

The Consultant Clinician

Behaviour Management
Consultancy Service
in
Educational Settings



VOICE FROM THE FIELD - THE CONSULTANT CLINICIAN

A case example, written by one of our Consultant Clinicians, of effective multidisciplinary practice through a Consultant Clinician from The Euphelia Clinic supporting early childhood professionals to learn behaviour management in their setting

My work as a **Consultant Clinician** is focused upon the five Every Child Matters outcomes and children's wellbeing, and I am a specialist in child and adolescent mental health, in addition to being an Early Years Consultant. I am involved in various projects situated within the Team Around the Child approach, where a team of multidisciplinary professionals work together to meet the needs of vulnerable children.

One recent project was **to support a large primary school** meet the individual needs of their pupils with emotional and behavioural issues in the school setting, and to promote positive behaviours. On assessing the pupils within the school, I found that child poverty was a critical feature of many of the cases – the school had a high number of low income families in its catchment area, which had, prior to my assessment, been unacknowledged and unaddressed. This knowledge enabled additional resources to be gained for the school when the local authority was made aware of these **evidence-based statistics**. Furthermore it helped the school to understand what resources it was entitled to in order to provide support for its vulnerable pupils, and to place some of the children's behaviours in the context of child poverty which has a severe negative impact across all developmental levels.

Professional support was further achieved though delivering **regular professional development sessions** for a whole term in regards to **behaviour management** for key school staff. Practical advice and support was given through a clinical supervision framework. This regular support was invaluable to staff, and enabled the school to make real changes during the term I was present, from the very first session. **School staff felt empowered,**

respected and listened to, and achieved many things, such as positively supporting a young child with an eating disorder to learn new eating patterns in the school's social setting (using role modelling and peer-learning strategies), and a vulnerable child who exhibited aggressive and disruptive behaviour in the classroom to completely minimise this behaviour pattern using specific behaviour management strategies. This work supported inter-agency relationships by a sharing of expertise, and strengthened joint working in regards to child safeguarding and well-being.



Preparations:

To begin this work I arranged a prior meeting with the Headteacher and Head of Inclusion at the school to find out more about the school, their pupils' needs, and the particular support and information the school would like from me. I established a [strengths-based professional relationship](#) with these professionals, listened to their perspectives and needs, and worked in partnership with them to plan my professional support. The Head of Inclusion gave me an overview of pupil case studies that enabled me to have a clear understanding of their specific needs, and the professional training the school staff would need to have in order to fully support these children.

I completed initial professional training sessions with school staff, finding out more about the group's individual professional needs, and [teaching them new strategies to support pupils in their classroom with specific emotional and behavioural issues](#). I have been able to broaden their professional perspectives into a more socio-ecological framework when supporting these pupils, in particular helping to overturn their viewpoint that these children are in control of their negative behaviour, or are deliberately choosing to behave in this way to disrupt the whole class. Staff now have a deeper understanding of how pupils can be overwhelmed by sensory stimulation or have situational stress responses that are barriers to their external referencing and emotional self regulation, and are unable to listen or change their behaviour without targeted professional support that needs to be given by the teacher at that specific moment . I have helped the staff empathise with these pupils, and extend their support for children in need at their school, by helping them to understand about maladaptive behaviour patterns as a result of trauma, neglect or abuse, the impact of stress, and deficits in social skills that may be present as a result. A child welfare model of professional support drawn from the Department of Health's assessment framework has been introduced which these educational professionals have not had experience of before. This work can continue to be built on, [focusing on child protection and safeguarding](#), as well as supporting individual children's needs and developing a shared inter-agency approach. School staff have continuing support from myself for any challenging cases, to enable them to be empowered in their classroom in the use of positive behaviour management. Staff have stated that this individual, [on-going support is invaluable for their confidence and effective practice](#).

Professional Development - Theory and Practice

Strategies drawn from [Cognitive Behaviour Psychology](#) were used to support each educational professional's engagement and assimilation of new information, and to help develop a focus on pupils' needs from a child welfare perspective. For example, the Socratic Process within Cognitive Behavioural Psychology uses situated questioning to support reappraisal and reflection of core beliefs.

When focusing upon individual pupils as case studies, [Constructivism](#) supported shared dialogue and narrative, and new meanings to be co-constructed. This encouraged professional reflection on the complexities of children's lives, from a child welfare perspective. Assessment of children's needs using [socio-ecological theory](#), which looks at the context of children's lives across a range of settings, such as home, school and community, was relevant and useful, to help the educational professionals understand the impact of contextual settings on children' behaviour patterns, and the support they could offer to children in need in their school setting.



In conclusion

The success of this initial professional development project in supporting both pupils and educational professionals in regards to positive behaviour management now means this approach is expanding across local authorities within the UK. Working in partnership with a professional with specialist expertise, such as a Consultant Clinician, within an educational setting [enables early childhood professionals to gain extensive skills in positive behaviour management](#), in a short space of time, leading to more positive outcomes for the young children in their care and education.



What to do next if you would like to have a Consultant Clinician to support your staff and educational setting:

Contact our Consultant Clinician in your local area for support, and to arrange your initial consultation to discuss your needs.

Please email: clinicalsupervision@euphelia.com

Our Consultant Clinician in your local area will contact you to arrange an initial meeting in your setting.

The Euphelia Clinic

Supporting each person's emotional and psychological wellbeing.

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