



HMIe - How Well are Children Protected and their Needs Met?

HOW GOOD CAN WE BE?

What is our capacity for improvement?

Healthy: having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices.

Achieving: being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school, and in the community.

Nurtured: having a nurturing place to live, in a family setting with additional help if needed or, where this is not possible, in a suitable care setting.

Active: having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community.

Respected*: having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions which affect them.

Responsible*: having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles in their schools and communities and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision.

Included: having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

Key Area 3: Solihull Approach

How was the need for improvement identified and initiated?

The Parenting Support Strategy Group was formed in 2005 to progress the development of a strategy for East Ayrshire. A Position Statement developed by the group was presented to senior management within Education and Social Work Services in 2006. An audit of parenting support programmes across Education, Social Work Services and Health was also undertaken in 2006 which highlighted the variable approaches to parenting support across agencies and the need to provide a more consistent approach to parenting support.

To date, the Parenting Support Strategy Group has focused on 2 areas:

- developing a Parenting Support Strategy and
- developing parenting support initiatives, one being the Solihull Approach.

The Principal Officer (Early Education and Childcare) and the Public Health Practitioner (Child Health) attended the Solihull Approach Parenting Conference in November 2006.

The strengths of this Approach were identified as follows:

- designed to meet the needs of families throughout the early development of the child (birth to 5 years)
- published evaluations in the *International Journal of Infant Observation (2004)* and the *Community Practitioner (2006)*
- integration of core concepts of containment (psychoanalytic theory), reciprocity (child development theory) and behaviour management. These concepts can be useful to practitioners in 3 ways: to help parents process any emotions and anxieties that are overwhelming, which in turn both restores the parent's ability to think and enables them to help the baby or child cope with his/her emotions and anxieties, to help practitioners and parents see how the parents and child interact – this can then provide the basis for feedback in order to facilitate the relationship and to help parents work with their children's behaviour.
- a shared approach and language when working with families which cross all agencies
- effective in daily work on a one to one basis with parents as well as in group settings
- development of a cascade system to disseminate training and sustain the approach locally.

Overall Evaluation (Brief Summary) of development/practice initiative.

23 staff trained in the Solihull Approach across Early Years, Health and Social Work

Results from the evaluation of the pilot were positive. One example from the evaluation noted that 90% of staff involved felt that:

- the Approach had enabled consistency of care to families and facilitated better engagement with families who feel they were listened to
- the Approach is solution based enabling families to see problems which help address their whole family's situation.

At the CHP Officer Locality Group (Children and Young People) meeting on 13th May 2009, it was agreed to rollout the Solihull Approach. Initially the multi-agency focus will be based around the 5 x nursery and family centres in East Ayrshire.

The work plan for the roll out of the Approach has been progressed starting in November 2009 with practitioners accessing the Trained Trainers course. This will facilitate training of staff across agencies during 2010. Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the roll out of the Approach will be incorporated from the beginning and will adopt best practice evaluation principles throughout the 3 year timeline of the roll out. The evaluation will include the gathering of parents and practitioners views and outcomes for children and families.

Supporting Evidence:

- Children & Young People Services Plan Steering Group
- Officer Locality Group (Children and Young People)
- Parent Support Strategy Group
- Parent Support Strategy Group – Solihull Approach sub group

- Children's Services Plan 2008- 2011
- Solihull Parenting Pilot Evaluation Survey (2008)
- University Of Strathclyde (2008) *Towards an East Ayrshire Parent Support Strategy (summary)*,
- The Scottish Government and COSLA (2008) *The Early Years Framework Part 2* p.12
- Learning & Teaching Scotland, *Early Years Matters* , Spring Edition (2009)

Example(s) of Good Practice

Evaluation of pilot identified

- assessment tool
- improved partnership with parents to aid identification of issues
- partnership working with practitioners across agencies
- improved information sharing
- anecdotal information from practitioners about the impact of using the Solihull Approach when working with parents and families.

Areas for Improvement

The Solihull Approach is work in progress which will be evaluated and monitored over the next 3 years. The initial evaluation has provided a baseline measure of activity which will be built on with the roll out of the Solihull Approach over the next 3 years.