

Emotionally Based School Avoidance



By Catrina Lowri

Who?

Catrina Lowri; experienced SENCO, qualified SEND teacher and founder of Neuroteachers. I am Neurodiverse myself; dyslexic and bipolar.

What?

We will begin with introduction to Neurodiversity. Discuss how this affects behaviour in the classroom and at home and how the educators and parents can support this.

A Neuroteachers Perspective

Introductions- being relational

- Catrina Lowri is an experienced SENCO and Advisory Teacher
- She is also bipolar and dyslexic
- She also owns a dog
- All the members of her family have different last names
- -Catrina is fluent in German



We will talk about the

This will include:

- Increasing your knowledge and understanding of EBSA
- Gaining new approaches to overcoming barriers to learning
- Making a plan for your 'Child in mind'**

What we will cover today



Your 'learner in mind'



What is Neurodiversity?

The term neurodiversity comes from the words 'neurology' and 'diversity' and refers to the variety of different minds and brains across the human genome.

It is a social construct rather than a diagnosis.

Neurodivergence originally referred to only autism and ADHD but has been expanded to include all types of neuro difference that are not neurotypical.



"I created this term as a banner for a new social movement of neurominorities, to argue that just as biodiversity is necessary for a flourishing ecosystem, so ND is for a flourishing society"

Judy Singer 1998

This includes

*All hereditary conditions which cause a difference in neurology

*All hereditary mental health conditions

*All acquired neurological difference such as those caused by injury

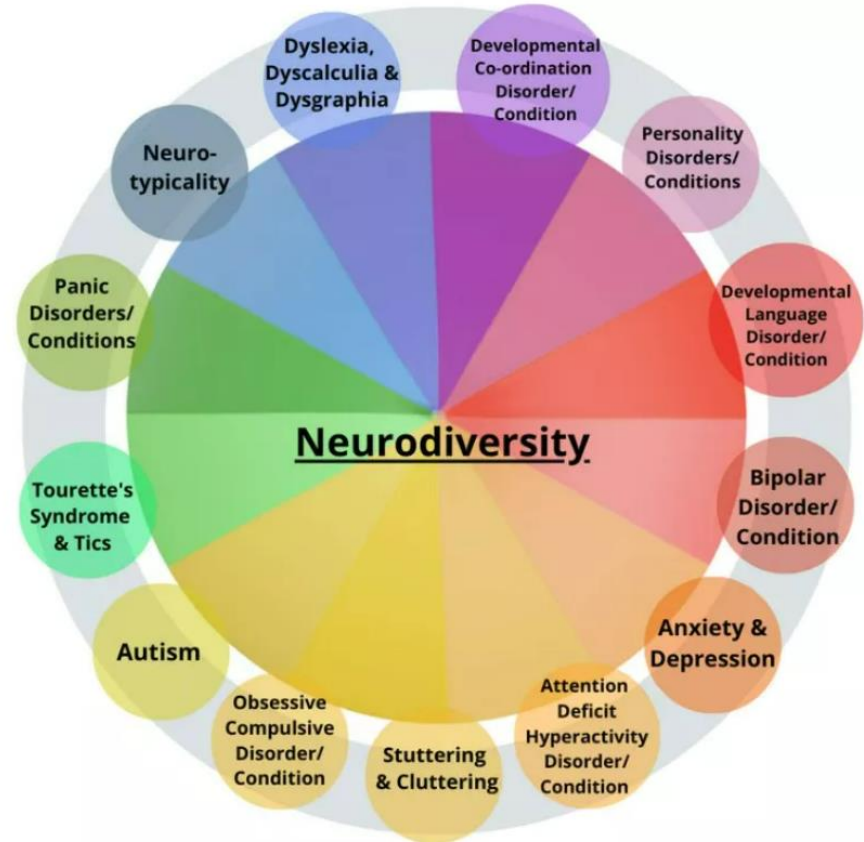


Neurodivergence

Co-occurring Neurodivergent Conditions

These include common conditions such as Autism, ADHD, Dyspraxia (DCD), Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

<https://neuroteachers.com/shop/>



The Fruit Salad Approach





Trauma



Ages and stages





Activity 1

Create a full profile of your child in mind

What demographic information do you have?	How does their ND present?	Do they have other ND?	Do they have physical or mental health needs?	-Describe the family
Are parents both employed?	-Is there any parental illness?	-ACES?	Siblings needs?	-School based social issues? (bullying/ friendship issues?)



What is persistent absence?

The numbers

- 1/5
- 10%
- 32
- 24
- 40%



The terminology



The individual who has anxiety-based reasons for persistent absence will be referred to as an 'anxious non-attender'.

The act of being unable to attend school, due to anxiety is called 'persistent absence'

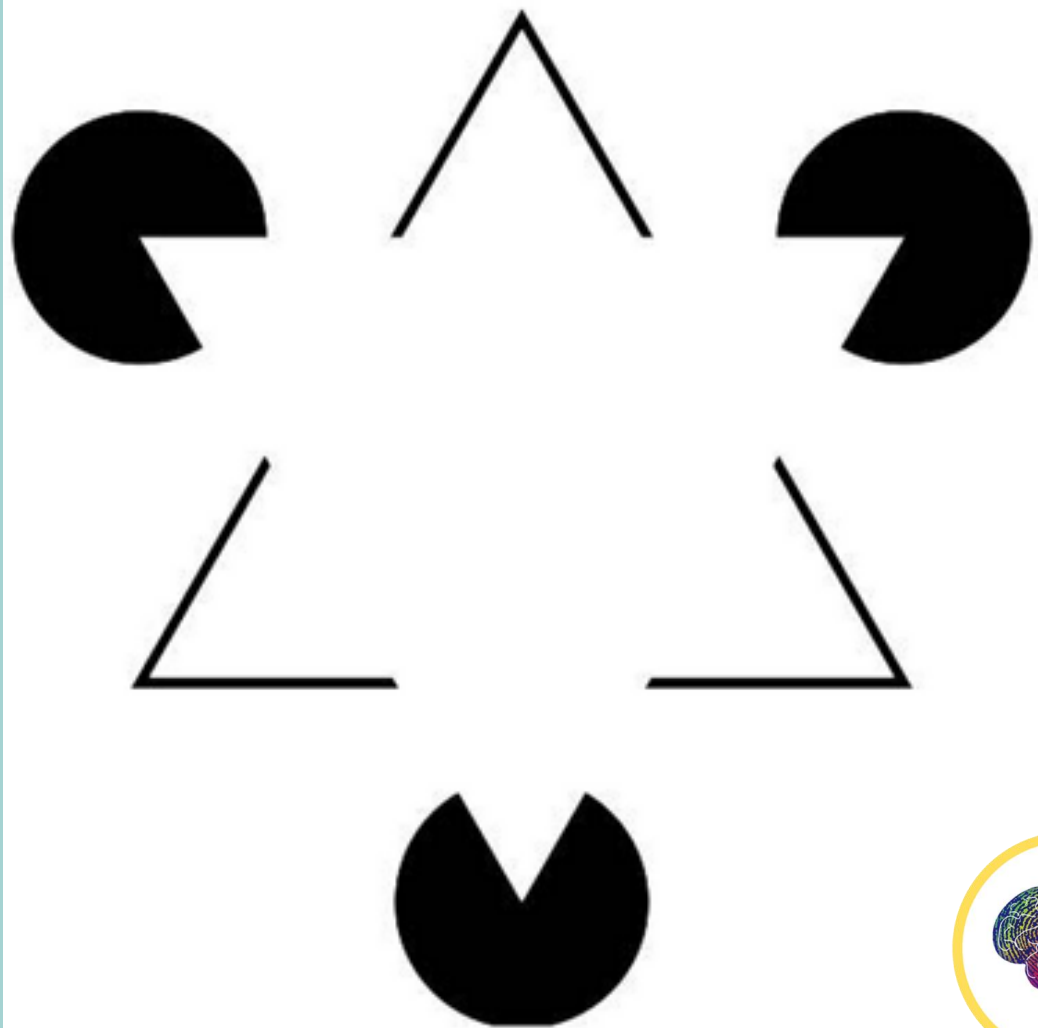
Non problematic persistent absence is related to physical, medical needs

Perception is everything

- Staff often perceive persistent absence as an active choice.
- Parents and CYPS perceive the barriers as mental health issues, other underlying ND, sensory needs or social issues.



(Autistic UK survey 2020)



Take a break



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Common but unsuccessful approaches

- What have you already tried?



Common unsuccessful approaches



Buddy system -
1%

-Feel the
fear and do it
anyway 1%

Exist card
1%

-Meet at the door
8%

-Different
timetable 5%

* Fine the
parents 1%



What works well

- Expect this process to take time.
- Reintegration takes 1 year on average
- <https://neuroteachers.com/individual-support/>



Collaboration

- The learner, parents or carers and school staff need to work together.



Understand school-based trauma

- Masking can lead to fatigue which can lead to burnout which may cause trauma.



Activity 2

Examining the potential barriers to attendance

How reasonable is this adjustment?



Exemplar- Victoria and the

- -Transition
- Redundancy
- -Change of job
- -Sick relative
- -'The incident'
- -Pink Wig
- -Private lessons



Activity 3- how skilled are the staff?



Do staff have a good understanding of neurodiversity?

Are they familiar with the concepts of masking, fatigue and burnout and that this may lead to trauma?

- Do staff know about any other potential barriers to attendance ?

-Are they familiar with trauma informed approaches?

Do they know how to work relationally with parents and the learner?

Remove all
barriers

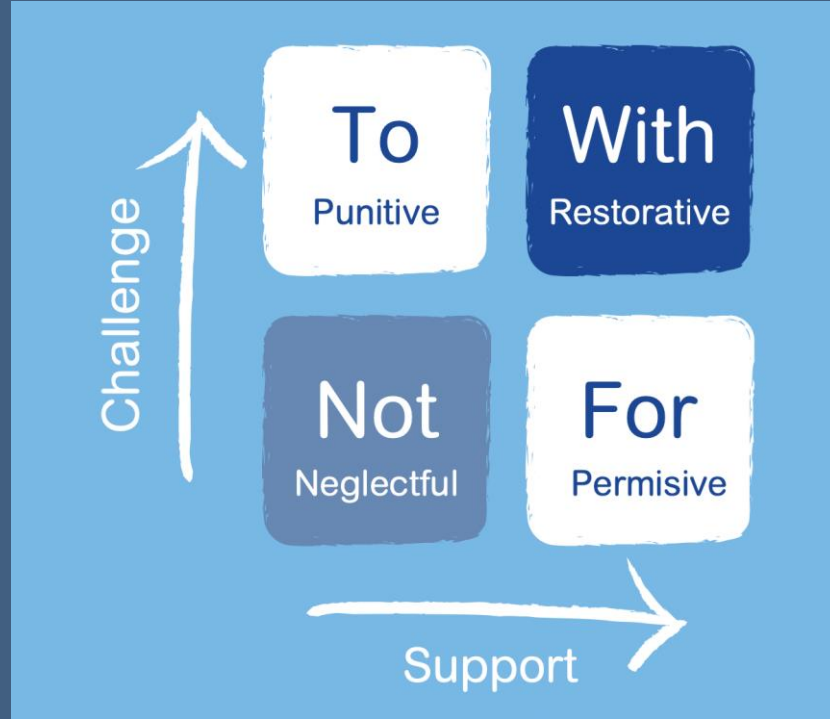


Activity 4 Creative ways of co-writing, implementing and reviewing a plan

- Stress is a barrier to curiosity – think about the emotional effect this is having on staff and parent carers
- -There are no bad ideas
- -Think about ways to communicate which are less direct. How could you use technology?



Working With Your Child, their parents, carers and Colleagues



Activity 5 – Troubleshooting ; Working collaboratively to find solutions



Any questions?





Neuroteachers

www.neuroteachers.com

catrina@neuroteachers.com

