

Case study – NG (11 years old, Year 6)

Bespoke education programme (Feb – Sept 2018)

Background

NG has a diagnosis of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD). When NG started working with Lapwing in February 2018, he had not attended an educational placement for almost a year. Before this he was in a specialist setting, but they felt they could not meet his needs due to his unsafe and challenging behaviour towards peers and staff. NG had considerable attention difficulties, was easily distracted and would often 'switch off'. His attention span was reportedly a maximum of 3 minutes. NG's social communication was poor and he lacked any self-regulation. This influenced any interaction and communication he had with peers and adults, which often resulted in aggressive incidents. Several agencies were involved with NG: social care, Family Solutions, ICENI, and The AIM project (in relation to sexualised behaviour).

NG's bespoke programme

At the beginning of the Lapwing programme NG mostly communicated via attention seeking behaviours and found it difficult to take instruction from others. At this point in time he could be extremely violent and there were elevated concerns over sexualised behaviour. NG's concentration and attention span were extremely short and initially he could only focus for periods of up to 10 minutes. He also struggled to regulate his emotional responses and would become physically and verbally aggressive throughout the sessions. His thinking processes were self-centered, meaning he found it hard to take on another person's point of view. NG refused to do any writing and, although he could read, was reluctant to do so. He struggled to play any games, either losing focus or becoming angry and trying to destroy the game.

Lapwing started with a 2:1 programme and had a timetable of activities outside of the home, however his behaviour – being violent towards staff and animals, damaging property and absconding – meant further control measures were required and sessions commenced in the home on a 1:1 basis. NG had five sessions per week and his programme was full and varied including: cooking, reading, educational games, dance, music, fine motor activities, literacy and maths activities. When Lapwing first began working with NG, he would spend the whole session being emotionally unbalanced, but after a few months he settled well and by the summer term could manage one hour without dysregulation. Aggressive incidents were also massively reduced. He achieved four AQA unit awards around life skills: Making a Sandwich; Preparing a Simple Cold Dessert with Support; Responding to Experiences; and Making a Cold Drink.

Outcomes and qualifications

Monitoring and developing NG's personal, social and emotional skills was integral to the success of his programme. The Thrive approach was used to assess NG's progress throughout his time at Lapwing. Thrive looks at the emotional development needs in young people so that differentiated interventions can be put into place quickly to build resilience and resourcefulness, decrease the risk of mental illness, reinvigorate learning and help those at risk of under achieving. The developmental stages (initial stage first) are as followed: 'Being', 'Doing', 'Thinking', 'Power and Identity', 'Skills and Structure' and 'Interdependence'. NG was initially assessed on the first stage of 'being' at only 38% secure; he progressed steadily to pass the stage and by the end of his time with Lapwing in September he had achieved 42% of 'doing'.

The future

Due to NG's highly complex nature, the local authority took a long time to find a suitable long-term education provision. However, an appropriate setting was found for NG in a specialist out-of-county residential placement to start in September 2018. Lapwing provided consistent support for NG over the summer holiday to prepare him for the move and he had a successful transition into his new setting. He was able to settle and form positive relationships with peers and staff, something he had been previously unable to do before the intervention of Lapwing.