

## **Peter Imray - Special Educational Needs Advice and Training**

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### **Course Titles**

- Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Disorders (one or two days)
- Introduction to Severe Learning Difficulties
- Introduction to Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (one or two days)
- Introduction to Challenging Behaviour in the special needs school
- Autism and Challenging Behaviour
- Attention Deficit, Hyperactivity Disorders

More specialist courses are also popular and these can be tailored to suit the audience, of teachers, teachers and TAs.

- Assessing pupil progress and target setting for those working within the P Scales
- Developing a PMLD curriculum for the 21st Century
- Developing an SLD curriculum for the 21st Century
- Teaching English, Communication and Literacy in the special needs class
- Teaching Mathematics in the special needs class
- Teaching Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in the special needs class
- Teaching Play and Games in and out of the special needs class.
- Developing Problem Solving and Thinking Skills in the special needs class
- Teaching Religious Education in the special needs class
- Teaching Drama and Poetry in special needs class
- Teaching Music in the special needs class
- Transforming Speaking and Listening through Storytelling
- An introduction to Signing
- Working in teams: teachers, TAs and other professionals working together

*Teaching Play and Games* is popular as both a whole school subject and one which can be delivered to mealtime supervisors.

### **Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Disorders (two days)**

This two-day course offers an intensive introduction to autism and concentrates on giving a solid grounding in knowledge of autistic spectrum disorders.

#### **Course content:**

- *Logically Illogical* - a fascinating morning with Ros Blackburn, herself diagnosed as autistic, who freely discusses her own views on autism and what it is like to be autistic.
- Defining autism – the Triad of Impairments. Explaining Theory of Mind, Central Coherence and Executive Functioning.
- An introduction to the problems of sensory impairments and what we might do to counteract their negative effects.
- Exploring the effectiveness of teaching strategies such as TEACCH, PECS, ABA, Options etc.
- An introduction to challenging behaviour and autism, including case studies and exploring issues in course participants own experience.
- An introduction to Social Stories.
- How autism might affect learning.
- Looking at the range of learning difficulties that might be found alongside autism.
- Effective classroom strategies for all ability levels.

### **Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Disorders (one day)**

This one day course gives a solid grounding in understanding autism

#### **Course content:**

- Defining autism – the Triad of Impairments. Explaining Theory of Mind, Central Coherence and Executive Functioning.
- An introduction to the problems of sensory impairments and what we might do to counteract their negative effects.
- Exploring the effectiveness of teaching strategies such as TEACCH, PECS, ABA, Options etc.
- An introduction to Social Stories.
- How autism might affect learning.
- Looking at the range of learning difficulties that might be found alongside autism.
- Effective classroom strategies for all ability levels.

## **Introduction to Severe Learning Difficulties**

A one-day introductory course ideally suitable for teachers and TAs new to learning difficulties and those more experienced seeking to brush up on their knowledge.

### **Course content:**

- A detailed definition of SLD and a comparison with PMLD.
- A brief discussion on the dual diagnosis of ASD and SLD.
- How those with severe learning difficulties learn and how we might teach them.
- Exploring how teaching and learning styles might be different from conventionally developing children.
- Age appropriateness.
- Literacy, numeracy and the SLD pupil.
- Process based learning and skills based learning.

## **Introduction to Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (two days)**

This practical and hands-on course offers an intensive introduction to PMLD as well as extending discussion into curriculum development for both teachers and teaching assistants.

### **Course content:**

- Defining PMLD.
- Disability awareness.
- How conventionally developing children learn.
- How very developmentally young children learn and how this differs from typical development.
- The causes of PMLD.
- What affects children from day-to-day.
- Intensive Interaction.
- How we can affect a difference.
- Exploring the nature of learned helplessness and how we might overcome this.
- Looking at ways of assessing possible motivators and using these as a tool of engagement.
- Developing a practical and effective curriculum model outside of the National Curriculum.

## **Introduction to Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (one day)**

This practical and hands-on course offers an intensive introduction to PMLD and concentrates on what those new to PMLD need to know.

### **Course content:**

- Defining PMLD.
- How conventionally developing children learn.

- How very developmentally young children learn and how this differs from typical development.
- The causes of PMLD.
- What affects children from day-to-day.
- Intensive Interaction.
- How we can affect a difference.
- Exploring the nature of learned helplessness and how we might overcome this.
- Looking at ways of assessing possible motivators and using these as a tool of engagement.

### **Introduction to Challenging Behaviour in the special needs school**

A one-day introductory course looking at simple and practical solutions to challenging behaviour across all age ranges (from 2 to 92) and all levels of ability from profound and multiple learning difficulties to moderate learning difficulties.

#### **Course content:**

- Fundamental principles relating to positive responses to challenging behaviour.
- The Magnificent Seven – seven key words that will guide you through the normal barriers to successful change.
- Short term and long term strategies.
- Writing a strength/needs chart.
- Writing a Behaviour Support Programme.
- Case studies of real children, young people and adults.
- Lots of opportunity to discuss solutions to problems course participants might have in their own workplace or home.

### **Autism and Challenging Behaviour**

Looking at simple and practical solutions to resolve challenging behaviours in pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and learning difficulties.

#### **Course content:**

- Fundamental principles relating to positive responses to challenging behaviour.
- Knowing the autistic child.
- Working with the autism.
- Sensory issues.
- Writing a strength/needs chart.
- Writing a Behaviour Support Programme.
- Case studies of real children, young people and adults.
- Lots of opportunity to discuss solutions to problems course participants might have in their own workplace or home.

## **Attention Deficit, Hyperactivity Disorders**

Some suggest that ADHD may affect up to 5% of the school population, yet it is a much misunderstood condition that often attracts negative and unhelpful responses. This course seeks to address the balance and offer real and lasting solutions that will benefit pupils, staff and families.

### **Course content:**

- What is ADHD?
- How it may present itself in the class.
- The likely learning and behavioural consequences of having ADHD.
- The medication issue.
- The effects on other children in the class and in the home.
- Taking a positive slant.
- Practical strategies for dealing with ADHD.
- Case studies and potential solutions to problems presented by children who are known to the course participants.

## **Assessing pupil progress and target setting for those working within the P Scales**

Those who work with pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties will recognise the dilemma between knowing that most will make progress over each key stage and proving such progress. This day is about finding and celebrating ways in which pupils who are working within P Scales and the lower reaches of the Level Indicators actually do make progress, and (most importantly) convincing Ofsted and the other powers that be, that these are legitimate indicators of attainment.

### **Course content:**

- Looking at current assessment tools, including P Scales; the reasons for assessment; the principles of assessment.
- Exploring what we have to teach and how we have to teach it.
- Questioning how we assess progress for those who do not necessarily succeed within the academic model.
- Looking at pupils who are likely to struggle academically; appear to plateau and make no progress for long periods of time; who are stuck in the lower Level indicators or P Scales; who have 'spiky' profiles; who may not make progress through linear development.
- Looking at alternative teaching and learning models.
- Exploring ideas for qualitative and quantitative assessment and progression outside of P scales.

## **Developing a PMLD curriculum for the 21st Century**

This course seeks to reconcile the seemingly impossible demands of the National Curriculum with the very early developmental levels of children and young people with profound and multiple learning difficulties. It is of direct interest to all those who have an interest in PMLD curriculum development across any and all key stages, whether they be experienced managers and teachers or those new to PMLD.

**Course content:**

- What Ofsted, QCDA, Every Child Matters and the National Curriculum require.
- Exploring the nature of effective teaching and learning for those with a profound learning difficulty.
- What other schools are doing – the latest ideas around PMLD curriculum development.
- PMLD assessment documents such as Routes for Learning.
- Overcoming the problems of demonstrating progress.
- The importance of holistic approaches to learning.
- Bringing Care into the curriculum.
- Exploring the Creative curriculum.
- Writing a base curriculum document.

**Developing an SLD curriculum for the 21st Century**

This course seeks to reconcile the seemingly impossible demands of the National Curriculum with the early developmental levels of children and young people with severe learning difficulties. It is of direct interest to all those who have an interest in SLD curriculum development across any and all key stages, whether they be experienced managers and teachers or those new to SLD.

**Course content:**

- What Ofsted, QCDA, 'Every Child Matters' and the National Curriculum require.
- Exploring the nature of effective teaching and learning for those with a severe learning difficulty.
- What needs to be taught and what can be taught.
- Assessing progress and attainment for those with SLD.
- Skills based and process based teaching and learning.
- Looking at a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Extending Literacy and Numeracy.
- From Play onwards: developing a Creative Curriculum.
- The importance of Thinking and Problem Solving.
- Writing a base curriculum document.

**Teaching English, Communication and Literacy in the special needs class**

A one-day course designed for all teachers and TAs who are working with those with Severe Learning Difficulties.

**Course content:**

- Defining the English curriculum for the SLD pupil.
- A brief discussion of the National Curriculum. How much is the SLD curriculum defined by this and how relevant is it to our learners?
- What are the problems in communication for those with SLD?
- Creating opportunities for communication.
- The growth of early literacy – from emergent skills to fluent readers.
- Using high tech communication aids – a brief overview of the possible aids available; their advantages and disadvantages.
- Using low tech communication aids – especially looking at signing and symbols.
- Speaking and listening versus reading and writing. How to square the circle.
- Storytelling and drama within the SLD English curriculum – a detailed exploration.

**Teaching Mathematics in the special needs class**

This course seeks to (i) broaden our understanding of how those with SLD and PMLD learn, including gaining the acquisition of basic mathematical skills, and to provide the basis for schools' curriculum development; (ii) equate this with the linear developmental model that applies to neuro-typical learners; (iii) assess the possibilities of teaching mathematics through an individualised developmental model that is non-linear and entirely practical.

**Course content:**

- Defining learning difficulties.
- The development of mathematical concepts.
- The primary/secondary split – exploring the issue.
- Why we teach maths to the SLD learner.
- Teaching maths to the higher functioning learner.
- Looking at research.
- The legal position – looking at what the DfES, Ofsted and QCA suggest we have to cover.
- Practical examples of practical maths.
- Teaching maths to PMLD learners.
- Exploring writing a scheme of work for all key stages and to all developmental levels.

**Teaching Play and Games in and out of the special needs class.**

Neuro-typical children learn so many basic social and life skills just through the process of playing with co-operatively with other children, whereas such experiences and learning opportunities are very likely to pass children with learning difficulties by, especially if the child is on the autistic spectrum. We can however compensate for this loss through promoting and facilitating play, irrespective of the age or developmental level of the child.

**Course content:**

- The functions of play – why it is important.
- How play skills develop in the conventionally developing child and why that is different for the child with learning difficulties and/or autism.
- Why children with learning difficulties will be delayed in acquiring play skills.
- Relating play to the Triad of Impairments and sensory Impairments.
- Filling in the gaps – how we can practically promote play to all those with learning difficulties and/or autism across all ability levels and ages.
- Working through practical games for all ages and all abilities.

**Teaching Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in the special needs class**

This course tackles head-on the issues around sexuality and learning difficulties and seeks to give practical advice on both what you should be teaching and how you should be teaching it.

**Course content:**

- Background to current thinking on SRE.
- Some philosophical questions to answer. A discussion around what we want an SRE curriculum to provide from the perspective of (i) pupils (ii) staff and (iii) parents.
- The importance of shared sexual knowledge.
- The difficulties of teaching SRE to those with severe/profound learning difficulties and/or autism.
- Taking a differentiated approach to learning.
- What do we have to teach? Ofsted, QCDA and the law.
- The central role of adults in the capacities of teachers, counsellors, protectors, interveners and empowerers.
- Devising a core SRE curriculum.

**Developing Problem Solving and Thinking Skills in the special needs class**

Currently tucked away as a small part of Maths, metacognition – thinking about thinking – is attracting considerable interest in academic circles and is a major force behind such recent initiatives as the Rose Report. Clearly however, and by definition, those with severe learning difficulties will have extreme difficulties in thinking and problem solving. This day is set up to establish why that is so and even more importantly, what we might do about it. It is a mixture of whole and small group discussion, exchanging ideas, looking at practical activities, and bringing thinking and problem solving planning into our everyday teaching.

**Course content:**

- How children learn.
- How children with learning difficulties learn.
- How thinking comes into learning.
- Current thinking about thinking – what are QCDA and the DCSF saying about it?
- The corrosive effect of learned helplessness.
- The difficulties in thinking and problem solving for those with learning difficulties



and the strategies that we will be able to teach.

- Setting up a ‘thinking and problem solving’ curriculum for children with severe learning difficulties.

### **Teaching Religious Education in the special needs class**

This course is designed to provide a basis for schools to devise their own practical multi-faith curriculum document that can be adapted to cover all key stages for both SLD, PMLD – including those who might have an additional autistic diagnosis. It will particularly explore methods of teaching spirituality to children, young people and adults with severe learning difficulties.

#### **Course content:**

- Developing both the factual and moral elements of religious stories.
- Separating the spiritual from the earthly dimension. Teaching what we can learn from religion rather than just teaching what we can learn about religion.
- Exploring possible frameworks for the RE curriculum.
- Discussions on how a curriculum document covering all six major world faiths can be adapted for SLD and PMLD through looking at beliefs and practice; holy books; holy people; holy places; festivals; and morality.
- RE and the PMLD learner.
- Advice on compiling a bank of practical resources.

### **Teaching Drama and Poetry in special needs class (with Keith Park).**

There is no doubt that the creative arts is a vital element of the 21st special needs curriculum and essential components of this are both drama and poetry. A key part of the English curriculum, both areas can be used not only to extend pupils’ experience and understanding of language but also as a consolidator of emotional literacy.

#### **Course content:**

- Drama and poetry’s relationship to play.
- Using language with those who do not speak.
- Teaching empathy and the understanding of emotions through drama and poetry.
- Appropriate works to cover all ages from nursery to post 19.
- Adapting the classics.
- Using call and response as a central means of engagement.
- Drama and poetry to take with you to use in the classroom.

### **Teaching Music in the special needs class (with Cee Jones)**

This workshop provides an introduction to the concept of using sound and music as a tool for creative communication. It is ideal for members of staff who are just beginning to develop their roles teaching or supporting young people with learning difficulties, and will introduce the principals of music as proven communicative techniques. It is not necessary that you are able to read music or even play an instrument.

**Course content:**

- Practical and easy to use techniques that can be immediately introduced into the school environment.
- The chance to gain hands-on experience with specialist instrumental tools such as resonance boards.
- Musical Interaction – the theory behind the practice along with key ways of engaging learners.
- Warm-up activities.
- Games.
- Cross-curricular ideas – how music can be brought into other subjects.
- Selection of song ideas – call & response, rounds, parts, actions etc.
- Sounds of Intent and other ideas for Schemes of Work.
- Sharing of books/ journals/ websites which may be of use to staff.

**Transforming Speaking and Listening through Storytelling (with Nicola Grove)**

Even those who cannot speak, can tell stories if we give them the right tools. This day explores how we can encourage pupils not only to tell stories, but even more importantly, to be able to communicate to others about the things and events that are most important to them.

**Course content:**

- How storytelling helps communication.
- How to make a good story.
- How to help your pupils listen to stories.
- How to help your pupils tell stories.
- Telling a story with nonverbal pupils.
- How to assess progress.

**An introduction to Signing**

A one-day course for all teachers and TAs wanting to introduce more signing into their classroom, covering practicing stage one signs, your top 50 signs to use every day and great ideas on how best to teach signing to your pupils.

**Course content:**

- The advantages and disadvantages of signing.
- How it works as a part of total communication.

- Prerequisite skills.
- Signing names and key words.
- The basic vocabulary.
- Course participants top 50 signs.
- How best to teach sign.
- Signing songs, stories and nursery rhymes.

### **Working in teams: teachers, TAs and other professionals working together**

The skills required for all those working in teams whether they be teachers, support staff, or other professionals, tend to be learned 'on the job' and are often regarded as a necessary 'right of passage'. Whilst such skills are being learned however, considerable friction between teachers and support staff and other professionals can arise as they seek to reconcile the differences in experience and authority. This course is therefore designed for NQTs, teachers new to working in special schools, TAs and LSAs.

#### **Course content:**

- Strategies for working in teams.
- Providing opportunities to discuss each other's situations and provide practical solutions to actual problems.
- Exploring ideas around current theory and good practice which can be directly applied to their own classroom situation.
- An exploration of the changing roles of teachers, support staff and other professionals working in special schools.
- Definitions of a team.
- An analysis of common goals and how to achieve these goals.
- A look at the qualities necessary for both teaching and assisting in the class and some ideas around improving relations.
- Opportunities to explore team building options.