FOREWORD

We owe it to our most vulnerable children and young people – those who are in the care of the local authority – to maximise their potential and help them achieve the best possible life outcomes. The LAC Pack is a training and resource pack aimed at helping education professionals and carers to understand and manage the behaviour of children who lack resilience and have not had the benefit of positive early attachments. The topic of resilience – our capacity to cope with change or challenge – is of crucial importance in working with children and young people, and especially those in the care of the local authority, who may have experienced negative early home environments. This additional section on Promoting Resilience is designed to give some strategies and techniques to those who work with looked after children in order to:

- **Identify** the risks and positive factors in the various areas of the child’s life.
- **Select** the appropriate tools or approaches which may suit your own way of working within your setting.
- **Use** these to promote resilience skills and qualities in children who lack them.

This section will provide information about the theoretical basis and characteristics of resilience and then give some ‘tasters’ of useful and practical approaches. Suggestions are made for whole-school and class or group approaches as well as at the level of an inter-agency team and the individual child. For those wishing to find out more about the topic of resilience, references and a bibliography are provided at the end.

Please note that although this section is aimed at working with children in care, all information and approaches mentioned, at whole school, group and individual level, apply to all children and young people.

The LAC Pack was produced as a result of information gathered in research, casework and consultation by the Senior LAC Educational Psychologist whose post is managed jointly by Education and Social Policy. All contributions for this additional section on Resilience have been written by members of a Resilience Working Group which has included the Senior LAC Psychologist from the LAC multi-agency team, mainstream educational psychologists with a special interest in the topic of resilience, two Head Teachers and the Young People’s Development Worker who is also part of the LAC Team, resulting in a shared product of interagency co-operation.

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INTRODUCTION TO RESILIENCE

1 What is resilience?

Risk and adversity are a normal part of life and for some people difficulties can be substantial and prolonged. Individuals vary in their capacity to manage change, challenge, stress and adversity. Some find it easier to recover from setbacks than others. The theory of resilience claims that those who manage to cope well, even in adverse circumstances, have a quality called resilience. The theory tries to identify the factors within individuals, in their families and in their environment that help them cope better with difficulties, and the life experience and processes that influence this. In general it has been found that highly resilient individuals tend to be able to respond flexibly and adaptively to a wide range of pressures and stresses, and that this helps them to recover and to resume normal functioning.

The term resilience is also used to predict a person's ability to resist future negative events, through the identification of protective factors. These can occur at an individual, family or environmental level and buffer negative experiences. The converse of these are risk factors. These serve to weaken a person's ability to cope either now or over the longer term. Because there are so many possible influences on an individual's level of resilience, it is a dynamic quality and can change. There is increasing evidence that interventions and strategies supporting the development of resilience are effective in improving outcomes for children and young people.

The term resilience can be applied to groups or communities as well as individuals.

2 How is resilience developed?

A number of different factors are involved in children's development. Some are more fixed than others and harder to influence – for example, certain aspects of personality. However, children's development is also very much influenced by their social environment – in the early years, the family influence is crucial. As the child grows, influences in the wider community become more important, like school and peers. The physical, cultural and economic environment in the child's community is also very influential both indirectly and directly. Some of these factors help or protect normal development and the development of resilience; some are risks to normal development and resilience. A strong attachment figure would be a protective factor; a long-standing pessimistic style of thinking would be a risk factor. A supportive extended family would be protective; a crime-ridden neighbourhood would be a risk factor.
Key elements in promoting resilience

a) In early childhood the family is the primary developmental context. The parents’ ability to express warmth is a key protective factor in even the most adverse of circumstances. As well as affection, certain types of parenting are also associated with good or poor resilience, depending on the extent to which they focus on developing individual factors and allow the child access to appropriate challenges, with sensitive support.

b) Having warm, supportive relationships remains important, and, particularly in adolescence, the capacity to forge long-term relationships is a vital protective factor. Developing positive peer relationships and external networks is essential, as is strengthening positive relationships with key adults. This is why the role of adult mentor or mentoring with an older pupil, as well as lunchtime clubs and structured after school activities, can be of real benefit to pupils who are struggling in this area.

c) Resilience theory claims that controlled exposure to adversity develops resilience through the positive use of stress to improve competencies. Having positive expectations is therefore important since confidence, competence and self-esteem go hand in hand.

d) An optimal environment is likely to be one:
- which does not provoke anxiety
- where adults themselves are not overly anxious
- which places demands on children that challenge them in a manageable way
- where adults are on hand should things become too difficult for the child to manage alone

This type of environment encourages good coping skills and strengthens positive development.

e) Having a positive, problem-solving approach and an optimistic and generous outlook is also associated with good resilience. This is best fostered in environments that in themselves are positive, forward-looking and promote strengths and diversity rather than those that focus on remediating weakness.
f) Within the educational setting, the approaches which promote resilience are mirrored in teaching styles, and, in general, describe teachers who:

- set out clear rules and expectations, and follow these through with praise and consequences
- convey confidence and positive belief in their pupils – no matter how well they are doing, in terms of learning and behaviour
- give appropriately challenging work
- give pupils lots of opportunities to make their own decisions and choices, to be responsible
- are responsive to pupils as individuals

Please see ‘Resilience at the Whole School Level – a Case Study’

4 Summary of factors promoting resilience for all children

- Strong social support networks
- Presence of at least 1 unconditionally supportive parent / carer
- Committed mentor, or other person outside family
- Positive school experiences
- Sense of mastery: belief that one’s own efforts can make a difference
- Participation in a range of extra curricular activities
- Capacity to reframe adversities so the beneficial as well as damaging effects are recognised
- Ability – or opportunity – to make a difference by helping others or through part-time work

5 What undermines resilience?

Research stresses the serious effects of chronic risk factors – e.g. chronic emotional neglect or abuse. In addition, risk factors are cumulative – the presence of one increases the likelihood that more will emerge.

LAC
The exposure to chronic, severe or multiple adversity, without the mitigating effect of protective factors, and particularly at key stages in relation to developmental needs, can lead to very poor resilience and fragility. This can have very negative life-long consequences and is often the case with Looked After children and other children with pronounced social, emotional and behavioural needs.
6 How and why is a resilience model helpful?

As education professionals we sometimes tend to use a deficit model, looking only at what goes wrong for a child, or at the things they don’t do well. However, this can make troubled children and young people feel as if they are a problem that needs fixed; it can make them feel they are failures, without the resources to improve their lot. It can also lead us to ignore the fact that they are often coping as well as they can with some very difficult problems, but because they are coping, this strength goes unacknowledged. In the light of this, attention has recently been paid more to investigating what helps individuals and communities manage to cope with the challenges and difficulties they face – the protective, helpful factors, the things they do to help themselves. It looks at the resources people have within them and how to develop them.

7 Main approaches to developing resilience

Risk-focused
This approach aims to reduce the child’s exposure to adversity e.g. placing him in foster care. This is usually an area that social workers engage in, and there is very limited scope for schools to intervene in this way. However, local authorities and Head Teachers can ensure that schools are both physically and psychologically safe places for all pupils, especially the vulnerable, and that staff are well trained and vigilant regarding child protection issues.

Asset-focused
These aim to provide resources, or improve access to resources that may have a protective factor. School can offer some resources such as breakfast clubs, study support. These are especially useful when risk factors are intractable and ongoing.

Process-focused
These aim to help children function in ways that help their development get back on a positive track. For example a predictable environment should help the child feel safe and more able to explore their environment. This means they can start to explore what they like and don’t like and find out what they are good at, and thus grow and develop, rather than constantly having to react to stressful situations they have no control over.
8  Key issues when using a resilience framework

- Interventions need to be matched to the child’s needs and stage of development.
- When assessing for and intervening around resilience, it is important to understand and identify the naturally occurring sources of protective influences that already lie within individuals, families & communities. Children and families often use informal sources of support to good effect, rather than turning to professionals. Professional support can inadvertently diminish the naturally occurring buffers against childhood risk.
- The line between stress and challenge can be hard to identify. Services can be inclined to keep reducing risk, and inadvertently also thereby reduce resilience, because the level of challenge for the child becomes far too low.
- Relatively minor but distressing, multiple and long-lasting factors which create continuously adverse circumstances (like serious and continuous conflict between parents) are more of a risk to resilience than acute and major events.
- Transitional events such as moving school, neighbourhood, or gaining a new step-parent, can pose risks. However, they may act as protective factors for resilience, if they serve to remove a risk factor – e.g. taking the child away from an abusive home situation, or from offending peers.
- Resilience is more than competent behaviour. It also encompasses personal qualities and emotional development which may be less easy to identify. In assessing for resilience risks, it would therefore be important to look at a wide range of behavioural features. A child may behave well but may also be experiencing high levels of emotional distress and / or depression.
- Children who have been abused or neglected sometimes adopt behaviours that are adaptive and that show resilience in the face of what they have had to cope with. These are strengths that can be turned to the child’s current advantage and can be reframed.

9  What kind of behaviour will we see in children with poor resilience?

When children do not believe that anything they can do will make a difference, they can develop learned helplessness. In school this may mean they do not believe they can achieve, that it is not worth trying, that they cannot make friends or get on with staff. They can often become withdrawn, or attention seeking as a way of disguising the fact that they feel very negative about themselves and their worth. They may lack the self-belief, the support, determination and the skills to make things better for themselves. They find it hard to express all or any of their feelings and can lack awareness of their inner world of feelings to a marked degree. They often find it very difficult to calm themselves or to remember that feelings change and that they may pick up soon. They often dwell on the negative side of events and can be pessimistic about the future or the idea of any positive change.
Here are some examples of commonly observed behaviours in children who have lost, or have never been able to learn resilience skills:

- Insistence on getting their own way
- Frequent falling-out with others / isolated / bullying
- Frequent challenges to authority
- Need careful handling by peers and adults, otherwise short-tempered
- Either constantly demanding help, or not asking when they need it
- Self-centred
- Give up on tasks
- Terrified of making mistakes, so avoid tasks or do not complete work
- Poor motivation for work
- Lack of dreams, goals, aspirations

10 What kind of behaviour and personal qualities indicate resilience?

Resilient people have the skills to make their own decisions and choices which will promote their wellbeing. They rely on their knowledge of themselves, of their own capacities, strengths and weaknesses. Their actions are guided by their previous experience, principles and beliefs. They can recognise their feelings and their own responses to their experiences and they can express these feelings authentically. They respect their own feelings and use them to guide their thoughts and actions. Therefore they can exert control over their own actions and influence their environment and other people. They take pleasure in mastering new skills. They don’t act impulsively and are less likely to indulge in risky behaviours. They don’t slavishly follow the needs of others but will seek out and listen to advice from trusted others.
The descriptions and statements below give a flavour of the qualities described here:

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can get along with others</td>
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<tr>
<td>People like me and care for me</td>
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<tr>
<td>I matter to others</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am concerned about others' well-being</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can make up with friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can express my feelings and needs</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am in charge of myself</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
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<tr>
<td>I can make choices and decisions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can solve problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know what my wants and needs are</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am a competent person and I can learn</th>
<th>Agency</th>
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<tr>
<td>I persevere even when a task is difficult</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are lots of things I can do well, and I can learn others</td>
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<tr>
<td>I believe I can master challenging situations</td>
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**Summary**

When we are using a Resilience framework in analysing a child’s protective and risk factors, it is worth noting that these can interact in complex ways. It can be very difficult to predict what will become of a child when he becomes an adult and children who seem quite similar in many ways can have very different outcomes. Research suggests that the development or otherwise of resilience is an ongoing dynamic proactive process, which can be developed at all stages in life.

The remainder of this section can be used at whole school, group / class and individual level. These approaches can be used by Head Teachers who want their school ethos to be based on a resilience model for all pupils and by class teachers, support assistants and other key staff who work with children individually. At the level of the individual child, the Resilience Checklist, CoR (Circles of Resilience) and the individual strategies can also be used by social policy key workers and foster carers.
Resilience: Quick assessment

The following checklist further describes qualities which indicate resilience and will serve as a sound basis for your reading of the following strategies. It will also be helpful whether observing a child over time or in discussion with other professionals and parents / carers. It can be used to gain a detailed profile of a child in relation to resilience in the school situation to identify areas of relative strength and to help in discussions when considering strategies for support. Directions for use are given in Appendix 1.

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>Ability to ask for help</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to persevere</td>
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<td>Ability to say positive things about others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to show interest in peers &amp; adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to compromise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to trust others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to show caring and affectionate behaviours</td>
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<td>Ability to repair relationship problems</td>
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<tr>
<th>Self-esteem, confidence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to identify preferences, likes / dislikes, strengths &amp; weaknesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to act independently (i.e. without a pal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to say positive things about self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to feel valued by important others</td>
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<td>Normally positive mood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remains calm in new / different situations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not too easily upset</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not restless</td>
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<th>Internal locus of control</th>
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<td>Ability to problem solve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shows interest / curiosity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to stay on / complete tasks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Willingness to try new things in learning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to be patient</td>
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<th>Communication</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to make ideas, wants, needs known appropriately to others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to negotiate with others assertively (not passively or aggressively)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to listen / accept others’ / different points of view</td>
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RESILIENCE AT THE WHOLE SCHOOL LEVEL: a case study

Building resilience at the whole school level is promoted primarily by the ethos, culture and relationships that make up the fabric of school life. The following section provides a case study to illustrate how one school in West Lothian successfully achieved this. This is only one example of the way in which a Head Teacher can foster a school culture which models and develops the qualities of interpersonal skills, autonomy and agency (See Introduction Section 10: I belong / I am in charge of myself / I am a competent person and I can learn). The resilience skills are grouped under four headings for ease of reference. These are mainly Asset and Process-focused approaches to promoting resilience (See Introduction Section 7). The case study is intended to provide a basis for a staff discussion to explore which approaches might be adopted, which your school does already and what other ideas you might develop.

LAC
This section does not refer to specific strategies for Looked After children. It looks at a systemic case study approach to fostering resilience in the classroom and throughout the school. LAC will still need individual and additional support from those who have developed key relationships with them, particularly when they are in crisis because of current care issues (See LAC Pack Part 1 & 3). However, such support should be given within a setting which also embodies the values, beliefs and skills which have been set out in the Introduction as being features of Resilience. Children learn what they see, not only what they hear. This means we should be modelling resilience skills in our relationships, in the classroom and school corridors and in care settings. A troubled child has more chance of being stabilised in a setting which recognises and owns him, where he can expect fairness and flexibility, where all views are seen as equally important and where relationships are open, compassionate and respectful.
1 Social Competence / Interpersonal Skills

1.1 The school consistently expects and maintains high standards of social behaviour.

- Right from the start of the school year children are expected to use common social courtesies to the whole school community e.g. saying ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ to everyone regardless of status: teachers, pupil support workers, lunchtime supervisors and equally importantly, other children.
- Adults model how to speak courteously to each other and to all children. Where children do not demonstrate the expected skills, they are corrected simply and respectfully.
- In addition, children are taught how to deal with a range of social challenges e.g. how to behave when adults are speaking together or going into classrooms on errands, so they feel socially competent in any routine situation.
- Where children are acting in socially appropriate ways this is noticed by adults and reinforced through positive comments.

LAC
We need to be sensitive to individual needs here, for example, if a looked after child finds open praise difficult, a low-key, pragmatic manner can be adopted. See ‘Specific Noticing’ in ‘Strategies for Key Workers’ section.

1.2 Relationships in the school community are authentic and open.

- Apologies are provided whenever mistakes are made: this shows respect and models how to resolve situations and move on.
- Where children’s social behaviour is inappropriate (butting into an adult conversation for example) they are calmly corrected. No value judgements or assumption about the child’s background is made. The process is seen simply as developing social skills and preserving the ethos of the school.
- Staff encourage children to have fun and see the amusing side of life by telling funny stories against themselves, recounting jokes or funny events.
- Staff encourage children to be honest with themselves and adults: they are listened to carefully and engaged in positive resolution of difficulties. This supports and maintains the establishment of relationships built on mutual trust and respect.
1.3 Developing children’s confidence in expressing their ideas is essential.

- This requires adults to really listen to what children say by being patient and waiting for children to collect their thoughts, communicating the expectation that everyone has something valuable to contribute.
- Children’s talking and listening skills are developed across the curriculum; obvious examples include the PSE and RE programmes but Maths, Science and Enterprise activities also provide opportunities for children to express their own beliefs and ideas. In activities like ‘show and tell’ and in problem solving in Maths children are actively encouraged to ask questions of each other and provided with feedback on what ‘good’ questions are. Many other situations exist across the curriculum such as discussions about books, videos, topic work, circle time and cooperative learning tasks that require children to be able to express their opinions and learn from each other.
- Teachers respond appropriately to children’s contributions, illustrating that they have heard the child’s view. In this way, teacher led conversations genuinely explore children’s own thoughts, beliefs and attitudes. Skilful questions help children to explore their own ideas rather than ‘guess what the teacher is thinking’.
- Children learn to discuss complex topics and to change or maintain their own point of view in the light of other information or opinions. They also learn how to disagree respectfully.

2 Problem Solving Skills / Effective Conflict Resolution

2.1 Formative assessment is used and marking schemes provide useful feedback to children

- Written and verbal feedback systems encourage children to be grounded in reality and to be reflective about their developing skills and abilities. This values and reinforces existing competences and captures emerging new skills and abilities.
- Marking systems provide guidance about what could be different and increase children’s problem solving skills as part of the learning process. They provide qualitative feedback, not just ticks or crosses, marks or percentages.
- Children are given time to correct errors and encouraged to ‘have another go’. If they need support, help is provided in a collegiate manner – ‘Let’s look at this together’. This models one approach for addressing problems.
- Children are told that mistakes are helpful and useful learning opportunities, not things to be avoided, hidden or embarrassed by. If the same errors keep occurring the child will be spoken to individually and directly to clarify what is needed or identify barriers to progress. Teachers highlight their own errors and demonstrate how to cope with these situations.
2.2 Competitive games and activities are seen as opportunities to develop the ability to cope with challenges and disappointments.

- Children who are not picked for teams in sports or quizzes are encouraged to be the best they can be (rather than comparing themselves with other people). They are reassured that it is natural to be disappointed and that these things happen to everybody at different times and in different situations. Teachers share their own appropriate experiences and make their empathy real for the child.
- They are encouraged to enjoy participating at their own level and thereby contributing to the team’s overall development. Personal progress is evidenced to the child and recognised by the staff.
- Successes and achievements are viewed as something for the whole school to take pride in. Staff are able to request special mentions for children at the monthly assemblies. Other ways of fostering pride include displays, photos of a range of activities the pupils take part in, newsletters to parents etc.

2.3 Children are taught to explain their thinking strategies for achieving solutions to challenges across the curriculum

- In Maths children are required to find different but equally valid ways of getting to the same answer: this illustrates the fact that lots of people can be ‘right’ but it also demands flexible thinking and active learning.
- NFER test results are used to provide objective information on strengths and weaknesses. Questions are analysed individually and used to identify where supplementary teaching may be required.
- From the early years, children take part in conversations, with teachers and each other, which familiarises them with receiving and giving feedback on subjects across the curriculum.
- Staff use the principles of ‘Assessment is for Learning’ to support children in setting appropriate targets or goals for themselves, for example in the PSE curriculum. By Primary 6 or 7 children write their own Personal Learning Plans building on skills they have developed further down the school – for example developing their own writing criteria in P4 / 5.
- In the early years teachers and pupils discuss achievements and set goals together and these are recorded and reviewed. By P7 children are expected to lead their own reports in a triangulation meeting with their class teacher at parents evening.

2.4 All children are trained in the principles of peer mediation

- Pupils were originally introduced to the principles of peer mediation via Mental Health Link Workers who also provided training for staff. It was then developed through the PSE curriculum. The children understand what mediation is and how it works.
Peer mediators are visibly identifiable in the playground and may offer mediation to children if they feel this would be useful. In this way, the school community takes active steps in managing difficulties.

All staff encourage pupils to seek peer mediation where appropriate.

3 Autonomy

3.1 Children are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves

- All staff encourage children to be as independent in their learning as possible. This includes being properly equipped for lessons and other areas of the curriculum e.g. remembering PE kits etc. Routines are as reliable, predictable and dependable as possible so children know, for example, where they should put completed work and what the next activity will be for them. Visual timetables and structural prompts are widely used to help children cue themselves into what is expected and what is next. Staff set homework clearly well in advance of when it is to be handed in and they expect children to use diaries, signed by parents. There is a clear homework strategy in place.
- Children are trained to develop organisational skills through the use of using praise where they achieve a greater level of independence or individual goal setting where they need guidance to achieve an acceptable standard. If children are not completing their reading, the school will make in-house arrangements to prevent this disadvantaging the child and to communicate the value the school places on education – parents and carers are supported in how to help this child and included as far as possible.

3.2 Children can communicate directly with the HT

- A post box is located in a private space. Children are told about the box during their school induction and they are then reminded informally at intervals during the school year or in assemblies. They are encouraged to use it as a suggestion box or to communicate something of concern. The HT checks the box daily and responds personally and privately to children. As far as possible children are facilitated and supported in resolving their own concerns – teachers are kept informed about relevant issues.

3.3 The pupil council is an important channel of communication

- The council meet monthly with the HT and are encouraged to understand that the purpose of the council is to bring issues, worries or ideas for how the school community can contribute to the wider community, not always a ‘wish list’ of wants. Suggestions from the pupils are discussed and, wherever possible, accepted and worked with.
- Children are elected to the council after putting their name forward with a manifesto, then peers vote for them.
Each class takes a turn to lead the council with a rotating chair and secretary. If the pupil council votes to put on a talent show, to raise money for charity for example, the children are encouraged to manage the whole enterprise with as little adult input as possible. Adults help only when requested by pupils.

3.4 Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible

- In the classroom, children are encouraged to use ‘elbow buddies’ (the person sitting next to them) as a resource before seeking adult help.
- Children are provided with individualised programmes to support their academic and social development or to address identified needs
- The children are encouraged to have a ‘can do’ attitude to life and to use problem-solving strategies to develop resourcefulness. Staff ask children where they think they might find a solution rather than directing them to it or providing it for them.

4 Sense Of Purpose / Community

4.1 Children have a strong sense of belonging and a clear idea of how they fit in to the school community.

- Uniform is valued by the school.
- Children are seen and treated as individuals, their abilities, personal qualities and strengths are recognised and celebrated
- Assemblies are used to bring the whole school together and share what is going on in different parts of the community: to prepare children for what they will be experiencing and to remind them of what they have coped with.

4.2 Children’s world horizons are widened in the interests of helping them to develop a sense of empathy and desire to ‘do good’:

- Within the local community, charity work helps to develop empathy for those less fortunate than the school community. For example pupils are asked to write a Christmas card to local residents who are on their own over the holiday period.
- Real life experiences are organised, for example visiting community institutions such as convents or hospitals for the elderly. They are encouraged to talk to residents to hear their stories and to contribute something to residents’ lives.
- Links are made and maintained with children attending special education provisions – for example, they may be invited to attend events at the school. This promotes an understanding of other people’s situations and helps break down prejudices. It provides a shared reference point for fostering tolerance and acceptance so personal ‘setbacks’ can be seen in a broader context.
- More broadly the school cluster has made links with projects in the third world. This has figured strongly in the children’s educational experience with the aim of fostering concern for and appreciation of things that are more important or ‘bigger’ than ourselves.
LAC
Children in the care of the local authority are sometimes accustomed to seeing themselves as more needy than others and as being ‘different’. They do not believe that they can contribute to the wellbeing of others, so using a Resilience framework in which we can re-frame their strengths and skills in a wider sense means that they can learn that they have something to offer.

Post Script...

The Head Teacher’s role in promoting a Resilient school

- An open ethos was established by the new Head Teacher at the start. Staff were included in providing comments and thoughts on the HT strengths and weaknesses through the 360 degree feedback process.
- The HT works alongside class teachers to better engage them in a professional dialogue and to develop a strong sense of each class and each pupil.
- Attitudes and values towards factors that affect the way the school operates (for example resources and processes for staff development) are clarified.
- Good communication systems are established and ‘small’ concerns or problems are addressed early, promoting trust and respect.
- The strengths of individual staff are recognized and their development needs and wishes provide a basis for professional progression.
- Management of change towards a more resilient staff includes recognition of individual talents and needs. Systems are established to increase experience, for example rotating an acting PT post and curriculum co-ordination roles.
- The need to take risks is modelled by the Head Teacher and staff are supported and encouraged to do this. Feedback is provided on regular class based observations to provide evidence rather than opinion. A link is made with how staff development positively impacts on learning, for example, using new technologies such as ICT and smart boards and trying out new approaches such as co-operative learning and critical skills.
- No one is expected to get things right or agree all the time so when mistakes occur there is honesty and support to move forward. Apologies are given to parents, staff and pupils when mistakes occur so that relationships are established and maintained. This also recognises the equal contribution and status of staff, children and parents.
- Staff involvement in school improvement planning follows quality and standards information. A ‘bottom up’ approach is used to agree priorities and promote ownership of changes. Decisions are ultimately taken by the Senior Management Team but clear communication and joint discussion of issues precedes action.
- Appropriate humour is recognised as a key feature of the school and a measure of staff morale.
Staff Training Activity

Title: How Resilient is our school?

Activity Aim: To encourage staff to consider how they already promote these skills and abilities in their class and whole school setting and to identify other ways to promote resilience at class / whole school / policy level.

Timing: One hour.

Materials: Flipchart (or Smart Board), flipchart pens, pencils, blank paper to record points discussed. Staff should be given a photocopy of ‘Resilience at the whole school level’. (See Appendix 2)

Instructions for trainer / Head teacher: Arrange into four working groups. Write up the Activity title and the following on the flipchart for consideration:

Under the following headings, discuss how successfully you feel the following skills are being promoted in your school. List examples of strategies / initiatives / projects as evidence.

- Social Competence
- Problem-solving
- Autonomy
- Sense of Purpose / Community

(Each group should read and consider only one heading).

Make a list of other ways in which these skills could be promoted in your classroom / school.

Allow 30 minutes for discussion. Feedback from groups to flipchart (Smart Board) Note suggestions for positive practice.
A consultative planning framework for

- Multi-agency meetings
- Interview with child / young person. A simplified version using child-friendly language is under development
- Three-way interviews with child / young person and key adults such as parent / carer, teacher, social worker, health visitor

Resilience: resilience in children can be described as the ability to ‘bounce back’, to continue to grow and develop positively, despite difficult life circumstances. Research shows that this resilience is partly due to the child’s individual attributes and partly to the support given by key people in the child’s life - a protective environment. Looked After Children in particular have often experienced significant adversity in their lives. These can risk overwhelming the child’s resilience at times, and key people involved with the child then need to work together to help the child build up their resilience.

CoR is a visual intuitive framework for exploring the risk factors and the protective factors in the child’s life. This information is then combined in order to develop an action plan for increasing the child’s resilience.

CoR is based on the work by Daniel and Wassell (2002) who identified six key aspects (“domains”) of resilience:

1. **secure base** (positive attachment relationships)
2. **education** (attainment and motivation in learning)
3. **friendships** (positive peer relationships and social support)
4. **talents and interests** (feelings of self-efficacy leading to self-esteem)
5. **positive values** (caring about and helping others - prosocial behaviour)
6. **social competencies** (including autonomy and self-control)

Each domain in the child’s life is explored in order to identify vulnerabilities and adversities which may pose risks, and the protective factors which can build resilience.
Directions for use

Beforehand:
- CoR has four strands: 1. The place where I live (sense of security); 2. Education / employment and training; 3. Friendships, talents and interest; 4. Social skills and positive values (right and wrong). Select some or all of the four strands, based on individual knowledge of the child / young person, and on the purpose of the interview. Using the full CoR framework will give a holistic overview. In some cases, however, a more focused approach may be useful, selecting the area of main risk (e.g. education, for a child who is frequently excluded from school) and the area of strongest protective factors (e.g. friendships, talents and interests if the child is good at a team sport or hobby).

- Be aware of the potential for distress or disclosure when interviewing a child / young person; think through in advance how to ensure there will be follow-through support.

Interview:
- Fill in names of significant people on My Key People; (you may find it helpful to keep this in view throughout the discussion).
- Have a conversation around the four questions in each of the four strands, recording notes as you go. Choosing some of the suggested Discussion Prompts may foster a richer discussion. Not all questions will give rise to useful discussion – you can record ‘don’t know’ or leave some parts blank.
  - Prompts should be used selectively and re-phrased as necessary to match the child / young person’s understanding or circumstances.
- Then review the completed notes, writing any Risk factors and Protective factors in the boxes at the bottom of the page. Not all strands will give rise to Risk or Protective factors.
- In the Summary page, select the most current Risk Factor and choose some useful Protective Factors from any of the four strands, which may help reduce the risk.

  The Summary page may be printed and given to the child / young person to keep as their record of the interview, if appropriate.

Planning:
- Collaboratively, using a ‘Multi-agency team’ approach, devise an Action Plan based on the above. This may require a follow-up meeting if the framework was carried out with the child / young person, rather than with the Multi-agency team.

This can be recorded manually on the hard copy of CoR (see Appendix 3).
Case Study using CoR in schools

Background
Josie is 14. She is currently living with her father and his partner and their two young children. Her mother, who also has a young family with a different partner, says that Josie has always been ‘impossible’ to manage. She refuses to have Josie living with her because she says she is a bad influence on her younger children. Josie has lived at various times with her mother, her father and her maternal grandparents. This last arrangement broke down after her grandfather was accused of hitting her. Josie visits her mother’s house every day and seems desperate to be included in that family.

At school, Josie is known to be academically able but frequent exclusions for disruptive behaviour mean she is not achieving her potential. She seeks the attention of her peers all the time and either ignores or is cheeky to the staff. Her personality is powerful and controlling of others; her peers try to ‘keep on her right side’ rather than developing friendships with her.

Offences in the community are escalating; currently there are multiple charges against her for assault and vandalism. These offences were carried out when she was in the company of other well-known offenders, both after school and during periods of exclusion.

CoR two-stage Process
Professionals working with Josie felt sure that the root of her risk taking behaviour lay in her feelings of rejection and frequent changes in family placement. To increase her coping skills in dealing with her problems and to help formulate a practical, focused action plan with her engagement and agreement, the Educational Psychologist used a CoR interview to frame a planning discussion with Josie and the Pupil Support Manager, who had a strong relationship with her (this could also have been done by any other staff member with a good working relationship).

On her ‘My People’ sheet, Josie and her key worker identified only the most significant people in her life – her dad at home, her mum and other family members along with her best friend and the Community Centre staff. (Note that her Auntie, her best friend and her mother were selected for helping in the Action Plan targets at the end) The most crucial risk factor was being sent to a local YPC if her father felt she was out of his control or even to a Secure Unit. Protective (positive) factors had been identified from discussion around all four strands in terms of personal qualities, helpful relationships, her own motivation to remain in her school and academic ability. The targets were drawn from her own skills and interests and agreed by her. The Action Plan itself was drawn up at a subsequent multi-agency meeting attended by those professionals who would be involved in helping Josie with her targets. Her father and Aunt attended this meeting to ensure family support.
Case Study - COR (Circles of Resilience) Summary

Date: 06.06.08

Name: Josie

Protective Factor

Josie's desire to remain in school and with her father.
Josie's ability to show good manners.
Good academic ability.

Risk Factor

Further offending in community leading to further offending.
Place where I live.

Protective Factor

Dad cares.
Mum is still in her life and willing to see her.

Protective Factor

Good academic ability.
Awareness of right / wrong.
Helpful people:
Auntie (Dad’s sister).
Best friend.
Best friend’s mother.

Risk Factor

Chores.
Caring towards younger.

## Case Study - CoR (Circles of Resilience) Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Josie</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>13.06.08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Using the summary, devise an action plan that will be possible to achieve in the medium term i.e. 5-10 weeks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective Factor</th>
<th>How to use it</th>
<th>How will we know it has worked?</th>
<th>Who / When / Resources needed</th>
<th>Review date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helpful people: Auntie (Dad’s sister). Best friend. Best friend’s mother. Good academic ability. Awareness of right / wrong. Caring towards younger children.</td>
<td>Josie to be enrolled with best friend in community class e.g. Taekwon Do Josie to be included in school’s ‘Philosophy for Teens’ group. Josie to be given careers appointment / work experience in pre-school setting / visit to college (childcare course).</td>
<td>Auntie and friend’s mum to enrol both girls and share lifts. Josie will be more able to think through consequences of her actions. Better problem solving skills. Josie will be motivated towards gaining educational qualifications. Improved self image through mastery of new skills.</td>
<td>Kit to be provided after a month’s trial. Within school resources. Pupil Support Team with advice from Careers Officer.</td>
<td>One month. December 2008. December 2008.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Josie to be enrolled with best friend in community class e.g. Taekwon Do

Josie to be included in school’s ‘Philosophy for Teens’ group.

Josie to be given careers appointment / work experience in pre-school setting / visit to college (childcare course).
PROMOTING RESILIENCE AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL – KEY WORKERS

Scripts for key workers and carers in individual work with LAC children and young people.

The following strategies for individual work with a child are built on Parts 2 and 3 of The LAC Pack (Attachment and LAC in Crisis). They represent ‘scripts’ or ways of talking between a key adult and the child and they must be used in the context of an attachment bond. This can be a carer, support assistant, or any other adult who can be given dedicated time for this relationship. That is, the adult and child should have a rapport and time needs to be given to building trust and ease in each others’ company. Attachment and Resilience research strongly supports the idea that change comes though supportive relationships which help develop new ways of thinking about problems and possibilities. (Fonaghy 2002) The capacity for understanding mental states (making sense of how you and other people think) has been found to be very important when a child is exposed to unfavourable circumstances. Fonaghy found, in studying the parents of securely attached children, that the child’s security is directly associated with the parent’s capacity to reflect on their own and others’ experience. In other words, it is vitally important that the child should be helped to make sense of the events in his life. Even when a child has not had a secure attachment to his primary carer, as is often the case with children who are in care, this kind of work can also be done within a ‘secondary’ attachment relationship, even in a school setting. Research has shown that having three or more of these secondary attachment relationships increases children’s resilience to stress and acts as a protective factor.

Setting the context for the strategies

- See CoR Introduction (Circles of Resilience Framework) The individual strategies in this section will help the child recognise and develop ‘Positive Values’ (Daniel and Wassell 2002)
- Michael Rutter (1987) produced four techniques for promoting resilience. One of these is to reduce ‘negative chain reactions’ (one negative event creating another). The individual strategies and approaches described in Part 3 of the LAC Pack (‘LAC in Crisis’) are designed to do this and the following strategies for promoting resilience are extensions of these.
- Robbie Gilligan (2000) has stressed the importance of a child being helped to make sense of what has happened in the past. Using humour and play in these individual sessions is a key factor as play has been found to provide a means of reflecting on experience and expressing feeling.
- Part 2 of the LAC Pack outlines the theory of Attachment (Bowlby 1969). A child who is securely attached to a primary carer is likely to be able to develop many of the features of resilience which are described in the Introduction to this section on Promoting Resilience. Looked After children who have experienced negativity, abuse and neglect are particularly vulnerable and often lack resilience as a result.
The strategies for helping a child develop resilience skills are extensions of the framework of ‘Parallel Activity’ and involve the use of the low-key style of communicating described in ‘Inconsequential Chat’ (LAC Pack Part 3). These specific and informal ways of relating are designed to reduce arousal and therefore to enable the child to listen in a more relaxed way.

Section 10 of the Introduction describes features of resilience. The strategies in this section focus on the development of the ability to recognise and express emotions and are designed to help a troubled child to:

- Understand and regulate his emotions and develop a ‘working model’ of himself as an effective agent of change in his own life.
- Provide a means of reflecting on experience and expressing feeling.
- Reduce arousal and therefore enable him to listen in a more relaxed way.
- Understand the effects of events in his life.

1. Attunement through Play

Within a secure attachment, the parent will reduce a baby’s state of arousal by imitating and ‘mirroring’ its expressions and movements, engaging the baby by direct gaze and turn-taking. A familiar key adult can do this for a tense and troubled child through using a card game, dominoes, playing ‘catch’ with a ball or an easy and funny word game. This is best to be introduced unexpectedly, taking the child by surprise at the start of a session. It lowers his defences because he needs to concentrate on the game, it encourages a rapport with the adult through laughter and turn-taking and it sets the scene for more active and sensitive resilience work, either later in the session or at another time. It enables him to be physically expressive (thus using up the adrenalin which is causing him to become hyper aroused) and it makes him keen and willing to focus.

It can also be used part way through a reflective session, when the child is becoming upset, anxious or angry – the worker can switch into a game very quickly and therefore finish the session at that point. It can be returned to on another day. Such play always improves the relationship and therefore supports the development of an attachment bond.
2 Positive Visual Mapping

The following is a powerful technique for helping a child develop a sense of perspective and reducing the effects of his tendency to ‘catastrophise’ (make things seem even worse than they are). The technique leads on from Positive Expectation (LAC Pack Part 3).

The Technique

A photo journal is created of good times, when he has been enjoying events and relationships. This needs to be thought through as a continuous strategy and photos routinely taken in class, at school events, or even just surprise photos of the child laughing, or of him playing with his peers or with a member of staff with whom he has an attachment bond. The technique can be set up in a low-key way, early on in the establishing of the attachment relationship. Looking at these photos visually loops him back into a time when he was clearly happy / achieving something and lays these positive memories down alongside his current negative reality. By making this journal and looking through it with him, you are implying ‘You did this / , managed that / had that lovely time before and you can again’.

During a difficult time, the album can be ‘found’: ‘I was just looking for your worksheet and I found your album. I was just laughing at this one of you at sports day, remember?’ If the key worker looks quietly through the album for a moment, the child will be tempted to look and this will trigger a more positive past view of himself. This works because the child responds to visual stimulus and to your affective state, so exclaiming ‘Hey, remember this? You nearly fell over doing that somersault and I laughed my head off!’ in a loud, humorous voice and with an expression of pleasure will engage his interest, even for a moment, and will strike him far more effectively than words during a low time. It also helps build on his emergent sense of self – ‘I am that boy who is so funny I made her laugh’.

At the point of crisis the child only sees his ‘bad self’, the adaptive, negative behaviours which he uses to seek attention or express his unhappy feelings. We are working to build up a more layered view of all the many aspects of the child.
3  Mapping of Feelings

This technique is especially useful with a child who does not recognise different negative emotions and how they are felt in the body. It is also effective with a child whom you know has been scapegoated within his own family: that is, he carries the blame for everything bad that has happened. He may have developed an adaptive behaviour of ‘learned helplessness’ (See Introduction, section 9). You can introduce this technique as a worksheet extension of class language work.

The Technique

Use a ready-made typed list of a few basic ‘feeling’ adjectives, positive and negative mixed, for example Happy, Sad, Angry, Excited, or else you can write them alongside him as if you are just thinking them up. (Leave big spaces between the words so you can add to them with the child. That co-operative ‘parallel activity’ approach is the point of the exercise) Ask the child to think of any others – no link is made to himself at this point. Add in the feelings you think he might have because of family circumstances (jealous, ashamed, humiliated, invisible) but only as one of your contributions, not drawing attention to it. Make sure he understands any word you add, by giving an example ‘That’s like when your carer gives Shannon (other child in placement) more attention and you might feel upset and want to hurt her’ or ‘when Mrs Brown picked Mary to help her and you got angry’. If the child can’t recognise the feeling even from this example, don’t add it to the list. The word should be as simple as possible and preferably a word or phrase he might use e.g. if you write ‘Excited’ and he says ‘Hyper’, you would change it on the sheet in front of him. Say you’ll bring this sheet out again and he should be thinking of words to add to it.

The trick is to use your attachment relationship to help him recognise and express his own feelings by interweaving some of your personal experiences into it. Make him laugh by admitting to some of the feelings yourself and give funny examples of these. In another session, ask him which words he thinks apply to him more than others. Tick them – two ticks if he thinks it’s definitely a feeling he gets often. Don’t offer opinions about these, except perhaps ‘Wow, you’re so jealous, looks like it needs three ticks!’ Then ask him to pick out all the negative feelings from the mixed list. Make two separate lists. Talk over which feelings stay inside you and which ‘come out’. ‘Could I see you feeling like this?’ (This depends on the child’s age and understanding but they usually know what it means) Talk each one over - he might agree that you can feel jealous inside but you can also hurt someone or damage something.

The aim here is to be able to help him to understand that he has feelings which lead to behaviour. There is a sense of relief for the child in being able to identify and own his emotions, to understand that his feelings are shared by all of us when we have difficult life events and that his behaviour is accepted and can be worked with. You can use this approach effectively with children and young people at primary and secondary stage.
4 Setting Out Your Stall

This strategy is linked with ‘Articulate Doubts and Fears’ (LAC Pack Part 3). When the child does not know why he is behaving in such a negative way, but is clearly unhappy, it provides relief if you can put some possible explanations into words for him and then leave him to indicate or signify which he recognises. This can be a sensitive area and using it pre-supposes the key worker’s knowledge of the child’s circumstances and current worries.

The Technique

‘You know what happened the other day?’ (This would allude to an angry episode in school, during a ‘crisis time.’ You don’t need to name the event, he knows it.) I was just thinking about everything that’s been happening for you the last while – your little sister’s moved carers, mum hasn’t been touch the last two contacts. If I were you, I wouldn’t know what was going on, that would make me feel angry and upset. I might wonder if I would be moving again as well. But maybe you don’t feel like that. ‘You will recognise by his body language if he owns this as his own feeling. If he denies it, you can say. ‘Well, that’s a relief. I was worried about you.’ Even if he denies it, he will still take away your explanations and consider them. If he owns it, you can go on to give a further explanation of the circumstances which are worrying him, if you know them, or you can say ‘We can ask your social worker about that, find out a bit more if you like.’

You are not being asked to act as a therapist or social worker here – it is possible to give a child some ‘generalised’ understanding of adult behaviour which will still offer some comfort. This is the basis of ‘mentalisation.’ ‘It could be your mum’s got some stuff happening right now and needs to work things out and then she’ll get back in touch.’

NB Always keep in touch with the child’s social worker when you are doing individual work like this. Pass on any information you feel is relevant to his behaviour and emotional state and liaise with him / her before offering any more specific explanations of his family situation. All you are seeking to do here is to enable him to express his fears and feelings and to empathise with him. This helps him to reduce his anxiety and to develop a framework for understanding his own and others’ behaviour.
Useful additional approaches for helping him to understand the effects of events in his life and build his capacity to reframe adversity are as follows:

**Adrenalin Talk**  
Explain in general terms to the child how adrenalin works in the body, how useful it is when you are in danger but that it stops you from being able to think or listen while you are feeling angry. Children and young people who have difficulty in managing their anger always recognise and own this kind of information and it is a relief for them to understand something which has seemed overwhelming and unmanageable.

**TV Talk**  
Using talk of favourite TV soaps to explore feelings and offer an explanation of behaviour. Because you are talking about someone else, the child will not feel defensive and will engage with enthusiasm if he likes the TV programme. You can then give opinions about the events and behaviour and be sure that he will listen. This offers him a framework for understanding his own life events and painful feelings which he can’t express. (This technique links with ‘Inconsequential Chat’ and ‘Mentalisation’, LAC Pack Part 3)

**Personal Nominations**  
Similarly, you can use stories about yourself and difficult / upsetting situations which you have experienced in your life. The child will listen to your feelings and outcomes of events with great interest, provided you have established a rapport with him and a secondary attachment bond.

**Leaving Space**  
Using questions and leaving spaces between sessions is effective, especially at the end of sessions. ‘I’ve been chatting away and maybe you really wanted to say something and I haven’t given you a minute’ If you have, maybe you can tell me next time, before I start talking!’ You may think you know what a child has been thinking and then discover that his worries or notions are entirely different.

**Specific ‘noticing’**  
This helps to re-frame his view of himself. ‘I noticed… you just popped into my head the other day… I was watching you and I thought, Jimmy’s changed a bit. You used to just get angry straight away when somebody disagreed with you, but I saw you walking away from John yesterday during break. I thought, good on you.’ This helps him to change and add to his ‘internal working model’ of himself. Your observations should be very specific and it should take the child by surprise. Over time, he can come to think of himself as a person who can exert control over his own behaviour, with positive outcomes.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This additional section on Promoting Resilience has sought to provide an introduction to the topic of Resilience and some tools and strategies for helping children and young people develop the skills which will enable them to recover from life's setbacks, challenges and transitions. This topic is of crucial importance to all of us, particularly those who are supporting our most vulnerable and deprived children. Once a child has established a trusting relationship and a calm and supportive environment, it is possible to begin the task of helping him recover from traumatic and damaging events and to build the skills he needs to manage his life.
Bibliography

The references below have been used when creating the document, but, for ease of reading, not all have been detailed in the body of the text. The references are split into their relevant sections.

Introduction


Resilience at the Whole School level


CoR (Circles of Resilience)


*Promoting Resilience – Key workers*


Resilience: Quick assessment checklist

Guidelines for use

This tool may be helpful to use as a checklist when observing a child over time, and/or in discussions with other professionals and parents. It can be used to gain a detailed profile of a pupil in relation to resilience in the school situation, to identify areas of strength and those requiring development, and to help in discussions when considering strategies for support and so on.

You can highlight statements where there is concern, or you can score it using 1 = little or no evidence; 2 = some evidence 3 = a lot of evidence. It is really helpful to be specific about the evidence which has led you to your conclusions, and to try to note the kinds of situations in which the behaviour is observed, rather than just work from a 'feel' about the child.

The tool is not standardised in any way. It is a consultation and assessment tool to inform professional discussion.
Resilience: Quick assessment

The following checklist further describes qualities which indicate resilience and will serve as a sound basis for your reading of the following strategies. It will also be helpful whether observing a child over time or in discussion with other professionals and parents / carers. It can be used to gain a detailed profile of a child in relation to resilience in the school situation to identify areas of relative strength and to help in discussions when considering strategies for support.

Learning
- Ability to set / meet goals
- Ability to receive constructive criticism
- Ability to ask for help
- Ability to persevere

Relationships
- Ability to say positive things about others
- Ability to show interest in peers & adults
- Ability to compromise
- Ability to trust others
- Ability to show caring and affectionate behaviours
- Ability to repair relationship problems

Self-esteem, confidence
- Ability to identify preferences, likes / dislikes, strengths & weaknesses
- Ability to act independently (i.e. without a pal)
- Ability to say positive things about self
- Ability to feel valued by important others

Emotional regulation
- Ability to settle / recover quickly when upset
- Normally positive mood
- Remains calm in new / different situations
- Not too easily upset
- Not restless

Internal locus of control
- Ability to problem solve
- Shows interest / curiosity
- Ability to stay on / complete tasks
- Willingness to try new things in learning
- Able to be patient

Communication
- Able to make ideas, wants, needs known appropriately to others
- Able to negotiate with others assertively (not passively or aggressively)
- Ability to listen / accept others’ / different points of view
Social Competence / Interpersonal Skills

1.1 The school consistently expects and maintains high standards of social behaviour.

- Right from the start of the school year children are expected to use common social courtesies to the whole school community e.g. saying 'please' and 'thank you' to everyone regardless of status: teachers, pupil support workers, lunch time supervisors and equally importantly, other children.
- Adults model how to speak courteously to each other and to all children. Where children do not demonstrate the expected skills, they are corrected simply and respectfully.
- In addition, children are taught how to deal with a range of social challenges e.g. how to behave when adults are speaking together or going into classrooms on errands, so they feel socially competent in any routine situation.
- Where children are acting in socially appropriate ways this is noticed by adults and reinforced through positive comments.

LAC
We need to be sensitive to individual needs here, for example, if a looked after child finds open praise difficult, a low-key, pragmatic manner can be adopted. See 'Specific Noticing' in 'Strategies for Key Workers' section.

1.2 Relationships in the school community are authentic and open.

- Apologies are provided whenever mistakes are made: this shows respect and models how to resolve situations and move on.
- Where children’s social behaviour is inappropriate (butting into an adult conversation for example) they are calmly corrected. No value judgements or assumption about the child's background is made. The process is seen simply as developing social skills and preserving the ethos of the school.
- Staff encourage children to have fun and see the amusing side of life by telling funny stories against themselves, recounting jokes or funny events.
- Staff encourage children to be honest with themselves and adults: they are listened to carefully and engaged in positive resolution of difficulties. This supports and maintains the establishment of relationships built on mutual trust and respect.
1.3 Developing children’s confidence in expressing their ideas is essential.

- This requires adults to really listen to what children say by being patient and waiting for children to collect their thoughts, communicating the expectation that everyone has something valuable to contribute.
- Children’s talking and listening skills are developed across the curriculum; obvious examples include the PSE and RE programmes but Maths, Science and Enterprise activities also provide opportunities for children to express their own beliefs and ideas. In activities like ‘show and tell’ and in problem solving in Maths children are actively encouraged to ask questions of each other and provided with feedback on what ‘good’ questions are. Many other situations exist across the curriculum such as discussions about books, videos, topic work, circle time and cooperative learning tasks that require children to be able to express their opinions and learn from each other.
- Teachers respond appropriately to children’s contributions, illustrating that they have heard the child’s view. In this way, teacher led conversations genuinely explore children’s own thoughts, beliefs and attitudes. Skilful questions help children to explore their own ideas rather than ‘guess what the teacher is thinking’.
- Children learn to discuss complex topics and to change or maintain their own point of view in the light of other information or opinions. They also learn how to disagree respectfully.

2 Problem Solving Skills / Effective Conflict Resolution

2.1 Formative assessment is used and marking schemes provide useful feedback to children

- Written and verbal feedback systems encourage children to be grounded in reality and to be reflective about their developing skills and abilities. This values and reinforces existing competences and captures emerging new skills and abilities.
- Marking systems provide guidance about what could be different and increase children’s problem solving skills as part of the learning process. They provide qualitative feedback, not just ticks or crosses, marks or percentages.
- Children are given time to correct errors and encouraged to ‘have another go’. If they need support, help is provided in a collegiate manner – ‘Let’s look at this together.’ This models one approach for addressing problems.
- Children are told that mistakes are helpful and useful learning opportunities, not things to be avoided, hidden or embarrassed by. If the same errors keep occurring the child will be spoken to individually and directly to clarify what is needed or identify barriers to progress. Teachers highlight their own errors and demonstrate how to cope with these situations.
2.2 Competitive games and activities are seen as opportunities to develop the ability to cope with challenges and disappointments.

- Children who are not picked for teams in sports or quizzes are encouraged to be the best they can be (rather than comparing themselves with other people). They are reassured that it is natural to be disappointed and that these things happen to everybody at different times and in different situations. Teachers share their own appropriate experiences and make their empathy real for the child.
- They are encouraged to enjoy participating at their own level and thereby contributing to the team’s overall development. Personal progress is evidenced to the child and recognised by the staff.
- Successes and achievements are viewed as something for the whole school to take pride in. Staff are able to request special mentions for children at the monthly assemblies. Other ways of fostering pride include displays, photos of a range of activities the pupils take part in, newsletters to parents etc.

2.3 Children are taught to explain their thinking strategies for achieving solutions to challenges across the curriculum

- In Maths children are required to find different but equally valid ways of getting to the same answer: this illustrates the fact that lots of people can be ‘right’ but it also demands flexible thinking and active learning.
- NFER test results are used to provide objective information on strengths and weaknesses. Questions are analysed individually and used to identify where supplementary teaching may be required.
- From the early years, children take part in conversations, with teachers and each other, which familiarises them with receiving and giving feedback on subjects across the curriculum.
- Staff use the principles of ‘Assessment is for Learning’ to support children in setting appropriate targets or goals for themselves, for example in the PSE curriculum. By Primary 6 or 7 children write their own Personal Learning Plans building on skills they have developed further down the school – for example developing their own writing criteria in P4 / 5.
- In the early years teachers and pupils discuss achievements and set goals together and these are recorded and reviewed. By P7 children are expected to lead their own reports in a triangulation meeting with their class teacher at parents evening.

2.4 All children are trained in the principles of peer mediation

- Pupils were originally introduced to the principles of peer mediation via Mental Health Link Workers who also provided training for staff. It was then developed through the PSE curriculum. The children understand what mediation is and how it works.
Peer mediators are visibly identifiable in the playground and may offer mediation to children if they feel this would be useful. In this way, the school community takes active steps in managing difficulties.

All staff encourage pupils to seek peer mediation where appropriate.

3  Autonomy

3.1 Children are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves

- All staff encourage children to be as independent in their learning as possible. This includes being properly equipped for lessons and other areas of the curriculum e.g. remembering PE kits etc. Routines are as reliable, predictable and dependable as possible so children know, for example, where they should put completed work and what the next activity will be for them. Visual timetables and structural prompts are widely used to help children cue themselves into what is expected and what is next. Staff set homework clearly well in advance of when it is to be handed in and they expect children to use diaries, signed by parents. There is a clear homework strategy in place.
- Children are trained to develop organisational skills through the use of using praise where they achieve a greater level of independence or individual goal setting where they need guidance to achieve an acceptable standard. If children are not completing their reading, the school will make in-house arrangements to prevent this disadvantaging the child and to communicate the value the school places on education – parents and carers are supported in how to help this child and included as far as possible.

3.2 Children can communicate directly with the HT

- A post box is located in a private space. Children are told about the box during their school induction and they are then reminded informally at intervals during the school year or in assemblies. They are encouraged to use it as a suggestion box or to communicate something of concern. The HT checks the box daily and responds personally and privately to children. As far as possible children are facilitated and supported in resolving their own concerns – teachers are kept informed about relevant issues.

3.3 The pupil council is an important channel of communication

- The council meet monthly with the HT and are encouraged to understand that the purpose of the council is to bring issues, worries or ideas for how the school community can contribute to the wider community, not always a ‘wish list’ of wants. Suggestions from the pupils are discussed and, wherever possible, accepted and worked with.
- Children are elected to the council after putting their name forward with a manifesto, then peers vote for them.
Each class takes a turn to lead the council with a rotating chair and secretary.
If the pupil council votes to put on a talent show, to raise money for charity for example, the children are encouraged to manage the whole enterprise with as little adult input as possible. Adults help only when requested by pupils.

3.4 Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible

- In the classroom, children are encouraged to use ‘elbow buddies’ (the person sitting next to them) as a resource before seeking adult help.
- Children are provided with individualised programmes to support their academic and social development or to address identified needs.
- The children are encouraged to have a ‘can do’ attitude to life and to use problem-solving strategies to develop resourcefulness. Staff ask children where they think they might find a solution rather than directing them to it or providing it for them.

4 Sense Of Purpose / Community

4.1 Children have a strong sense of belonging and a clear idea of how they fit in to the school community.

- Uniform is valued by the school.
- Children are seen and treated as individuals, their abilities, personal qualities and strengths are recognised and celebrated.
- Assemblies are used to bring the whole school together and share what is going on in different parts of the community: to prepare children for what they will be experiencing and to remind them of what they have coped with.

4.2 Children’s world horizons are widened in the interests of helping them to develop a sense of empathy and desire to ‘do good’.

- Within the local community, charity work helps to develop empathy for those less fortunate than the school community. For example pupils are asked to write a Christmas card to local residents who are on their own over the holiday period.
- Real life experiences are organised, for example visiting community institutions such as convents or hospitals for the elderly. They are encouraged to talk to residents to hear their stories and to contribute something to residents’ lives.
- Links are made and maintained with children attending special education provisions – for example, they may be invited to attend events at the school. This promotes an understanding of other people’s situations and helps break down prejudices. It provides a shared reference point for fostering tolerance and acceptance so personal ‘setbacks’ can be seen in a broader context.
- More broadly the school cluster has made links with projects in the third world. This has figured strongly in the children’s educational experience with the aim of fostering concern for and appreciation of things that are more important or ‘bigger’ than ourselves.
A consultative planning framework for Multi-agency meetings

Interview with child / young person. A simplified version using child-friendly language is under development.

Three-way interviews with child / young person and key adults such as parent / carer, teacher, social worker, health visitor.

Resilience: resilience in children can be described as the ability to ‘bounce back’, to continue to grow and develop positively, despite difficult life circumstances. Research shows that this resilience is partly due to the child’s individual attributes and partly to the support given by key people in the child’s life - a protective environment.

Looked After Children in particular have often experienced significant adversity in their lives. These can risk overwhelming the child’s resilience at times, and key people involved with the child then need to work together to help the child build up their resilience.

CoR is a visual intuitive framework for exploring the risk factors and the protective factors in the child’s life. This information is then combined in order to develop an action plan for increasing the child’s resilience.

CoR is based on the work by Daniel and Wassell (2002) who identified six key aspects (“domains”) of resilience:

1. Secure base (positive attachment relationships)
2. Education (attainment and motivation in learning)
3. Friendships (positive peer relationships and social support)
4. Talents and interests (feelings of self-efficacy leading to self-esteem)
5. Positive values (caring about and helping others - prosocial behaviour)
6. Social competencies (including autonomy and self-control)

Each domain in the child’s life is explored in order to identify vulnerabilities and adversities which may pose risks, and the protective factors which can build resilience.
build resilience
pose risks, and the protective factors which can

to identify vulnerabilities and adversities which may

Each domain in the child's life is explored in order

self-control)

six  social  components  (including autonomy and

-  prosocial behaviors - sharing, helping others -

5  positive  values - league to self-esteem -

4  external  and  internal  feelings  of  self-efficacy -

social  support -

3  friendships - positive peer relationships and

2  education  (attainment and motivation in learning -

1  secure  base  (positive attachment relationships -

who  develop  six  key  aspects  (domains)  of  resilience:

Cor  is  based  on  the  work  by  Daniel  and  Massell  (2002) -

Together  to  help  the  child  build  up  their resilience.

people  involved  with  the  child  then  need  to  work

overwhelming  the  child's  resilience  at  times, and key

significant  adversity  in  their  lives.  These  can  risk

children  in  particular  have  often  experienced

child's  life - a protective environment looked after

key  people  in  the

is  partly  due  to  the  child's  individual  attributes  and

circumstances.  Research  shows  that  this  resilience

and  develop  positive/defensive  strategies  to  help  the

for  the  child  to  bounce  back  and  continue  to  grow

Resilience:  resilience  in  children  can  be  described

Introduction

worker/health visitor

Key  adults  such  as  parent/carer, teacher, social

The-easy interviews with child/young person and

development

interview with child/young person a simplified

multi-agency meetings

A  consultative planning framework for
CoR Framework

Directions for use:

Beforehand:
- CoR has four strands: 1. The place where I live (sense of security); 2. Education / employment and training; 3. Friendships, talents and interests; 4. Positive values and social skills (right and wrong). Select some or all of the four strands, based on individual knowledge of the child / young person, and on the purpose of the interview. Using the full CoR framework will give a holistic overview. In some cases, however, a more focused approach may be useful, selecting the area of main risk (e.g. education, for a child who is frequently excluded from school) and the area of strongest protective factors (e.g. friendships, talents and interests if the child is good at a team sport or hobby).

Be aware of the potential for distress or disclosure when interviewing a child / young person; think through in advance how to ensure there will be follow-through support.

Interview:
- Fill in names of significant people on My Key People; (you may find it helpful to keep this in view throughout the discussion).
- Have a conversation around the four questions in each of the four strands, recording notes as you go. Choosing some of the suggested Discussion Prompts may foster a richer discussion. Not all questions will give rise to useful discussion – you can record ‘don’t know’ or leave some parts blank.
- Prompts should be used selectively and re-phrased as necessary to match the child / young person’s understanding or circumstances.
- Then review the completed notes, writing any Risk factors and Protective factors in the boxes at the bottom of the page. Not all strands will give rise to Risk or Protective factors.
- In the Summary page, select the most current Risk Factor and choose some useful Protective Factors from any of the four strands, which may help reduce the risk.

The Summary page may be printed and given to the child / young person to keep as their record of the interview, if appropriate.

Planning:
- Collaboratively, using a ‘Multi-agency team’ approach, devise an Action Plan based on the above. This may require a follow-up meeting if the framework was carried out with the child / young person, rather than with a Multi-agency team.
Directions for use:

Planning:

Beforehand:

CoR has four strands:

1. The place where I live (sense

Fill in names of significant people on My Key People;

Collaboratively, using a 'Multi-agency team' approach,

device an Action Plan based on the above. This may

require a follow-up meeting if the framework was

2. Education / employment and training;

(You may find it helpful to keep this in view

Choosing some of the suggested Discussion Prompts

when interviewing a child / young person;

Then review the completed notes,

writing an

y

or leave

parts blank.

3. Friendships, talents and interest;

Select some or all of the child / young person's

values (right and wrong).

Selective approach may be useful,


carried out with the child / young person, rather than

and social skills (right and wrong).


eight factors (e.g. friends, school, health, neighbours)

In some cases, however,


take some focus of main risk (e.g. for a child who is

excluded from school) and the area of

theresses should be used selectively and re-phrased

frequently.

Not all strands will give rise to useful discussion – you can record

'things I don't know'

In the Summary page, select the most current Risk

Fact

ors or and choose some useful Protective Factors

 trom an

y of the four strands, the risk.

Summar

y page may follow through support.

When interviewing a child / young person; think

through in advance how to ensure there will be

support.

If appropriate

Child or young person's

Young persons community

Young persons life

Young persons family

Young persons peers

(e.g. parents, siblings, parents partner, step sibling)

(e.g. sport, youth, church, leisure)

(e.g. friends, school, health, neighbours)

(e.g. parents, siblings, parents partner, step sibling)
How secure do I feel?

How does my home make me feel secure?

How do other people in my life make me feel secure?

How does my community make me feel secure?

The place where I live (sense of security)

How does my home make me feel secure?

How do other people in my life make me feel secure?

How does my community make me feel secure?
How secure do I feel?

How does my home make me feel secure?

How do other people in my life make me feel secure?

How does my community make me feel secure?

The place where I live (sense of security)

Protective Factor

Risk Factor

Choose a few from the following discussion points:

- Sense of belonging
- Loved / loveable
- Consistent management
- Looked after
- Physical care / wellbeing
- Health and healthcare
- Emotional support
- Resilient relationships
- Routines

How does my community make me feel secure?

How do other people in my life make me feel secure?

How does my home make me feel secure?

How secure do I feel?
How do I respond to learning?

How does my home support my education / employment and training?

How do other people in my life support my education / employment and training?

How does my community support my education / employment and training?

Choose a few from the following discussion points:

Enjoy
Own / owned by school
Relationship with staff outwith school
Role models
Can set and meet goals
Receive constructive criticism
Feel part of school
Interested
Ask for help
Willing to try new things
Home / school relationship

( NB for 'school' read 'college' or 'workplace' as appropriate)
How do I respond to learning?

How does my home support my education/employment and training?

How do other people in my life support my education/employment and training?

How does my community support my education/employment and training?

Friendships, talents and interests

What friendships, talents and interests do I have?

How does my home support my friendships, talents and interests?

How do other people in my life support my friendships, talents and interests?

How does my community support my friendships, talents and interests?

CoR Framework

Circles of Resilience

Choose 2 or 4 from the
following discussion points:

Protective Factor

Risk Factor

- Long lasting / enduring
- Show caring behaviour
- Equal in friendships (sometimes role models)
- Being a good friend
- Resources
- Where ideas known
- Spending time together
- Getting along together
- Interests
- Repair relationship problems
- Feel good about self
- Speak positively about others
- Hopes and dreams
- Role models
- Make time for:
- Visit each other’s homes
- Hobbies and pastimes

Protective Fact or Risk Fact

Choose a few from the following discussion points:

- Good art
- Positive
- Accepting
- Encouragement
- Constructive criticism
- Felt part of school
- Interested
- Ask for help
- Willing to try new things

Home/school relationship

(NB for ‘school’ read ‘college’ or ‘workplace’ as appropriate)

Education/employment and training

Pr or Risk Fact

Choose 2 or 4 from the following discussion points:

- Friendship
- Talents
- Interests
- Getting along together
- Makes needs known
- Resource
- Being a good friend
- Equal in friendship (sometimes leader, sometimes follower)
- Show caring behaviour
- Long lasting / enduring
- Good at:

Friends, families, teachers, co-workers, role models

308 3rd Feb 2007
4 Social skills and positive values (right and wrong)

What social skills and positive values do I have?

How does my home support my social skills and positive values?

How do other people in my life support my social skills and positive values?

How does my community support my social skills and positive values?

Choose a few from the following discussion points:

- Able to concentrate
- Understand others’ perspectives
- Taking responsibility for self
- Complies with rules
- Negotiate assertively (Neither passive or aggressive)
- Care for others
- Interested and curious
- Listen to others
- Role models
- Accept different point of view
- Problem solve
- Belief in own effectiveness
- Share with others
- Self-controlling behaviour
- Knows right from wrong
- Complete tasks
- Internalised moral code
What social skills and positive values do I have?

- Able to concentrate
- Understand others' perspectives
- Taking responsibility for self
- Complies with rules
- Negotiate assertively (Neither passive or aggressive)
- Care for others
- Interested and curious
- Listen to others
- Role models
- Accept different point of view
- Problem solving
- Belief in own effectiveness
- Share with others
- Self-controlling behaviour
- Knows right from wrong
- Complete tasks
- Internalised moral code

How does my home support my social skills and positive values?

How do other people in my life support my social skills and positive values?

How does my community support my social skills and positive values?

Social skills and positive values

Protective Factor

Risk Factor

Choose 1 risk factor and find some protective factors that may help, from the preceding pages.

This page may be printed and given to the child/young person as a record of the discussion.

Summary

Name

Date

COR Framework
CoR (Circles of Resilience) Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective Factor</th>
<th>How to use it</th>
<th>How will we know it has worked?</th>
<th>Who / When / Resources needed</th>
<th>Review date</th>
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Using the summary, devise an action plan that will be possible to achieve in the medium term i.e. 5-10 weeks