

The Manchester College

HMPYOI Hindley

Developing a Behaviour Management Training Programme for Staff



Our organisation

HMPYOI Hindley is a closed Young Offenders Institution which can hold up to 440 young males between the ages of 15-18. The Manchester College holds the contract as the main provider of Learning and Skills.

There is Learning and Skills Manager, a Deputy, 3 Senior Team Leaders with responsibility for Functional Skills, Vocational Learning and Personal and Social Development.

A Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator manages 29 Learning support practitioners who work to support learners with a range of LDD needs.

85% of YP's who come to Hindley have not completed their secondary education.

40% have identified learning difficulties and or disabilities and 15% have a previous statement of special educational needs.

Around 1500 YP's pass through Hindley in any one year and the average length of stay is around 3 months, but YP's can be resident for up to 3 years.

A curriculum has been developed which includes Maths, English, ICT, Personal and Social Development courses including Citizenship, Healthy Living and creative Art. Vocational courses including Bricklaying, Fitted Interiors, Plastering, Painting & Decorating, Bench Joinery, Catering, Fork Lift Truck driving and Warehousing.

Our approach

It was identified that staff, who were coming into young people's establishments, had not received sufficient training in managing classroom behaviour and that there was no consistent approach to this in young people's establishments as a whole.

Following an extensive curriculum change at HMP/YOI Wetherby, a behaviour management training programme was developed for the newly appointed staff team. This was developed and delivered by the Offender Learning and Skills Service Manager and other members of the management team.

It was recognised by other management teams at other young people's establishments that this was not only a need at Wetherby with their new team, but at other establishments where inconsistencies in the approach to Behaviour Management and the differing rules, regulations and expectations of individual staff members, had led to confusion for the young people in knowing where boundaries lay in the classroom.

Where one teacher would allow learners to get away with something, others would not, leading to conflict between staff and learners and ultimately leading to disruption to learning for the majority of young people.

In addition to the needs of the staff within a young offender's institute, the main college asked the offender learning department to deliver the training to groups of staff from mainstream departments who were struggling to manage and motivate learners. The training was delivered to over 100 mainstream staff during a staff development week in June 2011.

The feedback from the staff attending this training was extremely positive.

It was of the utmost importance to the team developing the training that it was a positive learning experience for all attendees with as much practical, interactive exercises as possible, just as would be expected of a good lesson delivered to the young people.

The aims of the training were to allow teachers to take stock of current personal skills in relation to behaviour management, to explore together, effective methods of supporting student participation, to examine different methods of dealing with conflict and strategies for managing difficult students and lastly to explore some of the barriers to learning and the reasons why learners may exhibit challenging behaviour.

The training was an opportunity to share with colleagues some of the practical strategies developed in each individuals practice.

The training was written to be in three - one-hour (lunch and learn) sessions but could also be put together to become one 3-hour session.

The emphasis was very much on the teaching staff being the experts in the classroom, having the knowledge and expertise and sharing their experiences and practices, rather than telling staff how to manage behaviour. The aim was to allow everyone to find their best way of managing challenging behaviour, of finding what works for you and making use of lots of 'tools' rather than the belief that there is a simple answer.

The first exercise has to be co-delivered and requires someone who is willing to take part in some serious role playing and ideally who do not know the staff as they need to believe that the trainers are disorganised and ill prepared.

The exercise demonstrates the need to be properly prepared and to present the right attitude to learners in order to ensure they present the right attitude to you and to their learning.

The next five exercises further explore eight core principles which have been identified in order to maximise a respectful environment in the classroom, one in which all can thrive and learn.

Outcome and impact of the work

Behaviour in classrooms within the department has improved substantially, from a department where there were inconsistencies in the approach to classroom management leading to more conflict between staff and learners to a place where young people feel safe in the positive learning environment which has developed.

Staff feel supported and empowered to challenge disruptive or negative behaviour as they now have a 'tool box' of strategies which have been developed and tried out by colleagues. Staff who felt that there was little guidance about what to do when faced with a challenging young person; have stated that they feel that their needs have been listened to.

Another positive outcome has been the sharing of good practice between Offender Learning and colleagues from mainstream site in college. This has led to a greater understanding from both sides of the challenges faced in each segment and a wider sharing of resources both human and material across departments.

Success rates have improved for learners with 96% of learners raising their Literacy and numeracy ability by at least one level whilst in Hindley.

In a recent prison establishment survey learners stated that they felt most safe whilst in education.

Next steps and future plans

A whole establishment behaviour management policy has been devised with all departments in the prison working together to safeguard young people in Hindley. Following training which has been delivered to all staff the policy makes it clear to both young people and the staff what the expectations are and also what the consequences of not following the policy are.

The behaviour management training was developed by Lesley Littlewood and the management team from learning and skills at HMPYOI Wetherby and adapted by Mairi-Anne MacLeod at HMPYOI Hindley and Amanda Fletcher from The Manchester College Offender Learning directorate for delivery in Hindley and a mainstream setting.

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