

Executive Summary

The SAND Behaviour & Wellbeing Framework

A Structured Reflective Response Pathway for Behaviour, Wellbeing, and Support Alignment

Version 1.1 | SAND Support | Erokcu, G.

The SAND Framework is a structured reflective response pathway designed to support behaviour, wellbeing, and alignment across individuals and the environments around them.

SAND is built on the principle that behaviour cannot be understood or supported effectively without first understanding and supporting the adults within the system.

The Challenge

Traditional behaviour systems in education often focus primarily on visible disruption – refusal, dysregulation, or conflict. While these approaches may address immediate concerns, they frequently overlook two critical areas:

- Internal distress – individuals who withdraw, mask, disengage, or remain quiet are often not identified within behaviour-led approaches.
- Adult wellbeing – the regulation, stress levels, and support needs of the adults delivering responses directly shape the quality of those responses.

The SAND Framework is designed in response to this gap, providing a context-informed approach to supporting behaviour through understanding internal state and system dynamics, while promoting alignment across environments.

The Adult Foundation

Most behaviour frameworks follow a single direction: behaviour occurs, the adult responds, the system records it. SAND reverses this.

Adults carry invisible load. Teachers, LSAs, and support staff operate under significant emotional, cognitive, and sensory demand – often without recognition or support. Their regulation directly impacts their response. Their response shapes the environment. The environment shapes the child's experience.

A dysregulated adult cannot consistently deliver a reflective response.

SAND therefore positions the adult as foundational – not as an afterthought. By supporting adult regulation, awareness, and wellbeing first, the framework strengthens every interaction that follows.

SAND does not prioritise adult wellbeing over the child – it recognises that adult wellbeing is the mechanism through which effective support for the child is delivered.

Not all distress is visible – and this applies to both students and the adults supporting them.

The most regulated-looking adult in the building may be the one carrying the heaviest load.

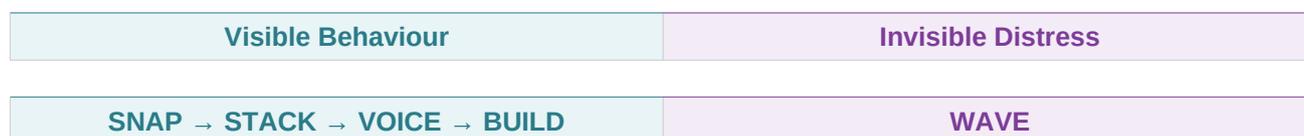
The Framework Model

SAND operates across four connected layers:



Two Pathways of Understanding

SAND addresses both visible behaviour and invisible distress through two distinct but connected pathways:



Both pathways connect into the same support alignment system, ensuring that adults are working from a shared understanding.

The Internal Wellbeing Pathway (WAVE)

WAVE is a core pathway within SAND, not an add-on. It provides a structured reflective process for recognising and supporting internal distress – in both students and the adults around them:

W – Withdraw Early signs of pulling inward.

A – Accumulate Stress building internally.

V – Validate Adults acknowledge feelings without judgement.

E – Empower Building confidence and self-regulation tools.

The Behaviour Pathway

A four-stage structured reflective process:

SNAP – Recognising the immediate trigger or stress response.

STACK – Understanding cumulative factors – Specifics, Triggers, Aftermath, Communication, Knowledge.

VOICE – Creating space for communication – Vulnerability, Observation, Interaction, Change, Empowerment.

BUILD – Developing strategies – Behaviour baseline, Understand the why, Identify strengths, Layer support, Develop and review.

Dual-Impact Approach

SAND operates as a dual-impact framework, recognising that supporting the adult directly influences outcomes for the child or young person.

Child Development & Wellbeing

Adult Wellbeing & System Alignment

Teacher burnout, parent frustration, and support staff stress are often symptoms of behaviour systems that lack shared understanding. SAND provides a context-informed, system-aware approach to behaviour and wellbeing – for both the child and the adults around them.

Supporting Neurodivergent Adults in Education

SAND recognises that educators themselves may experience sensory, emotional, or cognitive pressures within demanding environments. The framework includes:

- Reflective tools for educator regulation and self-awareness.
- Plain-language guidance on Equality Act 2010 protections and reasonable adjustments.
- A self-authored Educator Wellbeing Plan and Adjustments Planner.
- An Inclusive Supervision Guide for SENCOs and line managers.
- Signposting to Access to Work, unions, and relevant support services.

Framework Principles

Behaviour is communication – a signal of an unmet need or underlying pressure.

Understanding before reaction – reflection and context before response.

Internal wellbeing matters – not all distress is visible.

Alignment strengthens support – consistency across adults improves outcomes.

Development over punishment – building skills, confidence, and wellbeing.

Adult wellbeing shapes support – when educators are supported, they respond better.

Application in Practice

SAND can be used to guide staff responses, structure reflective discussions, and support consistent communication between school, home, and the individual. It operates across behavioural, internal, and systemic layers.

The framework is designed to be accessible and adaptable across:

- Schools – behaviour observation, reflection, and strategy development.
- Parents and carers – reflective tools and communication support.
- LSAs and support staff – in-the-moment documentation and post-incident reflection.
- Young adults in education – self-reflection and wellbeing tools for 18+ settings.
- Neurodivergent educators – rights awareness, adjustment planning, and wellbeing support.
- SENCOs and senior leaders – inclusive supervision and whole-school approaches.

Positioning

The SAND Framework does not remove expectations or boundaries. It strengthens them by ensuring responses are consistent, informed, calm, and supportive.

SAND operates across behavioural, internal, and systemic layers.

The framework reflects established principles of self-regulation, relational practice, and cognitive development, translated into practical application within real-world settings.

SAND brings understanding, reflection, and alignment together to support behaviour and wellbeing.

Behaviour is communication.

*When we look and listen, we begin to understand the voice behind it.
But silence can be communication too.*

Erokcu, G. | The SAND Behaviour & Wellbeing Framework | SAND Support
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