

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

*...applying psychology to
improve outcomes for
children and young people*

VIGNETTES OF PRACTICE

Children Services , Education
and Skills
Educational Psychology Service
West Offices
Station Rise
York
YO1 6GA

01904 554320



CONTENTS

ELSA – Emotional Literacy Support Assistants – Training for Teaching Assistants

Supporting Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs: Training for Teaching Assistants

Critical Incidents and Bereavement and Loss: Guidance for Schools.

Solution Oriented training for teaching assistants

Peer Mediation group work

Social Skills Groups

Bullying: group support and conflict resolution

Individual casework/consultation emotional and learning issues, leading to anxiety and refusal to work

Individual casework/consultation: behaviour and social communication

Individual casework/consultation: severe social anxiety and ASC

Individual casework/consultation: curriculum planning for a pupil with severe and complex needs

Individual casework/consultation: LAC

Using Solution Oriented Consultation to sustain a mainstream placement

Whole School Training: Removing barriers to learning

Behaviour management for lunchtime supervisors

Nurture Groups

Multi-agency workshop for parents of children with an ADHD diagnosis

Post 16 provision – training for members of the Additional Learning Support team at one of York's Further Education Colleges

Individual casework: Using a multi-element plan to support a young person at risk of permanent exclusion

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: ELSA – Emotional Literacy Support Assistants – Training for Teaching Assistants

York LA was phase 3 of the TaMHS initiative April 2010- April 2011 and received a substantial amount of funding to implement a preventative strategy for addressing mental health needs in schools. York introduced the ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) programme, initially in a small number of schools (2 secondaries and 6 primaries).

ELSA is an evidence-based 5-day programme of training for Teaching Assistants, delivered by Educational Psychologists with support from colleagues in the Education Development Service and Specialist Teaching Service. The course covers a range of areas of mental health needs which can create barriers to learning:

Emotional Literacy, Self-esteem, Active Listening and Communication, Solution-focused Conversations, Autism, Attachment, Understanding Anger, Loss and Bereavement, Therapeutic Stories, Silver SEAL, Social Skills and Friendship Groups.

More recently (2015) we have added an additional day to cover two additional areas: *anxiety and nurturing classrooms.*

Outcomes:

The TaMHS ELSA project was subjected to a comprehensive evaluation which demonstrated a very positive impact. Teaching Assistants were given questionnaires to complete before training, after training with follow-up 6 months into their role as an ELSA. The results demonstrated a large positive shift in the competence and competence of ELSAs. The top three items showing the biggest overall gains were:

- 'I know where to seek information, advice and support on EHWB issues'
- 'I have the skills to run effective groups to develop EHWB'
- 'I have the skills to work with individual pupils experiencing difficulties relating to EHWB, in a 1-to-1 context'.

Data on pupil progress was triangulated from staff, parents and pupils.

- For group work: 72% staff, 65% parents and 62% pupils showed improvements in perceptions of EHWB for the targeted pupils.
- For individual work 73% staff, 63% parents and 67% pupils showed improvements in perceptions of EHWB for targeted pupils
- For more complex individual work 79% staff, 89% parents and 75% pupils showed improved scores on the SDQ for targeted pupils

Cost effectiveness case-studies were undertaken. The cost of TaMHS interventions for a specific pupil ranged from £157 (individual support) to £371 (extended group and individual work). Most schools anticipated that without TaMHS involvement, further input would have been required from outside agencies, incurring additional costs. For one of the cases the anticipated outcome was placement in the York PRU so the costs *without* TaMHS potentially had an upper range of £4,000+.

Referrals to CAMHS increased over the duration of TaMHS, but Primary Mental Health Workers felt that this was because they had better links with schools to facilitate swift referrals, which were appropriate and had robust documentation.

OFSTED Report published 16.12.10 (p.7) reads: *'Pastoral care is good ... A team of well-trained teachers and support staff provide particularly effective care for the most vulnerable pupils. The 'Targeted, Adolescent and Mental Health' (TaMHS) support programme is a real asset in developing pupils' social and emotional skills, consequently enabling them to be successful learners.*

The current situation

Following the success of the TaMHS pilot project, the ELSA programme has been rolled out across the LA as part of the 'mainstreaming strategy'. Although the government funding finished in April 2011, York chose to invest money from the Early Intervention Grant to sustain the ELSA project. We are proud of the fact that we have now trained 185 ELSAs in 57 schools since 2010. Many schools have more than one ELSA, indeed one school has trained 15 ELSAs. York is now part of the national ELSA Network

Subsequent evaluations of ELSA courses have been very positive. Overall 99 % of the ratings given for achieving the course learning outcomes have been good or excellent. Competence and confidence questionnaires continue to show positive shifts pre and post training. Demand for places on the courses continue to be very high.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Supporting Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs: Training for Teaching Assistants

The Local Authority previously commissioned a highly successful Specialist Speech and Language pilot project (April 2008-July 2010), as a piece of action research to explore whether providing specific individual or small group intervention in school, from a trained Teaching Assistant (TA) to children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), would be a viable and effective way of meeting their needs. This was in contrast to children solely receiving individual therapy time, either in community clinics or in school, from a Speech and Language Therapist.

Following the success of this initial project an opportunity arose to resource an extension of the project. Nine schools were invited to participate, with match funding available from the Local Authority which, when combined with funding from the schools, would enable each school to have a designated TA to work with children with delayed speech, language and communication skills. Through training and experience of the delivery of specific intervention programmes and attendance at half-termly group supervision sessions it was intended that the TAs would increase their understanding of SLCN and their skills and competencies in identifying and supporting children with these difficulties. It was hoped that this early intervention would bring a high proportion of the identified children to within expected levels of attainment. Those with more significant needs would be identified and appropriate strategies identified for support.

There were three components to the training offered to the TAs:

- A training package already developed by EPs and Speech and Language Therapists and offered across the city
- Training sessions on the 'Time to Talk' and 'Black Sheep Narrative' materials
- Delivery of the Elklan training package, which leads to submission of a portfolio of work and the opportunity to achieve accreditation at NVQ Level 2 or 3.

Outcomes:

All training and supervision sessions were well-attended and positively evaluated. Data was collected via questionnaires and Elklan evaluation materials, showing a positive shift in TAs' perceptions of their understanding and practice in working with children with SLCN.

As a consequence to the successful delivery of the Elklan training package and the positive endorsements from the TAs, the LA and PCT are planning to roll out further Elklan training across the city.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Critical Incidents and Bereavement and Loss: Guidance for Schools.

Increasing numbers of requests from schools for guidance and support following a critical incident and/or a significant bereavement have been received by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) in York over the past few years. This led our team to identify these issues as a priority and the EP Team identified a small working party to take this forward. The focus of the working party was to produce a clear and concise briefing document to be presented to all Head teachers with clear guidance about responding to a critical incident, outlining the role of the EPS. In addition, two booklets for use by staff and pupils experiencing a significant bereavement were produced:

- Supporting Bereaved Children and Young People,
Guidance for School Staff to Help Them Provide Support.
- When Someone Close Dies,
Information Booklet for Children and Young People.

This work was the culmination of 2 years of work during which time was spent researching literature and drawing on past experiences, evaluating these events and their outcomes. A small number of Head teachers and other key staff in the Local Authority (LA) were consulted and the experiences of other LAs was drawn upon.

The booklets were professionally printed and these continue to be important sources of information for schools and settings.

Outcomes

The briefing document and guidance booklets were very well received at the launch. This was particularly timely in that it followed a critical incident in one of our Secondary schools just days before and the documents were requested and used prior to their official launch by members of staff at this school who were supported by their EP. A number of schools made contact following the launch to indicate how helpful the booklets are and requested further copies, as did a private school in the region. The document and booklets are now in all schools and settings. They have also been shared with colleagues in the Bereavement Team at Limetrees, and staff there also requested and received further copies. There is evidence of the booklets being easily accessible in school staffrooms and there have been a significant number of childhood bereavements in our schools since the launch of the materials and staff have commented on how useful they are proving to be when such situations arise.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Teaching Assistant Training in Solution-Oriented Conversations

Following CPD as part of the York EP Service Development Plan, the possibility of delivering training in 'Solution Oriented Conversation's was offered to staff groups in a mainstream secondary school. A half-day's training was negotiated to be delivered to the TA team in partnership with the LA KS3 Behaviour and Attendance Consultant.

The training was identified as a need by the school SENCo who felt the TA team would benefit from input to develop their communication skills specifically:

In their counselling role with individual pupils

As part of the SEN Departmental focus on peer coaching

Outcomes:

The training, which was practical and interactive, was very well received and follow-up discussions with the SENCo indicate that the skills acquired in the training are being applied on a daily basis with students and with peer T.A.s in the school.

A version of this training is now delivered on the ELSA Training Course.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Peer Mediation Group Work

At the termly school planning meeting the SENCO and head teacher of a primary school raised some concerns about the number of incidents during lunchtime play when children were getting involved in low level verbal conflicts.

The EP suggested that the school consider setting up a Peer Mediation programme. This is a scheme when children who are trained to act as mediators work in pairs and follow a simple structured clearly defined procedure to help other children who have fallen out to work together to find solutions to their own problems. It is a voluntary scheme and children who decide to use this service must agree to follow the rules of peer mediation before the mediators will agree to work with them.

The EP agreed to do a short after school presentation to all staff about Peer Mediation. During this thirty minute session the EP provided the staff with an overview of Peer Mediation so that they could consider the practicalities and benefits of Peer mediation Scheme and how it might operate in their school.

After the presentation the school decided that they would like to establish a Peer Mediation Scheme for key stage 2. The EP and a member of school staff worked together to train 12 Y5 / Y6 pupils to become Peer Mediators. Children were released from class for 2 full days to complete the Peer Mediation Training Course. During the 2 day course the children completed a variety of activities which helped them to learn the skills needed to enable them to work as peer mediators. After the initial training the school staff member worked with the peer mediators to launch the peer mediation service in the school with provided them with ongoing advice and advice.

Outcomes:

All of the children successfully completed the peer mediation training course and developed the skills and confidence needed to work in pairs as peer mediators during breaks and lunchtimes. Since the introduction of the peer mediation scheme the school have reported a reduction in the number of minor fallings out in the playground with children taking more responsibility for their own behaviour and relationships. The peer mediation scheme has helped children to learn how to cope with conflict situations and provides them with an opportunity to develop listening skills, express their feelings, negotiate and work with others to find mutually acceptable solutions to problems.

The EP has also co-worked with other members of the EPS team to enable them to deliver Peer Mediation training.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Social Skills Group

A Year 7 student, already known to the EP from his primary school, was raised as a concern at the termly planning meeting because of his inappropriate behaviour in lessons and difficulties with peer relationships.

A consultation meeting took place during which the EP and SENCo drew up a behaviour management plan, which the SENCo agreed to disseminate to all staff who taught the student and which would be monitored through regular review meetings with the EP.

The EP also suggested that the student would benefit from some group work to support the development of his social skills. The EP discussed relevant materials with the SENCo and, having agreed on those that were felt to be the most appropriate to the needs of the student, suggested an outline for the programme. The SENCo was also able to identify other students from the same cohort as the focus student who were experiencing similar difficulties and who might also benefit from attending the group sessions and it was decided that the social skills programme should be offered to a total of eight students.

It was agreed that the EP, SENCo and a TA from the school would plan the programme of sessions jointly, with a view to the EP and TA delivering the sessions on a weekly basis.

Outcomes:

The programme was evaluated at the end of the block of sessions. The school now have the materials and experience to enable them to run subsequent groups independently in the future.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Bullying, Group Support and Conflict Resolution

Three one hour sessions were offered to a group of 9 Year 8 pupils at the request of the Head of Year in a York secondary school. The group in question had increasing numbers of issues between themselves and other pupils in school, with one particular girl being a very intimidating ring leader. This particular girl received individual sessions with a counsellor (organised by school) while the rest of the group met together. Issues discussed were definitions of bullying and who are bullies, definitions of victims and who are victims, and bystander behaviour. The "Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence" video was shown and discussed. Circle Time activities and plenty of chocolate biscuits and drinks helped to relax the group and open up discussion. The final session was entirely occupied with imaginary scenarios, with the group working in three's coming up with solutions they could use to support the victim/s and resolve the situations should they occur in the future, in their school or group.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Individual Casework/Consultation emotional and learning issues leading to anxiety and refusal to work

A Y2 pupil was referred to the Educational Psychology Service because of ongoing concerns about some of the behaviours that he was presenting with at school. School staff reported that he said that he disliked reading and writing, and often refused to do these activities. It is understood that he liked to be in charge when he played with his peers.

A classroom observation took place followed by a series of consultations. The consultations included the class teacher and parent. During the consultations a variety of interventions were agreed, implemented and reviewed. Some of the interventions are listed below:

- The pupil received a high level of positive communication between home and school through a positive book.
- The school staff continued to “catch him being good”,
- The adults working with him continued to look for opportunities to “label emotions “in addition ELSA materials were used at school to support this area of work.
- It was suggested that the adults reinforced that situations/people, need not be either/or, but that “life/people can sometimes be grey”. To support this area it was suggested that the Teacher scaled his work, explaining what he had done to achieve his score i.e. what stopped it being lower, and what he could do to increase his score.
- The pupil benefited from access to activities that were specifically aimed at developing positive feelings about himself as a person and so increase his confidence. He heard younger pupils read.
- He had access to an Alpha Smart
- He had targeted intervention to support the development of handwriting,
- He had targeted phonological teaching

Outcomes:

After two terms the class teacher stated that the pupil was doing well, she was particularly impressed with the pupil’s attitude toward literacy. The pupil was now so proud of his writing that he loved to share it with other teachers and often asked to go to other classes so he could show them his writing– this was a massive step forward.

The pupil now reads every day at school either to himself or to another adult in the classroom.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Individual Casework/Consultation: behaviour and social communication

A Year 3 child was raised at a termly planning meeting due to concerns about aspects of his behaviour. School staff had previously sought the input of the Behaviour Support Teacher. The class teacher's concerns centred on issues such as difficulties attending in class, immature, socially inappropriate and 'odd' behaviour and difficulties around social comprehension and interaction, a lack of independence and poor organisational skills.

Two unstructured observations were carried out, after which strategies that might be used to support the child were discussed with the class teacher. A referral to the Speech and Language Therapy Service was also made by the EP following consultation with the child's parents. The initial SaLT assessment highlighted the child's receptive language, particularly understanding of longer instructions, and verbal reasoning skills, as areas for intervention.

Outcomes:

SaLT has been ongoing since the time of the referral and the child has made excellent progress. His progress in school has also been reviewed informally through termly planning meetings. There has been close communication between the EP and the Speech and Language Therapist, and these two professionals have consulted with each other on a regular basis to ensure that the most appropriate and effective strategies are being used to support the child. The Speech and Language Therapist has been able to make use of the EP's knowledge of interventions to support the development of the child's social communication skills and has made recommendations to parents and school staff based upon this.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Individual Casework/Consultation: severe social anxiety and ASC

A Y9 pupil moved to the York area with a diagnosis of precocious puberty and was experiencing very high levels of social anxiety, making it difficult for him to leave the house. He had stopped attending school in his previous authority in Y7. He was also struggling to acquire literacy and numeracy skills. When he and his father moved to York, he was initially offered education in very small groups on the Danesgate site (EOTAS) but he refused to attend. Attempts to make him go were leading to increasingly aggressive behaviours and verbal confrontations. CAMHS initiated an assessment of his needs and 6 months later he received a formal diagnosis of 'Atypical Autism'

EP support initially involved home visits to meet with the pupil's father (main caregiver) to discuss his learning needs and problem-solve around some of his behaviours, including his refusal to leave the house. The pupil was reluctant to meet with the EP, but on the third home visit he engaged in a brief conversation and on the next visit he agreed to undertake some assessment activities. I attended regular meetings with school staff, CAMHS and dad to put together a package of support to re-engage the pupil in education. He started a programme of home tuition in the hope that this would build confidence and ensure that his learning needs were addressed. Once these sessions were established the school introduced the offer of a gradual transfer to the Danesgate site, still receiving one-to-one tuition, with dad bringing him in for short sessions 2-3 times per week. Getting the right tutor (young and male), timing of sessions and adapting activities to his learning style were all considerations.

When he received his diagnosis of Atypical Autism, school requested EP support to put together an RSA (request for statutory assessment). The pupil received a statement of SEN and discussions focused on post-16 provision. As his EP, I supported a request to stay at Danesgate into Y12 as an 'exceptional circumstance', in order to consolidate the small steps of progress.

Outcomes:

The pupil has gradually increased his time at Danesgate, building up from short 1-hour sessions 2-3 times per week, to full mornings 5 days per week. He works hard and engages well with his tutor. He is not yet engaging in groups activities with peers, but he does understand that this is an important 'next step'. Recently he has been travelling to Danesgate independently in a taxi. The pupil is starting to understand and accept his difficulties with communication and social contact. He now believes that he can achieve and has a goal in mind – he would very much like to attend York College to undertake a catering course. It is admirable that, after all the obstacles he has faced, he still wants to gain qualifications that will lead to a career in a public arena.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Individual Casework/Consultation: curriculum planning for a pupil with severe and complex learning needs

A 9 year-old student with multiple and complex learning needs began attendance at his local mainstream primary school. The pupil had arrived in this country from Malawi and, in addition to his having Downs Syndrome, did not speak any English and had not, in Malawi, been educated other than in a Nursery environment. He arrived in York, therefore, with no prior experience of mainstream education with children of his age.

The role of the EP was initially to consult with parents about the possible types of provision that could be made available to meet their child's needs and then to provide a consultation service to teaching and support staff on the curriculum differentiation and target setting process.

Outcomes:

Parents had initially assumed that special school would be required but following initial visits they were impressed by what was on offer in mainstream school and he was welcomed into his local primary school. He has now made a lot of progress socially, educationally and linguistically. This is an example of the successful implementation of a policy of inclusion.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Individual Casework / Consultation: Child in Care

A Year 2 child who was placed in the care of the local authority was brought to the attention of the CYC EP for Children in Care by the social worker because of concerns about his behaviour in school and fears that his school placement might be in jeopardy. The child was living with foster carers 15 miles outside CYC boundary and attended an out of authority North Yorkshire primary school.

During the last 3 years the EP has worked closely with the social worker, occupational therapist from York CAMHS Team, foster cares and school staff to support the child's school placement. As part of this process the EP has:

- completed several classroom observations,
- discussed school behaviour management strategies with the classteacher, teaching assistant, foster carer, social worker and staff from CAMHS
- completed individual work with the pupil,
- submitted psychological advice to the LA as part of the statutory assessment procedures
- attended child care review meetings,
- attended annual review meetings,
- attended multi- agency meetings to plan the child's transfer to secondary school

Toward the end of the spring term in Y6 the child's foster care placement broke down, the child moved to a new foster care placement in York and consideration was being given to transferring him to a new primary school in York. Following EP consultation with social worker, school staff and CYC SEN admin team it was agreed that the pupil should continue to attend the same out of authority school until the end of Y6 with daily transport between his foster carers in York and out of authority primary school. This was done to provide the child with some educational stability and continuity and avoid any unnecessary change. The sudden change of foster care placement meant that existing plans to help the pupil transfer to a North Yorkshire secondary school were no longer relevant and the EP convened a multi-agency meeting with parents, foster carers, social worker and teaching staff from the primary school and new York secondary school to make arrangements to support the child's transfer to his new school placement.

Outcomes:

The EP's long term involvement with the pupil in an out of authority primary school, and established links with the social worker were extremely helpful in preventing an unnecessary change of primary school placement and in identifying action needed to support the child's successful transfer to a York secondary school

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Individual Casework / Consultation: Using Solution Oriented Consultation to sustain a mainstream placement.

This casework example concerns a boy with severe dyslexia who was placed in an Enhanced Resource in mainstream school throughout his primary and secondary school career. He was a very bright boy with exceptionally good spoken language skills but he also presented many challenges in terms his behaviour at both primary and secondary levels. On a number of occasions from Year 8 through to Year 10 there were requests from his father and the school for him to be placed in a specialist residential school.

Throughout the secondary school years the psychologist was involved in consultations with a range of staff within the school and with parents. A solution orientated approach to consultation was used which sought to acknowledge and specify the nature of difficulties causing concern but then to focus on strengths, achievements and emotional resources. At times this was difficult as an alternative future was seen as the desirable outcome.

There were also a number of direct consultations with the pupil himself whose expressed wish was not to go away to a residential school. However in this case the majority of the psychologist's work was involved in consultation with adults rather than direct work with the pupil.

Outcomes:

The pupil completed his Year 11 and remained in mainstream education. It would be wrong to diminish in any way the struggle that this has been for both the pupil himself and the school; both deserve great credit for achieving a positive outcome which at times looked to be an unrealistic possibility. The psychologist's role, although peripheral, has been critical in sustaining a sense of optimism and purpose and without this input it is highly likely that the boy would have been placed in residential education.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Whole School Training: Removing barriers to learning

The training arose from a discussion at a planning meeting when the Head Teacher explained that the school needed to ensure *that support for pupils with special educational needs and /or disability is more focused and includes greater challenge, so they can make the same good progress as their peers.*

To support the school in this area of their development it was agreed to provide a series of four training sessions for all the teachers at the school. The training was bespoke, it was provided in collaboration with a specialist teacher and in close discussion with the SEN Consultant.

Four sessions were delivered over a number of months. After each session the staff were asked to contribute to the planning of the next session.

The training covered

- identification of SEND,
- clarification of individual needs and removing barriers to learning
- Personalised programmes.

Gap activities were set after each session

On the last session, staff were asked to bring examples of the Individual Education Plans they had written, alongside some of the interventions they had implemented following the training. The Individual Education Plans and the interventions they had implemented were then shared and discussed. At the end of the training, staff were asked to set personal targets.

Outcomes:

The feedback from the school was very positive and followed up in subsequent Planning Meetings.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Behaviour Management for lunchtime supervisors

A York primary school requested some INSET for lunch time supervisors. The supervisors were complaining about the behaviour of the children in their care, whilst the head teacher was actually concerned about the amount of shouting done by the supervisors themselves.

Four sessions on behaviour management were offered to the supervisors, immediately after lunch time. This was well-received and offered the supervisors a chance to talk amongst themselves and to discuss ways of generally improving the system operating in the school. Lunch time reward stickers and a weekly good behaviour award was promoted by the supervisors in assembly.

Prior to this, two observations were made at lunchtimes and interviews were held with a selected number of pupils and each supervisor. A number of practical issues were resolved that had a major impact on both the behaviour of the pupils and ease of managing the lunch times for the staff. Namely, the cleanliness of the cutlery was improved, and consequently the children did not queue so long whilst waiting for each child to search for cutlery; the day's menu was clearly displayed so that pupils had chosen in advance of arriving at the serving hatch; chairs were not stacked until all children had left the dining hall so reducing the noise level. In contrast to the belief of the supervisors, most children enjoyed their meals and wanted more time to eat them-supervisors thought the children wanted to eat as quickly as possible and to go out to play.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Nurture Groups

Two Nurture Groups have been set up in York Primary Schools. They were initially funded by the Local Authority and the Childrens Fund, they continue to receive funding from the LA.

Establishing these groups involved:

- visiting other such established groups;
- presentations to Local Authority Committees;
- whole staff training; individual staff training;
- the use of the Boxall Profile and Re-integration Profile as part of pupil selection;
- home visits
- regular monitoring visits.

A Nurture Group is a school based educational resource which tries to meet the underlying needs of children who have not had the opportunity to develop the social skills, the self-esteem or confidence needed to be successful learners. They may have had a very unsettled early life with a variety of carers whose expectations have been inconsistent and whose own lives have been stressed by anxiety, illness, violence or isolation. Such children may be aggressive or disruptive; others are unresponsive or withdrawn. They have difficulties in learning because they have not had a chance to develop a trusting relationship with an adult. They have difficulties in accessing the curriculum within the mainstream classroom and being able to fit into the expectations of the school.

Nurture Groups aim to relieve the children's anxiety and to develop their self-esteem so that they can re-integrate into their mainstream class within three to four terms.

A Nurture Group always has a teacher and a support assistant who work closely together, providing a safe, predictable setting, so that early learning opportunities can be re-created. A Nurture Group will usually have eight to ten children; the two adults can therefore develop a very close relationship with each child, anticipating difficulties, intervening quickly and tailoring their approach to each child's particular needs. All children will spend some part of each day in their own mainstream classroom, perhaps at the beginning or end of each day or at another regular time that works well for the group. Regular liaison and joint planning between the class teacher and Nurture Group staff is therefore essential.

Outcomes

IN 2013 the Local Authority undertook a review of the nurture group provision and found it to be effective in preventative approaches to SEMH and also good value for money

Headteachers and staff from both Nurture groups presented their work to colleagues at a twilight session in January 2015.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Multi-agency workshop for parents of children with an ADHD diagnosis

The Educational Psychology Service received a request for input into the CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health) Service's regular programme of workshops for parents. In particular they were interested in some help for parents about working in partnership with their child's school.

"We will be running a workshop for parents whose children have been diagnosed with ADHD and wondered if someone from education might be able to come and talk to parents about the best way to communicate with schools when they struggle with how school is managing their son or daughter's behaviour."

An Educational Psychologist and the Coordinator of York SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service) worked together to create a presentation for parents. This material was not used in the actual workshops, which lent themselves to a much less formal approach.

Outcomes:

The workshops were well attended and informal. Each workshop included a short information sharing element, delivered by the EP and the SENDIASS advisor, followed by some discussion activities and opportunities for open questions and answers. Feedback from parents and colleagues in CAMHS was positive. As a result of the two workshops parents have been supported to establish a new group, specifically for parents of young people with ADHD diagnosis.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Post 16 provision – training for members of the Additional Learning Support team at Askham Bryan College

Following the Children and Families Act 2014 and the introduction of the new SEN Code of Practice all Educational Psychology Services were required to provide psychological services from 0-25 years. As a result of these changes City of York Educational Psychology Service was able to secure funding from the SEN Reform Grant for a 2-year temporary EP post working specifically with the Post 16 sector. The remit of this post was to work with all three of the main post 16 providers in York and also with young people placed out of city or in other educational or training placements.

The Additional Learning Support team at Askham Bryan College asked for some training input for their entire staff of learning support practitioners (approximately 40 people). They were interested in the area of thinking skills, specifically how to support students with additional learning needs in the wide variety of lessons provided by the college.

The training session covered some definitions of thinking skills, some suggestions about concentration and how much sustained concentration to expect. It also covered the term 'metacognition' and the potential value in teaching students to use their own metacognition effectively. The final section of the training examined 'learning styles' and strategies for supporting students in sessions.

Outcomes:

The training was well received and there was a great deal of audience participation. A review of the learning aims at the end of the session suggested that the participants were secure that the session had delivered the learning aims. One issue that remains to be dealt with is the sense from the learning support practitioners that it would be helpful for the tutors to access similar training so that a shared understanding and shared valuing of approaches might be generated.

CITY OF YORK EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

VIGNETTES OF GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Individual Casework: Using a multi-element plan to support a young person at risk of permanent exclusion

A Year 7 boy was raised at a termly planning meeting due to concerns regarding frequent instances of disruptive behaviour and physical aggression towards other pupils. Following a number of internal exclusions, the child was considered to be at risk of permanent exclusion. In addition to concerns about the child's ability to manage his emotions and regulate his behaviour, school staff were concerned about the rigidity of the child's thinking, his ability to focus and his social relationships with others. Conversations with the young person in school and a behaviourist approach involving rewards and sanctions had been ineffective in promoting positive behaviour; school staff were keen to use a different approach in which the child's views were elicited and incorporated into his package of additional support.

Following training by Derbyshire Educational Psychology Service, the EP used the framework of a 'Multi-element Plan' (MEP) to involve the young person, his parents and school staff in gaining a joint understanding of the functions of his behaviour and planning together to meet his needs. Initially, the EP engaged in individual work with the pupil using a card sort activity to externalise the behaviour and understand what messages the behaviour was communicating. The EP then used a further set of visual prompts to find out what strategies the young person felt might be helpful in terms of the response of adults and the set up of the environment.

A week after the session with the pupil, the EP met with the child's parents, the Head of Inclusion and the Pastoral Support Worker in school to put together the MEP. The child chose not to attend this meeting and therefore the views he shared during the individual session were inputted to discussions by the EP (with his permission).

The format of the MEP first encourages the consideration of the functions of the behaviour through the generation of 'I-messages'. Feedback from school staff, parents and the pupil himself suggested the following 'I-messages': "I don't like changes to routine", "I find it difficult to concentrate", "I hate writing" and "I like to be with my mum". These 'I-messages' were linked to underlying functions of 'control', 'expressing emotion' and 'increasing stimulation'. Gaining a joint understanding of the functions of the behaviour enabled the group to consider a range of strategies to address these needs. The format of the plan promoted recognition of environmental adjustments in terms of the physical and social environment, the pupils' access to the curriculum and how his basic needs were being met.

Incorporating feedback from the pupil, the group agreed to implement a number of environmental strategies and also considered methods of developing the child's strengths and his interest in PE to support his self esteem and engagement. The final section of the plan considered rewards and consequences. Here, the pupil's views were taken into account and a personalised system was devised, recognising that the whole school behaviour policy was not working for this young person.

The MEP was written up by the EP and shared with all members of school staff supporting the child in school.

Outcomes:

The EP met again with school staff and parents the following term to review the MEP. The pupil's achievements were celebrated and discussion was held around strategies that were working and those that needed adjustment. The MEP was updated by the EP and shared with adults supporting the child.

The child is no longer considered to be at risk of permanent exclusion. School staff and parents were in agreement that they could review the MEP in school and no longer required direct input from the EP service.

The pupil continues to be monitored at school planning meetings with the EP.