



BUSS® in Education - Working With You to Build School Readiness in the Early Years

Have you noticed children in your setting who find it hard to sit on the carpet and listen? Maybe they look quite awkward when they're drawing, or something about the way their body is positioned just doesn't look quite right? Their pencil grip might be good, but they don't seem to know how much pressure or force to use? You might have seen other children who seem to need to move a lot to stay sat in one position? Or others who struggle to negotiate their environment, so that everyday things like being able to hang their coat on their peg is tricky for them. They might seem to do everything at top speed or seem to be bumping and falling more than their peers? Maybe they're a child who avoids climbing or dancing? Or they don't notice when they hurt themselves? Perhaps they find it hard when other children talk loudly or shout, but then be really noisy themselves? All of these things might be indicators that a child hasn't yet got a **good foundation of bodily regulation** that will allow them to get the most out of being at school.

The BUSS® in Education alongside model is a 3-year programme is designed for children's pre-school or first year in school. What BUSS® can helpfully offer, alongside the good relational and teaching practice already in place, is a way of first understanding where each child is developmentally, through the lens of foundation sensorimotor systems. BUSS® in Education combines a manualised programme of work supported by a BUSS® Practitioner working with you in school. This allows your team to develop the expertise in assessment of children's foundation sensorimotor systems and differentiation of the programme to meet the needs of individual children and classes, building bodily regulation.



The programme includes a daily whole-class morning routine, enhanced provision in each classroom and targeted work based on assessments, and is designed to develop foundation sensorimotor systems, building capacity and school readiness. We work by upskilling school staff in their ability to assess children's developmental levels and support children to gain the skills that underpin engagement in education.

Research conducted by the Population Health Sciences Institute Biostatistics Research Group at Newcastle University (2026), looked at outcome measures for 468 families who completed BUSS®. It concluded that building bodily regulation using this model improves emotional



regulation, behaviour, relationships and daily functioning. [Click here](#) to read an Executive Summary of this research, or follow this link to watch a short animation about BUSS® and the research findings: <https://youtu.be/PXEvi3JO6Ww>

Our work in education settings has grown from the clinical model. It begins with a discussion, then a school visit and if it feels as if it's the right fit for your school, there will be some training for key staff before we get started.

What is Bodily Regulation?

There are two parts to **bodily regulation**:

1. The first is our body being able to make sense of information from the world around us through our senses like touch, taste, smell and sound, in a way that informs our response and action. When this system is working well, we're able to 'tune out' information that it isn't necessary for us to be aware of (e.g. familiar low-level sounds or someone gently brushing past us) and 'alert' to important information (e.g. pain or hunger).
2. The second part is making sense of our body's internal environment (information from muscles and joints) so that our body is able to do what we want it to do, like knowing how much pressure to use, and being able to do familiar tasks, like sitting or walking, without it requiring conscious attention. We want our minds to be freed up for thinking, playing, learning, relating or just daydreaming – but without a good foundation of bodily regulation, children need to use a lot of cognitive capacity to manage their body. So rather than an activity like circle time being the chance to talk, think and listen to their friends, a child will have to expend most of their energy on managing the task of sitting.

When we have a good foundation of bodily regulation, our body is able to manage the ‘doing’ part of everyday life and making sense of information from our surroundings without it impinging much on our consciousness. Even in a new environment, good bodily regulation allows us to quickly adapt to new places and experiences without that process impacting too much on our experience.

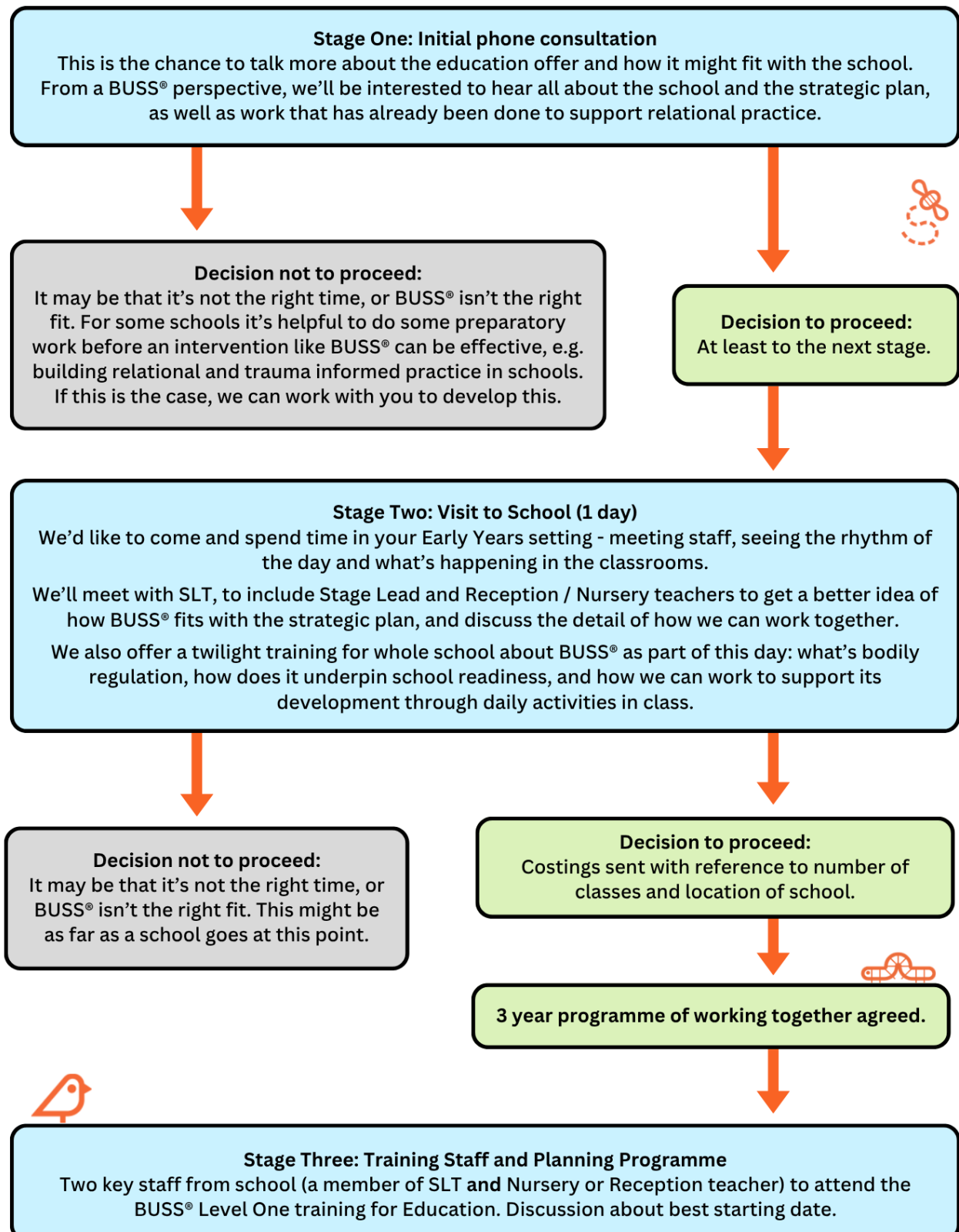
To develop good bodily regulation, the baby and developing child need to move through a sequential pattern of physical and emotional experiences, within loving relationships. This process starts at conception and continues throughout their early life. It can be interrupted for many reasons. Even lifestyle changes in the last 10 years mean that the everyday occupations of babies and young children are quite different to previous generations, and this can impact the development of bodily regulation. For all sorts of reasons, it can be helpful to have a greater understanding of the purpose of all those experiences, and how they feed foundation sensorimotor systems. It's this frame of reference that we'll use to support you to run programmes of work in your school to support the development of bodily regulation and build capacity towards school readiness.

Building good bodily regulation gives a child a platform for the development of more complex skills, like understanding and managing feelings, making and keeping friends, and learning.



How BUSS® in Education Works

Flowchart of the process from initial enquiry:





For schools not local to us (Leeds, West Yorkshire), all in-person visits to school will involve:

- Time in classes and targeted groups.
- Assessments at appropriate times of year.
- Grading and rewriting of programmes of work according to progress and change.
- Time with the appointed lead and key staff - supporting them to develop their expertise in this way of working.
- Any ongoing training or development work, ensuring any new staff have a good understanding of model and are supported to develop their skills in this way of working.

Terms One and Two

- 4 visits to school. A total of 12 days in school across these first two terms.
- 8 sessions of remote supervision using recordings of whole class morning routine, enhanced provision and targeted groups.

Term Three

- 2 visits to school. A total of 5 days in school this term.
- 8 sessions of remote supervision using recordings of LEAPlets® group, whole class morning routine, enhanced provision and targeted groups.

Terms One and Two

- 4 visits to school. A total of 9 days in school across these first two terms.
- 8 sessions of remote supervision using recordings of whole class morning routine, enhanced provision and targeted groups.

Term Three

- 2 visits to school. A total of 5 days in school this term.
- 8 sessions of remote supervision using recordings of LEAPlets® group, whole class morning routine, enhanced provision and targeted groups.

Terms One and Two

- 2 visits to school. A total of 4 days in school across these first two terms.
- 8 sessions of remote supervision using recordings of whole class morning routine, enhanced provision and targeted groups.

Term Three

- 1 visit to school. A total of 2 days in school this term.
- 8 sessions of remote supervision using recordings of LEAPlets® group, whole class morning routine, enhanced provision and targeted groups.
- End of year planning meeting for ongoing supervision of BUSS® Lead in school to enable school to continue to work in this way with good fidelity to the model.



Project Timeline

The starting point for the programme can be September, October half term or January, but later start dates will mean that less of the programme is able to be delivered to that class of children.

	TERM 1		TERM 2		TERM 3	
	1st Half Term	2nd Half Term	1st Half Term	2nd Half Term	1st Half Term	2nd Half Term
	September - October	October - December	January - February	February - April	April - May	May - July
Training and Supervision	Staff Training and Supervision Training prior to starting work, and regular supervision throughout our work together					
Termly Goals <i>The focus of the morning routine, targeted groups and enhanced provision will change to work towards these</i>	Working towards: - Sitting - Moving - Relating		Working towards: - Handwriting - Good discrimination		Working towards: - Bilateral integration and sequencing - Effective oral motor strength	
Morning Routine <i>Daily whole-class teacher-led morning routine each term, graded and changed as capacity grows</i>	Whole Class Morning Routine (v1)	Whole Class Morning Routine (v2)	Whole Class Morning Routine (v3)		Whole Class Morning Routine (v4)	
	Aim: Build core strength and gravitational security		Aim: Build shoulder girdle strength, working towards hand development		Aim: Hand development, balance and co-ordination	
Targeted Groups <i>Baseline measures and your observations will help to select the children who need additional support through daily targeted groups</i>	Using baseline assessments to devise the groups	Targeted Groups	Targeted Groups	Targeted Groups	LEAPlets Group A manualised 11 session programme - a weekly group for parents and their children, designed for about six families to work with your team.	
		Small targeted groups (based on assessment) will use sensorimotor circuits to augment the whole class and enhanced provision				
Enhanced Provision <i>Typically one station of the in-class provision, the emphasis of which will depend on the needs of the children and any class projects</i>	Introduction of Fundamental Movement Patterns into Daily Classroom Life To build core strength and gravitational security		Working on Vertical Surfaces (part 1) To support development of proximal joint stability		Working on Vertical Surfaces (part 2) To support both sides of the body working together in an integrated way, balance and co-ordination	
	Build Discrimination To help children make sense of the world around them through touch				Oral Motor Strength To support better language development and feeding	
Measuring Progress <i>How will we assess the children and measure progress at each stage of work?</i>	Baseline Measures These will be completed around week 3 and will inform the composition of the targeted groups. These will be scored again at the end of this term.		Assessment of Readiness for Writing These will be completed in the first 2 weeks of term, and again inform the composition of the targeted groups.		Final Measures - Assessment of Running Assessment of more complex movement patterns. Alongside re-scoring of the initial baseline measures at the end of this term.	

END OF YEAR ONE

Outcome Measures

Assessments at the beginning of each term inform the composition of the targeted groups, and the work of the groups. The initial assessment is repeated at the end of the year. In addition, we're interested to support you to use the Brief Early Skills and Support Index (BESSI) measures at the beginning and end of the year, to track changes across different domains. After positive initial evaluation of impact on school staff and learning outcomes, we are currently working with the Universities of Galway and Leeds to investigate this across wide range of settings.



Costings

Please get in touch with us to discuss costs.

Finally

Do please get in touch with us if you'd like to discuss any aspect of this further -
sarah.lloyd@busssmodel.org

Sarah Lloyd

Consultant Occupational Therapist, and Author and Director of the BUSS® Model

www.bussmodel.org