

From anger to joint understanding

Background

This case study was completed in 2023 by a member of the South Tees Youth Justice Service (STYJS). Names have been changed.

'L' was 12 when he received support from the SYTJS on a Community Resolution programme. L had experienced several Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and had previous social care history. L's parent needed support to access services for their child such as their GP and CAMHS and was now receiving support.

L's parent had a positive relationship with the primary school and felt that she needed the same support from the secondary school. STYJS worked on repairing the relationship with the secondary school and managing L's parent's expectations. STYJS worked on sleep patterns, rules in the home and diet for L who was on the EHCP Pathway, and school adjusted support.

Team around the child and family

A mix of STYJS staff were involved to support L along with specialists from CAMHS.

What were the main reasons for L not attending school?

L said: *"Didn't like teachers, they were always shouting. The work was hard. You forget socks and you get detention."*

L's parent said: *"This school does not understand his needs. In primary school they spent time with him and took him out with one staff member. I was on the phone to the Head every day sometimes and we didn't get on at first but now we do coz she listens and put things in place. They knew how to deal with him, and I said for a long time I think he has ADHD."*

She felt that she was supported in primary school and the transition may not have met her expectations.

Can you tell me a bit about what happened to make it easier for you to attend more regularly?

L said: *"I like that doodle thing in (teacher's name) room. I like PE now coz I get changed in a different place."*

Did anyone like a teacher or anyone you know do anything to make it better?

"(Teacher's name) said I can go into a different class when I get angry or a different room."

L's parent said: *"Getting the support I need for him and started listening to me. Now we got CAMHS involved his needs actually might be met. He seems a lot more settled. The teachers take time out and talk to him more now and I think that has helped."*

Do you feel the school have listened now?

L's parent said: *"Yeah well he is on that pathway (referring to EHCP) now and CAMHS are involved so they had to listen."*

What has made the difference to the young person attending?

- ✓ Some choice for the young person – where they change, a place to go if angry
- ✓ More teachers listening and understanding L's needs
- ✓ Specialist support from CAMHS which also helped engage the school more

What's going well for you at the moment?

L said: *"Going to PE and going to some lessons and going kickboxing."*

L's parent said: *"I am really pleased with him going to school. He is trying hard to go now some days he still doesn't go but he goes most days now. He is coming home in time now and helps me in the house."*

How are you feeling now your attendance is good at school / college?

L said: *"I feel happier now."*

L's parent said: *"Much happier now he's settled in. He is better than last year I don't know if he likes the teachers more. Before when you mentioned school to him he just wouldn't bother with it. Now he doesn't mind it but still gets bored and walks around sometimes then gets into trouble."*

Do you feel different to before, when you were unable to attend school /college like you are doing now?

L said: *"I don't know. Before, I was feeling angry and didn't want to go. No I am not angry now."*

Do you feel different to before, when your child was unable to attend like they are now.

L's parent said: *"I feel less stressed – I used to dread each day he would ring me every day from the toilet and say the teachers are shouting at him and I have other to think about and it is a lot."*

What changes have you noticed in yourself since before?

L said: *"I don't know I have time outs. So I feel better, but I still hate (name of teacher), and she doesn't like me."*

L's parent said: *"He understands that when he gets upset, he can go somewhere so he is trying his best with his behaviour so that's better. The skill to remove himself is a big step for him but the school would not listen. I have been saying for ages, but they don't support you."*

How is L doing now?

L appears to have settled in at the secondary school and this took some time. He says he is not "angry" when he goes to school now. He is on the EHCP pathway, and L's parent has a more positive relationship with school.