

Family Learning

Within Inverclyde's Attainment Challenge project there is a partnership between Inverclyde Education Services and Barnardo's to ensure that a holistic approach is taken to supporting families, by providing the right support at the right time, to ensure that young people from the most disadvantaged families are given the best possible start in life and the chance to achieve their full potential.

The initial bid allocated workers to support six focus primary schools and to deliver training on approaches to nurture with all schools across Inverclyde. Barnardo's workers now directly support 18 primary and secondary schools in Inverclyde, with all remaining schools having access to family support workers where required. The project aims to ensure that a suite of support and help is available to children and families when needed.

Our aim is to raise attainment in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing for all children, however for our most disadvantaged children, we are aiming for accelerated progress. In order to support parents to engage in their children's learning and therefore help to raise attainment, we work with Barnardo's on a range of parental outcomes including: improved mental health and wellbeing, improved family relationships, increased social networks, improved resources and living conditions, increased engagement in learning, increased engagement in children's learning, improved skills in managing change and loss. Our shared outcomes for children include; improved wellbeing through increased social skills, improved emotional literacy, greater self-belief, improved peer relationships and increased understanding of safe relationships.

Strong and effective partnership working between Barnardo's staff and education staff at all levels is at the heart of the success of this project. Everyone involved is committed to the vision and aims of the Attainment Challenge project and there is a shared desire to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable families.

Bespoke packages of support are developed from Requests for Assistance from schools for individual families. GIRFEC well-being assessments are offered to all families who have been identified as requiring individualised support. The wellbeing assessments form the basis of a support plan, through identification of unmet needs. These assessments are informed by parents, children, schools and relevant agencies where requests for assistance have been received from schools. Working in partnership with families, schools and relevant agencies provides an understanding of the adversity that children and parents experience. It provides a basis for planning bespoke packages of interventions that address unmet needs and identify targeted outcomes that are tracked and reviewed.



The themes highlighted in wellbeing assessments have provided ideas for group work initiatives and interventions that support positive change for families. These are being delivered in schools both universally, as brief targeted interventions, or as part of a bespoke package of family support.

Interventions provided through this partnership working include:

- Family Drop Ins within schools
- Family Learning Clubs after school
- Family Breakfast Clubs
- Star Café
- Crafternoon sessions
- Tiddlers Clubs
- ASD Parental Support Group
- Financial Support
- Seasons for Growth for Adults
- Connect Groups
- GEM Groups
- Befriending and support for staying safe online

Since the beginning of the primary Attainment Challenge project, in October 2015, bespoke packages of family support have been provided for 165 families with primary age children. 69 of these families have completed their targeted outcomes. Through our universal supports, 381 primary age children have participated in family learning activities.

Progress is measured through Barnardo's outcomes tracking matrix and framework, after an initial base line has been established. This is informed by feedback from parents, children and other professionals, observation of family interaction, analysis during case recordings and reviews of action plans.

Feedback from Barnardo's Family Support Workers and data from the tracking framework identifies steady improvement in planned outcomes for almost all families involved at the primary school stage.

Since the beginning of the secondary Attainment Challenge project, in January 2017, bespoke packages of support have been provided for 49 families with secondary age children. Six of these families have completed their targeted outcomes. Through our universal supports, 204 secondary age young people have participated in learning activities.




Research shows that a strong factor in children's achievement is parental engagement in learning at home, however a range of barriers can hinder positive parental engagement with schools and children's learning. We are working at a strategic, operational and community level with Community Learning Development and Barnardo's Children service to build on and improve parental engagement. This strengthens our capacity to work together to effectively improve educational outcomes.

Community Learning and Development (CLD) workers are now in place to work with families and communities across primary and secondary attainment challenge schools. CLD workers run more generic family or adult learning opportunities through primary schools. For example they offer Steps to Excellence - a leadership programme for parents, child psychology, family cookery, Families Connect and a Walking Bus to improve attendance. In any one month as many as 87 families from primary schools are participating in CLD learning sessions. The workers have attended joint training with school staff on approaches to numeracy and literacy. In this way, CLD workers can better help families with numeracy and literacy by using the same methods as the schools. Within the secondary project, CLD workers engage with S1 to S3 pupils, who have been identified by the school, through a series of targeted programmes to tackle low attendance, health and well-being, sociability, resilience in an informal education setting. The total number of pupils currently engaged with CLD Attainment Challenge Secondary is now at 151.

Schools welcome the increased accreditation that CLD workers have provided for youngsters and parents and the improved confidence through taking part in award programmes. Improved partnership working has increased the opportunities available from families.

Both CLD and Barnardo's Family Support Workers have provided support for the holiday lunch clubs. These have provided a lunch for all members of a family and associated activities linked to the development of literacy. This has involved strong partnership working with Inverclyde Libraries and Family Support Workers from Early Years Establishments. A comprehensive recent report to the Education and Communities Committee reported that over 6,000 lunches were provided during summer 2017. The holiday family lunch clubs have been recognised at a national level.



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