

GUIDE + CHECKLIST

Regulation before reasoning

A practical guide to recognising dysregulation and responding in ways that restore safety, connection and readiness to learn.

Scope: this resource supports educational reflection and immediate classroom response. It is not a clinical assessment, diagnosis or crisis protocol.

Pause before problem-solving

When a pupil is overwhelmed, more language, repeated questions or an immediate demand for an explanation can add to the load. Begin by making the situation safer and more predictable. Use fewer words, lower the social pressure and allow time. The aim is not to remove every boundary; it is to create enough stability for the pupil to re-engage with support.

Checklist

- ☐ Reduce non-essential language and give one clear next step.
- ☐ Offer calm proximity without crowding or requiring eye contact.
- ☐ Lower avoidable noise, audience and time pressure where possible.
- ☐ Name what is available now: a pause, a quieter place, water or a familiar adult.
- ☐ Return to reflection only when the pupil is able to take part.

Reconnect and review

Later, describe what adults noticed without judging intent. Ask what made the moment harder and what helped, while accepting that the pupil may not know. Agree one small adjustment to try in a similar situation and decide who will make it consistently available. Review the pattern across contexts rather than drawing a conclusion from one incident.