Using Person-Centred Practices in Schools
Acknowledgements

Developed by Helen Sanderson Associates.

The person-centred thinking tools were originally developed by The Learning Community for Person-Centred Practices, and are used here with permission.

For more information please go to learningcommunity.us and helensandersonassociates.co.uk

You can find out more about using person-centred thinking tools in education at personalisingeducation.org

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Appreciations

What it does
Identifies the pupil’s positive characteristics, talents and gifts, learning what others like and admire about them, and what they value in themselves.
How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- Acknowledges and appreciates the pupil’s gifts and qualities and builds self-esteem.
- Helps pupils identify what they value about themselves, developing self-awareness.
- Informs the one-page profile.
- Can be used to create a whole school appreciation.
- Helps us to think about how the pupil can use their gifts and talents to make a positive contribution to their school or community.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- **Parents** know that other people see their child’s talents and strengths.
- **School staff** can identify the gifts and talents of team members and use this within team building and to contribute to staff one-page profiles.
- Contributes to developing a person-centred culture within the school.

Appreciations
One-page profile

What it does
Gives us a summary of:
• What others like and admire about the pupil.
• What’s important to the pupil.
• How best to support the pupil.

Like and admire
What’s important to...
How best to support
### How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- Provides detailed information about how to support the pupil in their learning and pastoral support.
- Records what matters to the pupil, which can inform personalised learning and support.
- Helps us to learn what support the pupil needs to balance important TO and important FOR.
- To use at times of transition, ensuring that information is shared.
- Can be used in preparation for a Person-Centred Review.

### How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- **Parents** can see that their knowledge about how to support their child is shared and used within school.
- **School staff** can have their own one-page profiles to use in supervision, staff development plans and performance management meetings.

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Communication chart

What it does
It gives us a way to record how someone communicates through their actions, as well as their words, and describes how others should respond.
How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- It ensures that the pupil’s behaviour is understood as communication and therefore management strategies address this.
- It helps the pupil to share what’s best for them when they feel upset or angry.
- Ensures consistency of understanding and response to the way the pupil communicates.
- Contributes to positive relationships, as information can be shared with others.
- Pupils learn that everyone is different, that people communicate in different ways.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- **Parents** can be involved to support staff to understand how their child communicates.
- **School staff** can learn how the pupil communicates quickly and gain a better understanding of the pupil and what they are communicating through their behaviour.
Communication chart

What it does
It gives us a way to record how we can communicate effectively with the pupil.
### Communication chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help the pupil</th>
<th>Help others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• It can help the pupil to understand what is happening now or is going to happen.</td>
<td>• <strong>Parents</strong> are able to share information about the best way to communicate with their child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It ensures consistency in reassurance when the pupil feels upset or angry.</td>
<td>• <strong>School staff</strong> will know how to make sure that the pupil understands them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It supports school staff to communicate key messages consistently.</td>
<td>• <strong>New staff</strong> can quickly learn the best way to communicate with the pupil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The whole class can explore different ways of communicating.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning log

What it does
It gives us a way to record learning and information about a pupil in order to continuously improve on how we deliver personalised learning and support.
How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- It develops our understanding of how to deliver personalised school support based on learning about what worked well, and what didn’t, at key times.
- It helps the school to identify and deliver any adjustments to help the pupil have better support or learning opportunities.
- Can be used to replace/inform information in home/school communication books and inform reports.
- Helps at times of transition – to learn what is working and not working.
- Can be used to review a current one-page profile or to help develop a new one.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- **Parents** can contribute information.
- Helps parents to learn what support works best for their child at school.
- **School staff** can use this to replace traditional progress notes or to record professional observations of a pupil.
4+1 questions

What it does
This helps us to reflect on what has been happening and what has been learned in relation to any situation. It helps us acknowledge what has been working well, as well as providing discussion about any worries or issues and then to action plan.

- What have we tried?
- What have we learned?
- What are we pleased about?
- What are we concerned about?
- What do we need to do next?
How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

• It gives a structured way for the pupil’s views to be heard.
• Identifies what they and others have learned from any situation.
• Recognises and celebrates what has worked well.
• Is a genuine way to listen to a pupil’s concerns.
• Is a basis for action planning.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

• **Parents** can see a record and understand what has been learned about their child in school situations.
• Enables parents to share celebrations as well as concerns about their child in school.
• **School staff** can use it as a whole school, year or class exercise. It can give information to develop the school development plan.
• For a staff team to reflect on a new pilot or initiative.
• To measure the impact of any new intervention.
• Helps staff feel listened to.

4+1 questions
What it does

Identifies what is working well and where things need to be different (not working) by looking at an issue from different perspectives.

It gives us a snapshot of how things are now, an opportunity to acknowledge what’s working well, and to highlight what needs to be different to build into actions.
Working and not working from different perspectives

How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- To learn what is working and not working for the pupil, build on what is working and change what is not working.
- Helps to learn what needs to be in place at times of transition.
- To review extra provision in school from the pupil’s and others’ perspectives.
- To develop a targeted plan to support the pupil with things that aren’t working.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- **Parents** can contribute their perspective around an issue; both what they think is working well and their concerns.
- **School staff** can use it as a whole class activity to review what pupils think about school life and their performance.
- It can gather different perspectives in parents’ evenings or Person-Centred Reviews.
- A way to consult with parents on an issue.
- In staff meetings to look at what’s working and not working about a situation or issue.
- In supervision, performance management or one to one sessions.
- To gather information from pupils and parents to inform the school development plan.
Relationship circle

What it does
This gives us a visual summary of who is important in the pupil’s life. It is a way to understand the number, depth and spread of relationships a pupil has, and to then think about how to strengthen existing relationships and develop new ones.
How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

• To gather information for the one-page profile by learning who is important to the pupil.
• Can help to identify where friendships are an issue and to identify where pupils need support in this area (for example, circles of friends).
• If the pupil needs support, it can identify who might be able to offer this.
• When using the matching person-centred thinking tool, we can use this to think about relationships that work well and identify the characteristics of people they get on with best.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

• **Parents** understand their child’s friendships and relationships and anything they can do to support this.
• **School staff** think about relationships that are important to the whole school and how to develop these (may be part of the school development plan).
• To inform the school’s communication strategy.
Decision-making

What it does
This gives us a clear picture of how pupils make decisions, the range of decisions they make, and support they need in decision-making.

[Diagram with columns labeled "Important decisions in my life", "How I must be involved", "Who makes the final decision?"]

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How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- To record the best ways to support pupils to make decisions.
- Describes the decisions the pupil currently makes so that they are not over-supported or under-estimated.
- Helps to think about increasing decision-making and responsibility appropriate to the pupil’s age and circumstances.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- **Parents** are clear about their involvement in decision-making and how the final decision is made.
- **School staff** are clear about the decisions they can make and what is within their control.
- It can be used or adapted to develop classroom/school groundrules.
- It can inform the home-school agreement.
Roles and responsibilities (doughnut)

What it does
This helps people to understand what they must do (core responsibilities), where they can try things using their judgement and creativity, and identifies what is not their responsibility.
How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- It can be used to clarify pupil’s roles and responsibilities within the classroom or school and inform classroom agreements or rules.
- It can inform the home school agreement around homework, uniform and behaviour.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- **Parents** understand what their responsibilities are and what they can expect from the teachers and the school.
- **School staff** can use as a basis for personalised job descriptions and contracts.
Matching

What it does
This gives us a structured way to think about best matches for pupils with other people – for example when pairing up with pupils or matching to support staff.
Matching

How this person-centred thinking tool helps the pupil

- It helps to clarify a good match between the pupil and others for situations where people need to be matched, for example, project work, school trips.
- Can be used in the recruitment of individual supporters for the pupil.

How this person-centred thinking tool helps others

- This is the main person-centred thinking tool for person-centred recruitment for staff, for pupils with a personal budget.
Person-Centred Reviews

What it does
This is a way of learning or updating what is important to and for the pupil, together with the people who are important in the pupil’s life. The process involves looking at what is working and not working from the pupil’s perspective, the family perspective and the school’s perspective. Outcomes and actions are agreed to build on what is working and change what is not working.
Person-Centred Reviews

How the Person-Centred Review helps the pupil

- It creates a shared understanding of what is working and what is not working for the pupil.
- Identifies what is important to the pupil in the future.
- Outcomes and actions are agreed that reflect what is important to the pupil and change what is not working.
- It helps move the pupil towards a life that they aspire to.

How the Person-Centred Review helps others

- **Parents** are involved and supported to contribute equally to the review.
- They are able to share what is working and not working from their perspective about all aspects of their child’s life.
- **School staff** are able to review targets and attainment.
- The process meets statutory requirements of education, health and social care.
- It can be used to inform and review a 0-25 Education, Health and Care Plan.