

SUPPORTING LEARNING AT HOME – CASE STUDIES

Pupil Progress Plan, Bellshill Academy



Bellshill Academy developed an improvement activity which involved testing an approach to engage students, teachers and parents in working together to produce a weekly Pupil Progress Plan to support the individual needs of students while encouraging parental engagement and involvement.

1. The Approach

The Self Improving Schools Pathfinder was a Scottish Government project to explore if and how a structured approach to improvement methodology could be helpful to schools in securing a consistent approach to raising attainment, and particularly to reducing inequity.

The Scottish Government have supported Bellshill, and other pathfinder schools, with training in public sector improvement approaches and have provided direct mentoring support from an SG Improvement Advisor.

Bellshill chose to test a method to increase attainment for S5 pupils at 1+ level 6 awards to 70% of targeted pupils by August 2014. Attainment at this level is currently the only measure which is below comparator schools. The focus for improvement was students and parents in the most deprived areas (data zones 1 & 2) according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

2. The Process

Head Teacher, Mrs Ann Munro, established a small Quality Improvement Board within the school including subject teachers, department head and depute head teacher to take forward the improvement effort. The team were supported to gain a working knowledge of improvement methodology and used this to develop a clear project plan for their work.

The improvement activity involved testing an approach to engage students, teachers and parents in co-producing a weekly Pupil Progress Plan to support the individual needs of students while encouraging parental engagement and involvement.

Testing began small scale with one student testing out a template, individualised and completed by them, their parents and their teacher/mentor. The process has been refined over a number of tests including feedback and suggestions from more pupils

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and teachers as the project has developed. Testing has now spread to include a wider population of students working towards at least 1 higher grade.

3. Evaluation

Measurement of progress has been a focus throughout the project and includes a number of outcome and process measures which are qualitative and quantitative. These measures are informing progress towards the aim of the project. The school is now using run charts to plot data and learn from the improvement activity that they are engaged in.

4. Outcomes

The Pupil Progress Report was tested initially with one pupil. Five pupils are now involved in the project. The pupils have fully engaged in the process and have provided extremely informative and positive feedback. Parents have tested the Progress Report. Parental responses have been extremely encouraging with parents reporting that:

“The Progress Report gives me a good focus to discuss school work and studying with my son.”

“The Progress Report allows me to see how my daughter is doing on a weekly basis. I can discuss her targets with her and I can get much more involved in helping her to achieve her targets and to prepare for her exams”

Feedback from the school on the benefits of adopting the Model for Improvement has been very positive with the Head Teacher now working with the team to develop ideas on how to spread and sustain this project and also use the approach for future improvement activity in school.

'Learning To Achieve' , Falkirk Council



Falkirk Council

Falkirk Council have developed their 'Learning to Achieve' policy to support learners in the community. Part of this strategy includes interactive literacy and numeracy workshops where parents are given practical suggestions on how they can support their child's learning at home.

1. The Approach

Engaging with parents is an integral part of Falkirk Council's 'Learning to Achieve' policy. In order to support learners in our community, it is vitally important that we continue to develop positive relationships with parents. We employ a wide range of approaches from creative communications (e.g. Twitter and you tube information animations) to delivering interactive workshops. It is essential that we provide a

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variety of options to meet the needs of our parents and carers. We have also produced traditional support materials such as parental leaflets and hand-outs.

2. The Process

We have consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, including head teachers, parents and parent groups, Falkirk Council's parental engagement officers as well as pupils. We have used national and local guidelines and responded to key priorities to incorporate into our plans.

3. Key Factors

No one model suits all, our suite of approaches are adaptable to meet the needs of our parents and carers. The support materials are easy to access and use jargon free language. Sessions are held at different times of the day and evening sessions are also offered. Including pupils in the sessions is definitely a successful tool.

4. Challenges

The challenges have been trying to make the materials and support sustainable. Recently I have been inviting colleagues from local clusters to also attend sessions in order to build capacity to deliver sessions in their own establishments. This has turned into a positive as parents are seeing a joined up approach through involving other sectors e.g. High Schools.

5. Outcomes

a) Parents and families – reports indicate parents find supporting homework easier. Feedback has been really positive and parents are more confident with new terminology etc. to support younger children. Increase in quality of support with homework tasks

b) Children – increased confidence through presenting to others, being consulted and by being used as part of the materials – voiceovers, photographs, jotters used etc.

c) Teachers – less parental enquiries about particular curriculum areas. Positive relationships further developed.

6. Evaluation

After every session, we invite attendees to provide informal feedback. Key findings are: parents find the session's positive, helpful and request more in other curriculum areas.

Quote from a Headteacher "The Event was exceptionally well received by all who were in attendance. The comments made through the self-evaluation process could not have been more positive and appreciative. Parents/carers did feel included, more informed and were able to experience first-hand, the activities undertaken by the children on a daily basis."

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Kinneil Primary School and Nursery
'Active Numeracy' Parent Workshop – 14th March 2014



Sharon Wallace, Curricular Support Officer, and a group of our children led an Active Numeracy workshop for our parents. Colleagues from our cluster schools, including Bo'ness Academy, were also in attendance. They were also joined by our Quality Improvement Officer and a representative from the Scottish Government.

Feedback

Very enjoyable!

Interesting learning new ideas and teaching methods!

It helped me understand multiplication and ways I can help my child more!

Informative and fun way to learning, wish it had been taught like that when I was at school!



7. Resources

For further information and resources used by Falkirk Council please visit the following links:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/fa/LiteracyStrategy/>

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/fa/NumeracyStrategy/>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TnXMSAcKcCo&feature=youtu.be>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWeYMNxNUpc>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJod0TZu6oI>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjPg9WjkndY>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5r6tuHsRGOY>

Using these reflective questions will support you to consider your own approach to engaging and supporting children and their families:

- How effectively do we use current available data about levels of poverty in our community to help us involve parents in decision making?
- How effectively do you encourage parents to support their child's learning in literacy and numeracy? In what ways could this be developed further?

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- Are parents involved school improvement planning?
- How well are parents involved in reviewing school policies and procedures?
- Are parents involved in the recruitment of senior staff?
- Are appropriate family learning programmes arranged in collaboration with parental needs?
- What evidence do we have that family learning is improving the life chances of the families involved?
- Are outcomes for children improving as a result of their participation in family learning? How do we know?
- Are outcomes for children improving as a result of parental involvement in decision-making?

Documents: -

How Good is Our Third Sector (2015)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk3hgiothirdsector.aspx>

How Good is Our Schools 4 (2015)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk2hgios.aspx>

How good is the learning and development in our community? (2016)

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/frwk4hgiocommunitylearning.aspx>