

## **TRANSCRIPT: Keeping pupils engaged**

Colin Esrich

Obviously, our pupils have different learning styles and different motivations but something that many of them struggle with is the reading and writing side of things. So we try to minimise the amount of that sort of work, and by giving pupils the opportunity to be hands-on and to be actively engaged and involved in their learning we find that they're able to achieve much more and to learn much more effectively.

It's important always to have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. Although this is a special school, we do have pupils who are working to Level 4 in science and they do have the capacity to investigate independently and to come up with some fantastic ideas and questions, and we would support those pupils who need it by giving them visual information in terms of symbols, for example, so that they can more clearly understand what their learning objectives are.

The hope is that pupils will be engaged by the practical nature of the activity but we do find that by being able to work in small groups and by deploying assistants effectively, if a pupil is looking like they're not engaged or their concentration is waning, staff can get a pupil back and actively engaged in the activity.

It's important for our pupils to have a chance to think about their learning and to say how well they think they've done in a lesson. We use a traffic light system. So at the end of the lesson today, the pupils picked up a sticker to indicate how easy they found the lesson and how much help they think they needed. It gives me some more information to make sure that I plan at a suitable level for those pupils but it's also important for our pupils in terms of building up their own self-awareness.