



How Fordway Centre uses Fagus to understand pupils' social and emotional functioning, focus interventions and evidence progress

Summary

Fagus has helped Fordway Centre:

- Understand the origins behind their pupils' presenting behaviours.
- Develop a detailed assessment to understand their pupils' social and emotional delays.
- Create individual pupil plans and goals for social and emotional learning.
- Systematically review their pupils' social and emotional progress with hard data.
- Construct specific interventions to fill their pupils' skill gaps and aid learning.

Introduction

Fordway Centre is a Short Stay School (Pupil Referral Unit) based in Ashford, Surrey and supports pupils aged 4 to 11 years who have found it difficult to manage in a mainstream setting. Sam Dawson, in her role as SENCo and Key Stage 1 Teacher, has the responsibility for clarifying her pupils' needs to ensure effective learning, including addressing social and emotional difficulties.

Sam explains:

"For a number of years now I have been working with children who have difficulties accessing the academic curriculum. Often these difficulties are due to a significant delay in social and emotional development compared to their peers. Sometimes a child maybe 7 year's old 'on paper' but exhibit the behaviour of a toddler."

Why Fagus?

Sam describes how she uses Fagus to interpret, support and measure pupils' social and emotional well-being in her Key Stage 1 class.

"Fordway Centre use a bespoke measurement tool to quantify social and emotional functioning for our older children but for my Key Stage 1 class I needed something that was more granular. I had used Fagus in my previous setting and I knew that it mapped infant and early childhood social and emotional development in a detailed way and from this analysis we could understand our younger pupils' behaviour in relation to their actual developmental stage rather than their chronological age. By understanding our pupils' capabilities in self-awareness, self-management and social-awareness, we can personalise their social and emotional goals, deploy supporting interventions and assess progress against these targets."

How is Fagus Used

• Assessment of needs

Sam continues:

"We baseline our pupils' current level of social and emotional functioning by using the Fagus map of behaviours seen in typical development. Prior to completing our assessments we conduct careful observations and gather information from parents and other supporting professionals."

We have customised Fagus to suit our requirements. Instead of benchmarking our children against all 13 Fagus domains, we use five. We recognise that 'Language Development' and 'Cognitive Development' underpin all aspects of social and emotional functioning, but in our opinion the domains of 'Awareness and Understanding of Others', 'Coping', 'Self-Control', 'Moral Development' and 'Play' are the most relevant to Key Stage 1 children and the easiest to achieve the best developmental outcomes in the shortest amount of time – imperative when pupils are only with us for 7 weeks!



We copied the typical Early Childhood and Infant behavioural statements from each guide for all 5 domains into a spreadsheet.

We then record whether the child is displaying the behaviour (or not), this illustrates whether they are either demonstrating typical behaviours for their chronological age or whether they are functioning below their age range. The results also outline a pupil's current area of need all on one page and enable us to sensitively and swiftly develop 'a plan of attack' and provide a framework to evaluate and review progress."

• Creating plans

"Weekly we create 3 developmentally appropriate social and emotional goals for each pupil and align practical strategies to achieve these goals. We offer plenty of opportunities to develop the skills that may not be evident by scaffolding their experiences using coaching and modelling activities."

• Capturing progress

"We then review the targets and spreadsheet statements to see whether the pupil's original developmentally delayed behaviours are now starting to be seen, thus demonstrating a positive change in their behaviour and evidencing the success of the intervention. From these outcomes we can measure and report any positive behavioural changes in percentage terms across different time periods and record progress in a quantitative and analytical way."

Conclusion

Sam sums up:

"Fagus has created a shared language for our children's social and emotional difficulties and helped us reflect on the underlying reason for some behaviours. We look at social and emotional development in a more nuanced way and can now firmly pinpoint our pupils' social and emotional shortfalls, underpinned by science. From this starting point we set personal developmentally appropriate goals, craft the right interventions and measure progress systematically."

Fagus has been seen by other settings in the cluster and they can see that it fills a gap especially when understanding and measuring early years social and emotional functioning and evidencing progress. We hope that the resource will be used by many more settings as it has made such a difference to the way we see our children and enabled us to celebrate their successes and improve their school experiences."

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