

Special educational needs and disability

Report to board of directors *October 2015*

At the time of writing Woodcroft School has 29 pupils on roll, 4 girls and 25 boys. As a special school all of the pupils are required to have either a Statement of Special Educational Needs, an Education Health and Care plan or a note in lieu (whilst the assessment that leads to the issuing of an EHC plan is undertaken).

The profile of pupils needs attending Woodcroft remains complex and unique to each individual child. Autistic spectrum remains by and far the most prominent condition with over 71% of children having a positive diagnosis. A further 11% exhibit similar traits but are either undergoing 'second opinion' assessments or have had their diagnoses revoked. The remaining 18% of children demonstrate profiles that suggest autism but are known to have experienced attachment and early childhood trauma issues.

A significant number of the children have been identified as having comorbidity of Attention deficit hyperactive disorder, ADHD, Tourettes, Oppositional defiance disorder (ODD), Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and Epilepsy. Two children have a diagnosis of Pathological demand avoidance (PDA) whilst a working hypothesis of such is held for a further child.

Children and Families Act 2014

Currently 12 children have Education, Health and Care plans having either undertaken the process of conversion of statement or had a Plan drawn up following initial assessment. The process of conversion ranges in format from LA to LA with some authorities as identified by a recent NASS report, expecting the school to undertake the majority of work.

In line with 2014 Act the Head teacher and Academic administrator have booked into further training with Tower Hamlets in how to arrange and deliver the requirements in light of the changes to the review process and the greater person centred focus of the approach.

Work continues in the formation of priorities in the style of Outcome as opposed Objectives and targets. The language of Outcomes and how they should be written appears to vary with some LAs happy to use 'To be able to...' and others wanting an exact action ie 'Walk independently to the bus'.

Assessment

The formal assessment approach tool currently in use is PIVATs. The school has the Fourth edition version, which still used the old National curriculum levels. This has been recognised as not truly reflecting the progress and knowledge of our pupils because of the need for the children to meet the criteria of all five strands before they are able to move to the next level. This results in the child's true progress not being accredited.

The school is examining PIVATs 5, Pivat's response to assessment without levels. This appears to rectify the issue identified in PIVATS 4 and allows progress to be acknowledged on much narrower bands of progress e.g. in *Number* or *Using and applying*.

Following Whole school training in September, staff are in the process of accessing children against the SCERTs framework (Social communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support).

The school is also examining the Autism Educational Trust and MAPP assessing Personal Progress frameworks and approaches to help with articulating the children's wider progress that is not so easily measured by the PIVATS approach.

Woodcroft does not take part in Key Stage 2 end of phase testing.

Training

Bryn Brighton (speech and language therapist) and Martin Heather (Rowan class teacher) have since our last report undertaken Elklan tutor training. Martin was involved in the delivery of a Language Builders programme in January-March 2015 to 12 members of staff.

NAS Autism Accreditation

I undertook further Autism Accreditation training so as to be able to undertake Peer Reviews of other settings. This should also help us as we prepare for our own Peer Review in spring 2016.

Augmented Communication iPad

Bryn also undertook training in Augmented Communication approaches using the iPad to further the opportunities of some of our more verbally challenged children.

PEACH Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

We have re engaged with the PEACH organisation in order to help gain further input and advice in how to move some children on who benefit from a more Applied Behaviour Analysis.

Autistic spectrum

The school has decided in line with the view of the autistic community, to remove the word disorder from its literature. The term 'disorder' is deemed to provide a negative connotation of autism and is not how autistic people wish to be termed when describing their community.

Brian C Sainsbury, head teacher

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