



Autism Champions Report

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide School Forum with an overview of the impact of the funding provided through the Supporting Vulnerable Pupils Projects. Each champion has created a case study detailing the impact of the project/training.

Barton Hill Academy

D is a 5 year old boy who has found being in school tricky since nursery. He has had difficulties with sharing, joining in with adult led groups and keeping himself and others safe. Throughout nursery he wore a winter woolly hat each day and refused to remove it.

During reception he continued to struggle and found the free play and unstructured nature of the class set up difficult to manage. He repeatedly hurt children and interrupted all learning with continuous shouting out, screaming and throwing things. At this point D was still not in school full time. We tried several strategies: visual timetable with structured activities, sand timers to help him understand when his turn was starting and ending and support with a 1:1 to help with interacting with his peers safely. After the first term D was still struggling and we made the decision to place him into our pastoral provision with reduced access to his mainstream class. The room was now quieter and smaller.

Once in the provision we were able to set up a learning space that was D's. We set up a routine with the same adults and provided some free choice time for when he had completed his learning. He still presented with the same behaviours with regards to frustrations and outbursts. His ability to engage with learning and make progress was improved and he moved from level 6 to 13 with his reading. He was able to work at his own pace for his maths (which is above age expected).

In the pastoral provision we have a calm room that we encourage the children to use when becoming dysregulated. This is a safe space with a range of toys and calming ideas that help the children to regulate their emotions. We have some 5 point scales that we are now using as a point of reference to talk through the children's levels of anxiety or anger. D is now showing signs of using this room independently and will tell the adults that he is going to the calm room to calm down. He does not stay long and will bring himself out. We also use some restorative justice questions to talk through some situations. D sometimes prefers to talk through his Pikachu toy and we use this to talk about how he is feeling without directly saying it is D feeling 'nervous'. D is continuing to develop his emotional literacy with Thrive sessions and through the use of comic strip conversations.

D has a now, next and then with visual widget symbols. He uses this really well and we have also incorporated the ? symbol to allow for the unknown. Dylan is independent in taking these off as he completes them and transitioning on to the next activity with little fuss.

The main area of concern is the physical assaults and spitting. D does not respond well to the word 'no' and so we do not use this and direct him with 'we need to do this... then we can do this' or directing him to his timetable and showing him where we may be able to do what he is asking. He spits in response to not getting his way. We have written him a social story and are trying to use this daily to reduce this behaviour.

Eden Park

As part of my autism champion role, I have implemented one page profiles across the school. I gave the staff an example that I had done to guide them, then encouraged them to complete them with the children in their class so that pupil voice was evident. This extended beyond children with autism to children with other additional needs. These were shared with MDAs who said that they found it really useful and would be able to use the knowledge to help to support the children over lunchtimes. The senior leadership team were also given copies so that if children were sent to them for any reason, they had information that would help them. They are also displayed in the staff room so that everyone can access them.

Kings Ash Academy Cohort 2

Context- JS had a difficult time transitioning into reception. He displayed negative physical behaviours to both adults and children and would sometimes refuse to come into the classroom from the reception area. JS would run to any exit to try and leave. He could not tolerate change with adults and in a class with a teacher share this was very difficult for him.

Transitioning into Year 1- I wanted to start the transition process for JS early as it was a time he was going to find difficult. A social story was made and read to him daily. He also visited the classroom daily for the last term to familiarise himself. During the school holidays JS was invited to summer school where I (His previous teacher) and his new teacher worked with him to ensure language used was the same. The last day of summer school he helped to move his calm area from the reception classroom to the year 1 classroom.

Impact- JS is calm at present because he was aware and involved in every step of transition to the new classroom. Everything used with him (Makaton signs, visual timetable, social story, calm area) moved with him to his new classroom. Although this was a big change for him I feel having these have helped him to transition smoothly.

Oldway Primary

Stay and Play sessions are now held every week for our pupils with autism and their parents. This session has also been moved to an after school session to allow more flexibility and accessibility for pupils and their parents. Pupils have been invited to share their 'special interest' with the group which has developed communication skills and increased confidence, in a familiar, calm environment.

"In the Stay and Play sessions, the children can be themselves with all their little quirks in a relaxed atmosphere. They can socialise in their own way and us adults have an opportunity to talk 'autism' or not, with other parents who know what our lives are like at different stages of autism. Having an

autistic child is very isolating – having two is even more so! It's nice to be with others who understand" (Stay and Play Parent)

"My child loves attending the Stay and Play sessions mainly to have fun and be himself. He feels so relaxed with the group and looks forward to attending every week now" (Stay and Play Parent)

Following Lego Therapy training, sessions are now conducted throughout the school and are also held at our weekly Stay and Play sessions with pupils and their parents. Staff members have requested further training and now there are six members of staff who have received enhanced training through the Autism-friendly Schools Project. These staff members are now conducting Lego Therapy sessions with pupils with autism. Lego Therapy has succeeded in effectively developing social/communication skills with pupils in our school. One particular Year 3 child who attended sessions found it extremely difficult to take turns and was very controlling during paired or group work in class. He was able to develop the ability to take turns and allow others to take the lead during these sessions.

"I love Lego Therapy because I get to play Lego with T and we love Lego. We get to talk about what we are making and we help each other if we get stuck. We have to take turns to be the builder and the supplier but I like being the builder best!" (Year 3 Pupil)

During National Autism Awareness week, I led a whole school assembly for all pupils and teaching assistants. Autism was explained to pupils at an appropriate level. One of our pupils with autism stood up in front of the whole school and shared their experience of autism. He explained how his autism affected his learning, and his behaviour, and suggested ways that his friends could help him. This particular child had previously been unable to attend whole school assemblies due to heightened anxiety and sensory overload, so this was a huge achievement!

"I really liked finding out about autism in assembly today because it taught me that we might look the same but are different and we might look different and be the same. I liked listening to L talk about his autism and find out ways we can help people in our school that have autism." (Year 3 pupil)

At the end of Autism Awareness week, I organised a fundraising event to raise awareness and funds for the National Autistic Society, along with pupils and parents from our Stay and Play sessions. Information on autism was shared with parents and pupils and the event raised £242!

Autism training

As part of my role of Autism Champion, I have led autism training for all teaching staff during a school staff meeting, led training for all support staff during a non-pupil day and delivered training to Newly Qualified Teachers in Torbay. This valuable training has raised awareness of autism and will enhance their knowledge and understanding, as well as providing support and resources when supporting pupils with autism. The sessions also included Lego Therapy training.

"Very engaging session. Well presented with lots of ideas for strategies and resources to use back at school. Lots of interaction too which was enjoyable" (NQT)

"Really good training which could be applied to other pupils with other specific learning and behaviour needs. I really liked having a go at writing social stories and learning how to phrase new experiences in appropriate language" (Teacher at Oldway Primary)

‘Excellent content – very informative. Provided plenty of strategies for different children. Saw definite benefits of Lego Therapy’ (NQT)

“Great understanding of what autism is and strategies you can apply in the classroom. Good to have time to discuss case studies of children in our own class currently and how to resolve issues or check that what we are doing is correct or a good strategy” (NQT)

‘An excellent insight into Autism. The course provided lots of valuable information for both people with experience of Autism and for those with little knowledge. I have already put extra opportunities in place for the Autistic pupils I currently work with from the extra knowledge I gained from attending this course.’ (TA)

St Marychurch

IMPACT CASE STUDY

CONTEXT - *how she presented, her strengths and needs*

M, a year 5 pupil was struggling to cope at lunchtimes. Once she had finished eating, she was unsure of how to join others play. This often caused her or others to be in trouble outside. School had tried a small group lunchtime, lunchtime club and staying in the classroom but nothing had been successful.

ACTION - *how the school has responded to her needs*

I discussed the situation for M with the Inclusion Manager and the Class Teacher and we agreed the following actions:

- M would have regular check-ins with me over the course of the day to reduce anxiety.
- She would come to my classroom from 12:55-1:25 daily to help the Reception children.
- Adults working with M would make her a badge to wear that shows she is a classroom helper.

IMPACT - *how she presents now, her strengths and needs*

- M enjoys helping the younger children.
- M is calmer over the course of the day as she has less anxiety about lunchtime.
- M gets into much less trouble at lunchtimes.

Sherwell Valley

I have been running a coffee morning once a half term for our parents of children with Autism. The main aim of the morning was to create a calm, friendly atmosphere where our parents could chat to each other about their own experiences, ask questions of each other and to generally seek reassurance. Another aim was through inviting all of our parents, we would have a mix of ages and experiences. This was especially important as we have two children with new diagnoses in Nursery who were very concerned about how their child would move through school and what their future might be. Our SENDCO joined us on occasions and this was great as she was not only able to get to know our parents better, but they were also able to address any concerns they had with her. Initially

I was worried that an hour would be too long, but actually it wasn't enough! The parents responded so well to them and there was a lot of laughter as they shared stories and experiences. The feedback I have had has been so positive with comments like 'I don't feel so alone', 'someone else is going through similar' and 'my child is not the only one!' I have also had really encouraging feedback from the teachers of the children, as parents have talked about the coffee mornings in such a positive light. I am carrying on with them this year and have the first one in the beginning of October. I have really enjoyed doing them and feel they have made a good impact for our school.

Follow up transition meetings

In the previous case study I talked about one of our child PG in Year 5 and his parents' concerns about moving to secondary school. I initially met with them and our SENDCO and shared some resources with them. We have then had subsequent meetings, where the parents have followed advice and visited a range of schools at different times to get a feel for them. They have also had meetings with the schools' SENCOs and now feel more informed about the schools available.

I feel in general that our roles as Autism champions have had big impacts in our schools and I have loved being a part of it. From working closely with my SENDCO, to being a point of call for teachers and a source of reassurance for parents, it has been such a worthwhile career development and I am looking forward to continuing on into the future. It has even set me on the path of looking at the SENDCO training; hopefully with my head teacher's backing!

Torre Academy Cohort 2

SH is a child in key stage one who is currently going through the process of gaining an EHCP. He moved from another school into a year one class and is currently in year two. SH came to the school without an assessment and was observed by John Parkes and was subsequently given the diagnosis of ASD. The Occupational Health Therapist from John Parkes observed SH in his setting and met with myself and the class teacher on various occasions leading up to this. There were various strategies that the OT from John Parkes suggested and within my role as ASD Champion, I ensured that the class teacher and 1:1 learning support assistant were supported in implementing these strategies in the classroom. During the ECHP process; I was also involved in filling out the required form and met with the 1:1 support assistant to ensure this was filled out to meet the needs of SH appropriately.

SH's main barriers to his learning and school life are his social communication and his understanding of school structures and routines. SH also has difficulty in expressive communication and listening and understanding. In accordance with this, we have set up visual timetables, now and next boards and a social story for tasks in the classroom that are appropriate to him. With his 1:1 he also receives additional sensory (such as play foam, shaving foam, sand etc) activities during the lesson as a 10 minute on, 10 minute off strategy during the lesson. After becoming aware of the Lego-based therapy training session provided through the Autism-friendly Schools Project, I also arranged for SH's 1:1 to receive Lego therapy training in the summer term which Sue has begun to introduce, however we feel it may be more appropriate to use Duplo in this way as he finds it difficult to manipulate the Lego pieces. SH's expressive communication is an area which we will continue to assist SH in developing and ensuring he develops his understanding of social situations.

Watcombe Primary School

EP received a diagnosis of ASC in June 2016. He had struggled through KS1 and lower KS2 and often presented challenging behaviour. His confirmed diagnosis has enabled the staff supporting him to help him in the most appropriate way. After my training as Autism Champion I have been able to support them in this process.

I have made a profile sheet which all staff have seen and have access to; this was put together with discussions with EP, the staff that support him and his parents. It highlights his likes and dislikes and how to support him. This has enabled us all to have a better understanding of E and as a result the staff are better equipped to support him which has resulted in fewer problems at break times which has impacted on his ability to be ready to learn. The team that work with E are able to pick up on his anxiety before it escalates, and are aware of the quickest ways to help him settle again.

As part of my ASC role I have also, with the support of the SENDCO, completed a request for statutory assessment for EP. This was accepted and the final assessments are currently taking place. This has further developed a positive relationship with his parents who I met again to help complete some of the paperwork and it will also support him in this transition to KS3 in September 2018.

Year 5	Reading	Writing	Maths
Autumn 2016	Year 6 within	Y4 secure	Y4 secure
Spring 2017	Year 6 within	Y5 beginning	Y5 beginning
Summer 2017	Year 6 within	Y5 within +	Y5 within +

E's data from last year shows that he has made good progress across the curriculum and the support put in place has helped him to access learning. He is beginning Y6 in a fantastic position, ready to build on his strengths and develop the areas he needs to improve.

White Rock

This data will be based on only the children with a diagnosis.

- Pupil 1 (male) – EYFS
- Pupil 2 (male) – EYFS
- Pupil 3 (male) – KS2
- Pupil 4 (female) – KS2
- Pupil 5 (male) – KS2
- Pupil 6 (male) – KS2
- Pupil 7 (male) – KS2
- Pupil 8 (female) – KS2
- Pupil 9 (male) – KS2

Attendance analysis			
Name	Academic Year 15/16	Academic Year 16/17	Academic Year 17/18 <i>First week back</i>
Pupil 1			100%
Pupil 2			100%
Pupil 3	92%	95.3% (2.1% authorised absence)	83.3% (16.7% Authorised absence)

Pupil 4	98%	96.1% (3.9% authorised absence)	100%
Pupil 5	89%	95.5% (1.3% authorised absence)	100%
Pupil 6	97%	96.6% (3.4% authorised absence)	100%
Pupil 7	95%	93.9% (6.1% authorised absence)	100%
Pupil 8	97%	97.6% (2.4% authorised absence)	100%
Pupil 9	97%	98.7% (0.8% authorised absence)	50% (50% authorised absence)

Progress analysis – This will show whether the children have made: less than expected progress; the expected progress or more than the expected progress.

Name	Reading	Writing	Maths
Pupil 1			
Pupil 2			
Pupil 3	Expected	Expected	Less than expected
Pupil 4	Less than expected	More than expected	More than expected
Pupil 5	Expected	Expected	Less than expected
Pupil 6	Expected	Expected	Expected
Pupil 7	Expected	Expected	Less than expected
Pupil 8	Expected	Expected	Expected
Pupil 9	Expected	Less than expected	Expected

Impact and plans for 2017/2018

During my time (2 years) as an Autism Champion within White Rock Primary school I have worked alongside the school's SENDCo and Communication and Interaction Lead. I have helped other members of staff write EP Implementation plans for children that I have previously taught with ASC as well as supported Teachers in writing weekly IEPs for children with a diagnosis of ASC. The school staff are all aware of my role within the school as are the parents of ASC children.

I hope to continue to support the children in the school through working with their class teachers to focus on any gaps there may be in their academic progress and by writing plans and interventions for these children in order to ensure they make at least expected progress.

The school is very inclusive. The way the classrooms are set up is consistent across the school and there is a multisensory approach (visual time tables, labelled resources, organised learning spaces) which allows all children to learn effectively within the classroom environment. The environments will be looked at during Learning Walks during Team meetings. The expectation of visual time tables will differ throughout the year groups – whether that is a widget based time table or a written word style time table. If a child is in the upper years and they cannot access a written word time table a personalised visual time table or now and next board is provided.

In previous years I was part of a team that planned and delivered Lego Therapy Based training to Teachers, Learning Support Assistants and EPs that work within the Torbay area. We received excellent feedback from this training and we were able to enthuse and excite other professionals to start this same intervention in their schools.

For the past year I have lead an LSA meeting for adults that work with children that have ASC. These meetings allow time for the adults to discuss any issues that may have arisen during the week and any strategies that they may have tried and been successful in. This has been a really successful meeting that we will continue to run this year.

When I first started my role as an Autism Champion at White Rock Primary School I organised a trainer from the NAS to come and deliver training based on girls with Autism as this was a particular need of the school during this time. This was very beneficial as we were able to access this training as a whole staff so consistency could be guaranteed across the school.

Brixham College

This year has been about raising the profile of Autism within Brixham College. With our other Autism Champion; Simon Shrubbs, I ran a week of Assemblies for Autism Awareness week to bring Autism to the attention of the students in our cohort. This was followed up with some support material delivered by tutors to help get students thinking about being Autism Friendly.

I also delivered a small session of staff training on “Five top tips to become Autism Friendly” to remind teachers what Autism is and how some of the issues that cause Anxiety in School can be removed. This has since been shared with another Champion for her to share the session with her school. Simon and I also held a transition session with 6th form teachers to highlight the issues that are current and future 6th formers on the autistic spectrum face.

I have continues to work with LS from last year on supporting his lesson, we now have a TA working with him in one to one study sessions to support his Physics and a Maths Specialist TA mentoring him for his GCSE further Maths cause ready to reintroduce him into A-Level next year. I am also in contact with the local LA to try and change the way his transport to and from Churston for his Computer Science lesson is funded and organised. We occasionally have issues with taxis not showing up due to a change in the company serving the contract, or half term week interrupting the rotation of the time table, this causes great anxiety for L and could be an issue for LH who has just graduated from the Autistic Provision to Sixth form and is also commuting to and from Churston. We are trying to set up an “in house” transport system for students on the Autistic Spectrum who travel to and from other educational establishments which will allow us to reduce anxiety due to consistency in the way they travel.

For the transition to 6th form I have also been working on bespoke timetables for L and Lu due to the travel time and the difference in timings for both schools. Working with Bruce Nisbett (Autism Champion) from Churston I have also tried to make provisions for a smooth transition into computer science lessons at Churston for Lu and continue to iron out any issues for L. I am also in the process of trying to set up a Silent Study area for 6th form students on the Autistic Spectrum so they can reduce hypersensitivity whilst in private study session. This currently causes issues for L who will often stay home for these sessions as he cannot work if there is any noise. Our aim is to get him attending full timetable by the end of the year which he currently cannot do due to the noise in the sixth form study area.

The big project and vision this year is to try and make our sixth form Autism Friendly. This involves working with the Head of 6th Form and assistant principal involved in 6th form teaching and learning, as well as 6th form teachers to provide support and strategies for their lessons. The aim is to provide a 6th form suitable for students to attend after graduating the Provision in year 11 or for students with Autism and Autistic traits to attend from mainstream schools. I am working on transition and Autism

awareness as well as catering for individual anxieties by working with the students themselves and their families.

Brixham College Cohort 2

Impact of Champion Training

January 2017 On gaining increased awareness of the enhanced sensory experience of young people on the spectrum I decided to formalise a pattern of behaviour I had already endeavoured to improve outside the Enhanced provision at Brixham College. The ASC area is on a main corridor but there are alternative routes that students could use and areas to congregate during break times. The noise from the otherside of the provision entrance doors could be intrusive especially during wet breaks and lunch times. Additionally provision students would have to pass through a potentially intimidating group of students to gain access to the provision. Signs were placed in the corridors adjacent to the provision and through repeated reminders and encouragement main stream students were requested to leave clear the corridor pathway to the provision, so no congregating was permitted at all.

Though it took several weeks and battles as the year progressed the amount of time we spent clearing the corridors diminished and the atmosphere in the provision improved because we no longer had direct or indirect intrusions to deal with. Access also was available without having to pass through large boisterous crowds.

Impact: less stressful for students accessing ASC provision, more peace peaceful for students in ASC as no personal interruptions person or noise

18.2.17 After training and reference to Pupil Profiles I explored the schools SEN files and found that work had been undertaken the previous year to create individual profiles. This work was to all intents and purposes hidden from teaching assistants and teaching staff in the Autistic provision. I spent time making a precise of this information to give bulleted highlights. I informed staff where to find this information (not wanting it to be seen openly by students). In the example of JK Y8 who experiences high levels of anxiety, requiring support and reassurance in mainstream lessons I acted frequently as advocate with support staff (often variable personnel) who wanted to encourage him to attend class and wait for TA support. I advocated that he not leave the Provision until support arrived for him and this became the accepted norm or if challenged again by staff I reminded them it would not satisfy his particular needs. Impact: Staff have increased awareness of individual needs

Similarly with ST Y8 in conjunction with Personal profile information we became aware of absence on return to school days after holidays. Returning to mainstream classes was also an issue for several days of a new term / half term. In monitoring this pattern of behaviour we instigated a new term procedure in consultation with parents, pupil and staff.

ST would remain in the ASC enhanced provision on his return to school for the entire first day, then we would negotiate / agree with the pupil the lessons he would access on day 2, day 3 etc, slowly returning to full timetable.

Impact: Over the course of the year his attendance on first days back improved and his reintroduction to lessons was less anxious for him.

April 2017 Autism Awareness week

Tom Norman and I undertook mainstream school assemblies with each house (4) in turn during the first week in April. The assemblies included video material of young people with autism, we also illustrated how every individual might have autistic traits, we focused on the anxieties that may be found in young people on the spectrum and ways to positively support. The assemblies were supplemented by two tutorial sessions that I prepared using multi media resources.

Impact: Feedback from several tutor groups indicates that students understand more clearly why ASC students leave class early and arrive late, and why the corridors outside ASC are to be kept clear of mainstream students

May 2017

Building on information about sensory needs our teaching area undertook some decorating and physical changes. We took special care not to overload the teaching areas with too much information on walls, etc. keeping the classrooms information free. We organised information on a student noticeboard in the foyre between classrooms.

Impact: reduction in sensory overload and visual noise in classrooms, to facilitate improved learning environment.

June 2017

Some of the material above re Autism Awareness was used during a staff training carousel predominantly for teachers of potential 6th form students transitioning into the 6th form. I prepared personal profiles and a list of characteristics and concerns of LH, TB & TH who were applying to join the college 6th form.

Impact: To provide 6th form staff with details to improve transition into 6th form

July 2017

AET Progression Framework, I began investigating and experimenting with this to improve my skill level, I discussed its use with my line manager and began showing it to the HLTA in charge of the Provision. September 2017, we have identified 3 students WC Y8 and JD, NM Y10 who may benefit from being offered opportunities to develop themselves from the independent living section. I have spoken with a TA (PO) assigned to spend curriculum time with these students on Life Skills.

Impact: we have tentatively agreed to trial a topic based approach using the areas covered in this section of the AET progression Framework so that the above students will increase and improve their independent living skills

Churston Ferrers Grammar School

JH has a diagnosis of ASC which he received at the beginning of Y8. He joined us in Y7 with a loyal group of friends from primary school and seemed to cope exceptionally well with transition and exhibited few behaviours in class that would make him stand out apart from perhaps an over-literal interpretation of some instructions or phrases. This continued through Y8 until the summer term, when a couple of JH's friends moved school due to family relocations. This loss of peer support has hit JH badly, perhaps coinciding with hormonal and body changes moving into Y9. His lack of self-confidence has affected both motivation and class involvement. JH is in one of my Y9 classes this year and we have had a good start which bodes well for establishing a good working relationship.

JH struggles with boundaries and expected social behaviour, but responds well when given clear advice regarding expectations is given. Staff members have been made aware of this and also that

expectations need setting for each and every occurrence JH will not make the link between scenarios or locations.

Teacher education will be key to a successful Y9 and options process for JH. He will need environments where heightened anxiety can be calmed, constant and consistent boundary setting as well as work that allows him to be pushed from the rigid thinking that is often his first response.

I will be encouraging JH to attend some of the lunchtime sessions in my room where all manner of students come for a respite from the hustle and bustle of school lunchtime. It will also allow me to give mentoring support without that label. JH seems now more aware that he is different. I will be planning ways of allowing him to see the benefits of that difference and helping him devise strategies to cope with the situations that he currently finds difficult.

Paignton Community and Sports Academy Cohort 2

I am a Head of Year and have specialised in Pastoral care for 9 years. My current Year group are Year 8 and I have been mainly focussing on them, however we have done some whole school awareness training to help all students and their families. During Autism Awareness Week we ran sessions for all staff and students using the sensory overload lesson. We also had an Autism Awareness PowerPoint for every year group's assembly. We have introduced Lego Therapy club during two lunchtimes, this is being regularly attended by 6 students all who are either diagnosed or in the processes of ASC diagnosis.

LF. LF is a highly Autistic young man who finds it very difficult to cope with rules being broken. He often takes it upon himself to administer discipline to the rule breakers. This has resulted in many fights and arguments. LF has been issued with a timeout card and a leave 5 minute early card, these are different colours and laminated, a key ring has been used to hold them together, with a picture of LF in it. This has helped him to come to the office and talk about the rule being broken, who broke it and how he feels that it is unjust that they were not told off. This cooling off period has helped LF not become involved in altercations. The leave 5 minute early card means that LF is not caught up in crowded corridors with hundreds of other children pushing and shoving, it also means he can collect his bike early without the anxiety of interacting with others or witnessing others "mucking about", which tends to upset him. LF has also been attending Lego Therapy, this has worked well to open up new social groups but LF still finds it difficult to take on just one role in the build!

Parent view

Parent is happy that LF is now out of his nurture group and able to be in mainstream lessons in line with his academic ability. LF is enjoying school more as he is not so anxious about unstructured time and the journey home. There have been far fewer altercations with other students since the awareness week and the introduction of the cards. Parent wished that there was more one-to-one TA time available for LF so he could attend more of the extra-curricular clubs without the anxiety of new interactions.

St Cuthbert Mayne

Background

See previous case study on AW 250117 (below this case study). This case study is an update to reflect the development and impact over the last 7 months.

Observation and Intervention

Since January, I have continued to work with AW's teachers in offering advice and strategies to assist AW's learning in the classroom. The subjects that were still problematic were English, Science and PE (this emerged as behavioural logs were updated) with participation in group work, organisation of equipment, not doing homework and refusal to write in exercise book raised as common concerns

Prior to intervene in these areas, I met with the SENCO, the deputy head and AW's mother in February 2017. This resulted in very direct conversations and supportive strategies being agreed between all parties, including:

- Trialling a Chromebook for writing/typing in English initially
- Providing some alternative provision to PE lessons (where sensory issues and social anxieties were the barriers to participation)
- Establishing a time within school hours where Alfie could complete homework
- Involving AW in the Lego Therapy club (both Alfie and his mother thought that this would not work as Alfie didn't like Lego)
- Continuing to communicate with AW's teachers about strategies to use

Outcomes:

All of the above were put into place, with very strong outcomes indicating that AW is developing skills in several areas and this has also led to a perceived reduction in his anxiety:

- AW worked with me in identifying the best spots in school to use a Chromebook and Wifi. This was a collaborative effort. When the Chromebook, on occasions, did not work, AW thought more dynamically and less rigidly about potential solutions. AW started writing in his exercise book again as well as using a Chromebook. AW's progress grade has gone up significantly due to the legibility and presentation of his work (AW has more confidence in showing and sharing his work)
- AW is now working with the canteen staff during some PE lessons. This alternative provision allows him to work in a team with some physical activity. This arrangement has been formally acknowledged by the deputy head.
- AW can now work on homework in 'Chatterbox' club, with learning mentors present to help him. Behaviour logs reveal a reduction in homework-based negative behaviour points.
- AW actively engaged in the Lego Therapy sessions, working with a range of other students and getting adept at working in pairs. AW was always on time for his sessions, and was sometimes early. Attendance records indicate that AW's attendance had improved on days when Lego Club was running.
- I observed AW more in lessons and also worked with the SENCO in gaining his view and opinions (student voice). This led to a lot of clarity on what some of his perceived issues were. For example, his processing time often led to further sanctions in lessons. Teachers are now fully aware to give AW more time, and AW has a 5 minute time out / movement break card to use if he feels he needs to self-regulate his behaviour. This has proven effective from a behavioural perspective too

Overall, the thinking about AW's needs has changed significantly in the whole school. There is no longer discussion just about consequences and sanctions when perceived poor behaviour is presented, but rather an aim to find the underlying issues and work with AW to help resolve these. It

was good to see that other than myself and the SENCO, that others were also seeking more creative investigations. For example, the deputy head noticed that AW's behaviour log indicated negative incidents during period 2 lessons. Once he had established AW's food and drink intake and timescales, work was done with canteen staff and AW's mother to ensure that AW was eating and re-hydrating at certain intervals. This appeared to reduce the period 2 behavioural incidents.

Next steps

Now in year 9, AW has made a really positive start to the academic year. The following will be strategies that we anticipate using / developing:

- AW will continue to use the Chromebook in English- should this continue to work well, the Lead Practitioner (also me) will work with AW's other teachers with the view that AW can use the Chromebook in other lessons.
- AW will continue to work within Lego Club to develop social interaction skills and group work skills. This will also be informally observed in certain lessons to ensure skills are spotlighted to AW as being transferable in lesson situations too
- AW's mother will meet more regularly with the SENCO team and will have regular phone communication with the deputy head. Equally, we will do the same to continue to build this now positive relationship.
- Work will be done in Science this year to settle Alfie into routines quicker, and also ensure that his seating position is optimal for his learning. There should be a better and more consistent experience this year (last year was marred by several cover and supply teachers due to staff absence)
- The behaviour log for the last 6 months indicates that the main cause of negative behavioural points is the lack of equipment (eg, pen, PE kit). AW's executive functioning ability indicates that he simply forgets these items. Work will be done with staff to provide him with equipment to still allow him to work in lessons.

Compiled by:

Adam Shaikh

AW

250117

Background

AW is a year 8 boy who had perceived behavioural problems when he joined us at the start of year 7. Last summer, he received a formal diagnosis of autism. Over the first half term of this academic year, the SIMs behaviour log indicated key behavioural issues in the following:

- Not following instructions
- Fidgeting
- Disrupting others
- Refusing to work
- Arguing back
- Being rude to teachers in lessons
- English - refusal to write, resulting in several parkings

- D+T - being rude to the teacher, not following instructions and seeking distractions (particularly frustrating as in Art, with the same teacher, AW is quite pleasant).
- Science - not following instructions and writing very little in lessons.

Observation and intervention

Having reviewed the behaviour profile with the SENCO, I then observed lessons in late November where most of the incidents were taking place - Science, English and D+T. I looked at the teaching and learning atmosphere, routines and expectations and level/form of instruction. I then fed this back to the teachers and suggested strategies that could be used. Amongst others, here are the key ones:

- Slow pace down
- Keep to routine with the whole class
- Use visuals to support, especially printed sheets to reinforce whiteboard information
- Move to a seat with less visual stimuli
- Reduce verbal instructions and don't stack questions
- Wait for a response
- Praise processes and not outcomes (eg, making effort, social interactions, rather than the final grade)

Outcomes

AW has made positive progress since feedback to staff:

- Behavioural incidents have reduced (4 incidents in the last 4 weeks, rather than the 21 incidents in a 4 week period last November 2016)
- English: the teacher indicated that AW was more biddable and able to begin written tasks. Moving his seating position and using visual reinforcement to scaffold helped considerably.
- Science: more productive with knowing the sequence and order of work due to seating move and use of visuals.
- D+T: Teacher and student relationship improved when it was pointed out to AW that his Art teacher (whom he gets on with very well) was actually the same as his D+T teacher. In addition, the classroom environment was adapted to consider less stimulating 'office'-style spaces

Teachers have fed back through a survey to indicate positive impact of this approach by the Autism Champion at STCM.

Next steps:

- I will be observing AW in his literacy intervention session to see where we can develop opportunities for curriculum and learning around social interaction. To take place early February.
- Develop student voice to get more of AW's feedback on what is working for him
- Develop communication / forum with AW's parents to continue to work more holistically on routines, expectations and strategies

St Cuthbert Mayne Cohort 2

My application to be an autism champion arose as I supported a new student who had arrived at STCM in year 8. I had no experience dealing with autistic students and started reading how I could support parents and the student and sought advice from the current autism champion. AZ was mid-way through the process of diagnosis when he joined us and parents were anxious that the problems he had experienced in previous schools did not continue at STCM.

AZ suffers from anxiety and finds transition particularly difficult. He had been socially isolated in his previous school, had no friendships and low self-esteem.

I supported AZ in a phased start to school, which included daily contact with parents to deal with any problems and reduce anxiety quickly. AZ was issued a time-out card to be able to see me any time he felt anxious and we met every morning to go through the structure of the day and alleviate any worries. AZ also had a special interest and I arrange for him to spend some lunchtimes in my room and introduced him to a group of students with similar interests.

Through this initial period the chance to apply to be an autism champion came up and it has provided me with so much knowledge and the opportunity to seek advice from colleagues that I would not have had the opportunity to do so. From my own teaching point of view, in 20 years of teaching this role has really given me the chance to reflect on my own practise and the impact it has had on my and others has been more than any other role I have been involved in. AZ now has a diagnosis and I have worked closely with staff to provide them with strategies to help AZ reach his full potential. This role has allowed me to go into classes, observe AZ and feedback to individual staff. I have just supported AZ through the options process, transition to GCSES and his first round of exams using special arrangements. My input to staff has not only raised awareness of AZ's individual needs but reduced escalating behaviours through a greater depth of understanding on both my part and staffs.

Feedback from parents

“ Tracy, I just wanted to say a massive thank you for all you have done to support A in every way since he started at Cuthbert. He is really going to miss you and the fact that you have taken time to understand him and all the little things he does has meant so much to us all. As parents we have really valued the support you have given us and to see A happy and settled is something we always hoped for but were never really sure it was possible”

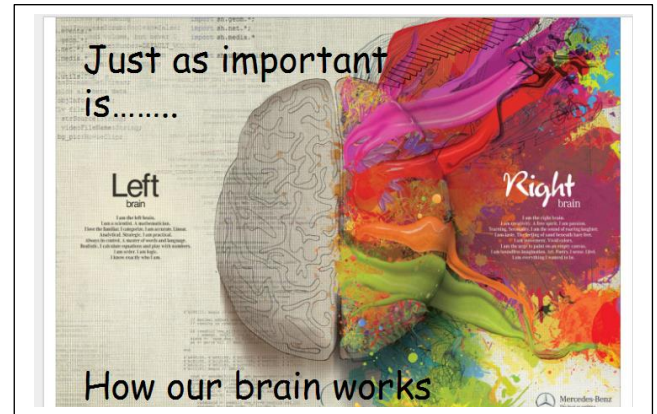
Developing a whole school Autism-friendly approach

After school we run a 2 hour teach meet which is an information sharing opportunity between staff. AS and I produced an 'Introduction to autism leaflet' and scenarios and simple strategies that staff could use immediately within their classroom. These sessions also gave staff the opportunity to ask us questions about individuals or the role in general, with further drop in sessions offered for staff to seek more in-depth advice/request in class support.

Drop in sessions are offered regularly to support staff who want to take contribute to making the school more autism friendly and develop a greater depth of understanding of individuals. My role

also included working with the SENCO to discuss introducing one-page student profiles which are accessible to all staff with key areas of information on each student.

During world autism awareness week AS and I delivered an assembly to each year group during Act of Worship on 'Neuro-diversity and difference'. We looked at differences between myself and Adam Shaikh and used the model brains and the soft brains to engage students and to get them thinking about how our brains work differently.

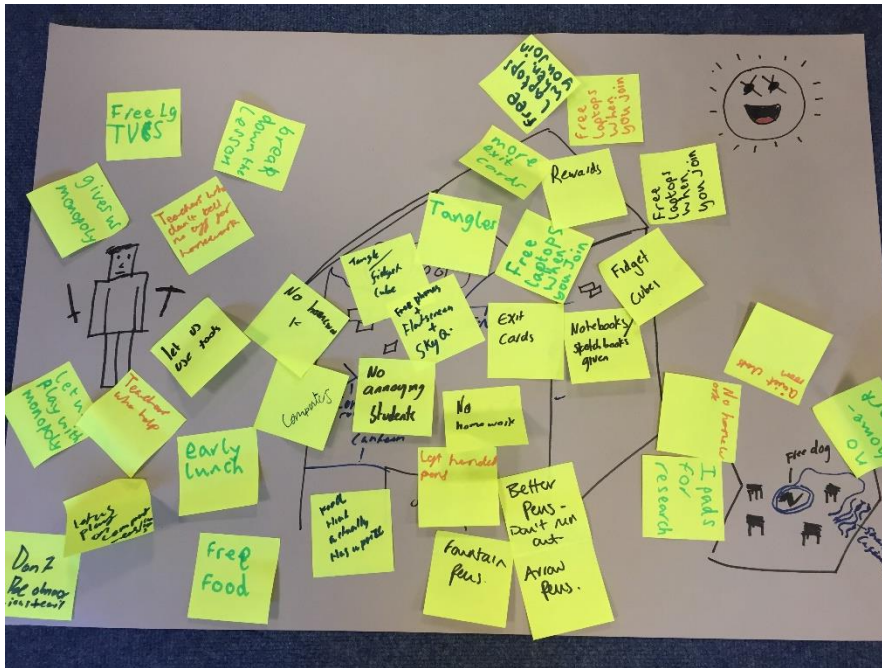


During this week we also did a 'daily drop' to staff giving them the latest research on autism, facts and figures and simple strategies. We placed a brain in the staffroom for staff to pin questions, thoughts and observations on.

[The Spires College](#)

In order to ensure that my role as Autism Champion was effective it was agreed with the SENDCO that I would focus my intervention on those students who have been diagnosed with Autism but who do not have an EHCP. The rationale behind this was that those students with an EHCP are already receiving a high level of support from the SEN department and it is those without an EHCP who do not have in lesson support and are often adept at 'hiding' the impact of their autism. Together we identified a group of year 7 and 8 boys. All of these boys were relatively newly diagnosed (within 1-3 years) and were not all comfortable talking freely about their autism. Once a fortnight the boys were taken out of a lesson and given a lesson focussed on social skills, group work and an honest discussion of the benefits and downsides to having autism. These sessions would run alongside the Calm and Quiet club (a library club for autistic and vulnerable students designed to be both a safe space and opportunity for interaction) and lunchtime sessions where the students could come and watch a programme and chat which also provided a safe space for them to relax and control the sensory input. These lunchtime sessions usually revolved around watching Doctor Who and provided an opportunity for the students to discuss any issues that were worrying them. One student (JB) who had recently developed friendships with some quite boisterous boys in his year seemed to particularly value the opportunity for a quiet space where he could be himself.

The fortnightly sessions were designed to develop the boys' interactions and to develop an understanding about how their autism affects them in school. We began by looking at their ideas for a perfect school.



The students focussed on ideas which would enable them to access school more easily such as access to laptops, use of tangles and exit cards. This was a good opportunity to discuss which of these strategies were appropriate and would genuinely help them and which weren't practical e.g. if they all had exit cards, where would they go?

The students also discussed how they felt about other students in their lessons and it became clear that group work was an issue. We used Lego therapy in each session ensuring that they had to rely on one another to build the models. This enabled them to 'practise' group work in a safe setting and meant that they felt more confident in their other lessons. We also looked at issues of self-esteem and how autism could affect this using activities from 'Asperger's syndrome: An owner's manual' which helped them to develop strategies to help them cope with any anxieties they were facing at home. For most of the students this was the first time they could honestly discuss the realities of living with autism and as a result they acted as a support network for one another. As the students grew in confidence we began planning how we could take the group forward. These students will now help to run the Autism film club and will be making videos for use in assemblies and staff training.

Torquay Academy

As part of my role as Autism Champion at Torquay Academy, I have set up Lego Therapy. This intervention started in the Spring Term and included a range of students, not just those who were diagnosed with Autism. One of the students I invited was struggling a lot with their communication and has a diagnosis of Autism. For the purpose of this case study I will refer to him as MF.

This student was then in year 9 and had displayed signs of Gender Dysphoria since year 7. He had never felt that he fit in that well and unfortunately many students picked on him because he stood out as being different. His Gender Dysphoria began in small ways to start: for example he grew his hair longer and then began to wear bits of make-up. MF looked visibly outcast from the school community and did not look happy about this.

Early last academic year there was a turning point and he began referring to himself as a female name. Unfortunately, his dad was not supportive of this but the school decided to honour the decision and she is now treated as a female student. I had a conversation with staff about the change and staff were happy to accept this change. Perhaps surprisingly, students were also (mostly) willing to accept MF's altered identity. However, I felt it was important to remind all students that we must accept each other for who we are. Therefore, I ran an assembly on autism and acceptance in general. I did not explicitly refer to MF or mention students who have Gender Dysphoria, as I felt

this would make it too obvious and may make it uncomfortable. Students were generally happy to discuss acceptance openly and the school environment became more inclusive as students were far more aware of their choices and treatment of others.

As mentioned earlier, MF was also invited to Lego Therapy twice a week to build on her communication skills as, although seeming outwardly happier, she was still on the edge of her peers. Lego helped her to make some new friends and it was also rewarding to see her new identity being cemented and accepted amongst some of her peers. Although MF does not obviously present as a female, students were happy to follow by the teacher's example and refer to MF as 'her' and 'she' and use her new name.

I appreciate that this case study is very anecdotal and I certainly don't take credit for the shift in MF's attitude. However, I genuinely can't express enough how happier she now seems and I think that is down to a shift in school attitude and the fact that she is accepted and communicated with on a regular basis.

Torquay Girls Grammar

As a champion I have become the point of contact for parents, staff, students, prospective parents and the SEND department for information and queries relating to any ASD issues.

The leadership team have asked me to meet with prospective parents and pupils at opening evenings and events to discuss with them how we could meet their daughter's needs.

The SEND team have included me in their meetings and we have updated the policy for processes such as the referral for SEND assessment to include a meeting with me if there is a possibility of ASD tendencies.

With a particular girl in year 9 (now going into year 10) I met with her in the capacity of Head of Year to look at how we could support her due to very low attainment. Although I do not teach this student (IP), I had already had contact with her Mother who reported a 'meltdown' at home one evening when IP had accidentally broken her 'phone and an ensuing rage when she could not be reasoned with. I then wondered from our interaction at our meeting if she may have difficulties with communication, social interaction, anxiety etc. I canvassed opinion from her subject teachers, carried out lesson observations and looked at her history in the school. IP was not able to give me her own opinions of anything and became very withdrawn if asked to comment on her feelings towards anything.

I had a follow up meeting when IP's mother came in to discuss her academic attainment at a Head of Year mentoring session. At this meeting Mrs P told me that she has long since had concerns that this student may be on the Autism Spectrum. I suggested that she may like to speak with her GP, which they did, and the GP said that any referral would need to come from the school.

Within school IP presented as being uncommunicative, unresponsive when asked a direct question, refusing to do homework as she believes work should be done at school and also that she will only spend time on tasks which she enjoys. The Maths department in particular were becoming frustrated because IP was not making progress, would not complete homework and would not attend the lunchtime support clinic as she was asked to. She was being given several detentions.

I made a support plan which removed detentions. I discovered that IP was unwilling to attend the lunchtime support group because it was held in a classroom which was not her usual teaching room and had unfamiliar people including sixth formers in it. She would often hover in the corridor waiting to see if it was the right place, and not feeling able to go in. We have since put a clear sign in the window stating 'Maths Clinic is held here at 1pm on Mondays, please come in' so now she is clear about where and when to go, and she has been attending. There are many activities which she can do online so she is more motivated to complete those.

I have liaised with IP's teachers and explained that she may lose concentration if there are too many other stimuli in the room, and helped them to reconsider seating arrangements. This seems to have helped in many areas.

I updated IP's Student Support Plan and circulated it to staff, with a comment from her mother to explain how it will support Isabelle to follow the suggested techniques in class.

I set out a suggested timetable for IP to follow at home so that she has a clear homework time set aside, then the remainder of the evening is her own time. Her sister is at home at the same time and encourages her to stick to this.

I contacted Devon Integrated Children's Services (Virgincare) and obtained the forms necessary for making a referral to the Autism Assessment Team and over the summer I have communicated with her mother, the SEND department and coordinated all the notes we have to make a portfolio of evidence, complete the questionnaires and have now sent off the referral.

I continue to be in regular contact with her mother, and alongside the SEND team we are working with staff to support IP as best we can. I meet with her frequently and she is happy with the referral being pursued. IP told me that she watched *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* and that it rang true for her with her own experiences.

Our aim is to improve the experiences of this student in school, to support her the best way we can and to equip her with skills which will enable her to manage independently in the wider world.

Combe Pafford Cohort 2

Combe Pafford is an SEN school set up for children with moderate learning difficulties (MLD). I am a teacher within the Autism Unit and I currently teach 7 children aged 8-11 who have autism alongside learning difficulties.

JE is an 8 year old boy who has PDA and suffers from Pseudological Hallucinations. He has been in a PMLD school before being home schooled last year after refusing education. He has now spent a year at Combe Pafford and has come on leaps and bounds. This short case study highlights the transition and intervention that was put in place for JE so that he was able to come back into education.

JE began afternoon visits to our class in the Summer Term before his September start date. He attended these afternoons with his mum who would assist and observe. He was very anxious on these afternoons and would often hit out or run away from the classroom. He would speak explicitly about death and self-harm. JE was already registered with CAMHS for this need. He would not interact much with the other children as he found them 'odd'. JE was to return to us in September on a part time timetable of mornings only. JE could not read, write or count with any meaning at this point.

Through research, advice and help from an Occupational Therapist, JE was set up with his own workstation and personalised 1:1 timetable. His workstation consisted of his TEACCH station, a short visual timetable, a visual reward system (same as the rest of the class) and some sensory toys. JE's timetable consisted of short 1:1 lessons where he would get 'reward' time at the end. Weekly interventions that were put in place were: 2x whole class Talkabout (social communication), 2x 1:1 sensory integration, 1x 2:1 sensory integration, yoga, fine motor skills and Autism Movement Therapy.

JE immediately became immersed within his new setting and routine. We stuck very rigidly to his routine for the first term. In January JE began 5 mornings and 2 afternoons and by February half term he was eager to stay for 5 full days. This didn't come without difficulty and of course in any school staffing becomes an issue at this point. Routine, research and preparation allowed for JE to become part of the whole class and we were able to drop some of his 1:1 learning support time.

In the summer term I was able to introduce Lego Therapy into our whole school to support social communication. This targeted 50 high-need children and whole school within small class groups. JE struggled with this new intervention to begin but over time made great progress within his small group. His next steps for this academic year are to use his new found skills elsewhere in the school.

Preparation and communication between myself and the team around JE was key for the integration of this boy back into school life. From beginning in September he did not run away once and was able to find his safe workstation when a problem occurred. He can now read and write to a Year 1/2 standard and counting over 100 and back. The main thing is that he *wants* to learn and feels extremely comfortable within our autism friendly school setting. Without further help from our Autism Champion training and discussion with the other champions I may not have been able to cater for this boy as well as I have. I have definitely learned new knowledge and techniques to use within our Unit.

Mayfield

In my role as autism champion I was asked to work with pupils in Key Stage 2 who were assessed as being in the lower quartile for English or Maths. After identifying the 8 pupils, I spoke to the class teachers, who were all keen to have intervention for their children. I referred to the pupils' ILPs so that I could identify what the teacher was working on and link this to the area of learning they were struggling with.

The pupils assessed were either non-verbal or had limited communication. Lego therapy is not usually used for pupils who have not achieved 3 way communication, however, I wanted to trial it and set about simplifying the rules.

Working with Sheridan, an intervention T.A, we initially played with the pupils on a one to one to see whether they had joint attention, photo recognition, could match picture to object. Once this had been assessed, Sheridan spent a few weeks modelling how to build; using two hands, pressing down, picking up a piece at a time, for example. Once this had been established we set about making simple Duplo models (Lego was too fiddly) for the pupils to build. We took photographs of each stage, of each brick.

This worked well, however, we realised that the photographs were not always clear as they did not show each piece or model in 3D. We also realised that most pupils need a choice between two pieces as a tray containing all the pieces was too confusing.

Once Sheridan had established that each child could understand the expectation she worked on building 3 way communication between herself, the pupil and the Duplo.

Sheridan and myself get together weekly to discuss and review. We agreed that the Duplo buildings we had made for the pupils to build were not stimulating. I put in a bid for some Duplo sets and received 5 sets of colourful creations ranging from a dipper truck to a train and a house. We also decided that the props and names given for the pupils in normal Lego therapy would become a distraction for these pupils due to their levels of engagement so these were not included in our sessions.

Sheridan worked with 2 pupils at a time for 20 minute slots.

I videoed her working with two 10yr old boys together, R.M and C.B

The boys were really motivated by the new Duplo sets. The cards which came with them showed clearly what the model should look like. Sheridan sat between both pupils, verbally prompting each child. R.M built and C.B passed the block that was needed (with physical and verbal prompting)

This worked really well. Expectation was clear and we already saw deeper engagement from the pupils. Once the model had been built the pupils took turns to play with it.

Regardless of the curriculum area of need highlighted for each pupil, it was clear that communication was what we needed to work on. We have adapted and are still adapting how best to work with the pupils. We write up, video and photograph each session to assess progress and plan next steps.

The first term was about establishing relationships, engagement, expectation and communication. Due to the academic levels of the pupils involved, we expect small steps of progress; however, the project is a really exciting venture for ourselves and the pupils.

Leonie (SaLT) visited to discuss how we were planning each session, in the early stages. She will return in the autumn to watch an established session. We are also visiting Bidwell Brook in September to watch a session in progress there.

I am sharing the Lego Therapy workshop information with our staff on a training day in September as well as how we have implemented it at Mayfield.

Medical Tuition Service

1. I previously wrote about a student whom received a late diagnosis in year 9 (TF). This student continued to have escalating presentation throughout his year 9 studies which resulted in increased levels of anxiety. This with the onset of puberty has made home and school life very difficult. A new baby arrived in the family in the last year and although adored by the student, in his comments in school this was not so much seen by the family. TF experienced anxiety to a level that he missed much of school in the spring/summer term. This was greatly down to his anxiety making sleep a very limited thing for him.

Mum has shown increasing concern for TF and not only his studies but also his personal life experience. She was very worried over the time he was missing. TF continued to place copious amounts of pressure on himself to achieve everything the staff expected of him and

would often spend all his recreational time within school trying to complete the work he had been set in lessons.

Through talking with the parents and the experienced gained via the autism training I could make suggestions which could be implemented within the school day to help alleviate some of the anxiety experience by TF. We learned that one way in which his anxiety could be reduced was through vestibular stimulatory activities such as spinning and calling and running. We established that 15 minutes before the lunchtime break TF would be allowed to enter a seclude space within the garden and spin and run and make noise to reduce his anxiety. This worked for a while and TF had a greater attendance.

Unfortunately, TF has had a summer holiday in which his anxiety has again increased. His mum is currently working with us to find a solution in which he can maintain schooling. Due to the training, I have been able to offer a ten-minute switch off period in which TF is able to change over between lessons (something that has come out as an incredibly challenging task for him). I have also been able to train staff on using a chevron method in which they can make lesson tasks explicit and work towards making sure TF is able to complete all tasks within the lesson and therefor find is easier to make the switch.

I have spent time visiting the student and walking with them, talking to maintain the relationships and trust and we hope for reengagement through a very specific personalised programme, adhered to by all staff. TF's parents have found it very difficult getting the paediatrician to see TF and are going that with some medical intervention his sleeping patterns may improve and help with his education.

This case is ongoing, however due to the training I feel able to openly make suggestions on how we may be able to make things easier at school and speak with parents about how we can support at home.

2. Again, the case I speak about here is a continuation of the case I spoke about in my first review. This is regarding a student whom only received a diagnosis in year 9. This student has just completed his year 11 and GCSE's. I must admit this is a student whom will always be in my thoughts and have impacted on me and my teaching due to the specific presentations and bonds he made with us while he was there.

This student made all his needs known through humour and stories that he made up about obscure topics. His key in way the Chinese mafia/rare medical conditions or his own martial art antics (something that always made him laugh and relax). Whether he thought this was funny because we didn't understand he was joking or whether it was because he found it funny that we were trying to talk about something unreal didn't matter, it kept him engaged.

This student really struggled through the final year and again had much absence. I worked incredibly closely with his parents to ensure he had access to work from home and that he had the time he needed to gain access to lessons. We also made sure that throughout his exams he was supported. The student required a reader for all exams this was allowed in and extra time. We ensured for all his exams he had one of two teachers whom completely understood his specific requirements and who he felt comfortable with. Due to his

processing time delay many teachers found it difficult not to be silent and wait, something we picked up in doing mock exams with him. I was one of these teachers and after reading an English exam question too him, I too found it difficult to sit and wait the twenty minutes before he started writing, however having spent time with the student before preparing and knowing that if I interrupted and asked if he wanted me to read again, would cause his whole thinking process to have to start over, I found this much easier. This compounded the training for autism undertaken and gave me experience that was supported by knowledge gained.

The student's results were;

Subject	KS2 based prediction	Teacher assessed prediction	Actual
English Language	3	2	3
English Literature	3	2	2
Maths	3	2	2
Physics	D	E	E
Biology	D	E	F
History	D	E	G
Art	D	F	D

As seen ragged against the initial predictions from the teaching staff DD achieved higher in two subjects, on target in three and below in two. Although against KS2 data this is different we feel due to the difficulties faced by the student he did amazingly and this has given him the experience needed to move onto post 16 studies at SDC.

I have since results day spoken with the student's mum who was as happy as we were with his results (he did not fail anything), and the student is starting a course in the nurturing environment of a small group at SDC. She has requested that I compile a report for the tutors at the college, explaining how we found working with DD and what worked well. I have of course said that I will make sure this happens.

Without the information gained through the training I don't know whether I would have the confidence to relate the experiences with this child to his autism and provide evidence for future professionals on ways to structure work for him.