
So far on Saint Helena...

To date, due to school holidays, I have only spent about 2 hours in each primary school. What I have observed has been caring, enthusiastic staff and well-behaved pupils, engaged in their lessons and wanting to do well. I have spent some of my time visiting a range of linked services but most of my time looking at the SEN systems, familiarising myself with the pupils on the SEN register(s) and looking at assessment and data and how we use and record this for pupils with SEND. I have also spent time looking over the draft of the new SEN Code of Practice for Saint Helena and making observations.

I have identified some key areas for development in terms of SEND provision and will be focusing on these in the first few weeks.

Assessment and Identification of Need

A key aspect of the role of the SEND Lead is to contribute to the raising of standards of achievement by working closely with Head Teachers and other key staff in identifying and addressing SEND needs. It is essential to develop capacity within the staff teams in order that schools can become mostly self-sufficient in assessing need by being equipped to carry out appropriate assessments and making use of available school data to correctly identify students with SEND and recognise when specialist support is required.

Programmes of Intervention

Development and use of appropriate 'easy-to-use and monitor' interventions will involve creating a bank of resources and interventions that correspond to the varying identified needs of pupils. This will be key to the sustainability of the service in the future. Showing and having evidence of tried interventions is also an important step in following the referral route to the inclusion team and beyond to specialist services when needed.

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Inclusion Team Saint Helena Island

Observations and first steps



With over 20 years Special Educational Needs (SEN) experience in schools, ranging from mainstream to special schools for pupils with severe, profound and complex needs, to specialist autism schools, and as a teacher trainer and advisor with experience of providing teacher training and public seminars on SEND, not just in the UK but also in the USA, I join SHG as a highly trained and acknowledged specialist in my field. While on Saint Helena, my role is primarily to develop the capacity of SEND support across the Island, with a view to making the schools and Inclusion Service as self-sufficient as possible in their ability to identify, assess and appropriately support pupils' needs.

Pupil Engagement

The voice of the child needs to be present throughout their journey through school. Making sure the pupil is involved in planning IEPs (where appropriate) and other key aspects of their education is an important part of supporting them and giving them the opportunity to feel included.

Parental Engagement

Parents often miss out on training opportunities and should be given the option to join training that is relevant to their child. Separate training should also be made available to parents with regards to key topics such as behaviour management or understanding IEPs etc.

Strategic Planning, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Staff Engagement

Designing and delivering a CPD programme that can be run in absentia, or from a distance, is something I will prioritise, as it is vital that this be put in place. This will include training for Teaching Assistants, Teachers (including Head Teachers where appropriate) and other staff as needed. In addition, a comprehensive training programme for SENCOs and prospective SENCOs, as well as members of the Inclusion Team, including Admin. staff, will be put in place. This will be designed as deliverable by specialists where needed, in person where possible but perhaps by videos on the Education system when no such professional is available. In the main, training will be developed to be accessible in the form of units to complete in key areas, so that skills can be built on over time and succession guaranteed. Giving staff the opportunity to develop their skills, whether as a group or in their own time, will promote positive motivation and aspiration and will support continuity of service.