The National Programme for Specialist Leaders of Behaviour and Attendance

innovative, effective, practical

Staff support in BESD settings

department for
children, schools and families

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Contents

Aims

Through study of this topic you will:

- Raise awareness of current research, knowledge and practice in peer support

- Become aware of a range of models of peer support systems for staff

- Understand the theoretical underpinnings and principals of peer support for staff

- Understand the issues in developing effective peer support systems for staff

- Take a lead in developing peer support for staff within your own setting

- Explore ways of monitoring the impact of peer support systems on the health and well-being of staff

The aims for this session are on slide 2

Aspects of leadership

The study of this topic will help you reflect on how you:

- Encourage colleagues to develop shared values, principles and beliefs

- Communicate effectively in a way that values the opinions of others and strives for mutual understanding

- Develop solution focused and resourceful approaches

- Support the development of staff skills that promote positive behaviour and attendance

- Promote peer support systems and/or provide peer support for individual staff members

- Use your knowledge and understanding to support others through the system of peer support in your setting

You will want to share this information with the group.

Learning outcomes

The study of this topic will help you achieve the following learning outcomes:

At level 3

Unit 3.1

3.1.1   List key concepts relating to current approaches to behaviour and attendance

3.1.2   Describe the vision and values inherent in a person-centred approach to whole-school or setting management and improvement

3.1.3   Describe the personal values and beliefs, how they could affect a person-centred approach to behaviour and attendance

3.1.4   Describe the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance

Unit 3.2

3.2.3   Explain how they can contribute to the development and implementation of induction and development programmes for staff, new staff and volunteers in relation to behaviour and attendance

3.2.4   Describe how the role of team leader can contribute to the content and support the implementation of strategic plans and policies relating to behaviour and attendance

Unit 3.3

3.3.1   Describe how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

3.3.2   Explain the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

3.3.5   Explain the importance of specialist team leaders of behaviour and attendance in contributing to the development and promotion of policies and practice which address reduction of violence within schools and other settings

Unit 3.5

3.5.2   State systems and practices in an educational setting to help to identify issues relating to behaviour and attendance

3.5.3   Describe how they would promote a whole-school or setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved

3.5.4   Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

Unit 3.6

3.6.5   Describe the influence that those involved with transfer and transition can have in supporting children and young people to cope with and build on those periods in their lives

Unit 3.7

3.7.1   List key conceptual frameworks relating to behaviour and attendance and describe their potential impact

Unit 3.8

3.8.1   List the national policies that indicate documented good practice for behaviour and attendance

3.8.2   Describe the current policies and practices on behaviour and attendance in your setting or one you are familiar with and identify how they relate to recognised good practice

3.8.3   Explain the role of the specialist team leader in behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice

3.8.4   Describe strategic approaches and interventions which might address the causes of poor behaviour and attendance

3.8.5   Describe the role of team leader in enhancing the understanding of their team in the use of approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

Unit 3.9

3.9.6   Describe how they could support other members of the team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

Unit 3.10

3.10.5 Work with other team members to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

You will want to share this information with the group

Learning outcomes

The study of this topic will help you achieve the following learning outcomes:

At level 4

Unit 4.1

4.1.1   Analyse key concepts relating to current approaches to behaviour and attendance

4.1.2   Explain how the vision and values inherent in a person-centred approach to whole-school or setting management and improvement

4.1.3   Analyse the impact of personal values and beliefs, how they could affect a person centred approach and consider how personal values and beliefs could be influenced to be more person centred and inclusive

4.1.4   Evaluate and explain the ethos and values of own environment, including the wider community, and consider what needs to be done in order to implement a more person-centred, inclusive approach to behaviour and attendance

Unit 4.2

4.2.5   Devise and know how to support induction and development programmes for staff, new staff, governors, parents and carers in relation to behaviour and attendance

4.2.6   Analyse the role of a leader in influencing strategic planning and policy making

Unit 4.3

4.3.1   Identify how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

4.3.2   Understand the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

4.3.3   Identify how to lead the development of a shared vision across the whole community

4.3.4   Understand the ethical principles and values that have been identified as underpinning good practice in working with children and young people relating to behaviour and attendance

4.3.5   Review and analyse the values and beliefs of the community in which they work

Unit 4.5

4.5.2   Evaluate systems and practices in the school or setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement

4.5.3   Develop a whole-school or setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion

4.5.4   Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

4.5.5   Analyse the contribution of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in developing networks and partnerships that draw up multi-agency policies and practice to promote positive behaviour and full attendance and an ethos of non-violence

Unit 4.6

4.6.4   Explain the influence that others can have in supporting children and young people to cope with and build on transfer and transition periods in their lives

Unit 4.7

4.7.1   Evaluate the impact of the application of conceptual frameworks applicable to behaviour and attendance to identify and evaluate their impact

Unit 4.8

4.8.1   Analyse the links between recognised good practice and the policies which have been developed for behaviour and attendance in the school or setting

4.8.2   Evaluate the current policies and practices on behaviour and attendance at national and local level and describe their potential impact on behaviour and attendance

4.8.3   Explain the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in using recognised good practice to inform the development of policies and approaches in the environment in which they operate

4.8.4   Recommend strategic approaches and interventions that might address the causes of and promote positive behaviour and full attendance

4.8.5   Develop and implement approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance.

Unit 4.9

4.9.6   Develop a comprehensive action plan to improve the learning environment

4.9.7   Identify examples of how they could support their team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

Unit 4.10

4.10.6 Explain how they would work with others to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance.

You will want to share this information with the group

Links to national behaviour and attendance strategies

The Behaviour and Attendance Strand of the National Strategies for School Improvement

The Primary National Strategy for behaviour and attendance includes the availability of: CPD opportunities which link to this study session; an initial and in-depth review/audit for primary schools which includes an audit of staff development and support suggested for use in Activity 1 and Intersessional Activities 1, 2 and 6.

The study materials are linked in content to a range of secondary national strategy materials, including the audit tools for auditing behaviour and attendance in secondary and middle schools of which the following booklet and its associated toolkits are of most relevance: Booklet 1: *Leadership and management* (Activity 1, Intersessional Activities 1, 2 and 6;). In addition, schools will have accessed the *Behaviour and Attendance Training Materials: Core Day 2* – Creating a positive whole-school climate, Developing staff skills to support pupils and *Core Day 4 – Developing emotional health and well-being – a whole-school approach to improving behaviour and attendance* which considers the importance of an emotionally healthy ethos and promoting emotional health and well-being through the National Healthy School Standard. Facilitators might make these links in relation to the preparatory reading. The materials for Core Day 4 also consider issues relating to leading an emotionally healthy setting, which complement the leadership aims of these study materials.

The facilitator of the session might like to draw attention to these known links

Every Child Matters, DCSF Five-Year Strategy

The Every Child Matters agenda sets out five outcomes for every child. The promotion of social, emotional and behavioural skills in educational settings explored in the session materials is linked in the following ways to each of the outcomes.

Being healthy:

There is an established link between positive mental health and children and young people having good social, emotional and behavioural skills (p.36, DfES Research Report 456, see references). One of the key roles of the leader of staff development in social, emotional and behavioural skills is supporting staff in fostering children's and young people's skills in this area and this link can be made explicit during the session. Intersessional Activity 3 (whole-organisation level) specifically focuses on this area.

Staying safe

The promotion of a collaborative learning environment where staff and pupils feel safe and supported is a central theme of this topic. The promotion of an anti-bullying and non-violent climate (see links outlined above) will also help to protect children and young people from harm.

Enjoying and achieving

The promotion of a collaborative learning environment through effective staff peer support will contribute to children's and young people's achievement, academically, socially and emotionally. Research has proved clear links between good social, emotional and behavioural skills developed within a supportive environment and academic achievement (p.34, DfES Research Report 456, see references). Teaching and learning styles are fundamentally related to both the enjoyment of learning and achievement and the facilitator may like to draw attention to this link with reference to Activity 2 and Intersessional Activity 4.

Making a positive contribution

The promotion of a collaborative learning environment will contribute to this outcome by

contributing to staff skill development children and young people will benefit and be supported in developing their own capacity to make a positive contribution. A key characteristic of an emotionally supportive environment is the contribution of all community members, and the rights and responsibilities that this involves will be made explicit within such a climate. The facilitator may like to draw attention to this link when considering work the for staff peer support ethos, in (in Activity 1 and Intersessional Activities 1 and 6).

Economic well-being

Academic achievement contributes to long-term economic well-being. The promotion of a collaborative learning environment develops and promotes problem-solving skills will therefore contribute to this outcome.

Attendance

Poor attendance at school and in other settings arises for many reasons, some of which relate to the experiences of children and young people who have poor social, emotional and behavioural skills or who find themselves within environments which do not meet their needs or in which they do not feel they have anything to contribute. One of the focuses of this study session is on the establishment of an ethos that is supportive of staff and pupils where social, emotional and teaching and learning needs are recognised and met.

Anti-bullying

The DCSF is working to create a climate in which bullying is recognised as intolerable and has secured a very broad consensus, with all the teaching associations and a national Anti-bullying Alliance signing up to the anti-bullying charter. The charter is a voluntary commitment to creating a setting community where bullying is not tolerated, and is signed by the head teacher, chair of governors and a children and young peoples' representative.

Settings are expected to tackle bullying on two levels – the preventative level and the reactive level. This study session focuses on establishing a culture and ethos that supports collaboration and inclusion where bullying behaviours are less likely to be tolerated, and where they do occur they can be recognised and dealt with effectively through collaborative problem solving. This relates to Activity 2 and 3, and Intersessional Activities 3, 4 and 5.

Violence reduction in schools

Teachernet has advice for schools on violence reduction. This advice has two key aims:

To help schools create a climate where violence will not flourish

To help schools and individuals learn from any incidents to prevent recurrence.

The advice is available at: www.Teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/violencereduction

The advice is grouped under five themes which have informed NPSL-BA study materials on violence reduction. The themes are:

- Safe school – knowing what is happening
- Involving pupils and families
- Curriculum
- School organisation
- Travel and safe surroundings

Under each theme there is advice about useful strategies including conflict resolution and restorative approaches.

In addition, on page 54, you will find references to relevant DCSF behaviour and attendance professional development materials.

Links to other topics

Visions, values and beliefs

Our own responses and actions depend crucially on the beliefs and values that we hold, exemplified in the ethos that we promote within our workplace. The beliefs and values of the leaders of organisations have great significance for the ethos created within the organisation. You are offered the opportunity to consider your own values and beliefs and how these underpin practice in Activity 1.

1a   Creating an ethos for social inclusion

Leadership

The specialist leader supporting staff to develop collaborative problem-solving skills will require a sound knowledge of basic leadership skills. These topics will enhance and develop these skills. One of the key roles of the leader is to provide a range of opportunities for professional development.

2ab   Leadership in behaviour and attendance

2e   Inducting staff in behaviour and attendance

2f   Leading professional development in behaviour and attendance

2h   Leading professional development in social and emotional skills

Systems and strategies

Systems and strategies that promote a collaborative culture and so enhance behaviour and attendance are a central focus of these study materials.

4a   Strategies for promoting positive behaviour and attendance

4b   Effective support for behaviour and attendance improvement

4e   The impact of peer support on behaviour and attendance

4g   Using counselling skills with staff, children, parents and carers

Self-review, monitoring and evaluation

Staff peer support forms an essential part of the self-review, monitoring and evaluation process.

5b   Behaviour and attendance self-review and action plans

Violence reduction

The development of an ethos and environment that supports and promotes a collaborative problem-solving culture is a key focus of the study materials. There are clear links between an ethos that promotes the development and practical application of collaborative problem-solving skills and one that promotes a climate of non-violence.

7a   Creating an ethos of non-violence

7c   Learning from violent incidents

You will want to share this information with the group

Session outline

Previous session	Review of intersessional activities	10 minutes
Overview	Staff support in BESD settings	10 minutes

Discussion of the reading and the preparatory activity

Aims

Links

Activities   1 hour 45 minutes

1.   Reflection and sharing of good practice in staff peer support

2.   Team roles questionnaire

3.   Peer group collaborative problem solving

Session review

Selecting intersessional activities   20 minutes

Forward look   5 minutes

Total time 2 hours 30 minutes

Overview

NB: For the sake of brevity 'child' and 'children' will be used to refer to both children and young people in this topic.

Children whose behaviour and attendance causes concern often have complex needs, which cannot always be met by individual staff working in isolation. For children to access learning and receive the support they need, staff need to feel safe, secure and supported. There must be a system of sharing of skills, knowledge and experience.

In this session you will:

- Consider the team roles essential for effective staff peer support
- Explore the process of effective staff peer support
- Be able to engage colleagues in setting up a pilot of a formal process of peer support
- Be able to Evaluate the effectiveness of formal peer support within your setting

Consequently you will be able to choose the most appropriate framework for your setting.

You could use slide 3 to introduce the session

Preparing to lead the session

To do before the session	Check
Familiarise yourself with the content, session leader notes and delivery methods for this topic. You will want to adapt the materials to suit the needs of your group	
Prepare the necessary resources.	
Arrange any visitors or speakers as necessary	
Ensure that the group has access to the pre-reading and additional preparatory activity prior to the session.	
Ensure that the group has access to the intersessional activities prior to the session	
Ensure that the group have information regarding when and where the session will take place. *You may already have provided this in the forward look at the previous session*	
During the session	
The previous session leader will review intersessional activities from the earlier topic	
Focus the attention of the group on the key questions that will help them gain most benefit from the session.	
These questions will also help focus reflection in the reflective log	
Introduce the activities and take feedback	
Review the learning	
Lead the group in a discussion about the intersessional activities and ensure they understand the options.	
Encourage group members to reflect on each section of the 'Framework for evaluating options' and to complete the section 'My next three steps are…	
Follow up	
Collate and distribute any material that you have agreed to circulate	
Reflect on your role as session leader in your reflective log	
At the beginning of the next meeting you will have a 10 minute slot to review intersessional activities with the group and to share ways in which learning might be further developed.	

Equipment	Check
Data projector and screen or interactive whiteboard	
Presentation slides	
Flipchart and marker pens	
Sticky notes	
Refreshments	

Resources	Check
Preparatory reading and reflection	
Preparatory activity	
Resource A *Audit of staff peer support*	
Activity 1	
Resource A *Audit of staff peer support*	
Activity 2	
Resource A *Team roles questionnaire*	
Resource B *Action planning*	
Activity 3	
Resource A *Guidelines for running a peer support group for staff*	
Resource B *Scenario: George*	
Intersessional Activity 5	
Resource A *Evaluation sheet*	

Activities

Review of intersessional activities

Preparatory reading and reflection

Preparatory activity *Audit of peer support for staff*

Activities

1.   *Reflection and sharing of good practice in staff peer support*

2.   *Team roles questionnaire*

3.   *Peer group collaborative problem solving*

Session review

You might want to adapt these activities or use alternative materials to help you meet the particular needs of your group

Review of intersessional activities

Write each of the four headlines below on a large sheet of paper. Display these around the room.

Read out the questions in full and allow the group five minutes to jot down their responses to each question on sticky notes. Ask group members to place each note under the appropriate heading.

Allow the group a further five minutes to look at the responses of others in the group.

1. In carrying out your chosen intersessional activity, were there any important leadership issues that arose?

    'Leadership Issues'

2. Were there any organisational or structural issues that particularly supported you in, or prevented you from, carrying out the activity successfully?

    'Organisational Issues'

3. Were there aspects of your own skills and knowledge that helped, or prevented you from carrying out the activity successfully?

    'Skills and Knowledge'

4. What were the most successful and enjoyable aspects of your experience with the intersessional activity?

    'What went well?'

After 10 minutes move on to discuss the reading and preparatory activity for this topic

Preparatory reading and reflection

Suggestions

Read carefully the preparatory reading noting any references or points of particular interest.

Bring any notes you make along to the cluster meeting.

 Following your reading, reflect on the following:

What support do you currently receive either formally or informally?

Which model or models of staff support would suit your setting?

Which of the 'helpful' factors apply in your setting?

How might you overcome some of the unhelpful factors?

Preparatory activity

Audit of peer support for staff

Purpose

To reflect on current practice in staff peer support in your workplace

Suggestions

What systems of support are in place in your setting already?

Use the scenario below as a stimulus using your knowledge of peer support systems within your workplace. They can be of a formal and informal nature. Examples of informal staff support would be conversations over lunch, coffee, in the pub or between appointments. Formal support is generally offered through mentoring, coaching and appraisal systems. Sometimes settings hold case discussion or problem solving meetings. These are usually pupil-centred.

Scenario

John is a pupil in a BESD setting. He needs to develop his social and emotional skills and he often finds it difficult to express his feelings. In challenging situations he will often become verbally abusive to staff. If this abuse is not dealt with appropriately John will often escalate the situation. This happens more to agency or supply staff than to permanent members of staff.

What are the current support systems in your workplace for permanent staff?

How effective are these systems in supporting permanent staff members?

How could a member of staff who is from an agency, on supply or new to your setting be supported, both informally and formally on a personal and professional level?

What systems of support for new members of staff do you have in your setting?

How effective do you think these are?

It is important to bring your notes to the study session as you will need them in Activity 1.

Activity 1

Reflection and sharing of practice in staff peer support

30 minutes

Purpose

To share current practices in staff peer support

Resources

Resource A   *Audit of staff peer support*

Two sheets of flip chart paper headed 'Informal' and 'Formal'

Suggestions

Work together as a whole-group to contribute techniques and approaches under each heading on the flip chart pages. Use your preparatory activity notes to support the discussion.

Identify models of good practice

Through discussion, identify and agree models of good practice; highlight these noting reasons for the recommendations.

Identify areas for development within your own workplace

Work in pairs to discuss the following question:

As a specialist leader, how might you introduce one of the approaches suggested in order to provide support to colleagues in your setting?

Each pair should share their ideas with the whole group.

Activity 2

Team roles questionnaire

30 minutes

Purpose

To explore how to use a team approach in working with children with social, emotional and behavioural problems

To raise awareness of the different roles that exist within a team

Resources

Resource A   *Team roles questionnaire*

Resource B   *Action planning*

Suggestions

Children whose behaviour and attendance causes concern often have complex and individual needs, which are difficult to meet by individual staff working in isolation. To ensure children access learning and the provision they need to be successful. Staff need to feel safe, secure and supported and there needs to be a system of sharing skills, knowledge and experience.

Specialist leaders need to be aware of the team roles essential for effective staff peer support:

- o   To ensure the flexibility and adaptability of the team
- o   To recognise and bridge gaps within the team's functioning
- o   To adopt missing roles and to encourage others to bridge gaps
- o   To identify strengths and weaknesses
- o   To aid successful development and functioning of the team
- o   To enable individuals to use their strengths and to address areas for development within their own personal profile

It is also important to note that roles change over time and depending on the focus of the discussion.

Complete the team role questionnaire (Resource A) and discuss your findings with a partner, use the questions below as a prompt for discussion.

- Were you surprised by the outcome?
- Would you have got the same outcome five years ago?
- What areas would you need to address to assist you in taking on the role of specialist leader?
- As a team leader what would you consider the most important factor for effective team working?
- Would it be helpful to use such a questionnaire in your own organisation?
- Think about an action plan that could address issues raised.

Write an action plan to address the issues discussed; record it using Resource B.

Activity 3

Peer group collaborative problem solving

40 minutes

Purpose

To learn more about the process of effective staff peer support

To be able to engage colleagues in piloting of a formal process of peer support

To consider evaluation processes for evaluating the effectiveness of formal peer support within your setting

Resources

Resource A   *Guidelines for running a peer support group*

Resource B   *Scenario: George*

Suggestions

Each setting has different needs. As a specialist leader you will be aware of your particular needs and able to choose the most appropriate framework for your setting, for example, staff support teams and consultation groups.

Use Resource A *Guidelines for running a peer support group,* work as a whole group, using the process described. Use a situation from your own experience or the suggestion in Resource B *Scenario: George.* The group leader takes the role of facilitator. You will be responsible for keeping the group to time, focused on task and keeping the process going.

Ask for a volunteer to take notes.

All of the group are listeners and consultants.

As you go through this process be aware of your 'team role' (from the previous activity).

To what extent are you following that role?

To what extent are you developing an alternative role?

Reflect on the effectiveness of the groups functioning and be prepared to reflect on your team roles at the end of this activity using Resource A *Guidelines for running a peer support group* (step 6).

Session review

You could use the questions below to help you focus on the learning from this session.

What has been the key learning for individuals?

Suggest one thing that has stimulated, interested or surprised you and that you will share with others.

What aspect(s) of your practice, as a leader, will change as a result of studying this topic and participating in this session?

Focus on leadership knowledge, skills, and understanding.

Session leader only

What has been the key learning for you? Record your thoughts in the reflective log.

Now spend 20 minutes looking at the selection of intersessional activities.

Remind the group to complete feedback forms and send to your Local Lead.

Intersessional activities

Intersessional Activity 1

The SWOT approach

Purpose

To provide an opportunity to introduce a system of staff support to colleagues and to seek their views on the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats of that system.

Audience	All cluster group members
Use of expert	You do not need to use an expert
Short-term	Short-term
	Discussion with staff to inform planning in designing support systems
	It should take 30-45 minutes
Links to the learning process	Practical application Feedback and reflection Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Introduce the idea of staff peer support at a staff meeting. Summarise the existing and briefly describe the proposed system of staff support in your setting.

SWOT analysis

(Taken from www.teachernet.gov.uk/professionaldevelopment/tipd/guidance/swot)

> This checklist is for those carrying out, or participating in, SWOT analysis. SWOT is the acronym of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It is a simple, popular technique which can be used in preparing or amending plans, in problem solving and decision making.

What is a SWOT analysis?

A SWOT analysis is a general technique which can be applied across diverse functions and activities. Performing SWOT analysis involves generating and recording the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relating to a given task. It is customary for the analysis to take account of internal resources and capabilities (strengths and weaknesses) and factors external to the organisation (opportunities and threats).

Benefits

A SWOT analysis can provide:

- A framework for identifying and analysing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

- The impetus to analyse a situation and develop suitable strategies and tactics.

- A basis for assessing core capabilities and competences

- The evidence for, and cultural key to, change

- A stimulus to participation in a group experience

Suggestion

On four separate tables in corners of the room put a piece of flip chart paper with one of the following headings STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS on each. Include an example on each of the sheets .

Strengths	Weaknesses
Staff helping each other understand what others think	Not enough time because of other commitments
Opportunities	Threats
Can focus on children's difficulties rather than staff problems	Requests for support may be seen as a sign of weakness

Divide the staff into four groups and allocate them to one of the elements of the SWOT. Give each group a different coloured marker pen. This pen is retained by the group throughout the activity and clearly identifies the contribution by each group.

Ask each group to consider their allocated area and to note down the main points of their discussion.

Allow five minutes for initial discussion and rotate the groups after the allotted time. At the next station ask the groups to reflect on what has been recorded by the previous group, tick if they agree and then add any additional points they wish to make.

Continue until everyone has recorded their ideas on the sheets.

Display the sheets and facilitate a group discussion reflecting on strengths and opportunities and how threats and weaknesses can be addressed.

Record these ideas using the action plan proforma from Activity 2 Resource B *Action planning*. Include a proposal to introduce a system for staff support based on strengths and opportunities.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

Understanding the features of your organisation that will sustain a formal system of peer support.

Identifying the opportunities for development of the system.

Recognising factors that could restrict the establishment and maintenance of a staff peer support group.

Action plans agreed with senior management and completed.

Reporting

Record your conclusions arising from this activity

Action plans published

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

At level 3

3.5.4   Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

3.8.3   Explain the role of the specialist team leader in behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice

3.8.4   Describe strategic approaches and interventions which might address the causes of poor behaviour and attendance

3.8.5   Describe the role of team leader in enhancing the understanding of their team in the use of approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

3.9.6   Describe how they could support other members of the team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

3.10.5 Work with other team members to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

At level 4

4.2.6   Analyse the role of a leader in influencing strategic planning and policy making

4.5.2   Evaluate systems and practices in the school or setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement

4.5.4   Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

4.5.5   Analyse the contribution of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in developing networks and partnerships that draw up multi-agency policies and practice to promote positive behaviour and full attendance and an ethos of non-violence

4.8.4   Recommend strategic approaches and interventions that might address the causes of and promote positive behaviour and full attendance

4.9.7   Identify examples of how they could support their team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

4.10.6 Explain how they would work with others to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

Intersessional Activity 2

Reviewing existing staff support systems

Purpose

To use your knowledge of existing systems to review their effectiveness in collaboration with colleagues

To take the lead in developing systems for supporting staff in problem solving behaviour and attendance issues in your workplace

To share and enhance existing good practice in your BESD setting

Audience	All group members
Use of expert	None
Short-term	Short term for enhanced good practice 5 hours
Links to the learning process	Practical application Feedback and reflection Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Use the knowledge gained through the pre-activity and Activity 1 to help you to review with staff within your own setting the organisation and effectiveness of existing systems.

Draw up a paper to discuss your findings. This could include the following:

- A brief description of your system(s)

- Formal or informal

- Brief explanation of activity

- How many people involved?

- How successful has it been? How do you know this?

- How it could be improved? Who could help you with this?

- How has it addressed behaviour and attendance issues within your setting?

Once completed present this paper in a staff meeting and agree actions to enhance your existing practice in your setting.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have further developed your skills in communicating and supporting staff

You will have further developed your skills in review and data analysis

You will have written a paper on staff support systems completed

You will have shared your findings with colleagues and good practice enhanced

Reporting

Paper on staff support systems as presented to staff

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

At level 3

3.5.2 Describe how they would promote a whole-school or setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved

3.5.3 Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

3.8.1 Describe the current policies and practices on behaviour and attendance in your setting or one you are familiar with and identify how they relate to recognised good practice

3.8.2 Describe the role of team leader in enhancing the understanding of their team in the use of approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

3.9.6 Describe how they could support other members of the team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

At level 4

4.2.5 Devise and know how to support induction and development programmes for staff, new staff, governors, parents and carers in relation to behaviour and attendance

4.2.6 Analyse the role of a leader in influencing strategic planning and policy making

4.3.2 Understand the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

4.5.2 Evaluate systems and practices in the school or setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement

4.5.3 Develop a whole-school or setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion

4.8.1 Analyse the links between recognised good practice and the policies which have been developed for behaviour and attendance in the school or setting

Intersessional Activity 3

Listening and communication skills

Purpose

To develop skills in consulting with staff on the introduction of systems to support them in improving behaviour and attendance

To encourage the development of your listening and communication skills

Audience	All group members
Use of expert	No expert required
Short-term	Short-term (3 ¾ hours)
	Presentation to staff: 1 hour
	Preparation of interview questions: 1 hour
	Interviews: 1½ hours
	To reflect and write up your conclusions 1 hour
Links to the learning process	Practical application
	Feedback and reflection
	Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

As a specialist leader you will be engaged with colleagues who are seeking support for work related issues.

Present the information (perhaps at a staff meeting), on formal and informal systems of peer support from the Preparatory activity, Activity 1 and Activity 3. Ask for volunteers to be individually interviewed after the presentation about staff support available within your setting (this should be completed 2 or 3 times with different staff).

Devise a series of questions that will help you elicit their views

The interview should last no more than 20 minutes. Make sure that you use open question techniques (questions that require more than a one word answer).

After the interview reflect on your ability to listen and communicate effectively. Ask yourself the following questions and record your answers.

- What did I learn from the other person(s)?

- What did I learn about the other person(s)?

- Who did more talking?

- Who did more listening?

- Did anyone interrupt?

- What questions should I have asked?

- What questions should I have answered more thoroughly?

- Was I absolutely certain I understood everything?

- Did I ask for clarification?

- Did I acknowledge the person's concerns?

- Were both parties attentive?

- Was the conversation balanced?

- Did anyone try to change the focus of the interview?

- Did anyone get angry?

- Did anyone appear sad?

- Was action agreed?

- What will I do different in my next interview?

Reflect on your interviews and decide in which areas you need to improve and apply them in your next interview. This is a plan, do, reflect on, your review process.

Your listening and communication skills should improve after reflection using the questions above to guide you.

Consider how you could apply what you have learned in your setting.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

Presentation, interviews and reflection exercise carried out

You will have further developed skills in devising interview schedules, interviewing colleagues, analysing data from interviews.

You will have developed skills in using information from interviews to inform action planning

You will have developed your reflective skills

Reporting

Evaluation of process

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

At level 3

3.2.3 Explain how they can contribute to the development and implementation of induction and development programmes for staff, new staff and volunteers in relation to behaviour and attendance

3.3.1 Describe how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

3.3.2 Explain the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

3.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist team leader in behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice

3.8.5 Describe the role of team leader in enhancing the understanding of their team in the use of approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance

3.9.6 Describe how they could support other members of the team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

At level 4

4.2.5 Devise and know how to support induction and development programmes for staff, new staff, governors, parents and carers in relation to behaviour and attendance

4.3.1 Identify how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

4.3.2 Understand the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

4.8.3 Explain the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in using recognised good practice to inform the development of policies and approaches in the environment in which they operate

4.8.5 Develop and implement approaches and interventions for promoting positive behaviour and full attendance.

4.9.8 Identify examples of how they could support their team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

Intersessional Activity 4

Team roles questionnaire

Purpose

This activity will provide an opportunity to use Activity 2 Resource A *Team roles questionnaires* with colleagues in your setting.

Audience	All group members
Use of expert	No expert required
Short-term	Short term (1/2 hour)
	To reflect and write up your conclusions (1 hour)
Links to the learning process	Practical application
	Feedback and reflection
	Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Remind yourself of the following:

Children whose behaviour and attendance causes concern often have complex and individual needs, which are difficult to meet by individual staff working in isolation. To ensure children access learning and the provision they need to be successful. Staff need to feel safe, secure and supported and there needs to be a system of sharing skills, knowledge and experience.

Specialist leaders need to be aware of the team roles essential for effective staff peer support:

The team roles questionnaire is a tool that will enable you as a leader a specialist leader:

- To ensure the flexibility and adaptability of the team

- To recognise and bridge gaps within the team's functioning

- To adopt missing roles and to encourage others to bridge gaps

- To identify strengths and weaknesses

- To aid successful development and functioning if the team

- To enable individuals to use their strengths and to address areas for development within their own personal profile

You will need to emphasise that roles change over time, depending on the focus of the discussion and the developing role and experience of the individual within the organisation.

As a specialist leader you will have a role in coordinating the efforts of a team to address these issues. To achieve this you will need to be aware of the strengths of the team and utilise them to the full.

Introduce the questionnaire (Activity 2, Resource A) to your team and discuss any issues arising with them.

Use the following questions to facilitate the discussion:

- How useful was the questionnaire?

- Was anyone surprised by the outcome?

- Would anyone have got the same outcome five years ago?

- What areas do we need to address, as a team, in order to become more effective?

Develop an action plan to address the issues arising from your discussion about how your setting can ensure the benefits of a supportive team (with identified roles) can be used to the benefit of your school.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have developed your skills in consulting with colleagues

You will have developed a greater awareness and understanding of your own and others roles in teams

Team role questionnaire delivered

Action plan formulated from the points raised in discussion with colleagues

Reporting

Evaluation of process

Action plan completed and fed back to staff

Timing and responsibilities to deliver the plan agreed

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

Level 3

3.3.1   Describe how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

3.3.2   Explain the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

3.5.4   Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

3.8.3   Explain the role of the specialist team leader in behaviour and attendance in encouraging teams to apply recognised good practice to their approach and practice

3.9.6   Describe how they could support other members of the team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

3.10.6 Work with other team members to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

At level 4

4.3.1   Identify how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

4.3.2   Understand the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

4.5.4   Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

4.9.8   Identify examples of how they could support their team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

4.10.6 Explain how they would work with others to enhance their ability to use information to promote positive behaviour and full attendance

Intersessional Activity 5

Piloting peer support

Purpose

To pilot a peer support system for staff within your own setting by using the format presented in Activity 2.

Audience	All group members
Use of expert	No expert required
Short-term	Short-term (pilot of an ongoing process)
	Time: 40 minutes for one session
	Evaluation report (3 hours)
Links to the learning process	Practical application Feedback and reflection Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

You should use Intersessional Activity 5 Resource A *Evaluation sheet* for this activity.

As a leader in behaviour and attendance, use your knowledge of your BESD setting to trial the process described in Activity 2. Ask for volunteers to take part in this pilot. Emphasise to group members that this collaborative problem-solving process is a successful evidence-based intervention for providing staff peer support.

Evaluate the support meeting experience using Gibbs (1988) analysis.

In order to enhance any learning experience, you need to be able to go further than simply being able to describe what happened. A structured approach to analysis is provided by Gibbs (1988), who recommends asking the following questions:

Description	*What did I do? What happened?*
Feelings	*How did I feel about that?*
Evaluating	*What was good or bad about what happened?*
Analysing	*What did I learn from it?*
Reflection:	
What	*What did I do?*
	What did others do?
So what?	*What did I learn?*
	How did it go?
	What did it mean?
	What was it like?
Now what	*What should I be doing about it?*
	What can I improve?
Drawing conclusions	*What general and/or specific conclusions arise as a result?*

Action plan   *What must I do next? What must I do differently next time?*

You will find it useful to complete Resource A *Evaluation sheet*

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have worked with colleagues to pilot a peer support meeting

Pilot staff peer support system trialled

Evaluation of process completed

Action plan developed and communicated to group member s in the pilot

Reporting

Evaluation form completed, feedback from staff on the process and usefulness of the peer support meeting.

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

At level 3

3.1.2   Describe the role of the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance

3.1.3   Describe the personal values and beliefs, how they could affect a person-centred approach to behaviour and attendance

3.2.3   Explain how they can contribute to the development and implementation of induction and development programmes for staff, new staff and volunteers in relation to behaviour and attendance

3.3.1   Describe how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

3.3.2   Explain the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

3.9.6   Describe how they could support other members of the team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

At level 4

4.1.3   Analyse the impact of personal values and beliefs, how they could affect a person-centred approach and consider how personal values and beliefs could be influenced to be more person centred and inclusive

4.2.5   Devise and know how to support induction and development programmes for staff, new staff, governors, parents and carers in relation to behaviour and attendance

4.3.1   Identify how personal values and beliefs can influence leadership of work in behaviour and attendance

4.3.2   Understand the importance of shared values and beliefs in leading improvements in behaviour and attendance

4.5.2   Evaluate systems and practices in the school or setting, to identify issues and make recommendations for modification and improvement

4.9.8   Identify examples of how they could support their team to enhance and improve the learning environment in order to promote positive learning, positive behaviour and full attendance

Intersessional Activity 6

Planning peer support

Purpose

To plan a system of staff peer support specific to your setting

Audience	All group members
Use of expert	No expert involved

Short -term	Short-term	
	Discussion with colleagues	1 hour
	Design and produce a handbook	2 hours

Links to the learning process	Practical application
	Feedback and reflection
	Embedding the experience

Suggestions

Before you begin this activity you should meet with senior colleagues to agree protocols.

Share the learning from the study session with interested colleagues. Work with colleagues to plan a system of staff support for your setting. Consider carefully which system(s) would best work in your setting.

You will want to consider the questions listed below.

- What type of support would be helpful in your BESD setting?

- Who would be involved?

- Where would you meet?

- Who can request support?

- What kind of problems would be discussed?

- When will meetings take place?

- Who facilitates the meetings?

- Are roles within the meeting rotated?

- How will concerns be followed up?

- How will you involve others, for example, parents, external support services

- How will records be kept and by whom?

- How will you ensure confidentiality?

- How will you publicise the meetings and encourage their use?

- How will you evaluate the processes and outcomes?

In discussion with other staff, design and produce a handbook to guide the operation of your service. Present the handbook at a future staff meeting.

At the end of the intersessional activity you should meet again with senior colleagues to discuss the impact this activity has had within your workplace.

You should record the key points from this conversation.

Outcomes

You will have developed skills in sharing knowledge and information and in working with colleagues to develop support systems

Agreement and production of handbook

Reporting

Production of handbook

Report of evaluation of process

Accreditation

This intersessional activity offers the potential to help you meet the following learning outcomes, depending on the nature of the assessment chosen and the elements you choose to include in your evidence:

At level 3

3.1.2   Describe the vision and values inherent in a person-centred approach to whole-school or setting management and improvement

3.1.3   Describe the personal values and beliefs, how they could affect a person-centred approach to behaviour and attendance

3.2.3   Explain how they can contribute to the development and implementation of induction and development programmes for staff, new staff and volunteers in relation to behaviour and attendance

3.2.4   Describe how the role of team leader can contribute to the content and support the implementation of strategic plans and policies relating to behaviour and attendance

3.5.2   Describe how they would promote a whole-school or setting action plan which addresses the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved

3.5.3   Explain the contribution that the specialist team leader of behaviour and attendance can make to the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

At level 4

4.1.2   Explain how the vision and values inherent in a person-centred approach to whole-school or setting management and improvement

4.1.3   Analyse the impact of personal values and beliefs, how they could affect a person-centred approach and consider how personal values and beliefs could be influenced to be more person-centred and inclusive

4.2.5   Devise and know how to support induction and development programmes for staff, new staff, governors, parents and carers in relation to behaviour and attendance

4.2.6   Analyse the role of a leader in influencing strategic planning and policy making

4.5.3   Develop a whole-school or setting action plan which addresses elements of the systems and practices relating to behaviour and attendance that could be modified and improved and plan its promotion

4.5.4   Analyse the role of the specialist leader of behaviour and attendance in the organisation and management of systems and practices that relate to behaviour and attendance

Resource materials

Preparatory reading and reflection

'A problem shared is a problem halved'

Recommendations for staff peer support were made as early as 1989 in the Elton Report. This recommendation has more recently been echoed in the Secondary Strategy for Behaviour and Attendance. Research into systems of peer support suggests that they are a a powerful and positive force for change.

Specialist leaders in behaviour and attendance need to explore the range of successful, evidence-based practice in this area and seek to apply or adapt effective models of peer support to the particular needs of BESD settings.

This reading will consider informal and formal systems of staff support. It will examine the research into effective peer support and the theoretical underpinnings for these approaches.

Theoretical perspectives

Stringer (1998) suggested that collaborative problem-solving within schools, could be given a Vygotskian interpretation. The 'scaffolding' model of Vygotsky uses the notion that the more experienced or expert person(s) provides help or support in the initial stages to solve a problem, leading to the situation where the person is able to solve the problem without the 'scaffolding'. Vygotsky also discussed the relationship between a learner and supportive other(s) even if the other(s) were not actually present when learning was taking place.

Daniels et al (2000) described peer support as an intervention that alters the educational settingl context by developing a collaborative problem-solving culture. They proposed that it does this by enhancing collective thinking about work related concerns. It is thus able to utilise the existing skills, knowledge and experience within the organisation and to bring these to bear on the situation causing concern.

Mead and Timmins (1993) maintain that it is important to recognise that a peer support group on its own will be relatively ineffectual in bringing about change. It is important in designing a system for your setting that it complements and enhances existing systems of support. This is important as you start to think about devising a peer support systemfor your setting.

Wagner (1995), suggests that social systems develop and change. Within a healthy setting this can create stimulus for growth. However, if there is an over-abundance of stressful events or there is not enough flexibility within the system for the structure to cope with change, then the system could get stuck in a repetitive pattern which prevents further development. One of the ways of changing this is by helping the group to develop their understanding of the situation causing concern and that changing perceptions can lead to positive change.

In the process of consultation, possible explanations and understandings of school-based problems are explored in a collaborative fashion….. In this way, a wider range of options for initiating change in the classroom context can be identified and evaluated. Through this process, teachers can be helped to become more reflective and effective practitioners with children who cause concern, and as classroom managers generally. Wagner (1995)

The literature suggests that if the schools are supportive of such collaborative problem-solving methods then it is more likely that they are to succeed (Kruger et al, 1995).

Creese et al (1998) describe a system known as teacher support teams (TSTs).

'Teachers can collaborate and support each other in many different ways, both formally and informally, within the classroom and outside of it.' What sets TSTs apart is that they are set up and run by teachers themselves using collaborative problem-solving systems with a review procedure. They enable concerns to be discussed and determined in a neutral situation. Some staff anxieties can be dealt with relatively quickly and objectively.

Informal systems

Informal systems of peer support will vary from a chat over a cup of coffee, a hurried conversation in the corridor or a conversation during a social event, such as lunch or a trip to the pub. There is evidence to support the importance of informal talk in enhancing the collaborative culture of an organisation.

Formal systems

Formal systems differ in that they offer dedicated time where concerns can be discussed in a structured and confidential setting where the boundaries of the discussion are understood and agreed by all the group members. They also provide an opportunity for agreed action to be reviewed, evaluated and further actions explored. Peer support should also be differentiated from any activity where staff appraisal is the objective. It is, as the title suggests, a system that aims to be supportive of positive change. The models discussed also differ from coaching and mentoring models. The latter usually involve one skilled or experienced person offering support to a less experienced or skilled colleague. This is not necessarily the case with peer support groups; in fact the diversity of the supporting group is a strength because it enables the consideration of a range of perspectives when considering possible ways forward.

Three models of staff peer support

There are a number of models of peer support for staff within educational settings. This summary concentrates on three models.

1. The work of Gerda Hanko is possibly the best known example of school consultation and group peer support (Hanko, 1985, 1990, 1999) Her work is based on meetings between individual or groups of staff with an external consultant (quite often an educational psychologist). At the meeting the concern is defined and an action plan drawn up which is subsequently reviewed and the operation of the plan, evaluated. The frequency is dependent on the availability of the external agent.

2. Stringer et al (1992) published a facilitator training manual for establishing peer support groups. They ran a training course for individual teachers, who would then go back to their settings to act as facilitators of staff peer support groups. The groups provided consultancy to their colleagues to address understanding and management of difficult behaviour.

3. The work of Daniels and Norwich (1992) on 'teacher support teams' is based on a team of three trained members of staff, providing a consultation service to their colleagues. The team are initially trained in a collaborative problem-solving process. They then offer peer support to other colleagues who have self-referred. The team assists the member of staff in defining the problem. They jointly consider ways forward, formulate an action plan and set a review date.

The model presented here is generic, based on the models above. It aims to utilise the knowledge, skills and experience of all staff without requiring specific training to participate. As a process, it contributes to the personal and professional development of all who participate and promotes the effective functioning of the setting in which it is operating. This process has been successfully piloted during NQT training and participants have commented on how it has increased their feelings of confidence and competency.

The evidence from research into the models presented above suggests that staff peer support:

- Reduces feelings of isolation and stress

- Increases understanding of problematic behaviour

- Generates practical strategies to improve the situation

- Enhances the interpersonal skills of the group members

- Enhances ability to consider a range of options for dealing with difficult behaviour

- Establishes or enhances a supportive and trusting working relationship with colleagues through the constructive sharing of problems or concerns

- Allows staff to retain responsibility for their own concerns whilst receiving support

- Strengthens morale and improves staff retention

- Using peer support strategies has an impact on individual, group, organisational and cultural level

Findings from recent research have identified the following factors critical for those considering setting up and operating such teams (S. M Smith, 2002).

Factors that are helpful in setting up peer support systems

- Support of senior management team

- Commitment of staff

- Enthusiasm and motivation of the staff involved

- A suitable venue for the meeting

- Professional development opportunities to motivate and give confidence

- An introductory meeting to explain the process of collaborative peer support

- Those involved are able to work together

- Time allocated to plan, organise and implement collaborative peer support systems

- Continued support from collaborative peer support coordinators and trainers

- Continued problem-solving support from meetings with the other support teams

Factors that hindered the process of setting up support systems

- The lack of time to plan, prepare and run collaborative peer support systems

- Poor relationships between members of the team

- Concerns over confidentiality

- Concern it may be used for performance management

- People feeling worried that they may not have solutions to problems

- Members already emotionally drained because of other factors

Reactions of staff to collaborative peer support systems

- Some staff feel that they have no problems, so there was no need for a collaborative peer support system

- Some staff felt that it was a welcome addition to existing support

- Some staff felt that it raised the need for more collaborative support mechanisms

- Some staff felt that it raised their self-esteem and morale to be able to discuss and resolve issues

- Some staff were concerned over the idea of confidentiality and performance management

- Some staff felt it was yet another initiative to encounter

Reactions of collaborative peer support team members to collaborative peer support

- They enjoyed being part of the team

- They felt it was both rewarding and challenging

- It improved listening and communication skills

- It gave them confidence and skills

- It gave them confidence and skills to seek promotion

- It provided time and opportunity to reflect on their own practice

- The importance of trust, neutrality and confidentiality was critical

- Meetings needed to be held regularly

- Problems raised in the short-term have provided a quick solution, which hopefully have begun to address the problem, but also in the long-term, to provide a variety of strategies to enable the person to help themselves prioritise any remaining issues.

Summary

Using a collaborative problem-solving approach to peer support is a positive way forward in helping staff. It can break down the feelings of isolation within the educational setting. It can raise the self-esteem of staff thereby promoting positive practice and helping children and young people solve problems. From the literature it has been shown that support for staff is needed in all educational settings. In BESD settings it could prove a powerful tool in supporting staff in improving the behaviour and attendance of children and young people. By providing consultation by staff for staff they can develop the necessary skills and confidence to help themselves whilst also supporting others.

The evidence presented here suggests that a formal system of staff peer support can considerably enhance the well-being of staff and so support the achievement of the five outcomes from Every Child Matters. In addition, staff support systems provide an effective tool to support specialist leaders to improve behaviour and attendance.

Activity 1 – Resource A

Audit of staff peer support

Formal	Informal

Activity 2 – Resource A

Team roles questionnaire

Information

For effective team functioning team members need to be flexible and adaptable. Within a team there are a variety of roles, A, B, C, D, E and F. When working as part of a team most people are capable of adopting aspects of each of these roles, although they will have a dominant role with which they are most comfortable. The leader however needs to have the confidence and competence to be able to recognise and bridge gaps within the teams' functioning. They achieve this either by adopting that role themselves or encouraging other members of the team to do so. Awareness of the team's strengths, weaknesses overlaps and under laps is vital to the successful development and functioning of any team. Individuals within the team also need to be prepared to further develop their skills.

The short questionnaire will enable you to explore your dominant role within a team.

Instructions for completing the questionnaire

Do not think about the questions too deeply. Complete the questionnaire as quickly as possible. There are no right or wrong answers, just try to be as honest as you can. When you are operating within a team how strongly do each of the statements apply to you?

- Write in the blank column the number you feel most reflects you.

- Once you have completed the questionnaire total each column, the largest total will reflect your preferred team role.

Team roles questionnaire

0 = not at all; 1 = partially agree; 2 = mainly agree; 3 = strongly agree	A	B	C	D	E
I encourage the team to work hard together when our performance is below our expectation					
I enjoy thinking things through					
I like to consider a range of perspectives					
I always try to find ways to improve things					
I urge people to keep on track if I think they are deviating from the point					
I like to have a clear picture of what the team's goals are to ensure that the others share that vision					
I try to avoid involvement in conflicts					
I can be relied on to come up with creative solutions					
I notice when others are discontented and try to help and support them					
I try to keep an open mind, listen to others and if necessary I am prepared to change my opinions					
I encourage people to talk things through to reach a consensus					
I ensure that the team agree their objectives and outcome before beginning a task					
I encourage the team to keep to time					
I anticipate possible drawbacks and advise the team to be aware of them					
I know what needs to be done to achieve our goals whilst taking into account the needs of the team					
I like to move forward even when it is hard and others have doubts					
I think things through carefully before coming to a decision					
I put a great deal of effort into following up plans and ideas					
If progress is not being made I like to intervene and find a way forward					
I cheer people up when they need it					
TOTAL OF EACH COLUMN					
I am able to challenge accepted ways of working if a fresh approach is needed					
I like to keep the team on course					
I attend more to the team members than the task					
I like to get straight to the point					
I actively seek to draw out contributions from others					
TOTAL OF EACH COLUMN					

A

Is concerned that everybody belongs

Eases tension and establishes links between members

Encourages and supports a team spirit

Strives for agreement between team members

Is mindful of the attitudes and feelings of others

B

Listens to others and observes interactions

Takes time to process information that has been collected

Is quiet before presenting ideas to the team

Having processed the information sees possible ways forward

Is good at anticipating the pitfalls and alerting others to these

C

Is success-orientated

Wants to make progress towards a clearly defined goal as quickly as possible

At times is impatient with delays

Doesn't take things at face value, can be challenging by proposing amendments to accepted ideas

Is enthusiastic in pursuit of team goals

May question the commitment of others to the vision and its associated goals

D

Communicates a coherent vision

Makes connections between the vision, the aims and the outcomes of the teams

Engages everyone in the process of striving towards achieving the goals

Is motivated and motivating

Is aware of the strengths of the team and utilises them to the full

Coordinates the work of the team

Is decisive at key points in progression towards goals

E

Is an active member of the team

Is ready to get involved in helping others with their tasks

Likes to follow through on plans and see progress towards goals

Is bored by long discussions and time-wasting

Likes to work hard to complete tasks

F

There is an additional role - the subversive. Be aware! We can all take on this role at difficult times. When people take on this role they can seriously affect the operation of the team. This role needs to be confronted and dealt with as soon as it is recognised.

Diverts the team away from the agreed agenda

Undermines the leader's position

Acts as a block on the progress of the team

Puts members of the team down

Seeks attention and sympathy

Avoids responsibility

Activity 2 – Resource B

Action planning

Action Plan	Who	When	Achieved

Guidelines for running a peer support group for staff

This model of peer support requires no special training to get started. You can just follow the process described. You will need three to nine people. For some settings this could include the whole staff. In other settings larger groups can be sub-divided into a number of smaller groups. The more diverse the groups are in terms of skills and experience the better! It is helpful if the senior management team are represented as there may be broader issues that need to be addressed at a whole organisational level. This should be done without breaking confidentiality within the normal operation of the group. Concerns about child protection issues and staff safety should be dealt with within the established policy and procedures of the setting.

Meetings are usually held on a regular basis as agreed by the group members. Attendance is voluntary but it is helpful if staff commit to attendance for an agreed period of time rather than just dip in and out as this can leave others feeling let down.

The group provides a forum for sharing skills, knowledge and experience where several minds think through a concern or problem that has become insurmountable to the individual staff member. It assists them in moving forward and generates ideas for positive action.

The venue for the meeting should be comfortable and free from interruptions. You may find it helpful to adopt roles for the session.

Facilitator: keeps to time and keeps the process going.

Presenter: presents the concern for discussion.

Scribe: takes notes. (Notes of the meeting belong to the person presenting the concern).

Group members: responsible for active listening throughout the process**.**

Roles may be rotated from meeting to meeting. For the purposes of Activity 1 during the training session, the session leader will act as facilitator. If this is done as an intersessional task, the facilitators role should be taken by the NPSLBA participant.

Step 1: 5 minutes

Agree ground rules, for example, relating to confidentiality, listening etc:

Members of the group take turns to present their concerns unless this is a second meeting to review the results of an action plan from a previously presented concern. A concern is selected by the group for in-depth discussion. The group roles described above are agreed.

Step 2: 5 minutes

The presenter of the chosen concern has five minutes to outline it in more detail. It is helpful at this point if group members listen carefully, encouraging the presenter but not interrupting. If the presenter falls silent before their time is up everybody stays silent. This time belongs to the presenter. Sometimes the presenter finds a way forward at this point; being listened to can be a powerful tool for creative thinking.

Step 3: 5 minutes

It is the presenter's turn to listen now. He or she should not respond to any ideas presented by group members at this time. This is not the time to ask for further information or seek to clarify things.

The whole group generate ideas. All ideas carry equal weight at this stage, nothing should be discarded. Everybody should be encouraged to contribute. Ideas should be action-orientated.
Step 4: 5 minutes

The presenter takes the lead again. Discussing the ideas ,clarifying the situation and exploring

some ideas further. Try to focus on those ideas that are practical.

Step 5: 5 minutes

The whole group agrees first steps in an action plan. Try to focus on those ideas that can be implemented within the next three days. It is helpful if a member of the group agrees to contact the presenter at an agreed time to see if a follow-up meeting is required.

Step 6: 5 minutes

Reflect on how the meeting went.

Was it a comfortable process?

What was learned?

Did you conform to your preferred team role?

Did your role change through the course of the meeting?

If so, how?

Did you recognise the roles adopted by others?

What might improve the functioning of the group in future?

Review ground rules.

Finally, agree date, time and venue for the next meeting.

Activity 3 – Resource B

Scenario: George

George is a pupil in a BESD setting. He is the third of four siblings. His grandmother is the principal carer. George's mother left the family home when he was still a baby. His grandmother has been concerned with his behaviour since he was three years old. He has a variety of medical diagnoses including ADHD.

George has a reputation amongst family members for 'winding people' up.

His case notes suggest that he lacks empathy and social understanding and yet he is quick to spot weaknesses in others and appears to know just which buttons to press.

Established members of staff recognise and can spot when George is starting to provoke a confrontation but they have not found a set of strategies that consistently prevent this happening.

Newer members of staff report a honeymoon period where George appears to be cooperative and confrontation is more easily avoided.

You are a fairly new member of staff who thought you had established a positive and trusting relationship with George.

During the past few weeks, however, you have realised that the honeymoon period is definitely over as George is more and more frequently setting out to provoke confrontation.

During the lesson George starts to sing whenever you try to direct the group. When you try to deal with this he sings even louder.

You have tried to remove him from the room but he refuses to go. This is often followed by pushing chairs and tables over.

This scenario often ends in restraint.

Restraint is used so frequently that staff are starting to feel that George may like to be restrained.

Intersessional Activity 5 – Resource A

Evaluation sheet

Briefly describe this activity
What was the purpose of the activity?
Briefly describe the group you were in (size, gender, etc.)
What kind of role did you take in the group?
Comment on the group performance as a whole; on whether you achieved the required outcomes; and how well
Was the collaborative problem-solving process an effective way of addressing the concern raised?
How could you have helped the group to improve the performance?
Write a summary of the skills you have used and developed through this activity
Other comments

References

For use within the session

Preparatory reading

For further study

A. Creese, H. Daniels and B. Norwich, *Teacher Support Teams in Secondary Schools* (1997), David Fulton Publishers, London.

H. Daniels, A. Creese and B. Norwich, '*Supporting Collaborative Problem Solving'* in H. Daniels (Ed), *Special Educational Re-formed Beyond Rhetoric?* (2000), *Falmer Press, London.*

H. Daniels and B. Norwich, *Teacher\Support Teams: an Interim Evaluation Report* (1992), Institute of Education, London University, London.

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DfES *Discipline in Schools: Report of the Committee of Enquiry chaired by Lord Elton (The Elton Report* (1989)*), HMSO, London.*

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Graham Gibbs, *Learning by doing : a guide to teaching and learning methods* (1988), FEU, London

G. Hanko, *Special Needs in Ordinary Classrooms* (1985, 1990 2nd ed), Blackwell, Oxford.

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C. Mead and P. Timmins, Peer support groups in whole school development in *Counselling Schools – A Reader* by K. Bovair and C. Mclaughlin (1993) David Fulton London

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B. Rogers, *Behaviour Management, a Whole-school Approach* (2000), Alden Press, Oxford.

B. Rogers, *Classroom Behaviour; A Practical Guide to Effective Teaching , Behaviour Management and Colleague Support* (reprint, 2001), Books Education 2000, London.

S. Smith *Evaluating the Process of Setting up Teacher Support Teams (TSTs)* M.Ed Dissertation (2002), University of Birmingham.

L. Stow, P.Stringer, K. Hibbert, and J. Powell, *Understanding and Managing Difficult Behaviour: establishing staff support groups* (1992), Educational Psychology Service, Newcastle upon Tyne.

P.Stringer, L. Stow, K. Hibbert, J. Powell and E. Louw, Establishing staff consultation groups in schools, *Educational Psychology in Practice* 8 (2), (1992), pp. 87-96.

P. Wagner, *School Consultation: Framework for the Practising Educational Psychologist: A Handbook* (1995), Kensington and Chelsea Educational Psychology Service.

Links to national materials

Secondary behaviour and attendance - Resources and publications
www.standards.gov/publications/ks3/

DfES 0055-2004 Core day 2

These materials are designed for schools to use, supported by Behaviour and Attendance Consultants. They cover sessions on

- Focusing on solutions

- Developing staff skills to support pupils

- Creating a positive whole school climate

- Meeting specific staff training needs using development materials

These four sessions follow a particular sequence but can be taken out of context and used separately as training units. It is intended that all schools will deliver the first three sessions. Schools can differentiate to meet their needs by selecting the most appropriate tasks and exploring some of the key ideas in the session.

DfES 0180-2005 Core day 4

These materials build on previous core training, in exploring ways to further develop staff skills and sustain school improvement. They expand the principles already exemplified in policy guidance and support development, following an analysis of school outcomes from the recently introduced behaviour and attendance audit.

The pack comprises:

- Guidance for senior leaders

- Self-study materials that build on the healthy schools framework, as outlined in the document

- Promoting emotional health and well-being through the national healthy school standard (NHSS, 2004) http://www.hda.nhs.uk/Documents/promoting_health_wellbeing.pdf available to download from the NHS Health Development Agency (HDA) website

The activities in the self-study materials included in this pack follow a process that will help schools develop their knowledge, understanding and application of an emotionally healthy school, building on existing good practice.

Behaviour and attendance toolkit units

These toolkit units provide consultants and schools with a comprehensive resource that supports post audit action plans.
The intention is to build on existing good practice and support development activity.

The final versions of all units in CD format are available to order separately.

DfES 1260-2005	Unit one	Leadership and management
DfES 1262-2005	Unit three	Dealing with consistently poor behaviour
DfES 0511-2004	Unit four	Bullying
DfES 1263-2005	Unit five	Pupil support systems

DfES 0153-2004	Unit six	Classroom Behaviour
DfES 1264-2005	Unit seven	Out-of-class behaviour
DfES 0156-2004	Unit nine	Attendance
DfES 1266-2005	Unit ten	Links with partners and other agencies

Secondary SEAL

Secondary SEAL includes a Guidance booklet, CD and website. The CD and website include a comprehensive set of staff development materials, including further readings and suggestions for staff development, and learning resources for use with pupils in year 7. Secondary SEAL will be available to order or obtain on-line from Spring 2007.

Primary Behaviour and Attendance - Resources and publications

Excellence and Enjoyment:
Improving behaviour and attendance… improving learning
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/

DfES 0110-2005 Kit - Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL)

The SEAL resource provides a framework for explicitly promoting social, emotional and behavioural skills, with built-in progression for each year group within a school.

The resource is designed to facilitate a systematic and spiral approach to learning. It should be seen as a stimulus or starting point, rather than a finished product.

It is hoped that it will provide structured support to the creativity and initiative of schools who use the materials.

The materials include:

- A guidance booklet
- A 'Getting started' poster
- A whole-school resource with photo-cards.

Seven sets of thematic materials that each have:

- An assembly and overview
- A Red set booklet – for the Foundation Stage
- A Blue set booklet – for Years 1 and 2
- A Yellow set booklet – for Years 3 and 4
- A Green set booklet – for Years 5 and 6.

In addition there are booklets that contain materials for all seven themes:

- Purple set booklets – activities for exploring the theme in the staff room
- Gold set booklets – family activities
- Silver set booklets – small-group activities (Years 1 and 2).

Staff development – These consist of ideas for whole school sessions and are appropriate for staff meetings or in-service training days. The materials are organised under the headings used in the electronic audits. These are:

- Leadership and management

- Whole-school ethos and framework

- School organisational factors and the management and deployment of resources

- Continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning through classroom-level factors
- Pupil support systems
- Staff development and support

The staff development materials mentioned above are as follows:

Working with colleagues on behaviour issues

The emotional aspects of professional development on behaviour management issues
Working with staff with varied attitudes, beliefs and experience
Planning your delivery – structuring a session and identifying potential 'hotspots'
Meeting your responsibilities and maintaining the focus

Focusing on solutions: a positive approach to managing behaviour

Building on success
Exception finding: when is success being experienced and how can we build on this?
Preferred futures
Rating scales: where are we now and how close are we to our desired solution?

Attendance and punctuality

The impact of poor attendance and punctuality on achievement
Registration
Using attendance data
Improving attendance and punctuality – sharing good practice
Attendance teamwork

Responding effectively when children show inappropriate behaviour

Principles for using consequences for inappropriate behaviour
Ensuring win-win outcomes
Using more intrusive consequences and involving school-based support

Understanding behaviour

How patterns of behaviour develop
A way of looking at behaviour in the classroom: the ABC model
The influence of group dynamics on children's behaviour

Relationships in the classroom

The importance of establishing positive relationships with all pupils
Building relationships where it is more difficult
The 'relationship bank' – building relationships with those hardest to reach
Building a classroom community

The importance of emotions in the classroom

Exploring why it is important to understand emotions in the classroom
Four key concepts and ideas about emotions
Implications for school and classroom planning

Classroom communication

Introduction: types of communication
Barriers to effective communication
Communication that can create or reinforce negative behaviour
Communication that promotes positive behaviour
Optional additional activities: transparent communication, 'I message'

Conflict and confrontation

What lies behind behaviour?
The processes involved in conflict and confrontation
Strategies for reducing conflict and confrontation in the classroom
Optional additional activities: the assertive teacher
Managing conflict and confrontation

Working with individuals

Stages in change
Involving children in making the decision to change their behaviour
Involving children in agreeing goals for change
Supporting change

Reference number for all the above is DfES 1732-2005CDO-EN

School self-evaluation and staff development

This CD-Rom provides a range of tools for primary schools and local authority staff to use in their work to promote positive behaviour and regular attendance. Materials include The initial review, In-depth audits, Behaviour in the classroom: a course for newly qualified teachers and the staff development materials listed above.

DfES 0101-2004 Kit – Leading on behaviour: a handbook for leading teachers

The aim of these materials is to help leading teachers reflect on their practice and make explicit to colleagues those elements that promote positive behaviour.
Exploring the role of the leading behaviour teacher and identifying
personal strengths in   behaviour management
A structure for understanding how we promote positive behaviour and regular attendance
Supporting colleagues in professional change
Skills, strategies and techniques for promoting change

Future publications - Primary

Excellence and Enjoyment: solution focused specialist coaching.
Improving behaviour and attendance… improving learning. (DVD)

Excellent and enjoyment: social and emotional aspects of learning:
small group work to develop children's social emotional and behavioural skills (DVD)

KS2 intervention group work (web only)

Family learning SEAL programme for parents / carers (web only)

SEAL assemblies one to six (web only)

Other relevant materials:

Introductory training for school support staff

Behaviour management

Self-study materials for supply teachers

Classroom and behaviour management
Available from TeacherNet as downloads www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications/supplyteachers

Behaviour management module
– Induction training for teaching assistants in primary schools

Behaviour management module
– Induction training for teaching assistants in secondary schools

Revised materials available from TeacherNet Summer 2007