



**Prizant, Wetherby,
Rubin & Laurent, 2007
Social Communication
Emotional Regulation and
Transactional Support**

What is SCERTS?

At [Oak Lodge School](#) we are of the view that:

Students who are engaged in their learning, and who are actively involved in decisions about their learning, are more likely to be confident learners in the short-term and the longer term.

An aspiration for all our students is to become confident communicators that can participate in social activities have increased opportunities to be independent and experience enjoyable social relationships.

At Oak Lodge we use a range of interventions to meet the individual needs of all our students. All of these interventions are identified as part of the whole SCERTS Framework.

SCERTS is taught within aspects of the National Curriculum but also as a holistic curriculum approach that offers therapy provision including speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. We consider SCERTS to be an important part of the curriculum and therefore it forms part of the Personalised Learning Plans for each student.

The SCERTS® Framework is recognised as an intervention in Barnet and the National Research Council 2001. SCERTS is a lifespan model that is used from early years through school years and beyond for children and young people with autism and a range of developmental disabilities.

It is designed to help teachers, parents and therapists work carefully as a team to maximise progress for each student.

**Progress and
Assessment of
SCERTS outcomes**

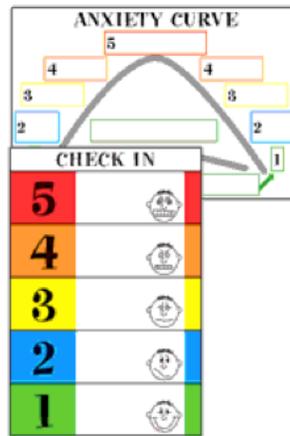
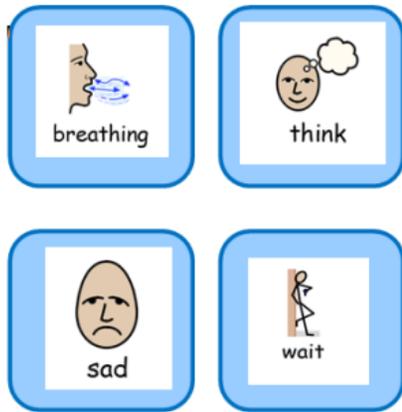
SCERTS uses a well-coordinated assessment process that Oak Lodge have developed with other Barnet professionals. Oak Lodge are leading on the implementation of the SCERTS Framework.

We are able to gather robust evidence of social emotional growth for each student and review and evaluate our interventions more than any single intervention for autism and complex learning disabilities.

**Improved Behaviour
through increased
Emotional Regulation**

My Zones Tool Box

Blue Zone	Green Zone	Yellow Zone	Red Zone
□	○	◇	⬡
When I feel...	When I feel...	When I feel...	When I feel...
Sad Tired Sick Bored	Happy Calm Focused	Frustrated Worried Silly Bored	Mad Angry Afraid
I can...	Behaviors	I can...	I can...



Transactional Supports

The Transactional Supports we provide are designed to respond to the needs and interests of our students. We adapt the curriculum, modify the environment and provide tools for our students to learn and feel happy and relaxed.

Transactional Supports are divided into 2 areas: **Interpersonal support** the way in which we adapt our approach when we interact with students and **Learning Supports** ways we adapt the learning environment or tasks across all routines in the student's day, using visual supports. We include all social time as learning time and provide support at these times too. Visual Supports are used right through to adulthood to provide essential scaffolding and predictability.



Emotional Regulation

Improved behaviour

The SCERTS Framework enables us to use interventions that prevent problematic behaviours interfering with learning to promote the development of social relationships. *We work on the understanding that earning preferred activities for good behaviour or losing time on preferred activities to reinforce positive behaviour is anxiety provoking for our students and increases stress.*

SCERTS principles for success are based on the understanding that behaviour is the outcome of emotional dysregulation so we do not shape or modify it with rewards or sanctions we understand the driver of the behaviour and work with that to help the student develop skills for life. We are also guided by the notion that autism is a 'lifelong' disability and support should be available right into adulthood

SCERTS Framework is split into 3 stages of development for communication

Social Partner Stage

Students communicate intentionally using gestures and vocalisations to make their needs known.

Language Partner Stage

Students communicate for a purpose using symbols, signs and/or words, this may include alternative communication systems – communication book or device.

Conversational Partner Stage

Students use words, phrases and sentences. They engage fully in extended conversations with others. Students develop an understanding of how to use language to express themselves and work out the feelings and thoughts of others.

Interpersonal support:

The way we as adult supporters scaffold our language to perhaps simplify it, adjust our interactive style to be positive and fun and assist with learning tasks so they are meaningful and predictable.

Examples include:

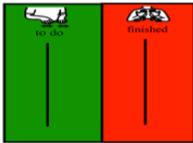
- Provide encouragement and positive feedback in all learning activities.
- Support the development of communication with peers in a range of social contexts
- Comment and expand upon students' communication and focus on attention.
- Notice, then respond to and provide support when students experience distress or anxiety.

Learning support:

We do this by making sure the learning environment and all activities and tasks are visually structured in a way that ensures high levels of engagement in curriculum activities that are relevant and meaningful and predictable.

Examples include:

- Ensuring curriculum activities are functional and meaningful and developmentally appropriate
- Ensure students can predict the purpose of tasks the steps within a task and how to engage in them.
- Promote and use environmental visual supports to help students predict next steps within activities
- Increase motivation to include students strengths and interests making specific curriculum modifications including visual systems in teaching



SCERTS Framework targets **Emotional Regulation** which we believe is critical for understanding behaviour. We teach emotional expression, awareness of feelings and respond to the sensory needs using the developmental level that Emotional Regulation emerges in line with language and social development.

Behavioural Level:

Student uses simple motor actions or sensory-motor strategies to regulate their arousal level and remain alert

Language Level:

Student uses words or symbols to regulate their arousal level, eg: "It's ok". At this stage students are learning about a wide range of emotions and how to respond to their feelings using language to support regulation.

Metacognitive Level :

Student is able to *think about, plan and talk through ways of helping themselves* to feel calmer in moments of anxiety. At this level of development students are able to talking themselves through a sequence of events, to help them process and manage potentially confusing situations.

Within the **Social, Language and Conversational Partner Stage**, we set **Emotional Regulation** targets related to ability students have to self-regulate their emotions. We also set *objectives* for us to adapt to the student's sensory needs or provide mutual regulation and other methods of transactional support.

Note: Some students despite being