 

Embedding Family Learning Case Study

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of establishment** | Gowanbank Primary School |
| **Case Study Written By**  *Name and Job Title* | Claire Bradley and Jenna Wilson |
| **Date Completed** | March 2025 |
| **Setting the Scene** *Brief description of your establishment* | |
| Gowanbank Primary School and LCR is located in the Nitshill area in the South Side of Glasgow. Our current school roll is 276 pupils, with approximately 90% of families living in SIMD 1 and 2. Our school is predominantly made up of white Scottish pupils however in recent years we have welcomed families from a range of cultures. We now have around 44 EAL pupils who speak around 13 different languages. At Gowanbank we support our families through various interventions. We currently have a Place2Be therapist who offers 1:1 in person and on-line supports as well as a Family Support Worker from HomeStart who is able to provide targeted group sessions and in-house bespoke supports for our parents. We strive to offer family learning opportunities and take pride in ensuring families are at the heart of Gowanbank. | |
| **Action/Approach Taken**  *Detail the actions taken in order to develop and embed family learning into your establishment. What was done and how? What staff and partners were involved? What were the costs and timescales?* | |
| Gowanbank Primary School reaches out to all families within the school via social media and SeeSaw and all families know that they are welcome to attend assemblies and other family learning and parental engagement sessions such Meet the Teacher, MacMillan Coffee mornings, Festive Family Bingo and Christmas Fayre.  Relationships are built by staff being visible and the school sharing an ‘open doors’ policy with families. All members of SLT welcome pupils to school between two entrances in the morning meaning parents can pass on any information necessary. Class teachers are also visible at the end of the day as pupils are passed over to their parents and again available for any general queries or the handover of information.  Parents are invited into the school at least once termly for a family engagement activity with their children. Staff have worked hard in the last few years to promote parental involvement after covid significantly prevented events between 2020-22. Since then, our numbers of parents and carers attending events have increased annually with over 100 families attending our latest ‘Welcome-in-Wednesday’ craft afternoon.  Staff try to think creatively about the types of things on offer. At least once per year parents/carers are invited to observe a showcase of their child’s learning in class. During themed weeks such as Book Week Scotland, families are welcomed into school to share stories and literacy-based activities with their child. During health week, events such as Sports Day, in particular the ‘Parents Race’ have been a huge success.  Pupils showcase two whole school performances annually, which high numbers of families attend; The Nativity which is led by our infant department and also a whole school show such as Peter Pan or Robin Hood, which involves every pupil and an interested cast of drama and music enthusiasts.  All staff are supportive of family learning activities and are willing to support whole school events such as our Christmas and Summer Fayres which raise vital funds for our school, as well as offering exciting stalls. All staff also offer time to support the whole school shows, with particular teachers leading other specific events throughout the year. For example, our P1 teacher leads an annual ‘Teddy Bear’s Picinic’ for new families to our school, our P7 teacher supports a success assembly to allow P7 pupils and their families the chance to reflect on their time at Gowanbank and our infant staff offer Play Along Maths. Staff in our LCR have also set up and organised a variety of workshops to support parents to learn more about ways they can support their children at home. These included training from the St. John’s Ambulance Service and Sense Scotland.  The school work closely with partner agencies including HomeStart and Place2Be. Our HomeStart family support worker offers a weekly ASN family support group which is very well attended by several of our parents. Our Place2Be therapist offers a targeted 1:1 intervention for parents/carers either in person or as part of an on-line training course.  The school’s PT lead’s family engagement and family learning opportunities but this is very much a whole team effort. | |
| **New developments**  *What new projects or initiative have you established?* | |
| **Welcome in Wednesdays** – These sessions are set up with a thematic approach, such as Halloween or Winter. All parents are invited into the school as a way of getting to know teachers, school setting and each other, developing robust home-school links and aimed at giving parents the message that they are most welcome into Gowanbank Primary. Arts and crafts are set up along with some refreshments for families. There has been very good turnout at the 2 most recent sessions with almost all parents invited attending (90 families) and a further session is scheduled in the school’s family learning action plan for Spring 2025.  Parents have shared the following:  Parent/carer afternoons are great!  The school offer lots of parent interaction and activities.  Lo  Love that you get Parent’s involved.      **ASN Family Support Group** – Families whose children have additional support or learning needs were invited in to school and specific families were soft-touch targeted by the Senior Leadership Team. The group of families started to meet three years ago and although there are many long terms members, the group supports new additions each term. The sessions take place weekly on a Thursday afternoon from 1.30pm and usually last an hour and a half and are supported by a Family Support Worker from partner sector HomeStart. Pertinent information is shared with families by the family support worker for example support with routines, structures and boundaries, parental wellbeing and a visit from a speaker from Trauma Informed Parenting has led to 14 families regularly taking part in structured workshops around parenting and supporting children with challenging behaviour using trauma informed strategies.  **Trauma Informed Parenting Sessions –** All Gowanbank Primary families were offered this programme of learning and specific families were soft-touch targeted to attend by the Senior Leadership Team. This programme has attracted 14 parents on a weekly basis, learning techniques that can be used to parent any child but with specific learning around parenting children with additional needs and challenging behaviour. Parents learn how to see behaviour through a “trauma lens” / trauma informed approach. Parents have learned new skills and gained confidence and were awarded a certificate on completion of the programme. Parents who attended have spoken very highly of this and offered the following feedback on skills learned and how this is helping at home.  Life has changed, small steps but very, very happy with my new approach to parenting.  We have all taken so much from the last few weeks which has helped us build a healthier relationships and connections with our kids.  Thank you for opening our eyes to a whole new world of emotions.  Thank you so much for everything you have taught us. We’ve all appreciated everything over the past few weeks and have all found our home lives a little easier to deal with.    I have found the workshop very helpful. I have taken on board so many tips and strategies learned there.  I’ve noticed a difference in my relationship with my child. Thank you.  **Due** to the success of this, the school will be offering this support again in term 4 of this session with the aim of supporting the Nitshill area to become the first Trauma Informed Neighbourhood.  **Book Week Scotland Events: Reading Café** – 82 families attended this lovely event to celebrate books, stories and reading for pleasure. Families enjoyed some time reading together, having a healthy snack and making a bookmark to take home. Parents have also been invited into classes to share books and stories in their first languages with their children’s class.  **Bookbug/Read Write Count**– An open invitation was extended to parents with children in P1-P3. Parents were given the opportunity to take part in and familiarise themselves with the activities in the Bookbug and Read, Write, Count bags with their children in the classroom setting, before the bags were sent home. 50% of parents were able to attend the session which supports their knowledge of early primary school learning and teaching approaches.    I read stories with my mum – Jessica (P2)  I was reading to my Nana. (Olivia P2) | |
| **Obstacles and Issues** *What obstacles or difficulties, if any, did you have to overcome?* | |
| At Gowanbank, after the school closures due to covid, we noticed a real dip in parental engagement and parents taking the opportunity to join us for family learning experiences. Our school role was rising due to our brand-new build school, however numbers of parents/carers at school events was decreasing with some planned experiences having no attendance at all. Steadily over the last three years, we have managed to significantly increase our overall numbers of parents and carers attending family learning events. | |
| **Results and Impact** *Outline the results of the actions taken. What impact and positive changes occurred (include impacts on parents, children and staff), were there any unforeseen benefits?* | |
| The FLO (family learning officer) has supported the school to use the planning, evidencing and evaluating toolkit to show evidence of impact and outcomes for families at Gowanbank. Meeting with the family learning officer has supported a robust evidence base of family learning and parental engagement using the family learning team’s Toolkit for Planning, Evidencing and Evaluating family learning. This has allowed staff to develop ways to plan, track and evidence all of the family learning experiences on offer at Gowanbank.  Staff have a clear understanding of annual events shared through a calendar.  Families have benefited from Family Learning opportunities and have shared the following:  The events including parents always get a great turnout.  Parent/carer afternoons are great!  Parental wellbeing has ben supported through the ASN group and Welcome-in- Wednesday  The school offer lots of parent interaction and activities.  Involving the parents is a great way to give the kids more responsibility.  The school are good at providing activities that involve families. It’s a good chance to see the kids in the school environment.  The school have supported me to build relationships with other parents through teambuilding and things like Bingo and Welcome-in-Wednesday. | |
| **Lessons Learned** *What are the key learning points? What worked particularly well? What would you do differently next time? What advice and recommendations would you give to other people dealing with a similar situation?* | |
| Our key lessons learned have been to involve pupils in the experiences on offer. Initially families tended not to attend school for parent/carer only workshops however we decided to start being more creative about the types of experiences we provided.  Building on the success of events, sharing information on on-line, advertising events in advance and targeting key families really helped to establish parental engagement events. Parents/carers started coming to school more, getting to know one another and through word of mouth and continued offers of experiences we started to see a high increase in our numbers.  This session, we have had high levels of engagement not only for our experiences involving pupils, but also for our adult only events. Having nonprescriptive child led experiences such as our Welcome-in-Wednesday craft afternoons has been hugely popular along with events like our family movie night and bingo.  Due to this success, we have been able to build more positive relationships with parents and have targeted and offered places on our workshops to parents we know would benefit from this.  Providing annual details and dates of our parental engagement events through our Parental Engagement Calendar has also been successful as this have given parents advanced notice of any events.  We will continue with this next session and hope to build on the successes we have experienced this year. We will also survey pupils and parents/carers ahead of next session to ensure their opinions are considered when planning our calendar for next year. | |
| **Next Steps** *Briefly describe the future of the project or related initiatives. For example, how you intend to maintain the momentum of the action you have taken so far, how you will monitor the success of your actions, or how you intend to build on/create new initiatives.* | |
| **Family Play with Glasgow Life** – in Term 4 Glasgow Life Early Years Children and Families team will deliver a 6-week family play programme for up to 10 families from P1-3 parents, empowering parents to support their child’s social, emotional and physical development through physical activity and play. A member of the Gowanbank Primary school team will support the sessions and be upskilled to deliver the programme to maintain the family play as a sustainable programme within the school.  Our P1-3 staff will also offer Play Along Maths sessions in Term 4 where families will be invited into school to enjoy maths and numeracy-based games with their children.  Our whole school events in term 4 will also include our Sports Day and A Picnic in the Playground.  In term 4 as we get to know our new parents/carers with pupils coming into P1, we offer several family learning opportunities. These include a loose parts play and coffee morning, an information session and a Teddy Bear’s Picnic. This allows our new Gowanbank families the chance to get to know school staff and one another to easy any anxieties ahead of the new session starting in August. These events have been hugely successful in the past with almost all families attending. | |
| **Any Other Information** *Detail here any further information you would like to include in your case study, e.g. photos, impact statements, suggestions for further reading* | |
| **P5 Class Workshop – World Book Day**      **Sense Scotland – LCR Parent Workshops**    ‘It was great! So much information! I will definitely email them and let you know how we get on. Thank you’  ‘Excellent workshop and a lot of information about autism and how to provide support to my child’  ‘Great workshop, lots of great information. Play session with kids and adults would be a great opportunity for parents to meet and chat.’  **P1 – Read, Write Inc Parents Workshop**    **Festive Family Bingo**    **Trauma Informed Parenting Sessions**    It’s a work in progress but we are trying our best to deal with things more calmly    Life has changed, small steps but very, very happy with my new approach to parenting.    I’ve noticed a difference in my relationship with my child. Thank you.    I have found the workshop very helpful. I have taken on board so many tips and strategies learned there.  Thank you so much for everything you have taught us. We’ve all appreciated everything over the past few weeks and have all found our home lives a little easier to deal with.    Thank you for opening our eyes to a whole new world of emotions.    We have all taken so much from the last few weeks which has helped us build a healthier relationship and connection with our kids.    **Welcome-in-Wednesday**    **A screenshot of a computer  AI-generated content may be incorrect.Parental Engagement Infographic** | |