

Primary case study example

Year 4 boy (pseudonym James) was not attending school for ten months. The professional network used the recovery model and WARMTH approach to support him. James is now in Year 6 and attending each day, for part of the day. The below table describes the steps involved in each aspect of the recovery model with reference to the WARMTH approach.

Recognition and acceptance of burnout:

- Professional network acknowledged significant emotional challenges James was experiencing related to school and developed shared understanding of his lived experience and shared responsibility (*mutual understanding*).

Adjustment of expectations:

- Short-term agreement to reduce pressure of attending school and set up regular multi-agency consultations including James' parents and school to develop targets, actions, and reviews that focus on his wellbeing as a priority (*wellbeing first*).
- The consultations were regular and consistent (consultations took place in summer holidays too) which was central to measuring small steps of progress, adjusting plans and maintaining a shared understanding and goal (*timely response*).

Rest and recuperation:

- Assistant EP made weekly visits to James to engage in enjoyable activities at home and building up to activities in the community. Some of these activities were related to developing his confidence, resilience and wellbeing (*wellbeing first*).

Reconnecting and building trust:

- James' TA began to join some of the visits with the Assistant EP to develop a positive rapport, and James' teacher sent frequent postcards/letters home to update him on what was happening in class.
- All actions that were agreed were consistently put in place to build trust between James, family and school (*relational approach*).
- James began to re-engage in learning outside of the classroom initially using an AV1 robot. This developed his confidence and sense of belonging in class before he was ready to enter himself (*relational approach*).

Exploration and learning from what happened:

- There was a commitment to understand James' perspective and ensure this was central to decision making. The professional network explored protective and risk factors contributing to James' anxiety about school (*mutual understanding*).
- This involved supporting James to understand his diagnoses of ADHD and support the family to pursue an autism assessment (*affirming practice*).
- In all support, James was seen as a whole child, not just an EBSA case. Other factors such as a bereavement was considered and supported through counselling (*holistic support*).
- Strengths and interests were considered such as a friend in school which supported a sense of belonging and James' interest in music as a motivating factor (*holistic support*).
- Once James was feeling a sense of psychological safety, developed positive rapport with key staff, and showed willingness to learn, a plan was created to learn from what happened and consider next steps.

Secondary case example

Year 11 girl (pseudonym Sarah) was not attending school for one year. Regular multi-agency meetings were held between school staff, Virtual School (VS) Case Manager, Specialist Support Worker (SSW) and Educational Psychologist (EP) to develop a plan using the recovery and WARMTH models. It's still early days, but the YP has started to increasingly engage in support.

Recognition and acceptance of burnout:

- Repeated cycles of assess, plan, do, review had taken place between school and home to support reintegration. (*mutual understanding*).
- Despite strong parental engagement and school's efforts, Sarah found it very difficult to attend. She was experiencing high levels of anxiety about school and despite the plan each evening to attend, she had only been in three days in the term. (*mutual understanding*).

Adjustment of expectations:

- Professional network discussed achievable and relevant targets for Sarah to achieve by the end of Year 11 which focused on increased structures and routines at home and sitting and achieving at least some of her GCSEs. (*mutual understanding*).
- There was recognition amongst the professional network to reduce the expectations of attending school and explore alternative avenues to meet the targets agreed. (*wellbeing first*)
- Regular meetings between VS advisor, school, SSW, and family were agreed to develop and review actions towards the agreed targets in liaison with Sarah. (*timely response*)

Rest and recuperation:

- A weekly timetable was created to develop structures around healthy habits at home, with SSW supporting the family. (*wellbeing first*)
- The timetable included downtime to engage in grounding, regulatory activities and Sarah's sessions with the Child Psychologist supported with activities related to this. (*wellbeing first*)

Reconnecting and building trust:

- The timetable included time to meet with a key adult each week to develop a positive relationship – this was focused on a wellbeing check, reviewing the timetable, responding to potential challenges, and developing a plan for the following week. (*relational approach*)
- Conversations also focused on her aspirations for post-16, using the PfA areas. (*holistic support*).
- Given Sarah is academically able, and motivated to do well in her learning, Sarah's timetable included time to engage in her core subjects at home and she had regular feedback from her teachers. Sarah reported that knowing she wasn't expected to go back to school, allowed her to feel increasingly able to engage in this learning (as best she could). (*holistic support*).
- There was also planned time for Sarah to engage in social activities. For example, a youth-group related to Quakers as this was important to her. (*holistic support*).
- Once she was feeling increasingly able, discussions began for an agreed time for Sarah to attend an aspect of school that is the least anxiety inducing (e.g. RAG rating her school day and choosing a green rated time). This was not educational, but an opportunity for her to spend time in school and experience lower levels of anxiety to increase her confidence and enjoyment of being in the school setting. This is still in the planning stage. (*wellbeing first*).

Exploration and learning from what happened:

- Information was gathered within the professional network to understand Sarah's strengths and challenges. Within the first month, Sarah had increasingly followed the timetable (above) with some small setbacks as would be expected. The next steps are to continue to support Sarah in following the timetable and targets and then consider plans to support the transition to Post-16. (*holistic support*)

Case study examples of embedding the WARMTH and Recovery models

Secondary case example

Year 9 pupil (pseudonym Leo) had recently moved to the school but was not exhibiting good attendance. He had moved between a number of schools, having lived in different areas had also been excluded from one. On beginning in his new school his attendance was sporadic and Leo was communicating that he didn't see the point in coming to school. A request for support was made to the Educational Psychologist (EP) to help school staff to identify strategies to improve his engagement with education and attendance at school.

Recognition and acceptance of burnout:

- In this instance Leo's non-attendance didn't seem to be underpinned by burnout related to school but in fact multiple experiences of rejection from education and exclusion (*mutual understanding*).
- Although Leo had not been attending for long it was felt that it would be useful to involve the EP and work on a plan to improve his attendance before this dropped even further (*timely response*).

Adjustment of expectations:

- On speaking with Leo it became clear that his motivation to attend school was only underpinned by a desire to leave school as quickly as possible. A discussion with Leo and school staff was undertaken to try and identify vocational learning that he could complete alongside/instead of school to help him see the purpose of education (*holistic support*).
- School staff worked with the EP to explore the experiences of rejection Leo had experienced at home and in school, and through doing so could apply a more empathic response towards him and the behaviours he was displaying (*wellbeing first*).
- It was decided that any decision making would need to include Leo as he had already lost a lot of trust in adults. Weekly updates about support and any decisions being made about his home situations were agreed (*mutual understanding*).

Rest and recuperation:

- It was identified that although Leo was not feeling motivated about school his mental health and well-being were not primarily of concern. Actions instead were devised around meeting his learning needs and supporting him to develop regulation strategies. It was decided that Leo would complete a writing intervention with a member of school staff to increase his proficiency and support him in feeling confident to attend lessons where he would be required to write. Speaking with Leo a plan was also agreed upon which would be used at times when he felt he may overreact to a situation (*wellbeing first*).
- Leo's sleep was of concern as he identified often feeling too tired to come into school until the afternoon. A pastoral member of staff agreed to work with him on devising a plan to address his sleep cycle (*wellbeing first*).

Reconnecting and building trust:

- Leo began engaging well with his literacy intervention so the member of staff working with him on this began to spend more time with him, finding him for check-ins during the day and meeting him when he arrived in school (*relational approach*).
- Adults in school supported Leo's desire to move into vocational learning quickly and explored different options for him once he finished in school so that he knew the pathway he wanted to take (*holistic support*).
- Through involving Leo in decisions he built up trust with a range of adults and was able to open up about other situations at home which seemed to be reinforcing his non-attendance in school, and which could be addressed (*holistic support*).

Exploration and learning from what happened:

- Through recognising the relationships that Leo was building with members of school staff adults could support him to accept challenges and recognise with him the successes that he was experiencing. He was also able to open up about other worries which could be addressed which all contributed to his attendance increasing. He is now much more positive about school (*holistic support*).