

## A case study highlighting the intervention practice with Looked After Children at Abersychan School

Abersychan School is an 11 - 16 co-educational comprehensive school. Our aim is simple, we want every person to achieve their personal best whatever their talents and ambitions. Abersychan had 24 looked after pupils attending school during the 2016/17 academic year. Abersychan also has a Special Needs Resource Base (SNRB) which 9 LAC pupils attend all of whom have Statement of Special Educational Needs. School have employed a LAC Intervention Worker to work alongside the Designated Teacher to offer additional interventions and support LAC pupils.

### LAC pupil breakdown 2016/17

	Number in year group
Year 7	5
Year 8	4
Year 9	8
Year 10	4
Year 11	3

- Intervention



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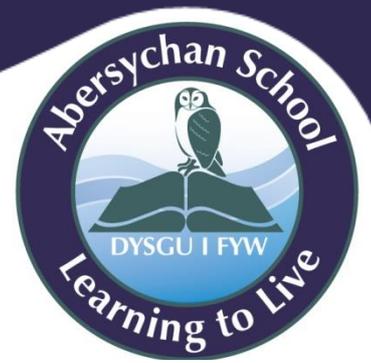
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All pupils receive at least one, one hour session per week, some of these are group sessions others are 1:1, dependant on the topic to be covered and the individual pupil. Some pupils receive daily sessions, especially in cases of severe BESD or attachment.

The topics covered in sessions vary dependant on individual or group pupil needs. BESD pupils often receive intervention based around behavioural therapy, we use programmes of study such as 'Behaviour 4 My Future' and various 'Talkabout' programmes by Alex Kelly. Pupils with attachment difficulties may follow these programmes also, yet the use of Play Therapy is also utilised. Pupils who are facing emotional hardship due to factors such as placement moves, milestone celebrations (birthdays, Christmas, Mothers/Father's Day etc.) or the loss of a sibling due to adoption sometimes benefit just from having a shoulder to cry on, someone they trust to talk to or a safe place to be where they can be alone or share the company of other children and young people who face the same situations as them.

Intervention packages include academic topics, mainly Literacy and Numeracy. Specific 'catch up' programmes are utilised in KS3, focusing on basic numeracy including times tables, addition, subtraction, and multiplication. For many of our LAC pupils, early admission into the care of the local authority has meant numerous placement moves during KS2 and early KS3 this results in the significant loss of time spent in school. This has an impact not only on attendance but on their early learning and it is this early foundation work that subsequently has a bearing on them, thus I have found that these pupils lack the basic skills in numeracy. Similarly, literacy at KS3 focuses on catch up programmes with simple grammatic and punctuation intervention proving to be most beneficial.

One of the paramount interventions however is the building of SAFE relationships. It is through such relationships with a dedicated person (LAC Intervention Worker) that the foundations of both academic and therapeutic work can be undertaken. Pupils are



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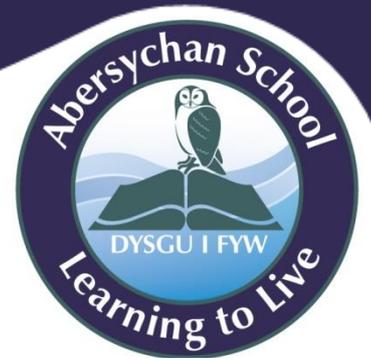
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invited to participate in board games, art, cookery, and sports based activities in their initial sessions so that such relationships can start to be formed. The pupil must be able to trust the dedicated person and a mutual respect gained.

- **Environment**

The environment to which intervention takes place is also a vital factor, pupils must be able to feel secure in this environment and Abersychan has ensured that there is a dedicated classroom for this. The classroom used (The Green Room) is a small yet inviting area. It houses a learning area that is equipped with laptops, learning resources such as books and stationary and a wealth of colourful and informative wall displays. In this area, most academic intervention takes place, pupils understand that this is an area for work to be completed and expectations are like those of any other classroom. Off the learning area is a small 'Calm Room' furnished with soft bean bags, bookshelves full of reading materials, calming aids, and an interactive TV. This room is used not only during times of anger or frustration to calm down but also for those pupils who are suffering emotional hardship and want to be alone yet feel safe, the TV can be used to watch informative programmes or when a child is significantly distressed to get 'lost' in a comforting distraction.

There is a separate area for play therapy with a sand pit, Lego, paints, playdough, board games and a chalk board wall. Additionally, the Green room houses an office for the LAC Intervention Worker.

All rooms are brightly furnished with equipment purchased through the PDG funding, pupils have a sense of ownership on this room as it is like no other within the school. They respect the area and it is always open as a safe place for them to retreat to when the everyday life of school gets too much. Pupils are invited to drop in whenever they need and many also make use of its facilities during break and lunch times.



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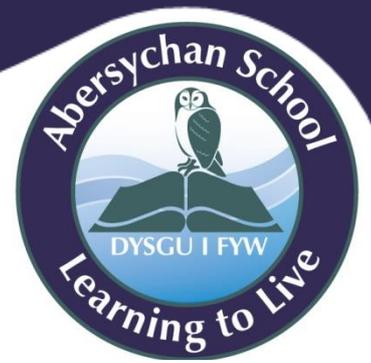
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Additionally, outside agencies such as MIST, Educational Psychology, Aspire to Achieve, Play Service and Communities First are all invited to work with pupils within the LAC room and the LAC Intervention worker refers to, organises, and facilitates such intervention.

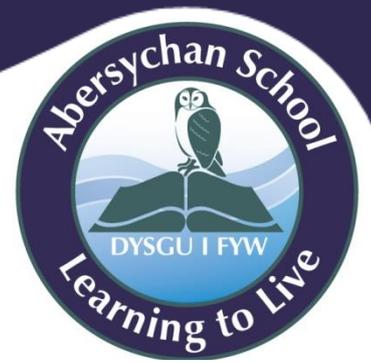
- **Role of the LAC Intervention Worker**

The development of this role over the past four years has been great and varied, not only in regards to the pupil intervention that is provide but also in regards to the responsibilities that one now undertakes. Intervention packages are designed to be as bespoke as the individual needs (both on and off school site) and no one child receives the same. As well as this the LAC Intervention Worker liaises with teaching staff within the school on both the academic and behavioural progress of LAC students as well as becoming a point of contact for outside agencies, parents, and carers (relationships are also as important on this level). The LAC Intervention Worker monitors attendance daily and investigates issues of truancy alongside the Attendance Officer and EWO.

The LAC Intervention Worker works with the Designated Teacher, ALNCO and other pastoral staff to update, and manage planning for the young person. This includes input into the PEPs and Enhanced IBPs, IBPs, PSPs, Risk Assessments, and PHPs. They attend PCPs, multi-agency and Inter-disciplinary meetings concerning LAC pupils. LAC pupils are managed under one umbrella within Abersychan to ensure continuity, time effectiveness and information sharing avoiding duplication.

They ensure that LAC pupils are rewarded for attendance and positive behaviour, initiating this through the organisation of termly trips such as the cinema or bowling, weekly 'Golden Time' sessions or correspondence home to carers and parents. Milestone birthdays are always celebrated and at times such as Christmas and Easter they ensure





that as a school we go the extra mile for our for Looked After Children recognising that school is the one place that is stable within what can be uncertain personal lives.

- **Outcomes**

Both the academic and social outcomes for LAC pupils has been considerably enhanced since the role of the LAC Intervention Worker. Pupils are for the majority achieving their personal educational targets and most are achieving the same as non-LAC peers at both KS3 & KS4. Attendance for LAC pupils is high with nearly all pupils achieving the school target of 97% and above. A recent student questionnaire found that pupils are happy with the intervention that they receive and value the relationships, environment, and support both academic and social to a great extent.

LAC performance analysis is completed on a termly basis and all academic levels as well as attendance is detailed by the LAC Intervention Worker.

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