

East Renfrewshire
Educational Psychology
Service

An Evaluation of the the impact of partnership working in the Pre-school Resource Group

Theme Two: Partnership Working

Activity Descriptor: Preschool
Resource Group: '4+1 Questions'

Date: Tuesday 31st January 2017

Time: 10:30am – 12:30pm

Venue: Carlibar Conference Room,
Carlibar Primary School, Carlibar
Road, Barrhead

VSE Briefing Paper

Theme One / Two Key Question

How effective is our partnership working in securing positive outcomes for children and families through prevention and early intervention and how can we improve?

Background

What information, knowledge and data do we have?

In 2013, the authority identified the need to review its systems for identifying and recommending support for children aged 0-5 years to ensure they complied with GIRFEC and supported the drive for prevention and early intervention. In partnership with the Quality Improvement Team, the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) has worked to improve structures and processes for allocating additional support to children (0-5), who have additional support needs. The Preschool Resource Group (PRG), established in 2014, replaced the existing PreSCAT, Care Group and PSADU referral systems. A new pre-5 EPS assessment team was established to work with the PRG. These developments have resulted in children and families (0-5) receiving a more equitable and consistent service from the EPS as well as increasing the involvement of the EPS in the assessment of vulnerable children (0-5) and ensuring that psychological and educational intervention is proportionate and timely.

The PRG meets on a monthly basis to consider referrals. It makes recommendations based on robust assessment and all decisions are outcome focused, making these more measurable. It is chaired by the Quality Improvement Officer (Early Learning and Child Care) with the support of the Depute Principal Psychologist. The PRG provides an example of multi-agency, partnership working, with professionals from health, social work and education. The PRG draws upon existing strengths related to multi-agency working within early learning and childcare centres. Whilst there is a presumption that young children under 3 years of age are best supported by their family, there is also recognition that some will require additional support to be able to do this effectively. Referrals follow the framework promoted by the national practice model and therefore, depending on need, include a single agency or integrated assessment, a SHANARRI plan and the child's core record. More detailed information about the PRG is provided within the Allocating Additional Educational Support for Children Aged 0-5 years paper (June 2014).

Referrals to the PRG are received from health visitors, educational psychologists, early learning and childcare centres, HSCP, child health, GPs, and speech and language therapists, which is clearly congruent with the multi-agency working promoted by GIRFEC. Resources allocated through the PRG include further assessment/intervention from Psychological Service, outreach services from PSADU or placement in PSADU, placement within a family centre/nursery, pre-five home visiting teacher, outreach from family centre/nursery, Family First and referrals to health.

The EPS maintains a centralised database for children (aged 0 to 5 years) who are referred to the PRG for additional educational support. A new pre-five EPS assessment team has also been established to work with the PRG. The EPS provides high quality assessments to the PRG ensuring that psychological and educational interventions are proportionate and timely. This supports children and families (0-5) to receive a more equitable and consistent service as well as increasing the involvement of the service in the assessment of children (0-5) who are vulnerable (data shows that in 2014-15 28 referrals resulted in further assessment/intervention from the EPS compared to 34 in 2015-16). VSE presents a timely opportunity to more fully consider and reflect upon the role of the EPS within the PRG. It will also support us to gather further self-evaluation data which will

inform the ongoing improvement of the EPS contribution to the PRG and ensure effective partnership working is in place to secure positive outcomes for children and families.

Activity Outline, Rationale and Outcomes

What are we doing?

We have chosen to use '4+1 Questions', a person-centred planning (PCP) tool, to guide collaborative discussion throughout the activity. The '4+1 Questions' approach will help us to examine how effective the PRG is at ensuring the best outcomes for our most vulnerable preschool children and families within the context of partnership working. The activity will allow us to generate discussion across the following general areas:

- What have we tried?
- What have we learned?
- What are we pleased about?
- What are we concerned about?
- What are we going to do next?

Why have we chosen this activity?

Whilst person centred planning was originally developed as a way of planning for people with learning difficulties and their families, it has more recently been used in a variety of settings for facilitating change in organisations. PCP provides a creative and empowering method of planning and problem-solving. PCP originally developed from a philosophy of inclusion rather than a specific theory base. However, the approach has clear links with social constructivism and ecological approaches, both of which underpin the practice of the EPS.

The theme of partnership working is central to the approach of our activity. PCP enables this by fostering a collaborative approach to problem solving. As an approach, PCP allows key stakeholders to be at the centre of the process, a feature which can be realised by consulting with stakeholders throughout and providing them with shared ownership over the direction of planning. It has also been shown to promote commitment to change and creative solutions (Sanderson, 2000).

'4+1 Questions' will be the specific person centred planning tool utilised in the activity. Key features of this tool include an emphasis on:

- working with people rather than for them.
- listening carefully to identify what is important for people and what their aspirations are.
- identifying strengths and solutions.
- focusing on what could be possible rather than just what is available.
- Collaboratively developing an immediate and accessible visual plan, using graphics, images and words.

What is the evidence base for this type of activity?

Created over thirty years ago, there is a wide range of research exploring the effective uses of PCP (e.g. Mansell & Beadle-Brown, 2005; Mansell & Beadle-Brown, 2004). Evidence suggests that '4+1 Questions' is an effective means of gathering information about what is important to someone, what they aspire to for their future, and what support they need in achieving this (National Transition Support Team, 2011).

What key questions do we intend to answer in this activity?

- How effective is partnership working within the PRG?

- Does the PRG system promote equity?
- What is the unique contribution of the EPS within the PRG system? What is the impact of this?
- What are the strengths of our approach?
- What weaknesses and barriers are there and how will we address and overcome these to improve?

Activity Facilitators	
Name	Role
Claire Creighton	Quality Improvement Officer
Yvonne Coyle	Educational Psychologist
Jennifer Hunter	Educational Psychologist

Participants	
Name	Role
Heather Kalinsky	Health Visitor
Mairi McIntyre	Preschool Home Visiting Teacher
June Walls	Early Years Prevention Officer
Catherine Paterson	Educational Psychologist, North Ayrshire Educational Psychology Service
Sarah Clark	Head Teacher, Isobel Mair School and Family Centre
Donna Jeffries	Head of Centre, McCready Family Centre
Margaret Abdullah	Acting Head of Centre, Glen Family Centre
Debbie Rankin	Family Nurse Partnership
Annie McGauley	Depute Head Teacher, Carlibar Campus
Claire Moore and Stevie McMenamin	Parents
Eilidh Lanzani	Educational Psychologist
Lesley Ann Stewart	Social Worker

References
Mansell, J. & Beadle-Brown, J. (2004). Person centred planning or person centred action? Policy and practice in intellectual disability services. <i>Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities</i> , 17, pp. 1-9.
Mansell, J. & Beadle-Brown, J. (2005). Person centred planning and person centred action: A critical perspective. In S. Carnaby & P. Cambridge (Eds.). <i>Intimate and Personal Care with People with Learning Disabilities</i> . London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
National Transition Support Team (2011). <i>Person centred approaches in transition planning</i> . London: National Children's Bureau.
Sanderson, H. (2000). <i>Person Centred Planning: Key Features and Approaches</i> . York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Thank you for participating in this Person Centred Planning activity.