

## EFFECTIVE PRACTICE: Brightlingsea Infants

### Focus

Moving from the pilot phase to Quality Scheme and embedding teaching and learning.

### Context

Brightlingsea is a three-form entry in the coastal Essex town of Brightlingsea. It was part of the initial Achievement for All pilot in Essex, then after a gap of a year rejoined the programme in Easter 2012. There is an increasing population of residents moving to the area from London and other towns, and FSM is increasing. During the pilot the school invested the funding it received predominantly into training to build a capacity for sustainable change. Other money was spent on work in the school grounds to improve play opportunity for children linked to improving behaviour.

### Approach

During the course of the pilot the school focused on developing the structured conversation model and to building on teaching and learning. Classroom culture and practice was patchy and too often responsibility for ownership of childrens' learning – particularly for those on the SEN register – was left to TAs. The impact of interventions was unclear and there were variable expectations on children.

***'What we try to do is look at what changes we can make to quality first teaching first before going in with an intervention – which can be costly and only impact on one child. A change of practice can impact on many and improve quality overall.'***

Julia Hunt, Head Teacher

The focus was put on quality first teaching. Teachers took full responsibility for all children in their class – they prepare for structured conversations, the IEPs, and for pupil progress meetings. Teachers review their routine practice in the classroom and are encouraged to consider whether all children can access the same quality of teaching. All teaching staff and TAs were trained in Fischer Family Trust Wave 3, interventions were narrowed down to core classroom practice and additional interventions; TAs were trained in narrative therapy; with groups of staff trained in specialist interventions such as Gym trail; a number of staff were trained as play leaders to help improve behaviour at lunchtime and playtimes. The school also looked at common practice to ensure children could access learning quickly – this includes all classrooms being set out in the same way so children are familiar and comfortable with the environment when they change class.

The gap of a year allowed time to reflect on the learning. Funding for Achievement for All was delivered through the Head Teacher becoming an Achievement for All

coach which also brought the benefit of additional problem sharing and solving with other schools. During the past year Brightlingsea has focused on embedding key practice. Structured conversations are now run in some form with all parents who get at least three 20 minute consultations each year. Teachers have full ownership and accountability for the progress for all the children in their classes and regular PPMs ensure this is focused on. The first point of action for any child is within the class, with the teacher ensuring that everything they are doing each day in the class ensures access to quality teaching for each child. It is only when that does not improve progress that further interventions are used. Children are only added to the SEN register if there is genuine cause to do so – not just because they are not making expected progress.

## Impact

- Brightlingsea has moved children off the SEN register to ensure that those who are still on it are genuinely not making progress because of a specific need. Currently there are 2 on SA, 7 on SA+ and 6 with statements
- Other than those who are on P scales, all but one child is now on course for L2+
- Responsibility for progress rests with each teacher who is expected to deliver quality first teaching for every child but has the capacity within the class to deliver interventions
- The structured conversation approach is embedded throughout the school.

## Key Learning

- Quality first teaching is fundamental to ensuring all children make progress and to identifying any who need additional support
- Cover is required for structured conversations and to ensure a variety of times, to suit parents' needs, can be provided.
- Working as an Achievement for All coach means that the Head Teacher is both able to share practice, and to benefit from joint problem sharing and solving with other schools.

## Next Steps

- Brightlingsea is looking at how to determine what 'good' progress looks like within P scales
- Sharing practice with other schools is beneficial to all and the Head Teacher is looking to build on this
- There is continuing work on assessing the impact of quality first teaching versus interventions
- The structured conversation model is being used in performance management

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