

AN EEF SCHOOL CASE STUDY: DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

Burton End Primary Academy Specialist Provision Hub

School context:



Burton End Primary Academy Specialist Provision Hub supports children in Reception and Key Stage One with complex learning needs. It caters to 12 children, all of whom have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and many rely heavily on high levels of support for many aspects of their daily life. Of the current cohort, 55% of children are eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

1 What problem were you looking to solve?



On average, our current cohort of children's development is 24 months behind their chronological age. Our aim was to develop an effective, purposeful yet streamlined method of assessment that could clarify what progress our children were making, relative to their starting points.

Regular ongoing diagnostic assessment would be needed in order to allow children to show us what they could already do and to identify where curriculum modifications might be needed, and which interventions would be most impactful. The existing system we had in place was too broad, cumbersome and uninformative.

2 What were the anticipated barriers/challenges?



Teaching and support staff were concerned that it would be challenging to identify a system capable of meeting the needs of all learners - especially those reluctant to engage in formal learning. They were keen that any new system would be manageable for staff to implement consistently and provide unique and useful information rather than known data. It was also important that the new approach would be cost effective for the small numbers of learners in our care.

3 What did you do?



Low stakes quizzing was introduced at the start of each Phonics and maths session. The quizzes are deliberately repetitive and related directly to children's targets in their EHCPs. They incorporate phrases such as "My turn, your turn", providing opportunities for low stakes recall of knowledge. Learning is broken down into a series of very short but engaging tasks, so that most children are keen to take part and do so enthusiastically, especially where tasks are musical or have actions. Children give short responses, respond to targeted questions or retrieve facts and information.

4 How do you monitor/evaluate that the intervention is working?



Pupil understanding is constantly checked through close observation and careful questioning. Our assessment data indicates that this bespoke quizzing indicates that the children are making pleasing progress, relative to their starting points since we adopted this approach. Teaching staff report that their pupils' key word recognition and use of language has developed considerably, whilst in maths their vocabulary and basic calculation skills have also improved. Specialist Provision Lead Teacher, Jason Austin-Guest said, "Over time, and with some creative tweaks along the way, we have created an assessment system, incorporating low stakes quizzing, that is purposeful, impactful and meets the needs of all learners."

Additional:

Suggested reading:

- *The EEF Guide to Supporting School Planning – A Tiered Approach to 2021*
eef.li/school-planning/



- *Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools guidance report:* eef.li/send/



Reflection questions



- How are diagnostic assessments systems adjusted for pupils with SEND in your school?
- How do you monitor the impact of your use of diagnostic assessment?