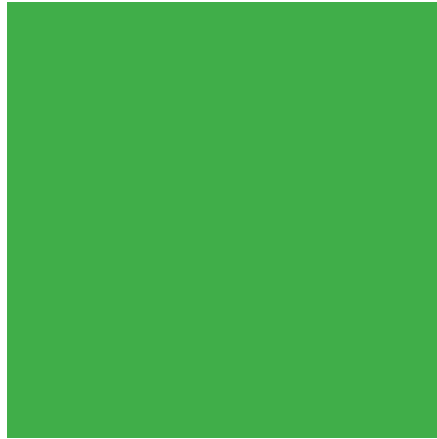
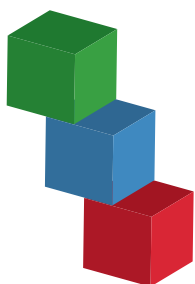


Social Impact Report

2015-2016



REALISING POTENTIAL. ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE.



NORTH EDINBURGH
CHILDCARE

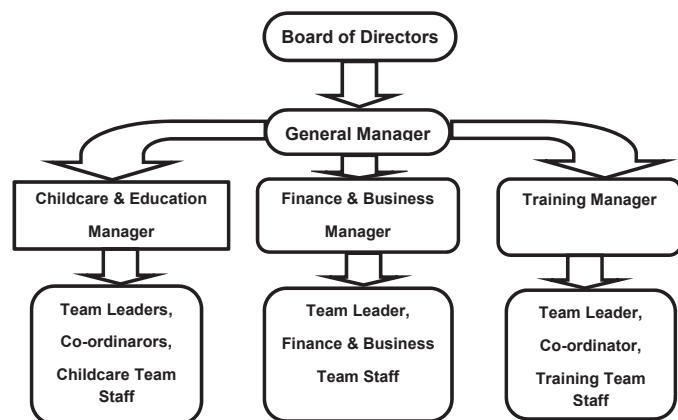
ORGANISATIONAL HISTORY

North Edinburgh Childcare (NEC) first opened its doors in May 1997. NEC is governed by a Board of Directors with a General Manager, Theresa Allison, and three Senior Managers employed to manage the day to day running of the business, supported by approximately 110 employees across the organisation.

The organisation developed in response to an identified need for affordable flexible childcare in North Edinburgh which would increase local parents and carers ability to take up opportunities in employment, training or education. The core purpose of NEC is to support people to lift themselves out of poverty.

We support low income families who live in Edinburgh through the provision of affordable childcare so they can work, train or attend programmes of further education. Our Training Services Department work with people from 16 years upwards who require training to enable them to access and/or sustain employment in the childcare field.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



OUR VISION

Realising Potential. Achieving Excellence.

OUR MISSION

To provide high quality affordable childcare, education and training which enables our service users to realise their full potential and supports people to progress into employment and training.

OUR VALUES

Our values are crucial to the organisation as they guide our decision-making and tell people how we will interact with our service users. These values underpin our business and help us achieve both our Vision and Mission.

- Respect for Diversity
- Working in Partnership
- Using a Person Centred Approach
- Promoting a Learning Culture
- Accessibility and Inclusion
- Encouraging Service User Participation

GENERAL MANAGER'S SUMMARY

At NEC we take our social responsibility very seriously, we already deliver a range of services that are high quality and have a proven track record of excellent standards in our performance. However, that does not tell the whole story of the difference our impact makes to people who chose to use our services.

Due to the wide and diverse range of social responsibility activities we deliver it is not possible to include everything in our first report. Instead we have chosen what we believe to be a representative sample of services we have developed and delivered over the last year. We will report on other activities in future Social Impact Reports and give updates on the activities reported here to measure their medium and long term impact.



We hope you find our first Social Impact Report helpful and interesting, and welcome any feedback on what you think about it.

SOCIAL IMPACT METHODOLOGY

We based our social impact reporting process on the "New Guide to Social Accounting and Audit, PROVE, IMPROVE, ACCOUNT" (Author Alan Kay of the Social Audit Network). In May 2015 our Board, SMT and Team Leaders attended a workshop facilitated by Alan Kay, Social Accounting and Audit (SAA) and the Social Audit Network an Introduction. This was the first stage in the development of our Social Impact Report.

We acknowledge the training we attended and the SAA guide to social audit has provided us with clear direction on how to produce our Social Impact Report. We commit to producing a biennial Social Impact Report because we want to demonstrate the difference made by our social responsibility activities.

We use a range of methods to evaluate the difference made by each of the chosen activities by focusing on what we did, why we invested, inputs (what we invested), outputs (what we delivered), stakeholders, social difference (impact outcomes), economic difference (where this applies), how well we performed and identifying where we could develop or improve.

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE SERVICES

NEC provides early learning and childcare places for children aged 4 months to 12 years whose parents are either entering or are already in employment, training or education. Our services consist of:-

- A 55 full time equivalent nursery including free early learning and childcare hours for 3-5 year olds that are delivered in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council.
- 7 out of school clubs providing 65 Breakfast / Before School places, 248 after school places and 164 holiday care places for 5-12 year olds.
- In the year 2015-2016 we worked with 600 children from 502 families.

The early learning and childcare activities we audited for this report consisted of a Social Impact Survey, two case studies, a Talking Time group work programme and a Forest School programme.

SOCIAL IMPACT SURVEY DECEMBER 2015

In December 2015 we carried out an online survey that was sent to all parents in both our Nursery and Out of School Care services.

WHY DID WE INVEST?

We wanted to know what impact and difference NEC makes to the people who use our early learning and childcare services.

WHAT WE INVESTED (INPUTS)

We invested staff time in putting together the online survey, administration of the survey to our service users and summary reports after the survey had closed.

WHAT WE DELIVERED (OUTPUTS)

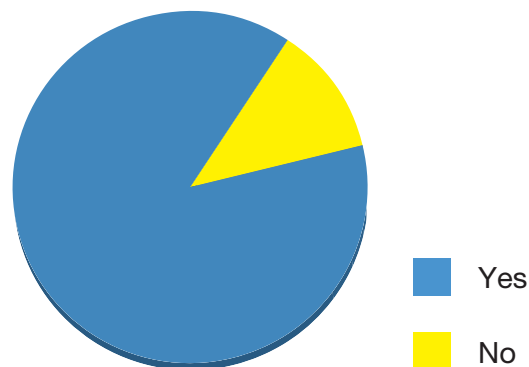
We emailed 395 service users with an online survey that consisted of the five following questions:

1. Has NEC been able to help you sustain your employment and or training?
2. Has NEC been able to help you increase your earnings potential?
3. Has NEC supported you in ways that have reduced your need for input from other professional services i.e health visitor, social work etc?
4. Has NEC supported your child's learning and development?
5. Why have you chosen NEC as your childcare provider, please tick all that apply?

IMPACT OUTCOMES

We received an excellent response from 177 parents which equates to 44.8% - the highest response rate we have ever had.

- **88% agreed we had helped them sustain their employment or training**

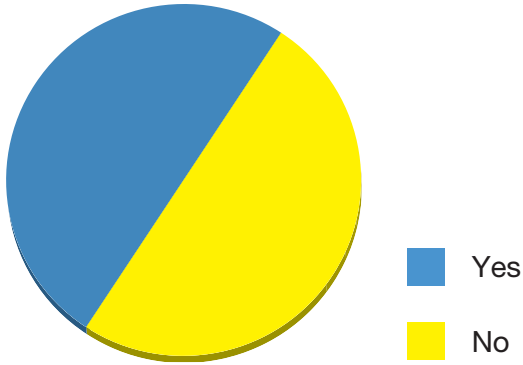


Comments

I wouldn't be able to work without access to affordable, flexible childcare.

I would have had to reduce my hours at work significantly if NEC was not available.

- 50% agreed we helped them increase their earnings potential

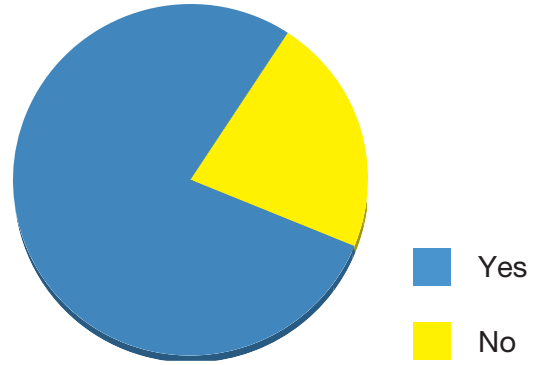


Comments

Without childcare my only option would be to work in between the school hours, so I would have to reduce my hours and therefore my income.

I was able to accept a new full time role that was much better paid than the previous part time role

- 78% agreed we had supported their child's learning and development

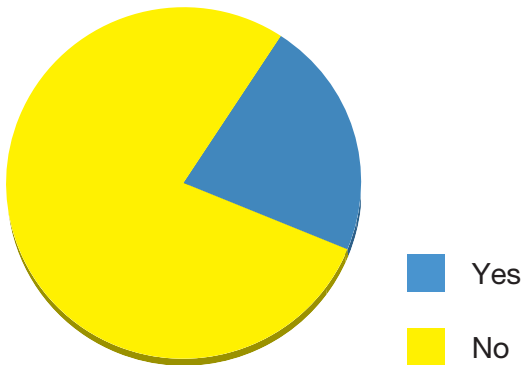


Comments

Yes, directly in that they allow & support homework activity. They also talk through issues that arise and help my children come to a solution.

It provides my son with a wide range of social interactions with children of different ages, it allows him to be creative and also exercise when he wants to join in.

- 22% agreed we reduced their need for support from other professionals

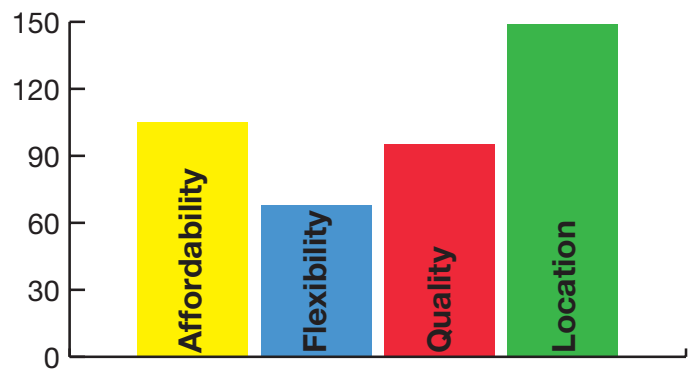


Comments

NEC staff are knowledgeable on the stages children go through and are able to advise on this.

Yes, my little girl has autism and the holiday club staff are very helpful with her care, as she can be difficult the holiday club staff are very understanding and great with her.

- This chart shows the priorities for parents in choosing NEC



Comments

We chose NEC as they had available space but now after a few months I can say they provide a high quality service and we would not change it for someone else.

The results of the survey illustrate the importance of the early learning and childcare provided by NEC. The following case studies report on the difference our social purpose have made to these parents and their children.

Case Study 1

Michelle Brown has one child, Claire, who is 3 years old. When Claire was born Michelle was able to take some maternity leave and returned to full time employment when her daughter was 5 months old. A close relative who had a young child of her own was initially able to look after Claire while Michelle was at work. However, this arrangement came to an end when Claire was 2 years old. With no other family members to support her, Michelle had to look for alternative childcare and visited North Edinburgh Childcare on the recommendation of a neighbour whose children already attended the nursery. As a lone parent in full time employment Claire emphasises how important it was for her to find the right nursery for her child.

“ I am a single parent and I work full time so I want to make sure that my child is in the best possible place and has everything she needs so she has the best future and is with people who really do care for her and are able to progress her future as well, so I think North Edinburgh Childcare ticks all the boxes. There were other nurseries that I'd gotten in touch with because I work in the city centre so I was looking around and did check out other nurseries but for me it was the atmosphere here at North Edinburgh Childcare - from the moment I walked through the door, I really liked it..... It's just me and Claire so it was really hard for me at the start to have that trust factor for leaving my baby girl with strangers at first. However, it wasn't like that we worked so closely together and I honestly cannot praise the staff enough.....”

Working closely with the nursery staff has helped Michelle to build up her confidence as a parent and provided her with support to further her child's development.

“ I definitely have no regrets whatsoever about bringing her to nursery its been the best thing, when I see her now its amazing she's so intelligent and it has helped me with that whole process of teaching my child because we work together ...so that we are raising her together. It helps a lot just having that extra balance as a single parent – definitely helps.”



Case Study 2

Jamie, now aged 10 years, has been attending North Edinburgh Childcare's services for over 8 years having started in our nursery at the age of 2 in March 2007 before moving on to our out of school care service in Summer 2010. His mum, Heather, works part time, 30 hours per week, and finds the out of school care service very beneficial, particularly because it is based within the school premises which means Jamie can make his own way to the club at the end of the school day. She says that North Edinburgh Childcare services have played a key role in allowing her to get back to work and maintain employment.



“ I suppose it has allowed me to get a job really, it's local it's handy to get to - especially the club here and the fact that he can get to it by himself after school so I don't have to worry about having to get someone to pick him up from school and bring him.”

“ I'd say it makes me more relaxed just to know that he is in a safe place, that he is being looked after well, that they listen to what he needs and I always get feedback..... I think its just the reassurance that I don't have to worry about him when he comes here I don't have to sit in my work thinking oh my goodness what is he doing..... and he loves it as well so that makes it a lot easier.”

Heather believes that attending the childcare services have had a very positive impact on Jamie's learning and development.

“ He is much more confident..... before he would just say that he couldn't do things whereas here he gets that bit more encouragement so he will try new things and then when he realises he can do them he is much happier and delighted with himself.”

If North Edinburgh Childcare services no longer existed Heather says:-

“ I think I'd probably give up work if I am honest because he needs support but I don't think he needs so much extra support in this setting because he is so used to it. He copes with the routine and knows exactly what he is doing. Whereas if I had to find somewhere else I'd be panicking thinking do they know what he actually needs and I don't think he would take to it very well either.”

FOREST SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

Forest school originated in Scandinavia in the 1950s as a way of teaching children about the natural world. The concept was brought to the United Kingdom in 1995 following an exchange visit to Denmark by staff from Bridgwater College in Somerset. Since then the Forest Schools approach has developed beyond just a way to teach children about the outside world and it is now recognised as a particularly good way of promoting constructive learning. The unique challenges presented by the outdoor environment provide hands on experiences in a real life context that quite literally allow children to learn by getting their hands dirty.

We were fortunate enough to receive funding for resources from various funders such as State Street, Big Lottery Fund and Leith Community Grants to create an onsite Forest School within the grounds of NEC. This funding was also used to train staff as Forest School leaders and assistants.

Over the last three years we have run regular Forest School programmes for small groups of up to 8 children aged 3-12 years. Our current programmes, which normally last between 6-8 weeks and take place in all weathers, are linked to the Curriculum for Excellence and most particularly the experiences and outcomes relating to literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. A typical 6 week programme will include activities such as exploring the outdoor



environment; identifying plants, mini beasts and looking for traces of wildlife; den building; climbing; outdoor games; fire building and outdoor cooking.

WHY DID WE INVEST?

A survey of our service users and ongoing feedback have shown that a significant proportion of children attending our early learning and childcare services do not have regular access to green spaces or woodland areas.

Research shows that a lack of opportunity to play in such outdoor environments alongside an increase in structured activities can be detrimental to children's learning and their overall wellbeing. As well as being great fun our Forest School programmes encourage children to be physically active and promote the development of key attributes such as resilience and perseverance which are important features in all areas of learning. Children and parents in our nursery and out of school clubs have consistently given very positive feedback regarding our Forest School programmes and continue to request greater opportunities for this type of play.

WHAT WE INVESTED (INPUTS)

We used some of the funding we secured to train a member of our out of school team as a Forest School Leader.

Two workers are always present due to the nature of some of the activities. This makes the staff to child

ratio much higher than normal i.e. 2:8 rather than 1:8. The group sessions took place on site at NEC. The main inputs were therefore: -

- Transport for the children to and from our offsite services
- Staff time to prepare, deliver and evaluate sessions

WHAT WE DELIVERED (OUTPUTS)

The programme described in this report was a short programme consisting of 2 sessions involving 5 children aged 5-12 years that took place in 2015. The sessions were delivered by one of our Forest School Leaders who was assisted by an out of school Practitioner. Each of the two sessions focused on the promotion of children's health and wellbeing with a particular emphasis on communication, confidence building, positive relationships, risk/benefit awareness and physical activity.

Seven children were referred to the programme by our out of school care team in agreement with the children and their parents. Five out of the seven children who were referred attended the sessions.

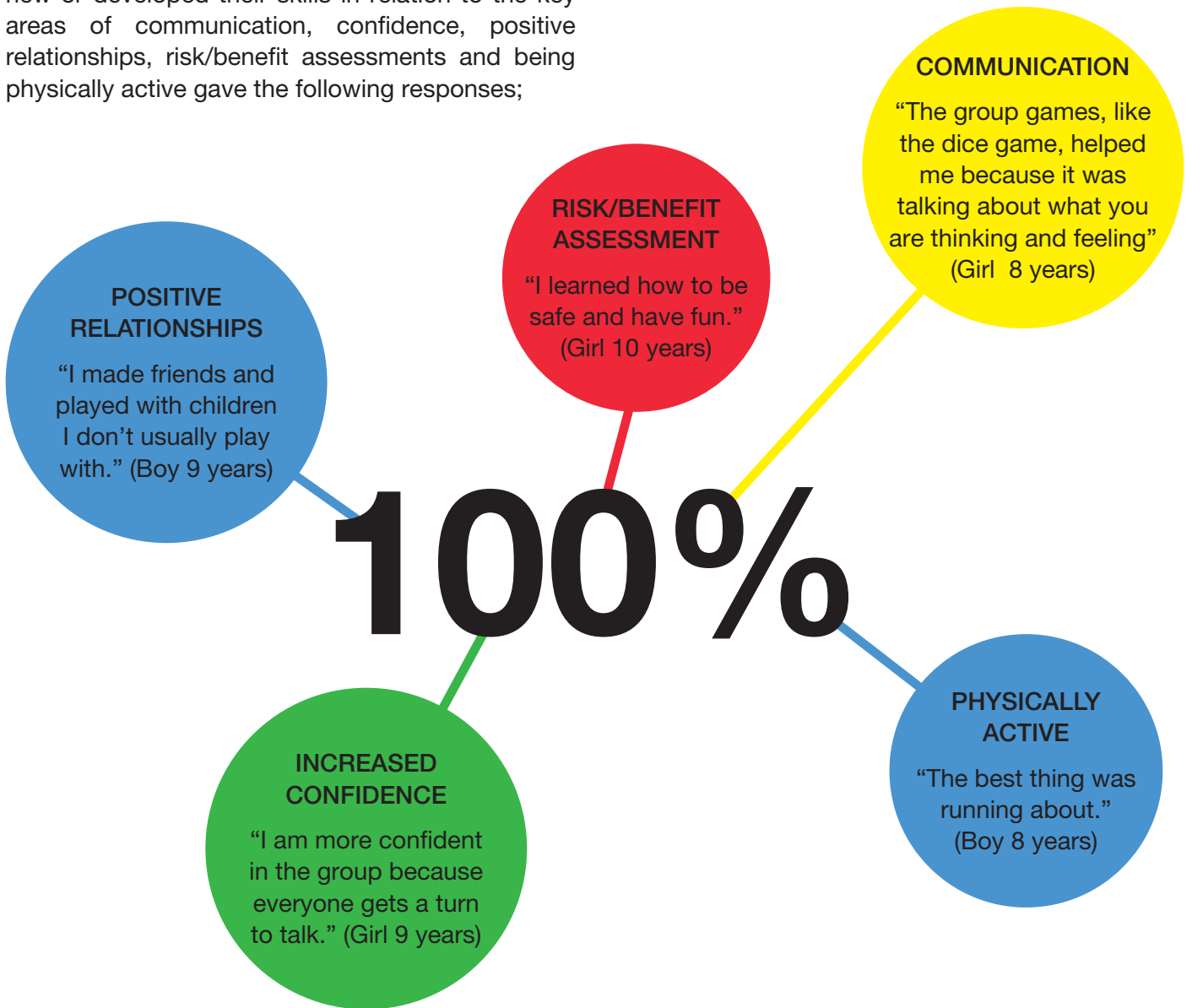
The children's progress was monitored on a weekly basis by the Forest School Leader and the Practitioner who assisted with the running of the sessions. These two workers and the children who attended evaluated the impact of the sessions at the end of the programme.



IMPACT OUTCOMES

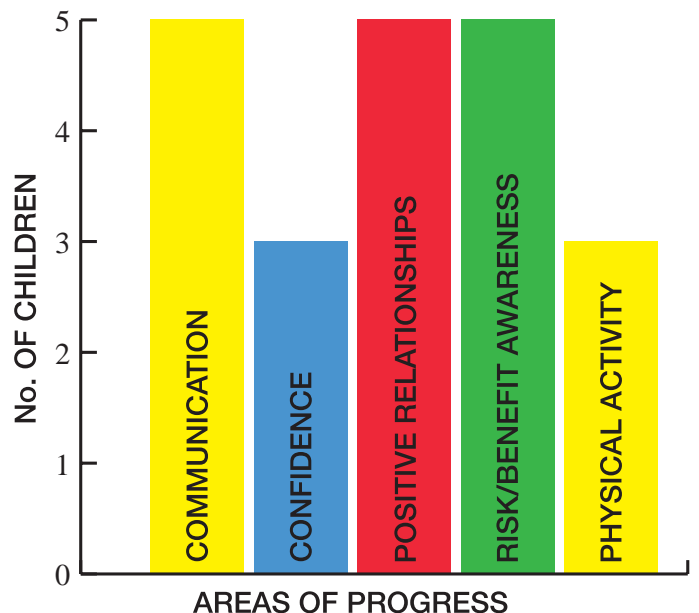
Children's Views

Children who thought they had learnt something new or developed their skills in relation to the key areas of communication, confidence, positive relationships, risk/benefit assessments and being physically active gave the following responses;



WORKERS VIEWS

Workers were asked to record any noticeable progress relating to each of the identified areas of learning and development. As the following table illustrates the children's views on the impact of the sessions can be seen to be largely supported by the workers who perceived all of the children to have progressed in at least some areas of learning and development over the course of the short programme.



Communication:

“A marked improvement was noted regarding child’s ability to listen to others and knowing when appropriate to talk during 2nd session”

Confidence:

“Participated in group discussions. Put his name forward to be a leader in one of the games – something he would not normally do.”

Positive Relationships:

“Overcame nerves and collaborated well with others including children he does not normally play with.”

Risk/Benefit Awareness:

“Increased awareness of risk. Able to identify risks and share with the group.”

Physical Activity:

“Group games and free play encouraged her to be more physically active”

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

We will continue to deliver Forest School programmes for small groups of children that will run for periods of 6 – 12 weeks and further develop our ability to accurately record and evaluate the impact of these sessions.

TALKING TIME GROUP WORK PROGRAMME

Our Talking Time groups are an example of how we promote early literacy in our nursery. We have developed a series of small group sessions based on information, resources and training provided by NHS Lothian’s Speech and Language Therapy Team.

WHY DID WE INVEST?

Early literacy is a key element of the Curriculum for Excellence. Recent research including that by the Rowntree Foundation (Monitoring Poverty and Social Exclusion in Scotland 2015) indicates that an inequity gap in early literacy exists between children from low income families and those from more affluent backgrounds. Our Talking Time groups help to narrow early learning disparities and support

all of our children to develop as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

WHAT WE INVESTED (INPUTS)

Staff time to prepare, deliver and record group sessions; monitor children’s progress and to work in partnership with parents to evaluate outcomes. Resources were provided by NHS Lothian’s Speech and Language Therapy team.

WHAT WE DELIVERED (OUTPUTS)

Over the year we ran 4 Talking Time programmes. Each of the groups were led by a trained Talking Time Leader and involved up to 6 children aged 2-5 years who met once a week over a 6 week period. The following information refers specifically to a 6 week programme that took place between February and March 2016 involving 5 children (3 girls and 2 boys) aged 3-5 years. Each of the group sessions focused on fun activities that were designed to promote early literacy skills including attention and listening; confidence in speaking; understanding of language; use of vocabulary and turn-taking.

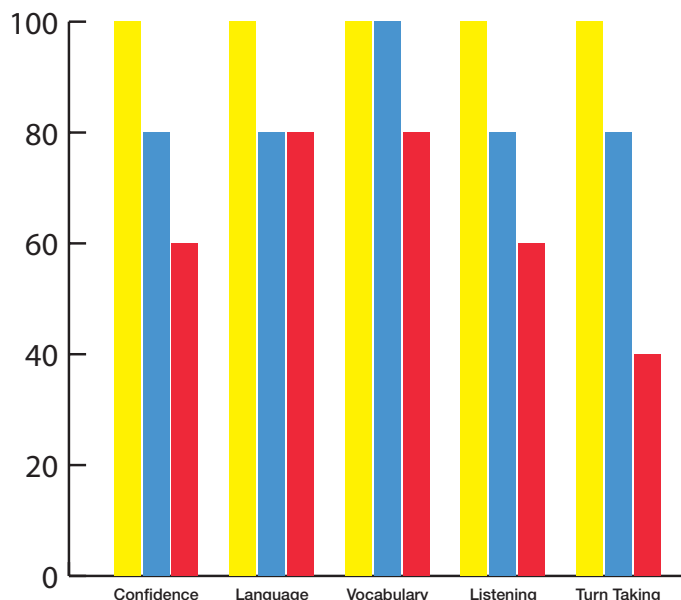
Children who would most benefit from attending the group were identified through partnership working between parents and the nursery staff team. Each child’s progress in relation to the areas of development listed above were monitored and recorded by the Talking Time group leader throughout the duration of the programme. An evaluation of the impact that attendance had on each child’s learning and development was carried out by the group leader, parents and playroom staff at the end of the programme.



IMPACT OUTCOMES

Percentage of children identified by the Talking Time Group Leader, playroom staff and parents as having made progress.

TALKING TIME ACHIEVEMENT TABLE



- % of children who were identified by the group leader as showing progress during small group sessions
- % of children who were identified by nursery staff as showing progress in the playroom
- % of children who were identified by parents as showing progress at home or outwith the nursery

Additional Comments:

“Alice showed progress within the group and responded well to praise. She can still be easily distracted and would benefit from further opportunities to learn in small group situations.”
(Group Leader)

“Since going to the Talking Time group my child is more confident in repeating new words and using language when he is role playing.”
(Parent of 3 year old child)

“Mark is improving with turn taking in the nursery and is more able to cope in group situations.”
(Playroom worker)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

We will train more members of the nursery team to become Talking Time group leaders so that we can run more groups on a regular basis throughout the year. We will continue to develop our evaluation processes in order to more fully capture the impact of any learning and development that is achieved by the children.

TRAINING SERVICES

In addition to our delivery of vocational qualifications in childcare and our extensive short course training programme, NEC Training Services also supports unemployed people to access employment in childcare through our delivery of a range of Taster Activities, our Childcare Academy programme and more recently, our Modern Apprenticeship in Childcare. This first Social Impact report focuses specifically on the impact of our Childcare Academy programme.

THE CHILDCARE ACADEMY

Our Childcare Academy programme supports unemployed people into jobs in the childcare field by providing them with a package of training and support which has been tailored to meet their specific needs and the needs of the sector.

WHY DID WE INVEST?

The purpose of the programme is directly in keeping with the organisation’s fundamental mission to support people to progress into employment. The Childcare Academy is well placed to assist the local childcare sector to respond to increasing demand generated by the Scottish Government’s expansion of free early learning and childcare entitlement and the expected growth in the 0-5 year population. The programme significantly contributes to the achievement of priorities outlined by the Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce, the City’s ‘Strategy for Jobs’, the Edinburgh Guarantee and Edinburgh’s Youth Employment Activity Plan.

WHAT WE INVESTED (INPUTS)

We secured funding from Skills Development Scotland’s Employability Fund (EF) which was invested alongside a significant proportion of staff time from the training department.

WHAT WE DELIVERED (OUTPUTS)

We delivered 2 x Childcare Academy programmes between April 2015 and March 2016 to a total of 38 trainees. 20 trainees were recruited to the first intake in September 2015 and 18 to the second intake in February 2016. The following outputs were delivered in relation to each stage of the programme:-

Promotion of / Recruitment to the Programme

- ★ 9 recruitment fairs attended
- ★ 14 referral organisations visited



- ★ 44 organisations referred to the programme
- ★ 23 Information Sessions held (199 unemployed people booked on, 104 attended)
- ★ 49 interviews conducted

Pre-Employment Training Period (week 1–4)

- ★ 8 weeks (2 x 4 weeks) of pre-employment training delivered containing 44 (2 x 22) workshops

Work Placement and 2 VQ units (week 5–26)

- ★ 37 childcare work placements provided
- ★ Average trainee undertook 144.5hrs work experience
- ★ Trainees spent between 87.5 - 386hrs in placement prior to getting a job
- ★ 40 tutorial sessions delivered and 24 supported self-study sessions facilitated
- ★ 62 observations of trainee practice undertaken
- ★ Assessors spent (on average) 1h 31m weekly with each trainee and between 18h 50m - 28h 10m in total with each trainee across the programme
- ★ 37 CV's developed and 26 mock interviews conducted

WHO ARE OUR KEY STAKEHOLDERS?

About our Target Group

- ★ All trainees unemployed for various lengths of time upon starting the programme
- ★ Majority resident in areas of deprivations
- ★ 45% age 16-17 years, 55% age 18+ years
- ★ Youngest trainee age 16 years, oldest trainee age 58 years
- ★ 8% male, 92% female
- ★ 16% lone parents
- ★ 13% care experienced (including young people resident within supported accommodation)
- ★ 37% had a disability which is protected under the Equalities Act 2010

- ★ 24% from minority ethnic groups
- ★ 39% long term unemployed (unemployed for longer than 12 months).
- ★ 11% progressed from our Taster Activities

About the Childcare Employers who support us

- ★ Over 100 childcare employers provide placement and employment opportunities to our Childcare Academy trainees (37 during this specific period)
- ★ Located throughout Edinburgh and the Lothians
- ★ Both private and voluntary sector organisations
- ★ Both Early Learning and Childcare and Out of School Care settings

HOW DO WE COMPARE TO OTHER PROVIDERS?

Data published by Skills Development Scotland in January 2016 confirmed that our Childcare Academy 'into jobs' achievement rate:-

- ★ Stands at 87% in comparison to the Local Employment Partnerships average of 44%
- ★ Is 8th highest of all Stage 3 EF Providers in Scotland
- ★ Is 26th highest of all 641 EF Providers (delivering at all stages) in Scotland
- ★ Is therefore within the top 4% of all SDS EF Training Providers in Scotland

IMPACT OUTCOMES

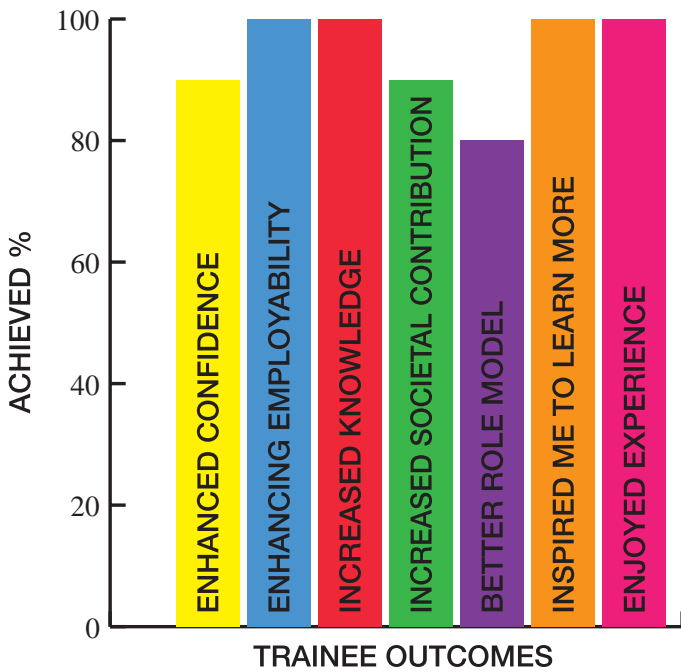
A significant number of the 38 trainees recruited between April 2015 and March 2016 are still undertaking the programme therefore we cannot yet determine their success in relation to the achievement of longer term outcomes. We have decided therefore to focus here instead on the longer term outcomes attained by Childcare Academy trainees within the period irrespective of when they actually started the programme.

Outcomes attained by trainees within the period

Trainees who progressed into a job	27
Trainees who attained 2 VQ Units	27
Trainees who progressed to undertake SVQ Level 3	22



Trainees are asked to complete an Exit Rating Form upon leaving the programme. 11 of 19 (57%) trainees from one of our Childcare Academy group responded.



Confidence and self-esteem:

“The Childcare Academy is helping me to get on with my life and making me realise that there is light at the end of the tunnel.”

Securing employment:

“The Childcare Academy unlocked the door to employment in the childcare sector.”

Knowledge:

“I have gained a lot of knowledge in childcare which has helped me get a job.”

Contribute to society:

“I feel I am going to have a secure future for me and my child.”

Role model:

“I am showing my children a good example in studying and working hard.”

Inspired me:

“I can now move into a higher level of childcare and continue my career.”

Enjoyed experience :

“I would highly recommend the Academy to anyone that wanted to take up a career in childcare.”

Case Study 1



Amylee had already undertaken some childcare work experience through the JET programme before being encouraged by Castlebrae Community High School to apply to the Childcare Academy at the

age of 17. Having progressed into placement with Cherry Trees Nursery, her enthusiasm and potential were soon recognised and she was offered a job. Amylee feels that the Childcare Academy gave her the opportunity to enter the adult world and supported her to mature. She has gained confidence in all aspects of life and feels good about doing a job that she feels is worthwhile, helping children to take their first steps in life. Financial independence has enabled her to start her driving lessons and to start making plans for her future. Cherry Trees were keen for Amylee to begin her SVQ Level 3 quickly upon securing employment and unfortunately we were unable to offer this opportunity free of charge. As a result, Amylee went on to undertake her SVQ Level 3 with another Training Provider, however her experience was a negative one and as a result, she soon withdrew from the programme. Upon recently securing a Modern Apprenticeship contract of our own, Amylee is now back training with us once again with the support of her former Assessor and the systems and assessment practices she is already familiar with. Achieving the Level 3 will support Amylee to achieve her long term aim of progressing into a Room Supervisor position within her workplace enabling her to enhance her income. Confident that she would definitely do it all again, Amylee’s recommendations to friends have already resulted in one other trainee securing a place within our most recent intake.

Developed to support the effective delivery of employability services across Scotland, The **Strategic Skills Pipeline** is the framework within which Edinburgh’s Employability Services operate. Amylee’s journey demonstrates how a range of organisations can work successfully in partnership to support a young person to progress through the various stages of the pipeline into employment and out of in work poverty through further education and upskilling (as depicted right):-

PIPELINE STAGE		PARTNER ORGANISATION
Stage 1 (not job ready)	→	Castlebrae Community High School
Stage 2 (not job ready)	→	The JET Programme
Stage 3 (becoming job ready)	→	The Childcare Academy
Stage 4 (job ready)	→	Modern Apprenticeship with NEC
Stage 5 (in employment)		

Case Study 2

Victor had a fair bit of experience working with children in a voluntary capacity when he heard about the Academy through his local Jobcentre and decided to apply. As a lone parent of 2 children and long term unemployed, Victor (age 50) and his family were wholly dependent on state benefits. Aspects of the transition back to work were particularly challenging for Victor. The classroom situation was difficult to adapt to having been out of education for so long and the whole family's routine had to alter quickly and considerably to accommodate the change. Victor tried to focus on the positives and the longer term benefits and the regular positive feedback he received helped him to continuously grow in confidence and to sustain the programme.



After a short time on placement within our own Nursery here at North Edinburgh Childcare, Victor secured a Trainee position and more recently, was successful in securing a permanent position as a Practitioner. Victor loves his job and feels he is 'coursing' through life now rather than 'standing still'. He has more confidence, motivation and self-belief and feels that both his mental and physical health have notably improved since going back to work. Knowing that he is supporting the children and families he is working with gives him a sense of fulfilment alongside the fact that he is also setting his children a good example. Victor is undertaking his SVQ Level 3 with us now which will enable him to sustain his employment and to enhance his income. He would definitely do it all again and would recommend others to the programme without hesitation.



Victor's journey clearly depicts some of the challenges involved in returning to work for a lone parent and the turmoil experienced by the whole family in relation to this transition. It also demonstrates the remarkable difference that going out to work every day, doing something you value and something you know you are very good at, can make to an individual's entire well-being. Securing and sustaining employment will undoubtedly have a positive longer term impact on Victor's children too in that research overwhelmingly confirms that children who are brought up in a household where one or more parent is working,

are significantly more likely to progress into positive destinations upon leaving school.

WHAT ECONOMIC DIFFERENCE DID WE MAKE?

20 trainees commenced our Childcare Academy programme within our September 2015 intake. From this group, we took a random sample of 4 trainees who were wholly dependent upon a variety of Unemployment Benefits and established how much benefit they were each in receipt of upon entering the programme. From this information we were able to determine that:-

**Approximate
annual amount of
unemployment
benefit**

The 4 trainees sampled were cumulatively in receipt of **£ 54,171**

Prior to starting the programme, an average Childcare Academy trainee is in receipt of **£ 13,543**

Without securing employment, this group of 20 trainees could potentially have been in receipt of **£270,855**

We supported 75% (15) trainees from this group into employment. This saved taxpayers **£203,141**

As well as saving taxpayers money through a reduction in the amount of unemployment benefit claimed, trainees who successfully progress into employment become taxpayers themselves generating additional revenue for the National pot through payment of National Insurance and Income Tax contributions.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

1. Increase the number of trainees progressing from our Taster Activities into our Childcare Academy programme
2. Increase the number of male trainees
3. Increase the number of trainees progressing to undertake their SVQ Level 3 with North Edinburgh Childcare
4. Increase the response rate of trainees and placement hosts to our Surveys

FINANCE & BUSINESS SERVICES

GRANT ENTITLEMENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

It became apparent to us that there was a real need to change the method our subsidised childcare fees were assigned to parents/carers. Historically this had been postcode driven and then in the recent past we were provided with the 2008 Scottish Index of Deprivations Maps. These mapped areas of Edinburgh were split into wards and categorised into four main colour codes; red, orange and yellow encompassing the 15% most deprived areas of the capital city; and grey which related to remaining 16+% areas.

From 2008 it did appear to be a fairer way of distributing the subsidised childcare fees but due to many changes in housing within our locale even the Scottish Index of Deprivation became out of date and was not the best way to ensure the subsidy was given to those who most needed it.

In light of this a new grant system was researched over a number of months by the Senior Management Team.

WHAT WE DID

The Finance & Business Team were tasked with developing a grant assessment process by the Senior Management Team which came from a need to ensure that low income families receive the highest level of support with their childcare fees.

A Grant Entitlement Assessment Pack was developed to allow the team to assess each family's individual circumstances based on their income and their ability to claim Child Tax Credits. All paperwork was developed and the pack included the following:-

- An Information Sheet—advising what was contained within the pack and instructions on how to complete it
- A new Childcare Contract—to allow us to begin to standardise all accounts across the organisation to ensure each family had the same contract
- A Grant Entitlement Assessment Form—to give us the information we needed to determine each family's current circumstances
- A Third Party Access Form—to give parents/carers the opportunity to let a third party access their account, e.g. Social Work Department or College for instance if they were paying for the childcare

Timeframes were agreed with the General Manager to make the Grant Entitlement Assessment process staged, this allowed for the nursery and out of school services to be split giving us the opportunity to provide parents/carers with a transitional period for the changeover of our fee structure. The decision was taken to commence with all nursery service users and the assessment process took place during October and November 2015 with an implementation date for fees and grants of 1 December 2015.

WHY DID WE INVEST?

We wanted to ensure that low income families receive the highest level of support with their childcare fees. With this in mind our preferred method to assist would be to issue a monthly grant against each child.

WHAT WE INVESTED (INPUTS)

Staff time was the biggest expense of this whole process. With a 20% cut to our funding we knew we could not request any extra monies to cover additional salary costs never mind for additional resources. We had to dig deep and request staff to work harder than ever before. Asking for staff to prioritise workloads which meant other deadlines being pushed and ultimately having to invest the charities funds into paying additional staff hours to bring this piece of work in on deadline.

The following letters and packs were created, printed and sent:-

- 298 letters were sent to nursery and out of school service users on 21 April 2015 in relation to funding, fees and the new grant process.
- 28 transitional all year round care user letters were sent on 10 July 2015.
- 46 Grant Entitlement Assessment Packs were sent out to Robins and Puffins parents/carers by 9 October 2015.
- 228 letters advising of new grant process were sent to out of school service users on 3 July 2015.
- 66 letters advising of new grant process were sent to nursery service users on 29 April 2015.
- 70 Grant Eligibility Assessment letters were sent out to nursery service users on 18 September 2015.
- 31 Grant Entitlement Assessment Packs were sent out to Penguins parents/carers by 12 October 2015.

A Grant Entitlement Assessment Checklist was created to check each pack in a systematic way to establish the outcome for each service user.

WHAT WE DELIVERED (OUTPUTS)

Of the 77 Grant Entitlement Assessment Packs sent out to nursery service users all 77 were returned fully completed. However, there were a number of these packs that were not returned on time or fully completed so a substantial amount of staff time had to be used to chase missing and incomplete packs to ensure we had the evidence from the service users. The final part of the process was to ensure that we had determined who should receive the grant and those who were not entitled to it. On doing this all service users received an updated fees calculation

which clearly displayed what their fees were up to 30 November 2015 and what the new fees with or without grant would be from 1 December 2015.

“A good opportunity to work closer with parents.”
Ruben, Finance Assistant

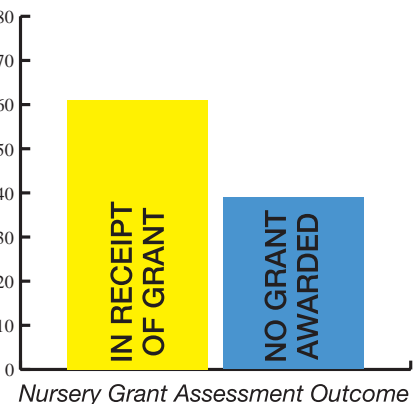
“A long process but a much fairer way to distribute funding going forward.”
Ashley, Finance Assistant

All deadlines were met in relation to the Grant Assessment Process by the Finance & Business Team.

SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

Nursery “Family X” were not deemed eligible for the additional subsidy on our previous fees structure but have now been identified as being able to access our new grant system. Their child’s attendance was Monday to Friday Full Day in the nursery and this would mean a difference of £1,587.60 per year that the family can now access as a grant.

In our nursery 100% of our service users are in receipt of affordable childcare due to our fees being on average up to 33.43% cheaper than the Scottish National Average. Post assessment 61.04% have been identified as low income families and now benefit directly from our grant.



FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

This staged process has allowed us to put in place a six monthly assessment check for the nursery service users which falls perfectly in line with the initial assessment of the out of school service users. In advance of this, further letters were sent to service users on 30 March 2016:-

- 256 Grant Assessment Advice Letters to out of school parents/carers
- 76 Grant Re-Assessment Advice Letters to nursery parents/carers
- Working towards compliance with Caselink Edinburgh’s online database (contractual requirement).



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