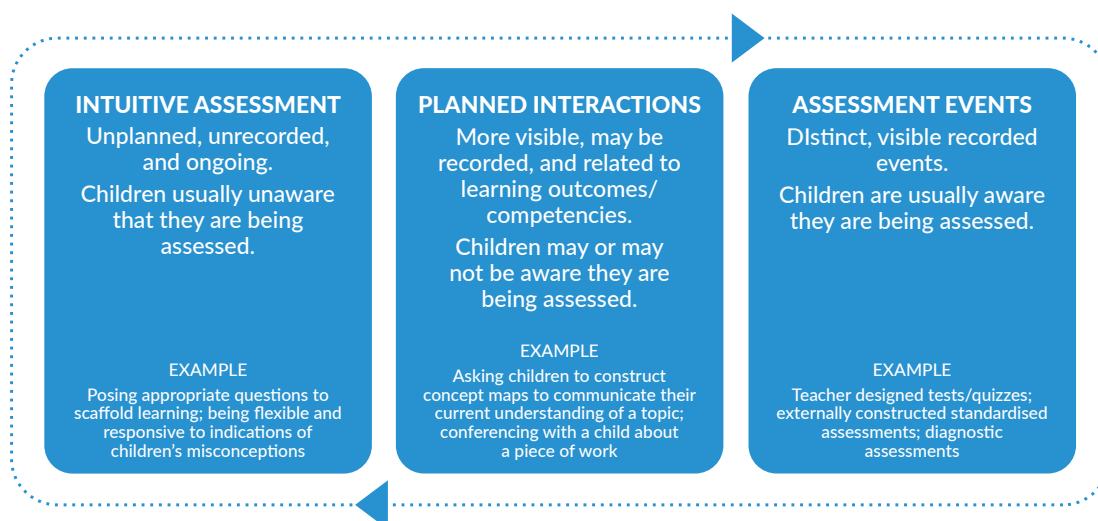


## The Exploring Element

The Exploring Element builds on the what has been established in The Understanding Element and The Relationships Element to develop knowledge of the student and how they can be supported to achieve best hopes and become expert learners. Now that you know about the student, their life and interests, you can find out more about what engages them in learning and what they may need to reduce barriers in their learning. Explore what is working well and how the elements of successful moments can be used to further support the student.

### Exploring – where to start?

- You will have gained great insight into the student from themselves and the people around them in The Understanding Element and The Relationships Element. Take time to reflect on how you will use this information to make positive changes.
- Knowing more about the student’s strengths, how can you build upon them to affirm the student and make learning accessible, supporting them in being a learner with agency?
- Has the student identified areas that they would like to work on? Incorporate these ideas into any planned support.
- Is there information from the student and their family, other staff or relevant professionals that will inform you on changes to the environment? Explore these changes regularly with the student to ensure they remain productive.
- Consider what and how you are assessing. Remember that we are getting to the bottom of ‘why’ a behaviour happens so good assessment is best placed in areas where the student needs support, e.g. literacy, language, sensory checklists, environment checks. Use the NCCA Continuum of Assessment to inform the best approach.
- Think holistically. Behaviours are never in silo, they have communicative intent; think widely about the supports the student may need rather than looking closely at the behaviour. To support the behaviour through rewards or consequences will not change the reason that it happens. Explore this as widely as possible.



(NCCA)

## Students say...

### Ask students



### Toolkit



Stressor Tool



Solution-Focused Goal Setting Tool



NCSE Solution Focused Goal Setting Tutorial

### Further resources



Routes for Learning



CAST Tips for UDL Assessment



NCCA Assessment (Primary)



NCCA Assessment (Post Primary)

### NCSE TPL



Assessment and Preparation (Primary)

Assessment and Planning (Post Primary)

PEP-3 (Primary)

T-TAP (Post Primary)

Preparation for Teaching and Learning for Autistic Students (Primary)

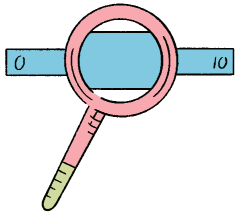
Planning for Autistic Students (Post Primary)

Student Behaviour Planning (Post Primary)

Student Support Planning (Post Primary)

### Reflective questions

- Are there multiple ways for students to show their learning?
- Do you use assessment flexibly or is there more value placed on one particular type?
- Are students and their families aware of assessment and do they have voice and choice in this?



## Solution Focused

Solution-Focused Practice is a change-focused approach that helps people to find ways forward from difficult or challenging situations by focusing on what is wanted in the future and what is already working, and focusing on solutions rather than problems.

(Ajmal & Ratner, 2020)



Exploring best hopes. Finding out what is wanted and what are the best hopes in terms of differences or outcomes.



Exploring the 'preferred future'. Capturing the details of what we want to see happening.



Identifying instances of existing success and strengths and exceptions to the 'problem'. Finding moments where the preferred future may already be happening so that we can build on what is already working.



Identifying small signs of change as evidence of future progress.



Engaging in reflective practice.

## Solution-Focused Goal Setting



What are your best hopes for the student(s)?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



What difference might that make?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



What are your best hopes for yourself?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



What difference might that make?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred future



Suppose those best hopes are realised, how would you know? What would you notice that would tell you these changes have happened?

- What might the student be doing differently, in a way that would be good for them?
- What might you be doing differently?

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Exploring existing strengths and solutions



On the scale, where, at 10, the best hopes are achieved, and 0 is the opposite of that, where are you now? Mark a number on the scale below.

0 \_\_\_\_\_ 10  
(best hopes)

How come you are already there and not lower? List 5 things.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Mark where might be the 'good enough' point on that scale?

Small signs of change



Moving up half a point on that scale from where you are now, what will be the next small signs of change that show things are moving in a helpful direction? What will you start looking out for?

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Reflective practice



Continuous reviewing and reflecting on what is going well is encouraged. Start looking out for small signs of change, and what you are pleased to notice.

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## Solution-Focused Review and Reflection

What have you been pleased to notice?

What difference has that made?

What else has been better?

What difference has that made?

Who else has noticed these changes?

What difference has this made?

What might the next signs of change be?