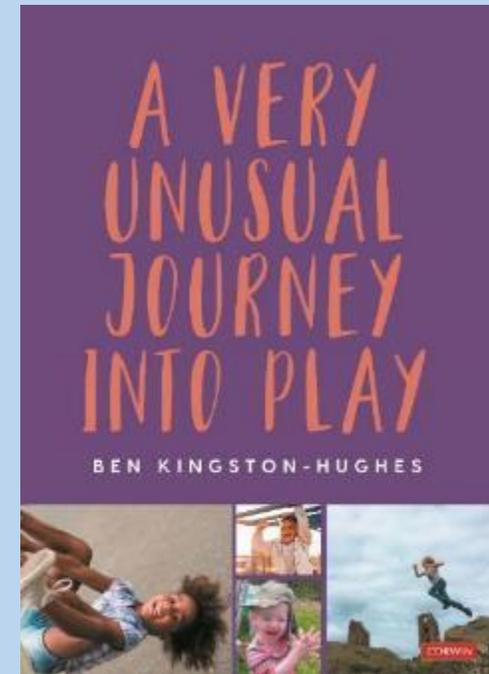
Check out Ben's books!

A Very Unusual Journey into Play
Why Children Need Joy

"A wonderful book, engaging and easy to read, worth every penny, and thoroughly recommended." *Jim Morehouse*

order at Amazon https://www.amazon.co.uk/kindle-dbs/entity/author/B09MV3FMWX?_encoding=UTF8&node=492564011&offset=0&pageSize=12&searchAlias=stripbooks&sort=author-sidecar-rank&page=1&langFilter=default#formatSelectorHeader

**Call 0116 4030066 or
07958057353 to speak to Ben**



Workshops:

2pm to 2:30pm

2:35pm to 3:05pm

3:10pm to 3:40pm

Group	Workshop	Room	Person leading
Group 1	Family voice listening event	Main hall	Laura Davies and Liz Guarnaccia (FV)
Group 2	Classroom Strategies to support children with SLCNs in the classroom.	Roma	Jan Tate (Southfields)
Group 3	Meeting the autism needs of CYP & parents in transitions	Forli	Darrel (NPA) and Mark (KSCS)
Group 4	Making reasonable adjustments vs Ordinarily Available Provision; what the policies say and how to make it work in school.	Venezia	Jude (JHS) and Laura (OMA)
Group 5	PFA outcomes training	Sorrento	Elizabeth Sullivan (PCC)

Feedback

- Please click on the below link or scan the QR code to give us feedback on this event..
- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F3QGBS2>

