

Social Thinking Policy Document

Introduction - What

Social competency and resilience are fundamental to living and communicating with others and these life skills enable us to understand the thoughts, feelings, intentions and actions of others and adapt our behaviour accordingly. We may consider these as an ability to think flexibly.

All children and young people (CYP) with ASD experience challenges navigating the social world to a lesser or greater extent because of associated difficulties with social communication, social interaction and **flexibility of thinking**.

This inflexible thinking often leads to difficulties with interpreting the thoughts, feelings and intentions of others and of predicting their actions. We often refer to these difficulties as difficulties with **theory of mind**. There is also a limited ability to make sense of the whole picture from the information available. People with ASD tend to focus on the detail and have a weak drive towards **central coherence**.

Aims and Objectives- Why

Drumbeat Outreach are committed to enabling social competence and building social resilience

- To deliver training to all settings to develop awareness of the social difficulties and challenges inherent in a diagnosis of ASD
- To embed a social competency curriculum in mainstream schools
- Identifying strengths and needs in social competency of each individual with ASD

- Teach the strategies to learn and then use social skills that relate to the level of social understanding of each individual child or young person
- To use the interests and strengths of individuals to support and develop social understanding and resilience
- Using concrete visual strategies to support social understanding, and the perspective of others
- To teach explicitly the social thinking skills necessary to develop social competence e.g. predicting, inferring, problem solving
- To generalise learning from 1:1 working, group sessions and whole class learning to real life situations and experiences
- To teach social thinking and doing through: favourite TV shows, films, drama role-play, stories, comic strips etc.
- To provide guidance on selection organisation and delivery of suitable teaching materials to facilitate social thinking and doing
- To work directly with individual students, groups of CYP in order to model the teaching specific social communication and interaction skills

Strategies and Resources - How

Comic strip conversations

Social Stories

Social mapping

Social Eyes