Annual Conference for Educational Psychologists in Scotland 2015

Workshop 1 (11.10-12.10)

Carnegie B

‘Deliverology’ – an approach to leadership of change with a focus on the development of Visible Learning across Midlothian

Sarah Philp, Midlothian Educational Psychology Service

‘The wire is high and roar of the crowd may be less positive than before, but this is no time to wobble’ (Guardian editorial, quoted in Instruction to Deliver 196)

This workshop will share the experiences of Midlothian Educational Psychology Service in leading change within the area of learning and teaching. The change is rooted in the Visible Learning approach and the evidence base of John Hattie’s research. We will share our experiences and impact through the lens of Michael Barber’s ‘Deliverology 101’. The deliverology approach is designed to help a system set and achieve ambitious goals. We will describe how we have developed a strong foundation for delivery and reached a shared vision. The delivery of this has its strength in the combination of a variety of strands at all layers of the organisation which have been identified, sequenced and combined to have greatest impact. These strands will be shared with a focus on the impact they have had. We will reflect on the key learning points we have experienced along the way and how we have used this to effect further impact, including a focus on how the process of validated self-evaluation contributed to this. Within the theme of leadership we will give specific consideration to how we have promoted leadership at all levels across Midlothian in order to build capacity for change.

Workshop 1

Carnegie B

Positive Coaching Scotland: Lessons for Sport and Lessons for Life

Imogen Kerr, Educational Psychology Service, Orkney Islands Council and Michael Swanney, Active Schools Team, Orkney Islands Council

Positive Coaching Scotland (PCS) is a national programme using sport to ‘support children’s learning and the development of their life skills’. Sportscotland – the national agency for sport – has led the roll-out over the past two years across Scotland’s 32 Local Authorities. Delivered mainly by Sports Development and Active Schools teams, the programme however bridges beyond the sporting context. The role of coach is redefined, with the ‘Double Goal Coach®’ focusing equally on fostering sporting ambition and on equipping young people with cognitive skills, personal qualities, and a sense of social responsibility, which they can draw on throughout their lives. Education Scotland has developed teachers’ workshop materials to encourage use of PCS in the wider learning environment, and the programme also has materials to encourage parent involvement. In this way, PCS takes an ecological approach to Health and Wellbeing and, explicitly drawing on the work of Carol Dweck, reinforces the links between effort, achievement, and sense of fulfilment.

This workshop will give participants a chance to look at the key features of the programme, and to consider how it has been used in Local Authorities over the past two years since its roll-out. The opportunity that it presents for Educational Psychology and Active Schools teams to engage in joint work will be explored, and a small-scale case study will be presented, where the Educational Psychology Service and the Active Schools team in a rural Authority have used PCS to jointly support a school in its goal of increasing emotional resilience through strengthened self-efficacy.
Session 1

A Strategic Review of Inclusion and Additional Support Needs in a local authority education service

Nicholas Balchin, Falkirk Council EPS and Elaine Beck, Falkirk Council EPS

The Local authority commissioned the Principal Educational Psychologist to review the approach to Inclusion and the provision for meeting additional support needs. The Principal Educational Psychologist formed a team of 9 participants and used the Soft Systems Methodology to provide a coherent vision and set of proposals for implementing a more inclusive educational approach to meet all additional support needs. The project team then entered a briefing phase with local leaders and politicians, followed by a concept validation phase with local leaders and key practitioners. Aspects of the Inclusion Review Implementation were able to be tested using the improvement methodology of small tests of change in some establishments. Others have been expanded on using alternative systems methodologies, such as a Design Thinking approach.

The workshop will explore the value of Soft Systems Methodology as an approach for leading change, comparison with other systems approaches and allow participants to reflect on leading change that affect complex real world problems at a time of significant financial constraint.

In this context the Soft Systems methodology provides one approach that can provide a framework for considering evidence based practice. Its iterative nature is such that the change element can be modified as increasing numbers of stakeholders are brought into the process and other views and evidence-based approaches can modify the transformation. The change process is complex and affected by many barriers including staff shortage and change of senior leadership personnel. There will be opportunity to reflect on these dimensions as they affect projects of this magnitude.

The workshop will provide a perspective on leading change.

Workshop 1

Implementing a Visible Learning Approach to School Improvement in a Primary School

Pamela Foster, Midlothian Council/University of Strathclyde

Educational Psychologists can take a lead in supporting change in schools through embracing evidence-based practice to improve outcomes for children and young people. This project sought to do so through the application of John Hattie’s visible learning research. Hattie’s comprehensive meta-analyses and his interpretation of the data seeks to understand which factors have the biggest impact on learning and achievement, and how this can successfully translate into real classrooms.

The first year of a primary school’s journey to become a visible learning school in collaboration with Educational Psychology is explored, in the context of local authority and EPS priorities. This project gives an example of how an Educational Psychologist can engage in school improvement in a purposeful way using research and psychology, and will consider how EPs at any stage of their career can identify with a leadership role. Challenges and opportunities in relation to implementation will also be explored. The impact of this multi-stranded one-year project has been evaluated through a range of methods from a critical realist stance in keeping with Hattie’s ‘know thy impact!’ message.

Workshop 1

School Engagement: Co-construction of Learning

Gillian Horribine, Perth and Kinross

This workshop aims to share the process, learning and outcomes of an action research project to promote school engagement, led by members of the Educational Psychology Service.
The School Engagement Action Research (SEAR) project was the result of an authority wide needs assessment by the Social Research Unit at Dartington, where ‘School Engagement’ was highlighted as a priority improvement area. The Educational Psychology Service offered to support improvements leading a yearlong action research project. Four primary schools were involved and were supported through needs analysis, problem redefinition and implementing and evaluating an intervention or change. The project generated interest from the Education Scotland ‘Knowledge into Action’ project and was supported by research from Professor Louise Hayward at the University of Glasgow.

This workshop will outline the stages undertaken by the psychologists and school staff including early negotiations within the local authority, the model applied, engagement evidence shared, areas of intervention and evaluation data. Implementation factors will also be discussed, as will key messages from Professor Louise Hayward in relation to supporting academic research into practice. Early indications of impact highlight that the project has been an effective model for schools to understand their school engagement more fully, to take ownership of the changes they are beginning to make and learn skills to problem solve other areas.

We hope this workshop will provide an opportunity to share thinking, experience and resources in relation to Educational Psychologists leading action research and the theoretical application of school engagement research.

Workshop 1

Not another initiative - using Visible Learning as the basis for raising attainment in Aberdeenshire

Anne Wilson and Jane Craik, Aberdeenshire

Aberdeenshire EPS have been working with partners to improve learning for all children in Aberdeenshire schools. Using John Hattie’s research as an evidence base we are supporting teachers in their understanding of Visible Learning as an approach for change in schools. Aberdeenshire is a large rural authority with small pockets of deprivation and children living in poverty within areas of relative affluence. Therefore targeting areas for special support is not sufficient. This workshop will explore how Visible Learning can be used to change the emphasis from target setting to improving learning for every child/YP. We will share the Visible Learning Journey of one small school and identify the challenges and evidence of impact at the local level. Feedback from teachers, pupils and parents have provided opportunities for reflection and subsequent learning points used to construct next steps. The workshop will then look at the work going on at every level of the Local Authority to support and develop Visible Learning across the authority. The workshop will describe the challenges and strengths of collaborative working in one local authority.

This workshop is an example of leading change.

Workshop 1

Developing Nurture Networks in Early Years Establishments

Mark Brotherton, East Ayrshire Council and Blake Killeen, East Ayrshire Council

East Ayrshire Psychological Service (Cumnock and Kilmarnock Learning Communities – Early Years)

After the introduction of nurturing approaches in all Early Childhood Centres in East Ayrshire a need emerged to further support practitioners with the implementation of nurturing principles in daily practice. Evaluative feedback confirmed that nurture was not consistently adopted in all establishments with discrepancies in the application of theory between and within centres.

A pilot programme was developed utilising the Model for Improvement (Early Years Collaborative) and individual practitioners (Nurture Champions) were identified to lead the project in their own
locality. The Educational Psychologists met with the Champions on a monthly basis utilising coaching and modelling techniques to support the application of small tests of change in the field. There have been various successes but also points for improvement as the model has developed over the last year.

Developing and utilising leadership skills, encouraging autonomy and building confidence have been integral factors in the successes, and learning opportunities of the Nurture Networks approach with opportunities for reflection emerging for both psychologists and practitioners alike.

Currently the project is being up-scaled to more learning communities in East Ayrshire within ongoing study and review. An authority wide event allowed selected Early Years Practitioners to learn about the model, share practice and consult with their Educational Psychologist to plan potential next steps.

In this workshop the feedback relating to the success of Early Years Nurture Networks will be shared with opportunities to explore the Improvement Model, the leadership skills developed, the impact

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Session 2 (2.10-3.10) Carnegie A

RAFA

Susan Hannah, Education Scotland Alison Crawford, Glasgow North West

Raising Attainment For All – How a Model for Improvement is supporting quality improvement activity to close the gap in educational attainment

Schools who have engaged in the RAfA programme and are using the Model for Improvement are showing how useful this method is in driving forward improvement activity focussed on the progress of children and young people in schools. This session will provide an overview of the RAfA programme, it’s progress so far and share examples of how school teams are adopting the methodology into their teaching practice. The involvement of Educational Psychologists in this work is important to ensure that the focus of improvement activity considers the whole child and colleagues attending this session will have the opportunity to discuss the role of Educational Psychology in raising attainment for all children and young people and how that role might be increased or different in some way.

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Workshop 2 Main Hall

Transition to secondary school: Reducing anxiety using a whole-class Homunculi Approach

Dr Anne Greig, Argyll & Bute Psychological Service, Prof Tommy Mackay, Psychology Consultancy Services & Argyll & Bute Council And Amy Nolan Argyll & Bute Psychological Service

There is a growing evidence base for the use of universal CBT packages to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in the educational context. The Homunculi Approach is a CBT based programme that is already validated for use with individuals or small groups of pupils on the autism spectrum or with similar difficulties. Following a local needs analyses, two comparable
Primary 7 classes were identified as having unusually high levels of general anxiety and particularly regarding the secondary transition programme. It was agreed that a whole class intervention using an adapted Homunculi Approach would best meet the needs of pupils.

The Intervention programme comprised of five expert teaching sessions:
1. Thinking about Thinking (Psychologist);
2. Creation of Characters and Gadgets (Art Teacher);
3. Filming Techniques (Drama Teacher);
4. Storyboarding (English Teacher)
5. Using iPads (Class Teacher).

The P7 teacher then dedicated a two-week period to the development of digital films addressing the transition worries of the pupils: bullying, getting lost, homework, making friends and peer pressure. The two classes were randomly allocated to an intervention (N = 23) or control group (N = 22). Genders were equally represented across groups. Both classes included two girls on the autism spectrum. Pre and post measures included: Spence Children’s Anxiety Scale; Qualitative booklet SUD responses to scenarios; strategies generated; and reflectivity. Results showed a significant difference (p < .01) in favour of a reduction in anxiety for the intervention group. Qualitative results and further follow-up are forthcoming.

Workshop 2

The South Lanarkshire Framework for supporting pupils with severe and profound learning needs; informing teaching and assessment approaches which reflect the atypical development of this group of learners.

Kirstie Rees, South Lanarkshire Psychological Service

Children with severe and profound learning difficulties often plateau in their learning, have difficulty generalising skills to new contexts or show regression as a result of illness. The skills that they need to learn at school will have already been achieved by the majority of typically developing children within the first two years of life.

In South Lanarkshire, Psychological Service has facilitated an authority-wide working party which has led to the creation of a ‘Framework for Supporting Children and Young People with Severe and Profound Learning Needs’. This document aids schools in taking forward the Curriculum for Excellence for this group of learners and ensures that emphasis is placed on pupils’ ‘active engagement’ and on the identification of relevant and individualised learning ‘outcomes.’

The aim of this workshop is to explore how educational psychologists can use the information and resources within the Framework to build capacity amongst school staff and inform teaching and assessment approaches which are based on an understanding of the often atypical development of these pupils. Further consideration will also be given to implementation factors and to how Psychological Service can provide ongoing peer support to staff in this sector and evaluate the impact of the Framework across the authority.

Consistent with Council objectives and with recommendations from both Education Scotland and the Doran review, the ‘Framework for supporting pupils with severe and profound learning needs’ aims to increase expectations of what pupils experience and achieve whilst promoting the professional learning of staff.

Workshop 2

Parenting which involves seeking repeated diagnostic or exaggerated ASN criteria
Carolyn Brown and Rosaleen Chalmers, Fife Council Psychological Service

The majority of parents exhibit appropriate anxiety & protectiveness towards their children within a normal range of parental concerns. However, research shows that a small percentage of parents & carers place their child or children at risk of physical or emotional harm because of their strongly held beliefs & anxieties that there is something seriously wrong with their child in terms of either additional support needs & /or medical issues. Such parents & carers seek various additional support requests through the education system &/or medical diagnoses through the health system. They are likely to seek numerous educational & medical assessments with a view to seeking a range of educational & health interventions. This parenting approach not only has an impact on the deployment of scarce resources but more importantly it may result in causing significant harm to some children & young people’s wellbeing & inclusion in education. Research in this area is limited & difficult to conduct due to the sensitivities regarding this issue. Not surprisingly, the literature indicates significant under reporting of this issue across agencies. This workshop will present findings from a survey of all ep caseloads conducted by Fife Council Psychological Service (FCPS). The FCPS Survey will compare its data with current available research findings alongside a number of GIRFEC themes relating to wellbeing. The workshop also plans to use the opportunity to gather information & data from other local authority psychological services with a view to the development of a national perspective regarding this area of work. The presenters also plan to make recommendations regarding risk management and child protection processes within the frameworks espoused by GIRFEC.

Workshop 2

Exploring Routes into Secure Accommodation for Young People from Fife

Dr Clare Gilfillan, Fife Council Psychological Service and Lynne Millar, Fife Council Psychological Service

This work is one of a series of research projects ongoing in Fife Council Psychological Service focusing on ‘Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage’.

A significant number of young people from Fife are currently placed in secure accommodation. Young people reach these placements mostly through secure panels. However, leading up to this stage a series of events will have taken place and a number of professionals are likely to have been involved. These placements are disruptive to education and take a young person away from their community, often a long way from home. They are also very costly to fund.

The project will explore best practice to avoid placement in a secure unit for those young people being considered for it. Through collaborative working with Fife Social Work Services access has been given to the chronologies, child’s plans and Secure Panel minutes for all Fife young people considered for secure accommodation in 2014/2015. The data incorporates all young people who were presented at a secure panel including those young people who did not enter secure accommodation as an outcome.

Thematic analysis will be used to investigate the commonalities and differences in young peoples’ pathways towards secure accommodation. Other data that will be considered includes tracking Young People’s care placements in the preceding years and consideration of any historical significant events.

Workshop 2

Using the "We Can and Must Do Better” document to improve educational outcomes for children Looked After at Home

Sharon Philip, Glasgow Psychological Service and Yvonne Bushnell, GPS
Background
Children who are ""Looked After"" represent a high-risk group of whom those ""Looked After at Home"" have special problems. This workshop will present research which sought to listen to the voices of these young people and to acknowledge them as experts in their own lives and as essential contributors to the research process. A twin approach was taken with questionnaires being distributed by EP's their schools to establish the school's perspective on what initiatives they had in place for these youngsters followed by focus groups of looked after children at home, drawn from P5-P7. The workshop aims to share and discuss issues raised by this research, particularly in relation to the vulnerabilities highlighted by this group (school attendance, parental disengagement, homework, deprivation) and to discuss current interventions in schools to elicit areas of most impact in order that EP's can advise their local authorities on good practice. Research is ongoing and participants are invited to contribute their ideas and help shape future practice.

Key Points
Questionnaire data and focus group outputs were subjected to thematic analysis using the GIRFEC framework.

Conclusions
66 schools who responded were able to identify a wide range of supports. There needs to be a mechanism to elicit which supports and initiatives have most impact and to share these. The young people had strong views both positive and negative about school life. It is crucial that we find ways of involving them more in the decision-making process. We need to address the resilience factors both internal and external which result in more positive outcomes for these youngsters. Finally, it is essential that we liaise closely with SW to help parents engage in school life.