

BEST PRACTICE – MULTIPLE SCHOOL / LEAs

PASS has a wide and varied range of applications. In view of this, it is neither possible nor appropriate to give definitive guidance on its application in all circumstances. However PASS has been designed so that the profiles produced are readily understandable by professionals who work with children.

When using PASS with individual pupils, it is essential that it is not used in isolation from all the information that a school, teacher, psychologist or mentor will have about that pupil. A PASS profile on its own should not be used to determine actions without taking account of other information that will be available about that pupil.

Considering the PASS profile overall will provide valuable assistance to professionals in selecting areas to target, and in deciding support methods and interventions. PASS will also provide a baseline for evaluating the effectiveness of interventions for those aspects of children's development which were previously only subject to qualitative perceptions.

Only a sample of case studies are presented within this section. These are intended to provide the user with a guide to the possible applications of PASS. We will enlarge and update this section in time as more schools and LEAs submit their own examples to our web site.

Please note that these sample suggestions are in respect of these case studies only and should not be generalised. Profiles for your pupils need to be interpreted in your school/professional context and on the basis of your knowledge of the pupil(s) concerned.

Case Study - Connexions Primary Project

The Connexions Service in a U.K. 'shire' county carried out a 'Primary Links Project' aimed at supporting pupils moving from Year 6 to Year 7, thus ensuring a smooth and effective transfer into their respective high schools. The objectives of the project included exploring children's attitudes to learning and to school, establishing criteria for the identification of pupils 'at risk' of poor transfer to secondary school and evaluating the project through pupil feedback.

Seven primary schools of varying size were involved in the project. PASS involvement centred on a pre-test application to assess the self-regard as learners and attitudes to school of Year 6 pupils in the two terms before secondary transfer. As a result, a range of interventions, focussed on improving children's learning and aimed at both students and teachers was developed and implemented within the target schools during the Summer Term 2002.

The initial intention was to assess project impact in July 2002, using PASS as a primary means of evaluation. However, a second phase to the project was implemented which involved 23 partner schools. PASS was again identified as the key data-gathering instrument. The intention is that not only will it be continued to be used by participant schools as a means of project evaluation, but also as a means of gathering ongoing attitudinal change tracking data, both on an individual and group basis.

High School / LEA Case Study

Case Study - High School 'CCC'

High School 'C' trained approximately 40 Year 9 pupils in mentoring skills, with the view to implementing a cross-phase mentoring project in a number of local primary schools. Within this group half went on to participate in the project as mentors, whilst the remainder, having completed the training did not practice as mentors. Both groups completed PASS as did an additional group of students from the high school, who had not completed the training and were not mentors. This last group of pupils were to act as a control group for the project.

The schools, both primary and secondary, were interested not only in impact measures for those pupils being supported, but also for the mentors from the high school. In this instance, PASS was used to measure the attitudes to school of each group and their self-regard as learners, along with other measures, to provide initial baseline data for the project. The same students completed PASS again, after the cross phase mentoring project was complete, in order to gain information on positive change to school and learning self-regard as a result of their involvement in the initiative.

It was found that:

- * There were no significant changes in attitudes of the control group
- * There was a small but significant positive change in those pupils who received the mentoring training but who did not practice the skills
- * There was a highly significant and positive shift in those pupils who both completed the training and practised their skills with the primary school pupils.

As a result of this, the school has introduced the cross-age mentoring programme as a regular feature.

Case Study - 'On Track' Mentoring

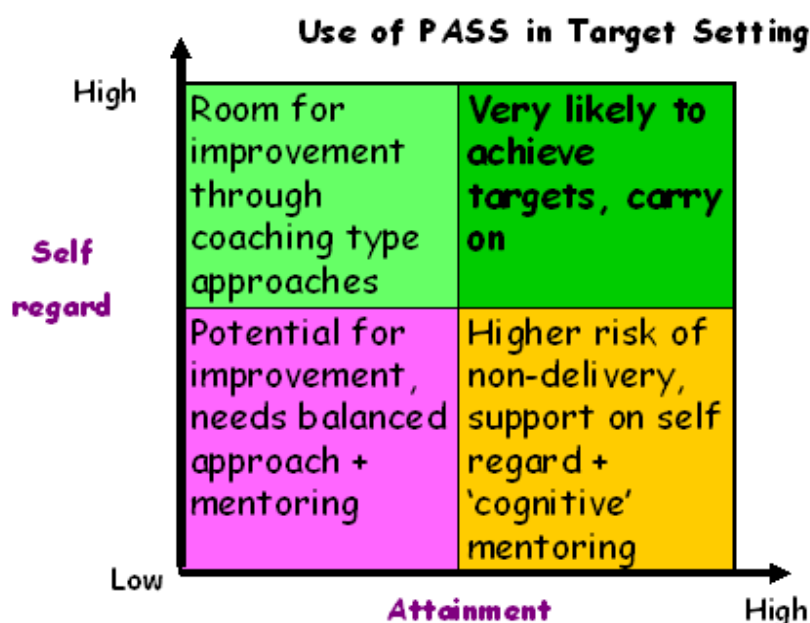
'On Track' provides Government funding to help small discrete local urban neighbourhoods tackle issues of youth crime and disaffection through school-based, community-focussed interventions and initiatives. As part of the 'On Track' plan in one urban LEA, a system was established to provide mentoring for targeted upper Key Stage 2 pupils. A number of Key Stage 3 and 4 students from the two high schools in the 'On Track' area were trained as mentors to work with the pupils from the primary schools. PASS was used to identify Key Stage 2 pupils who would benefit from mentoring intervention, and to help specify the content of the mentoring relationship and intervention. The focus for the primary schools was on using positive changes in pupil attitude to raise attainment. One way of using PASS for this is illustrated below.

The mentoring support also continues into Y7 when the pupils transfer in order to facilitate continuity in learning and progression into KS3.

PASS is now being used with the targeted pupils as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of mentoring support.

Use of PASS in target setting and mentoring support

PASS can be used to assist in target setting in that it can give indications of those pupils who because of their self-regard as learners and attitude to work are more likely to attain at levels commensurate with their abilities. It can also highlight those pupils whose attainment is more 'fragile' and possibly more vulnerable to other factors that could impair attainment levels. This analysis also provides some guidance as to the most appropriate approaches to supporting these pupils by learning or mentoring programmes. An example of this is shown in the diagram below focussing on self-regard.



Monitoring of progress and identification of schools causing concern.

One LEA is planning to incorporate whole school PASS data within the school profile that it uses to assess schools' performance and to identify schools that may be a cause for concern. At a whole school level, PASS represents more than just the accumulated profiles from individual pupils. It provides a measure of the learning climate of a school. With reference to school data already available from the national sample and accumulating LEA data, it will be possible to indicate 'at risk' profiles for schools in respect of their learning climate based on objective comparative data sets. The evaluation data for PASS has already established a clear correlational link with attainment at both the individual pupil and whole school levels. This would enhance the LEAs support to schools by including the learning climate from pupils' perspective as a measure.

The use of the learning climate approach would also identify particular issues within schools for action. For example, it would be possible to identify that a school had an issue about pupil attitudes to attendance as compared to other schools. This would allow both earlier intervention and a more creative use of the Education Welfare Service working in partnership with schools. Another example might be the case of a significantly lowered rating on the 'Response to curriculum demands' factor which might indicate a higher level of disaffection or a response to a restricted model of curriculum delivery. PASS would be able to highlight which year groups, gender or ethnic groups were most affected. This in combination with other attainment data etc. already within the LEA/school system would provide the basis for improvement work with the school.

PASS & THE BEHAVIOURAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Wolverhampton was one of the first of 34 LEAs nationally to receive a share in the initial wave of the Government's £60m Behaviour Improvement Programme (B.I.P.). The initiative targets truancy and bad behaviour in schools to improve levels of attainment and, in turn, local communities as a whole. Under phase two an additional 600 schools in 27 further local education authorities have joined the scheme.

In Wolverhampton PASS has been central to benchmarking, monitoring, refining and evaluating the impact of the B.I.P. initiative using pre-post test measures. Whole school PASS audits were undertaken across targeted primary and secondary B.I.P. schools, in the Autumn term of 2002, before the implementation of the programme. The same schools are to be re-measured at the end of the initiative to offer rigorous outcome evidence of programme effectiveness.

Ongoing consultation, discussion and feedback of PASS baseline data to senior LEA officers, school staff and pupils has had a decisive, and positive, influence on whole school strategic planning, individual pupil intervention, target setting, systemic organisational change and the deployment of external agency support across the LEA.

PASS has been praised by independent DFES consultants and OfSTED teams for its use with B.I.P.s and is actively endorsed as a model of good practice, in this regard, by Anne Hayward Associates.