



## Re- Evaluation for Investing in Children membership: Walworth Outreach Service

Walworth Outreach Service has been running for three years now. The service provides a two term intervention in order to make progress with the child, with at least three reviews during that time (more if necessary) and also a withdrawal meeting. For the purpose of this re-evaluation I had the pleasure of meeting with Luke, Jaydon, Keegan and Lauren.

### **Evidence of Dialogue and Change**

The work of the outreach service is directed work; however it is based on the child's feelings and their input, in order for the intervention to be successful. The worker and the child complete a Pupil Booklet together (see attached). The booklet has a number of versions and the staff gauge which will be best for the child. The booklet asks the child to think about themselves and how they behave, how they learn, how they organise themselves, and how they get on with others. This is an ongoing dialogue between the staff member and the child, for them to monitor their own progress. Sometimes staff put out hoops on the floor so that the child can physically feel their progress. The booklets are regularly reviewed on an individual basis. Lauren told me, **"I did one last term, I do about lessons, and I did one yesterday. I got a few tens and a whole set of tens. I'm much better."** Lauren went on to say, **"I did smiley faces, Joanne's got them, I filled it myself."** Jaydon told me he did **"smiley faces."**

The first meeting is a planning meeting, looking at the needs of the child and setting targets for the long term. Children are always invited to be at this meeting, however, they don't always want to be there. If they choose not to be in the meeting they are asked what they would like to be said for them and they also get all of the information from the meeting delivered back to them.

The service is tailor made for each child and they work towards personal goals. Jaydon showed me his chart, **"I've got a chart on the wall in the classroom with targets. If I'm good I get Scooby Doo paws. Jake gets dinosaurs. When I get to the top I get a piece of jigsaw. When you finish the jigsaw you get to take it home."**

The content and the execution of the programme is based on the children's feelings and they decide how they feel most comfortable with the work.

When Keegan decided at school that he wanted to be part of his class rather than working in the unit at the school, he knew that Mrs Bolton from the outreach service would be coming to work with him. Keegan didn't want to be out of class any more so he asked that Mrs Bolton work with him in the class.

He said, **"When she first came she sat next to me because I didn't want to go out of the class. She then started going round the other children."** As Keegan became more confident in his class he felt he no longer wanted Mrs Bolton sat with him all the

time. He felt able to tell her this and she responded by making herself available to the whole class, but Keegan knew she would come back to him if he needed her.

It is very important for the children receiving the service to understand their own behaviour in order to change it and the staff are very skilful in doing this. It is crucial for the children to have a good relationship with the staff they are working with, and this is evident with all the children I met.

Lauren said, **“I didn’t used to like doing English, now I’m trying hard in all my subjects because Mrs Pearith has helped me...I used to go in a huff with another teacher, I didn’t like doing the work. Mrs Pearith is nice. She just asked me how I felt about things.”**

Lauren added, **“I like her coming all day Tuesday, she watches me do buddy duty.”**

Luke talked about Mrs Dunn who works with him. **“She’s been 3 times. It’s just me and her and I like that. I like the way that she talks to me, she talks first about what we’re going to do. I know what to expect. Mrs Dunn is caring, she says you can try it if you want but if you don’t want to that’s fine.”**

Keegan has felt valued by Mrs Bolton, not only have they exchanged gifts at the end of her time working with him, but as Keegan said, **“She said she’ll come and see me if I’m doing anything special like assembly. I’m learning the violin.”**

Keegan felt he understood how Mrs Bolton has helped him, **“She’s helped me to get on with people, she’s tried to help me get it right, make the right choices.”** He went on to say, **“I come in at dinner time now, and play time. I was a bit of a bad one, playing silly games, playing rough and getting hurt, I was getting into trouble.”**

Luke finds the way that Mrs Dunn works suits him. **“On the sheets she brings there’s some instructions and I read them first. Then I try the work, if I don’t get it right she doesn’t say anything, she just says well done. She knows if it’s right or wrong but she doesn’t say because it might make me go into a stress.”**

Luke also works with Mrs Althwaite from Walworth Outreach service and said, **“Mrs Althwaite is caring, we’ve sorted out my problems. She’s been the one who pushed my behaviour problems into the next level; I’m not as bad any more.”**

Activities are planned together, with the children able to ask for the activities they enjoy, as Luke said, **“Mrs Dunn gave us an opportunity to say which games and activities I liked. I said Monopoly but she said that might take too long and I agreed. She brings Mastermind and I like that game.”**

Keegan told me about his choice of activity. **“Mrs Bolton asked me what I liked. I was going to choose computer games, but I chose parachute. If I got 6 stars I got to choose people from my class and she took us to do the parachute.”**

Family involvement is very much an element of the work that the outreach service does. Lauren told me about her dad’s interest in her work. **“Miss Hunt and my dad said I’m doing really well since I’ve been working with Mrs Pearith. I’m happy about it.”** This was important to Lauren as she went on to say, **“My dad came to parents evening, he said I’m doing really well.”**

Jaydon said he had **“a silver book to write nice things in to send to home and school.”** He takes this to his granddad’s house too, to show him. When he takes his jigsaw home it show **“mammy what a good boy I’ve been.”**

Parents are asked to complete an evaluation, as well as the school, at the end of the intervention.

Keegan said, **“She saw mam at home and asked her to write all the good things I’ve done at home in a book. That went from school to home.”**

When I asked if anyone would change anything about their time with the service Lauren said, **“I wouldn’t want to change anything about working with her, except her going.”**

Jaydon told me, **“I like all of it.”**

Luke enjoys working with Mrs Dunn and Mrs Althwaite. He said about Mrs Dunn, **“I think she might have been scared – in other words eerie – that I’d get upset and I wouldn’t work with her. But we seem to be getting on quite well.”**

Luke went on to talk about the activities he had done with both teachers from the service. He said, **“I didn’t say anything but I did like them. The next time they didn’t bring them because I hadn’t said anything. So I need to say what I like and don’t like. If they’d asked me at the end of the session if the work and the activity I’d be able to answer, but I didn’t want to say it myself, I’d rather they said it.”**

Perhaps in the future this could be something that staff could incorporate in to the end of each session, to allow children like Luke more choice on their terms.

The children are asked to evaluate their time with the service, the evaluation (see attached) is currently being worked on by staff to make it more child friendly and in a number of versions to suit different age groups.

Schools also get an opportunity to feedback their views on the intervention. I met Mrs Oxenen, a support assistant at Keegan’s school. She told me how the class that Keegan was in had found it **“difficult to gel together.”** She felt that Keegan had been greatly helped by Mrs Bolton, and that without her intervention Keegan would not have been able to be part of his class again. She said of Mrs Bolton, **“She never got cross, and she always said something positive.”** Mrs Oxenen said that the interventions of the outreach service make huge differences not only to the individual children they help, but to the class, and to the staff.

When I asked the children if they thought that Walworth Outreach Service should get their Investing in Children membership again, they all agreed. As Luke said, **“If I was to give some certificates out I’d give them to Mrs Dunn and Mrs Althwaite.”**

Based on their comments I have no hesitation in recommending that Walworth Outreach Service receive their Investing in Children membership.

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