

Implementing the SEND Reforms: Providing pupil/parent ownership of a simple mechanism for measuring pupil behaviour management process Forest View Primary, Cinderford, Gloucestershire

Background

Forest View Primary School joined Achievement for All with a view to a whole school cultural change by all staff and to create a positive 'can do' attitude. As part of this the school wanted to significantly improve parental engagement, improve attendance, increase staff expectations, secure QFT and achieve greater progress for all pupils including those identified with SEND, and close the gap for SEND pupils.

Context

Forest View is an average-sized primary serving the town of Cinderford in the Forest of Dean. Although the region around the town is one of great beauty, it is also one of the most deprived areas in the local authority. Most pupils are from a White British background with a small number from a wide range of other ethnic heritages.

The proportion of children eligible for free school meals at 45% is above the national average, as is the proportion identified with SEND and these include a range of moderate learning needs.

In September 2009, Forest View had 45% of pupils identified as SEND. With the support of Achievement for All and a new SLT that included an Inclusion Manager/SENCO, this percentage has reduced steadily each year and currently stands at 27%.

"It was really useful to do because it helped me to see his strengths as opposed to focusing on the negatives, which is easy to do when the behaviour is very challenging. He also realised we were trying to help him and he felt supported."

Class Teacher

The school frequently has children in care, and is experienced in successfully managing pupils with challenging behaviour.

Approach

The school was struggling with a disproportionate number of pupils with particularly challenging behaviour, requiring the school Behaviour Policy to be overhauled.

A whole school behaviour environment investigation took place with all staff teams contributing. The outcomes fed into a new, more robust, school Behaviour Policy with a clear hierarchical approach.

Regular staff behaviour management training was provided and the rewards and sanctions systems were reinvigorated. Pupils were made aware of new expectations via the SLT putting on an amusing play for the whole school. Parents were also made aware of the new policy. Individual Behaviour Plans were made more effective as they fed into and were

supported by the robust and consistently applied policy.

The school then took steps to measure the impact of the policy across the school and on an individual basis. The expectation was that there would be improved progress and attainment levels, represented by quantitative measurements but qualitative measures were also required to evidence improved behaviour of pupils.

A measurement system for teachers to evidence impact across the school was fairly straightforward to create. A qualitative measure system to evidence impact of improved individual behaviour management required more thought and led to the development of the Personal Social & Emotional Factors Affecting Learning (PSE) form was created (Appendix).

Teachers completed a PSE form at the point when a pupil displayed ongoing challenging behaviour. It served as a mechanism to identify clearly the key areas that needed priority targeting in the Individual Behaviour Plan. It also gave a baseline measurement of how the child was operating at that time.

Once the Plans had been in place for an identified period of time the pupil's PSE form was revisited by the teacher and scored appropriately. This provided evidence of the pupil's behaviour improvements over time and by how much. It also identified more finely remaining areas to target.

The form had been designed as a working record for teachers, however work with an able Year 6 pupil, who had started to underachieve and was displaying unexpected challenging behaviour.

The pupil scored himself against each of the PSE areas, this demonstrated he had some insight into his behaviour and was then compared to the teacher's scores.

The pupil was surprised and pleased that his teacher had given him better scores than he had himself in some areas, and that others agreed with his own perspective.

However he then realised that his teacher's perceptions of other areas of behaviour were different to his own. He was surprised and genuinely seemed to be unaware of how his behaviour was being perceived and how disruptive it was.

A discussion about how to move out of the 'red' areas resulted in the child announcing: 'I need to try harder to get into the green zone'.

This work was followed up with a Structured Conversation with the pupil's parent and during this meeting the pupil was able to explain to his parent where he needed to improve. The parent agreed to support this and weekly phone calls between the teacher and parent took place to discuss behaviour progress and target areas needing support.

An Individual Behaviour Plan was put in place to meet the child's needs together with a personalised reward system, which he responded to positively. At times when he was struggling or doing particularly well a 1:1 session was put in place to refer to the PSE form and discuss next steps.

Four months later the pupil and teacher redid the form and were delighted to see how both sides felt he had improved considerably.

Impact

Staff awareness was raised that some children are capable of reflection and having insight into their behaviour difficulties.

The child gained a better understanding of how their teacher perceives the impact of their behaviour difficulties.

The child's self esteem benefited from knowing that his teacher could identify strengths and could see in a visual form how behaviour and progress were improving. The child's improving self-esteem resulted in calmer behaviour and the ability to maintain better friendships, and this fed back into further improvements in self-esteem.

During the period of challenging behaviour this particular pupil's progress had flat lined. Following the appropriate support progress restarted and the child continued to make good progress achieving 3+ and 4+ APS progress, and the child achieved good SATs results.

Key Learning

The strategy was successful and has since been rolled out to other pupils. It also forms part of the assessment of pupils who are receiving Social Skills intervention.

This method proved to be a simple way to demonstrate progress with individual behaviour management involving pupils, parents and teachers.

Next Steps

- To incorporate this PSE measurement within Pupil Progress meetings with a focus on specific pupils.
- To use this as part of the transition process to ensure continuity.
- The PSE information/assessment can be linked to providing information for an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- [This can also be used to support any plans to reduce individual bullying issues.
- This good practice is being shared with other schools.

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