

Autism Progress Sample Pages

Our Autism Progress framework helps schools to build a profile of a pupil's autism and how it impacts them across 4 key areas. The framework is based on SCERTS and includes a range of strategies to support pupils.

Connecting Steps

BSquared



Connecting Steps

Connecting Steps is our market-leading pupil-tracking software that makes showing progress for all pupils easy.

'B Squared has really made a difference in our school - it has been a great system for tracking the progress of our SEND pupils '

Carolyn Sykes, Assistant Head Teacher, Ferndale Primary School

Connecting Steps is widely recommended by advisors and local authorities and receives great feedback from inspectors.

'B Squared is an excellent resource for our school. It enables us to track the small steps of progress our learners make. '

Jamie Wright, Deputy Headteacher, Acorn School

Connecting Steps is the robust assessment package that is trusted in over 3000 schools worldwide. The assessment software has been designed to make assessment and tracking progress easier. The cloud-based software is designed to save teachers time by providing teachers with feedback that can then be used in their planning, report-writing and for other documents. Connecting Steps also supports meaningful communication with parents by giving clear information about progress and attainment.

To find out how Connecting Steps can make a difference in your school go to the website below to arrange a free online meeting. We can show you how Connecting Steps works, what frameworks are right for you and the benefits to your school.

www.connectingsteps.com/meetings

Our Assessment Software

Levels of Achievement



Within Connecting Steps are different levels of achievements. Teachers can record more than just achieved or not achieved. Each school can choose how many of these they wish to use and turn off the ones they don't want. This will depend on the type of school, type of pupils and the levels of attainment the pupils are working at.

Non-linear Progress

Schools need to assess a wider range of development, they need to show progress in a non-linear way and they need more flexibility to suit the development and individual progress for pupils with SEND. Connecting Steps features a number of reports for showing non-linear progress so schools are not left being unable to report the progress pupils with SEND make.

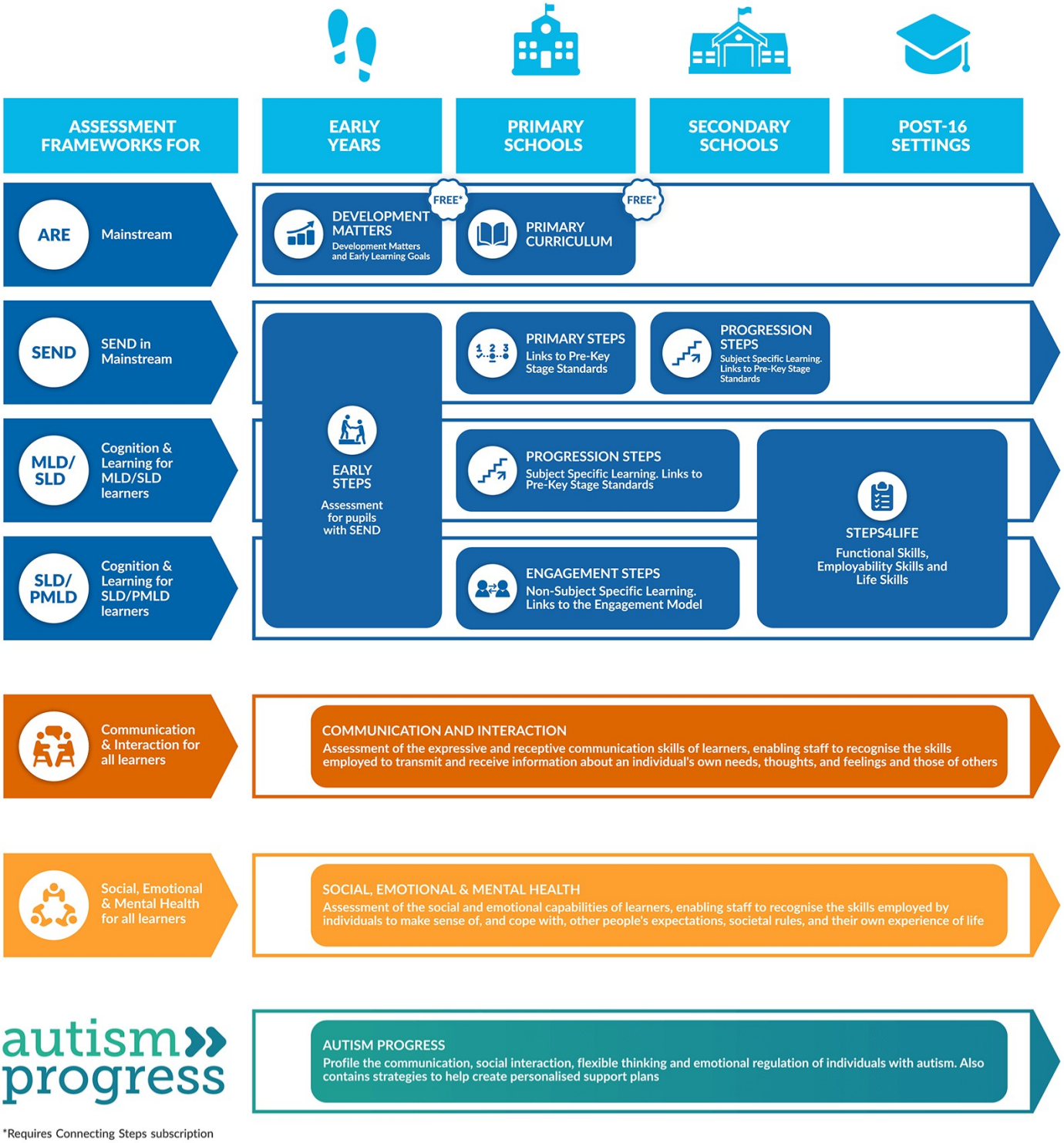
Simple Reporting

Teachers can instantly produce a range of reports designed to be shared with parents or professionals. The information is displayed clearly and simply to help increase parental engagement. The Connecting Steps Analysis Module allows leaders to build graphs for different cohorts in a few clicks. Tailored for each curriculum, the graphs are designed to present information clearly and concisely.

Our Assessment Frameworks

Frameworks

We have developed a range of frameworks to suit a wide range of abilities and ages. The image below gives you an overview of all our different frameworks and help you to identify which frameworks will apply to your setting.



*Requires Connecting Steps subscription



Our Assessment Frameworks

B Squared Framework Comparison Chart

B SQUARED STANDARD SCORE	B SQUARED ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORKS									P LEVELS AND NC LEVELS (COMPARISON)
	Early Steps (2022)	Engagement Steps	Progression Steps & PfA	Primary Steps	Steps 4 Life	Autism Progress	SEMH	Executive Function	Communi-cation & Interaction	
15 - 15.5								EF Step 5 (up to 18)		NC 7
14 - 15			Progression Step 10				SEMH Step 11	EF Step 4	Level 16	
13 - 14					Level 2	Level 17				NC 6
12 - 13			Progression Step 9	Greater Depth & Breadth			SEMH Step 10		Level 15	
11 - 12						Level 16		EF Step 3		NC 5
10 - 11			Progression Step 8	Year 6	Level 1	Level 15	SEMH Step 9		Level 14	NC 4
9 - 10				Year 5						
					Entry 3					NC 3
8 - 9			Progression Step 7	Year 4		Level 14	SEMH Step 8	EF Step 2	Level 13	
7 - 8				Year 3	Entry 2					NC 2a
										NC 2b
6 - 7			Progression Step 6 (PKS 6)	Year 2		Level 13	SEMH Step 7		Level 12	NC 2c
			Progression Step 5 (PKS 5)		Entry 1					NC 1a
5 - 6				Year 1		Level 12	SEMH Step 6	EF Step 1	Level 11	NC 1b
	Early Learning Goals (ELG)		Progression Step 4 (PKS 4)							NC 1c
4 - 5	Children in Reception		Progression Step 3 (PKS 3)	Primary Step 3	Step 7	Level 11	SEMH Step 5		Level 10	P8
3 - 4	3 & 4 year olds		Progression Step 2 (PKS 2)	Primary Step 2		Level 10	SEMH Step 4		Level 9	P7
2 - 3	2½–3 years	Engagement Step 6			Step 6	Level 9	SEMH Step 3		Level 8	P6
	2–2½ years		Progression Step 1 (PKS 1)	Primary Step 1					Level 7	
						Level 8				P5
1 - 2	18–24 months						SEMH Step 2		Level 6	
		Engagement Step 5			Step 5	Level 7				P4
	12–18 months								Level 5	
						Level 6				P3(ii)
0 - 1	9–12 months	Engagement Step 4			Step 4	Level 5	SEMH Step 1		Level 4	P3(i)
	6–9 months					Level 4			Level 3	P2(ii)
	3–6 months	Engagement Step 3			Step 3	Level 3			Level 2	P2(i)
	0–3 months	Engagement Step 2			Step 2	Level 2			Level 1	P1(ii)
		Engagement Step 1			Step 1	Level 1				P1(i)



Our Assessment Frameworks

Early Steps

Our EYFS assessment covers the range from birth to the Exceeded Early Learning Goals (ELG) across all seven areas based on the Development Matters 2020 and Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021.

Primary Steps

Our Primary assessment breakdown structure is based on the 2014 National Curriculum. If you are looking at using B Squared assessment with both mainstream and SEN pupils in a Primary setting then the Primary Steps works well for you. It includes the End of Year Outcomes and the first 3 levels of our Progression Steps for pupils working below Year 1.

Core Subjects

English, Maths and Science

Plus Subjects

Citizenship, Computing, E-Safety, PE and PSHE

Foundation Subjects

Art & Design, DT, Geography, History, Languages, Music and Religious Education

Progression Steps

Progression Steps is our new formative assessment framework for pupils who are engaging with subject-specific learning. It will over time comprise books which reflect the four broad areas of need. This framework covers the ability range identified by the new pre-key stage standards.

Core Subjects

English, Maths and Science

Plus Subjects

Citizenship, Computing, E-Safety, PE and PSHE

Foundation Subjects

Art & Design, DT, Geography, History, Languages, Music and Religious Education

Performing Arts

Acting, Singing, Dancing and Stagecraft



Our Assessment Frameworks

Engagement Steps

Engagement Steps is our new formative assessment framework for pupils not yet engaged in subject-specific learning. It comprises four sections which reflect the four broad areas of need and includes the 5 apects of engagement. This framework will help teachers to record the achievements of pupils who are working profoundly beneath age-related expectations and who are working on an informal curriculum.

Steps4Life

Steps4Life is our new framework for individuals with SEND who are working towards independent living. It is primarily designed to be used from Key Stage 4 onwards. Some individuals will be working towards independent living, with employment while others will be working towards semi-independent living and others will be in supported living. The Steps4Life covers a wide range of areas and a wide ability range, it includes 7 levels that are the equivalent of P1 to P8 which replace the old Milestones, Entry Levels 1, 2 and 3 and RFQ Level 1 and 2.

Academic Skills

English, Maths, PSHE and Digital Skills

Life Skills

Food, Self-Care, Independence, Travel

Employability Skills

Identifying and Getting a Job, Your Rights, Workplace Routines and Skills

Preparing for Adulthood

We have created a small Preparing for Adulthood framework that covers the 4 PFA areas. It uses the same level structure as the Progression Steps, so goes from a developmental stage of around 18 months to around the developmental stage of a typical 15-year-old. It is not a big framework, it is not designed to be used on its own to support older learners. It has been created to be used alongside a subject based curriculum to the end of key stage 3. It works well with our Primary Steps or Progression Steps frameworks.



Our Assessment Frameworks

Autism Progress

We recognised a need for an assessment tool which could be used by all to assess the impact of a person's autism. Using autism descriptors already created by B Squared, the developers at Autism Progress have created a set of progressive levels in the following areas of autism:

Communication
Social Interaction
Flexibility of Thought
Emotional Regulation

Communication & Interaction

Our Communication and Interaction framework aims to give more structure around assessment and progress of a pupil's communication and interaction skills. The framework is designed to be used by Speech and Language Therapists and school staff to lead to a more collaborative approach. The framework is split into the following areas:

Spontaneous Verbal Communication (Spoken Language, Sign Language and Symbols)
Recorded Verbal Communication (Writing)
Non-verbal Communication
Using Technology to Communicate (AAC)

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

Our SEMH framework helps schools to build a profile of a pupil's social, emotional and mental health needs and how these affect their learning and wellbeing. The framework is split into the following areas:

Emotion

Recognition, Expression, Regulation and Recognition in Others

Social

Developing and Maintaining Relationships/Friendships and Communicating with Others

Social & Emotional Cognition

Social Decision Making, Moral Reasoning, Attention and Social Expectations and Social Awareness

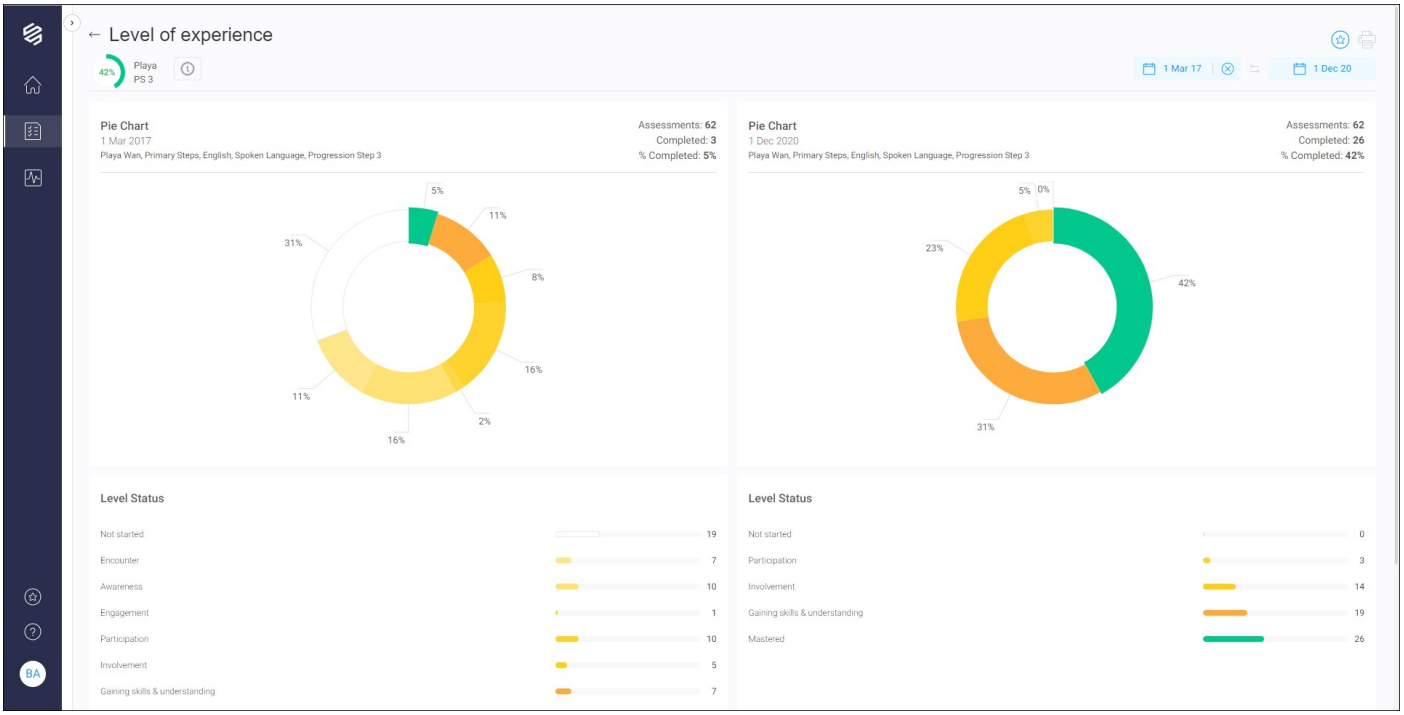


Sample Pages

The samples over the next few pages are designed to give you an overview of

Autism Progress

They show the different areas covered by this assessment framework and cover a range of ability levels.



BSquared

Individual Assessment

B Squared Ltd

22 Aug 2024 - Student Name - Communication, Communication - 12 / Start Date: 1 Aug 2024 / Progress: 0%

Expressive

- Communicates about what they think may happen, e.g. in a science experiment
- Communicates in a fluent manner about familiar topic or an event
- Communicates to peers in the room
- Discusses their own interests or hobbies
- Explains their feelings simply
- Explains why they need help
- Explores ideas through discussion when working with others
- Gives reasons why they like or dislike something
- Identifies things that are important to them, giving reasons
- Justifies their opinion simply
- Recounts ideas logically
- Simply states why they agree or disagree with a statement
- Uses language to solve problems

Receptive

- Completes a task showing they have followed simple verbal instructions
- Enjoys listening to repetitive poems
- Follows a simple instruction
- Joins in repetitive parts of poems and stories
- Listens in public settings
- Looks at the person's face when listening
- Participates willingly when exploring the sounds of language
- Recognises when others are unkind
- Responds to "What will you do tomorrow?"
- Responds to "What did you do yesterday?"
- Waits until they are asked to respond by a member of staff

Strategies to Support Students

UNIVERSAL APPROACHES:

Lots of new experiences - set up shared experiences that can be reflected upon together or shared with others, e.g. visits, cooking, stories that can be re-enacted or reflected on supported by photographs or remnants.
Enable generalisation of developed skills and strategies to new environments/contexts.
Develop simple "social stories" to explain new events or "invisible" social information (Carol Gray Available at: www.carolgraysocialstories.com).
Prompt the individual to ask for help. Support with pictures/symbols if signs of frustration are evident.
Share humour which may be visual, or word play, but avoid irony and sarcasm.
Support individual's growing ability to express a wide range of feelings and reflect on social difficulties when they are calm or feeling resilient.
Consider a range of ways in which you can enable the individual to make choices, e.g. PECS, Communication Books, Talking Mats, etc.
Don't rush your conversations.
Use symbols and written words to embed information in the environment, e.g. polite behaviour at mealtimes, agreed TV watching rules etc.
Position yourself so that you can be seen and heard, allowing for sensory loss such as poor hearing/vision.
Everyone uses the same visual support in all environments, e.g. at home and in school
Ensure any AAC communication support is always available, e.g. the individual carries their PECS book for themselves or that the iPad is always in the right place for individual to access.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES:

Set up the environment to create communicative temptations.
Build conversational exchanges by adding comments or extending utterances which follow the individual's lead, e.g. the individual says "Go in car?" and the member of staff retorts with "Yes, go in car to cinema".
Developing play through "Joint play and inter-subjectivity."
Play games which involve listening for a signal such as 'Simon says' and 'ready steady go'.
Develop joint play and "inter-subjectivity" by including characters who act out intentions and emotions in small world play scripts.
Develop more sophisticated visual structured activities, e.g. shoe box tasks, daily routines, recipes etc.
Look for facts, e.g. practise finding information in paragraphs.
Use the individual's interests to help build communication skills.
Show individual how to use language for negotiation by saying 'may I, would it be alright, I think that, and will you" in your interactions with them.
A clear visual structure to events through the day e.g. now-next, schedules and prepare individual for changes that may occur.
Develop "mind maps" to organise ideas, e.g. planning a new garden, culture evening etc.
Add language in context using gestures, words, pictures and signs matched to the individual's interests and focus. Use comments and descriptions that add information.
Cue individual into a change of conversation, e.g. "Now we are going to talk about…"
For people who struggle with 'listen and do', say their name before giving an instruction or asking a question.
Give the individual ample time to think, plan and respond.
Develop vocabulary including more abstract words and concepts using a focused approach such as "word aware".
Give instructions which include information about time and sequence.

Practise "active listening" and "comprehension monitoring" strategies with the individual so that they can recognise when they have not understood something and know what to do about it.
Discuss how to plan and anticipate problems and agree on solutions.
Discuss and plan the details of a project, e.g. recipes, crafts, horticulture, trips, etc.
Visual structured activities, e.g. TEACCH tasks.
Visual aids available to the individual, e.g. in their wallet or on a key ring.
Use visuals to support planning and reviewing experiences with the individual.
Have visual prompts showing the week's activities.
Extend narrative skills e.g. “story starters” (Black Sheep Press).
Develop sight vocabulary through visual is accompanied by written word.
Build sentences using visual supports such as “colourful semantics” (Integrated Treatment Services. Available at: http://integratedtreatmentservices.co.uk).

TOP TIPS:

Seek the views of the individual regarding familiar concrete experiences using “Talking Mats” (Lois Cameron. Available at: www.talkingmats.com), e.g. to discuss menu planning, leisure activities etc.
Give time for individual to initiate discussions from shared experiences and have conversations about their “news and interests”.
Represent time information visually e.g. day/week/month wheel (language builders for verbal ASD, ELKLAN).

Individual Assessment

B Squared Ltd

22 Aug 2024 - Student Name - Emotional Regulation, Emotional Regulation - 4 / Start Date: 1 Aug 2024 / Progress: 0%

Self-Awareness

- Forms attachments with specific people when working with them repeatedly
- Moves towards a member of staff to attract attention when not engaged in a task
- Reacts with sorrow to the absence of a familiar person, e.g. when a favoured family member leaves
- Recognises their reflected self by making intentional movement and watching reaction when shown a mirror
- Shies away from strangers, demonstrating concern when unfamiliar people enter the room
- Understands the meaning of the word 'No!' by responding when it has been exclaimed by a member of staff

Self-Control

- Maintains interest in pictures for a minute while the content is named
- Plays with objects happily
- Touches a range of textures without protest when provided with different objects

Self-Expression

- Anticipates outcomes with enthusiastic reactions when playing social games, e.g. peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake, etc.
- Communicates consistent preferences with emotional responses when choices are provided
- Communicates their wants to an adult by using an individual action or gesture
- Communicates their wants to an adult by using consistent vocal noises
- Communicates their wants to peers by using actions or gestures
- Communicates with an adult by taking turns to babble
- Indicates a preference when provided with two equally liked items
- Indicates a preference when provided with two pictures of equally liked items
- Indicates a preference when provided with two symbols of equally liked items
- Moves to music with enjoyment when familiar songs are played
- Protests the conclusion of an activity after working with a member of staff
- Reacts to a familiar member of staff with excitement after a period of separation
- Reacts to familiar words with a heightened expressive response
- Reacts with heightened expressive response to the suggestion of “More?” when it is accompanied by intonation, gesture or sign
- Recognises familiar activities by reacting with excitement
- Refuses an object, activity or foodstuff when given to them by a member of staff, e.g. verbally or physically
- Rejects interaction/an object by turning their head or pushing away when provided with a disliked activity
- Requests physical contact with gestures or vocalisations when playing with peers
- Responds to familiar members of staff consistently when interacting with them
- Responds to familiar peers consistently when interacting with them
- Responds to liked stimuli consistently when provided with their favourite item/activity
- Responds to other people’s emotions with an emotional response
- Responds to physical contact with happy facial expressions when playing with others
- Vocalises to a member of staff to attract attention when not engaged in a task
- Vocalises to a member of staff to keep attention when engaged in conversation

Strategies to Support Students

UNIVERSAL APPROACHES:

Lots of new experiences - make sure they are relevant to the individual's interests.
Using the individual's name helps to focus attention.
Support the motivation of the individual which is driven by basic needs and wants.
Create "irresistible invitations to learn" by making yourself noticeable and introducing objects or experiences which are intrinsically fun for the individual (Gina Davies. Available at: www.ginadavies.co.uk).
Help the individual to learn anticipation through consistent and systematic presentation of objects of reference or object signifiers.
Encourage playfulness with turn-taking interactions. Follow the individual's lead, match their type of turn and try to balance the number of turns you each take.
Follow the individual's focus of attention and join in by (1) gently "intruding" on the game (2) "including" objects or actions which the individual likes, or (3) "imitating" what they like to do (The Hanen Centre, More Than Words).
Approach with playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy.
Consider a range of ways in which you can enable the individual to make choices.
Share photos with the individual, talking with them about what they did and how it felt, e.g. take photos of things as they happen so you can talk about them after the event.
Position yourself so that you can be seen and heard, allowing for sensory loss such as poor hearing/vision.
Create a visualised communication environment which includes signs, schedules, labels and behaviour prompts (better communication research programme).
Consider the use of the "Picture Exchange Communication System" (PECS).

SKILL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES:

Set up listening opportunities where people can enjoy stories, rhymes and sounds.
Create "communicative temptations" e.g. by having a reminder in sight but not in reach, by having objects which you can work but the other individual needs help with, by adding unexpected excitement to familiar routines (a piece of shiny paper in the favourite book), by use of "constructive stupidity" (woops, I forgot a vital piece of equipment!).
Develop simple schemes of play. Place an object within reach where the individual can see it, and then wait.
Ensure the individual has opportunities to "join in".
Praise the individual without delay, make sure to use their name first.
Look for key indicators of anxiety and utilise strategies to allay them.
Respond to their vocalisation.
Always greet and say goodbye to the individual.
Decide on key vocabulary linked to activities and ensure that all carers regularly model its use in a range of contexts.
Smile when using the individual's name.
Label and reflect emotions in context by saying, "Ooh sad!" whilst modelling a sad face and tone of voice.
Keep voice at a moderate level of tone and volume.
Use puppets and other props to encourage listening and responding.
Slow down and mirror the individual to develop "creative conversations".
Display photographs of carers so that they can see who they are working with.

TOP TIPS:

Talk about sounds that can be heard, e.g. quiet/loud voices, clapping, laughing
Set up social for the individual to experience sharing, e.g. looking at pictures.
Go down to the individual's level when interacting with them because eye contact may be incidental.

Individual Assessment

B Squared Ltd

22 Aug 2024 - Student Name - Flexibility of Thought, Flexibility of Thought - 6 / Start Date: 1 Aug 2024 / Progress: 0%

Prediction and Planning

- Applies potential solutions to problems systematically when attempting to resolve issues that affect them, e.g. looks nearby for their other shoe when one is missing, then further afield
- Matches objects based on obvious criteria, e.g. when a member of staff picks an item, the individual finds ones that match
- Offers an object to a member of staff on their own initiative
- Offers an object to a member of staff when prompted
- Offers an object to a peer on their own initiative
- Offers an object to a peer when prompted
- Posts objects through holes when playing

Awareness and Coping

- Calms down and returns to an activity when a problem is resolved
- Co-operates with adult proactively when having clothes changed
- Follows simple commands (including verbs) with appropriate responses, e.g. rolls the ball when requested to
- Indicates a need for a change of clothes when they have soiled them
- Indicates a need for a change of clothes when they have wet them
- Indicates what has caused them to be upset
- Looks for help when frustrated
- Makes their feelings known to a member of staff
- Modifies their anger response with assistance
- Orientates their head or eyes towards an object when a member of staff points at it
- Shares an activity with a member of staff on their own initiative
- Shares an activity with a member of staff when prompted
- Shares an activity with a peer on their own initiative
- Shares an activity with a peer when prompted
- Undertakes shared activities working in parallel when supported by a member of staff

Imagination and Exploration

- Creates their own words (jargon) when communicating with others
- Explores pages in books haptically when working with an adult
- Explores pages in books visually when working with an adult
- Explores their environment inquisitively when working independently
- Expresses their independence by confidently exploring new surroundings when playing
- Expresses their independence by confidently initiating activities when playing
- Expresses their independence by confidently initiating conversation when playing
- Scribbles on paper and attends to the marks they have made when prompted by a member of staff
- Takes items out of containers when playing
- Takes lids off containers when playing
- Turns pages in a book when reading with a member of staff

Strategies to Support Students

UNIVERSAL APPROACHES:

Lots of new experiences - make sure they are relevant to the individual's interests.
Using the individual's name helps to focus attention.
Support the motivation of the individual which is driven by basic needs and wants.
Create "irresistible invitations to learn" by making yourself noticeable and introducing objects or experiences which are intrinsically fun for the individual (Gina Davies. Available at: www.ginadavies.co.uk).
Encourage playfulness with turn-taking interactions. Follow the individual's lead, match their type of turn and try to balance the number of turns you each take.
Follow the individual's focus of attention and join in by (1) gently "intruding" on the game (2) "including" objects or actions which the individual likes, or (3) "imitating" what they like to do (The Hanen Centre, More Than Words).
Call the individual's name before giving any spoken information and wait for the individual to turn towards you or give some indication they have heard you before speaking, e.g. by stilling.
Follow the lead of the individual. Remember to watch, wait and then join in.
Approach with playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy.
Consider a range of ways in which you can enable the individual to make choices, e.g. PECS, Communication Books, Talking Mats, etc.
Share photos with the individual, talking with them about what they did and how it felt, e.g. take photos of things as they happen so you can talk about them after the event.
Position yourself so that you can be seen and heard, allowing for sensory loss such as poor hearing/vision.
Create a visualised communication environment which includes signs, schedules, labels and behaviour prompts (better communication research programme).
Consider the use of the "Picture Exchange Communication System" (PECS).

SKILL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES:

Lots of new experiences - encourage the individual to explore, by modelling your own interest in discovering new things.
Talk about sounds that can be heard, e.g. identify intrusive/distracting noises.
Create "communicative temptations" e.g. by having a reminder in sight but not in reach, by having objects which you can work but the other individual needs help with, by adding unexpected excitement to familiar routines (a piece of shiny paper in the favourite book), by use of "constructive stupidity" (woops, I forgot a vital piece of equipment!).
Develop simple schemes of play. Place an object within reach where the individual can see it, and then wait for the individual to acknowledge.
Provide a clear structure to the day by including rhyme and pattern into routines, e.g. during intimate care, at meal times, massage, peek-a-boo, songs, etc. Remember to pause between steps.
Stick to familiar routines as far as possible, because familiarity breeds confidence and then increased engagement.
Introduce subtle changes to routines, e.g. different routes to next location.
Role model emotions.
Look for key indicators of preference or choice, e.g. pointing, eye contact.
Help the individual as needed to do what they are trying to do, without taking over.
Leave pauses for the individual to formulate responses.
Use actions/signs to develop understanding of key words.
Give instructions one step at a time.

Use simple, direct language. Keep the language short and concrete. Focus on a small number of target words across time, context and people.
Use visual prompts to encourage activities and change of activity.
Observe individual for signs of ‘emerging negation’, e.g. shaking head, swiping away.

TOP TIPS:

Use ‘talk’ to anticipate or initiate what the individual will be doing within a routine, ask individual to ‘look after’ an item that will be needed, e.g. shoe.
Multi-sensory learning of target vocabulary using real objects, actions, signs, pictures, to develop/reinforce understanding.
Observe individual for signs of ‘emerging recurrence’, e.g. gestures to indicate ‘more’.

Individual Assessment

B Squared Ltd

22 Aug 2024 - Student Name - Social Interaction, Social Interaction - 8 / Start Date: 1 Aug 2024 / Progress: 0%

Environmental Awareness

- Brings a specific object from another room when asked
- Dances to music
- Demonstrates curiosity in the outside world
- Explores a new environment, away from members of staff
- Handles animals gently
- Identifies the sound source when an object is out of view
- Notices changes in the environment
- Recognises a familiar object regardless of colour, e.g. pencil/cup
- Runs freely, avoiding large obstacles
- Sits appropriately in public spaces
- Tolerates interruptions
- Volunteers to help put objects away

Independence Skills

- Demonstrates an awareness of the purpose of simple kitchen equipment
- Eats and swallows only edible substances
- Expresses that socks get put on before shoes
- Feels objects that may be hot with care
- Gets ready for lunch
- Pours water from one container to another with little spillage
- Puts the lid on a container
- Remains at work station while using specific equipment
- Shows an awareness of routines, e.g. home time, bedtime, meal time, etc.
- Shows an awareness of where own possessions are located
- Shows awareness that some things can hurt
- Sits at the table for a meal
- Takes the lid off to find an object placed in a container
- Understands that the cooker makes food hot
- Unwraps a small object
- Uses simple tools with pliable material
- Uses spoon well and attempts to scoop with a fork

Engagement with others

- Accepts some boundaries for a short period
- Communicates in a manner that can be understood by a familiar person
- Communicates 'Please' and 'Thanks' or 'Ta' when reminded using words, signs or symbols
- Communicates 'Sorry' when reminded using words, signs, or symbols
- Co-operates with another on a task
- Joins in play with others briefly
- Recognises how they can show concern
- Repeats an action that created laughter
- Shares out things to other people in the group
- Shows an awareness of the feelings of others
- Stops an action when told
- Waits their turn when lining up
- Works alongside a peer without support from a member of staff
- Works with two other peers, with assistance

Strategies to Support Students

UNIVERSAL APPROACHES:

Create “irresistible invitations to learn” by making yourself noticeable and introducing objects or experiences which are intrinsically fun for the individual (Gina Davies. Available at: www.ginadavies.co.uk).
Encourage playfulness with turn-taking interactions. Follow the individual’s lead, match their type of turn and try to balance the number of turns you each take.
Call the individual’s name before giving any spoken information and wait for the individual to turn towards you or give some indication they have heard you before speaking, e.g. by stilling.
Plan first-hand experiences and challenges appropriate to the stage of the individual, challenging but achievable.
Set up interesting objects/events and wait for the individual to draw your attention to them.
Lots of new experiences - set up shared experiences that can be reflected upon together or shared with others, e.g. visits, cooking, stories that can be re-enacted or reflected on supported by photographs or remnants.
Turn-taking activities in small groups with adult support. The group work may be problematic.
Develop simple “social stories” to explain new events or “invisible” social information (Carol Gray Available at: www.carolgraysocialstories.com).
Build in opportunities for role-play to develop different points of view and how other people think (theory of mind).
Opportunities to be responsible for something else, e.g. pet/plant, membership of a committee.
Use “Moment of Choice Map of Possibilities” to support contextually appropriate behaviour e.g. appropriate behaviour in swimming pool (Brain in Hand app).
Seek the views of the individual regarding familiar concrete experiences using “Talking Mats” (Lois Cameron. Available at: www.talkingmats.com), e.g. to discuss menu planning, leisure activities etc.
Approach with playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy.
Consider a range of ways in which you can enable the individual to make choices, e.g. PECS, Communication Books, Talking Mats, etc.
Share photos with the individual, talking with them about what they did and how it felt, e.g. take photos of things as they happen so you can talk about them after the event.
Position yourself so that you can be seen and heard, allowing for sensory loss such as poor hearing/vision.
Everyone uses the same visual support in all environments, e.g. at home and in school
Ensure any AAC communication support is always available, e.g. the individual carries their PECS book for themselves or that the iPad is always in the right place for individual to access.
Create a visualised communication environment which includes signs, schedules, labels and behaviour prompts (better communication research programme).

SKILL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES:

Create “communicative temptations” e.g. by having a reminder in sight but not in reach, by having objects which you can work but the other individual needs help with.
Developing play through “self-pretend” play or simple actions in toy building e.g. Teddy’s day or Superhero’s day “Joint play and inter-subjectivity” link.
Early interaction - wait and allow the individual time to start the conversation. Leave pauses for responses.
Play games which involve listening for a signal such as ‘Simon says’ and ‘ready steady go’.
Help individual to recognise when their actions hurt others. However, be wary of expecting the individual to say “Sorry” unless they have an understanding of what this means.

Give praise for following instructions and undertaking specific self-initiated tasks, e.g. send them to show their work to another member of staff.
The individual, with appropriate communication resources, takes part in discussions about their care and support.
Praise the individual's behaviour.
Look for key indicators of anxiety and use appropriate coping strategy.
Always greet and say goodbye to the individual.
Decide on key vocabulary linked to activities and ensure that all carers regularly model its use in a range of contexts.
Label the experiences that you notice the individual attending to e.g. "wow...that's a CAR".
Make implicit information explicit by labelling and describing what is seen, supported by pictures and symbols embedded in the environment, e.g. to go out in the car we need to get the car keys first. If it is raining you will need a jacket and if it is sunny you will need a hat.
Cue individual into a change of conversation, e.g. "Now we are going to talk about…"
Use two to four pictures/symbolic reminders for routines, e.g. brushing teeth (toothpaste on brush, brush teeth, rinse brush).
Have visual prompts that allow the individuals to ask for things, e.g. a drink.
Display photographs of carers so that they can see who they are working with.

TOP TIPS:

Encourage the individual to use others' names (spoken, signed or with picture symbols).
Model patterns of play.
Mixed social group opportunities in familiar settings/contexts, e.g. dining table.



Want to find out more?

To find out how Connecting Steps can make a difference in your school, go to the website below to arrange a free online meeting. We can show you how Connecting Steps works, what frameworks are right for you, and the benefits to your school.

www.connectingsteps.com/meetings

Or get in touch with us...

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