

**Welcome** to this issue of the SENCO Bulletin. If you have particular interests that you would like us to feature in next term, please contact the [SENCO Bulletin Team](#).

This week we focus on the following themes:

- Down Syndrome Awareness Week
- A trainer's feedback from the National SENCO Award
- Highlights from Schools' Autism Awareness Week
- Mental Health Champion for schools
- Developing number skills (pupils with high needs)
- Overcoming maths difficulties
- SENCOs recommend ...

## Down Syndrome Awareness Week ...

World Down Syndrome Day takes place on Monday 21 March 2016, and Down Syndrome International presents a global video journey promoting inclusion of people with Down syndrome: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbXX68h3wfY>



"My Friends, My Community" features interviews with children from around the world talking about their lives, friendships and aspirations.

Down Syndrome Association (DSA) is celebrating people with Down syndrome, of all ages, who are part of our communities – at home, in schools and colleges, in workplaces, clubs and social groups.



## My Friends, My Community – what it means to be included 20-26 March 2016

This year's campaign focuses on the ability of people with Down syndrome to enjoy full and equal rights alongside their peers. This includes the opportunity to participate fully in their communities as and when they wish with the right support. Some people may need extra support to do things that are not specifically for people with a learning disability and it is important to encourage

**Issue:**

**Monday**

**21 March 2016**

## QUICK LINKS

[Educational Psychology Service](#)

[SEND Information Advice & Support Service \(Parent Partnership\)](#)

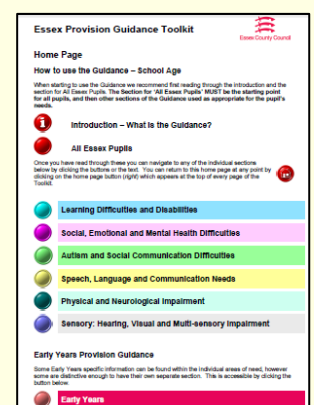
[Statutory Assessment Service](#)

[Essex Local Offer](#)



## Provision Guidance

For the most up-to-date version of the Provision Guidance Toolkit and guidance on its use



our wider communities to be appropriately inclusive. **When people with Down syndrome are given opportunities to participate, the whole community benefits.**

DSA will be spreading the word throughout the week via its website, Facebook page and Twitter feeds. It has also produced [resources](#) for our communities to encourage others to include people with Down's syndrome. Awareness Week 2016 is a chance to share stories of positive inclusion and DSA invites us all to do just that - using our stories to help break down barriers, to stop stereotypes and to provide more opportunities for people with Down syndrome to live their lives fully with the right support.

We are grateful to those Learning Support Assistants who support children with Down syndrome in Essex mainstream primary schools for sharing their stories:

[Supporting children with Down syndrome in Essex mainstream primary schools - what's working well](#) (March 2016) - a summary of feedback by Learning Support Assistants who support children with Down syndrome in various Essex mainstream primary schools

[Supporting children with Down syndrome in an Essex primary school - a case study](#) (March 2016) - an account of how Shalford Primary school in Mid Essex is successfully supporting two pupils with Down syndrome

Specialist Teachers (Learning Difficulties/Disabilities) support those staff, and facilitate regular cluster group meetings which allow practitioners to discuss issues, problem solve and share their ideas with one another.



*"Listening to the stories of others who are supporting children with Down syndrome is giving hope for the future! It is good to hear that others have been through 'tricky stages' and what they did to get through them."*

Specialist Teachers also maintain a [Pinterest board](#) to share ideas on ways to support children with Down syndrome

For example:

- visual resources that will help learning as well as communication skills



- using Makaton to develop communication skills



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[SENCO Bulletin Archive](#)

To view previous issues of the SENCO Bulletin

[Specialist Teaching and Preschool Service](#)

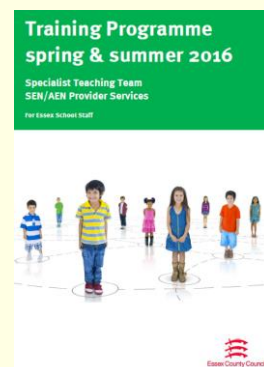
The service's 'Request for Support' [form](#) can be found on our Primary Sector page

**INSET**

[Bookings](#) for the advertised SEN Training Programme

[Enquiries](#) about the SEN Training Programme

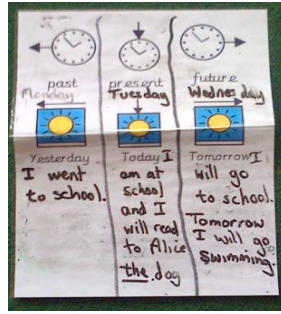
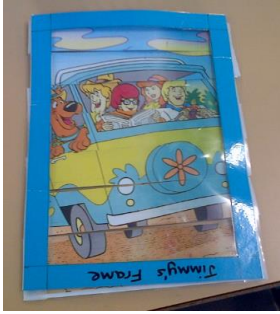
[Training brochure](#) Spring/Summer 2016



[www.EESforschools.org](http://www.EESforschools.org)



- advice on the development of life skills and how schools can create bespoke resources to meet learning needs



- using software to create resources to develop literacy skills.

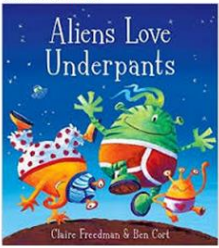

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- introduction of visual personalised planning to meet individual needs, linked to the class curriculum, but using narrative as a focus with creative tasks chosen to develop key skill

Aliens love underpants: WB (3 week period tbc depending on Xxxxxxx's needs)  
 All of Xxxxxxx's activities/work should be photographed as evidence and then sent home.  
 NB statement objectives and are implicit in daily communication with Xxxxxxx.


Activity	Activity Detail	Statement target(s) working on	Activity	Activity Detail	Statement target(s) working on
A	Share the book together - look for CVC words to read together. Make flashcards of them or use magnet letters to match them. Choose a friend to share the book with when familiar.	1 3 4 6 9 11 12 13	N	Washing and drying underpants! Find the different colour pants to match the request, count how many you can find in the water and hang them up to dry on the line with pegs!	2 5 6 7 8 11 12 13

**A trainer's feedback from the National SENCO Award ...**

After a pleasant morning spent with SENCOs at the National Award training on Tuesday 8 March, I felt compelled to write a note of recognition for all SENCOs.

Changing labels...  
**BESD → SEBD → SED → SEMH**  
 Where is the 'B' in SEMH ?  
 Behaviour is communication...not a SEN

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The process of writing the presentation 'It's not about the label - SEMH' illuminated for me the wider context of emotional health that complicates our assessment of children's SEMH needs, whether they are transient or longer term.

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS for Spring Term 2016**

Tuesday 22 March  
Supporting children with developing fine motor skills  
 Chelmsford City FC

Let's Get Supporting... children with social and emotional needs.

This course can offer an LSA, who is either new to the role or new to supporting interventions for SEMH/direct support for a child with additional SEMH needs, an opportunity to gain greater understanding of the barriers to learning for a child with social and emotional needs and practical strategies that can assist children so that they are able to learn with greater confidence and independence.

Monday 21 March  
 9.30 am – 12.30 pm  
 Chelmsford City Football Club

We have seen a lot of changing labels and we all understand that assessment is not about fitting a child into a category but gaining an understanding of the unique child.

At the core of this, is what makes assessment of emotional well-being different from assessment of SEMH needs as a SEN.

The **SEND Code of Practice (2014)** recognises the range of SEMH needs from the transient to the persistent:

6.21 'Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has a SEN.'

Effective schools have recognised the impact of resilience and well-being on attainment outcomes, they are witness to the increasing pressures of 21st century living and their responsibility to support young people with managing the stress and pace of our world today. Guidance to schools reminds us that whole school development of non-cognitive skills and promoting emotional and mental well-being is part of universal provision for all pupils.

'Schools should teach pupils resilience and how to be "rounded and grounded"... and 'By character I mean resilience, humility, emotional intelligence, team spirit, someone who will go the extra mile'... 'It is not only the disadvantaged who need help, but also gifted and talented pupils whose schools had focused on pushing them academically, at the expense of helping them to develop social attributes.' John Cridland, Director-General of the CBI

We discussed how working with the graduated approach is made more complex by the wider context and the emotional connections between adults and children/ young people in school.

SENCOs are really challenged to understand the emotional and social dynamics at work in a setting. A passion to support the best outcomes for children is a strong motivator but this drive and the accompanying sensitivity to children's emotions can also drain us emotionally. Holding a stance of neutrality and curiosity and recognising limitations and opportunities is vital to keeping ourselves well so that we can support colleagues and children effectively. We looked at **The Resilience Framework** as a whole child assessment tool – see this site for more information. [www.boingboing.org.uk](http://www.boingboing.org.uk) and this short [video](#).

Resilient Therapy - Magic Box (Children & Young People) 2012 – adapted from Hart & Blincow 2007 <a href="http://www.boingboing.org.uk">www.boingboing.org.uk</a>					
	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
SPECIFIC APPROACHES	Good enough housing	Find somewhere for the child/YP to belong Help child/YP understand their place in the world	Make school/college life work as well as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
	Enough money to live	Tap Into good influences	Engage mentors for children/YP	Being brave	Support the child/YP to understand other people's feelings
	Being safe	Keep relationships going		Solving problems	
	Access & transport	The more healthy relationships the better Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope	Map out career or life plan	Putting on rose-tinted glasses	Help the child/YP to know her/himself
	Healthy diet	Get together people the child/YP can count on	Help the child/YP to organise her/himself	Fostering their interests	Help the child/YP take responsibility for her/himself
	Exercise and fresh air	Responsibilities & obligations		Calming down & self-soothing	
	Enough sleep	Focus on good times and places Make sense of where child/YP has come from	Highlight achievements	Remember tomorrow is another day	Foster their talents
	Play & leisure	Predict a good experience of someone or something new	Develop life skills	Lean on others when necessary	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
		Make friends and mix with other children/YPs		Have a laugh	
	<b>NOBLE TRUTHS</b>				
	ACCEPTING	CONSERVING	COMMITMENT	ENLISTING	

We heard from Liz Lawrence (Gt Totham Primary) and Andrea Thorne and Lauren Bagley (The Boswells) about what they have put in place such as direct support for families and therapeutic support for young people that goes some

Training requests for schools should be made using the School Request for Support [form](#), and emailed to the appropriate area team:

[Mid](#) Braintree

[North-East](#) Colchester

[South](#) Basildon

[West](#) Harlow

**Autism Education Trust Training**



[Bookings](#) for in-school Autism Education Trust training (Level 1 and 2)

[Information](#) on Autism Education Trust training for Essex schools






way towards meeting SEMH needs in the transient and longer term and creates valuable capacity for effective teaching and learning. Using psychological models and assessments, (see [Provision Guidance Information Files](#) in the SEMH section), collaborating with other professionals and taking an action research approach to our work can help us to meet the SEMH needs of our young and hopefully retain an emotionally healthy perspective in our busy world.

[Catherine Stephenson](#)

### Highlights from Schools' Autism Awareness Week ...

We are pleased that Essex County Council published a [report](#) on Schools' Autism Awareness Week on its website last week, and that councillors took time to attend a drop-in event at County Hall. Some photos and reports have also been published on the Essex Local offer website and Facebook page:

For example:

 <p><b>Let's hear what children and young people with autism have to say ...</b></p> <p><i>King Edmund School, Rochford, Essex</i></p> <p><b>What we want to tell you ...</b></p> <p>"Everyone is different and weird in their own way, so don't judge other people."</p> <p>"If you talk to people you will find things in common."</p> <p>"Be nice to someone – you don't know, they could be nice."</p> <p>"Sometimes I just need to walk - it makes me feel safe."</p> <p>"When people annoy me I want to sit under the table."</p> <p>"Some people are kind, some people are not kind."</p> <p>"You treated me normally before, so why treat me differently now?"</p> <p>"Autism isn't a disadvantage, it's an opportunity for us to show you what we're capable of."</p> <p>"I am human, just like you. I deserve respect, just like you."</p> <p>"Autism is nothing to be ashamed of. If anyone makes fun of it, it shouldn't affect you. It should affect them."</p> <p>"We're already living and learning among you; it may not be obvious that we have autism."</p> <p><a href="#">Click here</a></p>	 <p><b>Highlights of Schools' Autism Awareness Week 2016</b></p> <p><b>Autism Awareness Assembly for the Years 5 and 6</b></p> <p><i>Tanya Cotter Specialist Teacher (Autism &amp; Social Comm)</i></p> <p>"I have been privileged today to have been given the opportunity to speak to children in order to raise their awareness of autism. The school I was in has 60 children in each year group and has a large number of children with a diagnosis of autism across the school. We had a lovely conversation about their knowledge of autism."</p> <p><b>... A surprisingly wide range of knowledge! ... A fascinating insight into their perspectives ...</b></p> <p>I read the children two books:</p>   <p>The first was 'Say Hello to me' by April Charisse, a story about a little girl on the autism spectrum. She describes herself in a way that shows what she has in common with her peers but also where she has differences.</p> <p>After some chat with audience participation around sensory processing I read 'Why Johnny Doesn't Flap' by Clay and Gail Morton. This has a different perspective altogether which created a thoughtful and perceptive audience.</p> <p>The children were quiet at the end of the assembly and questions began after they had had some time to think. It was lovely to have all of the class teachers in assembly with me as they are going to follow this up with class PSHE lessons."</p> <p><a href="#">Click here</a></p>	<p>If you have had the opportunity this past week to meet any members of our autism team, then you will have noted their new 'uniform' for the week:</p> 
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Please share your stories and pictures with us so that we can keep circulating the messages ....

### Mental Health Champion for schools ...

"Everyone has a mental health"



Natasha Devon MBE is the Government's first ever **Mental Health Champion for Schools**.

She writes an informative blog about her work as this Champion on the [time to change](#) website.

They produce a range of [free resources](#) to help challenge mental health stigma and discrimination across England.

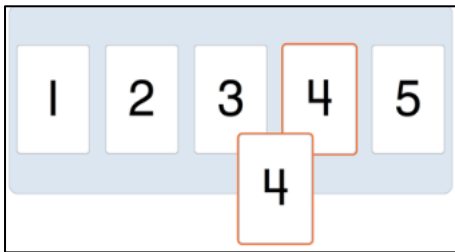
Secondary schools may find the [resources for youth professionals page](#) useful for everything you need to get your young people talking about mental health.

Find out how teachers got started and what they have to say about the work they've been doing in their schools in these short [videos](#).

Natasha makes important links between bullying and mental health in this [article](#) in a daily newspaper recently. She is the founder of the [Self Esteem Team](#).

### Developing number skills (pupils with high needs) ...

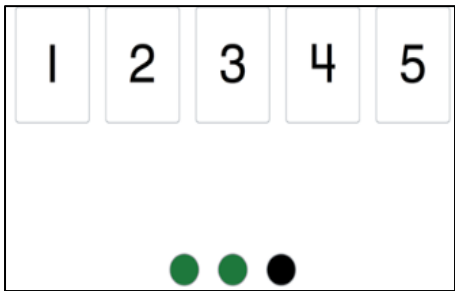
If you are working on developing number skills with pupils with high needs, the following two resources are worth your consideration:



### [See and Learn First Counting](#)

This is one of the publications from the [See and Learn Numbers programme](#). The See and Learn teaching packs were originally designed for pupils with Down syndrome but are very useful for a range of pupils with significant learning needs.

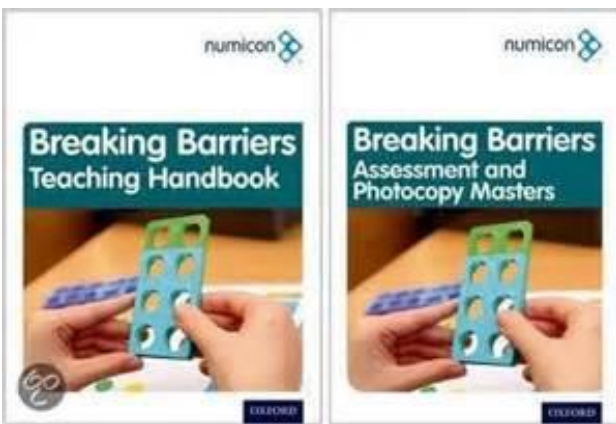
**See and Learn First Counting** is available as an [app](#) and as a [kit with printed materials and plastic counters](#).



See and Learn First Counting is designed to help parents and educators teach children the number words, numerals and counting from 1 to 10. See and Learn First Counting is designed to teach children to say the number words, to recognise the numerals, to link quantities to numbers, to count, and to understand the concepts of cardinality and equivalence for the numbers 1 to 10. It is also designed to teach the key maths language needed at this stage of number learning.

### **Breaking Barriers Numicon**

Breaking Barriers is specifically designed for teaching children with special educational needs and disabilities, and those working well below age-related expectations



The Numicon Breaking Barriers Teaching Pack comprises of a Teaching Handbook and an Assessment and Photocopy Masters book. It is designed to be used with Numicon materials.

The Teaching Handbook provides teaching progression with support for planning and assessment. It contains advice on making number ideas accessible and addressing children's underlying difficulties, easy-to-follow activities with guidance on the smaller steps some children may need to take. There are suggestions for extension and illustrations that demonstrate how apparatus can be used to support children's reasoning.

The Assessment and Photocopy Masters book contains Assessment Signposts that ensure that teaching starts at an appropriate point, an Individual Record of Progress providing detailed tracking for each child, a Child Profile for building a picture of strengths and difficulties so that specific needs can be addressed, and Photocopy masters to support the activities in the Teaching Handbook.

If you would like to find out more look at <http://fdslive.oup.com/www.oup.com/oxed/primary/catalogues/primary-maths-catalogue-2016.pdf?region=uk>

More ideas for using Numicon can be found on the LDD Specialist Teachers Pinterest board: <https://uk.pinterest.com/SpTeachersLDD/numicon-ideas/>

There is also a course running shortly covering the Breaking Barriers Numicon materials:

#### **Using Numicon in the classroom to teach pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (high needs) KS1-2**

This course for class teachers and SENCOs will enable teachers to adapt the mathematics curriculum using Numicon in order to support those pupils with the most significant learning needs in their primary classroom. Delegates who attend this course will receive a 10% discount when buying Numicon materials.

PSE 16/033 Thursday 21 April 2016 9:30 am – 4.00 pm  
Wat Tyler Country Park, Pitsea Hall Lane, Pitsea, Basildon SS16 4UH

[Helen Holton](#)

### **Overcoming maths difficulties ...**

Nationally and internationally renowned speakers will be contributing to the 8<sup>th</sup> Dyscalculia and Maths Learning Difficulties national conference on 29 June in London. Details of the keynote speakers, workshops and booking

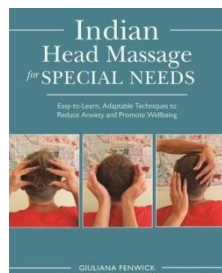
arrangements can be found [here](#).



## 8th National Dyscalculia & MLD Conference 29 June 2016

### **SENCOs recommend ...**

With Autism Awareness Week in mind, **Jenni Balcomb** (Holy Cross Primary) contacted us to share information about a resource that she has found particularly useful for parents and professionals.



*"This manual introduces unique Indian head massage techniques to help reduce feelings of stress and anxiety, calm sensory overloads, improve sleep patterns, ease frustration and boost mental, physical and emotional wellbeing in people of all ages with special needs, including Autism Spectrum Disorders."*

The author has a son with autism and works at the Special Needs Hotel in Minehead (which was recently on TV). She has carried out lectures round the world and regularly works with children who have autism, ADHD or Down syndrome.

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

### **Specialist Teaching and Preschool Service**

### **All Staff**

**MID** (Braintree)

[Enquiries mailbox](#)

**NORTH EAST** (Colchester)

[Enquiries mailbox](#)

**SOUTH** (Basildon)

[Enquiries mailbox](#)

**WEST** (Harlow)

[Enquiries mailbox](#)

Chris Perkins

Service Manager, Specialist Teaching and Preschool Service

21 March 2016

On behalf of the SENCO Bulletin Team

[SENCO.Bulletin@essex.gov.uk](mailto:SENCO.Bulletin@essex.gov.uk)