Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties

The BESD strand of the Inclusion Development Programme is very close to being a stand-alone CPD package with minimal fine tuning required by the lead teacher. After the early frustration and alienation caused by the chaotic SpLD/SLCN strand and the valiant attempts by the ASD team to come up with a more usable package, the BESD materials are a breath of fresh air. Users will be pleased to know that there is little chance of becoming lost in IDP cyber space, though it is important to be careful when closing windows as it is quite easy to check out of the programme and have to start again. Users may notice the adobe flash player icon on the task bar – this is an easy way to check between sections.

The structure of the course

The programme is built around four areas of study, each linked to a case study of a pupil with BESD. In a scenario approach, four practitioners explore the needs of four pupils and two experts provide the wider view. There is a logic and coherence to this programme which could allow lead teachers to run it across a number of twilight CPD sessions and do so with confidence. As is to be expected in a work of this scope, some of the pages, activities and messages are less helpful than others, but the overall potential is significant. Especially if linked with the personalised approaches and insights afforded by the ASD materials and the strategies for accessing the curriculum presented in the SLCN/SpLD strand. There are also strong messages about the importance of quality first teaching together with concrete suggestions about how effective differentiation, assessment for learning and personalisation support pupils with BESD to gain success. This "mainstreaming" of inclusive solutions is a particularly pleasing aspect of the BESD material and the powerful message, that the key to managing challenging children is great teaching, comes across loud and clear.

Useful tabs

The Library tab allows access to an impressive range of articles and resources.

The School Leaders tab contains a 20 slide presentation which provides a useful overview for trainers and, with appropriate fine tuning and additions, could form the basis of a personalised presentation.

Using the BESD Strand for whole school training

The linear nature of the materials, together with the way that information, activities and learning opportunities are woven around four pupils and their teachers, could enable quite compelling training with the lead teacher orchestrating activities. Because the material is sequential and generally of uniformly high quality, there is little need to check between pages in order to avoid some of the unhelpful content in the previous two strands. This said, the voices of the two "talking head" experts may not be easy listening for some, but they can be muted and their transcripts shown on screen. There are a number of scenarios with possible approaches which provide excellent interactive opportunities within a training sessions and concrete solutions are presented. In the event of less favourable options being chosen, the consequences of these are also spelt out. As a result users are left in no doubt about the implications of certain choices and also how teacher choices can manage or provoke extremes of behaviour.

Introduction

The introduction is worth working through, initially by the lead teacher and then probably by colleagues because it sets the scene for what is to come and is particularly useful in differentiating between BESD and disruptive behaviour. A range of behaviours are presented as being typical of BESD and it would be tempting to challenge colleagues to establish their own list before presenting the official version from the IDP material.

Pages 5 and 6 set the scene with pen pictures and the challenge to identify and support BES needs. By then we have also met the main protagonists, the four class teachers and the two experts.

Section 1 – How do BESD develop?

The key challenges for this section focus around improving classroom based provision and support. There is also an opportunity on the opening page to download a useful power point presentation via the School Leaders tab.

A number of interactive check box activities provide opportunities for decision making and discussion and the "offical view" is also presented as either a bench mark of good practice or an opportunity for further discussion.

Page 8 establishes an important link between BESD, Speech and Language and ADHD. There is a useful opportunity to challenge staff to address the issues unaided before checking onto the IDP solutions.

Section 2 – How can I improve provision in the classroom?

The section begins with the opportunity to read a case study of the pupil on whom this section is based. It would be worth inviting colleagues to identify pupils with similar needs in the school as part of an on-going need to keep the IDP related to "real children" while working on these fictional scenarios. There are a number of check box activities which will lead to very fruitful discussion and decision making, each supported by usually helpful responses from the practitioners. Where the practitioner view is less helpful it will give colleagues an opportunity to band together and value their own approaches and opinions.

A strength of this section is the emphasis on the importance of differentiation, assessment for learning and personalisation as the basis for a quality first approach to managing BESD. This section offers real opportunities to discuss the implications of this, especially the view, implied though not stated, that a failure to differentiate, etc. will be a root cause of unhelpful behaviour in the classroom.

Section 3 – How can I support individual pupils with BESD more effectively?

The practitioner in this section is a Teaching Assistant and another case study is presented on which the materials are based. As with the previous sections there are a range of interactive check boxes with possible actions, consequences and solutions. A strength of this section is the very real and believable scenarios that are developed and resolved. The implications of unhelpful choices by the TA are also unpacked in ways that will support the behaviour management of all practitioners, especially NQTs.

The value of this section lies in the pragmatic and realistic way in which behavioural incidents are described and the range of possible approaches which are presented.

Pages 10 – 12 may be of less interest to class/subject treachers but the strand gets back on track from page 13 onwards as it confronts real issues about balancing a pupil's social and emotional needs with education, safety and a range of other aspects. The issues and solutions are sometimes quite stark and are all the more valuable as a result. This latter part of the section may prove to make for quite uncomfortable training for some but it is essential that the issues are confronted and resolved.

Section 4 – What are the other sources of support

The final case study begins with a very real scenario based around support for a school trip. A useful check box activity is supported by the presentation of a specific intervention activity which is both pragmatic and helpful. Issues such as risk of exclusion and working with agencies, parents and carers are also covered in this strand. It is likely that not all teachers will need to be engaged with all of these elements so some careful selection and editing will be required to personalise or differentiate it in order to meet the needs of certain colleagues without losing the impetus of the training.

The now familair scenario approach is used to offer insights into the pressures faced by parents and there are useful practical activities to support this.

Deliverable strategies to reach out and engage parents are presented and any school seeking to implement aspects of the Lamb Report will find this strand helpful.

Alternative self assessment checklist

The checklist presented in the BESD strand of the IDP is based on some very strange statements which may actually detract from the purpose in hand. As with the other "IDP" self review questions on the actual materials, the questions and statements often seem more concerned with the identification and labelling of BESD rather than reviewing current practice.

The questionnaire below, like the others presented in this book, is based on "OFSTED type" questions which focus on the key issues in the classroom and the school.

Inclusion Development Programme: BES Generic Staff Self Evaluation

Dev = Developing: This is a new area for me that I am beginning to take on board

Est = Establishing: This is part of my knowledge base and regular practice

Enh = Enhancing: This is an area of specialism for me

Please tick as appropriate

Self Evaluation Questions *"In your class/in your group"*	Evidence	Dev	Est	Enh
How confident are you in recognising pupils with BES type learning needs?				
How well do your pupils with BES type learning needs achieve in terms of "Expected progress" data?				
How well do you ensure equality of access and opportunity for your pupils with BES type learning needs?				
How well do you feel you are regarded by your pupils with BES type learning needs and their parents/carers?				
How well do you ensure equality of access and opportunity for pupils with BES type needs?				
How effective are you in responding to the learning needs of these pupils?				