

# **Thrive Approach Pen Portraits**

## **Pen Portrait for POWER AND IDENTITY - Childhood Years**

### **The inner world of the child:**

A child with a disrupted POWER AND IDENTITY will lack confidence in themselves. The child's response to this core anxiety may be to externalise their feelings through bullying or trying to control others or alternatively they may be unable to protect themselves from bullying or being controlled. They may also sneer or laugh at other children to feel better about themselves.

To boost their confidence they may exaggerate stories about their life, experiences, etc. If they get immersed in feelings of negativity about themselves they may become overwhelmed and depressed and lose all sense of personal power.

The child often confuses fantasy and reality, unlike other children who can make this differentiation. Sometimes the fantasy is the child's attempt to comfort themselves for example, as an escape from painful feelings, loneliness, boredom and for stimulation.

Sometimes the child feels sad, alone and separate from their peers at a time when most children are enjoying and developing strong friendships, 'best friends'. Occasionally the child experiences separation anxiety that can lead to school phobic behaviour.

Body language:

The child may act tough and use their body to intimidate others, being purposely disrespectful of other's personal space. Sometimes they appear indifferent and often hide their deep sense of inadequacy ...with a shrug... 'see if I care' attitude as they turn away from peers and adults. This is a time when the children may test body limits and pain thresholds of themselves and others. This can be particularly dangerous as these children do not always have a good understanding of healthy, safe limits and may not know when to stop.

The way forward to help these children is to recognise their struggles. Many of their earlier needs have not been fully met and they still need help to value who they are. They need clear information about themselves, reassurance that it is still OK for them to have needs and get help to understand the reality of any situation.