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“You ok, mate? Umm…I mean, how are you today, sir?”

Teaching social communication in the mainstream school.

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Victoria Mason
Today we are speaking about:

- What are ‘social communication skills’?
- Why do we need effective social communication skills?
- What difficulties can weak social communication skills cause in the classroom?
- What strategies can be put into place to strengthen pupils’ social communication?
What is social communication?

Introduce yourself!
Social Communication - What is it?

‘body language’

facial expression

posture

movement

touch

eye contact

gestures

proximity / personal space
Social Communication - What is it?

how we use our voice
tone of voice
pace
intonation
volume
stress
Social Communication - What is it?

- turn-taking
- relevance
- asking and answering questions
- changing and maintaining topics
- Giving enough information but not too much
- beginning and ending conversations

Conversational skills
Social Communication - What is it?

- Politeness / manners
- Cultural awareness
- Appropriateness
- Level of formality
- Following the ‘unwritten rules’
- Adapting to the context and audience

‘social skills’
Why do pupils need effective social communication skills?

- To make and maintain friendships
- To work effectively with others
- To stay healthy, physically and mentally
- To develop socially and emotionally
- To stay out of trouble!
- To increase life chances and outcomes, including employability
Difficulties you may notice in the classroom

- shy, quiet, withdrawn
- falls out with friends, irritates or upsets others
- low-level disruption
- inappropriateness towards staff
- interrupts, talks too much, dominates
What can we do?

► Adults
► Environment
► Supporting Pupils
What can we do in the classroom to improve and teach social communication?

- Say what you mean and what you want
- Model social behaviour.

Adults in the classroom...
What can we do in the classroom to improve and teach social communication?

- Questions
- Homework
- Cue pupils in

Adults in the classroom...
What can we do in the classroom to improve and teach social communication?

- Visual cues
- Labelling
- ‘It’s ok to ask for help’
What can we do in the classroom to improve and teach social communication?

• Reduce distractions.
• Task plan
• Who?
• Timetable
What can we do in the classroom to improve and teach social communication?

- What helps?
- It’s not personal if....
- Reduce anxiety
- Individual timetable
- Safe place

Supporting pupils...
What can we do in the classroom to improve and teach social communication?

Set yourself a challenge!

• Adults
• Environment
• Supporting pupils
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