

# SEND Innovation: The NASS SEND Incubator

Developing innovations to improve experiences and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

At NASS (the National Association of Independent and Non-maintained Special Schools), we see colleagues in our member schools who are passionate about improving access to learning, and experiences of education, for young people with SEND.

These teachers, leaders, and health and care staff **do not want to reinvent the wheel**, and they don't want their colleagues in other schools or colleges to have to do that either. They want to find innovative ways to **unlock learning potential** and improve well-being for specific groups of learners with SEND. They want to work with young people and families to get feedback about **what works for them**. And they want to build an **evidence base** about the impact that different approaches to learning can have. When they find something that works, they want to **share it**, so that more young people can benefit, whatever type of school or college they attend.

**That's why we set up the NASS SEND Incubator**, in partnership with the Young Foundation. To develop, evidence and share new ways of improving education for children with SEND.

## What did we do?

We worked with 9 NASS schools who had emerging evidence of positive impact for their learners from their innovative approaches. We supported them to develop their innovations through:

- a series of workshops
- coaching support
- encouraging partnerships with other schools to get feedback and share ideas
- sourcing expert input tailored to their innovation
- feedback from 'critical friends' across education and other fields.

**Their innovations are set out in this briefing**, along with links to access the resources, or find out more from the schools themselves.

One of the most powerful ways to improve educational approaches is continual feedback from young people, families, teachers and other school staff across different settings, and collaboration between schools. That's why many of the innovators featured here are keen to share their early-stage work with you.

So please get in touch, with NASS or with the schools featured below, to keep building a **collaborative approach to improving education** for children with SEND.

# What are the innovations?

## Subject specific resources

### Count on Words: Maths vocabulary sessions

A programme to support students' development of maths vocabulary, increasing their access to mathematical learning, and their ability to achieve in Maths.

Developed for D/deaf children, those with Developmental Language Disorder or English Language Learners, and children with low language levels. This programme includes 5 x 30-40 minute sessions on key maths topics, with discussion activities, jokes and specially adapted games.

Developed by Rachael Lethbridge, SENCO and Assistant Head at Mary Hare School, and freely available now to trial: [r.lethbridge@maryhare.org.uk](mailto:r.lethbridge@maryhare.org.uk)



### The Sex Factor: RSE Pack for young people with complex neurodisabilities

A training and resource pack to enhance pupil learning and teacher confidence in RSE. The pack contains 30 stories on 4 themes (Relationships, Diversity, Safety and Puberty), which read as lesson plans and include a resource list and suggested assessment questions.

The pack also includes guidance in:

- Working with parents
- Useful whole school initiatives
- Training ideas to get everyone on board
- Effective use of anatomically correct dolls

Developed by Helen Dunman, PHSE Lead at Chailey Heritage Foundation. Pack and training available now, visit: [www.chf.org.uk/rse-training](http://www.chf.org.uk/rse-training)



### Music for All

Music assessment framework developed for children with SEND, and accessible for all children, which maximizes learning across all areas of the wider curriculum and focusses on well-being.

Music for All:

- Provides a music assessment framework to support teachers to deliver effective music education to all children, however complex their needs, and
- Demonstrates how music supports well-being, as well as progress in core skills and core subjects.

Currently in development at Treloar's School. For further information and to get involved, contact Jocelyn Watkins, Head of Music: [Jocelyn.Watkins@treloar.org.uk](mailto:Jocelyn.Watkins@treloar.org.uk)



# What are the innovations?

## Whole school approaches

### The Quality of Life Network and Framework

A whole school system for measuring, and working to improve, student and family Quality of Life (QoL) in three key areas:

- social participation,
- well-being, and
- independence.

*'The innovative QoL framework you have developed has a positive life-changing impact on pupils and their families'* OFSTED July 2019

The QoL network of over 50 schools is currently free to join, and a range of QoL resources are available for use. The framework is particularly relevant for children on the autism spectrum.

Developed by Kiran Hingorani, CEO of Swalcliffe School. To find out more or join the network contact: [KHingorani@swalcliffepark.co.uk](mailto:KHingorani@swalcliffepark.co.uk)



### The Needs Led Curriculum

A universal framework that supports individuals with SEND to accelerate their development against both academic and broader outcomes.

The Needs Led Curriculum incorporates 32 strands and over 1000 outcomes. As well as core skill development in Reading, Writing and Maths, there are four further foci:

- Learning to Learn • Functional Independence
- Language and Communication • Myself and Others

Developed at St Dominic's School, and available for free trial. Contact Matthew Bell, Regional SENCO: [mbell@stdominicsschool.org.uk](mailto:mbell@stdominicsschool.org.uk)



### The Ambitious Framework: Educational approach for children with autism

The Ambitious Framework aims to enable settings to provide high-quality education for children and young people with autism whilst prioritising dignity, respect, and compassion.

The framework is based on **School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SW-PBS)**. Part One provides tools to help settings review their practice, including a self-review tool, and a case study tool to review impact for children and young people. Part Two provides practical guidance to implement the framework.

Developed by Ambitious about Autism, and available to download and use free at [www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk)



# What are the innovations?

## Improving inclusion and supporting mental health

### Reducing Exclusion: Early Intervention approach



This programme helps schools develop a sustainable, whole school, proactive approach to reducing exclusions, through support for staff working with pupils with social emotional and mental health needs whose behaviour can be challenging. It is rooted in **trauma-informed approaches**.

*'We now have a process for pupils we are struggling with, who we feel are at risk of exclusion. The framework and time has been of real benefit.'* SENCo of school that has used the programme

Developed by The Mulberry Bush, and rolling out during 2021. For information contact Ray Burrows, Specialist Teacher: [RBurrows@mulberrybush.org.uk](mailto:RBurrows@mulberrybush.org.uk)

### The Work Life Ready Curriculum and Wheel



MUNTHAM HOUSE SCHOOL

The Work Life Ready Curriculum and Wheel is a post 16 transition tool promoting positive outcomes, mental health and real-life skills learning.

It covers 7 key areas: Personal Development, Daily & Living Skills, Money Management, Accessing the Community, Work Ready / Employability, Mental Health and Well-being, Learning and Development.

Currently in development at Muntham House School. For further information contact Dan Shambrook, Post-16 Lead: [DanielShambrook@muntham.org.uk](mailto:DanielShambrook@muntham.org.uk)

### Resources to reduce and respond to self-harm and suicidal intent



Developed to support a whole school culture of early intervention and support around student mental health, and partnership working with CAMHS services, for deaf children and young people and those on the autism spectrum.

These resources include:

- Simple tools to promote a shared understanding of managing risk, risk assessments, and the language used around mental health risks
- Flow charts to support staff to know how to respond in emergency situations

Developed by St John's School for the Deaf, Boston Spa, and freely available.

To find out more contact Kate Adams, School Nurse: [Kate.Adams@stjohns.org.uk](mailto:Kate.Adams@stjohns.org.uk)

## So – what's next?

We want to continue supporting schools to connect and learn from each other, and are exploring the scope for a SEND Innovation Network. To find out more contact Kate Williams at [kwilliams@nassschools.org.uk](mailto:kwilliams@nassschools.org.uk)