

**Teaching Schools Leicestershire**  
**East Midlands Challenge Project**  
**Tackling disadvantage and closing the achievement gap**

## **Case Study – Emotion Coaching**

### **Summary**

A project to support Children in Care with a focus on social and emotional needs and development. The project was part of a wider national project that involved Leicestershire's virtual school towards creating National Attachment Aware Schools.

### **Name of school**

**Kingsway Primary School**

### **Brief description of what the case study is about**

The project was about increasing awareness of the impact of social and emotional needs on academic achievement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and ensuring a whole school consistent approach to this issue.

### **Why did this work take place?**

- An increasing numbers of children in school identified with social and emotional needs that were impacting on their ability to learn and progress.
- At times, staff reacting to difficult behaviour using standard behaviour management techniques and yet aware that these strategies sometimes had a negative impact on outcomes for these pupils.
- From a child's point of view, an inconsistent approach to managing difficult situations depending on who was dealing with them and when they occurred.
- Some staff feeling stressed by difficult situations that could not be neatly or immediately resolved.

### **Description of the work undertaken**

- half-day, whole staff training session about emotion coaching
- regularly revisited the agenda of emotion coaching in staff meetings and briefings.
- Shared anecdotal information in less formal ways (staff room) to provide mutual support and encouragement.
- HT and DHT set up and ran small EC groups for pupils most vulnerable at play and lunch times. This made the Emotion Coaching approach viable and audible as the 'room' selected was in the middle of the open plan part of the school.
- identified a cohort of 10 vulnerable children including CIC
- staff complete pre-and post-evaluations, including a Strength and Difficulties questionnaires for each child, and DHT created an emotion coaching log.
- collected performance and behaviour data on a regular basis
- Information to be collated by Bath Spa University in July will be used to inform the next steps of the national project and to help inform our way forward in school.

## **Impact of this work**

Positive impact noted:

- Improved ability of staff to deal with difficult situations in a calm manner
- Improved ability to reflect on feelings for young people
- Improved support for staff
- Useful/ accessible training
- Framework for ALL to access
- Useful language for ALL to use
- A structured approach
- Applicable to a range of situations
- Not age dependent
- More focus on resolution/ resolving
- All staff have a consistent language to use.
- Pupils have begun to reflect the language back and have found a voice through which to express their own emotions
- The physical location of the group, in an open plan environment, enables all pupils and staff to see EC in action. Success is
- Behaviours related to anger, aggression and frustration are lessening enabling pupils to successfully 'exit' the group and re-join their peers.
- Nurture group led by HT and DHT to establish tone and to model the EC approach in action. For whole school.

## **Key learning points**

- High levels of leadership involvement
- Regular input both formal and informal
- Focused tracking of small group of pupils
- Link to wider developments/research projects to boost capacity and motivation

## **Next Steps**

- Ensure all school staff have refresher training on attachment and trauma and that all new staff are aware of our approach.
- Continually strive for best possible consistency with some important non-negotiables (no shouting, listening body language, eye contact etc...)
- Develop stronger links with feeder nursery's and secondary schools and share approach.
- Monitoring and Evaluation – widen the scope – include pupil voice and parent workshops.

## **Recommendations to other schools**

- Look out for relevant wider project work that will add value to your priorities
- Provide dedicated time and clear leadership endorsement and hands on support for the focus work