

NORTHUMBERLAND

C O U N T Y C O U N C I L

Behaviour Support Service
Schools and Family Support Division, Children's Services Directorate
Northumberland County Council, Hepscott Park, Morpeth, Northumberland,
NE61 6NF

Re: Neurological Developmental Delay Research Programme

01.10.2008

Participant schools –

Ashington Central First School – 80 pupils – year 3 - one group NDD programme, one groups Activate – mixed ability in each group

Choppington First School - All Year 1,2,3 and 4 pupils

Red Row First School – (58 pupils) All Reception, Year 1,2 and 3 pupils

The Grove Special School – 28 pupils aged 5 -17

I moderated the exercise testing and the exercise programme in all participant First Schools and the Special School.

All staff have been trained as INPP Practitioners by Peter and Sally Blythe. Some explanation was offered to pupils “These exercises will help our bodies work with our brains,” “These exercises only work if you keep your brain quiet” and “This is going to make it easier for you to read and think for longer”.

Three schools exercise in the morning, one in the afternoon. Most exercise every day of the week. I observed;

All pupils were welcomed into their exercise area. The leading adults commented on appropriate pupil behaviour. One school played classical music, another played the metronome. All pupils calmly found a space without talking. Some pupils did the finger exercises as they entered.

All exercises are deliberately slow with the leading adults using calm soothing voices with lots of encouragement. Some adults circulated to adjust posture and position; two schools used pupil helpers to circulate and help peers. All helpers were responsible and careful.

All leading staff have commented on some initial difficulty in engaging other staff, yet suggested support grew as participant pupils were carrying through the sessions quietly and

were, in general, calmer. I also observed some pupils playing the finger exercise game independently.

There were five pupils in the INPP exercise group already following School Action Plus, four of which also had referrals to the Behaviour Support Service.

One pupil in the Activate Group (comparison programme) was School Action+ (SA+) with a Behavioural Support Service referral. All are still SA+ and have completed their BSS programme of work. Both classes followed the same curriculum in every respect other than the exercise programmes. The INPP exercises were taught by an NQT, Activate by an experienced teacher.

Statistical results appear to show

- there is a correlation between behaviour and retention of infant reflexes
- there is a reduced level of retained reflex scores between 1st and 2nd assessment in the 3-6 age group
- there is a reduced level of balance error scores between 1st and 2nd assessments in the 3-6 age group
- there was a reduction in reflex retention between 1st and 2nd assessment in the 3-6 age group
- there is a greater reduction in reflex scores between 1st and 2nd assessment in the INPP group than the Activate (comparison) group
- there is a greater reduced level of balance error scores between 1st and 2nd assessment in the INPP group than the Activate group
- the INPP group were assessed with higher level of reflex retention at the outset than the Activate group in the 1st assessment and have therefore made greater overall progress
- the INPP group were assessed with lower level of reflex retention than the Activate group in the 2nd assessment

Please note – both the Activate group and the INPP group showed development through the year - this study intends no comment on the Activate exercise programme.

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