

East Renfrewshire
Educational Psychology
Service

Career Long Professional Development: Pupil Impact

Theme One: Learning and
Teaching

Activity Descriptor: CLPL Pupil
Impact: Person Centred Planning

Date: Wednesday 1st February
2017

Time: 10:30

Venue: IMS Atrium

VSE Briefing Paper

Theme One Key Question
What impact is our contribution to practitioner enquiry and professional learning with schools having on learning and teaching, particularly for our most vulnerable pupils?
Background
What information, knowledge and data do we have?
Building Capacity through Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL)
In order to support inclusive practice East Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service provides professional learning opportunities in relation to the support of pupils experiencing Dyslexia, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and needs related to nurture. In particular, the Educational Psychology Service facilitates regular practitioner forums in these three areas.
Dyslexia and ASD Advisors
An ‘advisor approach’ for supporting children with dyslexia in schools was reported as good practice in a Scottish research review by Reid, Deponio & Davidson Petch, (2005) and was adopted to support dyslexic learners in East Renfrewshire. Positive evaluations from staff led to the ‘advisor approach’ later being implemented for ASD.
Advisors are invited from schools and where appropriate early learning and childcare establishments to meet as a group at least twice per academic year. The EPS delivers training, often in partnership with highly specialised teaching practitioners, on a variety of relevant topics. Information sharing and peer support are core features of the advisor forum approach. Advisors are very involved in shaping the content and direction of the training they receive through ongoing evaluation and critical reflection. Advisors are also expected to fulfil a number of key functions in assessment, intervention, planning, support for colleagues, shaping of whole school practice and delivery of in school training.
Learning Centres Practitioners Training and Network (Nurture)
Learning Centre Practitioners in East Renfrewshire are responsible for leading Learning Centres in their school for small groups of children with additional support needs related to nurture. The EPS provides annual two day training to staff members who are to become Learning Centre Practitioners. Practitioners then attend termly meetings as a group coordinated and led by an educational psychologist. Training is provided by the educational psychology team on a variety of topics related to nurture and attachment. Opportunities are provided for sharing good practice and resources.
An increase in the number of schools using nurturing approaches is detailed as an expected outcome in the Local Authority Improvement Plan. A possible next step for Learning Centre Practitioner Network is to support practitioners to take on an ‘Advisor’ role in relation to whole school nurturing approaches.
Individual forum and network evaluations from ASD and Dyslexia Advisors and Learning Centre Training indicate staff training needs were met and impact on their practice (see Figure 1 for information gathered from most recent meetings). However, data is lacking to evaluate the ‘advisor’ approach overall and on the impact of these forums on learning and teaching (from the perspective

of wider staff and pupils).

Figure 1

	Percentage of participants who rated training as meeting their development needs (i.e. rated 6 or above on 1-7 likert scale where 1 is low; 7 is high)
ASD Advisor's Forum	6 – 17%; 7 – 83%
Dyslexia Advisor's Forum	6 – 47%; 7 – 32%

Figure 2

	Percentage of participants who rated training as increasing their knowledge of nurture and attachment (rated 6 or above on 1-7 likert scale where 1 is low; 7 is high)
Learning Centre Practitioner Training	6 -60% 7 – 40%

Activity Outline, Rationale and Outcomes

What are we doing?

A sample of children and young people who experience ASD, Dyslexia or attend a Learning Centre from schools across the authority will work in groups at three task stations. Tasks are designed to elicit their views on the support they have received. The stations are Snakes and Ladders where children are asked to share positive and negative experiences; Giant Jenga where children will answer specific questions about their support and My Ideal School Poster where pupils will be encouraged to reflect on what the ideal support for their needs might look like. Children will work at each activity in groups of four for around 20 minutes. An adult will be present to make notes. The purpose of the task stations is to stimulate and clarify children's thinking about the support they have received through supported discussion with peers with similar needs. Children will then be supported to collectively complete an adapted Scoping and Scanning Cycle from Transforming Learning (Education Scotland, 2016). The completed cycle should summarise the information generated at the three previous stations and highlight transformational change actions (see figure 3). Adult participants will then use these for reflection following the activity.

Figure 3



Why have we chosen this activity?

Educational Psychologists contribute to CLPL with the ultimate aim of impacting positively on the wellbeing and attainment of vulnerable pupils. Pupils have a right to voice their views regarding their education (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; Standards in Scotland's Schools. Act, 2000). Therefore whilst aware of the challenges in gathering the views of children with additional support needs (Lewis, 2004; Nind, 2008) the EPS is committed to involving children in a meaningful way in their self-evaluation.

Children who experience ASD, Dyslexia or attend a Learning Centre have been invited to share their views on the support they receive. The aim is not to evaluate the children's experience of direct work with educational psychologists (although children may discuss this if they wish). Rather, the aim is to gather the children's views to allow for deeper insight regarding the impact of the educational psychologist contribution to CLPL for teachers in the areas of ASD, Dyslexia and Learning Centres.

What is the evidence base for this type of activity?

Focus groups are highlighted as being particularly suitable in gathering information from pupils. They create a safe peer environment and reflect the small group setting that children are used to experiencing within the classroom (Mauthner, 1997). However, issues around the validity of data gathered remain. Information gathered from children is often filtered by adult interpretation, an issue which is particularly salient when gathering the views of children with additional support needs (Williams and Hanke, 2007). Norwich (2006) notes the importance of finding alternative and adapted methods [of data collection] for some children with SEN. Lewis (2004) highlights that question and answer formats may be more constraining than narratives or use of statements. Whereas Lewis, Newton and Vials (2008) assert that individuals with emotional, learning or communication difficulties may require highly structured support in giving their views. Considering the literature, a multi-modal approach has been designed to try to maximise the quality and accuracy of the information which will be elicited. Pupils will participate in games and activities which will allow for both free discussion and provide prompts in the forms of direct questions and statements.

What key questions do we intend to answer in this activity?

The Scoping and Scanning Cycle was adapted for use with children and young people to provide a framework for the information gathered. The activity sought to answer the following key questions which are based on the Scoping and Scanning Cycle.

- 1) *Are there things that we/teachers need to stop doing or that don't work?*
- 2a) *What are the priorities regarding your support?*
- b) What aspects of the support you receive are going very well?*
- 3) *What would be helpful regarding your support that isn't already in place?*
- 4) *Why aren't these things in place (barriers)?*
- 5) *What would be the solution?*
- 6) *What should be different in the future?*

Key points for adult facilitators to note:

- The purpose of games and tasks is to generate discussion, completion of the game etc. is not particularly important if sufficient information is being gathered.
- Pupils should be encouraged to reflect on what others say rather than solely answering questions they have chosen.
- Please encourage children to expand their answers, clarify, reframe and challenge their responses where appropriate considering their ability and support needs.
- Prompts and specified questions are to guide and stimulate discussion only. Discussion should be allowed to develop naturally where it is relevant to the purpose of this activity.

Activity Facilitators

Name	Role
Andrew Nelson	Social Worker, East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership
Christine McGovern	Educational Psychologist, East Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service

Participants	
Name	Role
Ainsley McGoldrick	Educational Psychologist, East Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service
Annie McGauley	Depute Head Teacher, Carlibar Primary School
Pamela McCully	Community Worker, Young Person's Services

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Thank you for participating.