

ENGAGING PARENTS IN SEN SUPPORT

BRIAN LAMB

**Review of arrangements
for disagreement
resolution (SEND)****Research report**

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What parents want?

- To see their child's needs being recognised and met so the child/ young person has as good a chance as possible of a fulfilling life
- To be in good communication with professionals/workers dealing with their child/young person's case
- To be listened to and have their views taken on board – or at least be respectfully included in discussion around 'next best' options
- To interact with staff who know and apply SEND law and principles and who understand good practice
- To interact with staff who show understanding and empathy of the lived reality of caring for a child/young person with complex SEND

These themes mirrored in other surveys of parents views.

Models of Engaging-Expert

Parents

Parent provides information and expects support and guidance

Professionals

Professional provides expert advice

Has full control

Makes decisions and informs parents

Parents Bring;

1. Knowledge and Expertise on their Child/Insight on SEN
2. Own Resources
3. Networks
4. Support for the Approach in the Setting or School



Practitioners / Teachers Bring;

1. Knowledge and Expertise on how to teach/insight on SEN
2. Settings and Schools Resources
3. Access to additional support
4. Whole school Approach

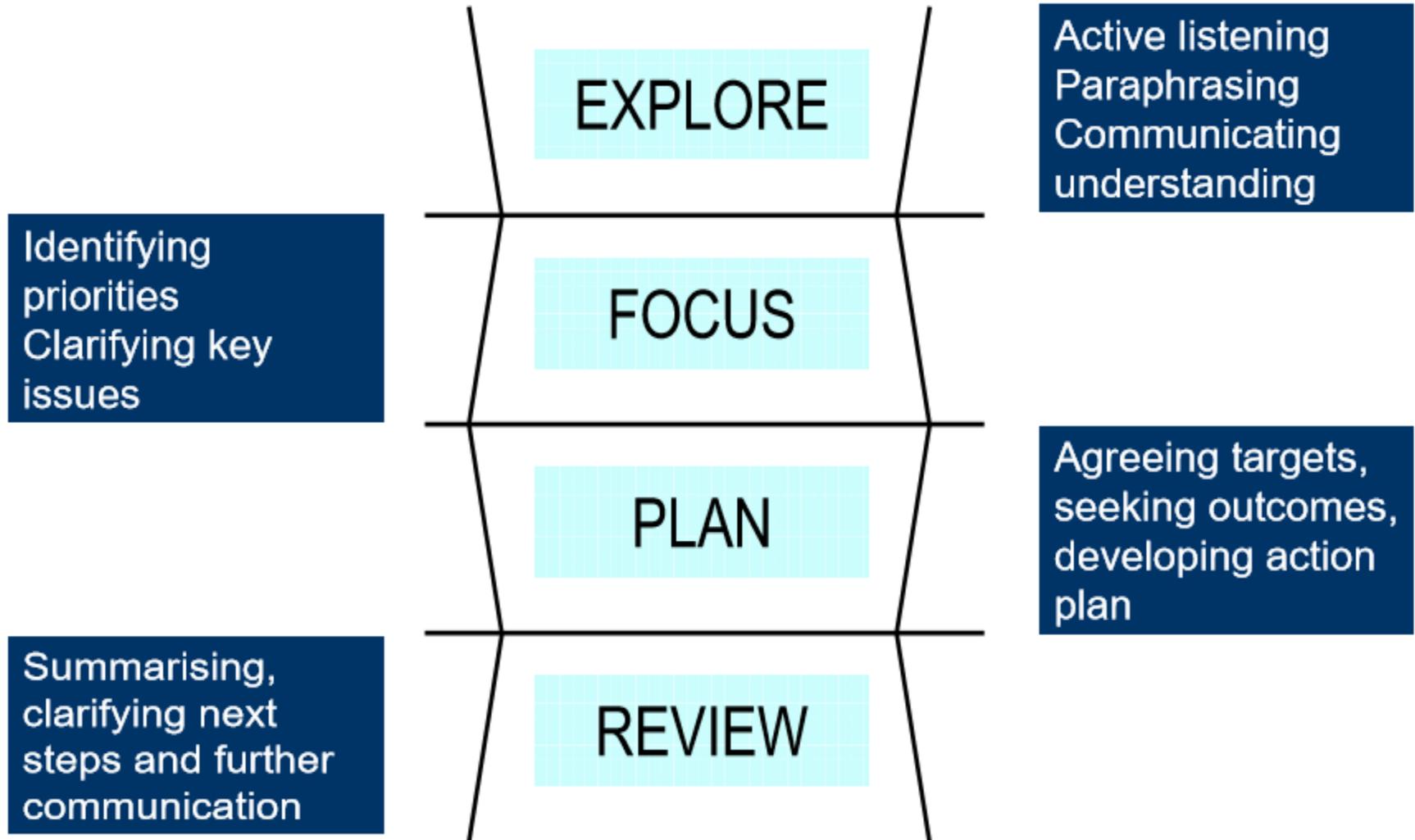


Co production

A different approach



Framework for the structured conversation



Go to <https://afaeducation.org/> for more about the structured conversation

Exercise

Get together in two's: Listener / Talker

In pairs: talk about "An issue my child/one of my SEN children needs addressing"

Each person will take a turn to either talk or listen for 1(ish) minute

The listener should attempt to paraphrase- what has been said.

Maintain a conversational rhythm

Avoid long silences

Avoid long periods of the speaker talking uninterruptedly

Then summarise what you have heard in turn and check this correct.
(half a minute)

Parental engagement

**Family learning
day/afternoon**
Lots of activities for
parents and children
to engage in – you
can often “catch”
them during this
time



Home visits for all
children (regardless of
year group) as they start
at school (very successful
as a starting point!)



**Back to school
evenings for
different subjects
or a term for KS3
parents. Very
effective – very
rewarding**



Challenges

- How do I make the time?
- How do I make contact with “hard to reach parents?”
- Needs to fit with whole school approach
- What do “good” outcomes look like?

What Works?

- Effective interventions are informed by a parental needs analysis and targeted at particular groups of parents.
- Parental support programs which focus on both academic outcomes and training in parenting skills are more effective than interventions that do not include such training.
- Parents require specific and detailed guidance and understanding of programmes, and what programmes expect parents to do.
- Significant outcomes of parenting programmes include: parents' acknowledging that a problem exists; gaining knowledge and skills to manage children's behaviour; the confidence and empathy to use these skills effectively.
- Parental engagement interventions can significantly improve the relationship between parents and children.
- Parent tutoring interventions are effective in improving literacy skills for children.
- Interventions for parents targeting children's reading outcomes bring significant benefits. Training parents to teach their children reading skills can be more than twice as effective as encouraging parents to listen to their children read.

Good Parental Involvement?

- **Planning**-Parental engagement must be planned for and embedded in a whole setting strategy. (Early Years and Schools SEN Policy/Schools Information Report)
- **Leadership**-Effective leadership of parental engagement is essential to the success of programmes and strategies. (Early Years and Schools Accountability Measures/Equality Act/Schools Information Report)
- **Collaboration and engagement**-Parental engagement requires active collaboration with parents and should be pro-active rather than reactive. It should be sensitive to the circumstances of all families, recognise the contributions parents can make, and aim to empower parents. (Assessment/parental conversation)
- **Sustained improvement**-A parental engagement strategy should be the subject of on-going support, monitoring and development. (Early years and School SEN Policy/Schools SEN Report)

