

My experience of an alternative placement

Katie Campbell shares her experience of a last minute alternative to her placement as part of her SCPHN School Nursing student journey, after her initial alternative placement broke down, and what she learned.



Katie Campbell, student school nurse

There was a last minute breakdown in the alternative placement I had organised over the summer. SAPHNA responded to my call and stepped up to provide me with an enriching and exciting week as part of my SCPHN SN journey

I have had such an amazing week away in Suffolk with Annie O'Neill and Sue Miller and their company OM Health and Wellbeing, providing health education for both pupils and staff primary and secondary schools (I even ended up on television). Both are such an inspiration to me as I begin my career in school nursing. Both of them are bursting with knowledge and deliver their teaching sessions in such a creative way that captures the imagination of all their audience. Their sessions are presented in a very inclusive way. I thought it was wonderful that they were not only educating all the students but also go on to support the teaching staff. It was a holistic way to support a school, particularly in current times.

The love and passion they both have for school nursing, education and ensuring that they are building relationships with staff and students was evident and it was a real joy to see

them in action. I will carry what I have learnt from them both throughout my school nursing career. School nursing is about whole school communities and, importantly, that includes staff.

In addition to spending the week with Annie and Sue, I also spoke with other national school nurse leaders from the School and Public Health Nurses Association (<https://saphna.co>), who very kindly shared their experiences, expertise and career stories. They included:

- Sharon White OBE, CEO, about her varied career and her passion and drive for school nursing as well as the changes that are taking place currently in the 0-19 service. Some of her advice to newly qualified SCPHN's 'get published – there will always be support from SAPHNA' and 'keep shining'.
- Anne-Marie Gallogly about her role within the complex safeguarding team as part of multi-agency service. What was clear to me was how we need to think carefully about the language that we use within the 0–19 service. I now have the 'Appropriate Language: Child Sexual and/ or Criminal Exploitation, Guidance for professionals' document (The Children's Society et al, 2020). It was also fascinating to hear what

challenges COVID-19 has brought, resulting in their service now looking for changing trends in behaviours and potential presentation in exploited children and young people and those around them.

- Elaine Davies, lead for special schools, about her role, how they implement their service and about the role of a special school nurse. This will be invaluable when I need to get further information and advice to help the children with additional/complex need I support in my schools.

I am so incredibly grateful for the experience that I gained and the knowledge and advice that was shared, as well as the time everyone took from their busy schedules. The value of school nursing was really brought into focus by these excellent professionals, who demonstrated the passion, expertise and knowledge that the SAPHNA team have in abundance! **CHHE**

The Children's Society, Victim Support, NPCC. Appropriate language: Child sexual and/or criminal exploitation guidance for professionals. 2020. Online. Available at: <https://tce.researchinpractice.org.uk/appropriate-language-child-sexual-and-or-criminal-exploitation-guidance-for-professionals/> (accessed 2 December 2021)

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