

Behaviour & Pastoral Update



Social and emotional learning and the pupil premium

The focus on SEAL may have gone, but Ofsted reports suggest that pupil premium money is keeping some initiatives afloat

With the arrival of the Ebac and the withdrawal of SEAL as a national strategy, the emphasis on the social and emotional development of young people might have looked under threat. However, according to some recent Ofsted reports, the pupil premium is being used by schools to maintain and develop social and emotional learning.

Nurture provision

'A nurture group, funded by the pupil premium money, skilfully supports those pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable' (Latest Ofsted report, Amesbury C of E Primary School: <http://bit.ly/1k7mJH>).

At Amesbury Church of England Primary, 51% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Headteacher Yvonne Harris explains, 'Our children were not always in a position to access their learning. They needed something else and, coming across nurture groups, we decided to establish our own group. The group is heavily geared towards the children's social and emotional needs.'

The Orchard Room is a facility based at Holy Family RC Primary in Oldham. It caters for approximately six children, who can come from any one of 14 schools who contribute financially. Some of these schools use their pupil premium money to fund their commitment. 'Every year, each school contributes £5,000 towards its maintenance,' explains headteacher Collette Gill. 'Not every school uses it

every year but they can see the benefit of having the option if they need it.'

It's not only primaries that are investing their pupil premium money in nurture provision. An increasing number of secondary schools are exploring and implementing the concept for older pupils too. Irene Grant, national director of the Nurture Group Network, points out: 'Evidence from numerous studies would suggest that it is essential to provide a safe base where missed early learning opportunities can be addressed before effective learning can be progressed.'

Alternative creative strategies

Other Ofsted reports suggest that schools are thinking creatively about how the pupil premium might be put to good use, and not just on additional support for academic subjects:

- King Edward VI Sheldon Heath Academy supports a breakfast club.
- Tanbridge House School uses part of their PP to fund gymnastic sessions.
- Marshland High School funds an attendance officer.
- King David Primary School provides a quiet time for those who need it at lunchtime.
- Holy Family RC Primary School provides visits out of school.

Schools are demonstrating that they are looking for individual solutions to support vulnerable students within their own, unique context.

Issue 94 February 2013

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Inspiring teaching and learning throughout your curriculum with new technology

ICT is about to be catapulted right up the agenda, so now is the time to start ensuring you have everything in place to secure innovative and inspirational use of technology in all classrooms, writes Paul Haigh

www.optimus-education.com/inspiring-teaching-and-learning-throughout-your-curriculum-new-technology

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Behaviour & Pastoral Update

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Look at the child, not the statistics

We are faced with an increasing reliance on statistics to tell us how it is out there. Our education service is being judged by international rankings, and fluctuations in these are being greeted by statistical analysts first and professionals second. Data consultants are multiplying at a staggering rate. You can hire one for £650 a day to meet your school's individual needs.

This fixation must not detract from a focus on what's best for our students. We are now being swamped with accusations, aimed directly at schools and their teachers, about data manipulation, over-marking, and individuals and institutions succumbing to perverse incentives. But it's not just in relation to exams that numbers are dictating our practice.

For example, the Education Committee's

report on the English child protection system (<http://bit.ly/UmfYRz>) suggests that some young people close to their 16th birthday might not be taken into care because to do so would make them the responsibility of the local authority until they are 21. This is both shocking and unsurprising. As we are increasingly judged numerically with budgets that reflect this, decisions will be made for reasons removed from the best interests of children and young people.

The Education Committee notes how challenging behaviour in schools is often the result of difficulties and even abuse in the home that has perhaps gone unchecked for years. Unfortunately, dealing with the external behaviour and moving children on to another provider might make 'performance sense' for the

school. To get to the root of the problem takes time and resources that may not be reflected in the statistics that have the highest profile. However, to neglect these children is not only detrimental to them but can impact on all those around them.

Coming soon in BPU

Find out more about the 'Good Behaviour Game' and what the research says about its effectiveness. Hear how Ormskirk School has reduced the number of its exclusions and read Dr Lauren Warren's description of strategies for working with pupils who present persistent behaviour problems.

Maxine Handley-Wells at Amesbury CE Primary School recommends...

'I am pastoral support manager of a large primary school in a socially deprived part of Wiltshire. After much research, resourcing, identification of children and discussions with parents and school staff, our nurture group "The Sanctuary" was set up in March 2010. Its purpose is primarily to support children with emotional, social and behavioural needs. The facility operates five mornings a week and includes a breakfast club, provision for social and emotional aspects of learning for 10-12 children during morning sessions, and a break and lunch club.

'Under my guidance, a teaching assistant runs a sports club at lunchtimes and further supports children with the integration from nurture back into class during the afternoons. My role includes guidance and support to all school staff on behaviour issues, and I run support sessions for parents as well as, where necessary, making home visits.

'We have now successfully integrated back into mainstream many children who had been previously excluded from other schools and we have helped others to set up a similar facility. We are currently in the process of obtaining the Nurture Group Network Quality Mark Award.'

What five tips would you give a new coordinator?

1. Make sure you are well read on the facilities required. A small area outside a classroom or in a corridor is not enough.
2. Ensure that all school staff are aware of what you are doing and why. The Nurture Group is not just a bolt-on taking in troublesome children.
3. Go and have a look at another facility. You really need to see the Nurture Group up and running to be aware of what is involved before you get started.
4. Make sure that you have sufficient training. I had previously been a parent support advisor, had behaviour accreditation, restraint training and had attended a course on the theory and practice of nurture groups.

Can you recommend any resources?

1. The Boxall Profile (<http://bit.ly/1ONXleL>) - developed to provide a precise way of assessing a child/young person's needs, planning intervention and measuring progress.
2. *Beyond the Boxall Profile: Strategies and Resources* (<http://bit.ly/VtR81z>) - using the information from the

Boxall Profile, this book provides the practitioner with ideas about how to engage with children in addressing their identified needs.

3. Join the Nurture Group Network (www.nurturegroups.org) - here you get access to courses, literature and resources. Well worth the cost.
4. For lots of fantastic lesson plans on many PSHE themes visit the free site www.gogivers.org
5. *Toxic Childhood: How The Modern World is Damaging Our Children and What We Can Do About It*, Sue Palmer (2007) - I first read this book at university, where its contents helped me understand how we can help to change things.

Tell us a good idea you implemented.

The visual sanction and reward scheme created for the nurture group, which is now successfully used across the whole school.

Tell us an experience you wouldn't want to repeat.

Initially we learnt as we went along. You need to make sure that all staff are on board and fully understand the purpose of the nurture group and the part they play in this. Without this you are very much alone.

What do young people think about ADHD?

Debate over ADHD diagnosis and stimulant drug treatments continues. **Lauren Baker** and **Ilina Singh** report from their research into the perspectives of children affected

The VOICES study (Voices On Identity, Childhood, Ethics and Stimulants) investigated children's experiences with ADHD diagnosis and stimulant drug treatments. A primary aim of the study (<http://bit.ly/T8gl4I>) was to understand whether children's perspectives and experiences support claims about the ethical harms of stimulant medication. We interviewed 151 children, aged nine to 14, in the US and the UK.

A major finding is that an informed teacher and supportive school environment make a world of difference to children with ADHD and their parents. Children spoke positively about the creative ways teachers helped them manage their ADHD. Teachers introduced techniques to help children keep track of time during tasks, to manage their energies, and to ensure self-esteem and confidence in learning. Where children did not find teachers helpful, teacher training, stigma, classroom environment and niche values were shown to be common factors preventing positive engagement.

Barriers to positive teacher engagement

The VOICES study found that children in the US and the UK inhabit different 'ecological niches' – a concept used to describe aspects of children's local environment, including schools.

In the UK, a conduct niche was the modal niche environment. Here, a main preoccupation was with good behaviour. Children with ADHD were often thought of as 'naughty'. Schools in the UK tended to have a bullying culture, which included ADHD children as victims and victimisers. Children reported that teachers seemed unable or unwilling to intervene in bullying situations.

In the US, a performance niche was the modal niche. Here, a main preoccupation was with good academic performance. Children with ADHD were often thought of as having 'learning issues'. Secrecy and shame surrounded US ADHD diagnoses, and children often did not want teachers and peers to know about their diagnosis. In some US states, teachers are legally prohibited from discussing ADHD with parents and children. As a consequence, few children reported having meetings with teachers to discuss strategies to help them learn. In both the conduct and the performance niche, children were unlikely to have been invited to be active collaborators in their education.

Teacher training and ADHD

Teacher training and knowledge about ADHD differed within and between the US and UK. ADHD is an area of increasing concern in schools, and intersects with other mental health and learning

What teachers can do to encourage children with ADHD

- Include the child in discussions about educational strategy:
 - What works for them?
 - What would they like to try?
- Allow children with ADHD to have a 'fiddle toy' (with firm rules), such as a stress ball, in the classroom.
- Use non-punishing 'time out' strategies that children can control.
- Keep an even temper and tone with children.
- Find ways to give a child with ADHD daily praise and responsibility.

Most children we interviewed were eager to do better, but they need to be expertly guided

More information

- 'ADHD and Me' animation: <http://youtu.be/yvaVKvuEBkk>
- Practical strategies for classroom management of children with ADHD: <http://bit.ly/XiyoY6>
- ADHD VOICES homepage: www.adhdvoices.com

Lauren Baker is the VOICES project manager and Dr Ilina Singh is the VOICES principal investigator and reader in Bioethics and Society. Both work at the Department of Social Science, Health and Medicine at King's College London. contact@adhdvoices.com

issues, such as autism. Teacher training should be part of continuing professional development and staff training. This applies particularly to teaching assistants and learning support assistants, who often provide one-to-one support to ADHD children.

Managing the stigma of ADHD

Children with ADHD reported quite a lot of stigma experiences. Sometimes teachers contributed to the stigma surrounding ADHD. For example, teachers would let a child with ADHD off too easily, thereby allowing ADHD to be an excuse for bad behaviour. Teachers would also warn other children to stay away from the child with ADHD, thereby suggesting that ADHD is dangerous or violent. Better alternatives for managing the stigma of ADHD are to devise ways to talk about ADHD in class or assembly.

Concentration and the classroom environment

All children, but especially children with ADHD, told us that they found it difficult to concentrate in a noisy classroom. It was not just that classmates were distracting. Teachers who repeatedly raised their voices to try to control behaviour, or who were aggressive with students, could cause a child with ADHD to become agitated and distracted.

To build on the great work schools and teachers are already doing with children with ADHD, teaching staff need training and institutional support to implement useful tactics in the classroom and on the playground, where many children encounter bullying and stigma. Most children we interviewed were eager to behave well and to do better, but they need to be expertly guided, managed and encouraged along the way.

Teachers are in a prime position to hear the voices of children with ADHD and to use their experiences to create more supportive classroom conditions and more confident pupils.

What works for pupils with SEBD

All schools have developed a range of ways to cope with behaviour, social and emotional difficulties. Which of these work best? **Maggie Frost** did her own research to find out

My role is as the SEBD coordinator and a specialist advisory teacher for the Additional and Complex Needs Service. We are a team of teachers with specialist qualifications and expertise who work closely with schools to offer support and advice and to develop capacity amongst staff.

For some years now, I have been monitoring the number of requests that have been made for support for children with SEBD. Data is collected termly on the demographics of where these troubled youngsters go to school within the borough and also on the year groups where the incidence of SEBD is most prevalent. In addition, I am charged with monitoring pupils with additional needs who have received fixed-term or permanent exclusions or have been involved in managed moves.

I became interested in exploring data about which schools return to us for support, and which seldom do yet rarely exclude. I began to wonder how the latter group of schools succeeded in managing and supporting some quite challenging children without the need to access external support services. This curiosity blossomed into a plan to develop a small study with a group of primary schools that fell into this category.

After scrutinising data such as number on roll, free school meals and funding arrangements, I refined the list to draw together as broad a range of schools as possible from across the borough. I wanted to explore the ethos of each school, the mindset of the staff and the internal support mechanisms that were in place for staff, pupils and their parents or carers.

The process

I set up and conducted interviews with school leaders focused around nine different questions:

1. What makes a school effective in managing and supporting pupils with SEBD?
2. When you took on the role of headteacher, was there anything about the behaviour in school that gave you cause for concern?
3. How did the behaviour policy at the time address the needs of the pupils?
4. What was the first thing that you decided to look at in relation to pupils' behaviour?
5. How did you go about bringing staff on board with your vision for the school?
6. What would you say are the key skills needed by staff that has enabled the school as a whole to establish and maintain positive management of pupil behaviour?

Key points

- Maggie Frost decided to explore how schools within her borough managed behaviour and why some seemed to be more effective than others.
- She interviewed headteachers, SENCOs and talked to pupils.
- She found that there were many key characteristics shared between effective schools.
- It was particularly important that staff set a good example and modelled the behaviour they expected from pupils.

The children are asked not to do anything that the staff do not do in terms of politeness and good manners, looking smart, being punctual and avoiding language that is confrontational or sarcastic

7. How long would you say it has taken you to get where you are now as a whole school?

8. Have there been any setbacks during your 'journey'?

9. Some schools in the borough are still struggling with the behaviour of some pupils. What advice would you give to your colleagues that could be a starting point in making the journey towards change?

Responses were wide-ranging and embraced a number of philosophies, values and beliefs, yet there was a common thread that emerged from all the interviews: a strong commitment to an inclusive school in which everyone is valued and immersed in a culture of positive relationships, respect and honesty.

What makes schools effective in managing SEBD?

In relation to staff, effective schools:

- demonstrated consistency and predictability
- consulted and agreed on what is and is not acceptable behaviour – including the behaviour of the adults as well as the children
- recognised that it is the responsibility of all the adults in school to provide excellent role models for the children
- encouraged staff to develop a strong understanding of their own emotions and to be able to remain calm in a crisis
- had heads who recognised and celebrated the efforts of all the staff and were available as part of a 'mutual internal support system' to both the staff and the pupils.

As one head stated, 'The children are asked not to do anything that the staff do not do in terms of politeness and good manners, looking smart, being punctual and avoiding language that is confrontational or sarcastic.' All children in effective schools knew exactly what the behaviour expectations were. This information is delivered to them in the most appropriate way for their level of development and individual need.

Headteachers confirmed that they did not think any less of staff who needed more help in dealing with significant behaviour issues or in maintaining positive relationships with colleagues and the children. Where there was a need for additional training for some staff, funding was, as far as possible, released for this to take place.

In relation to parents, effective schools:

- provide communication that is relevant and timely
- have a collective belief that all children have a right to be in the school as members of the school 'family'
- emphasise consultation, information-sharing and problem-solving with parents and pupils.

Partnerships with parents was universally agreed to be one of the most important features of an effective school. Often referred to as 'working as a team', there was a shared belief that parents needed to be included in consultation, information-sharing and problem-solving. The profile of better behaviour was promoted through making a range of shared activities available to parents during and after school. On occasion schools offered drop-in sessions, where parents could meet to talk about any issues they might be having with their child's behaviour, and be offered suggestions as to how they might address these in a more positive and supportive way.

Strategies for engaging staff

In some cases, problems appear to have arisen where individual members of staff had been in post for a considerable number of years and had become somewhat entrenched in managing behaviour in a way that was not necessarily successful or supportive of the children. Headteachers used a variety of different approaches to change attitudes and bring staff on board with their vision for the future; some examples included:

- group problem-solving during staff meetings or in exceptional cases when a significant problem had arisen with a child's or children's behaviour
- encouraging teachers to be reflective about practice
- making available a behaviour management handbook
- targeting NQTs and recently qualified teachers for additional training
- staff being encouraged to share their skills and act as role models for one another
- conducting pupil interviews
- using restorative approaches
- developing a 'no blame culture' for both staff and children
- recognising that 'naughty' is not a helpful description and that behaviour needs to be described factually and without using emotional language
- using solution-focused techniques to repair and restore relationships and plan for the future
- changing a 'restricted' curriculum, maximising the opportunities for every child to enjoy success and achievement
- inviting children to suggest what they wanted to learn within a topic.

Advice to colleagues

At the conclusion of the interview I asked what advice the headteachers might give to someone new in post on how to start the journey of change. Much of what they said has been mentioned earlier; however, there were some insightful comments that reflect their experiences:

'There is no quick fix. Time needs to be devoted to working on every aspect of the behaviour of everybody in school.'

'It's a cliché, but there is no "I" in team and this is never more true than in a school, particularly when it comes to dealing with challenging behaviour. Aim to develop a team spirit and mindset.'

'Go back to basics and have a clear philosophy in your mind. Promote and demonstrate a "can do" attitude.'

'Always think of what you'd want school to do if this was your child.'

'Build your team carefully, using your judgement about the skills you know are needed to make the difference. Make sure no one feels isolated or insecure. Let your team know that you are interested in their welfare as much as the children's.'

'Involve the whole school community in your plans. It's a journey to make together.'

When it comes to managing children's behaviour, the first people who need to think about and change their behaviour are the adults

Maggie Frost qualified as a teacher in 1973 and worked for 17 years in primary schools. She became a SENCO during that time and took additional specialist qualifications in SEN. Maggie is a member of the ADHD Task Group in partnership with CAMHS and is a member of SEBDA. Maggie.Frost@oldham.gov.uk

All these changes were made with the minimum of cost to the school financially. Where staff were not able to embrace change they were supported to find a post in which they felt their skills were better suited.

An effective behaviour policy

An effective behaviour policy should:

- involve all the adults in school
- be worded in an unambiguous and comprehensible way
- avoid being too negative and sanction-bound
- be a motivational and solution-focused document.

There was a powerful acknowledgement that while the interaction between teaching, learning and better behaviour was undoubtedly immensely important, there was more to be considered, such as the impact of relationships within school and the need for secure emotional literacy. As one head put it, 'There needed to be a sense of optimism: things could and would change for the better. We are looking for possible solutions rather than dwelling on historical problems.'

All heads were in accord that everyone in school needed to be fully aware of the policy as a working document and of the need for regular review to ascertain whether it remained fit for purpose.

An inspirational experience

This project is just the beginning of a much bigger piece of work to come. It has been an enlightening and, at times, inspirational experience. It has reinforced my belief that when it comes to managing children's behaviour, the first people who need to think about and change their behaviour are the adults themselves.

Why arts education is good for SMSC

With the introduction of the Ebac, there are concerns that schools will allow their arts education to slip. **John Doyle**, headteacher at Ormskirk School, explains why making it high-profile is good for inspection as well as for raising pupils' self-esteem

The telephone call that I had been expecting for some weeks arrived at midday on a Tuesday in October. 'Hello John. I'm sure you can guess what this is about. Your school has been selected for inspection tomorrow and on Thursday.'

This was to be my fourth inspection as a head and this time the stakes were even higher than usual. We'd improved significantly since our last inspection, when we had been judged 'satisfactory', and the outcomes showed it, but were we as confidently 'good' as our school self-evaluation indicated? Or would we be deemed not to have improved fast enough and be categorised as 'requires improvement'?

'Oh, and one other thing,' continued the lead inspector, 'I see from your website that your school production is taking place this week. I presume you won't be seeking a deferral?' I murmured assent. 'Good. It probably wouldn't be granted anyway. See you tomorrow.'

The impact of the school production

For more than 20 years, my head of drama has organised a series of performances that are exceptional in their scale and quality. It has been astonishing for the pupils to find out what they are capable of under her direction. This is true of everyone, including some of the most difficult students. But would the inspectors recognise its value?

On the first day of the inspection the cast of nearly 200 pupils would be performing a premiere of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to 300 pupils and their teachers from Year 6 of our feeder primary schools. This would be followed by performances that evening and for the rest of the week to the paying public. I knew the production was a real opportunity for us to show the inspection team something remarkable.

SMSC at Ormskirk

I knew that our SMSC was thoroughly and thoughtfully audited and that our spiritual and moral dimension was exceedingly well covered. Although we are a non-denominational school, about 70% of our students successfully pass GCSE philosophy and ethics. Social and cultural aspects are dealt with in lots of curriculum areas and I was secure in the work that we had done in the last two summers with the hosting of an Olympic Challenge Day.

These days had involved the whole student

Ofsted said...

The school's vibrant arts specialism makes a major contribution to students' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's ambitious productions involve substantial teamwork and perseverance, with inspirational results that delight the community.
(Ofsted report, 17 October 2012 - Overall effectiveness 'good')

I knew the production was a real opportunity for us to show the inspection team something remarkable

John Doyle has been headteacher at Ormskirk School since its formation in 2001. He has served on the regional steering group of the SSAT and has been the secretary of the Lancashire Association of Secondary Headteachers from 2010-2012. He is an accredited trainer with NCSL. jmorris@ormskirk.lancs.sch.uk

body in activities which reflected the Olympic ideals of respect, courage, friendship, inspiration and excellence. While many of the activities were sporting, others brought the values of the games to life in more unexpected ways, such as T-shirt making, cookery and mosaics. The days had been well-documented and displayed around the school and I just hoped they would be noticed.

The inspectors' reactions

My concerns about the inspectors paying attention to these aspects of school life were unnecessary. At the end of the team meeting on day one it was immediately clear that they had been immensely impressed by the school production. It got even better by the end of the second day. They took note of the:

- bright, vibrant specialism
- emphasis we place on valuing students and giving them a sense of self-esteem
- strong RE syllabus dwelling on questions like 'What is God?' and 'What are beliefs?'
- serious and motivated approach to fund-raising
- encouragement of students to think independently, described by one inspector as 'some of the best I've ever seen'.

Advice from Ormskirk

For a successful SMSC inspection, remember:

- It's about the pupils and the experiences you can give them. Make their school experience as rich and varied as possible.
- Emphasise the importance of RE or philosophy and ethics to everyone, within and beyond the curriculum.
- An audit's important, but not as important as what's going on.
- Keep your curriculum as broad as you can – drama, RE, music and PE might not be on the new EBC, but they are the essential vehicles for driving your school's moral values.
- Display your activities prominently: show they have high value and play a big part in the life and the values of the school.

A home-grown social skills programme that makes a difference

Teachers might have ideas for developing a social and emotional support programme, but it's very unusual for them to have it published. **Sarah Lewis** explains how her 'Growing Together' scheme for primary children came to be

Looking closely at pastoral provision at St Luke's C of E School in Tiptree, the staff were increasingly aware that children were finding it difficult to make and sustain positive relationships and to manage their feelings. My colleague Deborah Taylor and I wanted to look really closely at common difficulties the children were experiencing. We noticed that children were struggling to have an appreciation and understanding of the people around them, with many showing little or no empathy. We decided that any programme we created needed to aim to support children to:

- develop and grow as individuals
- explore thoughts, feelings and actions
- have increased self-esteem and confidence
- feel empowered through self-awareness
- gain a knowledge of emotional literacy
- have a greater awareness of effective communication
- develop personal responsibilities and realistic expectations
- develop resilience
- use coping/problem-solving skills
- use support materials and strategies available.

Themes and content of the programme

The 'Growing Together' programme is made up of six sessions preferably delivered weekly by two facilitators. The themes over the six weeks include:

- qualities and relationships
- barriers to learning
- listening and talking
- feelings
- praise and rewards
- routines, responsibilities and rules.

In the first session, group rules are set and the 'Piggy Bank of Self-Esteem'* is introduced. Each child has a Piggy Bank and throughout the six weeks they can earn 'coins' for identified skills, ie for sharing, being brave, confidence, kindness. Words like 'self-esteem', 'resilience', 'perseverance', and so on are deliberately used and explained. Not only does this increase knowledge, it also serves to help the children become self-aware and increase their self-esteem.

Homework is set each week and the group are asked for volunteers to 'share' at the beginning of each session. Whilst gentle encouragement is given, children are not made to do this. Homework

is always of a practical nature and involves, for example, being more self-aware of body language and noticing the body language of those around them. The use of effective and clear communication is important and may be something as simple as giving a compliment and noticing the effects.

Other features of each session include:

- an icebreaker to help break down barriers and also ensure the children have fun
- a main aim, with two activities designed to achieve this along with strategies to 'take away'
- interactive activities that rely on good group facilitation skills
- facilitators summarising each activity, ensuring they 'pull out' and confirm the learning objectives
- the children evaluating the session and enjoying a snack together.

Inappropriate behaviour is usually ignored. The child who does not engage is nurtured and supported rather than singled out. Praise and encouragement are essential components in order that children feel safe and able to participate.

Adopting a whole-school approach

In order to maximise programme potential we felt a whole-school approach ethos was essential, and we spent a great deal of time ensuring that:

- all staff/governors have an overview of the programme and its benefits
- all parents of children at the school are given the opportunity to further their knowledge about the programme
- all school staff are able to signpost parents
- the programme is included within the school's pastoral policy.

Although we strongly believe in the benefits of the programme, it is important this is not seen as an isolated piece of work. Staff at St Luke's support the belief that PSHE education should permeate all aspects of school life, and in doing so we can really equip our children with a toolbox of strategies. We mirror these strategies in parenting courses with the aim of creating more cohesive working where we are all speaking a common language. Staff have embraced this approach and they themselves expressed a wish to complete 'Growing Together' training. This has had a major impact on the success of the programme.

Sarah Lewis is the wellbeing mentor at St Luke's C of E School in Tiptree. Her role includes working one-to-one with emotionally troubled children, parenting support and close liaison with other professionals. sarah99@uwclub.net

'Growing Together' and resources will shortly be available as a manual; course content training is also available for facilitators. For more details contact the school on 01621 815456

** Dr Carolyn Webster Stratton PhD (Incredible Years) has given express permission for the 'Piggy Bank of Self-Esteem' to be used throughout the programme*

Helping pupils to overcome difficulties with transition

The transition to secondary school is a crucial stage in a child's education and can be a major cause of anxiety. **Stephen Adams-Langley** explains how Place2Be can help vulnerable children

Key points

- Place2Be supports children as they make the transition between primary to secondary school.
- There are many different reasons why a child might find it difficult to make a successful transition.
- Strong communication links between the primary and secondary schools are important.
- Transition therapy groups in the summer term can help vulnerable pupils in Year 6 make the transition.
- Continued support is provided in the secondary school through the universal 'Place2Talk' as well as through targeted support.

Place2Be's work includes supporting children as they make the transition from primary to secondary school. Five main anxieties and issues that children can face during transition are:

- the fear of being bullied
- the size and complexity of the new school
- new forms of discipline
- losing friends from primary school
- new work demands in secondary school.

Most unease amongst Year 6 children comes from social and environmental matters rather than academic issues.

Helping the 16%

In a report by Evangelou et al (2008) most children (84%) said they felt prepared for entry into secondary school. However, Place2Be is particularly interested in the 16% of children who may have difficulties with their transition, and works to help schools bridge the gap for these children as they move to secondary school. In our experience there are a number of obstacles and risk factors which can hinder a child negotiating a successful transition. Vulnerable children are more likely to experience a negative transition. This includes those who have:

- special educational needs
- experienced bullying in primary school
- struggled with their learning and attainment
- experienced difficulties with socialisation and making friends
- been at risk of exclusion due to conduct disorders or aggressive or non-compliant behaviour
- troubled or chaotic families due to parental

substance misuse, domestic abuse or violence or mental health problems within the family

- experienced everyday trauma such as parental conflict, separation and divorce or bereavement
- home circumstances such as poverty and deprivation where children feel unsafe due to environmental factors
- contextual pressures such as long travel times from home to school – a particular issue in London.

Children who are newly arrived and appear at secondary school without prior notice or transition arrangements can find transition particularly difficult. These might include:

- children from asylum-seeking families
- looked-after children
- children in temporary fostering arrangements
- young people who are refugees from war and conflict.

Research into successful transition shows that pupils with SEN are particularly vulnerable. The support pupils get in primary school, from resource hours to individual staff support, does not automatically transfer with them when they move to secondary school. It is the responsibility of the secondary school to arrange for the necessary assessments to be carried out. This can cause a delay in the allocation of support and as a result a plan may not be in place when the child starts at the school. Evangelou et al show that 72% of pupils with SEN did not adapt easily to new routines in secondary school and 58% of pupils with SEN did not settle well.

Supporting a successful transition

Children who settle well into their secondary school invariably receive a lot of help from their primary and secondary schools through strong communication links between the two schools and clear information

Place2Be is particularly interested in the 16% of children who may have difficulties with their transition

What is Place2Be?

Place2Be (www.place2be.org.uk) provides school-based emotional and mental health support works in over 170 primary and secondary schools across the UK. The therapeutic support that Place2Be provides for children includes one-to-one counselling sessions, group sessions, and a lunchtime drop-in service called Place2Talk. Place2Be also provides support for parents, carers and teachers at the schools they work in.

about transition being communicated to children and their parents. This might include:

- ‘bridging materials’ such as leaflets and booklets about the transition being provided
- visits to the new school and taster days for children, including tours of the school
- an older pupil mentor or buddy, or a buddy system for children within the secondary school to support identified vulnerable children in the process of transition
- parents being on board and supportive of the process with parental choices received on time, most parents getting their first choice of school, and few appeals
- attention to supporting the Year 7 children in self-esteem, confidence and socialisation into new routines and friendships.

Using the PSHE curriculum to develop skills such as a buddy system, empathy and personal skills (friendship, self-esteem and confidence) is particularly key to supporting vulnerable children to make a successful transition and enhancing social adjustment. Curriculum explanation and continuity between primary and secondary schools further ensure successful transition and prepare children in primary school for the different level and style of work in Year 7.

Approximately three in every 10 children had some or many experiences of bullying according to their parents, and 72% of these children did not settle well (Evangelou et al 2008). Anti-bullying initiatives and robust support to identify and reduce bullying is of paramount importance to children in Years 7 and 8. Again, children with SEN have been shown to be more consistently vulnerable to bullying than their peers.

How Place2Be helps

Place2Be is an example of an external organisation and school-based service which can be incorporated into the transition process to support vulnerable pupils. School project managers work with the SENCO and teachers in feeder primary schools to support transition.

Transition therapy groups take place in the summer term for vulnerable Year 6 pupils who express anxiety or are deemed to be at risk. In these groups, staff work intensively with six vulnerable pupils for eight weeks to address their anxieties about secondary school. Pastoral care workers and trusted teachers are identified in the new school that the children can approach if they are struggling. Staff in secondary schools, whether pastoral or care managers or inclusion staff, are given information prior to the transition to help the most anxious children to make the adjustment.

As a school-based mental health service, Place2Be has several distinct characteristics:

- Embedded within the school system, it offers a range of therapeutic interventions in a normal setting, reducing the possibility of stigma for the child and family.

Michael's story

Michael was referred to Place2Be in Year 7, struggling with his transition from primary to secondary school. His parents and teachers were concerned about him. Michael was often tearful and would run out of class and bang his head on walls, calling himself rubbish and useless. He talked about killing and harming himself and said he wanted to be dead. He was unable to concentrate on his classwork and had low scores in Maths and English.

Michael was offered one-to-one counselling for a year. He worked with his counsellor to manage his anxiety and distress, to develop and enhance his emotional resilience and manage his frustration. Though his parents and teacher were kept informed of his progress in these sessions, Michael knew that detail of what he said in the dedicated Place2Be room was confidential. His trusting relationship with his counsellor enabled him to accept the boundaries and contract and he felt safe to explore his fears and anxieties.

Gradually Michael's confidence grew, he was able to manage his fears, and learned how to keep calm and carry on. He described Place2Be as a place he could 'be himself' and his counselling time as 'awesome'. He no longer harmed himself, engaged with his classwork, and his scores for Maths and English significantly improved. Michael's teachers found him easier to manage. He felt able to make friends for the first time, and his confidence and school engagement grew.

- There is a designated Place2Be counselling room in each secondary school to enable children to explore their anxieties and problems through talking, art psychotherapy, groupwork and creative work. This promotes their emotional resilience and coping strategies and helps them to reach solutions to cope with stress and distress in their home or school life.
- Place2Be's focus is on early intervention since successful transition can address and find solutions to truancy and exclusion, low academic achievement and negative behaviour in school.

The range of interventions includes the universal 'Place2Talk', which is available to all Year 7 and Year 8 pupils in their lunchtime and breaktime. This lunchtime drop-in service provides opportunities for children to access brief solution-focused therapy for their problems. In each school this is offered for between 12 to 18 pupils, based on a service model from two to four days a week.

Place2Be seeks parental consent ahead of seeing a child for counselling, with the key aim of collaboration between the student, parent and teacher. The child's issues and problems are invariably found in the family context and in relationships with family and teachers. The Place2Be model is an example of a flexible systemic mental health service.

Secondary schools are busy environments and support services should offer pupils in transition consistency, time and clinical skill to ameliorate anxiety and disengagement from educational tasks. It is programme persistence, as well as programme intensity, which can make a difference for the most vulnerable and anxious pupils.

Reference

What Makes a Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School?
Evangelou, M et al,
Research Report DCSF-RR019 (2008)

Stephen Adams-Langley has practised as a psychotherapist and counsellor for 20 years, working with children, young people and adults. He has an MA in psychotherapy and counselling and is regional manager at Place2Be

Making decisions about transition

It's not only vulnerable pupils who can struggle at transition times: all pupils need help preparing for the decisions that accompany a change of school. In this article we hear how the 'Flying Start' project is helping Year 6 pupils in Manchester

Making the right choice of secondary school, and feeling confident about the decision, is a major concern for pupils in Year 6. In 2011 Manchester Airport arranged a project to help pupils prepare for transition and the decisions that accompany it. The host school was Manchester Enterprise Academy (MEA) and as their lead sponsor, Manchester Airport provided support throughout. The project ran successfully in 2011 and the partners were happy with the results. In 2012 they wanted to take the project even further.

'Each partner was keen to repeat the event, but wanted to make the day even more beneficial to all those taking part,' explains Helen McNabb, who works in community relations at Manchester Airport. "'Flying Start" was chosen as the title of the project, and the outline of the day was constructed by combining the aims and values of MEA with the key competencies of Manchester Airport and the *Emotional Lifelong Learning Inventory* (ELLI) from Bristol University.'

The team decided on five key themes for the day:

- Communication
- Leadership
- Relationships
- Curiosity
- Resilience.

'Flying Start' provides Manchester Enterprise Academy with a window to introduce itself to prospective students in five local primary schools. However, Helen is keen to stress its universal appeal: 'The programme was designed so that all of the children learn new skills and are better placed to face the challenges ahead of them – no matter what school choice they make.'

Developing social and emotional skills

The project lasts for one day and incorporates a morning visit to Manchester Airport and an afternoon session in the lecture theatre at MEA. The content of the day is very much about developing social and emotional skills whilst learning more about the airport and MEA. A key feature is the opportunity for students to reflect on their own ambitions and capabilities.

'Once we had decided on the themes, we then agreed on the objectives and the activities,' Helen explains. The pupils were all given a 'passport', which was the key working document for the day. During the afternoon a team challenge was held. 'Initially this was going to be physical. However,

The schedule

- Pupils receive a 'passport' and the aims of the day are explained.
- Adults and pupils introduce themselves by telling the group one thing that they like doing and something that is very important to them.
- Discussion about the way in which we take information into our brain through sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell.
- Opportunity to reflect on how we see the world differently using pictures and images which can be interpreted in various ways.
- Discussion about resilience and ways in which we can become more resilient.
- Guest speaker highlighting the importance of team work.
- Discussion about what makes a good team leader.
- Introducing the concept of self-talk.
- Identifying the ways in which we build relationships with each other.
- Using visualisation techniques.
- Introducing the importance of non-verbal communication.
- Introducing simple techniques to help you feel calm when making a presentation.
- Opportunity for reflection - what have I learnt?

The programme was designed so that all of the children learn new skills and are better placed to face the challenges ahead of them

More information

- Manchester Airport's educational website: www.thejourneyeducation.co.uk
- The Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI): <http://bit.ly/UowqRN>

Online extras

Visit the Optimus website for a downloadable copy of the Flying Start 'passport': <http://bit.ly/X29i9y>

we decided on an artistic challenge instead, and gave pupils a brief which included planning a piece of art on the subject of "a journey".

A key element of the project was the participation of volunteers from Manchester Airport, who support 'the teams' in their activities and challenges, and guest speakers who described their role.

Evaluating the day

A pilot addressed the students during the day and his talk was one of the features most appreciated, according to the evaluations. The children were asked to rate each session on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = poor, 10 = excellent) and the average overall rating of 9 is an indication of the success of the event. Comments from the children included:

- 'Amazing. After today I want to be an escape lounge person like Dawn.'
- 'Today was great because we learnt about the jobs that different people do.'
- 'Today has been brilliant because I learnt how to be resilient and how to do teamwork.'

'Flying Start' proved to be an excellent opportunity for pupils to take time out of their primary schools and begin to reflect on the changes to come. The style of delivery meant that they were already beginning to feel like Year 7 students whilst having the opportunity to discuss their experiences back in their Year 6 classrooms.

New draft guidance on school attendance

The draft document *Advice on School Attendance* (<http://bit.ly/SLBy1r>) is in the style of previous DfE guidance documents, bringing together existing legislation and government advice in a condensed form. There are three sections:

1. Pupil registers and attendance codes.
2. School day and year.
3. Statutory guidance on education-related parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices.

It reminds schools about the law in relation to keeping admission and attendance registers and what schools should do when a pupil goes missing or is to be home-educated. There are explanations of the different codes and when they should be used.

Prosecution, orders and contracts

The purpose and scope of parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices form a major part of the guidance. They are described as being 'available to promote better school attendance and behaviour'. They are also 'permissive', meaning that it is up to individual governing bodies and local authorities to decide if they want to use them or not.

Prosecution by local authorities – at the moment only LAs can prosecute parents. They can do this in order to ensure that parents comply with a school attendance order and make sure their child attends school regularly. Parents can be fined up to £2,500.

Education supervision orders – a local authority must consider applying for an

Education Supervision Order (ESO) before prosecuting parents. The LA is appointed by the court to supervise the child's education for a specified period of time.

Parenting contracts – a formal, written and signed agreement between parents and either the LA or the governing body of a school. They should include:

- a statement by the parents that they agree to comply with the terms of the contract
- a statement by the LA or governors that they will provide support to the parents.

They are voluntary, but non-compliance might be used as evidence in court if a behaviour parenting order is applied for.

Parenting order – these are imposed by a court and might be applied:

- following a prosecution by the LA for non-attendance
- where an exclusion has taken place
- where there has been serious misbehaviour.

They consist of:

- a requirement for parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions
- a requirement that parents comply with the specifications of the order.

The orders are supervised by a responsible office from the school or LA. Breaches of the parenting order can lead to a £1,000 fine.

Penalty notices – these are fines of £60 or £120 given to parents as an alternative to prosecution. They can be issued by a headteacher, the LA or the police where a pupil's absence has not been authorised.

This might include:

- where there have been a number of unauthorised absences
- holidays taken during term time without the school's permission
- where a child is found in a public place when they have been excluded.

There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice.

The professional view

Dr Raymond Arthur, reader in law at the School of Social Sciences and Law, Teesside University, has his concerns: 'Parenting contracts and orders are based on the assumption that parents of children who offend have not accepted their responsibility and that they can be made to do so by the imposition of court orders and financial penalties. They do not represent a serious attempt to tackle the root causes of youth offending but instead reflect successive governments' proclivity for talking tough on youth crime. Parenting orders and contracts oversimplify the complex linkage between parenting and young people's behaviour in a reductionist effort to blame parents for their children's wrongs. Such measures camouflage the state's unwillingness to maintain a social infrastructure that provides parents with the support, resources and services they need to care for their children.'

Wellbeing does matter, says report

The Impact of Pupil Behaviour and Wellbeing on Educational Outcomes (<http://bit.ly/V36Xwn>) is the report of a project examining longitudinal data and a review of relevant literature. Its findings include:

- Children with higher levels of emotional, behavioural, social and school wellbeing are more engaged in school.
- Pupils who are engaged in less troublesome behaviour make more progress and are more engaged in secondary school.
- As children move through school, emotional and behavioural

wellbeing become more important in explaining school engagement, while demographic and other characteristics become less important.

The overall conclusion from the researchers is that although wellbeing for children and adolescents is important throughout their primary and secondary school education, there are periods when one dimension is more important than another. The dimensions include:

- emotional (including fears, anxiety and mood)
- behavioural (including attention

problems, activity problems, troublesome behaviour and awkward behaviour)

- social (including victimisation)
- school (including enjoyment, stimulated by school).

Emotional wellbeing is a key factor in primary schools, whereas low levels of troublesome behaviour and more school engagement are particularly significant in secondary schools.

In the next issue of *BPU* we will hear from the researchers about the implications for schools.