

SEND Graduated Briefings - V SEND Spring 2022

Early Years and Childcare Support

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Team huddle

“A huddle is a **safe place** for practitioners to discuss and reflect on cases and share ideas, experiences, and knowledge to improve the outcomes for children they work with . . . key to sustaining person centred, strengths-based, community connected, and outcome focused practice”

What | When | How

- Bring cases of children with SEND or emerging needs to discuss where you have completed the Valuing SEND tool, or intend to
- Leave out any identifiable features such as name or date of birth. If cases are discussed anonymously the group can be open and creative.
- Tell us as much information as possible about them and their experience

Key questions to consider:

- What strength based tools and techniques have you used so far...how did it go?
- What has worked well?
- What's been difficult and why?
- What can we learn from this?
- What are the key priorities for this week?

Reflective model

Reflective huddles will follow a conversation structure in which each person has a role to play:

Timing	Presenter	Team
5 minutes	Introduce the case	Actively listen
3 minutes	Listen and then respond	Clarifying questions
10 minutes	Discussion and suggestions	
2 minutes	Summing up and confirm actions and decisions	

Role of Presenter:

Be open and honest about what you've explored and any difficulties you faced



Prompts for presenting:

- What questions did you explore?
- What do you wish you had explored earlier in the conversation?
 - What prompted this thought?

Role of Team:

Actively listen and respond constructively without blame or judgement



Prompts for questioning:

- Can you elaborate on where you explained...?
- What has worked well?
- What has been difficult and why?
- What can we learn from this?

Introduce your case template

Background and context

- Brief background about the child including their progress to date and the strengths in their lives
- Context to the child's needs
- Any other relevant information to support the conversation

Support

- Details of the conversations to date including what has worked and what might not have
- Where needs are currently being met?
- Where needs are not being met?

Next steps

- Where is there potential to support the child to achieve better outcomes?
- What are your next steps?
- Are there any questions to the group that might guide your thinking?

Huddle Culture

In reflective huddles we ask practitioners to look at cases in a different way. The group is guided to use a creative lens that removes any 'language of blame' from the situation.

The group should use their wide experience, both as a practitioner and in life, to first probe and then help to plot the next steps for the case. As the presenter it is really important to remember that the group have been asked to challenge you, and any suggestions are not a criticism of your practice but an opportunity to explore a different way of working.

To promote the culture of creativity some suggestions for how to challenge and probe are below:

Phrases to avoid

- ✗ Why didn't you...?
- ✗ You should have...
- ✗ I always make sure that I....
- ✗ Didn't you know about...?
- ✗ I wouldn't have done....
- ✗ I've had a case exactly like this...

Phrases that might help

- ✓ I wonder if...?
- ✓ Have you considered...?
- ✓ Can you tell me more about...?
- ✓ I'm interested in what you said about...
- ✓ It sounds like...

What do we mean by the ‘strength based approach’?

“It is about **enabling people to find the best solutions for themselves**, to support them in making independent decisions about how they live. ’

Lyn Romeo, Chief Social Worker for England (2019) Strengths-based approach practice handbook

‘It cannot be prescriptive and there is **no one-size fits-all model**’

Strengths-based social work practice with adults Roundtable report (2017)

‘Strengths-based practice is a **collaborative process** between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing them to work together to **determine an outcome that draws on the person’s strengths and assets...**’

(SCIE, 2014) Care Act 2014: Strengths-based approaches. SCIE, 2015 <http://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/assessment-and-eligibility/strengths-basedapproach/>

Understanding need, planning support

Early years settings are working in an environment where child and staff absence is now a regular occurrence. Understanding **the holistic needs of children** and planning support using **Valuing SEND** means settings can be more **resilient** and **flexible** in the face of the many challenges the pandemic presents:

- ✓ The ability to understand and talk about individual needs and plan effective and flexible support
- ✓ Develop an understanding of needs across the cohort to help plan deployment of staff, decide on key workers, and group children in a way to maximise support from members of staff with a specific skill
- ✓ Open up dialogue around need in the setting, easily and quickly communicating how to best support a child in the case of staff absence or flex
- ✓ The opportunity to reflect on their own provision and their own graduated response to need. This could inform the continued professional development of staff members



V SEND Huddles in Early Years Settings

- Spring 2021- Impower sought volunteers from Early Years settings to trial V SEND huddles .
- Priority given to SENCOs who hold DfE recognised Level 3 SENCo qualification.
- Two SENCOs from different settings took part in the huddles with support from Impower. One huddle attended by ASK SALL.
- Settings were located on the outskirts of Lincoln and Burgh Le Marsh near Skegness .
- Both settings welcome high numbers of children with a range of complex needs.
- These SENCOs delivered a presentation to their colleagues at SENCO Networks in Summer 2021 -sharing the impact of “ huddle culture” on their settings graduated approach .

Graduated approach recording

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