Senco CPD Audit

Topic 1: Teaching assistants

**Outstanding practice means that teaching assistants are:**

* Knowledgeable across a range of SEND issues.
* Motivated and act with purpose.
* Strategically placed to maximise impact.
* Aware of the needs not just of students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) but across the classroom.
* Trained in SEND skills, including prompting, scaffolding and other “on-the-spot” differentiation techniques.

**Common challenges**:

Teaching assistants often do not have the training to know when and how to support a student – and sometimes support in a manner that actually gets in the way of learning.

Logging and record-keeping are common weak spots. Too much information goes awry and not enough useful information is farmed.

Teaching assistants need allocated time to work on this on a weekly basis and well-structured systems need to be in place with regard to how this information is stored and ultimately used. Finally, Ofsted inspectors want to see regular updates on students’ progress and other information-sharing between teaching assistants and teachers.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

* Does the job description and training provided to your teaching assistants reflect the new SEND Code of Practice?
* Do your teaching assistants give the school “value for money”?
* Line-management meetings should occur at least every other week.
* Regular liaison between the teaching assistant and home (to pass on positive feedback and follow up on issues) requires training and monitoring but is worth its weight in gold.

Topic 2: Interventions

**Outstanding practice means that:**

* Interventions are specific, child-led and personalised.
* Interventions are home-grown, issue-specific and inexpensive.
* Staff/parents are given clear information about wave 1, 2 and 3 interventions.

**Common challenges**

Schools often buy expensive interventions only to find that these do not work as well as free, home-grown ones – they are less student-specific and often sit outside the curriculum. Furthermore, soft data successes are often not recorded or get lost behind hard data, creating a less positive impression of a student’s progress. Systems for long-term tracking and record-keeping cross key stage are often cumbersome, too. There should be efficient systems in place for mapping the history of students’ needs and progress.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

Every intervention should have entry and exit criteria. When interventions are not successful, those involved should take time to work out if this is because of the intervention itself, the person leading it, or an inappropriate application of the intervention to the particular cohort or student.

Topic 3: Assessment and identifying need

**Outstanding practice means that:**

* A robust whole-school plan and procedure for assessing need across year groups and at regular junctions is in place.
* There is awareness of closing the gap issues and strategies in place to respond.
* The school is able to assess students across the board, taking into account social, emotional and behavioural factors.
* The school is responsive to the ways in which SEND intersects with other groups, including Pupil Premium, English as an additional language, gifted and talented, ethnic minority, child protection (looked-after children), attendance and lateness.

Common challenges

* Family, social and soft data factors.
* The misuses of expensive educational psychologists’ time.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

* Is there a policy in place for pupils joining after September?
* How does the school become aware that a student has language acquisition or language retrieval issues. Unless there is a sophisticated and robust procedure in place these critical needs will go unnoticed.

Topic 4: The role of the SENCO

**Outstanding practice means that the SENCO:**

* Facilitates, mentors and monitors the delivery of SEND support by teachers, rather than doing it all themselves.
* Has both a long and short-term strategic view of progress.
* Is involved on leading in both pastoral and curriculum matters.

**Common challenges**

SENCOs often struggle with whole-school and departmental staff development and management. They should be facilitating staff to develop understanding of their students and to adapt the curriculum accordingly.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

* Is the SENCO financially aware?
* Does the SENCO maintain good relationships with parents/agencies?
* How is the SENCO supported?

Topic 5: Whole-school SEND

**Outstanding practice means that:**

* We have SEND reps in departments, key phases or year groups.
* The SENCO meets regularly with teachers and oversees their work.
* SEND is present in the pedagogy of the whole school and not a separate issue to be dealt with in the SEND department down the corridor.

**Common challenges**

* SEND is often treated as the responsibility of the SENCO when it is the responsibility of all staff .
* Peer Modelling / co teaching?

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

* Is SEND part of every department’s agenda?
* In what ways is learning personalised to individuals (no more bog-standard differentiated worksheets)?

Topic 6: Strategy and planning

**Outstanding practice means:**

* Demand-led interventions.
* Half-termly measures of impact.
* Senior leadership role.

**Common challenges**

* Financial accountability.
* SEND remains entirely reactive and not rooted in whole-school data and planning to directly tackle areas of concern in RAISEonline or whole-school data.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

* Pupil voice and pupil-centred planning.
* Termly reports for the senior leadership team and governors.
* Can you read, understand and interpret whole-school data and do you do this regularly?

Topic 7: Code of Practice implementation

**Outstanding practice includes:**

* Information reports.
* Parental engagement.
* Teacher–teaching assistant liaison.
* Implementation.
* Quality first teaching.

**Common challenges**

* Meaningful parental engagement.
* Confusion over the EHCP application process.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

* How accessible to parents is the information report?

Topic 8: Transitions

**Outstanding practice focuses on:**

* Key stage transfer.
* Mid-phase transfer and rapid integration of mobility students.
* Securing meaningful data prior to entry to your school.
* Liaison with primary schools and early planning.

**Common challenges**

The most challenging transitions are on and off roll, in and out of pupil referral units, cross-borough and out-of-borough. Many permanent exclusions can be traced back to problems at the point of transition.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

Often it is the most vulnerable students who end up transitioning. Staff involved should be clearly aware of the impact the transition might be having on the student, and strategies to mitigate the worst of it.

Topic 9: Local Authority Processes

**Outstanding practice focuses on:**

* Having the most up to date information.
* Being fluent with LA processes and paperwork.
* Knowing who to ask / where to seek help.
* Understanding the district wide picture.

**Common challenges**

The pace of change means that information quickly becomes out of date.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

Different LA teams sometimes give conflicting information. How can you ensure the information you receive is accurate and up to date?

Topic 10: SEND Knowledge base

**Outstanding practice focuses on:**

* Being aware of the educational implications of number of common SENDs.
* Being able to put in place appropriate quality first teaching to manage the needs of most students.
* Securing meaningful data prior to entry to your school.
* Liaison with primary schools and early planning.

**Common challenges**

The most challenging transitions are on and off roll, in and out of pupil referral units, cross-borough and out-of-borough. Many permanent exclusions can be traced back to problems at the point of transition.

**Additional goals/other points to consider**

Often it is the most vulnerable students who end up transitioning. Staff involved should be clearly aware of the impact the transition might be having on the student, and strategies to mitigate the worst of it.

Senco CPD Skills Audit 2018

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Self-assessment ( 1 = early stage of development, 5 = high level of competence) | Suggested Training |
| Teaching assistants | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| Interventions | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| Assessment and identifying need | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| The role of the SENCO | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| Whole-school SEND | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| Strategy and planning | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| Code of Practice implementation | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| Transitions | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| Local Authority Processes | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |
| SEND Knowledge base | 1 2 3 4 5 |  |

Any other comments / suggestions?