

Targeted Services

LST Schools Consultation Spring 2016

May 2016



The Voice Project is a consultation and Engagement service that offers its services across the whole of Families First. Our aim is to ensure the voices of children, young people and families are embedded in Staffordshire's approach to planning, design, delivery and evaluation of services.

Background

The Voice Project agreed a consultation framework with the LST management team at the start of 2016. Following the success of the school LST consultation pilot in autumn 2015 this has been included in the framework. This consultation is now open to all LST districts; the districts have been split into the school terms meaning all districts will have a consultation session within the year. This term we have covered South Staffs and Moorlands in the last 2 months.

During this 2 week consultation we meet with 16 young people aged between 8 & 16 years old. We visited 8 schools including, primary, middle and secondary, some of which are academies.

The aim of this consultation was to gain feedback from young people whose cases were closed following support from the Local Support Teams in South Staffs and Moorlands.

Methodology

The service leads in South Staffs and Moorlands were sent out a report showing all cases closed in the last 2 months in their area. They were given two dates in which a Voice Project member of staff would be available in their area for interview. They then booked appointments directly with the schools for Voice Project staff to undertake. It was done this way as it is felt the locality teams have the relationship with the schools.

These appointments were then passed to the Voice Project team to undertake direct consultation work with young people.

At the informal sessions young people were all asked the same set of questions, notes were taken by Voice Project staff. After all the interviews the Voice Project staff inputted information gathered into a table.

Findings Snapshot ▼

What we do well

- They talked to me and involved my mum in the work we did.
- It was nice to have someone to talk to outside of the family.
- Nice to have the support whilst waiting for CAMHS.
- Having someone to talk to who treats you like an adult.
- Helped with my feelings.
- Helped me be more confident.
- Talked to teachers for me to help me get more support.
- She was very kind and happy.

What we could do better

- Support in place earlier would have been better.
- Explain why I was having these feelings more.
- Have the support for a bit longer.
- Had a number of support workers, so could not build up a relationship.
- Advice given did not help.
- Work with whole family as it affected them too.
- School did not know what was going with LST support.

Feedback Summary ▼

Things that we did well...

Young people spoken to in first and primary education were very positive about the support they had received from their LST and worker. They enjoyed the group work they took part in and the work that was done with them.

Although the cases were closed they were told they could ask to see their LST worker again if they felt they needed more support or things started to become unsettled again.

Some young people liked having someone outside the family to talk to who could give them support and answer questions, this made them feel listened to and happier.

Things could have been better if...

The project visited 5 secondary schools, the feedback from here is not as positive as the first and middle schools. Young people felt the advice and support given did not

help improve their situation, or the support came in too late. One young person felt her parents were not involved in the work and support which they believed would have helped, were as another felt that their views were not sought before meeting with everyone.

Overall the young people in secondary did not feel they built such a strong relationship with the LST worker, they were nice but not that helpful to their situation they were called in to support with.

I would change...

Having support earlier on than offered, as may have been easier to sort out before it became too big.

The information given was not very relevant to specific situations, so felt it was not very helpful.

Communication between LST, young person and school could be better, some appointments had been missed, workers changed without discussion with young people. A few were unaware the LST involvement has finished and wondered why they hadn't seen them for a while.

What's changed at school and for the family...

Many commented on how things had improved at home, their parents were happier and not so stressed which made things calmer.

Some explained that due to the work and advice they have been given they controlled their anger more and used ways they had been taught to work through their feelings before they became too much.

A few felt nothing had changed for them, these were generally older in age and attending the secondary schools we visited.

If you needed advice or support where would you go...

Teachers and support staff are a popular link for information for all ages of young people. They feel safe talking to them and they see them daily so have many opportunities to request information or support.

Parents are another place young people will go for help, advice and support, this also included other family members like grandparents and older siblings.

A member of the Voice Project team went out to visit teams in the localities taking part in this consultation to give them general feedback from the school visits and get their views on the responses.

- Things that went well....

The team were really pleased to hear the positive feedback received from the young people and felt it was nice to hear, they strive to have a “family approach” the support they give.

- Things that could have been better...

Schools to refer earlier where possible so they can work with the child and family before it reaches a crisis point, doing this may mean it does not escalate. They do not have referrals from families themselves, are they aware they can self-refer? Could posters be made advertising how to self-refer?.

Staff absence and long term sick does mean workers are changed at last minute or meeting cancelled, this is out of the team’s control.

Waiting lists for CAMHS support makes staff feel they are “babysitting” when specialist support is needed. Gaps in services, hardly any voluntary service to refer to and target support with large waiting list.

- In general the younger children spoken to were happier with the support and felt it helped them, but the secondary school age did not feel as supported or feel the support met their needs as much.

Feel we do not have the capacity to do what we consider to be a good job, seem to spend more time gathering data to justify the work load.

Teenagers are harder to engage with in general, we sometimes feel the school thinks we have a “magic wand” and we can fix everything quickly which is not the case and may not be in the time scales they want. Do they know they can refer themselves? They may want to engage more if they feel they are in control of the referral?.

Secondary schools are harder to engage with, we find it hard to get into the schools to work with them unlike primary and middle.

Schools do not have a clear understanding of what LST service offer, so unrealistic expectations. Mental Health issues seem to be prominent in the secondary schools which can mean specialist support is needed.

- Clear action plans to be written for all young people working with the LST which can be shared with others who are supporting the plan and work with the young person and family. (*same as Autumn 2015*)
- Communication mechanisms to be reviewed between the school, parents/young people and LST workers. (*same as Autumn 2015*)
- LST workers to be trained on a range of methods to use with young people and their families, this will mean young people who are referred back to the service will not have to do the same work twice. This also gives varied methods to use as not all young people are the same and have different learning styles. (*same as autumn 2015*)
- To look at promotion of self-referral for young people and parents/carers.
- To give LST leads 3 week window to book appointments; this should mean more appointments booked leading to more feedback.
- To give the LST coordinators a more structure request for certain young people so we get more of a mixture of age, sex and areas.
- To exclude young people who worked with LST only for attendance as they do not have much feedback to give as only maybe a couple of sessions. (*agreed by Sue Coleman 15.4.16*)