

## *Does using key adults for children with behavioural difficulties improve reintegration into class and reduce exclusion rates?*

### CONTEXT

- Primary School with 200 children including class of two lots of 8 children with challenging behaviours and high rate exclusions (morning KS1 group, afternoon KS2 group) – rest of day in normal class
- The Educational Psychologist had worked with school on Attachment Disorders and techniques that may help
- We wanted to reintegrate children to class and reduce exclusions

### PLAN

- Send questionnaires to all staff to see if how many were prepared to be Key Adults
- Decide what data would be collected (quantitative – Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire<sup>1</sup> (SDQ), Boxall Profile<sup>2</sup>, qualitative – observations)
- Choose the children to be allocated Key Adults (3 KS1 children)
- Match children and adults (children had a say in who their Key Adult would be)
- Get informed parental permission

### DO

- Baseline observations, SDQ questionnaires and Boxall profiles completed
- Daily meetings – soft start with an activity, break and lunchtimes
- Key Adults helped the children reintegrate full time back into their class acting as a bridge between class teacher and child
- Regular meetings held with parents

### REVIEW

- Observations, SDQ and Boxall profiles repeated and analysed
  - Significant reduction in all children's "overall stress" on SDQ
  - Significant reduction on insecure sense of self and negative towards others strands on Boxall profiles
- All children reintegrated back into class full time
- Term before Key Adults – 7.5 days exclusions, term during and after Key Adults – 1 day
- Children, class teachers and Key Adults all reported it as a positive experience
- Most successful where Key Adult is easily accessible to them

### What the children said about their Key Adults

I really like her and she likes me. She still likes me, even if I'm not nice to her she still likes me. That makes me happy.



He's good. He's cool, he does fast running and I can keep up, sometimes I can run faster, I'm really fast. If he sees me out when I should be in he talks to me and helps me go in but sometimes I run out back again. He talks about stuff in the morning and he lets me run around the playground. He comes and sits next to me a lunchtime as well. He eats his lunch with me before running club. He is happy when I say I have got stickers.



She looks out for me. I can talk to her - sometimes I have to talk to her, sometimes if I was silly. She is getting good at Lego I'm showing her how to. She comes to breakfast club with me a bit now. She does Lego at breakfast club but she's not as good as me. I will help her and she can help me.



1. Goodman R (1997) The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire: A Research Note. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 38, 581-586.
2. Bennathan M. and Boxall M. (1998) *The Boxall Profile Handbook for Teachers*, London: Nurture Group Network.