

Making Meaning of SEMH

Offer for Secondary Settings

Description



Making Meaning of SEMH is a way of reflecting on our current ways of thinking about and approaches to understanding children and young people who present with SEMH needs.

- SEMH is a term introduced by the SEND Code of Practice in 2014 in an attempt to move away from the word behaviour and to acknowledge that a behavioural presentation is a way of communicating something more significant, such as an unmet need
- There are a wide range of presentations and difficulties associated with SEMH needs
- The causes of SEMH are variable and debated, but can include Attachment history, Trauma history, current family and relationship dynamics and other systems around the child

Making Meaning asks participants to reflect on their current assumptions about children with SEMH and asks questions facilitating understanding on different levels around the child, generating enhanced understanding and creative planning



Training Offer

Two free sessions are available to all Secondary schools to support the understanding, thinking, and developing practice around SEMH.

We want to be explicit about the psychology that is being used to support the development of this model and will give you some input around this. We will also train you by modelling a reflective process that we hope will be useful for you to use in school for your internal conversations around young people with SEMH. Therefore, your trainer will show you the materials they are using to support them with the process and explain how and why they are using questions to enable the thinking in the session, these will then be passed on to you to use.



Parameters

One session of supported Making Meaning discussion around a case study of a child presenting with SEMH, this will be delivered by an Assistant Educational Psychologist trained in the use of the process and should involve the SENCo, Pastoral Lead and a key person in school who knows the child well, up to four people can be involved. It is to support the development of practice within school and should be thought of as training it is not designed to be a multiagency or facilitated parental meeting.

One further session (approximately 1 term on from the first) will be a supportive review and reflection of the process supported by the Assistant Educational Psychologist, with the original staff and an exploration of how the process could be used within school. SEMH should be the child's primary need, their presentation may be withdrawn, emotional, mental health, social or behavioural, it should not be emotionally based school non-attendance as we are offering other free training around this area. It should be a case where the SENCo could seek support from external agencies but may not currently be prioritised, and not at a stage where a permanent change of provision is being considered. I.e. the child may have had fixed term exclusions, but the school remains committed to including this child and striving to meet need. The child may or may not have an EHCP, but there should not be an active assessment in process.

Parental consent is not necessary as the child will be anonymous for the purpose of discussing the case. If you wish to feedback to parents about your learning and change in practice arising from the process, that is your decision, but it should be made clear that this is not an Educational Psychology assessment or consultation. It is an opportunity for a supportive discussion, using a particular process, around a specific case example.

Requirements



The SENCo, Pastoral Lead and any other staff involved should be able to set aside 2 uninterrupted sessions of at least 2 hours to focus on this process.

All participants should view the discussion as a safe reflective space in which to openly explore the systems and their own practice in relation to the child.



How to book

Please contact the Assistant Educational Psychologists working in your area for more information and to book your sessions.

West: caleb.davies@leeds.gov.uk

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