



Best use of external special needs professional

The Lyndon School, Solihull

Judges comments:

Well presented and clearly represented above and beyond practice for all schools. The entry showed good rigour and demonstrated the collaborative partnership approach the school have taken.

Entry:

Lyndon is a happy, caring school with high expectations for all students. We want every child to become a success and to achieve their very best. We believe that success can be captured by hard work, perseverance and partnership. Lyndon is a Trust school, working together in partnership with higher education providers, as well as successful businesses and community partners. These partnerships provide students with a wealth of experiences and opportunities that are unique to Lyndon. Within school and through these partnerships we encourage our students to have high aspirations and to become positive, disciplined and respectful role models.

Over the last 12 months, Lyndon has been working hand in hand on a Speech and Language pilot with one particular Trust Partner, a local University. As a school we identified a gap in our provision and we were feeling some of the same difficulties other schools in the authority were feeling with regards to access to Speech and Language therapy. As a result, and with the support of our link Governor for SEN, we met with the University Speech and Language faculty to embark upon a joint project that would benefit both parties. In short, the Speech and Language faculty would provide us with Speech and Language therapy support to work with students, families and staff at

Lyndon and we would provide placement opportunities for undergraduates training in this field who were hoping to fulfill a career within schools or supporting school aged clients.

Our initial aims:

For the University to provide speech and language therapy assessments of individual pupils identified by the school's Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) and teachers.

Outcome/ impact:

- A profile of the young person's speech, language and communication need (SLCN) will be provided to parents and teaching staff.
- Advice for the pupil, parents and teachers to support the young person's speech and language skills and learning within the classroom will be given following the appraisal process.
- Recommendations for individual/ group speech and language therapy as appropriate.

To commence speech and language therapy intervention with pupils with an identified SLCN.

Outcome/impact:

- To increase pupil's functional communication in order to improve their activity and participation within the school context. Individual short term aims will be set with SMART targets to achieve.
- Liaison with teaching staff re: strategies to support the young person in class.

To discuss/review current social skills for pupils at the school with the SENDCO and teaching assistants.

Outcome/impact:

- To implement strategies to support the young people within the group
- To set up an additional social skills group for pupils if deemed appropriate.

- To develop inter-professional working – training and supporting teaching assistants.

To provide face to face training session(s) for teachers and assistants regarding a range of speech, language and communication needs.

Outcome/impact:

- To increase teachers' and teaching assistants' knowledge and skills of SLCN in order for them to provide effective support for pupils with SLCN.

For Lyndon to support the trainee Speech and Language therapists whilst on placement to enable a true experience of work within the Secondary School environment.

Outcome/impact:

- To increase trainee therapists understanding of the demands on staff and students within the Secondary school setting
- To enable the trainee therapists to assess and work with real clients.

SENDCO from Lyndon to deliver a lecture/workshop to the Speech and Language undergraduates at the University.

Outcome/impact:

- Understanding of National curriculum requirements for Speaking and Listening and how it is assessed
- Understanding the identification of young people with SLCN in a Secondary setting
- Understanding of the wider role of the SENDCO
- An introduction to the SEND reforms

To date:

More than 10 students have been assessed and individual profiles of SLCNs have been provided to parents and staff.

Advice and training for students, parents and staff has been provided in various forms: telephone, email, face to face, 1:1 and during various staff training days.

Placements of trainee therapists has enabled more detailed assessments to be carried out including more than one lesson observation which in turn enables a more thorough explanation regarding advice and recommendations for all parties involved.

Individual Teaching assistants have been working closely with the Speech and Language therapists to develop their own knowledge and skills. This included attending individual therapy sessions with students and then further supporting the students to use various learned strategies in lessons across the curriculum.

Students have shown developments in their vocabulary particularly of high focus words such as those used in exam questions. Some students have become more independent in identifying new vocabulary in lessons and then learning it more effectively in therapy sessions. Staff have reported noticeably increased confidence amongst the students with regards to learning and their potential to succeed.

All in all, the Speech and Language partnership pilot has been a real success. We continue to work closely with the Speech and Language faculty and therapists. As a SENDCO I feel confident that we are effectively meeting the needs of our young people and that the Teaching and Support staff are continuing to develop professionally leading to a stronger, highly skilled future provision.