

## Improve Health and Wellbeing in Perth and Kinross Schools

### Improving Resilience through sport.

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#### Rationale

The Emotional Wellbeing Collaborative in Perth and Kinross brought together colleagues from across sectors and agencies to consider how we could improve resilience for children and young people in this area. Using Improvement Methodology several strands were identified, one being positive learning environments. Possible change ideas were considered and it was decided to carry out a small scale project at Coupar Angus Primary School in collaboration with CAMHS and Active Schools which would use sport to improve aspects of resilience for a group of children. The hypothesis is that learning a sporting skill in a group will increase aspects of resilience for children.

**Aim:** Use sport to develop aspects of resilience (delayed gratification and focus) for a targeted group of children at Coupar Angus Primary School.

#### Method

It was decided that the project would be aimed at children accessing the Nurture Class at Coupar Angus PS. The children had existing IEPs and Boxall profiles and would benefit from a targeted intervention aimed at improving their resilience.

#### Process Change

Rosie Adams (CAMHS) met with the parents/carers of the children to explore what resilience meant and why it was important for their children. Tammy McKinlay and a PSA from Coupar Angus PS ran a weekly gymnastics group for the identified children. The PSA was known to the children already. The Success Criteria (called Steps to Success at Coupar Angus PS) were shared at the start of each session. The Steps to Success were to be able to listen to an instruction and follow it and to be able to wait your turn. The children used video technology to identify their strengths in the movements learned and to build on this. An email group was set up to allow Tammy to communicate regularly with the children's teachers about progress.

Area	Target	Current
Listening planning	100%	85%
Engaged parents	100%	90%
Improved emotional regulation of all children	100%	75%
Training and support for staff	100%	100%
Positive group dynamics	100%	95%

#### Key Learning Points

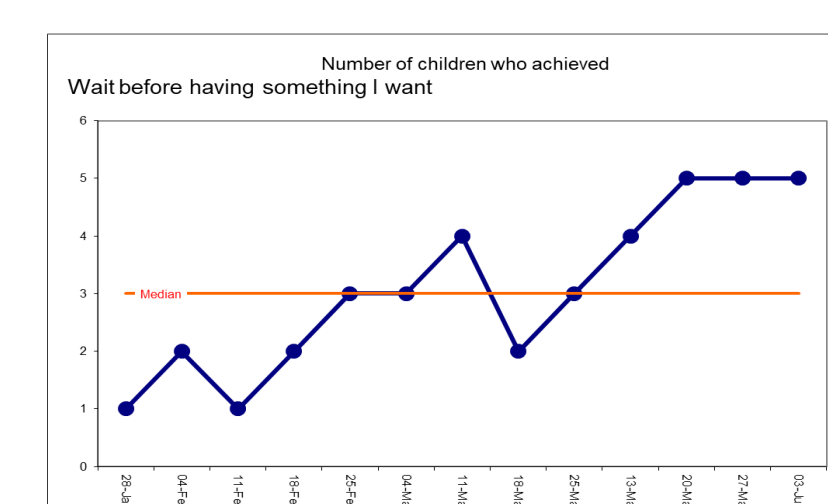
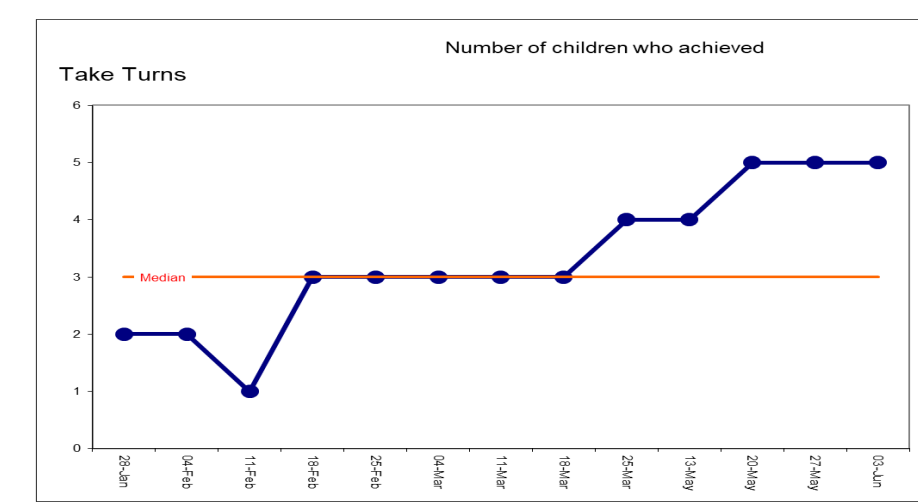
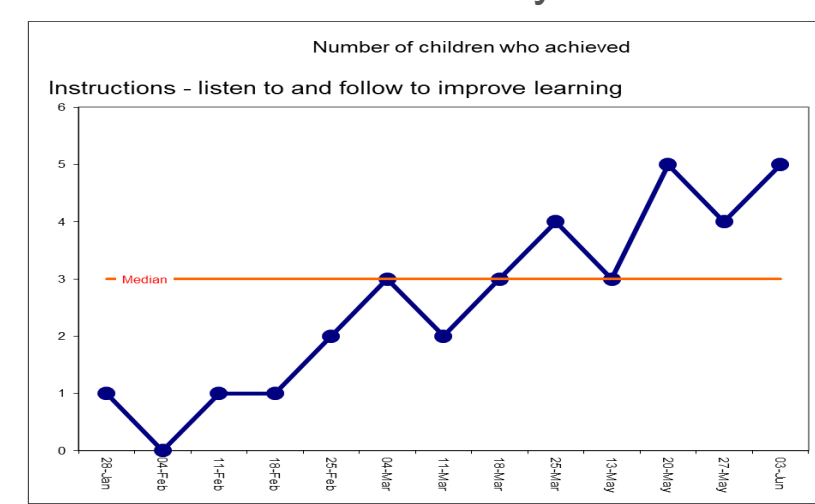
It is important that there is adequate and appropriate staffing to undertake the delivery of the project consistently. It is important that parents/carers and class teachers are involved and understand the aims. The size and dynamic of the group and length of the session are important to get right.

#### Scale/Spread

During Session 2019-20 the project will take place in twelve schools across Perth and Kinross. It will be aimed specifically at P7 girls, which will also improve the participation in sport for this gender and age group.

#### Results

All of the children improved in their ability to listen to and follow instructions (focus); to wait their turn and wait to have something they want (delayed gratification). They were able to transfer this out of the group context. Their IEP Trackers and Group Session Trackers showed this clearly.



All of the children reported increased self-esteem through being proud of the skills they had developed.

"It is really fun and I am learning how to do a handstand. I can take turns better in class now." Cassidy P3  
"Being a leader and helping others makes me feel good." Cassie P7  
I've learned to keep going if I'm learning something hard and to practise. It feels amazing when you get it right! Cassie P7  
Cassidy's turn-taking has improved. I enjoy coming to watch her in the group. Granny  
The Gymnastics Group is the first thing Cassie has looked forward to in P7. She uses the skills in PE to be an expert. She hasn't previously wanted to join in with PE. Her leadership, teamwork and communication skills have all improved a lot. Helen McQueen (P7 Teacher)

#### Achievements

The children have all benefitted from taking part in the project. Their teachers and family members have reported that their ability to listen and to wait has improved and this has had a positive impact on life at home and learning in class.

#### Conclusions

The project has been very successful for the children and for the agencies working together. Collaborating on one project also allowed exchange of ideas and information about wider aspects of our work. As a school we are using Improvement Methodology for School Improvement Planning.

## Other Perth and Kinross Health and Wellbeing Projects.

### How can learning about big and little deals impact S1 pupils' ability to control impulses?

Steven McLaughlin, PT Guidance, St John's Academy, Perth

#### What did you do?

- Firstly, I selected a group of four S1 pupils (three of whom are in the ACORN 4&5 bracket) who regularly displayed poor self regulation skills. Prior to the intervention, I gathered three types of data: the number of behaviour "demerits" they received in the previous week (quantitative), observation notes from classroom PSAs (qualitative) and got the participants to fill out a short questionnaire (qualitative).
- The intervention stage lasted four weeks, and during this time the sample of pupils came to me for a half hour session three times a week. I taught them about big deals and little deals and what would be an appropriate response to these. We also talked about setting goals using the Goal Plan Obstacle Do Review model and the class made several short term goals which were later reviewed. There was a running theme about the need to stop and think about our actions.
- Finally, after the intervention, I gathered the same data as before to compare the results.

#### Why did you do it?

- One of the reasons I chose to focus on self regulation was that my school was looking to use some of the Pupil Equity Fund to send a teacher to regular training sessions on this topic. This was aimed at helping to close the attainment gap as the reason that some pupils from poorer backgrounds don't possess the same self regulation skills as those from wealthier families. I opted to do this for my Teacher Leadership Programme as it is also an area I am interested in.
- There is plenty of literature on self regulation and how important it is to reinforce these skills in young people. Ylvisaker and Feeney (2009) state that young people with strong self regulation skills are more likely to live longer, happier and more successful lives than those who don't. Also, the Curriculum for Excellence (The Scottish Government) encourage teachers to help pupils take ownership of their learning and be responsible citizens. I believe self regulation can play a big part in this, so it is therefore worth doing.

#### What has happened as a result?

- From the information I have gathered so far, I could reasonably conclude that goal setting and identifying big & little deals has had a positive impact on pupils' ability to control impulses within our defined group. I know this because the pupils showed improved results in their questionnaire, observations from PSAs indicated a positive change and I also observed examples of it working in action.
- **Pupil questionnaire:**  
• "I can identify if something is a "I can identify self-calming strategies"  
• "big or little deal"
- **Sample of PSA observations:**  
• Pre-intervention: "Hyper, giggling all lesson", "unnecessary comments"  
• Post-intervention: "Stayed on task", "followed instructions", "apologised for his behaviour"

#### What are the implications?

This intervention supports my hypothesis that peer tutoring supports learning in the classroom. Based on the formal and informal feedback so far it appears that organising pupils in peer tutoring groups after an assessment promotes the development of understanding.

- As a consequence I will continue to arrange my classes to promote peer tutoring but will develop activities to utilise this time effectively and provide opportunities to develop the skills required by peer tutors and tutees. I will also need to repeat my intervention to confirm its reliability and share my findings with my colleagues in the Science department.



### How can the use of technology positively impact upon parental engagement and student motivation?

Catriona Steele, Class Teacher, Crieff Primary School

#### What did you do?

- Introduced the applications Class123 and See-Saw within the classroom and to my students' parents
- Encouraged fellow colleagues to get involved in using these resource
- Held parent information evenings and regular drop-in sessions to encourage engagement and to improve parents' confidence levels
- Regularly collated evidence with regards to parents' views, children's views and colleague's views
- Introduced the applications to my fellow colleagues with one being adopted across the school and the other is beginning to be used within the nursery setting
- Regularly reflected upon the progress of my enquiry

#### Why did you do it?

- I wanted to improve the links between school and home, giving parents more regular feedback with regards to children's learning, in the hope that they would more effectively support and motivate their children.
- I also wanted to improve the relationship between myself and parents. A number of parents work full time and rely on the after school club, therefore I had limited contact with these parents.
- I wanted to give children an easy, regular way in which they could collate evidence of and reflect upon their own learning, whilst monitoring their progress.
- Since my head teacher Annette Beaton embarked upon the Fellowship Programme I have taken an interest in SCEL and it's development within Scottish Education. Because of this I was eager and inspired to learn more and become more involved.

#### What has happened as a result?

- I have become more confident when communicating with parents and I am doing this on a more regular basis. The information evenings I organised and the drop in sessions have supported me in this area.
- The children really enjoy using the technology and it has developed their language skills, especially when reflecting upon their own and their peers learning. It has also helped them to monitor their own progress and recognise their next steps.
- Parents are more confident about approaching me and I feel we have established better relationships. The majority have shown great enthusiasm when using and interacting with the applications and they have expressed how the information evenings and drop-in sessions were very beneficial.
- Colleagues have become interested in the development of this project and are also being trained in the use of these applications.
- Suzanne Bouffard states that "We need to stop expecting families to come to school and instead we should reach parents where they are. Increasingly where families are is online and on mobile devices." I feel that my enquiry project has taken the school a step closer to achieving this goal.

#### What are the implications?

"Positive feedback is powerful. Its addictive! Once teachers start communicating with parents in this intimate and positive way, the number of learning anecdotes that both teachers and parents send multiplies!" (G Nixon, 2017)

- The use of the applications is now embedded within my practice and I plan to continue this with my new cohort of pupils and parents in the new academic year.
- We are hoping to start using See-Saw throughout the whole school and we are consistently using the resource Class123 as our Behaviour Management Programme and to contact parents.



### In what ways does relaxation and mindfulness help in developing positive mental health and wellbeing in children?

Sean Dowling, Class teacher - P1/2, TCSOA

#### What did you do?

- At the start of the year, pupils in my P1/2 class completed the interactive Wellbeing Wheel which uses the SHANARRI indicators to assess and score a child's overall health and wellbeing. The results, although broadly positive, highlighted nurtured, included and safe as areas for development. In addition to this, regular pupil observations and interactions throughout term 1 indicated a broad need to develop resiliency and tackle low level anxiety which was negatively impacting on pupil engagement and social, emotional development. Throughout the year, using targeted strategies including relaxation, mindfulness, yoga and Bounce Back, pupils have demonstrated growing confidence, increased engagement, improved resiliency and reduced anxiety.

#### Why did you do it?

'Prevention and early intervention are key to minimising the prevalence and incidence of poor mental health and the severity and life time impact of mental disorders and mental illness. Prevention and early interventions must be the focus of activity and funding' (Scottish Government 2017)  
Mental health and wellbeing is something that personally and professionally interests me and, in the last 2 years, has become a hot topic in education. As an early years and infant teacher, I have witnessed a growing number of pupils coming into school with anxiety and low self-esteem and I recognise the significant impact this can have on a child as they progress through school into adult life.

#### What has happened as a result?

- The impact of this enquiry has yet to be formally assessed as pupils will revisit the wellbeing wheel in June as part of a whole school focus. With that said, the anecdotal evidence points to a positive result. When asked 'How has the relaxation and mindfulness helped you?', pupils responded;  
• "Relaxation gives me time to think about what has happened and calm down." (P1, boy, 5)  
• "I think about why I am sad and change what I am thinking to something happy then I feel better." (P2, girl, 6)  
• "After lunch when we do relaxation, I feel calmer and happier. The music and story help me decide if it is a big deal or a little deal." (P1, girl, 6).  
• Throughout the year we varied our activities and timings and found that focusing on mindfulness in the morning helped reduce work related and separation anxieties. This helped with overall productivity, particularly with literacy tasks, and those pupils who simply struggled to enter the classroom without crying. The relaxation time proved more effective in the afternoons when low level incidents weighed heavily on the children's minds.

#### What are the implications?

My School has identified health and wellbeing, particularly resiliency and positive mental health, as an area for development as part of the School Improvement Plan. Although not a direct result of my enquiry, it does serve to recognise the wider concerns across the school and the growing need to support children with their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

As for my own practice, I am aware of the signs of anxiety and feel more prepared in how to support pupils moving forward. I recognise the importance early intervention but would like to see more targeted resources and support in tackling such a sensitive issue at such a young age.

