



CHESSWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Home of Bright Sparks

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Dear Parent

I recently sent out a letter to all parents of Pupil Premium children outlining the provision available at Chesswood through the funding the school receives. Having recently met with an adoptive parent, I felt it was necessary to further unpick the difference between 'Pupil Premium' and 'Pupil Premium Plus (PP+)' funding. There are differences within the guidance on how the money can be spent, however, with the number of children currently entitled to PP funding in school, the wide range of needs is diverse and we seek to meet the needs of children as a group and on an individual basis.

The focus of the Pupil Premium funding is *'to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities and to close the gaps between them and their peers.'*

The focus of the Pupil Premium Plus funding is to *'help adopted children emotionally, socially and educationally by providing specific support to raise their attainment and address their wider needs.'*

Both focus on the attainment of pupils, whilst Pupil Premium Plus recognises the need to support children emotionally and socially. However, it is clearly recognised that to raise attainment for Pupil Premium children, addressing any emotional and social needs is critical to enable them to focus within class and attain higher. Therefore, the vast majority of strategies in place are relevant to both groups of pupils. However, PAC-UK (The Agency for Adoption and Permanency Support) have provided a helpful list of suggested strategies to particularly support adopted children in the key areas in which they may struggle; namely -

1. Attachment relationships with adults
2. Managing their peer relationships
3. Managing their feelings and behaviour
4. Coping with transitions
5. Developing their executive functioning skills

The purpose of this letter is to outline what we do to meet these needs whilst identifying the areas for improvement, suggesting ways forward and inviting ideas and responses so that we can work together to make sure provision for adopted children is as good as it can be.

Please use the attached table to feed back any ways you feel we could improve / introduce to further support your child.

Kind regards
Jez Himsworth

	PAC-UK Suggestions	What we already do	Future action	Parental Suggestions / Comments
Provide nurture and relationships through:	A nurture breakfast club which allows children to settle into the school day	A member of staff is on duty to specifically support PP children during breakfast club. Free breakfast club places are available for PP children.	IXL club with free breakfast places.	
	Providing meet and greets for children at the start of the day	Learning mentor undertakes this role on a needs basis.	Continue	
	A nurture room and group. More information about the Nurture Group Network can be found here.	Currently the Bluebell Room is used as a basic, safe, inclusive space in school. Base of the pastoral team.	Research nurture rooms and the potential development at Chesswood – e.g. convert PE changing rooms.	
	Training and supporting staff to provide key attachment relationships with regular 1:1 'attachment time' built into children's timetables	We believe training in attachment theory is critical in school. Attempts to undertake training have not yet been successful. We believe this would support a significant number of pupils – not just PP/+.	Seek whole staff training in attachment theory. In the meantime, circulate 'Adoption UK – Factsheet A9 – What every teacher needs to know' and 'Attachment behaviour overview' to all staff and ensure understanding. Staff meeting planned for Autumn 2	
Scaffold children's social skills and peer relationships, for example through:	Social skills groups or Circle of Friends interventions	Learning mentor leads social skills groups and friendship interventions – including lunchtime.	Develop capacity within the SEN / pastoral team to release the learning mentor to increase intervention – Autumn 2.	
	Lunchtime clubs with opportunities to practice social skills	Learning mentor leads social skills groups and friendship interventions – including lunchtime.	Continue	
	Training midday supervisors to provide structured play at break times	Sports coach has begun to lead structured play.	Training of midday supervisors in structured play – INSET 23rd November	
	Friendship groups	Learning mentor leads social skills groups and friendship interventions – including lunchtime.	Continue	
	Facilitating friendships e.g. through a buddy scheme or peer mentoring initiative	Learning mentor leads social skills groups and friendship interventions – including lunchtime.	Develop the role of the school 'Friendship Buddies' – tabards and training – by January 17	

	PAC-UK Suggestions	What we already do	Future action	Parental Suggestions / Comments
Support emotional literacy and emotion regulation through:	Emotional literacy and emotion regulation groups, including anger management	On a needs basis, pastoral team lead anger and anxiety management support.	Continue Build wider understanding in staff – including literature.	
	Appointing and training an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)	Current learning mentor and pastoral lead provide support in this area.	Continue	
	Providing calm boxes and staff to spend 1:1 time helping children to regulate themselves	Children provided with 'calm down kits' and supported in their use	Further resources to support – eg lego, stress balls, calm-down kits, sensory toys	
	Providing calm zones in classrooms and centrally within the school	Calm zones / safe places provided in classrooms on a needs basis.	Create a safe-zone classroom for break times	
	Providing alternatives to detention and isolation which focus on understanding and repairing what went wrong	All TAs trained in comic strip conversations and social stories.	Embed in practice. Clear understanding and consistent implementation of the behaviour policy.	
	Therapeutic services (e.g. play, art, music, drama therapy) for individuals or groups of children; please note that therapists and counsellors who provide 'adoption support' must be registered with Ofsted as Adoption Support Agencies or commissioned by the local authority or a registered Adoption Support Agency	Pastoral team interventions include drawing and talking and lego therapy. On a needs basis, external therapy sessions have been delivered – e.g. art therapy, play therapy and counselling services. The pastoral team are experienced in delivering anxiety, self-esteem, social and anger-management sessions.	Develop expertise in specific support for permanently placed children – eg attachment issues. Develop links with Adoption Support Agencies to enable expert support as required.	

	PAC-UK Suggestions	What we already do	Future action	Suggestions / Comments
<i>Support children to cope with transitions and change by:</i>	Providing additional structure during break and lunchtimes	1:1 and group support provided on a needs basis	Create a safe-zone classroom for break times. Further implementation of structured play activities.	
	Providing safe spaces for children to come to throughout the school day	The Bluebell Room is a central safe space for children to go to throughout the school day – base of the pastoral team.	Further develop the Bluebell Room as a calm, sensory focused environment.	
	Appointing a transition worker to support children through the Year 6 to Year 7 transition	Comprehensive transition programmes are in place for vulnerable children within school and with feeder schools.	Continue current transition work. Raise profile of attachment needs with staff as these are not always apparent.	
	Identifying a group of staff who can provide cover for absence, reducing the need for external supply staff	Regular staff used for cover where possible.	Continue to use current staff to cover wherever possible. If not possible, use supply staff well-known to the school.	
	Spending time preparing children for change in advance e.g. using social stories or visual timetables	All TAs have been trained in the use of social stories. Each classroom has a visual timetable for children to access. If necessary an individual visual timetable can be provided.	Continue to develop	
	Liaising closely with parents and guardians who can help their children prepare for and cope with change	On a needs basis – however, we recognise this is not currently proactive enough	Better communication with parents of PP+ children – including termly review meetings for all PP+ children, not just those on the SEN register. Share PAC-UK 'Making decisions about sharing information with schools' with parents. Coffee morning for parents of children in care / adopted.	

	PAC-UK Suggestions	What we already do	Future action	Suggestions / Comments
<i>Develop children's executive functioning skills through:</i>	Training staff in understanding and supporting executive functioning skill development in the classroom and on the playground	The school's ACRO skills and BRIGHT SPARKS code promote the development of executive functioning skills.	Continue – further focus on ACRO and BRIGHT SPARKS as part of daily school practice.	
	Providing individual and group sessions which focus on scaffolding the skills needed	Regular classroom practice focuses on these skills. 1:1 and group support is available on a needs basis via the pastoral team.	Continue	
	Providing coaching for children who struggle to plan and organise e.g. check-ins to ensure they have books and equipment, have recorded the homework etc.	SEN department and TAs, support children with organisation – eg using visual timetables, prompt sheets, checklists, task boards, home-school logs / checklists etc	Continue	
<i>Address barriers to information sharing and joint working by:</i>	Developing policies and procedures which ensure that key information about children's needs is shared with all key staff coming into contact with them	This happens on a needs basis but we acknowledge the need to be more proactive.	Joint working is not developed enough – as a school we want to use the expertise and understanding of parents to know how best to support their children. Share PAC-UK 'Making decisions about sharing information with schools' with parents. Develop PP+ 'passport' for all PP+ children.	
	Identifying a named member of staff who liaises with the parents or guardians and facilitates regular meetings to discuss the child's need and progress	Currently nothing in place apart from where meetings have developed in response to need or where PEP is in place (Personal Education Plan)	Termly update meetings with parents. Potential to facilitate group meetings – eg coffee mornings to enable discussion which leads to improved practice.	

Further Comments

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