

## Case Study – Meath Green Infant School



### Project Title:

To provide a positive lunchtime experience for all children.

### Healthy Schools Theme:

Emotional Health and Wellbeing

### School Context:

Location: Meath Green Infant School, Horley, Surrey  
Number of Pupils: 269  
SAT Performance 2016/2017: Maths: 77.5%, Reading: 71.9%, Writing 66.3%.  
% of SEND: 4.8%  
% FSM/Disadvantaged Pupils: 7.4%

### Identified Priority:

- 1) Teaching and Middy staff reporting that some children were unhappy at lunchtime. Teachers reporting that this was having a negative impact on children's learning in the afternoon sessions.

During discussions at staff meetings, teachers reported that some children were returning from lunchtime either unhappy or upset. Teachers discussed how transition from lunchtime to lessons was often disturbed by need to resolve issues that have occurred at lunchtime. Furthermore, some issues were not communicated effectively between teacher and Middy Supervisor, which had left some teachers unaware of events which would need reporting to parents. In some cases, sensitive issues were discussed with teaching staff in front of children.

The teaching and Middy Supervisor teams agreed that issues needed to be resolved at lunchtime in order to maintain positive health and wellbeing throughout the whole of the school day, and for the children to start the afternoon sessions positively.

- 2) Some children reporting that they felt unhappy or unsafe at lunchtime.

The teachers conducted a whole school survey within their classes to gauge children's opinions on how they felt at lunchtimes. Teachers felt that if children were able to identify resources and activities that they enjoy playing with, they would be more likely to engage and enjoy lunchtimes. Questions were aimed at children's enjoyment of lunchtime, whether or not children felt safe, their engagement in resources and preferences of activities and equipment.

The results from the whole school survey indicated that:

- 8% of children felt unsafe at lunchtime
- 21% of children did not enjoy lunchtime
- 28% did not know what the problem solving and friendship benches were used for
- 61% of children said they had not used the playground equipment that day
- The children made lots of suggestions of how we could help improve lunchtime experiences, including resources and equipment.

As a result of the surveys, SLT, the teaching and Middy Supervisor team agreed that ensuring a positive lunchtime experience would immediately be a whole school priority.

- 3) Teaching staff and SLT observing that the lunch period within the hall was loud and appeared hectic at times. Middy Supervisors reporting an increase of behaviour incidents at lunchtime.

Teachers observed that at times when children were eating in the hall, it appeared that children's behaviour was not consistent with that displayed in the classroom. Middy Supervisors reported that children were loud, which created an unsettled atmosphere.

- 4) SLT and teaching staff observed that Middy Supervisors were not interacting with children as would be expected and Middy Supervisors felt unprepared for leading activities.

Whilst observing lunchtime, inside and outside, SLT and teaching staff reported that children were often left to play alone and opportunities were missed by Middy Supervisors to interact with children by leading games and activities. Discussions with Middy Supervisors indicated that they felt they would need more guidance on leading play activities.

#### **Outcomes:**

**Reflecting our whole school mission to inspire, challenge and encourage children to achieve, we feel that all children need to feel safe and enjoy all parts of the school day, including lunchtime.**

- 1) Complete a structured plan for lunchtimes to cover all aspects e.g. dining in the hall, play provision both outside and inside if wet.

All teaching staff and Middy Supervisors need to be aware and confident to use the resources effectively, both in the hall and in the outside areas. To achieve this, the Lead Middy Supervisor will gather ideas and evidence of successful projects at other schools. This will be accompanied by a review of current equipment and use of the outdoor areas. Following this, an organised rotation of activities will be implemented, ensuring that Middy Supervisors are upskilled and motivated to ensure the outcome. Provision which encourages children to feel safe and happy will need to be consistent for indoor and outdoor play, with a plan for allocation of Middy Supervisors to classrooms and communication with teachers for what resources are available during wet weather.

- 2) Children reporting that they enjoy the lunchtime experience

We need to ensure that children enjoy their lunchtime experience, both when eating in the hall and outside playing. In response to the issues mentioned, and to raise the profile of the lunchtime period across the whole school, the school have identified 'ensuring children have a positive lunchtime experience' as a priority on our School Development Plan. Children need to leave the classroom for lunch knowing that they will be kept safe and have an enjoyable experience. In order for the children to continue with their learning in the afternoon sessions, they need to return to the class in a calm and positive manner. This will be achieved through training the Middy Supervisors with how to deal with conflict and behaviour issues with confidence. As a result, communication between Middy Supervisors and teachers will be more positive and conducted with greater clarity. Teachers will promote positive lunchtime expectations as an extension of the classroom, by being more present at lunchtimes. Teachers will support by modelling positive play and interacting with children at lunchtime. A survey during the project will indicate children's improved experiences of lunchtimes.

- 3) A decrease in the number of behaviour incidents reported by the Middy Supervisors.

This will be achieved by training the Middy Supervisors in dealing with conflict and resolution. Middy Supervisors need to be confident in the whole school behaviour policy which is consistent with learning in the classroom and understand that less serious behaviour incidents are best dealt with immediately by intervention, rather than as a reaction. Additionally, by Middy Supervisors using their skills and equipment to keep children engaged, children are far more likely to interact positively. Teachers being more present at lunchtime will support the Middy Supervisors and model positive play to children. As a result, it is hoped that a decrease in behaviour incidents will occur.

- 4) An increase in the skills, confidence and job satisfaction of Middy Supervisors.

Effective communication between the Midday Supervisor and teaching teams needs to be regular. This will be achieved through organised meetings between SLT and the Midday Supervisor team, and regular contact between each Midday Supervisor and class teachers. The Lead Midday Supervisor will benefit from visiting other schools to research new ideas for positive lunchtimes and will work with SLT to implement these changes. In order for Midday Supervisors skills to be developed, a regular appraisal timetable will be set with specific targets. Within these appraisals and the regular meetings, suggestions will be encouraged from all Midday Supervisors of how to continue to achieve the identified priorities.

5) Positive start to the afternoon learning and teaching time.

The importance of starting the afternoon session in a positive way is imperative. This will be achieved through discussions between SLT and the Midday Supervisor team and will be modelled by all class teachers. Staff need to be aware that afternoon sessions need to start as quickly as possible, with minimal disruption. Midday Supervisors will understand the importance of dealing with minor behaviour incidents as quickly as possible, to ensure a swift transition to the classroom. The entrance and exit procedures between the class and the playground will be discussed and different routines will be trialled to ensure a quick start to the afternoon teaching sessions. Observations by SLT will indicate that transitions are managed effectively.

6) Research the play activities provided by other schools.

Many schools have identified lunchtimes as an area to develop. By visiting other schools, the Lead Midday Supervisor will understand the impact that positive lunchtimes have on children and the Midday Supervisor Team. Furthermore, suggestions by other schools as to suitable activities, routines and resources will increase the confidence of the Midday Supervisor team and consequently provide our children with a range of engaging and exciting activities.

### **Activities / Interventions:**

- 1) Complete a structured plan for lunchtimes to cover all aspects e.g. dining in the hall, play provision both outside and inside if wet.
  - Project Lead researched other schools' rota for indoor and outdoor play ideas and communicated with Lead Midday Supervisor.
  - Project Lead met with Abi Price (Active Surrey Consultant) to obtain guidance on running a lunchtime club. Using the guidance and template of PhysiFit (Active Surrey), Project Lead runs a weekly activity session ('Golden Ticket Friday') every Friday lunchtime. In addition to being a reward for positive behaviour at lunchtime during the week, the session teaches children a range of playground and active games that they can play on the playground at other times.
  - A timetable and a rota have been implemented which ensures Midday Supervisors are rotated through activities every day. All areas are used as much as possible, such as the Multi Use Games Area, School Fields, Adventure Playground and Quiet Areas.
  - A list of activities is communicated with each Midday Supervisor for every class.
  - Jenny Mosley 'Happy Lunchtime' books purchased. Many ideas have been used, such as 'Golden Table' Friday. Children are picked by the Midday Supervisor and Catering Team for positive lunchtime behaviour, such as showing good manners. These children then sit with the Headteacher to have their lunch, with special treats such as a golden table cloth and serviettes.
  - Other ideas implemented include presenting a birthday cake to children with birthdays, awarding stickers for those children who have shown good table manners, or finishing their dinner and presenting a table award for a whole table who interact positively whilst in the hall.
  - The Headteacher and Project Lead observed lunchtimes and the usage of different equipment.
- 2) Children reporting that they enjoy the lunchtime experience
  - Class surveys were conducted across the whole school before and during the project. Questions asked were; did you enjoy lunchtime today? How do you feel about lunchtime? Do you feel safe at lunchtime? Did you play with any equipment today? Do you know where the problem solving and friendship benches are? How could we improve lunchtimes at our school?
  - All Midday Supervisors were asked to report positive lunchtime behaviour in their hand over to class

- teachers in front of the children. Teachers and Midday Supervisors were to praise this behaviour.
- During the project, a survey was issued to all Midday Supervisors. This was to gauge whether they felt that behaviour incidents had reduced.
  - Teaching staff have lunch with the children once a week. They are to model good table manners and positive interactions. Following this, all teaching staff go outside to play with the children and model positive play.
  - Following the resource audit, the Headteacher and Project Lead met with the School and Eco Council. These representatives met with their classes to choose new and exciting playground equipment.
- 3) A decrease in the number of behaviour incidents reported by the Midday Supervisors.
- Regular discussions were held with the teaching team with regards to changes in behaviour incidents being reported.
  - SLT and the Project Lead held observations with specific focus on transition between lunchtimes and classroom time and entry and exit procedures.
  - Changes were made to the entry procedure to classes; no lining up.
  - Midday Supervisors were asked at meetings as to the effectiveness of the lunchtime 'Golden Ticket' club reward scheme
- 4) An increase in the skills, confidence and job satisfaction of Midday Supervisors.
- A questionnaire was issued to all Midday Supervisors which asked for their ideas and suggestions to improve the lunchtime experience for all.
  - These ideas formed the basis of the meeting between the Headteacher, Project Lead and Midday Supervisor team.
  - Two Midday Supervisors have attended the Babcock Positive Play course.
  - All new and existing Midday supervisors have completed an induction process, which includes a detailed induction and basic training. All midday Supervisors attend appraisals which outline their targets and measure their impact on the proposed project outcome.
  - SLT have met and have discussed with the Lead Midday Supervisor how different behaviour incidents should be dealt with to ensure consistency across the Midday Supervisor team.
- 5) Positive start to the afternoon learning and teaching time.
- All staff are aware that communication between Midday Supervisors and teaching staff in front of children is kept positive.
  - All staff are aware that any sensitive issues are discussed away from children.
  - Minor behaviour incidents are dealt with at lunchtime and only incidents that are of more serious nature need be reported to teachers.
  - All children thank their Midday Supervisor for their help before they leave the classroom.
- 6) Research the play activities provided by other schools.
- Project Lead and Lead Midday Supervisor visited another local school to research more ideas on how other schools create a positive lunchtime experience.
  - Headteacher, Project Lead and Lead Midday Supervisor met to discuss an action plan of ideas to introduce at our own school.
  - New ideas have been implemented such as; playing quiet and calming music in the hall during lunchtime to promote a safe and calm atmosphere for all.
  - One child per year group is asked to be a 'kitchen helper' for the week. They wear a chef's hat and apron and are responsible for helping the kitchen serve the food and the staff to clear plates. Children who struggle with less structured activities are given this opportunity.

#### **Impact:**

- Project Lead researched other schools' rota for indoor and outdoor play ideas and communicated with Lead Midday Supervisor – **guidance included the promotion of Jenny Moseley's book which was used to implement ideas listed below.**

- Project Lead met with Abi Price (Active Surrey Consultant) to obtain guidance on running a lunchtime club. Using the guidance and template of PhysiFit (Active Surrey), Project Lead runs a weekly activity session ('Golden Ticket Friday') every Friday lunchtime. In addition to being a reward for positive behaviour at lunchtime during the week, the session teaches children a range of playground and active games that they can play on the playground at other times – **this club had a big impact on a specific group of children in Year Two who were consistently demonstrating negative behaviour at lunchtimes. They were highly motivated to get the Golden Ticket and many got their ticket every week. This meant that they were interacting much more positively during all lunchtimes, in order to get their ticket.**
- A timetable and a rota have been implemented which ensures Midday Supervisors are rotated through activities every day. All areas are used as much as possible, such as the Multi Use Games Area, School Fields, Adventure Playground and Quiet Areas – **when possible, all areas are now being used. This allows children more space and reduce pressure points, engaging all children.**
- A list of activities is communicated with each Midday Supervisor for every class – **Midday Supervisors are now clear on what activities children can use when the weather is poor.**
- Jenny Mosley 'Happy Lunchtime' books purchased. Many ideas have been used, such as 'Golden Table' Friday. Children are picked by the Midday Supervisor and Catering Team for positive lunchtime behaviour, such as showing good manners. These children then sit with the Headteacher to have their lunch, with special treats such as a golden table cloth and serviettes – **children are always very excited about 'Golden Table' and the Headteacher has commented how children are showing improved table manners.**
- Other ideas implemented include presenting a birthday cake to children, awarding stickers for those children who have shown good table manners, or finishing their dinner and presenting a table award for a whole table who interact positively whilst in the hall – **children have commented that this has made their lunchtime special. This also gives the Midday Supervisors opportunity to promote a collective atmosphere within the hall.**
- The Headteacher and Project Lead observed lunchtimes and the usage of different equipment – **it was identified that not all available equipment was being used, and if it was, it was often not being used effectively. This led to further discussions with the Lead Midday Supervisor to highlight the importance of variety in order to engage children.**
- Class surveys were conducted across the whole school before the project and during the project. Questions asked were; Did you enjoy lunchtime today? How do you feel about lunchtime? Do you feel safe at lunchtime? Did you play with any equipment today? Do you know where the problem solving and friendship benches are? How could we improve lunchtimes at our school? – **every response showed a dramatic improvement from the baseline survey. 100% of children said they feel safe at lunchtime, with 98% said they had enjoyed lunchtime today. 84% said they had played with equipment (23% increase) and the children came up with some fantastic suggestions of how to improve lunchtimes. These were then fed back to school council and new equipment was purchased.**
- All Midday Supervisors were asked to report positive lunchtime behaviour in their hand over to class teachers in front of the children. Teachers and Midday Supervisors were to praise this behaviour – **Midday Supervisors now do this and understand the impact it has on teaching classes in the afternoon. This collective praise approach outlines the importance of the teaching staff and Midday Supervisor team working closely.**
- During the project, a survey was issued to all Midday Supervisors. This was to gauge whether they felt that behaviour incidents has reduced – **during appraisals, many had felt that lunchtimes had improved, and reported that they preferred working in the hall and on the playground with children.**
- Teaching staff have lunch with the children once a week. They are to model good table manners and positive interactions. Following this, all teaching staff go outside to play with the children and model positive play – **teaching staff and the children really enjoy this opportunity. Not only does it demonstrate support for the Midday Supervisors, but it also allows teachers to interact with children in a less formal environment and build relationships by modelling positive play.**
- Following the resource audit, the Headteacher and Project Lead met with the School and Eco Council - **these representatives met with their classes to choose new and exciting playground equipment. New equipment purchased using Sports Premium funding, including Pom-Poms, hoops, balls and catching games.**

- Regular discussions were held with the teaching team with regards to changes in behaviour incidents being reported – **all teachers have reported a decrease in behaviour incidents at lunchtime.**
- SLT and the Project Lead held observations with specific focus on transition between lunchtimes and classroom time and entry and exit procedures - **changes were made to the entry procedure to classes; no lining up. This allows for a quicker transition to class and less waiting time.**
- Midday Supervisors were asked at meetings as to the effectiveness of the lunchtime ‘Golden Ticket’ club reward scheme – **Midday Supervisors have agreed that this has been a successful intervention and would like the reward to be used across other groups as well as Year Two.**
- A questionnaire was issued to all Midday Supervisors which asked for their ideas and suggestions to improve the lunchtime experience for all - **in order to demonstrate that their ideas are valued, these ideas formed the basis of the meeting between the Headteacher, Project Lead and Midday Supervisor team. Many of these changes were put in place, or are in the process of.**
- Two Midday Supervisors have attended the Babcock Positive Play course – **these staff have reported that they feel more confident in providing and leading games which will inspire and engage children. Additionally, this allows them to model these games to other members of staff.**
- All new and existing Midday supervisors have completed an induction process, which includes a detailed induction and basic training. All midday Supervisors attend appraisals which outline their targets and measure their impact on the proposed project outcome – **this has allowed the Headteacher time to communicate the high expectations of the school and promote the importance of creating a positive lunchtime experience to all staff.**
- SLT have met and discussed with the Lead Midday Supervisor how different behaviour incidents should be dealt with to ensure consistency across the Midday Supervisor team – **only more serious behaviour incidents are reported to class teachers.**
- All staff are aware that communication between Midday Supervisors and teaching staff in front of children is kept positive – **this ensures that children start the afternoon in a positive way and that we are looking to reward positive behaviour throughout the whole school day.**
- All staff are aware that any sensitive issues are discussed away from children – **this allows the teacher to use their judgement as to whether/what best next steps need to be taken.**
- Minor behaviour incidents are dealt with at lunchtime and only incidents that are of more serious nature need be reported to teachers – **this has meant that teaching time is increased and children are aware that Midday Supervisors are consistent and confident in dealing with issues.**
- All children thank their Midday Supervisor for their help before they leave the classroom – **this creates an atmosphere of appreciation and builds relationships between the class and their Midday Supervisor.**
- Project Lead and Lead Midday Supervisor visited another local school to research more ideas on how other schools create a positive lunchtime experience - **Headteacher, Project Lead and Lead Midday Supervisor met to discuss an action plan of ideas to introduce at our own school. New ideas have been implemented such as; playing quiet and calming music in the hall during lunchtime to promote a safe and calm atmosphere for all; zones for activities outside to ensure that equipment does not get mixed up and areas are more suited to the activity.**
- One child per year group is asked to be a ‘kitchen helper’ for the week. They wear a chef’s hat and apron and are responsible for helping the kitchen serve the food and the staff to clear plates. Children who struggle with less structured activities are given this opportunity - **these children have really enjoyed the new responsibility.**

### **Next Steps:**

Following the most recent meeting with Midday Supervisors, it has been suggested that we introduce ‘zones’ to our playground. With consultation with the Headteacher, Sports Premium funding will be used to mark off specific areas for children to participate in activities.

To continue to maintain the emphasis on supporting emotional health and wellbeing for children in our school, the school continue to raise the profile of PSHE. The school have purchased and implemented a new scheme of work to be used across the whole school.

**Senior Leader Quote:**

The Healthy Schools project, 'To Provide a Positive Lunchtime Experience for all Children' has had a positive impact on the whole school, including children, teachers, midday supervisors and SLT.

As SLT, we have seen less behaviour incidents reported to us at lunchtime. The incidents that do occur are mostly dealt with by midday supervisors, who appear more confident when doing so.

Observations of the hall while children are eating, show that they are calmer, helped by music and the children's manners are improving, supported by the midday supervisors.

On the playground, midday supervisors are engaging more with the children and using the new equipment more regularly. Some midday supervisors also engage children with different games, modelling how the equipment should be used.

The outcomes of the project are now becoming embedded in lunchtimes and improvements continue to be made where necessary to maintain children's health and wellbeing.

We are extremely pleased with the outcomes of the project and how they have benefited the children and staff in school.

Nicola Edwards

Assistant Head