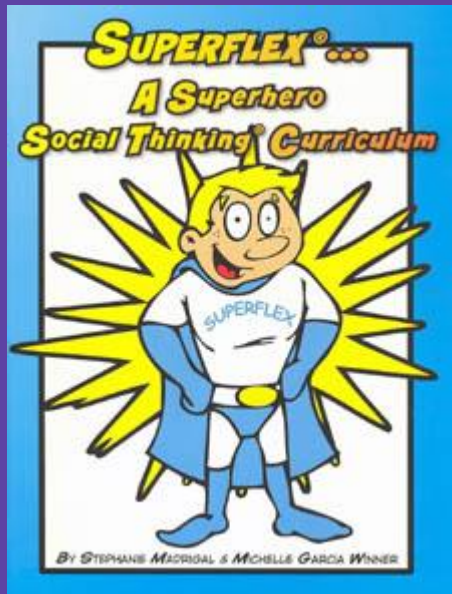


# Superflex



Drumbeat

School & ASD Service



# What is it?

- We have adapted the Superflex social thinking curriculum to help students increase awareness of behaviour and develop ways of being super-flexible thinkers.





# Why do we do it?

- Many of our students find it difficult to monitor and regulate their own behaviours. This curriculum provides a fun forum where they can explore their own challenges and identify ways to modify thoughts and related behaviours.
- Children with ASD can find it difficult to learn hidden social rules. This curriculum teaches these rules and promotes highly flexible thinking.
- Superflex is an ASD specific intervention developed by Stephanie Madrigal and Michelle Garcia Winner. The team of unthinkables present with different social and interaction difficulties that children with Autism can relate to. The superhero Superflex helps students find ways to stop their brains getting side-tracked and rigid in unsocial ways.
- Superflex is a relatively new treatment but grounded in the principles of cognitive behavioural therapy for which there is a strong evidence base.

# How do we deliver it?

- Group sessions last between thirty to forty five minutes, and generally run weekly.
- The sessions incorporate videos, discussion, practical exercises, sensory experiences, role play and homework assignments.
- At Drumbeat the curriculum is delivered to primary and secondary pupils at the higher end of the spectrum, with adaptations made such as visual support to enable greater understanding and involvement.
- Initially principles of flexible and inflexible thinking are explored. Then core focus of each session is to explore either the Superflex Superhero or the qualities of the “Unthinkable's” that get in the way of flexible thinking.
- Students are encouraged to understand how “the Unthinkable's” impact on them personally and develop ways in which to “beat” them. They also learn about the team of “thinkables” who can help to defeat them. They support each other with this too.



# Who has the group benefitted?

- The Superflex curriculum has been delivered at Drumbeat since 2013. It has been used with a variety of classes across Primary and Key Stage 3, as well as with targeted groups of children.
- In addition, a “Superlego” group runs weekly, which incorporates ideas from Superflex with lego therapy, enabling students to further build on their social skills in role play and group games together.
- The superflex curriculum has also generalised outside of the sessions, with students using their strategies in class, keeping diaries to encourage reflection each week, and teachers helping to spot moments of flexibility or when unthinkable characters might be causing problems.

# Comments from students and staff

Feedback from students and staff has been gathered and has been largely positive.

## Students:

- “We learnt about being flexible and inflexible”
- “I like all the activities and games we played”
- “I learnt about what to do if we feel grumpy... calm down and time out”
- “It’s calmed me down, given me good memories, good thoughts, and kepted me calmed down and flexible.”
- “I would have liked to do more on batman and spiderman”
- “Its given me nice memories. My favourite unthinkable was the Enforcer, he only cares about the rules. You can walk away to defeat him.”
- “It was great, all about memories, tell the teacher if someone’s getting angry, it’s the coolest ever”
- “Superflex is about being calm, not punching or kicking or not arguing with each other, or fighting. It’s about when in Superflex you must tell the teacher, or be calm.”
- “I remember rock brain”
- “Supaflex is fun. He helps at home, class, everywhere. He helps everyone”
- “The Red Beast is scary”

## Staff:

- “The students all worked really hard and got a lot out of it, Superflex is the way forward!”
- “R is better at turn taking and J is more confident.”
- “I think it is a great way to help students with their emotions.”
- “I think it’s a very useful course for students, and ... its really good for adults and teachers to take part in the sessions to understand the issues that the students are facing”

# Photographic evidence

The students made Superflex and The Unthinkable's characters. We use pipe cleaners to represent Superflex's flexible thinking, and clay for Rock Brain's inflexible thinking.



We role played social situations and solved any problems together.



(Grump Grumpaniny)

Everyone drew pictures of happy and grumpy thoughts. J is then destroying his grumpy thought. Primary are sorting happy and grumpy characters.



(Topic Twistermeister)

We all wrote down a topic to practise talking about the same thing.

# More Evidence...



The idea of glass man, who shatters at small incidents, is introduced by smashing ice together, and breaking a puzzle.



The students made tornados in bottles to explore Anger and practised strategies to help control it.



The Students exploring the concepts of flexible and inflexible using spaghetti.