

Improve your universal inclusion offer



The Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF) aims to support schools to develop a strong universal inclusion offer that improves pupils' learning and engagement, attainment, wellbeing, and sense of belonging. The funding should be used to '*identify and meet commonly occurring, predictable needs*' within pupil cohorts. So how can schools identify and meet these needs?

It starts with staff observations. Have you observed pupils in your class who are quietly disengaged or unexpectedly disruptive? Perhaps you have noticed several pupils who have persistent low-level behaviour challenges?

Sound familiar? Meet our three example pupils below and find out how a strong universal offer could help identify and meet the needs behind the behaviour, leading to improved pupil outcomes, wellbeing and behaviour.



Charlie, Year 5

- Class joker
- Seeks reactions
- Finds it difficult to stop behaviour after attention



Jayden, Year 9

- Uses banter when work gets difficult
- Refuses instructions
- Challenging when corrected



Anne, Year 5

- Reluctant to contribute
- Struggles with changes to routine
- Withdraws from peers



Charlie, Year 6

- Makes jokes and tries to make classmates laugh during lessons
- Copies other pupils, particularly when it receives peer attention
- Doesn't follow instructions, especially when it gains peer attention
- Finds it difficult to stop a behaviour once peers respond positively
- Makes exaggerated noises at inappropriate times, seeking reactions from classmates and adults

Matching observations with data

Rather than viewing Charlie's behaviour simply as attention seeking or poor behaviour, staff understand that all behaviour is communication, and use the Boxall Profile® to consider the developmental needs that may be behind the behaviour they're observing. They move from asking 'What is Charlie doing?' to 'What is Charlie communicating or finding difficult?'

A Boxall Profile® assessment for Charlie could indicate:

- Q Difficulty regulating impulses and considering the impact of actions before responding.
- Q The need for support to respond appropriately to adult direction, particularly when seeking peer approval.
- Q Not consistently understanding when a social response is appropriate or how to regulate his behaviour.
- Q A reliance on peers to understand what to do, and finding it difficult to independently judge what's appropriate in a particular social situation.
- Q A strong need for peer recognition and positive social connection, but not able to consistently recognise socially appropriate ways of achieving this.

Know a pupil like Charlie?

For pupils with a similar Boxall Profile® assessment to Charlie, it is important that staff provide opportunities to develop the skills needed to manage impulses, understand social boundaries and successfully participate in the classroom, while maintaining relationships and their sense of belonging. Instead of giving pupils like Charlie the greatest amount of adult or peer attention when they make noises, jokes or refuse instructions, staff can deliberately increase positive attention when they demonstrate the underlying skills.

A universal offer could include:

- giving brief clear instructions
- visual cues and pre-correction
- modelling appropriate ways of gaining attention
- building in opportunities for movement and regulation
- planning opportunities for positive peer interaction and recognition

**Strategies
to introduce
in your
classroom**

Jayden, Year 9

- Makes humorous comments during lessons, particularly when the work becomes challenging
- Uses humour and banter to gain attention from peers
- Copies the behaviour or language of other pupils
- Refuses or delays following instructions when peers are watching
- Becomes more challenging when corrected in front of his peers



Matching observations with data

Instead of viewing Jayden's behaviour simply as disruptive, defiant or attention seeking, staff consider what his behaviour could be communicating, and use the Boxall Profile® to identify what developmental needs may be behind it.

A Boxall Profile® assessment for Jayden could indicate:

- 🔍 A strong need for peer acceptance, often relying on humour to secure social status
- 🔍 Difficulty regulating impulses, particularly when excited, bored or seeking a social response
- 🔍 A strong influence of peer behaviour, finding it difficult to judge when particular behaviours are appropriate in different contexts
- 🔍 Difficulty managing the immediate impulse to challenge an instruction
- 🔍 Difficulty developing positive relationships with peers and adults
- 🔍 A strong need to maintain peer status or avoid embarrassment

Strategies for secondaries

For secondary-aged pupils like Jayden, peer relationships can be really significant.

The same behaviour may have a different social meaning from that of a younger pupil. At age 13, identity, autonomy and social status can be particularly important. The aim is not to remove pupils like Jayden from their peers or reduce opportunities for age-appropriate independence. Instead, universal inclusive practice is used to strengthen the developmental skills that enable them to remain engaged, successful and included within the mainstream secondary setting.

A universal offer could include:

- 📋 Providing specific positive recognition when instructions are followed, behaviour is regulated, appropriate contributions are made, or peers are supported.
- 📋 Giving pupils legitimate opportunities for responsibility, contribution and positive status, like supporting younger pupils, contributing to practical tasks or taking a defined classroom role.
- 📋 Using private, low-key correction wherever possible to reduce the risk of escalating behaviour through perceived embarrassment or loss of peer status.
- 📋 Providing clear instructions, processing time and discreet prompts.
- 📋 Building opportunities for movement, participation and regulation into lessons where appropriate.
- 📋 Identifying adults with whom pupils have a positive relationship and using these relationships to support engagement.

Anne, Year 5

- Generally quiet and conscientious
- Enjoys creative activities
- Has positive relationships with several adults
- Becoming increasingly reluctant to contribute in class
- Find changes to routines difficult
- Often withdraws from peers during unstructured time



Matching observations with data

A Boxall Profile® assessment for Anne could highlight strengths in her ability to form relationships with trusted adults, alongside emerging needs around emotional regulation, confidence and social interaction. This information wouldn't automatically result in an individual intervention. Instead, the teacher may consider how classroom practice can be adapted so that Anne, alongside other pupils with similar needs, can participate successfully.

If you know a pupil like Anne, try these universal offer strategies:

A universal offer that supports all pupils could include access to predictable routines, clear expectations, visual prompts, opportunities for emotional regulation, and regular check-ins. The Boxall Profile® could be used universally alongside teacher observation and pupil voice to develop an understanding of social and emotional development across the class.

For example, the teacher could introduce structured opportunities for paired discussion before whole-class questioning, provide advance notice of changes, and build short regulation opportunities into the school day. A strong universal offer could also include named trusted adults and planned check-ins for all pupils.

Using the Inclusive Mainstream Fund to develop your universal offer

The Boxall Profile® Online helps educators to identify the needs behind behaviours, and provides strategies that can be used for the whole class. It aligns with the 7 principles of inclusion - including enabling evidence-based support and high-quality adaptive teaching - and means that needs can be met earlier without additional targeted support.

Using the Boxall Profile® Online as part of your universal offer helps you create a roadmap for every child. It gives you the data to support your observations, strategies to build on your existing practice, and a way to track progress over time, ensuring no pupil falls through the gaps.

You can see at a glance where the gaps in social and emotional development lie and more importantly, you can track how they improve over time. This is the '*gold standard*' of evidence that the DfE and Ofsted are looking for in your Inclusion Strategy, and to justify your IMF spend.



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free trial today**

