

Learning Walk – Teaching & Learning of DSEN pupils

As a busy SENCO with a teaching load, you will probably not have much opportunity for knowing how well teaching and learning across the school is meeting the needs of pupils with DSEN, but the school does need to have a view about this. The following are some suggestions as to how your Headteacher might gather this evidence, with some help from yourself as SENCO.

First, start with a Desk-top exercise.

Work scrutiny : (Use marking checklist)

Take a sample of work books or moderation portfolios from each Key Stage – look at English and Maths. Select books for a SA, SA+ and statemented pupil. From what you can see, are DSEN pupils making good, or even outstanding progress? Use the marking checklist to record what you see.

Progress made in DSEN interventions

Use SEN provision mapping formats to analyse the progress made by DSEN pupils in the different interventions offered. Is their progress good, or even outstanding?

Planning for individual DSEN needs

Ask colleagues if they would give you one example of a lesson plan (or series of lessons) for English and Maths, so that you can see how the needs of pupils with DSEN are planned for

IEPs / Advice to teachers re DSEN

Carry out a short survey with your teacher colleagues – how much help are your IEPs and the information you give to teachers about individual pupils with DSEN? Do they provide sufficient guidance for writing a good, differentiated lesson plan?

Assessment for Learning

Check the records that the TAs are making in class when they are giving targeted support to DSEN pupils. Do these provide evidence of DSEN pupils making good or outstanding progress in learning?

Progress and Achievement of DSEN pupils

Use the quads model to analyse the progress of DSEN pupils – at the end of a key stage, and during the past 12 months (focus on English, Maths, Science, and progress in reading and spelling ages)

Then do a learning walk, preferably with your Head or Deputy. (Use Learning Walk checklist)

Use the learning walk checklist to gain a view about how the needs of pupils with DSEN are being met in teaching and learning. Make sure that your colleagues understand that it is not their lesson that is being observed – just that you are gaining a view about how the DSEN pupils are learning.

Ask your Headteacher if you can have 1 – 2 hours a year to observe any DSEN intervention groups, particularly if they are being led by a TA. Use the TA checklist to gain a view about the quality of teaching and learning in the intervention.

Gaining the views of DSEN pupils. At least once a year, gather a small group of DSEN pupils together and ask them what helps them to learn in school. Draw up a list of 4 or 5 questions (about subjects they like, learning activities they like, homework, what helps them to behave, whether they feel safe in school).

Finally, write up a short report of your findings. What is working well in teaching and learning of DSEN pupils, and what could be improved.