Multi-Element Plan (MEP)

This is the file section to save your MEP in.

The following information is from the Derbyshire Education Psychology Service, which outlines what an MEP is.

Written by the Early Years MEPS Working Group, August 2009. Adapted for website use, March 2025.

DERBYSHIRE
County Council

The Multi-Element Plan

A guide for Parent, Carers and Professionals

What is it?

How will it help my child?

How can I help?

How is it different from other plans?

Who will it involve?

What is a Multi-Element Plan (MEP)?

A Multi-Element Plan sets out strategies adults can use to help a child. We hope to find the most helpful strategies by trying to understand the behaviour better. We do this by using Functional Assessment.

What's Functional Assessment?

We assume that all behaviour has a purpose (or function). Functional Assessment is where we try to understand what this purpose is. Using this approach is one way a Multi-Element Plan is different from other plans.

It is helpful to gather information from all those involved with the child, as well as the views of the child where possible. Parents / carers are key to this process as they are the 'experts' on their child.
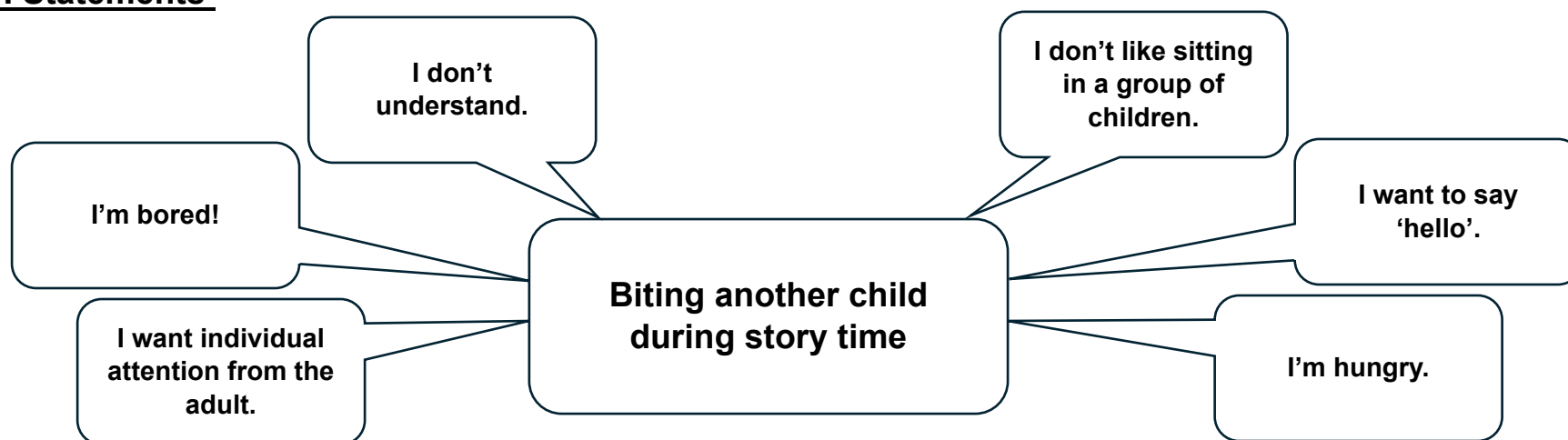
We may ask you about:

- The behaviour causing concern and its history e.g., when, where, how often, when it is more / less likely to happen
- What happens before and during incidents
- What happens before and during more successful times
- What happens after incidents and more successful times.

Together, we will use this information to make a best guess as to what the behaviour is telling us.

Another way of looking at this, is by using 'I statements', what the child is saying to us through their behaviour. These will be individual to the child, so one behaviour could have different 'I statements' in different circumstances.

Examples of 'I Statements'

I don't understand.

I don't like sitting in a group of children.

I'm bored!

I want to say 'hello'.

Biting another child during story time

I want individual attention from the adult.

I'm hungry.

Developing Strategies

Having come to our best guess about what the behaviour is saying, we are in a better position to look at a range of strategies. A Multi-Element Plan contains 4 different types of strategies:

a) Environmental Strategies

This is where we try to create an environment that best matches your child's needs, e.g., access to activities, use of language at the right level, routines within the setting.

b) Skill Development

This is where we think about new skills that we need to teach the child to replace the behaviour causing concern, e.g., how to ask for help, how to take turns.

c) Reward Strategies

If we want a child to change his/her behaviour, we need to provide something to encourage the child to make the change.

d) Responding to Difficulties

We need to have a plan for:

- When things are starting to go wrong, so we can intervene early to stop the situation getting worse.
- When things have gone wrong, to resolve the situation as quickly and safely as possible.

Review

When we have tried strategies for an agreed length of time, we will meet to discuss how effective they have been and whether there needs to be changes to the plan.