

5 Steps to Effective Interventions

by Natalie Packer

The term 'intervention' is often used to describe a short-term, focused teaching programme with specific intended outcomes aimed at individuals or small groups of pupils with particular needs. Interventions are provided in addition to high quality teaching in the classroom and are likely to be an essential part of the additional provision you offer pupils with SEND. There are a number of structured intervention programmes available that aim to support and develop pupils' key skills. Some can make a real difference to pupil outcomes, others can be costly, time-consuming and not as effective, so it is important to consider decisions carefully when making strategic choices. Try following these 5 steps to ensure effective intervention planning:

1

Clarify the outcomes

The first thing you need to do when planning your interventions is to identify what you want your pupils to achieve by the end of the intervention. This will be based on knowledge of your SEND population and by considering the following questions:

- ▶
- ▶ What are the main areas of need within our SEN population?
- ▶ What are the key areas to focus on / skills to target?
Which pupils will benefit from this type of intervention?

Within **Provision Map**, the SEN Report comparing school percentages with national percentages will provide you with an overview of your main areas of need and help you to identify if you have any mismatch between need and current provision types.

2

Choose the interventions

If you identify that there are gaps in your provision, or if you decide that the current interventions you are using are not effective, there is a wealth of information available to help you choose alternative interventions using an evidence-informed approach. The provision library within **Provision Map** includes a comprehensive database of commonly used interventions as a useful starting point.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) website provides guidance on evidence-based strategies and programmes, and now includes a section on SEND. Reference is made to some of the 'promising projects' the EEF have trialled that show positive impact for pupils with:

- ▶ Communication and interaction needs
- ▶ Cognition and learning needs
- ▶ Social, emotional and mental health needs.

Many interventions are likely to be delivered by teaching assistants (TAs) and research shows that where TAs work in structured settings with high quality support and training they can have a positive impact on pupil learning. The EEF *Making Best use of Teaching Assistants Guidance* outlines some of the common elements of effective interventions:

- ▶ Sessions are brief (15-45 minutes), occur regularly (3-5 times per week) and are maintained over a sustained period (8-20 weeks)
- ▶ Careful timetabling is in place to enable consistent delivery
- ▶ TAs receive extensive training from experienced trainers
- ▶ The intervention has structured supporting resources and lesson plans, with clear objectives and possibly a delivery script
- ▶ There is fidelity to the programme and TAs closely follow the plan and structure of the intervention
- ▶ Assessments are used to identify appropriate pupils, guide areas for focus and track pupil progress.
- ▶ Connections are made between the out of-class learning in the intervention and classroom teaching.

3

Plan implementation

Before starting any intervention, check that staff involved in delivery are knowledgeable, well trained and are clear about expectations. Where interventions are being delivered by TAs, the teacher should still retain overall responsibility and work closely with the TA to plan and assess the impact of the interventions.

Practical questions to consider when planning implementation include:

- ▶ When will the interventions take place? How will this affect the pupils' timetables?
- ▶ How will staff time be managed?
- ▶ Where will the intervention take place?
- ▶ How will resources be managed?
- ▶ How will parents and other members of staff be informed about the progress of the intervention?
- ▶ What feedback is expected after each session?

Crucially, it is important to clarify what baseline assessments will be carried out, and when and how assessments will be repeated in order to track pupil progress over time.

Remember, don't try to implement too many new interventions at once - quality not quantity is key!

4

Record your interventions

Using Provision Map will enable you to record all the interventions you have in place, providing an 'at a glance' way of showing the additional provision across the school. You can choose the interventions within the provision library or easily add your own, recording details of:

- ▶ The intervention type
- ▶ Intended outcomes
- ▶ Schedule details
- ▶ Assigned staff

When individual learning plans are created for pupils, details of the appropriate interventions can be included on the plan, alongside their targets.

An increasingly useful aspect of the provision mapping process is the ability to cost interventions. This will enable you to demonstrate not only how much you are spending on individual pupils, but also consider whether or not particular interventions are proving value for money. Again Provision Map provides the facility to manage intervention costings.

5

Monitor and evaluate the impact

Proving the effectiveness of an intervention can be tricky but is the crucial final step in ensuring an effective intervention plan in your school. The impact of any intervention can be determined by looking at the progress each pupil has made towards the objectives of the intervention and by considering how well pupils have developed the desired skills.

Provision Map enables you to assign a 'score' to each intervention in order to show the impact on pupil learning. The scores for a particular type of provision or intervention can then be amalgamated in order to produce an overall impact score for the intervention. This will help you determine whether the intervention is effective and should be used again or not.

If you decide that an intervention has been effective, seek to determine what went well and how the good practice could be shared wider. However, if it's not effective – get rid (or make changes!). Evaluating and reviewing your interventions regularly as part of your strategic provision management process should help you to develop a successful intervention plan that has real impact on your pupils with SEND.

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