



Embedding the SEND Reforms ensuring that parents and pupils contribute their views and agree shared outcomes.

Castle Hill School, Huddersfield

Background

Castle Hill has been working with Achievement for All (Afa) to address the needs of the hardest to reach students who have complex needs in terms of communication challenges, behaviour, readiness to learn and engagement.

Context

Castle Hill is a Specialist College for Communication and Interaction for pupils aged between 3-19 years. It is judged to be Outstanding, and is a teaching school through the NCSL. The Head teacher, Gill Robinson, is the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Representative for the Teaching School Council and National Leader of Education.

All pupils attending the school have a statement of SEND or an EHC Plan. The greatest proportion has severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties, many with associated sensory impairments. A minority also have autism spectrum conditions and some have life-limiting health needs.

Approach

The school has formed an Afa

Strategic Team including the Head of School. The Deputy Head is the School Champion, supported by a second Deputy responsible for assessment and data recording and reporting. The School Champion is doing NPQH and the Afa work forms part of his home-school improvement project.

The Programme is an identified priority in the School Development Plan and this includes a named link Governor.

Key staff received training in Structured Conversations in March 2014, further enhanced by in-house training in conducting conversations with parents so that they would be able to inform Section A of the EHC Plans.

All teachers applied the Structured Conversation process, practices and skills to conduct the EHC Plan meetings to involve and empower parents/carers and capture their views effectively. Further support was provided by the school's Family Support and Liaison Officer and by Kirklees Information and Advice Service.

Key target children were identified following discussions with all associated professionals and the engagement of these students was analysed through an innovative process of engagement profiling.

The group chosen was those experiencing the most significant challenges in their engagement, communication and readiness to learn.

Baseline data for reading, writing, maths, behaviour and communication needs was gathered in the Spring Term 2014.

A parents' evening was set up to explain the Achievement for All programme and inform them of the plans for their children, in terms of class groupings, proposed changes in the environment and adapted approaches to learning.

The Afa Strategic Team ensured that careful preparatory work took place prior to the target students coming together to form the new class grouping.

An environment was designed, through collaborative discussions, to reduce visual and auditory

distractions - a white space intended to reduce sensory overload and have a calming effect on student behaviours.

Engagement profile programmes were implemented to ensure that student's individual approaches to learning were effectively identified - allowing class teachers and support staff to build planning and educational programmes around personalised learning.

An extensive process of timetable and staff deployment planning took place to ensure students could have a flexible and personalised learning journey.

Assessment processes were reviewed and revised - with Quest providing additional information.

A wide range of achievements are recorded and reported including: early reading, writing, maths, behaviour, attendance, engagement, self-confidence and self-esteem, life skills, and parent/carer engagement.

The Achievement for All students and staff began work in the new environment in July 2014.

Impact

APS scores in reading, writing and maths show good progress e.g. reading Autumn Term 2014 2.06 APS increased to 2.37 APS at the end of Spring Term 2015.

Violent incidents (biting, kicking, self-harming) have decreased on average by 71% across the group.

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Individual students have shown increases in engagement scores e.g. from 12 to 23.5

The Q Skills assessment tool shows that the students have made good or very good progress on all level descriptors.

"He is making really good progress, very settled and communicating much more at home."
Parent

Key Learnings

- The positive value of personalised learning and teaching approaches is vital for these students.
- Effective teaching of life skills underpins academic progress.
- Preparation and development of staff knowledge is key.

- The significance of qualitative assessment to evidence progress.
- The teaching and learning environment is highly significant.
- Teaching that closely follows the needs and interests of students and is student-led impacts positively on student progress.

Next Steps

- Continue to provide this specialised Afa provision.
- Consider presenting the outcomes locally, regionally and nationally through an Afa event.
- Aim to achieve Afa Quality Mark.



**To find out more about Achievement for All call to speak to one of our experienced staff on
01635 279 499
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