Child First Effective Partnership Practice

Removing Systemic Barriers

How Assistive Technologies can transform communication outcomes for young people and adults in justice pathways

Wednesday 25th October 2023

Marius Frank Microlink Education
Diz Minnitt Milton Keynes YOS

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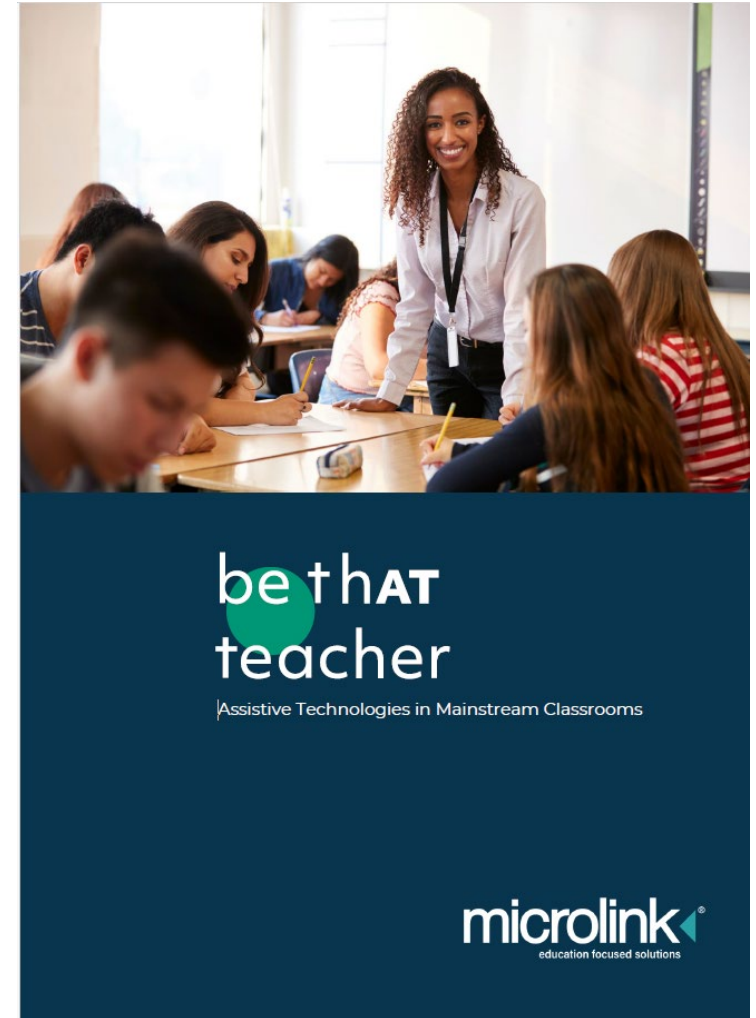
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Summary

We wish to create opportunities for Youth Offending Service staff to access AT training alongside staff from PRUs and Alternative Provision in their areas.

We are currently seeking funding to roll out another wave of free training.

Please use this Expression of Interest link to register your interest:
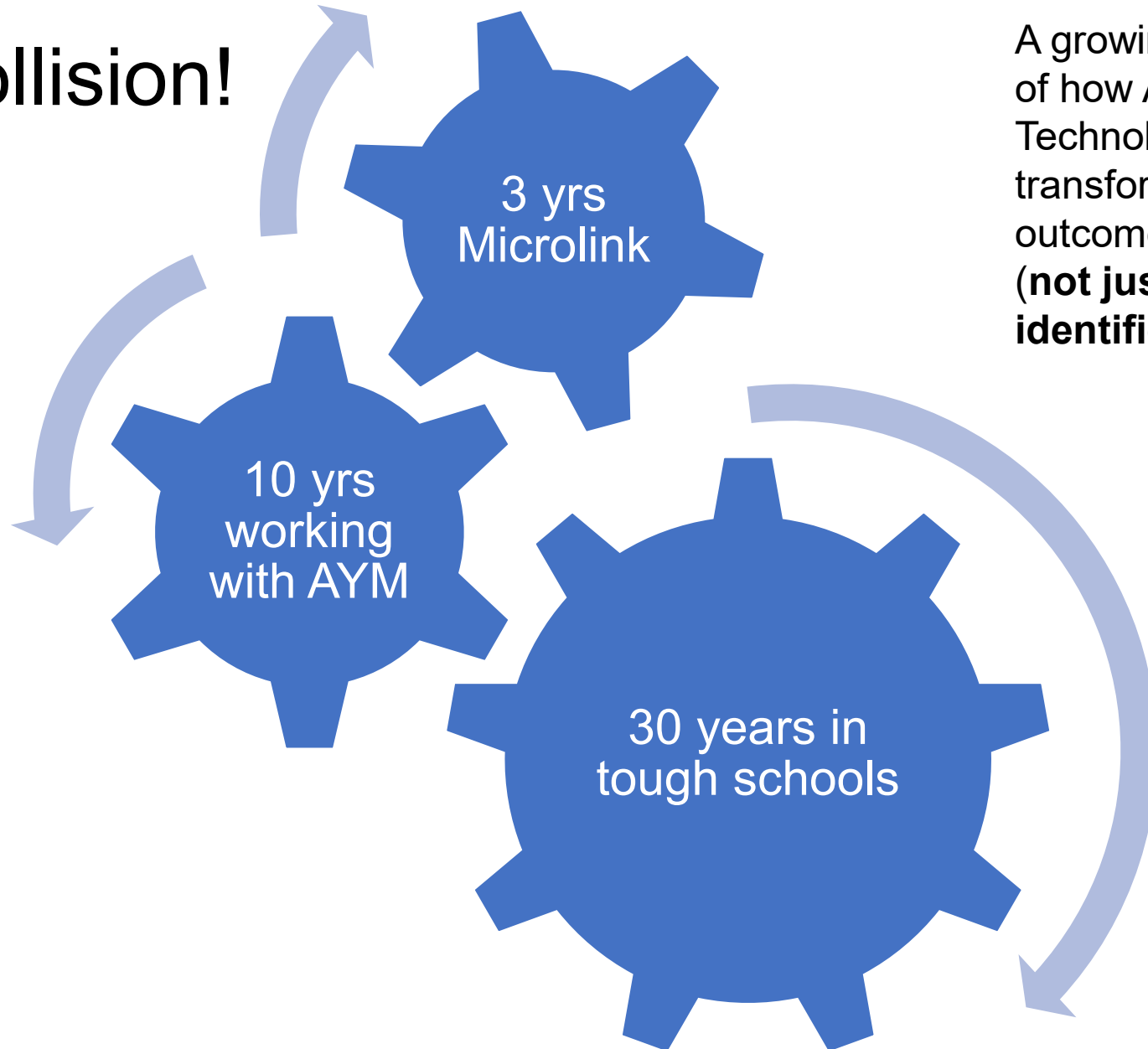
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Be ThAT youth justice professional!

be thAT teacher

Assistive Technologies in Mainstream Classrooms

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A fortunate collision!

3 yrs Microlink

10 yrs working with AYM

30 years in tough schools

A growing understanding of how Assistive Technologies can transform learning outcomes for all children (**not just those with identified needs**)

A profound understanding of why children fail in education… and what to do about it!

A shared and developing understanding of how to successfully meet the complex needs of children entering youth justice pathways… or preventing them from entering a pathway altogether

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Removing Systemic Barriers

How **Assistive Technologies** can transform communication outcomes for young people and adults in justice pathways

- Hidden Speech Language and Communication Needs in youth justice pathways **The evidence**
- Why?
- Solutions
- Extending the social model of disability to include children and young people "disabled by circumstance"
- From *equality* to *equity* to *removing systemic barriers*
- What are Assistive Technologies?
- Learning from two DfE-funded AT Pilot projects- **Be ThAT Teacher**
- Emerging AT (Assistive Technologies) that could transform communication outcomes
- Have a play for yourselves!
- Expression of Interest to join a pilot programme for AT use in youth justice services

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A National disgrace?

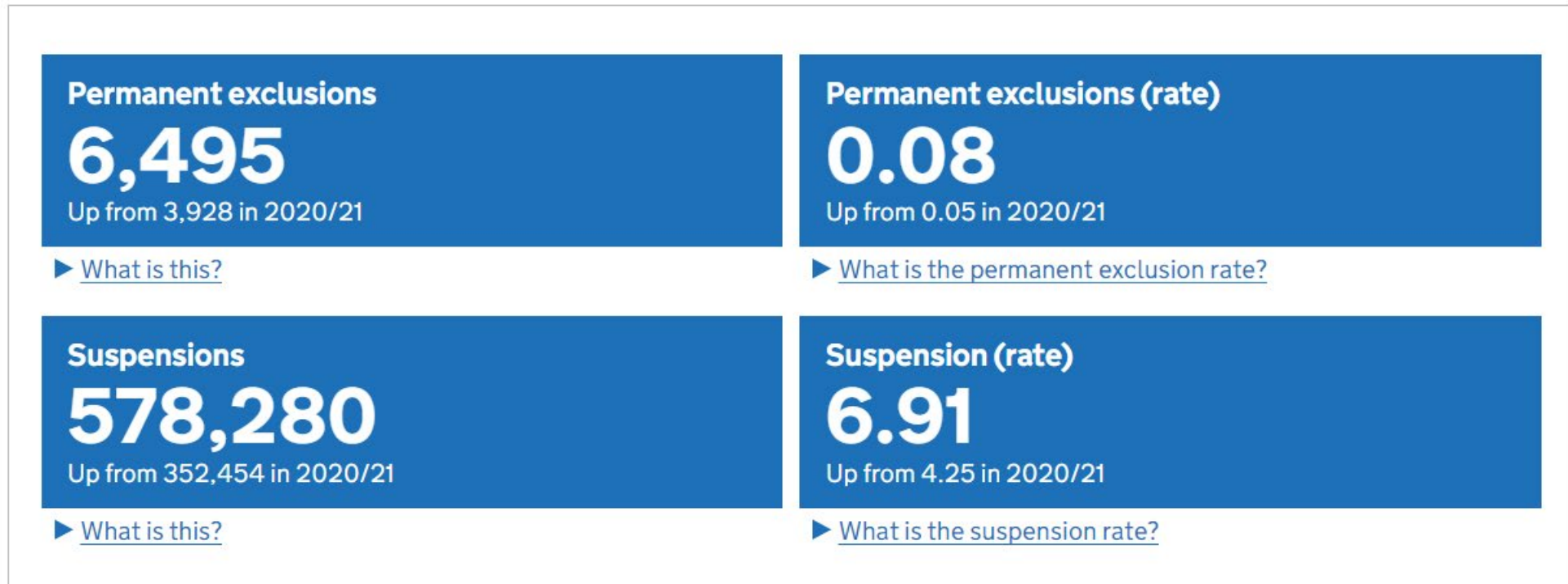Of the 80 children in the criminal justice system studied:

•nine in ten children are known or suspected to have been abused;

•eight in ten children are known or suspected to have a health issue;

•**eight in ten were subject to school exclusion or attendance at multiple secondary schools;**

•seven in ten are known or suspected to have lived with domestic violence whilst growing up;

•seven in ten children are known or suspected to be a victim of violence;

•seven in ten children lived in poverty;

•there was only one child with no recorded abuse or childhood adversity

Punishing Abuse

Children in the West Midlands Criminal Justice System

https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/4678/punishing-abuse.pdf

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A National disgrace?

Headline facts and figures - 2021/22

Permanent exclusions
6,495
Up from 3,928 in 2020/21

▶ What is this?

Permanent exclusions (rate)
0.08
Up from 0.05 in 2020/21

▶ What is the permanent exclusion rate?

Suspensions
578,280
Up from 352,454 in 2020/21

▶ What is this?

Suspension (rate)
6.91
Up from 4.25 in 2020/21

▶ What is the suspension rate?

3000 suspensions per school day!

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A National disgrace?

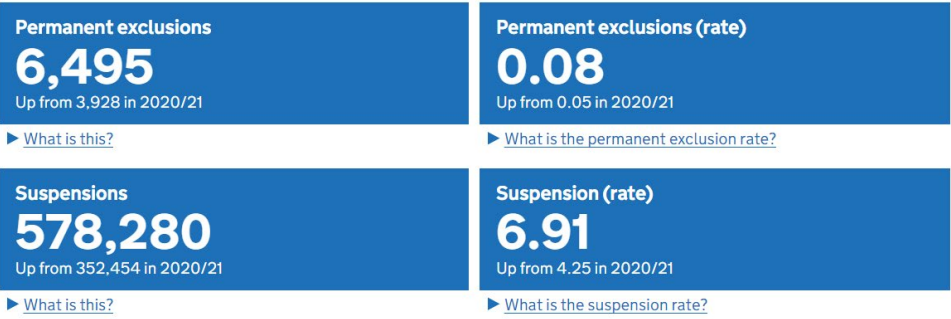## Rates are higher among pupils with special education needs (SEN)

The suspension rate for pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan is 17.63, and for pupils with SEN with no EHC plan (SEN support) is 18.59, compared to 4.69 for those without SEN.

The permanent exclusion rate for pupils with an EHC plan is 0.13, and for pupils with SEN support is 0.25, compared to 0.05 for those without SEN.

Suspension and permanent exclusion rates - by SEN provision, 2018/19 to 2021/22

	Suspension (rate)				Permanent exclusions (rate)			
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
SEN with statement or EHC	16.11	11.71	12.98	17.63	0.15	0.10	0.08	0.13
SEN without statement	15.59	11.01	11.86	18.59	0.32	0.20	0.15	0.25
No SEN	3.57	2.44	2.80	4.69	0.06	0.04	0.03	0.05

Headline facts and figures - 2021/22

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Children with SEN nearly **eight times** more likely to get permanently excluded than those without SEN

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And the National Stats do not tell the full picture!

What about unidentified needs?

(Milton Keynes Presentation)

More than **60% of young people** involved with the Youth Justice System have Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) which are **largely unrecognised** (Bryan et al, 2007)

71% based on **YJB Asset Plus data**, have SLCN but, as this is a hidden disability, for the majority of children this is **not accurately recognised prior to them being assessed by the YOT**.

57% of children with diagnosed language difficulties have Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (Benner et al, 2002)

81% of children with Emotional and Behavioural Disorders have **significant unidentified communication needs** (Hollo et al, 2014)

And the National Stats do not tell the full picture!

What about unidentified needs

(Milton Keynes Presentation-local analysis)

In 2018, a 'Predicted Harm Analysis' was completed by partner organisations and identified that of the 35 young people identified by the analysis, 25 had previously had some involvement with Milton Keynes Youth Justice and Support Services (YJSS).

At least **92% of the 25 young people** known to Milton Keynes YJSS had **identified SLCN**. Of the 92%, **79% of young people did not have their needs identified prior to our involvement.** The remaining 8% had a formal diagnosis of ADHD. Therefore, what can be concluded is that 100% of this cohort had additional needs.

In December 2021, we identified that the percentage of young people who had their Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) identified before being referred to YJSS or ESP was around 15%.

Between 2021 / 2022, Of the 86 young people who had been assessed by our Speech and Language Therapy team, **87% were found to have had identified SLCN.**

Between 2021 / 2022, referrals to our Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) SLT project in schools, showed that out of the 31 children assessed under this project, following a referral from their school setting for being at the greatest risk of school suspensions, **96% of the children assessed had a identified SLCN.**

Local Trends – all children (Milton Keynes)

In 2019 / 2020 - Of 80 young people assessed for SLCN, **80% had identified SLCN**.

In 2020 / 2021 - Of 97 young people assessed for SLCN, **84% had identified SLCN**.

In 2021 / 2022 – Of 86 young people assessed for SLCN, **87% had identified SLCN**.

Road to Nowhere…

- If untreated **33%** of children with **communication needs** (SLCN) will develop **mental illness** and over **50%** will become involved in **criminal activity.**

 *(Breakthrough Britain – The Centre for Social Justice)*

- **81%** of children with **Emotional and Behavioural** Disorders have **unidentified language difficulties** (SLCN).

  (Bercow: Ten Years On – 20th March 2018)

- **88%** of Unemployed young men had **communication needs** (SLCN) – compared to **8%** in the general population .

  (Children's Communication Coalition)

So the evidence is clear - **unrecognised and unaddressed needs** are compounded over time and the negative consequences increase… This is the Road to Nowhere…
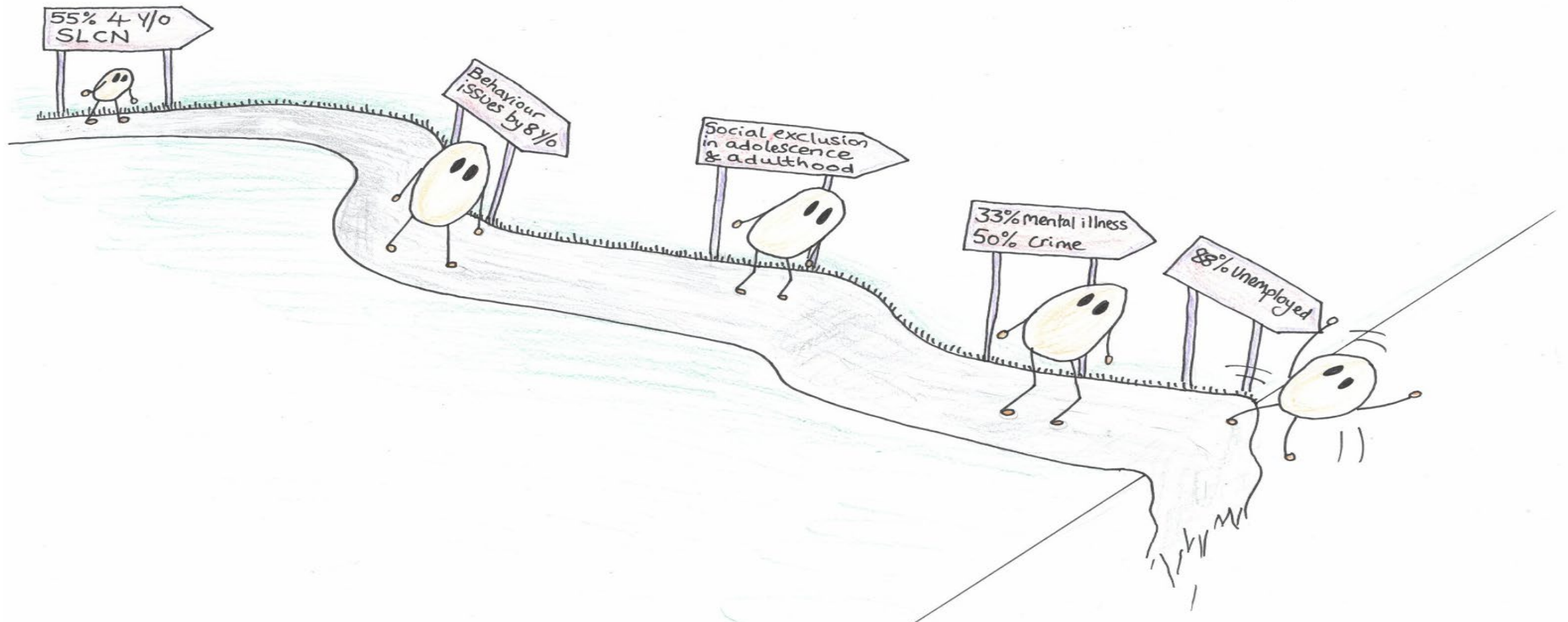
What is the problem?

- The impact of **complex needs** not fully appreciated, understood or met

- **"Hidden" disabilities**… often disguised behind layer upon layer of "front" (behaviours that help a young person gain some personal and social "power" back… but sometimes at the expense of relationships… or their freedom.

- **Exclusion** because of disruptive behaviour.., without the reasons for that behaviour being fully understood or addressed.

- A **curriculum** that venerates academic prowess, and an ability to understand and express learning (GCSE assessment) through academic reading and writing skills.

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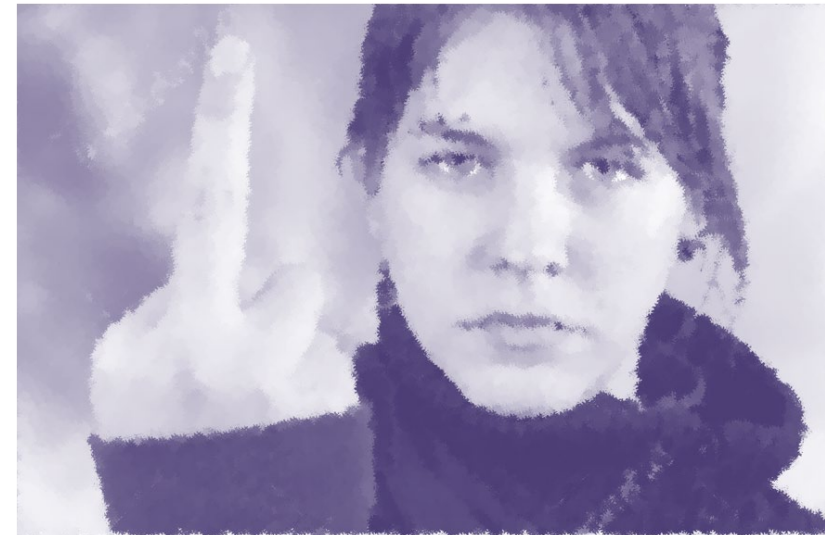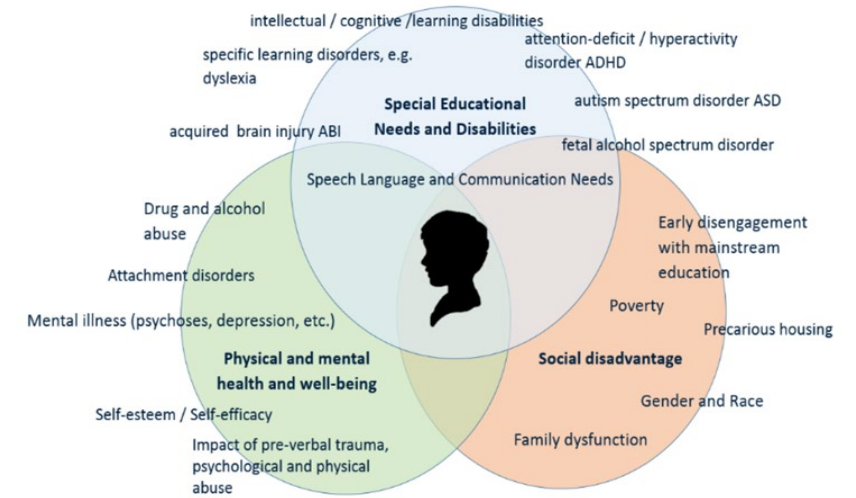
What is the solution?

- Give them more literacy lessons (WILL THIS REALLY WORK?!)

- Multi-agency working to understand and meet **complex needs** (YES- this is happening)

- **Assess every child for dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, ASD, ADHD, etc. etc.** (NO- Too expensive)

- **Ban permanent exclusion** (NO- not a chance of this happening)

- Change the **curriculum** to widen opportunity and access to a broader skillset, with assessment not limited to written expression of knowledge and skills (NO- not under the current political climate)

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Matt Hancock MP for West Suffolk launches Accessible Learning Foundation to help neurodiverse children
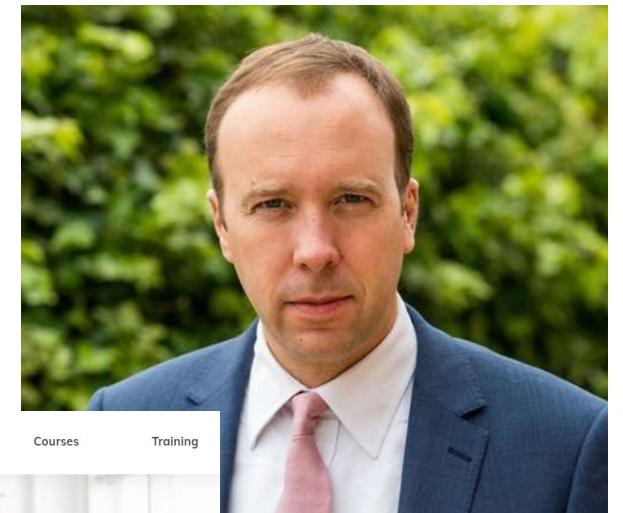
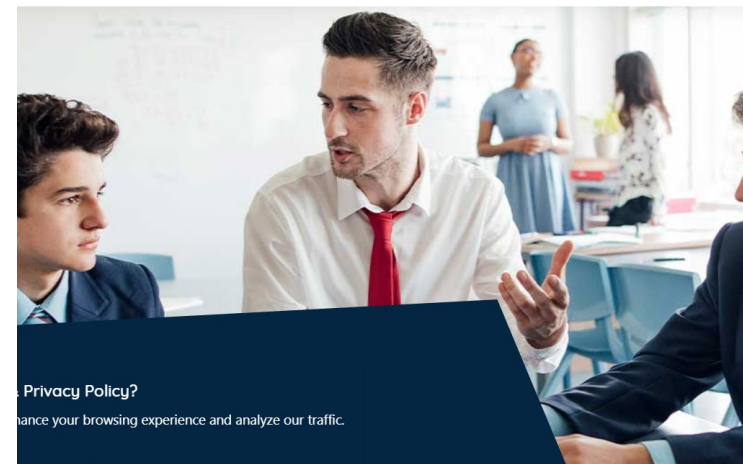ASDAN   About us   Membership   Resources   Courses   Training

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What is the solution?

Is there another way?

What is the solution?

Yes

What is the solution?

Let's start to examine some of the systemic barriers that exist within schools, within society, and take steps to remove them.

Let's build an **enabling** world!

The Social Model of Disability

Badly designed buildings

Poor job prospects

Stairs not ramps
No lifts

Isolated families

The problem is the disabling world

Special schools

Inaccessible transport
No parking places

Discrimination

Few sign language interpreters

The Social Model of Disability states that the oppression and exclusion people with impairments face is caused by the way society is run and organised.

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Medical Model of Disability

Needs helpers and Carers

"Confined" to a wheelchair

Cannot see

Cannot hear

The problem is the disabled person

Is housebound

Has fits

Cannot learn as quickly as non-disabled peers

Cannot walk up steps

Social Model of Disability

The social model of disability says that **disability is caused by the way society is organised**, rather than by a person's impairment or difference.

It looks at ways of removing barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people.

When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

Social Model of Disability

Badly designed buildings

"Special" schools

Social isolation

No access to sign language interpreters

The problem is the disabling world

Poor job prospects

Discriminatory practice and/or unconscious bias

Access to public transport

Cannot walk up steps

Social Model of Disability

Fully inclusive building design

Social inclusion

Fully inclusive mainstream education settings

The **solution** is an **enabling** world

Sign Language services available on demand

Equality through workplace adjustments

Fully inclusive and anti-disablist culture and climate

Fully accessible public transport

"Steps" are designed out

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In the cartoon, the medical model would suggest it is the "fault" of the wheelchair user that they cannot get into the building up the stairs; a social model would see the steps as the barrier that can be overcome by clearing the ramp first.

What is the solution?

Let's apply the social model of disability to a broader systemic issue.

Let's apply the social model of disability to children and young people "disabled" by Speech Language and Communication issues (sometimes unseen and unassessed)… **let's use Assistive Technologies to open up pathways of communication that will support learning, working and living**

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What is the solution?

Slide taken from "Sentence Trouble" training
(Communication SpLD Trust)
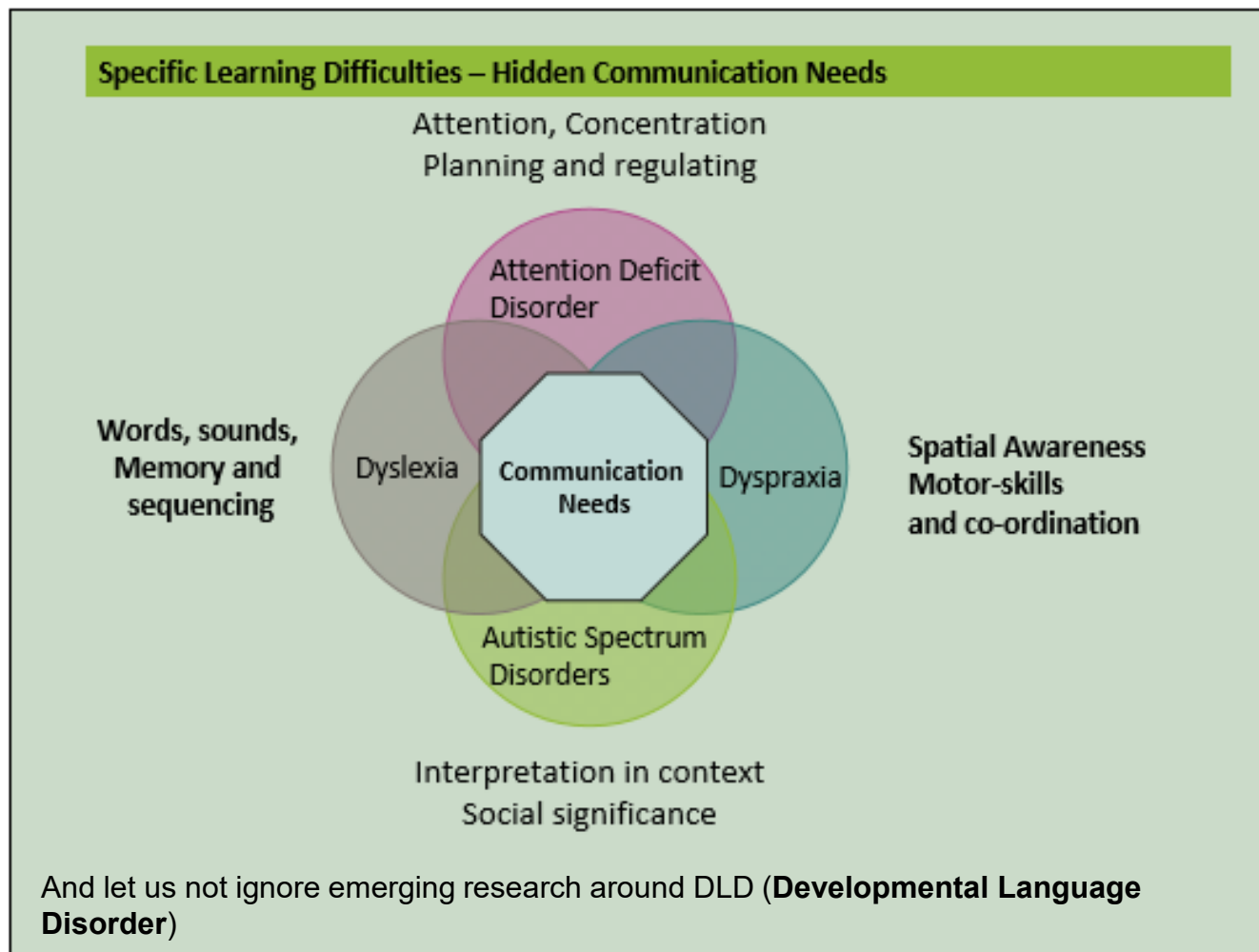
. "Using Speech and Language Therapists to probe communication needs can be a window to uncovering the sometimes complex and multifaceted underlying issues that are the major barriers to securing better outcomes."
Diz Minnitt

Communication accessibility could be the key to agency, understanding, wellbeing and independent living for many children

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Example: Using Assistive Technologies

Giving every child in class an I-Pad

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY … **to removing systemic barriers**

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Giving every child **with identified SEND** access to Assistive Technologies on their I-Pad

Creating an **environment, culture and classroom practice** that empowers the use of **Assistive Technologies** in mainstream lessons, so that **every child disabled by circumstance** can access quality teaching by choosing the right tools themselves

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Assistive Technologies:

- **Enable greater independence by the users** – it allows them to achieve and perform tasks that they were previously unable to or found difficult.

- **In daily life**, they range from mobility aids to physical tools such as grips and levers, hearing aids and visual impairment systems, physical modifications to the built environment etc.

- **In terms of IT systems**, they range from voice recognition programs, screen readers, and screen enlargement applications, closed captioning, speech-to-text and text-to-speech, and cognitive support and development systems to overcome specific learning difficulties.

" For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier.
For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.

**Judy Heumann
Educational Policymaker**

Accessible technology embraces **universal design principles,** supporting the widest group of users possible.

And if Assistive Technologies become as ubiquitous in classrooms as a pen and paper, then children will use them to support learning if and when required… and why not beyond the classroom too?

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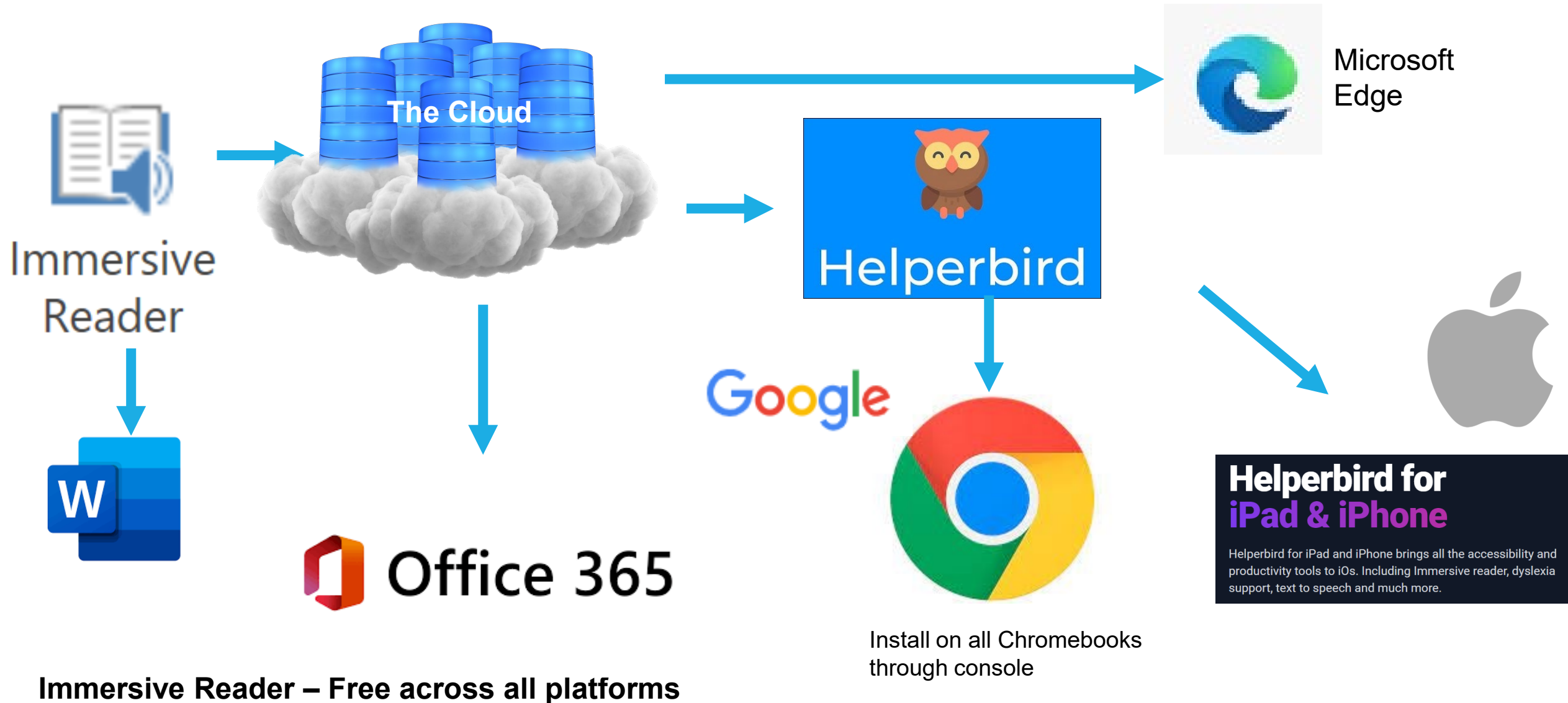education focused solutions

Be ThAT Teacher

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teacher

Assistive Technologies in Mainstream Classrooms

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Informed by DfE-funded AT pilot projects in 2022 and 2023 involving over 200 primary and secondary schools.

Developed further by accessibility and assistive learning experts at Microlink Education.

Launched in October 2023 to another 100+ schools (fully funded through the generous sponsorship of HSBC)

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The Cloud

Microsoft Edge

Immersive Reader

Helperbird

Google

Install on all Chromebooks through console

Helperbird for iPad & iPhone
Helperbird for iPad and iPhone brings all the accessibility and productivity tools to iOs. Including Immersive reader, dyslexia support, text to speech and much more.

Office 365

Immersive Reader – Free across all platforms

From Kim to Everyone 02:57 PM **Thank you so much. I felt daunted coming in, but you have demystified the process and I am now very excited!**

From Elisa to Everyone 04:57 PM **AT is not as scary a prospect as I thought...going to revisit built-in AT tools with pupils! Thank you!**

From Miss B to Everyone 02:55 PM **Hello I have dyslexia and have coloured glasses. I have never heard of Immersive Reader and I already know I will be using this myself... Had I known about this when I was in school I know it would have been such a benefit to me.**

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Anthony McGeeney @A_mcgeeney · 15h

Another great session Action Planning Assitive Technologies with @nasen_org @NicolePonsford and @marius_SCiP5. Looking forward to exploring, innovating and transforming how we support all children with AT #collaboration
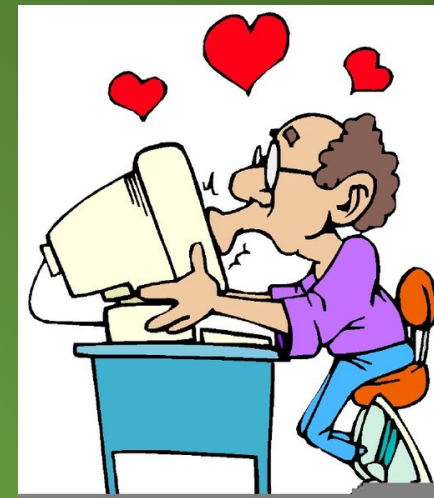
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"Helperbird is a gamechanger!" x 8 !

"A Year 8 student got to the Headteacher before me and said "Have you heard of Immersive Reader?"!"

Esther: "We are 95% EAL- I am going to get (Translation App) installed on the Office Admin PC, so that they can use it to communicate with parents and carers in the Reception area!"

Paul: "Started using voice to text with some SEN children. It has proved a really emotive experience for parents to see for the first time, in print, something created by their children... *(without the obvious support of teaching staff)."*

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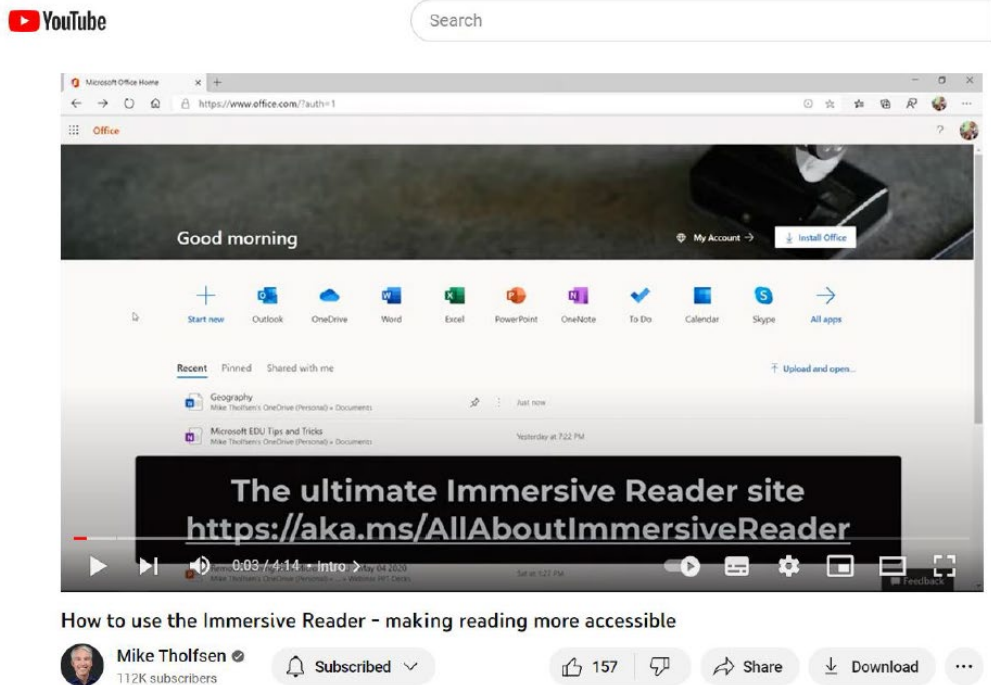
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Emma: "We have already begun:
- Using Helperbird
- Bought Clicker
- Office 365 given to me and my class to trial
- Whole school Training completed
- All staff given Microlink E-learning login details

We now need to embed this new tech into every classroom with every teacher feeling confident using it and more importantly using it effectively"

Michelle: Loving this project. It is really opening up avenues and opportunities for our pupils and school community.

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So… now it's your turn to have a play!

How to use the Immersive Reader - making reading more accessible

Mike Tholfsen ✓
112K subscribers

LINK:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVlXk3BsLVE&ab_channel=MikeTholfsen

Built-in Assistive Technologies that are free and easy to use: Introductory videos

There have been significant upgrades to the major IT platforms over the past five years that have transformed accessibility solutions that are built-in and free to use.

Here are some explanatory videos that illustrate the possibilities, from Google and Microsoft.

Text-to-Speech and Speech-to-Text

Microsoft Immersive Reader

Immersive Reader is a service that is built into many of the everyday Microsoft Office applications such as Word. It debuted in 2016… meaning earlier versions of Word and Microsoft Office will not exhibit its full functionality.

It comes in two versions:

- **Available in Word**, direct from your laptop or PC without an internet connection (but with limited functionality)
- **Available in Office 365** (online version of all Microsoft Office products). The full power of Immersive Reader is released. This is because the immense power of cloud-based processing can be accessed. This version of Immersive Reader has been embedded into a wider range of other applications.

Essentially, **Immersive Reader** is a reading support tool. Not only does it read text aloud, also called **Text-to-Speech**, it improves the readability of information making written information more accessible.
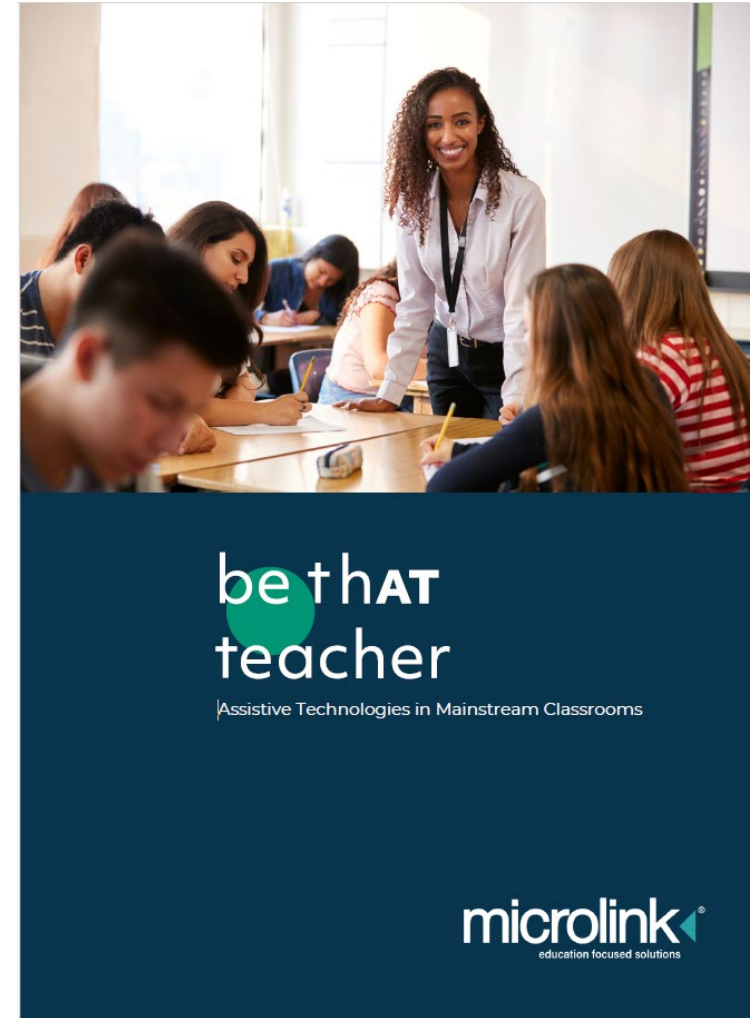
Next steps

Opportunities for Youth Offending Service staff to access training alongside staff from PRUs and Alternative Provision in their areas.

We are currently seeking funding to roll out another wave of free training.

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Please contact:
Marius Frank
Co-Head of Education Microlink

e: marius.frank@microlinkpc.com