

National Assembly for Wales

Children, Young People and Education Committee

CYP(4)–06–14 – Paper 3 – Pillgwenlly Primary School

Inquiry into Educational Outcomes for Children from Low Income Households

Briefing Paper on Family Engagement Projects at Pillgwenlly Primary

Pillgwenlly Primary School is based next to the dock area of Newport. It is an area of high deprivation with quite a transient population. There are currently 681 pupils on roll; 90% EAL/BME and 21% of the school population not speaking the English Language. The school has 32 spoken languages, FSM 42.5%, Number on SEN register 39%. Pillgwenlly Primary prides itself on working with the whole family in order to maximise the learning in every household.

Pillgwenlly Primary School currently offers the following projects and initiatives:

1. Nurture Groups
2. Family Nurture Group
3. Family Learning: OCN English,
4. Family Intervention Learning: Reading Boosters, Maths Games
5. English as a Second Language Class
6. Family Lending Library
7. Practical Parenting Sessions
8. LAP/ NAP
9. Reception Parents Literacy

Nurture Groups

Pillgwenlly Primary offers a Nurture Group to provide a suitable learning environment for some of the most vulnerable pupils and the 'hard to reach' parents. Parents fully engage with the Group and attend 'Play and Stay' sessions, Reading Guidance sessions and attend family breakfast sessions. In March, we will be piloting an exciting new Family Learning Programme with our Nurture Group parents that will involve using iPads to explore learning

programmes available for the children. The Foundation Phase Nurture Group has been in operation since 2004. The school has been awarded the Boxall Quality Mark Award.

Family Nurture Group

Since 2010, there has been a significant increase in learners arriving who do not speak English and have had little or no previous school experience. We recognised the particular needs of these learners and needed a strategy to engage the families in the life and work of the school. We established a Family Nurture Group to provide these families with social and emotional support while settling into the local community and school.

The family Nurture Room provides a place where children and their family (parents or grandparents) can join them for part of the week. All learners have a base class. The children access the Family Nurture Room for 55% of their week, working alongside their family members for 10% or 20% of the week and attending their base classes for the remainder of the week with home language support. As soon as the learners have acquired the skills to support them with their learning and wellbeing, they transfer into their base class full time.

The outcomes have included forming trusting relationships with new families. Their participation in school life has resulted in improved standards for disadvantaged learners and has provided those learners with the literacy and social skills they require to achieve at school. Learners attitude to school has developed positively; pupil attendance rates have improved (range of 47% to 71% to a range of 84% to 96%), parent attendance to family learning sessions is between 94% to 100%, parental attendance to consultation evenings have also significantly improved. The Family Nurture Room has also provided a forum for parents to have access to support resources; for example - school nurse, midwife, dentistry and other professionals.

Family Learning: OCN English

Every Wednesday morning Pillgwenlly Primary offers Family Learning Sessions with a focus on basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Part of the morning is developing parent's knowledge and understanding and the second part of the morning the parent learns alongside their child. Parents attending this workshop had a desire to gain a qualification,

hence the group is now called the OCN (Open College Network) Group. This parent group currently consists of twelve families. Many of our parents who have completed their OCN qualifications in previous years, are now 'parent mentors' and support new families in achieving their OCN qualifications.

Family Intervention Learning: Reading Boosters, Maths Games

Pupils receiving Maths Catch Up Programme have some sessions with their parents. The parents are shown how maths resources can help their child learn. Some resources have included 'hundred square' and how to use it, 'multiplication grid', number lines. The family session also involves playing maths games, many of which the family make to take home.

English as a Second Language Class

Every week parents are able to attend English Speaking Classes. An external tutor attends school to develop parents' spoken language and written language. This is a very popular class accessed by a mix of ethnic minority parents.

Family Lending Library

Families can borrow games, puzzles or books on a weekly basis. Children are shown how to play the games in order for them to share the activity with their families.

Practical Parenting Classes

Pillgwenlly Primary School offers families help, support and guidance in supporting them with their parenting. Parents are given the opportunity to make visual timetables for the home, routine charts to support them getting their children to bed and to school, positive behaviour charts and healthy eating support.

LAP/NAP

In the Autumn term, our new Nursery parents are invited to attend Language and Play sessions. Parents attend practical sessions alongside their children in order to gain a better understanding of how their children learn, and how they can support this learning at home. This is followed by a Numeracy and Play programme in the Spring term.

Reception Parents Literacy

As a continuation of parental engagement in Nursery through LAP and NAP, Reception parents are invited to attend Literacy sessions on a Wednesday in the Family Learning room. Parents continue to develop their knowledge of how they can support their children's learning.

Starting this year, many of our Family Engagement Programmes are run by a fully trained in-house facilitator.

Pillgwenlly Primary School recognises there is always more to do to engage parents in their child's learning and attitude to school life. Plans for this financial year is to produce some short factual and helpful information leaflets called:

Attendance: Every Day Counts

How to Help your Child with Maths: Every Day with Numbers

How to Help your Child with Reading: Every Day with Words