

Bramhope SEN Coffee Morning

27th January 2025



We will begin promptly at 9am. Please sign in on the sign in sheet.

Please help yourself to a coffee from the side.



Today's Agenda

Outline of the Morning

- **9:00 – 9:05am**

Welcomes and Ground Rules

- **9:05 – 9:20am -**

Alpha to Omega intervention insight.
Intro into Colourful Semantics.

- **9:20am – 9:35**

Local and Regional Challenges.

Are there any specific challenges for our families?

- **9:35 – 9:45am**

Chance to have a conversations with Mrs Judd, Mr Street and Mrs House.

Ground Rules and Protocols for SEN Working Group

1. Safe Space for Discussion

- This group is a safe and supportive space where all members are encouraged to discuss a wide range of SEN-related topics, including questions, experiences, and challenges.
- Everyone's input is valued, and there is no such thing as a "silly" question. We are all here to learn from each other and to share knowledge.

2. Maintain Anonymity

- To ensure privacy and respect confidentiality, no names of children, parents, or other staff members will be mentioned during discussions. When sharing experiences or examples, keep identifying details anonymous.

3. Positive and Constructive Atmosphere

- Discussions should remain positive, constructive, and solution-focused. We aim to build one another up and create a supportive environment where feedback is given respectfully.

4. Equal Contribution and Collaboration

- Each member of the group is encouraged to contribute, share their expertise, and offer solutions. Whether this is during the Q & A section of the morning or when you have some time to talk amongst yourselves over a coffee.

6. Welcoming and Inclusive Environment

- The group should be friendly, welcoming, and inclusive. Making new members throughout the year feel comfortable by being open and approachable. Acknowledging that we are all at different stages of diagnosis or are here because we have an interest in SEN.
- Avoid judgment and focus on creating a space where everyone feels encouraged to share and participate.

By adhering to these ground rules and protocols, we will build a strong, collaborative community focused on improving support for SEN children and ensuring a positive environment for all of our parents and staff members.

Responding to Feedback and Questions
from the previous coffee

Interventions at Bramhope

Interventions across school

- 1:1 reading support
- Times table support
- Mathletic Maths (different year groups)
- Alpha to Omega
- Lego Club
- Away with words
- Sensory Circuits
- Phonics / Fast Track Phonics
- Handwriting
- Precision Spelling
- Reading Fluency / Comprehension
- **Nessy Fingers**
- **Lexia**
- **Personalised Morning Tasks**
- **Colourful Semantics**

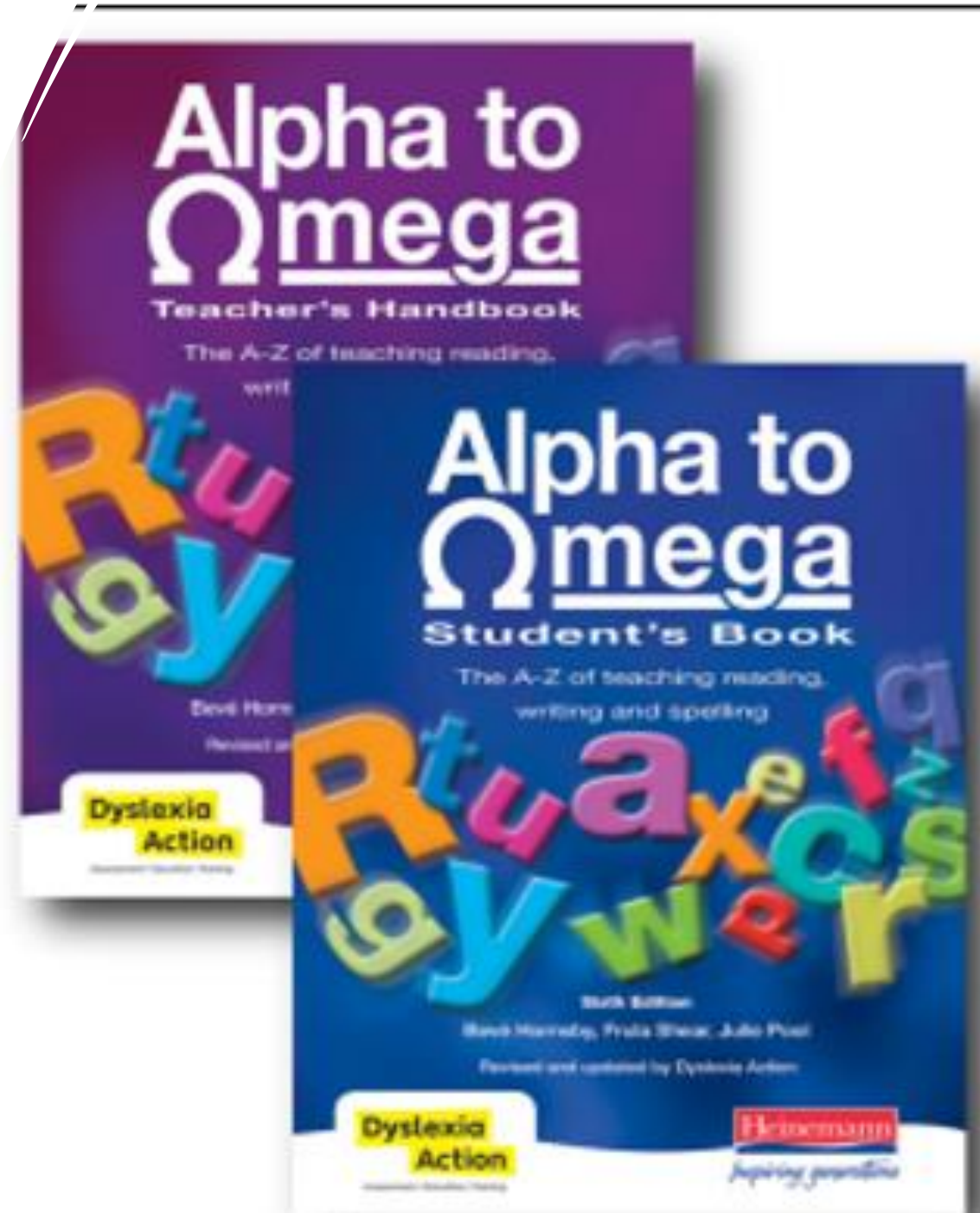
Who supports and runs the interventions?

- Support Staff across KS1 and KS2
- KS1 class teachers – phonics

- KS2 Support Staff
- Mrs Judd
- Mrs House

Today's Focus – Alpha to Omega

- Alpha to Omega was introduced into Bramhope 4 years ago.
- Initially it was piloted in the year 3 / 4 cohort at the time. Mrs Lawson, Mrs House, Mrs Reynard were trained for the intervention (the year 3 / 4 teachers and support at the time)
- Alpha to Omega now runs across KS2 and is specifically for children with a confirmed dyslexia diagnosis.
- Mrs Haughton has become our leading support staff member for this.



What is Alpha to Omega?

The Alpha to Omega programme is a phonetic, linguistic approach to the teaching of reading, writing and spelling. Alpha to Omega also links to our handwriting as it is taught using the cursive script where possible (unless the pupil(s) has a pronounced difficulty with fine motor control).

Where we begin

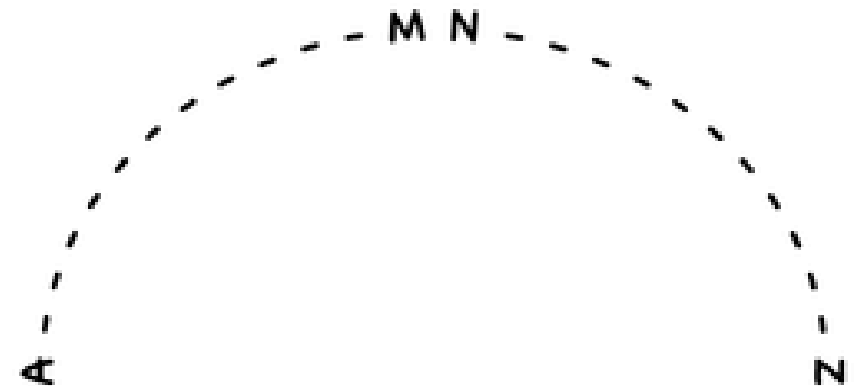
The Placement Test helps to highlight particular gaps in pupil's alphabetic code and identifies a suitable starting point for pupils. It can be surprising how far back the assessor needs to go for the children accessing the programme.

In the placement test, the pupil is asked to:

- Alphabet
- Set out the alphabet arc (Place markers a mn z) Pupil sets out letters as far as they can go.
- Name letters
- Give sounds
- Pick out vowels
- Give short vowel sounds
- Dictate letter sounds for student to write.
- Sequencing
- Name read and spell
 - Days
 - Months
- Read words on spelling list
- Spell words on spelling list (stopping after first error to decide entry point)

The assessment informs baseline targets for the pupil to work on.

Where the programme is taught in a group – the teacher will determine the best fit starting point.



Time	Item	Comments
5 mins	Alphabet or sequencing work Alphabet arc a to z – use timer	
5 mins	Memory training Visual: stun elix Auditory: blip	Struggled with 4 letters (auditory)
2 mins	Review Spelling SOS – brand bend wind bond 'od'	
5 mins	New Spelling pattern or concept /ot/ 'Listen to these words and tell me what sound you can hear that is the same in all of these words: 'grant,' plant' 'lent,' 'sent' tent' 'spent' 'mint' 'splint' 'blunt' (ot) Pick out 'ot' from the arc & make a flashcard Adult overwrite letters 'ot' saying letter sound and name, Pupil copies Tracking 'end' saying letter sound and name Practice joining 'ot'	
2 mins	New words for reading grant plant lent rent sent tent spent mint splint blunt	
5 mins	Spelling in structure Simultaneous oral spelling grant plant lent rent sent tent spent mint blunt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher says word e.g. 'mint' Pupil repeats word: 'mint' Pupil repeats word: mint Pupil says letter sounds/names before spelling /m/ /n/ /t/ Student writes word whilst simultaneously saying letter names as they write: mint 	Letter b reversed
5 mins	Dictation The band is in the tent We went in the wet mud and sand.	
2 mins	Sight words be – use 4 step spelling strategy	
5 mins	Consolidation exercises (AP 1.74-1.44)	
Lesson Evaluation		
Progress to next session Recap full stop Work on b (4 step instruction)		

Colourful Semantics

Introducing Alpha to Omega was to meet a need for a specific group of our children.

We are constantly working towards finding different ways to support our children and monitoring the need across specific groups of children.

How do we monitor need across school?

- Assessment Results
- Classroom teacher conversations and judgements
- Intervention impact results
- Growing specific need / diagnosis

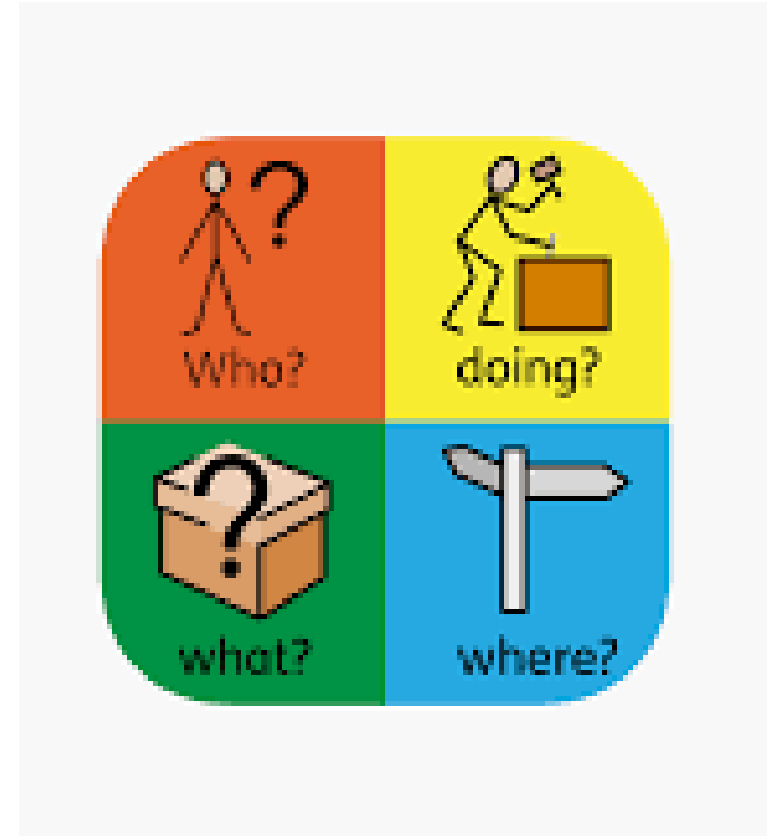
Colourful Semantics – currently in its infancy as a pilot intervention to monitor impact.
Introduced after linking with the English lead Mrs Rathmell

Colourful semantics is an approach that was created by Alison Bryan and is designed to support children develop their understanding of sentence structure and expand the length of their sentences. The structure of a sentence (syntax) is colour coded and then these are linked to their meaning (semantics).

4H is our trial class for measurable impact.

English planning this half term reflects the colourful semantics and I am running an additional intervention for some children with a measured baseline.

This intervention, if rolled out would play a vital role in supporting children who struggle with the basics of sentence structure. It is also an easy to use way of developing those extended sentences for our more able writers.



Section 2 of today's discussion points.

National figures- context

Over 1.5 million pupils in England are identified as having SEND

Overall proportion of pupils with SEN

Of all pupils in England in January 2024:

- 13.6% had special educational needs (SEN) support, but didn't have an [education, health and care \(EHC\) plan](#) (up from 13% in 2023)
- 4.8% had an EHC plan (up from 4.3% in 2023)

Primary school pupils with SEN

At state-funded primary schools (including academies) in January 2024:

- 14.1% of pupils were classed as having SEN, but didn't have an EHC plan
- 3% of pupils had an EHC plan

Secondary school pupils with SEN

At state-funded secondary schools (including academies) in January 2024:

- 12.9% of pupils were classed as having SEN, but didn't have an EHC plan
- 2.7% of pupils had an EHC plan

Types of need

- Speech, language and communication needs were the most common primary type of need for those with SEN support, applying to 291,742 pupils (25.6%).
- Autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) was the most common primary type of need for pupils with an EHC plan, applying to 132,249 pupils (33%).

National Figures

Gender

In January 2024:

- 62% of pupils with SEN support were boys
- 72% of pupils with an EHC plan were boys

- **FSM eligibility**

- Pupils with SEN are more likely to be eligible for free school meals (FSM) than those without.

In January 2024:

- 38.3% of pupils with SEN support were eligible for FSM
- 42.2% of pupils with an EHC plan were eligible for FSM
- 21.4% of pupils with no SEN were eligible for FSM

National Challenges: increasing need

- The number of pupils requiring SEND support in the UK continues to rise, placing significant pressure on existing educational infrastructures. Recent government data reveals a 13% increase in the number of SEND pupils from 2022 to 2023, totalling over 1.5 million students.
- This escalation not only strains the physical capacities of schools but also the resources available for tailored educational support. SEND support and EHC plans serve distinct purposes: SEND support offers supplementary assistance within the school environment, whereas EHC plans involve more intensive, individually tailored interventions following a statutory assessment. The increase in students needing these services shows an expansion in demand that outpaces current educational provisions.

National Challenges: reduction in health services

- The DfE schools' survey showed the second most common barrier to providing adequate SEND support was a lack of access to external specialist support or professionals.
- The reduction of wider support services, like CAMHS, has left schools to source their own specialists.
- While nearly nine in 10 parents surveyed said their child was getting the required medical support, this dropped to around half for mental health and educational psychologist support, a parent, pupil and learner voice survey found.
- DfE's school survey found 44 per cent of special school teachers said they were able to access the external support they needed for "all or most" of the time.
- But this dropped to 24 per cent for primary teachers, and 19 per cent of those in secondaries.

National Challenges: staffing

- The UK is currently facing a significant crisis in supporting SEND children due to profound staffing challenges in schools. A recent survey revealed that almost every state school in England is grappling with a shortage of support staff, with only six out of 922 schools surveyed reporting that they had no issues. In addition to recruitment struggles, schools are experiencing a severe turnover, losing essential support staff to better-paying work in places like supermarkets. Caring for children with severe learning difficulties is a skilled, challenging job, and requires a competitive salary that in many cases is not funded by councils.
- The impact is dire: over half of SEND coordinators cannot find suitable candidates for teaching assistant roles, while three-quarters of school staff say that more learning support assistants are needed. This not only affects the quality of education but also places additional stress on the existing staff, which could cause even more to leave the profession.

National Challenges: funding

- Funding, or lack thereof, sits at the heart of many of these problems. Recent debates in the Commons have highlighted a bleak situation across the UK, with MPs from all sides expressing frustration over delayed assessments and a severe shortage of special school places.
- This significant rise in EHCPs has far outpaced the availability of provisions, leading to substantial budget overruns, with councils paying for expensive transport to distant schools or even private school places. While the government is increasing funding and committing to opening 60 new special schools, many feel it is not enough, with Education funding campaign group f40 suggesting an additional £4.6 Billion was needed. Similarly, last year The National Education Union stated that funding would need to be £3 Billion higher to meet previous standards. The stark reality is that while funding has increased, many allege that it falls critically short of what is required to prevent the deepening crisis in SEND education.

National Challenges: EHCPs

- The effectiveness of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) is crucial for supporting children with special educational needs, yet timely access to these plans remains a significant challenge. The statutory 20-week timescale for finalising new EHCPs was only met in 50.7% of cases in 2022, showing a low adherence to legal deadlines. A 2024 freedom of information request revealed that 20,000 cases across England were waiting longer than the 20-week window, with 3,000 waiting for longer than a year. Such delays can have profound impacts on children's education, leaving them without the support they need for extended periods.
- These problems are compounded by both increasing need and stagnant funding, leading to many difficulties for parents and children. As this service is run by local councils, the scale of the problem can also vary dramatically, with some councils having a considerably worse rate of missing targets (such as Leicestershire hitting the 20-week target just 3.8% of the time in 2023).
- Even when children have an EHCP in place problems can continue, with 35,000 children in 2023 officially lacking suitable provision, and 15,000 officially logged as unknown.

Local/Regional Challenges- Leeds Local Authority

- Last year, Leeds saw an 86% increase in requests for EHC needs assessments, with 1,497 requests received compared to 803 in 2021. This trend has accelerated further this year, with an additional 23% increase between January and June 2024 (1,002 requests) compared to the same period in 2023 (813 requests).
- This surge in demand also coincides with a shortage of EPs, recognised by the Department for Education as a national issue and something we are experiencing locally in Leeds.
- Some new provision but SEN capacity has not increased with demand.
- Removal of Funding For Inclusion, leaving a funding gap from March 2025. Not all children previously in receipt of FFI will receive an EHCP. Delays in EHCPs further exacerbate the funding gap.
- The local authority is operating at a deficit, running into £millions.

National Challenges- schools

National school survey

- Most heads say they are being forced to reduce the number of teaching assistants or hours worked by teaching assistants, even though the role is crucial in offering individual support to children with SEND.
- Nearly four-fifths (78%) said they had needed to do so in the last three years due to funding pressures, while a further 84% anticipated they would be forced to do so in the next three years. For example, more than four-fifths (85%) said that they were having to subsidise healthcare provision from their own budgets.

“Schools face a perfect storm of growing demand to support more pupils with special educational needs at the same time as costs have increased massively and are still rising.”

“The funding we receive for pupils with SEND is simply not enough, and it’s astonishing that the per pupil SEND funding has not increased for more than a decade. This puts huge pressure on our dwindling school budgets.”

“There just isn’t capacity within special schools in our area, meaning we are supporting even more pupils with complex needs within our mainstream settings. We believe in inclusion and are currently doing our best with the limited funds, but, put simply, it is not good enough for the children with the most complex needs - they deserve so much more than we can give them.

What is the new government doing?

- The government is reviewing the current intervention schemes. But education secretary Bridget Phillipson has also hinted at a wider-shake up, saying “we need to have a conversation about how we look to reform the system overall”.
- Schools minister Catherine McKinnell pointed to announcements already introduced, such as the curriculum and assessment review which will look at improvements for SEND children and Ofsted inspections from next year probing how inclusive schools are.
- Ministers have also moved SEND policy from the families to schools directorate.
- McKinnell said while ministers are “listening, we want to move as fast as we can to really fix what we can as quickly as we can”.

“But there will be time that needs to be taken to get them absolutely right because it is a complex system – there are complex decisions to be made.

“We need to make sure we get it right, but can build that trust while we do so as well.”

Challenges at Bramhope

- Increasing need: SEN numbers have doubled in less than 12 months
- Limited capacity
- Funding
- Recruitment
- Accessing specialist support

What are we doing?

- Meeting a wide range of complex needs
- Focus on quality first teaching
- Upskilling staff: training and development
- Clear identification, monitoring and tracking
- Completing EHCP 'request to assess' applications
- Supporting parents with referrals for assessment
- Supporting parents in accessing wider support
- Engaging parents in decision making for their child: IPMs, ILPs, ongoing communication and annual reviews