Promoting Inclusion from the Early Years Project

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CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL

Our mission:
Working as one to serve our city

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Content

Project context	Legislation Council vision Local awareness of need Early Years awareness of need
Identifying partners	Key partners for working together and co-production
Aims	Key project objectives
Keys to Inclusion	Developing shared understandings about inclusion
Transition	I am…Digital Transition Videos Transition framework Making Action Plan (MAP) person-centred planning process
Staff skills, confidence and experience	Audit Training offer
Support networks	Solution-circles Networks of support across schools
Evaluation and key reflections	What is the impact? What have we learnt?

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Project Context

Legislation

- The Equality Act (2010) schools have a duty to provide provision so that children with SEND are not disadvantaged.

- The Children and Families Act (2014).

- SEND Code of Practice (2015) schools must prevent discrimination, promote equality and foster positive relationships.

Project Context

Council vision

- The Wolverhampton Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2020-23 sets out the vision and key priorities that council and partners in the city want to focus on to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND.

- Our 'Relighting our City' vision invests in supporting people who need it most, this is underpinned by our 'Fair and Inclusive Principle' which outlines our commitment to tackle the inequalities in our communities which impact on the opportunities of local people.

- The Culture of Belonging and Inclusion Projects.

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Project Context: Awareness of need

Local context

- Wolverhampton has 121 schools providing education to children and young people.
- The numbers of children identified as having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is higher in Wolverhampton compared to national averages (17.6% compared with 16.7%, **2020/21** data).
- In **July 2021** there were 9,599 children identified with SEND in Wolverhampton, equating to 17.84% of the school population or nearly one in every five children.
- The number of pupils with SEND in the city has increased over the last five years (from 6,935 in January 2016 to 7,834 in January 2019 and 9,599 in July 2021).
- Approximately 10% of our children and young people with SEND are placed in special schools.
- Only 4% of pupils with an EHCP are reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2 compared to 9% for England.

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Project Context: Awareness of need

Early Years:

- The numbers of children with SEND in the nursery cohort who would start **Reception in September 2021** were notably higher than in previous years.

- National research such as 'The School Starters Study' by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) identified the significant impact of instability brought about by the coronavirus pandemic on children who started **Reception in September 2020**. A large proportion of schools reported that children who started school in Autumn 2020 are needing more support than children in previous cohorts particularly in relation to communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and literacy.

Identifying partners

Children (Nursery, Reception and Year One)

Parents/carers

Schools and nursery settings

Educational Psychology Service (EPS)

Special Needs Early Years Service (SNEYS)

Education Excellence (School Improvement)

Outreach Service

Specialist Learning Support (SLS)

Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS)

Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment and Review Team (SENSTART)

Speech and Language Therapy Service (SaLT)

Physiotherapy Service

Occupational Health Service

Social Care

Project Aims

The project aims to deliver a co-ordinated support offer for mainstream schools to maintain high aspirations and assist in meeting the needs of children with SEND who will be transitioning into Reception and Year 1 in September 2021.

Keys to Inclusion

- Keys to Inclusion sessions delivered by Inclusive Solutions commissioned by the council free for schools and settings to attend.

- Three sessions offered during June and July 2021- dates and times agreed with Head Teachers.

- Head Teachers, SENDCos, Early Years Leads, Reception and Year 1 Class Teachers and support staff invited to attend.

- 146 members of the children's workforce attended the sessions.

- 88 representatives from schools/settings attended including those from 31/41 (76%) of target schools.

Training - Keys to Inclusion (inclusive-solutions.com)

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Keys to Inclusion

Keys to Inclusion

"I thought the session was excellent- really thought provoking. My colleague and I cried multiple times during the afternoon, it really touched us. It absolutely met the objective of 'hearts and minds'.

From a leadership perspective, I think I am always thinking about the bigger picture and the training really made me come back to thinking about individuals. I couldn't stop thinking about what more we can do to meet the needs of some of our pupils who are struggling. It also made me consider the wider meaning of 'inclusion' and the fact that it means more than just SEND.

Really looking forward to continuing with the promoting inclusion from the early years project" (Head Teacher)

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Transition

During Summer Term 2021

- I am…Digital Transition Videos training for nursery settings.

- Transition planning and framework of support developed by School Improvement with partners for nursery settings.

- One-page profile completed for each child with support from the Special Needs Early Years Service (SNEYS).

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Inclusion Support: Educational Psychology Service
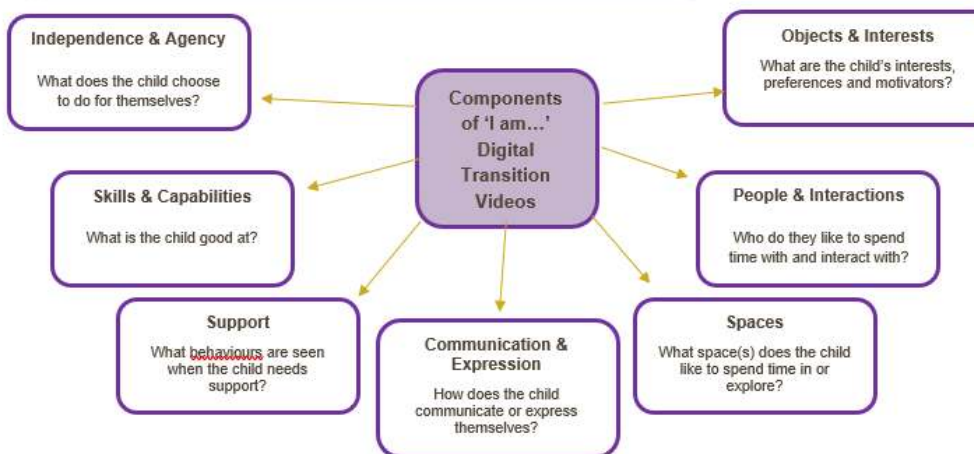
'I am...' Digital Transition Videos

A RESOURCE TO SUPPORT TRANSITIONS IN THE EARLY YEARS

What are 'I am...' Digital transition videos?

The concept of 'I am...' videos has been produced by the University of Southampton and ACoRNS (Autism Community Research Network). They were initially designed to support children with Autism Spectrum Condition but are beneficial for supporting children with a range of needs transitioning to a new setting.

The videos are short profiles of children (around 1-3 minutes) that can be shared with teachers and other school staff. They can also be shown to other professionals involved with the child. The videos are made from the child's perspective and focus on the abilities, strengths and positive experiences of the child.

'I am...' videos can be made in collaboration with key staff and parents or carers.

I am....

I like....

Independence & Agency

What does the child choose to do for themselves?

Objects & Interests

What are the child's interests, preferences and motivators?

Components of 'I am...' Digital Transition Videos

Skills & Capabilities

What is the child good at?

People & Interactions

Who do they like to spend time with and interact with?

Support

What behaviours are seen when the child needs support?

Communication & Expression

How does the child communicate or express themselves?

Spaces

What space(s) does the child like to spend time in or explore?

Please contact the Educational Psychology Service for more information (contact details in the footer below).

Further information and examples can be found at: autismtransitions.org/i-am/

Contact us: inclusionsupportadmin@wolverhampton.gov.uk
    01902 550609

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Transition: MAPs

- Transition Team Around the Child (TACs) for each child with SEND using the person-centred planning tool Making Action Plans

  (MAPs)

The image (right) shows a document titled:

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Inclusion and Empowerment: Educational Psychology — enabling positive participation for all

Making Action Plans (MAP)

A MAP is a person-centred planning tool used to help individuals, families or organisations create a shared vision of a positive future, by exploring the nine steps below:

- The story so far – The history of the focus individual, family or organisation.
- The 'Dream' – Exploring what an ideal future would look like.
- The 'Nightmare' – Exploring what the worst future would look like.
- Who is the individual/family/organisation? – Words, images, metaphors that sum up the individual, family or organisation.
- Gifts, strengths, talents – When is the individual, family or organisation at their best?
- What will it take? – To get closer to the dream and further away from the nightmare?
- Action Plan – What specific actions will be taken in the next 7-10 days?
- First Steps – What specific actions will be taken in the next 5 days?
- Final Reflections – Reflecting on the MAP process.

The MAP session will be led by two trained facilitators - a process facilitator who guides people through the stages and ensures the focus individual, family or organisation are at the centre throughout, and a graphic facilitator who records discussions visually.

A MAP usually takes 1.5-2 hours to complete and involves a group of 5-10 people including the focus individual or organisation, along with their family, friends and other professionals who know them well.

The visual representation of the MAP process is for the focus individual, family or organisation to keep following the session.

If you feel that a MAP would be a useful tool to support your organisation, an individual or family, then please contact the Educational Psychology Service on 01902 550609 or speak to your link EP.

"Allows individuals and organisations to reflect on their journey and discuss their plans for the future in a positive, interactive and solution-focused way"

"A powerful and thought-provoking process for regrouping and change"

"A useful person-centred planning tool to support with re-engagement and recovery following the pandemic"

"A fantastic opportunity for collaborative action planning when pupils change provision"

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Transition: MAPs

- 85 children with identified SEND who were transitioning to mainstream Reception classes in September 2021 were offered a Transition TAC (process facilitated by an EP and graphic facilitation by an Assistant Psychologist or member of the Outreach team).

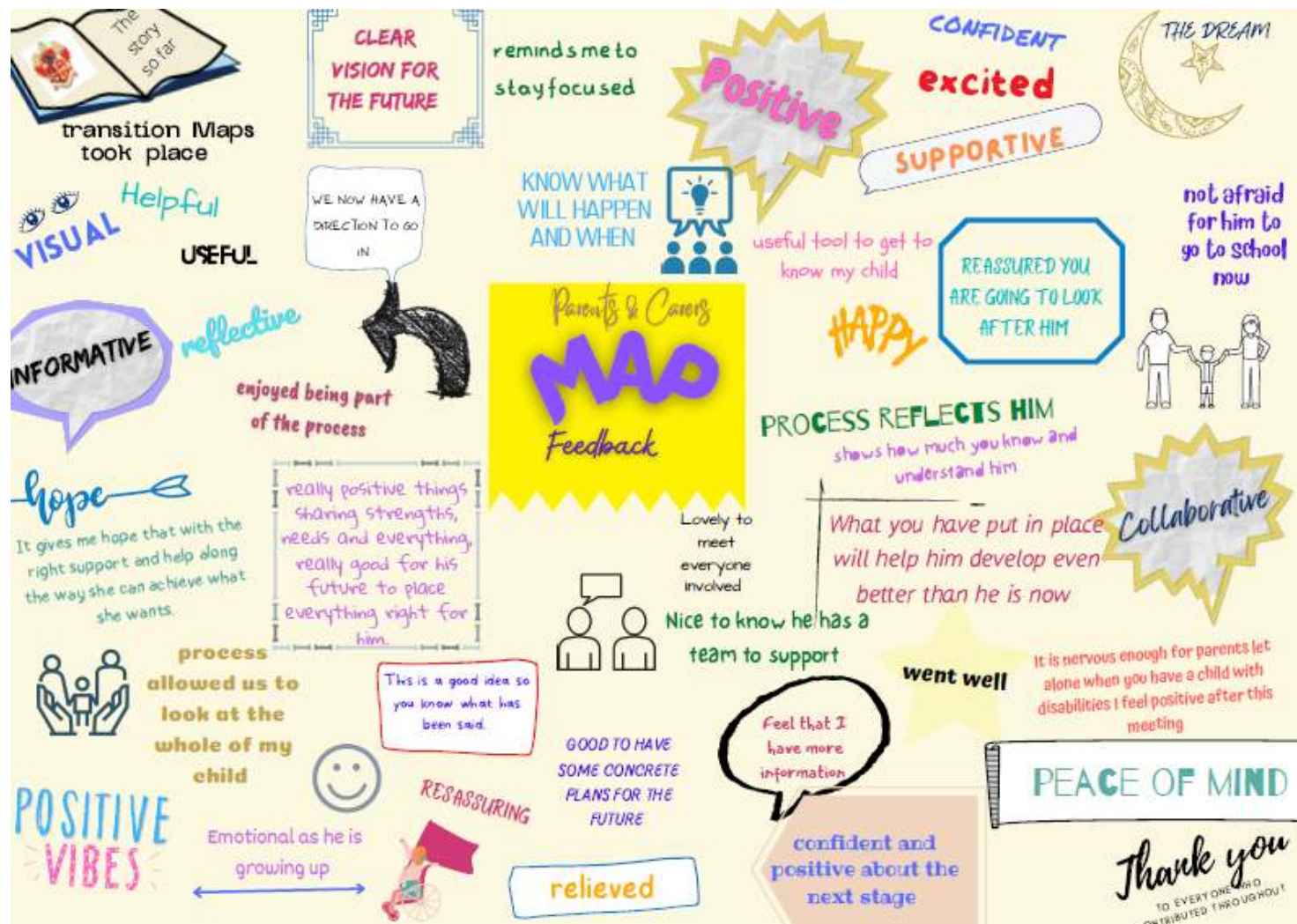- 59 Transition TACs took place mostly during the Summer Term.

Transition: MAPs
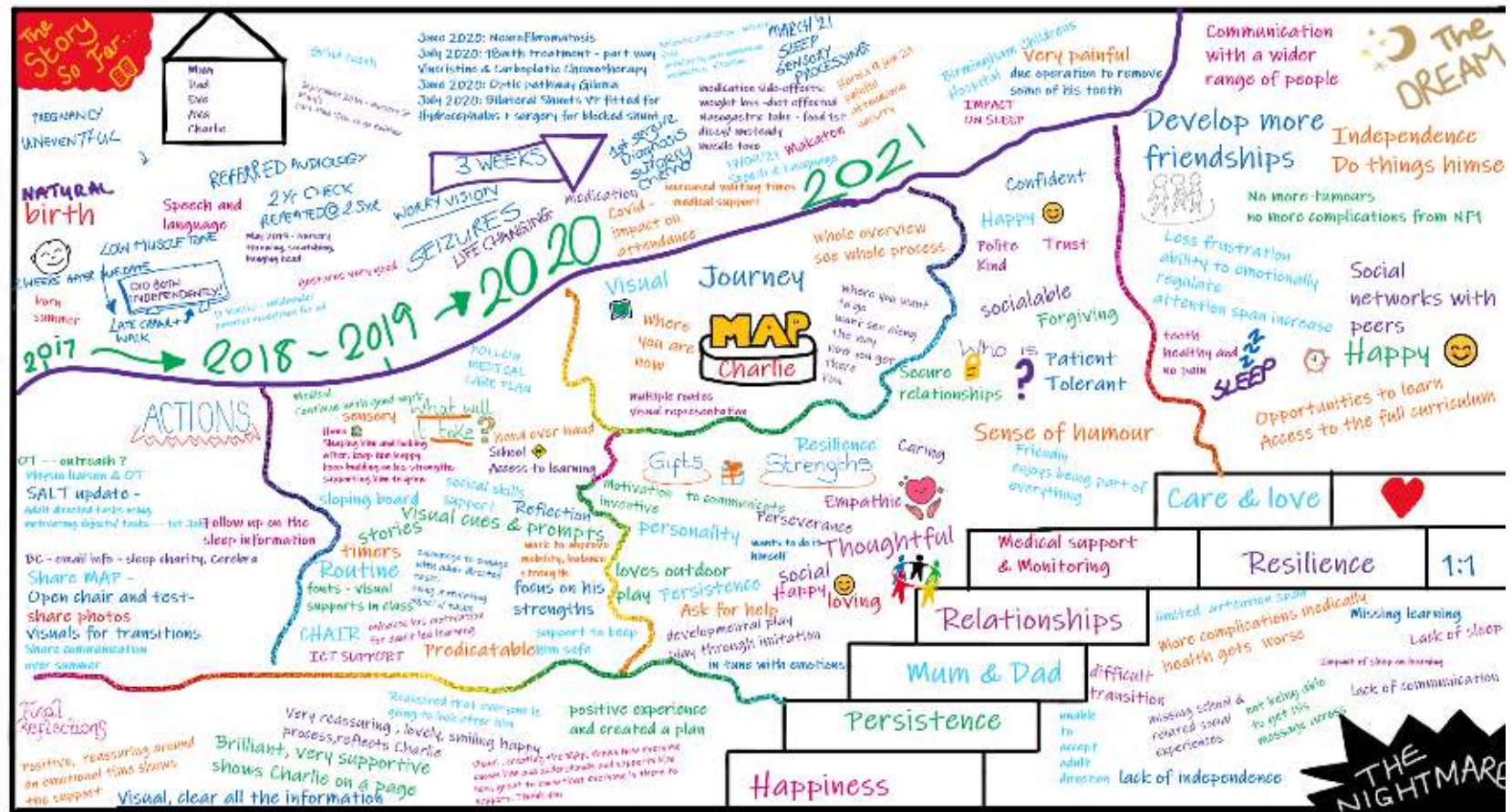
Transition: MAPs

Transition: MAPs

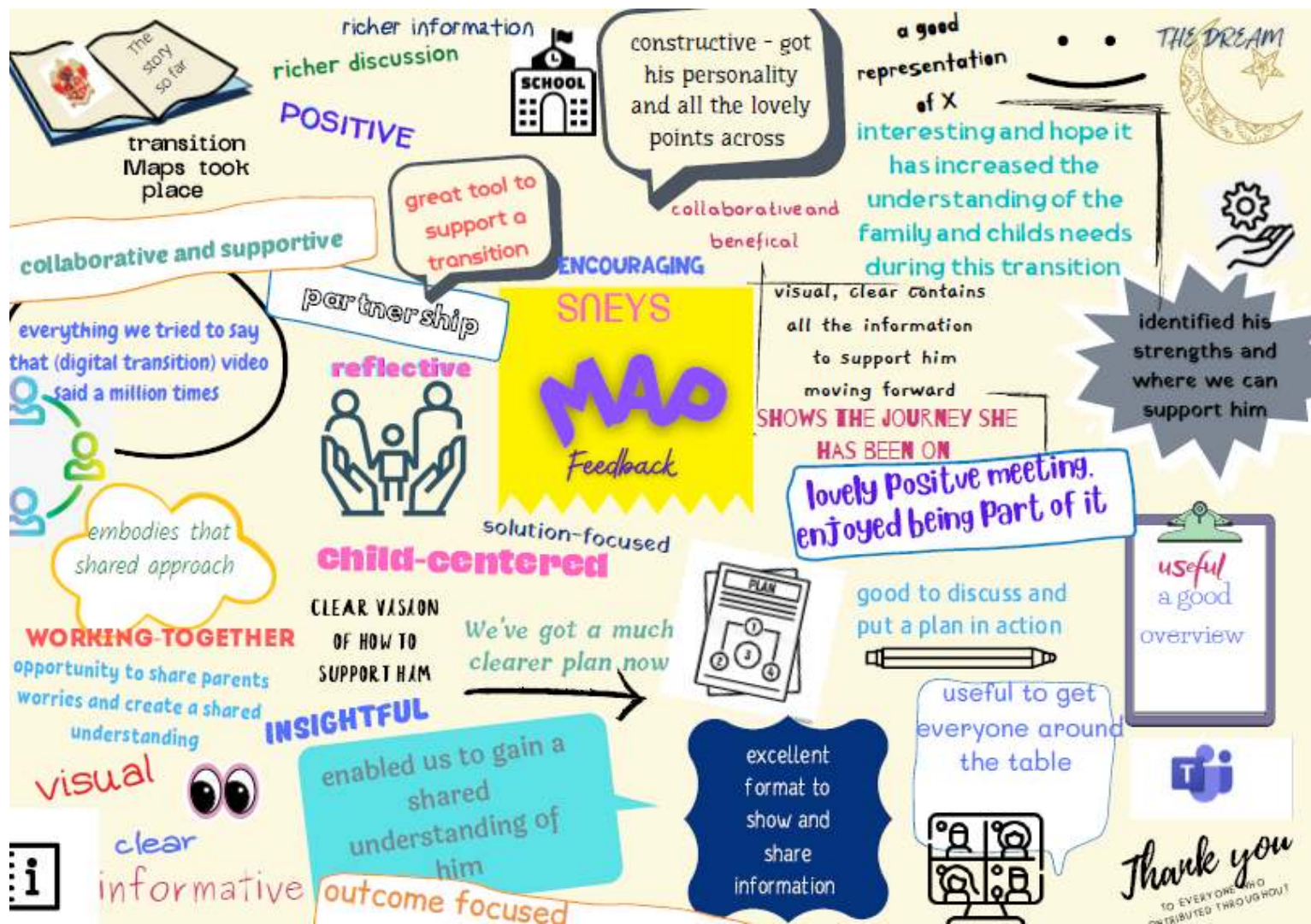# Transition: MAPs

Transition: MAPs

Transition: MAPs

Transition: MAPs

- The Transition TAC reviews took place during the Autumn Term.

Staff skills, confidence and experience: Audit

- Summer Term 2021: Schools asked to complete a Staff Skills Audit.

Please rate your level of training/experience and your level of confidence in each of the following areas:

(1=low and 5=high)

Area	Training / Experience					Confidence					Comments
Early Years Foundation Stage Framework	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Typical child development	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Understanding the role of specialist services	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Understanding the graduated response	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
EHCP Process	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Supporting children experiencing learning difficulties	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Supporting children experiencing physical difficulties	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Supporting children experiencing attachment difficulties	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Supporting children who have communication difficulties	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Supporting children who have social difficulties	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Supporting children with Autism Spectrum Conditions	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
Using objects of reference as support for communication	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	

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Staff skills, confidence and experience: Audit

- Responses were gathered from different settings/schools across the city.

- During summer holidays: responses were analysed to determine where school staff felt they lacked skills, confidence and experience.

- 15 areas of need were identified and training session were developed to address these areas.

Staff skills, confidence and experience: Training

Autumn Term	Spring Term
Autism: Awareness raising	Visual Impairment Awareness
Speech, language and communication needs	Child Development
Flexibility/Engagement in learning	An Introduction to SCERTS
Sensory needs	Supporting children with self-care needs
SEMH and Behaviour	The Sensory Pathway
Attachment in the Early Years	Makaton taster session
Deaf Awareness	Developing play and social interaction skills
Understanding the EHCP process and graduated response	

Solution Circle

What is a solution circle?

- Solution circles provide a supportive and non-judgemental environment for workers to discuss an issue, case or problem
- A four stage process for focused discussions
- Development of ways in which to address an issue or lead a topic

How do solution circles work?

- Depending on the size of the group, the facilitator should arrange the chairs as follows:

  Single circle: Chairs arranged in a circle.

  Larger circle: A large circle with a small circle of 6 chairs inside, there should be one empty seat within the smaller circle.

- Ground rules should be agreed by the circle and the process explained to all participants

Stage 1: The issue

A person is identified to present an issue/case/problem/ topic (referred to as the subject of the process) and they sit either in the single circle or within the inner circle. This subject of the process has two minutes to tell the group about their issue/case/problem/topic without any interruption from the group.

Stage 2: Clarification questions

Eg: "when does this?... How often will they?... Who is involved?"

This is a four minute slot for the group to ask any clarification questions only to the subject of the process; the facilitator should ensure no solutions are being put forward.

Single circle: Group members can put their questions forward for further clarification.

Larger circle: Within the smaller circle, any member can ask a clarification question at any. time. Members of the outer circle should sit on the inner empty chair to ask any questions.

Stage 3: Solutions

The subject of the process should now be provided with a pen and paper. The members of the circle can then share their solutions within a four minute timeslot.

Single circle: Group members can put forward their solutions.

Larger circle: Within the smaller circle, any member can share solutions at any time. The outer circle members must sit in the empty chair in the inner circle in order to share their solution.

Stage 4: Selection

The subject of the process will now sit, reflect and select two of the solutions that they feel they can action and use in the future. These are then shared with the group and can be reflected on at a later date or in a future solution circle. Times can be adjusted as appropriate but should be set at the beginning of the circle when the ground rules are being discussed.

Support Networks: Solution Circles

If the daily routine has changed, is this supported by a visual timetable?

Visual timetable with velcro that can be changes as and when necessary

Consider looking at sensory needs- hitting can be a sensory seeking behaviour. What could he be gaining from this?

Visual structures in place to support expected behaviours- kind hands etc.

Now and Next board to break things into smaller steps

Use of timers to show how long he has left on activities

Sensory break/circuits

Try a very flexible multi-sensory curriculum

Have a critical look at the environment and see if you can create a space for him to go, rather than taking him out of the classroom.

Lego Build intervention

Use of a workstation with motivating activities in it

Use of emotional regulation activities such 5 point scales

Emotion coaching

Support what your are saying with visual aids-for example give him an ALD (when he was bothered by the wind he struggled to tell you why).

You said he feels happy in his small space off the main classroom- could 1 or 2 peers do small tasks in there with him?

a motivating activity could be added as the next if using now and next board

Social Stories to prepare for change - e.g. a social story around the change in the day to sports day - so he is prepared for what is coming

Visual timetable or Now and Next board

Begin small group "play" sessions led by an adult to try to build relationships with his peers.

Give small special responsibilities for him to do on his own and eventually working with others

Could you recreate how the child feels using drawing, painting, listening/moving/drawing to music

Challenge 1

Replace the hitting with a sensory activity/resource.

Explore the use of an "Its ok to be angry but we cant hit others" resource that is appropriate for his level.

Rewards for making positive choices

Social Stories

Short, modelled turn taking activities - doing things he likes. With an adult initially, then introduce a peer.

Soft object to hold to reduce the hitting then he can squeeze the object when frustrated and if he throw it then it won't hurt anyone

Teaching social skills like sharing or turn taking

Teaching about feelings – labelling them so the child has the vocabulary to express them, and also teaching strategies to regulate his feelings

Give the child responsibility of his own feelings. say things like "do you want to stay feeling angry?" and you could revisit feelings after the event "can you remember a time that you have felt like this before?"

Safe space within the classroom and safe space out side of the classroom

ask him to select a 'buddy' to play for a very short time initially

Create a few physical signs together or use Makaton, so that he can signal when he feels angry etc, before lashing out

Encourage parallel play with other children and gradually work towards including the child in a highly motivating activity with one other child to start to build social skills such as turn taking

Sensory tent in the classroom?

tent that can be moved around the room with the group, but if things get to much, he could sit in there for a few mins (sand timer) – but this tent can be taken, indoor/outdoors etc, so that he doesn't get to go back inside away from everyone

Provide ALD's to give him the vocabulary to explain himself- for example instead of "I don't like them"-"I'm not ready to play"

could you use visuals for him to explain he wants out / wants changes so that he doesnt feel the need to resort to hitting as a way of getting your immediate attention?

Support Networks: Solution Circles

"Thank you to everyone who was part of the solution circle. I found it a really useful activity, it was good to have a range of services available who were able to offer advice and solutions. I have shared all the ideas with staff and they seem much happier knowing there are things we haven't tried yet that may make things easier for staff and the child involved. Thanks again" (SENCo)

"Thank you all so much. Lot's of useful strategies and nice to hear similar issues!"

"It has been such a wonderful supportive session, lots of ideas to use and remember what we have in our toolkits"

"I DEFINITELY FEEL BETTER HEARING OTHERS WITH SIMILAR STORIES SO THANK YOU ALL FOR SHARING!"

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Support Networks: Solution Circles

Reflections...

Hugely beneficial

Fairly quick to gather a lot of good ideas

Practical solutions

A collaborative approach

I think this could help us to build a clearer pathway between services of where to go first etc so as not to overwhelm with referrals

Enjoyed the range of speciaist services who were able to attend. Thank you.

Lots of helpful suggestions made

Feels very collaborative and a good use of time

good to get things off your chest in a supportive situation

Love jamboard to hear/see everyones views

loving the jamboard – great way to work together – really hope it helps

Empowers staff to select the strategies they think will work best

realistic solutions

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Support Networks

- Case Studies- celebrating inclusive practice across the city

- Buddy Network system

Evaluation

Qualitative feedback from

Keys to Inclusion- training evaluations

MAPs- reflections

Training sessions- training evaluations

- Case studies

- Survey for Schools, parents and support services (scaling questions and qualitative information exploring inclusion/transition)

Quantitative data

- Numbers of children involved in the project and an early annual review of the EHCP has been called
- Numbers of children involved in the project who have gone through decision panel and moved provision e.g. specialist, resource bases or other schools
- Numbers of children involved in the project on reduced/modified timetables
- Numbers of children involved in the project who have received an exclusion
- Numbers of children involved in the project who are now EHE
- Attendance data
- Progress tracking

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Key Reflections

- How do we encourage participation from all primary schools?

- Next phase will involve using the voice of the child to inform future action planning.

- Enhance the offer for parents/carers I am…Digital Transition Video training.

- Develop guidance and expectations for the MAP process. Offer training for school staff so that they can facilitate MAPs.

- Sustainability planning in relation to impact of CPD and on-going training needs.

- Using the evaluation data to explore impact and consider repeating the project for children transitioning to Reception in September 2022.

- Utilising our learning from the initial project to support inclusion and transition planning for older children and young people.

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