

**Storyboard at a Glance...**

<input type="checkbox"/> Families	<input type="checkbox"/> Universal
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce	
<input type="checkbox"/> Identification	
<input type="checkbox"/> Intervention	

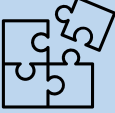


An Early Language and Communication Improvement Story Board from




Local Authority/HSCP: **Argyll and Bute**

*Mapping a pathway forward, together...*

*'Turning what we have, into what we need, to get what we want.'*

*(Santiago Rincon- Gallardo)*

 <b>The issue</b>	 <b>The team</b>	 <b>Our idea</b>
<p>The changing profile of learner need in Education has been acknowledged, nationally. In the present time, evidence suggests that approximately 34% of learners are neuro divergent. In recent times, we have navigated the challenges of Expansion 1140 and Pandemic. Many students found themselves completing their initial training, removed from children. Many colleagues have found themselves in role as lead learner, ahead of time and continue to benefit from support to build their leadership capacity.</p> <p>Tensions play out across environments for learning, at home and in setting. There is reported strain within Child's Plan meetings. Understanding of what leadership of inclusion involves is relatively limited in places. So too, is awareness of neurodiversity within community, and, at times incl. empathy towards, individuals in their 'being ME', and their families.</p> <p>Misunderstanding of individual roles and responsibilities across agencies persists; time is of the essence across the working week as, collectively, we continue to think creatively to reconcile increasing expectation that we will find ways to do more with less.</p> <p>Of course, all of this is exacerbated by the well- reported change in the mental health of the wider population, post-pandemic. This includes that, of the key adults around the child.</p> <p>A perfect storm.</p>	<p><b>...around the team...around the child.</b></p> <p>Our team is formed of colleagues across multi-disciplinary teams. Lead individuals have agreed to step up and into this unknown space, committing themselves and their teams to 'be the difference' together as we map our pathway forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and families across communities</li> <li>• Leadership/ educator teams in settings across localities</li> <li>• Education Officer and Education Support Officers, Early Years</li> <li>• Principal Educational Psychologist and team</li> <li>• Lead Speech and Language Therapist and team</li> <li>• Occupational Therapy Team Lead and team</li> <li>• Paediatric Physiotherapist</li> <li>• Carers Act Officer- Adults- Health and Community Care</li> <li>• Child Health Manager/ Senior Manager and HV team</li> </ul>	<p>We recognise that the historical practice of extending high levels of additional allocation of resource within environment, often, erroneously referred to as, 'one to one support', is with limited potential, in securing the necessary impact on the longer term outcomes for children. In one example, having satisfied herself at the snack table, one learner turned to her inclusion support worker (who was standing behind her chair waiting for her to finish eating ) and said, 'Right then, come on...you follow me!'</p> <p>This practice is with limited potential in its capacity to secure best-value. Neither does it nurture and sustain practice which reflects a strong image of the child, or indeed, of the educator. The 'funding pot' will never be sufficient and has the potential to lead to resentment between settings.</p> <p>In dialogue with colleagues alongside us, forming the multi- disciplinary 'team around the child', we recognised shared frustrations, necessitating consideration of a model of professional learning within and across localities. Thus, moving beyond multiple, repeated conversations of 'same' and towards shared understanding of roles and responsibilities within the staged intervention process and incl. managing expectations. Thus, strengthening capacity of educators to draw on skilled observations, to 'listen with eyes and ears', (RtA) to understand well, within the process of initial assessment, how to shape personalised support that will be effective in meeting learner need.</p>

 <b>Tools &amp; resources used</b>	 <b>What we did</b>	 <b>The impact</b>																
<p>We engaged the skills of our data analyst in interpreting responses from the consultation exercise across localities. This gave clarity to the purpose and focus of this time-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Support extending from multi-disciplinary dialogue</i></li> <li>• <i>Access to expertise from individual agencies</i></li> <li>• <i>Tailored professional learning</i></li> <li>• <i>Identifying 'practice/ resources worth sharing'</i></li> </ul> <p>Colleagues within settings requested a simple tool (below) to support them in distilling information about the individual learner, framing their presentation of anonymous case study-</p> <div data-bbox="159 784 574 1041" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>STAGED INTERVENTION DISCUSSION - SOLUTION FOCUSED SUMMARY</b></p> <p>Location: _____ Setting: _____ Network Stage: _____ Presentation: _____</p> <p>KEY QUESTION (focused on child) (What you are seeking support to answer?)</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">CHALLENGES <small>Barriers to learner progress</small></th> <th style="width: 50%;">STRENGTHS <small>Positive areas of performance</small></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>DESIRED OUTCOMES (focused on child) (What will make a positive difference/promote progress?)</p> <p>Any additional significant information-</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Key question (focused on the child that you are seeking support to answer?)</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges (Barriers to learner progress)</i></li> <li>• <i>Strengths (Positive areas of development)</i></li> <li>• <i>Desired outcomes (focused on child. What will make a positive difference/ promote progress?)</i></li> <li>• <i>Any additional significant information</i></li> </ul> <p>The case studies are forwarded to the Early Years Team within a specified timeframe. Thereafter, lead colleagues within the multi-disciplinary team meet to consider the identification of themes which stand to have greatest impact on settings, drawing on shared knowledge across localities. Themes are shared with settings enabling them to sign up to those most relevant.</p> <p>Thereafter, discussion is facilitated by colleagues within Educational Psychology, engaging a 'solution circles' model. Strong encouragement to participate is extended to all settings within the locality and with clear expectation of the need to be cognitively present and contributing as part of the solution.</p>	CHALLENGES <small>Barriers to learner progress</small>	STRENGTHS <small>Positive areas of performance</small>			<p>Ultimately, this became about, 'backwards mapping' from where we need to be... i.e. Learners at all levels achieving their potential shared processes which support/ moderate leadership of inclusion across localities.</p> <p>We established a group of colleagues across disciplines, Early Years, Educational Psychology, Health, invested in 'working on what works'.</p> <p>We drew colleagues from settings together, in consultation, to propose the initiation of ASN Early level Locality Networks. Thereafter, we collaborated to co-design WHY? WHAT? HOW?</p> <p>We were guided in our strategic planning by an over-arching question, '<b>What does the child/ young person need from the environment and adults around them to support them in their development/ learning and ensure that they continue to make progress?</b>'</p> <p>We posed a question to educators to establish a baseline, '<i>How confident do you feel at this time in your role in relation to 'Leadership of Inclusion' as 'responsibility of all'?</i>' They returned an honest response.</p> <p>Colleagues across disciplines were led by educators in identifying clear priorities for the use of our time together. This was effective in clarifying purpose. Colleagues committed to meeting once a term, online, 1530-1700, and to contribute anonymised case studies which would be explored via 'solution circles' model of facilitation. In addition, a short, 'bite-sized' professional learning dialogue would be facilitated</p>	<p>From the outset, we recognised that this was about the following-</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="965 392 1436 728" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3" style="background-color: #d9ead3;">What is our capacity for improvement?</th> </tr> <tr> <th style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Leadership and management</th> <th style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Learning provision</th> <th style="background-color: #d9ead3;">Successes and achievements</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9ead3;">How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?</td> <td style="background-color: #d9ead3;">How good is the quality of the care and learning we offer?</td> <td style="background-color: #d9ead3;">How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our children?</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #d9ead3;">           1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement            1.2 Leadership of learning            1.3 Leadership of change            1.4 Leadership and management of practitioners            1.5 Management of resources to promote equity         </td> <td style="background-color: #d9ead3;">           2.1 Safeguarding and child protection            2.2 Curriculum            2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment            2.4 Personalised support            2.5 Family learning            2.6 Transitions            2.7 Partnerships         </td> <td style="background-color: #d9ead3;">           3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion            3.2 Securing children's progress            3.3 Developing creativity and skills for life and learning         </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evaluation of impact-</b> Outcome= progress + evidence + impact i.e. Q1 3.1= Q1 1.3+ Q1s 2.2/2.4/2.6</p> <p>Whilst important to recognise that this work is in the early stages of development, at the same time, since Sept '23, a shift in thinking is manifesting within localities, as a consequence of this collaborative facilitation. This is leading to an increase in colleagues' understanding of themselves as integral to finding solution within their own context and evident within professional dialogue and small actions of change reported.</p> <p>There is an increasing awareness of the responsibility held a setting level to draw on high quality, meaningful observations within period of initial assessment and beyond this in shaping long and short term outcomes, supported by well-considered strategy, as Education's contribution to the Child's Plan. Importantly, that consistent investment in these should extend to include at least one cycle of review, prior to requesting a Child's Plan meeting.</p> <p>Individual Education Support Officers, EY, are noticing a gradual slowing of requests for additional allocation of resource. This, as a result of professional learning at all levels, with particular focus on the five key indicators of Language and Communication-friendliness-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A physical environment that enhances and promotes opportunities for speech, language and communication for all children.</i></li> <li>• <i>Adult talk that encourages and promotes participation from all learners.</i></li> <li>• <i>Adult interaction styles that are responsive to individual children's needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>The use of supportive learning strategies to develop language and communication skills.</i></li> </ul>	What is our capacity for improvement?			Leadership and management	Learning provision	Successes and achievements	How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?	How good is the quality of the care and learning we offer?	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### Solution Circles



by multi-disciplinary locality team, extending from the theme(s) within locality. Beyond this, colleagues communicated an openness to meet on a second occasion within the term, utilising the full 90 minutes for the purpose of engaging in focused professional learning. Again, this will be facilitated by colleagues within the multi-disciplinary team within locality, best-placed to support.

In addition to this, and given the acute nature of circumstance within particular settings (2), we have concentrated investment in professional learning in the form of four modules. Alongside this, two sessions have been facilitated with family groups.

This 'live' research is affording us the opportunity to 'test' impact i.e.

**Setting 1-** investment in whole team professional learning and nominal additional allocation of 30 hrs.

**Setting 2-** existing additional allocation of resource (totalling 107 hrs) is observed to be securing very limited impact on children's longer term outcomes and yet, more still is requested. What might be the change observed as a consequence of investment in whole team professional learning and, particularly, at the point of the support following the child, as they move on to school at Aug '24?

- *The establishment can demonstrate a strong commitment to staff training and development to meet the speech, language and communication needs of all children.*

and the six Principles of Nurture (OCTNE)

- *Children's learning is understood developmentally*
- *The environment offers a safe base*
- *Nurture is important in the development of wellbeing*
- *Language is understood as a vital means of communication*
- *All behaviour as communication*
- *Transitions are important in our lives*

This has encouraged greater awareness of what is possible to achieve via consistent 'paying attention to', and increased expectation of this as the 'norm'. Progress is assured via the process of Quality Visits.

Since the initiation of the ASN Early level Locality Networks at Sept, 23, the safety of locality dialogue has supported colleagues to grow from, 'We don't have enough time to support the children enough for them to meet their potential' to:

*'I really enjoyed the collaborative aspect of the solution circle, it was informative listening to others settings solutions and strategies. It was also reassuring that were not the only ones going through these experiences. I'll look forward to the next meeting!'*


*'This has been a great meeting looking forward to more and all work together in a great multiagency group to make our community a better place to be for our young children. Thank you all so much it has been really worthwhile and very much appreciated.'*

*'I think that this approach can be really good if colleagues buy in to it and know it is a safe space - it can really help others.'*

Whilst the impact at this stage is more apparent on adult learners, nevertheless, ultimately this is the necessary place to start to secure the intended longer term impact on outcomes for children.

Already, in the relatively short period since Jan '24 and the commencement of model of 'whole team professional learning' within settings, we are hearing of considerable impact.

*Head of Nursery-'I see a more confident educator team in terms of their capacity to understand and respond positively to meet the needs of individual children. Overall, educators appear to have greater awareness of the wellbeing needs of individual children and are able to respond more effectively.*

		<p><i>There is a sense of children recognising that their 'behaviour as communication' is understood well via the response they receive. The difference in individual children is very notable- happy and confident; more communicative; fewer incidents; the visible relaxation of the family is humbling. They are less anxious in presentation.'</i></p>
 <p><b>Our learning &amp; next steps</b></p>	<p><b>Complementary to this work,</b> additional collaborations are set to secure positive actions within cycle of improvement change and, ultimately, leading to greater attainment and achievement of our youngest learners within the development of Literacy and English, as they move across the early level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Colleagues from Speech and Language Therapy are facilitating a Small Talk Hub on the last Tuesday of each month. This is an opportunity for practitioners to link in with Speech and Language Therapists to chat about speech, language and communication (SLC) needs within their establishment or ask for advice around any child where there might be concerns about the SLC development.</i></li> <li>• <i>To maximise the impact of the Early Years central team in securing outcomes for learners at all levels, and as a consequence of understanding well, reliable data from locality, Cluster Lead Practitioners are being deployed according to where their resource is most needed. They engage evidence- based tools to walk alongside settings within a 'block model' of support (6 wks) This includes working with an identified group of learners and modelling engagement for identified adult learner using evidence- based materials ('Teaching children to listen' and 'Three Read Approach'. The learning of learners at all levels is documented via academic poster, making thinking visible in a manner that is repeatable. Professional learning sessions are planned at beginning/ middle/ end, thus, ensuring the model empowers and sustains.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are collaborating across Health, Educational Psychology and Early Years to develop documentation, 'A child's journey'. This, with the intention of clarifying roles and responsibilities of multi-disciplinary colleagues within the process of 'Getting it right for every child'.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Moving forward-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Colleagues within the Early Years Team will engage in Froebel in Childhood Practice Course (Aug- Oct '24) This invitation will extend to Lead Practitioners within settings. In reflecting one of Froebel's principles, this opportunity will continue to strengthen the knowledge of educators, and including the recognition of relationships with key adults around the child as their first experience of musicality in the 'call and response'. (Mother Song)</i></li> <li>• <i>Engaging the same model as Cluster Lead Practitioners, the Early Years Family Support Workers intend to work across communities and within settings engaging evidence- based materials to support our youngest learners and their families. This will engage improvement methodology to measure progress towards outcomes.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have planned professional learning, 'Let's talk about: Staged intervention in the early years', in collaboration with colleagues across Early Years/ Inclusion and Equalities teams and Health. This will include materials co-constructed with colleagues from Educational Psychology/ Early Years and Health, anticipated to support colleagues to bring to interpret staged intervention processes in practice.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is our intention to continue to build capacity to facilitate focused professional learning across the Early level. It is proposed that this will begin with small test of change across four localities (4x4 colleagues supporting learners at Early level. We will take the learning from evaluation and consider spread and scale within each locality.)</i></li> </ul>	



### Find out more

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