

Notes from meeting with Forensic CAMHS 21.1.20

John Hicklin Clinical Nurse Specialist FCAMHS

Sarah Loughrin CAMHS Criminal Justice

Steph Halloran CAMHS Criminal Justice

Anna Jameson Social Worker

Julie Hamill Family Worker

Jo Hodson Deputy Head The Acorns School

Apologies sent from Scott Morgan Sefton CAMHS

Meeting opened with Steph H describing the incident on 11th December, whereby Axel had arrived at Range High School and assaulted a pupil. He had taken a hockey stick and knife to the school with the intention of using it on another pupil, MK. Steph stated that she had interviewed him straight after the incident and Axel had described his intentions towards the other child MK. She said that she could understand the rationale behind his actions, given that he said that MK had been bullying him (even though it was still the wrong thing to do). However, she was very concerned because the child that he had assaulted was someone that he liked. Axel had stated that he had assaulted him because he knew he was going to be arrested, so he might as well. Steph H then described the assault as severe, and said the child was very lucky not to have been seriously hurt. It was only because he had put his hand up to save himself that he had not been more seriously injured.

Jo H said that the police had described the CCTV footage as being a serious attack.

John H asked whether there were concerns that MK had not actually been bullying Axel. Jo H confirmed this and said that there had been similar concerns at The Acorns. Axel had accused another learner of bullying him and Dad had phoned and repeated the claims "just like the other boy". Staff had been particularly vigilant and had not picked up on any bullying. On speaking to Axel again it turned out that he objected to the other child telling him to put his apron on in cookery. Axel had also been targeting certain members of staff and a meeting had been held about this just before the final incident. Jo H described his rising levels of agitation in the days before the incident.

At this point Anna J and Julie H arrived at the meeting. John H asked for people to go round the table and introduce themselves.

He described the work that his team does. They consider higher risk and offending behaviour, this was a professionals meeting. Following this he would decide whether their service would be able to offer anything and whether it was necessary to meet with Axel and his family.

John H then turned to Jo H and said I've been thinking about what you said before, I don't have a crystal ball, none of us have! We can't say whether he's likely to offend again. There are kids who have carried out serious offences, they still have a right to an education. Jo H replied that might be so, but she wasn't prepared to explain to a parent why a child at our school has been seriously injured.

Steph H then repeated her concerns from his initial interview, that the child he had assaulted had been someone Axel liked, and that there was no reason for the assault on that child. That was why she had referred to Forensic CAMHs.

Steph H then updated the meeting on the involvement of other agencies. Prevent had interviewed Axel, but had no concerns about radicalisation. All of Axel's devices had been seized, but it was likely to be 2-3 months before analysis was completed. CPS had not yet made a decision about prosecution. However, because Axel had been arrested on lower S47 charge, the outcome was likely to be a conditional order with one YOT meeting or NFA. Steph spoke about the family's experiences in Rwanda and that some family members had been killed. Axel is not concerned about this as he states that he did not know them anyway. John H asked whether there was any mental illness in the parents, or any evidence of PTSD. It was stated that there was not.

Anna J and Julie H then updated on the Social Services assessment. Following the Strategy meetings the family are on a Section 17 CIN plan. Social Services have no concerns, Mum and Dad are working with them, he does not present with any difficulties at home. Jo H stated that Mum and Dad were managing him through negotiation, the other professionals said that this was normal for parents of teenagers. There are concerns about Axel's relationship with his older brother, Dion. Dion uses a wheelchair, [DPA] Axel considers him to be a fraud [DPA] but Anna J stated that Axel [DPA] presents as ASD. Steph H also agreed that this was how he presented in her interview with him.

John H then asked about an ASD diagnosis and whether there was an EHCP. Jo H shared that Range High School had referred Axel onto the ASD pathway in August, and Jo H had also referred him before the incident in December. She described his admissions meeting when she had asked him why he had brought a knife on multiple occasions into Range High. When asked why Axel had replied "To use it", his thinking was very literal. She described the frustration of trying to engage with other agencies before the incident in December. Again John H repeated that there were no crystal balls and that he would offer a £5 bet to anyone who could say what was going to happen next. He said that Axel clearly needed some sort of specialist provision with ongoing therapy and social stories. "But unfortunately, you've been left holding the baby!"

Steph H said that she had asked the ASD service to put Axel on the cancellation list, and he was due to see them early this year. However, the pathway to diagnosis could still take some time.

John H asked about support for parents. Jo H said they were accessing parenting 2000 via Sefton, but it was agreed that this was generic rather than specific for ASD. John H mentioned a course "Riding the Rapids" but this needed an ASD diagnosis. Anna J suggested that parents could access this [DPA] [DPA] rather than waiting for Axel to be diagnosed.

Jo H stated that she had concerns that the Strategy Meeting had decided that the Request for Statutory Assessment (RSA) would be made via parental request. The EHCP process is long and drawn out and this potentially will delay it further. Julie H agreed that parental requests could be weak because they try to present the best picture possible, rather than the true extent of the problems. Anna J then suggested that an RSA be coordinated via Social Services, with input from all the agencies involved.

Jo H and Steph H then said that they were concerned that the ASD diagnosis would take a long time, the RSA, EHCP and identification of specialist provision would also take a long time. Sefton CAMHs had done some initial work, but there were no underlying mental health issues identified, so

they were only planning a short intervention. This meant that Axel could be left high and dry with no services supporting him.

John H was concerned that Axel would become frustrated by being cooped up in the house all day, and this could lead to another incident. He pointed out that Axel was only 13 and had a right to an education. Jo H pointed out that she had other students and staff to consider. Axel was bright and articulate and all his actions on that day had been pre-meditated, even to the extent of contacting MK's sister and booking the taxi the day before. Mum had agreed to hide all the knives from him at home after the first incident at The Range, yet he had still managed to obtain one and take it with him in December, along with a modified hockey stick. It hadn't been a spur of the moment, impulse decision.

Anna J said that she had been directed by the Strategy Meeting to carry out a Risk Assessment, but she didn't think she could do this, it should be education. Jo H pointed out that Anna had been asked to do a Risk Assessment just in regards to a tutor visiting Axel at home. Anna's response was "Oh, yes, he'll be fine doing that".

John H said that he needed structure and a robust education package with other services supporting him.

Jo H left the meeting at this point.