



Queensmill School

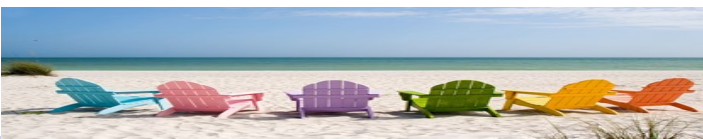
Research & Development Newsletter

Welcome and Update from the R&D Board

Welcome to the last edition of the R & D newsletter for this academic year. It has been a very busy year with projects led by school staff on sleep, assessment and the use of technology to support learning. Queensmill has also facilitated professional learning from staff and colleagues from other mainstream and specialist settings in SCERTS and PECS. Another focus for the year has been our work leading the Research and Development Board for the West London Teaching School Alliance. You can read more about some of the activities in this newsletter.

We would like to thank the members of the Board for their work and commitment this year, especially to our parent representative Gill Wilson who has been with the Board from its inception and provides invaluable input.

Have a good summer break.



Enjoy the newsletter!
Caroline Bulmer,
Research & Development Coordinator

West London Teaching School Alliance (WLTA)

Queensmill recently led a pilot project on identifying the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) with other schools in the WLTA.

What did we investigate?

Whether a newly devised pilot pupil referral form helped staff to 'articulate' more clearly why they might be concerned about a pupil.

The efficacy of using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) with these pupils to provide more accurate identification of need and for indicating ways forward for support for the pupil.

How did we do it?

Two primary schools agreed to work with two staff members in their schools. The staff members completed a referral form for four pupils they suspected had some form of SEMH difficulty. The SDQ was completed on the four pupils then feedback was provided on this process.

A member of staff from each school completed a SWOT analysis (that identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of the process with particular attention paid to efficacy of the referral form and the SDQ.

Findings to date

The summary of the SWOT analysis of the referral form showed a very positive response from all staff who completed the form. All staff agreed that they would like to continue using the form.

The SDQ scores for all pupils did show some cause for concern which supported the findings of the review paper (Humphrey and Wigglesworth, 2016) that teachers can and do make sound judgements about pupils they suspect of some form of SEMH and that only at this stage would the SDQ assessment be needed.

New Research Study - The Paediatric Autism Communication Trial – Generalised (PACT-G)

A previous Queensmill Speech and Language Therapist, Hannah Foote, is now involved in a research study. The study is researching whether implementation of PACT-G, which is a social communication therapy for children with autism, will help improve autism symptoms. This trial builds on the work of the original PACT study (2006-2009). Results from this trial showed that parents' ability to adapt their communication with their child had increased and in turn that their child initiated more communication with them. However, these improvements did not generalise to other settings or people. The new PACT-G builds on the original therapy approach – coaching caregivers, using video-feedback, to use strategies that facilitate communication development. This study has been extended to include home and school based intervention and both pre-school and primary aged children.

You can read more about the study here: <http://www.pact-g.org/>

Investigating the use of Standardised assessments at Queensmill

Emily Bennett, a teacher at Queensmill, is currently investigating how three standardised assessments might be used in school to inform teaching and learning and support our work with external professionals. Emily is specifically looking at:

- i. The British Picture Vocabulary Scales (BPVS) which helps to assess levels of vocabulary which is important for language development.
- ii. The Raven's Coloured Progressive Matrices (RCPM) which is an assessment of a pupil's non verbal ability
- iii. The Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales (VABS) which assesses skills in communication, daily living and socialisation.

The findings of the investigation will be reported in the next edition.

Do you have a baby 0-11 months old?

Does your baby have a sibling or parent with ADHD and/or autism?



The Studying Autism and ADHD Risk in Siblings (STAARS) project aims to learn more about the early development of babies with a family member with ADHD and/or autism.

We hope our studies will help to improve early detection and diagnosis of ADHD and autism.

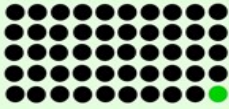
Travel costs to central London (WC1) are reimbursed and special arrangements are made for families who live further away.

Phone: 020 7079 0761 · Email: staars@bbk.ac.uk



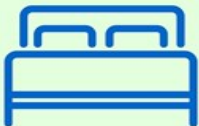
Research Autism to address the effects of stress for autistic people and their families

Stress in Autism



98% of autistic adults say that stress is a significant issue for them

95% of parents/carers say that stress has a high or very high effect on their autistic child's education or work



74% of autistic adults say that stress has a high or very high effect on their sleep

86% of autistic adults say that stress has a high or very high effect on their mental health



84%

84% of parents/carers say that stress has a high or very high effect on their child's relationships

98% of parents/carers say it is difficult or impossible to find effective support for their children



#BeatingStress



www.twitter.com/ResearchAutism

What is autism?

Autism is a term used to describe a difference in the way the brain deals with information, which can lead to difficulties in social communication and sensory processing.



What is stress?

Stress is the term used to describe the effects on the body and mind of external demands. In autism, the level of stress is much more severe, frequent, and difficult to manage.



People on the autism spectrum and their families face a range of difficulties in everyday life. Key external factors are misconceptions about autism, lack of understanding, and insufficient support.



www.researchautism.net
www.justgiving.com/researchautism

Research Autism has launched a campaign to address the issue of stress in autism. Autistic people and their families say stress is the biggest issue in their lives.

Despite wide recognition that autistic people may suffer stress, there is a lack of quality research into the nature of stress in autism and how to properly help and support those people affected. The results from their survey (see left) show clearly the need for more action.

Research Autism is organising an international Stress Summit in September, to listen to autistic people, their families, professionals, and leading scientists and researchers.



AET Framework

The Autism Education Trust (AET) schools autism progression framework is an assessment tool for pupils on the autism spectrum. It is designed to support staff in setting targets and measuring progress in areas which fall outside the national curriculum. These areas relate closely to priority areas for development for individuals with autism such as: safety, independence, listening and understanding and special interests.

The progression framework has been drawn up for the AET by Autism Associates (Suzanne Farrell, Ruth Fidler, Phil Christie, Linda Lyn-Cook). It is based on a literature review as well as consultation with a wide range of practitioners, parents and people on the autism spectrum. At Queensmill, this framework will be used to guide our curriculum and target setting for relevant subjects.

The framework can be downloaded here:

<http://www.aetraininghubs.org.uk/schools/pf/>

Priorities for Autism Research

The results of a year-long consultation on autism research priorities have been announced. This work was carried out by Autistica in partnership with the National Autistic Society, the Autism Alliance, Autism Research Trust and many other charities.

This project involved asking autistic adults, parents and professionals to decide their top 10 questions for autism research.



The results are shown to the right with 1 being the top priority identified.

The top priority is mental health research in autism.

The publication of these results will help in the development of a national strategy for autism research. This will also help to increase investment in autism research from national funders.

Autistica will now be concentrating on how to use the results of this survey to ensure autism research is focused on these areas.

Further details can be found at:
www.autistica.org.uk/top10

- 1 Which interventions improve mental health or reduce mental health problems in autistic people? How should mental health interventions be adapted for the needs of autistic people?
- 2 Which interventions are effective in the development of communication /language skills in autism?
- 3 What are the most effective ways to support /provide social care for autistic adults?
- 4 Which interventions reduce anxiety in autistic people?
- 5 Which environments/supports are most appropriate in terms of achieving the best education /life/social skills outcomes in autistic people?
- 6 How can parents and family members be supported/educated to care for and better understand an autistic relative?
- 7 How can autism diagnostic criteria be made more relevant for the adult population? And how do we ensure that autistic adults are appropriately diagnosed?
- 8 How can we encourage employers to apply person-centred interventions and support to help autistic people maximise their potential and performance in the workplace?
- 9 How can sensory processing in autism be better understood?
- 10 How should service delivery for autistic people be improved and adapted in order to meet their needs?

