

Word Version of 'The AWCEBD Newsletter': Autumn 2002

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Remembering Robert Laslett (1923 -2002)

All members of AWCEBD will have been saddened to hear of the death of Robert Laslett, former president of the Association. His colleague and co-author at the University of Birmingham, Colin Smith, has written an appreciation of Robert's outstanding contribution to thinking, practice and provision for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Tributes, taken mainly from a 'Celebration' of his life held at New Barns, Toddington, in July, are also offered.

Robert Laslett (1923 - 2002): a brief biography.

Born Watford, 1923. Sixth child of a Baptist minister. Moved to Birmingham in 1933. Trained as teacher and worked with David Wills. Became headteacher of Aston Special School in Ealing for 12 years before appointed Tutor for BPhil course in education of maladjusted children at University of Birmingham in 1970s. 'Educating Maladjusted Children' published, 1977. Co-founder and chair of New Barns

Therapeutic Community in 1960s and staunch supporter in dark days before its closure was enforced by false allegations. Ex- President of Association of Workers for Maladjusted Children. Council member until death in 2002 of AWCEBD. Family man with four children and grandchildren. Lay-reader. Lover of Mozart and Shakespeare.

Marion Bennathan:

'Robert has his immortality through his family and his children and his grandchildren, he has his immortality in our Association, and in all the people he's influenced, and all the influence through him that other people have had on children's lives. And so I remember his life with great joy, with great regret that he's no longer with us...'

Craig Fees:

'He walked among ...people who we regard as giants: Richard Balbernie when he was first learning at Swalcliffe Park; the Dockar Drysdales when they were first in the early days of creating the Mulberry Bush; David Wills at Bodenham. '

Robert Laslett: An Appreciation

Colin Smith, Senior Lecturer at University of Birmingham, writes:

My first awareness of Robert was when, as a teacher in a special school for what were then still officially categorised as 'maladjusted children,' I looked for guidance on understanding and working with this turbulent group of pupils and wanting to learn ' why they behave the way they do, and how best to help them.' At the time, I knew of his work because a very experienced colleague from my school attended Robert's BPhil course at the University of Birmingham in one of its earliest presentations and came back full of praise for his perceptive and practical approach. Robert had known and worked with the likes of David Wills and Richard Balbernie at Swalcliffe school and Bodenham Manor. Fortunately the New Barns archive has recorded his memories and anecdotes from that pioneering period, after which he became head of Aston school in Ealing before moving to the University to start the first course specifically for teachers of maladjusted children.

Robert's thinking from this period is encapsulated in *Educating Maladjusted Children* published in 1977. A significant year much currently in mind through newspaper articles and television programmes on the theme of how greatly things have changed from that Silver Jubilee year to the present Golden Jubilee but Robert's thoughts and advice in that book are as fresh, as relevant and as comprehensive an account of theory and practice today as they were then.

Whilst there were good accounts of pioneer work with maladjusted children, *Educating Maladjusted Children* was the first book to deal with relationships with children and parents, classroom management, school organisation and curriculum from a perspective as applicable to the day special or mainstream school as to a residential situation. Many other good books on the topic have since been written and there are now fewer special schools but if I were advising a young teacher about to begin working in a PRU or a Learning Support Unit, I can't think of a better

starting point than *Educating Maladjusted Children* and Robert's balanced and authoritative account of theory and practice in working with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Writing before the appearance of the Warnock Report, never mind the current focus on 'social inclusion,' in *Educating Maladjusted Children*, Robert was 'concerned with the teacher's task...in educating the increasing number of maladjusted children retained in ordinary schools and coping with the emergence of disruptive and poorly motivated pupils in secondary schools.'

In reviewing different theories, in that book, Robert was erudite without being obscure, enthusiastic for therapeutic approaches but fair-minded about others. For example, whilst he was not greatly enamoured of behaviourism, Robert gives a clear and fair representation to learning theory alongside more psychodynamic approaches. As he puts, it 'the fact that there are differing and conflicting theories explaining maladjustment in children is not of enormous importance to teachers... more important is their appreciation of what each approach has to offer and the effectiveness of the one they choose to use.'

In his monograph *Changing Perceptions of Maladjusted Children 1945 – 1981* (republished by AWCEBD in 1998), he wrote that 'willingness to lift their eyes from classroom performance,' reminds teachers that children's behaviour is complex in causation as well as manifestation and that asking 'why?' as well as 'what?' contributes towards positive intervention. In particular, it drew attention to the importance of remembering that often children who cause concern come to school from a home environment:

' with a good deal of inner chaos and internal destructiveness which continually threatens to overwhelm them. Some of them have been involved in situations where relationships have been destroyed by the eruption of hostile and violent feelings. They have not been responsible for that destruction but caught up in it and they have fantasies about the power of their own hostility'
(Laslett, 1977 p76).

Robert's response to these problems was to advocate the timeless virtues of a stable pattern to school life; the presence of predictable and reliable adults; freedom from meaningless restrictions but also fixed limits to behaviour. Above all as Robert put it in the book we later wrote together on *Effective Classroom Management* (1993) teachers should 'enjoy what they are doing not only in teaching their subject but in being with children and understanding what they can accomplish when relationships are mutually satisfying.'

That also captures Robert's way of working with his students by whom he was not merely admired but revered. As any driving instructor will tell you teachers are not the easiest of students and it has been suggested that many teachers of maladjusted pupils have been appointed on the basis that 'it takes one to know one!' Talk to any of his former students and you will hear how Robert enlightened and enthused them and through them improved the lives of many vulnerable children. Let me conclude by returning to *Educating Maladjusted Children*, for a more general quotation on the word 'therapeutic' having two meanings, to heal and to give service:

'the idea of service to the needs of the manifestly handicapped blind, deaf and physically disabled is more easily acknowledged. The idea of giving service to delinquent, aggressive and difficult children is not so readily acknowledged.

One of the achievements of those who have been most influential in the education of maladjusted children is that the idea of service and professional commitment to these children is central to their approach.'

Selflessness and professional commitment leavened by personal warmth and a wry sense of humour are the characteristics, which I and other members of the AWCEBD will always associate with the pleasure of working with Robert.

References

Laslett, R (1977) *Educating Maladjusted Children* London: Crosby Lockwood Staples

Laslett, R (1998) in Laslett RB, Cooper, P, Maras,P, Rimmer, A and Law, B *Changing Perceptions: Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Since 1945* Maidstone: AWCEBD

Smith, C.J. and Laslett, R. (1993) *Effective Classroom Management: A Teacher's Guide (2nd Ed)* London: Routledge

Joan Pritchard, Chair, AWCEBD: I first came across the name Robert Laslett in 1976 when I was doing an Advanced Diploma at Manchester University. ..After I'd succeeded in qualifying, largely because of Robert's book, I was the head of a school for children with EBD...All the staff wanted to borrow this book, and I kept losing it. He still is a major influence in the Association [AWCEBD]. My memories of him are at the National Council Meetings. He always came, he'd always read all the papers, he always had some considered reflection on the topics we were going to debate, and we relied on him constantly to bring us back and re-focus us if we rather went astray.

Just recently at a conference of EBD heads in Liverpool, Ted Cole was one of the speakers. During his talk he mentioned some of Robert's work, and he just added, 'who died recently'. There was a pause, and there was a definite intake of breath, of dismay, that all these people who've done various courses, who've been to our Study Courses, who ...were no longer to have Robert there to turn to.'

Hayward Osborne, Archdeacon's funeral address at St Mary's Church Mosely:

'Robert lived simply, satisfied with little for himself. He did not seek luxuries for himself... he was fun loving and had quite a mischievous streak... Devout without being pious, gentle without being weak, influential but unassuming, he had at the end reached a stage of fulfilment and peace. He had enjoyed a rich and rewarding marriage, he loved his children... And with a suddenness he was cut down by the severity of this stroke.'

John Visser: "Educating Maladjusted Children". ..got me through my Master's degree. You didn't write an assignment in 1980 without reference to Robert's book... And that remained the case. It is a seminal text in our field'

Richard Rollinson, former Director of Mulberry Bush:

[Robert as adviser to Mulberry Bush] 'Robert was able to assist the Bush in its developmental efforts, helping everyone not only to understand, but to embrace the

reality that educational activities and standards – small 's' standards – are both part of treatment and indeed therapeutic in themselves, a wonderful pulling force for children to change and grow...Robert, as the fine person and professional he was, did much to preserve the good in what the Bush had been doing, and enable the Bush to have a future that honours its true past. '

Roy Lund (ex-Headteacher and LEA Advisor): *[Roy undertaking London Diploma in Ed of Malad Children in 1971-2]* ' He led a seminar ...and I remember thinking that here was someone I could identify with, who was able to put his love of maladjusted children into a positive framework of care and control and learning...His masterwork 'Educating Maladjusted Children' could not have been better timed, as it appeared in 1977, just after I was appointed to my first headship of a school for maladjusted children. It was my mentor for many years and essential reading for all the teachers and support workers who arrived in the school... It will never be bettered ...I always felt better when I had seen him and talked to him.'

Robert Laslett and New Barns - John Cross recalls:

[Robert the thinker and practitioner] 'I met Robert first in 1956 at Bodenham Manor. Robert was still quite young, and I was even younger. And we would spend a long time talking about Bodenham Manor itself, because Bodenham Manor and David Wills meant a lot to both Robert and myself and many other people who went off from Bodenham Manor and continued the work that David so much inspired. Robert...was one of the few people who really understood...what David Wills was trying to create at Bodenham Manor. And even then I recognised in Robert a kindred spirit. We spent quite a lot of evenings at Bodenham Manor, late at night, walking around and talking. Not just talking, but very often we were looking out for children who were in the bushes... Robert was always anxious that they were somewhere else, but I said to him, "Don't bother too much. They're not far." One night I was actually saying this to him, and then a voice from a tree came down and said, "Yes, we're here."...'

[Robert as adviser/governor to New Barns Therapeutic Community] 'Robert ...was a teacher...and had a professional attitude to that...The education that he saw was a wider thing: it included the nurture of children and saw the children as whole human beings, not split up, and that was so important. But as education became more and more important, Robert gave us enormous help in establishing our response to the National Curriculum. Robert was also, as a governor, enormously supportive of all the team members, which included some teachers, social workers and other people.'

[Robert during the false allegations period that brought about the closure of New Barns] 'Robert had taken over as Chairman of the Governors when David Wills died, and gave an enormous amount to us then. But when this disaster overcame us. His true worth and mettle came out... to stand up and speak in the face of the press and what went on. It needed a great personal as well as professional courage, and Robert...did that...was supportive of the team here, protected them and served as an insulation from what was going on outside, dealt with the media.'

A taste of the gentle humour the Editor remembers from Robert's inspiring sessions on the history of provision for pupils with EBD given over the last decade to students on the EBD Distance Education courses at the University of Birmingham:

" Robert talked about ... at Swalcliffe - the boy who stuttered out very, very angrily: 'Youyou...' And Robert said, 'I knew what he was trying to say, and I was about to fill in 'bastard' for him, but what he said was, 'You bogey nosed crow.' " (*Craig Fees at the 'Celebration' at Toddington*).

Greetings from the new editor.

With no little humility I lift my electronic quill. Marion Bennathan, founder and such impressive editor of the Newsletter, is no easy act to follow. I am honoured to have been asked. My intention, spelled out to AWCEBD Executive, is to commit myself to the job for two years (subject to unexpected career change). Already I know that producing an edition is a challenging, time-consuming yet rewarding task.

Continuity

From Day One of my tenure of the editorship, I wanted continuity of key themes and ideas. As David Wills said (and recently John Visser reminded us) there are some 'eternal verities' in our work. The tragic passing of Robert Laslett has allowed, indeed made essential, a rehearsing in this Newsletter of some of his ideals- theory guiding sound practice- which he knew were essential for those working with and for children and young people with SEBD.

I also wished for continuity of personnel. I wanted and needed to retain the services of those who have filled these pages over the last few years to such telling effect. I am grateful to the Regional and PDG Reps who have filed their reports on time (the Editor is being magnanimous here!). The musings of Marion remain magnificent (in the Nurture Group section). The sagacity of Cynthia still shines (in social report). The jottings of Joan glitter like jewels (Chair's report; mentoring). The - what? Struggling here a bit - the erudition of Allan R ever enlightens. Or 'the effulgence of ...' (he used this in an e-mail to me recently, no doubt to emphasise his superior education). But enough of compering the music hall. Behind the scenes, I am very grateful to Dick Rummery for his expert advice and practical help. I was also delighted to receive and to be able to include in this edition contributions from a range of professionals. To all of you, cheers!

Intentions

How do I see the role of this Newsletter, I did not hear you ask but am going to tell you. On a personal level I see it as an opportunity for me to escape from worthy but dry academic writing, researching and reading. This (if I can carve out the time) I relish. I want an easily digested magazine-style publication that informs busy practitioners, whatever their profession, in whichever setting they work (or retire)

- of national events and trends
- of AWCEBD activities wherever in Britain (I'm pleased that Scotland is dividing into two branches: how can Scotland be described as 'a region'?)
- of evidence-based practice (but I shall not be afraid of reporting interesting and perhaps unproven approaches).

The Newsletter must reflect the aims and objectives of the Association, remembering (as the proposed subtext to our new name reminds us) that we are THE multi-professional association for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. We are the established organisation for those working in PRUs, learning support units, specialist provision in FE, CAMHS, social services, Connexions as well as day and (importantly still) residential schools and communities. We have contributed significantly in the past to the framing of policy and government guidance and seek to continue in this role. With your active and hopefully, growing support, we can.

Interaction

How far the Newsletter reflects the view of all the caring professions associated with SEBD depends on the extent members and other readers support and contribute to it. I need your help, your input, your feedback. If things are said in these columns that need challenging, please e-mail or snail-mail me and I shall heed and usually publish your views. Please help me make this Newsletter (like a good care or educational setting for children and young people with SEBD) inclusive, interactive and collaborative.

Empathy

As an ex-practitioner, I wish to celebrate success, to defend injustice to staff and children, to disseminate sound research, to raise awareness. I am a former careworker, teacher, special school principal, have a degree in enuresis management (that early morning smell along the boarders' corridor!) as well as EBD. I have a diploma in OFSTED and false-allegations survival. I've had my specs broken in physically restraining violent teenagers and have despaired over the unreality of policy makers in this area. I've got the teeshirt.

Having gone to a special residential school, aged six months (my parents opened the first such school for Lancashire LEA in 1950), I finally achieved my permanent exclusion aged forty-five (phew!). Admittedly my last seven years researching and visiting EBD provision in special and mainstream settings, PRUs, FE colleges etc or recently, tracking permanently excluded young people, have been a privilege away from the intense daily pressures under which so many of you work. But I trust this research and my work as a tutor on the Birmingham University EBD courses have kept me in touch with the feelings and aspirations of practitioners as well as policy makers. Together we shall make the Newsletter stimulating, informative and relevant to a widening circle of readers as AWCEBD, under its new name, spreads its wings and soars.

Ted Cole
October 2002

Your Chairman Reports

Joan Pritchard writes: I hope you have all had a good summer break and have returned to work feeling refreshed and ready for all that the government and the children with whom we work throw at us.

My first task is to introduce our new Newsletter editor to you, that is if Ted Cole needs any introduction! He is a long time member of the Association who has always been happy to share his thoughts, comments and ideas with us on a range of subjects.

My second task is to thank Marion Bennathan for bringing the concept and then the reality of a Newsletter to us. Hers has been the inspiration and driving force which has made it such a success. She will be a hard act to follow but I am totally confident that Ted is up to the task and will bring new ideas and enthusiasm to the role. We are lucky to have someone so knowledgeable about SEBD to take up Marion's mantle.

You will read elsewhere about the sad loss to the Association of Robert Laslett and Anthony Rodway. Both were active members and worked unflinchingly for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties. Their wisdom and support will be sorely missed.

We have been active on behalf of all our members since I wrote to you in the last newsletter.

The Nurture Group Network

The Executive committee had a busy agenda at its meeting in July. We discussed exciting plans for development in a variety of ways. We had a joint meeting with members of the executive of the Nurture Group Network in order to explore future relationships. It was finally resolved that we would seek to establish an agreement that would provide autonomy for the NGN within the constitution of the AWCEBD. A consultant, Neil Brady, is assisting both NGN and AWCEBD to draw up plans. These are moving forward in a positive way. We will keep you informed of the progress.

Name Change

Another important agenda item was the requirement laid upon us by the AGM to prepare a proposal for the change to the name of the Association. I have written to you all with the proposal which was agreed by your representatives on National Council. We are calling an Extraordinary General Meeting on Saturday, January 25, 2003, to be held at St Thomas's Hospital, Westminster, London, at 11.00am. We do encourage anyone who is able to attend to do so but understand the difficulties people face. With this in mind my letter has a voting slip attached to it for you to fill in and return to me. Once we have a mandate from our membership we will begin the process to implement the change.

PDG

You will read elsewhere about the Professional Development Group, a sub-committee within the Association, however I want to report that the group, of which I am a member, has been active, not only delivering the roadshows but also setting up a new certificate course in professional studies, which is being accredited by the University of Leicester. The first cohort begins their studies this term. If this proves successful we will seek to offer a wider range of development opportunities, both short courses and accredited. The roadshows for 2003 are already in the planning stage so look out for the information telling you when it is coming to your region. I want to record my thanks to Richard Rollinson and Keith Bovair for the work they put

in to such good effect travelling around the UK delivering the 2002 roadshows. They were well-received wherever they went.

The Annual Study Course will be held in Liverpool in 2003 from April 25 to 27th – the theme will explore – ‘Where do we all belong?’ – it will be looking at early experience and the effect it has on the desire we all have to ‘belong’.

Scottish developments

One of the other bits of good news to report is the way the Scottish Division is blossoming. Not only do we have an active northern branch but we also have a southern one which has just been launched. Well done Scotland!

Autumn Study Course

The Course organised by the PDG and held at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, was well attended and a great success. Initial feedback was all very positive. The theme was ‘The Meaning of Inclusion’ and the range of speakers took us on a stimulating journey through the various definitions and processes of the term. Our thanks to Allan Rimmer who organised it for us.

Keep your new editor informed

Do let us know about any other exciting events happening around the regions. Ted Cole our new Newsletter editor would love to publish them.

Thanks

I want to thank all members of the Executive and National Council for their hard work and commitment to the Association and the children with and for whom we all work.

General Secretary Re-elected

At the AGM in London, Patrick Webb, Harmony School, Balerno, was re-elected as General Secretary. In his report to AGM he reflected on his three years in post and the challenges ahead. He also described a shared cream-tea at Grantchester Meadows where in two hours, Robert Laslett 'managed to influence and change completely my whole attitude to working with young people with EBD.' The Chairman expressed the Association's gratitude to Patrick for his work and for agreeing to stand again.

Robert Beattie, DfES, meets with Council

Allan Rimmer reports...

Robert Beattie is the senior DfES official leading the review of the future role of special schools in the context of inclusion. On 11th September, 2002, he joined Council for the Autumn meeting at St Thomas' Hospital, London. He explained that a Working Group had been set up including the heads of special schools, including SEBD, and was engaged in providing information and views on the changing roles of special schools. Contributions for AWCEBD would be very welcome in view of the breadth and depth of experience and knowledge that it represented.

DfES believes in some special schools

Robert stated that DfES policy included the retention of special schools and a recognition that there was a degree of uncertainty about their future. He noted that in the area of MLD there had been a marked shift from special to mainstream provision but this shift had not been so significant with other areas of SEN including SEBD.

The three areas of concentration were:-

- Future development of the special schools as part of a continuum of provision
- The development of multi-agency working
- Good models for SEBD provision

In this context a particular area of concentration was the development of interactive partnership between special and mainstream schools

Successor to Circular 9/94

Specific to SEBD was the need to look at, and if necessary review and develop, the definition in Circular 9/94. Robert felt that this was a sound core definition and gained from its inclusion of indicators and reference to causes. However it had become evident from the evidence of EBD heads that the disaffected/ EBD/ mentally ill matrix did not correspond to their experience: they felt that their populations included many who were suffering from many forms of mental ill health.

Late referrals and complex needs

This group had also presented a consensus view that referrals were too late chronologically and in terms of the intensity of the problems for the expertise of their staff to meet the children's needs. This implied that an enhanced role for CAMHS and earlier multi-agency intervention must be part of improved provision (Ted Cole referred to new University of Birmingham for Mental Health Foundation available on www.mentalhealth.org.uk).

Staff development

In this connection mainstream staff awareness of sensitivity to the nature of SEBD was essential. This could be achieved through interactive work between mainstream and special schools and through enhanced professional development. Council members urged that urgent consideration be given to more specific training in child development in ITT and professional development in the early stages of a teacher's career. Robert agreed but pointed to the overloaded nature of current ITT courses s trainers and students were preoccupied with the academic curriculum and its delivery. This was reinforced by the main elements of the inspection process.

PRUs

Robert said that there had been recognition of the need to include PRUs in the review as an essential element in the continuum of provision but admitted to 'behaviour' sometimes being dealt with by other parts of DfES.

Pilots and funding

Robert raised funding issues. A major problem was that many SEBD projects depended on funding such as Standards Funds which were not reliable year-on-year. The meeting agreed with this and referred to a number of very successful projects which had been adversely affected by the withdrawal of funds. At the same time the profession had suffered from “pilotitis”, meaning a plethora of new initiatives which demand considerable time and effort but prove to be evanescent and do not appear to be evaluated.

Collecting AWCEBD views

Patrick Webb, General Secretary, undertook to receive, collate and forward views from members to Robert.

Robert said the initial report to Ministers will happen in this Autumn. The Council expressed its gratitude to Robert for attending the meeting and being so generous with his time.

The AWCEBD AUTUMN STUDY COURSE

Allan Rimmer reports on another in a long line of successful and very enjoyable events at RAC, Cirencester. It's worth going just for the food and the social. And as for the speakers...

The Autumn Study Course seems now to have become a regular part of the AWCEBD calendar. This year it was again held at the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester on 20th to 21st September and this year the theme was 'The Meaning of Inclusion'.

As usual the take up was heavy with about 150 attending. Indeed we found that we hadn't got room for all who wanted to come. The membership included the first cohort of the course, which is being accredited at the University of Leicester and this group remained with us into the Sunday

SEBD and Inclusion

The main sessions opened with Ted Cole, whose theme was 'Inclusion: The Challenge of formulating an AWCEBD Inclusion policy'. The Association has struggled to formulate a policy for the last two years and we are grateful to Ted for the firm grip that he has taken on its development and production. There was helpful interaction and we are now confident that we are in a position to go ahead and publish what promises to be an excellent document.

He was followed by Professor Philip Garner on “Inclusion, Rhetoric and Reality. Messages from research. Philip was his usual robust self in his wide references to research that questions the fundamental meaning of the term and tends to the conclusion that inclusion, in the sense of location in a mainstream school, does not work here or in any part of the developed world

Learning Support Units

Jane McSherry was next with her theme 'Learning Support Units: Models of Good Practice'. This was an excellent presentation, giving a productive framework for

establishing effective LSUs and stark warnings about how easily units can become negative and destructive placements for staff and children is the planning is not in place. (Members who have not bought her book ought to do so: 'Challenging Behaviours in Mainstream Schools', published by David Fulton)

Quiet Places

Fran Renwick and Penny Moon concluded the first day with 'A Quiet Place: Practice and Evaluation.' This was a refreshing introduction to the theory and practice of The Quiet Place as a holistic therapeutic approach with teachers and children. The research outcomes were most impressive.

Inclusion only exists when the child *feels* it
John Visser opened Saturday on 'Alternatives to Exclusion: An Overview.' John was both passionate and rigorously academic in his demonstration that inclusion can only be defined in terms of the experience of the client. Where only locational inclusion is achieved pupils are not really included in any productive sense. He insisted that what EBD provision has achieved in terms of raising the standards of education must be recognised and celebrated as in itself an important therapeutic and inclusive gain. A number of the audience were new to John's 'Eternal Verities', his summation of the essential elements of good practice and the centre of his David Wills Lecture last year, and were impressed by how readily they recognised them.

ADHD

He was followed by Dr Geoff Kewley on 'ADHD, Understanding and Treatment.' We were fortunate to have this specialist paediatrician presenting a session on the most excluded of all children. It was clear that for many of the audience the lecture was the first time that they had heard a genuinely scientific address on this important subject. Geoff stressed the need for very precise and expert assessment based on collaboration and for multi-disciplinary treatment of this complex condition. We hope that he will in the early future make his paper available to us.

Post 16 Phase

The morning concluded with Alan Chesney of the Learning Skills Council presenting on 'Developing 'Joined Up' Thinking and Practice'. It was a refreshing factor that Alan's area of work concerns the post-16 phase; we know that many of our clients are well-supported and able to grow up to school leaving age only to be failed abysmally by the FE system. Alan gave a very clear demonstration of the structural reasons for this in terms of in-built discontinuities between the many agencies involved and was both cogent and passionate in his presentation of alternatives.

Working groups/Seminars

As in previous years the course was enriched by Working Groups and Seminars led by volunteers who had responded by offering their services. The sessions were very well attended and were uniformly excellent and well received. We would like to take this opportunity of thanking them publicly and list their names and themes.

- Nancy Williams: Understanding the Differences in Children with ADHD
- Geoff Kewley and Pauline Latham: Understanding and Working with ADHD:

- Sue Gleaves, Ann Hendon-John: CLASS (Children Learning Acceptable Social Skills) HOPPERS Programme
- Peter Cox: Emotional Literacy – Why Now?
- Gill Dixon: the Warwickshire FRIENDS project
- John Murray, Brian Kettleborough: The Expanding role of a School for Children with EBD
- Sue Bletcher: Nurture Groups in Key Stages 1 and 2. Linking philosophy and practice with Key Stages 3 and 4
- Ruth Chesney: The relevance of modalities of learning.

We have the contact details for all the speakers and Workshop leaders and would be pleased to share them with AWCEBD members.

The David Wills Lecture, September 2002: Present and Faithful by Marion Bennathan

We were indeed fortunate this year to have our Annual David Wills Lecture delivered by Marion Bennathan. Marion has worked with children for more years than she cares to remember and the profound knowledge and wisdom she has gained over these years provided a stimulating, challenging and amusing lecture, delivered in her own inimitable style.

The audience included members of her family, invited guests and members and friends from the Association. We were all treated to a lecture which started with a reminder of the work of David Wills and the other early pioneers in our field, took us through some of Marion's experiences as a parent, her career with working with children and her role in the Association. She linked all these strands together with reference to the research work of psychologists and psychiatrists which helps to explain the possible causes of children's behaviour and the achievements of those working with children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in this ever changing society.

We were reminded of the importance of attachment and nurture, of unconditional love and affection and the importance of a stimulating and challenging environment.

She led us all to the conclusion that society may change but the needs of children remain the same, therefore we must remain faithful to the work of David Wills and the other pioneers.

Joan Pritchard

Anthony Rodway: In Memoriam

Sadly another of the noted pioneers has passed away. Allan Rimmer pays tribute through a review of Anthony's account of his work at Tylehurst School.

Tylehurst School: unconditional love and the continuity of relationships.
Published by The Byre, Lairg, 2001

Anthony Rodway was at Tylehurst School from 1949 until its closure in 1983, remaining with it during the following two years when it was located in Redhill. Since that time he maintained supportive contact with ex-pupils until the Tylehurst Trust came to an end in 1999. Those of us who have had the privilege of knowing and working with Anthony have been inspired by him and have regarded him as a touchstone of integrity in our demanding field of work.

The book begins with an invaluable theoretical and historical survey of the work of the school by Anthony. In this section he gives real and precise meaning to “unconditional love” and “the continuity of relationships”.

This is followed by chapters from eight of the pupils who were at Tylehurst. These are rewarding, if frequently painful, reading as the contributors relive their experiences and emotions from the perspective of relative adult tranquillity. The shared appreciation of what the school and its ongoing support have meant to them is deeply moving. At the end of this intense reading Anthony provides a short but moving conclusion and celebration of shared achievement.

In the nineteen eighties there were two lines of attack on special schools; between them they have done incalculable damage in contributing to the loss of therapeutic resources which were built over many years and can never be replaced. The first was an ideological commitment to “inclusion” and a conviction that any alternative provision was a mechanism for negative social engineering and control. The second was more precise and was based on supposed research evidence that special schools for deeply disturbed children were expensively ineffective. It continues to be a matter for deep regret that the pioneers involved in the work had neither the time nor the inclination to take on these two areas of antagonism. It is only recently that the work of Visser, Cole and Cooper has asserted the therapeutic effectiveness and value of well-run EBD schools.

The consequence has been that children with severe EBD have been retained in mainstream schools, trying to negotiate a fish ladder of successive “strategies” until they and those working with them are exhausted. They are then excluded and only at this ultimately destructive stage are they sent to special schools where they enter trailing clouds of ingloriousness, convinced of their own badness and with little sense of their own specialness.

In 1963 Anthony Rodway wrote, “I believe that if one can help children continually to understand themselves, their desires and their fears, their hates and their loves; if one can help them to realise that these are shared by all; then one can lay the basis for a real identification with others and a sympathy for human suffering which is the best possible basis for a truly just and happy society”. This is a precise credo in which every word has been carefully measured and chosen. It is this belief and its practice that informs the insistence throughout on sensitivity to children’s feelings and a determination to see behaviour as symptomatic and secondary. The contrast with the current preoccupation with behaviour and behaviour management without empathic skills or any roots in the internal world of damaged childhood is refreshing.

Copies of this book are available from the Administrative Office at £10 including post and packing.

Special schools have a future, government tells NAES Conference

The senior DfES official leading the review of the role of special schools assured headteachers and other senior staff from EBD schools that Education Minister, Baroness Ashton, saw a continuing need for special schools. Robert Beatie was addressing the annual conference of the National Association for EBD Schools in Liverpool, on 28th June, before taking questions from a packed hall.

The successful NAES event was also addressed by Dr Ted Cole on 'EBD Schools: Continuity and Innovation', Prof. John Harris on government guidance on physical intervention. In the evening, George Smith, Head of Care at Lindsworth School, Birmingham, gave an after-dinner speech up to his usual hilarious standards.

On the second day talks were given by Sue Bainbridge on the national numeracy strategy, by Charlie Mead, Lindsworth Village, on socially excluded children and a range of workshops were offered. All in all it was a very successful conference, much enjoyed by delegates.

The NAES consists mainly of headteachers of EBD schools and exists to influence the national debate on EBD issues. It also offers peer support and seeks to share good practice. Discussions are under way to establish firm links between NAES and AWCEBD.

PRU REVIEW: Ted Cole reports...

Pupil Referral Units: 1066 and All That

In days of yore in a war-ravaged land, good King George decreed that there should be compulsory secondary education for all - even for those who did not want it (Butler's Education Act, 1944).

His minions scratched their heads and the months rolled by. They knew that there were always those who found mainstream schooling difficult and who resorted to or could not stop themselves from disrupting it. The minions understood that there were not enough special schools for young people now deemed maladjusted. They knew that their Victorian ancestors were a tad OTT when they locked persistent truants in solitary confinement in special truant schools; that there were not enough special hostels from which the 'maladjusted' went to neighbouring day schools (e.g. in Berkshire). They understood that parents sometimes hated their children being spirited away to boarding schools, occasionally special or therapeutic, but often to mix with toffs in public schools (Underwood Report, Min of Ed. 1955). Then a smile appeared on the faces of London's sagest. 'Doh!', they uttered: 'Tutorial classes!'

And so in 1950 were born the forebears of the PRU. Some disaffected/maladjusted children attended the London off-site units for half the week while required to go to mainstream schools for the other half. Teachers in the tutorial

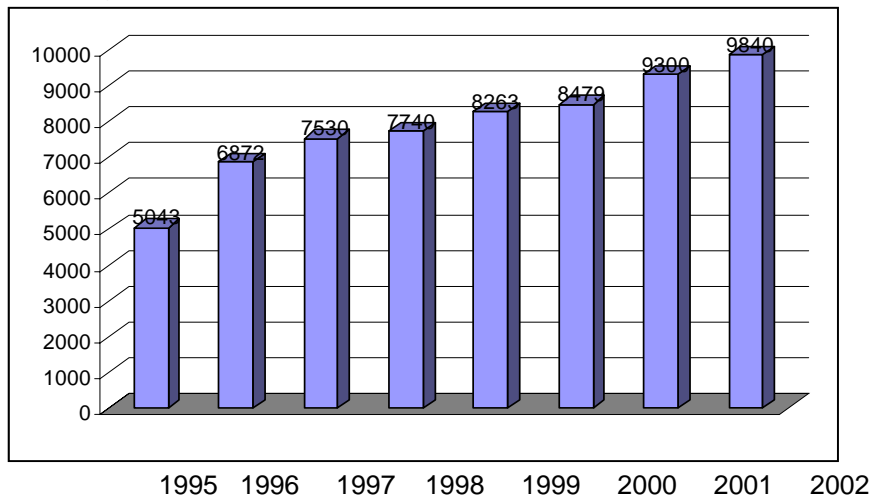
centres had time allocated each week to work with parents. The education minister (David Eccles) was pleased: in the foreword to the Underwood Report (1955), the five year government enquiry into provision for maladjusted children study of provision, he praised approaches that treated the maladjusted child at home, as part of the child's family. Do we always remember that the history of provision for SEBD is far more than an account of a few boarding special schools focussing on 'within-child' factors and a psychodynamic perspective? For over a hundred years, influential contemporaries have seen the genesis of difficult behaviour as an interactive, social thing, best tackled, if possible, in the local mainstream school (e.g. 1930s experimental classes) or local community using systemic approaches - as the best PRUs do today (see Cole, 1989; Daniels and Cole, 2002). So the off-site unit approach has a long history. From the tutorial class model developed the hundreds of special units of the 1970s and 1980s (see Elton Report, 'Discipline in Schools'; DES, 1989), transmuted after the 1993 Education Act to the Pupil Referral Units.

Lord Elton and his colleagues were worried about the 'sin bin', dumping-ground associations of the special units and held out their view of future off-site units. Their purpose would be to

're-integrate pupils into the mainstream at the earliest possible stage or to begin procedures for statementing. They should be run by members of the support team...They would offer a breathing space, specialist diagnosis and an individually tailored programme aimed at reintegration.'
(DES, 1989a, p.157).

These were sentiments taken up by the 1993 Education Act, which set up PRUs. The hoped-for 'revolving door' philosophy was repeated in Circular 11/94 (DFE, 1994) (and later Circular 11/99; DFEE, 1999). Circular 11/94 said: 'Education in a PRU cannot be regarded as an acceptable long-term alternative to placement in a mainstream school...' (para.29). In both circulars the need for effective inter-agency working was highlighted. Ah, the idealism of government policy writers! More realistically the new PRUs were spared the rigours of the early national curriculum and the demands of some schools premises regulations (features that continue to attract cash-strapped and OFSTED-fearing LEAs). In relation to physical premises, government could not do otherwise - given the under-resourced, sometimes shocking conditions at times observed by HMI (DES, 1989b) in their inspection of off-site special units in the 1980s (rotting demountables or leaky disused Victorian primary schools etc ...plus ca change...?).

Figure 1: The growth in numbers of pupils registered in English PRUs (excluding dual-registered children).



(Source: DfES National Statistics First Release, SENs in Schools in England, Provisional, 1999,2002)

And then in England, the Cinderella service grew and grew, as staunch inclusionists and many in central and local government perhaps turned a necessary blind eye (see Figure 1). By January, 1995 there were 5043 sole-registered pupils. LEAs not possessing PRUs (sometimes in the name of inclusion, sometimes because alternative arrangements were made through their special schools or unregistered tutorial centres) shrank to about a dozen. By January, 2002, there were estimated to be 9840 (provisional figure) sole-registered pupils. In addition there are unknown thousands of dual-registered pupils (Harris et al., 2000, suggested about 4000 pupils at that time, for England and Wales). Closures of EBD special schools have been more than offset by expansion of PRUs. In too many LEAs, PRUs clearly substitute for EBD schools and are occupied by long-stay pupils who often want to be in PRUs rather than in unreformed, rejecting mainstream schools pursuing perform a 'standards agenda'.

Some PRUs strive admirably and succeed in being stepping-stones to full re-integration but how do you make a door revolve when the mainstream schools remain so resistant to re-admitting those firmly labelled as troublemakers and as Professor Croll (2001) recently found, teachers even in primary schools tend to want more special schools and alternative provision for those with severe SEBD? And is it wise that PRUs should strive so hard for re-integration when the research evidence (e.g. Parsons and Howlett, 2000) suggests

- the low success rate of pupils returning to mainstream schools,
- some units offering short-term, time-limited placements tend to pre-select the children they admit and such units tend not to track the long-term progress of the re-integrated?

AWCEBD rightly supports determined, well-supported attempts at re-integration but we are also aware of the revolution that still needs to happen in too many mainstream schools before some children with SEBD *feel* welcome, understood and truly included. It is not surprising that recent research (bearing out similar historical findings e.g. Fish Report, ILEA, 1985) shows a significant number of pupils and their parents happy with their alternative placements, appreciating how these have increased the young person's chances of a lasting social inclusion. Professor David Berridge and colleagues recently noted that while permanent

exclusion can be a devastating event for many, for others it 'marked a positive turning point in their lives. They [the young excludees] valued the individual attention and the fact that staff would respond to their social and emotional needs and their desire to be treated as an adult' (Berridge et al., 2001, p.vii). A message to CSIE (Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education): please continue to campaign for more inclusive mainstream schools - but please accept that, in the foreseeable future, *for a small but important minority, children's rights are sometimes better respected outside mainstream schools*. The present central government (see e.g. DfEE, 1998) and the Prince's Trust (2002) clearly accept this but are some influential local politicians listening?

From uncertain beginnings (see criticism of OFSTED, 1995) PRUs have become a major form of often effective provision for children and young people with SEBD. Given the ancient and continuing vagaries and serendipity of assessment and placement (Cole, 1989; Galloway et al., 1994; Cole et al., 1998) it is not possible to maintain the myth that clear dividing lines can be placed between the disaffected, the permanently excluded and those with SEBD: or that PRUs are for the purely disaffected. As recent OFSTED reports on PRUs show, many who attend PRUs, whether stated or not, have severe and complex SEBD.

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PRU Review (Part 2): An Inspector Calls (2000/01)

The most recent annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector notes in 'Main Findings' (p1):

- 51 PRUs were inspected in the previous year
- 'Standards reached by the vast majority of pupils in PRUs are below average, but the progress they make, particularly in English and mathematics, is improving. PRUs are successful in improving the attendance and the behaviour of most of their pupils'.

The report also noted:

- Beyond the core subjects, curriculum tends to be narrow although PRUs strive to provide a broader curriculum, too often they are not helped by a lack of resources and unsuitable accommodation.'
- a quarter of the PRUs were in unsatisfactory accommodation.
- PRUs praised for increasing the opportunities for pupils to gain accreditation e.g. GCSE or Certs of Achievement:' Many pupils make good use of these opportunities and their successes are in marked contrast to those in previous educational settings where they had become disengaged from the learning process.' (para. 254).
- good PSHE helped by effective personal tutors and key-workers.
- attendance figures depressed by a few chronic non-attenders (para.262).

The Editor Enthralled (2002)...

Whiling away a few idle moments your Editor happened on the OFSTED inspections site (www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports) and printed out the summary pages of inspections on some 16 PRUs in the period March to May, 2002 (more recent inspections yet to be entered under LEAs and PRUs). And pleasant reading many of these summaries made. So let's celebrate a little (though I am not pretending to applaud the Ofsted inspection model or its processes in their entirety). Praise clearly outweighed criticism and the weaknesses in one case clearly related to inadequate LEA provision and support (see below). Other reports also alluded to lack of LEA clarity of policies (uncertainties spread through seemingly endless reviews of behaviour support or EBD services etc.) for the Cinderella service.

Out of 'special measures' after HMI visits: a PRU in Wolverhampton and another in Bassetlaw. In the former case, problems would seem to have related to uncertain LEA policies as much as to staff performance (is it significant that they have no EBD school?). Both PRUs are noted to be catering for pupils with severe EBD.

Good reports Well done

- the Kempston, Bedford PRUs - good education, pupils well cared for, good links with parents.
- Sheffield Spring Lane Teaching and Re-integration Service is described as effective with good teaching, after 'a period of uncertainty and rapid change'.
- Wolverdene, Andover: 'Almost all pupils have EBD and a minority specific of MLDs'. High levels of re-integration achieved. Clear, positive leadership, good teaching and 'pupils are very supportive of the centre. They are keen to learn and usually behave well.'
- Parkside, Ipswich 'a very effective PRU'.

- Bridgwater, Somerset: effective PRU with good teaching (but lack of LEA clarity for EOTAS, in inspectors' view).
- Asbury, Smethwick. Good unit now after unsettled past. Good leadership and 'a very good curriculum' well taught.
- The five centres of the Central Area PRU, Norwich, have 'high quality teaching', very good behaviour management and 'outstanding' adult/pupil relationships. In addition there are good links with local schools: 'There is a common belief in inclusion and everyone is working towards it.' NB 'Until recently a log-jam of secondary pupils who could not be reintegrated into mainstream schools prevented one centre from working as effectively as it should have'.

Perhaps this was also the case for Brook Education Centre, Folkestone, which is probably unfairly criticised for low re-integration rates of the permanently excluded (has Ofsted and DfES absorbed the recent research showing the resistance of so many mainstream schools to re-integration? Or the fact that when local schools are over-subscribed there is little chance of re-integration?). The Folkestone centre is also reported as serving young people with EBD. There are many positive comments: good teaching and learning, leadership, team work and staff commitment.

Your Editor Appalled

Poor environment in and surrounding the demountable buildings hinders but does not prevent all good practice at Lime House, Walsall. This despite 'the overall unsatisfactory conditions the staff and pupils work in, and the lack of support, guidance and funding available to the unit.' The unit does not receive the funding for pupils to which it is entitled...'resources are inadequate'...'there are a large number of health and safety issues relating mainly to the exterior of the buildings' (the criticism of the LEA goes on...). Despite this, education and behaviour is generally satisfactory and the dedicated staff 'successfully help pupils overcome their phobias so that they are able to re-integrate into school'. There are very good links with parents. Maybe by now the LEA has responded positively.

The gloomy picture painted sadly reflects some PRUs visited by me over the last few years. Some LEAs and their political masters/mistresses (whatever the pressures on them from other directions) do need to get their acts together and find the necessary money for PRUs. The young people and staff really do deserve decent accommodation with secure tenure (as HMI stressed in the 1980s).

There was criticism also of the LEA (though action being taken) for one of the Ipswich PRUs where 'serious weaknesses' are reported although there is satisfactory and often good teaching and good relationships with parents.

Reference: Chief Inspector of Schools' Annual Report: Standards and Quality in Education, 2000/2001 (DfES, 2002, www.official-documents.co.uk/document/deps/ofsted).

EDUCATION MATTERS From the DfES Web-site

EXCELLENCE IN CITIES [EiC] claimed to remove 'the post code lottery of education' in urban schools.

The Annual Report (April, 2002) said £500million had been invested in 2000 schools in disadvantaged areas (creating 4000 jobs) in a three year period: 'New

research shows many city schools are improving , with standards rising faster than their suburban counterparts'. EiC provides

- Learning mentors 'for all who need it, to help raise achievement and reduce disaffection by removing barriers to pupils' learning;
- Learning Support Units (an approach avoiding exclusions and disruption of other pupils' learning);
- 100 EiC Action Zones;
- supported research and innovative projects in schools and LEAs

'EVALUATION OF THE SEN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The evaluation of the network of eleven SEN Regional Partnerships is now well under way. The evaluation team – from Manchester University – has produced its interim report published in spring 2002.

The report's key messages are:

- The Partnerships have proved to be a valuable conduit between the DfES and individual LEAs on matters relating specifically to SEN - helping in getting information to LEAs quickly; collating, in some cases, a regional response to draft documents; co-ordinating awareness-raising and training events in connection with new initiatives.
- There has been a significant increase in the level of inter-partnership collaboration since the Initial Impressions Report. This is further facilitated by DfES representation making connections across three or four partnerships. There is potential for further development of cross partnership working.
- The evaluation team are confident that by the end of their two-year evaluation there will be persuasive evidence that the partnerships have made a real difference.'

DfES RESEARCH STRATEGY

The Department for Education and Skills undertakes research to help achieve its aims and objectives as set out in the strategy paper document entitled '[Education and Skills: Delivery Results - A Strategy to 2006](#)'.

The Department's priorities for the next four years are to:

- provide high-quality early education and childcare for more children.
- continue the progress already made in primary education.
- transform secondary education.
- develop a flexible and challenging 14-19 phase of education.
- increase and broaden participation in higher education.
- develop the skills of the workforce - particularly the basic skills of some adults.

All the research the Department undertakes underpins and informs the policies and programmes required to meet these.

DfES web-site provides details of all the research the Department has commissioned or published since 1997.

BEHAVIOUR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (as part of fighting Street Crime Initiative).

£66m has been made available to fund 34 LEAs in supporting measures to improve pupil behaviour and attendance in secondary schools and their feeder primaries ('pyramids') over two year period. (0.5% of the £66m to reported to be used for evaluation). Schemes should draw on the following menu of 'good practice':

- Whole-school approaches to promote good behaviour;
- Use of Learning Mentors, Connexions Personal Advisers or other staff supporting individual needs;
- Measures to improve attendance e.g. truancy sweeps;
- Out-of-school hours extension programmes for pupils and families;
- Behaviour and Support Team (BEST) work who can work with school 'pyramids' linking with PRUs and special schools;
- police based on school sites.
- key-workers to provide or broker necessary help for all 'at risk' pupils or those who have developed difficult behaviour.

Allan Rimmer lists NEW DfES PUBLICATIONS:

DfES: Autistic Spectrum Disorders: Good Practice Guidance
Ref. DfES/597/2002, www.dfes.gov.uk/sen

Statutory Instrument: 2002 No 1985. Disabled Persons Education, England and Wales. The SEN and Disability Tribunal Regulations 2002
£4 HMSO

Guidance. DfES: Quality Standards in Education Support Services for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment.
Ref: LEA/0138/2002
www.dfes.gov.uk/sen, dfes@prolog.uk.com

Guidance.DfES: Accessible Schools: Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils.
Ref. LEA/0168/2002
www.dfes.gov.uk/sen, Dfes@prolog.uk.com

Consultation. DfES/RNID: Developing Early Intervention/Support Services for Deaf Children and Their Families.
Ref. DfES 0183/2002
Dfes@prolog.uk.com, www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations

Consultation. DfES/DoH: Together from the Start: professional working with disabled children (birth to 2) and their families
Ref. DfES 0184/2002
Dfes@prolog.uk.com, www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations

TTA: Award-Bearing Inset Funds: Interim Bidding Round 2003 – 2006
Ref 02/ITTST/0263, Walsha@teach-tta.gov.uk

DfES: Special Educational Needs, Update 9, www.dfes.gov.uk/sen

DfES/ Coram Family: Intervening Early. A “snapshot” of approaches primary schools can use to help children get the best from schools

Ref. DfES/0131/2002 Intervening Early, Dfes@prolog.uk.com

Jane Sutton: Learning Support Units: Promoting Inclusion or Internal Exclusion?

Policy and practice can vary dramatically in different learning support units [LSUs]. This is suggested in a recent small-scale research study of 25 LSUs in eight LEAs (Sutton, 2002). School systems and staff perceptions were explored through a detailed questionnaire distributed to teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs) who worked in the host schools. Questionnaire content had been based on the literature on effective practice, in particular work by Hallam and Castle (1999) and Swallow and Levey (1999). The study was conducted ahead of the recent guidance of DfES (2002) on good practice in LSUs. Many of the necessary constituents of good practice arising from earlier work and from this study are summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Effective Policy and Practice in Schools containing LSUs

- A critical mass of the school's staff is committed to reducing exclusions and to developing an inclusive environment for all pupils (including those with EBD).
- Head and senior management are actively involved and support the LSU.
- Mainstream class teachers and support staff are aware of, understand and where possible contribute to the operation of the LSU.
- The ethos of the school and LSU are compatible (i.e. child-centred LSU and child-centred school).
- The LSU is seen as an integral extension of the school's pastoral system; not a semi-detached 'dumping ground'.
- Referral procedures and exit plans are clear but flexible - and widely understood.
- Pupils are included back into mainstream at the earliest possible time.
- Pupils receive appropriate support when they return to the mainstream classes.
- Specialist subject teachers teach in the LSU to ensure a full and varied curriculum and to get pupils better attuned to mainstream class expectations.
- Parent/school/ pupil relationships are built up through openness and honesty (e.g. through joint target setting); sometimes parents play an active role in the LSU.
- LSUs are easily accessible to the pupils – not having to travel long distances to attend.
- In the LSU, staff go beyond national curriculum [NC] requirements, providing 'counselling', social-skills training and self-esteem building.
- Pupils should be given and learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

- Training relevant to LSU practice can enhance skills and understanding throughout a school and must include LSU and mainstream class teachers to promote consistency.
- LSUs are staffed at all times (including lunch and break time)
- The LSU evolves, reviewing and developing its good practice over time.
- Effective communication and collaboration is established with all concerned (school staff, pupils, parents/carers and support agencies).
- Certain pupils with severe EBDs will need specialist education beyond what LSUs can offer. LSU staff can help identify these pupils and should work with other professionals to seek appropriate alternative placements.

The questionnaire contained fifty statements reflecting Figure 1. A good response rate provided rich data. The researcher also spent a day in an inner city 'good practice' LSU, making observations and interviewing staff and pupils. The qualitative and quantitative data were analysed and revealed that there seemed to be a continuum of provision covering essentially three types of LSU: 'exclusion units', 'inclusion/exclusion units', and 'inclusion units'.

'Exclusion units'?

Despite government advice, a minority (under 20%) of the sample LSUs seemed to be operating as 'sin bins'. Pupils and staff in these units and wider school community seemed to see the aim of the LSU as to contain, control and possibly to punish. Often the LSU was staffed by one person usually an LSU manager. Pupils spent their entire day, including lunch and break times, with this adult. There was little or no input or support from LEA, mainstream classteachers, LSAs, or senior school staff. The LSU's policy and practice was not widely known throughout the school. Pupils' EBDs were perceived as being permanent, internalised and often family related, with the parents being blamed for the young persons' difficulties. In these LSUs parents were not encouraged to visit the LSU. Targets tended to be imposed by the LSU teacher with no input from pupils or parents. Exit criteria for pupils were not clearly defined and the young people would stay in the LSU until 'they learned to behave'. This could mean long-term placements. LSUs in this category reported that they firmly adhered to the national curriculum with little or no time allocated to social skills, outdoor education trips, individual counselling or therapeutic intervention. Mainstream classteachers were often unaware of the resources in the LSU. This suggested that the LSU had not been visited by them. Pupils were often reported as being stigmatised, damaging their self-esteem and feelings of isolation were high amongst LSU staff. These LSUs were not seen as significantly reducing fixed-term or permanent exclusions. In one school exclusions were reported by LSU and mainstream staff to have risen since the LSU opened.

Inclusion/exclusion units

Most of the twenty-five LSUs fitted into this broad grouping: they were intended to be vehicles for promoting inclusion but could unintentionally marginalise students. The host schools could have excellent policies and practices in place with staff at different levels in the school hierarchy who were committed to the inclusion of 'disruptive/EBD' pupils. The inclusion/exclusion unit could be considered an 'evolving unit': the time to evolve in a positive manner depended on how long it took for mainstream teacher attitudes to change and to move significantly towards favouring

the inclusion of pupils with EBDs. Senior staff were often involved in running the LSU, ranging from minimal to active and frequent involvement. LEA support varied, ranging from very supportive to unsupportive. However, there was often no involvement of mainstream classteachers in the LSU. LSU staff could feel isolated and this usually went unnoticed by colleagues taking mainstream classes. The young people in the LSUs were sometimes seen as being removed from their classrooms to allow mainstream staff 'to get on with the job of teaching'. Pupils referred to the LSU for poor behaviour, were helped to improve their behaviour. The emphasis was on the national curriculum but some LSUs incorporated social skills, outdoor education trips and individual counselling. Improving self-esteem was acknowledged as a factor that reduced EBDs by some staff although rarely by all. Perceptions of parental roles varied. LSU staff were generally more welcoming to parents than mainstream teachers. Mainstream teachers were mostly unaware of LSU policy on parental visits to the unit. In some LSUs pupils and parents were involved in target setting and LSU staff saw this as positive. Entry and exit criteria varied from school to school. Some prescribed fixed periods of stay, while others took pupils on long-term contracts. In many schools LSU and mainstream staff were confused as to what the entry/exit policy was. Physical accommodation for academic and/or therapeutic areas varied from school to school. Confusion existed as to whether or not exclusions were reduced by the presence of the LSU.

Inclusion units

The questionnaire returns suggested that this minority of units (20%) were situated in institutions characterised by a whole-school vision of inclusion. LSU and mainstream classteachers worked closely together, providing a combined approach to supporting pupils, both in the LSU and in the wider school. Some senior staff were actively involved (i.e. teaching) in the LSU. LEA support was usually good to excellent. Pupils with EBDs were seen as having temporary solvable problems, and were given time, patience and tolerance. There were networks of people deployed to support these pupils. The curriculum seemed balanced with social skills, individual counselling, outdoor activities and the national curriculum thriving comfortably together. Sometimes mainstream class teachers were rostered into the LSU timetable on a regular basis. The LSU was accessible at break and lunch times as a drop-in centre for mainstream teachers who expected re-integration to take place as soon as possible. The barriers between home and school seemed to be gradually lowered through home visits by LSU staff and visits to the LSU by parents. One aim was the creation of a consistent home/school approach to behaviour modification. Programme planning involved parents, pupil, mainstream and LSU staff in regular reviews to devise appropriate targets. The inclusive LSU was usually a self-contained unit with areas for teaching, IT, crisis intervention, and a separate, comfortable area to spend breaks and/or lunchtimes. There was a 'staff only area' where teachers and LSAs would take respite. Exclusions were reduced through whole-school commitment to inclusive education although occasional exclusions may be still necessary.

Conclusion

In the final stages of writing up this study government guidelines on effective practice in LSUs were issued (DfES, 2002). It is reassuring that my findings were largely in line with the latest government recommendations. However, my

identification of 'exclusion units' and others closer to being 'exclusion' than 'inclusion' units suggest that profound change is needed before government hopes for promoting genuine inclusion in these LSUs can be realised.

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Jane was a Research Associate on the University of Birmingham's EBD Research Team's recently completed, major longitudinal study for DfES of young people's careers post-permanent exclusion. She has just completed her MEd in EBD at the University of Birmingham and is currently working as an Education Welfare Officer in Cumbria. Correspondence: janesutton2311@hotmail.com.

NB Pre-selection and Integration Units, writes Ted Cole.

The Thornton School Information Sheet on the Integration Unit states:

'As it is an integration unit, children we feel are not suitable for re-integration will not be accepted as we do not wish such children to fail in yet another educational establishment.'

The Third Way: The Editor asks...

What experience have you had of the 'third way' of on-site units? This would seem to be a model being increasingly adopted (e.g. in Aberdeenshire). I hope in future issues I can publish letters and articles by other practitioners on units. Caroline has made a strong case for them. Yet in 2000, in a study I conducted with John Visser I interviewed a few headteachers in two LEAs where they and their governors fought successfully to close their on-site primary EBD units after very unhappy experience of them. They felt they had been used as dumping grounds by other schools and the units had an adverse affect on the ethos and success of the rest of their schools. Caroline's school would seem, crucially, to be a welcoming, supportive and inclusive environment. What is your experience?

Catherine McCurry: Using psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural approaches to counselling to enhance teaching and learning.

[all: 2060 wds; article = 1600 wds]

Catherine, presently reviewing 'best practice' and SEBD for the Belfast Education and Library Board, is keen to 'stimulate debate as to whether or not training in basic counselling skills and theory should be a required element in pre-service and in

service training for all teachers'. She would be particularly interested in the views of teachers working in therapeutic SEBD contexts.

During the last twenty years, the teaching profession has faced many challenging issues relating to the support and education of young people while dealing with almost constant change. To facilitate teachers' capacity to *deliver* and pupils' capacity to *absorb*, more attention should be given to supportive mental health development. Sometime ago McGuinness stressed the need for close analysis of adolescents' development: teachers should understand 'the normal strategies used by adolescents in their search to come to terms with adulthood that facilitate them in their search for independence.' (McGuinness, 1982, p. 26). Yet two decades later, teachers, particularly those working in SEBD contexts, are not required to have either training in, or an awareness of those counselling skills and approaches, which might help them to gain a deeper insight into the world of the adolescent and to structure the teaching and learning process in a more inter- and intra-personal way. This article is a personal reflection on how this might, to some degree, be rectified. It considers how an understanding of two approaches to counselling – psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural - could be used to enhance the learning experience of all young people in our schools, but particularly those who are the most 'challenged and challenging'.

McGuinness (1982, p.26) wrote: 'Counselling generally means a process whereby a counsellor forms a therapeutic alliance or a relationship with a client and working collaboratively with them, supports the latter to address a range of problems or issues.'

A similar description could, I feel, be applied to the 'teaching and learning process,' since the preferred relationship between teacher and pupil is also 'collaborative and supportive'.

Although teachers have a legally 'captive audience' (their classes), they seem increasingly at a disadvantage when trying to support their pupils' personal growth and development in comparison to other professionals who work with young people. The educational reforms of the last two decades have forced teachers to work *with a programme of study* rather than *with people*. To off-set this and to support curriculum delivery *effectively* as well as academically, the inclusion of training in a range of counselling and therapeutic approaches, as a statutory requirement in *all pre-service* teacher training courses should be considered. If we could establish the efficacy of counselling skills at this stage of teachers' professional development, as an essential element in a range of teaching and learning strategies for teachers' use, I feel that schools might be healthier environments for staff and pupils alike. Teachers skilled and trained in the use of these techniques would be in a better position to support young people to address their academic, personal development and indeed behavioural needs in a more integrated way. This, as Galloway (1990) advised, should happen within the standard curriculum frame work, rather than as 'a bolt on'.

I wish to discuss two therapeutic approaches which I feel could be used as part of a seamless blend of support strategies to facilitate effective learning for all young people in the classroom. The first is the psychodynamic approach. This emphasizes

the importance of unconscious influences on how people function and aims to support them in achieving greater control over their lives.

First, let us consider one aspect of this approach in order to illustrate how lack of awareness of can, despite careful preparation and planning, conflict with teacher's intentions. During the process of psychotherapy, clients can relive past conflicts and direct them toward the therapist in the present. However, this phenomenon, known as *transference*, is not limited to treatment considerations, but influences *all* interpersonal reactions. In the classroom where young people can experience both success and failure, support and rejection, approval and anger, they may direct those feelings toward teachers and their peers. If the teacher is unaware of this, the quality of the teaching and learning process will be diminished, simply because due consideration has not been given to the importance of transference in terms of understanding the nature of classroom dynamics

It is also important to note that as well as psychoanalysis continuing to be used as an intervention for those with serious emotional disturbance, the early Freudian theories have been expanded to offer a convincing explanation of how people develop and learn. Yet scant attention has been paid to this in terms of teacher training and professional development. Hellmann's comment (cited in Weiss, 2002) concerning the use of psycho-dynamic approaches to counselling in educational contexts, is very relevant: 'There can be no doubt...that psycho-analysis has greatly influenced educational thought...through the fact that psycho-analysis makes a study of human beings, their development, the forces within them and their relations with each other. In this way, it has been able to throw light on the very elements of teaching and learning'. It is also important to note that the core perspective of psycho-dynamic theory is that emotional problems often have their origins in early and often painful childhood experience. These can be the very experiences that young people bring to the classroom. We ignore such experience at our peril.

I stress that I am not advocating that teachers should abandon their pedagogical role in favour of a purely therapeutic one. Neither I am suggesting that they venture into complex areas for which they are not trained. Rather, I am suggesting that an awareness of psychodynamic theory and practice, together perhaps with the capacity to apply simple aspects of it appropriately, is as an integral part of making the teaching and learning process effective.

However, it is when psycho-dynamic theory and practice are used in conjunction with cognitive-behavioural techniques, that I feel the most impact can be made, in terms of the development of positive classroom relationships and the development of a supportive learning environment. Nelson Jones (2001) reminds us that the cognitive-behavioural approach is concerned with 'the contribution of how people think, to creating and sustaining and changing their problems' (p.3). Therapists working from this perspective 'assess clients and then intervene to help them change specific ways of thinking and behaving (p.3)'. This statement exemplifies the similarities between the teaching and learning process and that of counselling and psychotherapy, this time from a cognitive behavioural perspective.

The cognitive-behavioural approach to counselling and therapy helps clients to focus on their difficulties in the 'here and now'. Used in conjunction with a more

psychodynamic perspective, the client, supported by the counsellor, can be facilitated to develop coping skills and strategies to minimize those negative influences which may be impeding his or her development. In a similar way, within the educational context, the teacher's goal is to facilitate the young people to develop a range of skills and strategies to minimize the negative influences, which may be impeding their learning.

Geldard and Geldard (1999) state that 'most adolescent self-destructive beliefs are accumulated during childhood as a consequence of the messages given directly and indirectly by adults in the child's environment' (p.155). They also believe that our thoughts influence our emotions and our behaviour. These ideas strongly echo the psycho-dynamic perspective discussed earlier. Geldard and Geldard also suggest that counsellors, in their work with adolescents, might like to consider the use of 'structured goal-orientated approaches' involving 'collaboration between an active counsellor and an active adolescent, with an emphasis on current issues' (p.155). Whilst this 'suggestion' refers to the fact that the relevant threads of these two approaches could be woven together to support adolescents in a counselling context, it is equally applicable to the classroom.

Given the range of issues that young people bring with them to school that impact on their capacity to learn, the use of cognitive-behavioural techniques used together with a psycho-dynamic approach to classroom management, would seem a justifiable way to move forward. Pupils would be supported in engaging in and managing their own learning more effectively. The use of such an approach - in essence an eclectic blend of two perspectives - would allow the teacher to consider both the antecedents and the outcomes of a young persons' difficulties. This information could then be used to inform how the learning environment should be structured, in order to maximize the capacity of each young person to reach his or her full developmental and intellectual potential. There is also evidence to suggest that young people are more willing to address issues of self-control, anger management, self-destructive beliefs and decision making, in a group setting rather than on an individual basis. These aspects of personal development, the effective management of which can have a significant impact on the outcomes of the learning experience can be examined within a cognitive-behavioural framework, easily subsumed within the school timetable, in personal, social and health education or in small group sessions.

At the very least, I consider counselling skills and the skills that facilitate effective teaching and learning to be complementary. I have tried to demonstrate that teacher awareness needs to be increased and want both pre-service and indeed later in-service teacher training to include study of psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural approaches, and for these to be eased into their repertoire of pedagogical skills. These skills would, I believe, enhance the quality of the teaching and learning experience. However the efficacy of my hypothesis will depend not only on the willingness of teachers to step outside the boundaries of *their subject*, but also on the *quality* of the training and support they receive.

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Catherine McCurry was appointed by the Belfast Education and Library Board in September 2001 to research best practice in relation to SEBD provision. Her appointment, on a three year contract, resulted from a review of SEBD provision in the city. She moved from mainstream secondary education to pursue her interest in SEBD as Senior Teacher in the Rathmore Educational Guidance Centre and later as Principal of the Jaffe Centre. [now Loughshore Educational Resource Centre] . She joined AWCEBD in 1993.

Catherine also recommends:

On the web:

Counselling Approaches.

<http://www.allaboutcounselling.com/counsellingapproaches.htm>

A Guide to Understanding Cognitive and Behavioural Psychotherapies.

[http://www.babcp.org.uk/babcp/what is CBT.htm](http://www.babcp.org.uk/babcp/what%20is%20CBT.htm)

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REVIEWING SEBD BEST PRACTICE: CATHERINE'S APPEAL FOR HELP

Catherine McCurry praises the recent AWCEBD 'The Flight from the Child', the second study course she had attended. She reports that this was 'extremely enlightening' for her as a practitioner and researcher on behalf of the Belfast Board. But she would like further input on 'best practice' for SEBD. She would welcome contact from colleagues in the Association who would be willing to share their views on any or all of the following:

- *Alternative Provision* – policy, procedures, processes and practice in relation to those who 'fail to thrive' within a mainstream educational context.
- *Strategies and systems for inclusion* - support for young people with SEBD in mainstream systems .
- *Early Intervention* - Strategies to promote the early identification of young people with SEBD and which encourage the development of inter –

disciplinary, multi – agency support programmes for young people ‘at risk’ within the education system as they move toward adolescence and beyond.
Catherine can be contacted at : 40, Academy Street ,Belfast BT1 2NQ
Phone 02890 / 564186 e – mail catherinem@belb.co.uk

Disability Discrimination Act now in force in schools

Ted Cole

This September, the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) (as amended by the SENs and Disability Act, 2001) came into effect in Scotland, England and Wales. The Act says it is unlawful to discriminate without justification, against disabled pupils in all aspects of school life. The Disability Code of Practice (Schools) now operates alongside the SENs Code of Practice.

Moot point: are some or all children deemed to have SEBD disabled? In many cases, probably not. If they get the label ADHD from a doctor, do they become disabled etc? If a child with a statement or on School Action Plus for behaviour is excluded will the school be guilty of discrimination against a disabled person? I suspect the courts will be involved before long and lawyers will once again have a field day. Perhaps LEAs' already stretched budgets will be further distorted by pushy parents to the detriment of many children with SENs.

Or more optimistically, **Special!** cites Bert Massie, the Chair of the Disability Rights Commission as saying: 'The adjustments that schools will need to make are mostly very simple, such as ensuring that teachers always face the pupils when talking, so that a child with a hearing impairment can lip-read'. But Bert, tell us your views on SEBD, please.

Schools have two key duties:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably and
- to make reasonable adjustments to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.

Have you seen the Disability Rights Commission's recently published 'Getting It Right For Children?'

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English SENs Stats for January 2002

The DfES Statistical First Release (May 2002) showed:

- 248,970 pupils had statements in Jan, 2002.
- % of pupils with statements increased from 2.9 % in 1998 to 3.0% in Jan., 2002.
- pupils in special schools reduced from 93,472 in 1998 to 89,970 in 2002.
- pupils sole-registered in PRUs increased from 7740 in 1998 to 9840 in 2002.
- numbers of statemented and non-statemented pupils with SENs in mainstream schooling increasing between 1998 and 2002.
- increasing numbers of pupils with statements in independent schools.
- decreasing numbers of pupils with statements in non-maintained schools.

Girls and Exclusion from School

A study by Prof. Audrey Osler and colleagues at the University of Leicester claimed that the invisibility of girls' difficulties has serious consequences for their ability to get help. Further, girls are more reluctant to avail themselves of the help on offer. Truancy and forms of internal exclusion are claimed to be widespread. Bullying can lead to truancy ('self-exclusion'). A useful digest of this study published in January, 2002, is available from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation web-site: www.jrf.org.uk. (This web-site is a useful place to visit for digests of various reports relevant to our field.)

Mental Health Foundation Report: 'The Mental Health Needs of Children with EBD'.

A report written by Ted Cole and colleagues for the MHF was published on the web in September, 2002. A useful digest is also available. This says:

'National and local government strategy must foster school climates that are more understanding and supportive of affective needs and that reduce the need for so many children to be placed in special schools and PRUs. For a tiny minority of young people with mental health difficulties, social inclusion is sometimes not best served by school inclusion, particularly where the latter is enforced and inadequate.'

The full report will be published next spring in book form, along with reports on youth offenders and homeless children. This successor publication to 'Bright Futures (MHF, 1999) is planned to be launched at a conference in London in March, 2003.

Web address: www.mentalhealth.org.uk

An article linked to the MHF report appeared in the late August edition of 'Community Care': not recommended. The reporter could not tell the difference between an LSU and a PRU plus mis-read the report to suggest that it was anti-special school. Sloppy.

HMCI on EBD Schools

Did you catch Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools' Annual Report for 2000/1 (DfES, 2002, www.official-documents.co.uk/document/deps/ofsted). Mike Tomlinson and his colleagues on EBD Schools :

Summary of main findings , p1:

'Achievement has improved particularly in schools for pupils with EBD' (para. 221):

'Pupils are achieving well in most special schools'

'Schools for pupils with EBD are maintaining their more rapid improvement from a low baseline, despite their continuing difficulties in recruiting teachers, particularly subject specialists.'

Being a mentor

Joan Pritchard

Circular 10/99 (Social Inclusion: Pupil Support) advocates the use of mentors in order to help those pupils who are in danger of becoming disaffected or of being excluded. Three years ago I was asked to be a voluntary mentor to a girl in year10 at a school in Cheshire, which serves a fairly deprived area. My daughter is a teacher at the school so it was difficult to say 'no'! I had read about the concept of using mentors and was keen to support the project which was being launched by a member of staff who was so dedicated to the idea that she was prepared to undertake the work in her spare time with just the support of enthusiastic administration assistants.

Volunteers were invited to a meeting at the end of one school day and over coffee and biscuits were told what was required of a mentor. We were then given anonymous profiles of pupils who had been selected for mentoring. The list had been compiled from a much longer list of pupils who had requested a mentor. Those deemed to be in the greatest need were in the final list. We studied the lists and then tried to match ourselves and our background with the profiles. I ended up with a girl who was disruptive, foul-mouthed, in a foster placement that was breaking down and was in danger of being excluded. Good match!

I went to the school on a fortnightly basis to meet up with Sally (not her real name). We met in the medical room, coffee and biscuits were provided. I used to sit and listen, often to some very interesting descriptions of staff with whom she was at odds. I tried to use my counselling skills – be non-judgemental, reflect back to her what she was telling me and then try to lead her on to her own solutions. I tried to be there as a detached support, as someone who was on her side but anxious for her to do as well as she could in school.

We did talk about her work and I, at her request, did give feedback about some of her concerns, but I did not see myself as a 'learning mentor'. My role was a much more pastoral one.

During the two years I spent with her, her life outside school changed. She moved from the very difficult foster placement to live with her maternal aunt and her family. This was a tricky move for her because her mother who has serious mental health problems had resented such an arrangement in the past. However she accepted it on this occasion when she was told of the very inappropriate foster situation.

When one hears the life history of some of the children in our schools one can only come to the conclusion that it is a miracle that they attend school. So to expect them to manage their behaviour under the regimes of the majority of our schools is expecting too much. Sally has had to cope with being taken into care, be abused by the first set of foster parents, watch her foster mother die of cancer and cope with her foster father's bereavement. Throughout this time she had to manage to delicate situation of seeing her mother under the watchful eye of a social worker and see her mother's family without her mother knowing. She had to do all this while moving through an education system which does not have time to make allowances for such emotional turmoil.

The good news is that by the time she was nearing the end of year 11 she did not really need me. She had a very successful work experience in an animal sanctuary for which she received an excellent report. We met regularly, as friends for a chat. We reminisced sometimes about the times when she used to call the teachers rude names. By then she had found out that my daughter was one of the 'sound' teachers in the schools that made me even more acceptable.

At GCSE she got grades beyond all expectations and was able to go on to the local FE College to follow a course in beauty therapy. This is a course at which she should do well. Now she has lost the frozen, bad-tempered scowl she is a very attractive young lady.

I have currently just finished my first year with my new mentee. She is presenting more of a challenge than Sally did. Her life history is equally depressing but it has left her with greater defences against the world. To quote her she is 'gobby' she also steals, she is sometimes violent and has been on every report card system the school employs. She has had several fixed term exclusions and has been told the next one will be permanent. She tries to appear tough and uncaring but is in reality a very immature child in a mature teenage body. When she relaxes she is pretty and good company but the façade of being 'gobby and hard' does not slip often enough. We usually plan to meet during one of the lessons where she often gets into trouble. It may seem like collusion but I am sure the teachers concerned enjoy the break!

I took her to Macdonald's for a treat at Christmas because she was not on any colour of report card. As a joke I asked would she like a 'Happy meal' (my 7 year old granddaughter has grown beyond those) Laura (not her real name) jumped at the chance and was thrilled with the Mr Man toy she received. That spoke volumes to me about her level of emotional functioning.

Time alone will tell what the outcome will be for Laura. Social Services and Connexions are now working to try to put together some kind of package for her. I will continue to go in to provide a listening ear.

Building Resilience Through After-School Clubs

Sandy Chapman describes the success of after-school clubs operated with The National Pyramid Trust in Cornwall.

The National Pyramid Trust aims to raise the self-esteem and confidence of 7-9 year olds in order to build their resilience. Over 15 years of national research proves that a short term fun activity club run by trained volunteers gives children the boost they need to enable them to partake in school life and feel confident to be a part of what is happening around them. This low cost intervention provides preventative measures at the early stages of a child's school life, helping to stop problems that may become deep-rooted and so avoid the need for expensive and more intrusive intervention later. Through this scheme the mental health and well-being of participants increases, as well as their ability to make social relationships and friendships. Children thrive and, often, academic standards rise. Since piloting the scheme in four schools in 1998 Cornwall Child and Family Services have continued to develop the work of The National Pyramid Trust in Cornwall.

Teachers praise the National Pyramid Trust Scheme

'The club has benefited the school, promoted children as individuals in a highly academic world'

'Pyramid brings problems to the foreground and makes you address them.'

'It's really amazing. I thought, 10 weeks? Will it make a difference? But it *does*.'

'A drastic improvement. She didn't come to school – now she attends every day and is always smiling" Head Teacher.

'This did him a lot of good. There has been a dramatic turnaround in his work and progress'

Selecting Club Members

Working alongside schools, children are selected from years 3 and/or 4. The class teachers for the year group(s) use a checklist designed by the national charity. This is not scored but utilises the knowledge of, and a "gut reaction" about, each child's needs. The aim is to highlight children who are at risk of failing at school, socially, emotionally or educationally. Examples of children highlighted may be those who are naturally shy, have never settled or belonged in class, are anxious, have poor social skill or have a difficult family background such as isolation, are anti-social or under stress. Teachers also look at attendance records and how each child interacts in the class and in the playground.

The names of these children are taken forward (with parent/guardian's permission) to a multi-agency meeting held by the school. Here 10 children are selected for a Pyramid Club whilst the rest are offered a positive intervention. Selection of the 10 will depend on need and the best mix of children.

Club Members give their verdict

'I like the food, you can choose what you want'

"I am so pleased – I met my best friend at the Pyramid Club– I didn't have one before'

The Pyramid Approach

Clubs are held immediately after school for ten weeks for 1½ hours per week. Three volunteers per club are recruited from the local community, colleges and from the schools themselves. They are carefully selected, gain police clearance and are trained. Aspects of training include club ethos, games and activities, development of a club, planning, building self-esteem, child protection, and managing groups – including situations/difficulties that might arise.

The clubs aim to develop a sense of belonging and self-worth. Each group chooses their own club name and rules. They design a poster, badges, identity cards and often a secret sign or password. Clubs follow the same format each week to develop a sense of security for the children. The leaders introduce appropriate games and activities as the group develops. Throughout, the children are encouraged to suggest their own.

The clubs are free to all participants in order to exclude no one. There is always a drink and snack which most children list as one of the favourite parts of their club. Circle time is encouraged within club time to develop speaking and listening skills. Many leaders report this is an ideal forum for discussion of ideas and for the children to get to know each other as well as a way of playing games. One of the ten sessions is an outing chosen and planned by the group and the last week is a party to celebrate and also to say good-bye.

The meetings not only provide support to the school but are also a useful forum for exchange of information and forward planning.

After the ten weeks the school hosts another meeting to discuss all the children from the original selection meeting. It is a forum for the club leaders to share their experience and for the school to report on any progress the children have made. It also ensures that all interventions suggested in the first meeting have been followed up and their outcome.

Expansion of the Scheme

Following the successful pilot, Cornwall Child and Family Service funded expansion of the scheme into 8 schools during spring 2000. Again, after great success a full time coordinator was appointed from May 2000 until March 2001 to take the scheme into 20 schools for the academic year. This appointment was temporary, funded through Standards fund 18b and has again been funded from April 2001 through to March 2002.

Figures for this current year are being collated, however, we can report that during the 2000 / 2001 year the scheme looked at the needs of 1153 children with 168 participating in a club and 115 being offered an alternative intervention.

The scheme continues to go from strength to strength with a proactive multi-agency steering group overseeing the work of the coordinator and seeking permanent funding. A further 7 schools have joined the scheme through On-Track and Education Action Zone funding. It is hoped that Children's Fund will assist in expanding the scheme further as so many schools want the benefits of this input.

Sandy Chapman, is Head of Behaviour Support services in Cornwall and Chair of AWCEBD, South West.

False abuse allegations? The continuing saga...

Cynthia Cross and Ted Cole report on some slightly more hopeful developments.

MPs probe allegations inquiry methods: police 'trawling' attacked

A Home Affairs Select Committee, chaired by Labour MP, Chris Mullin, has been inquiring into police methods of investigating allegations of past abuse in children's homes. The Committee, consisting of 60 members from both Houses of Parliament, was established after a campaign by Claire Curtis-Thomas, MP for Crosby. It heard oral evidence from three journalists, Bob Woffinden, David Rose and Richard Webster in May, all of whom have written extensively about the subject.

Claire Curtis-Thomas appeared before the committee in June. She accepted that there had been wide-spread abuse of children in the past and their voices had not been heard. But this did not alter the fact that she was convinced that there had been people wrongly convicted because of deficiencies in the prosecuting system.

The committee has heard evidence from a child psychotherapist, a residential worker and two teachers who have been wrongly accused of abusing children. Three solicitors who have represented workers also appeared before the committee.

The main criticism is about police trawling for evidence from previous residents of a home, once an allegation has been made. In the case of workers accused of abuse, the burden of proof is being reversed and the defendant is expected to establish his or her innocence, which is more or less impossible, rather than the court prove guilt. The solicitors claimed that the police lead witnesses in a number of ways. They did not agree, however, on how much the motive for making allegations was the prospect of getting compensation.

Cleared Newcastle Nursery Workers Win Libel Action

Dawn Reed and Christopher Lillie won an historic libel case at the end of July, 2002, eight years after they were cleared in court of abuse allegations.

In April 1993 an allegation was made against Christopher Lillie, the only male worker at Shieldfield nursery in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and he was suspended. During the investigation the allegations grew to horrific proportions and his colleague, Dawn Reed was suspended in May 1993. The pressure increased until in July 1993 they were remanded in custody. In October, 1993, they were successful in a bail application but were arrested as they left the court and remanded again until the case

went to court in July 1994. The judge, Mr Justice Holland, having looked at the videos and the evidence, concluded that it was so weak that it should not even be put before a jury.

On the same day the leader of Newcastle city council spoke before television cameras saying, 'We do believe that abuse has taken place...We have dismissed the employees.' In November, 1998, Newcastle City Council published a report of their inquiry into the allegations and found the workers guilty of terrible abusive acts. This report was released to the press without the knowledge of the accused pair. The allegations were once again blazoned over the media together with their photographs. They had to go into hiding.

They were tracked down by Woffinden and Webster who helped them to find barristers who would work for them on a no-win-no-fee basis, leading to their successful libel case against Newcastle council.

Although the case was in court from January until July, 2002 and all the evidence was thoroughly examined, there are still journalists and child protection workers who believe that the judgement should not have been declared in favour of Reed and Lillie because of the effects this could have on future investigations and inquiries.

More than 10 years ago in the Cleveland Report Judge Butler-Sloss warned about the suspension of disbelief by professionals and pointed to 'the complex forces which can affect judgement and action in dealing with emotionally powerful material.'

Art Teacher Cleared of Hitting Disruptive Pupil

Further highlighting the vulnerability of staff working with disruptive children was the recent case of a 55 year old art teacher in a mainstream school in Totnes. Ten months after the offence, during which time he was suspended, he was brought up before the magistrates accused of hitting a boy, dubbed in some press reports as the school's 'worst behaved'.

The teacher admitted to pushing the boy in sheer frustration while trying to get the pupil to leave the class but denied punching or butting him. The presiding magistrate accepted the evidence of the teacher in its entirety: 'We took into account his previous good character and we have no indication of any previous disposition to violence in his long and dedicated career.' The defence lawyer claimed: 'The truth of the matter is that by December last year the boy's behaviour was disgraceful. His parents were getting annoyed about it and he made up this incident to suggest that teachers were victimising him ...False allegations are easily made and acted upon. The trial raises many questions about how teachers can be expected to keep order and discipline and ensure that disruptive pupils do not adversely affect the education of other pupils.'

The teacher did not belong to a teachers' union. The Crown Prosecution Service was said to believe that bringing the case was in the public interest.

Teachers lives wrecked by false allegations say union leaders

In the wake of the recent Totnes case, Roger Darke, south-west regional secretary of NAS/UWT was quoted as saying that false allegations were an increasing problem: 'We have members whose lives are wrecked by this. Many are accused but very,very few are found guilty. We feel more should be done to deter false allegations.' Vince Allen, Principal Officer for NUT, South-West is reported as saying: 'Teachers are increasingly concerned that any gesture and any move they make or any contact can easily be misconstrued as assault.'

More cheerfully...

A Durham EBD school, highly praised by Ofsted , has taken more than its share of false allegations over a period of years, with probably lasting damage to staff and pupils. A report on northern English regional TV this summer seemed decidedly unbalanced. However, senior staff have now been back in post for some time and the council is rumoured to be investing in new buildings and an expanded role for the school. Good luck to Pete and his team.

Training in Use of Physical Interventions

Though I have not read these personally (Ted Cole writes), are you aware of the work by British Institute of Learning Disabilities [BILD] on physical interventions. Their publications include:

- Prof. John Harris, David Allen, Marion Cornick, Alan Jefferson and Richard Mills (1996): *Physical Interventions: A Policy Framework*.
- BILD (2001) *Code of Practice for Trainers in the use of Physical Interventions*.
- David Allen (2001): *Training Carers in Physical Interventions: Research towards Evidence-based Practice*. The blurb says that this report alerts purchasers and providers to the types of outcomes they can expect from different types of training and helps trainers evaluate their training, with sample measures of direct training outcomes.

Obtainable from BILD Publications, Plymbridge Distributors, Estover Rd, Plymouth, PL6 7 PZ. Phone: 01752 202301.

Looking back on allegations

In the national study of English EBD schools in 1998, 130 schools returned a questionnaire on abuse allegations. Given the topic and the methodology a degree of caution is needed in using the results. However they indicated that between 1991 and 1996, 22 staff were dismissed for abuse. Of over 400 allegations leading to the involvement of outside agencies:

- 85% were in residential schools
- 74% led to 'no criticism' of the school
- nearly all of the rest were said to result in 'minor' or 'very minor criticism'
- about one in twenty allegations led to a member of staff being found guilty of serious malpractice
- 56 members of staff took sick leave and 10 opted for early retirement.

We wrote then: 'A dilemma is posed both for child protection workers and senior staff in schools. How can the one in 20 who is guilty be speedily weeded out and the damage done to the 19 be minimised?'

Strong views were expressed. One headteacher wrote to us about the impact of the 1989 Children Act: 'The balance of the Act has not worked in children's favour. Falsely empowering children and at the same time shattering the confidence of those working with them is a step which will give rise to a long bitter harvest.'

[See Cole, T., Visser, J. and Upton, G. (1998) *Effective Schooling for Pupils with EBD*, London: David Fulton, pp 78 - 83.]

See similar findings, though some improvement in child protection procedures, notably speed, in NAHT survey of 2000. This, weakened by a low response rate, stressed the damage caused by suspensions [Visser and Cole (2001) *Allegations of Child Abuse in Special Schools* for National Association of Head Teachers].

BOOK REVIEW: Rona MacKenzie

Mental Health Handbook for Schools

Mary Atkinson & Gary Hornby (2002)

This book highlights an issue which we as teachers appreciate every working day. In our daily contact with students, it is clear that we are not solely educators of our subject areas. In developing, educating and maintaining appropriate social, communication and life skills, to name but a few, student mental health is wholly affected by school life on a day-to-day basis.

The authors of this book note that teacher knowledge and understanding of mental health issues vary widely through training and experience. This book aims to educate teachers and educational professionals within schools in the fundamental mental health issues that may arise. In order to do so, it has been divided into 4 parts.

The introductory section defines mental health, details the processes of identification and intervention, and the models of normal and abnormal child development. Part 2 is devoted to mental health disorders, including the following; Conduct Disorder, ADHD, Eating Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Substance Abuse, Depression, Suicidal Behaviour and self harm, Soiling and Wetting, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Schizophrenia, Autism, and Special Educational Needs. Each disorder is written in a set format – diagnosis, features, incidence, causes, treatment, course & outcome, and advice on suitable action for teachers.

Part 3 is dedicated to psychological reactions to adverse situations. This deals with bullying, parental separation and divorce, bereavement, child abuse and neglect, and post-traumatic stress. Part 4 details the support available from the mental health services, and the avenues which teachers may explore in order to gain support and advice from professionals in these areas. The final chapter in this part outlines the ways in which schools can promote mental health effectively through a whole school ethos.

This book has been written in a clear and user-friendly format. It is an easily readable text, with technical information thoroughly explained. The book can be dipped into with ease when information on specific mental health disorders is required. However, I found that the book contained so much valuable and interesting information that I read it cover to cover!

I believe this is a key text for all trainee teachers and educational professionals. A copy should be actively available for staff within all schools – not sitting collecting dust on a staff room shelf or hidden away in someone's office! It holds vital information on a range of issues that affect the lives of our students and that we often feel ill equipped to help them deal with. This book does not confess to hold the answers, but highlights ways in which we may guide them to a better understanding of the occurrences in their lives. This in turn may help them to appreciate the ways in which they may be feeling and so make informed choices about the actions they may undertake. Most importantly, it notes that many of the mental health issues of our students will be affected not only by the SENCO but also more importantly by form tutors and teaching staff who come into daily contact with these students. These are often the people most ill equipped to deal with such issues, and the people who receive little training in such areas. Therefore, this is a vital text for educators at all levels to read.

In addition to the details regarding mental health disorders, the final and smallest chapter outlining the promotion of child mental health is one of the most valuable parts of this book. It details the work undertaken by Child and Adult Mental

Health Services (CAMHS) and provides a valuable insight into their working practices. The authors appreciate that the training and support available for teachers from mental health professionals is not always easily accessible and that in some cases staff do not know how to access the services effectively. It goes some way to educate teachers in these areas.

A chapter follows this on the promotion of mental health in schools and the ways in which the school as a whole can work towards an ethos of sound mental health. Importantly, it sees this role as an issue for every member of the school and across all curriculum areas – I feel that all staff, but most importantly those who affect policy change and implementation should read this chapter.

The mental health of our students is an issue that should be high on the agenda of all schools and all staff within them. This is a finely written book, full of valuable information which will go along way to supporting both staff at classroom level, those working with special educational needs departments and with EBD students, and those at the forefront of policy change and implementation. In my mind, this book is a key read if schools wish to seriously consider the impact that they are having on students and the ways in which they are trying to support them. We have an important role in developing and maintaining good mental health and I do not feel that we are being educated fully into the affects we may be having.

Rona MacKenzie teaches at Sheredes Schools, Hertfordshire

From Scotland.gov.uk...

Extra secure places for youth offenders

Twenty-five additional secure accommodation places will be created as part of a multi-million pound investment to tackle the problem of youth crime, it was announced on 17.9.02. Specific plans will now be brought forward to reconfigure the secure estate. Speaking during a visit to Edinburgh's Junction Team to see first hand work being done with persistent young offenders, the Minister for Education and Young People, Cathy Jamieson, said:

"Youth crime is a major problem that affects all our communities. There are a small number of young people across the country who persistently offend and cause misery for a large number of people. That is why we have a 10 Point Action Plan to tackle this issue quickly and effectively and why we have set ourselves a target of reducing the number of persistent young offenders by 10 per cent by 2006...By providing additional places we will be able to offer much needed facilities for girls and young women and, as far as possible, avoid under-16s being remanded to young offenders institutions. We must ensure that places are available for every young person who needs them. The funding will also enable us to improve rehabilitation programmes and provide specialist provision for sex offenders as well as considering the needs of young people with mental health problems. '

The Scottish Action Plan (June, 2002)

to tackle youth crime and disorder includes:

- Specialist Children's Hearings.
- Youth Courts: A feasibility study will be carried out. Funding will be used to improve the range and quality of programmes for offenders and to fund restorative justice and work with victims.
- Community-Based Approaches: Money will be available to selected local authorities to extend existing neighbourhood based programmes on community safety and youth justice (e.g. programmes aimed at reducing truancy and school exclusion, diversionary opportunities for troubled youngsters and tackling graffiti and anti-social behaviour by young people.)

The Junction project is run by Edinburgh City Council and works with Edinburgh's "hard-core" persistent young offenders. The project began in April 2002 and is funded by the Executive. The Junction project has worked with 36 young people since April 2002. It is early days but of the small number of young people who have completed the project several have not re-offended. It provides intensive programmes that not only tackle their offending behaviour but also their other needs that might cause their offending such as drug and alcohol misuse. The Junction's services are provided through an interagency partnership of social work, police, children's reporter and voluntary sectors.

New laws are being proposed to create an official list of people deemed "unsuitable" to work with children. The Protection of Children (Scotland) Bill will create a List of Persons Unsuitable to Work with Children. The list will take into account a range of unsuitable behaviour, from neglect to sexual abuse.

Social Scene

Cynthia Cross reports...

The Mental Health Bill Consultation

The government's consultation process on the Reform of the Mental Health Act 1983 began in November 1999, primarily to try to deal with dangerous psychopaths who were deemed untreatable and therefore could not be detained unless they committed and were convicted of a criminal offence. After considerable lobbying to cover psychopathic children, a consultation paper was published in June 2002 which contained the following:

“Protecting Children with serious mental disorders

3.6 Although the Mental Health Act 1983 applies to children, there are no specific provisions about the way in which formal powers should be applied to them. Mental health practitioners have tended to apply the common law on consent and treatment to children. This means that where children are able to make decisions about their treatment, they may consent to, but not refuse, treatment. Where children refuse treatment, it may go ahead without legal compulsion if the parents consent. This has

led to distressing and difficult situations, where children able to make decisions have been treated against their will, with no legal protection.

3.7 The new legislation will introduce safeguards to protect children and young people who could otherwise be treated against their wishes, but with their parents' consent. These provisions are intended to strike a fair balance between the rights of the child to liberty under Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the rights of parents to respect for family life under Article 8.

3.8 We intend to recognise the rights of young people aged 16 or 17 to have a greater say in decisions that affect their lives and so they will be treated as adults under the Bill. This means that wherever compulsory powers are needed they will have access to the full protection offered by the legislation. While there will be no legal right for parents to be consulted, our Code of Practice will make clear that parents should be consulted unless the result of that consultation might be detrimental to the young person.

3.9 We are also taking action to further protect children under the age of 16 who are so seriously ill that, without parental consent, they would meet the conditions for compulsion. Parents will, as now, be able to consent to treatment on behalf of their children. However, where a child who is competent to decide about treatment and is refusing it or who is not competent to decide about treatment but is resisting it, special arrangements will apply. These special arrangements will be that parental authority to agree to treatment will extend only to 28 days. After that, all treatment must be authorised by the Mental Health Tribunal. During the initial 28 day period, the child will have access to safeguards, for example, a nominated person to represent their views, access to a specialist advocate, and the right to challenge their treatment applying to the Mental Health Tribunal.”

(Consultation ended 16/09/02)

Readers may also be interested in sections 3.18 – 3.32 quoted below:

“3.18 The Mental Health Act 1983 sets out (in section 1(3)) that no one may be treated under the Act as suffering from mental disorder “by reason only of promiscuity or other immoral conduct, sexual deviancy or dependence on alcohol or drugs.” This provision was designed to address a particular concern of the time: that some people without mental disorder might be detained inappropriately, perhaps because of their sexual orientation or because their behaviour was morally unacceptable.

3.19 In fact, over time, it has become clear that the exclusions may have been misunderstood. Clinicians have been discouraged from using the Act for people with problems of, say, substance misuse despite the presence of mental disorder and evidence of risk, because the exclusions were there.

3.20 We believe that the exclusions should not appear in the new Bill. We intend it to focus more clearly on mental disorder and on risk to patients and to others. This will mean that if someone has a mental disorder, regardless of cause, and regardless of association with other problems, then they may be subject to compulsion.

3.21 People will be protected from inappropriate intervention by the conditions, which will govern any decision to apply compulsion. These will be that:

- the person has a mental disorder;
- the mental disorder is of such a nature or a degree which requires specialist mental health treatment to be provided;
- treatment is necessary for the health and safety of the patient or for the protection of others and that treatment cannot be provided unless he is subject to the Act; and
- appropriate treatment for the person's disorder is available.

3.22 We understand concerns about the scope of the Bill and about the dangers of its use for people whose condition does not warrant compulsion. We do not intend the Act to be used as a means to promote social control, nor to detain anyone simply because their sexual preferences diverge from the norms of society nor to detain anyone who does not have a mental disorder. However, we do intend that the Act, provided all the criteria are met, should permit the compulsory treatment of those with a mental disorder who may also have problems of substance abuse or whose sexual deviance arises in the context of a diagnosis of mental disorder and whose consequent behaviour poses a risk of harm to others.

3.23 Under the present Act, clinicians may, for example, be deterred from detaining someone who is at immediate risk of suicide because the person's main diagnosis is alcohol dependence. It is not the intention that the Act will be used to treat alcohol dependence in itself but a suicidal person with alcohol dependence could be admitted compulsorily.

Sharing information to improve patient care

3.27 Where decisions are being made in connection with the use of compulsory treatment, clinicians need access to information about their patients. This is particularly important where, for example, a patient's history is needed to support an assessment of risk to the patient or to others, or where a patient is being transferred between care settings, or being discharged.

3.28 Although consent from a patient for the sharing of information between agencies should always be sought, there are occasions when it is not given. In these circumstances, awareness of good practice in relation to information exchange is vital, to ensure that any risk of harm to the patient or others is not missed.

3.29 Good information sharing to improve patient care can suffer because the rules governing confidentiality are misunderstood between professionals. There are also problems between agencies that may be wary of co-operating with each other, have different systems for storing information, or are governed by different statutes concerning its exchange in relation to health and risk, criminality family and education matters.

3.30 For these reasons we propose setting out in the Bill a general duty to co-operate in the supply of information in relation to risk management and assessment.

We also propose a duty on professionals to consider thoroughly, as part of the care planning process, whether there is a need to share information.

3.31 For those agencies carrying out statutory functions under the Act, a further requirement will be introduced that protocols be developed between agencies. The provisions in the Bill will be supported by guidance in the Code of Practice that will detail the general principles that should be followed on good information sharing."

The draft Bill was published in September, 2002, but at this time is not available from the DoH web site and can only be bought at the Stationery Office.

Modern Social Services: a commitment to reform

(The 11th Report of the Chief Inspector of Social Services, August 2002)

The Chief Inspector reports:

- **Recruitment and retention** of staff continued to be the most pressing issue facing all forms of social care but particularly in foster care and field social work. This despite the launching of a 1.5m recruitment campaign last autumn. The government has also committed 41m over 3 years to social work training and 15m in the current year to training for care home managers. The Chief Inspector, Denise Platt warns however that "investment alone may not deliver improvement unless employers tackle fundamental human resource management issues"
- **Star ratings on council's children's services** are given in Chapter 2.
- **Progress of the Quality Protects Programme** and the implementation of the "Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need" are discussed.
- **Placement and service choice are problematic.** In particular concern is expressed about the ability of foster care services to provide the range of care needed. Further regulation of services to privately fostered children remains on the governments agenda.
- **The Adoption and Children Bill** was introduced in October 2001 and when it becomes law it will modernise the whole of the legal framework for domestic and inter-country adoption.
- **The education of looked after children remains a concern** although it is reported that links between education and social services were improving. It was noted however that there were tensions in some councils between addressing the educational needs of looked after children and other priorities.

Action Needed

The Chief Inspector recommends that councils

- pay more attention to the development of proper commissioning strategies for children's services involving education, leisure and health services
- pay particular attention to their responsibilities to children that are privately fostered.
- ensure that they and their partners continually review their safeguards for children to ensure that their arrangements are sound and robust.

The report can be obtained free from DH Publications, PO Box 777, London SE1 6XH, Fax: 01623 724 524 Email: doh@prologistics.co.uk or down load from www.doh.gov.uk/ssi/ciann-11.htm

Teachers and Child Protection: The Education Act 2002 (England)

A late amendment made during the final stages of the Bill will broaden teachers' responsibilities in relation to child protection. Teachers and other staff in the education service have day-to-day contact with individual children. They are therefore, particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse changes in behaviour or failure to develop. Thus, following the tragic case of Lauren Wright, and extensive lobbying by the NSPCC and the former education secretary, Gillian Shepherd, schools and local education authorities (LEAs) are now under a legal duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of their pupils.

The Lauren Wright Tragedy

Lauren Wright died in May 2000 after being struck so hard in the stomach by her stepmother that her digestive system collapsed. Norfolk Health Authority commissioned an Inquiry into Lauren's death, the report of which was published in March 2001.

The Inquiry discovered a catalogue of errors across the broad range of services that had come into contact with Lauren, including the education service. The headteacher and other staff at Lauren's school had failed to report their concerns about Lauren to the education welfare service, and the school did not have a teacher trained in child protection, contrary to the guidelines set out in Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Circular 10/95. However, because the guidelines had no statutory footing, the teachers could not be disciplined.

In the weeks before she died, Lauren was still attending school despite weighing a little over two stone. She was also covered in bruises and her hair was falling out due to malnutrition. Although the school was concerned about Lauren, her stepmother a playground assistant at the 'school — lied to teachers, convincing them that Lauren's injuries were a result of her clumsiness.

See ChildRight 189, September 2002

Government Spending Review

In August, John Denham, the Minister for Young People, announced the outcome of the Government's 2002 Spending Review as it applied to the Children's Fund and the work of the Children and Young People's Unit. A settlement of £600m available over three years from next April was made for the Children's Fund, the Local Network and other projects the Children and Young People's Unit is supporting.

The minister prioritised use of the Children's Fund to ensure that by September 2003 all Children's Fund partnerships have identification, referral and tracking (IRT) systems in place for every child and young person at risk (i.e. not just those currently targeted by Children's Fund partnerships). 25% of Children's Fund will be earmarked for services that local partnerships jointly agree with youth offender teams (YOTs).

'Children at Risk' are defined here as children who are at risk of adverse outcomes such as getting into crime or drugs, or teenage pregnancy, school exclusion or becoming looked after.

YOIs: facts, figures and the 1989 Children Act

The High Court has granted permission to the Howard League for Penal Reform to judicially review the failure of the Home Office to implement the provisions of the Children Act 1989 in young offender institutions (YOIs).

In April, 2002, the Home Secretary announced new powers to detain 12 to 16 year-olds and foreshadowed similar measures for children as young as 10. Press reports suggest that as many as 600 new places in secure units will be required to implement the new proposals. However, there will be an immediate knock on effect as vulnerable 15 to 17 year olds are decanted from secure units into YOIs to make way for the younger age group.

There are over 2,400 teenagers aged 15-17 in 13 YOIs throughout England and Wales. This is a vulnerable and volatile age group, approximately half of whom are likely to have had contact with the care system, and the majority of whom would be identified as having special educational needs by their local authority.

In any other setting, these young people would be required by the Children Act 1989 to have their needs investigated and to have protection from abuse and neglect. The Home Office has been criticised for many years for failing to apply the Children Act 1989 in prisons. Importantly in July 1997 by Sir William Utting and in October 1997, by the Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Prison service order 4950 was issued in July 1999 for regimes that housed children under 18. It acknowledged a requirement to reflect the standards imposed by the 1989 Children Act. The Youth Justice Board also said it would adhere to the principles of the Act when it assumed responsibility for this age group in April 2000. There is however still a considerable gap between the treatment of children in prison and their treatment in secure units or other settings.

Although there have been some improvements to regimes since the YJB took over, prisons remain closed and unsafe environments for children, where they mostly lose contact their social and support networks. Education and welfare provision is often inadequate, and there are no meaningful independent mechanisms for young people to voice complaints or raise concerns about their safety.

Between April 2000 and January 2002 there were 3,620 incidents were recorded where prison staff used force on children. These resulted in injuries to 296 children, five of whom required immediate hospital treatment. These statistics reflect an ethos of punishment and physical control largely untouched by concerns for children's welfare and rights.

Self-harm and suicide are serious problems within YOIs. There were 554 self-harm incidents recorded between April 2000 and November 2001. Since April 2000, four 16-year-olds and three 17-year-olds have committed suicide, making a total of 19 in the past 10 years. In any other setting, such statistics would cause demands for a public inquiry.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

The CRB, launched on the 1st March, 2002, is a joint venture between the Home Office and Capita, a private services company. It was set up to provide a one-stop shop for criminal records checks. But by 4th September, a deadline established for the autumn school term, the backlog at the CRB was such that, it was estimated that several thousand checks remained outstanding.

The delays continued despite measures being put in place to deal with the backlog, including staff working around the clock and over the August Bank Holiday weekend, staff being re-deployed from other areas to help and the use of couriers rather than post to deliver completed checks.

In a reversal of Government policy, teachers were be allowed into classroom without full checks after delays in vetting forced of children to stay at home after term started. The Secretary of State announced that teachers and classroom assistants who had not yet been cleared by CRB could work in schools at the discretion of head teachers. Amid fears that disruption would continue until well into term, Estelle Morris stated that teaching staff would only be checked against List 99, a dossier held by the Department of Education and Skills, of people convicted or suspected of child abuse.

Other public services, such as social services, hospitals, care homes and fostering services, have also been affected. But this is an old problem: children's homes and other residential establishments for children have suffered delays over police checks for years. This has resulted in staff having to wait weeks to start work.

Adoption and Children Bill

A woman who gave up her son for adoption in 1966 is desperately trying to warn him that he may have a fatal hereditary disease. His father husband, and one of his children, is now suffering from Huntingdon's disease, a degenerative and incurable disorder. Her efforts to warn her child that he has a 50% chance of inheriting the disease are being thwarted by laws, which prevent her from contacting him. The child's adoptive mother has been notified of his medical history by the adoptive agency that placed him, but is refusing to inform him of it.

The mother hopes a proposed amendment to the Adoption and Children Bill will help. The amendment would give birth relatives a statutory right of access to an intermediary service that would actively seek out the adopted child, once an adult, to ask them whether they want to communicate with their birth relative. The amendment would also ensure that adopted adults are advised if a birth relative makes an inquiry about them, giving them the opportunity to respond.

Domestic Violence.

Another proposed change to the Bill is that children who witness domestic violence could be taken into care. There is a greater risk of abuse in homes where domestic violence occurs. The NSPCC believes that even witnessing domestic violence can significantly harm children. There is a proposal in the Bill that the definition of significant harm can include witnessing domestic violence.

Progress review on UN Rights of the Child Convention

On 19 September 2002, the Committee on the Rights of the Child will examine the Government's progress on implementing the United Nations Convention on the

Rights of the Child 1989 (CRC) and produce their 3rd Report. Prior to the Committee's meeting with the Government, NGOs are invited, to submit a report analysing the Government's implementation of the Convention rights. Below is a summary of the key points raised in the report.

Poverty

Britain has the fourth richest economy in the world. Yet the most recent Government statistics show that in 2000-2001

- 3.9 million children across the UK were living in relative poverty.
- 59% of children in lone parent families live in poverty
- 68% of Pakistani/Bangladeshi families in Britain are poor.
- Babies with unskilled or semi-skilled fathers have mortality rates 70% higher than those with professional parents.

The last English House Conditions Survey, carried out in 1996, found that 207,000 households in England lacked one or more basic amenities, such as an indoor toilet, kitchen sink, bath/shower or hot and cold running water. In 1998, 643,000 families with children in England were officially living in fuel poverty and, in 1999, 22,200 households had their gas supply disconnected - a 19% rise on 1991 figures. However, poverty not only affects a child's health and mortality.

Poverty and Education.

Too many children from poor families continue to fare badly in education: in 2000, 69% of children with professional parents in England and Wales attained five or more good GCSES, compared to only 30% of children with unskilled parents.

Government inaction

The Government has so far failed to introduce a range of concrete measures that would help to alleviate child poverty:

- it has refused to reintroduce the right to social security for 16 and 17 year-olds, even though compulsory education ends at 16;
- full benefit rates are not available to anyone under the age of 25, even if they are parents;
- poor families still have to take out state loans through the Social Fund to buy essential living items, such as cookers, beds and children's shoes;
- child workers are not entitled to the minimum wage, even though they can officially work from the age of 13; and
- the full minimum wage is not available to those under 22 years of age.

Youth Justice

The age of criminal responsibility across the UK is extremely low - eight in Scotland and 10 in the rest of the UK. The UK Government persists in breaching Article 37(b) CRC, by refusing to use custody as a last resort and for the shortest period possible. We lock up more children than almost any other country in Europe. As of March 2002, 2,480 children in England and Wales were held in prison, representing a 3% increase on the previous year's figures. In addition, there were 110 12 to 14-year-olds in England and Wales accommodated in secure training centres at the end January 2002 and, as of 31 March 2001, 394 children in England and Wales were detained in secure accommodation, a 3% increase on the previous year. Only last month, the Government announced an increase -in the use of custody for 12- to 14-year-olds on remand.

Furthermore, Home Office Minister, John Denham, recently announced five-year custodial sentences for mobile phone thieves. This is likely to have a significant impact on children and young people, as a Home Office survey published earlier this year revealed that it is mainly young people aged between 14 and 17 who are responsible for mobile phone thefts.

Other issues raised were

- The physical abuse of children and the concept of reasonable chastisement by parents.
- The treatment of asylum seekers:
- The education of children in care and
- The placing of vulnerable teenagers in bed and breakfast.
- The education of disabled children in special schools
- Small number of schools and leisure facilities, which are accessible to, disabled children.
- Children in prison.

The full report can be obtained by contacting the Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) on 020 7278 8222 or downloaded from www.crights.org.uk

New Directions for Children's Services
Marion Bennathan writes:

On September 6, John Denham, Minister for Children and Young People, announced a new initiative, an effective preventive strategy: 'Too many children fail to achieve their full potential and face involvement in crime, poor health, early unwanted pregnancies, substance misuse or under-achievement in education because we fail to spot the emerging risks or to intervene early enough to co-ordinate the support necessary'.

All Chief Executives of Local Authorities in England will be asked to take the lead to ensure that all those responsible for relevant services are involved in agreeing a local preventive strategy.

Nurture groups are about spotting the signs of educational failure and intervening rapidly and effectively so they are relevant to this plan. If you are making bids for funding you might wish to point out the relevance of your work to this new strategy. You might also think of inviting your Chief Executive to come to see what you are achieving.

The full document is available from anna.paige@cypu.gsi.gov.uk

AWCEBD Professional Development Group

Sue Panter looks back on the successful Roadshow and outlines future plans.

The very successful Roadshow 'Beyond Behaviour Management' with Keith Bovair and Rich Rollinson has now completed its tour of the UK. It had a blend of theory and practice with an entertaining delivery, which audiences welcomed and found useful.

The next Roadshow will begin in January and address Inclusion/Exclusion. Details of this will be available soon and Regions can request it for their area.

The updated accredited course, which is now linked with the University of Leicester, is well subscribed and had the first residential as part of the "Meaning of Inclusion" Course at Cirencester on 20th September.

This was, as always a very popular course, with a wealth of workshops and seminars as well as Key Speakers.

The Annual Study Course is being organised by the North West Region and will be held in Liverpool on 25th – 27th April 2003. Its title "Where do they all belong?" promises a fruitful and inspiring course with an underlying Beatles theme that will keep delegates entertained as well as informed.

The Professional Development Group (PDG) is looking at its remit with regard to publications being a process for professional development. AWCEBD has, in the past produced some interesting and topical – even controversial publications; this needs to continue. If anyone has any ideas or would be willing to write for us, please contact me.

The PDG is a very small group of people, Allan Rimmer, Joan Pritchard, Cynthis Cross and myself. Paul Cooper and Bob Law work with us. We want to extend our network of people who, when appropriate will come on board and work to develop a course or publication. We want to extend this both geographically and areas of professionalism and expertise. Any offers with areas of interest should come to me.

Finally let me remind you of the International Course September 12th – 14th 2003 in Leicester. Booking forms are out now, with places going at a good rate. Do not miss your opportunity to participate. Booking forms are available from Allan Rimmer (details at the end of the Newsletter).

In the Journals Ted Cole looks at ...

Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (Vol. 7, no. 3) - consists of papers on imprisoned youth in the USA, mobile phone usage and exclusion; person-centred counselling intervention and play therapy with emotionally damaged children.

British Journal of Special Education. A good edition including papers on

- *Pupil Support Bases.* Paul Hamill and Brian Boyd doing a useful precis of their study of Pupil Support Bases (Scottish equivalent of LSUs) for children

who are disaffected or have SEBD in eleven Central Scotland comprehensives. The full report, available from University of Strathclyde, is highly recommended and should be studied by all schools with LSUs.

- *The Liverpool Quiet Place Project.* Fran Renwick and Bob Spalding report their work in structuring the physical environment to provide respite and therapy for children needing 'emotional first aid'.
- *The Audit Commission's Report* on statutory assessment and statementing in England. Anne Pinney reveals widespread dissatisfaction with current approaches to assessment, statementing and allocation of resources for SENs. The Audit Commission noted that LEAs spend £3.6 billion last year on SENs, about 15% of spending on schools. However, little is said to be known about how this money is used or what outcomes are achieved.

Support for Learning (Vol.17,3). As is now the norm - a themed issue entitled 'Children and Young People: Advocacy and Empowerment.' A young person writes of his mixed experience of inclusion and special schooling. Papers focus on listening to children. There are also articles on Connexions, restorative justice, a Children's Rights Commissioner's work in Oxfordshire and peer mediation.

Special! (Summer 2002 edition). Alex Griffiths, Editor, keeps up his high standards as this NASEN glossy reaches its tenth birthday. He continues his pursuit of movers and shakers, this time interviewing the Scottish Education Minister, Cathy Jamieson. Cathy is quoted as saying: ' We want to see young people with the full range of special needs included in the mainstream.' However she also said: ' Young people who have particularly complex needs will require more than the mainstream setting would be able to offer.' She wants more early intervention for SEBD. She also cast doubt over the future of the Record of Need; wanted to integrate children's services 'because a child's needs don't easily split into the health box and the education box, and the social work box.' Also in this edition, Pam Maras, Brahm Norwich and Paul Cooper write a challenging article on labelling and overlaps between ADHD and EBD.

AWCEBD DIVISIONAL/ REGIONAL REPORTS

Scottish Division:

Liz Duthie:

Jenny retires: After two years as Scottish contact, Jenny Kinnon has resigned coinciding with her early retirement as Head of The Stevenson Education Centre. Though we wish Jenny well in her future plans and thank her for all her hard work, effort and support, we hope she will remain active in local AWCEBD events where we can all benefit from her great wealth of experience and expertise.

Inclusion policy:The Stevenson Centre is no longer a freestanding secondary school for children with SEBD having now amalgamated with the local Academy as part of their Behaviour support department. Regional Policy on Inclusion does however recognise that for some pupils off- site provision is still required to best meet their needs.

Roadshow success: The roadshow 'Beyond Behaviour Management' held in Perth on the 11th May was well attended. Feedback was very positive showing

delegates thoroughly enjoyed the day and left feeling they had a better understanding of why children with SEBD behave the way they do as well as a greater knowledge of how best to help them. There were especially positive responses from non-teaching staff who feel there is a great lack of such opportunities for relevant joint training. Already we look forward to the next Road Show.

Marion on NGs: All Scottish members were invited to hear Marion Bennathan talk on Nurture Groups at Harmony School, Edinburgh on Saturday the 8th June. Delegates enjoyed an engaging and enthusiastic presentation on the benefits of Nurture Groups to children with SEBD,

New branch: At this talk, Marion encouraged participants to consider forming their own local branch of the Association. Consequently, the inaugural meeting of the South of Scotland Branch was held in Harmony on the 24th August, a committee formed and office bearers elected. The intention is to have four meetings a year (working breakfasts with bacon rolls provided) to look at support, sharing good practice and organising training events. Anyone interested in joining or seeking more information please contact:

Secretary: Rosalind Elliott 01698 423200 Email:
rosalindelliott@activemail.co.uk

The Active North: The North of Scotland Branch remains active and details of our next training event will be sent to members as soon as finalised.

Scottish Contact; Liz Duthie, Lowit Unit, Child and Family Psychiatry, Children's Hospital, Aberdeen AB25 2ZG Tel:01224 554699 E-mail:
Liz@lduthie.freeserve.co.uk

Northern Ireland:

Adrian Harbinson: At the end of August 2002, the Belfast Education and Library Board, through the Behaviour Support Team's Jill Trotter, organised a two day EBD conference. Both Rich Rollinson and Keith Bovair made significant contributions to the conference while promoting our Association. The AWCEBD Summer Newsletter was distributed to all who participated.

It seems that several classroom assistants have expressed a desire to complete the course accredited by Leicester University. I will be involved in delivering part of this course.

We were unable to secure funding for a local study course at Easter 2003 in Stranmillis University College. After this disappointment, activity did reduce. We now need to drive things along! With this in mind, I intend to gather members together and see what can be done.

Anyone who wishes to contact me regarding the Association should feel free to do so. Tel.: Home : 028-9181-5954 or work: 028-9056-4372 or e-mail: AdrianH@belf.co.uk

England:

South East Allan Rimmer:

The next event in the Region is a major day session led by Rob Long on "Strategies for Supporting Students with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties". This is being organised in partnership with the Ashford Inclusion Unit on Friday 10th January 2003 at the Ramada Hotel (formerly the Great Danes). The day is very reasonably priced at £45 and details are available from Allan Rimmer on 01622 843104 awcebd@mistral.co.uk

We are pleased with the success of the Inclusion weekend at Cirencester. These autumn events have grown out of the South East Study Days and have now been transferred as national events to the Professional Development Group.

We hope that as next year the Region ceases to be the national administrative centre with all the demands that this entails we will be able to focus more on developing the local activity and support that members need and deserve.

We were all deeply saddened by the sudden death of Anthony Rodway. Anthony was for many years an officer in the Region and instrumental on keeping it active. He attended all meetings and events up to the recent past and has been a source of advice and support since his health prevented his being with us physically. All of us can ill afford the loss of one so committed to therapeutic principles and practice.

London

Sue Hogan: The main event to report is the AGM held on 9th July, 2002. We were pleased to welcome some non-committee members and showed a video on attachment theory made by Richard Bowlby. This was most thought-provoking and induced an interesting discussion on its contents. Anyone interested can obtain the video by sending a blank tape and SAE to Richard Bowlby, Boundary House, Wyles Close, London, BW11 7JB.

At the AGM we did not manage to fill the vacancy for a Secretary so in the meantime duties are to be shared by the present committee members. We do need new members on the committee as some longstanding members wish to relinquish their (heavy) commitment.

South West Sandy Chapman: Good ideas needed to get things moving. Could local members contact me to make plans for autumn and spring activities. Sandy Chapman, Head of Behaviour Support Service, Cornwall Education Department, Gannel Building, Old County Hall, Truro, TR1 3 AY. Tel: 01872 323430. E-mail: schapman@cornwall.gov.uk

West Midlands

Formal report not received but the Editor knows Trish, Charlie and co. have been active. AWCEBD/Evita have offered courses for learning mentors, solution focused brief therapy counselling and anger management this autumn. In the summer Charlie Mead and George Smith contributed to the NAES Conference in Liverpool. Contacts: Charlie Mead, Lindsworth School, Monyhull Rd, Birmingham, B30 3QA. Tel: 0121 693 5363.

North West Region

There was one successful training event last term but since then we have been quite quiet - except of course the exec committee beavering away to plan the 2003 Annual Study Course. This year Liverpool is the venue (see info on back page). The course is now well on the way and members will soon be receiving details. I expect it to be every bit as stimulating as ever. Remember to keep the dates free: Friday 25th to Sunday 27th April, 2003. If members have any information or requests for events please contact Linda or Pete.

Pete Strzalko, Chair and Linda Riley, Secretary