Identifying the factors that impact on short term interventions delivered by

Southampton Advisory Outreach Service for SEND:

Maximising pupil progress and building school capacity.

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September, 2016

This Independent Study has been completed on behalf of the Southampton Advisory

Outreach Service for SEND and Southampton Inclusion Partnership.

ABSTRACT

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In September 2015, outreach services working separately out of Southampton special schools, amalgamated as one service. Leadership and management of the new Southampton Advisory Outreach Service for SEND (SAOS) were assigned to Springwell School, due to its role in the city as lead for *Southampton Inclusion Partnership,* an accredited Teaching School focusing on special educational needs. This led to a clear need to agree a method for evaluating the impact of the service, to identify the strengths of new service delivery and inform future developments.

This research investigates the challenges for SAOS in measuring the impact of short term interventions for pupils with special educational needs and seeks to identify the factors that contribute to successful intervention. It was carried out with mainstream schools accessing support from SAOS for identified pupils with special educational needs. Data was gathered using the *Target Monitoring Evaluation* system to measure pupil progress against specific targets, collating the views of service users through an on-line evaluation survey and gathering the perspective of the service provider using the *Nominal Group Technique*.

The report identifies some of the factors that lead to successful intervention and provides a focus for future service development. Moreover, it highlights considerations for enhanced partnership working between the Southampton Advisory Outreach Service for SEND and city schools in order to ensure that the service continues to affect positive outcomes for pupils with special educational needs.

List of Contents

Declaration and Copyright Statement

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Introduction

The research begins from the premise that the newly formed Southampton Advisory Outreach Service for SEND (established September 2015), designated by the Local Authority to develop provision for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, needed to be able to demonstrate evidence of impact and provide information for future service development. This was a challenging task, particularly because interventions provided by the service have a dual role; firstly to secure positive outcomes for pupils with special educational needs but secondly to build capacity within the school to support pupils with similar needs in the future.

Aims:

The purpose of the research is twofold. Firstly, it sets out to identify the impact of short term interventions delivered by the outreach service on mainstream provision for pupils with special educational needs; its impact on pupil progress but also on school capacity. Secondly, it seeks to investigate the factors that lead to successful outcomes for pupils and schools. It is intended that the identification of these factors will help to enhance partnership working in the future.

Research Approach

This study was carried out using a mixed methods approach. Data on pupil progress was gathered using the *Target Monitoring and Evaluation* system. This was used to assess learning against specific targets by base lining pupils' current skills, predicting expected progress and finally assessing progress at the end of the intervention. The views of schools in relation to pupil progress and school capacity were gathered using an on-line evaluation survey, completed by schools at the end of the intervention. Thirdly, the views of the outreach provider were captured using the *Nominal Group Technique*, in order to identify some of the factors that led to successful outcomes. The purpose of the mixed methods approach was to provide both quantitative and qualitative data from different perspectives, in order to eliminate any bias generated by a single approach or perspective.

The researcher acknowledges the limitations of the study, firstly in terms of the subjective nature of the data but also in its inability to correlate data for specific pupils and outcomes. However, the research did not set out to establish a set of truths, but to reflect some of the issues that impact on the service's dual aims to bring about pupil progress and develop school capacity. Despite its limitations, the research identifies different views on how the outcomes of intervention are perceived, and in doing so highlights areas for future partnership working.

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter will explore the challenges of measuring the impact of short term interventions for pupils with special educational needs, where an outreach service implements the intervention which is then delivered by the receiving mainstream school. Firstly it will explore the importance of identifying positive outcomes for pupils with special educational needs against which progress can be measured. This will include an examination of how systems can be used to collate and evaluate data effectively. Secondly, it will explore what is meant by building school capacity and the factors that affect a school's confidence and motivation to sustain improvement once the service provider withdraws. Finally, it will examine some of the factors that impact on successful intervention and how partnership working between outreach services and mainstream schools can be enhanced.

Measuring progress against identified outcomes

An HMI report (2005) into the impact of outreach services highlighted weaknesses in relation to gathering information about pupil progress, stating that evaluation tended to focus on provision rather than pupil outcomes (p.10). Within the field of education, there is an increased emphasis on the accountability of schools and services to demonstrate pupil progress through evidence based practice. This expectation sits within the context of significantly reduced budgets and the need to demonstrate cost effective approaches to intervention, particularly in relation to pupils with special educational needs. Such accountability is equally important for services providing outreach support to schools where there is a need to evaluate the service's performance and demonstrate its impact on positive outcomes for pupils and schools.

There is much research in relation to the impact of setting and framing goals or targets, particularly in relation to specificity and challenge (Locke & Latham, 2006; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Berkman & Lieberman, 2009). Hattie &Timperley (2007) highlight research that suggests specific goals generally make success criteria more evident and as such are more likely to enhance learning. Indeed, when goals are well defined, it is clear how the gap between current and intended learning may be reduced. Furthermore, there is a greater

commitment to securing a specific goal when there is belief that the goal is achievable (p. 86-89). Locke and Latham (2006) also identify the importance of specificity in relation to goal setting, suggesting that specific and challenging goals lead to a higher level of performance than vague, easy to achieve goals (p. 265). They argue that goals are more effective when they focus on acquiring the skills needed to reach a goal, rather than focusing on reaching the goal itself. Indeed, goals that are skills based tend to enhance metacognition and promote planning, monitoring and evaluation towards goal attainment. Moreover, they highlight the benefits of goal setting, in terms of motivating people to use existing abilities and bringing previously stored knowledge into awareness (p. 265-266). In addition, Berkman and Lieberman (2009) describe the key elements required for effective goal setting, stating that a plan, together with a mechanism for initiating the plan, clear success criteria and a way of monitoring progress are all necessary components for successful intervention (p.98).

However, whilst some would argue the importance of measuring pupil progress against specific targets, others would suggest that progress needs to be measured using more holistic methods. Indeed, Rix et al (2009) argue that indicators of progress should be rich and varied, not simply indicators that can be readily measured (p. 92). In this respect, the measurement of the impact of an intervention cannot be seen simply in relation to whether or not a specific target has been achieved. Such narrow measures fail to take into account the impact on the whole child, their effect on other associated skills and their generalisation across different contexts. For this reason, evaluation needs to embody a wider range of views and perspectives.

Griffiths et al (2006) emphasise the need for systematic data collection with inbuilt reviews to evaluate the success of an intervention and determine future support (p.51). Indeed, as Brandt et al (2014) point out, data collection is crucial in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an intervention, enabling schools and services to understand which aspects of the intervention are being implemented, which aspects are having a positive effect and how consistent staff are in accurately implementing recommendations (p.230). Techniques such as *Goal Attainment Scaling* and *Target Monitoring Evaluation* attempt to provide such data, measuring the progress of the pupil against specific targets in order to establish the impact of an intervention.

However, selecting a method that can determine whether an intervention has had its intended effect remains highly challenging (Mackay et al, 1993; Wellington and Cole, 2004; Timmins and Miller, 2007; Parkinson and Humphrey, 2008. Timmins and Miller (2007) argue that no intervention is likely to have an equal impact on all participants because those involved bring different outlooks, perceptions and skills to its delivery. Such differences can be masked by any attempt to evaluate programmes using statistical measures (p.9-10).   As Wellington and Cole (2004) point out, the individual variables impacting on the success of an intervention, make the methodology for evaluation highly complex (p.102). Indeed, as Mackay et al (1993) suggests, it is problematic to identify a single approach for use by a service that is "designed to achieve a diverse range of outcomes" (p.144). Firstly, there is huge variation amongst the pupils being supported, even within groups that are "superficially homogenous" e.g. two learners in a Reception class with autism will be vastly different. Secondly, the skills that are being measured are conceptually complex e.g. progress in independence or communication skills will look uniquely different for each pupil. Such diversity means that it is not possible to make comparisons or to apply the same measures to all pupils receiving intervention. Indeed, as stated by Mackay et al (1993), any evaluation method needs to accommodate not only the heterogeneity that exists among these pupils but also take into account the variation in their rates of progress (p.143-143).

Brandt et al (2014) highlight the importance of baseline data for comparing changes that occur during the period of the intervention (p.230). This is reinforced by Mackay et al (1993) who highlight the need to use evaluation methods that measure change in an individual. By setting goals tailored to individual needs, problems with heterogeneity can be avoided. Furthermore, there needs to be a means of base lining a pupil's skills and then repeating the measure once the intervention is completed. This means that the pupil is treated as an individual with their own goals, base points and progress markers (p.144). Data can then be collected to not only measure the pupil's individual progress, but to also analyse the development of the service and how well goals are achieved over time (p.145).

As Dunsmuir et al (2009) point out, decisions about which interventions and approaches to use, should be based on 'systematic knowledge of intervention outcomes rather than unsubstantiated judgement' (p.53). Furthermore, Parkinson and Humphrey (2008) argue that

any measure of success needs to be based on "visibly robust, replicable and definitively measurable" outcomes, demonstrated through the meeting of targets (p.4). In this respect, the capacity of schools to define and subsequently evaluate measurable outcomes for these pupils is ever more apparent. However, there are a number of inherent issues within the process of defining outcomes and evaluating outcomes for pupils. These include agreement between professionals in terms of target setting, the quality of the target itself and the perspectives of different professionals involved.

Research by Atkinson et al (2006) raises the importance of goal setting in terms of the pupil and the promotion of self efficacy. Indeed, they suggest that a pupil's belief in their own ability to succeed as well as motivation to do so, is dependent on their ability to see themselves progress towards a goal. In this respect, targets need to be broken down into small steps so that that they can more easily assess their progress towards completion (p.34).

However, the identification and negotiation of outcomes takes place within a complex and multi-professional environment. Dunsmuir et al (2009) highlight the need for agreement between professionals about which targets to set and clarity about how these can be achieved (p.57). Indeed, dialogue in relation to target setting can motivate the participation of the consultee and ensure coherence and continuity between all interested parties (p.57). Furthermore, as Dunsmuir et al (2009) points out, the quality of the target is dependent on the experience of the person setting the target and an understanding of how much can be achieved within the time frame (p.64). Therefore, the importance of setting SMART targets (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time limited) is crucial if the evaluation is to be both valid and useful and this has implications for how staff are trained. Secondly, evaluation can place an over emphasis on how clients perceive support provided by a service, rather than focusing on the progress of the pupil (p.54). In this respect, the measure of outcomes needs to be related to a specific and agreed focus.

Building school capacity to respond to future needs

One aspect of building school capacity is reflected in a school's confidence and motivation to continue with an intervention once the service provider withdraws support, requiring the school to continue with established systems whilst setting new targets for the pupil. In this

respect, a key aspect of the service provider's role is to increase the school's motivation to continue with support. Research carried out by Scott and Nowlis (2013) examines the factors that motivate a consumer to reengage with goal setting and to sustain motivation over a period of time. They suggest that goal specificity, which offers both attainability and challenge, leads to a greater feeling of accomplishment and therefore a greater chance of re-engagement (p.444). In other words, outreach services need to work with schools to set specific goals that are both attainable and aspirational, leading to a greater sense of accomplishment that is highly motivational.

Furthermore, how service providers and schools monitor progress towards defined goals can also have an impact on the success of the intervention. Koo and Fishbach (2012) suggest that motivation to bring goals to completion is influenced by how progress is monitored. They argue that people prefer actions that increase the perceived pace of progress, the 'quick wins'. Moreover, they suggest that the closer people are to a goal, the more resources they invest in reaching it (p.493). In this respect, the systems put in place by outreach services for monitoring the progress of an intervention, can influence motivation to bring goals to completion. Thus, whilst at the beginning of an intervention it may be useful to focus on the progress that has been achieved so far, at the end of the intervention it may be more beneficial to focus on progress yet to be made.

In terms of capacity building, sustainability is also key in evaluating the impact of support provided by outreach services. Parkinson and Humphrey (2008) suggest that the strength and success of an intervention is measured by its sustainability, not only whether the intended outcomes have been realised but also whether these outcomes can be retained over time (p.6). Becker and Domitrovich (2011) identify three elements that help to sustain the positive benefits of interventions in the long term. Firstly, they suggest that the consistent use of shared language and skills across the workforce helps to reduce variability in implementation and consequently promotes sustainability. This requires coordinated support systems to ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and feedback on performance. Furthermore, they identify the need for members of staff to "capitalize on naturally occurring learning opportunities" in order that pupils may practise newly learned skills and increase their ability to generalise these skills across different contexts. In this respect, a more integrated approach

to intervention with reinforcement in a range of contexts could have greater impact than any individual programme. In addition, their research suggests that the quality and impact of an intervention is enhanced when progress is monitored whilst the intervention is in progress, rather than when it is completed. This ensures that opportunities to adapt the intervention and promote progress are not missed (p.582-586). This has implications for how outreach services work with schools in terms of intervention implementation, monitoring and development.

Influencing factors and partnership working

For a number of years, special schools have had a vital role to play in not only making provision for pupils with complex special educational needs but also in working with mainstream schools to share their expertise. As Baker (2007) states, special schools can support greater inclusion within mainstream schools by providing outreach support for pupils with special educational needs within these settings (p.72). Moreover, Rose (2012) highlights the importance of partnership working to enhance provision for pupils with special educational needs, by sharing working processes and decision making in order to reach a particular goal (p.84-85). In this respect, collaborative partnership working is crucial if pupil outcomes are to be achieved.

As Dunsmuir et al (2009) point out, it is important to remember that the delivery of interventions by external agencies is often dependent on consultative principles with an expectation that the intervention is largely delivered by the host school. Indeed, the service provider is not solely responsible for the success of the intervention and is dependent on the skills and motivation of the consultee (p.55). Brandt et al (2014) identify the need for whole school culture that expects commitment from all staff involved in a programme, ensuring that systems are directly and continuously reinforced (p.229). As Dunsmuir et al (2009) point out, public commitment is a powerful tool in maximizing commitment and developing intrinsic motivation. For this reason, it is important that the person with prime responsibility for implementing the intervention should be involved in the action planning process in order to increase a sense of ownership and accountability (p.65).

Whilst it is important for services and schools to be accountable for the impact of interventions, providing an evidence base is problematic when evidence can vary in different

circumstances and success or failure is dependent on a range of factors. Timmins and Miller (2007) highlight context as a key influencing factor, both in terms of people and setting. This can include the relationships between people involved in the intervention, the characteristics of the setting in which the intervention is implemented, as well as factors that may be outside the control of those involved. They highlight the importance for evaluators in identifying which contexts are most effective in triggering the mechanisms that result in desired intervention outcomes (p.9-10). Furthermore, in order to inform future development, they highlight the need for schools to understand how and why their efforts to achieve particular outcomes work and why they do not (p.16). In this respect, it is important for schools and outreach services to be able to specify which aspects of an intervention worked and which did not, as well as to identify contextual characteristics that may have exerted an influence on the intervention's success or failure.

A further influencing factor lies with the need for dialogue between all those involved in the intervention so that there is shared commitment and responsibility. As Locke and Latham point out (2006), it is important that those who are responsible for the intervention are committed to the goals that have been set and have some control over the outcomes. Indeed, they need the ability and capacity to support positive outcomes and ensure they do not simultaneously adhere to conflicting or competing goals. Ongoing feedback is therefore vital in enabling key parties to track progress and keep the importance of the goal in sight (p.265). Dunsmuir et al (2009) also points out, there needs to be commitment "to invest the time and energy required to bring about change" (p.67). This suggests the importance of factoring in consultation time, training, supervision and review, requiring the involvement at senior management level to approve the allocation of organisational resources.

A key factor in the success of short term interventions seems to be effective partnerships between key players (Pretti-Frontczak, 2002; Wellington & Cole, 2004; Parkinson & Humphrey, 2008;). Pretty-Frontczak (2002) advocates 'a linked system approach' to intervention, making clear connections between the assessment of a pupil's needs, development of appropriate goals, planning of interventions and monitoring of performance over time (p.15.) However, Wellington and Cole (2004) suggest that the effective linking of these systems requires active and collaborative partnership working between all involved

parties if intervention and subsequent evaluation of progress is to be successful (p.104). Parkinson and Humphrey (2008) also highlight the benefits of joint working, with agencies working together to set targets and monitor and evaluate progress. They suggest that for this joint working to be successful, there needs to be a sharing of mutually agreed aims which underpin the implementation of defined strategies and approaches. Indeed, intervention needs to be seen as a dynamic process which will necessarily require ongoing refinement in order to meet the changing needs of the child (p.4).

Brandt et al (2014) raise the importance of consistency in relation to implementation if significant outcomes are to be achieved. This requires a high level of fidelity from all those involved in the intervention both to the strategies that are recommended as well as the determination to obtain desired outcomes (p.232). As Rix et al (2009) highlight, "Teachers' effectiveness is strongly influenced by their recognition of their responsibility for all learners" (p.86). In this respect, teachers have a key role to play in overseeing interventions, monitoring pupil progress and reinforcing application of newly learned skills.

Conclusion

It is clear from the above discussion that there is a need to measure the success of an intervention by assessing pupil progress against specific targets. However, this raises the question of staff training and quality assurance in terms of target specificity. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that the use of statistical measures fails to acknowledge the wider progress of the pupil and the development of associated skills. In terms of building school capacity, it is evident that effective collaboration between all parties can help to embed principles that can be continued once the service provider withdraws support. However, it is crucial that increased capacity is sustained over time, not simply for the individual pupil but also for other pupils with similar needs in the future. Whilst sustainability remains a challenge for schools working with outreach services, it is clear that success is dependent on partnership working that motivates all those involved. This necessitates the need for culture and practices that facilitate effective communication, reinforce learning in different contexts and secure consistency through robust monitoring systems.

Research Approach

Introduction

In September 2015, outreach services working separately out of Southampton special schools, amalgamated as one service. This was a response to a directive from the Local Authority to find a new model of improved support for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, within the restraints of a significantly reduced budget. Leadership and management of the new service were assigned to Springwell School, due to its role in the city as lead for *Southampton Inclusion Partnership,* an accredited Teaching School focusing on special educational needs.

Following a period of consultation and dialogue with various stakeholders, the newly formed *Southampton Advisory Outreach Service* developed a Service Level Agreement with the Local Authority. Tiered layers of charged and funded support were drawn up, with clearly identified eligibility criteria for accessing funded services as part of Southampton's Local Offer. This led to a clear need to agree a method for evaluating the impact of the service, both for pupils and mainstream schools. The evaluation of data during the first year of implementation would help to identify the strengths of new service delivery and inform future developments.

In terms of evaluating the impact of short term interventions delivered by external agencies within a school, a number of challenges present themselves, both for the service in general, as well as for the researcher. Firstly, the service offers a wide range of interventions in terms of both learning and behaviour, many of which are funded by the Local Authority but some that are offered as a charged service. This difference has the potential to influence where accountability for the success of the intervention lies. Secondly, whilst interventions are designed and overseen by the outreach service, the responsibility of delivering the support on a daily basis lies with the school and is therefore subject to a range of factors, some beyond the control of both the outreach service and the school it is supporting. Furthermore, establishing a method for measuring impact raises a difficult challenge, especially as pupils and schools vary significantly, often requiring different approaches from the service provider.

Key questions for the research

The aim of this enquiry is to explore the challenges for the Southampton Advisory Outreach Service (SAOS) in measuring the impact of short term interventions for pupils with special educational needs and to identify the factors that contribute to successful intervention. This includes measuring the impact on pupil progress as well as the impact on building school capacity.

The following key questions will be explored:

1. *What is the impact of short term interventions on pupil progress?*

It will be necessary to explore how the progress of pupils with special educational needs can be measured effectively. This will include an examination of the use of goal setting to determine whether an intervention has had an intended effect.

2. *What is the impact of short term interventions on building school capacity?*

It will be necessary to explore what is meant by building school capacity and how this can be measured effectively. This will include an exploration of how the intervention impacts on the skills of staff to support pupils with special educational needs and whether these skills can be transferred outside the intervention.

3. *What factors influence the success of short term interventions delivered by an external outreach service?*

It will be necessary to explore the strengths and limitations of short term interventions on the progress of pupils with special educational needs and on school capacity. This will include an examination of the factors that impact on success and how partnership working between the outreach service and mainstream schools can be enhanced.

Methodology

Which methods were selected and why?

As a response to the challenges implicit within the research, it was felt that a mixed methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative data would help to reduce bias and provide a range of perspectives to the enquiry. It was agreed that for the purposes of this research, the views of pupil participants would not be sought. For this reason, it was decided to employ three different approaches to data collection; data gathered from use of the *Target Monitoring and Evaluation* system (quantitative), an on-line evaluation survey completed by participating schools (quantitative and qualitative) and *Nominal Group Technique* carried out by outreach staff (qualitative and quantitative).

Target Monitoring and Evaluation System

Research carried out by Dunsmuir et al (2009) highlights the importance of evaluating an intervention against measurable and evidenced based outcomes for pupils, rather than on unsubstantiated perceptions provided by client groups (p.53-54). The *Target Monitoring and Evaluation System (TME)* was therefore selected as a means of focusing the intervention on outcomes for pupils, providing quantitative data generated from a pupil's progress towards specific targets. This system will be used to baseline performance in relation to the target set at the beginning of an intervention, predict an expected outcome and measure progress once the intervention has been completed. (See appendix i.)

An Outreach Advisory Teacher will carry out an initial assessment of the pupil at their mainstream school in order to establish the pupil's strengths and needs. In consultation with staff, up to three targets will be agreed for the school to work on during the period of the intervention. The school will be asked to sign a *Partnership Working Agreement* in order to demonstrate a commitment to the intervention. Once the targets have been agreed, the school will be asked to indicate a baseline score (B) for the pupil in relation to the target and an expected outcome score (E) using a standard number scale from 1 to 10.

The Outreach Advisory Teacher will provide a written report for the school outlining the intervention, identifying the agreed targets and making recommendations for provision. A

Special School Support Assistant or Outreach Advisory Teacher will then carry out six visits to the school, providing support for staff in implementing recommendations. This will include working directly with the pupil, modelling strategies and completing a written visit record. At the end of the intervention, the Outreach Advisory Teacher will lead a review meeting with the school and produce a final written report. This will require the school team, in consultation with the Outreach Advisory Teacher, to assess the achievement of the pupil (A) in relation to the targets set using the TME scale. Finally, the progress of the pupil towards the targets will then be categorised as follows:

Outcome is below baseline

Outcome is baseline maintained

Outcomes is less than expected rating but above baseline

Outcome matches expected rating

Outcome exceeds expected rating

Evaluation Survey

As part of normal practice, integral to the *Partnership Working Agreement* is an agreement that schools complete an on-line survey on completion of the intervention. This survey is designed to match previously agreed Performance Indicators provided by the Local Authority in order to quality assure services provided. The survey will provide both qualitative and quantitative data for the purposes of the research. (See appendix ii.)

Firstly, schools would be asked to evaluate the impact of the intervention in relation to:
- increasing staff confidence
- developing staff knowledge and understanding
- providing practical strategies
- building the capacity of the school
- overall satisfaction with the service.

Secondly, schools would be asked specific questions relating to the impact of the intervention both on pupil progress and on the school's capacity to meet the needs of pupils with special

educational needs in the future. Finally schools would be asked to provide suggestions as to how the service could be improved.

In designing the on-line evaluation survey a number of factors were considered. Schaeffer et al (2003) highlights research that suggests the optimum number of categories for a rating scale should range between 5 and 9 categories. This view is based on the notion that there is a compromise to be made between increasing the discrimination of the respondent by providing more categories and recognizing that the respondent has limited capacity to make 'finer distinctions reliably' (p.78). For this reason the on-line evaluation tool uses a uni-polar rating scale restricted to five categories, including a midpoint value.

Furthermore, the rating scale selected does not provide a 'filter' for an option of 'no opinion'. According to Schaeffer et al (2003), filters can reduce the number of respondents willing to provide a specific answer and encourage them to satisfice, that is to take the middle ground option, thereby avoiding a decision (p.79). The rating scale selected for the evaluation therefore creates the expectation that a position on the scale will be made by the respondent, unless the question is not applicable to the case.

In addition, the evaluation survey does not provide questions that ask respondents to agree or disagree. Sturman (2008) highlights research that suggests there is a social tendency to agree with others (p.128). For this reason, the tool asks questions instead, therefore reducing the likelihood of acquiescence.

Consideration was also given to the presentation and delivery of the evaluation to respondents. Saunders (2012) highlights the importance of 'timing' and when evaluations should be carried out for best effect (p. 428). For these reasons, respondents were asked to complete the evaluation form immediately following the period of intense intervention, in an effort to collect views whilst the experience of the provision was still felt.

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT)

This will provide further qualitative and quantitative information from the service provider on how schools received and made use of the support. (See appendix iii.) As outlined by Flick (2007) and Bergman (2008), the triangulation of data within a research approach can help to provide an alternative perspective that extends and complements the information collated. Since the daily delivery of an intervention is dependent on the receiving school, it makes sense that the perspective of the service provider is also considered. In this respect, views provided by the outreach service through use of NGT, will serve to broaden understanding of how interventions were received and implemented by schools.

Research carried out into the use of the *Nominal Group Technique* suggests a number of benefits for generating a large quantity of ideas efficiently when time is limited (Nelson et al, 2002; Boddy, 2012). Its strength also lies in the fact it helps to increase the effort made by individuals when working as part of a group and reduces inhibition or fear of criticism when offering ideas (Asmus & James, 2005).

The process will include three phases:

i)   Outreach staff will be asked to complete two sentences individually, relating to the factors that impact on intervention. (*Outreach interventions are successful when...Outreach interventions are less successful when...*)

ii)   The team will discuss ideas, sorting and categorising them into themes.

iii)   Staff will be asked to individually rank and score ideas in order of importance, leading to identification of highest scoring ideas.

Trialling the method

During the first half of the Autumn Term, the outreach service trialled use of the *Target Monitoring and Evaluation* system with some schools. This highlighted the following considerations:

- the need for staff training in relation to target setting to ensure consistency
- the need for quality assurance and moderation systems throughout the duration of the research

- the agreement of efficient and manageable systems for consent and data gathering that would not impact significantly on teachers' workloads
- the need to agree the parameters for data gathering including time period and which interventions would be evaluated as part of the research.

As a result, the following arrangements were made:

- Training and quality assurance systems were considered in relation to reliability and validity and these are described below.
- Additional administrative support was put in place to gather data and support in its analysis and evaluation.
- Only interventions delivered between November 2015 and June 2016 would be used for the research. This would allow time during the Summer Term to evaluate the findings in order to inform further development for the service from September 2016.
- Only funded Level 1 core interventions agreed by the *Primary Headteachers Inclusion Group* would be used for the research. This comprises a 6 to 12 week period of support with ongoing visits overseen by an Outreach Advisory Teacher. This would ensure that all interventions evaluated as part of the research were similar in rationale, duration and pace.

Ethical Considerations

In order to comply with guidelines for ethical research (BERA, 2011) an Ethics Statement was completed. This used a checklist to highlight ethical considerations and support the drawing up of specific procedures to handle the collection and dissemination of data.

Permission to use the data was gathered from both schools using the service and from parents. Due to the complex learning needs of pupil participants, parents gave permission to use the data on behalf of their children. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, pupil participants were allocated a reference number for the purposes of data collection. There would be no reference to the name of the pupil or their school within any of the written research.

Permission to use data for the research was granted by schools as follows:

- As part of normal practice, schools were asked to sign a *Partnership Working Agreement* before starting the intervention. This sets out the responsibilities for both service user and service provider and makes it clear that data generated from the intervention will be used anonymously for research purposes.
- As part of normal practice, schools were asked to complete an on-line evaluation survey once the intervention was completed. The survey makes it clear that the data will be used anonymously for research purposes.
- As part of normal practice, schools receive a review report on completion of the intervention. This report makes it clear that data generated from use of the *Target Monitoring and Evaluation* system will be used anonymously for research purposes.

Permission to use data for the research was sought from parents as follows:

- As part of normal practice, the parent gives signed consent for the outreach service to work with their child. This is a requirement before any support from the outreach service can start and is a key component of the initial referral form provided by the school, for both funded and charged services.
- In addition, parents were i) given a participant information sheet explaining the research and ii) asked to sign a letter giving their consent.

Reliability and validity

It is acknowledged that the nature of the research will inevitably include a level of bias. However, the following measures will be taken to increase both the reliability and validity of the data:

- Outreach Advisory Teachers will be given training on how to set specific pupil targets that can be achieved and evidenced following a 6 to 8 week period. This will include guidance on how to write appropriate targets and written exemplars.
- All initial and review reports, including the setting of targets, will be moderated by the Service Manager.
- Regular moderation and quality assurance meetings will be held for outreach advisory teachers to ensure the quality and specificity of the targets set and to evaluate how progress towards targets is reviewed.

- The use of qualitative data generated from the on-line survey and *Nominal Group Technique* will provide further information to explain all quantitative data generated by the on-line survey and the *Target Monitoring and Evaluation* system.

- Evaluation data will be collated from both service users as well as service providers. This will help to ensure that the impact of the intervention is considered from different perspectives.

Findings

Introduction

This chapter will summarise the results from the data collected and discuss the strengths and limitations of each method. These include:

- the progress of pupils towards the targets that were set (*Target, Monitoring and Evaluation System*).
- the impact of interventions as perceived by the receiving school (*Evaluation Survey*).
- the factors that influenced the success of interventions as perceived by the Outreach Service (*Nominal Group Technique*).

Secondly, the results will be examined in relation to the key research questions and attention drawn to any significant findings:

- What is the impact of short term interventions on pupil progress?
- What is the impact of short term interventions on building school capacity?
- What factors influence the success of short term interventions delivered by an external outreach service?

Target, Monitoring and Evaluation System *(TME) (*See Appendix i.)

The TME was used to gather information about the pupil's progress in relation to specific targets that were set for the period of the intervention. These targets related to aspects of learning as well as behaviour. Only 11 parents gave permission for their child's data to be used for the purposes of this study. The following data therefore relates to only 11 pupils and 32 targets set in total.

Table i. Percentages for target outcomes

Target outcome	Number of targets	Percentage of targets
Below baseline	0	0%

Baseline maintained	0	0%
Less than expected rating but above baseline	6	19%
Expected rating	11	34%
Exceeds expected rating	15	47%

The following conclusions need to be viewed in the context of limited data. However, of targets that were set at the start of the intervention, 100% demonstrated at least some progress towards the targets that were set. Furthermore, 81% demonstrated at least the expected rate of progress and nearly half of targets set exceeded the expected rating. This would suggest that overall, the majority of pupils make progress as a result of intervention.

However, the data raises a number of questions for both the outreach service and the receiving school:

- What were the factors that prevented 19% of targets reach at least the expected rating?
- What were the factors that led to nearly half of the targets set exceed the expected rating?

It is clear that the TME provides a method for measuring and quantifying the progress of an individual against specific targets, measuring the progress of the pupil over time and allowing the pupil to be treated as an individual, with their own baseline and progress markers. In addition, the system provides data in a form that can be collated, enabling the service to identify measurable outcomes for a much wider and diverse group of pupils receiving intervention. Furthermore, use of the TME focuses specifically on outcomes for pupils as a result of intervention, rather than on the provision.

However, the nature of such quantitative data does not allow for the analysis of specific targets, particularly in relation to type, specificity and challenge. In this respect it does not indicate whether or not targets are well defined and how the quality of definition impacts on

the pupil's capacity to make progress towards the targets that are set. Furthermore, it has to be acknowledged that the TME is essentially a narrow measure of progress and does not take into account the wider impact of the intervention on the pupil, on his or her associated skills and generalisation across different contexts.

Evaluation Survey. (See Appendix ii.)

Data collected from the on-line evaluations, highlights the impact of interventions as perceived by schools receiving support.

Firstly, using a rating scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all/poor and 5 being extremely/excellent), schools were asked to evaluate the impact of the intervention in relation to five key areas. This data provided information particularly relating to the impact of the intervention on building school capacity and were as follows:

i)   Increasing staff confidence

ii)   Developing staff knowledge and understanding

iii)   Providing practical strategies

iv)   Building school capacity

v)   Overall satisfaction with the service.

Increasing staff confidence

Table ii. Impact of intervention on school's confidence to meet pupil's needs before and after intervention

How confident were you about meeting the pupil's needs BEFORE outreach support was provided?			Having received outreach support, how confident are you NOW about meeting the pupil's needs?		
Rating	No.	%	Rating	No.	%
1	2	11	1	0	0

2	5	26	2	0	0
3	12	63	3	3	16
4	0	0	4	11	58
5	0	0	5	5	26

37% of evaluations identified below average scores (a rating of 1 or 2) for confidence to meet pupil's needs before the start of the intervention. After intervention, no evaluations gave a rating below 3. Before the start of intervention, 100% of evaluations gave a confidence rating of 3 or below, with no scores of 4 or 5. After intervention, evaluations provided a confidence rating of 3 or above with 84% of scores 4 or above and 26% of scores at 5. This suggests a significant increase in staff confidence to meet the needs of the pupil following support, as perceived by the school.

Developing staff knowledge and understanding

Table iii. The extent to which the support increased the school's knowledge of the needs of the pupil

To what extent did support increase the knowledge of the needs of the pupil?		
Rating	No.	%
1	0	0
2	1	5
3	3	16
4	9	47
5	6	32

95% of evaluations provided a score of 3 or above in relation to the extent to which support increased knowledge of the pupil's needs. 79% of these provided a rating of 4 or above with 32% providing a score of 5. This suggests schools perceive that support from the service significantly raises the level of staff knowledge in relation to pupil needs.

Providing practical strategies

Table iv. The extent to which suggestions provided practical responses to the pupil's needs

To what extent do you feel the suggestions provided practical responses to the pupil's needs?		
Rating	No.	%
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
4	8	42
5	11	58

100% of evaluations provided a score of 4 or above in relation to providing practical responses to pupil's needs, with 58% rated at 5.

Building school capacity

Table v. The extent to which support helped to increase the capacity of the school to respond to pupils with similar needs in the future

To what extent has support helped to increase the capacity of the school to respond to pupils with similar needs in the future?

Rating	No.	%
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	3	16
4	12	63
5	4	21

100% of evaluations indicated a score of 3 or above in relation to increasing the capacity of the school to respond to pupils with similar needs in the future, with no scores below 3. 84% of scores were 4 or above, with 21% scoring 5.

Overall satisfaction with the service.

Table vi. School's satisfaction with the service received

How satisfied have you been with the service you received?		
Rating	No.	%
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	1	5
4	4	21
5	14	74

100% of evaluations indicated a score of 3 or above in relation to schools' satisfaction with the service they received. 95% of scores were 4 or above and 75% of scores rated 5.

The rating scale of 1 to 5 without an option for 'no opinion' ensures that all respondents provide specific answers. The data suggests that overall schools felt that their capacity to meet the needs of similar pupils in the future had increased. This appears to be reinforced by data relating to an increase in staff confidence to meet the pupil's needs, a greater knowledge and understanding of pupils with special educational needs and development of a wider repertoire of practical strategies.

However, it needs to be remembered that there are a number of issues related to these findings. Indeed, the capacity of a practitioner to assess their own level of confidence is problematic. Firstly, the respondent may not be willing to acknowledge a lack of confidence at the start of an intervention for fear of how they may be perceived by others. Furthermore, they may over estimate their confidence at the end of an intervention in order to please the service provider. In addition, whilst the data demonstrates how overall confidence levels shifted by the end of the intervention, it does not provide an average score for how the confidence of individuals increased. In this respect we do not know where specific levels of confidence were raised. For example, did respondents with lower levels of confidence at the start of the intervention make greater increases than respondents who rated themselves with average levels of confidence at the start of the intervention?

A further issue relating to the evaluation form is the use of the rating scale itself and what is meant by each rating. Since there is no criteria on which to base judgements the scores could be considered as highly subjective. For example a score of 3 to one school may be perceived differently by another school.

Secondly, schools were asked to select from a list of areas, the factors they felt were impacted by the intervention, both in relation to pupil progress and to the school's capacity to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs in the future. Schools were able to select as many factors as they wished.

Impact of the intervention on pupil progress

Table vii. The impact of the intervention on pupil progress

Please select the following areas the resource impacted upon:	No.	%
Improving the pupil's motivation?	15	79
Improving the pupil's listening and attention skills?	15	79
Improving the pupil's independent skills?	15	79
Improving the pupil's progress in learning?	13	68
Improving the pupil's confidence and self esteem?	12	63
Enabling the pupil to meet individual targets?	12	63
Enabling the pupil to access the curriculum?	10	53
Reducing incidents of negative behaviour?	9	47
Improving the pupil's interaction/relationships with peers?	8	42
Improving the pupil's communication skills?	7	37
Enabling the pupil to manage transitions?	6	32
Reducing exclusions?	1	5

In summary, schools felt that the most significant impact of intervention was related to pupil's motivation, listening and attention skills and independence skills (79%), with secondary impact related to the pupil's progress in learning (68%), confidence and self esteem and enabling the pupil to meet individual targets (63%). Of lesser impact were aspects relating to pupil behaviour, interactions and relationships with peers, with a 47% impact on reducing negative behaviours and a 42% impact on improving pupil's interactions and relationships with peers.

In contrast to the *Target Monitoring and Evaluation* system (TME), the on-line evaluation identifies a broad range of areas in which the pupil may progress, including aspects of learning, emotional well being, social interaction and behaviour. They are not determined by specific success criteria but reflect a respondent's instinctive response to the question. However, it is important to note that the scores are neither hierarchical nor do they reflect the complexity of the child's needs or the extent to which progress may have been made. In this respect, an aspect may have a low score because it does not have high significance for the sample. For example, pupils working well below their chronological age would not be able to access the curriculum for their age group and would therefore require access to a highly personalised curriculum.

Impact of the intervention on school capacity

Table viii. The impact of the intervention on school capacity

Please select the following areas the resource impacted upon:	No.	%
Increasing staff capacity to plan future interventions for the pupil?	22	116
Improving overall provision for the pupil?	15	79
Improving resources to support learning?	15	79
Staff's professional development in relation to additional needs?	14	74
Developing teaching strategies?	12	63
Improving consistency in relation to systems and routines for the pupil?	12	63
Increasing staff capacity to plan/differentiate learning for the pupil?	11	58
Developing staff's understanding of pupil's levels and next steps in learning?	10	53
Enabling staff to apply strategies and resources across the school?	9	47

Improving consistency amongst adults in relation to management of the pupil?	8	42
Providing information for parents?	1	5
Providing information for other agencies?	1	5

The on-line evaluation provides a range of aspects relating to building school capacity from which schools can select. In summary, schools felt that the most significant impact of intervention was related to increasing staff capacity to plan future interventions for the pupil (116%), with secondary impact relating to improving overall provision for the pupil and improving resources to support learning (79%). Of lesser impact were aspects relating to information for parents and other agencies (5%). Again, results are not hierarchical and lower scoring aspects may not hold significance for the sample. However, the scores do raise questions for further investigation. For example, does support from the outreach service provide adequate information for parents and outside agencies or is this an aspect of service delivery that could be improved? In terms of building school capacity, can the outreach service support schools in liaising effectively with parents and other agencies?

Finally, schools were asked to provide suggestions as to how the service could be improved and to identify the factors that may have supported or hindered the intervention. This qualitative data was coded and categorized into a quantitative format to allow for emerging themes.

How the service could be improved

In response to the question about how the service could be improved, each of the following responses related to individual schools only and do not represent a view shared by more than one school.

Table viii. How the service could be improved.

Individual schools cited the following suggestions for improvement:

- Attendance at multi-agency meetings

- More resources and support for parents

- A longer period of intervention for more complex pupils

- More contact with the Class Teacher

- Intervention to start more quickly following referral

- Schools to receive written reports promptly

Factors that supported the intervention

A total of 29 responses were provided in relation to the factors that supported the intervention and were coded and categorized as follows:

Table ix. Percentage of responses relating to factors that supported intervention

What factors **supported** the intervention?					
In relation to SAOS	**No.**	**%**	**In relation to the school**	**No.**	**%**
Quality of support	11	38	Consistency between all adults supporting pupil	2	7
Quality of advice	3	10			
Quality of resources	3	10			
Knowledge of SAOS staff	3	10			
Quality of target setting at the start of the intervention and after intervention	2	7			
Regular meetings and support	2	7			

Strategies suggested	1	3
Flexibility of support	1	3
Quality of communication	1	3

Evaluations highlighted the value of the quality of the support (38%), with further significant factors relating to the quality of the advice, the quality of resources and the knowledge of SAOS staff (10%).

Factors that hindered the intervention

A total of 9 responses were provided in relation to the factors that hindered the intervention and were coded and categorized as follows.

Table x. Percentage of responses relating to factors that hindered intervention

What factors **<u>hindered</u>** the intervention?					
In relation to SAOS	**No.**	**%**	**In relation to the school**	**No.**	**%**
Delay in schools receiving reports	2	22	Staff changes	3	33
Difficulty in arranging meetings due to time limitations	2	22	Difficulty in arranging meetings due to time limitations	1	11
			Staff not putting in place strategies suggested	1	11

Compared to 29 responses to factors that supported intervention, only 9 factors were identified by schools as hindering impact. Key factors relating to SAOS support related to

some delays in receiving written reports and some difficulties in arranging meetings to discuss and review support (22%). In contrast, factors hindering the impact of support largely related to contextual difficulties within the receiving school; these included changes to staffing during the period of the intervention (33%), difficulties in arranging meetings and staff not implementing the strategies that had been recommended (11%).

The data raises a number of questions about who within the school is completing the evaluation form and to what extent this person has been involved in the delivery of the intervention and in receipt of direct support from the outreach provider. The question itself is clearly directed at an individual person within the school by its use of the second person (you). However, there is likely to be a significant difference between how support is perceived by a teaching assistant working on a weekly basis with outreach staff and a SENCo who has less frequent contact with the service but a greater overall strategic view of the provision. Furthermore, as it is unclear who has completed the evaluation form, it is not possible to ascertain whether a person's role within the school influences their capacity to evaluate the delivery and impact of the intervention. In addition, schools may to choose to complete evaluation forms as a team, providing an overall view of how the support has been perceived rather than specific impact on an individual practitioner. In addition, where interventions are delivered across a transition point, such as across year groups, phases or schools, it has to be acknowledged that the capacity of the school to complete the evaluation form accurately is weakened.

Nominal Group Technique (See Appendix iii.)

The *Nominal Group Technique* (NGT) was used with the service provider in order to provide a further perspective on service delivery and outcomes. Outreach staff identified six key factors as having a positive impact on the success of interventions delivered by the service. These are listed and explained below in order of significance to the team.

Attitudes

The most significant factor integral to the success of the intervention related to attitudes presented by staff within the receiving school (31% of votes). Attitudes were evidenced at three different stages during the intervention:

- prior to the intervention starting

- when recommendations were made

- whilst the intervention was in progress.

Outreach staff felt that interventions were more successful when mainstream staff did not feel that support had been imposed on them and were willing to engage with the process. In these contexts, it was clear that the needs of the pupil drove the school's decision to request support, with recognition that intervention from an external service could ultimately secure positive outcomes for the pupil. Secondly, interventions were more successful when mainstream staff responded positively to recommendations, demonstrating a willingness to accept advice and support, to try out new strategies and methods and to implement recommendations. Thirdly, interventions were more successful when positive attitudes continued for the duration of the intervention, with staff maintaining confidence in the programme and communicating positivity to the pupil.

These reflections raise a number of questions for both the outreach service and the receiving school:

- On what basis is the need for intervention decided by school leadership teams and how is this communicated to staff who are responsible for delivery of the intervention?

- How can the outreach service help to engage the trust and confidence of staff they are supporting, remove barriers and build confidence over time?

- How can the outreach service work with school leadership teams to ensure that clear expectations for all staff involved in the interventions are communicated clearly?

Consistency

Consistency was cited as a second key factor in ensuring successful intervention (19% of votes). This related to three main areas: staffing, use of strategies and timing. Firstly, the

team found it more productive when there was a consistent member of staff to liaise with and work with on each visit. It was also helpful that this person worked with the pupil between outreach visits, ensuring that recommendations were followed up. Secondly, it was important that strategies suggested by the outreach team were used consistently by all members of staff supporting the pupil, following the guidelines provided by the outreach worker. Finally, time was a key component in ensuring a successful intervention. This required recommendations to be practised regularly between visits, with dedicated time given to the delivery of the intervention each week and protected time for outreach appointments. Furthermore, pupils benefited more from the intervention when they were not on a reduced timetable and attended regularly.

These reflections raise a number of questions for both the outreach service and the receiving school:

- How can school leadership teams ensure that a consistent member of staff is available to work with the outreach team and follow up recommendations?
- How can schools work with the outreach service to monitor systems and ensure that recommendations are carried out consistently?
- How can schools work with the outreach team to ensure that parents understand the impact of attendance on the success of the support?

Communication

Communication was identified alongside consistency, as a key factor in ensuring a successful intervention (19% of votes). This was evidenced at three different stages during the intervention:

- prior to the intervention starting
- at the start of the intervention
- whilst the intervention was in progress.

Firstly, a detailed referral with clear information about the pupil's strengths, needs and the impact of interventions that had been tried, helped to reduce delays in identifying how the pupil could best be supported. Secondly, there needed to be clear communication between the

outreach team and the receiving school before starting the intervention. This required staff and parents to be clear about the role of the outreach service, with all parties sharing key principles for partnership working. In this respect, staff supporting the intervention needed to agree outcomes and targets for the duration of the intervention to ensure clarity and commitment from all those involved. Furthermore, recommendations needed to be communicated clearly to staff both delivering the intervention and monitoring the intervention, to ensure recommendations were understood. Finally, ongoing communication between all parties for the duration of the support was crucial. This required school staff to be released to consult with the outreach team regularly in order to discuss progress and receive feedback. Such communication enabled staff to reinforce new learning with the pupil and support application of learning in different contexts. In addition, ongoing communication between the school and the outreach team outside of visits, such as telephone calls or email, allowed for any concerns or questions to be raised and addressed immediately.

These reflections raise a number of questions for both the outreach service and the receiving school:

- How can schools be supported to provide quality referrals that enable the right sort of intervention to be identified quickly?
- How can partnership working agreements be used effectively to communicate shared principles and practices?
- How can communication between schools and the outreach team be maximized within the constraints of reduced school budgets and time pressures?

Leadership

The involvement of school leadership in the intervention was also identified as a contributing factor to success (15% of votes). The outreach team felt that the involvement of the Headteacher, particularly in communicating the importance of the intervention, had a positive influence on their staff's response to the support and commitment to its success. Furthermore, where robust monitoring systems were put in place, usually led by the school SENCo, recommendations were applied consistently by class teams and any concerns could be identified and addressed quickly.

These observations raise the following question:

- How can the outreach service work with Headteachers to ensure that interventions are given high importance within the school?

Knowledge and skills

The knowledge and skills of staff designated to work with both the pupil and alongside outreach staff were also identified as a contributory factor to the success of the intervention and ultimately upon outcomes for the pupil (10% of votes). This was evidenced in relation to the knowledge and skills of staff prior to the intervention starting and also to the quality of support the pupil received outside the intervention. Due to time constraints for carrying out the support, usually between 6 and 8 weeks, outreach staff felt the intervention was more successful when staff had a basic experience of working with children with special educational needs. Indeed, where staff knew their pupils well, were able to manage behaviour positively and had high but realistic expectations for their pupil, positive outcomes were more likely. Outreach staff also felt that provision for the pupil outside the intervention was also a significant factor, particularly in relation to the role of the teacher. Where class teachers took a lead role in support, building in opportunities to work with the pupil, leading on the assessment of the pupil's strengths and needs and providing carefully planned, differentiated learning outside of the intervention, outreach staff felt that pupils were more likely to make progress in relation to the targets that had been set.

These observations raise the following questions:

- To what extent should outreach services be expected to train staff?
- How should schools select staff to work with outreach services?
- How can schools enable class teachers to take responsibility for the learning of pupils with special educational needs?

Resources

Resources were identified by the team as the least significant factor impacting on the success of the intervention and ultimately pupil progress (5% of votes). In this context, the term resources was defined narrowly in relation to physical equipment and tools to support the

learner, rather than human resources. The team felt that the intervention was more likely to be successful if the school had adequate physical resources and equipment to draw on. Furthermore, the intervention had a greater success when resources were readily available for use by the team and the pupil. This was usually the case where schools allocated time to the making and preparation of resources and these resources were then used between visits.

This observation raises the following question:

- How can schools ensure that additional time to make and prepare resources is factored into time allocated to pupil support?

In contrast, Outreach staff identified five key factors as having a negative impact on the success of interventions delivered by the service. Consistency, communication, attitudes and knowledge and skills were again identified as having an impact on intervention (within the top three categories), although the order of significance was slightly altered. The role of the school leadership team was not identified but the category of resources was extended to include a widened view of provision.

In terms of negating factors, consistency scored highly (35% of votes), with observations mirroring those identified under positive effects. This suggests that the outreach team felt that lack of consistency had a greater negative impact on the intervention than consistency had on positive impact (only 19% of votes). In other words, where 'attitudes' had the greatest impact on success, 'consistency' became the overriding factor in terms of lack of effectiveness. This could suggest that without consistency, positive attitudes may not be enough to secure success. Furthermore, whilst the knowledge and skills of staff were cited as contributing towards a positive outcome (10%), they had less significance when describing negative factors (only 4% of votes). This may be due to the role of the outreach team in building the capacity of mainstream staff by developing the knowledge and skills of the team they are supporting. Indeed, this observation reflects the dual role of outreach teams to support both pupils and staff.

Findings from the use of the *Nominal Group Technique* highlight clear themes for further examination and discussion. In particular, the need for effective communication between involved parties underpins all the categories identified. Communication relates to both the setting of expectations at the start of the intervention, when outcomes are agreed and roles and responsibilities defined, as well as throughout the duration of the intervention, between different parties at different levels. It would therefore be useful to explore how improved communication impacts on other identified factors, such as attitudes and consistency and how this can be achieved, possibly as part of the Partnership Working Agreement between the school and the service provider.

In conclusion, the mixed methods approach to this data gathering provides a range of complementary perspectives that gives insight into the impact of outreach interventions on pupil progress and school capacity. Whilst it is acknowledged that the data is inevitably limited, it does highlight some of the factors that both hinder and promote the success of an intervention. Furthermore, it raises interesting questions for further investigation, the findings of which could be used to improve service delivery, develop partnership working and increase the role of schools in maximising the intervention's impact on pupil progress and school capacity.

Analysis and discussion

Introduction

This chapter will consider the research questions set out at the beginning of the study and examined within the statement of results. It will discuss how the data reflects existing knowledge on the challenges for outreach services in ensuring that time limited interventions impact on the progress of pupils and on school capacity, as portrayed in the literature. Deficiencies in the research design will be examined and alternative approaches will be considered.

What is the impact of short term interventions on pupil progress?

At a time of accountability and the need to provide cost effective approaches to intervention, it is crucial that the Southampton Advisory Outreach Service (SAOS) has a method for evaluating the impact of the service, specifically in relation to progress and positive outcomes for pupils (HMI report, 2005). Furthermore, the collection of data is crucial in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an intervention and determining those aspects which are having a positive effect on pupil progress (Brandt et al, 2014).

It is acknowledged that the impact of individual variables on the success of the intervention, both the diverse nature of schools and heterogeneity of pupils, makes evaluation highly complex (Wellington and Cole, 2004). However, the *Target, Monitoring and Evaluation* system (TME) does provide a method that enables the service to measure the progress of pupils against specific targets (Locke and Latham, 2006; Hattie & Timperley, 2007) as part of an inbuilt review (Griffiths et al, 2006). The strength of the method lies in its flexibility to set bespoke targets for individual pupils across a wide range of areas, thereby accommodating the heterogeneity that exists among pupils and the need to measure a wide range of conceptually complex skills (Mackay et al, 1993).

Furthermore, the TME provides a method of identifying changes in an individual against specific targets during a time limited intervention (Mackay et al, 1993). This is achieved by base lining the pupil's skills at the start of the intervention and then repeating the measure

once the intervention is completed (Brandt et al, 2014). Individual results can then be collated to provide quantifiable data on overall pupil outcomes across the whole service.

However, it is important to acknowledge that such a system provides a very narrow view of progress against specific targets. In this respect, it does not measure the wider impact on pupil progress across areas that fall outside the parameters of the target itself, such as associated skills and generalisation in different contexts (Rix et al, 2009). Furthermore, the system is dependent on the accurate identification and formulation of a specific target at the start of the intervention, the capacity of practitioners to predict expected progress for the pupil and agreement at the end of the intervention as to what progress has been made. This requires visibly measurable targets which are well defined (Parkinson & Humphrey, 2008) and agreement between professionals about which targets to set and how these can be achieved (Dunsmuir, 2009). Without specific criteria against which to measure progress, the identification of outcomes can be seen as both challenging and potentially subjective.

In comparison, the on-line evaluation survey identifies aspects of progress impacted by the intervention as perceived by the receiving school. This question enables schools to identify broad areas of progress that go beyond the target itself. However, unlike the TME, the data does not illustrate the extent to which progress has been made in these areas. Indeed, the on-line evaluation tends to place an emphasis on how receiving schools perceive the support, rather than focusing on the progress of the pupil (Dunsmuir, 2009).

In order to further evaluate the impact of short term interventions on pupil progress, the data highlights the need for further research into target design. Firstly, it would be useful to examine the role of the target setting meeting in identifying outcomes for pupils and in communicating the targets to all parties responsible for the pupil's progress. Indeed, what is the significance of this initial meeting in establishing commitment to the targets set and identifying the success criteria by which progress will be measured? Secondly, it would be useful to examine the impact of target specificity and how the initial wording of the target affects the outcome. In this respect it would be helpful to analyse the specificity of targets against final outcomes and compare outcomes for similar targets.

Furthermore, there could be additional analysis of results for different types of targets and investigation as to whether the TME is effective in measuring progress for different areas of learning; for example, academic targets compared to targets focused on behaviour. In addition, further comparisons could be made between targets that were not met and targets that were exceeded. This could be achieved through the analysis of specific case studies and the factors that influenced their outcomes. Finally, it is clear that the research does not evaluate the impact of the intervention itself on pupil progress. It would therefore be necessary to examine the relationship between the setting of the targets and the recommendations that are made.

What is the impact of short term interventions on building school capacity?

The Southampton Advisory Outreach Service also has a key role to play in terms of school improvement. The on-line evaluation survey provides schools' perceptions on the extent to which the intervention has helped to build future capacity. The method for data collection allows for the collation of both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for statistical measures to be gathered, whilst capturing more descriptive views of respondents. The data suggests that outreach support has a significant impact on the school's capacity to meet the needs of similar pupils in the future, by increasing staff confidence, extending their knowledge of pupils with special educational needs and equipping teams with a wider repertoire of practical strategies.

The view of schools in terms of how they see their own capacity is a critical component in terms of sustaining capacity long term. Indeed, a sense of accomplishment is a key factor in motivating service users to maintain systems once the service provider withdraws support (Scott and Nowlis, 2013). In this respect it is also important to recognise the connection between use of the TME and a school's perception of their increased capacity. It is likely that the setting of specific, achievable and measurable targets helps to generate a feeling of accomplishment in the service user. This perception is highly motivational and produces effects that can be evidenced long term (Locke and Latham, 2006).

However, it is also important to recognise that the perceptions of receiving schools represented in the on-line evaluation survey are also subjective. For example, the capacity of

a practitioner to assess their own level of confidence is problematic. Firstly, the term 'confidence' may have different meanings for different staff, depending on their level of experience and expertise. Furthermore, practitioners may have a perception of their own confidence level which may not be shared by others. Moreover, the respondent may struggle to give an accurate indication of their confidence level both at the start of the intervention and at the end, for fear of how they may be perceived by others.

Finally, the data does not demonstrate whether the school's perception of increased capacity is sustained, once support is withdrawn. Indeed, one of the key factors in evaluating impact on building school capacity is sustainability (Parkinson & Humphrey, 2008). In this respect, it is important to examine whether a school is able to continue with intervention once the service provider withdraws support, ensuring that outcomes set for the intervention are retained over time. Thus, the data highlights the need for further research into sustainability over time, possibly through the use of case studies that examine provision for pupils beyond intervention.

Furthermore, in order to examine sustainability, it is also important to consider the elements that help to sustain the positive benefits of intervention in the long term. These include i) the consistent use of language and skills across the workforce to reduce variability in implementation ii) the commitment of staff to provide opportunities for pupils to practise newly learned skills across different contexts and iii) monitoring progress throughout the duration of the intervention in order to make any necessary adaptations that promote progress (Becker and Domitrovich, 2011). In this respect, it would therefore be useful to carry out further research into how these elements impact on building long term capacity and how they can be embedded into the process of intervention.

What factors influence the success of short term interventions delivered by an external outreach service?

The on-line evaluation survey provides the school's views on the factors that supported the intervention and those that hindered it. This qualitative data was coded and categorised in order to identify key themes and patterns. The key factors impacting positively on the intervention included the knowledge of outreach staff, the quality of advice and support and

the quality of resources. Limiting factors related to some delays in receiving written reports and in setting up review meetings on the part of the outreach service. Other limiting factors related to contextual difficulties within the receiving school, such as changes to staffing during the period of the intervention, difficulties in arranging meetings and in some cases strategies not implemented by staff. The nature of this data provides useful suggestions for future improvement of the service and for its partnership working with schools.

However, it also raises questions about how the role of the respondent influences the responses that are given and who should complete the evaluation. For example, a teaching assistant may have specific knowledge of direct contact with the service and progress of the pupil, whereas a more senior member of staff may have a wider view of how the intervention has impacted on school capacity. In this respect, it may be of benefit to carry out further research into whether school practitioners in different roles identify different or similar positive and limiting factors.

In order to identify factors that impacted on intervention, it was also necessary to collate the views of the service provider, gathered through use of the *Nominal Group Technique*. This data provided a number of key elements that the outreach provider felt contributed to a successful intervention. However, it is important to acknowledge that this data represents a broad perspective of interventions in general and does not relate to specific cases or outcomes.

Firstly, the attitudes presented by the receiving school throughout the period of the intervention had a significant impact on the intervention's success. This included willingness by all staff to engage in the process, respond positively to recommendations and to implement recommendations. Positive attitudes were evident where whole school culture expected commitment from all staff involved in the programme (Brandt, 2014) and those who were responsible for the intervention were committed to the targets that had been set (Locke and Latham, 2006). This would suggest that schools in collaboration with the outreach service need to consider how best to maximise commitment and develop intrinsic motivation (Dunsmuir, 2009). In this respect, the research would benefit from further examination of the systems that can help to facilitate such commitment.

Consistency was also a key component in the success of an intervention. This related to having a consistent member of school staff to work with on visits, recommendations implemented consistently between visits and dedicated time to carry out the intervention at regular intervals. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are sometimes factors outside the control of those involved, it is important to establish the characteristics of a setting that ensure consistency (Timmins and Miller, 2007). This requires a high level of fidelity to the recommendations and strategies that are made by all those involved, as well as a system of ongoing monitoring to ensure that systems are directly and continuously reinforced (Brandt et al, 2014). It would therefore be of benefit to explore further how monitoring systems can be used to ensure consistency.

Alongside consistency, outreach staff also identified communication as having an impact on intervention. This identified the need for clear communication prior to the start of the intervention in the form of the referral itself, at the start of the intervention in order to share principles around partnership working and throughout the period of the intervention in order to share information and monitor consistency. It is clear that dialogue between all those involved has a significant impact on attitudes to the support provided, as well as to consistency in implementing the intervention. Indeed, collaborative partnership working across the intervention facilitates effective communication and secures the sharing of work processes and decision making (Rose, 2012). It ensures that actions are planned and communicated effectively, leading to a greater sense of ownership (Dunsmuir, 2009) and enables staff to track progress and keep targets in focus (Locke and Latham, 2006). Furthermore, it is important that all those involved have the opportunity to contribute to discussions about which aspects of the intervention worked and which did not, in order to inform future development (Timmins and Miller, 2007). It would be worthwhile investigating further what effective communication looks like and how partnerships can overcome barriers to communication.

The role of school leadership was also cited as a contributing factor to the success of an intervention. It was felt that the involvement of the Headteacher in communicating the importance of the intervention had a positive influence on the commitment of school teams to the principles of partnership working and helped to ensure that organisational resources were

allocated proportionately (Dunsmuir, 2009). Furthermore, leadership teams, particularly the school SENCo, had a significant role to play in monitoring the progress of the pupil. However, this also includes the role of the teacher in overseeing the intervention, monitoring progress and reinforcing the application of newly learned skills (Rix et al, 2009). It would therefore be useful to investigate further how the involvement of leadership teams affects the success of intervention and impacts on outcomes for the pupil.

Finally, the knowledge and skills of staff designated to work with the pupil and alongside outreach staff was also identified as having an impact on pupil outcomes. This demonstrates the complexity of evaluating a service that has a dual role in terms of both affecting pupil progress as well as building school capacity. Since the success of the intervention is dependent on the skills of the consultee, outcomes will necessarily be affected by the skill level of staff responsible for carrying out recommendations, especially where time is limited (Dunsmuir, 2009). It would therefore be of interest to carry out further research into how the skill level of the consultee affects outcomes and whether a potential lack of accelerated progress in the pupil is offset by an increase in skills by the member of staff.

In summary, the mixed method approach to data collection has provided a range of perspectives to the enquiry, by placing an emphasis on pupil progress and outcomes, but also by combining the perspectives of both the service provider as well as the service user. It is clear that there are limitations to the data and the wide range of contextual factors makes evaluation highly complex. However, the research does offer a broad view of the factors that can facilitate or inhibit the success of an intervention. In this respect, it identifies a number of elements that could contribute to improved partnership working in the future but also raises questions worthy of further investigation.

Implications for future practice

In September 2015, outreach services working separately out of Southampton special schools, amalgamated as one service. This was a response to a directive from the Local Authority to find a new model of improved support for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, within the restraints of a significantly reduced budget. The newly formed Southampton Advisory Outreach Service for SEND therefore required a mechanism for evaluating data during the first year of implementation in order to identify the strengths of new service delivery and inform future developments. Starting from this premise, the research therefore set out to evaluate the impact of the service on pupil progress and school capacity and to explore the factors that contributed to successful intervention.

In carrying out this research, a number of challenges presented themselves. Whilst interventions are designed and overseen by the outreach service, the responsibility of delivering the support on a daily basis lies with the school and is therefore subject to a range of factors, some beyond the control of both the outreach service and the school it is supporting. Furthermore, establishing a method for measuring impact raises a difficult challenge, especially as pupils and school settings vary significantly, often requiring different approaches from the service provider. Within such a context, the task of making reliable judgements about progress and school capacity was highly challenging and often subjective. However, the research does raise a number of implications for future practice, both for the outreach service itself and for the schools it supports, particularly in terms of collaborative partnership working.

Firstly it is clear that there is a need for systematic data collection in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of an intervention and to determine future support (Griffiths et al, 2006; Brandt et al, 2014). However, it is important to acknowledge that such data has a two-fold function; firstly to capture the progress of pupils in terms of their learning but also to capture the progress of schools towards building their capacity to support similar pupils in the future. It is therefore crucial that any future development for data gathering takes into consideration these two distinct functions.

It is acknowledged that the challenges of collecting reliable data for the purposes of service improvement remain complex. Attempts to use or compare statistical measures can serve to mask the differences in school contexts, the heterogeneity of pupils being supported and the diversity of outcomes being measured (Mackay et al, 1993; Wellington and Cole, 2004; Timmins and Miller, 2007; Parkinson and Humphrey, 2008). It is therefore essential that the data gathered for evaluative purposes comes from a range of sources and perspectives, with both quantitative and qualitative methods applied. Furthermore, it is important that base line measures are taken pre and post intervention in order for data to reflect progress over time (Mackay et al, 1993). In this respect, it may be necessary to reconsider how the on-line evaluation form is managed in order to ensure that change over time is captured. This could include consideration of how the evaluation form is completed, when it is completed and by whom.

A further implication for future practice lies with the function of target setting as a system for measuring pupil progress. This system remains a visible method for defining pupil outcomes and enables practitioners to focus on the progress of the pupil rather than their provision or how support is perceived (Parkinson & Humphrey, 2008; Dunsmuir et al, 2009). However, it is acknowledged that the identification and negotiation of targets takes place within a complex and multi-professional environment, requiring agreement about which targets to set and whether they have been achieved, as well as the quality of the target itself (Dunsmuir, 2009). For this reason, the outreach service needs to continue to work with schools to develop the language of target setting, define clear success criteria and establish an awareness of what can be realistically achieved within a given time frame.

In this respect, regular target reviews and moderation needs to be embedded within routine practice in order to improve specificity and ensure that targets focus on acquiring the skills needed to reach them (Locke and Latham, 2006). This could include the development of case studies to provide a background as to why some pupils do not meet some targets and why others exceed what is expected. Such data would provide useful information on how to reduce the gap between current and intended learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Furthermore, it is crucial that systems are in place to ensure that practitioners develop the skills necessary to produce well defined targets beyond the duration of the intervention in

order to build their capacity. This could be supported by working with schools at the final review meeting to set further short term targets.

However, it is crucial that schools and services acknowledge that the measurement of progress purely against specific targets, fails to recognise the wider impact on the whole child, the effect newly learned skills has on other associated skills and the pupil's ability to generalise new learning in different contexts (Rix et al, 2009). For this reason, any review of progress should not only take account of outcomes in relation to targets set, but also include a more holistic review of the child's progress. Whilst this is an essential element of the on-line evaluation, it should also inform the review at the end of the intervention and examples where the pupil has generalised new skills could be celebrated.

Another implication for future practice arising from the research is the importance of partnership working between schools and the outreach service. Indeed, collaboration is a key driver for service improvement, with shared work processes and decision making having a significant impact on enhancing provision for pupils with special educational needs and ensuring positive outcomes (Rose, 2012). The involvement of those responsible for daily implementation, as well as those accountable for overall oversight and monitoring, prior to the start of the intervention through to its culmination, creates a vehicle for reducing inhibiting factors generated by a particular school context (Timmins and Miller, 2007). Sustained partnership working can help to mitigate any limiting factors, including those that are sometimes out of the control of those involved.

Furthermore, ongoing dialogue throughout the process helps to create a shared responsibility and commitment to the process and to the targets that are set. Firstly, it increases motivation by enabling all parties to understand how and why their efforts to achieve particular outcomes are important (Timmins and Miller, 2007). Secondly, it ensures that monitoring feedback is communicated swiftly, facilitating any refinements that need to be made to meet the changing needs of the child (Parkinson and Humphrey, 2008) and securing consistency in the implementation of recommendations (Brandt et al, 2014). In addition, effective communication strengthens cohesion, allowing for clear connections to be made between the

assessment of a pupil's needs, the development of specific targets, the planning of the intervention and the monitoring of performance over time (Pretty-Fronczak, 2002).

It seems therefore that the Partnership Working Agreement (PWA) has a key role to play in establishing the relationship between service user and service provider, prior to the start of the intervention. By setting out expectations for effective partnership working, it ensures that the process is driven by clear communication from the start. However, it is crucial that the value of the PWA is recognised so that it does not become one of many requirements to be fulfilled before intervention can begin, simply a document to be signed. Indeed, there is a clear need for the outreach service in partnership with schools, to consider what the PWA should look like in the future, how it should be administered and how its principles can be communicated. The potential for the PWA to have a more central role in establishing sustained partnership working could therefore directly impact on positive outcomes for pupils as well as increased school capacity.

A significant implication for future practice relates to sustainability, the continued progress of the pupil once intervention has finished and the school's capacity to maintain this over time. Indeed, the strength and success of an intervention is not simply whether outcomes for the pupil have been achieved, but whether or not outcomes can be retained in the long term (Parkinson and Humphrey, 2008). A focus for service improvement could therefore be to identify systems for measuring the progress of pupils following intervention, both short term and long term, and identifying the characteristics that ensure impact is sustained. Long term impact could also be examined in relation to building school capacity, with an investigation into how schools cascade support and apply recommendations in new contexts. In this respect, it would be useful to identify how the outreach service can work with schools to establish self sustaining systems that reduce dependency, thereby freeing the service to focus resources where there is greatest need.

Finally, the voice of the pupil was not included as part of this research. However, if intervention is focused on improving outcomes for pupils, then it is crucial that the views of the pupils themselves are listened to. Not only do pupils have a right to express their opinions about matters that affect them but schools and services have a duty to use flexible

techniques and avenues of communication to enable them to do so (Davis, 2000). Indeed, a pupil's insight into their experience of the intervention can reveal issues that may go undetected (Fitzgerald, 2003), as well as helping staff to develop a greater understanding of the pupil's needs (Rose and Shevlin, 2004). Therefore, a worthwhile development for the outreach service would be to examine ways in which the pupil could be central to the target setting and evaluation process, including the opportunity to assess their own progress towards the targets set (Atkinson et al, 2006).

In conclusion, the researcher recognises the limitations of this study, both in terms of the subjective nature of the data as well as its inability to correlate data for specific pupils and outcomes. In this respect, it raises a number of questions that could serve as the catalyst for further research and long term study. However, the research did not set out to establish a set of truths, but to reflect some of the issues that impact on the service's dual aims to bring about pupil progress and develop school capacity. In this respect, the research has a value in terms of identifying the factors that lead to successful intervention that will provide a focus for future service development. Moreover, it highlights considerations for enhanced partnership working between the Southampton Advisory Outreach Service for SEND and city schools in order to ensure that the service continues to affect positive outcomes for pupils with special educational needs, on behalf of the Local Authority.

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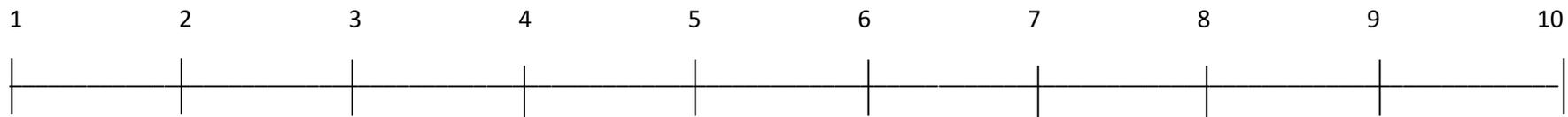
Appendices

Southampton Advisory Outreach Service: Target Monitoring and Evaluation System
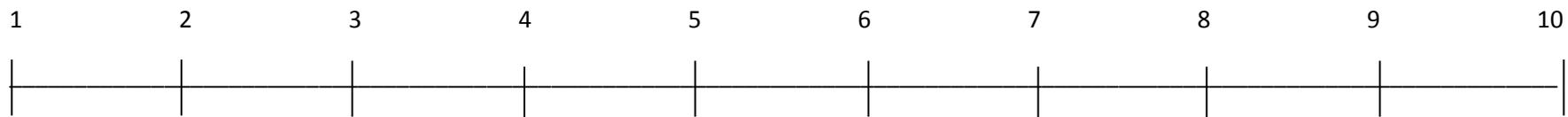
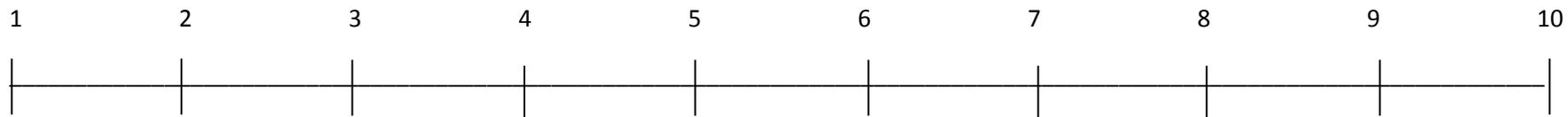Pupil: School: Date:

Target 1: _____

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Target 2: _____

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Target 3: _____

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Guidance for use of TME

At the Initial Meeting:

*In consultation with the school, mark <u>baseline </u>assessment as **B** and <u>expected outcome</u> as **E**.*

At the Review Meeting:

*In consultation with the school, mark <u>achievement</u> as **A**.*

Following the Review meeting:

Categorise the pupil's progress towards each target as follows:

Worst progress (actual outcome rating is below baseline) = W

No progress (baseline maintained) = N

Some progress (outcome is rated less than expected rating but above baseline) = S

Expected level of progress (actual rating matches expected rating) = E

Better than expected progress (actual outcome exceeds expected rating) = B

FINAL TARGET EVALUATION

Target	Outcome
1	
2	
3	

SOUTHAMPTON ADVISORY OUTREACH SERVICE FOR SEND EVALUATION FORM

The data generated from this survey will be used for research purposes and may be published. All responses will remain anonymous.

Pupil**:**   Gender**:**

Date of Birth**:**   Year Group**:**

Mainstream School**:**

Date resource/support allocated**:**

Following the date of panel, were you contacted by the service within 10 school working days?	**Yes**	**No**

Please rate the following questions.		1	2	3	4	5	
How confident were you about meeting the pupil's needs **BEFORE** outreach support was provided?	not at all						extremely
Having received outreach support, how confident are you **NOW** about meeting the pupil's needs?	not at all						extremely
To what extent did support increase your knowledge of the needs of the pupil?	not at all						extremely
To what extent do you feel the suggestions provided practical responses to the pupil's needs?	not at all						extremely
What was the impact on the pupil's participation in learning?	poor						excellent
How helpful and relevant were written reports provided to you?	not at all						extremely
What was the impact on pupil's behaviour?	poor						excellent
What was the impact on attendance?	poor						excellent
What was the impact on pupil's relationships within the school?	poor						excellent
To what extent has support helped to increase the capacity of the school to respond to pupils with similar needs in the future?	not at all						extremely
How effective was the allocated resource?	poor						excellent
How satisfied have you been with the service you received?	not at all						extremely

Please answer the following questions in relation to the **PUPIL.** *Please select the following areas the resource impacted upon.*	Yes	No
reducing incidents of negative behaviour?		
reducing exclusions?		
improving the pupil's confidence and self-esteem?		
improving the pupil's motivation?		
improving the pupil's listening and attention skills?		
improving the pupil's independent skills?		
improving the pupil's progress in learning?		
enabling the pupil to meet individual targets?		
improving the pupil's communication skills?		
improving the pupil's interaction/relationships with peers?		
enabling the pupil to access the curriculum?		
enabling the pupil to manage transitions?		

Please answer the following questions in relation to the **SCHOOL.** *Please select the following areas the resource impacted upon.*	Yes	No
staff's professional development in relation to additional needs?		
developing teaching strategies?		
improving overall provision for the pupil?		
improving consistency in relation to systems and routines for pupil?		
improving consistency amongst adults in relation to management of pupil?		
improving resources to support learning?		
increasing staff capacity to plan/differentiate learning for the pupil?		
Increasing staff capacity to plan future interventions for the pupil?		
developing staff's understanding of pupil's levels and next steps in learning?		
providing information for parents?		
providing information for other agencies?		
enabling staff to apply strategies and resources across the school?		

How do you feel the service could be improved?

What factors do you feel supported or hindered the intervention?

Any further comments…

Thank you for taking time to complete this form.

Nominal Group Technique Results

Outreach interventions are most effective when...

Factors	Score	Percentage
Attitudes	42	31%
Consistency	26	19%
Communication	26	19%
Leadership	20	15%
Knowledge and skills	14	10%
Resources	7	5%

Factors	Comments
Attitudes	• The Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant embrace the support offered. • Staff take on board suggestions and use ideas offered by the outreach team. • Staff want to learn and try out new strategies. • Staff are happy to revisit strategies that have been tried previously. • Mainstream staff are receptive to the advice offered to them. • The best interests of the pupil remain at the forefront of decision making. • Staff interact positively with the pupil. • Staff demonstrate confidence in the suggestions that are made. • Staff are enthusiastic about engaging with the support.
Consistency	• The outreach team has a consistent member of staff to work with/liaise with on each visit. • There is a consistent member of staff to work with the pupil and follow up recommendations. • Strategies for support are used consistently by all staff involved with the pupil. • Recommendations are rehearsed and practised consistently with the pupil between visits. • Recommendations are delivered as advised by the outreach team. • There is designated time each week for a member of staff to work with the pupil on recommendations made by the outreach team. • Teachers and TAs use weekly intervention timetables to plan in time to work on targets. • The pupil is not on a reduced timetable. • The pupil's attendance is good. • Visits happen regularly and appointments are kept.
Communication	• The receiving school works in partnership with the outreach service to identify and agree outcomes and targets for the intervention. • Support has been agreed and communicated to all staff.

	• All staff supporting the pupil are clear about the role of the outreach provider. • There is a match between the aims of the outreach provider and the receiving school. • There are opportunities to discuss recommendations with all staff working with the pupil. • The SENCo is available to meet with outreach staff. • Class Teachers and SENCos drive the interventions between outreach visits. • Staff, including Class Teachers, are released from class in order to attend meetings and discuss the needs of the pupil. • Staff are released promptly to meet with outreach staff in order to maximise time available. • Any concerns voiced by the mainstream school are raised and dealt with straight away. • Referral paperwork is detailed, identifying the strengths and needs of the pupil and the impact of interventions tried so far. • There is good communication between all staff/parties involved with the pupil. • Recommendations are communicated to all staff supporting the pupil. • Interventions are understood by staff and delivered correctly. • The pupil is prompted to apply learning from interventions back in class. • There is a good response to communication between the school and the outreach service e.g. email, telephone messages etc. • The progress of the pupil and outcomes from the intervention are communicated to parents. • Time is allocated to review progress with staff on a regular basis.
Leadership	• The SENCo and Class Teacher are committed to the targets that have been set. • The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team show interest in the intervention. • The SENCo or senior leadership team support the delivery of the intervention to ensure recommendations are carried out. • There are robust systems in place to monitor the progress of pupils during the intervention and at the end.
Knowledge and skills	• Staff are knowledgeable and experienced. • Staff are experienced in working with pupils with special educational needs. • Staff provide quality, differentiated learning activities outside the intervention. • Staff carry out interventions confidently. • The Class Teacher takes responsibility for pupil's learning

	through planning and assessment.
	• Class teachers build in opportunities to work with the pupil.
	• Staff understand the specific needs/condition of the pupil and how it affects their learning.
	• Staff are able to set targets that are specific, measurable, achievable and realistic within the time frame.
	• Staff have realistic expectations of what the pupil can achieve; neither too high nor too low.
	• Mainstream staff are flexible when strategies need adjustment.
	• Staff understand that poor behaviour has a communicative function and manage behaviour positively.
Resources	• There are adequate resources within the school to support the intervention.
	• Resources are prepared and readily available between visits.
	• The mainstream school allocates time to making and preparing resources.

Outreach interventions are less effective when...

Factors	Score	Percentage
Consistency	47	35%
Communication	36	27%
Attitudes	32	24%
Provision and resources	14	10%
Knowledge and skills	6	4%

Factors	Comments
Consistency	• There is no consistent member of staff to work with the pupil in school.
	• There is no consistent member of staff to work with/liaise with the outreach team.
	• The pupil is on a reduced timetable.
	• The Teaching Assistant does not have designated time to follow up on recommendations made by the outreach team.
	• Strategies are not used consistently by all staff supporting the pupil in school.
	• Recommendations are not delivered as intended.
	• Appointments are cancelled.
	• Pupil attendance is poor.
	• There are a number of different staff working with the pupil.
Communication	• The Class Teacher is not able to be released to consult with outreach staff.
	• Staff are not released promptly to meet with outreach staff, reducing time available.
	• Ideas and strategies recommended by outreach are not cascaded within the school.

	- Recommendations are not communicated to all staff supporting the pupil. - There is limited communication between all staff involved with the pupil e.g. between Class Teacher and TA or between Class Teacher and SENCo. - There is limited time to speak with lead staff e.g. SENCo. - It is difficult to make contact with schools e.g. by telephone. - Parents are not informed about the progress and outcomes of outreach support.
Attitudes	- Staff are reluctant to trying new strategies. - Staff are reluctant to revisiting strategies previously tried. - Staff are reluctant to take on board advice. - Staff have low expectations of what the pupil can achieve.
Provision and resources	- Schools are not able to allocate the time needed to prepare and deliver the intervention. - There is no adult assigned to work with the pupil between visits. - The school lacks resources to support the intervention. - Insufficient time is given to making and preparing resources.
Knowledge and Skills	- Staff lack confidence in working with pupils with SEN. - Staff lack knowledge of the needs of pupils with SEN. - The targets set are not achievable within the time frame. - Targets are either too challenging or not aspirational. - The expectations of staff do not match what the pupil can achieve. - The pupil does not receive differentiated learning across the week, both in class and out of class.