

## OXFORDSHIRE, JULY 2015

### INTERVIEW WITH MOTHER OF RON

#### **FAMILY DETAILS:**

Ron is one of eight children, and at the age of two, lived with his mother, father and six older sisters.

#### **FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CLIMATE:**

Ron's family situation is complex; his parents have been separated since he was two but both parents look after him. He spends three days a week with his father and the other four with his mother and maternal grandmother. Occasionally Ron is looked after by his mother's new partner.

Ron's father has high aspirations for his son and they share a close bond.

His father, who described his children as "my whole world" was proud to share with us photographs of displays in his hallway of Ron's work, Fathers' Day cards, etc.

#### **CHILD CHARACTERISTICS:**

The father describes Ron as extremely good-natured, willing to do anything for anyone, and eager to learn. He is helpful at home, e.g. he will regularly tidy up for his dad or make lunch for his siblings. He is well-ordered and organised,

"will engage his brain before speaking or asking something" and can adapt easily to different situations. His skills at conflict resolution are not always good, but he has shown emotional intelligence in dealing with very challenging behaviour from his thirteen year old step sister, reporting that Ron told her after she had hit her siblings, "No matter what, E, you're not evil". Initially Ron was a shy child who found it very difficult to mix with other children, and would only play football with his father. In the last year he has come out of his shell noticeably. He is still too shy to join a team, but likes to play football. In his father's view, he has the talent to be a great sportsman, to go to college and to achieve at the highest level.

His concentration is described as "awesome" though if he doesn't enjoy an activity, he will rush it.

Ron finds it difficult to cope with bad atmospheres and his father tries to protect him from them. He is described as well-behaved and his father states that he has never had a cause to smack Ron,

and cannot remember the last time he needed to be reprimanded. He will not sulk (his father commented that he cannot tolerate sulking or rudeness).

### HOME EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES:

Ron's father loves teaching him and described how he helps him in various ways, e.g. showing him how to put expression into his reading aloud, teaching him Maths, explaining about nutrition and '5 a day', etc. He has realised, however, that he needs to hold back in teaching Ron Maths and reading because his methods are different from the ones used in school.

Father sets up courses for circuit training and has bought dictionaries and felt pen packs on a limited income to encourage home learning because he sees his three days a week with Ron as periods of stability where there are clear boundaries. Ron is not allowed then to do as he likes and to spend his time playing computer games. His father allows friends round and encourages Ron to be sociable. He claims that this is not the case for the majority of his week.

At age five or six, Ron was kept at home for two months by arrangement with the school after the death of his paternal grandfather, and taught exclusively by his father.

He described how he bought books from Poundland and worked through them with Ron.

### PRE-SCHOOL EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES:

The father was unable to provide any information about Ron's pre-school experiences.