



BEARPARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

This case study illustrates the attempts through Study Support and After School Activities that the school has put into place to manage and improve the self- esteem, behaviour and therefore the progress of a group of 6 boys.

JUNE 2010



"I won't be able to do that"

"Nobody likes me"

"I don't have any friends"

(Comments from the children September 2009)

Local Authority Durham County Council	School /Centre Bearpark Primary School
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Context Statement:

Bearpark is a former mining village just outside Durham City. The result of the closure of the mine in 1984 has resulted in an area of high unemployment and low social esteem and a general feeling that underachievement is acceptable. There is a general expectation that education is the responsibility of the school and that in this climate of unemployment and social disadvantage, school is not an essential aspect of the future.

Bearpark Primary School is for children aged 4-11, pupils almost exclusively come from the village. There are currently 92 children in the school in 4 mixed age classes. Many children are from families whose parents and grandparents attended the school.

Children in general behave well and are well motivated in lesson (Ofsted 2005, SIP Annual Report to Governors April 2009-2010 examples) There are however some children that can have challenging behaviour and the school prides itself on having experienced staff that use a positive behaviour policy to minimise any problems.

In 2008/9 There was however a lot of concern from the very experienced Class 4 teacher (R/year 1) about the behaviour of a small group of 4 boys. The boys then in year 1 had not settled down during the more formal structure in year 1 and were making things difficult for the teacher and the rest of the class. Most of the behaviour was low level disruption but constant and affecting their progress and others in the class. The children all demanded constant attention from the teacher both positive and negative. At that time advice was sought from County Literacy Support regarding the behaviour during carpet time to try and prevent arguing and bickering and to improve listening skills. One simple suggestion was that the children had their own spot which was stuck to the floor. This did work for a while and the teacher noticed that carpet time was calmer although the affected children were still close to each other.

There were also some concerns regarding two parents threatening to take their children from the school because of the impact these children were having.

The boys moved into Class 3 years 2/3 in September 2009 which is an even more structured day and continued to be challenging. Already in that class was a year 3 boy with behavioural and attitude issues. Another year 2 boy who had not been a concern in year 1, returned to school in September after a difficult summer with major changes in his home structure also became difficult, this made 6 children altogether. All of these case study children suffer from low self esteem and lacking in confidence, with comments such as, "I won't be able to do that" "No body likes me" "I don't have any friends"

At an informal staff meeting to discuss options to improve the situation, it was decided that since it was unlikely that a single approach would be successful, several concurrent strategies were discussed to be adopted.

The class teacher was asked to keep a record of the number of inappropriate incidences in a typical day from members of the group to provide a base line on whether there was any improvement. The number of incidences proved to be impractical to keep a record so the class teacher was asked to record on a scale of 0-5 where 0 represented no level of incidences and therefore no intervention by the teacher and 5 represented a constant input to maintain control.

September 2009

	Literacy session Rate 0-5	Types of incidences
Child 1		Fidgeting, shouting out (particularly after just been asked to

	2	be quiet) Sees transition times such as moving around the classroom and between activities as an opportunity for mischief. Going in a huff. Attention seeking
Child 2	5	Needs constant attention in order to maintain any level of control. Shouts out, cries, lies on floor, hurts other people by biting and nipping.
Child 3	3	Temper outbursts, unpredictable. Shouting. Argues with other children over minor things. Runs off into corner. Needs coaxing
Child 4	4	Immature- babyish Tell on people constantly nips people.
Child 5	4	Throwing things, not listening therefore not sure what to do. Constant support needed to no independent working. Telling tales
Child 6	3	Poor communication. sneaky, have to keep watching him, trying to wind people up if teacher doesn't watch, making others in the class laugh.

AUTUMN TERM

FUN CLUB

The first attempt was a Fun Club- an After School Activity where only the 6 children were invited. The parents were informed that this activity was to try and improve behaviour, raise self esteem and to help the boys be more co-operative. All parents were fully supportive.

The children needed to earn stars throughout the week in order to be allowed to come. These were for making the right choices and co operating with other members of the class. Two year 6 boys were also invited along to act as role models for the group. There were different activities each week chosen in conjunction with the group. Soft Play painting and cooking were very popular. Each week started with "Circle Time", an opportunity to share good things from the week. All of the group found it challenging to wait their turn and to say something positive about them selves.

All of the children had a say in the activities and enjoyed the "special ness" of the group. There were some weeks when some children did not achieve the required stars and were not allowed to stay.

Children of the group would stop me in the corridor and tell me how many stars they had and whether they had been "good"

There were also positive contributions from the year 6 role models who supported the younger children with maturity and reported that they enjoyed the experience and the opportunity to help.

The Club ran for the Autumn Term and will be resumed for the last half term before the summer. Some of the group have asked regularly for it to be returned.

Evaluation

The children certainly got a positive experience from attending the club. They tried hard in

class to get the reward stars and the class teacher did notice them trying hard especially the day before the club when their parents were told if they were allowed to stay.

From my point of view in running the club, each of the children responded well to individual attention and praise. The behavioural problems occurred when they had to interact with each other and all had a problem with sharing anything or waiting until it was their turn. There were however never any serious incidences mostly just "bickering." The two year 6 boys were excellent role models and in effect we worked with 2 children each. The parents were pleased at this opportunity and I spoke with them all at the end of each session when they came to pick up their children. There was never any need to say anything but positive comments in an effort to raise the children's self esteem in front of their parents.

The success from an improvement in their personal behaviour and social skills at the club was limited because of the short time scale (only 5 weeks) It will be interesting to run it again in the summer term to see any changes and to compare.

SPRING TERM

The most demanding of the children continued to be disruptive to the extent that a CAF was initiated resulting in a multi agency meeting and an assessment by Behaviour Support Service. A referral was then made by school to C.A.H.M.S based in Chester-le Street for a clinical diagnosis.

Unfortunately the child did have a fixed, short term exclusion because of the unacceptable disruption to the class through screaming crying and being totally unreasonable. Crisis Response was then called in to try and prevent further exclusions and as he was now at risk of permanent exclusion. A worker comes in and works with the boy in a small group specifically to assist with inclusion. He has had a further detrimental effect on the other children in this case study as some of his behaviour has been copied by the others which has been noticed on several occasions by the class teacher and other members of staff.

One of the most significant improvements from the class teacher's point of view is the employment of a classroom assistant for 3 mornings a week. This is specifically to help with this boy. She is able to support him in the classroom and if necessary remove him to give individual support. The funding from this has been found by the school. The class teacher reports that if this boy is absent the rest of the Case Study Group are more manageable.

Getting Along Initiative



Two of the children from the group joined this 10 week programme run by the Educational Psychology Service. Four other children from the class act as role models. The worker felt that for one of the children in particular she noticed a significant improvement in his confidence and self esteem.



Two of the children have involvement with Parent Support Workers who are based at DCBC which suggest strategies which promote positive behaviour to use at home.

SUMMER TERM

Behaviour support are using SIGNS (Social Interactions Gaining New Skills) which is similar to Getting Along Programme

As one of the boys had shown some improvement he was chosen to play tennis in an inter school tournament which he enjoyed and improved self esteem just by being involved. A group of 8 children have been chosen to play in a Football World Cup Challenge at the local comprehensive School. Three of the Case Study group were involved. Two of the boys were engaged and enthusiastic all through the event and had excellent opportunities to socialise and be part of the team. It was a very positive experience for them. The third boy did have to be spoken to because of inappropriate behaviour but had an adult with him which provided individual support.

The boy that has made the most improvement has been given the opportunity to attend a series of 4 sessions run by NUFC After School for Gifted and Talented in Football. He is excited about this activity which has been very motivating for him and is something he is proud of. He will attend with another boy in his class who will be an excellent role model.

2008/2009 Progress made

Children are expected to make 2 sub levels progress in one academic year

As can be seen from the tracking none of the children are making expected progress in all areas. However it is encouraging that the children that are showing improvement in their behaviour (4,5 and 6) are making slightly better progress than those that are not. This is an indication that we are trying the correct kind of strategies.

Child	LITERACY	READING	LITERACY	WRITING	NUMERACY	
	Oct	May	Oct	May	Oct	May
1	2c	2b (+ 1)	1b	2c(+2)	2c	1a(-1)
2	2b	2b (+1)	1b	1a (+1)	2c	2c (=)
3	2b	2b (=)	1b	2c (+2)	2c	2c (=)
4	1c	1b(+1)	P8	1a (+1)	1b	2c (+2)
5	P7	2b (+2)	P6	1b (+2)	1c	1a (+1)
6	2c	2a (=)	1b	1a (+1)	1a	2c (+1)

May 2010

	No of incidences in 1 session	Types of incidences
Child 1 Ross	2 NO APPARENT CHANGE	Avoids work Cannot sit still
Child 2 Aiden	5+ WORSE	Involvement of Crisis Response and CAHMS
Child 3 Kieran	5 WORSE	Shouting at class teacher, rude to other adults

Child 4 Corey	3 BETTER	Still immature but less tale telling More able to
Child 5 Callum	2 BETTER	Tale telling but less Can work independently for short periods. More concentration Better positive attitude
Child 6 Ryan	1 BETTER	Better with adult interaction Most improvement Volunteers information

CONCLUSION

There were never any illusions about there being an instant way to improve the behaviour of these individuals. Some of these children have multiple problems. One boy in particular is expected to have a medical diagnosis which may result in medication. Some of the children have huge personal problems and difficulties at home to deal with which will need long term attention to try to overcome or minimise. It is interesting that all of the children were interviewed and they all think they are better now than they were in September! However as can be seen by the chart there has been some success which will be build upon and added to so that it is hoped by the time these children leave Bearpark the effect of Study Support and After School Activities will have had a more definite impact on their progress and personal development.

Comments from the children May 2010

"I still hurt people ...but not as much now. I'm OK in class."

"I can sit still better"

"I look at the teacher when she is talking"

"I can't be good"

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