

My life with the Surrey Care Trust

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Mark Wedden  
from the School  
Inclusion team,  
supporting  
young people  
in school

“I do a lot of listening”



**M**y work involves working in four schools offering intensive support to pupils who are struggling in school and have been highlighted as needing this service.

Being male, a lot of my clients are chosen due to the fact that they have no or limited experience of a positive male role model, hence mostly boys.

The issues that arise are mainly anger and frustration. They feel that teachers and supporting staff do not understand their issues.

I offer a service that is non-judgemental, honest, confidential and safe.

By not being a teacher, I can give them quality time that encourages them to explore these issues and not put pressure or demands on them.

Many people have asked me “How do evaluate or quantify your effectiveness?”

The simple answer is “I can’t”.

What I do know is, that the young people have told me that it gives them a chance and opportunity to talk and express their feelings and

“get things off their chest”. This is the reason why I do, and enjoy my job. I went through a tough time at school myself and would have greatly benefitted from this kind of support.

Their attendance is consistent, and I gauge my effectiveness by this.

Not all the young people respond. Maybe they don’t like or trust me, or it is not the right time for them to receive help and advice. My training has equipped me with the skills to deal with this and to not take it personally.

The joy and pleasure for me is when, as happened recently, a pupil walked in to the session wearing a strange coloured tie. I asked why he was wearing it and he said that the school had recognised a vast improvement in his attitude and behaviour and had awarded him by making him a prefect. He was made up that I was made up.

He is working towards being a physiotherapist, but the downside is that he supports Reading!

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