

What is the behaviour communicating? Applying Marie Delaney's RETHINK Model

REVIEW

Describe the behaviour

What do you see? Where and when? How often? With whom?

What is a typical response?

How do you approach the student? What do you say? How successful are your strategies? Are the responsibilities of staff carried out consistently?

Consider the environment

How are instructions and routines communicated? How are rules talked about? How do peers interact with the student?

Existing preventative measures

Differentiation for learning needs and personal strengths?

Support for the student's sensory profile? De-escalation and stress reduction plans?

REFRAME

"When he tells me to go away & gets angry, I feel like a failure".

vs

"Has he learnt to look after himself and not trust others?"

"Does my approach remind him of someone else?"

"I wish she would ask for help. It's exhausting having to constantly check on her"

vs

"Is she self-conscious about asking for help if she didn't always receive it in the past?"

"It's impossible to get anything done because he always wants to chat. There are no boundaries"

vs

"Perhaps he's focused on being remembered because he hasn't been kept in mind elsewhere"

REFLECT

The impact of Trauma

How have adverse experiences affected the ability to trust, share attention, tolerate not knowing, take risks & seek help?

Feelings fuelling the behaviour

Is the student projecting emotions onto you? Are you inadvertently re-enacting previous relationships?

Attachment history

How have earlier experiences shaped the student's preferences for connecting with adults and engaging with tasks?

Play development

Is the student able to separate from an adult? Are they better at playing alongside rather than with peers? Can they easily negotiate and relinquish control?

RESPOND

Add Structure & Predictability

Visual routines | Consistent routines for starting & stopping work | Preparation for transitions | Opportunities for sensory input & relaxation

Adapt the Learning Task

Small, time-limited steps | Clear & realistic goals | Reducing information overload | Memory aids | Providing choice & playing to the student's strengths

Relationships with Staff

Positive greetings | Check-ins | Exploring feelings through metaphor | Indirect feedback | Show empathy for tough times

Relationships with Peers

Clear roles in group activities | Non-competitive games | Role-play & Social Stories | Mentors