

Social pedagogy in children's residential care: DCSF pilot programme

Professor Pat Petrie, September 2009

Inspired by the social pedagogic approach in continental children's residential care this pilot programme aims to develop and implement similar methods in residential children's homes in England. The project is being implemented by the Thomas Coram Research Unit. The evaluation of the approach will be the subject of a separate project by an independent organisation, yet to be appointed.

In association with Jacaranda Recruitment and advised by a group of national and international experts, the project builds on existing knowledge of staffing and practice in residential care, and existing knowledge of introducing social pedagogy into children's services in England and the UK.

The pilot utilizes international professional networks to recruit and support around Danish and German pedagogues to work in England, as well as taking account of pedagogues already employed in this country. In two contrasting regions of England, around 30 children's homes will be studied, representing different kinds of homes and the demographic contexts in which they are located.

The children's homes will fall into one of four categories: i) they already have social pedagogues working in them; ii) they recruit at least two social pedagogues from abroad to fill vacancies; iii) they recruit two social pedagogues to work as social pedagogues and in a practice development and networking capacity; or iv) they are comparison homes, which are happy to be evaluated alongside the children's homes in the other three groups. Two project workers, themselves German social pedagogues, have been appointed to the team to provide support to the pedagogues recruited.

For further background information, including definitions of social pedagogy, TCRU research over the last ten years and references, see LAC 9.xb (also at http://eprints.ioe.ac.uk/58/1/may_18_09_Ped_BRIEFING_PAPER_JB_PP_.pdf)

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