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Title   Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service

Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach (ANWA) (Education Scotland, 2016), to build capacity and raise attainment in a mainstream Inverclyde Primary School.

What did we ask?

Aim: To use the ANWA materials (Education Scotland, 2016) to effectively implement nurturing approaches within an Inverclyde Primary School using Implementation Science (Fixsen, Blasé, Naoom and Wallace; 2009) and Action Research (i.e. the Plan, Do Assess, Review Model) (Dundee Educational Psychology Service; 2016).

Research Questions: Within a mainstream school, to what extent does the implementation of the ANWA (Education Scotland, 2016):

1) Create an enhanced school ethos where Nurture Principle 4 (NP4): 'language is a vital means of communication' is embedded?
2) Impact on pupil progress in literacy and numeracy?
3) Impact positively on teacher knowledge and understanding, confidence and skills in embedding nurture.

Figure 1 in Appendix 5 depicts the proposed relationship between the capacity building input conducted by Inverclyde Educational Psychology Service and the impact and outcomes expected for children. Further clarification of the National Improvement Drivers can be found in Appendix 4.

What is the evidence base?

In 2015 the Scottish Government launched the Scottish Attainment Challenge to close the poverty related attainment gap in Scottish schools. Health and Wellbeing is key to supporting this as it is underpins the process of raising attainment (Sosu & Sue Ellis; 2014). Whilst longitudinal research on the impact of nurture approaches shows that

time in a nurture group has a positive impact on attainment (MacKay, Reynolds, Kearney; 2009) there is only limited evidence that the application of nurturing approaches from the group to the establishment level has a similar positive effects (MacKay; 2015). A further breakdown of key research focused in this area can be found in Appendix 2.

There are nurture focused self-evaluation and planning frameworks that have evolved to support a whole establishment nurture approach including How Nurturing is our school? (Glasgow EPS, 2011) and the Somerset Nurturing School Improvement Process (Somerset County Council, 2003). However, robust research evidencing the impact of nurturing approaches at the whole establishment level has, to date, not been cited in the literature linked to these frameworks. The most recent framework is the ANWA, which is based on How good is our school? 4th Edition (Education Scotland, 2015). This is the national toolkit for supporting staff to engage in evidence based self-evaluation, analysis and planning for implementation.

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of a whole school nurturing approach and its link to attainment within a mainstream school in Inverclyde Council.

What did we do?

The following research, supported by Education Scotland: National Action Enquiry (NAE) programme focuses on a whole school nurture project within Whinhill School, a mainstream primary school in Inverclyde Council that has been identified as a target school for the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The research focuses on Nurture Principle 4 *Language is a vital means of communication*, using the ANWA as the overarching framework to evidence impact.

The authors employed an Education Scotland adaptation of the Fixsen et al (2009) model to support real world change.   The stages and process are shown in Appendix 1 and a summary of the triangulation of needs analysis assessment can be found in Appendix 3.

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What have we found so far?

By using an Action Research model, evaluation was conducted within a continual, cyclical process. As a result of this the information gathered included pre- and post- data and on-going practitioner reflection to inform project direction.

Staff
- There was low level of understanding of action research and implementation science at the beginning of the project.
- Participants could not name the 6 nurture principles before the intervention.
- Staff had a low level of understanding of attunement in practice and how to assess and support this within the classroom,
- Made broad use of restorative meetings, however, there appears to be a discrepancy in the use of aspects of restorative practices in the school.
- Had identified a need for developing their practice in creating language rich environments. This should be based on a thorough knowledge of language development.
- Recognise the importance, of a more consistent approach to the three key aspects underpinning NP4, across the school.
- Participation in the implementation Group indicated increased knowledge and confidence in implementation science and action research.

Pupils
Sixteen pupils from P.4 to P.7 were involved in focus groups led by the Educational Psychologists. Key findings include:
- In PE pupils thought they were given many instructions, which could make them feel overwhelmed. They also felt that some of the language in Mathematics was difficult to comprehend.
- Around half the pupils suggested that school was a good place to talk about feelings, however many pupils alluded to the fact that they felt that this was dependent on the relationship that they had with their teacher.
- When exploring staff/pupil attunement with the pupils, findings

suggested that there was a lack of consistency in de-escalation.
- When considering how Restorative Approaches were implemented within the school, it was cited by many pupils that follow-up meetings to explore if outcomes were met would be advantageous.

SMT (Readiness Questionnaire)
- There was a recognised need to involve parents in the process of change e.g. parental noticeboard. This will further provide sustainability and breadth to the project.
- From the whole school training there was a recognised need for follow on targeted coaching.
- The EPs involved in the project were providing evidence based support and modelling.
- There was a need to move the project on now to examine the utility of practical interventions to support change.

Demographic information (baseline) – place for nurture?
The gathering of information displayed that there were a significant number of children in the school, compared to the national average:
- From SIMD bands 1 and 2.
- Who had a free meal entitlement.
- Who were looked after or previously looked after.
- Who had lower scores on their PIPS assessments.
- With a diagnosis of ASD.
- With lower CfE assessments.
- Who had been referred to Support for Learning Teachers (SLT) over the past two years.

Using implementation science – ensures sustainable implementation
In terms of process evaluation the project is progressing well. The implementation science approach is ensuring that considerations such as staffing, coaching and whole school factors are taken account of. This also ensures sustainability.

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What do we plan to do next?

By following an implementation science framework, the authors have considered both intervention progress and next steps as part of the IS framework stage 3 Initial Implementation (appendix 1).

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Appendix 1

Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
1. **Exploration & Adoption**	Prior to the formal needs analysis stage key staff attended a four day Nurturing Approaches course run by Education Scotland. The nurturing approaches development strand was highlighted within the school improvement plan and a multi-disciplinary implementation group was established. The school has adopted the ANWA into its improvement plan, and this will be actioned over a three year cycle. This paper will report on progress on an ongoing basis. At the present time it is in year 1 of the project. In line with an implementation science approach which encourages change through the identification of an early adopters approach, a primary school was idenitified as an establishment that would welcome this level of input (SIMD profile and staff motivation). Further to this a focus was placed on NP4 (Language is a vital means of communication) alongside HGIOS 4 (Education Scotland; 2015) 2.3 Teaching, learning and assessment. This was negotiated as a result of staff feedback and Quality Improvement data. An analysis of this area brings forward a focus on Restorative Approaches, attunement and language development. **Needs Analysis** *(HGIOS 4 – Assessment and Moderation Framework)* Quantitative • Speech and Language Therapy (S&LT) assessment data gathered: ✓ number of pupils on S&LT caseload in school,

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Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
	previous cases open ✓ language needs of the pupil population, • PIPs score and attendance data. • Numbers of children – English as an Additional Language (EAL), autistic spectrum, free schools meals, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 1 & 2, Looked After Children (LAC). • How many NP can staff name? **Qualitative** • Readiness questionnaire with SMT and Nurture Coaching and Modelling Officer (CMO), • Staff Nurture Questionnaire focuses on NP 4 – 'Language is a vital means of communication'. • Pupil Focus Groups • Staff self-evaluation exercise based on ANWA indicators • Quality Improvement Review – feedback to school • Attunement Coaching Sessions Staff Questionnaire pre/post • SMT staff (implementation group) staff questionnaire Implementation Science and Action Research (knowledge and understanding) **Observations** • Nurture principle 4 – Education Scotland

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Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
	Observation Profile (pre/post) • Attunement Principles Education Scotland Observation Profile (pre/post) • Quality Improvement Review – direct classroom observations
2. Installation	In terms of goodness of fit and staff-selection, staff who are motivated and viewed as leaders of change were selected to take-forward varying strands of the project. For example, a staff grouping of nine teachers who expressed an interest in attunement and displayed leadership skills, were recruited to lead on attunement coaching for whole school. Speech and Language Therapy has been scoped to join the implementation group, on the basis that they are key players in terms of professionals building capacity in the school/nursery in terms of language development. Through an action research model of continued analysis and reflection, a triangulation of the needs analysis data is ongoing. This is seen as a non-linear model of working, whereby aspects of the stages of implementation are not necessarily discreet or chronological in nature. The data gathered feeds into our continued project development. In terms of sustainability and resource, the Scottish Attainment Challenge supports the funding of the project. Alongside this, the National Action Enquiry (NAE) provides impetus for project.

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Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
	Through building capacity the Educational Psychology Service is using coaching and leadership for the project. The implementation group had an input on action research and implementation science. A peer to peer coaching approach was adopted for the post input support for attunement. This ensures that there is fidelity around the implementation structure and the evidence based underpinnings, such as implementation science and action research, are adhered to. The process, based on action research, ensures that the educational psychologists are engaged in constant reflection and as a result are continually adapting the programme based on feedback and emerging evidence.
3. Initial Implementation	This stage focuses on the vision for the project as well as gauging where it is at and defining next steps. As stated action research is built into this stage. Based on the triangulation of evidence the following developments will be undertaken in an ongoing process. *Whole School Nurturing Approaches* • In following an implementation science framework a project launch, awareness rising session was delivered to whole-school regarding the ANWA document and the key components of NP4. • Education Scotland's staff questionnaire regarding both class and whole-school practice input regarding Nurture Principle 4 was

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Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
	administered to staff on a peer coaching basis. This will be used as a further pre/post measure. • Focus Groups were undertaken involving pupils from primary 4 to 7. This was participatory in nature with all pupils becoming active in their discussions and debate. They were led by the EPs to think and analyse the school's use of restorative, attunement and language development. This was seen as involving both assessment and intervention, as the pupils developed their knowledge and skills as part of the process. *Attunement* • Interactive awareness raising session with nine members of motivated staff regarding attunement within their context. • Follow on intervention – peer coaching amongst the staff using Education Scotland 'Attunement Observation Profile' and then on-going coaching via the EP service regarding sharing good practice. • Target Setting – the members of staff will support the dissemination of the initiative whole school via peer coaching. • Evaluation – pre/post staff attunement questionnaire linked with ANWA attunement indicators.

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Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
	Restorative Approaches As part of the ongoing attunement input there will be a focus on two key aspects of restorative with staff (i) that it exists on a continuum from the informal to the formal meeting stage & (ii) that it is more powerful when outcomes from meetings are enacted and monitored by adults. An evaluation system will be created in time to establish change. *Language Development* As part of the wider implementation group, membership will be opened up to include speech and language therapy. This recognises the salience of language development within NP4. It also provides appropriate multi-professional input. This will assist in providing staff in the nursery class and early primary stages to have an enhanced understanding of language development and its linkage to attainment. It will also provide them with knowledge of assessment and intervention in this area. *Structural* As part of an implementations science framework there is an emphasis placed on ownership of projects resting with key stakeholders. This process of adoption ensures sustainability. As such there has been a recognition at this stage that the current structure for the implementation group will have to evolve over time and widen out to involve staff from

Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
	across the school – not just to members of the SMT.
4. Full Implementation	Sharing innovative practice
	The project is linked to Education Scotland as prt of piloting their development of ANWA. It is also linked to Education Scotland as it is a NAE project.
	As leaders facilitating the ANWA pilot within Inverclyde Council, we have been asked by Education Scotland to potentially highlight our project roll-out and implementation structure with the cohort of professionals on the Nurturing Approaches 4 day training.
	Within the Fixsen et. al (2009) model this stage of implementation concentrates on needs led training, for example, learning rounds using observation profiles. This is being supported through this dissemination stage.
	It also brings forward the importance of interagency working and Senior Management Team (SMT) 'buy in', as highlighted by the interface with speech and language therapy and the place of the project on the ongoing SMT agenda.
	Through reflection it has been acknowledged that there is scope to further develop the project through involving parents. It has been suggested that the development of an information sheet could be a possible starting point for this process.

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Stages of Implementation (Fixsen et al, 2009)	Where are we now
Sustainability	Through the implementation group, we will develop a three year strategic plan for the project which has its heart an acknowledgement of the need to move leadership from the current group into the ongoing existing school based structures. The aim of this plan is to ensure sustainability through succession planning. An overall key change which the authors seek to evidence is that levels of literacy nad numeracy increase positively as a result of enhanced pupil engagement in the process of learning.

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Appendix 2 – Specific Literature Research

As cited there has been little research into the effectiveness of applying nurturing principles to a whole school context. There is also very limited evidence on whether or not whole school nurture approaches improves attainment. Of the research to date the following may be concluded:

- Doyle (2004) found that a social development curriculum created to support children's transition from a nurture room to mainstream classes had some positive impacts. For example, children felt more fully included in activities in the mainstream (?)classroom.
- Positive attachment based dyadic relationships (between pupils and teachers) led to improved school attendance, which impacted on attainment (Marcus & Sanders-Reio, 2001).
- Mackay, Kearney, Reynolds (2009 & 2010), highlighted the link between nurture groups and positive academic outcomes through longitudinal research.
- Lucas (1999) suggests that when the principles inherent in the nurture group approach are applied in mainstream classrooms "a positive cycle of growth and development is set in motion."
- Colwell and O'Connor (2003) postulate that the successful verbal and non-verbal communications teachers display in nurture groups could be unscaled to the whole school level, supporting a whole school nurturing approach.

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Appendix 3 Triangulation and Moderation of Needs Analysis Assessment

QUANTITATIVE:
- PIPS scores
- Numbers of children: LAC, EAL, social & emotional, free schools meal entitlement, attendance.
  - SIMD
- Speech & L. data
  - CfE data
- Staff knowledge of Nurture Principles

VIEWS:
- **Readiness Questionnaire**
  - **Staff Questionnaire**
  - **Pupil Focus Groups**
  - **Staff self-evaluation**
  Attunement questionnaire
- Quality Improvement Review
- Implementation Group
  - Action Research & Implementation S. Questionnaire
- Semi-structured interview with Speech & L.

QUANTITATIVE DATA / PEOPLE'S VIEWS

EVALUATION OF QUALITY
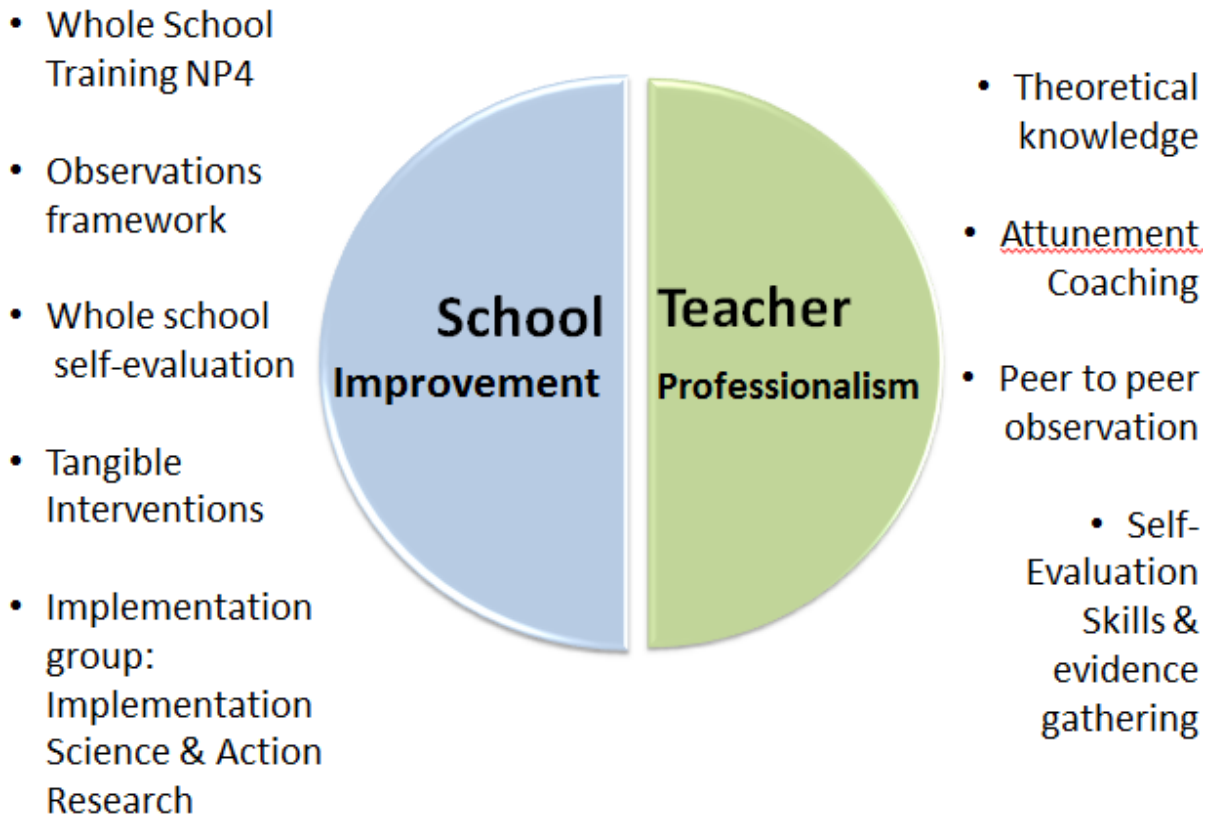
DIRECT OBSERVATION

DIRECT OBSERVATIONS:
- **Class Nurture Observation (peer to peer)**
- **Attunement Observation (peer to peer)**
- Quality Improvement Review
- Educational Psychologist - class observations
- Coaching & Modelling Officer: playground observations

![Education Scotland / Foghlam Alba logo]

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Appendix 4: The National Improvement Framework Drivers

The National Improvement Framework

- Whole School Training NP4

- Observations framework

- Whole school self-evaluation

- Tangible Interventions

- Implementation group: Implementation Science & Action Research

School Improvement | **Teacher Professionalism**

- Theoretical knowledge

- Attunement Coaching

- Peer to peer observation

- Self-Evaluation Skills & evidence gathering

Appendix 5: Proposed relationship between project key variables

Teacher Professionalism:

Joint theory and coaching model & building upon teachers self-evaluation skills.

Educational Psychologists (EPs) building capacity via embedding the WSNA.

School Improvement:

Peer observation framework and tangible interventions.

Whole School Nurturing Ethos – embedded process, building sustainability.

Health and Wellbeing

Literacy

Chain of Impact

Numeracy