

This issue focusses on CPD. Now, more than ever, children and young people need those professionals who work with them to be skilled, reflective and confident. It offers some thoughts on the benefits of CPD for both children and adults and presents some currently available opportunities and resources as well as signposting to relevant journal articles.

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Oxford Brookes University, in partnership with the Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Association (SEBDA), offers two postgraduate courses for professionals working with children and/or young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. These Master's-level distance learning courses are delivered online and will enhance your understanding and skills in working with this vulnerable group. Both courses involve an optional virtual or residential induction event in September and a further study day in the spring. Each course lasts 1 year.



Applicants should hold a first degree (2.2 or above) and should be working in a relevant setting with children or young people e.g.

mainstream school, special school, youth club, social care setting or pupil referral unit.

The timetable and structured activities each fortnight enabled me to manage the workload, on top of working full time.

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(G.Z., Year 1 student)

SEBDA publications by Dr Rob Long and Dr Kathy Evans:

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"This is an easily readable book, great for stressed and overstretched parents." It provides a wealth of practical ideas to support parents/carers cope with the challenging times we are living through.

Supporting Children at Home

"Clear and straight forward advice and guidance without being patronising."



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The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children's mental health and well-being has been, is and will be hugely significant.

Our conference will aim to understand this impact and consider the best way forward for professionals and non-professionals who support children with social, emotional and mental health issues.

Contributions come from experts in the sectors of education, social care, therapeutic intervention, psychology, youth justice and research.

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In Mind is a series of short articles on issues relating to SEMH including motivation, relationships, self-esteem and physical intervention. They develop the reader's understanding and offer practical strategies.

Available in the members' resource area of the SEBDA website.

Join SEBDA and

- Share good practice
- Have a national voice
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- Benefit from reduced fees for courses & conferences
- Receive quarterly issues of the international academic journal 'Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties'



Wellbeing, Mental Health & CPD

Compiled by Long, Loughnane & Watt.

"I would quadruple, I would quintuple the amount we spend on professional development"

Matt Hood (TES. 19 March 2021)

School staff, through their daily contact with young people, are in a position to have a positive impact on their social, emotional and mental health. This occurs through both a range of interventions and the all important relationships they make with each individual child or young person. In order to achieve this positive impact school staff need to be knowledgeable and skilled in supporting the social, emotional and mental health of those they teach and, if they are to be able to put this knowledge into practice effectively, they need to take care of their own mental health. The number of children with mental health difficulties had already reached crisis numbers; the current pandemic means there is a crisis on top of a crisis, with numbers predicted to increase further ([NHS Digital](#), 2020; [Young Minds](#) 2021). Staff will come into contact with even more learners facing a range of SEMH difficulties so the need for continuous professional development in wellbeing and mental health issues has never been greater.

So how can CPD help? It provides professionals with the opportunity to:

- share knowledge and examples of whole school and care systems.
- increase their awareness of prevention and early intervention strategies.
- develop a critical perspective to help them understand/evaluate evidence based practice.
- develop universal resilience initiatives as well as targeted support for the most vulnerable CYP.

The pandemic has resulted in new challenges for staff, challenges that require new ways of working. These include the need to develop:

- communication skills beyond face to face interaction and engaging virtually.
- ways of maintaining relationships/communities/support networks.
- strategies to form and nurture attachment and minimise trauma whilst socially distanced.

CPD, in-house or external, can serve to explore some of the unforeseen consequences from the pandemic and consider questions such as:

- Why have some children thrived being away from school?
- What lessons can be learned about our psychological adaptation to such crises? Can lessons learnt be applied to future contexts?
- What can we learn from the enforced separation caused by COVID?
- Can we better understand/support some of the traumas our children face such as family separations, parents working away, children who have difficulties socialising etc. ?

Lessons learnt from the pandemic will lead to new policies, new practices. Implementing new road maps will typically have supporters and detractors. This is where good CPD can pay dividends. It can draw on the collective experiences of others who have sought to introduce whole school mental health and wellbeing programmes. Challenges faced and lessons learnt can enable any school or care setting to increase the likelihood of success. CPD can provide the space for considering how new practices can be introduced, consolidated and sustained, whether they are culturally sensitive, and how students can be involved in designing a new wellbeing curriculum.

CPD enables staff to be well informed and have supported opportunities to learn new skills, gain in confidence and feel supported by the leadership team. In itself this promotes the resilience and emotional well-being of staff, which is especially needed at this time. In turn this enhances the educational and pastoral provision for all children and young people, but especially those who are vulnerable to the negative consequences of enduring this pandemic.

COVID has been a great **Disruptor** but he has been an **Innovator** as well.

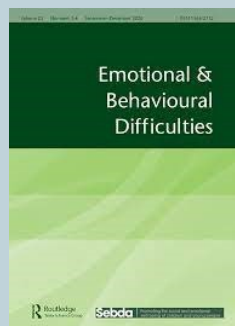
CPD is how great ideas are shared!

Sebda

Promoting the social and emotional
well being of children and young people

Registered Charity 258730: formerly AWCEBD

Where's the Evidence Base?



With so much information we can all struggle to find what is helpful quickly. Irvin Toffler wrote of the “paradox of choice”. Too many choices, too much information is not always helpful. To address this issue, in addition to the regular features offered in our newsletter, we intend choosing SEMH themes of interest that occur in our journal, *Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties* (Published by Routledge). This international academic journal is published four times per year. The full version of each article is available online for signed in SEBDA members (go to <https://www.sebda.org/members-area/resources/> and click on **ACCESS**).

In each issue a key article will be introduced as well as links to others that offer additional information. It seems apposite, given the global pandemic, to begin with staff wellbeing.

Rae, T., Cowell, N. and Field, L. (2017)

Supporting teachers' well-being in the context of schools for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 22:3, pp 200–218.

ABSTRACT:

The importance of nurture for the development of well-being has been extensively documented as has the importance of the relationship between education and well-being. Supervision is seen as an invaluable and essential resource for monitoring staff well-being and as a means of maintaining effective practice. This exploratory study had two aims. The first was to determine how teachers in two special schools in England, catering for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, understood and experienced supervision and the importance they gave to it. The second aim was to explore the role of Educational Psychologists (EPs) in providing supervision. A qualitative research paradigm espousing an open-ended exploratory nature, using semi-structured interviews was employed. Convenience sampling and self-selection was used in relation to the participant teachers. Analysis of the data was undertaken using a conventional content analysis approach adopting a constructivist paradigm. The findings showed that there was a lack of consensus amongst teachers as to what supervision actually looked like in the real world of a special school. Teachers wanted objective, solution-focused and confidential support and opportunities to reflect; offload and feel contained. The provision of such support through supervision by EPs was less clear. There was a very limited perception of how EPs could play a role in promoting teacher well-being through supervision. Based on these findings, the authors propose approaches that utilise group supervision as well as individual supervision, the latter based on the principles of nurture and narrative practice highlighting a role for the EP in both approaches.

Other articles which may be of interest:

Cooper, P. & Cefai, C (2009) **Contemporary values and social context: implications for the emotional wellbeing of children**, *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 14:2, pp 91-100, DOI: [10.1080/13632750902921856](https://doi.org/10.1080/13632750902921856)

Hall, S. (2010) **Supporting mental health and wellbeing at a whole-school level: listening to and acting upon children's views**, *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 15:4, pp 323-339, DOI: [10.1080/13632752.2010.523234](https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2010.523234)

McCluskey, G., Fry, D., Hamilton, S., King, A., Laurie, M., McAra, L. & Stewart, T.M. (2021) **School closures, exam cancellations and isolation: the impact of Covid-19 on young people's mental health**, *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* Published online: 05 Apr 2021 DOI: [10.1080/13632752.2021.1903182](https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1903182)

SEBDA's bespoke training offer

The National Council at SEBDA comprises a range of professionals including teachers, university tutors, psychologists and specialists in mental health and wellbeing, behaviour and a range of psychotherapies. Working together these specialists enable SEBDA to offer a range of unique training opportunities. These include CPD in whole school, classroom and individual SEMH issues. SEBDA is able to design bespoke courses to match the needs of individuals or of particular settings. Training can be delivered face to face or virtually. Contact SEBDA to discuss your training needs.

