Interview Recording Ronnie 22-09-21

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**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

people, kids, suppose, staff, ddp, support, [Consultant A], relationships, team, wee, feel, important, nice, therapy, interested, culture, bit, genuinely, behaviour, work

00:02 - Interviewer

should be afraid to press up. So if we start then about beginning then intend to work what works or what has worked in the past, but what could he have currently what would be the things that you pick out?

00:18 - Interviewee

so so the DDP approach is kinda the big thing for here isn't it? And so as I don't, I just wanted, sorry, I'm going to waffle, but I just want to run through PACE but I suppose it is that sort of group of people here who high in empathy or under not understand that have a knowledge of and some kind of understanding of what the kids have been through and and that looking to, looking to build the relationships, up that engagement and openness. And just that willingness to spend time and get to know them and it not all been about behaviour, and yes, and no and prevention from doing whatever that risky behaviour, but actually focus on them and get to know them and, I don't know, I'm going to ask you a question now. If you feel that certainly, the first thing that I felt was that lovingness. And that was obviously a long time ago, but I still feel it within [org] certainly is that there's a lot of love and I think that's one of the things that work... practical stuff. I mean, I suppose repetition, I suppose in that high structure, and hopefully that, a bit of common language, where we are talking about safety and obviously, again, loving, loving the child or being there for them. And it's not about rejecting them, but some of the behaviour not acceptable... And that's, hopefully it's that repetition the those safe boundaries and that structure, I suppose. Yeah.

02:03 - Interviewer

So there's loads in that to unpick actually. So the first thing we read means because obviously you mentioned the DDP model there. But from that what you sprung into on what it sounded like to me, was that that our staff here who want to develop relationships with children are open to that. Do you think then that it's the type of training that you have DDP or other training here that allows the staff to be like that? Or do you think you attract a certain type of staff member or a mixture of those things?

02:40 - Interviewee

Probably a mixture. Because you get people that naturally, instinctively, are that way, and they look to make connections with the kids before they start being like, stop. No, don't do that and becoming more behavioural.. But I do think for a lot of people just really how we're raised isn't it you do something wrong, you've been grounded I'm guessing? I'd have been the same and yeah or something would have been removed from you or you weren't going to get your computer or some, you weren't allowed out to play with your pals or they weren't allowed in, something along those lines. So it's something that I suppose you tailor. So yes, some people are naturally gifted that way. And others it's abit of a learning process, I suppose.

03:29 - Interviewer

Different way of approaching it. Yeah. Yeah. And to that learning process is that when you mean when you start with DDP the way that that has been done, has helped with that

03:41 - Interviewee

I sort of think, the training is part of it, but I think there also needs to be the right, the right culture to help people develop, and it not being, a, that sort of blame culture when something goes wrong, people make mistakes, people's buttons get pushed, you're in high intensity situations with the kids, sometimes. And they, things can go wrong, I suppose. But it's no, it's having that supportive environment and culture, I suppose. And openness with each other. And because that's the big thing for DDP as well. It's not something you switch on and off with the kids. It's the way of being. So actually, I so I'm gonna try and be like that everybody, which is the kids but my team and hopefully you can do that in a nice, gentle, professional way to help people feel safe to have the discussions Yeah. And and make suggestions in how we go about different and actually... Just identify your own triggers and different strategies and what works for you and I get everybody's relationships different, different dynamic to how people respond to different people and there's so many variables in it all but you'll typical be able to find, and it may not be the same thing, like what you have in common with your dancing ability with [one of the children], for instance, isn't how I've made my connections with him! So it's just help and support them to find a common thought or a common denominator from which you can start to build in some time... There's so many.

04:31 - Interviewer

Yeah, but yes. And as I suppose as soon as one of the things with this research, that means it that overwhelmed with a main idea of [inaudible] that is. But it's interesting that you mentioned a culture there. So I now wonder what is the culture, see if you were to try and pin down what it is or what it's trying to be? Or, you know, how would you go about defining that? What is it that's as the culture here?

05:40 - Interviewee

So... So I suppose that's different for me the now right, because I was moved over into [bungalow 2] obviously, which part of the issue was the culture in there I suppose. Yeah, yeah. And that's why I've moved. So it's maybe better if I speak about [bungalow 1] And then because that's probably the hopes that I would have, it is the hopes that I have, I don't know why I said probably... the hopes that I would have for the team in [bungalow 2].. And so I think it's so it's about being supportive, being open and being honest with each other. It's being engaging, it's as every, it's just from the moment like, from the moment I come in, I'll offer to make everyone's Tea in the morning, I'll ask how everybody is, if there is anything that I need to know about, is is the support that they're looking for in place, it's the first thing I do every day, and hopefully that filters down to everybody and they feel that, and certainly, I had really positive feedback, from the [Consultant A] session the other day. And certainly, I feel like that was kinda established so I didn't feel like, there's always moments and there's always somebody can get something's there. They've had a bad day they've reacted to somebody and... but I always felt that in [bungalow 1], there's a a relaxed approach to wanting to support each other when, when we're struggling, like the team meetings, that would never be your right. People just want to pick fault and then it all becomes a bit what's wrong. Yeah. And instead, you need to flip that and be like, Alright, here's an issue. What can we do best to try and support, support that or improve that and typically it'll be around about the kids and how we best support that. And it's about, I don't know, I just feel like, if you've got a team that's functioning really well, they actually will become very creative and there's, different ideas, some will work, some won't , but it's always about well, we are trying and yeah, we keep trying to improve things. And that's kinda how I felt it was going in [bungalow 1] and hopefully I've started that process in [bungalow 2].

07:48 - Interviewer

Yeah. And is that do you think? Is that something that you've been developing that approach to? How you do things? Or is that something that you've kind of brought here just as part of who you are as a man?

08:06 - Interviewee

I don't know, some of that's obviously how I am and how I want to be, like my management style to be in stuff but a lot I think probably has been how DDP's... brushed off on me - you get my meaning? And, and yeah, the effects of that and actually, it's just a nicer way to go about things, I think, because I've had many different managers in my time here. And some have been more authori... authoritarian and stuff and never how I felt. It's not what got the best out of me. Yeah, certainly. I So, I think so What Yeah, it's different manager's styles, a third, maybe me and then a third DDP approach

08:45 - Interviewer

yeah. And that's really approaches. And what you're describing, one of the things is coming across from you, which I find really interesting here, as this cultural place where, you know, mistakes are accepted and can be, things can be explored and had no idea. I don't even know how to describe as we open as something I keep thinking about here where that comes up for people, you know that we get things wrong sometimes, and that's fine. And we can talk about that. And it's no blame thing. It's more about, well, what can we learn from that? And how can we move on? Yeah, I'm just wondering, is that always been the culture here? Or is that is that something that's actively worked at is that what? DDP happens a lot of work places aren't like that?

09:37 - Interviewee

It's not always felt like that No, okay. No, one's really short is probably not always felt like that. It just depends on management styles and stuff, I suppose. And what period that's, because at one point, you know, halfway through my time here, the place was kind of overhauled a bit. Yeah, and I think that I don't know, made everybody panic and stuff. And I mean, there's been people here for years that were all leaving and things and just the shake up. In general, I would say yes, but there was a time there where it was really tough. People probably wouldn't have felt like that.

10:16 - Interviewer

So it's been worked at then that to create,

10:19 – Interviewee

and that, and that. So that was seven years ago. So quite a significant period where that's been something that's been worked on. Yeah,

10:28 - Interviewer

yeah, time to time here. Yeah, culture. The other thing is, it's kind of coming through for me in what you're saying is this, because you're talking about how you work with staff, you're talking about DDP as well. And I'm just wondering about that. As a manager, then or as a team of managers, are you doing something similar with staff that you would expect to be doing with doing the children I don't mean in terms of you know?

10:59 - Interviewee

So I say it's one of these, right, cause I actually didn't know, like the word playfulness because it sounds childlike and just a bit infantile, like you play... But actually, it's the same kind of stuff though, because you just engage with them in a different way. And it's Yeah, I'm happy see everybody I come in in a positive frame of mind. Like I said, What needs discussed how things have been, I'm wanting to make sure everyone is alright, do you want a cup of tea. And, and that sort of stuff. So it's just yeah, it's just done a different way, I suppose. It's not necessarily playing with toys or being out and playing tig or something together but it's using that positive engagement with a staff team and accepting their feelings, all that's still the same, the high levels of empathy because certainly for me, like I've always loved it here. But I also remember how hard it was working shifts, working longer hours at weekends and especially and that's been tricky or there's a new kid in or that's why like it's genuine like I genuinely know, how hard it can be and want to support the team through that, so yeah, and the Curiosity is already there and what's going on and how they are, how the team is and what we can do. Yeah, better, I suppose what's been going well, it's always someone to remember what's been going well to try and... Because it can be difficult and you need to thrive off every little one that you get I think

12:30 - Interviewer

eh? Yeah, absolutely. And I’ve certainly seen the handover meetings a playful I think there's a lot of play goes on there, a lot of banter, a, it's Yeah, feels good to be in it actually, you know, we've all come in and know each other well, and they seem genuinely happy to see each other as well. So yeah, I think playfulness probably has been we've been all he told us, maybe we try something and I do like a game. And yeah, so so that's him so there's that's been one of the things you mentioned. Do you know you're genuinely interested in supporting the staff and making this kinda environment for them as well? genuineness is a thing that's coming up again and again. Folk that are genuinely interested in these kids genuinely interested in the well-being of the staff, genuinely invested in the work, Where is that coming from here do you think?

13:25 - Interviewee

[inaudible] that they're working in care and caring as, like something that they value or a quality that they have innate in people that want to work in this area, I suppose. But yeah, I don't know. Don't know, is it just, I mean, and again, hopefully it is just hopefully is everything, hopefully it's the way that they've been greeted from the very beginnings of their time here for the staff. And it feeds through and hopefully some of that is top down it is part of the induction and the time spent with them to and certainly I can say folks names and that I take it? [Yeah I'll take them out] And I mean certainly like [one of the workers] who's just started, her feedback has been like I didn't know this existed almost like people actually caring and spending time and some of that was about her diabetes and what we spoke about the risk assessment for her. I think she, her first reaction was oh, I could do the job like there's nothing preventing me and was on the defensive I mean, I was we were trying to explain it as we know it's just going to be about highlighting to the team like what it looks like if your blood sugars are low or if you go quiet for instance. So what to look for and where your medicines held and stuff as about protecting and it's supporting you but her first reaction was, was to be like, Oh no, no like I can do this, you're not stopping me from doing this job. But then we had the [Consultant A] session and that was a focus on the team and using DDP with each other and I think she was just shocked. I mean, she stated she was shocked that time was spent aside from, I don't know, you're core hours or your actual work to just check in with each other and check in and how the teams functioning and then have a focus on that culture. And where we were at and how people were doing and meeting the values that we agreed as a team or whatever.

15:29 - Interviewer

Yeah, yeah, and sometimes not as well, because it's no, certainly, you know, I've spoken to [Consultant A], we now is going to do definite folk as well . No, you just do your training. And now it's you you've got the there's an ongoing structure revisiting as that sounds the way you've described it, but that may be one of the things that contributes to the

15:52 - Interviewee

Yeah, and I suppose there's no worse than being sent to a training course and then expected to one remember in six months time, everything that you've went through and people have an expectation like, Oh, you know, been on a training course you ken that now and it's never revisited and em, even still [Consultant A], five, six years or something, we still revisit the principles we still go over the same stuff and I just think it's important because I focused on all of that right, that's how you should go about it or why are the kids struggling and then how you respond best to that and it's upping the acceptance and upping the empathy that's A&E always everyone remembers that? But instead people can forget these things and you gets stuck in behaviour and it's important that we always revisit that stuff so we're following the same things structural same expectations same language same skills that were using all of that

16:51 - Interviewer

because imagine the just some of my observations you know the intensity to work with a kids actually you can you can get a bit lost in in that, especially

16:59 - Interviewee

especially if it's like a run, a run of run of things... if you've had a bad fortnight and then people do get... they've hit me five times in my last six shifts or something like that, actually. Yeah, yeah. And this is not right and I'm going to stop it and, which is all fine? Yeah. But we need to do that in a way that's appropriate to our values and beliefs and not just, actually about supporting each other. Yeah, if you've been hit five or six times, maybe you're not the right person to be with that child? And maybe I'll take that and maybe what we'll do is I'll bring them in closer we'll have conversation what's happening there. See you're struggling around the boundaries and and we explore that and see what we can do and start to make the reparations and don't get stuck in some sort are two people digging their heels in and actually it's for us to work that out, it's not the kids, it's for us to say here's what's best and here's what we're going to do.. sometimes people find that difficult

17:18 - interviewer

[inaudible] actually you've got my brain going off on something that you know, I might remind one of these kids, either parent or another smell or something like that as well. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. And I've actually experienced that [recounts story of having a negative reaction to someone who reminded them of a bully] so that must be even tougher for kids anyway, so I've totally distracted and so that's interesting then because because [Consultant A]'s no, the only specialist here and that is there's been interesting changes here lately in terms of specialist I wonder what you think about that, you know, in terms of what that adds or contributes or changes.

18:57 - Interviewee

So, I'm like, I think this idea of a therapy team like is great, and it's probably what's been needed for a while I know it has been in the plans for a while and they were raising money and stuff. to fund that. him So yeah, I think it's great. I'm really looking forward to seeing what that all brings. Again, not just for the kids, but also the team and stuff as well. I want to have another layer of support or an outlet. Yeah, no, I think it'll be great. Especially, [Consultant C]’s really good. I always think Speech and Language is so important because again, like I said, it's not just the uniform language, but it's how, how you how you speak to the kids and whether you, it's really limited or slow paced and for the background should be like and just finding the right space for it, communicate with them best and in such an important an important part. daily life, it's important being able to communicate with the children properly. And, and yeah, I'm obviously really interested to see what the clinical psychologists will bring. And obviously we've got [Consultant B] and [a worker] is the therapies as well which have been really good

20:17 - Interviewer

range. It's been interesting to see how they're working here because they're not necessarily just coming in as you say to do a therapy session with the kids but there seems to be doing stuff in the within the staff to address with I've got about interested in this twin track. doing similar things with the kids in terms of you're trying to achieve is doing the with the staff as well as looking after them. Caring for them creating the right environment, making them feel safe. Yeah. So so that's one of the things I've been really interested

20:48 – Interviewee

in. Yeah, and I guess it's something that's in its infancy and stuff, and we had therapists before and obviously I don't, it's wasn't really what they were looking for. And you didn't you'd always see them and care and stuff. So it's interesting to see how it will look and have it will go.

21:05

Yeah. [inaudible] You mentioned layers there so Oh, yeah. So yeah, I'm gonna have one but a nice thing about layers, you know, that care staff can create this but they can if the managers are creating that for the staff if the senior manager creating that out for the managers. Yeah, that can affect me and I'm quite interested in that process and how that works. So sorry. Any other things that you think work particularly? Well, the [org], you've mentioned being in different bungalows, I wonder, do you know how's the interaction between the bungalows because I was really struck by how that is a wee culture in each bungalow I was surprised I thought I'm doing more campus wide thing but

22:09 - Interviewee

him so I suppose that's probably improved. Because when I first started like they never really mingled. Right? Okay. Okay. Like not at all, like the kids never really they would maybe be playing at the park at the back of [bungalow 2], but there was never really any crossover so it is something that so obviously, they tried to change a bit but you're right I suppose each house does have a different different way about it. (different kids different staff). Yeah. Yeah, yeah. I think what I've found helpful is that something a bit a focus on people's different skills so for [a worker] or [a worker] for instance, I think they've really made like seem invested that's the word, and the invested quite a lot in building those skills up and I think that's been really handy to have on the site and again just for having the different kids will engage with him and want to be part of that and just different options I suppose in most of our kids are highly active Yeah. So it's great to have those skills and benefits for them I think that has been great

22:26 - Interviewer

the outdoors the activities and stuff like that and I suppose the physical environment Yeah. as well.

23:34 - Interviewee

Yeah. So yeah, all, yeah, all that stuff has been much much improved. And when I first started there was no investment like that on mountain biking or outdoor education or anything like that. And you have activity money for the kids and stuff was really limited compared to what it is now. it's, all of that's been for the better. And the therapy team and then hopefully the secondary unit, that would be the other thing that would be I think would be great.

24:11 - interviewer

Yeah, so that's for the older age groups. Yeah, pips then so I suppose as can can lead naturally towards the next kind of part of this is thinking of the futures I forgot so is that why is that I suppose is the question I would ask why is the why is that important to you? Why do you think now I

24:28 - interviewee

am, just from I think, our whole thing is... Being relational, I suppose and to be able to see that through further for our kids and actually, it's not 12 age limit anymore. where a lot of the kids would just move on and on some of the kids I've never heard from again or you don't how they are doing - it would nice to be able to see through and to be able to give them a key worker or team member or somebody that they known from being 8 to 18 potentially would be great for them and I'd really like, I'd like really like that to be the next part of it.

25:05 - Interviewer

So that's sounded when you were describing that you were talking about them kids moving on in you not knowing, that seems like is real is this relationship of the job less important for for staff as well for you?

25:16 - Interviewee

Yeah of course! like the first kid that I was key worker for, he so I was like, part of the process and he went into foster care and mainstream and stuff and then he moved away and I never really heard and I always, like I do, I thought, I still wonder what happened to him. what happened to him, how's he doing because he'll be like 23 or something now, could have bairns, a family anything, and I think because it was, I knew that such a success story. And he'd been here from he was seven to 12, it was five years, I had grave concerns about how he would get on in a mainstream education. And then actually he did great and it just it's nice not just that, a wee lassie I was key worker for too, I know she's had it different. she phones now and again still, but it would just be nice to have I don't know... Yeah, a better way for us to be able to keep in touch, I get we have kids from all over Scotland and that'll not always be easy. I don't know if that is something that, not just somebody that coordinates the transitions out of here but maybe a touching point. actually, you'd have thought it would be easier in this day and age with computers and Facebook and social media whatever that you'd be able to do that but also get those boundaries and professionalism and it's no as simple as that would be I think it's important to most people that they know how the kids that they've worked with for years got on

26:56 - Interviewer

love and relationships it's interesting because you told me a little bit of personal on the relationship and knowing how things are and then mentioned obviously needs to be professional or whatever else, there's this almost contradiction in the work you know that you're expected to be two quite different things at the same time. Yeah. Supposed to be person in case no relationship but loving relationships with trying to see what is real but also need to remember our Come on professional Yeah, that seems like a strange

27:29 - Interviewee

Yeah I suppose it is it doesn't quiet marry all the time does it, because that's not again when I first started him and that wee boy that I key worked I remember like he he started to see his grandparents who he hadn't seen throughout his time in care, and they'd been told to put a pillow in between them before cuddling him and stuff because... and you're just thinking, oh my god just ... come on. Yeah he's a wee boy, he's what nine or something like that? He's cuddly! Climb you like a tree and I hand on to you yeah, it's funny because especially because it is quite relaxed up here like cuddles is Oh, like when I first started cuddles is on the curriculum was like [org]’s big thing and in the paper and stuff. So I never really knew what to expect either for this be my first first place to kinda work like that? And I don't know.

28:31 - Interviewer

Yeah. And I suppose residential childcare in general sets within our public discourse, doesn't it? And it came through some rock up to me His name's you know, and it's not we own the watch, because well with that kind of physical contact and stuff like that, which I do shame.

28:49 - Interviewee

I just couldn't imagine. I just couldn't imagine. I mean, like, Oh, a side hug?

28:54 - Interviewer

[recounts experience with two children during first visit]. Okay. Well, then, in terms of if you were to starts, you've mentioned obviously, the older age groups been able to build and sustain relationships almost parent-like I would guess and he early adulthood, and then beyond potentially even contact and then any other things. If you could do anything have a magic wand that you think aren't, I would, I would introduce this or I would change that? anything that You?

30:01 - interviewee

M. So the thing is, like you said that that's a big thing that's important. I'm keen to see how the therapy team will be fully utilised, then how that will work and all of these things because again, probably cross roles of that as well. So be funny, you know, to see how things are defined once that happens. And there's just, there's wee stuff that I probably do. differently that would improve things... was more practical stuff. Also, I don't know if it's just like when the kids first come to [org]. For me, I would increase the staffing levels, for I don't know, up to three weeks help support the team, you help embed the child in And if they're struggling if that's a need that they have, you've got somebody that is specifically for them. Yeah, I just think to ease that transition is probably how I would go about things. I think that's probably one of the things I would I would do.

31:15 - Interviewer

And the new school, obviously, the school for the big thing as well.

31:22 - Interviewee

And makes me feel old, because like, the only thing is that when I first came up, and to think now that that's been a progress. I don't know, not quite as fit for purpose as it once was

31:38 - Interviewer

the school. So that could use some?

31:42 - Interviewee

Yeah, well, that's the plan. Is that to knock it down and start again, I think it's the plan. So we'll see how that goes. And

31:53 - Interviewer

is it just the the physical environment, the school is no working? Or do you think

31:59 - Interviewee

I think the whole layout is not great I mean, it's better than it was - do you know where

32:05 - Interviewer

The old building?

32:08 - Interviewee

The top level was where they all lived, though. That's before my time, was what I was hearing. And then it was like the two bottom layers were classrooms and gym or whatever. So it was just the school when I started here, and the bungalows that are here for residence. And then yes, just the way you and stuff and build the offices, Sachi and the classrooms and

32:34 - Interviewer

[in audible]

32:37 - Interviewee

people have already used the computers in the [in audible], if I'm going to be done. The back end of no

32:47 - Interviewer

HR department as [discussing where different parts of the organisation are based within the school building]

32:49 - interviewee

[specific people’s offices] are on the other side. And then there's the [a worker], I mean, just, you know. And, again, the therapy staff at the age of the two things, for me, really working for us to get that to be spoken about forever. Yeah. So ken, ah and then like I said, I'm just keen to see how all therapy at all come together and and we [inaudible] and or what they're going to offer

33:21 - Interviewer

and if you are given a limitless resource, will there be any magic things that you can go out and that's not possible but you would not be considered if it was

33:31 - Interviewee

staff and if all with the money the money hasn't taught me that that would be great. And hopefully I'm even little we're just two or three weeks that you've wasted but for the new staff you have for the meet people that are skilled that can come out and do things almost like the school because yeah, music people in for that something from mountain bike lessons or whatever or I think would be great and hopefully if we get the right people it would just be about giving that space to them.

34:04 - Interviewer

And have you got you've got quite a wealth of skills, so I imagine they probably do bring in joining all obviously an energetic, outdoors, but imagine probably from the staff team, you've got other people.

34:16 - Interviewee

It's even people art and crafts or knitting and stuff like that. And for wee groups to knit in... used to have a drummer and things come in. I've been able to do that as well. So yeah, all the options. So just probably invest in some more of that and other people as well and keep building up. Keep building that up.

34:42 - Interviewer

And there Okay, I think that's probably most of the main main parts. I wonder if you do you think that other people who work at [ORG] can see things in the same way as you in terms of the kind of things, the kind of things you used to do. He talked about the importance of relationship and potency, genuineness model DDP the structures around in all these things have covered the physical environment they're interested in different colours, or shape view or do you think

35:16 - Interviewee

of as no? Yeah, yeah, I would have thought so.

35:26 - Interviewer

Some of the big things probably shared. And there may be some differences about some of the smaller stuff. But yeah,

35:31 - interviewee

I think you're probably right. I think for for everybody would feel that the DDP and the layers... The layers, of input that have been a created for that. And I'd like to think the culture is a big thing, because I feel like over six months of speaking about that I'm worried about shared values and how we support each other and no drag each other down or just the problems, but we actually find the solutions that they thought were at least helped to try and find the solutions. So I've talked for either and now I think, yeah, I think most people would see. And I'm sure,

36:12 - Interviewer

yeah, okay. Is there anything else that you'd want? He mentioned a lot, and

36:16 - Interviewee

so I'm happy with that. Yeah. That's great.

36:19 - Interviewer

Thank you very much.