

COTTINGHAM CHURCHES TOGETHER PUPIL AND FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2010 – JUNE 2011

The third year of the pilot scheme at Cottingham High School has been a varied and challenging year as Andrea seeks to find her way in the job. This year has also seen changes within the school with the appointment of a new Head Teacher and the change to the pastoral system as it moved from year groups to Houses and from year form groups to multi-year form groups.

This report covers the work that Andrea has been involved with over the past year including support work, group work and other work she has undertaken. It overlaps slightly with last years report starting from when Andrea was first in post at the beginning of June 2010, several weeks before Merry left.

SUPPORT WORK

The vast majority of the work this year has been support work, continuing where Merry left off, working with students and parents on a one to one basis. As in previous years, the support for students' or parent's may be as a result of difficulties at home or at school, bereavement or for a number of other reasons. In some cases I have consulted with other professionals or colleagues who may be involved with that particular person or family.

REFERRAL DATA

Referrals for the support work can come from anywhere though most often they are through the school's pastoral team with the majority coming from the pastoral assistants. It is encouraging to see that a couple of students, over the year, have referred themselves. The table below outlines this in more detail.

	June – Aug (2 nd half of Summer term)	Sept – Dec (Autumn Term)	Jan – Apr (Spring Term)	May – June (1 st half of Summer term)
Number of referrals received	11	27	21	4
Number of cases handed over	10	-	-	-

Referral source:				
Pastoral Manager	6	7	6	1
Pastoral Assistants	2	16	8	2
Directors of Learning	-	1	1	-
Teaching Staff	-	-	4	-
Teaching Assistants	-	2	3	-
Parent	1	-	-	-
Self	1	-	1	1
Connexions	-	-	3	-
Attendance Officer	1	-	-	-
Parent Support Advisor	-	1	-	-

Number offered initial appointment	6 ¹	26 ²	21 ³	4
Number accessing on-going support	4	24	18	3

¹ Three students were accessing better support elsewhere; one student declined further support; two other referrals were referred to a colleague

² One student did not require any further support, whilst two others declined further support

³ One student declined further support; one was already accessing support from another member of staff who was better placed to support the student; one student failed to come to the follow up appointment

The low number of referrals for May – June were as a result of the May half term being relatively short. There has also been a trend in previous years for the number of referrals to drop off during the latter half of the academic as the year 11's start and finish their exams and school gradually starts to wind down.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THOSE ACCESSING ON-GOING SUPPORT

Throughout the year I have worked with all year groups with the majority of young people coming from the Key Stage 3 (KS3) cohort (school years 7, 8 and 9). This is slightly different to last year and the year before where the work seemed to be mainly with Key Stage 4 (KS4) students (year's 10 and 11). The large numbers of KS3 students accessing support could be due to the self esteem group work that was run in the autumn term which drew from these year groups.

Work has also been done with student from year 12 and 13. This came about through offering and delivering stress management sessions. At the beginning of the year there was a pretty even split between the work with students from Hull and the East Riding. As the year has gone on however, this has begun to lean more heavily towards students from Hull. This however was what was expected by the school when the pilot initially began several years ago.

	June - Aug	Sept - Dec	Jan - Apr	May - June
Number brought forward from last reporting period	4	11	27	21
Total number accessing on-going support	22	36	36	26

Male	2	12	17	14
Female	20	24	19	12

Year 7	5	9	6	5
Year 8	1	9	8	8
Year 9	5	3	4	3
Year 10	4	2	5	4
Year 11	2	1	9	3
Year 12	-	-	-	1
Year 13	-	-	-	1
Parent/Family Member	5	3	4	1

Resides in Hull	11	27	25	18
Resides in East Riding	11	9	11	8

ON-GOING SUPPORT DATA

As was stated earlier, the majority of the work has been one-to-one support of students within the school. One-to-one support of parents has also taken place, some of this via telephone conversations. Meetings with parents that took place were, in virtually all cases, held outside of school, usually at a café, though in some instances at their home. The table below shows this in more detail.

	June - Aug	Sept - Dec	Jan - Apr	May - June
Number of support sessions attended	47	77	105	34
Of which:				
One-to-one work in school	35	64	89	33
One-to-one work outside of school	4	2	4	-
Telephone support	7	3	9	1
Joint family/joint pupil sessions	1	6	2	-
Multi-agency meeting/sessions with other professionals	-	2	1	-

The support work this year has covered a variety of issues. Several young people have been referred to me for bereavement support whilst others just want someone to off load to. A lot of work has been with students with anger problems. Some of these are keen to get on top of their anger whilst others need the constant reminder of the consequences angry outbursts can have not only on others but more specifically on themselves. Other work with students has been around stress management and time management, general behaviour issues, self confidence and family problems.

CLOSURES

As with previous years, the majority of closures have been as a result of work being completed. It is reassuring to see that out of the 50 referrals received this year only three dropped out or stopped attending sessions. The table below shows this in more detail.

	June - Aug	Sept - Dec	Jan - Apr	May - June
Closed – work completed	4	2	11	1
Closed – declined further support	3	3	-	-
Closed – dropped out/stopped attending sessions	1	1	1	-
Closed – left school	3	-	-	2
Closed – referred to another professional/member of staff	2	5	2	1
Support continuing into next reporting period	9	17	22	22

Of the 22 students/family members who are accessing support at the time of writing, some will be closed at the end of the academic year as they will be leaving the school. These are unable to be finalised at the present time due to continuation of current support until this happens.

PARTICIPANTS QUESTIONNAIRE

As with previous years the participants questionnaire has been used to evaluate what students think of the support they have received (see appendix). The questionnaire was given to those who had accessed a sufficient amount of support to make the questionnaire meaningful. Over the course of the year, 4 questionnaires were given out to students.

The feedback from students was extremely encouraging. All students identified the support as either useful or really useful. When asked specifically what was helpful about the support Andrea offered, the following responses were given:

- It made me have more self confidence
- It was good having someone to listen to me and understand how I am feeling
- I've got better with my relationship with my Nana and Grandad
- She has given me ideas to keep calm

Not one of the students had suggestions for improvement of the support offered.

When asked what the main impact of the support they had had was, they responded:

- It gave me more confidence and I felt a whole lot better in myself
- I am a lot more confident
- Better relationships
- It has helped me with my courage and keep me calm with my mum

Students were also asked to measure the impact of any changes as a result of the support from Andrea. All students identified that they felt more confident. Improvement in behaviour was not applicable to some and for others they didn't notice any impact. Virtually all felt they were coping better with difficult situations and dealing with difficult feelings better. With regard to things improving at home, two felt there was no change whilst the others felt there was improvement. All students felt that things had improved at school.

An opportunity was provided for students to add any other comments. Of the four that were given the questionnaire only one chose to do this stating, *'Andrea has been very helpful and I thank her for all her help.'*

STAFF FEEDBACK

In previous years, Merry had used a staff feedback form to assess the impact of the work from a staff member's perspective. This was not used this year but it will be used again in the coming year so as to fully understand the impact of the work on the wider school community.

However, feedback was sought from staff for a few students. Some of this is below:

- '[Name] has improved of late and is showing more maturity and commitment to drama work and group activity. He has taken direction, correction and instruction in a more calm and polite manner and shown enthusiasm for the drama work.'
- '[Name] has been much better these recent few weeks but he is still easily distracted by another in science and can be still a bit rude when challenged.'
- 'I had a PE cover yesterday and had the delight of taking all pupils who didn't have PE kits. Of the pupils who were in the classroom, [Name] behaved really well which was no easy task considering the other participants!!!'
- '[Name] behaviour has been much improved of late. He is far more reasonable when having to be disciplined and responds much better to sanctions now than he has been.'
- 'I can confirm that [name] has been a lot better in lessons recently. He has been very engaged with the topic we are doing (the Holocaust) and has been giving good verbal answers as well as writing more. Whatever you are doing, do it more!'

IMPACT OF THE WORK

1. *Anger management work with a student who was both being bullied and bullying*

Work was done with a student over a period of 9 months or so around issues of bullying. This young person was bullying another pupil as well as being bullied themselves and was also lashing out at others. Regular meetings were set up initially where particular behaviours were challenged and alternative ways of managing particular situations were looked at. Feedback from the pastoral team was regularly sought to understand the situations the student was involved in more comprehensively.

Over the 9 months, the regularity of meetings decreased as the student grew in her confidence to handle certain situations appropriately and felt that she no longer needed as much support. Feedback from the pastoral team confirmed that the student's way of dealing with particular situations had improved and that she was dealing with difficult situations appropriately.

The sessions ended soon after this feedback was received and the student filled in a participants questionnaire to which they responded to the question 'What has been the main impact of the support you have had?' by saying, *"It gave me confidence and I felt a whole lot better in myself."*

2. *Stress management with a year 11 student*

A year 11 student was referred by a colleague who had seen them quite upset. In the initial conversation the young person shared the different stresses he was experiencing at home, at school and also socially. Coursework deadlines were looming for a number of subjects and this, compounded with the struggles at home became too much to the point where the young person was ignoring everything.

During the sessions, over the following few weeks, the young person was encouraged to look at ways of managing the different stresses and planning his time. Space was also given to enable the student to get things off his chest. When looking at the different stresses, particular subjects were highlighted and conversations with relevant members of staff were had, with the student's permission, to find a way forward that would work for both the student and the school. These were then put in place enabling the student to manage the other stressful elements of his life more effectively.

3. *Stress Management with a year 13 student*

A young person was referred to me by the pastoral assistant for the 6th form through the offer of running a 4 week course in stress management. This student was nearing her final exams and was struggling with the pressure she was under both in terms of her school work as well as family and other outside pressures.

We met several times over the course of several weeks and discussed ways of managing the exam stresses (like study timetables, prioritising, reviewing what had been learnt etc) as well as creating space for her to off load and speak to someone impartial about the other situations she was confronting. Upon the completion of the stress management material I offered her general support should she wish it and also asked if she would be happy to evaluate it. She agreed and her response to the question 'What has been helpful about the support Andrea has offered?' was *"It's helped me to be able to relax and cope with my issues more. It's also provided me with someone to talk to if I need to get something off my chest about the issues in my life."* To the question 'What has been the main impact of the support you have received from Andrea?' she responded *"[I] can relax and concentrate on revising for my exams."* The feedback from this student, despite the short period of support, was incredibly positive and a great encouragement to the work taking place generally.

GROUP WORK

In last year's report it was stated that one of the areas for development would be to run a group work programme including an anger management course and a self esteem course. Whilst the anger management course hasn't been run, as much of this work has been done in the one-to-one sessions, a self esteem course was run in the latter half of the autumn term and into the spring term.

The group consisted of 9 young people from years 7 to 9 and was a mix of both boys and girls. It was an 8 week programme which has been run in other schools (Longcroft School and Beverley High School) though this was usually in single sex groups. Despite this, the group worked really well and the feedback received from students at the end of the course was positive.

Number of referrals received	9
Number attending programme	9
Of which:	
Male	4
Female	5
Hull	6
East Riding	3
Year 7	5
Year 8	3
Year 9	1

At the end of the course, I asked students to complete an evaluation form. 8 were completed as one student was not in attendance on the last day. Of those received, the majority found the course either useful or very useful and all enjoyed the course. When asked to name which two things they enjoyed the most, the following responses were received:

- ❖ 'Meeting people' and 'keeping my confidence'
- ❖ 'Everything' and 'everything'
- ❖ 'You got to meet new people' and 'new understandings'
- ❖ 'Everything. I can't make my choice.'
- ❖ Fun
- ❖ 'Role play' and 'the fun stuff'
- ❖ 'All of it'
- ❖ 'Learning' and 'the fun'

When asked to name two things they disliked about the course, most commented 'Nothing' whilst a couple fed back, 'Missing fun lessons' and one 'the writing'. Students were also asked if they had any suggestions for improving the course and again, most either wrote nothing or commented 'nothing'. A few did make use of the opportunity to comment saying, 'more year 9's', 'more role play' and 'a few more people'.

Unfortunately this was the only group work session to run this year. A stress management group was set up for year 11's just prior to the beginning of their final exams. However, due to confusion over the referral process of students for these sessions, as well as the lateness of their start in the academic year, they had to be cancelled for this group of students.

CHRISTIAN CLUB

This was not run this year initially as a result of Andrea finding her feet within the school and the job and later because of word on the grapevine that some year 10 students had begun a Christian Union in the school. It was then felt that it was better to offer support for something that was already being run by the students than run another which could be seen as being in competition with it. Support was subsequently offered but was neither declined nor accepted and it is unclear as to whether the group is still running. It is hoped that something of this nature will be run in the forthcoming academic year so please watch this space!

OTHER WORK

1. Weekend Residential – Escape

Over the first weekend of the February half term, Cottingham Churches Together Schools Work Trust together with Open Spaces Cherry Burton and Hunsley Christian Youth Trust ran a residential at Carlton Lodge near Thirsk for young people from the different areas who had connections with the youth work and/or churches in those areas. Eight young people from Cottingham attended and despite the first hour being a bit awkward and the three different groups sticking closely to each other, the weekend was a roaring success. The initial awkwardness was very quickly overcome and new friendships made. Over the weekend time was given to look at our response to the environment and Fair-trade, as Christians (though not everyone who attended was a Christian), at both a micro and macro level. The young people were encouraged to think about the impact they have on the environment through the things they buy and the way they live. Saturday saw a wide game take place and despite the snow, everyone seemed to have a good time. A treasure hunt around Thirsk followed shortly after followed by a formal dinner and awards for the best dressed girl and boy. A video of the weekend is available on YouTube for those that are interested. The address is: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yv118A8WEHY>

2. Other

Other work that has taken place over the past year has included:

- ❖ Meeting with Mark Tiddy from South Hunsley Christian Youth Trust and Phil Simpson from Open Spaces Cherry Burton to plan the weekend residential as well as sharing good practice and resources
- ❖ Attending several area wide networking events where local youth workers have been present and opportunities for working together have initially been explored.
- ❖ Attending the Scripture Union staff and associates conference in both September (3 days) and May (2 days)
- ❖ Attending Rock Solid and finding out if there was any support, from the Christian angle, the young people would like
- ❖ Helping with the end of year behaviour trip which the school runs to reward students whose behaviour has been consistently good throughout the year.
- ❖ Working with the Extended Schools Co-ordinator, Alex Young, on some of the holiday activities she was running throughout the year, the highlight of which was helping a young person decorate 6 cupcakes with an Easter theme!
- ❖ Being a part of the week long Maths Summer school that the Head of Maths, Mr Bird, ran in July 2010.

- ❖ Attendance at the Dove House Hospice Bereavement Training – a one day training course designed for those working in the school environment on how to support a student who has been recently bereaved. The training also looked at the need for bereavement policies.
- ❖ In school Child Protection training.

THE YEAR AHEAD

Whilst much of the general day-to-day work will continue, areas for development include:

- ❖ Re-launching the Christian Club, though possibly rebranded under the name 'Emerge' which is used in the Beverley secondary schools
- ❖ Linking in with the RE department and offering to deliver lessons that have already been delivered by Phil Simpson (from Beverley Schools Christian Trust) in Beverley Grammar School
- ❖ Developing the group work further namely in the areas of Stress Management, Anger Management and Self esteem.

This year has been an exciting and challenging year as I have sought to fill the gap that Merry left. Whilst I recognise that this is impossible as we are two very different people, the impact of the work of Cottingham Churches Together Schools Work Trust has continued, albeit slightly differently.

I am coping better with difficult situations

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4		5

I can deal with difficult feelings better

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4		5

Things have improved at home

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4		5

Things have improved at school

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
0	1	2	3	4		5

7. What other comments do you wish to make?

8. Finally, are you (please circle):

In year 7-9

In year 10-13

A parent/family member of a pupil

Thank you for taking time to complete this. Please return to Andrea in KS4 Office.