

Improving Attendance - Beath High School

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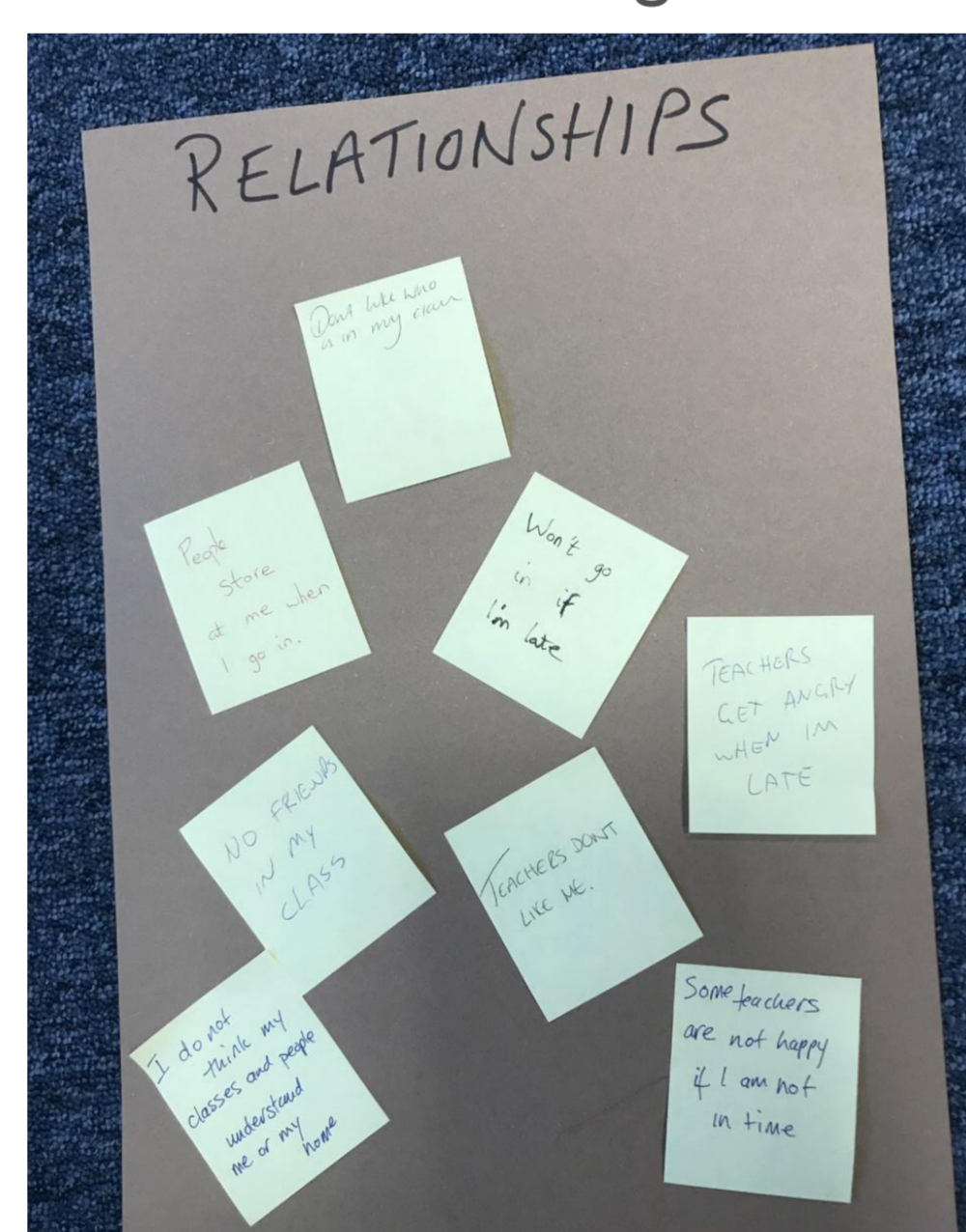
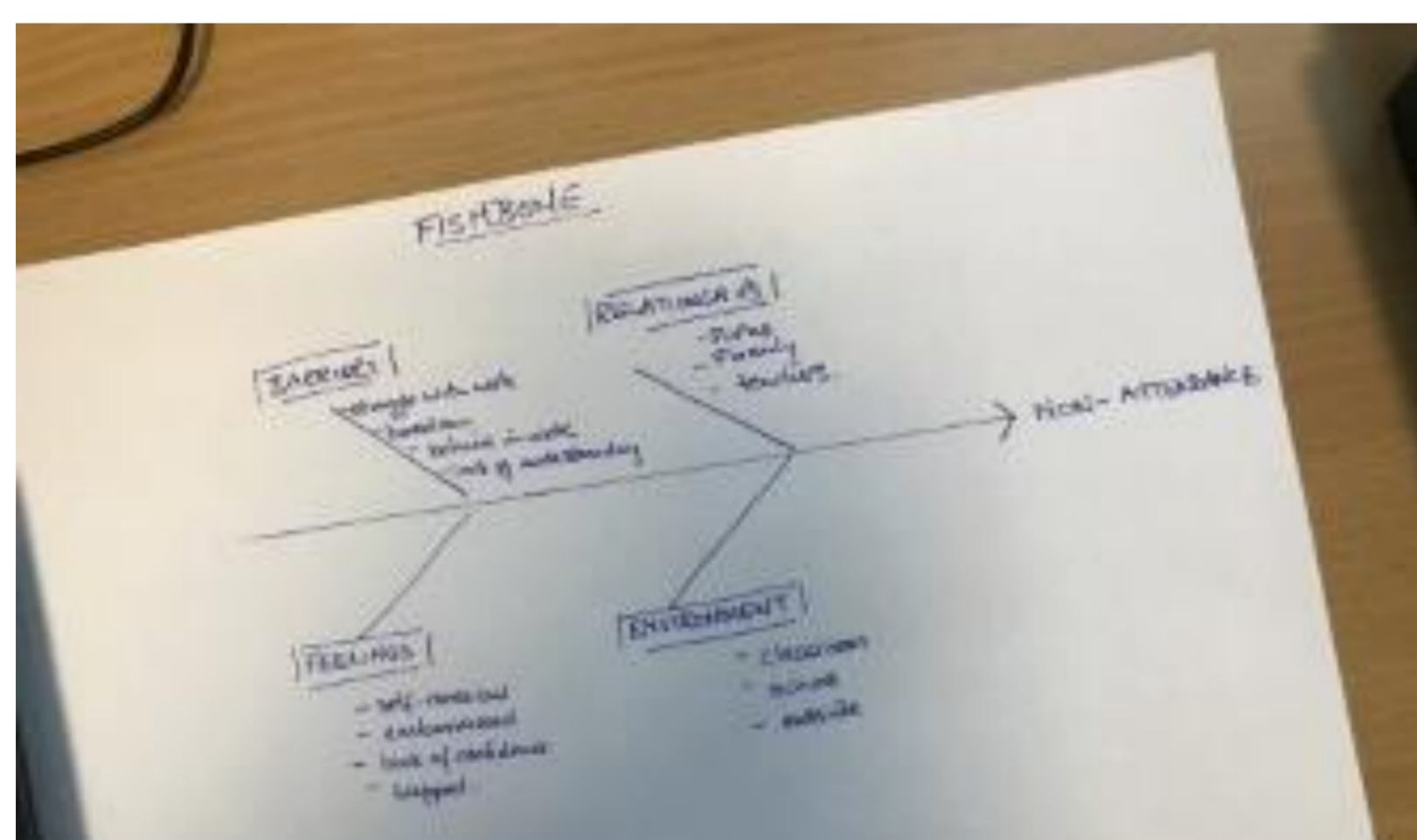


School attendance is an important factor in young people reaching their academic potential. Attendance is at the forefront of strategic and schools improvement efforts. We know that disruptions to Education and family life caused by COVID-19 will have complicated further our efforts to improve school attendance and for some of our young people exacerbated barriers to learning.

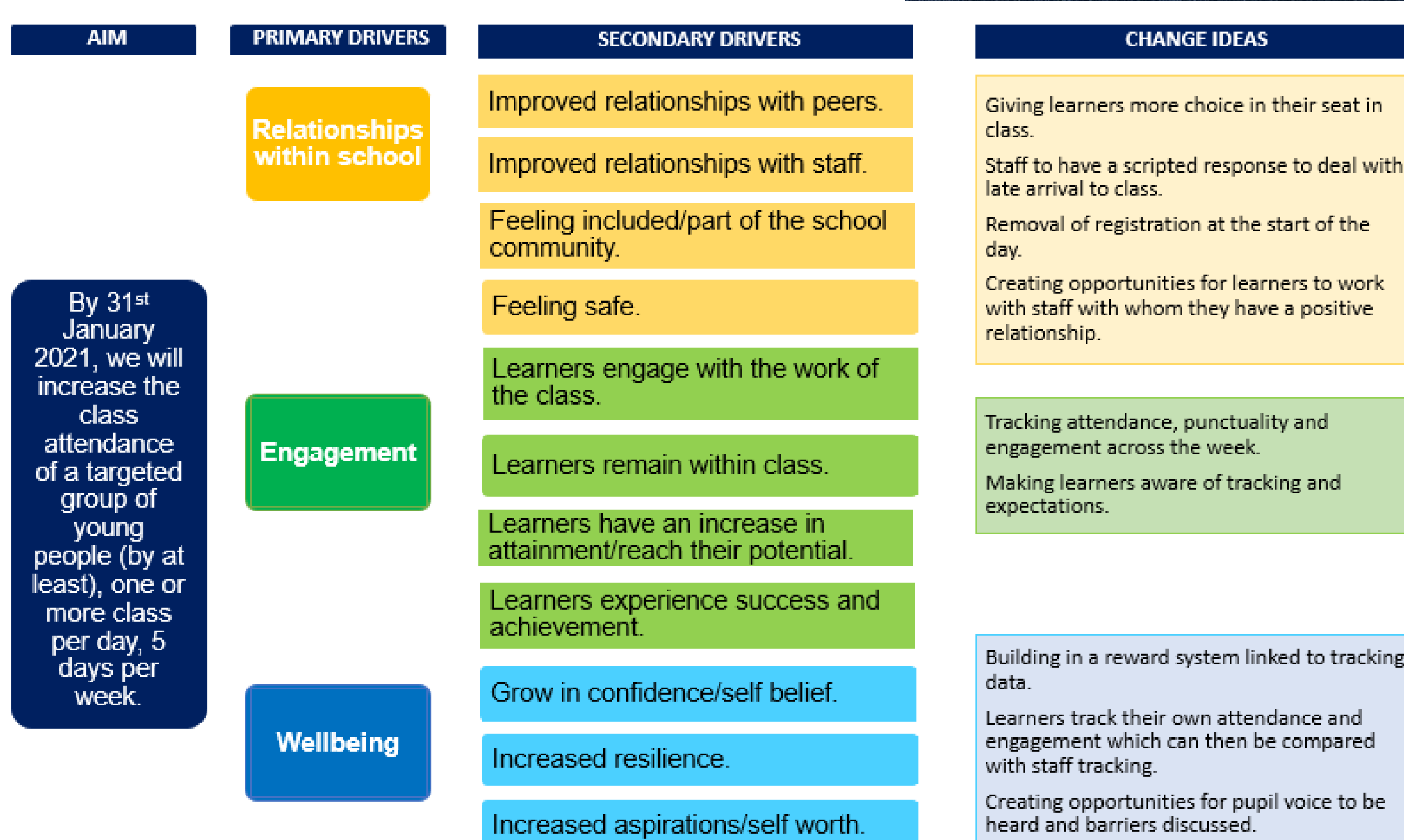
Aim: By 31st January 2021, we will increase the class attendance of a targeted group of young people (by at least), one or more class per day, 5 days per week.

Method

- Established an Improvement Team to focus on improving attendance.
- Attended SEIC Intensive Quality Improvement Programme (IQIP2) to develop our understanding of Quality Improvement Methodology and received coaching support to apply this methodology to improve pupil attendance.
- Developed an explicit Improvement Aim and developed a driver diagram (theory of change) to support our thinking and project planning.
- Identified small cohort of pupils (6) to focus improvement efforts on.
- Collected baseline data for targeted individuals over two weeks. Noting if pupil was late, left class, walked out (for every period).
- Collecting baseline data supported us to understand what was normal for this cohort and highlighted barriers to attendance/engagement and flagged flashpoints that were exacerbating problems.
- Speaking with the identified cohort also gave us valuable insight.



Process Change



Change Ideas Tested

- Involving Young People in the process - Sharing Improvement aims and intentions to monitor and track their attendance.
- A script for staff to use and have a consistent approach to pupil's lateness to class.

A Script for latecomers

Following discussion with one of our frequent latecomers, the following script was co-created. It was launched a fortnight before Christmas.

Conclusion

- Unfortunately there was not sufficient time prior to lockdown to gather any meaningful data.
- A number young people had to self isolate and some parents/carers opted to keep their child off school prior to Christmas.
- Our plans to gather more data after Christmas were stopped due to #lockdown 2.

South East Improvement Collaborative Project

Script for 1-5 minutes late:
 Hi, are you alright? Let's get ourselves in and settled.
 Actions – Go over to the learner when they are settled and work has begun, to catch up with them and have a chat as to why they were late.

Script for 5-10 minutes late:
 Lovely to see you. If you come in and get settled, I'll catch up with you after I've finished starting everyone off and help you catch up.
 Actions – Go over to the learner and make sure they understand what the lesson is about. Have a chat as to what had happened to make them late to class.

Script for 10-15 minutes late:
 Hiya! Great to see you today. I hope you're ok. Let's get ourselves in and settled. We can have a chat when you're ready and I will help you catch up with what we are doing today.
 Actions – Go over to the learner once they have settled. Help them start the work that is set and understand what they are to be doing. During the conversation, have a chat to make sure the learner is ok and ascertain why they were late to class.

Many thanks for your support with trialling this!
 #teamBeath SEIC IQIP

Key Learning Points

- Sharing our improvement aims and intent to monitor individuals class attendance sent a clear message to young people involved that their attendance was a cause for concern and a priority.
- During the initial phase of the project we became aware that one of the target YP would rather not attend class opposed to being confronted by the class teacher for being late.
- This barrier to attendance highlighted that staff's management of lateness was inconsistent across the school. Change ideas to mitigate against YP opting to truant from the fear of confrontation for being late, initiated the development and testing of a script.
- Staff reported improvements in individuals attendance and young people felt happier following these conversations, but we do not yet have sufficient data to support this change idea.

Next steps

TO BE CONTINUED... Due to lockdown measures announced on 4th January and the subsequent closure of schools (with the exception of provision for vulnerable YP those whose parents are key workers) this improvement work has been temporarily hibernated.

Following young peoples return to school in August we intend to pick up where we left off with the targeted pupils and continue to test and learn what change ideas deliver impact.

We will continue to test and measure the effectiveness of the introduction of the script to manage pupil lateness.