

SMSA Training

Case Study

Everyone at St Johns Primary school, Midsomer Norton was concerned about lunchtime. It felt rushed and busy, loud and noisy. In order to create a more restaurant like feel it was decided to re-launch lunchtime. Flight trays were replaced with plates and bowls, cloths were put on tables, music was played and the whole eating area was renamed, “The Purple Planet” (a name that was nominated by a pupil). Most important of all, it was decided to recruit a team of ‘Happy Lunchtime Helpers’ to assist the lunchtime supervisors. These helpers had to apply for the job and were interviewed. The successful applicants then completed a training programme along with the supervisors to make sure everyone knew what they were doing. The helpers received special aprons and were given privileges for undertaking their lunchtime duty. An outline of the training programme is provided below.

Lunchtime supervisor and pupil helper training

Aim:

To create a positive dining hall experience for pupils and staff:

- Ensure mutual understanding of role of supervisors and new pupil helpers.
- Foster team spirit.
- Raise self esteem and status of supervisors and new pupil helpers.
- Identify current challenges for supervisors.
- Identify solutions.

Session 1 (60 minutes)

Equipment required.

Chairs in circle.

Puppet/soft toy with which pupils identify.

Flip chart, stand and marker pen.

Welcome, introductions, congratulations, ice breaker (10 minutes)

Welcome everyone, congratulate on new role, explain plan for session.

Ask everyone to find a partner, introduce themselves and find out the following 3 things about their partner (encourage pupil/supervisor pairings)!

My favourite food.

My favourite drink.

My favourite television programme.

Now ask partners to introduce one another to the rest of the group.

My worst lunch time (10 minutes)

Participants are introduced to a puppet who is very unhappy following dinner time in the hall - can they think of reasons why s/he might be unhappy? Volunteer to write up ideas on flip chart. e.g. not sitting with anyone, being shouted out, not liking food, being bullied, dropping plate/cutlery, not being able to cut food, open packet etc.

Best lunchtime ...all the time (20 minutes)

Divide group into smaller working parties comprising a mix of supervisors and pupil helpers.

Allocate each group 2-3 items from the "worst lunchtime" list generated earlier.

Ask the group to consider the following questions:

- 1) How could an SMSA make sure this doesn't happen?
- 2) How could a pupil helper make sure this doesn't happen?

e.g. Sit with loners, open packets, help cut food, fetch cutlery, agreeing and displaying rules about behaviour, sanctions

Action plan (15 minutes)

Get feedback from each group on ideas.

Can the Supervisors and pupil helpers agree who should be responsible for what?

Agree:

- Any research/action that needs to take place before next session and who will undertake it:
- Talking to classes about agreeing rules for lunchtime.
- Assembly presentations about new ways of doing thing.



- Lessons about table manners.
- Privileges for good lunch behaviour.
- Talking to head about discipline policy.
- Responses to problems identified.
- Agenda for next session.

Supervisors – reflection/discussion/comment (5 minutes)

Ask pupils to leave and supervisors to remain. Invite supervisors to share thoughts on session and reminisce about their own experience of lunchtime when they were at school. What would be most useful for them in second session?

Session 2 (60 minutes)

This session will very much depend on the outcomes of session 1, however it should include an opportunity for everyone to role play their part and ensure they know what they are doing when the service goes “live”. Things to include:

- What time to report for duty?
- Where aprons etc will be kept?
- Where to stand/which sections of room someone is responsible for?
- Where to collect and dispose of plates/cutlery?
- How pupils/helpers will indicate if they need help?
- What happens if something gets spilt or dropped, or someone is sick?

Supervisors may also appreciate some input on behaviour management and a review of incentives and sanctions used in the school. You may prefer to deliver this as a separate session or, better still, invite them to a whole school behaviour management training day.

For further information on these issues see suggested links.

Suggested links/resources

‘Turn Your School Round: Circle-time Approach to the Development of Self-esteem and Positive Behaviour in the Primary Staffroom, Classroom and Playground’.

Jenny Mosley www.circle-time.co.uk

