Tyssen ARP

Promoting independence

What the research tells us

Students (that have an assistant) have fewer interactions with their peers, especially in adolescence (Carter, et al., 1999)

Student achievement MAY BE hindered by para-professionals without extensive training supplying most of the daily interventions with the students (Gerber, et al., 2006)

Students have fewer opportunities for self-determination because everything is done on their behalf (Giangreco, et al. 2005)

Within the ARP

Within the ARP we are aware that pupils benefit from higher levels of support from an adult to aid them with developing a range of skills that they may be finding difficult, including social communication, social interactions, sensory processing and so forth.

However we are also aware of the need to promote independence as it is a direct link to independence skills in the future. Staff working at the ARP will be aware of individual strategies to develop independence as each child is unique. Examples of strategies we use in the ARP to develop independence includes:

- Fading support gradually, for example: 1:1 support, walking away for short periods whilst the child completes a task individually with the appropriate support such as a check off list timetable, walking away for longer periods
- Regular staff training to brain storm ideas to promote independence

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- Ensuring that pupils are given time to process instructions, for example when asking them to put their shoes on

- To provide pupils with the visual support to help them understand instructions and therefore have the ability to complete them

- To allow time for tasks, transitions and activities, reducing the need to rush and therefore complete tasks for pupils

- Giving pupils a clear understanding of what is expected of them, then giving them time to independently complete these

- During the All About Meetings parents independence skills may be one of the targets. Such as, putting their shoes on by themselves, this ensures that these skills are being developed across different environments.

- Use of a TEACCH workstation

- Visual timetables and allowing children to take the lead on this after the initial 'What's next?' cue

- Groups to explicitly teach independence skills during community visit groups

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