

Redesigning Services – SEMH

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let's talk
Newcastle

Case for change around SEMH support

- Previous primary school offer for SEMH was through four additionally resourced provisions (**ARPs**) in primary schools
 - Originally intended as turnaround provision
 - Total cost: **£511,000** for **26 places**
 - Pupils never returned to mainstream. After Y6, they moved into specialist secondary provision
 - Primary schools reported increasing need, and wanted more specialist places
 - Secondary school suspensions, permanent exclusions and absence were increasing
 - After some persuasion, primary heads accepted that much of what they do to manage SEMH relies upon the **small size of primary schools** and is **not sufficiently specialised** to enable pupils to adapt to secondary school
- Need to invest in improving SEMH provision in mainstream primary schools to avoid spiralling numbers of pupils requiring costly specialist provision**

New service structure and operation

- Closed the four ARPs over time
- Eight specialist teachers, nine specialist support assistants (some TUPE from the ARPs). Started **Sept 2023**
- **£1.0M** overall service cost
- Sits in School Effectiveness, **not SEND**, as is about improving whole school offer
- Led by highly experienced **educational psychologist**
- Significant amount of service staff training before going into schools
- Divided into four **locality teams**. Know schools and locality services well. **Universal offer**. Go into schools regularly, sometimes just as a check-in
- Each locality team has supervising **educational psychologist**
- Strong links into other services through **Team Around the School**
- Aim is to support schools to help children **cope and adapt** effectively

One year on...impact and next steps

- Primary leaders initially sceptical and wanted more ARP places, but now **hugely positive about service**
- **2,400** school visits since October 2023. The team's practical classroom experience plus specialist expertise are **highly valued by schools and families**
- **300** individual pupils supported, plus **staff training** and **advice meetings**
- Available to **all schools**. First point of call, so a bit like paramedics, but with expert EP advice easily available.
- Far fewer calls and referrals to specialist SEND services
- Generally pick up cases where concerns are about high levels of activity, eg. biting
- Team deals with **presenting behaviours** rather than diagnosis – mostly to do with **anxiety** and **communication**. Not all 'SEMH'.
- Significant positive impact on individual pupils and on **wellbeing of school staff**
- Expanding into Y7 from September 2024, then into Y8.

Outer West Case Study

Context

The SEMH team were asked to work with a child in Year 1 in the autumn term. Our involvement was required to support a child who was regularly in trouble and was hurting others.

His presentation was challenging at school and included: hurting his peers, impulsivity, spitting and not following instructions. Staff felt that the child 'lashed out' randomly and that there often wasn't a trigger.

Staff reported that incidents were frequent (2-3 times per week). Outside of the child's classroom, the staff's views of the child were very negative, and the child's behaviour was often dealt with differently compared to their peers.

The child was on the SEN register, had good attendance and was at expected for age related expectations.

Staff had noticed that the child's peers were starting to avoid them due to unpredictability.

The child's parents were separated, and school reported that both parents had very different parenting styles. It had been noticed that Mum was avoiding talking to school staff and was very defensive when an incident occurred.

Our aim was to support the child to experience success at school, know how to make age /stage appropriate decisions and have good relationships. (competence, autonomy, relatedness)

We implemented:

- More opportunities to access whole class Zones of Regulation activities and conversations.
- Joint planning to incorporate teaching around identifying the feelings of self and others.
- An achievable reward system
- Structure into the child's lunchtime
- Strategies to rebuild the relationship between mum and school
- Daily mindfulness to support regulation
- Strategies to improve connections e.g. 2x10 approach and weak ties
- Support around introducing and using sensory equipment in class

Implementation

Impact

'X has been brilliant since we last met and there have been no more incidences, so everything seems to be working'.

How beneficial was the support to the child/teacher/class?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
									X

Reduction in behavioural incidents – staff have observed a significant reduction in impulsive behaviours which often resulted in others getting hurt.

Improved relationships– X's class teacher reported that staff across school have formed positive relationships with the child and the relationships in class have improved. Mum's relationship with school also started to improve.

'X' is still getting on really well and is enjoying breaks from the yard during lunch time. We continue to have everything in place for X and have not yet had any slip ups - all is good!

– **Class teacher**

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