



BSquared 

What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Presented by: [Dale Pickles, Managing Director, B Squared](#)

SEND Expertise

Over 20 years of experience working in SEND, helping schools assess progress for pupils with SEND.



Product Development

Designs and develops innovative products tailored to meet the needs of schools and their students.



SENDcast Sessions

Host of SENDcast Sessions, delivering affordable, high-quality CPD for schools, including 6-monthly FREE SEND briefings.



20+ years in SEND solutions for schools.

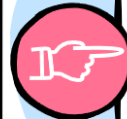
Innovative Solutions

Provides schools with solutions around assessment, data management, and tracking the progress of pupils with SEND.



SENDcast Host

Host of the award-winning SENDcast, a podcast focused on Special Needs, with over 350,000 downloads.



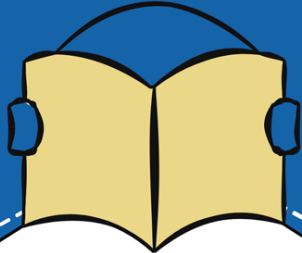
Neurodiversity Advocate

Passionate advocate for neurodiversity as someone with autism and ADHD, promoting inclusion professionally and personally.



B Squared Overview

What schools ask for informs us; what they need inspires us



1 Focus on SEND Pupils

B Squared concentrates on aiding pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) by identifying and tracking the essential small steps of progress that are crucial for their development and ensuring they are aptly supported.



2 25 Years of Expertise

With over a quarter-century of industry experience, B Squared has become a leader in monitoring and demonstrating progress for pupils with SEND, providing educational institutions with reliable and proven tools to facilitate effective learning.



3 Commitment to Inclusion

Inclusion is a core value for B Squared, and we design products that support all pupils, regardless of their educational needs. Our inclusive approach ensures that no student is left behind.



4 Collaboration with Schools

B Squared works closely with hundreds of schools each year, helping them tackle challenges related to assessment, data management, and progress demonstration. These partnerships enable the creation of tailored solutions that effectively meet individual school needs.



5 Versatile Frameworks

Our frameworks are designed to cater to a diverse range of abilities and ages, ensuring that every pupil's progress can be accurately measured and tracked, thus promoting an inclusive educational environment.



6 Adaptable Tools

Our assessment tools are highly adaptable and customizable, allowing schools the flexibility to implement them in ways that best suit their specific requirements, enhancing the effectiveness of their educational strategies.



End of Key Stage Assessment

**Pre-Key Stage Standards and
The Engagement Model
are for end of Key Stage 1 and 2 only**



The Engagement Model

The underlying principles of the Engagement Model work and are based on research conducted by the CLDD project.

The principles apply to all learners, not just pupils with complex needs.
Higher engagement leads to improved outcomes for all learners.

It was never intended as a summative assessment process/tool. It was designed as an ongoing approach to support pupils.



The Engagement Model

“Schools have the freedom to decide how to use the engagement model alongside their existing planning, assessment and recording systems”

Page 8, The Engagement Model

“To allow maximum engagement, teachers should set realistic but appropriate success criteria that are specific to the pupil and set out how progress will be monitored against each of the criteria”

Page 14, The Engagement Model

“The Engagement Model” serves no real purpose to schools



Pre-Key Stage Standards - Use Them Correctly

“they should not be used to track progress throughout the key stage”

“Those reviewing school performance, including Ofsted inspectors, would not expect them to be used for anything other than summative assessment at the end of the key stage.”

Page 5 of the Pre-Key Stage Standards

The pre-key stage standards are for accountability only. They should not be used to summarise learning within the key stage for EHCPs, annual reviews or anything else!



Ongoing Assessment

The Government gives no guidance around ongoing assessment for pupils in early years, primary or secondary.

Schools can choose what is appropriate to meet pupil's needs.

The problem is, in some schools, the pupil's needs are not very high on the list when it comes to decision making.

It is easy to spot those schools, they are using the pre-key stage standards or simply using the term "Below"



Ofsted Inspection Framework 2025

“leaders use the ‘graduated approach’ (a continuous cycle of ‘assess, plan, do and review’) which helps to ensure that pupils receive an appropriate level of support and meets pupils’ needs, and staff receive suitable training and support to implement it”

“leaders make sure their work improves the progress and achievement of pupils with SEND and they do not lower their expectations of them”

“leaders monitor the progress of pupils with SEND, and review adaptations and support systematically, making any necessary changes to improve their learning and/or well-being”

Inclusion, Page 13, Ofsted Inspection Framework 2025



Ofsted Inspection Framework 2025

“whether the school provides a high-quality education for all pupils (the impact), especially disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND,”

“the progress that pupils make across the curriculum from their starting points, so that they know more, remember more and are able to do more”

“preparing pupils, at each phase, for the next stage of education, training or employment”

Achievement, Page 27, Ofsted Inspection Framework 2025



Ofsted Inspection Framework 2025

“keep in mind that published outcomes data may not give a sufficiently detailed picture of the progress and achievement of some groups of pupils, or this data might not be available, and therefore evidence gathered on site is crucial to evaluating progress and achievement”

“consider pupils’ starting points and the progress they make from them; inspectors also want to understand the curriculum pathways of individuals or groups, and whether leaders have identified the right priorities for them and are ensuring that they make good progress”

Achievement, Page 29, Ofsted Inspection Framework 2025



Assessing Progress for Pupils with SEND

BELOW / SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW / WORKING TOWARDS.....

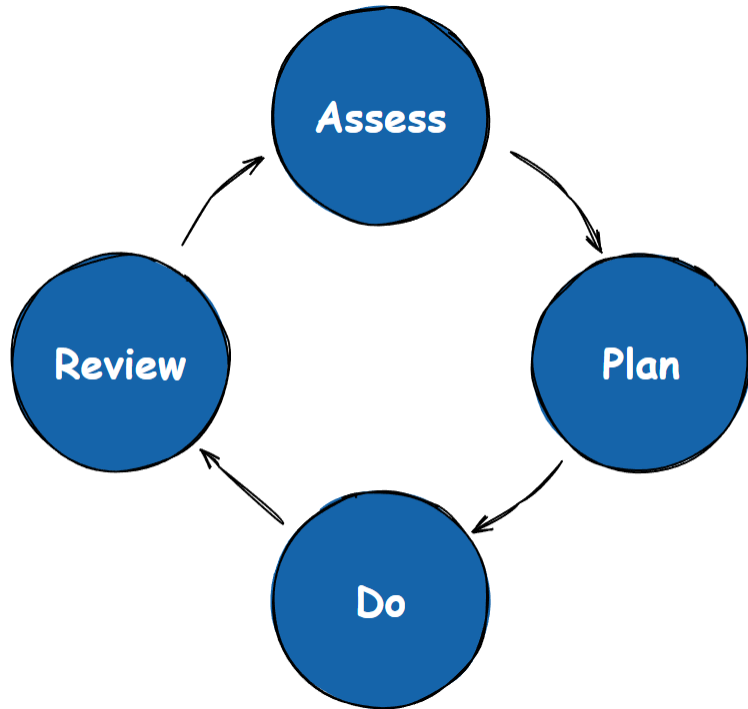
If this is the only way you record attainment and progress. You need to change!

These phrases do not show progress, do not show impact, so not support APDR and it does not support teachers to support the pupils or the conversations with parents or professionals in discussing the students needs.

It is a great way to say these students don't matter and not your priority.



Assess Plan Do Review (APDR)



We all know the APDR cycle and the graduated approach, but it is sometimes used extremely badly.

“Can anyone recommend a Year 4 writing intervention?”

People are often rushing to the Do part of the cycle or only doing the Do part. They find an intervention someone recommends and start using it. It is often not effective.

Spend more time on Assess!

What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

What is good progress for
pupils with SEND?





What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

There is no Holy Grail

What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Can you show progress from starting point?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

What are you doing?

How are you measuring the impact?

Do you have the right tools to measure impact?

Unless you can see the small steps of progress and show impact, you will never be able to identify if progress is good enough?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

“consider pupils’ starting points and the progress they make from them; inspectors also want to understand the curriculum pathways of individuals or groups, and whether leaders have identified the right priorities for them and are ensuring that they make good progress”

Achievement, Page 29, Ofsted Inspection Framework 2025

So much more than just Reading, Writing and Maths! Where else do they need support? SEMH, Communication and Interaction, Executive Function? Are you helping them Prepare For Adulthood (PFA)?

How do you decide what is important for your pupils?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

There is no simple answer, there is no formula and there is no data set for pupils with SEND (and there should never be!) to tell you if progress is good enough.

Data does not give a judgement, and should not be used as a judgement for pupils with SEND.



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

The data gives us questions to ask about pupil progress. These questions need to be answered by the professionals who work with the pupils.

If a pupil is targeted to make 30% progress but they only make 20% progress, it does not mean they haven't made good progress. You need to ask why?

**Data-based decision making is different
to data-based judgements**

What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Attend, Engage, Attain, Excel

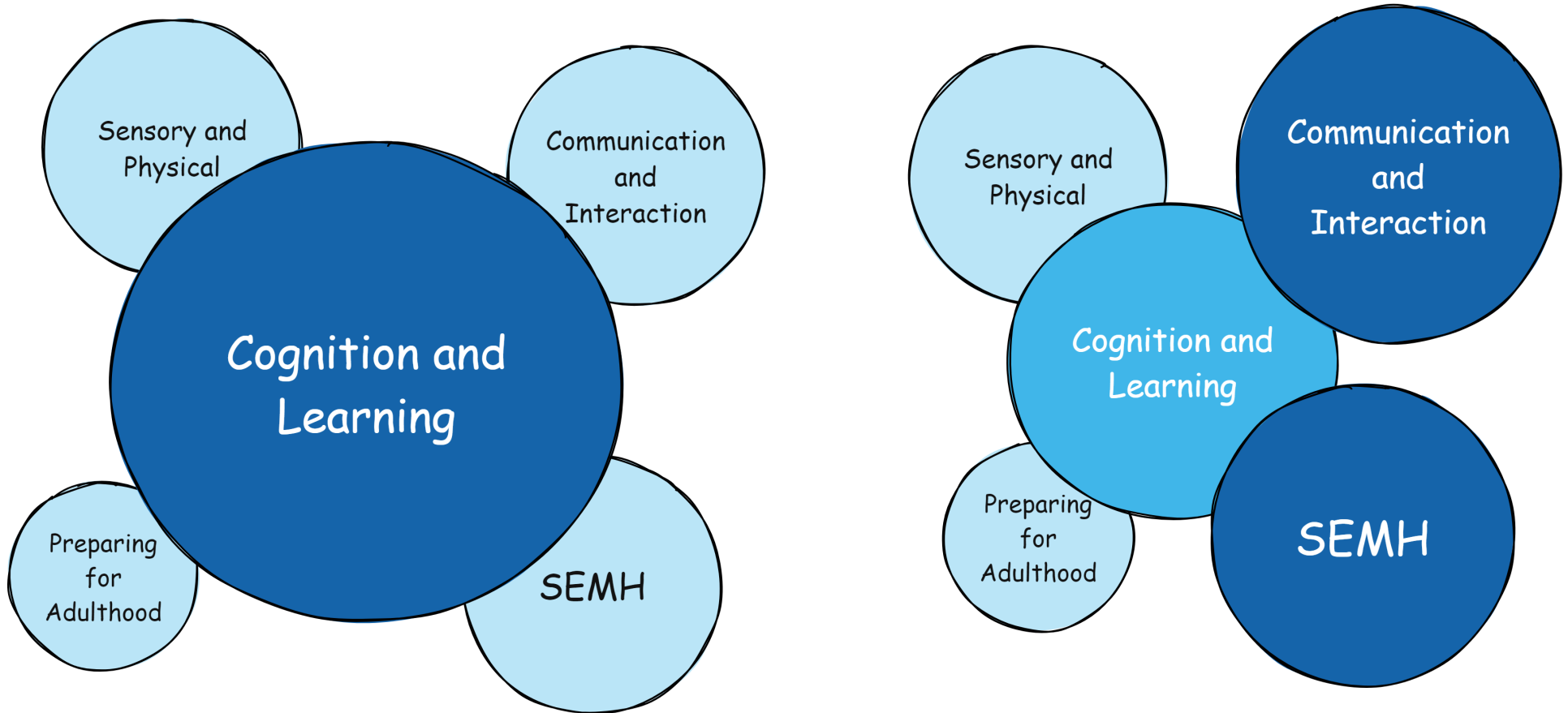
The Children's Commissioner's School Census, September 2025

Engagement is crucial!

Children are unlikely to attend if they have no sense of belonging. Engaging learning builds that belonging. Once a child engages, the attainment begins, and if you keep them engaged, they can go on to excel.



Change how you judge progress



Change how you judge progress

Linear Progress

Focuses on the difference between two attainment points, assumes all students learn in a specific sequence.

Non-linear Progress

Celebrates all aspects of progress, recognising student's strengths across different levels.

Achievement Progress

Celebrates progress towards specific skills acquisition and acknowledges reduced need for support.

Engagement Progress

Emphasises students' increasing involvement and active participation as a form of notable progress.



Cause vs Effect

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting different results.

The Government sometimes thinks that to improve an area of education you just keep repeating it until the pupil finally achieves it. If a pupil struggles with phonics, just keep doing phonics until they get it.

You might see a pupil struggling with Maths (the effect), but that is probably not the cause. If you only focus on the effect, you can spend lots of time focussing on the wrong area and see no improvement. There is so much more going on before we get to Maths.



Cause vs Effect

Maslow's Hierarchy of Need

Understanding basic needs helps in analyzing student progress, as unmet needs affect learning and concentration.



Support Provided

Evaluating the effectiveness of support systems in place for aiding student learning and progress.



Curriculum

Analyzing curriculum relevance to ensure it meets student needs and supports learning objectives effectively.



Four Broad Areas of Need

Recognizing diverse needs: cognition, communication, emotional, and sensory factors in individualized educational assessments.



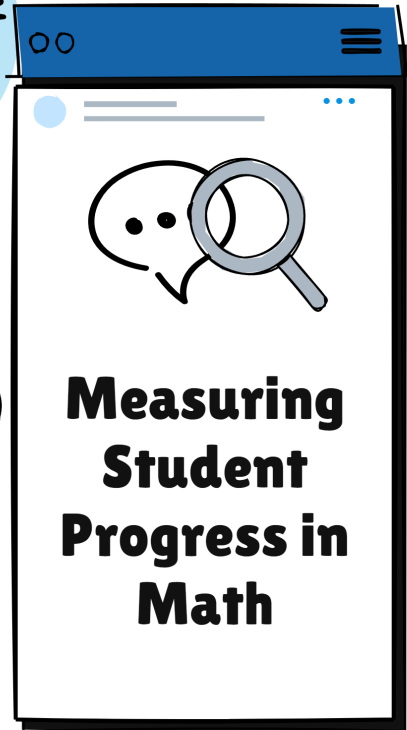
Quality of Teaching

Measures how teaching methodologies impact student understanding and retention of mathematical concepts.



Teacher's Curriculum Knowledge

Understanding teacher proficiency in the subject area to better address student questions and learning challenges.



Progress measures learning effectiveness, not pupils.



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

- What was the pupil working towards this year?
- How does progress compare to last year?
- In what areas has the pupil made progress?
- What changes have we implemented and what effect has this had?
- How does their progress compare to other pupils working at the same level?
- Have there been external factors?
- What support has been put in place?

You might feel they could make more progress, but within their current context, is the progress good enough?

What are you changing, to remove the barriers? How are you supporting them to achieve the progress you believe they're capable of?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Only those who know a pupil can answer if progress is good enough.

What is good progress for one pupil might not be good progress for the next. Answering the question 'Is progress good enough?' depends on which version of the question you are asking.

Has the pupil made good progress with the quality of teaching and support available?

OR

Has the pupil made good progress based on the time spent learning in this area?

OR

Has the pupil made good progress?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Progress is not really measuring a pupil's performance

(you aren't really measuring their ability, effort or potential)

You are measuring how effective and engaging your learning opportunities are, how well you remove barriers and provide support and how inclusive you are.

When you are looking at and judging progress for your pupils with SEND, you aren't judging the students or the teachers. You are generally judging the senior leaders. You are judging the decisions they make, the priorities they set for the school and the ethos they have created.



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Example:

A Year 3 child, aged 8, but working at the start of Primary Step 3 — roughly the developmental stage of a 4-year-old. They are making progress at a rate of roughly six months for every year in school.

Primary Step 3 represents around a year of development. Based on their current rate of progress, over the next year you would expect them to cover about half of this step.

If they make the same progress as before, is it good progress?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

**Let's start with the assumption:
“Good progress can be defined as progress that is increasing
over time”**

It means the student is better supported. You understand the student's needs and you're better at supporting them. They have a better sense of belonging, learning is more engaging etc.

To show this impact, you need to track their small steps of progress.



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

If the progress is the same as last year, why might it not be good progress?

You shouldn't be sitting still. You have had another year of learning about the pupil, using pupil voice, going through APDR cycles, finding out what doesn't work and what does work. You should be better at meeting a pupil's needs each year.

You should be removing barriers every year and helping them to succeed.

If progress is the same, you aren't removing barriers



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

If the progress is the same as last year, why might it be good progress?

As I mentioned before, there are so many factors that can have a negative impact on progress. Their attendance, home life, Maslow's hierarchy of need, quality of teaching (including passing information on about how they learn to the next teacher) and so much more.

If they are making the same progress as last year, but have faced greater challenges, is that not good progress?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

If they make less progress than last year, why might it be good progress?

So many factors can have an impact on progress. There can be various transitions, not just between schools, but other transitions both in school and in their home life.

For some children, development may plateau or decline due to life-limiting or degenerative conditions. For these children, you really need to ask what is the right curriculum for them. What is important for them?

Really knowing the children and understanding their needs will help you to say whether progress or regression is good progress.



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Good progress for pupils with SEND is:

As a whole school, understanding the needs of your pupils with SEND, providing the environment and support they need, and removing the barriers so that the pupils can engage with their learning.

If a school is consistently asking questions about pupils needs, removing barriers and improving provision, this will have a positive impact.



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Should you set more aspirational targets to increase progress for pupils with SEND?

No!

How do you increase progress for pupils with SEND?

By meeting their needs!



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Where does Connecting Steps fit in?

Our academic frameworks, alongside SEMH, Communication & Interaction, and the upcoming Executive Function framework, help schools understand pupils' needs and evidence the impact of removing barriers.

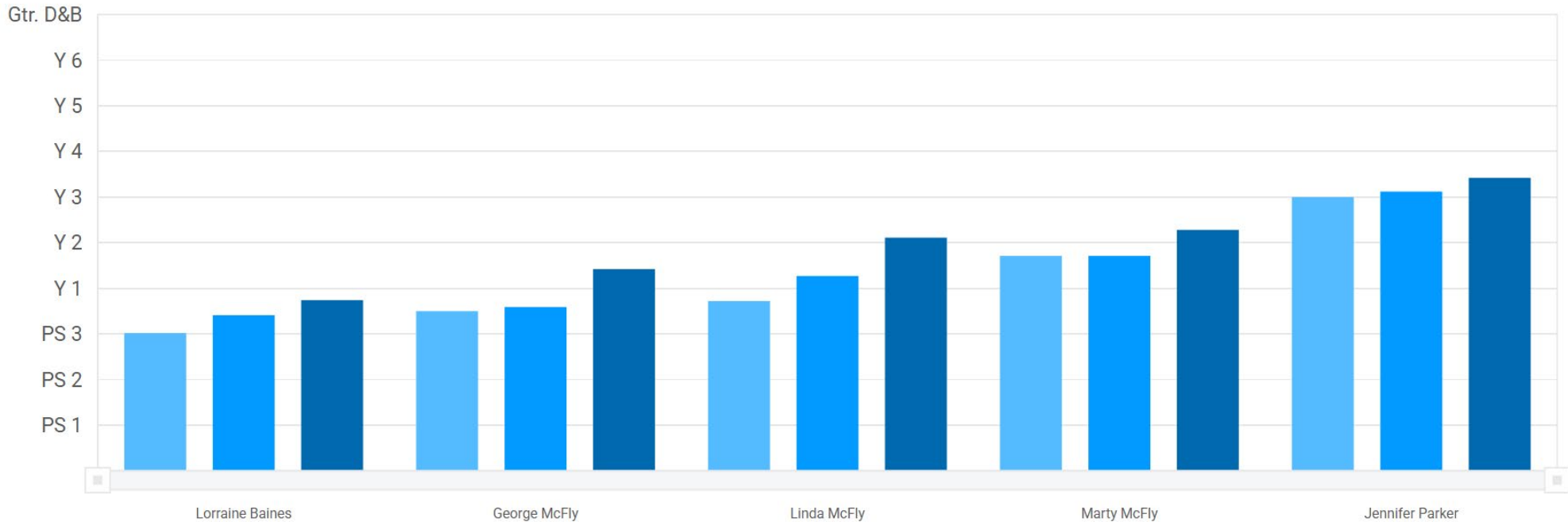
Connecting Steps plays a role in the APDR cycle: it informs the Assess stage by identifying needs, and the Review stage by evidencing the impact and progress.

And of course, it shows those small steps of progress



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Where does Connecting Steps fit in?



What is good progress for pupils with SEND?

Where does Evisense fit in?

Evisense is where we can evidence the progress being made, show the impact of our changes and engage parents in meaningful communication.

We can use One Page Profiles within Evisense to share information easily and to get input from everyone in school and include parent's point of view

Evisense is a great collaboration tool where you can capture pupil voice and parent voice and celebrate the progress and wider achievements with parents.



B Squared's assessment system



Connecting Steps has a wide range of assessment frameworks for different ages and abilities.

Early Steps for early years and Primary Steps for primary both show small steps for pupils working at lower attainment levels.

There are also additional frameworks like SEMH, Communication and Interaction, PFA and Autism Progress that help profile how a pupil's autism impacts them.



Connecting Steps

Selection

Group Type
Registration

Group
BTTF

Student
Biff Tannen

Framework
Primary Steps

[Need more frameworks?](#)

Subject
English

Profile
Writing

Level
Y 1

Today Today

Reset

History

Individual Assessment

17 Oct 2024 - Biff Tannen - English, Writing - Year 1 / Start Date: 3 Nov 2007 / Complete Date: 27 Mar 2024

View | Sort | Filter

Use Baseline Date: 1 Sep 2023 | Today | Add Achievement

Composition

↳ Planning and preparation -

Talks to an adult about what they wish to write	Says sentence aloud before writing	Discusses where they think a punctuation mark should be placed after reading aloud their writing
M 17 Jun 2012	M 12 Aug 2021	M 20 Mar 2023

↳ Drafting and writing -

Conveys ideas using phrases or short sentences	Conveys information using phrases or short sentences	Makes up their own sentences and says them aloud, after discussion with the teacher (PKSS)	Writes down one of the sentences that they have rehearsed (PKSS)	Writes sentences in order, to create a simple narrative
M 21 Mar 2013	G 24 Jan 2024	E 17 Oct 2024	E 17 Oct 2024	M 13 Sep 2021

↳ Evaluating and editing -

Makes amendments on reading own writing	Answers questions about the content of their writing	Discusses what they have written with other pupils or members of staff	Re-reads writing using the same words with some support	Reads their own work aloud, for the class to hear
M 10 Nov 2023	M 26 Jan 2014	M 7 Jun 2023	M 8 Dec 2013	E 8 Mar 2023

Vocabulary, Grammar & Punctuation

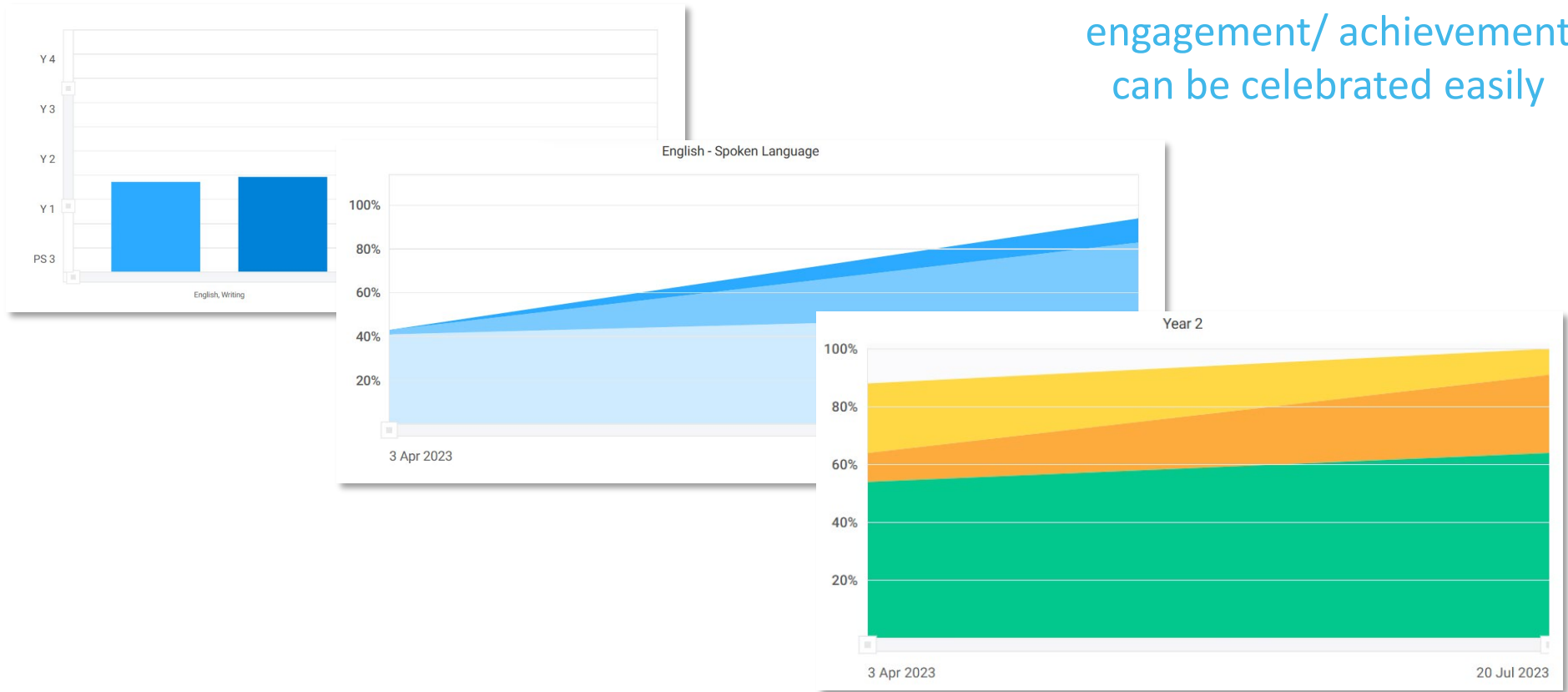
↳ Demonstrates some understanding of the terms -

Letter	Capital letter	Word	Singular	Plural
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Connecting Steps

Linear, non-linear and engagement/ achievement can be celebrated easily



Assessing Progress for Pupils with SEND

A school looking to use the software for up to 30 pupils with SEND

This license is limited to 30 pupils and comes with our AI features.

First Year costs

Connecting Steps with AI +
Primary Steps Core +
Hosting =
£1025 first year

Ongoing costs

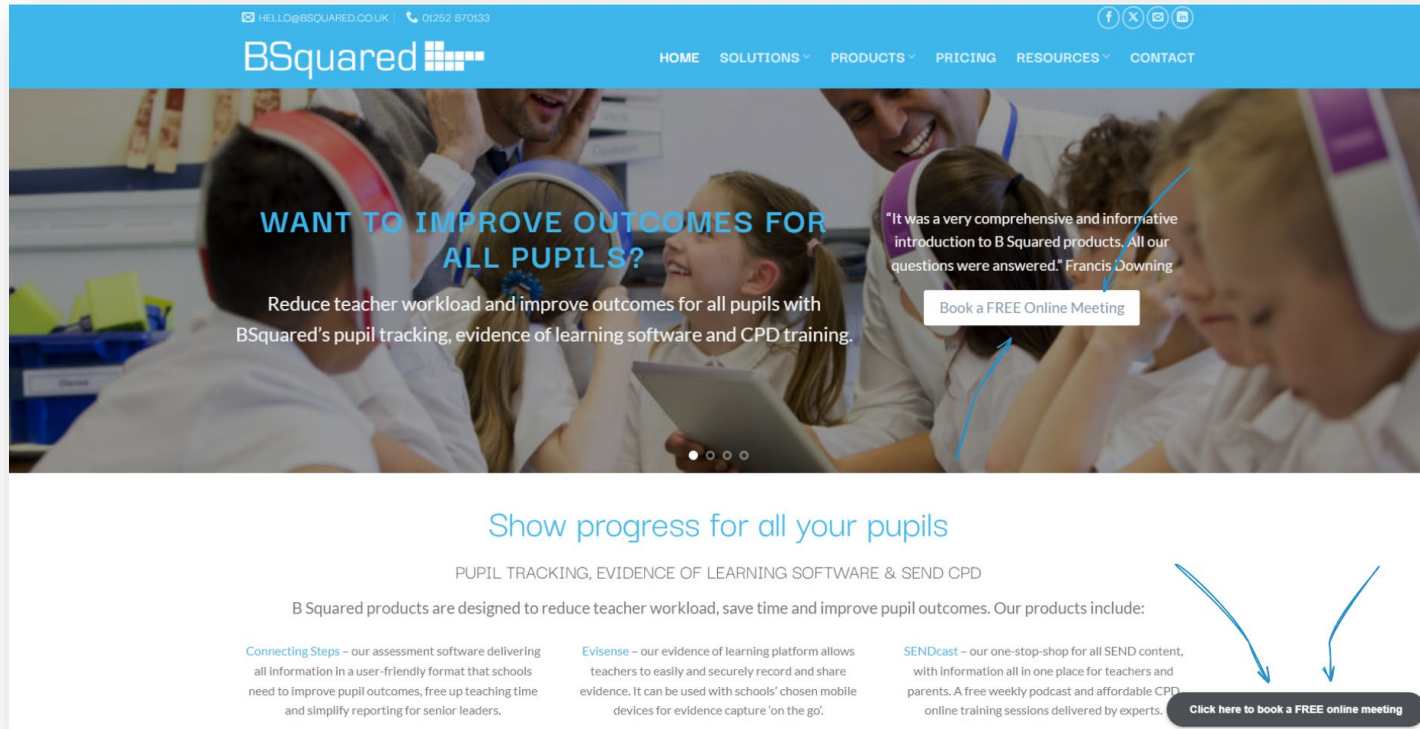
Hosting
£245 per year

Book a FREE online meeting on the B Squared website to find out more


www.bsquared.co.uk



Connecting Steps



HELLO@BSQUARED.CO.UK | 01252 870133

BSquared 

HOME SOLUTIONS PRODUCTS PRICING RESOURCES CONTACT

WANT TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR ALL PUPILS?

Reduce teacher workload and improve outcomes for all pupils with BSquared's pupil tracking, evidence of learning software and CPD training.

Book a FREE Online Meeting

"It was a very comprehensive and informative introduction to B Squared products. All our questions were answered." Francis Downing

Show progress for all your pupils

PUPIL TRACKING, EVIDENCE OF LEARNING SOFTWARE & SEND CPD

B Squared products are designed to reduce teacher workload, save time and improve pupil outcomes. Our products include:

- Connecting Steps** - our assessment software delivering all information in a user-friendly format that schools need to improve pupil outcomes, free up teaching time and simplify reporting for senior leaders.
- Evisense** - our evidence of learning platform allows teachers to easily and securely record and share evidence. It can be used with schools' chosen mobile devices for evidence capture 'on the go'.
- SENDcast** - our one-stop-shop for all SEND content, with information all in one place for teachers and parents. A free weekly podcast and affordable CPD online training sessions delivered by experts.

Click here to book a FREE online meeting

Book a FREE online meeting and we will take you through what Connecting Steps can do and how it can support your teachers and pupils



Improving Knowledge Around SEND



SENDcast PODCAST



APPLE PODCASTS



SPOTIFY

- FREE podcast, listen via the website, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Audible, Amazon Music and any other podcast app
- New episode every week, with over 270 episodes featuring over 100 different guests and over 450,000 downloads!
- Covers a wide range of topics including anxiety, emotions, Autism, school avoidance, masking, ADHD, behaviour, language, SENCO workload, ACC and so much more
- Created to support everyone in schools, parents and more.

www.thesendcast.com

Or just search SENDcast in any podcast app



Improving Knowledge Around SEND



“Excellent content delivered in a very convenient way and at a very reasonable price.”

Janet Bristow, SENCO - Perrymount Primary School

- High quality online SEND training delivered by experts
- Improve outcomes for children with SEND
- £10 for 1-hour training sessions for your whole school
- Build a library of online CPD training to access anytime
- Covers a wide range of topics including literacy, inclusion, Autism, ADHD, behaviour, language, SEND law and so much more
- Created to support everyone in schools – so your whole school can get training around SEND, not just the SENDCO!
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Dale Pickles – *email me for more information or if you want a copy of my slides*
dale@bsquared.co.uk

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