The Engagement Model

The Engagement Model is an assessment tool for those children with a high level of need who are not accessing National Curriculum. It is not subject specific as is the Curriculum but, instead, focusses on the child's ability to observe, explore and interact with their environment and maybe with adults and other children in the setting. The curriculum and activities for the child is planned by the teacher specific for the child.

5 Areas

The 5 areas are not hierarchical, so there is no expectation that pupils need to demonstrate progress in all 5 areas. Instead, each of the areas represent what is necessary for pupils to fully engage in their learning and reach their full potential. The areas also provide the scaffolding to enable pupils to become independent in learning a new skill or concept.

Exploration
Does the pupil show interest and curiosity in the stimulus or activity?
What exploratory behaviours does the pupil use to investigate it?

Realisation
How does the pupil interact with a new stimulus or activity?
Do they show realisation, surprise, delight, amazement or fear at a new application of their previous learning?

Initiation
Does the pupil spontaneously and independently initiate an action with the stimulus or activity to bring about a desired outcomes? Are they able to prompt another person to do an action?

Engagement Model

Anticipation
Is the pupil able to predict, expect or associate a particular stimulus with an activity?
Is their prediction because of their previous knowledge, experience or skill?

Persistence
Does the pupil show perseverance or determination in actively trying to find out more about the activity or stimulus? Do they sustain their attention in the activity?

Exploration

This shows whether a pupil can build on their initial reaction to a new stimulus or activity, for example, whether they display more than an involuntary or startled reaction to the activity. Additionally, the pupil may be interested in and curious about the stimulus or activity, for example, they may notice it or reach out to it.

Exploration becomes more established when the pupil is still responsive to the same stimulus or activity when it is presented in different contexts or environments, for example, a different time of day, a different place or with different people.

Exploration is important in identifying which stimuli or activities interest the pupil and motivate them to pay attention and investigate them further, so that they can develop new knowledge and skills.

Realisation

This shows how the pupil interacts with a new stimulus or activity or discovers a new aspect of a familiar stimulus or activity. They will display behaviours that show they want more control of the stimulus or activity, for example by stopping it or trying to make changes to it. The pupil will often show what familiar adults consider to be 'surprise', 'excitement', 'delight', 'amazement' or 'fear'.

Realisation becomes more established when the pupil uses the newly developed skills or knowledge in new ways and in different contexts or environments. This is important as it can keep the pupil excited in their learning and prevents an activity from becoming routin

Anticipation

This shows how much the pupil predicts, expects or associates a stimulus or activity with an event. They may anticipate that a familiar activity is about to start or finish by interpreting cues or prompts such as auditory (what they hear), tactile (what they feel) and visual (what they see).

Anticipation becomes more established when the pupil shows awareness that a familiar activity is about to start or finish, even when cues and prompts are reduced.

Anticipation is important in measuring the pupil's understanding of cause and effect, for example if they do this, then something will happen. This prepares the brain for learning and helps with the pupil's memory and sequencing.

Persistence

This shows whether the pupil can sustain their attention in a stimulus or activity for long enough that they can actively try to find out more and interact with it.

Persistence becomes more established when the pupil shows a determined effort to interact with the stimulus or activity. They will do this by showing intentional changes such as changes in their gaze, posture and hand movement.

Persistence is important so that the pupil maintains an activity long enough to develop and reinforce learning. It also helps the pupil apply their skills or knowledge so they can achieve their desired outcome.

Initiation

This shows how much, and the different ways, a pupil investigates a stimulus or activity in order to bring about a desired outcome. The pupil will act spontaneously and independently during a familiar activity without waiting for direction.

Initiation becomes more established when the pupil shows they understand how to create an impact on their environment in order to achieve a desired outcome.

Initiation is important to establish how well the pupil is developing independence, which is required for more advanced learning.

In school we assess according to what is observed in the different areas. We set targets and look for evidence but also observe the child by asking ourselves questions such as the ones below.

Exploration

Does the pupil show interest and curiosity in the stimulus or activity?

How do they build on their initial reaction?

What exploratory behaviours do they use to investigate?

Do they notice/reach out?

Are they responsive to the same stimulus in different contexts?

Which stimulus interest the pupil, motivate then to pay attention?

Realisation

How do they interact with new stimulus / activity?

What behaviours show that they want more control of the stimulus?

What new skills are used in new ways or different contexts? Do they show realisation, surprise, delight, amazement or fear at a new application of their previous learning?

Are they continuing to be excited in their learning?

Anticipation

Is the pupil able to predict, expect or associate a stimulus with an event / activity?

Is their prediction because of their previous knowledge, experience or skill?

Are they anticipating when familiar activities are starting/finishing?

Can they show awareness of familiar activities with reduced prompts?

What is the pupils understanding of cause and effect?

Persistence

Can the pupil sustain attention and actively find out more?

Show a determined effort to interact? Perseverance?

Can they demonstrate intention changes? What are they?

How long are they maintaining engagement in an activity?

Do they sustain their attention in the activity?

Initiation

How much investigation does the pupil show?

How do they interact?

Are they investigating spontaneously and independently during familiar activities?

Can they spontaneously and independently initiate an action with the stimulus or activity to bring about a desired outcome?

Are they able to prompt another person to do an action?

Are they developing independence? What does this look like?