

## Index for Inclusion Pilot Newsletter – January 2018



60 schools, working in 7 Clusters across West Sussex are currently involved in collaborative School Improvement research & development activities using the INDEX for INCLUSION to:

**“Improve outcomes for all children and adults working in schools and settings by putting inclusive values into action and disconnecting action from excluding values”**

Participants are using the Index for Inclusion as a toolkit of ideas & support in order to help them a) reflect on current school practice and behaviours and b) to assist in highlighting areas requiring improvement that link to existing whole school development plans and school improvement priorities.

Clusters are working on common themes, building collaborative networks and sharing best and emerging practice. Much excitement and energy has been generated and after 3 cluster meetings, things are beginning to take shape and schools are already reporting impact due to changes they have made this term in a wide variety of ways.

### Clusters have chosen a variety of foci from the Index materials for research & development activity:

- Creating inclusive cultures –Staff and children respect each other
- Orchestrating Learning - Children are actively involved in their learning
- Building Community - Parents & carers are fully involved with their children’s learning
- Developing independence & resilience
- Establishing inclusive values - Expectations are high for all children
- Developing the school for all – staff expertise is known and used
- Organising support for diversity - Barriers to attendance are reduced
- Personalising learning

### School activities have involved:

- Compilation & analysis of questionnaires to staff, governors, parents and children creating baseline assessments
- Staff meetings - reflection and discussions highlighting & agreeing areas for development
- Linking with and enhancing existing school development plans & joint school/locality priority alignment
- Cluster schools working in partnership on common themes and sharing current expertise and practice
- Cluster liaison on training needs and running joint CPD activities
- Developing coaching practices
- Pushing student voice/outcome to the forefront of all activity
- Determined focus on impact for **all** children and **all** school participants/community
- Solution focused activity emphasising thinking outside the box for creative strategies and solutions
- Focusing on pedagogy and Teacher/TA participatory action research activities
- Creating and implementing new strategies, tools and resources for whole school use
- Using the Index to underline & support existing initiatives e.g. mental health and wellbeing for staff and children and within in Rights, Respecting Schools.

### Schools are noticing the impact of change:

Impact so far has been extremely positive. It’s been really useful to meet with other schools and share some of the issues with inclusion. It’s very reassuring to find that we share so many of the same problems and concerns, and that the same strategies might help us all. It’s also been interesting because we so often find that lots of meetings don’t apply to us in SEN sector when the majority of attendees are from mainstream, so this has been a very different experience.

Successes so far, well, it's early days, but we have a workable and realistic action plan to try and extend our support and engagement with parents and families, and some of the ideas discussed are already starting to be applied in our parent meetings and admissions tours.

*Being a 'Rights Respecting' school we are aiming towards achieving the Level Two accreditation. Many new strategies have been implemented. However it is the pupils' voice that has most impact, when you walk into classrooms and hear children saying "it's not fair that some children can't go to school, we all have the right to an education" or when out in the playground children are resolving conflicts by discussing the UN articles.*

Child A's overall attendance from Sept to the 2nd meeting date: 78.3% then attendance from meeting date to present: 87.5%. Mum has also engaged and is starting to seek support from 'Reaching Families' charity and is attending a child anxiety course.

Child B's overall attendance from Sep to meeting date improved to 53.4% then attendance from meeting date to present 16.67%. Unfortunately this was due to their asthmatic condition which has worsened and they are critically ill in hospital. However staff who work with this child have all fed back and said that they felt more informed in handling Child B's needs. Also we now have the school nurse overseeing the family and supporting as necessary.

Our snippet of good news is that we have started to use '3b4me' (Brain, Book, Buddy, Boss) which prompts the children to think before asking the teacher. First, they need to think for themselves (Brain), then use their book or resources around them to help (Book), then ask a friend (Buddy), all before putting their hand up to ask the teacher (Boss). It will encourage the children to be more independent. Many children often just automatically ask for help without even thinking about what they could do first to help themselves. We have new posters up around school to remind everyone.

**Another success is that we have had 31 responses to the parent survey. 25% said their children are never organised for school and they have to help them get ready.**

Our good news has to be the involvement of our TAs in staff meetings to develop the project. It was the best way to share and develop new ideas and everyone left the meeting 'buzzing'! As teachers had the opportunity to discuss ideas with their TAs in the meeting, changes started to happen more quickly in the classroom. It was fun as well as productive and we are looking forward to a twilight session together again next term.

I think we have really made a great start in our understanding and acceptance of Mental Health and Social and Emotional well-being, staff are feeling supported enough to come forward in asking for support since our Mental Health First Aid Twilight. Adults in school are able to view challenging behaviour with empathy and reacting with warmth and nurturing practices. The Attachment and Trauma Twilight was well received and members of the SEMH support team, teaching staff, learning support staff and our SEND governor have all 'signed up' to join the movement for inclusive well-being for all. We have been awarded a grant from 'Time to Change' to set up our 'Well-Being Cafe' which we hope to grow into a Hub to support our locality and we are hoping to be chosen as a pilot for the CYP Well-Being packages and further develop our Index for Inclusion aims through the SEND partnership Board team focusing on Behaviour practices and SEMH needs.

**Seeing a year 2 child who now has and EHCP eat, drink, speak, play and learn freely amongst his peers after having spent most of Reception under a table and most of year one in a tent in the corridor is one of the most wonderful things I have ever witnessed and the joy on adults faces as he approaches, talks to and hugs them is wonderful.**

**The relief of a Reception child's mother as she came to the Nativity, fully expecting for him not to be able to join in, as she watched him dressed in a camel suit singing on the stage was another high as was her delight in how far he'd come only since September.**

*I have asked for an I4I slot at our SENCO forum in January so that I can ask for feedback from the other SENCOs with regards to their needs and ideas for collaborative working.*

We completed our first faculty Inclusion review which highlighted many staff strengths that can be shared more widely. I also fed back to Director of Faculty and together we have decided on 4 key points of development to help ensure that "Expectations are high for all children".

More targeted questions with a 'no hands up' approach  
Ensure challenging activities present throughout lesson

Improve use of LSAs to develop independence and resilience - not always LSAs with weakest children

Use of more positive language and specific praise to encourage high standards and aspiration

We have placed a folder on the shared drive for each of the 4 areas of SEND (C&I, SEMH, C&L and Physical and Sensory). In each folder there are presentations and pieces of research re Teaching and Learning and how to ensure best outcomes for students. Along with the SEND regulations we have added hyperlinks to 'One Page Profiles' to remind staff of how to get the best out of each and every student.

Already we are beginning to see impact of our changes. Children are taking more pride in their independent work. They are better at getting started on an independent task and being more focused. The work they are producing is of a much higher quality and is more in line with the work they produce with the teacher.

I have been trying to engage a parent who has herself had a bad experience of school. Her son is struggling and needs an EHC assessment. I have worked with her to complete these as her son will only do them if she is present. We have worked together to find the best time to these to take place. Every time I see her on the playground, I make sure that I go and say 'Hello'. The other day I said hello and she was with a friend. She turned around to her friend and said that I had worked so hard for her son and that I was a 'good one'!

**In developing personalisation & a deeper understanding of barriers we identified a child in Year 3 who did not understand the concept of being paid to work and did not believe teachers were paid and believed money came from cashpoints that anyone could access. Individualised work is being done with her to develop her understanding of work/jobs etc.**

*We have been working on providing mentoring for children who lack motivation and aspiration. By providing opportunities for them to take on increased responsibility, two children are now able to discuss something which they have achieved during the previous week that has made them feel proud. Both have been given roles as House Captain/Vice-captain.*

**We have used the Index for Inclusion – A1.1 EVERYONE IS WELCOMED with our school council, had a joint School council meeting with four locality schools and looked at the same point. The children had opportunities to share their ideas and their school values. This led to identifying that we need to enhance the entrance to the school and we are going to put a screen with a loop of images of children working and their work for parents to look at whilst waiting to speak to someone.**

**In a large secondary school, a monthly staff inclusion breakfast session (with food!) where staff share & discuss successful T&L strategies and good practice has led to the introduction of 'structure slips' across the whole school. All fully supported by the HT. There are also PE lessons trialling yoga classes for anxious pupils.**

In another large secondary school, discussion on the Index has led to full buy in from the SLT and Governors, who asked lots of questions but were in full agreement with the principles of the Index. A link governor is now fully on board and working with the member of staff on agreed actions.

In order to engage more parents, instigating a parents' meeting with an open agenda has led to the establishment of a Parents' Forum with meeting dates set throughout the year. The session raised concerns about parental anxiety which we will address with an 'anxiety training' session. (Courtesy of another school in the cluster)

**The focus on inclusion and an awareness of Developmental Trauma has meant that a Yr 4 student who has really struggled to cope this term has remained in school as staff (both teaching and non-teaching) across the school have been informed and supported and have acknowledged the issues the student was facing. Modelling of appropriate strategies has seen a positive change in behaviours of all involved.**

In order to encourage a child with poor attendance to come into school on a more regular basis, the Head teacher bought a plant and the child was asked to come in and water it every morning before going into class. This has seen a marked improvement in her attendance, with only one absence since the strategy was put into place. On this day the Head teacher rang the parent to check the reason for the absence.



Each class has been given a resource box for supporting maths. The use of concrete resources is being promoted throughout the school.

One Index question that received a noticeably negative response was "I like to tell my family about school", with over half the children responding with a straight or a sad face. In response to this, the school has decided to introduce Family Learning Conferences to replace traditional parent evenings. The invitations to these conferences are being sent out by the children, in an effort to encourage their parents to attend.

In each class one disadvantaged child and one other have been identified to be involved in this pilot

A staff meeting is booked to train staff and a coffee morning to inform families. There will also be a workshop for the children.

During Family Learning Conferences, the child is present and brings to the meeting a piece of work he or she is proud of and a piece of work that that he or she would like to make better. Prompt cards will be given to parents, who will lead the session rather than the teacher.

All parents will be told about the Family Learning Conference trial and will know that if it is successful, it will be rolled out across the school

#### **Other successes noted by cluster schools this term were:**

*Lunch and homework clubs have started and are a great success.*

*Individual meetings with parent/carers that have been really positive.*

*Deepening of involvement with parents in the community and at events e.g. local choir*

*Fresh approaches to independent working are evident in pupil books.*

*Pupil teachers are delivering fun lessons*

*Teachers are running parent learning workshops*

**The next round of cluster meetings take place in February and further successes will be reported in our next Newsletter at the beginning of the Summer term.**

If you would like more information about the Index for Inclusion pilot, please contact:

[miriam.hill@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:miriam.hill@westsussex.gov.uk)