



Early Learning Initiative
National College of Ireland

Early Learning Initiative

**End-of-Year Report
2017/18**

CHY 9928

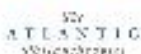
Supporting parents, communities and

services in the education of children



www.ncirl.ie/ELI

The Area Based Childhood Programme 2013-2018



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FOREWORD

As part of the National College of Ireland (NCI), the Early Learning Initiative (ELI) is a community-based educational initiative, which provides ‘world-class’ educational support programmes at each stage of a child’s/young person’s educational journey. This is in line with NCI’s mission to change lives through education.

This was a special year for ELI as we celebrated our 10-year anniversary. While much has changed, some things have stayed the same. The message from parents in 2008 was, “*We love our children. We want them to do well. We don’t know how*”. Since then, ELI has been working with parents and professionals to ensure that children have the social, language, literacy and numeracy skills they need for success in education, employment and life.

This End-of-Year Report describes the work completed in 2017/18 and briefly outlines our plans for 2018/19. It also takes a look back at what has been achieved over the past 10 years as ELI has grown from just 7 programmes, 19 services/schools and 400 people in 2008 to 17 programmes, 67 services/schools and over 10,000 people in 2018. Satisfaction rates remain high at 98% (N=1,364) across all programmes for those who filled out evaluation forms. This number is derived from responses given to questions, which provide indications of satisfaction such as finding a programme useful, finding a workshop interesting and a programme being a valuable learning opportunity.

Children’s oral language, literacy, numeracy, social and coding skills continue to improve and with #LOVEeducation this year young people’s aspirations for the future have never been higher. With our first PCHP children entering second level, we are looking at more ways to support them to continue to third level and beyond.

This End of Year Report will inform ELI’s decision-making processes throughout 2018/19. Summaries of this document are available on the website: www.ncirl.ie/eli and in hard copy to our partners in the statutory, community and corporate sector. A Community Update Newsletter is also available.

ELI achievements are the result of people having the vision and courage to explore new possibilities and work together to ‘*nurture and support children and young people to grow into strong individuals with the capacity and resolution to achieve their dreams*’. Each of our partners have played an essential role in the development of ELI and we would like to thank each and every one of you for your support. Looking to the future, we welcome the contribution of all our partners and hope, with your support, to build on our success in improving educational outcomes for children, young people and their families in the area.

Partnership with Government

The Government, through its continuous support and interest of ELI, is directly ensuring that education is at the heart of a more cohesive, more equal and more successful society; thereby making Dublin’s Inner City one of the best places to grow up, live, work and rear a family. Implementing Government policy at local level is the foundation of all ELI’s Programmes. By investing in ELI, the Government is delivering on its *Programme for Government* (2016) and national policy frameworks such as *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014-15* (DCYA 2014); *Action Plan for Education 2018* (DES 2018); *National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy* (DES 2011); *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-19* (DES 2015) and the *DEIS Education Plan 2017* (DES 2017).

The support received from various Government Departments, in particular the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and its Agencies, enables us to address key educational and social issues in the communities in which we work. The statutory funding received through the **Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme** is helping us improve outcomes for children and their families in the Dublin Docklands and East Inner City. The ABC Programme continued to grow in 2017/18 and we were delighted to see the continued commitment from the DCYA and the Government to its development. From September 1st 2018, the ABC Programme will move from Pobal and CES into Tusla, the Child and Family Agency with a working group established to oversee the transitional arrangements and to advise on the planning, implementation and development of a community based prevention and early intervention programme, within Tusla, from 2019. The Government and the DCYA intends to utilise the learnings emerging from the findings of the ABC National Evaluation to inform the design of prevention and early intervention initiatives that comprehend the Programme for Government commitments. We thank the Centre for Effective Services (CES) and Pobal for their support in the past and look forward to working with our colleagues in Tusla, the Child and Family Agency to ensure that children in the area are being supported to realise their maximum potential in all areas of learning and development, both now and in the future. More information on this programme is available in Chapter 8.

The communities in which ELI works are experiencing a level of inward migration higher than the national average. Migrant children, particularly if English is their second language, are less likely to have the language, literacy and numeracy skills needed for school. Their families are more isolated and less likely to be involved in community activities. Funding from the **Department of Justice and Equality through the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014 - 2020 (AMIF)** for PCHP is ensuring that migrant children start school on a par with their peers and their parents will receive the support they need to access other services, make friends and integrate into the local community. More information on this programme is available in Chapter 9.

Partnership with the North East Inner City (NEIC) Programme Implementation Board

Following the violent incidents in the North Inner City, the Government decided as a matter of urgency to see how they could support the community to deal with the situation and work together to envision and plan for a better future for the children and young people in the area. Following the report by Kieran Mulvey, a NEIC Programme Implementation Board led by an independent chair, Michael Stone, was established in June 2017. The Board comprises the key Government departments and agencies who have statutory responsibility for delivery of key services and accountability for the expenditure of funds related to priority areas in the Mulvey Report.

Four working sub groups reflecting the four priority areas for actions have been established: Tackling Crime and Drugs; Maximising Educational / Training Opportunities / Creating Local Employment Opportunities; Creating an Integrated System of Social Services (Family, Children and Youth Services); Improving the Physical Landscape. Both NCI President, Gina Quin, and myself as ELI Director were delighted to be asked to sit on Subgroup 2: Education and Training and Subgroup 3: Children, Family and Youth Services respectively.

ELI was pleased to receive NEIC funding to deliver the following projects: NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative – Restorative Practice Phase 2 (2017-18); Love Education Event and Home from Home Learning Programme. On behalf of all involved, I would like to commend and thank the NEIC Programme Implementation Board, its Chair Michael Stone and the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone and her Department for supporting ELI, as recommended in the Mulvey Report, and helping us to create a more cohesive, equal and inclusive community in the North East Inner City.

Partnership with the Corporate Sector

Interest in ELI from the corporate sector increased again last year with more organisations signing up to partner ELI in improving outcomes for children and young people in Dublin's Inner City. The role our prominent corporate partners play in supporting these children and their families to succeed in education cannot be underestimated. It is helping to change attitudes and build relationships through all sectors of the community. As one of our corporate volunteers summed it up:

I feel it shortens the gap between "them and us", having a common thing to talk about shows them they could work in a place like our firm.

Without the substantial, long-term financial and voluntary support of the following companies and individuals, much of the ELI's work would not be possible: Ireland Funds, basis.point, Community Foundation of Ireland, McCann FitzGerald, Central Bank, Dublin Port, State Street Foundation, Panda Waste, Northern Trust, Facebook, ESB, Deloitte, Citco, McGarrell Reilly Group, HSBC, SAP, SFI, Chartered Lands, Keegan Quarries, Arthur Cox, Dermot Desmond, Fyffes, Samskip, Total Produce, Ulster Bank, Eversheds Sutherland, Twinlite, KPMG, Clancourt Group, Mason Hayes and Curran, Keith Ennis, Joseph E. Corcoran, The Winifred Garvin Fund, Circle of Giving, The Panel, Microsoft, EBECs, Oriel Wind Group, Cairn Homes, Linesight, Park Developments, Centaurfs, Philip Matthews, Colin and Nikki Ryan and other donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Their contributions have made a positive difference to the lives of many individuals in the Docklands and are helping to build a high-achieving, supporting and cohesive community. We applaud their genuine commitment to making a real, measurable and positive difference to the lives and learning successes of children and young people in the area. More information on fundraising and corporate volunteering is available in Chapter 3 and 13 respectively.

We are continually seeking additional corporate partners and would welcome the opportunity to talk to interested companies. Please contact Shivonne Heery (by phone: 4498628 or e-mail: shivonne.heery@ncirl.ie) for more information on how your organisation could get involved with ELI.

Partnership with other Communities

Our hope is that the ELI will, over time, act as a centre of excellence, from which many communities can learn, thereby improving the educational and life chances of children and their families across Ireland.

Learning communities are an important element of the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme. They bring together the government agencies responsible for programme governance and implementation, representatives from each project involved in the programme and the programme evaluation team to share and disseminate learning from project implementation to collectively influence policy. They also give participating projects the opportunities to share their practice and experience with the other projects. ELI is actively involved in the ABC Managers' Forum and the other ABC Groups. We are also members of the Prevention & Early Intervention Network (PEIN), which is a network of evidence-based practice, advocacy and research organisations that share a commitment to improving outcomes for children, young people, and their communities.

Over the past year, many diverse organisations in the statutory, community and voluntary sector has expressed an interest in our programmes. We continue to work closely with our existing partners: Galway Education Centre (PCHP); Dublin South City Partnership (PCHP); Garryowen Community Development Group and Paul Partnership, Limerick (PCHP); Bite, Ballymun (Discover University);

Katherine Howard Foundation (PCHP), Pavee Point (PCHP); Daughters of Charity/ DIT/Grangegorman ABC Programme (PCHP); and Clonmel Parenting Support (ABC 0-2 Programme).

Interest in ELI internationally increased. In 2017/18, we hosted visits from Family Lives, UK; Rotary Family Service Centre, Singapore and ECEC students from the US. We also participated in national and international conferences along with using various media to disseminate our work. More details on these are available in Chapter 6.

We are also collaborating with our partners in Germany, UK, Luxembourg and Catalonia, Spain on a European Erasmus+ Project Literacy Project- Making Literacy Meaningful; which involves developing two MOOCs (Massive Online Learning Course) to support the teaching of literacy as well as language support. More details on these are available in Section 10.6

Partnership with our Local Docklands and Inner City Communities

One of the great strengths of ELI has been our network of parents, public health nurses, early years, after school and youth services, schools, TDs, community, statutory and corporate organisations, who are working with us to ensure that children will have the aspirations, skills and qualifications needed to achieve their dreams. None of the work outlined in this report would have been possible without their support. Through their involvement in the Review Board, Consortium and various Working Groups, they actively inform the development and implementation of all our programmes. They are also responsible for implementing ABC/ELI's programmes in their services.

Thank you to everyone who supported us last year in helping children and young people in the area achieve their educational, career and life goals. We look forward to continuing to work together to improve outcomes for children and young people in 2018/19 and beyond.

Partnership with our Colleagues in the National College of Ireland

ELI operates under and adheres to all NCI's policies and procedures. NCI staff, from various Departments, work very closely with us to ensure that our programmes are delivered to a high standard. We are very appreciative of their dedication, collegiality and encouragement.

Aside from organising rooms for meetings and events, recruiting staff, delivering materials to services, ordering books, fixing our computers, supporting programme delivery and making sure our finances were in order, NCI staff hosted the Christmas Party for PCHP families. NCI students are also actively involved in ELI, through our Intern Programme, Discover University and early numeracy assessments. Through their interactions with ELI and the local community, they demonstrate NCI's long-standing commitment to widening participation in higher education and ensuring that children in the area will progress successfully to third level.

NCI's Vision 2025 and forthcoming Academic Strategy recognises ELI as an integral part of the NCI landscape. In the words of NCI's President, Gina Quin,

The Early Learning Initiative is built on a foundation of human dignity, it is about the common good, the sharing of our wealth of expertise as a College, it is about the empowerment of the most disadvantaged around us, achieved through participation and solidarity brought about through Community Action Research. It is genuinely changing a community, slowly, one person at a time, in reference to an ever changing environment.

(Quin 2018)

ELI's Five-Year Strategy 2015-20 aims to embed ELI further within NCI, including governance structure and regulations; academic, research and ethics base; and cross-departmental collaborative projects. ELI continues to work closely with our NCI colleagues with team members on various NCI Committees; some shared between Departments and others availing of NCI courses. Key projects for collaboration in 2017/18 were SFI/SAP – Robotic Coding Clubs; Restorative Practice/Brighter Futures; EU Literacy Project; Discover University and Summer Programme. ELI placements and intern positions also allowed NCI students to engage in real-life practice and research with the local community.

One of the most exciting collaborations this year was between NCI's IT Department; the Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) team; EBECs and Microsoft to develop a new online record management system using Dynamics CRM. The new system allows us to measure more effectively the impacts (short, medium-term and long-term), of PCHP on the children, their families and the wider community. We would like to thank the IT Department, in particular Cameron, for their understanding, patience and kindness to the PCHP team as they became more familiar and proficient with the CRM system.

ELI Governance

NCI takes full responsibility for the financial, management, contractual, reporting and governance requirements of ELI. It upholds the highest standards of corporate governance and is signed up to the Statement for Guiding Principles for Fundraising, Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015, Child Safeguarding Statement, GDPR and The Governance Code. NCI does not charge any central overhead to ELI and has absorbed historical deficits between funding available and the cost of delivering ELI programmes and services. The generous commitment of Leonard Moloney, Chairperson of NCI's Governing Body; Gina Quin, President of NCI; and other members of NCI's Governing Body and Executive Board has been critical to the success of ELI in improving outcomes for children and young people in the area.

ELI is a discreet centre within NCI with its own dedicated staff and Advisory/Review Boards. The leadership and expertise shown by Frank Ryan, Chairperson of the ELI Advisory and ABC Review Boards; Dan O'Connor, Chairperson of the ELI Development Committee and the other members of the Advisory/Review Boards and Development/Research Committees has been invaluable in the development of ELI. We thank them for their advice, guidance and support over the past year and look forward to working with them in 2018/19.

Going Forward

Thank you everyone who wished us a Happy Birthday in January. It was wonderful to catch up with all of our supporters along with our first PCHP children and their families at ELI's birthday celebrations in January. As these children enter second level, we are looking at how we can support them to continue to third level and beyond.

ELI's 10-year celebration continued with our Early Years Conference on the theme '*The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children*' on 13th June. We were delighted to have Paschal Donohue, TD and Minister for Finance & Public Expenditure and Reform as the keynote speaker on the role of fathers in their children's education. Since 2008, fathers' involvement in ELI's programme has grown enormously and it is wonderful to see so many active interested fathers at our events. Our Home Visiting team are developing a proposal to recruit a team of Dads as Home Visitors.

A new decade is beginning for ELI and we are starting the process of developing our 2020-25 ELI Strategy. If we are to build on our achievements, we will need the on-going interest, commitment and participation of our local community and corporate partners as well as Government funding and support.

ELI's long-term strategy is based on improving its existing programmes - Home Visiting, Parent and Professional Support, Literacy, Numeracy and Coding, Restorative Practice and Educational Guidance - as well as developing new ones to ensure that our children and young people have the skills they need for tomorrow's world. Nobody can predict the future, but we can say that our children will need self-confidence, resilience, a wide range of literacies and transferable skills if they are to thrive and flourish.

Over the past 10 years, ELI's Community Action Research approach has enabled the development of truly innovative initiatives, which are making a real difference to the lives of children and their families in our locality. By harnessing the expertise and experience within the local families and services in a proactive and systematic way, it has created an active, engaged and more inclusive community, where everyone has a voice. However, long-term sustainable change requires multiple Community Action Research iterations and continued innovation. While changes in one family and one service is always welcome, it is the collective impact on a number of families and services in an area and the national system that delivers organic intergenerational change. As ELI embarks on its second decade, we remain committed to the Community Action Research process of improving educational, career and life outcomes for children and their families through bottom-up, flexible, continuous, collaborative change.

In 2018/19, we will continue to build on the work being done at present. While all of ELI programmes will run next year, some will be reviewed and updated. The ABC Programme is in full implementation stage and we are excited about the move to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.

As another year for ELI begins, I want to thank everyone who has helped us get this far. We are very excited about our plans for 2018/19. We look forward to continuing to work with you all to build a better brighter future for the children, young people and families we work with.



Dr Josephine Bleach,
Director
Early Learning Initiative
National College of Ireland

Executive Summary 2017/2018

This was a special year for ELI as we celebrated our 10-year anniversary. It was wonderful to catch up with our community, statutory and corporate partners who have given us so much support over the years. It was also amazing to look back at the growth of ELI from just 7 programmes, 19 services/schools and 400 people in 2008 to 17 programmes, 67 services/schools and over 10,500 people in 2018. Satisfaction rates remain high at 98% across all programmes for 2017-18.

Section A: Governance and Strategy

Finance (Chapter 3)

The combined spend of ELI/ABC for the 12 months to June 2018 was €1.2m (compared to the previous year of €1m) of which €670K was ABC funding and €540K was ELI fundraising income. The 2018/19 projected expenditure for ELI/ABC is €1.5m.

Governance (Chapter 4)

NCI takes full responsibility for the governance requirements of ELI and has proactively embraced the highest standards of corporate governance including the *Statement for Guiding Principles for Fundraising, Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015, Children's First Child Safeguarding Statement, GDPR and The Governance Code*.

From September 1st 2018, the ABC Programme will move from Pobal and CES into Tusla, the Child and Family Agency with a working group established to oversee the transitional arrangements and to advise on the planning, implementation and development of a community based prevention and early intervention programme, within Tusla, from 2019.

Strategy (Chapter 5)

In 2017/18 ELI's 2015-2020 strategy was reviewed and updated and we began the process of developing our 2020-25 Strategy. ELI's long-term strategy focuses on improving its existing programmes as well as developing new ones to ensure that our children and young people have the skills they need for tomorrow's world.

Research and Evaluation (Chapter 6)

There were 17 conference presentations; 7 journal/report/book chapter publications; 3 community newsletters and 6 articles/appearances in newspapers/magazines/radio content.

Our social media profile grew with over 1,613 likes on Facebook, 680 followers on Twitter, and 73 followers on Instagram.

An Early Years Conference on the theme '*The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children*' was held on 13th June. Paschal Donohue, TD and Minister for Finance & Public Expenditure and Reform and Francis Chance, Katharine Howard Foundation were the keynote speakers.

Programme Implementation (Section B)

Volunteering (Chapter 8)

Corporate volunteers increased from 235 in 2016/17 to 349 in 2017/18 due to additional volunteering opportunities and the increased interest in volunteering from corporate companies.

Home Visiting and Parent Support (Chapters 10 & 11)

Home Visiting and Parent Support Programmes, which enable families to develop the understanding, skills and knowledge needed to support their children's developmental, educational and life journeys, expanded in 2017/18. Two hundred and forty-two families received a home visit last year with 173 attending parent support groups.

The NEIC Home from Home 2017 summer programme for the 126 families with children aged 0-3 years was such a success that we repeated it in 2018.

Our ABC 0-2 Programme was one of the finalists in the Irish Healthcare Awards.

Our PCHP Home Visitors went digital in 2017/18 with their new mobile phones and online record management system.

Literacies Programmes (Chapter 12)

ELI's Literacy, Numeracy and Coding Programmes focus on supporting parents, services and schools to develop children's social, language and thinking skills from an early age; thereby, ensuring that the children and young people have the skills needed to achieve their educational, career and life goals. Supported by 270 professionals, 2,847 children, 4,157 parents and 115 corporate volunteers took part in one of ELI's literacy programmes.

The first EU Erasmus+ Literacy Project *Making Literacy Meaningful* MOOC, which focused on supporting the teaching of children who have the countries 'instructional language' as a second language, is available online: <http://literacymooc.eu/courses/teaching-in-multilingual-classrooms/>.

Restorative Practice (Chapter 13)

Restorative Practice (RP), which aims to build relationships and resolve conflict, took on several new initiatives in 2017/18. Four hundred and forty-five children, 242 parents and 14 volunteers took part in a RP programme with 305 professionals attending training.

Our '*Let's Talk*' book, which was launched by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone, is very popular with children, families and services and will help us embed restorative practice throughout the community.

Two new programmes, an RP parenting course and *Opening the Door* - RP conversations between local young people and corporate employees were piloted very successfully this year as part of the NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative.

Educational and Career Guidance (Chapter 14)

The Educational Guidance Programme, which aims to support children and young people to access further education and career opportunities, was updated in 2017-18 with the addition of the #LOVEeducation showcase event and the third-level options drop-in clinics. The Discover University project strands expanded to include Early Years and Psychology as well as the traditional projects in Business and Computing. Three-hundred and ninety-one children, 192 parents and 170 corporate volunteers were involved in one of ELI's educational guidance programmes.

Section A: Governance and Strategy

The long-term strategy for ELI is to improve the service it provides to our local community in Dublin's Inner City. Our vision is that the ELI is an advocate for prevention and early intervention supports for children, parents and families as well as a centre of excellence in Home Visiting and Parent Support Programmes from which other communities can learn.

Community action research continues to be ELI's research methodology as it provides the process and on-going data required for continuous improvement and capacity building. By giving a genuine voice to participants through a methodology that directly involves them as co-constructors of programmes, it develops the capacity, ownership and participation required for effective implementation.

Short-term Targets:

- Ensure our vision, purpose and values remain relevant and influence all aspects of our work
- Continue to use community action to review, update, and develop programmes, to ensure that they are continuing to be effective in meeting their stated purpose and objectives
- Maintain the existing high quality of provision, support and oversight.
- Continue to develop a structured approach to the collection of robust data, as well as the most effective methods of measuring the educational outcomes of the various programmes
- Plan for sustainability, within the limited resources available, and taking account of the need to extend ELI within Dublin City and other disadvantaged areas in Ireland
- Develop further our dissemination and communication strategies
- Plan for the next stage/iteration of the ABC Programme as it moves into Tusla
- Implement ELI's 2015-20 Strategy and consultation process for the 2020-25 Strategy

Medium-term Targets:

- Contribute further to national and international theories in relation to community action research; parental involvement; early intervention and prevention; and change management.
- Continue to develop pioneering programmes that address low educational achievement and child poverty along with the overarching strategy for the future direction of the Initiative.
- Develop ELI's 2020-25 Strategy

Long-term Targets:

- Increase the scale of ELI's work, with models of best practice developed by ELI used across Ireland to improve outcomes for children and their families
- Implement ELI's 2020-25 Strategy

This section gives an overview of ELI at the end of June 2018 in terms of Governance, Accountability, Research and Strategy. An overview of programme implementation is available in Section B, while more detailed reports for individual programmes can be found in Section C.

1 Participant Numbers 2017/2018

Table 1. Participant Numbers 2017/2018

Programme	Children	Parents	Professionals	Volunteers	Totals
Home Visiting and Parent Child Home Support Programmes (0 - 3 yrs)					
ABC 0-2 Home Visiting Programme	69	69	7	20	165
Parenting Support Sessions*	173	173	12	0	358
Parent Child Home Programme	176	176	31	30	413
Cruinniu na nOg*	113	80	0	0	193
NEIC Home from Home 2017 Summer Programme*	127	126	4	0	257
Literacies Programmes					
Early Numeracy Project (0-8 years)*	1,739	2,501	180	16	4,420
Zoom Ahead with Books (4-6 years)*	737	1,416	44	17	2,214
Doodle Den (Senior Infants)*	55	73	9	12	149
Rummikub (2nd class)**	85	55	11	34	185
Table Quiz (3rd class)**	75	40	8	10	133
Monopoly (4th class)**	42	27	2	4	75
Robotic Coding Club (afterschools)	33	20	10	20	83
Financial Literacy (afterschools)	59	25	6	2	92
Tuition Support (15-18 years)	22	0	0	0	22
Educational Guidance					
ELI Educational Scholarships	41	0	0	5	46
Educational Guidance (5th/6th class)	52	32	4	11	99
Mentoring Programme (5th/6th class)	61	110	6	45	222
NEIC Love Education Event**	194	0	15	28	237
Discover University (14-17 years)	38	50	7	76	171
NCI Interns & Third Level (17+ years)	5	0	0	5	5
Restorative Practice (NEIC and ABC)**	445	242	305	14	1,006
Totals	4,341	5,215	661	349	10,545

* May also have been involved in other programmes

** Numbers are the number who attend events not the number who took part in the schools/services, which is larger

Please note: Professionals are staff working in schools, services etc.

2 Performance Outcome Indicators 2017/18

Table 2 Performance Outcome Indicators 2017/18

Programme	Performance Outcomes	Target for Year ending 30 th June 2018	Target met Year ending 30 th June 2018	Target for Year ending 30 th June 2019
Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) – 866	No. of families visited	180	176	185
	No. of home visits*	5,600	6,836	7,000
0-2 Programme - 863	No. of families visited	70	69	80
	No. of home visits*	600	614	800
	No. of families attending groups	160	173	180
Early Years Numeracy Programme - 865	No. of ECCE settings	13	12	12
	No. of Primary Schools	11	12	12
	No. of After Schools	7	5	5
	No. of Libraries	5	5	5
	No. of Health Services	5	5	5
	Working Group Meetings	4	4	4
	Staff Training Sessions	10	9	9
	Numeracy Support Visits	230	234	240
	Curriculum Priority Weeks	3	3	3
	Zoom Ahead with Books	1	1	3
Doodle Den - 868	No. of After Schools (Delivery)	4	4	4
	No of Children	45	55	55
	No. of Primary Schools (Referrals)	4	4	4
Restorative Practice (ABC/NEIC) - 864	No. of Primary Schools	9	14	12
	No. of Secondary Schools	0	1	1
	No. of After Schools	7	6	6
	No of Youth Organisations	7	7	7
	No. of Other Organisations	7	7	7
	No of staff trained	200	305	300
	No of children & young people	400	445	500
No of parents	0	242	250	

	No. of schools - NCI Challenges			
	· Quiz	6	7	7
	· Monopoly	4	4	4
Primary - 868	· Rummikub	6	7	7
	No of students in the ELI Coding Clubs	40	33	33
	No. of schools - Educational Guidance	4	2	2
	No. of schools - Mentoring Circles	4	4	4
	No. of students - tuition support	20	22	20
Second/Third Level - 869/870	No. of students in Discover University	35	38	35
	No. of Students - NCI Internship	0	5	5

3 Finance

This section details the expenditure and budgets for both the ELI and ABC Programmes (Table 3). The combined spend of ELI/ABC for the 12 months to June 2018 was €1.2m (compared to the previous year of €1m) of which €670K was ABC funding and €540K was ELI fundraising income. The 2018/19 projected expenditure for ELI/ABC is €1.5m.

Table 3. Expenditure and budgets for the ELI and ABC Programmes 2017/18

	Projected Expenditure 2017/18	Actual Expenditure 2017/18	Variance in Expenditure 2017/18	Projected Expenditure 2018/19
ABC	€671,900	€669,705	€2,195	€671,900
ELI	€601,300	€540,529	€60,771	€850,000
Total	€1,273,200	€1,210,234	€62,966	€1,521,900

Notes:

- ELI expenditure includes NEIC and AMIF funding.
- The ABC Projected Expenditure 2018/19 is based on the 2018 projected budget submitted to Pobal in June 2018. Funding from January to August 2019 is subject to its inclusion in the Government's 2019 Budget.
- The ELI Projected Expenditure 2018/19 is based on costs in previous years as well as the proposed programme expansion for 2018/19. It will be amended in December 2018 to reflect any changes in the ABC budget.

3.1 ABC Programme Expenditure - Year Ending 30th June 2018

Table 4. ABC Programme expenditure and budget - Year Ending 30th June 2018

	Projected Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018	Actual Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018	Variance in Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018
0-2 ABC Programme	€107,100	€ 117,377	(€10,277)
Restorative Practice Programme	€33,400	€ 30,816	€2,584
Early Years Programmes	€161,200	€ 115,699	€45,501
Parent Child Home Programmes	€280,100	€ 315,690	(€35,590)
Doodle Den Programme	€90,100	€ 90,123	€23
Total	€671,900	€ 669,705	€2,195

Notes:

- The over spend was due to the increased participation rates for ABC 0-2 and PCHP Programmes.
- The costs included above represent the direct costs incurred of providing the ABC Programme. They do not include any charges for services provided by NCI such as accounting, payroll, HR, marketing. However, in line with Pobal's grant conditions, these internal services are accounted for indirectly as 'leverage' (C/f Section 3.5).

3.2 ELI Programme Expenditure - Year Ending 30th June 2018

Table 5. ELI Programme expenditure - Year Ending 30th June 2018

	Projected Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018	Actual Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018	Variance in Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018
Parent Child Home Programme (Docklands & AMIF)	€250,000	€192,729	€57,271
Parent Child Home Programme (National)	€130,000	€92,531	€37,469
NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative	€41,300	€66,029	(€24,729)
Stretch to Learn Primary	€90,000	€97,074	(€7,074)
Stretch to Learn Second & Third Level	€90,000	€92,166	(€2,166)
Total Costs	€601,300	€540,529	€60,771

Notes:

- The costs included above represent the direct costs incurred of providing ELI's services. They do not include any charges for services provided by NCI such as accounting, payroll, HR, marketing.
- The over spend was due to the additional funding for the Robotic Coding Clubs and Financial Literacy along with the inclusion of some 2016/17 costs for the NEIC Brighter Futures.
- The PCHP underspend was due to the slow recruitment of families in some areas.

3.3 ABC Programme Budget - Year Ending 30th June 2019

Table 6. ABC Programme Budget - Year Ending 30th June 2019

	Actual Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018	% of Expenditure 2017/18	Projected Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2019	% of Projected Expenditure 2018/19
0-2 ABC Programme	€ 117,377	18%	€ 117,000	17%
Restorative Practice Programme	€ 30,816	5%	€ 49,300	7%
Early Years Programmes	€ 115,699	17%	€ 100,600	15%
Parent Child Home Programmes	€ 315,690	47%	€ 315,000	47%
Doodle Den Programme	€ 90,123	13%	€ 90,000	13%
Total	€ 669,705	100%	€ 671,900	100%

Notes:

- The costs included above represent the direct costs incurred of providing the ABC Programme. They do not include any charges for services provided by NCI such as accounting, payroll, HR, marketing. However, in line with Pobal's grant conditions, these internal services are accounted for indirectly as 'leverage'.
- The ABC Projected Expenditure is based on the 2018 projected budget submitted to Pobal in June 2018. Funding from January to August 2019 is subject to its inclusion in the Government's 2019 Budget.

3.4 ELI Programme Budget - Year Ending 30th June 2019

Table 7. ELI Programme Budget - Year Ending 30th June 2019

	Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2018	Expenditure % of 2017/18	Projected Expenditure Year ending 30th June 2019	Projected Expenditure % of 2018/19
Parent Child Home Programme (Docklands)	€192,729	36%	€350,700	41%
Parent Child Home Programme (National)	€92,531	17%	€100,000	12%
NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative	€66,029	12%	€41,300	5%
Stretch to Learn Primary	€97,074	18%	€186,000	22%
Stretch to Learn Second & Third Level	€92,166	17%	€172,000	20%
Total Costs	€540,529	100%	€850,000	100%

Notes:

- Both expenditure for 2017/18 and projected expenditure figures for 2018/19 represent the direct costs incurred of providing ELI's Programmes. They do not include any charges for services provided by NCI such as accounting, payroll, HR, marketing
- The ELI projected expenditure figures 2018/19 are based on pledged funding and may need to be amended in December 2018 to reflect any changes in the ABC budget and other funding.

3.5 ABC Programme Leverage – Year end 20th June 2018

There is a commitment of all participating ABC areas to raise additional resources to be applied to the programme objectives, in the form of cash, in-kind contributions consisting of property, equipment / materials or service. This is known as leverage and must be equivalent to 20% of the grants made through the programme. To date, €2.5m has been raised in leverage by our ABC Programme

Table 8 is a summary of the 'leverage' that was attributed to ABC in 2017/18. The leverage calculated for this period is well in excess of the 20% required for the 20.

Table 8. Leverage attributed to ABC - Year Ending 30th June 2018

Detail of In-kind Contribution	Leverage 2017/18	Cumulative Leverage 2014/18
Premises (NCI)	€ 23,500	€ 74,543
Indirect Central Admin Costs (NCI)	€ 114,348	€ 332,317
Degree and Diploma Courses for ABC Staff	€ 14,000	€ 35,550
ELI's Corporate Donors, NEIC & AMIF Grants (NCI)	€ 108,635	€ 316,771
Premises (Services)	€ 193,725	€ 681,305
Professional Services	€ 330,554	€ 1,151,932
Total of in-kind contributions	€ 784,762	€ 2,592,418

3.6 Fundraising Review 2017/18

ELI has tightly managed income and expenditure to ensure that programme and partner outcomes and commitments have been fully achieved. It is financed by a mix of statutory and voluntary funding. ELI raised a total income of €1.5m in 2017/18.

Of the income raised (Figure 1), 48% was statutory funding. The majority (44%) of statutory funding was allocated through the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme, which co-funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Atlantic Philanthropies. The remainder (3%) came through the North East Inner City Government Task Force or other grants from Dublin City Council along with the funding (1% listed as other income) from Grangegorman ABC Programme and Daughters of Charity Children’s Services to deliver the Parent Child Home Programme in Dublin 7.

The rest of ELI’s income (52%) was raised through fundraising and grant applications. Total voluntary fundraised income for the year 2017/18 generated €768K, which is an increase from €654 in 2017/18. We are also receipt of two EU grants, for which the income for the activities in 2017/18 will be received in 2018/19. One was European Erasmus+ Learning and Teaching Literacy across Europe, while the other was from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014 - 2020 (AMIF), Department of Justice and Equality.

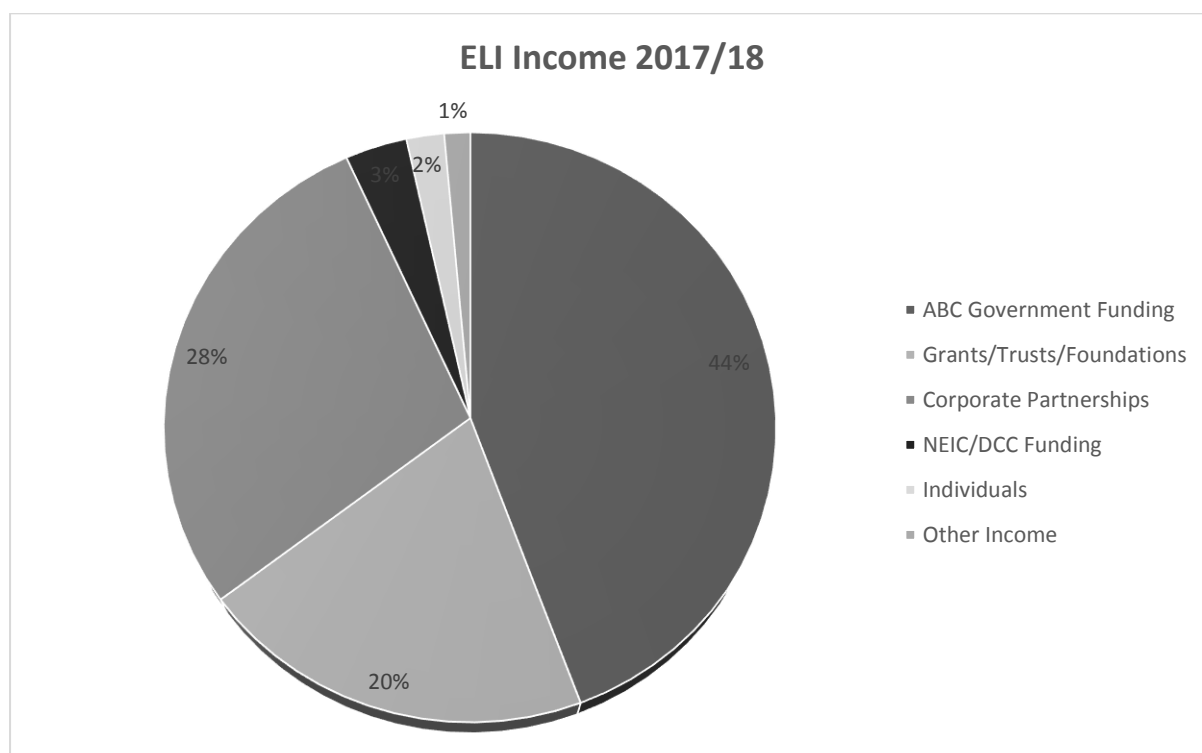


Figure 1. ELI Income 2017/18

We now have accumulated reserves of €844k, which is in line with our Reserves Policy. It, along with our pledged funding, will be used to sustain programmes from January to August 2019 until additional ABC funding is committed in the 2019 Budget.

There is continued engagement from the Development Committee on growing fundraising income streams along with the ELI Team engaging with existing funders on a regular basis through newsletters, volunteer training and involvement; reports, meetings and events.

Thank You

It was ELI's 10-year birthday celebration this year and our festivities kicked off in January 2018 with an evening birthday event. ELI's community, statutory and corporate partners joined our first Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) children and their families to celebrate ten years of achievements. The role our partners have played in our ten-year journey has been hugely significant in supporting local children and families to succeed in education and life. Our partners are helping us to change attitudes, raise educational aspirations and build relationships throughout the community.

We would like to pay tribute to the generosity of all our donors – who ranged from businesses engaged in social responsibility, to socially minded individuals like Dermot Desmond, Keith Ennis, Joseph E. Corcoran, Colin and Nikki Ryan, and The Winifred Garvin Fund, and those who wish to remain anonymous. Many of our donors have been with us from the start and play an active role in helping us improve educational outcomes for children, families and communities. We would also like to acknowledge the support of all those who gave their time and expertise on a pro bono basis.



Many of our corporate partners were involved in volunteering and attended many ELI community events in 2017/18, including the launch of the CRM system for our Parent Child Home Programme by Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Minister of State for Higher Education at the Department of Education, (Sept 2017) and our Early Years' Conference, where the Minister for Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohue (June 2018) was a keynote speaker on the role of fathers in their children's education.

They also joined our 10-year anniversary celebration in January, where Fr Leonard Maloney, Chair of NCI's Governing Body, presented a tenth birthday cake, confirming National College of Ireland's commitment to the Early Learning Initiative and raising a toast to the future.

A "Let's Talk" book, which encourages emotional literacy in children was launched as part of our anniversary celebration in January. PCHP families visited Government Buildings to officially launch the book with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone. The book and accompanying materials will be used in ELI's Restorative Practice Parenting Support Programmes throughout the community.

Our annual breakfast event in November, which was kindly hosted by one of our long-standing partners, Citco, was very successful and resulted in more partnerships being formed.

We have a detailed five-year Fundraising Strategy (until 2020) with clear outcomes and targets developed. It has informed our fundraising efforts thus far and is helping us ensure that ELI can continue to grow and support children, families and communities in addressing educational disadvantage. As the Irish economy improves ELI is well positioned with a new and inspiring strategic proposition. We believe we can significantly develop our unrestricted fundraising whilst continuing to achieve targets for programme income. The ABC Programme continued to grow in 2017/18 and we were delighted to see the continued commitment from the DCYA and the Government to its development. From September 1st 2018, the ABC Programme will move from Pobal and CES into Tusla, the Child and Family Agency and the retention of the existing ABC funding from 2019 onwards will remain a priority.

A special thank you to Dan O'Connor (Director, CRH), Declan Quilligan (Managing Director, Citco Fund Services), Sean Reilly (Executive Chairman, McGarrell Reilly Group), Michael Hartwell (Partner, Deloitte) and Thadg Young (COO & Senior VP, State Street) for their invaluable input, once again, as part of the ELI Development Committee.

Governance

Public Statement of Compliance: "We confirm that our organisation complies with The Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable Sector in Ireland".

National College of Ireland complies fully with The Governance Code and has just renewed its adoption of the Code (minuted in the Governing Body Meeting May 18th 2018). The Governance Code is principles-based and voluntary. It has been designed by the sector, for the sector. We conduct annual reviews to ensure continued compliance. (Visit www.governancecode.ie)

ELI is committed to complying with The Guidelines for Charitable Organisations Fundraising from the Public (the 'Guidelines') issued by the Charities Regulator in September 2017. The Guidelines replaced the 2008 *Statement for Guiding Principles for Fundraising*.

You can find a copy of our up-to-date charters on our website at: www.ncirl.ie/eli

4 Governance

The National College of Ireland (NCI) takes full responsibility for the financial, management, contractual, reporting and governance requirements of the Early Learning Initiative (ELI), which operates under and adheres to all NCI's policies and procedures.

NCI is a third level learning, teaching and research institution. It is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. As a 'not for profit' entity, the company has been granted charitable status by the Revenue Commissioners with a registered number CHY 9928.

NCI complies with The Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary, and Charitable Sector in Ireland. Our compliance with the principles in the Code was reviewed on 18th May 2018. This review was based on an assessment of our organisational practice against the recommended actions for each principle. NCI's compliance with these recommended actions continues to be monitored on an on-going basis and there will be a full review when the new Governance Code for Charities is issued by the Regulator. A copy of this statement is available at Appendix 1.

NCI publishes financial statements in accordance with Company Law and FRS102, which take precedence over SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice). At present, the Charities SORP is not mandatory and NCI is awaiting the pending accounting regulations under the Charities Legislation and the new Governance Code for Charities before moving forward on SORP.

NCI is compliant with the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015. It is registered on the lobbying.ie website and makes the required return every four months.

In line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017), and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice, NCI's Governing Body has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement on 1st March 2018. NCI is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children and vulnerable students safe from harm while availing of our services. A copy of this statement is available at Appendix 2.

Legal Status of Organisation: Company Limited by Guarantee

Charity Tax Reference Number (CHY): 9928

Company Registration Number (CRO): 134303

Organisation established: 1951

4.1 NCI's Governing Body

Overall responsibility for the College under its Articles and Memorandum of Association rests with the Governing Body, with executive responsibility resting with the President of the College.

The Governing Body establishes and monitors the College's strategic direction and policy, its financial planning, and compliance with best practice in all College activities. A Finance, Audit and Organisation Subcommittee, which oversees the financial planning and statutory reporting requirements of the College as a limited company, reports directly to the Governing Body. The Company Secretary retains the records of the Governing Body in accordance with Company Law requirements. The annual audited accounts financial statements of the College are on public record, and can be obtained from the Companies Office.

The President of the College is responsible for planning in conjunction with the Governing Body, and for the implementation of the policy and administrative decisions of the Governing Body. An Executive Team, comprising the Vice President, the Director of Finance, Registrar, Director of Marketing, Director of HR and an Executive Group, supports her in this role. The Executive Group manages the day-to-day operations of the College and includes the Deans of School and Heads of support functions. It monitors departmental performance in achieving overall operational targets as well as ensuring interdepartmental effectiveness.

NCI's Governing Body as of June 2018 is set out below:

- Chair – Fr Leonard Moloney S.J.
- Mr Brendan McGinty
- Mr Peter McLoone
- Ms Barbara Cotter
- Ms Brigid McManus
- Dr Tish Gibbons
- Dr Tony White*
- Mr Michael Brady
- Fr Kevin O'Higgins S.J. *
- Mr Liam O'Donoghue
- Gina Quin, President NCI*
- Ms Jonathan Lambert, NCI Staff Representative
- Ms Frances Sheridan, NCI Staff Representative
- Mr Stephen Cleary, President NCI Student Union

*Members of Governing Body who sit on the ELI Advisory Committee, which in turn reports to Governing Body.

4.2 ELI Advisory Board

The ELI Advisory Board has authority from NCI's Governing Body to provide oversight of ELI's compliance and financial responsibilities and advise on the ELI's delivery of services. The Board also makes recommendations to NCI's Governing Body on strategy and policy issues. It also oversees the ABC Review Board and the delivery of the ABC Programme. More specifically, the Board provides oversight for:

- Policy and Management of the Early Learning Initiative
- Budgets and expenditure
- Expansion proposals for new ELI sites
- Service contracts
- Require, receive and approve terms of reference for ongoing research and evaluation of the Early Learning Initiative, including external evaluations, in order to ensure full achievement of the Early Learning Initiative objectives.
- Policies and procedures to enable the Early Learning Initiative to enhance and support government strategy.
- Review the overall effectiveness of the Early Learning Initiative and its management on an ongoing basis.
- Risks and mitigation plans.

ELI Advisory Board as of June 2018 and during the year is set out below:

- Chairperson – Frank Ryan, Chairman IDA

- Fr. Kevin O’Higgins S.J., NCI Governing Body
- Tony White, NCI Governing Body
- Dr Sheila Greene (resigned December 2017)
- Joe O’Reilly
- Owen Kirk,
- Sean Reilly,
- Dan O’Connor, Chair of ELI’s Development Committee
- Jenny Barnard,
- Dr Alan Barrett (Replaced Sheila Greene in April 2018)
- Mary Doyle, (Joining in October 2018)
- Gina Quin, President NCI.

The secretary of the Board is the ELI Project Coordinator, who will attend all meetings of the Board in a non- voting capacity.

NCI is represented on the ELI Advisory Board by two members of Governing Body and the President of NCI. The Advisory Board compiles a report for each of NCI’s quarterly Governing Body meetings. This report is presented by the President of the College or his/her delegate.

Donnchadh Ó Madagáin, Director of Finance NCI; Shivonne Heery, Development Manager, Gráinne Kent, Researcher and Dr Josephine Bleach, Director Early Learning Initiative give update reports at each meeting.

4.3 ABC Review Board

The ABC Review Board was established in order to provide oversight and direction for the three-year ABC grant of €1.2m. The ABC Review Board is chaired by Frank Ryan and reports into the ELI Advisory Board, of which it is a sub-committee.

The ABC Review Board advises and supports the overall direction of the ABC Programme, including:

- Budgets and expenditure
- Terms of reference for on-going research and evaluation, including external evaluations and the monitoring of internal evaluations as outlined in Chapter Six.
- Reviews and monitors the overall effectiveness of ABC and its management on an on-going basis, including actions taken to meet the condition of the contract
- Recommend policies and procedures to enhance and support the service provided by the ABC team and its alignment with national policy.

The ABC Review Board as of June 2018 and during the year is set out below:

- Chairperson – Frank Ryan, Chairman IDA
- Mark Shinnick, Principal, Holy Child Preschool, Sean Mc Dermott Street, Dublin 1
- Mary Moore, Principal St Laurence O’Toole’s Junior Boys School, Seville Place, Dublin 1
- Teresa Nyland, Principal Social Worker, Tusla Representative.
- Angela Nolan, Assistant Director of Public Health Nursing. PHN Representative.
- Alison McCormack, Community Representative
- Dr Sheila Greene, (resigned in December 2017)
- Dan O’Connor, Chair of ELI’s Development Committee
- Gina Quin, President NCI (resigned in November 2017)
- Donnchadh Ó Madagáin, NCI Finance Director (replaced Gina Quin in December 2017)

NCI is represented on the ELI/ABC Review Board by the Finance Director.

The secretary of the Board is the ELI Project Coordinator, who attends all meetings of the Board in a non-voting capacity. Donnchadh Ó Madagáin, Director of Finance NCI; Gráinne Kent, Researcher and Dr Josephine Bleach, Director Early Learning Initiative give update reports at each meeting.

4.4 ELI Development Committee

The ELI Development Committee was established to provide direction to and support ELI's fund-raising activities. The Development Committee is chaired by Dan O'Connor and reports directly to the ELI Advisory Board.

The Development Committee is responsible for supporting the fund-raising efforts of the President of NCI and the ELI Development Manager by

- Identifying, and arranging access to, prospective ELI donors
- Attending cultivation events
- Contributing a gift (company or individual)
- Supporting NCI/ELI leadership
- Participating in briefing and gift request meetings, if and when appropriate

ELI Development Committee as of June 2018 and during the year is set out below:

- Chairman – Mr Dan O'Connor, Non-Executive Director Glanbia
- Mr Sean Reilly, Executive Chairman Alcove Properties
- Mr Thadg Young, COO & Senior VP State Street International (Ireland) Ltd.
- Mr Declan Quilligan, Managing Director Citco Fund Services (Ireland) Ltd.
- Mr Michael Hartwell, Partner, Deloitte
- Gina Quin, President NCI
- Dr Josephine Bleach, Director Early Learning Initiative
- Shivonne Heery, Development Manager Early Learning Initiative

4.5 ELI Staff

The ELI Director and her team are responsible for the day to day running of the service, and reports to the President of NCI, Chair of the Review Board, and the ELI Review Board on a regular basis. In this, they are supported by various departments within NCI, including Finance, IT and HR.

ELI's Staff as of June 2018 and during the year is set out below:

- Director- Dr Josephine Bleach
- Assistant Director – Lána Cummins
- Project Coordinator- Brigina O'Riordan
- Project Coordinator – Catriona Flood
- Parent Child Home Programme Senior Specialist - Michelle Moore,
- Parent Child Home Programme Coordinators- Jennifer O'Neill and Linda McGrath
- ABC 0-2 Year Programme Coordinator- Marion Byrne
- Stretch to Learn Programme Coordinator- Lucy Kinghan
- ELI Second and Third Level Project Coordinator - Aine Kavanagh
- ABC Early Years Coordinator- Claire O'Buachain
- ABC Programme Coordinator – Julie Booth
- NEIC Brighter Futures Coordinator - Emma Wheatley;
- NEIC Brighter Futures Restorative Practice Facilitators - Karen Mooney, Mona Lucas, Michelle Stowe, Lindsey Kirby, Danielle Mulgrew

- Development Manager- Shivonne Heery
- Researchers- Dr Gráinne Kent, Tess O’Leary, Eimear Mc Dowell (January – April 2018), Vasiliki Pitsia and Gary Colton
- Administrative Assistant – Rhonda Hill; Roisin Dunne
- Home Visitors – Teresa Adrienne Anene, Julie Booth, Marie Boyne, Margaret Campion/Farrell, Melanie Cassidy, Amy Cooney, Sandra Farrington, Sharon Falegan, Lisa Farrelly, Jackie Glynn, Sarah Keegan, Maja Krpeta, Pamela Martin, , Eimer McCabe, Julie Ann McCabe, Ann McDonnell (resigned April 2018), Deborah Maloney, Sandra Monks, JiLyn McLoughlin, Adrienne Taaffe, Irina Ivanova, Linda O'Rourke/Coulihan, Katie Chun Yan Huang, Lisa Jing Xia Miao, Sun Xhuan Sue (Sue Chuan), Julie McCabe, Sinead Cassidy, Victoria Kelly, Sabrina Brady, Erika Penrose
- Doodle Den Facilitators – Anne-Marie Connelly, Stefanie Dawick, Ruth McCormack, Barry Nolan, Elise Rafter; Anne-Marie Connolly, Lindsey Kirby, Anna Stewart, Rose Duffy, Brendan Phelan, Martina Cullen, Lily Marshall

4.6 Commitment to Standards in Fundraising Practice

National College of Ireland is fully committed to achieving the standards contained within the ‘Guidelines’.

The ‘Guidelines’ exist to:

- Improve fundraising practice
- Promote high levels of accountability and transparency by organisations fundraising from the public
- Provide clarity and assurances to donors and prospective donors about the organisations they support.

National College of Ireland believes it meets the ‘Guidelines’ in the Code of Practice set out.

National College of Ireland’s report on our fundraising activities is available in our most recent Annual Report which can be found here [\[annual report link\]](#)

We welcome your feedback on our performance via any of the contact points provided (see below).

See our Feedback and Complaints Procedure here [\[Link here\]](#).

Write to:

Gina Quin
 President
 National College of Ireland
 Mayor Street
 IFSC
 Dublin 1

T: +353 (0) 1 449 8500; E: Gina.quin@ncirl.ie; W: www.ncirl.ie

We are open five days a week from 9.00 am to 5.30 pm

5 Five Year Strategy (2015-2020)

In March 2015, following the ratification of the ABC Programme, NCI's Governing Body established a group to develop a five-year Strategy for ELI. The strategy was developed in consultation with our partners and approved by the Governing Body on 9th October 2015.

Since 2007, ELI's strategy had focused on the delivery and sustainability of its programmes within the Dublin Docklands. The year 2014-15 marked a significant milestone with ELI generating a surplus for the first time in seven years and the start of ELI's most significant State funding stream to date through the Area Based Childhood (ABC) programme, which is funded by Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Atlantic Philanthropies.

Given its belief in the transformational impact of its programmes both ELI and NCI wanted to define a new phase in ELI's history by bringing its programmes to similarly disadvantaged communities within the Greater Dublin area and beyond; to begin to establish ELI as a national initiative with national impact. The ELI Strategy Document set out how NCI and ELI would achieve this ambition between now and 2020.

An implementation plan with agreed actions and time lines is reviewed at each NCI Governing Body, ELI Advisory Committee and Team meetings. From October 2017 – May 2018, NCI's Governing Body and ELI Advisory Committee reviewed and amended the 2015-20 strategy with the amended strategy ratified by Governing Body on 18th May. A process for development of a strategy for 2020-25 was also agreed.

This section outlines the rationale for the strategic review, the revised 2015-20 vision and strategic plan along with the 2020-25 strategy process. In addition to the review of the ELI strategy, ELI was involved in the development of the NCI academic strategy from February to June 2018. The strategy statement submitted by the ELI subgroup to inform NCI's academic statement is outlined in section 5.4. It will inform the ELI 2020-25 strategy.

5.1 ELI Strategic Review

The 2015-20 Strategy defined a new phase in ELI's history by aiming to establish ELI as a national initiative with national impact. It was based on improving the service ELI provided to our local community in the Docklands, as well as extending ELI's programmes nationwide. This strategy was one of 'cautious expansion' ensuring that ELI had the resources (both people-related and financial) to support any new activities, while continuing to maintain its commitments in the Docklands and the existing quality of provision, support and oversight.

This vision was being implemented but the following risks were identified:

1. Scale and Reach: *New areas require a lot more support than expected to implement PCHP and the further away they are, the more difficult and costly it is. Funding is coming to NCI rather than locally, which increases the administration and governance demands and costs. With PCHP children now entering second level, the supports ELI provides for the twelve to eighteen year age group needs to be reviewed and updated to cater for their emerging needs.*
2. Integration and Influence: *These objectives are not aligned with developments or practice in ELI and do not make sense in the present context. ELI is embedded throughout NCI and has relationships with all departments, not just Psychology and Education. ELI engages with Government Departments very effectively through its involvement with national initiatives and networks. The growth since 2015 has been in its relationship with Dublin City Council, North East Inner City Initiative (NEIC) and the Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC). This*

engagement with a wide range of committees and services e.g. Homeless Organisations, DCC Sports and Arts Officers, the Right to Read Campaign etc. increases our capacity to provide an integrated service to children and families but also adds to ELI's costs and staff capacity to deliver programmes as does running an annual national event.

3. Resources: *ELI has been very successful in attracting funding since 2015 but the application, delivery and reporting processes can be quite onerous, which adds to staff capacity issues. The needs of children and families should continue to take priority over maximising funding streams but we also need to ensure that we have the funding to meet these needs. The ABC funding is uncertain at present and, if it continues, will be on annual basis in the future. This complicates ELI's budgeting and expenditures processes with the retained annual surplus a critical element of the budgeting process.*
4. Governance: *The direct line of reporting has been established and is working effectively. There are two important pieces of legislation, Children First and General Data Protection Regulations that need to be implemented through NCI, which will impact on ELI's capacity to enable national expansion.*

Having identified these risks, the strategy was amended using the following processes:

- The Strategy was reviewed and amendments were agreed by the ELI Advisory Board at its meeting on 27th February 2018
- The amended strategy was presented to NCI's Governing Body for feedback on 16th March
- Governing Body feedback was discussed at ELI Advisory Board meeting on 10th April and amendments incorporated into the Strategy

Dan O'Connor (ELI Development Chair and ELI Advisory Board member) representing Frank Ryan (ELI Chair), and Josephine Bleach, ELI Director, presented the amended strategy to Governing Body on 18th May for a final discussion and sign off. Approval was also given for the development of an ELI Strategy 2020-25.

5.2 Strategic Vision 2018-20

The Early Learning Initiative at National College of Ireland is about changing children's lives, families and communities through education. The 2015-20 Strategy defines a new phase in ELI's history by establishing it as an advocate for prevention and early intervention supports for children, parents and families as well as a centre of excellence in Home Visiting and Parent Support Programmes from which other communities can learn. Starting with children aged zero to three years and their parents, it takes an educational cycle approach to developing active engaged resilient high achieving citizens. The focus remains on improving the service ELI provided to our local community in the Docklands, as well as Dublin's Inner City. This strategy continues to be one of 'cautious expansion' ensuring that ELI had the resources (both people-related and financial) to support any new activities, while continuing to maintain its commitments in the Docklands and the existing quality of provision, support and oversight.

5.3 Strategic Plan 2018-2020

The Strategy Plan outlines how NCI and ELI will achieve this vision between now and 2020 under the existing four strategic themes. The ten strategic objectives have been reduced to four and incorporated under the following four themes

5.3.1 Scale & Reach: Maintain ELI's existing commitments and focus on Inner City Dublin (CYPSC Dublin North and South City)

- *ELI's existing commitments in the Docklands and Dublin region will be maintained with provision for the twelve to eighteen year age group reviewed to ensure that PCHP children and families get on-going support as they progress through second level. The first ELI cohort from ten years ago are now entering Secondary school, and are possible NCI candidates within five years and could avail of the ELI scholarship/support scheme from 2023 onwards. ELI's existing support, including scholarships, at second and third level will be reviewed. An 80:20 expenditure split is agreed with 80% of funds being spent on the early years and the remainder on the older age group.*
- *Support will be provided for existing PCHP sites, including those in Limerick and Galway but no more will be recruited, unless they have the funding to be self-sufficient. We will not fundraise for other sites but will encourage potential donors to engage with the sites directly.*

5.3.2 Integration & Influence: Increase ELI's influence within NCI and at local and regional level

- *Embed ELI further within NCI, including governance structure and regulations; academic, research and ethics base; and cross departmental collaborative projects.*
- *A research protocol to track ELI children from when they first engage with ELI from (0-2 yrs. and PCHP) and throughout their education will be developed further through the ELI Research Committee and CRM system.*
- *Establish regular dialogue with key policy and decision makers at national and local level through a range of meetings, networks and relationships, particularly in relation to the ABC Programme and North East Inner City Task Force.*

5.3.3 Resources: Develop ELI's financial sustainability and capacity to fund its existing commitments and growth ambitions without any financial impairment to NCI.

- *Embed the capacity within ELI to manage the increasing complexity of programme delivery in Inner City Dublin (CYPSC North and South Dublin areas), whilst maintaining quality and impact*
- *Build a retained surplus, equivalent to 6 months' operational costs i.e. €500K (2016/17)*
- *Maintain ELI's financial sustainability and fund its growth ambitions without any financial impairment to NCI by retaining existing funders and sourcing new donors, both corporate and individual, along with applying for new grants.*

5.3.4 Governance: Continue ELI's direct line of accountability and reporting to NCI's Governing Body

- *The National College of Ireland (NCI) takes full responsibility for the financial, management, contractual, reporting and governance requirements of the Early Learning Initiative (ELI), which operates under and adheres to all NCI's policies and procedures.*
- *The ELI Advisory Board is a subcommittee of NCI's Governing Body and has authority from NCI's Governing Body to provide oversight of ELI's compliance and financial responsibilities and advise on the ELI's delivery of services. It reports to the Governing Body on a regular basis.*
- *Continue to work with NCI re: Implementation of Charity Regulations, Children First Legislation, General Data Protection Regulations and any other future relevant regulations.*

5.4 Strategic Plan 2020-25

The proposed process and timeline to develop the 2020-25 ELI Strategy is as follows:

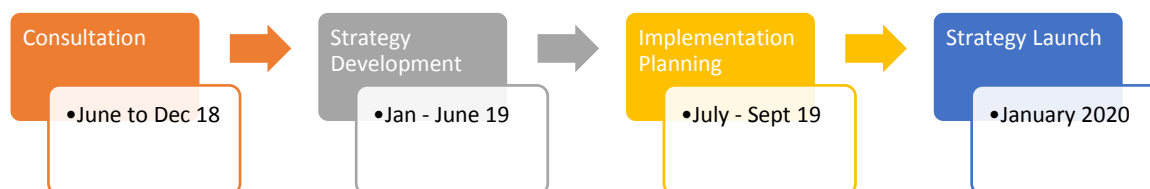


Figure 2. Timeline to Develop the 2020-25 ELI Strategy

Questions for consideration are:

1. *ELI is now ten years old. What can we celebrate? What can we improve on?*
2. *In 2025, ELI will be seventeen years old, what do we want to be celebrating then?*

The following outline 2025 Vision has been drafted:

- ✓ Children and young people are achieving their educational, career and life goals
- ✓ Parents/professionals are better able to support children and young people's educational and career journeys
- ✓ Impact extending to other communities in Ireland and Europe due to the networks of supports and knowledge sharing.

The consultation process began with an ELI Team meeting on the 18th June and at the ABC Consortium meeting on 26th June. The following four themes emerged from this initial consultation process:

5.4.1 Celebrate, Expand and Grow

- Celebrate and build on our successes
 - Partners and funders who encourage, support and believe in ELI
 - Relationships and the strengthening of the bonds with families and services
 - Interagency collaboration
 - Well established in the community and known on a national level: Everyone knows about ELI and people can see the benefits/results of our work over the years
 - Our core values – child-led programme in partnership with parents
 - Our history and memories: pictures/art-work/newsletters – reeling in the years with old photographs
- Improve outcomes through a life cycle approach – early years; primary; second level; higher and lifelong education, training and career development
 - 2025 - Cusp of adulthood – both ELI and our first cohort – first cohort in higher education - need to continue this support
 - 2030 – first cohort working in our corporate partners
- Wider reach through more areas, services, participants and programmes
 - Expand areas: spread ELI further; less restricted boundaries; PCHP and 0-2 to go national
 - Expand existing programmes: more groups, events and summer programmes
 - 0-2 programme will be on a par with PCHP and be able to reach the wider community

5.4.2 Diverse and Inclusive

- Better inclusion: Children with special/additional needs: autism: what we can offer? Different VISM list? Adjust our programmes to make them more inclusive? Should we take children with a diagnosis?
- Training to meet needs of children and families: off the script at the moment for children and families with additional needs; more uptake of children with more needs and disabilities by 2025
- Not just for disadvantaged – universal provision; all families with children aged zero to three years need support
- Be more flexible around the child not just fidelity to the programme: **You can't make the child fit the programme. You have to make the programme fit the child**
- Male Home Visitors: always saying it so aim to do it
- The diversity of the programmes could allow a more culturally diverse staff base to reflect the changing community. We need to be able to communicate in the family's native language so that families are not losing their identities

5.4.3 Capacity-building

- Supporting more parents in a variety of ways
 - Champion parents' voices and build their capacity as advocates for their children
 - More follow-on support for parents after PCHP graduation
- Returning to Education, Training and Work
 - Parents are reporting back a sense of self-esteem and expressing an interest in going back to work and education, how can we support this?
 - Staff members within the ELI organisation returning to third level education
 - More opportunities for the Home Visitors: training, course, education; different roles and work experiences; more opportunities to take groups
 - Training: additional training particularly on special needs; diagnosis; more opportunities to share our experience and learning;
- Supporting development and expansion
 - Need to be more confident in our work and our professional role, improve on our time management, self-care and work-life balance
 - Space, research and technology to ensure quality and continue development
 - Need the systems, space, quality, research and resources to manage growth
 - Long-term sustainable increased funding to enable us to fund expansion

5.4.4 Research and Dissemination:

- More research to provide evidence of outcomes; develop our research strategy to meet emerging programmes and needs
- Dissemination: More strategic and consistent messaging re: ABC, Child Poverty, ELI; publish success stories
- Build on the success of the CRM system - PCHP database
- Timing on positive feedback from research as this encourages the development and improvement of programmes

5.5 NCI Academic Strategy: ELI Statement

NCI's activities and business have developed very positively over recent years; the move to the Docklands campus; expansion of offerings; increasing student numbers; significant interaction with the local community; and growing revenues and profitability. A ten-year vision statement was prepared in 2016, through a collaborative process between management / faculty and other stakeholders. NCI now wishes to build on the vision statement; to consider potential development paths over the next several years, and to express a chosen path in terms of a clear Academic Strategy that will guide action plans.

From 19th February to the 20th June, all departments within NCI have been involved in developing this academic strategy. The ELI subgroup consisted of Josephine Bleach (ELI Director), Robert Ward (NCI Marketing Director), Michelle Moore (PCHP Senior Specialist), Donnchadh O'Madagain (NCI Finance Director), Meera Oke (Programme Director and Lecturer, Early Childhood Education, Centre for Learning and Teaching, NCI). The questions this group were tasked with were:

Where does ELI need to go?

- Are the linkages with our other activities clear enough?
- How can ELI be an integral part of NCI landscape?

This section outlines the group submission as part of the development of NCI's academic strategy and will be used to inform ELI 2020-25 Strategy.

Vision Statement

Changing lives through education and addressing educational needs in disadvantaged communities is an essential part of NCI's mission. Established in 2007 by NCI, the Early Learning Initiative (ELI) is a complex community initiative, which partners with local families, services, communities, industries and the State to improve/strengthen educational, career and life outcomes through the life span. Each year over 9,000 children, parents and professionals take part in one of ELI's programmes with positive and tangible benefits to NCI's reputation, including recognition by the Government, Higher Education Authority (HEA) and Department of Education and Skills (DES) of making a unique contribution both within the Higher Education (HE) sector and to the Docklands area.

Relationships between ELI and other disciplines within NCI are good with great collaboration on teaching, practice and research projects, particularly where there are clear benefits to NCI, ELI, staff, students and the local community. Engagement between academics, researchers and practitioners afford all involved with valuable opportunities to inform each other's work. ELI staff sit on many of the committees in NCI and have been involved in the development of and marketing of NCI programmes. Similarly, NCI faculty have supported the development and delivery of ELI's programmes. Through ELI, NCI students get practical experience of implementation, assessments, evaluations and research methods in real-life situations with the support welcomed by ELI and the community.

ELI has a proven track record in using Community Action Research to improve outcomes for children and influence policy and practice in the areas of educational disadvantage; community development; and early intervention and prevention. Publications in peer-reviewed journals; conference presentations and submissions on national policies by members of the ELI team and their NCI colleagues helps to heighten NCI's research visibility, both nationally and internationally.

Proposed Strategy

Going forward, ELI will be an integral part of NCI academic strategy with ELI involved in course development, delivery and accreditation. While ELI's knowledge and experience will inform teaching and research across all disciplines and programmes at NCI, it will also support NCI being recognised as a centre of excellence in early learning and development. Through ELI, NCI reaches those who might otherwise miss out on educational opportunities and supports individual learners, both in NCI and the community, to access pathways to their chosen careers.

1. ELI will work closely with our colleagues in NCI with team members on various NCI Committees; some shared between Departments and others availing of NCI courses. Each year, there will be a variety of tangible projects e.g. Science Foundation of Ireland (SFI) – Coding Projects; Restorative Practice, Early Years Professional Development etc. ELI placements and intern positions will allow NCI students to engage in real-life practice and research with the local community.
2. NCI will be recognised as centre of excellence in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) practice, professional development and research with regular professional development opportunities provided for the ECEC sector.
3. Through ELI, NCI will reach those who might otherwise miss out on completing their education and will support individual learners to access pathways to careers that meet the student's needs and those of the prospective employer. These will include ELI employees and participants, who are accessing NCI's courses.
4. ELI will be involved in shaping programmes in NCI through course development, teaching and accreditation. One of the learning outcomes for all NCI students will be that they are aware of and have some understanding of complex social issues, which NCI through ELI is addressing, of social justice, corporate social responsibility, childhood development, community/organisation change management with disengaged and marginalised groups, relationship building and conflict resolution.
5. ELI's research will be integrated fully with NCI's Research structures, outputs and strategy, through greater interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral research activity within the College and with external institutions from the academic and non-academic sectors. Through this cross-disciplinary collaboration, NCI will be recognised worldwide for both practice and research on social justice, educational disadvantage and how to lead and support culture change at an individual, family, organisational and community level.

6 Research and Evaluation

ELI's Community Action Research process allows us to plan, do, and review all our programmes throughout the year. We strive to continuously develop our evaluation policy in line with best practice. Programme success is currently measured using the following criteria: participation, learning outcomes, educational aspirations, programme satisfaction, and impact. The ELI research team is represented on the National College of Ireland Research and Ethics Committees and work closely with other Departments within NCI in sharing best research practice.

6.1 ELI Research Committee

In 2016/17 a specific ELI Research Committee was established to oversee and advise on the overall direction of the ELI research activities; in particular, its strategy: *To develop a research protocol to track ELI children from when they first engage with ELI from (0-2 Years Programme and PCHP) and throughout their education.* It reports directly to the ELI Advisory Board.

Going forward, it agreed to

- Focus on specific aspects of the programmes/interventions
- Continue to ensure our research methods and data are appropriate and fit for purpose
- Review ELI's existing research strategy, procedures and targets/level of outputs. The emphasis is on educational outcomes, participation, impact and service evaluation through the collection of quantitative and qualitative data
- Continue to collect real life stories about the implementation
- Develop guidelines in terms of research, audits, assessments and evaluations along with when a programme needs to be submitted to NCI's Ethics Committee will be developed.

In 2017/18, there were several developments in the overall direction of ELI research activities, in particular:

- Alignment of measures used by ELI to Growing Up in Ireland measures (e.g. Longitudinal Survey, 0-2 survey).
- Revision of policies to include guidelines for research, audits, assessments and evaluations.
- Introduction of CRM system.

6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

Across all our programmes, regular evaluations are conducted throughout the year by staff utilising the processes outlined in ELI's evaluation policy. As in previous years, evaluation forms were used in 2017/18 to gather feedback from participants, and attendance and observation notes were recorded at events. These results are taken into account as each coordinator plans their programme delivery for 2018/19.

As the data-gathering element of the ABC National Evaluation has finished, there were reduced requirements on children, families and staff to engage in research this year.

The ELI continued to collaborate with the Quality Assurance & Statistical Services (QASS) in NCI and improve their evaluations systems. As in previous years, there are some limitations with the Evasys, which requires mentioning:

- The system relies on the evaluation surveys being completed correctly (with a black/blue pen, boxes marked with an 'x', comments all within the boxes provided etc.).

- When the instructions are ignored and the forms completed incorrectly, the machine is unable to read the responses. This has continued to be a challenge for us as we are not normally in direct contact with the individuals completing the surveys. However, we continue to work on this limitation in collaboration with the programme coordinators.
- In the meantime, we have a system in place whereby once the machine has read the surveys and produced the automated report, the research team manually check the evaluation forms to ensure there are no significant outliers, which have not been reported.

Methodology: Evaluating children's outcomes

The *PCHP Evaluation of Child's Behaviour Traits (CBT)* template is completed by the Home Visitors four times across the two years of programme delivery- after the 6th visit, between the 44th and 48th visit, between the 68th and 72nd visit and between the 89th and 92nd visit. These results are available in Section 9.1 of this report.

This *PCHP Parent and Child Together (PACT)* template has now become standard practice for all children involved in the PCHP. Again, this is completed four times across the two years of programme delivery- after the 6th visit, between the 44th and 48th visit, between the 68th and 72nd visit and between the 89th and 92nd visit. These results are in the Section 9.1 of this report.

Customer Relations Management (CRM) system was introduced in 2017/18. This now means that the CBT's and PACT's are completed on the system by the Home Visitors. There have been some challenges with the collection of CBT's and PACT's using this system, and these are outlined in the PCHP section of the report.

PCHP: Pilot longitudinal survey

Objective 4 of the ELI Five-Year Strategy is *to develop a research protocol to track ELI children from when they first engage with ELI from (0-2 years and PCHP) and throughout their education*. This year saw a reformatting of the survey in order to align it with the data collected as part of the national Growing Up in Ireland study and the International PISA study. In doing so, it is hoped that the usability of the data will be greatly increased. Ethical challenges to this study were highlighted this year with increased consent requirements around accessing and using school reports. The wider ELI team plans to work on a streamlined procedure for this during summer 2018. The next stage of the longitudinal study will then continue once these issues are finalised. Findings from this study are available in the PCHP section of the report.

Assessing children's numeracy outcomes

During summer 2017/18 a review of the numeracy assessments took place with all stakeholders. The benefits of the assessment were recognised, in addition to the challenges and limitations. In line with this review, some adaptations were made to the system which are outlined in the numeracy section of this report.

Stretch to Learn Primary: Assessing children's outcomes in reading and maths

Standardised test results in English and Maths at seven years and 12 years continue to be collected from the local schools who participate in our programmes. This information continued to be aggregated and compared with the baseline data collected by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College (Share et al., 2011). The summary of the results can be viewed in the literacies section of this report.

6.3 Research Projects

This year as part of the overall focus on adding to the learning in the area of early intervention and prevention a number of specific research projects began. In addition to these research projects, the ELI research team was awarded their first research specific funding through the Children's Research Network Prevention and Early Intervention Research grant scheme.

Children's Research Network Prevention and Early Intervention Research Grant

The Children's Research Network Prevention and Early Intervention Research grant scheme provides small-scale, competitive grants to individuals or teams from any discipline to conduct further exposition of research data that was generated by The Atlantic Philanthropies' Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative. Funding was received to explore data from the Preparing for Life Evaluation. The research team, Dr Gráinne Kent (Principal Investigator), Vasiliki Pitsia and Gary Colton, explored the influence of early demographical and environmental factors on cognitive abilities at four years and their school readiness outcomes at five years. As part of the ELI conference in June 2018, the research team held a symposium to facilitate knowledge exchange of their findings to all members of the community. The researchers are also in the process of preparing three papers to be submitted for publication in peer review journals as well as three conferences in 2018/19.

Increasing children's language exposure in Irish homes through the use of a smartphone intervention (Talk2Me More) - an exploratory pilot study

This project explores whether a disparity exists in the vocabulary exposure of children living across different socio-economic contexts in Ireland. A secondary aim is to explore whether a smartphone-based intervention elicits caregiver behaviour change and confidence in enriching the child's language environment. A full report on the study's findings will be available in September 2018.

Early developmental outcomes of infants from an area of socio-economic disadvantage: a comparison with national norms

This study will explore whether infants from an area of socio-economic disadvantage differ in terms of certain early developmental outcomes, as compared to national norms. A secondary aim is to explore whether an early intervention (0-2 Years Programme) succeeds in closing any gap created by this disadvantage.

An evidence-based, multidisciplinary and collaborative approach towards implementing a behaviourally orientated curriculum in a Department of Education Autism Preschool

The National Council for Special Education (2015) outlined how children with Autism should be provided with a high quality early intervention pre-school education employing an evidence-based, multidisciplinary and collaborative approach. The PEAK Relational Training System is an evidence based, behaviourally orientated evaluation and curriculum guide aiming to support the development of language and cognitive skills in children with Autism. The current project therefore aims to explore the impact, efficacy and utility of the PEAK curriculum in a Department of Education Autism preschool.

Attitudes and acceptance of technology by Home Visitors, before and after implementation of technology-based work practices

The current study aims to explore the factors that impact on acceptance by Home Visitors of technology and whether a move towards technology-based work practices impacts on these attitudes and acceptance.

6.4 Dissemination

If ELI is to influence practice, policy and theory, our learning needs to be shared with others through a range of dissemination strategies. During 2017/18, we continued to communicate our work through a mix of social media, conferences, papers, newsletters and traditional print and radio media coverage.

6.4.1 Conference Presentations

Quin, G. (July 2018). *Licence to Educate; NCI's community based approach to sustainable engagement in education, in marginalised families*. Presentation at the IAJS/CJBS Conference, Seattle

Bleach, J. (September 2017). *Community Action Research: Validity*. Presentation at the Network of Educational Action Researchers Ireland (NEARI)

Byrne, M. (June 2018) *Creating an Infant Play Space*, Paper presented at the Early Learning Initiative Early Years Conference 'The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children', National College of Ireland, Dublin

Cummins, L. (June 2018). *Finding my voice in a well-established community action research project*. Paper presented on at the 8th International Action Research Colloquium of the Action Research Group Ireland at University College Dublin.

Quin, G. & Bleach, J. (January 2018) *Building Vibrant, Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Communities*. Presentation to Dublin City Council Central Area Committee at City Hall, Dublin

Kent, G., Pitsia, V. & Colton, G. (June 2018). *Findings from an exploration of the Preparing for Life data as part of a research study funded under the Children's Research Network Prevention and Early Intervention Research Initiative*. Symposium Paper presented at the Early Learning Initiative Early Years Conference 'The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children', National College of Ireland, Dublin

Kent, G. & Kelly, M. (May 2018). *An evidence-based, multidisciplinary and collaborative approach towards implementing a behaviourally orientated curriculum in a Department of Education Autism Preschool*. Paper accepted to present at 30th Conference of the Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education, DCU.

Kent, G. & Pitsia, V. (November 2017). *How do the home learning environment experiences in Ireland vary across diverse backgrounds?* Paper presented at Psychological Society of Ireland Conference, Limerick.

Krpeta, M., Ivanova, I. & Jing Xia Miao, L. (June 2018) *Supporting migrant families in our community*, Paper presented at the Early Learning Initiative Early Years Conference 'The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children', National College of Ireland, Dublin

Moore, M., McGrath, L. & O'Neill, J. (April 2018) *Parent Child Home Programme*. Presentation at the Prevention and Early Intervention Network (PEIN) Conference, Dublin

Moore, M. & Minogue, G. (May 2018). *CRM Implementation and Impact*. Paper presented at Parent Child Home Programme Conference, Long Island, New York, U.S.

O'Buachain, C. (October 2017) *Building Capacity and Promoting Numeracy Awareness, Early Numeracy Project, Dublin Docklands & East Inner City*. Presentation at the Longford County Childcare Committee Leaders in Quality Awards Night 2017

O'Leary T., Hurley, O., Kirwan, S., Bleach J. & Kent, G. (April 2018). *Exploring early childhood language exposure in Irish homes*. Paper presented at Early Childhood Ireland Conference.

O'Leary T. & Hurley, O. (June 2018) *Exploring Preschool Language Exposure in Irish Homes*. Paper presented at the Early Learning Initiative Early Years Conference 'The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children', National College of Ireland, Dublin

O'Leary T. & Kent, G. (June 2018) *The Home Literacy Environment: A Comparison of Graduates of the Parent Child Home Programme to National Norms*. Poster presentation at the Early Learning Initiative Early Years Conference 'The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children', National College of Ireland, Dublin

Pitsia, V. & Kent, G. (November 2017). *Which factors can predict students' problem solving skills? The case of nine-year olds in Ireland*. Paper presented at Growing Up in Ireland Conference, Croke Park Dublin.

Wheatley, E. (April 2018). *Restorative Practice*. Paper presented at RPI/RJF Education Symposium Newry Conference Centre, Newry, Co Down.

Wheatley, E. & Mooney, K. (April 2018). *Brighter Futures: A Vision for a Restorative Learning Community in Dublin, Ireland*. Paper presented at International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP) Conference 'Leading and Sustaining Change', Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

6.4.2 Publications: Papers, Books Chapters, Newsletters and Articles

Bleach, J. (2018) Working with and Listening to Families. In: L.L. Kocher, L.L. and C. Patterson, ed., Volume 2: Pedagogies for Children's Perspectives, Abingdon: Taylor & Francis

Bleach, J. (2019) Mentoring and Coaching and their relationship to Management and Leadership in the Early Childhood Education, In Gasper, M. and Walker, R., ed., *Mentoring and Coaching in Early Childhood Education*, (forthcoming) London: Bloomsbury

Bleach, J. (2018) A Reflection on Action Research Leadership Practices, paper accepted for publication in *Action Research*

Moore, M. and Wheatley, E. (2017) *Let's Talk*, Dublin; National College of Ireland

Kent, G. & Pitsia, V. (2018). *A comparison of the home learning environment of families at risk of socio-economic disadvantage to national norms in Ireland*. Published in Irish Educational Studies.

Catibusic-Finnegan, B. (2018) *Supporting multilingual children's literacy development*, <http://euliteracy.eu/>

Catibusic-Finnegan, B. (2018) *Supporting language acquisition in multilingual environments* <http://euliteracy.eu/>

This year the ELI published three newsletters: one Community Update (September 2017) and two Community Newsletters (January and May 2018). All are available on our website: <https://www.ncirl.ie/ELI/Publications>

Dublin Inquirer mentioned *PCHP/ELI 10 Year Anniversary in January 2018*

<https://www.dublininquirer.com/2018/01/31/in-the-docklands-an-effort-to-close-the-word-gap/>

PCHP was highlighted in the Ireland Funds 2018 issue of Connect and this online article by Philanthropy Ireland:

<http://www.philanthropy.ie/2018/04/10/philanthropy-in-action-early-learning-initiative-national-college-of-ireland/>

NEIC Home from Home Summer Programme featured by Samskip:
<http://www.samskipmultimodal.com/news/expert-insight-early-learning-initiative-covers-dublin-s-summer-break>

Irish Examiner published a piece on parenting in June 2018:
<https://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/lifestyle/features/when-mum-really-does-know-best-852001.html>

A letter was published in Irish Times in March 2018
<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/tackling-the-class-divide-at-third-level-1.3420430>

ELI Conference was mentioned by Miriam Lord in the Irish Times June 2018
<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/miriam-lord-%C3%B3-broin-s-pr-tricks-to-highlight-flaw-in-murphy-s-law-1.3532461>

6.4.4 Social Media

Over the year we significantly increased our levels of engagement through our social media channels — in particular Facebook and Twitter, but also Instagram.

6.4.4.1 Facebook

The ELI Facebook page now has 1,613 likes with most of the activity around updates, news and photographs of events. In April 2018, Facebook kindly gifted ELI funding towards advertising, which significantly boosted our reach on social media.

The highest reach of the year was for a post about Discover University applications in April 2018, reaching 5,163 people (both organic and paid). A post in December 2017 about the PCHP Children's Christmas event reached over 3,000 people organically, as did a post about 'A Playful City' in September 2017. Other posts about our Love Education event in April, ELI's 10 year anniversary event in January 2018 and a Restorative Practices workshop for teachers in July 2017 were also seen by over 2,000 Facebook users.

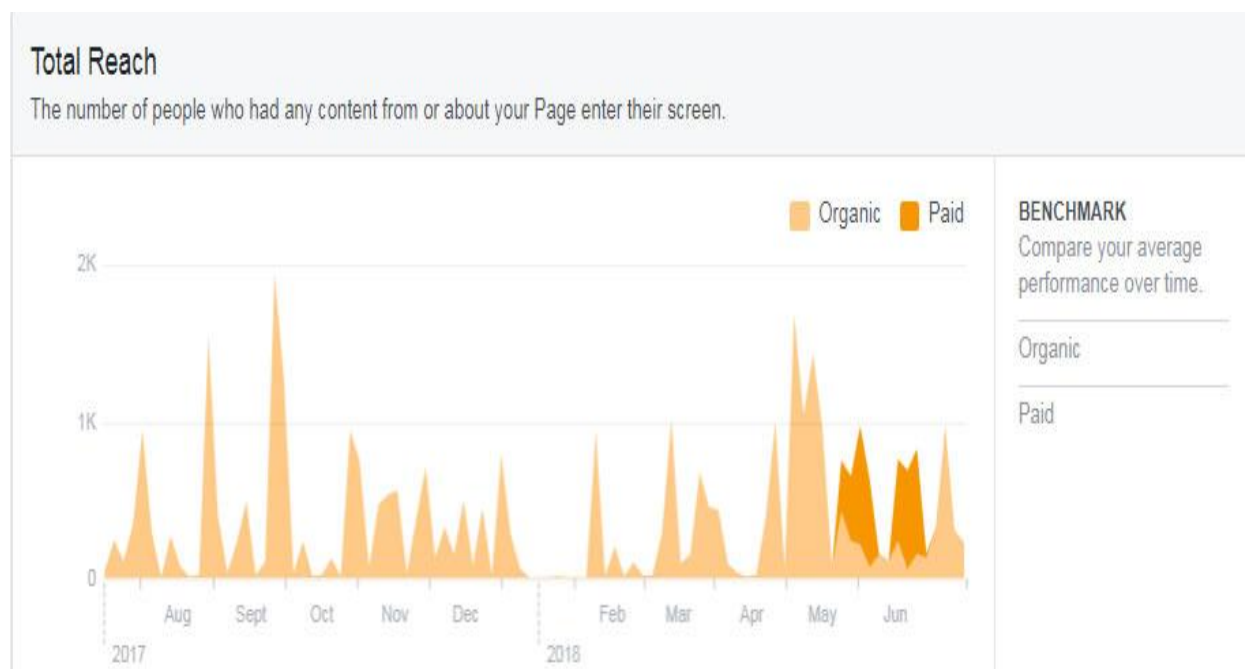


Figure 3 Total reach of ELI page

6.4.4.2 Twitter

ELI's following has increased from 480 to 680 during 2017-2018. Engaging with Twitter allows us to communicate more readily with corporate sponsors, participate in current trending conversations, as well as facilitating discussions between similar partner organisations, services, groups, businesses, other charities and researchers. Twitter has also increased the immediacy of our longstanding relationship with our PCHP colleagues in the US, enabling us to share stories, images and learning. Furthermore, Twitter continues to raise our profile in the local community and wider early years' educational sectors.

Our twitter impressions over the past year (Figure 4), highlight the extent of our reach during important events. Both reach and impressions give an idea of the overall exposure a tweet receives. Using these metrics, we can get a sense of the size of our potential audience and gain a more complete understanding of our social media impact. As seen below, the spike during September 2017 can be attributed to the launch of ELI's #PCHPGoesDigital database, in collaboration with Microsoft Ireland and eBECS, with further points of increased activity seen during October 2017 due to the Government's #Budget18 announcement to maintain all existing ABC Programme sites in 2018. Social media engagement due to our attendance at national and international conferences during April and May in Ireland, Canada and the USA ensured several spikes in engagement levels, while June 2018 saw our highest Twitter impressions take place during our own conference #ELIconf2018, as well as the Discover University programme.

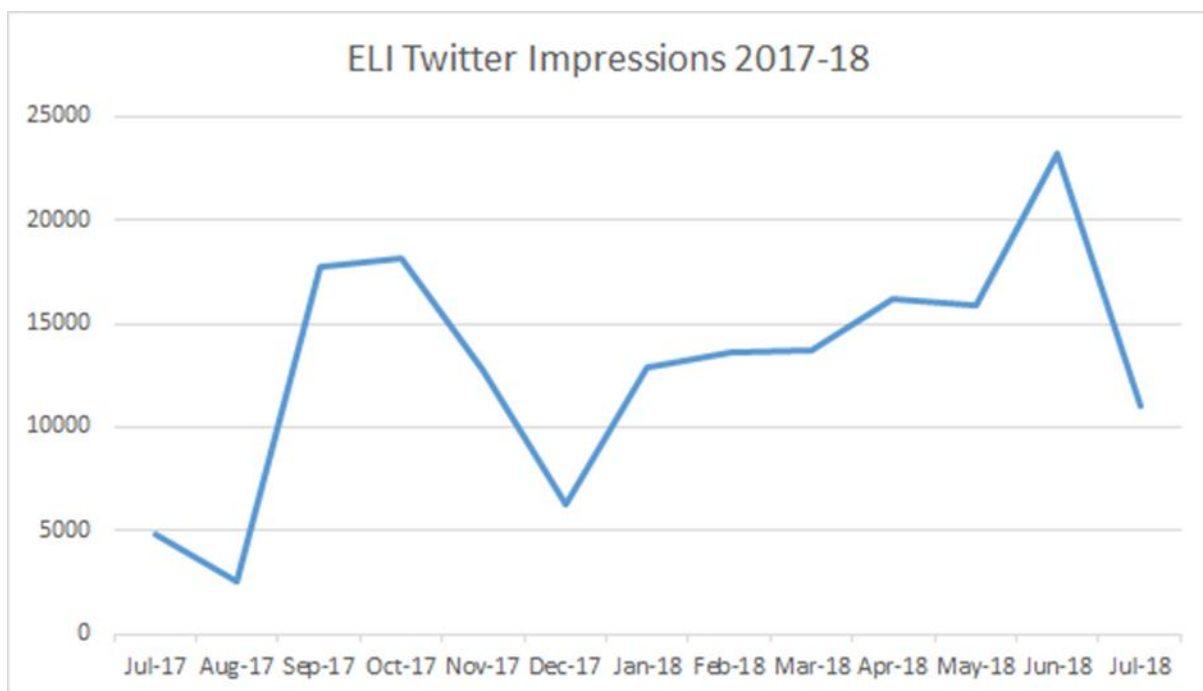


Figure 4 ELI Twitter impressions 2017-2018

6.4.4.3 Instagram

ELI also has an Instagram account (linked to our Facebook account) to increase our engagement across local and global communities. Our account has grown to 93 followers during 2017/18, and our aim is to increase our use of Instagram to expand our visibility across multiple social media platforms and to support our digital marketing campaign during 2018/19.

6.4.4.4 Website

ELI's website is a microsite within the larger NCI website. Content is updated during the summer each year and as required, to reflect new developments or changes to programmes, while notices about news and upcoming events are posted on social media accounts. ELI also featured in the NCI blog and social media channels:

<http://blog.ncirl.ie/part-time-student-full-time-parent-coping-with-that-end-of-summer-panic>

<http://blog.ncirl.ie/part-time-student-full-time-parent-summer-survival-guide>

<http://blog.ncirl.ie/celebrate-universal-childrens-day-with-your-baby-at-the-lab-on-foley-street>

6.5 Learning Networks

Learning networks are a critical element of ethos of our community action research approach. Key criteria for networking are the individual's and organisation's commitment to improving outcomes for children along with their ability to work in partnership with others. Priority is given to networks that are focused on early childhood development, educational disadvantage and supports for parents. Learning more about or having an input into Irish and European policy, especially when it concerns children's learning and development, is highly valued.

ELI are involved with the following networks and organisations:

- Learning Communities: ABC Managers Forum (Chair), 0 – 3 Forum, ABC Early Years Forum, Primary Schools Forum, Learning Community Planning and Evaluation Groups; Community Mothers Programmes in Dublin, Nenagh, Clonmel and Limerick; Restorative Practices Ireland and Northern Ireland
- North East Inner City (NEIC): North East Inner City Subgroup 3: Creating an Integrated System of Social Services; YPAR's 0-5, 5-12, Homeless and International Working Groups; North Inner City Community Coalition (NICCC) and its subgroups
- Dublin City Council (DCC): DCC Sport Officers; DCC Culture Connect Neighbourhood Project; The Lab; Right to Read Network; Arts Office
- Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) and Sub-Committees: Safe and Protection from Harm (Southside); Connected, Respected and Contributing (Northside)
- Early Years Groups: Early Years Policy Unit; DES; Dublin City Childcare Committee; Better Start and Síolta Mentors
- Homeless organisations: DCC Homeless Executive and their HABs team; CDYEB; Foundations Projects; Focus Ireland, Cross Care
- Advocacy Groups: Prevention and Early Intervention Network (PEIN); Children's Rights Alliance; Katherine Howard Foundation; Sonas; Pavee Point and Roma Association Events
- Research: ERSI; Growing Up in Ireland; Children's Research Network for Ireland and Northern Ireland; Psychological Society of Ireland; Network of Educational Action Research in Ireland (NEARI); Action Research Network of the Americas (ARNA); Collaborative Action Research Network (CARN)
- A Playful City, which is a collaboration between Upon A Tree (www.uponatree.ie), Connect The Dots (www.connectthedots.ie), UCD School of Geography, UNICEF, Dublin City Council, Leave No Trace Ireland, Sean Harrington Architects and others, which seeks to redress the poor record for playfulness and child friendliness in Dublin City.

In 2017/18, we attended a range of conferences and events, including

- The 8th BECERA Conference, Centre for Research in Childhood, 20th February 2018 *Creativity & Critical Thinking in the Early Years*
- Barnardos Designated Liaison Person Training, April 19th 2018
- Launch of Irish Association Infant Mental Health Professional Competency Guidelines & Training Event 19th April 2018.
- Early Childhood Ireland, Advancing Children’s Rights Through Education: From Imagination to Realisation, April 25th 2018
- Young Ballymun in conjunction with Irish Attachment in Action a public screening of ‘Resilience’, a documentary about Adverse Childhood Experiences featuring Dr Burke Harris’s work 7th June 2018.
- Archways Basic Parent Group Leader Training ‘Ante Natal Me & My Baby Programme. 24th October 2017.
- LYCS Adult Education Programme ‘Nurturing Wellness and Self Care Day,’ Facilitated by Capacitar founder Pat Cane, 7th February
- National Counselling & Psychotherapy Conference 2018 ‘Attachment in Psychotherapy - Bowlby and Beyond’, 9th June 2018.
- Tusla Meitheal Training, 28th & 29th June 2018*
- Barnardos Making the Most of Supervision Training 2nd, 3rd & 31st May 2018
- Shalem Mental Health Network — Restorative Workshop with Terry O’Connell, Hamilton, Canada, 3rd and 4th May 2018.
- ‘Building Bridges: Restoring Connections with Terry O’Connell’, Distillery Building, Dublin, 20th September 2017.
- CDI Tallaght - 10 Years On, Civic Theatre, Tallaght, 12th September 2017.
- Learning Together Working Together, Dublin, eight-week course during October and November 2017.
- CYPSC Dublin City North - Consultation with Services, Dublin, 13th December 2017.
- Outcomes Based Accountability Training, Dublin, 14th and 15th February 2018.
- Making the Case for Education - Cross Border RP Symposium, Newry, 20th April 2018.
- *Dialogue on Effective Prevention and Early Intervention* organised by Prevention and Early Intervention Unit (PEIU), Department of Public Expenditure & Reform

6.5 Second Early Years Conference: *Supporting Parents in their Constitutional Role as the Primary Educators of their Children*

On the 13th June 2018, ELI hosted an early-years conference titled *‘The Constitutional Role of Parents as the Primary Educators of their Children’*. Children’s rights are enshrined in the Irish constitution, law and policy but for young children, the main way they can realise those rights are through their parents. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child places a duty on the State to respect the rights and responsibilities of parents [Article 5] and to support them with their child-rearing responsibilities [Article 18]. As a nation, we need to empower parents as the primary educators of their children to realise their children’s right to be respected, protected and fulfilled; and ensure that parents have the support and resources to help their children realise their maximum potential now and in the future.

The conference aimed to:

- Raise awareness of the vital role that parents have as primary educators of their children and how this contributes to children’s development and learning

- Highlight how educators and family support services can support parents in their role as primary educators of their children
- Showcase quality practice-based research projects from across Ireland.

There were approximately 100 attendees, comprised of early-years practitioners, educators, Home Visitors, family support services, community and statutory organisations, students and prospective students, parents and researchers, policy makers and interested parties.

The format included two keynote speakers (one morning and one afternoon), two sets of parallel interactive workshops (one morning and one afternoon), and a plenary session at the end of the day based on the feedback from workshop participants.

Keynote Speakers and Panel Members were:

- Keynote 1- Minister Paschal Donohoe TD- The Role of Fathers as Primary Educators of Their Children
- Keynote 2- Francis Chance, Katharine Howard Foundation- Giving our Children the Best Start in Life the Voices of Parents
- Liz Kerrins, Children’s Rights Alliance -Panel contributor
- Áine Lynch, National Parents Council- Panel contributor
- Dr Josephine Bleach, Director-Early Learning Initiative chaired the afternoon plenary session

Key policy recommendations from the conference included:

- Long term plans from government for early interventions for the child. Name, capture, and improve upon what is working well
- Promote the value of play to parents and educators
- Build awareness with educators and parents on:
 - What is important for school readiness
 - Resilience in children. Upskill educators on how they can support parents to promote resilience in their children.
- Suitable housing for families to support children/families. Government to treat people as individuals using respectful language, not ‘homeless’, ‘addicted’ etc. The situation is the problem and not the individual
- Community response to social isolation

Early Years Conference Evaluation

A total of 32 Conference Feedback Forms were completed and returned. All conference attendees (N=32) indicated that they enjoyed the conference. When asked if they found the conference useful, 100% of responses indicated that they did (N=31). Conference attendees were asked “*What was the best thing about this conference?*” Responses focused mainly on the interesting information they received through the breakout sessions, seminars and from speakers. The opportunity to network with peers and colleagues in the field was also mentioned by many attendees as a positive aspect of the conference.

A selection of comments in response to this question are included below:

- *Breakout sessions. Good mix of attendees, good choice of sessions.*
- *Mixing with others and getting their views and feedback.*
- *Meeting people from other services. It broadened my horizon.*
- *Fantastically organised, the presentation sessions were very coherent, fit together well. Inspiring, really useful and inspired discussions.*

Conference attendees were also asked what key messages they were taking away from the conference. A significant theme within these comments was the need to empower, consult with and engage parents. Some additional comments in relation to the key take-home messages are included below:

- *There is some fantastic research going on in this area! Continuous need for support for development and dissemination and awareness of evidence based practices/supports*
- *Consultation matters. Don't pathologise individual parent behaviours – structural inequality matters too.*
- *Parents as partners*
- *Valuing parents' role means listening to them and consulting. Long term and multiparty policy and investment essential. Who are the families we are missing as we deliver targeted interventions? Need to support parents to implement public health messages*
- *I was bowled over by the sheer number of agencies and the diversity of supports available. The importance of connecting parents and joined-up thinking from professionals*
- *Don't assume – ask, consult, listen to parents*
- *That we are doing a great deal of quality work within the sector*

A selection of additional comments are included below, which reflect the overall positive feedback received in relation to the conference:

- *A very well organised and enjoyable conference. Thank you*
- *Well done. Good conference and a lot of info and knowledge imparted*
- *Congratulations to all involved in organising the conference. It was very professional and ran smoothly*
- *Excellent day!*
- *Looking forward to the next one*

Section B: Programme Implementation

Early learning is the foundation for all subsequent learning. It is within the period of early childhood (zero to six years) that achievement gaps begin to emerge and unless they are addressed, these gaps will compound as time progresses.

Central to young children's learning is high quality adult interactions and a challenging and stimulating learning environment, both at home and in early years' settings. The main focus of ELI's *Early Learning Programmes* (zero to six years) has been on helping parents and early childhood and education practitioners to develop children's social, language and thinking skills from an early age and thereby, ensure that children enter school ready to learn, with the skills they need to be successful throughout their education. ELI believes that intervention at this level will increase the likelihood of children, with the support of their parents, progressing through the education system to third level, and developing the skills required to achieve their educational and career goals.

While support in the Early Years is undoubtedly an essential part of our approach, we strongly believe that continued input throughout the stages of development is a key element in addressing educational disadvantage within the Dublin Docklands. Through our protracted period of intervention, we hope to improve the developmental and educational trajectories of children, and sustain high levels of parental involvement in their children's education. Our programmes are developed through careful collaboration with local schools, after-school services and youth organisations, and respond to areas of need that have been identified within the community.

Objectives:

- To improve the educational outcomes for children and young people in the Dublin's Inner City
- To enable children and young people to develop the skills they will need to achieve their educational and career goals
- To promote a rich learning environment at home, in school, after-schools and youth organisations
- To increase parental involvement in their children's education and learning
- To support continuity and progression in learning for children moving from home to Early Years' settings to the local schools and on to higher education and career; thereby widening access to and participation in higher education

7 Programme Summary Reports

This chapter provides brief summary reports with more detail reports on individual ELI's programmes, available in the following chapters. Programmes are grouped under the following headings that are aligned with ELI's vision, mission and objectives.

Home Visiting and Parent Support Programmes promote positive learning interactions between parents/guardians and their children and help parents/guardians and extended family develop the understanding, skills and knowledge needed to support their children's developmental, educational and life journeys.

Literacies Programmes partners parents, services and schools to develop children's social, language and thinking skills from an early age; thereby, ensuring that the children and young people in the area develop the skills needed to achieve their educational, career and life goals.

Restorative Practice (RP) Programmes enables families, services and communities to create positive interpersonal relationships, resolve conflict, and repair damaged relationships.

Educational Guidance supports young people, parents and communities' understanding of the education system and the impact of certain decisions such as subject choices on young people's ability to access further education and career opportunities.

7.1 Home Visiting and Parent Support Programmes

The aim of these programmes is to promote positive learning interactions between parents/guardians and their children and help parents/guardians and extended family develop the understanding, skills and knowledge needed to support their children's developmental, educational and life journeys. There are two main programmes: Parent Child Home Programme and the ABC 0-2 Programme. As well as home visiting, these programmes support parents to access group parenting sessions as well as other services in the community.

7.1.1 ABC 0-2 Year Programme

The 0-2 Years Programme, designed to enrich the home learning environment for parents/guardians with children under two years of age. As a universal, prevention-based programme, families from pre-birth to two years of age are supported in their learning and community engagement through a Home Visiting and Community Support Programme. Participation in the programme reflects the diversity of the catchment area with families from many different living and ethnic situations choosing to be part of one or both elements of ABC 0-2

In 2017/18, not only did we reach the milestone of engaging with over 100 families since the start of the programme in 2014, but the ABC 0-2 Programme was a finalist in the Irish Healthcare Centre Awards 2018. During 2017/18, 69 children and their families were involved in the 0-2 Home Visiting Programme with a total of 614 visits across the full year. The number of Community Parent Support Groups offered this year grew to having at least one group per day with approximately 173 children and their families engaged across nine groups.

7.1.2 Parent Child Home Programme

Originally from the US, the Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) is an innovative, home-based literacy and parenting programme that strengthens families and prepares children to succeed academically. Over a two year period Home Visitors model oral language, reading and play in their

twice weekly visits. The families then continue the activities in their own time, thereby enabling the PCHP child and his/her siblings to develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills.

The Parent Child Home Programme continued to be delivered this year with six sites across Ireland. In total, 242 children and their parents received twice weekly home visits across these sites which include the Docklands and East Inner City Dublin, Bluebell and Crumlin (Dublin South City Partnership), Finglas (Pavee Point and the Traveller Community), North West Inner City Dublin (Daughters of Charity and DIT Grangegorman ABC Programme), Ballinasloe (Galway Education Centre and Sisters of Mercy) and Limerick (by Garryowen Community Development Group and Paul Partnership).

As in previous years we have continued to see positive indicators of the benefits of the programme to children, their parents, their families and the wider community. The assessments completed twice a year by the Home Visitors (Child Behaviour Traits (CBT) and Parent and Child Together (PACT)) continue to show positive developmental trends for the children and enhanced interactions between parent and child.

7.2 Literacies Programmes

ELI's Literacy, Numeracy and Coding Programmes focus on supporting parents, services and schools to develop children's social, language and thinking skills from an early age; thereby, ensuring that the children and young people in the area continue to develop the skills needed to achieve their educational, career and life goals. These programmes, developed through careful collaboration with local services and schools, are Early Numeracy Programme, Zoom Ahead with Books, Doodle Den, NCI Challenges, Financial Literacy, Robotic Coding Clubs and Tuition Support.

7.2.1 Early Numeracy Programme

Beginning in 2011 with funding from the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI), this programme is aimed at improving early year's numeracy and mathematical skills from birth to six years of age. With funding from the ABC Programme, this programme has grown from sixteen organisations and 498 children in 2011-12 to 39 organisations and 1,520 children in 2017/18. The programme revolves around the three curriculum-focused Early Numeracy Weeks. The numeracy themes for 2017/18 were Positional and Directional Language (November 2017), Shape (February 2018) and Counting (May 2018). Working group meetings and onsite mentoring are used support programme development, implementation and evaluation. Site visits support practitioners to reflect on and improve the quality of their practice using the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide Resource*.

7.2.2 Early Years Continuous Professional Development and Mentoring

Continuous professional development (CPD) is central to good practice and a key element in the provision of high quality experiences for children. Since 2007, ELI has worked with Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) settings to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their centres and the support the implementation of *Síolta, The Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education* (Síolta) (CECDE 2006) and *Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (Aistear) (NCCA 2009).

There are three strands in the Programme:

- Communities of Practice – Early Numeracy Working Group, which met four times during 2017/18.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training: There were three Pre-Numeracy Week workshops, delivered to 51 staff across nineteen services and schools. One additional CPD session on the topic of *Working with Children with Challenging Behaviour* along with Paediatric First Training was also provided.
- On-site mentoring and support to early years services, including the review and development of their individualised Action Plans. There were 234 visits to services in 2017/18.

7.2.3 Zoom Ahead with Books

The *Zoom Ahead with Books* project encourages parental involvement and promotes children's enjoyment and motivation to read for pleasure. Each night over the four-week project, the children take home a book from the class library, sit, read and discuss the book with their 'Book Buddy' and then both draw a picture representing the book.

This year nine primary schools, one preschool and one afterschool service took part in the Zoom Ahead with Books project, with two primary schools participating for the first time. Seven hundred and thirty-seven (737) children, forty-four (44) educators, and seventeen (17) corporate volunteers were involved in the programme. The programme was delivered to children in Preschool, Reception, Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First classes. Teachers reported that each child, on average, read eight books during the duration of the project, culminating in approximately 5,896 books being read. The exhibitions to showcase the work of the children and their book buddies took place in the National College of Ireland, Central Bank and in some schools. The programme has become embedded in the school year, with a lot of positive feedback from children, book buddies and teachers. It will continue in 2018-19.

7.2.4 Doodle Den

Doodle Den aims to improve literacy among children (five to six years) using a wide range of activities in an afterschool setting. 38 children enrolled in the programme in September 2017 i.e. fourteen in DD1, thirteen in DD2 and eleven in DD3 with an additional sixteen enrolling in DD4 in January 2018 to bring the total to 55 children. However, over the course of the year the numbers attending decreased with 36 children graduating in June 2018.

Average score across all assessment areas increased from 71% to 91% across the year. The greatest increase was in the children's sight vocabulary. Doodle Den will continue in four sites for 2018/19 in the North East Inner City.

7.2.5 NCI Challenges

The NCI Challenges are designed to encourage the development of cross-curricular skills as well as encouraging parental involvement in their children's education and schools. The inter-school challenges promote the development of children's literacy, numeracy, general knowledge and social skills through playing board-games like Monopoly (money, number, problem-solving), Rummikub (number, pattern, sorting) and the Table Quiz (general knowledge, literacy). In 2017/18, 209 children took part in one of the NCI Challenges. Feedback was very positive with all involved agreeing that these Challenges provided valuable and enjoyable learning opportunities.

7.2.6 EU Literacy Project – Making Literacy Meaningful

Teaching staff in a multi-faceted Europe are continually confronted with questions around facilitation of children from a multitude of backgrounds. The Making Literacy Meaningful project, funded by the European Union under the ERASMUS+ Programme, is developing practically oriented knowledge in the area of language and literacy development, with a specific focus on addressing the needs, challenges and opportunities resulting from multilingual and multicultural classrooms.

This year saw our second year of participation EU Erasmus+ Literacy Project *Making Literacy Meaningful* in conjunction with the School of Computing (Development of the (Massive Open Online Courses) MOOCs and Website); Teaching and Learning (Programme Content) and our partners from the UK, Germany, Luxemburg and Spain.

The first MOOC, which focused on supporting the teaching of children who have the countries 'instructional language' as a second language (in the Irish context this will be children who have English as an additional language), has been completed and is available online:

<http://literacymooc.eu/courses/teaching-in-multilingual-classrooms/>. The content for the second MOOC, which will focus on the teaching of literacy for all children, is now being developed and it is hoped that this MOOC will be released in January 2019.

A Making Literacy Meaningful website <http://euliteracy.eu/> has been developed. It hosts materials specifically developed for the project as well as providing links to the two custom-designed MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) around Language Facilitation and Literacy Facilitation. Reflective tasks and practical implementation tips are designed to help practitioners to link theory to practice. NCI has provided two papers for the website with more papers and teaching materials on the way.

Planning meetings were held in Luxembourg (February) and Barcelona (June) this with a Multiplier Event in Luxembourg (February). In 2018/19, ELI will host a project meeting, Learning Activity and Multiplier Event in March. There will also be a Multiplier Event in Freiburg in May/June with the last project meeting in Freiburg in July.

7.2.7 Literacy & Numeracy Assessments

Standardised test results in English and Maths at seven years (second class) and twelve years (sixth class) were collected from the local primary schools who participate in our programmes. The aim is to monitor how children are faring in terms of their literacy and numeracy skills; thereby giving us an indication what, if any, impact DEIS, ELI's and other programmes are having on children's educational attainment. As schools and children change each year, the findings are limited and should be interpreted as population trends and indicators.

This year saw a slight decrease in second-class student's Micra-T/Reading scores with the number of students scoring between average and above average decreasing from 72% in 2017 to 66% in 2018. However, an increase was seen in sixth class Micra-T/Reading scores with the number of students scoring between average and well above average increasing from 42% in 2017 to 52% in 2018.

In Maths (Sigma-T), the number of second-class students, scoring between average and well above average was similar to last year with 66% of students scoring in this range in 2017 compared to 64% in 2018. Sixth class students Sigma-T/Maths scores have increased with the number of students scoring from average to well above average increasing from 52% in 2017 to 58% in 2018.

7.2.8 Financial Literacy Programme

The Ulster Bank Financial Literacy Programme was developed in 2014/15. Building on the success of the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) Docklands Early Numeracy Programme (for children aged zero to six years), it was run initially in five primary schools. Since then, the programme content was adapted for use in afterschool services. In 2016/17, it ran in four after-school services with more funding awarded in April 2018 from the Ulster Bank Community Impact Fund to extend it to a new cohort of afterschool's. The programme, which targets children, aged four to twelve years old and covers topics such as income, budgeting, saving, borrowing and currency, was delivered to 59 students in three local afterschool services. Programme deadlines have been extended to October 2018 to include additional groups of children. In September, each afterschool will create a storyboard under the theme 'Classics & Finance'. This will involve incorporating financial elements into a fairy-tale such as Cinderella. The programme will finish with a showcase of the storyboards to the participating children, their families and afterschool staff.

7.2.9 Robotic Coding Clubs

The Robotic Coding Clubs for children aged seven to twelve years old continued in 2017/18 in collaboration with NCI's School of Computing, SFI, Deloitte and Hubspot. Participants learned about robotics, programming and electronics with an mbot, which is an easy-to-assemble robot that

provides infinite possibilities for students to learn STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). In total, 33 students were involved in the club across three sites (NCI and two afterschools).

This year there was an increased focus on parental involvement, parents being encouraged to attend events and get involved by providing positive encouragement and support for their children's learning. Parents and families also received invitations to attend the final event, the NCI Coding Challenge, where students were asked to code their mbots before they faced a series of challenges. Twenty parents and family members attended the NCI Coding Challenge event.

The programme will continue in the new term (October – December 2018) and, dependent on funding, it is hoped to continue the Coding Club again into 2019.

7.2.10 Community Based Tuition Support

Community Based Tuition Support was delivered to 22 students in St Mary's Youth Club, East Wall. Maths Tuition continued as in previous years, at both Junior and Leaving Certificate levels. Leaving Certificate Irish Tuition began running in April 2018 and ran until the end of the academic year for all levels. East Wall Youth also delivered Leaving Certificate Foundation Level Maths tuition.

7.3 Restorative Practice (RP)

Restorative Practice (RP), funded by the Government's Area-Based Childhood (ABC) Programme and the North East Inner City (NEIC) Task Force, is an approach to building and maintaining interpersonal relationships, resolving conflict and repairing damaged relationships. It provides a framework, which can support a wide range of organisations and sectors, including schools, early years' services, youth services, workplaces, communities and families – while complementing and supporting other approaches, such as coaching, mediation, and restorative justice. Diverse statutory, community, voluntary, public, civic, and corporate partners have been encouraged to get involved in the following activities:

7.3.1 RP Training and Mentoring for Adults

'Getting Started with Restorative Practice' Training is for those who are engaging with RP for the first time, and provides an overview of the origins and development of Restorative Practice, the evidence of outcomes that can be expected from adopting RP, and an outline of the skills that are used when taking a restorative approach. 'Upskilling Training' is for those who have already completed the initial workshops and who are interested in developing their skills. In 2017/18, 305 professionals attended RP training and learnt how to take a restorative approach to their life and work. Mentoring and support is offered to all services that are engaging in Restorative Practice through on-site visits, phone calls, e-mails and Monthly Community of Practice Meetings.

7.3.2 RP Initiatives with Children and Young People

RP training with children and young people aims to empower young people of all ages by providing life skills and strengthening people's ability to express themselves safely and imaginatively. Restorative practices provide young people with a range of skills and methods that promote mutually respectful relationships while building community cohesion. It is an asset-building endeavour in which young people develop a greater sense of self-efficacy, self-esteem, sense of community and empathy and emotional literacy.

In 2017/18, two separate RP CREW six-week programmes took place in Cooperative Childcare Afterschools with 22 children taking part. Eight children participated during January, February and March (aged between five and nine-years-of age), and 14 children (aged between five and seven-years

of age) took part during April, May and June. Children participated in a range of activities discussing restorative values, building and maintaining friendships, feelings and problem solving activities, among others.

In June 2018, fourteen students from the local community took part in two days training in restorative practices in National College of Ireland. This group are the incoming 4th, 5th and 6th Year students from Larkin Community College for 2018/19, and took part in a two-day restorative practice training course to support them in becoming 'relationship keepers' in their school. This course equipped them with the restorative language, skills and tools necessary to build positive relationships and to resolve conflict

Restorative Practice Conversations between corporate employees and local young people is a new programme developed as part of the North East Inner City (NEIC) Brighter Futures Initiative. The aim was to build trusting relationships between the young people and corporate volunteers; enhance the participants interpersonal and communication skills and increase the professional employability of participating young people. Arthur Cox, a long-standing ELI partner, piloted this programme during 2017/18 with thirteen Arthur Cox employees and fourteen young people from Belvedere Youth Club (along with two youth leaders) taking part.

7.3.3 RP Parenting and Home Visiting Initiative

Funding from the NEIC enabled the development of a Restorative Parenting Initiative, which aims to give parents/guardians the training and support they need to provide for a nurturing home learning environment. Restorative Parenting is a tool to support healthy parent-child relationships, improve communication, and build stronger families, while enabling parents to cultivate new relationships with other parents, practitioners and professionals in the community. The Restorative Parenting and Home Visiting Initiative consists of two elements: Reportative Parenting Group Workshops and 'Let's Talk' Home Visiting and Parent Support Sessions.

7.4 Educational Guidance

The main focus is on supporting young people, parents and communities' understanding of the education system and the impact of certain decisions such as subject choices on young people's ability to access further education and career opportunities; thereby, ensuring that the children and young people in the area achieve their educational and career goals. These programmes, which are being developed through careful collaboration with local schools, afterschool, youth and community services, are Educational Guidance, Love Education, Mentoring Circles and Discover University.

7.4.1 Love Education

In collaboration with the Taoiseach's North East Inner City Initiative and Túsla Educational Welfare Services (EWS), the ELI held an educational showcase event to demonstrate the positive aspects of education in the North East Inner City (NEIC). As the basis for Love Education, educational partners in the NEIC were invited to participate in a poster presentation which illustrated their greatest achievements and hopes for the future. Fifteen schools and services participated in the poster presentations where a photograph of an aspect of their service they were proud of was also captured and they highlighted what their service aims to do.

The event itself was divided into three stages to allow for age appropriate activities for the participating services. In the morning, activities were set up for Early Years Services and Primary School pupils from Junior Infants to first class. Activities included a range of career-related materials for

building, horticulture, and hospitals, in addition to reading and painting resources. 152 children from local schools and services attended the morning time session. This was then followed by the Educational Guidance Exhibition for fifth and sixth class from two participating primary schools.

A corporate showcase for second and third level students as well as other adult learners was organised for the afternoon. Twenty-eight volunteers representing twelve corporate organisations participated in the event to illustrate the work that their organisation conducts and to discuss the link between their own education and employment opportunities. Forty students from local secondary schools attended the event.

7.4.2 Educational Guidance

This project-based learning Educational Guidance programme is targeted at fifth and sixth class in primary school. Beginning in 2009-10 at the request of local primary school principals, it aims to raise the awareness among students, parents and teachers of the necessity of having a third level education if one wishes to pursue certain careers. It is also meant to inform the local community of how choices made at the end of primary school can limit life chances in terms of accessing further education and career opportunities.

Ten projects were exhibited by 52 children from the two schools and ten representatives from local companies acted as judges for the exhibition. As part of the Love Education Showcase, representatives from ELI's corporate partners were available to talk to the children involved in the Educational Guidance Programme about their educational and career options. A scavenger hunt was incorporated into the event to encourage the children to start conversations with volunteers at the stands about job opportunities, education paths and skill sets etc.

7.4.3 Mentoring Circles

The Mentoring Circles Programme connects the students with a mentor in Facebook for four group-learning sessions followed by an interview session, which focused on building the skills needed in order to complete and present a final project. Sixty-one students from same four schools as in previous years engaged in the programme over two days a week for four weeks. The final event was hosted by Facebook over two evenings with invitations to the graduation event extended to parents and family. Both events were very successful with all parties involved highly impressed with the performance of the students.

7.4.4 Third-Level Options Drop-in Clinics

The third-level options drop-in clinic was a pilot programme specifically targeted towards second-level students and their parents. The aim was to provide the local community with information on accessing further education and career opportunities as well as increasing their understanding of how certain educational choices can limit further education, career and life chances. The clinics began at the Love Education Showcase event on April 30th, and continued weekly every Thursday in the NCI atrium for two hours from May 24th until the end of June. Staffed by the second-level programme coordinator along with two NCI interns, ten people engaged with the clinics in 2017-2018.

7.4.5 Discover University

Discover University (DU) is a summer programme that aims to give young people aged fourteen to seventeen from disadvantaged communities across Dublin the opportunity to experience a taste of life at NCI and to see college as part of their future. Thirty-eight young people aged fourteen to

seventeen years old, from Dublin city, the Docklands and Ballymun participated in DU from the 19th – 27th June 2018 and were given the option of participating in one of four projects: Business, Computing, Early Years and Psychology, with the latter two added as new project strands this year. Students presented their projects at various intervals during the week to corporate volunteers, who gave them advice and support on improving their projects. The programme finished with a Project Showcase on Wednesday 27th June, attended by the newly elected Lord Mayor of Dublin, Nial Ring and President of NCI Gina Quin. This was followed by an official graduation ceremony and a BBQ for all, including invited guests.

7.4.6 Third Level Internships

The ELI Third Level Internship programme offered eligible students the opportunity to work with ELI during the academic year, as well as partake in personal and career development opportunities with ELI corporate partners. They undertook a wide range of tasks, working on programmes such as Financial Literacy, Third-Level Options Drop-in Clinics, and Discover University, at events including the ELI Conference, ELI Monopoly Challenge, ELI Coding Challenge and Sports Day. They also undertook research activities for ELI Numeracy programme, Restorative Practice and Brighter Futures.

7.4.7 Educational Support Fund

In 2017/18, a grant of €20K was donated to ELI by very generous donor to support young people in Dublin's Inner City achieve their educational goals. An Educational Support Fund was established in April 2018. Applicants has to be attending a primary (4th class – 6th class) or secondary DEIS school (as set out by the Department of Education and Skills) or a local community or voluntary service with priority given to people living in Dublin's inner city. An independent panel of volunteers from Dublin Port, Citco and The Panel rated the 88 applicants with 41 successful candidates. Of these 20 received funding for educational equipment, mainly laptops; 18 got funding for educational assessments and 3 received funding for educational courses.

8 Volunteer Programme

ELI's volunteer programme, which began in 2010 with 8 volunteers, provides rewarding, diverse volunteer experiences, which give employees in our corporate partners the opportunity to interact directly with children and their families in the community in which they work. The programme offers mutual benefits – allowing corporate staff to enhance their own interpersonal communication skills while simultaneously making a positive difference to the educational life chances of the people in their locality. This section outlines the Volunteer Programme for 2017/18.

Targets

- To augment the work of the Early Learning Initiative and the service it provides to the Docklands community.
- To provide corporate volunteers with positive meaningful interactions to enhance their interpersonal and employability skills.
- To allow corporate volunteers to contribute to the community, as well as developing their employability skills.
- To enable our corporate partners to deliver on their corporate social responsibility agendas

In 2017/18, 349 corporate employees volunteered with ELI compared with 235 in 2016/17. This increase can be attributed to the growth in available volunteering opportunities along with the increased interest in volunteering from corporate companies. The decision in 2016/17 to extend the volunteering opportunities to afterschool and out-of-school programmes was expanded further in 2017/18 and led to an increase in the organisational complexity of the ELI Volunteering Programme and the involvement of more members of the ELI team. Programme Coordinators now take responsibility for the corporate employees who are volunteering on their project. However, this has led to the need to review the support and training for the volunteers, particularly more intensive training for specific programmes such as the Afterschool Coding Club, Doodle Den, and Zoom Ahead with Books, Restorative Practice training etc.

As in previous years, there were two intakes of volunteers in Sept/Oct and Jan/Feb with companies encouraged to become involved in the programmes that interest them most; nominate a volunteer coordinator and hold volunteer information/training/inductions sessions in their offices. The new e-Garda Vetting procedures speeds up the volunteer vetting process considerably but there can be issues when volunteers do not complete the forms on time or in full.

Programme	Number of Volunteers	Lead Corporate Partner
<i>Early Years Programmes</i>		
0-2 Programme: Activity Boards	20	State Street
CRM System for PCHP	5	EBECs, Microsoft
Home Visitor IT Upskilling	15	Mason Hayes & Curran

Programme	Number of Volunteers	Lead Corporate Partner
<i>Afterschool and Community Programmes</i>		
Doodle Den	12	KPMG
Zoom Ahead with Books	17	Central Bank, Citco
Afterschool Coding Club	20	Airbnb, Deloitte, HubSpot
Financial Literacy Programme	2	Ulster Bank
NEIC RP Opening the Door	14	Arthur Cox
Love Education Showcase	28	Citco, Centaurf, Deloitte, Designer Group, ESB, HSBC, JJ Rhattigan, Knight Frank, McGarrell Reilly, Minnis Development, The Panel, Ulster Bank
'Play & Learn' STEM Showcase	16	State Street
ELI Scholarships	5	Citco, Dublin Port, The Panel, Total Produce
PCHP Graduates Video	10	Verve
<i>Primary Level Programmes</i>		
NCI Rummikub Challenge	34	Central Bank, Deloitte
NCI Quiz Challenge	10	Central Bank
NCI Monopoly Challenge	4	Deloitte, McGarrell Reilly
Educational Guidance	11	Deloitte, The Panel
Mentoring Circles	45	Facebook
<i>Second Level Programmes</i>		
Discover University	76	Arthur Cox, CentaurFS, Citco, Deloitte, Facebook, HSBC, KPMG, Mason Hayes & Curran, McCann FitzGerald, McGarrell Reilly, NTMA, State Street, Verve
<i>Third Level Programmes</i>		
NCI Dragons Den	5	HSBC
Total	349	

Corporate Volunteer Feedback

At the end of the year, once all volunteer opportunities had ended volunteers were emailed a link to a survey monkey questionnaire asking them to give feedback on their experience. This year there was a low return completion rate of the end of year questionnaire with only two volunteers completing it. However, general feedback from the end of programme volunteer feedback for Doodle Den, Zoom Ahead with Books and Restorative Practice has been collated, along with the minimal number of end of year volunteer feedback, in this section. Additional volunteer programme specific feedback is also included under the relevant programme sections of this report.

The overall feedback was very positive with all volunteers reporting that they were happy they volunteered/ enjoyed volunteering with ELI (100%; N=24). When asked whether they would recommend the experience to a friend, all volunteers agreed (100%; N=6). The majority of volunteers reported that they were happy with the support they received (91%; N=10), while one volunteer reported being unsure.

**Responses presented below were made in response to closed questions where participants could select more than one response.*

What motivated you to volunteer?* (N=6)	Volunteering with ELI enhanced my:* (N=12)
<p style="text-align: center;">To make a difference 50% (N=3)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To have fun 33% (N=2)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To enhance skills 17% (N=1)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pride in community 25% (N=3)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Confidence 25% (N=3)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communication Skills 25% (N=3)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Job Satisfaction 17% (N=2)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Leadership Skills 8% (N=1)</p>

When asked their opinion on the impact they had on the children only one volunteer comments included:

- *"It brought a bit of fun!"*
- *"I believe corporate volunteers add a lot of value to the programme by engaging, encouraging the children. Making the programme fun & interactive help".*
- *"They give children the opportunity to see people in professional jobs and exposing them to new opportunities".*
- *"Engaged in learning in a fun informal environment, improved literacy".*
- *"By encouraging the kids, being respectful and in turn gaining their respect at the same time. The kids are looking for role models & are quick to mirror the adults' actions. The environment for the kids to be inspired about learning for themselves and as a group".*

When asked to reflect on their experience of volunteering with comments included:

- *"Fantastic"*
- *"It was a great experience. All the tutors were supportive and it was great fun. It was also so nice to see the children develop and grow in themselves."*
- *"It was a brilliant programme, the volunteers gained a lot of insight to the work this organisation does with the children. It's a very positive initiative, we all looked forward to taking part in it".*
- *"It's a fantastic programme to be part of. It costs you nothing but your time and the payback is immense seeing how happy the kids are for you to spend some time with them".*
- *"The children were so lovely and I really enjoyed seeing them grow in confidence and even in their learning ability".*

2018-2019

The volunteer programme will continue in 2018/19. There is a need to review the induction and training material in addition to overall volunteer supporting material and documentation.

9 Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme

The Area Based Childhood (ABC) programme, which is jointly funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DYCA) and Atlantic Philanthropies, targets investment in evidence-informed interventions to improve the long-term outcomes for children and families living in areas of disadvantage. It aims to break ‘the cycle of child poverty within areas where it is most deeply entrenched and where children are most disadvantaged, through integrated and effective services and interventions’ (Programme for Government, 2013), in the areas of child development, child well-being, parenting, and educational disadvantage.

Building upon the existing expertise and interventions in the area, the aim of the Docklands and East Inner City ABC Programme is to continue and extend the existing programmes, which address disadvantage in the Dublin Docklands and East Inner City through the provision from pre-birth of an integrated programme of interventions and support for children, their parents and families, and educators.

Project Objectives:

- To improve wellbeing, developmental and learning outcomes for children (zero to eight years)
- To increase parental skills, knowledge and engagement in all areas of their children’s development, and learning
- To ensure effective transitions for children at key developmental stages and between home, primary schools, early years, statutory and community services
- To continue to improve the quality of the services (statutory, community and voluntary) provided to children and their families
- To enhance and develop the existing interagency collaboration within the area, including implementing the Meitheal Practice Model
- To enable children and their families to experience a safe, secure, stable, caring, holistic, learning and restorative environment at home, in services (statutory, community and voluntary) and throughout the community

9.1 ABC Programme - Process

In November 2013, the then Tánaiste, Eamon Gilmore, and Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald, launched the ABC Programme here in NCI. The Docklands and East Dublin Consortium, for which NCI is the lead agency, were awarded funding of €1.2m to implement their proposal.

From January to July 2014, our Consortium worked on the design stage with Pobal and Centre for Effective Services (CES), who were engaged by the co-funders to manage the funding and programme support of the ABC programme. In July 2014, the following documentation were submitted to CES and Pobal for review and approved in September 2014:

- ABC Area Logic Model
- ABC Implementation Plan
- Revised Budget

Following the submission of further documentation and a process of due diligence by Pobal, the grant agreement was ratified by both NCI’s Governing Body and ELI’s Review Board and returned to Pobal on the 5th December. The Pre-Payment Conditions in relation to the Apportionment Policy and Implementation Plan were met and the first payment was received on 23rd December 2014. It was agreed with Pobal to backdate the expenditure to 8th September 2014. Implementation began in

January 2015. Further details on implementation from January 2015 to June 2017 can be found in the End-of-Year Reports 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17 respectively.

There was continuous engagement with Pobal and CES on Governance, Implementation and Evaluation in 2017/18, including:

- Returns; Drawdown Requests and Governance Reports were submitted to Pobal twice annually in January and June. Change of budget requests were sent in December.
- Attended the ABC National Evaluation Group Meeting in September 2017 and May 2018, where summaries of the emerging findings and learning from the national evaluation were presented and discussed.
- Information on the additional funding required to extend the ABC Programme until December 2018 was sent to Pobal. No new programme activity or expansion will be funded in 2018 and as such, only existing approved programmes can be included in our budget.
- Funding for the ABC Programme has been secured until the end of December 2018.

Discussions were ongoing with the DCYA through the ABC Managers Forum re: future of the ABC Programme with Tusla's Partnership, Prevention and Family Support Section identified as the future home of the ABC Programme. From September 1st 2018, the ABC Programme will move from Pobal and CES into Tusla, the Child and Family Agency with a working group established to oversee the transitional arrangements and to advise on the planning, implementation and development of a community based prevention and early intervention programme, within Tusla, from 2019. The Government and the DCYA intends to utilise the learnings emerging from the findings of the ABC National Evaluation to inform the design of prevention and early intervention initiatives that comprehend the Programme for Government commitments.

Our consortium is represented on the ABC Managers' Forum; Early Years Mentors Forum; Maternity Hospitals, Learning Community and Evaluation Groups. In addition, we have liaised with other ABC sites on programme design and implementation.

The ABC Learning Community Review took place on the 11th June and will as part of its agenda explore the Vision of a new programme and following on from that what / how would we be able to evaluate or measure outcomes relating to that vision.

The review of the existing Community Mothers Programme in Dublin, which commenced in 2017, is continuing with a draft report presented to existing Community Mothers sites on 21st November 2017 for amendments. Work continues on the final document, which will be presented to the Health Service Executive (HSE), Tusla and other stakeholders. The outlook is positive with overarching findings showing that the programme has huge potential to support families in the early days of parenting. ELI continues to support the coordinators of the remaining programme sites with agreement from Nurture, DCYA, HSE and Tusla.

9.2 ABC Consortium

As the lead organisation, NCI has responsibility for the financial, management, contractual, reporting and governance requirements of the Docklands and East Inner City ABC Programme. Each member of the consortium is jointly responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating the project.

Representatives of each member of the consortium at management level met three times last year in September, January and June to discuss and agree the overall direction of the project and the implementation plans. On average, eight representatives, excluding ELI, attended these meetings. Average attendance at consortium meeting was lower than in previous years with highest attendance in September 2017 (N=10). There were several reasons for this, including workload, numbers of

meetings people are expected to attend along with the expectation that the ABC Programme was ending and there were no real decisions to be made. Follow-up individual meetings were held with those who could not attend. Members of the Consortium also received regular e-mails throughout the year informing them of all developments.

Twenty-one end-of-year evaluation forms were completed by primary school principals (N=10) and managers of early years services (N=4), afterschool's and youth services (N=7). All felt supported by and felt listened to by ELI staff. The support visits by ELI staff were useful in improving the quality of the practice, while ELI programmes met the learning needs of the children and supported parental involvement.

Comments were positive overall. Some examples are included below:

- *“We have really enjoyed the programmes you have provided this year. The older children really enjoyed the Financial Literacy and would love further programmes like this one.”*
- *“I would not change anything.”*
- *“We took part in Restorative Practice training. It was excellent. More of the same in 2018”*
- *“We had a fantastic experience working with the Early Learning Initiative. We would change very little. The workers have been great support and everybody has enjoyed working together”*
- *The onsite visits really help as we usually can't go to meetings in NCI. It's great to get the supports in the service*
- *The supports we receive through the programme is fantastic. Although we incorporate numeracy in our planning, it supports us in ensuring that it (numeracy) is kept fresh and relevant for the children*
- *RP has helped me as a manager to nourish the relationships with staff*
- *Our setting felt supported by the NCI team, we are looking forward to more mentoring by new coordinator and the rest of the ELI team in the future*

Some suggestions provided by managers going forward included the provision of Coding Club training to youth workers; the provision of more STEM-oriented programmes; continued staff mentoring (new staff and old) and additional training along with *a focus on disseminating feedback from the various research projects conducted over the last number of years*

Table 8 presents a list of organisations who have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and are members of the Consortium.

Table 8. Organisations - Members of Consortium who have Signed the MOU

Areas	Organisation	Lead Person	
Ringsend	Ringsend and District Community Crèche	Marian	Allen
	St Patrick's Boys National School	Robin	Booth
	St Patrick's Girls National School	Martin	Lynch
	Ringsend and Irishtown Health Centre	Marlene	Lally
North Wall	After School Educational Support Programme	Geraldine	Brennan
	St Laurence O'Toole's CBS	Mark	Candon

	North Wall CDP	Geraldine	Comerford
	St Laurence O'Toole's Girls School	Mona	Lucas
	St Laurence O'Toole's Junior Boys School	Mary	Moore
Summerhill	LYCS	Sarah	Kelleher
	Ozanam House Resource Centre	Tony	Rock
	O'Connell's CBS	Patsy	O'Keefe
	Central Model JNS	Anne-Marie	Connolly
	Central Model SNS	Anne-Marie	Connolly
	Community After School Project (CASPr)	Ann	Carroll
	Holy Child Preschool	Mark	Shinnick
	North Strand Health Centre	Ann Marie	Coyle
	HSE PHN Summerhill	Jillian	Deady
	Rutland St National School	Niamh	Murray
	HAY Garda Youth Diversion Project	Jessica	Murphy
	Hill Street Family Resource Centre	Eileen	Smith
East Wall	Daisy Days Community Crèche	Eva	Dillon
	St Joseph's NS	Ellie	Kennedy
	East Wall Health Centre	Emer	Hosford
	NABCO - Island Key	Emma	Reilly
	St Mary's NS, Fairview	Eibhlin	McGarry
City Quay	City Quay National School	Richie	Hoban
	St Andrews Resource Centre Crèche	Martina	Mc Kenna
	Fledglings St. Mary's Crèche	Karen	Weafer
	Pearse Street Health Centre	Finola	Moyne
	Scoil Catriona, Baggot St	Siobhan	Weekes
South City	Charlemont Regeneration Board	Trish	Brennan
Voluntary & statutory agencies who work across the areas	Early Learning Initiative	Josephine	Bleach
	Dublin City Libraries	Mark	French Mullan
	Tusla – Northside	Teresa	Nyland
	Tusla - Southside	Maria	Hayes

The following organisations (Table 9) are aware and supportive of the Docklands and East Inner City ABC Programme:

Table 9. Organisations Aware & Supportive of the Docklands and East Inner City ABC Programme

Organisation	Lead person	
Area Manager, HSE, Dublin North City	Des	O' Flynn
Acting General Manager, HSE, Dublin North City	Michelle	Forde*
Primary Care Unit - HSE, Dublin South Central	Gillian	Farrelly
Integrated Service Area Manager, HSE, Dublin S. Central	David	Tully*
Primary and Community Operations Manager - HSE, DSC	Ellen	O'Dea
Director of Public Health Nursing - HSE, Lord Edward St	Joan	Bourke
Director of Public Health Nursing - HSE, Cherry Orchard	Frances	McHugh
Child Protection, Garda Siochana, Store Street, Dublin 1	Sharon (Insp)	Kennedy
Child Protection, Garda Siochana, Pearse Street, Dublin 2	Fionnuala (Insp)	Olohan
Restorative Practice, Garda Siochana, Store Street, Dublin 1	Martin	Moloney
Restorative Practice, Garda Siochana, Pearse Street, Dublin 2	Bronagh	McArdle
Children's Services Committee - Northside	Linda	Creamer *
Children's Services Committee - Southside	Doreen	McGowan*
National Maternity Hospital, Holles St	Ciara	Mc Kenna
Rotunda Hospital	Fiona	Hanrahan
YPAR - Northside	Pat	Gates

* Signed MOU for Tusla and PHNs

9.3 Key Project Activities

- Implement the following evidenced based programmes:
 - 0-2 ABC Programme (PHN service & Home Visiting) Section 9.2, p 82
 - Parent Child Home Programme (18months - 3 years) Section 9.1, p 59
 - Early Numeracy Programme (0-6 years) Section 10.1 p. 90
 - Zoom Ahead with Books (4-6 years) Section 10.3, p 114
 - Doodle Den (5-6 years) Section 10.4, p 120
 - Restorative Practice (6-12 years) Section 12, p 153
- Enhance and sustain the existing interagency collaboration within the area through engaging with the new agencies and structures e.g. Children Services Committees; Tulsa Child and Family Support Agency; HSE; Meitheal Practice Model
- Implement fully the Meitheal Practice Model and integrated service delivery in early years' services, primary schools and after school services.
- The Restorative Practice approach is being used in schools and youth projects in the North Inner City.

9.4 ABC National Evaluation

As an ABC site, we are part of a National Evaluation of the ABC project, which is being managed by the Centre for Effective Services (CES). ELI have an active role in the evaluation process, both through the National Evaluation Group and the ABC Managers' Forum. While this year was our third year of participation in the ABC National Evaluation, no data was collected this year for CES with the time being spent analysing the 2014-17 data collected and preparing the findings for key stakeholders and the Final Reports.

The section below presents a summary of our engagement with the ABC National Evaluation in 2017/18 and the progress across the three strands in the evaluation to date.

1. Assess the achievement of outcomes

a. Assessment of Children aged 3 and over

Three of our ABC programmes were evaluated under this strand:

- Early Numeracy Programme
- CPD & Mentoring Programme
- Zoom Ahead with Books

Data collection for this strand took place across both the 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic year. A summary of data collection by ELI is presented in both of these ELI End-of-Year Reports.

The Evaluation Report is currently being prepared by CES with it due to be finalised in early July. The draft findings were very positive in relation to outcomes for children and parents. Area-level outcomes, a revised tool to aid data collection along with additional support around using outcomes data will be available when the report is finalised.

Draft Interim Area-Level Report of the National Evaluation of the ABC Programme was received from CES, which reported indicated positive outcomes in our area as a result of the ABC Programmes above with improved school readiness in terms of social and emotional development, language development and approaches towards learning along with improvements in the home learning environment.

b. Assessment of Children aged 0-3 years

This strand of the evaluation was conducted by Early Years, the organisation for young children and was being led by Dr Clionagh Boyle in partnership with Dr Katrina Collins, an independent researcher.

There are three strands to the evaluation with different types of interventions included under each:

- Outcomes- both our home visiting programmes (0-2 home visiting programme and PCHP programme) and professional development intervention (CPD) are being included under this strand.
- Implementation- both home visiting programmes and professional development intervention are being included under this strand.
- Oral Language Interventions- none of our programmes are being included under this strand.

Data collection for this strand took place in 2016/17. The research team are currently working on the report with it due to be completed by the end of summer 2018.

2. Explore issues of implementation

As part of the implementation strand, CES contacted all ABC Consortium members and Practitioners involved in implementing ABC programmes asking them to take part. Surveys were distributed in 2016/17 for completion and interviews were conducted with lead agencies, groups of active consortium members, groups of less active consortium members and focus groups of practitioners.

The Evaluation Report is currently being prepared by CES with it due to be finalised in early July. Draft findings are positive with evidence indicating that the ABC Programme contributed to positive changes in local models of service provision, use of evidence and data; interagency work and strategic service planning and delivery. However, many of the enablers of change such programme design, communication, leadership, relationships and other initiatives were also identified as barriers to change.

3. Conduct cost analysis

While financial returns and programme figures continue to be returned to Pobal on a six monthly reporting cycle, CES has completed a cost analysis on the total spend by ABC areas, overall service delivery and service delivery by outcome area from 2015-17. This strand has continued into 2017/18 with financial returns submitted to Pobal in December and July.

Section C: Individual Programme Reports

Section C provides detailed reports on each of ELI's programmes under the following headings, which are aligned to ELI's vision, mission and objectives:

Home Visiting and Parent Support Programmes promote positive learning interactions between parents/guardians and their children and help parents/guardians and extended family develop the understanding, skills and knowledge needed to support their children's developmental, educational and life journeys.

Literacies Programmes partners parents, services and schools to develop children's social, language and thinking skills from an early age; thereby, ensuring that the children and young people in the area develop the skills needed to achieve their educational, career and life goals.

Restorative Practice (RP) Programmes enables families, services and communities to create positive interpersonal relationships, resolve conflict, and repair damaged relationships.

Educational Guidance supports young people, parents and communities' understanding of the education system and the impact of certain decisions such as subject choices on young people's ability to access further education and career opportunities.

10 ABC 0-2 Home Visiting and Parent Programme

The 0-2 Years Programme is now in its third of programme delivery as part of the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme with 69 families taking part this year. In 2017, we reached the milestone of engaging with over 100 families since the start of the programme in 2014 and the ABC 0-2 Programme was a finalist in the Irish Healthcare Centre Awards 2018.

The programme aims to improve the long-term developmental outcomes for children from pre-birth to two years of age through a universal Home Visiting and Community Support Programme. It is a universal programme whereby it is open to all families within our catchment area. The families that enrolled in the programme are from all 'walks of life' with many different ethnic groups. The location of our home visits, e.g. apartments, flats complex, direct provision and emergency accommodation reflects this diversity. This section reviews the ABC O-2 Programme for 2017/18 and outlines our plans for 2018/19.

Objectives:

- To improve wellbeing, developmental and learning outcomes for children (zero to two years), including offering one to one baby massage sessions to the families as part of five weeks of the programme. All home visitors are now trained infant massage instructors.
- To increase parental skills, knowledge and engagement in all areas of their children's (zero to two years) development, and learning
- To ensure effective transitions for children (zero to two years) at key developmental stages and between home, hospital, early years, statutory & community services
- To continue to improve the quality of the services (statutory, community and voluntary) provided to children (zero to two years) and their families
- To enhance and develop the existing interagency collaboration within the area and co-facilitating community support groups with other agencies to support specific family's needs
- To enable children (zero to two years) and their families to experience a safe, secure, stable, caring, holistic, learning and restorative environment at home, in services (statutory, community and voluntary) and throughout the community.

This programme receives support and guidance from many professional services within the area including Family Resource Centres, Tusla Family Support Services, Health Centres, Public Health Nurses, homeless services, social workers and Maternity Hospitals. There were two working groups in 2017/18 to discuss and plan programme provision. Meetings were also held with representatives of the Community Mothers Programmes (on which the 0-2 Programme is based) in Dublin, Clonmel, Nenagh and Limerick on a regular basis. A retired Public Health Nurse, who coordinated the Community Mothers Programme previously in Bray, attended the 0-2 Supervision once a month as a mentor support for both the Coordinator and Home Visitors. She is also involved with the provision of training for Home Visitors.

10.1 ABC 0-2 Home Visiting Programme

Catering for parents/guardians with children from pre-birth to two years of age, Home Visitors work with the family to strengthen the parents' skills and self-esteem; thereby enabling them to believe in their own capabilities and skills when parenting. It employs a non-directive approach and encourages the parent as the child's first and best teacher. The official HSE publications for this age group are used during home visits.

The programme takes place in the child's own home at a time that suits the parents/guardians:

- One visit per week, each visit will last about one hour (for the first three months)
- One visit per month, each visit will last about one hour (up to till the child is eighteen months)

Exceptions have been made for some families by using space in libraries, community centres etc. to hold "home from home visits" as the current living situations for some families are not suitable to hold home visits.

A Christmas event was held in the National College of Ireland where activities were provided for children to explore in addition to a chance to meet Santa and Mrs Claus. This event was open to all families taking part in the Home Visiting programme with 21 families attending this event.

Attendance

69 children and their families were involved in the ABC 0-2 Home Visiting Programme from July 2017 to June 2018. The majority of families received one visit per week with a total of 614 visits across the year. A number of families will continue with the programme over the summer months or into the next academic year with some children transferring to the Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) or engaging in Community Parent Support Groups.

Parental Feedback

25 families completed the programme in 2017-2018 and were asked to fill in an exit evaluation to provide feedback on their experience of the ABC 0-2 programme. Of the parents who completed these evaluations, 100% (N=9) felt that participating in the ABC 0-2 programme benefitted them.

When asked in what way the programme benefitted them, comments included:

- *"Yes I think it was good for my child with his communication and having another adult in the home. He really seemed to enjoy the visits."*
- *"I found it very supportive as a new mum to have the home visitor. Especially since I have no family around. I learned a lot and could ask questions and we got some great toys and books"*
- *"How to keep calm, got to enjoy my child's different stages of his development. Got great breastfeeding advice, done lots of activities and floor time and when he was asleep, the home visitor was a great support for me. I was able to have great conversations with her and often got to offload to her about my motherly concerns and other things"*
- *"It helped my child with social skills, reinforced motor skills. It also helped me as a mother. It was good to have somebody to speak to weekly, to check in and feel supported. Thank you!"*

Parents were also asked if participating in the 0-2 Programme benefitted their child. Of the parents who responded to this question (N=7), 100% felt that it did. When asked to comment on the ways in which the programme benefitted their child, responses included the following comments:

- *“The toys and play shown/given to her encouraged her motor development”*
- *“He has met all his milestones and more”*
- *“He got to enjoy the home visitor’s activities and opened him up to his social skills. He walked very quickly (8 months) and he was very advanced for his age”*
- *“I think it was good for him to get to know another person. He formed a good relationship with the home visitor and he loved the singing and the new books and toys”*
- *“Helped my child with social skills, supported her verbal/motor skills development”*
- *“Enhanced the learning from Toddler Group”*

Parents were also asked what they had learned from participating in the programme. Comments in response to this question mainly centred on learning about the different stages of child development and about the tips received around supporting their baby during these stages of growth e.g. in relation to sleeping, feeding, teething. When asked if they would recommend the programme to a friend, six parents responded that they would (three parents did not respond to this question).

Parents who are continuing to participate in the 0-2 Programme were asked to complete mid-programme evaluation forms in order to gain feedback on their experiences of the programme so far. Of the parents who complete mid-programme evaluation forms, 100% (N=15) reported that they are finding the programme useful, are feeling supported by their Home Visitor and that they had learned new approaches and ideas from their Home Visitor that they now use themselves. All parents (N=15) reported that they would recommend the programme to a friend.

When asked to comment on what they had specifically learned, responses included:

- *“Baby massage, bedtime routine, weaning tips, age-appropriate play ideas”*
- *“I’ve learned to encourage my child to eat solid foods and for him to do belly time so he can strengthen his belly muscles and also to let him enjoy being messy as I had a habit of cleaning him every time he did a mess”*
- *“Talk to your child. Singing to your child”*
- *“Massage, play space, story time, mammy time”*

Parents were also asked what they thought was working well about the Programme. Comments included:

- *“Mainly everything is going really well and I enjoy the new learning abilities and new tricks that I can now teach to my child”*
- *“[My child] loves the Home Visitor and I like that when she sees her she feels happy”*
- *“I loved that the visits were baby, parent-led which resulted in a lovely relaxed atmosphere during each session and made me feel confident in my own ability”*
- *“I really love my chats with the Home Visitor and the quality time with my son without my other family members hovering over me”*
- *“The relationship between my Home Visitor and baby. He feels comfortable and relaxed around her”*

Programme Outline 2018-19

The 0-2 Home Visiting Programme will continue in 2018-19 with training provided to the Home Visitors over the summer months to ensure all the information they deliver is aligned with HSE materials and up-to-date. Due to demand for the ABC 0-2 Programme, the Programme team will be expanded with a new cohort of Home Visitors being trained to deliver the programme from September 2018. The focus for the coming year is to promote creativity and the arts for the very young. All 0-2 Home Visitors will take part in training courses provided by Dublin City Council Arts Office in order to build their capacity as Home Visitors and group facilitators. Both the Coordinator and Home Visitors will continue to work towards achieving Early Childhood Education qualifications from Level 5-10.

10.2 ABC 0-2 Community Parent Support Programme

The ABC 0-2 Parent Support Programme, now in its third year, was developed and piloted in collaboration with local parents and professionals. It has a dual purpose of supporting parental involvement in their children's learning as well as providing an introduction to the other supports available in the area. All the sessions are based on best practice from the following: *Aistear*, *The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (NCCA 2000), *Síolta the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education* (CECDE 2006), *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide* (2015) *Parents Together Community Course* (Parents Plus & NCI 2008) and *Parent Child Home Programme* (PCHP).

Using carefully chosen resources laid out in an inviting manner, in particular toys, books and rhymes, the Community Support Programme give parents the opportunity to:

- Play with their babies/toddlers (zero to three years old) in a stimulating environment
- Learn more about developing their children's learning through play
- Meet and learn from other parents of young children
- Access services in the area

Programme Delivery

While parents are encouraged to attend various parenting and parent support groups running in the community, the following are available through the ABC 0-2 Programme:

- Storytelling Sessions in Pearse St Library
- Parent- Toddler group in Mark's Lane Primary Care Centre
- Toddler Group within Homeless Accommodation
- Mam and Baby Fitness Class St Lawrence O'Toole CBS and St Andrew's Family Resource Centre

The number of Community Parent Support Groups offered this year continued to grow to having at least one group per day with approximately 173 children and their families engaged across nine groups.

Pearse St Library

Now in its fifth year, the storytelling sessions in Pearse St Library continued this year with an average of nineteen families attending each month. Many of the families in attendance also received Home Visits through either the ABC 0-2 or PCHP programme.

Mark's Lane Primary Care Centre

Parent- Toddler Group in Mark's Lane Primary Care Centre has been running successfully since 2015 with an average attendance of 21 families each month. It was noticeable over the last year that parents were returning to the group with consecutive children. Each session includes a short talk on how parents can help their children develop their social, language and thinking skills as well as

promoting their well-being and involvement. During the play session, ABC 0-2 Home Visitors model talking, playing and reading with the children. They are also available to chat to parents and discuss any queries they may have.

Homeless Accommodation

Our partnership with the Foundations Project provides targeted Parent and Toddler groups for families in homeless accommodation. This toddler group gave the children living in the accommodation a safe space to move and play safely. Activities focused on encouraging tummy time and crawling with each session concluding with actions songs and rhymes. This year, there were two such Parent - Toddler Groups running in two different Homeless accommodations with an average attendance of four families per month. The numbers are small as attendance is confined to those living in the accommodation.

Mam and Baby Fitness Classes

Through our consultations with parents, the need to look after their mental health and well-being was highlighted with a suggestion from one family was to run Mam and Baby Fitness Classes. This began on a trial basis in February 2018 with a trained fitness instructor and an Early Learning Initiative staff member co-facilitating the group. The fitness instructor worked with the parents while the ELI staff member offered play opportunities to the children. There was an average attendance of nine families per week. This group was such a success that it now running in two venues two days per week, with some families attending both venues. We attempted to provide a similar group for Dads in partnership with Dublin City Council, which ran for three weeks in St Laurence O'Toole Recreation Centre. However, no one attended, despite widespread advertising. Over the summer, the Home Visitors are spending time planning a Dad programme, which we hope to trial in 2018/19.

Parent-Toddler Group in Charleville Mall, Library

Over the past year, the Parent and Toddler Group in Charleville Mall Library has taken place each Friday morning. Through encouragement for the librarians, attendance numbers have steadily grown throughout the year. This group was given the opportunity to take part in group musical workshops in conjunction with Dublin's Culture Connects. Due to the popularity of this morning group, plans are being put in place to start an afternoon parent and toddler group in Charleville Mall in 2018/19.

Infant Massage

Infant Massage, which began in 2016, continued as part of the ABC 0-2 weekly Home Visits. There was one Infant Massage group in October 2017 in East Wall and after the five weeks of classes, two families availed of the ABC 0-2 Home Visiting Programme and some joined our Mam and Baby Fitness Class. Due to disruptions caused by Storm Ophelia, no evaluation forms were from parents taking part in these classes. Some ABC 0-2 Home Visitors co-facilitated Infant Massage sessions with local Public Health Nurses in an existing Parent and Baby Group in the North East Inner City. Additional Home Visitor training in the infant massage strokes took place during September 2017. In addition, one local Public Health Nurse trained in Infant Massage during summer 2017.

Programme Evaluation

Feedback from the story telling sessions in Pearse St Library, toddler groups at Mark's Lane, within homeless accommodation and Mam and Baby Fitness was very positive. Of those who completed evaluation forms, all (100% N=31) reported that these group sessions supported them in developing their child's social, language and thinking skills in addition to supporting their own well-being and involvement with their child. They also reported that they enjoyed the group and were glad they attended and in addition to feeling supported by the group facilitator.

When asked if they have learnt any new approaches or ideas all parents reported they had with comments on what they had learnt including:

- *“The importance of play. Aware of how my child will develop and what to expect from them. I have gained great deal of confidence thanks to the facilitators”*
- *“A lot of things about how to talk with my child and how to improve the language skills”*
- *“I have gained confidence in playing and understanding my granddaughter’s needs”*
- *“Some new rhymes/songs, book ideas and toy ideas”*
- *“The benefits of singing, how it calms the child. The importance of play”*
- *“The importance of socialization, independent play, the importance of repetitive nursery rhymes. I also learned the importance of me meeting other parents. Nice information leaflets on health and safety, play ideas and on educational facilities”*
- *“Sharing ideas on development milestones”*

When asked to comment on what worked well comments from the parents included:

- *“Have a nice place to go every week and meet new people”*
- *“Love the colourful rug in the centre, works better than separate play areas”*
- *“I am very supported by the staff. I feel I can ask any question regarding my granddaughter without feeling embarrassed or inadequate”*
- *“My baby learnt to be social with others and sharing habit has been improved”*
- *“It’s a very relaxing group where we actually have some time to sit and talk, because the room is safe for the babies. Toys are clean and organised”*
- *“Think the mixture of stories, songs and the play at the end keeps the children involved to the end”*
- *“Mixture of stories and songs, often intertwined. Description of stories goes beyond just the words that are written (it has also encouraged me to do same at home)”*
- *“It is a very welcoming environment. Songs and knowing the children’s names and stories”*

Programme Outline 2018-19

The ABC 0-2 Community Parent Support Programme will be similar in format to 2017/18 with a mix of existing groups and events in NCI with lots of exciting opportunities for creative play and active learning. As the programme has grown so much, a new coordinator to manage the Parent Support Programme, including groups, will be appointed.

10.3 Home from Home 0-3 Summer Programme

The Summer Programme ran over five weeks with a mix of newly established and existing community support groups; some Northside with funding from the NEIC Home from Home Learning Space Programme and some Southside with funding the Docklands and East Inner City ABC Programme. Parents were encouraged to drop into all or just some of the groups and activities. Home Visitors were available to walk families to venues, which the parents were unfamiliar with or not confident in visiting. Vulnerable isolated parents were prioritised for this support.

Programme Delivery

In total, 126 families attended one or more sessions over the summer with 90 attending one or more of the groups and 34 attending the ‘Out and About with ELI and/or the Messy Play session in NCI. The timetable and attendance for the Parent Support Groups was as follows:

Table 10. Timetable and Attendance for the Parent Support Groups

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Wednesday
<p>Toddler Group National College of Ireland 10.30 am - 12 pm</p> <p>✓ 22 Family over 4 Sessions ✓ 5 families attended 2 or more sessions ✓ 9 Families currently or previously on 0-2 or PCHP</p>	<p>Story Telling Pearse Street Library 10.30 am - 11.45 am</p> <p>✓ 30 Families Attended over 4 sessions ✓ 12 Families attended 2 or more ✓ 3 families are currently previously on PCHP programme</p>	<p>Toddler Group Marks Lane Pearse Street Primary Care Centre 10 am - 11.30 am</p> <p>✓ 25 families attended over 5 sessions ✓ 10 families attended more than 2 sessions ✓ 4 currently or past 0-2 or PCHP programme</p>	<p>Activity Morning Charleville Mall Library 10.30 am – 12 pm</p> <p>✓ 13 families over 4 sessions ✓ 4 families attended 2 or more ✓ 4 families on 0-2 or PCHP</p>

Out and About with ELI

On Thursdays and Fridays, families were supported to explore their community with a trip to a city farm; Natural History Museum in addition to participating in local community activities, including the Liberty Park Teddy Bears Picnic, (Foley Street, 3rd July) and South Dock Festival Teddy Bear Picnic (Pearse Square, 20th July). Overall, 22 children attending these Out and About Sessions, with an extra fourteen attending the Messy Play/Creative Event in NCI. Eight children attended two or more sessions and twelve families were either currently or previously on the ABC 0-2 or PCHP programme.

Table 11. Timetable and Attendance at Out and About with ELI Events

<p>Sports and Fun Spencer Dock Park 10.30 am - 12 pm 7th July</p> <p>11 families attended</p>	<p>Visit to Child Vision City Farm Meet at Ballybough Community Centre 10.30 am – 1 pm 14th July</p> <p>19 families attended</p>	<p>Visit the Animal Museum and Merrion Square Meet at Pearse St. Library 10.30 am - 12.00 pm 11th August</p> <p>8 families attended</p>	<p>Messy Play in NCI 10.30 am - 12.00 pm 18th August</p> <p>36 families attended</p>
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Programme Evaluation

Although no direct parent evaluations were completed, Coordinator and Home Visitor Feedback are summarised below:

What worked well as part of the summer programme?

- “Families really enjoyed the events with both fathers and mothers attending”
- “The summer was a great opportunity to support vulnerable families who otherwise may have had no support during the summer months.”
- “The out and about activities were particularly beneficial for homeless families and those living in apartments.”

- *“It was a great support to isolated parents; helped to get them out of their accommodation and make friends with other parents”*
- *“The home visitors were a huge help – particularly encouraging their families to come along.”*
- *“Attendance stayed steady on the weeks, with a number of families attending events on both the north and south of the city.”*
- *“Our home visitors met families in different locations e.g. at homeless accommodation, library and NCI to walk to the venue. This encouraged more families that are not familiar with the area to come along.”*

What impact did the summer programme have on the children and families involved?

- *“We had a wide range of families taking part”*
- *“Older siblings came along to events also which supported the younger children’s play.”*
- *“The summer programme helped families to get to know the amenities the area.”*
- *“Helps to build supports within and between the families”*
- *“Friendships were formed between parents, which led to them doing other activities together e.g. going to the park; for coffee etc. These parents may have lived in the same apartment complex, were aware of the other parents but did not have the self-confidence to introduce themselves. The events and activities gave them the opportunity to chat informally; get to know each other and become friends.”*
- *“One of the mums who I visit suffers with anxiety and she finds it particularly stressful to venture out on her own. She is highly isolated and has no family support so it was great that I could invite her to these events to get her out of the house. She seemed to enjoy talking to the other mums & dads at the summer events.”*
- *“Another one of my mums said she was going to find it difficult without the routine of her visits during the summer and she was worried about having all 5 of her children off school every day. It was nice to be able to invite her along to the summer events also.”*

What would we do differently next year?

- *“Advertise the events earlier so to target more families.”*
- *“Maybe a few family days, that parents can come with older children and babies.”*
- *“Advertise our events more.”*
- *“Put the notices up on poles rather than in shops, as people do not read notices in shops.”*
- *“Better cater for those with older siblings to come along and join in the activities.”*
- *“Start the summer programme earlier in June so that parents get into the routine of coming before the school term ends.”*

Programme Outline 2018-19

The 2018 Summer Programme will be similar in format to 2017 with a mix of existing groups; events in NCI and visits to local amenities and many exciting opportunities for creative play and active learning.

11 Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP)

Originally from the US, the Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) is an innovative, home-based literacy and parenting programme that strengthens families and prepares children to succeed academically. Home Visitors model oral language, reading and play in their twice weekly visits over a 92-visit period. The families then continue the activities in their own time, thereby enabling the PCHP child and his/her siblings to develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills.

A fundamental element of ELI's Vision is to bring PCHP to other disadvantaged communities/ sites within Greater Dublin and across Ireland. This ambition is one of 'cautious expansion' with all new areas requiring a suitable community-based partner organisation that has the need, commitment and funding required to sustain PCHP in the long-term. In addition, this expansion will not deflect any of ELI's attention to maintaining the quality and impact of its programmes in the Docklands and Inner City. Where funding and local community partners are identified, ELI will work to support these communities to deliver PCHP.

Short-term targets:

- To continue the existing programme with families in the Dublin Docklands
- To support the development of existing Home Visitors by having Level 5 training as their minimum qualification
- To support the development of new PCHP sites: Garryowen, Limerick; Daughters of Charity/DIT Grangegorman; Family Matters, Ballyfermot and Ballinasloe, Galway
- To continue the use of learning activities between parents and the children in their own time
- To improve children's oral language, literacy, and numeracy skills

Medium-term targets:

- To continue the training of Home Visitors, and offer home visits to more families
- To offer ongoing support and development of new PCHP sites
- To develop oral language, literacy, and numeracy skills of children in the Dublin Docklands in a way that they will be respective to the national norms at school entry
- To provide parents with a better understanding of their children's development in oral language, literacy and numeracy in order to be able to monitor and support their children's progress
- To improve parenting strategies, parents' personal skills and enhance their involvement in their children's learning

Long-term targets:

- To increase parental awareness and engagement in children's education
- To improve educational outcomes for children in the long-term

PCHP Areas

At present, PCHP is being delivered in seven areas, all of which receive training and support from ELI. The number of families involved in each area vary, depending on the funding and the developmental stage of each area (Table 10). Start-up areas take at least 5 years, depending on the capacity of and resources available to the local partners to reach Level 4: Full Implementation and be fully operational.

Level 1: Getting Started – Exploring and Preparing	1
Level 2: Starting Implementation – Experimenting, Planning and Resourcing	4
Level 3: Partial Implementation – Implementing, Operationalising and Evaluating	1
Level 4: Full Implementation – Business as Usual	1

Existing PCHP areas are

- Docklands and East Inner City Dublin by ABC/ELI (2007-2018)
- Bluebell and Crumlin by Dublin South City Partnership (previously Canal Communities Partnership) (2009-2018)
- Finglas by the Pavee Point and the Traveller Community (2014-2018)
- North West Inner City Dublin by Daughters of Charity and DIT Grangegorman ABC Programme (2014 – 2018)
- Ballinasloe by Galway Education Centre and Sisters of Mercy (2015-2018)
- Limerick by Garryowen Community Development Group and Paul Partnership (2015-18)
- Ballyfermot by ABC Family Matters and Ballyfermot Tolka Partnership (2017-2018)

Table 12. PCHP Family Participation across Areas

PCHP Area	Apr-17	Jun-18
Docklands and East Inner City	128	155
Traveller Community Finglas & Pavee Point	10	4
ABC Grangegorman	5	14
South Inner City Partnership	19	19
Garryowen, Limerick	12	34
Ballinasloe, Galway	7	14
Ballyfermot	0	2
Total	181	242

With the roll out of PCHP nationally across different communities, the different developmental trends across communities are interesting. However, as it is not clear whether this is due to stage of development or the varying numbers, ages and developmental profiles across cohorts, these findings are not presented in this report. Section 1 gives a detailed report of PCHP areas, which are managed by ELI and whose Home Visitors are employed directly by NCI and use the CRM system. The majority of these families are living in Dublin1. Summaries of the development of PCHP in each area are presented in Section 2 under PCHP National. It is important to note that each of these areas are at very different stages and it is not possible to make comparisons between areas.

11.1 Dublin Docklands and East Inner City (ELI/ABC)

This section focuses on those areas, which are being delivered directly through ELI; where Home Visitors are employed by NCI and are on the CRM system. CRM data on the families across the Dublin's East Inner City, including the Chinese families, Pavee Point (Travelling Community in Finglas – see section 9.1.3 for more details) and Grangegorman ABC Programme (DIT/Daughters of Charity – see section 9.1.4 for more details) are included in this section. It is hoped to add PCHP Limerick (see section 9.1.6 for more details), PCHP Galway (see section 9.1.5 for more details) and PCHP (Ballyfermot) to the CRM system in 2018/19 so that we have better oversight of their outcomes for children and parents.

11.1.1 Recruitment, Retention and Attendance

There were changes in the recruitment process in 2016/17. It was decided to recruit families with children as young as sixteen months in order to ensure that they have the required number of visits before the free preschool year starts. Enrolment is operating on a rolling basis rather than just one intake per year and families are encouraged to continue with and complete PCHP if the child starts preschool/ crèche. These changes have been implemented for over a year and are working well with

retention rates improving. It seems the new system is meeting the needs of families and that more children may now get the full dosage and benefit of the programme.

However, between September 2017 and June 2018 several homeless families left the programme due to difficulties keeping up with their visits, being moved to alternative emergency accommodation or being moved to permanent housing. Home Visitors have noted various challenges in working with homeless families, such as a lack of space to play, social isolation and the psychological effects of homelessness. In an effort to meet the needs of homeless families and minimise the effects of homelessness on the child's development, the home visiting team are in the process of developing a condensed version of PCHP which will be called the 'Home from Home Programme'. This programme will offer supports to homeless parents who cannot meet the commitment of the full 92-visit PCHP programme. It is proposed that the programme will offer families one visit per week over a twelve-week period. Participating children will receive a range of PCHP's most beneficial books and toys throughout the programme in order to encourage their early learning and development. It is expected that the final format for the Home from Home Programme will be completed in the coming weeks.

A total of 242 children have been involved in PCHP throughout 2017 - 2018, 29 of which have left the programme. This number includes families across the Dublin East Inner City, including the Chinese families, Pavee Point (Travelling Community in Finglas – see section 9.1.3 for more details) and Grangegorman ABC Programme (DIT/Daughters of Charity – see section 9.1.4 for more details), all of which are managed and coordinated through NCI. This figure also includes families visited as part of PCHP Limerick (see section 9.1.6 for more details), PCHP Galway (see section 9.1.5 for more details) and PCHP Dublin South City Partnership, all of which receive training and support from ELI. As we have been enrolling the children in the programme from a younger age, the Free Preschool Year is no longer the main reason families withdraw from the programme. The main reasons for withdrawal were families moving out of the area or finding permanent accommodation, family illnesses and parents returning to full time employment. In total, 206 families stayed in PCHP in 2017/2018. This indicates an overall retention rate of 90%, which is significantly higher than the respective figure in 2016-2017 (73.2%). It appears that changing to rolling intakes is making a significant difference to retention rates.

During the year 2017-18 PCHP Docklands recruited 178 families who participated in the programme;

- 89 Female Children and 89 Male Children
- 171 Female Adults and 7 Male Adults

117 families are Irish and 61 are from the migrant/refugee community with 29 Chinese families (largest Cohort) and the remainder a mixture of families from – Africa (Somalia, Nigeria), Pakistan, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Eastern European, Romania, Nepal etc. Funding from the Department of Justice and Equality through the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014 - 2020 (AMIF) for PCHP ensures that migrant children will start school on a par with their peers and their parents will receive the support they need to access other services, make friends and integrate into the local community. Ten families were linked with this funding source in 2017-18 with a further ten in September 2018 and another ten in 2019, bringing the total to 30 families.

A total of 29 families dropped out of the programme this year. Of these families, twenty were in Phase 1 of the programme and nine were in Phase 2. The majority of these families were located in the Dublin Docklands site with three families dropping out of the Pavee Point site. Six families presently on the programme are in homeless accommodation with a further six families dropping out of the programme since September 2017 due to not having time to commit or moving to a different homeless hub/accommodation.

Attendance

Overall, 6,836 home visits have taken place in the Dublin Docklands area this year, a significantly higher number than last year – 5,574 home visits.

The location of home visits was spread across a number of areas in Dublin with the vast majority taking place in Dublin 1. The geographical spread of Dublin home visits by postcode can be seen at Figure 5 below.

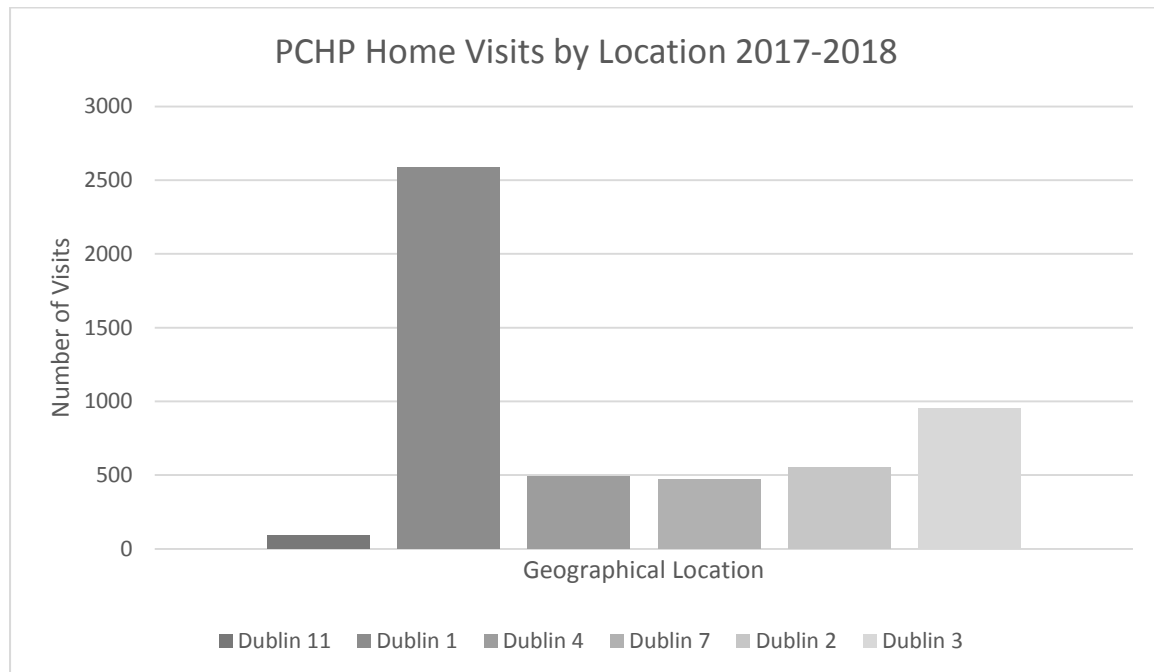


Figure 5 PCHP Dublin Docklands 2017-2018: Home Visits by Geographical Location

11.1.2 'Irish Chinese' Cohort

The Chinese community in Dublin is growing from strength to strength but so too is their need to adapt into Irish society. PCHP now employ three Chinese Home Visitors who deliver the programme in Mandarin/Cantonese. While our 'Irish Chinese' families are continuing to receive the programme Phase 1 with a Mandarin/ Cantonese Home Visitor and the Phase 2 with an Irish Home Visitor, we have taken on board feedback from parents and Home Visitors and now provide families with an option of;

- Phase 1 Mandarin/Cantonese with Chinese home Visitor and Phase 2 English with Irish Home Visitor
- Or, Phase 1 and 2 Mandarin/Cantonese with Chinese home Visitor
- Or, Phase 1 and 2 English with Irish Home Visitor

Naturally, some families responded well to the Home Visitor transition from Chinese to Irish, whereas other families struggled with the change. The rationale behind the original approach was to preserve the home language but to give the children the English they need for school. However, for some families, who only speak Mandarin/Cantonese the transition to the English language proved difficult. Factors that guide this decision process are the strength of the native language and the use of English language by the programme participant parent.

We have 23 families in the 2016-2018 child cohort from the Chinese community enrolled in the programme. Seven of these families have requested an English-speaking Home Visitor from the

beginning as they felt that it was important for their child to learn English in readiness for preschool/primary school and would be actively speaking English in the home environment already. The other 17 have started with Chinese Home Visitors who speak only Mandarin/Cantonese in the home for the first phase of the programme but will be given the option of changing to an English speaking Home Visitor half way through the cycle.

11.1.3 PCHP Programme Assessment – CBT and PACT

As discussed in more detail below, PCHP monitors the progress of children and parents taking part in the programme through the use of Child Behaviour Trait (CBT) and Parent and Child Together (PACT) assessments, together with progress notes which are now recorded through the CRM system by Home Visitors throughout the course of their visits. These assessments are delivered at four points throughout the child's participation in the programme and are intended to chart the family's progress with respect to the child's developmental trajectory and the developmental of the parent-child relationship.

In 2017-2018, some changes were made to the way in which the results of these assessments were collated and presented.

PCHP Dublin Docklands Cohort

In September 2017, a new method of collecting and collating CBT and PACT assessments was rolled out through the introduction of a Customer Relations Management (CRM) system. This system, described further at section 9.1.1.12 below, is intended to make the collection and presentation of CBT and PACT data more efficient, particularly following the introduction of rolling enrolment. The CRM database currently contains all CBT and PACT assessments for the following children in the Dublin Docklands and East Inner City areas who are currently either actively enrolled in the programme or have recently graduated in June 2018:

- Children who commenced the programme in September 2016
- Children who commenced the programme at any point in the 2017 calendar year
- Children who commenced the programme at any point in the 2018 calendar year

In order to create a larger sample size from which to explore the progress of these children, all available CBT and PACT scores in relation to the above children have been collated together. This has allowed the exploration below of the progress of all 'active' children who took part in the PCHP in 2017-2018.

It should be noted that, while this method of collectively presenting the developmental progress of PCHP children does offer the benefits mentioned above, it does also result in significant size disparities between the groups presented at each stage (i.e. CBT/PACT 1, 2, 3 and 4). This should be taken into account when interpreting the results presented below with caution. Furthermore, as 2017-2018 was the first year in which the CRM system was introduced, a number of operational and technological challenges arose around the effective implementation of this new system. This may have resulted in some minor errors with respect to data input and collation or, in some cases, occasions where data may be missing. In dealing with these challenges throughout the year, the PCHP team has achieved valuable knowledge and insight into the most effective and efficient way of leveraging the CRM system. This knowledge will be applied in using the CRM system in the coming year to further reduce these limitations and the occurrence of error.

11.1.3.1 Child Assessments

In line with the programme manual, the Child Behaviour Trait (CBT) assessment is completed by the Home Visitors in order to monitor the developmental trajectory of the children and identify areas of learning that need to be addressed. Home Visitors complete each of the four CBTs at approximately the following points throughout the child's time in the programme:

- CBT1 after the sixth visit
- CBT2 between the 44th and the 48th visit
- CBT3 between the 68th and the 72nd visit
- CBT4 between the 89th and the 92nd visit

The success criteria for the programme, as identified by the CBT, are that at the end of each programme phase (CBT 2 and CBT4):

- At least 80% of children will exhibit an increase in positive verbal interaction and behaviour
- Children will improve by at least one point on the 5-point scale or maintain a 3 (often) or a 4 (always)

In the following graphs, the percentages displayed are calculated based on the proportion of Home Visitors answering 'often' or 'always' in the CBT and PACT assessments. According to the coding scheme, children scoring 'often' (=3) or 'always' (=4) tend to meet their developmental milestones. Please note arrows on the graphs show the level which indicates that children are meeting their developmental milestones.

The percentages of children enrolled in PCHP throughout 2017-2018 meeting their developmental milestones based on the CBT assessments are presented in Figure 6. Overall, percentages of children meeting their developmental milestones have gradually increased from 29% at the beginning of the programme to 43%, 60% and, finally, 69% on completion of the programme. The percentage of children meeting their developmental milestones at CBT 4 in 2017-2018 is slightly lower than that reported last year (76%, N=50) and in 2015-2016 (83%, N=25). The size disparity between the groups should again be noted in this respect. In particular, due to the system of rolling enrolment, a number of children who commenced towards the end of the 2016 calendar year may still have a number of outstanding home visits that will need to be completed when the programme recommences in September 2018. Accordingly, CBT 4 data for these children is still outstanding, reducing the CBT 4 sample size further.

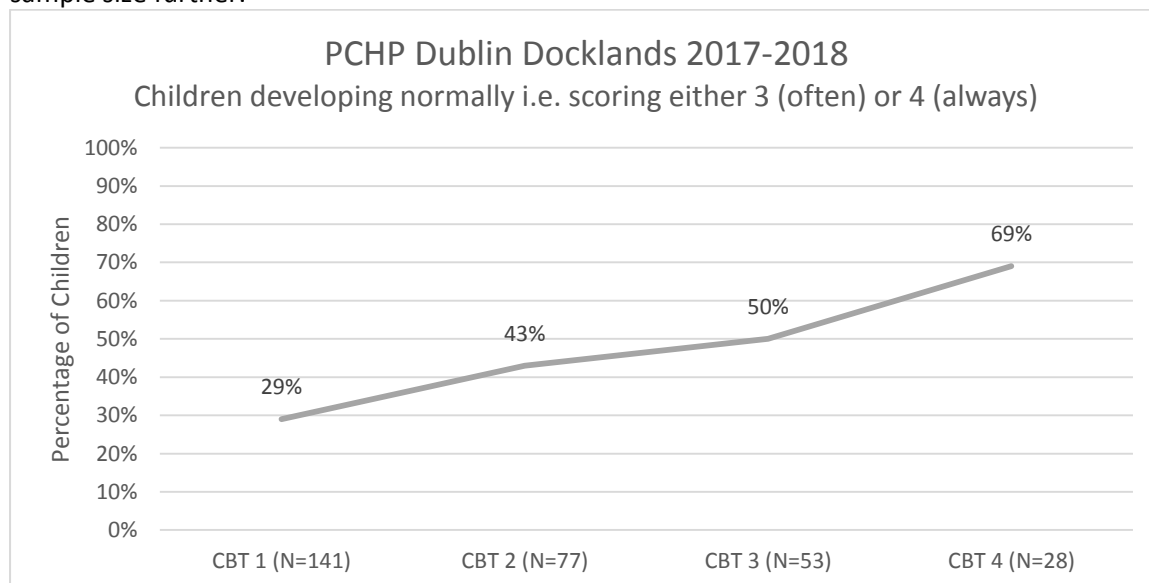


Figure 6. PCHP Dublin Docklands 2017-2018 Cohort: Percentages of Children Developing Normally i.e. scoring either 3 (often) or 4 (always)

The average CBT score of children who completed the programme in 2017-2018 increased from 51 at CBT 1 to 72 at CBT 4, with 86% of children demonstrating an increase in positive verbal interaction and behaviour. In Figure 7, the progress of all active children enrolled in the programme throughout 2017-2018 across the Dublin Docklands and East Inner City per assessment area (cognition, behaviour, language) is presented. Overall, children improved their scores in all three areas of assessment with cognition having the greatest increase from 25% at CBT 1 to 81% at CBT 4. These results are comparable to those demonstrated last year (2016-2017), with cognition also showing a significant increase from 27% at CBT 1 to 82% (N=50) at CBT 4 in 2016-2017 and from 29% to 86% (N=30) in 2015-2016. Interestingly, the domain which demonstrated the largest increase in the previous two years was language, compared to this year where cognition showed the largest increase.

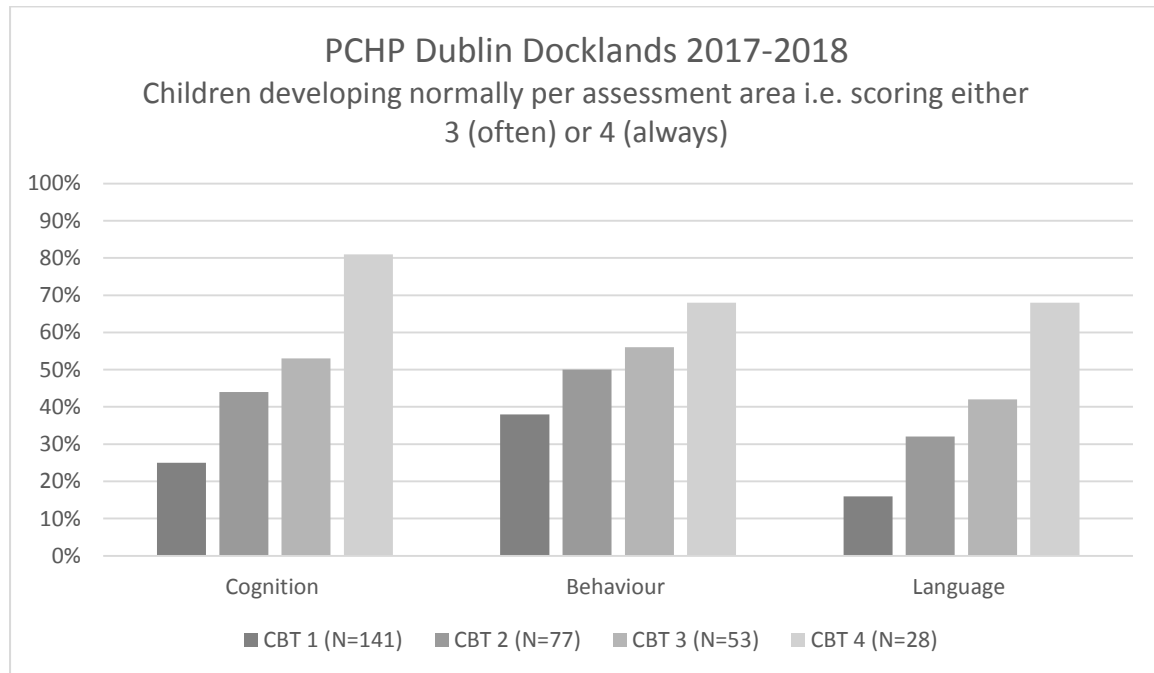


Figure 7. PCHP Dublin Docklands 2017-2018 Cohort: Percentages Children Developing Normally per Assessment Area i.e. scoring either 3 (often) or 4 (always)

As part of their CBTs, Home Visitors record their observations on individual children's assessments. For the purposes of a more thorough understanding of the quantitative results presented above, several indicative qualitative comments are listed below:

- *“Child has really come on so much. Much better social skills, much more confident and language has really come on. Really enjoyed the visits.”*
- *“The child loved his books. His language skill improved a lot. He could clearly talk about what he sees and thinks. The child and I would have a lot of conversations and he asked a lot of questions.”*
- *“The child is becoming more confident and speech and language have improved.”*
- *“Child is fully focused on every 30 minute [visit]. She always reminds her parents ‘do not talk’ and asks attention for her. She can start to ask questions and she is very confident to lead us to play in her way.”*
- *“She is a very curious child. Always asks what’s in my bag. She is also starting to use longer sentences.”*

- *“Child has really come on. Nannie was very much supportive on the visit, lots of praise to child. Nannie said she has learned so much regarding books and how to use them in a fun way.”*
- *“Child seems to enjoy books as any time I visit he goes and gets his books and toys and enjoys turning the pages and pointing out the pictures and repeats words such as “elephants” and “monkey”.”*
- *“Child’s concentration is improving and is obviously at its best when something really takes his interest.”*
- *“There is still no language with the child but from the time I started until now, his concentration is a lot better. When I started with him he had no interest in books, now he has, even it is only one or two that he likes.”*

11.1.3.2 Parent and Child Together Assessments results

The Parent and Child Together (PACT), introduced in 2016, is an assessment tool which helps to highlight the parent-child relationship and identify areas of interaction that need to be addressed. As with the CBT, the PACT is administered four times in the programme cycle:

- PACT 1 after the sixth visit
- PACT 2 between the 44th and the 48th visit
- PACT 3 between the 68th and the 72nd visit
- PACT 4 between the 89th and the 92nd visit

The success criteria for the programme, as identified by the PACT, are similar to the CBTs. At the end of each programme year:

- At least 80% of parents will exhibit an increase in positive verbal interaction and behaviour
- Parents will improve by at least one point on the 5-point scale or maintain a 3 (often) or a 4 (always) i.e. maintain above 60

In the following graphs, the percentages displayed are calculated based on the proportion of Home Visitors answering ‘often’ or ‘always’ in the PACT assessments. According to the coding scheme of the PACT, parents scoring ‘often’ (=3) or ‘always’ (=4) indicate positive parent-child relationships.

The percentages of 2017-2018 parents having high quality interactions with their children, based on the PACT assessments, are presented in Figure 8. Overall, there was a significant increase in the percentage of children having high-quality interactions with their children from 43% at PACT 1 to 76% at PACT 4. As can be seen below, there was a reduction in the percentage of parents from 62% at PACT 2 to 54% at PACT 3. However, this may be explained by the challenges presented by the CRM system, as outlined above, and the potential for some data to be missing. An additional consideration is the fact that PACT assessments were first introduced in 2016 and, accordingly, Home Visitors are less experienced in the administration of these assessments than in the case of the CBT. There may therefore be some variation in the consistency of its application. This consideration will be noted going forward and taken into consideration in ongoing training of Home Visitors in the administration of the PACT assessments.

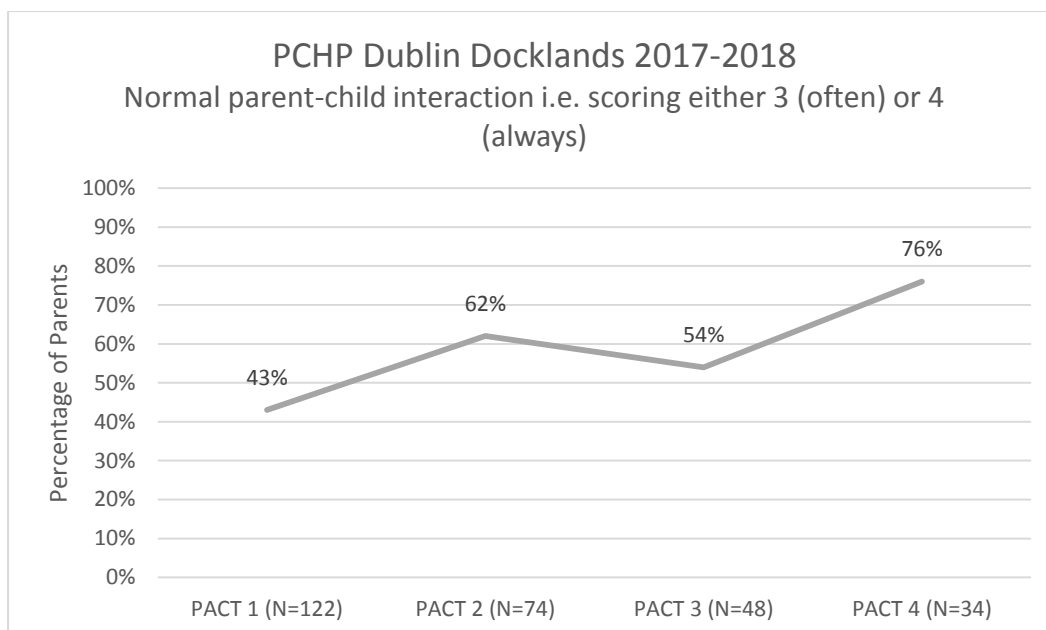


Figure 8. PCHP Dublin Docklands 2017-2018: Normal Parent-Child Interactions i.e. scoring either 3 (often) or 4 (always)

The average PACT score of children and parents who completed the programme in 2018 increased from 48 at PACT 1 to 60 at PACT 4, with 82% of parents demonstrating an increase in positive verbal interaction and behaviour. As last year (2016-2017) was the first year of implementation of PACT assessments, this is the first year that a complete set of PACT assessments (1 – 4) is available for a cohort. However, comparison can be drawn between this year’s PACT 3 and 4 results and that of the Phase 2 cohort last year, who completed these assessments in the latter part of the programme. Last year’s results showed a comparable percentage of parents demonstrating high quality interactions at PACT 4 (76%, N=49) to this year (76%, N=34). The increase from PACT 3 to PACT 4 was more significant this year (from 54% at PACT 3, N=48) than in 2016-2017 (from 63% at PACT 3, N=57).

The quality of parent and child interactions per assessment area for 2017-2018 are presented in Figure 9. Overall, the percentages of parents having interactions of good quality with their children show improvement in the case of children leaving the programme in 2018, compared to scores at PACT 1 in all four areas of assessment with the aspect of parental responsiveness to the child having the greatest increase from 43% at PACT 1 to 74% at PACT 4. As in the case of Figure 8 above, caution should be taken in interpreting the slight decrease in percentages between PACT 2 and PACT 3 in relation to the aspects of consistency with the child and affection towards the child, for the reasons outlined above.

Again, a complete set of PACT assessments are not available from last year for comparison purposes. However, the percentages of parents demonstrating normal parent-child interactions across all domains (in Figure 9 below) are comparable to those demonstrated at PACT 3 and 4 in the 2015 – 2017 cohort last year, with the percentage of parents increasing between PACT 3 and PACT 4 more significantly this year than last year with respect to all domains except affection.

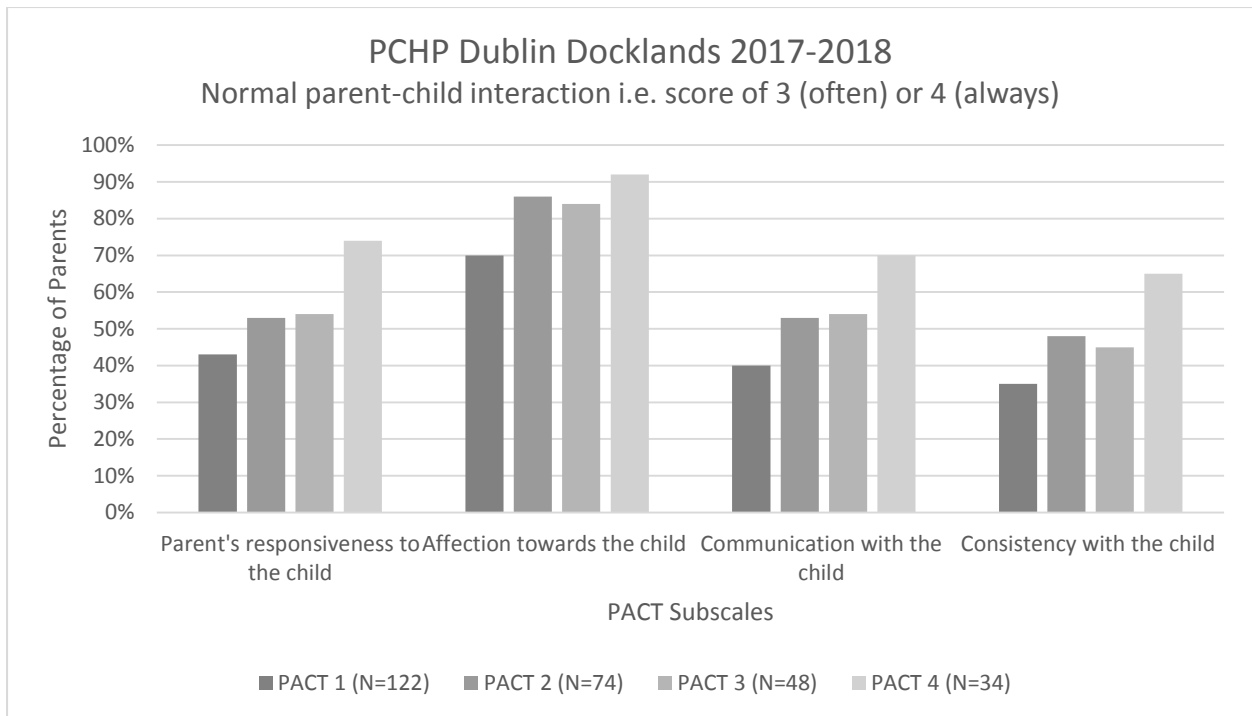


Figure 9 PCHP Dublin Docklands 2017-2018: Percentage of Parents with Normal Parent-Child Interactions per Assessment Area i.e. score of 3 (often) or 4 (always)

As part of the PACT, Home Visitors record their observations on the interactions between parents and children. For the purposes of a more thorough understanding of the quantitative results presented above, several indicative qualitative comments, which many Home Visitors mentioned, are listed below:

- *“Mammy has changed so much from telling the child and doing things for him to letting him lead the play, asking questions on what he is doing.”*
- *“Mam really got the programme. Would model the book and toys from tips I gave her. Would always be so grateful for the stuff I brought. We had great visits in this house.”*
- *“Mam has really benefitted from the programme. Learned different ways of play, labelling, positional language...”*
- *“Daddy is always involved in our visits and tells me about what the child did over the weekend. Daddy would always ask questions and was always willing to learn more. Always listens.”*
- *“Mother very sad to see me go as I was her friend as this mother would not have a lot of people coming in to her.”*
- *“Child’s mam really puts the work in and enjoys watching the child learn new things and meet all of his milestones.”*
- *“Mammy is trying her best. The child wakes up at 5.30am every morning, he is on-the-go non-stop. Mammy tells me what they do – singing, dancing, yoga. Lots goes on that I don’t see but I know and can see the work Mammy does with the child.”*
- *“Mum is starting to use longer sentences when she is describing pictures in the books.”*
- *“Going very well with this family. Mam and dad fully on board with the programme. She loves the visits and looks forward to the books and toys.”*

- “Mum has become more involved in the visits and is starting to become more confident when leading a visit.”
- “Mum gets involved and thinks the programme is great. She thanks me every time I leave a visit for what I am doing.”
- “Mum gets involved in the visits and prepares for the visit by explaining to the child to get their books out.”

11.1.3.3 Parental Feedback

This section includes the end of year data from the evaluations that parents from the PCHP completed. In total, 68 parent evaluation forms were returned. All parents who completed the evaluation forms (N=68) said that they would recommend the PCHP to a friend. Parent attendance in the events at the National College of Ireland is an essential part of the PCHP. The majority of the parents (98%, N=48) reported that they have the capacity to attend the PCHP events. All of the parents (N=44) who attended the events this year reported that they enjoyed them.

As presented in Table 11, the majority of parents strongly agreed that the PCHP was useful for their children and that the books and toys provided during the programme were useful as well. As can be seen below, a very small percentage of parents in each case responded that they ‘strongly disagreed’ with these statements. The qualitative responses throughout all of the forms do not, however, reflect this sentiment and the possibility for these options to be selected in error due to the layout of the form (a parent may inadvertently ‘strongly disagree’ with a statement where they intend to select ‘strongly agree’) should be noted in interpreting these results.

Table 13. Usefulness of Overall Programme, Books and Toys - Confidence and Support of Parents: Percentages of Parents' Responses

	I found this programme to be useful (N=59)	I found the books and toys useful (N=58)	I feel confident using the strategies for reading and playing with my child (N=58)	I feel supported by my Home Visitor (N=53)
Strongly Agree	94.9%	93.1%	77.6%	92.5%
Agree	1.7%	3.4%	19%	3.8%
Strongly Disagree	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.8%

Parents were asked about what their children learnt as a result of PCHP. As shown in Figure 10, improved attention span (57.4%), social skills (54.4%) and speech and language skills (54.4%) were the most improved areas. Compared to parent feedback last year, this year’s cohort of parents placed more of a focus on their child’s improved literacy skills (44% in 2017-2018 compared to 38% in 2016-2017) and speech and language skills (54% in 2017-2018 compared to 46% in 2016-2017) as a result of PCHP.

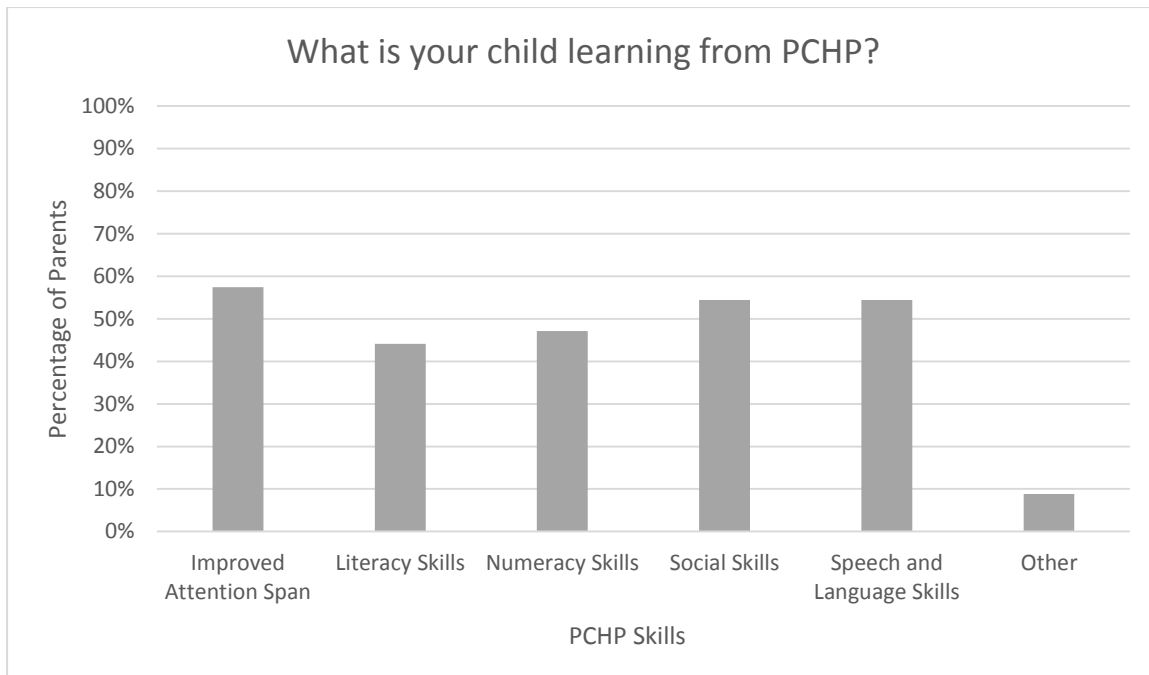


Figure 10. What is your Child Learning from PCHP? Percentage of Parents' Responses

Parents were also asked what they had learnt from PCHP. Responses indicated that more parents this year (N=68) felt that they had learned how to play (50%) and how to read books (50%) than parents in 2016-2017 (45% and 36%, respectively, N=55).

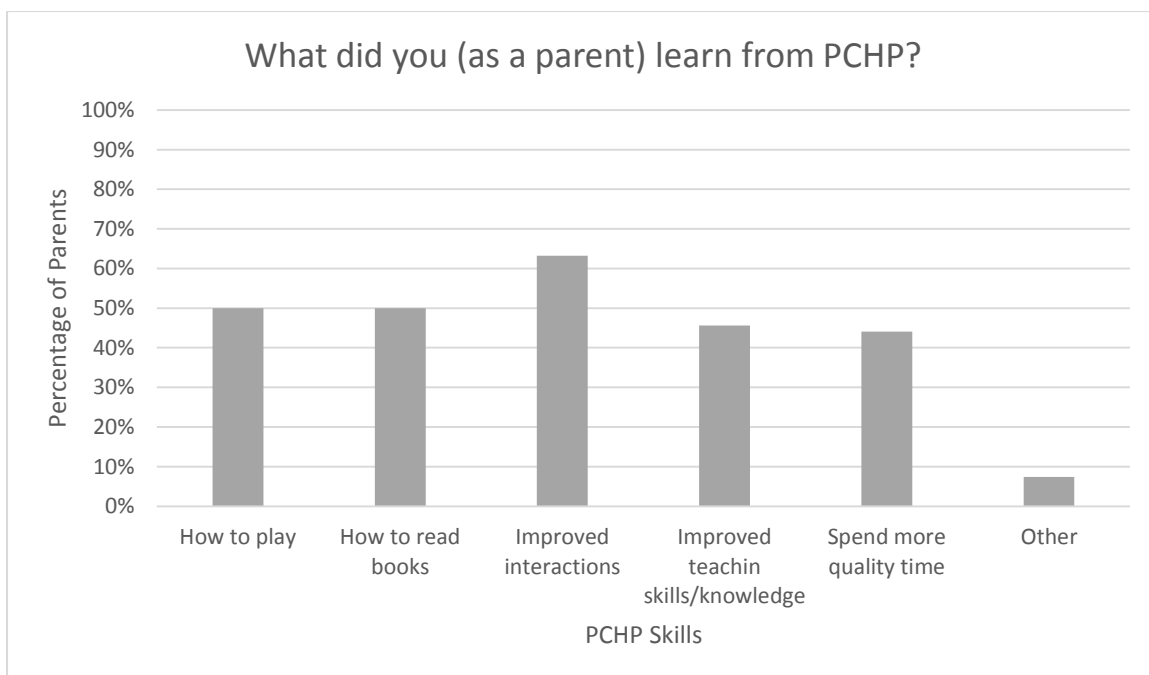


Figure 11. What Did You (as a Parent) Learn from PCHP? Percentage of Parents' Responses

In Figure 12, parents' responses to 'What parts of PCHP did you (as a parent) like best?' are presented. As can be seen, the aspects parents enjoyed the most were quite evenly spread, with 56% of parents reporting that they enjoyed 'everything' about PCHP. Responses to this question were more evenly spread and higher generally in 2017-2018 than last year with over 40% of parents selecting 'Child's

Learning', 'Talking & Reading Books' and 'Interactions with Home Visitors' this year, compared to between 20% and 30% of parents last year selecting these options.

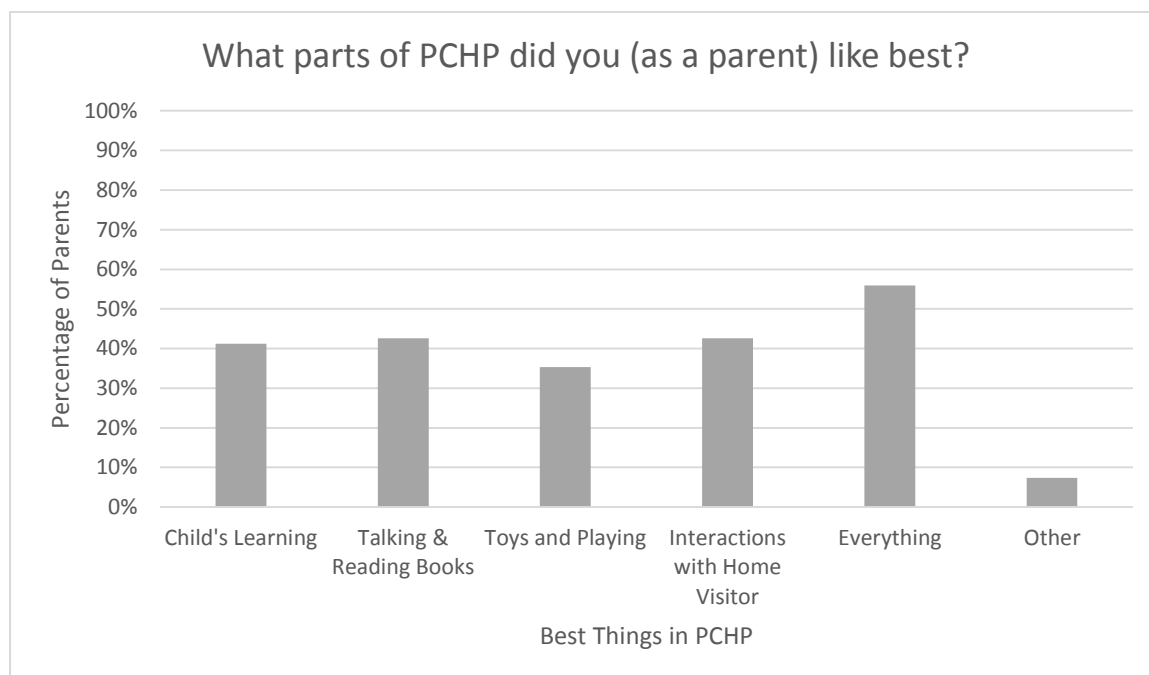


Figure 12. What Parts of PCHP did you (as a Parent) Like Best? Percentage of Parents' Responses

Parents were also asked to comment on the aspects of the PCHP that have worked well and the aspects that may need improvement.

Comments from parents on what worked well included:

- *"All books and toys are informative and I myself learned that every little effort to the child can make a huge difference so I am focusing her every single word and encouraging to explore. She has lots to express and those materials and the programme help her to express herself."*
- *"The surprise on my child's face when she gets new books and toys"*
- *"I got tips off the home visitor of how to interact more with my child and a fun way of learning and it brought his language out and also learned to praise my child more"*
- *"The help and confidence they gave me as a parent to read to my kids"*
- *"Everything. My child loved every minute of her PCHP visits. I have recommended PCHP to loads of friends and family"*
- *"The toys, books are really good and educational. It brings kids out of themselves. I think it is a superb programme which NCI should be so proud of"*
- *"Dedication of home visitor to wellbeing of child, professionalism, experience and knowledge of children. Visitor gets to know child at his own pace and interactions aren't forced"*
- *"I think the PCHP Programme is brilliant for the children. Me and my son have really enjoyed it over the last two years. He has also learned lots from it."*
- *"That the same person comes in at the same time every week"*
- *"I think the hard working team and dedicated home visitors makes this programme excellent. The home visitor brings new ideas to help kids to learn and develop skills – home visitors have very positive attitudes that promotes healthy learning environment"*

- *“I think the relationship between home visitor and the child is so important and I could not have asked for better. The programme is so focused on what works best for the child. My son has thrived since starting this”*

The majority of parents reported that the PCHP worked well overall and did not have any suggestions for improvement. One suggestion that was made by a number of parents was that the duration of the home visits should be longer than 30 minutes and that a couple of the books were perhaps targeted at children older than their child. Other individual suggestions included:

- *‘I also have a younger son and would love to be able to sign him up for it also but I believe it can only be one child per family which is understandable’*
- *‘I found everything worked well but going forward maybe more puzzles’*

11.1.3.4 Parent and Child Engagement

One of the benefits of the new CRM system is the ability to track parent and child engagement with the programme. At the end of each home visit, the Home Visitor records their response to the questions ‘Did the child engage?’ and ‘Did the parent engage?’ Of the home visits for which engagement has been recorded, the number of visits for which parents and children are either “fully engaged” or “somewhat engaged” suggest positive levels of engagement by families during home visits (see Figure 13 below).

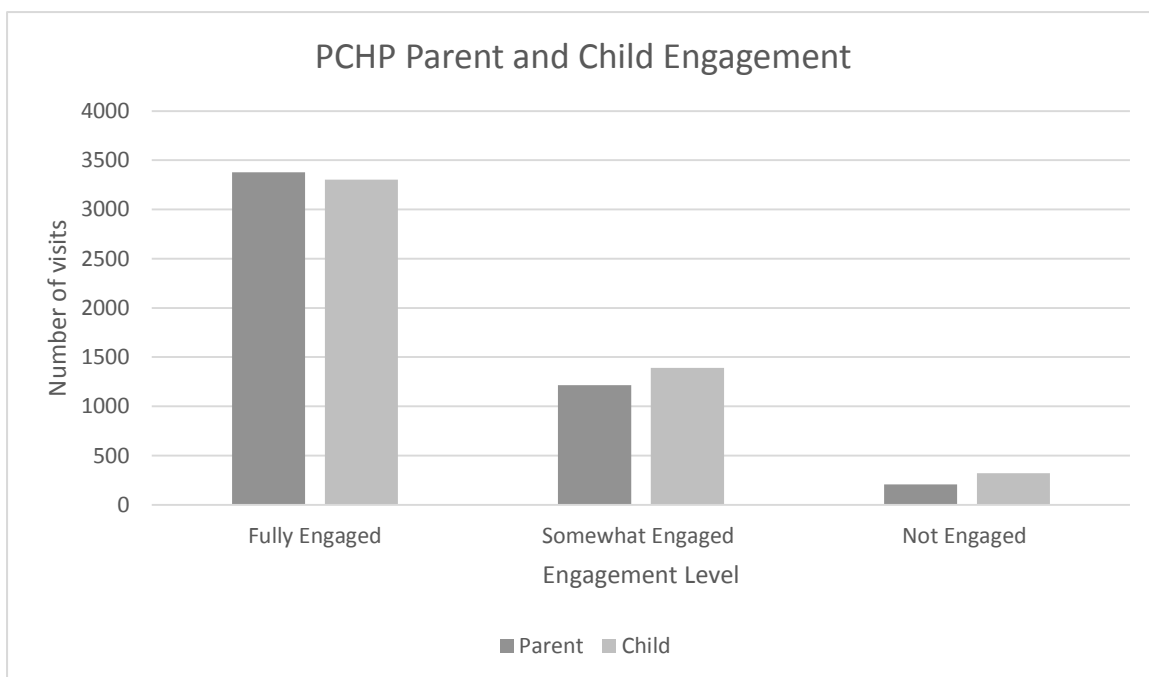


Figure 13. PCHP Dublin Docklands 2017-2018: Parent and Child Engagement during Home Visits

11.1.3.5 Home Visitor Strategies/Child Development Encouraged in the Home Environment

While in the home, the Home Visitor is actively encouraging the child’s developmental stages through the medium of books and toys. The Home Visitor now captures these on their phones for each visit. This gives us a more holistic insight into the home visit and tells a story in itself. We can now see the

quantitative data to back up the assessments, parents' evaluations and the more qualitative piece that Home Visitors write after every home visit.

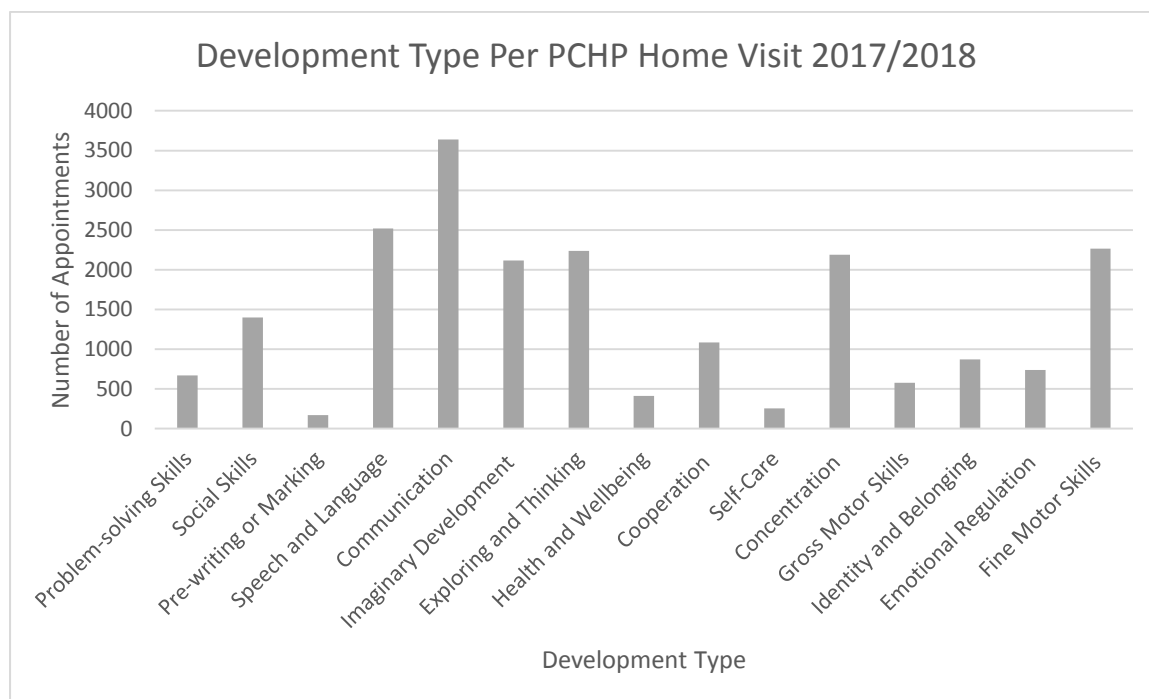


Figure 14. Development Type per PCHP Home Visit 2017/2018

11.1.4 Events

The PCHP events are designed to strengthen the link between NCI and PCHP families as well as to lessen the isolation of many of the families involved in the PCHP programme. In 2017/18, there were six events: NCI Christmas Party; NCI Facebook Party; ELI Ten Year Anniversary Event; PCHP Creative Event, PCHP Graduation and Cruinniu Na nOg. January 2018 saw the start of ELI's ten year anniversary celebrations with an "Appreciation Event" kicking off the festivities. Past and present programme families, community partners, government bodies and funders attended the celebrations. This also saw the launch of ELI's "Let's Talk" book, a parental tool to aid families to talk about feeling and emotions.

The Creative Event replaced the Easter Event in 2016/17 in order to accommodate the range of cultural backgrounds involved in PCHP. This occasion aims to encourage parents to allow their children to think freely and use their imagination. The occasion allows parents to understand the benefits of messy play and has proved to be PCHP's most popular event. ELI also collaborated with the Creative Ireland Programme to host Cruinniu na nOg – an event for children aged zero to six years to showcase culture and creativity. A diverse range of families from all across Dublin attended the event which saw a range of activities for children including painting, drawing, storytelling and Play-Doh modelling.

Table 14. Attendance of the PCHP events in 2017-2018

	NCI /Facebook Christmas Party (Phase 1 families)	Easter Creative Event (All families)	Graduation (Phase 2 families)	Cruinniu Na nOg
No. of adults	32	23	80	130
No. of children	30	21	46	80

In the end-of-year evaluation forms, 83% (N=41) of parents said that they were able to attend the events with 100% reporting they enjoyed them. Comments from parents at events included:

- *“Great party. Friendly staff. Books and toys are kid friendly. [My child] loves them. [Our home visitor] is the best, she’s absolutely lovely. Very friendly and always giving ideas.”*
- *“[My child] is loving the party mixing with all the children, loving animals and space. He loves his Home Visitor, loves visits and his toys are very educational.”*
- *“Party is very interactive. Home Visitor is very good and great for [my child’s] development and you can see her grow and grow. The interest in the books has made her older brother interested.”*
- *“Brilliant. You get to meet other parents in the programme, share experience”*
- *“We really enjoyed all the events – messy plays, play groups in the summer, because we feel like part of the same community and they could play with toys different than at home and messy play gave us more inspiration to play at home.”*
- *“The programme is perfect to both child and us. My son and myself enjoyed all the home visits. Home visitor is such a nice person. She is very patient. All the books and toys are useful to my son.”*
- *“It was very good ceremony. The kids really enjoyed it and parents will remember it.”*
- *“Really enjoyed the Christmas event, loads for the kids to do.”*
- *“Very good. [My child] enjoyed painting and the crunch of rice krispies.”*
- *“[My child] loved painting. Great that there was a lot of choices and the kids for [my child] to play with and make a mess”*
- *“Enjoying the day. She’s taking it in, observing everything. A little bit shy but loving it.”*

Programme Implementation 2018-19

There will be four events as usual for PCHP families next year. These will be as follows:

- Phase 1 and Phase 2 Christmas Party (all families)
- Phase 1 Creative event
- PCHP Graduation (Phase 2 families only) - the need for two graduations is being considered to adjust to the system of rolling intakes.

11.1.5 Home Visitor Training

Home Visitors received training in September 2017 with more provided throughout the year.

- Eleven of the Home Visiting team are on the Early Childhood Care and Education Degree in NCI with one graduating with her level 8 honours degree in November.
- All the coordinators and all Home Visiting team have successfully completed Child Protection Training with Tusla (the National Child and Family Agency) and E-Learning General Data Protection Regulations training.
- All staff have trained in the ‘Getting Started’ training Restorative Practice this year with three hourly workshops on ‘Let’s Talk’ – Introducing Restorative Practice to PCHP. These follow-on workshops gave the Home Visitors practical tips on using Restorative Practice in the home environment with families.
- Members of the Home Visiting team are actively encouraged to attend and present at various conferences re: Infant Mental Health, Supporting Children with ASD (Sensational Kids), National Parents Council Conference, Integration of the Roma Community (Pavee Point) and the Early Years Advisory Group (DES). They successfully presented two workshops at PEIN Conference in Dublin, PCHP Conference in New York and ELI’s Early Year’s Conference in NCI (2018).

Between September 2017 and June 2018, a total of eleven Home Visitors engaged in IT mentoring sessions provided by Mason Hayes & Curran. Sessions were tailored by mentors to each Home Visitor's individual IT competency level. Topics and skills covered during mentoring sessions included Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Outlook (emails and calendar). All Home Visitors reported that the experience has been positive for them and beneficial both professionally and personally. Home Visitors also provided more detailed qualitative feedback. Some examples of comments provided include:

- *"I found my mentor very supportive and patient. She helped me gain a lot of confidence and I learned a lot. Even this email I'm sending now I'm confident doing as before I would not have been. I learned how to type a letter, email and how to add attachments. I also learned how to organise and set up a presentation using bullet points and slides. We also worked a little on Excel doing spread sheets."*
- *"I felt very supported by my mentor as she made me feel at ease and comfortable to ask questions and query areas of difficult without making me feel 'stupid' for not knowing. Indeed, there were many times when she had to review the same topics repeatedly until they 'clicked' with me. My mentor has a deep reservoir of patience and empathy. She demonstrated a genuine interest and skill at being a supportive, patient and knowledgeable IT mentor. These sessions mostly benefitted a growth in my confidence in using computers in general, which has empowered me to at least explore more without the fear that I am going to lose what I have been working on (or blow something up!!)"*
- *"I have really enjoyed my sessions from [my mentor], she was so helpful in guiding me through the computer and also on our new work phones. I'm now not afraid of opening a web page or sending emails and sending emails with attachments as before I would panic like mad – haha. I am very grateful for the opportunity and would take it up again to progress more if the opportunity comes again. My tutor was very understanding and very helpful... I am very grateful for her help and this opportunity."*

11.1.6 PCHP CRM (Customer Relations Management) System

In 2016/17, a decision was made to move PCHP's paper-based recording keeping system over to a CRM system, where all Home Visitors will populate their data (observation notes) on a smart phone, which will feed into a centralised system. Supported by Microsoft, the system was developed by European BEST Engineering Competitions (EBECs), NCI's IT Department and the PCHP team from March-June 2017. System testing took place during July/August 2017/18 before live deployment and training/ support in September.

The CRM system was launched by Minister for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor on 11th September. The system went 'live' in the Dublin Docklands area and all paper work ceased. All Home Visitors now populate their data (observation notes) on a smart phone, which feeds into a centralised system. Although still in its infancy, the culture of ELI has transformed from paper to technology and the PCHP team have embraced the change. The outcomes include a much faster streamlined system for the Home Visitors, with both management and the research department able to access data and reports automatically. With real time data, PCHP Docklands are now in a position to cater for their family's needs quicker with interventions put into place more effectively. The additional data collected by the CRM system has demonstrated the scale and reach of PCHP, measure child and parent engagement along collating the strategies used by the Home Visitors to support children's learning and development with the home environment. It is hoped to extend the system to the other PCHP areas and the ABC 0-2 Programme as well as reviewing how the data in the CRM system can be further mined to improve quality and accountability.

11.1.7 PCHP Longitudinal Research

The 'Baseline Evaluation of the Dublin Dockland's Parent Child Home Programme' by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College (Share et al. 2011) reported on the positive benefits of the programme, which included motivation for and benefits of participation, parent and child bond, Child-Home Visitor relationship and benefits for other family members.

In 2013/14, a pilot longitudinal study was completed with fifteen families from the first cohort of PCHP graduates (2008-2010) (ELI Annual Report 2014). The aim of this study was to follow up on the families and see how they and their children were doing both at home and at school. It would also give an indication of the long term benefits of PCHP on educational and social outcomes for the children and families involved, with a particular focus on their numeracy and literacy skills.

In 2015/16, two PCHP Home Visitors were trained as assistant researchers and completed a study on fourteen families involved in PCHP from 2010-2012. This was the third cohort of children and families since the PCHP was introduced to the Dublin Docklands. Due to an administrative error the 2009-2011 cohort was skipped.

Results from the two previous studies highlighted the ongoing positive impact of the programme six years on from the parents' perspective across three main areas: positive impact on the parent- child relationship and interactions; improved home learning environment for both the PCHP children and their siblings; along with the children's school readiness. The parents are continuing to use the skills they learnt through the programme along with books and toys. The children are doing well at school and have, according to their parents, the necessary literacy and numeracy skills. The areas for improvement identified by this study were increase availability of the programme, increased time allowance per visit and flexibility of visiting times.

In 2016-2017, the research team made revisions to the longitudinal questionnaire in order to align the questions to the Growing Up in Ireland study (GUI). Accordingly, some preliminary comparisons between the longitudinal PCHP cohort and the GUI cohort – which is representative of national norms – was possible this year. These comparisons were drawn between the GUI data and data gathered through the longitudinal study to date from the parents of 45 children who had graduated from PCHP between 2010 and 2012. This allowed for an exploration of the home learning environments of children who had previously graduated from PCHP, with some promising results, as indicated below.

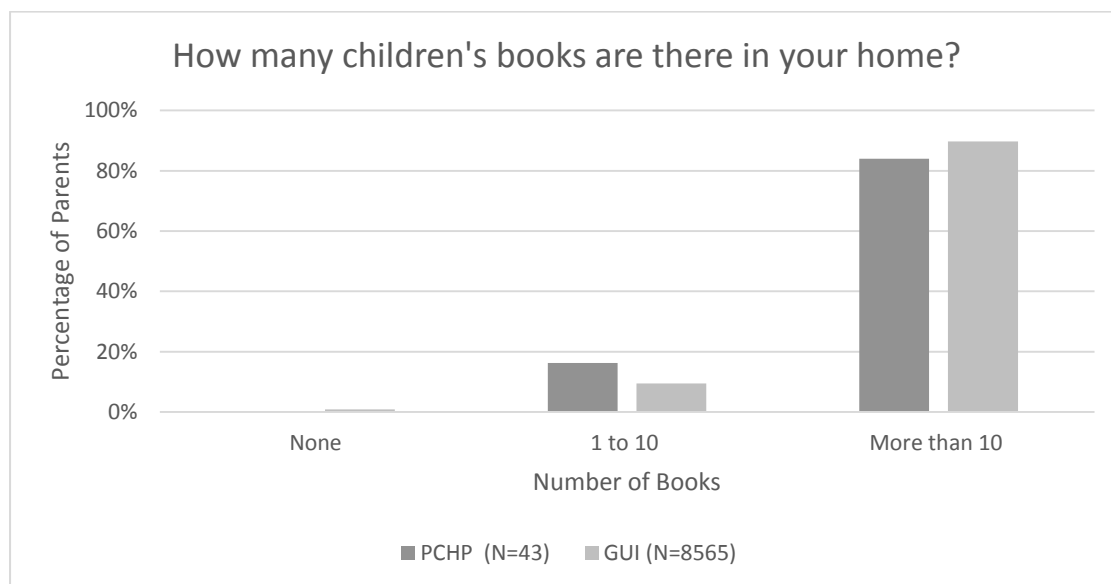


Figure 15. Number of Children's Books in the Home

As can be seen above, every PCHP graduate home in this study reported having at least one children's book available. Comparatively, a small percentage (approximately 1%) of GUI homes did not have any children's books available in the home.

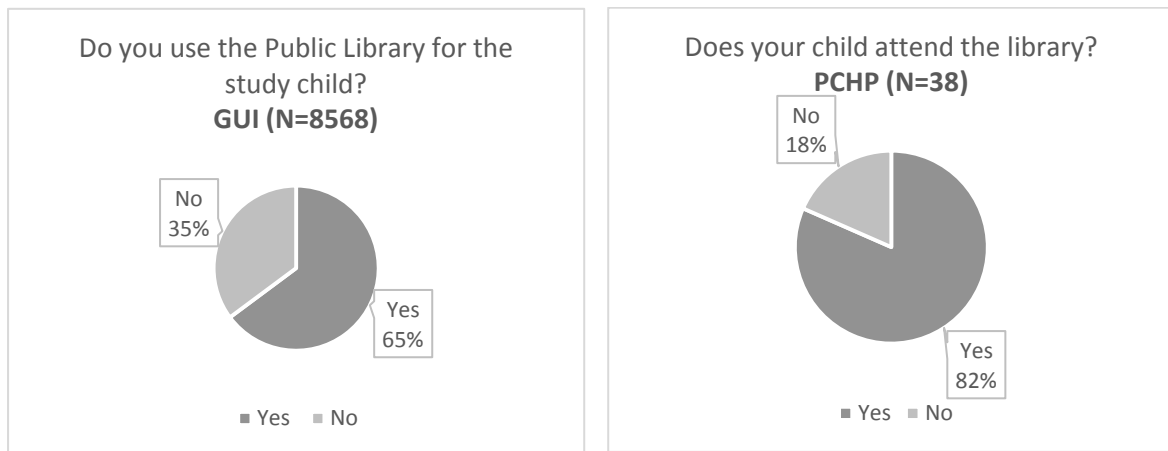


Figure 16. Library Attendance

When asked if their child uses or attends the public library, a higher percentage of PCHP parents (82%, N=38) than parents from the national sample (65%, N=8,568) responded positively, as can be seen above. Caution must be taken in comparing two samples of very different sizes. However, if the GUI results above are taken to represent the national average, the home learning environments of PCHP graduate children are relatively strong in comparison to their nationwide peers.

11.2 National Overview

A fundamental element of ELI's Vision is to bring PCHP to other disadvantaged communities/sites within Greater Dublin and across Ireland. Objective 2 of the ELI's Five-Year Strategy is to establish Galway and Limerick sites and to initiate two additional pilot sites by 2020.

This ambition was one of 'cautious expansion' with all new areas requiring a suitable community-based partner organisation that has the need, commitment and funding required to sustain PCHP in the long-term. In addition, this expansion would not deflect any of ELI's attention to maintaining the quality and impact of its programmes in the Docklands and Inner City. Where funding and local community partners were identified, ELI worked to support these communities to deliver PCHP.

In 2017/18, the ELI 2015-2020 strategy was reviewed. While the above vision was being implemented, the following risk was identified: *New areas require a lot more support than expected to implement PCHP and the further away they are, the more difficult and costly it is. Funding is coming to NCI rather than locally, which increases the administration and governance demands and costs.*

As a result, it was agreed to amend the objective as follows: **Maintain ELI's existing commitments and focus on Inner City Dublin (CYPSC Dublin North and South City).** *Support will be provided for existing PCHP sites, including those in Limerick and Galway but no more will be recruited, unless they have the funding to be self-sufficient. We will not fundraise for other sites but will encourage potential donors to engage with the sites directly.*

At present, PCHP is being delivered in five areas, all of which receive training and support from ELI.

- Bluebell and Crumlin by South City Partnership (previously Canal Communities Partnership)
- Finglas by the Pavee Point and the Traveller Community
- North West Inner City Dublin by Daughters of Charity and DIT Grangegorman ABC Programme
- Ballinasloe by Galway Education Centre and Sisters of Mercy
- Limerick with Northern Trust, Garryowen Community Development Group and Paul Partnership

The number of families involved in each area vary, depending on the funding and the developmental stage of each area. Start-up areas take at least 5 years, depending on the capacity of and resources available to the local partners to be to reach Level 4: Full Implementation and be fully operational.

Level 1: Getting Started – Exploring and Preparing	1
Level 2: Starting Implementation – Experimenting, Planning and Resourcing	4
Level 3: Partial Implementation – Implementing, Operationalising and Evaluating	1
Level 4: Full Implementation – Business as Usual	1

This section gives a brief overview of each of the areas, with the table above indicating the level at which area are operating at.

11.2.1 Dublin South City Partnership

Dublin South City Partnership (previously Canal Community Partnership) (DSCP) has been delivering PCHP in Bluebell since 2009. Funding from the Katharine Howard Foundation has enabled it to expand its catchment area to include Pembroke/ Rathmines. Having received their Site Certification in 2014-15, they are a stand-alone PCHP site, which means they run independently but have support and training from ELI.

DSCP won the tender last December 2017 to deliver the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) in Dublin South City for the next five years. SICAP aims to tackle poverty, social exclusion and long-term unemployment through local engagement and partnership between disadvantaged individuals, community organisations and public-sector agencies. This has been a positive development as DSCP can now plan over several years. PCHP is part of their Life Long Learning Team work and there is a commitment to continue this programme and extend its boundaries. DSCP applied and successfully received two additional smaller grants from the Katherine Howard Foundation and the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) for PCHP.

DSCP also implemented an outreach strategy to inform targeted communities of PCHP; to recruit local people to train as Home Visitors. With support from ELI, they successfully ran their first Home Visitor Training Course in Crumlin in April 2018. The evaluations from the training were very positive. Three new Home Visitors were recruited, which brings the total Home Visitors to seven. The DSCP coordinators attended three communities of practice for Home Visiting Coordinators in NCI.

New to 2017-18 was DSCP's partnership with Dolphin Library, one of the public libraries in their catchment area, to deliver a weekly 'Story time and Play for Toddlers' with the support of the Home Visitors. This has been running since early last year and is very successful. We have had 22 children and their families attending sessions in the last number of months. This also provides an opportunity to advertise the programme; to upskill Home Visitors and also to encourage families that are most excluded to visit and enrol in their local library.

DSCP successfully managed to meet most of the statutory service providers to inform them of PCHP in October- December 2017. Consequently, they received more referrals from Public Health Nurses and the Family Support team. They are also visiting more families that have serious language delay/ no language at two years of age. Twelve families enrolled before December 2017 with an additional eight families in 2018 (twenty in total) with four children graduating in June 2018. Five DSCP families are from a local Homeless Hub. Due to logistical challenges, CBT and PACT data for this cohort is still outstanding for this year but will be included next year.

11.2.2 Traveller Community, Finglas, Dublin

Pavee Point have been delivering PCHP with the Traveller Community in Finglas since 2014 with support from the Katharine Howard Foundation and the Ireland Funds. While Pavee Point takes responsibility for the administration of the Katherine Howard Foundation Funds, the programme is coordinated from NCI, who also takes responsibility for the administration of the Ireland Funds grant. Home Visitors attend supervision in NCI and are employed jointly by Pavee Point and NCI. As a result, traveller families have been included in the CRM system and included in the ELI PCHP results

In 2017/18, there was one Home Visitors and four families remaining in the programme. One family completed the programme in October 2017 with the remaining two families continuing the programme and graduating in June 2018. Discussions continue between Pavee Point, the Katharine Howard Foundation and ELI about how the programme can continue with the traveller community in Finglas.

11.2.3 North West Inner City Dublin

PCHP is one of the Grangegorman ABC Programmes for which the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) is the lead agency. However, responsibility for the delivery of the programme rests with the Daughters of Charity Community Service (DoCCS), who work closely with NCI. As their Home Visitors are directly employed by NCI, all the Dublin 7 families have been included in the CRM system and included in the ELI PCHP data.

In 2017-18, the relationship between the DoCCs and NCI has been strengthened with the resulting growth in the number of families from the Dublin 7 area. With two new DoCCS staff members trained in PCHP Home Visiting and Coordinator training and DoCCS actively referring families to the programme, we are looking forward to continuing our partnership this year, with PCHP supporting more families in the Dublin 7 area.

11.2.4 Ballinasloe, Galway

PCHP began in Ballinasloe in September 2015. It is being run by the Galway Education Centre with ELI providing training and support both in NCI and Ballinasloe. Beginning with three Home Visitors and five families, funding from The Ireland Funds (Joe Corcoran) will enable 33 families take part in the programme. PCHP Galway is creating partnerships with local community nurses, child and family agencies etc. to recruit and support the neediest families. Brochures have been produced and distributed to all the local crèches, schools, doctor's surgeries etc. They have five Home Visitors and fourteen families involved in the programme at present.

With support for ELI, Galway held Home Visitor training in November 2017, with interviews for new Home Visitor positions taking place in December 2017. From this PCHP Galway, recruited one new Home Visitor (possible second coming on board in Sept. 2018) with NCI providing oversight, coordination, training and support. Galway Home Visitors attend on average three supervision sessions in NCI, Dublin throughout the year and their coordinator has attended three community of practice for Home Visiting Coordinators in NCI.

Qualitative feedback from parents of children taking part in PCHP Galway indicate the positive impact that the programme is having on these children to date:

- *“The programme was a God send for my grandson. He was not talking at all when the programme started. Now he has come on socially and never stops talking.”*
- *“The twins love to sit and look at books compared to my eldest who is in primary school. He never showed much interest in books as a toddler. “*
- *“My older son was nowhere as confident or had as much knowledge regarding numbers and colours as what my younger son has now aged 3. I know my younger son will be ready for play school because of the programme.”*

11.2.5 Garryowen, Limerick

PCHP started in Limerick in 2015 with the Garryowen Community Development Group taking responsibility for the delivery of the programme. As the recipient of the initial Northern Trust grant and in 2016/17, grants from Basis Point and Clancourt Group, NCI provides oversight, coordination, training and support. We work in close partnership with services in the area including ABC Start Right, Barnardos Family Support Unit, Barnardos Homemakers, PAUL Partnership, Community Wraparound and Community Mothers.

A new coordinator was appointed in September 2017. Training and support for this position was provided by the ELI team. Limerick Home Visitors attended on average three supervision sessions in NCI, Dublin throughout the year and their coordinator has attended three community of practice for managers of all ABC home visiting programmes, set up by NCI to support managers in their roles. Extra support has been given to Limerick around recruiting and linking other professionals (Speech and Language Therapists (SLT's), Occupational Therapists (OT's), Public Health Nurses (PHN's) with PCHP

and the coordinator has been successful in attending ABC wrap around meetings, Speech and Language therapist meetings with the intention of promoting PCHP.

With the extra referrals came a need to recruit more Home Visitors. With the support of ELI, training took place in Limerick and three new Home Visitors were employed in January 2018. Recruitment of extra staff meant it was now possible to expand PCHP to other areas of Limerick. Home Visitors are now supporting families in Garryowen, Southill, Prospect, Ballinanty and Moyross areas.

As well as on-going PCHP supervision all staff completed mandatory Children's First Training and accredited Hanen Speech and Language training. With seven Home Visitors now in place and spread over most of Limerick city there are 32 families in the programme. Four will graduate in June 2018, two will leave the programme due to moving outside the catchment area with the rest continuing in September 2018.

Qualitative feedback from the PCHP Limerick coordinator reflects some additional highlights experienced this year, including:

- *“At Christmas, PCHP Limerick took the families to Share-a-dream “Dreamland” along with the families from their Parent and Toddler Group. This experience was treasured by the children and photographs were provided as a keepsake.”*
- *“Our most recent “success” was noted by a PHN, when one of our children attended a developmental check the PHN inquired if the child was “getting extra help”. Also, the child with the worst missed visit rate has now no missed visits as the parent has realised the benefits of the programme. This family are also linking in to other supports provided by Garryowen CDP, including the Parent and Toddler Group. We have some parents now so involved in the community that they are delivering Reflexology classes in Garryowen CDP.”*

11.2.6 Ballyfermot

Discussions began with Ballyfermot on delivering PCHP to ten families through the ABC Programme, Family Matters in early September 2017. Four potential Home Visitors attended PCHP Home Visitor Training but Ballyfermot held off moving forward with PCHP until 2018. At present, there is one Home Visitor who has just started with two families. The Home Visitor is attending supervision in NCI and will be supported by our coordinators but will be employed by Family Matters. It is hoped to expand this programme to at least ten families in 2018-19.

11.2.7 Family Lives UK

We received a request from PCHP US to host a site visit from Family Lives (UK) who have funding to start PCHP in London, Newcastle and Nottingham. Jeremy Todd (CEO) and Pamela Parks (Dep. CEO) visited NCI for two days in December 2017, to get an insight into how we run PCHP.

12 Literacy and Numeracy Programmes

ELI's Literacy, Numeracy and Coding Programmes focus on supporting parents, services and schools to develop children's social, language and thinking skills from an early age; thereby, ensuring that the children and young people in the area continue to develop the skills needed to achieve their educational, career and life goals. These programmes, developed through careful collaboration with local services and schools, are Early Numeracy Programme, Zoom Ahead with Books, Doodle Den, NCI Challenges, Financial Literacy, Robotic Coding Clubs and Tuition Support.

Objectives:

- Enable children and young people to continue to develop the skills they will need to achieve their educational and career goals
- Develop a learning rich environment in inner city Dublin
- Support parental involvement in their children's education and learning
- Encourage children's and families interest and pleasure in Literacy, Numeracy and Coding
- To widen participation in higher education within the Docklands

12.1 Early Numeracy Programme

Beginning in 2011 with funding from the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI), this programme is aimed at improving early year's numeracy and mathematical skills from birth to six years of age. The Numeracy Programme has evolved over time and become an established play based programme to support children to experience numeracy play and language guided by the National Frameworks; Aistear the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA 2009), and Síolta the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education (CECDE 2006). It is also informed by the Primary School Curriculum with particular emphasis on the mathematical strand for Junior and Senior Infants.

The Early Numeracy Programme supports children, their parents and families, and educators to improve educational outcomes for children in numeracy. With funding from the ABC Programme, this programme has grown from 16 organisations and 498 children in 2011-12 to 39 organisations and 1,520 children in 2017/18. The target for 2017/18 was 38 organisations, a reduction of 6 services, one due to closure and others due to staff changes and /or capacity issues. One additional primary school joined the programme to bring the figures to 39. Figure 17 illustrates the organisational engagement growth in numeracy programme 2011 – 2018:

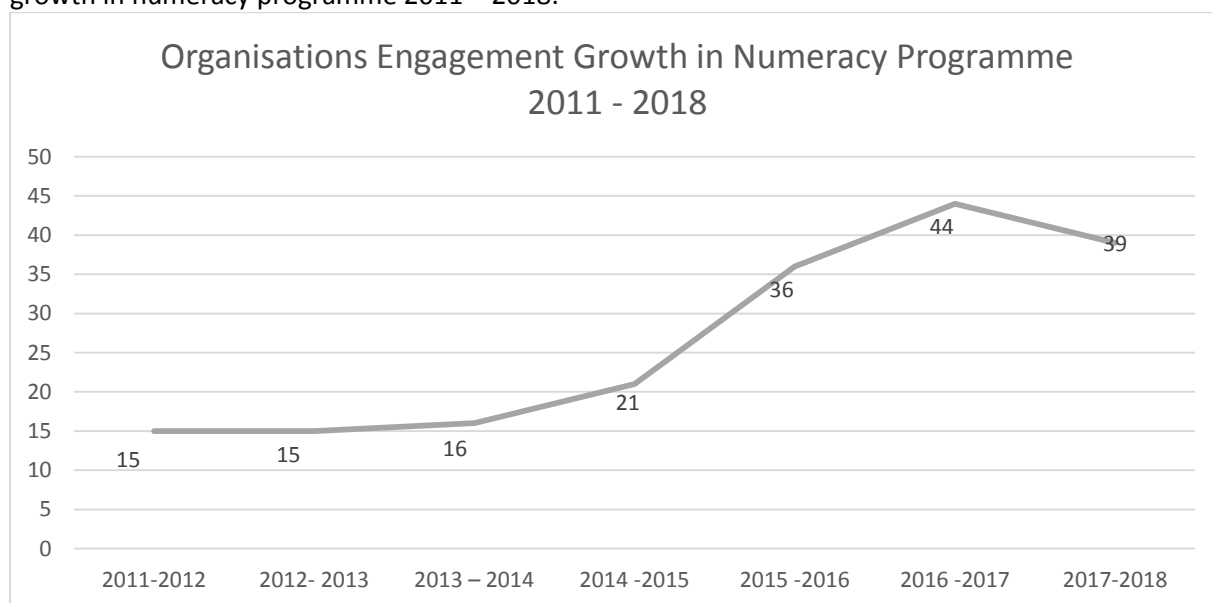


Figure 17. Organisations' Engagement Growth in Numeracy Programme 2011-2018

This following section reviews the Early Numeracy Programme for 2017/18 and outlines our plans for 2018/19.

Aims:

- The numeracy levels of children in the Dublin Docklands will be on a par with the national norms
- Children in the Dublin Docklands will experience a seamless development of their numeracy skills from zero to eight (DES, 2010)
- Parents will have an understanding of their children’s development in mathematics, and be able to monitor their children’s progress
- Parenting strategies, personal skills and involvement of the parents in their children’s education, particularly in numeracy, will be improved
- Early childhood care and education practitioners’ professional practice will have improved as a result of this programme and the implementation of the *Síolta* and *Aistear* frameworks, in particular in the teaching of numeracy
- Increased awareness throughout the community of the role that community, family and educational settings can play in promoting successful learning, particularly in numeracy (DES, 2010)
- In the long term, participation in higher education by the local population within the Dublin Docklands will have increased

12.1.1 Curriculum Priority Week: Participation

Participation Figures 2011 – 2018

Since the establishment of the Numeracy programme, participation levels have increased considerably (Figure 18). This is a reflection of the increased funding through the ABC Programme and the importance services place on children’s numeracy learning and development. The number of parents involved has also increased as more services continue to supplement the Home Learning Numeracy Cards with practical activities for families to engage in to support their children's learning and development.

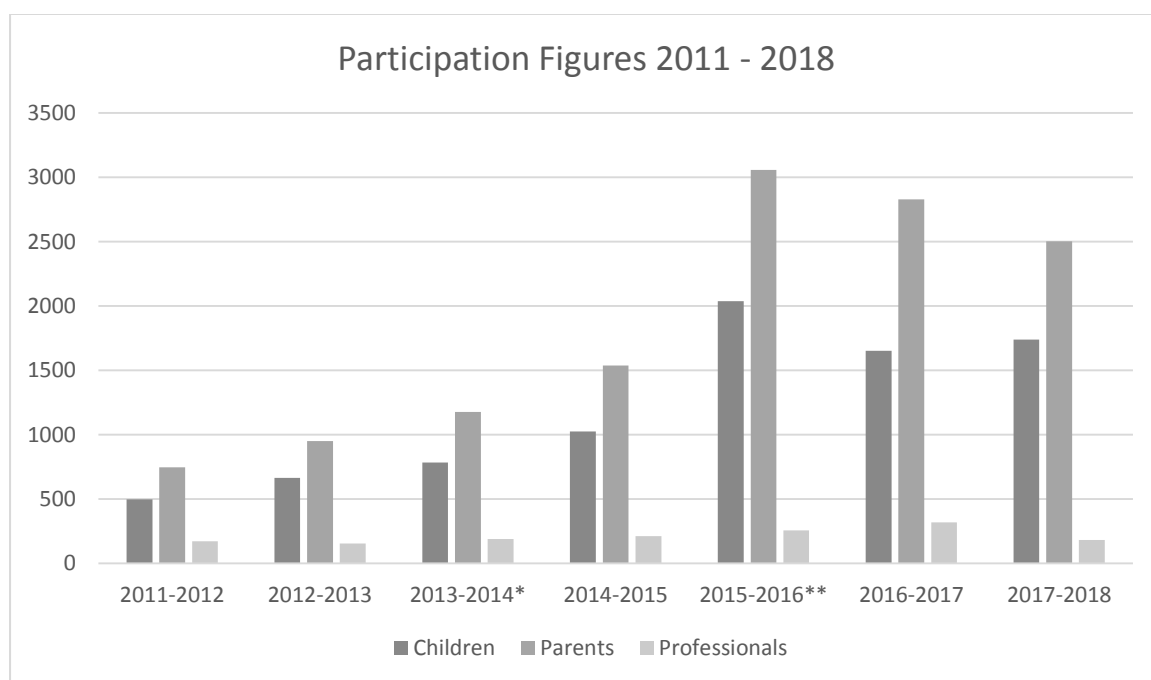


Figure 18. Participation Figures 2011-2018

12.1.2 Participation 2017/2018

Approximately 1,739 children and their numeracy buddy took part in the early numeracy programme, supported by an estimated 180 educators from a variety of services, including ELI Home Visiting Teams, Early Childhood Education and Care Settings, Primary Schools, Afterschool's, Libraries and Health Centre – 38 organisations in total.

The programme revolves around the three curriculum-focused early numeracy weeks. The numeracy themes for 2017/18 were:

- ✓ Positional and Directional Language (November 2017)
- ✓ Shape (February 2018)
- ✓ Counting (May 2018)

Each service/school received an Early Numeracy Resource Pack, which contained books and materials, practitioner and home/parent cards and posters. These resources are all based on Síolta and Aistear. This year, the resource cards were reviewed in conjunction with the practitioners. The purpose of the review was to build capacity of the early year's educators and develop their skills. Aistear, Síolta resource guides were provided to encourage educators to identify the links within the children's learning during numeracy week to the relevant themes and learning goals from Aistear. This practice supported the further development of documenting children's learning to develop practice in planning for future learning and development.

This section outlines the responses received throughout the year from educators and parents to the evaluation forms distributed through the services/schools.

Staff Feedback

Staff members working in the services and schools where Early Numeracy Week took place in 2016-2017 completed evaluation forms. Early Numeracy Week, as mentioned above, consisted of three different terms (symbols of the environment, number and money). The table below presents the staff evaluation forms return rate across all services and schools for each term (Term 1, Term 2, Term 3) In Table 15, the return rate out of the total number of services and schools involved for each term is presented.

Table 15. Return Rate for Numeracy Staff Evaluations 2017-2018

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
No. of services and schools who returned the forms	12	19	N/A*
Total No. of forms returned	41	78	41

*Due to logistical challenges, no record is available of which schools and services returned staff evaluation services in Term 3

Staff members were asked about the learning opportunities that were provided to children, parents and staff in their service or school during Early Numeracy Week. In Table 16, the responses of staff members answering the respective questions are presented. The vast majority of the practitioners and teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that Early Numeracy Week provided valuable learning opportunities to children, their parents and practitioners and teachers themselves.

Table 16. Staff Responses about the Learning Opportunities of the Early Numeracy Week for Children, Parents and Staff

Early Numeracy Week provided valuable learning opportunities for:						
Children						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Term 1 (N=35)	0%	0%	0%	0%	37.1%	62.9%
Term 2 (N=69)	0%	0%	0%	1.4%	33.3%	65.2%
Term 3 (N=37)	5.4%	0%	0%	2.7%	32.4%	59.5%
Parents						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Term 1 (N=34)	0%	2.9%	5.9%	20.6%	44.1%	26.5%
Term 2 (N=66)	0%	3%	3%	12.1%	43.9%	37.9%
Term 3 (N=34)	5.4%	0%	5.9%	8.8%	29.4%	52.9%
Staff						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Term 1 (N=34)	0%	0%	0%	2.9%	32.4%	64.7%
Term 2 (N=61)	0%	0%	1.6%	6.6%	34.4%	57.4%
Term 3 (N=33)	3%	0%	0%	18.2%	24.2%	54.5%

Table 17. Staff Responses about the Learning Opportunities of the Early Numeracy Week for Children, Parents and Staff, in the Years 2012-2018

The Early Numeracy Weeks provided valuable learning opportunities for	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Children	96%	95%	100%	98%	99%	98%
Staff	73%	84%	83%	97%	97%	98%
Parents	67%	73%	97%	97%	96%	91%

The trends remain positive in terms of staff perceptions of the numeracy week, despite the decrease in the percentage of participants who view the programme as providing valuable learning opportunities for parents. Parental involvement will need to be reviewed and strengthened in 2018/19. However, it was interesting to note that in Term 3 (see Table 16 above), when satisfaction rates for parental learning rose, satisfaction rates for children and staff decreased.

Overall, across the three terms, staff members reported that they were most likely to engage in numeracy songs, followed by activities and games. These responses indicate that this year, staff were engaged in similar activities as during Numeracy Week last year. As with last year, 'numeracy songs' and 'activities' were the most popular activities, with 'trips to the library' being the least popular option.

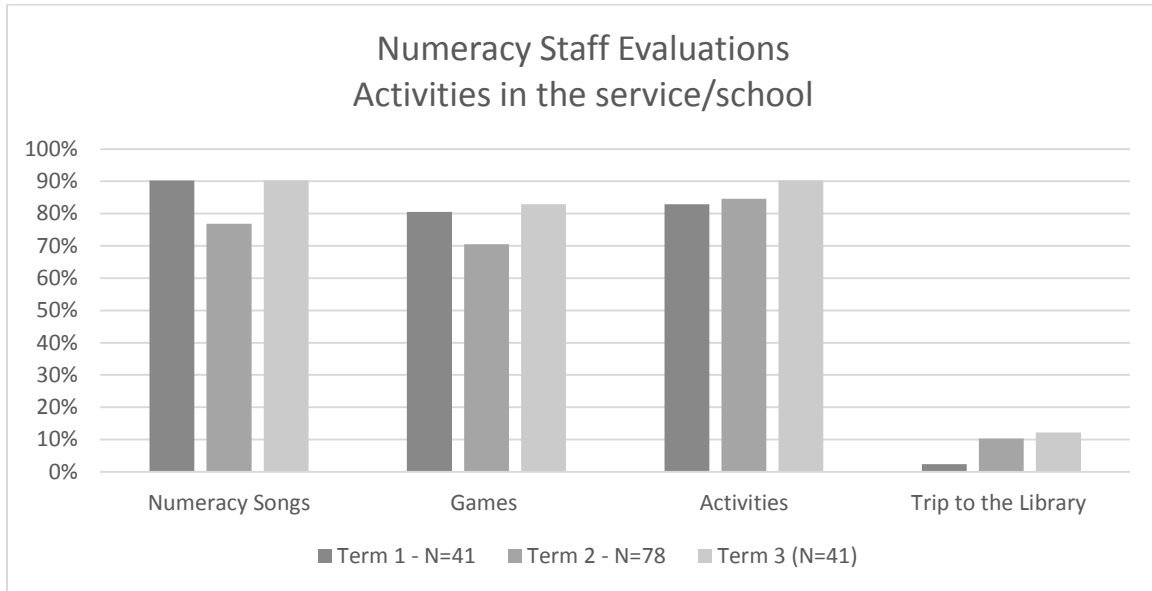


Figure 19. Numeracy Staff Evaluations: Activities in the Service/School

Staff were also asked about the impact of Early Numeracy week on children, with the children's enjoyment of Numeracy Week being the most popular response across all three terms. In comparison to last year, where more of an increase in parental involvement was reported by staff in Term 1 than Term 3, the responses below suggest that staff saw Early Numeracy Week creating increased parental involvement to a significantly greater extent towards the end of the year than in the first two terms. This may be reflective of the cumulative effect of increased efforts throughout this year by the Early Numeracy Week coordinator and staff to encourage parental involvement.

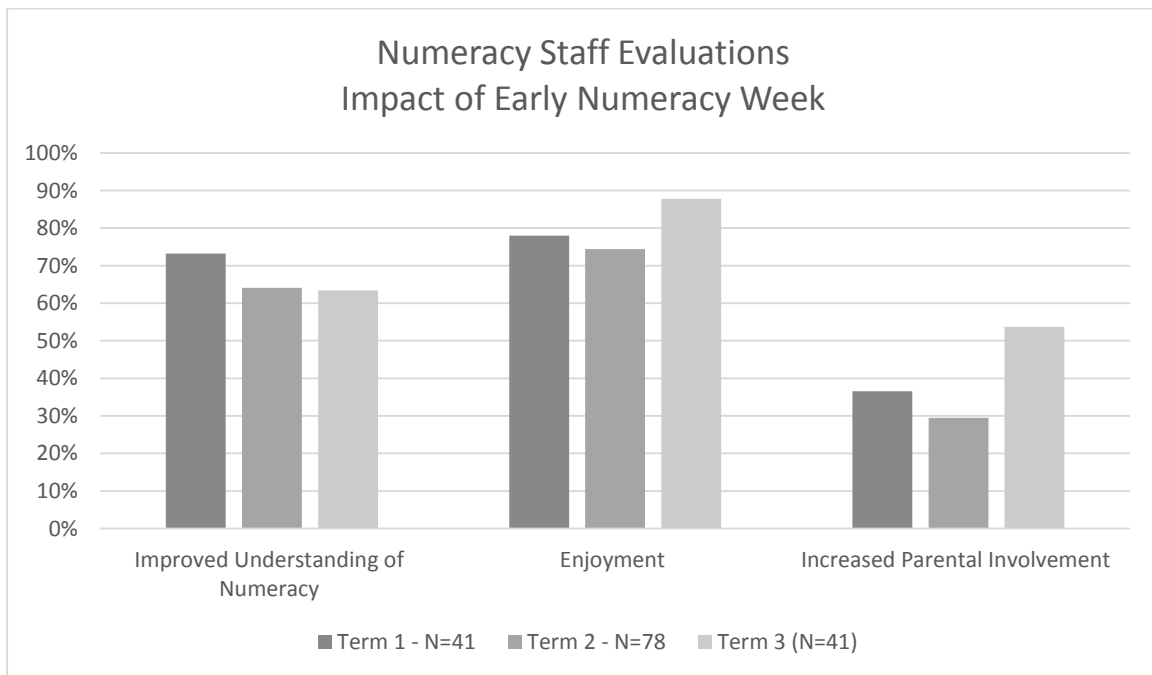


Figure 20. Numeracy Staff Evaluations: Influences of Numeracy Week

Staff's opinions about which were the best things about Early Numeracy Week are presented in Table 18, together with responses to the same question last year for comparison purposes. As can be seen, children's learning was the outcome most staff viewed as the best thing about Early Numeracy Week for the last two years. Again, staff responses to this question indicate a greater observation of increased parental involvement towards the end of the year this year, in comparison to patterns of parental involvement in 2016-2017.

Table 18. The Best Things about Early Numeracy Week, as Reported by Staff

Best things about Early Numeracy Week	Term 1 2017-2018	Term 1 2016-2017	Term 2 2017-2018	Term 2 2016- 2017	Term 3 2017- 2018	Term 3 2016- 2017
Children's Learning	95.1%	84.1%	78.2%	79.7%	82.9%	76.8%
Activity Cards	41.5%	47.8%	37.2%	50.6%	34.1%	41.1%
Increased Parental Involvement	24.4%	40.6%	28.2%	41.8%	43.9%	48.2%

Staff members were also asked about the impact Early Numeracy Week had on them and their learning. Their replies focused on:

- *The introduction of new and different ideas and activities to them and the children*
- *The reinforcing nature of Early Numeracy Week in demonstrating how much numeracy-based language the staff were already using with the children, outside of Early Numeracy Week*
- *Motivating them to find new ways to incorporate numeracy language and learning into other daily activities*
- *Bringing the different competency and interest levels of the children to the staff's attention*
- *Increasing staff confidence in implementing activities and teaching numeracy concepts*
- *Learning new ways to approach activities with the children*
- *Staff enjoyment of Early Numeracy Week activities and interacting with the children in a fun way*

The support that Early Numeracy Week provided to staff practices in other areas was another aspect investigated by the evaluation forms. In this respect, a number of staff members highlighted the links that could be made between the content covered during Early Numeracy Week and aspects of Aistear and Síolta, which helped in documenting the children's learning. They also remarked that Early Numeracy Week assisted in their planning. A number of staff mentioned applying the skills and activities learned during Early Numeracy Week to other subjects including English, Art, Music and Geography.

Staff members were also asked to answer the question 'What do you think worked well this week?' As can be seen below, the majority of staff felt that room-based activities, stories, songs and rhymes and the resources provided were the aspects of Early Numeracy Week that worked well.

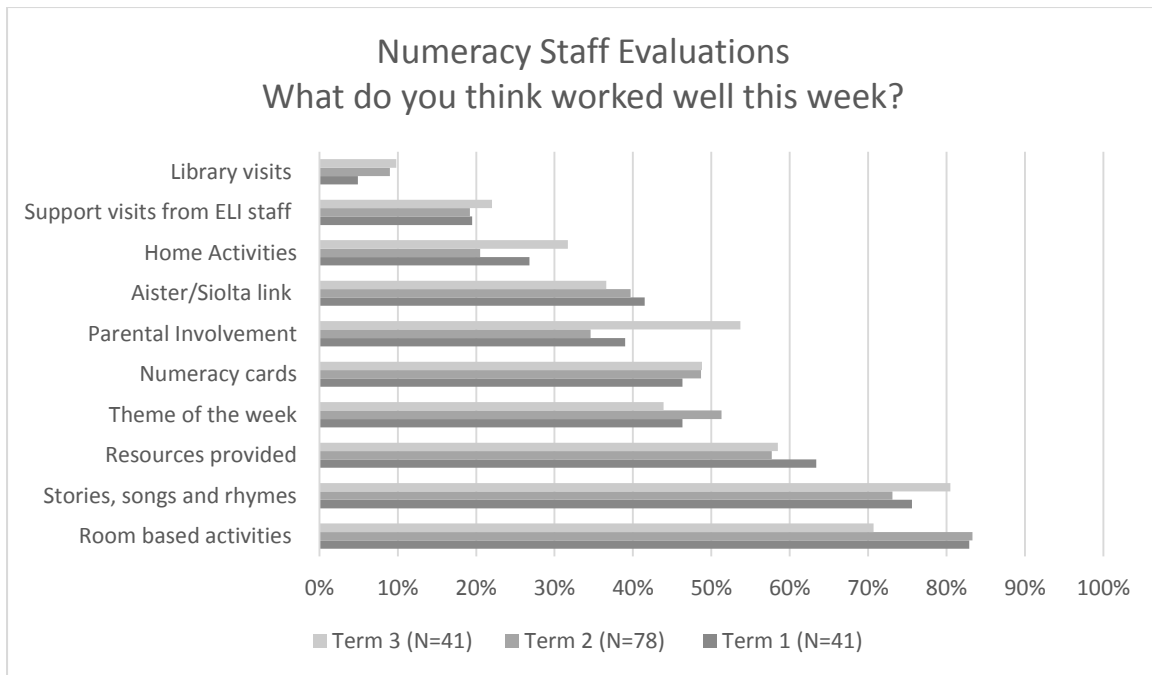


Figure 21. Numeracy Staff - What Worked Well During Early Numeracy Week?

In order to identify whether the things that work well about Early Numeracy Week are similar or vary from year to year, presented at Figure 22 below are the responses of staff to this question this year, as compared to last year's responses, based on the average responses across the three terms. It should be noted that this question was not presented to staff in Term 1 of 2016-2017 and accordingly the averages below are calculated based on responses in Term 2 and Term 3 of that year only. As can be seen below, responses in terms of what worked the best about Early Numeracy Week were quite similar across both years, which indicates consistency in the delivery and reception of the programme.

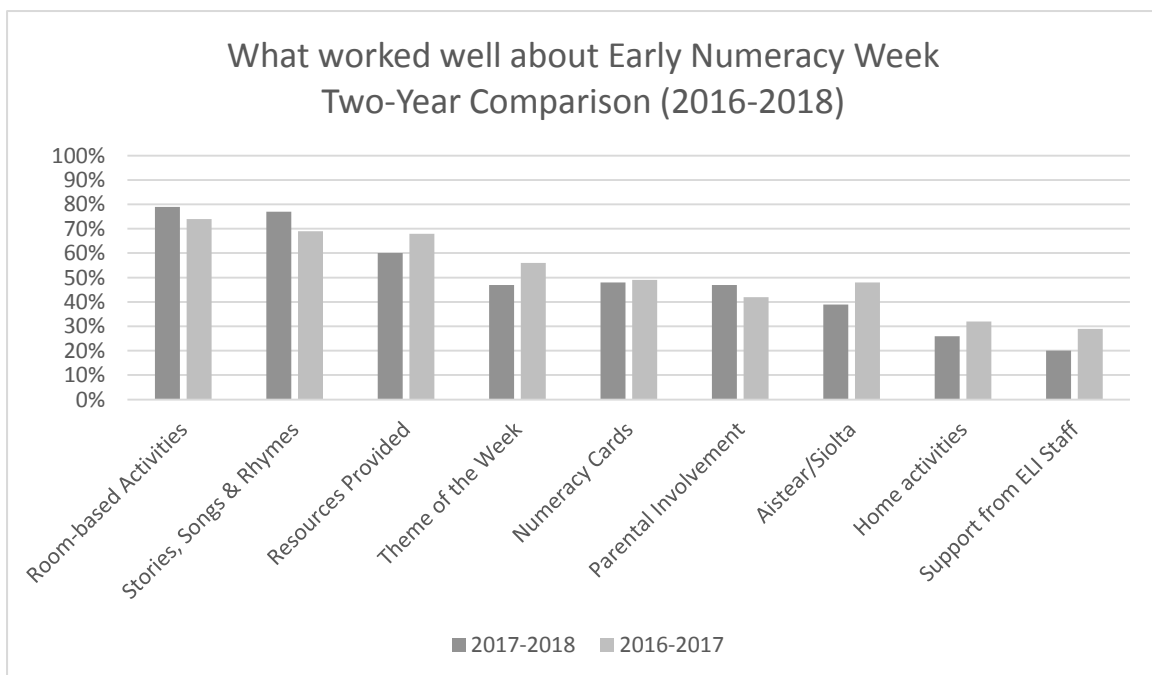


Figure 22. Numeracy Staff - What Worked Well during Early Numeracy Week? (Two-year Comparison)

The staff also reported on what did not work well during Early Numeracy Weeks. One common piece of negative feedback which was reported by some staff surrounded the impact of the weather on Early

Numeracy Week in Term 2. Due to the weather-related postponement of the programme, there was an overlap with another of the scheduled ELI programmes – Zoom Ahead with Books. A number of staff commented that this scheduling issue led to challenges in running Early Numeracy Week activities as originally planned. Parental involvement and the amount of equipment provided were also aspects of Early Numeracy Week in which a number of staff commented they would like to see improvement.

Overall comments from staff included:

- *‘Numeracy Week gave me some new ideas of activities to do with the children.’*
- *‘It reminded me to continue to make reference to our environment and how shapes are all around us. The children continue to find shapes around the classroom and school.’*
- *‘The resources were excellent and provided lots of opportunity for learning and active learning.’*
- *‘The children really enjoyed all the new toys and books and understood positional language even more.’*
- *‘Whole school approach was great because all children could benefit from the counting pictures that were placed around the indoor and outdoor pre-school areas’*
- *‘We had a ‘counting bug’ hunt in the school garden which the children carried out with their parents/family members. This activity reminded me how important it is to regularly include parents in children’s learning at school’*

Parents’ Feedback

Parents of children involved in Early Numeracy Week also completed an evaluation form regarding the overall experience of the programme. In total, 308 forms were returned with is a significant increase from 173 last year.

The total number of parent evaluation forms returned for each term are presented below. In Term 3, based on feedback from the Working Group around the challenges encountered in the evaluation process, a mixed-methods approach was piloted in the collection of parent evaluations. An online version of the evaluation form was offered to parents, with 23 parents returning their feedback in this way. In addition, three services availed of the assistance of Home Visitors on-site at collection time in supporting parents in completing paper evaluation forms. As can be seen below, this resulted in Term 3 producing the highest return of parent evaluations.

Table 19. Number of Parent Evaluation Forms Returned After Early Numeracy Week

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Total No. of parent forms returned	70	101	137

In both Term 1 and Term 2, 93% of parents reported awareness of the numeracy activities being carried out with their child in the school/service. In Term 3, 89% of parents were aware of the activities. The majority of parents heard about these numeracy activities from the school/service (79% in Term 1, 73% in Term 2 and 91% in Term 3), followed by directly from their child (39% in Term 1, 37% in Term 2 and 26% in Term 3). Smaller numbers of parents heard about Early Numeracy Week from other parents, the community and social media.

When parents were asked whether they had used the Home Based Numeracy Activity Cards, the majority of parents (93.2% in Term 1/86% in Term 2/91% in Term 3) answered that they did use the

cards. A large majority of parents also reported that the activity cards were easy to understand and use.

Table 15 presents how these trends have changed over the past three years of implementation of the ABC Early Numeracy Programme.

Table 20. Overall Parents' Feedback for the Early Numeracy Week 2014-2018

Early Numeracy Week Activities	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Aware numeracy activities were being done with the children in the centres/schools	94%	94%	96%	96%
Use the home activity cards	92%	96%	94%	94%
Recommend Numeracy week/activities to a friend	90%	97%	100%	99%

Parents were also asked about their awareness around the specific activities their children were doing during Early Numeracy Week (Figure 23). Many parents reported a good awareness of the types of activities taking place as part of Early Numeracy Week, showing strong engagement with the programme. Across the three terms, approximately 55% of parents also reported an awareness of the use of Aistear/Síolta in their child's school.

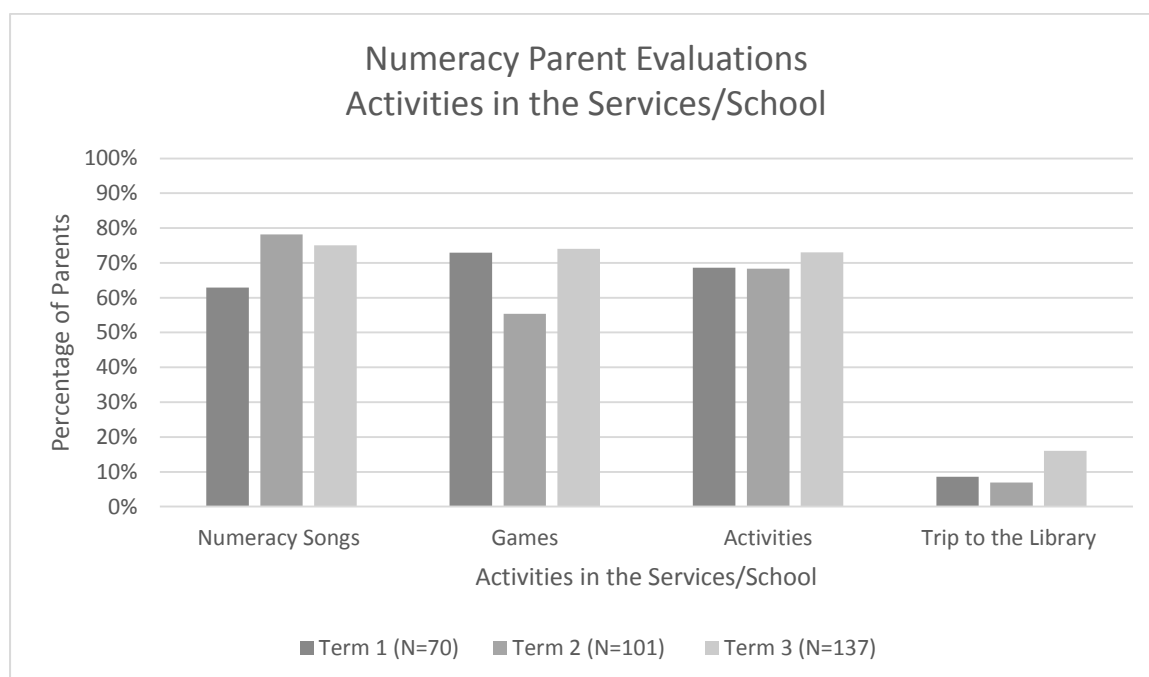


Figure 23. Numeracy Parent Evaluations: Activities in the Service/School 2017/2018

Parents were also asked about the effect that the Numeracy Activity Cards and School/Service-based Activities had on them as a parent. As can be seen below, increased involvement in their child's learning and enjoyment of the activities were the most popular responses across all three terms. This is comparable with findings in previous recent years where increased involvement in their child's learning was rated by parents in both 2016-2017 (66% of parents, N=157) and 2015-2016 (66% of

parents, N=232) as being the greatest influence of Early Numeracy Week activities on the parents themselves.

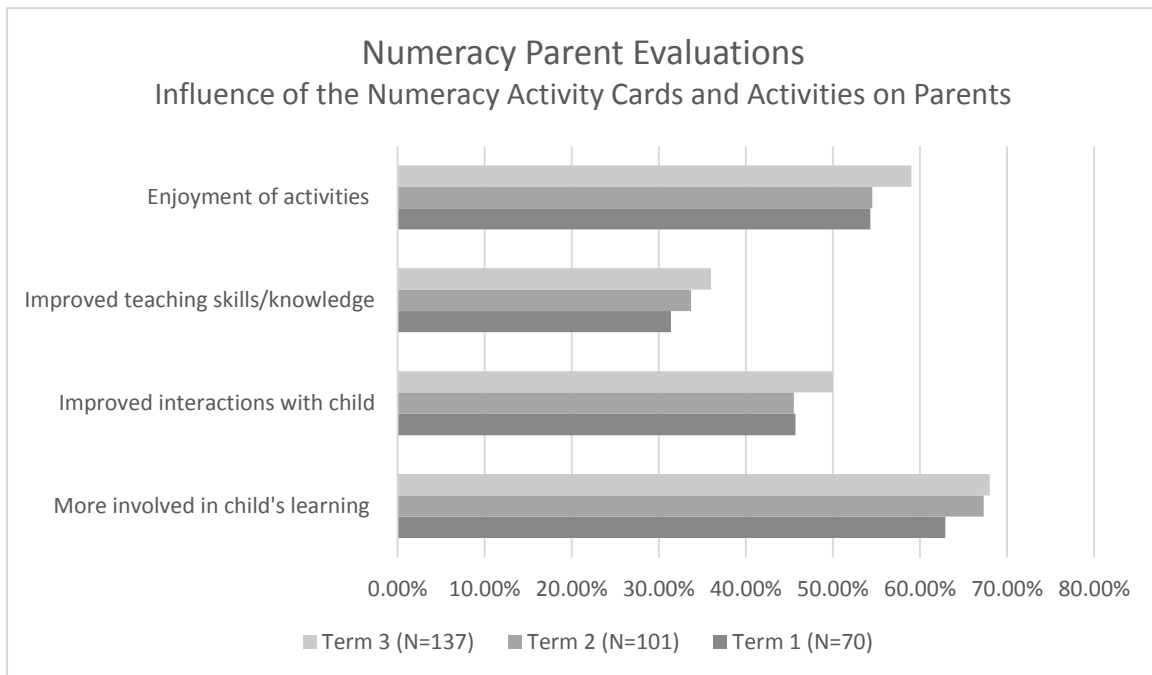


Figure 24. Numeracy Parent Evaluations: Influence of the Numeracy Activity Cards and Activities on Parents

In terms of the influence Early Numeracy Week activities and cards had on children, a significant proportion of parents reported that children enjoyed the week and demonstrated an improved understanding of the numeracy theme, as can be seen below at Figure 25.

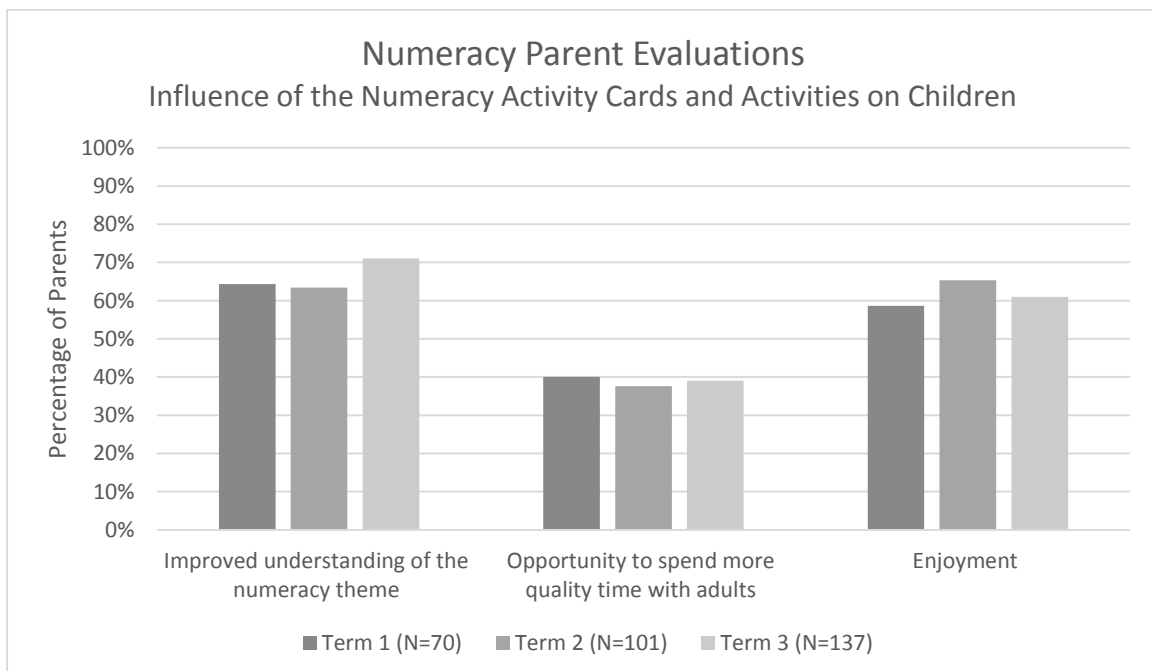


Figure 25. Numeracy Parent Evaluations: Influence of the Numeracy Activity Cards and Activities on Children

When compared to last year's responses to this question, the average percentage of parents across all three terms in 2017-2018 are comparable to previous years, as demonstrated in Table 21 below. These comparisons reflect a positive trend of an increased percentage of parents indicating their children's enjoyment in taking part in the programme over the last number of years.

Table 21 Comparison of the Influence of Early Numeracy Week Activities on Children 2015-2018

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Improved understanding of Numeracy	68%	54%	66%
Opportunity to spend more quality time with adults	34%	31%	39%
Enjoyment	54%	57%	62%

Across all three terms in 2017-2018, the most commonly reported “best” aspect of Early Numeracy Week from the parents’ perspective was the fun activities in the child’s school/service. The parents’ perspectives throughout the year were comparable to those expressed in 2016-2017 with similar percentages of parents finding home-based activities (41% - 2016/17; 49% - 2017/18); increased awareness/learning (46% - 2016/17; 42% - 2017/18); parental involvement (60% - 2016/17; 57% - 2017/18); and fun school/service-based activities (56% - 2016/17; 61% - 2017/18) to be the best things about Early Numeracy Week.

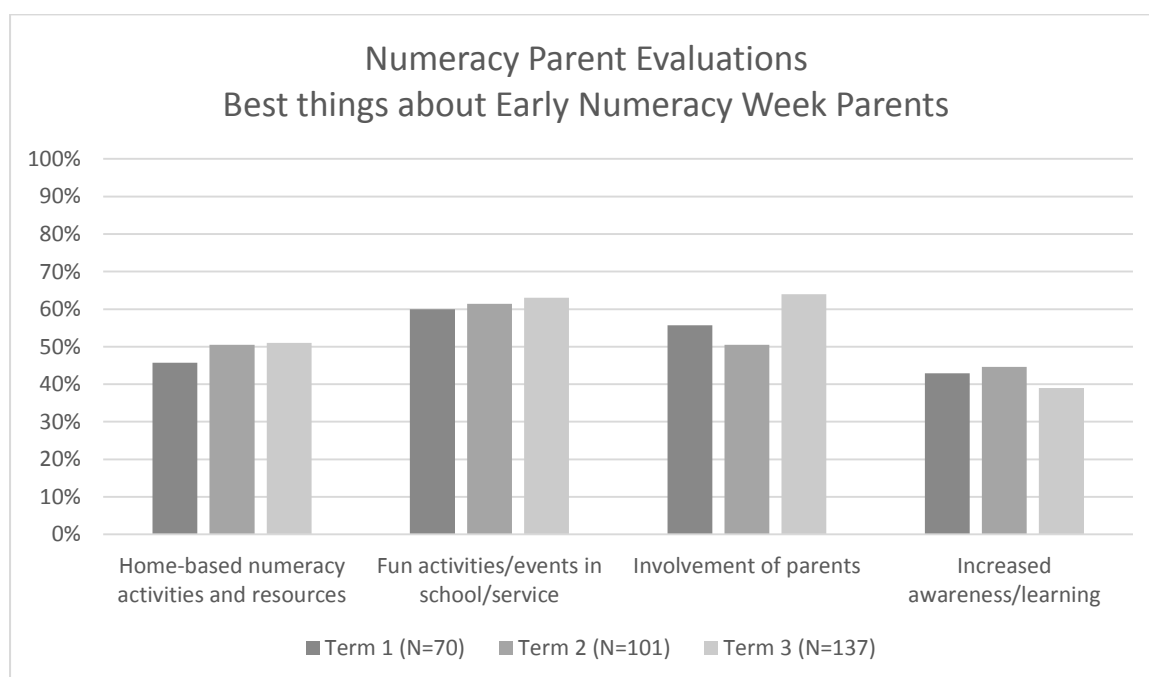


Figure 26. Numeracy Parent Evaluations: Best Things about Early Numeracy Week

Parents were also asked to point out the things that worked well during the week. Many parents commented on the opportunities they had to get involved in their children’s learning through the games and activities of Early Numeracy Week. The songs and rhymes were also reported by many parents as being one of the most enjoyable aspects for them and their children. The sheets and activity cards that were sent home with the children were also reported to be one of the best things about Numeracy Week.

Regarding the aspects that did not work well during Early Numeracy Week, many parents commented that there was nothing that they would improve. Of those that did, comments reflected the difficulty involved in completing one activity every day at home and the fact that some of the children seemed to lose interest in the activities. One parent commented that they were unable to go to the library and

interestingly suggested that, instead, parents could be provided with a list of online sources for books/resources relevant to the theme.

Parent comments on what worked well included:

- *'We enjoyed singing the songs at home and we played games finding different shapes in our house and when we drove to crèche'*
- *'I think they all worked very well, each day was something new but still kept on the same theme'*
- *'Shape Week has Child pointing out shapes at home, which was fascinating'*
- *'I would have loved to be there longer. But I can't fault a thing – my daughter and I had a lovely morning – thank you!'*
- *'Mixing music with learning'*
- *'My child enjoys counting more than before. He uses many opportunities to acknowledge numbers (toys, food or cars on the street. His favourite numbers are 2 and 3'*
- *'I found all of the activities worked well, they all have their own advantages and as long as activities are being used at home as well as school children will benefit immensely'*
- *'To play together with our child and to see how he/she enjoys it and learns at the same time. It was fun for the parent and his brother too'*
- *'Made homework enjoyable and fun!'*
- *'Cards/songs/activities easy to use, presented well, child enjoyed them very much'*
- *'The number exercises worked well as it helped him to focus on his surroundings'*
- *'Everything worked well the whole family got involved'*
- *'Working together to make sure our children are learning what they learn in school, it's good to keep on top of things'*

12.1.3 Numeracy Assessments

In October 2012, the Educational Psychology Department in UCD agreed to support a local ELI evaluation of children's numeracy outcomes. An innovative numeracy assessment tool was devised by Terri Lalor, a Master Degree Student (Special Education). The Assessment of Early Mathematical Skills and Concepts (AEMSC) provides ELI and its partner early years' services with data on children's Mathematical Development and evidence of programme impact; thereby enabling us to support children's Mathematical outcomes and address programme weaknesses.

The purpose of the AEMSC is to determine if the child has mastered the following basic Mathematical skills and concepts needed for formal mathematical education:

- Number - Recognising Quantity & Symbol, Counting (40 items)
- Size & Comparisons (9 items)
- Shape - Recognising & Identifying (16 items)
- Direction/Position (6 items)
- Early Maths Skills (9 items)
- Mental Maths (8 items)

It focuses on both receptive and expressive language ability in order to determine the child's language skills, cognitive development, and school readiness.

From 2012-17, the AEMSC has been administered to children in

- Pre-school Year in Early Years' Services by students from UCD's Educational Psychology Department
- Junior Infants in the Primary Schools by NCI Psychology students

The results of these assessments have been both consistent and very positive over the past three cycles of testing. The two main factors that influence the results are the age of the child at the time of testing and the area in which the preschool is located. A full report on these assessments is available upon request from ELI.

Between June and September 2017 a numeracy review took place with services and schools involved in the Early Numeracy Assessments. The group considered the benefits of the assessment to the child, parent and practitioner, the suitability of the assessment and the validity and reliability of it. Based on the feedback it was decided that the following changes would be made:

1. Services would be given the choice of taking part in the numeracy assessments or alternatively a child focused focus group.
2. If services decide to continue to engage with the numeracy assessments, the system would be changed whereby staff who work with children would be asked to administer the assessments with NCI Psychology Students observing.
3. The assessments would be shortened. Specifically, subtests 11, 15,17,18,19 and 20 were removed. Specifically, subtest 11 was part of the shape domain, reducing this domain from 16 to 8 while subtest 13 was part of the early maths skills domain, reducing the totals in this domain from 9 to 7. Subtest 15 was part of the number domain, reducing the items in this domain from 40 to 29. Finally, subtest 17, 18, 19 and 20 were all part of the mental maths domain.

The revised AEMSC now contains:

- Number - Recognising Quantity & Symbol, Counting (35 items)
- Size & Comparisons (9 items)
- Shape - Recognising & Identifying (8 items)
- Direction/Position (6 items)
- Early Maths Skills (9 items)

In 2017-2018, the revised numeracy assessments were administered by teachers and practitioners within the schools and services. Three early year services and one primary school opted to be part of the numeracy assessments. In total, the assessment was administered to 30 children across three Early Year Services aged between 3:0 years and 4:10 years old (both in the pre and post-test) and 16 children from a Primary school aged between 5:3 years and 6:2 years old (in the pre-test). The assessments take place twice each academic year – one assessment prior and one assessment following the Early Numeracy Programme that the children are involved with. From the 30 children that took part in the numeracy assessment in November 2017, 27 took part in the post-assessments in May/June 2017. This retention rate (90%) has greatly improved from the 2016/17 retention rate (53%) and is attributed to the increased buy-in from services.

In the pre-test for the early years' services, girls ($m=67.4\%$, $SD=19.5$) performed slightly better than boys ($M=59.845\%$, $SD=21.95$) however this difference was not statistically significant. This finding is in contrast to the 2016/17 results where boys ($m=63.7\%$, $SD=21.06$) performed statistically significantly better than girls ($m=52.0\%$, $SD=19.90$) ($t(51) = 2.085$, $p=0.042$). In post-testing, again girls ($m=75.75$, $SD=14.66$) performed better than boys ($m=70.167$, $SD=22.69$) however this difference was not statistically significant. The difference between average scores for boys and girls was smaller during post-testing, suggesting that the numeracy programmes may have helped bridge the gender gap in performance. However, these findings could be due to different developmental stages of the children and they should be interpreted with caution. Differences on performance based on children's gender could not be tested for the primary school, as it consisted of one gender only.

In Table 22, the trends in the percentage scores of the baseline assessments are presented for 2012 until the current year. The changes made to the assessments, outlined above, should be considered in interpreting these results. It should also be considered that the scores should not be compared among the different years; as different child cohorts were involved each year. The scores provide the trends for each assessment area. In the current academic year 2017-2018, the average percentage score was 64%, which was a large increase from the previous year of 56%. However, it should be noted the impact the changes made to the assessments this year, primarily the possibility that the self-selection of services into the numeracy assessments may have reduced the participation of some of the weaker services. Overall, children performed better at baseline in 'shape' and 'direction and position'. Overall, the above-mentioned areas, along with 'early maths skills' and 'direction and position' tend to have the highest scores throughout the years. The area of 'number' continues to have a low performance whilst 'mental maths' has been removed from the assessment.

Table 22. Numeracy Assessments: Baseline Percentage Scores per Assessment Area from 2012 to 2017

	Number	Early Maths Skills	Direction & Position	Size & Comparison	Mental Maths	Shape	Overall Score
2017/2018	52%	69%	79%	79%	Removed	81%	64%
2016/2017	42%	68%	78%	80%	43%	71%	56%
2015/2016	44%	63%	60%	74%	40%	73%	55%
2014/2015	38%	67%	67%	67%	38%	69%	50%
2013/2014	38%	70%	52%	61%	33%	67%	53%
2012/2013	40%	62%		65%	11%	67%	53%

In Figure 27, the average overall percentage scores are presented both for the baseline and the end of year assessments. Children improved their average performance by 8% going from baseline to the end of year. The average percentage scores per assessment area are also presented both for the baseline and the end of year assessments. Children improved their performances in all different assessment areas. The area where children exhibited the greatest increase for the 2017-2018 academic year was 'size and comparison', increasing their scores from 79% to 93%. Children demonstrated the slightest increase in the area of 'shape' (going from 81% to 83%).

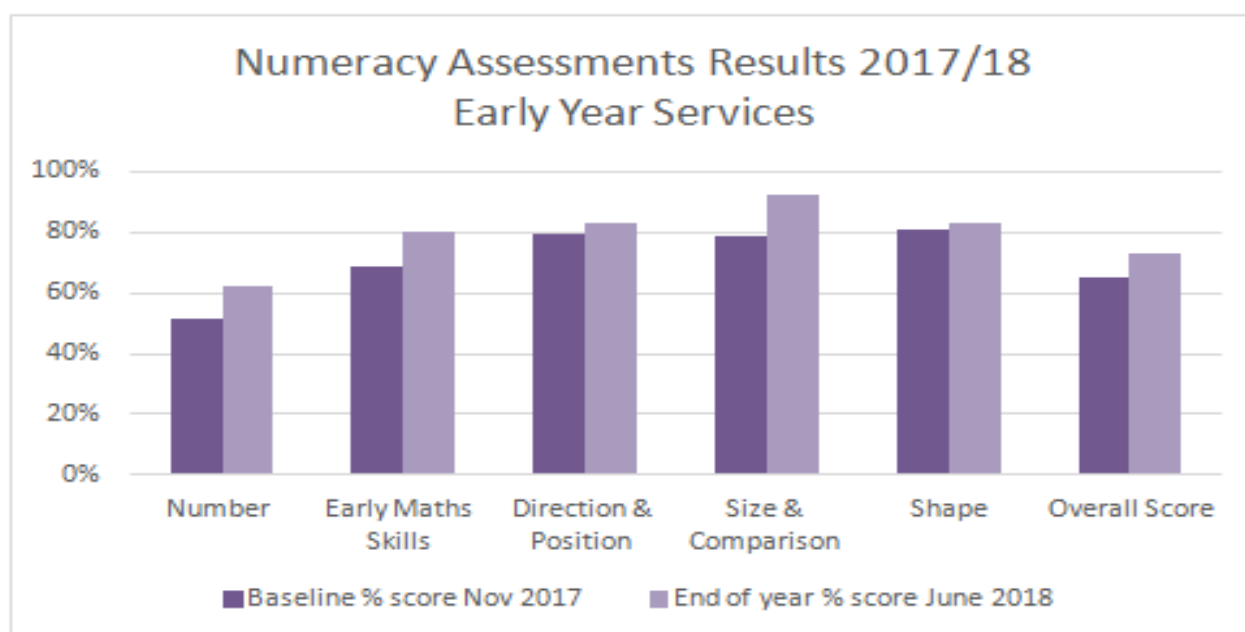


Figure 27. Numeracy Assessments Results 2016/2017 per Assessment Area: Average Percentage Score - Early Years Services

Of the three services who participated in the numeracy assessments in 2017/18, two of the three services demonstrated an increase in the overall percentage score, with 15% being the largest average improvement for the 'blue' service and 10% being the smallest average improvement for the purple service (Figure 28). One of the services decreased its average percentage score from 73% to 71%, but it should be mentioned that the child who scored the highest at pre-test did not participate in post testing.

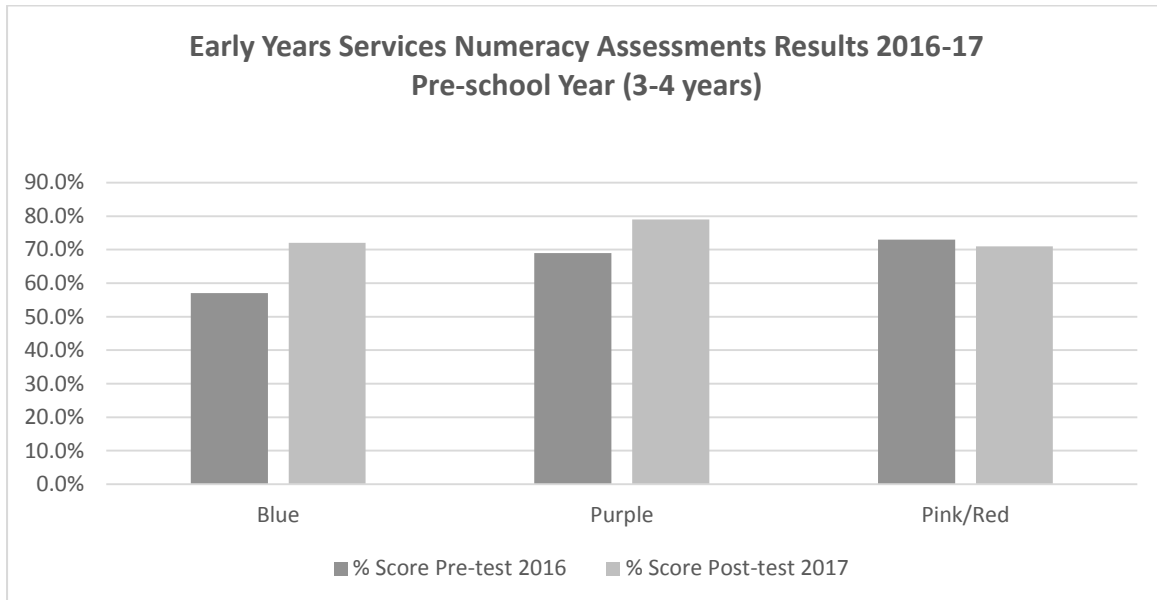


Figure 28. Numeracy Assessments Results 2017/18 per Service: Average Percentage - Early Years Services

In Figure 29, the average percentage scores on the pre-test across all early years' services are presented based on the children's age group. There was a difference of approximately nine points on average between younger and older children. Age was not found to be statistically significantly related to children's score ($r=.251$, $p=.180$).

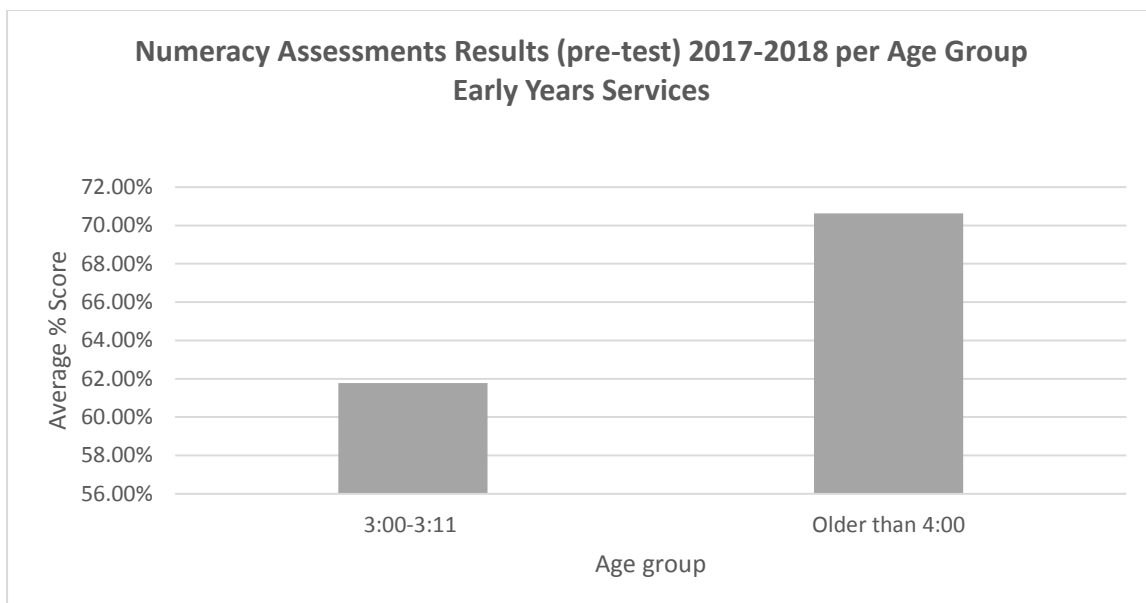


Figure 29. Numeracy Assessments Results (pre-test) 2017-2018 per Age Group: Average Percentage Score - Early Years' Service

In the post-test of the numeracy assessments, there was a difference of approximately eleven points on average between younger and older children. Age was not a statistically significant factor in terms of children’s performance ($r=.283$, $p=0.153$).

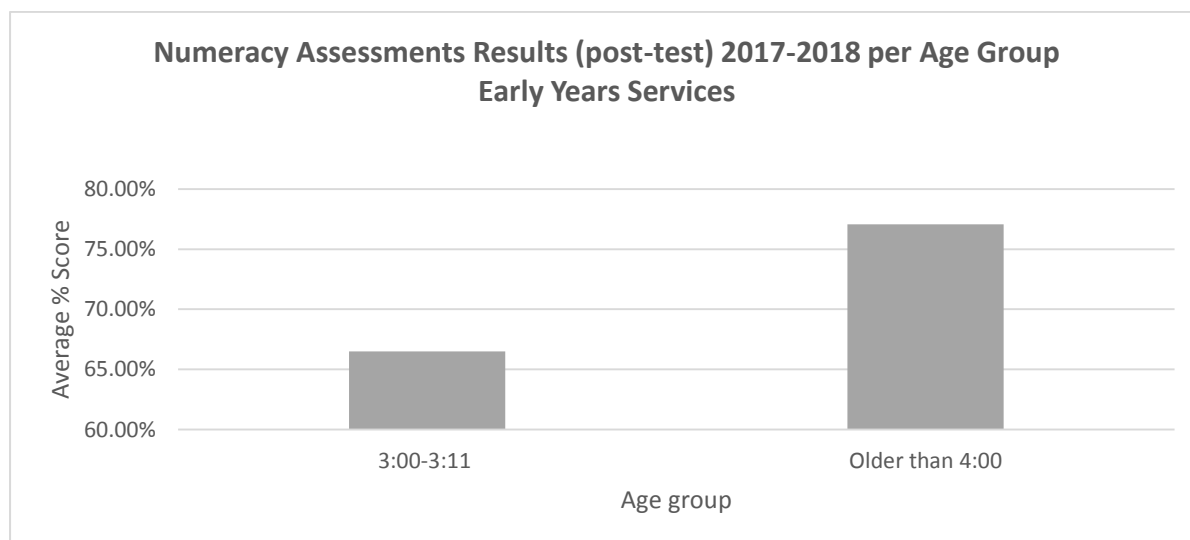


Figure 30. Numeracy Assessments Results (Post-Test) 2017-2018 per Age Group: Average Percentage Score - Early Years’ Service

As in previous years, numeracy assessments were conducted in junior infant classes in primary schools. While they are normally conducted in one primary school in Dublin Docklands and another in a middle class area, due to changes in Garda Vetting procedures it is no longer possible for these to be conducted in the middle class areas. They were however conducted in the local primary school, and were completed by the class teacher.

As can be seen from Table 23, this year children in the Dublin Docklands School increased in the areas of Number, Size and Comparison, Direction and Maths Skills. The students showed a slight decrease in shape, however overall the children’s average scores increased from 85% in 2016/17 to 92% in 2017/18.

Table 23. Mean Scores of Children in the Middle Class and in the Dublin Docklands Schools per Assessment Area

Year	School	Number	Size & comparison	Shape	Direction	Mental maths	Maths Skills	Overall score
2013/14	MC	98	89	98	93	88	94	96
	DD	93	91	94	83	83	99	92
2014/15	MC	86	81	93	97	85	88	88
	DD	76	96	95	99	71	93	87
2015/16	MC	96	98	97	97	85	96	96
	DD	86	90	84	74	72	64	84
2016/17	MC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	DD	85	93	92	82	65	85	85
2017/18	MC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	DD	91	97	78	94	-	92	92

12.2 Early Years Continued Professional Development and Mentoring

High quality early childhood education has long-lasting beneficial effects on children and society, with competence of the workforce perceived as one of the more salient predictors of ECEC quality (Urban, et al 2011). Continuous professional development (CPD) is considered central to good practice and a key element in the provision of high quality experiences for children.

Since 2007, ELI has worked with Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) settings to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their centres and the support the implementation of *Síolta, The Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education* (Síolta) (CECDE 2006) and *Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework* (Aistear) (NCCA 2009). A crucial element of this programme is to continue to ensure ongoing professional development opportunities which will embed learning within the settings and allow for dissemination of knowledge among all staff members and parents. Action research, peer learning and on-site mentoring support the practitioners in improving teaching and learning in their settings through the successful management of innovation and change.

There are three strands in the Programme:

- Communities of Practice – Early Numeracy Working Group, including Peer Learning and Support
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training, including Action Planning
- On-site mentoring and support to early years services, including the review and development of their individualised Action Plans

ELI's relationship with local early year's services and its professional credibility within the local community has fostered the development of a structured 'learning community' where all participants can engage in a collaborative construction of knowledge. Disseminating the knowledge gained through CPD to parents and engaging them in their children's learning is an essential element of our programme.

The focus of the programmes is:

- Parental involvement in children's learning
- Enhancing play, language, numeracy and abstract thinking within the early years setting and primary school for children from birth to six years
- Transition from childcare setting to primary school
- Effective adult pedagogies
- Leadership and mentoring

Short-term Targets

- To provide well-designed, high quality, on-going professional development for Early Years Care and Education (ECCE) providers in the area, primary schools, afterschool's and community agencies
- To develop an understanding of the importance and enjoyment of early years educational activities within the ECCE settings in line with the National Frameworks Aistear and Síolta
- To help ECCE settings and infant classes to implement the Aistear and Síolta frameworks
- To engage parents in children's learning and development within the ECCE settings
- To empower and support educators to be confident and competent in their professional roles through reflective practice as guided by the Aistear Síolta Practice Guide.

Medium-term Targets:

- To improve the quality of service and education provided by the local early years settings, schools and afterschool's in line with the Síolta standards
- To increase parental awareness and engagement in children's learning
- To establish links and build relationships between the ECCE providers and infant classes in the local schools through working group meetings, CPD and networking opportunities

Long-term Targets:

- To improve the educational outcomes for the children in these ECCE settings
- To establish a transition programme for children moving from ECCE settings in to Junior Infants in their local schools
- Early years education settings and primary schools will be implementing the Síolta and Aistear frameworks

12.2.1 Communities of Practice - Early Numeracy Working Group

The Early Numeracy Working Group is responsible for developing, planning and implementing the programme at front-line service delivery level. Each service, appoints an early numeracy nominee, with this nominee attending a Numeracy Working Group. These numeracy nominees, supported by management and colleagues, are responsible for ensuring the implementation of the Early Numeracy Project within their setting. They are also tasked with supporting both the ABC National and ELI's Local Evaluations, as appropriate, by distributing and collecting both staff and parent evaluations within their service.

This working group met four times in 2017-18 with an average attendance of eight participants from local early years' setting, schools, afterschools and libraries. The attendance has decreased from previous years which reflects the increased demands on schools and early year's services which has impacted on their ability to release staff to attend. Outreach site visits were offered to early year's services and schools to allow for feedback and planning for the year ahead.

As with previous years, having a numeracy nominee from each setting present at the working groups has been key to the successful implementation of the programme – with nominees taking ownership over the project. Through encouraging active participation in the working group, in the planning and implementation of the programme, a 'community of practice' has evolved. This community is developing a repertoire of experiences, stories, tools and perspectives, with their growing knowledge improving educational outcomes for children, across the Dublin Docklands and East Inner City.

At the end of the year, Working Group nominees were asked to complete evaluation forms to provide their feedback on the experience of taking part in the Working Group. A total of eight completed forms were returned. Of those who completed evaluation forms, 88% of nominees (N=8) felt that the Working Group was a useful opportunity to develop and plan the teaching and learning that would take place during Early Numeracy Week. All nominees who responded (100%, N=6) felt that the Working Group is a good forum for sharing and learning from others and 86% (N=7) found it to be a valuable networking opportunity. Working Group nominees were also asked what they had learned from the role. Comments are included below:

- *"I have only been attending a short time but it is very useful to plug into the wider Numeracy community and see the bigger picture. Otherwise it can be very isolating."*
- *"As a primary school teacher it's good to discuss with afterschools personnel what areas they will cover (we have the same children in different settings)"*
- *"Really enjoy other people's views. Feel I learn so much from these working group meetings"*
- *"Has been great for sharing ideas with other practitioners. Has been fun coming up with ideas to highlight the theme, to encourage parents' involvement"*

When asked what successes they had experienced, the majority of nominees mentioned either increased parental involvement or the success of parent/family events. A common challenge that was mentioned by a number of nominees was the difficulty in getting parents and staff to return evaluations.

12.2.2 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

This year there were three Pre-Numeracy Week workshops, delivered to a total of 51 staff across nineteen services and schools. Attendance was down on last year and like the numeracy working reflects the increased demands and staffing changes in early year's services. One additional CPD session was delivered on the topic of working with children with challenging behaviour. Paediatric First Training was offered to all services in September 2017 with 10 practitioners availing of the opportunity.

12.2.3 Pre-Numeracy Week Workshop

The introduction of the Pre-Numeracy Workshops in May 2015 has helped to build capacity and strengthen quality practice. Two weeks prior to each numeracy week, these sessions focus on the upcoming Numeracy Topics and create a numeracy learning space for educators. The intended learning outcomes for Pre-numeracy workshops are:

1. Develop awareness of the numeracy materials and resources that have been crafted and purchased for numeracy week
2. Explore areas of numeracy practice, guided by the six pillars of the Aistear Síolta Practice Guide, which include - Interactions, Play, Planning and Assessing, Parental Involvement, Learning Environments and transitions.
3. Develop a short term plan for numeracy week guided by the NCCA templates.

The Planning and Assessing pillar of the Aistear Síolta Practice Guide is explored at every Pre-Numeracy Workshop and one other pillar is also presented to participants.

In 2017/18, two numeracy workshops ran in Term one, with eighteen educators in attendance in total. In Term Two, three pre-numeracy workshops ran, again with a total of eighteen educators in attendance, and in Term Three, one workshop ran successfully with eighteen educators in attendance. In 2016/17, the majority of the participants (83%) were Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Practitioners with only 11% teachers, while in 2017/18, there was almost a 50:50 split between teachers (N=18) and early years practitioners (N=24).

In term two of 2016/17, there was a decrease in participation levels from ECEC practitioners at Pre-Numeracy Workshops due to the new staff regulations. As of December 2016 under the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations, all employees must have a minimum QQI Level 5 in Early Childhood Care and Education (Regulation 9 (4)). This had a major impact on settings, in particular those relying on Community Employment Schemes for staffing and has resulted in services being unable to release staff to attend the workshops. In addition, more services are engaging with Better Start and Dublin City Childcare Committee and this has an impact on their capacity to engage with ELL.

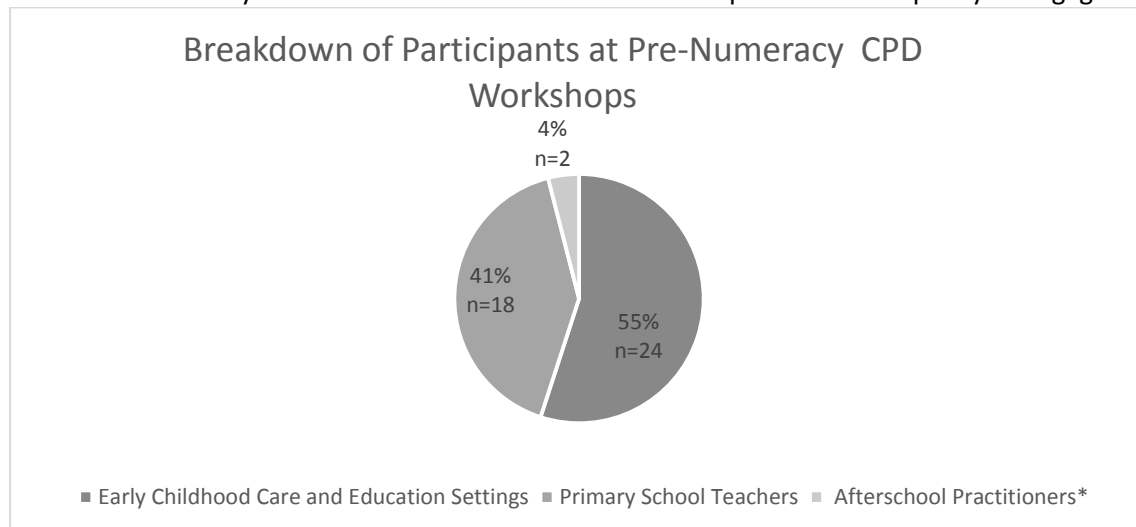


Figure 31. Breakdown of Participants at Pre-Numeracy CPD Workshops

**It must be noted that Early Years Practitioners often work between Early Childhood Care and Education services and Afterschool's service, although at training referred to their role as an Early Years Practitioner.*

The learning and development areas for Pre-numeracy workshops for 2017-2018 included:

November: Using the Learning Environment – Creating and using the class environment to support learning

February: Involving parents in their children's learning – Strategies to encourage and support parents

May: Extending Children's Learning & Sharing our ideas and experiences of involving parents in their children's learning.

Table 24. Pre-Numeracy Workshop Feedback 2017-2018

Pre-Numeracy Week Workshop	No. of participants	No. of evaluation forms filled out	Found the workshop interesting	Felt that it will support me to improve the quality of my practice	Facilitator was responsive to learning needs	I feel confident in making changes that will have an effect on the quality of my practice
Term 1	18	16	100%	100%	100%	94%
Term 2	18	12	100%	92%	92%	92%
Term 3	18	16	100%	100%	100%	100%
TOTAL	54	44	100%	97%	97%	95%

Comments from the participants on the best things about the workshop included:

- *“Getting the information on research and evaluation. Looking at resources and talking about how they can be used in the service”*
- *“As usual, having a chance to explore the materials and plan play with the coordinator and other teachers was super interesting. Very excited!”*
- *“Listening to other people's experiences”*
- *“Having a chat about ways to involve parents. Like hearing the ideas from other services to tailor them to our own”*
- *“Getting ideas on how to deliver the theme”*
- *“The trainer really goes into detail but also that you can do your own activities”*
- *“Sharing information between agencies was positive. There were some great ideas”*

12.2.4 Additional CPD Workshop

An additional CPD workshop was offered to settings, on the topic of ‘Working with children with challenging behaviours’. Feedback from the participants of this workshop are presented at Table 25 below.

Table 25. Additional CPD Workshop Feedback

Workshop	No of Participants	No. of evaluation forms filled out	Found the workshop interesting	Felt that it will support me to improve the quality of my practice	Facilitator was responsive to learning needs
Working with children with challenging behaviour	11	11	100%	100%	100%

Comments from participants on the best things about the workshop are included below:

- *“The information was brilliant and opened my eyes up to a different way of helping children with behaviour”*
- *“It’s really interesting and easy to understand. Very useful for our routine”*
- *“Finding new ways of dealing with behaviours and new techniques”*
- *“Hearing about alternative procedures to the challenging behaviour”*

12.2.5 Onsite Mentoring in Early Childhood Education and Care Settings

The main focus of the Onsite Mentoring Programme is on improving the quality of the teaching and learning in ECEC services. The visits support practitioners to reflect on and improve the quality of their practice using the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide Resource*. Areas prioritised included:

- Numeracy as part of the Early Numeracy Programme (Section 5.2)
- Planning and assessing for learning
- Adult child interactions
- Working in partnership with parents

Mentoring visits are guided by the *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide* developed by the NCCA (2015), the aim of mentoring is to support early year’s practitioners to reflect on their practice to increase and strength quality provision for young children and develop critical thinking skills. Prior to each visit, based on the numeracy theme and the needs of the service, the early years mentor prepares relevant examples of good practice using the *Aistear Síolta Online Practice Guide* along with suitable materials. On the visit, current practice is discussed using the *Aistear Síolta Online Practice Guide* as a benchmark. Based on this discussion, an action plan is agreed on and documented. Follow-up review visits along with additional support in strengthening quality, if necessary, are agreed.

Pre-Numeracy Mentoring Visits

Pre-numeracy visits were made to services, who had difficulties in sending staff to the pre-numeracy workshops. The pre-numeracy mentoring visits supported staff to plan for the upcoming numeracy week. The areas focused on were planning the classroom learning environment, using the numeracy resources, involving parents in their children's learning. There will be an increased focus on offering pre-numeracy support workshops to services in 2018/2019.

Numeracy in Action Visits

Numeracy in Action Visits are support visits which take place throughout Numeracy Week to see how settings are engaging with the numeracy theme, provide mentoring support to Educators and assess additional supports that maybe required during post Numeracy Visits. Numeracy in Action visits are generally, informal and settings do not receive prior notice of the visit.

During Numeracy in Action Visit, photographs are taken of numeracy activities to share on the ELI Facebook page and allow other settings see what is happening across the Docklands and East Inner

City, creating an online community of practice. Photos of children's faces are not taken as consent would be required from parents, therefore only backs of children's heads, their hands may be included in these pictures.

Photographs are also used to capture the numeracy learning taking place during Numeracy week. These are used at working group meetings, for numeracy slideshows, conference presentations etc.

Post Numeracy Week Visits

Post Numeracy Week visits are intensive mentoring support available to ECEC settings. As this is a structured mentoring support visit, dates and times are agreed in advance. To date mentoring support has explored areas of documenting numeracy week using Numeracy Scrap Books, Aistear Learning Records, Documenting using Displays etc., and planning and assessing for Numeracy guided by the Aistear Síolta Practice Guide and Self-evaluation tool along with the use of the Aistear Síolta Practice Guide Action Plans.

Intensive numeracy mentoring programme

There was an intensive numeracy programme offered to childcare services who are not engaged with Better Start's mentoring programme. One service engaged in this programme in 2017/2018. There were two mentoring visits completed each month with a schedule of the monthly numeracy themes agreed at the beginning of the year. The aim of the intensive numeracy programme is to support services who have been engaged in the numeracy programme to embed numeracy as a key area of their curriculum planning within practice. A focus of this programme was to allow the opportunity to support early year's educators to develop their practice in documenting children's learning experiences and allow for positive reflective practice. This will inform planning for and extending the children's future learning opportunities. The first mentoring visit allowed for goal setting for the month ahead and the second visit supported reflection on practice and an opportunity to explore the goals set for the month ahead.

Programme Delivery 2018/19

While a review of the Early Numeracy Programme took place in May 2017, a further review of the programme is needed as the ECEC and NEIC landscape changes. With Better Start now involved in intensive mentoring and the introduction of the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), early years services are involved in a lot of CPD at regional and national level. In 2018/19, services will be encouraged and supported to engage in CPD and mentoring provided by Better Start and Dublin City Childcare. The ABC Early Numeracy Programme will continue next year under the following strands:

- Curriculum Priority Weeks: three in 2018/2019
 1. Term 1 Theme: Sequence and Pattern
 2. Term 2 Theme: Time
 3. Term 3 Theme: Measurement
- Onsite Mentoring and Support – each service will receive at least one visit a month
 1. Curriculum Priority Week Planning to include delivery and discussion on use of resources
 2. Curriculum Priority Week Implementation to promote and support numeracy in action
 3. Curriculum Priority Week Evaluation to include collection of evaluation forms
- Numeracy Working Group Meeting – four per year
- Numeracy Workshops – three per year (one for each numeracy theme)

12.3 Zoom Ahead with Books

ELI's support for the Zoom Ahead with Books Programme began in 2009 at the request of St Laurence O'Toole's Junior Boys School who had developed the programme. In 2010, the programme was taken up by other schools in the area. In 2016, the programme was offered to afterschool and early years services with corporate volunteers getting involved for the first time this year. The Zoom Ahead with Books project reinforces ELI's philosophy that literacy begins in the home and promotes both parental involvement in their children's learning and children reading for pleasure and information.

Programme Delivery

Zoom Ahead with Books is a three-week project primarily involving children aged four to eight years. In 2017/18, this age range was extended with the participation of an afterschool service and the inclusion of older children using this service. Each night throughout the project, the children take home a book from the class library, local library or their own home library, and sit, read and discuss the book with their book buddy and then, draw a picture representing their discussion – whether it is their favourite part of the book, their interpretation or any creative expression based on the book. Book buddies, in the context of this report, refers to both the spontaneous engagement of parents and carers (grandparents, siblings etc.) towards children's reading for enjoyment in the home, as well as the more structured involvement and engagement of corporate volunteers. This project finished with a series of exhibitions of the artwork from the children and book buddies in schools and services, National College of Ireland (NCI) and for the first time this year in the Central Bank, which serves as a celebration of the commitment and effort of all the families.

Nine primary schools, one preschool and one afterschool service took part in the *Zoom Ahead with Books* project, with two primary schools participating for the first time. Since 2015/16, as a result of consultation with parents and schools, the project is organised to run for three weeks. 737 children, 44 educators, and seventeen corporate volunteers were involved in the programme. The programme was predominantly delivered to children in Preschool, Reception, Junior Infants, Senior Infants and 1st Classes. Children from the participating afterschool spanned the remaining primary school class range. Educators reported that each child, on average, read eight books during the duration of the project, culminating in approximately 5,896 books being read.

Before the programme started, some schools held information meetings for parents to explain the programme and how they can support their children's reading. For most schools *Zoom Ahead with Books* is a regular event in the school calendar, so the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teachers host these information sessions. In the two new services, staff and parent meetings were facilitated by ELI. Information and training workshops were also facilitated by ELI staff to support corporate volunteers to engage with the project.

At the beginning of the programme, each participating school and service received teacher and family resource packs. The teachers' pack contained programme objectives, guidelines, record sheets and evaluation materials to enable the delivery and assessment of the project. The *Zoom Ahead with Books* family pack contained blank copybooks, colouring pencils, a letter to the book buddy explaining the project, along with prompt cards with suggested literacy, numeracy and emotional literacy questions for the book buddy to use during the reading sessions. This is the second year that an emotional literacy prompt card has been included. It was introduced in 2016/17, as part of the objective to embed Restorative Practices across programmes and services by encouraging the use of emotional vocabulary in the home and was received favourably during last year's project by both teachers and parents/guardians. This is aligned with the continued efforts to embed Restorative Practices across the community (you can read more about the Restorative Practice Programme in Section 12).

The exhibitions of framed pictures, along with mini-concerts and book reviews were held in the National College of Ireland, Central Bank and some schools, over several weeks during late April and early May 2018. Approximately 1,416 parents and family members attended exhibitions to support the children and celebrate their achievements. The *Zoom Ahead with Books* song, written in 2016, was again circulated to all schools, and this year S2, S4 and S5 performed the song, with actions, during their exhibitions.

Programme Evaluation

With the addition of two new schools, the overall number of participating children has increased from 561 in 2016/17 to 737 in 2018/19. Data on participation (excluding the new schools that only joined this year and last year) shows that the number of children involved in the programme across the initial six schools has decreased for the first time in a number of years. This year saw 363 children involved across six (original) sites compared to 444 in 2016-17. This can be attributed to lower numbers of children enrolled in classes across these schools.

Table 26. Participation Figures for Zoom Ahead with Books 2017-2018

School	No. of Children involved
S1*	53
S2	46
S3	93
S4	62
S5	87
S6	61
S7	48
S8	48
S9	23
S10**	52
S11**	164
Total	737

*This school devised and piloted the programme in 2008-09

** These schools are new to the programme

Teachers' Evaluations

In total, 22 teachers returned evaluation forms and all of them (100%) agreed that the programme was a valuable and enjoyable learning opportunity for children and an enjoyable experience for the book buddies.

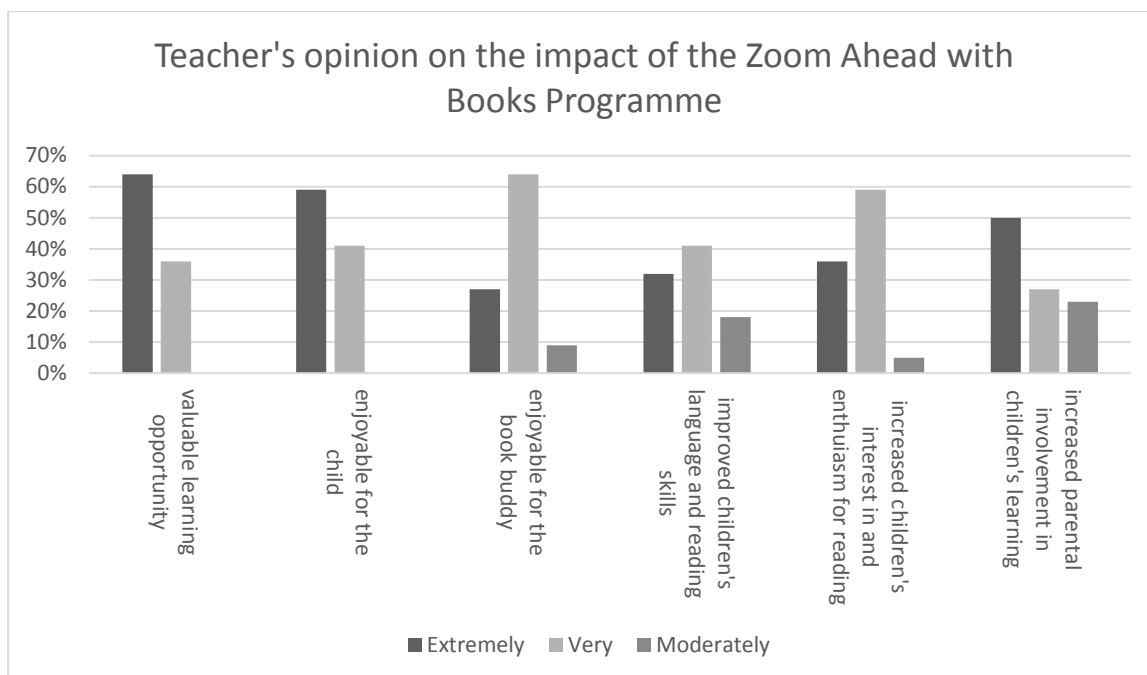


Figure 32. Teachers' Opinions on the Impact of the Zoom Ahead with Books Programme

Comments from the teachers on what worked well during the programme are included below:

- *“Zoom Ahead gives parent/book buddy a great opportunity to spend time with each other, to learn from each other and to talk about the books and their favourite parts of the books”*
- *“The programme itself is a great idea as it involves and increases parents’ engagement and it helps families to make a common activity, spending time together while enjoying”*
- *“The programme allowed children and parents to engage with reading in a fun an accessible way. They had choice in the books they chose and the pictures they drew”*
- *“Teaching first class, I found that children and parents were familiar with Zoom Ahead at this stage and knew what was involved. Those who put in the effort enjoyed reading a wide variety of books and discussing them with their book buddy”*
- *“The focus on shared reading with an ultimate aim – collaborative drawing allowed literacy levels of participants to be valued”*
- *“The children loved the exhibition of their work at the end of the programme”*
- *“Interaction with parents”*
- *“The framed picture is a lovely keepsake”*
- *“Children loved to draw the stories. They loved seeing their finished work framed”*

Teachers also provided some constructive feedback on what they felt had not worked well about the programme. A number of teachers commented on the timing of the programme, which clashed with Early Numeracy Week, also the programme was interrupted by school closures due to snow, making administration of the programme more challenging. Other suggestions included:

- *“Would be great to get Book Buddy feedback for our service”*
- *“The ceremony at the end could have been longer and each child’s final book/artwork could have been commented on”*

- *“A few children disappointed they don’t have same parental support as others. Children notice these things even if they don’t verbalise it”*

Book Buddies’ Evaluations

In total, 195 Book Buddy evaluation forms were returned. Of the book buddies who responded, 90% are parents, 4% are siblings, 2% are grandparents and 1% are an aunt or uncle. It is interesting to note that 86% of the book buddies are female. Most of the book buddies (98%, N=184) reported the project to be a valuable learning opportunity for the child, and 99% (N=183) reported it to be an enjoyable experience for the child. Most of the books came from the school library (83%) although an increased number of books used as part of this year’s project came from the home (25%, N=195) as compared to last year (15%, N=267). This highlights a positive change in the home learning environment of children taking part in the programme.

Table 27. Feedback from Book Buddy Evaluations 2017-2018

Book Buddy’s Relationship to Child (N=195)	Source of Books for the Project (N=195)	Impact of Project on Child (N=195)	Impact of Project on Book Buddy (N=195)
Parent 90%	School library 83%	Improved language and reading skills 57%	More aware of child’s learning 56%
Sibling 4%	Home 25%	Increased interest and enthusiasm for reading 55%	Spent more time with child 54%
Grandparents 2%	Local Library 5%	More quality time with adults 55%	Enjoyment 50%
Aunt/Uncle 1%			Improved interactions and teaching skills 39%

All responses presented above were made in response to closed questions. In some cases, participants could select more than one response.

Comments from the book buddies on what worked well about the programme are included below:

- *“Getting the child interested in reading and trying to draw a picture and showing off how good their picture was... Letting them do their own thing and having fun with it”*

- *“I think it’s very good to show kids books and to make them like to read. To show parents that it can be fun to read and draw in this “machine crazy” world we’re living in. Books are very important and adults have to show and teach kids to love them.”*
- *“Spending more time asking questions about the story and interacting with my son”*
- *“Drawing pictures gave an insight into my son’s interpretation of the story”*
- *“Enthusiasm while bringing home new copybook and pencils; “mission” for my child”*
- *“My child was getting better at not judging a book by its cover”*
- *“Had great time with my child. His English has improved a lot.”*
- *“The display of all drawings was lovely to see for her as well as us”*
- *“He now can read silently to himself and now like to read more. Plus, he never liked to read and he’s more confident and pronounces his words right more”*
- *“I learned how well my child is growing and improving with her reading and writing”*
- *“The books that were selected were well thought-out and relevant to the child’s imagination and capability”*
- *“Just spending time doing an activity with my child that we both really enjoyed – great fun”*
- *“Reading a new book once or twice a week is a brilliant way of spending more time with your child while increasing their interest in reading.”*

Corporate Volunteers’ Evaluations

This year two corporate organisations, Citco and Central Bank, engaged in volunteering with the *Zoom Ahead with Books* project. Following discussions with both corporate organisations, as well as the afterschool service that would facilitate this volunteer participation, it was agreed that corporate volunteers would work with S9 in supporting the development of the *Zoom Ahead with Books* project on a pilot basis. Due to the complex needs of the children using this afterschool service, and reflecting on last year’s feedback from educators and engagement levels in relation to book buddies, it was felt that this service would benefit most from corporate engagement.

Over six weeks (including one in-house training session with corporate volunteers), volunteers visited the service one afternoon per week and assumed the role of the ‘book buddy’. Each child was assigned their own book buddy and over the course of the project played games, read, talked and built relationships with their book buddies, before completing their final framed artwork. Their afterschool space as well as an adjoining school library provided a relaxed environment for this reading, play and discussion, and provided children with the same attention and engagement levels from their corporate book buddies as was afforded to other children participating in the project.

Out of the seventeen participating corporate volunteers, six completed evaluation forms were returned. All volunteers (100%, N=6) agreed that *Zoom Ahead with Books* was an enjoyable experience for both the volunteers and the children. The majority of volunteers felt that participating in *Zoom Ahead with Books* developed the children’s literacy skills (83%, N=5) and their social and communication skills (100%, N=6). When asked what other benefits the programme had on the children involved, a number of volunteers commented on the one-to-one dedicated time with adults who could support them as being an added benefit of the programme. All volunteers (100%, N=6) also agreed that taking part in the programme gave them an opportunity to make a contribution to the local community and wider society.

comments from the corporate volunteer book buddies included:

- *“It’s a fantastic programme to be part of. It costs you nothing but your time and the payback is immense seeing how happy the kids are for you to spend some time with them.”*
- *“I enjoyed the experience immensely. Really terrific kids and I do hope our involvement helped.”*
- *“It was a brilliant programme, the volunteers gained a lot of insight to the work this organisation does with the children. It’s a very positive initiative, we all looked forward to taking part in it”*

When asked if they had any suggestions as to how Zoom Ahead with Books could be improved, a number of volunteers suggested that the programme length could be extended and the time slot allocated to the volunteers could be made longer.

Programme Outline 2018-19

The programme has become embedded in the school year, with a lot of positive feedback from children, book buddies, teachers and corporate volunteers. It will continue in its universal form in the primary schools in 2018/19. Its extension to other afterschools will be considered with the aim to support more children and build on the valuable contribution of corporate volunteers as book buddies in 2017/18. The structure will remain the same: a three week programme beginning in February with the Exhibitions in April.

10.4 Doodle Den

Doodle Den, an evidence-informed afterschool programme, which aims to address literacy needs amongst senior infants' children (aged five to six years of age) is now in its third year of programme delivery as part of the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme.

While Doodle Den helps children to develop literacy skills through games and fun activities in an afterschool setting, another key element to the programme relates to parental involvement. Doodle Den enables parents to support and encourage their children's literacy development in a relaxed and relevant way and in the process improving parent-child relationships, increasing the regularity of reading at home and library visits, creating more positive home learning environments, and developing a family-orientated love of learning.

Programme Delivery

In 2017-18, Doodle Den ran in four sites in the North East Inner City, which will be identified as DD1; DD2, DD3 and DD4 in this report. The children were recruited from the following four schools: St Laurence O' Tooles JBS, St Laurence O' Tooles GNS, Gardiner Street NS, Rutland Street NS and Central Model Junior School. This year Doodle Den took place in one afterschool setting, one preschool setting and two primary school setting. This change in location was due to community space being unavailable in two of the original afterschool sites, and is more in line with how the programme is delivered in Tallaght and Limerick (where Doodle Den is delivered predominantly in the primary schools). Compared to the groups in last year's report, DD1 is no longer operating, DD2 continued into 2017-18, and DD3 continued into 2017-18. Therefore, in this year's report DD1 and DD4 are new sites.

Each Doodle Den group requires two facilitators, using a team teaching model – a primary school teacher and an early years/afterschool/community practitioner. Ten facilitators were employed and trained to deliver the programme. Eight had responsibility for specific sites and two were employed as support staff. Doodle Den team meetings, or 'communities of practice', were held three times during 2017-18. These communities of practice provided supports and capacity-building to the facilitators while ensuring consistency and quality of service provision across all sites.

Due to the success of the KPMG corporate volunteer involvement last year it continued across the four sites this year. There were twelve volunteers with each volunteer attending one day a week for a six-week period.

Programme Evaluation

The Doodle Den groups were made up of children of varying literacy abilities and needs. Based on the referrals of class teachers or Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) coordinators at intake, of those who responded to the question on the level of literacy needs, 36% (N=20) of participants across the four sites had a high level of literacy needs, 18% (N=10) had a medium level and 36% (N=20) had a low level. The professional referral intake form identifies a need in one (or more) of the following areas:

- Oral language
- Phonic awareness
- Emergent writing
- Reading- particularly in relation to decoding words
- Social- in relation to confidence in reading and writing

There were some differences between groups with those attending DD4 presenting with the highest level of high literacy needs (59%; N=10), followed by DD1 (57% N=8), DD3 (8% N=1) and DD2 (8% N=1).

There were also differences in the number of English as an Additional Language (EAL) children with DD4 having the highest percentage (94% N=15), followed by DD2 (58% N=7) and DD1 (57% N=8). DD3

had no EAL children. In relation to the number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), DD1 had the highest rate (14% N=2), followed by both DD2 and DD2 who each had 8% (N=1) of children with SEN. DD4 had no children reported with SEN.

Attendance

Initially 38 children enrolled in the programme in September 2017 i.e. fourteen in DD1, thirteen in DD2 and eleven in DD3 with an additional sixteen enrolling in DD4 in January 2018 to bring the total to 55 children. However, over the course of the year the numbers attending decreased with 36 children graduating in June 2018. Across the sites, five (36%) completed the programme in DD1, eight (62%) in DD2, seven (64%) in DD3 and all sixteen (100%) in DD4. This represents a 35% attrition rate which is higher than last year’s rate of 31% but lower than that reported in Tallaght as 76% (Biggart et al 2012).

Several issues impacted both retention and attendance. The transition between primary school and after school service was difficult for some children and their parents with the distance adding to the length of the day for children. Anecdotal evidence suggested that the ongoing feud had an impact on attendance with parents fearful for their children’s safety. Some of the families were in emergency accommodation, which meant the children left their programme when their families were moved from the area. This was particularly challenging last year and is still a challenge this year.

Assessments

Assessments were completed on the children involved in Doodle Den at the start of the programme in December 2017 and again at the end of the programme in June 2018. These assessments examined the child’s Phonic Skills, Writing Skills, Sight Vocabulary and Social Skills. As can be seen in the graphs below the average score across all assessment areas increased from 71% to 91% across the year. The greatest increase was in the children’s sight vocabulary. It should be noted that these assessments have limitations and do not assess the children’s oral language, pre-literacy and other more complex needs.

Figures below displays average pre-and-post programme assessment scores for children in in each of the doodle den sites across each of the four domains.

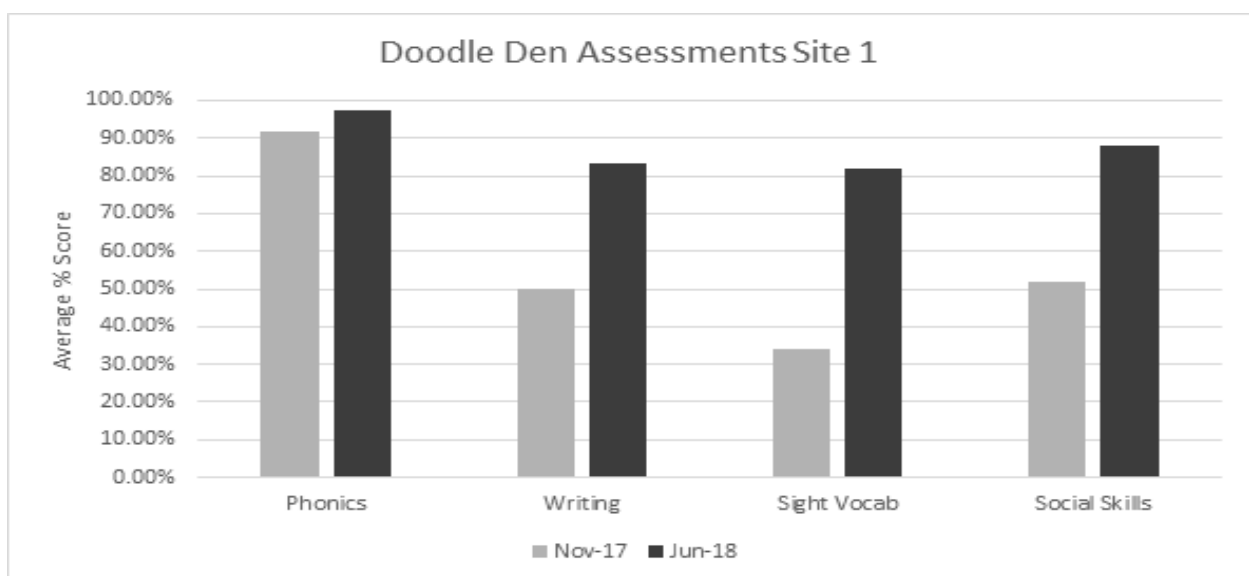


Figure 33. Doodle Den Assessments Site 1

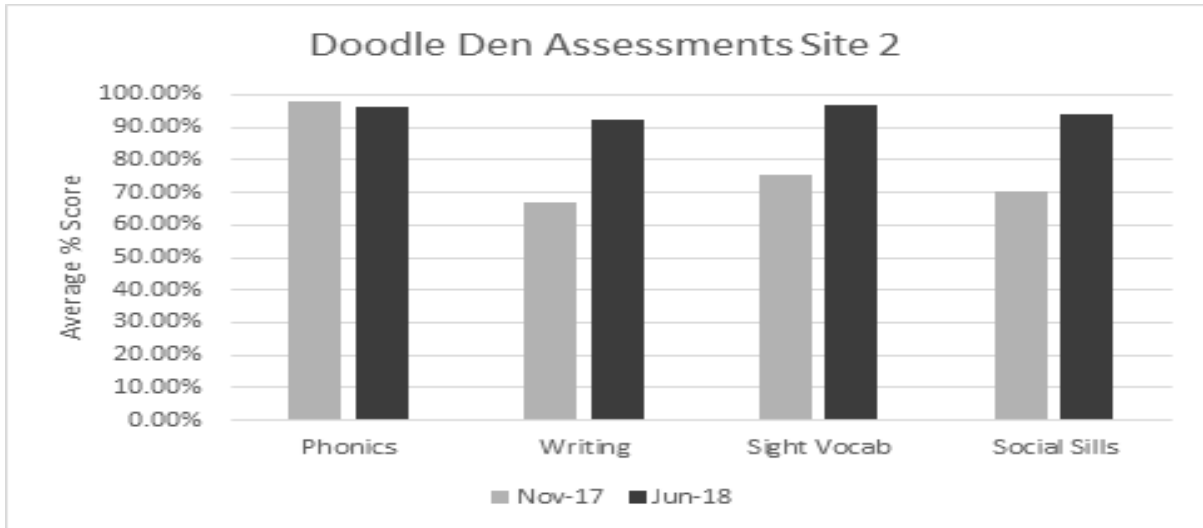


Figure 34. Doodle Den Assessments Site 2

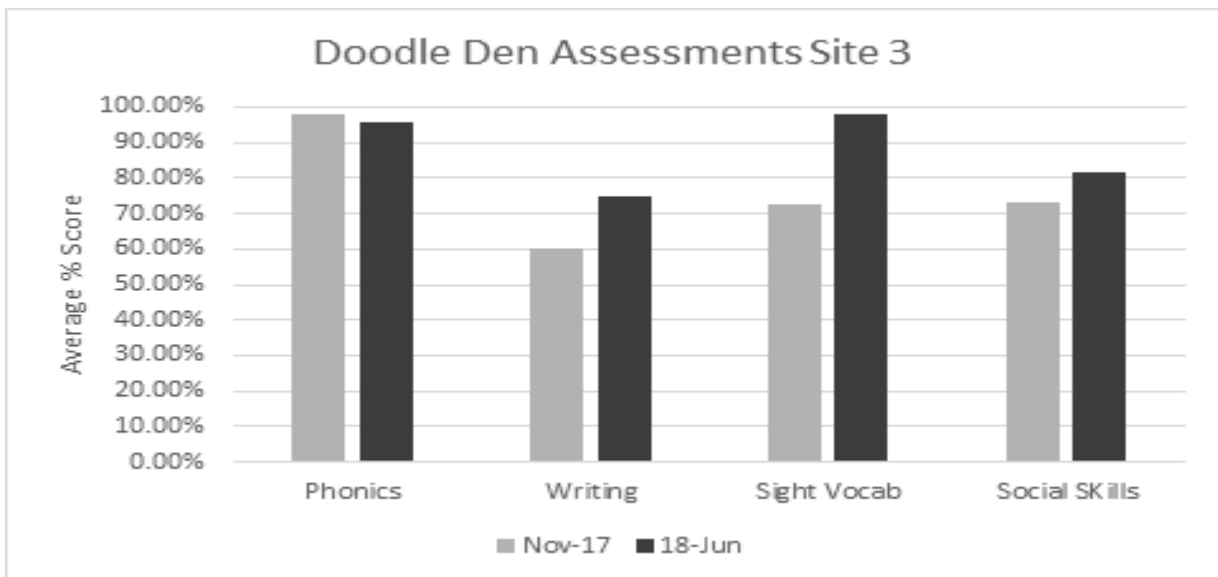


Figure 35. Doodle Den Assessments Site 3

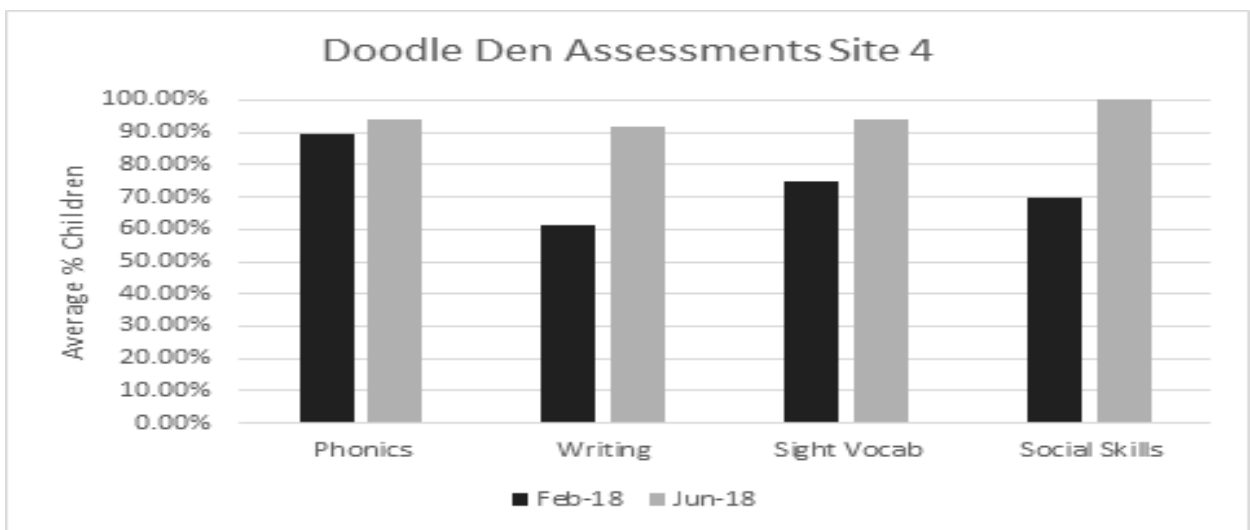


Figure 36. Doodle Den Assessments Site 4

The graph below presents overall pre-and-post programme scores combined for all children involved in Doodle Den in 2017-18. As can be seen from the graph above, children in the Dublin Docklands cohort showed a 1% increase in Phonics, 26% increase in writing, 27% increase in sight vocab and a 21% increase in social skills. Overall scores increased from 71% at pre programme to 91% at post programme. This represents an increase of 20%, which is slightly above last year's overall improvement level of 18%.

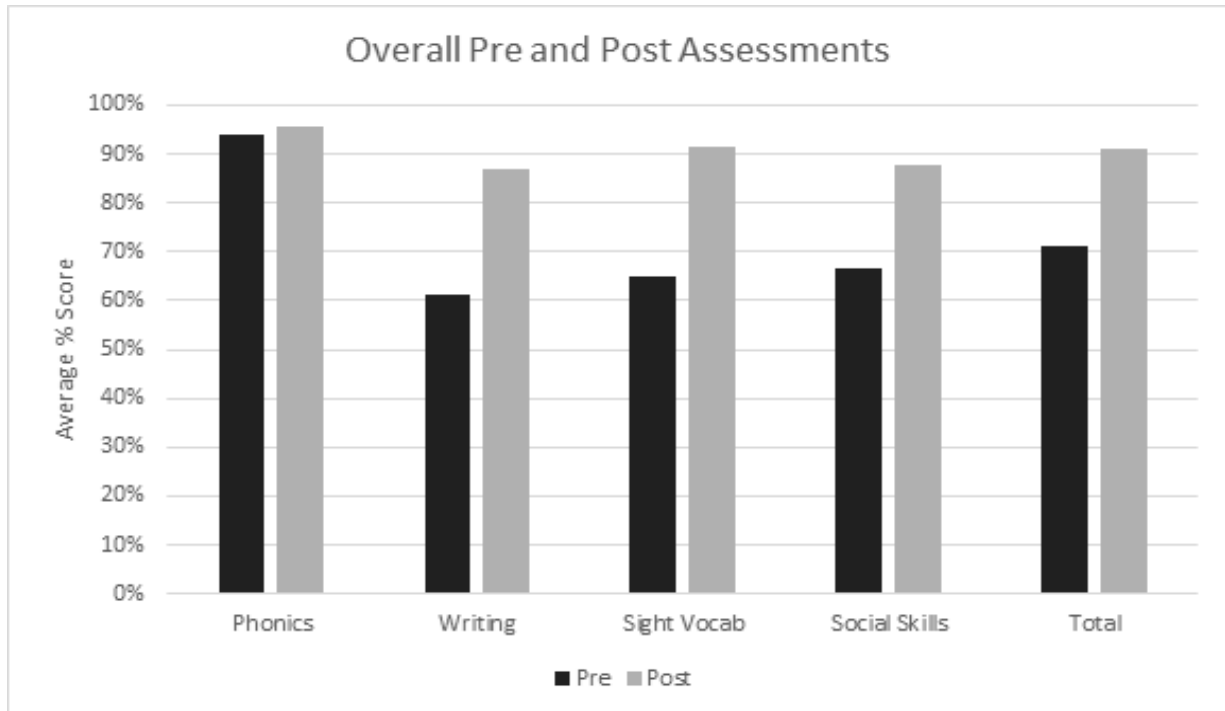


Figure 37. Doodle Den Pre-and –Post Programme Scores 2017-2018

Children's Feedback

This year due to an administration error, children were not given surveys to complete at the end of the programme. However, through gathering feedback from parents, principals and facilitators there is strong evidence that the children involved in Doodle Den enjoyed the programme with it having a particular benefit to the children's social skills. One parent commented to the coordinators that their child was "sad the programme was finishing, would miss his friends and won't have anywhere to go after school". One of the teachers commented to the coordinator that on the days there was no Doodle Den, the children were sad that they were going home and not to Doodle Den. Finally, a principal mentioned that the engagement in the playground had improved with children interacting with a wider social circle and using children's names as part of their interactions.

Parents' Feedback

Doodle Den aims to enable parents to support and encourage their children's literacy development in a relaxed and relevant way and in the process improving parent-child relationships, increasing the regularity of reading at home and library visits, creating more positive home learning environments, and developing a family-orientated love of learning. However, the evaluations in both Tallaght (Biggart et al., 2012) and Limerick (Rafferty & Colgan, 2013) highlighted the difficulties in engaging parents. However, as time went on, parents became more positive and more involved (Biggart et al., 2012). It continued to be a struggle to encourage parental participation in Doodle Den. This year, during the last few minutes of Doodle Den the facilitators would open the doors while the sessions were going

ahead in the hope that the parents would come in and attend the end of the session. We found this was very beneficial because it was allowing the parents to become involved at their own pace.

Parent workshops and family sessions form part of the Doodle Den programme with parents and guardians encouraged to attend a number of varied sessions over the course of the year. The workshops and family sessions take place at the same time and for the same time period as Doodle Den and involves a number of relevant themes and activities. This year the parent/family sessions included a workshop titled *Introduction to Doodle Den*, Library Visit, Holiday parties (Christmas, Easter) and Graduation

Attendance was poor at these sessions. For the introductory session, three parents from DD1 attended, twelve parents from DD2 attended and none attended from DD3 and DD4. No parents attended the Christmas and Easter events. For the library sessions, no parents attended from DD1, five parents and three siblings attended from DD2, one parent attended from DD3 and two parents attended from DD4. Finally, for the graduation, five parents and three siblings attended from DD1, six parents and four siblings attended from DD2, two grandparents, two parents and one sibling attended from DD3 and thirteen parents and four siblings attended from DD4.

At the end of the programme, parents across all four sites were asked to complete end of programme evaluation forms. This year saw an increase in the response rate of parents from 24% (N=9) in 2016/17 to 77% (N=24) in 2017/18. However parental involvement remains to be a challenge with 63% (N=15) of parents reporting that they never attended a Doodle Den session while 38% (N=9) reported they attended one or two sessions. The same frequency of attendance was reported when asked how many family sessions they attended.

Of parents who completed the evaluation forms (N=24), all agreed that the programme had helped their child and was an enjoyable experience for their child. All parents also agreed that they would recommend the programme to a friend.

When asked how it helped their child:

- Child's reading 83% (N=20)
- Child's listening skills 75% (N=18)
- Child's writing 67% (N=16)
- Making friends 63% (N=15)
- Homework 58% (N=14)
- Understanding 45% (N=11)
- Reading at home 42% (N=10)
- Behaviour 38% (N=9)
- Writing at home 38% (N=9)
- Using the library 25% (N=6)

It is interesting to compare parental reports on the areas Doodle Den helped their child with those from last year's parental reports. However, in the 2016-17 annual report, percentages were calculated as a percentage of total responses rather than the percentage of participants. This year the percentages were calculated based on the number of parents who reported each skill. For comparison purposes last year's data was recalculated. This year there were more parental reports of improvements in reading skills, listening skills, writing skills, understanding skills and writing at home.

- Children's reading skills 67% (N=6)
- Making friends 67% (N=6)
- Listening skills 56% (N=5)
- Understanding skills 56% (N=5)
- Homework 56% (N=5)

- Writing 44% (N=4)
- Reading at home 44% (N=4)
- Writing at home 22% (N=2)
- Using the library 22% (N=2)

When asked to comment on the best thing about the programme comments included:

- *"Good activity post school day. Mixing with children from other classes. X loved every minute and was always eager to attend"*
- *"Extra support in literacy, opportunity to meet new friends"*
- *"X is shy. He made new friends and came out of his shell. He loved talking about it when he came home. The staff were lovely to all the kids"*
- *"It was a good experience for children and useful in the future. Thank you!"*
- *"Making friends. Doing games with friends and reading and writing"*
- *"It was a good experience for children and useful in the future. Thank you!!"*
- *"I see progress in reading and writing for my son. The ladies who teach them are very good and very nice to kids"*
- *"I think the best things are it helped my child making friends and listening and writing. He can do his homework by himself now"*

Staff Feedback

The Doodle Den facilitators were also asked for their feedback on the programme delivery. All coordinators who completed evaluations (100% N=7) reported that they were satisfied with their work and found the programme useful. All facilitators (100% N=7) also reported that they were confident using the strategies to support the students learning.

When asked to comment on the best thing about the programme, comments included:

- *"I think the centres work well with the children, because they get to use lots of skills and improve on these skills-phonics, writing, reading etc."*
- *"The story books as I believe it is a great introduction to quality authors and hopefully give a life-long love of reading to the children"*
- *"It allows children an extra opportunity to boost their literacy skills in a more relaxed environment and a smaller group setting. Children also get a chance to work on oral language and confidence. The children love how it feels like their own club and enjoy being in the Doodle Den setting. Children especially loved doing their artwork on Thursday"*
- *"Seeing how much the children enjoyed the learning. It is very interactive. There is a very relaxed but productive atmosphere. The staff are very welcoming, friendly and supportive. It is great for my own CPD"*
- *"The clear outline of the curriculum, the quality resources provided, the quality interactions between facilitators and children"*

Corporate Volunteer

Due to the success of the KPMG corporate volunteer involvement last year it continued across the four sites this year. There were twelve volunteers with each volunteer attending one day a week for a six-week period. However, there were some challenges because of school mid-terms and holidays. Feedback from the Doodle Den facilitators on the involvement of the volunteers was very positive. They mentioned how supportive and confident the volunteers were in their approach both the children and the learning activities. The facilitators felt confident in the volunteers' abilities to lead the learning activities with individual or small groups of children. The volunteer induction session, which focused on the books, activities, phonics and sight vocabulary, was helped the volunteers understand the programme and contributed to their effectiveness in supporting children's learning.

Volunteers were sent an online link to a survey monkey evaluation by the Doodle Den coordinator. Of those who completed the evaluations (N=4), feedback was very positive with all volunteers reporting that they are happy they volunteered with ELI, found it to be an enjoyable experience and would recommend the experience to a friend.

When asked to comment on the benefits of the programme to the children comments included:

- *"There was more of a teacher (helper) student ratio. The children seemed to enjoy having new people in"*
- *"I feel I was an extra pair of hands, meaning that more children got one-on-one reading and/or writing time. Additionally, I could help out with the different creative activities"*
- *"Engaged in learning in a fun informal environment, improved literacy"*

When asked to comment on the best think about their volunteer experience comments included:

- *"Spending time with the children"*
- *"Opens your eyes to the differences between communities!"*
- *"The children were so lovely and I really enjoyed seeing them grow in confidence and even in their learning ability"*
- *"Opportunity to work with local community and help local children"*

When asked to comment on what value the volunteers brought to the programme comments included:

- *"Being able to give the children more attention"*
- *"I think we really do. I feel we bring a lot of energy and fun. As the coordinators are specifically driving the educational content three days a week, I feel we bring a specific element of fun as we are only there once a week"*
- *"Corporate volunteers often come from a background of themselves having to mentor junior staff in training programmes. This skill means you can bring very different methods of 'teaching' to the table"*

When asked whether there were any aspects of the programme that they did not feel adequately prepared for, one volunteer commented:

- *"Yes - phonics. A sheet of paper isn't enough to teach you how to read using phonics. The fundamental point of the programme is literacy. If you want me to read with kids when they ask for help I need to have the skills to use their "language" for learning. In no way did the Doodle Dens training equip me for this".*

Programme Outline 2018-19

While a number of challenges remain in implementing Doodle Den in 2018/19, the programme continues to work well and benefit those children who attend on a regular basis. The partnership between the teachers, early years/afterschool/community-based practitioners and KPMG corporate volunteers continues to prove successful in building relationships and enabling shared learning between professionals from different sectors.

Doodle Den will continue in the four existing sites for 2018/19 in the North East Inner City, with ABC funding guaranteed until December 2018 and with the move from the DCYA into Tusla, a commitment to secure funding until August 2019.

The selection of children for this programme will continue to be carefully screened to ensure suitability for the programme. Children who require a Special Needs Assistant (SNA) in school, children with

emotional/behavioural difficulties, children in learning support, and children who have English as an additional language, will continue to be very carefully screened using other tests where necessary. Consideration will also be needed in relation to the continuing issues regarding homelessness, which is particularly challenging in the North East Inner City where much of the population is transient.

Staff will renew engagement in continuous professional development opportunities, annual upskilling training and communities of practice meetings, to support and encourage the building of relationships and maintain high levels of quality in service provision.

Adjustments to making the programme more child-friendly, play based and language focused will continue so that the programme meets the needs of the children in the North East Inner City. More effective ways of involving parents will also be considered along with ensuring follow-on support to these children and their families through various ELI programmes. In relation to the feedback received from the volunteers there is a need of a more intensive mentoring session on phonics so that the volunteers feel more confident and comfortable when supporting the children while reading. In relation to the delivery of the programme there will be training provided for all facilitators and volunteers at the beginning of September to refresh their knowledge of the programme and providing the opportunity for discussion on how programme delivery can be improved.

References:

Biggart, A., Kerr, K., O'Hare, L. and Connolly, P. (2012) Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Childhood Development Initiative's Doodle Den Literacy Programme. Dublin: Childhood Development Initiative (CDI).

Rafferty, M. and Colgan, A. (2013) Case Study – Replicating Doodle Den Literacy Programme. Dublin: Childhood Development Initiative (CDI).

12.5 NCI Challenges (7 - 10 Years)

The NCI Challenges began in 2009 with two events, Monopoly and a Table Quiz. In 2011, a third event, Rummikub, was added with the corporate volunteers getting involved in 2012. These inter-school challenges promote the development of children's literacy, numeracy, general knowledge and social skills through playing board-games like Monopoly (money, number, problem-solving), Rummikub (number, pattern, sorting) and the table Quiz (general knowledge, literacy). They also encourage the development of cross-curricular and social skills as well as encouraging parental involvement in their children's education and schools.

Programme Delivery

In 2017-2018, the NCI Challenge consisted of three events: Table Quiz, Rummikub and Monopoly, with a total of 209 children involved. There were six children on each quiz team. Children were entered as individuals for Rummikub and Monopoly. Four children played on each board and a parent/volunteer acted as the referee/banker. Schools organised parental support for the quiz and monopoly preparations, while corporate volunteers from Central Bank attended class practices for the Rummikub competition in some schools.

Room bookings in NCI continues to make coordination of the challenges difficult as dates cannot be confirmed with schools until room availability is confirmed. While the three challenges are well received by schools, there is a need to have confirmed dates sooner to ensure that all schools have the notice to plan and schedule their time to ensure their participation. Participation in Monopoly decreased considerably in 2017/18 when there was a change to agreed date. This meant the event was being held on the 5th June, a day after the June bank holiday when most of the schools were on mid-term rather than May. The event was re-scheduled to the 19th June with the agreement of the schools.

Table 28. Participation Figures in NCI Events in 2017-18

Event	No. of schools involved	Children	Parents	Volunteers
Table Quiz	7	75	40	10
Rummikub	7	85	55	34
Monopoly	1	42	27	4
Total	-	202	122	48

* Numbers are the number who attend events not the number who took part in the schools, which is larger

Programme Evaluation

In line with best practice research guidelines, as the primary participants in NCI Challenges are the children, a decision was made to focus the programme evaluation on the children's feedback. At the end of each event, children are asked to complete evaluation forms based on their experience of engaging with the NCI Challenges.

Of the children who filled out evaluations forms, 99% (N=151) said that they enjoyed taking part in the NCI challenges. When asked what they learnt through taking part in the NCI challenges, children commented on learning about the game (32%; N=47), learning general knowledge (31%; N=46), developing social skills (22%; N=32) and learning mathematical skills (15%; N=22). These results are similar to 2016/17.

When asked to comment on 'what did you like?' Comments included:

- *"I got to take part in "*
- *"I liked the pressure"*
- *"It was fun and competitive"*
- *"That it's a game but it's still educational"*
- *"It was really fun and competitive"*

When the children were asked to comment on 'is there anything you would like to change?' Comments included:

- *"If every table got the same amount of kids"*
- *" I think everyone should get Easter eggs"*
- *" I would like more money"*
- *" Us winning instead of another team"*

Programme Outline 2018-19

The feedback collected from the children this year provided evidence of the students' learning and enjoyment in the NCI challenges. The programme is working well and will continue to be delivered in 2018/19, though having NCI as the venue for the competition will need to be considered as well as the timing of the events.

12.6 EU Literacy Project - Making Literacy Meaningful

Teaching staff in a multi-faceted Europe are continually confronted with questions around facilitation of children from a multitude of backgrounds. The Making Literacy Meaningful project, funded by the European Union under the ERASMUS+ Programme, is developing practically-oriented knowledge in the area of language and literacy development, with a specific focus on addressing the needs, challenges and opportunities resulting from multilingual and multicultural classrooms.

This year saw our second year of participation EU Erasmus+ Literacy Project *Making Literacy Meaningful* in conjunction with the School of Computing (Development of the MOOCs and Website); Teaching and Learning (Programme Content) and our partners from the UK, Germany, Luxemburg and Spain.

The first MOOC, which focused on supporting the teaching of children who have the countries 'instructional language' as a second language (in the Irish context this will be children who have English as an additional language), has been completed and is available online: <http://literacymooc.eu/courses/teaching-in-multilingual-classrooms/>. Each partner took responsibility for the development of content for one week or six to eight hours of delivery. NCI developed the second lesson: Vocabulary Acquisition, where best practice and learning from much of ELI's work was used to illustrate the theory of vocabulary acquisition and its role in literacy development.

The content for the second MOOC, which will focus on the teaching of literacy for all children, is now being developed and it hoped that this MOOC will be released in January 2019. NCI is working on two topics: Reading and Writing Acquisition in Ireland along with Reading Comprehension. We hope to get both courses accredited as a DES Summer Course in 2019.

A Making Literacy Meaningful website <http://euliteracy.eu/> has been developed. It hosts materials specifically developed for the project as well as providing links to the two custom-designed MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) around Language Facilitation and Literacy Facilitation. Reflective tasks and practical implementation tips are designed to help practitioners to link theory to practice. NCI has provided two papers for the website with more papers and teaching materials on the way.

Planning Meetings were held in Luxembourg (February) and Barcelona (June) this with a Multiplier Event in Luxembourg (February). In 2018/19, ELI will host a Project Meeting, Learning Activity and Multiplier Event in March. There will also be a Multiplier Event in Freiburg in May/June with the last project meeting in Freiburg in July.

12.7 Literacy & Numeracy Assessments

Standardised test results in English and Maths at seven years (second class) and twelve years (sixth class) were collected from the local primary schools who participate in our programmes since 2012. The aim is to monitor how children are faring in terms of their literacy and numeracy skills; thereby giving us an indicating what, if any, impact DEIS, ELI's and other programmes are having children's educational attainment.

However, the data reported is based on the averages from the schools who submit their scores. It should therefore be interpreted with caution as not all schools submit their scores each year, two new schools are included this year and there are different children involved each year. Table 29 shows the returns across the past six years:

Table 29. Returns of Assessments from Schools across the Years (2011-2017)

	2011/1 2	2012/1 3	2013/1 4	2014/1 5	2015/1 6	2016/1 7	2017/1 8
School 1	1		1	1	1	1	1
School 2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
School 3	1		1	1	1		
School 4	1		1	1			1
School 5	1	1	1		1		1
School 6	1		1	1	1	1	
School 7		1	1			1	
School 8				1	1	1	1
School 9					1	1	1
School 10					1		1
School 11							1

This information is aggregated annually and compared with the national norms developed by the test developers based on a sample of more than 10,000 pupils during the 2002-2003, in addition to baseline data collected by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College (Share, et al., 2011). The figures below display the results of aggregated results of students attending primary schools in the ELI catchment area. This year eight primary schools, both North and South side, submitted their aggregated scores. This included two schools who had not submitted their results in previous years.

As can be seen in Figure 38, this year saw a slight decrease in second class student's Micra-T scores with the number of students scoring between average and above average decreasing from 72% in 2017 to 66% in 2018.

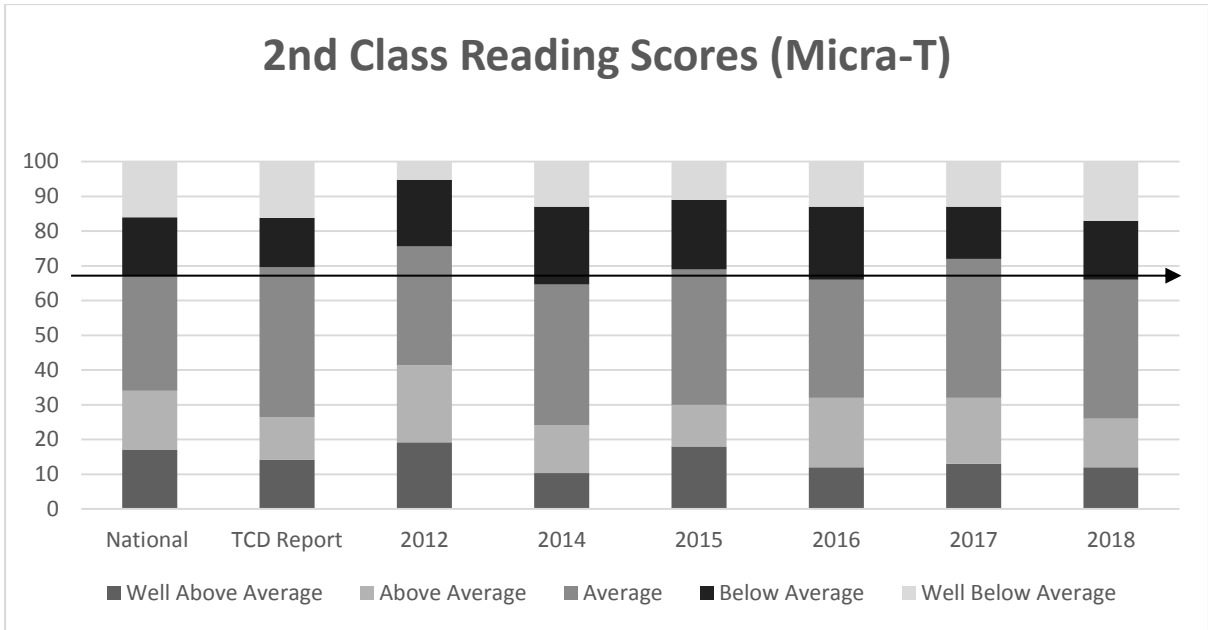


Figure 38. Second Class Reading Scores (Micra-T)

However, an increase was seen in sixth class Micra-T scores with the number of students scoring between average and well above average increasing from 42% in 2017 to 52% in 2018.

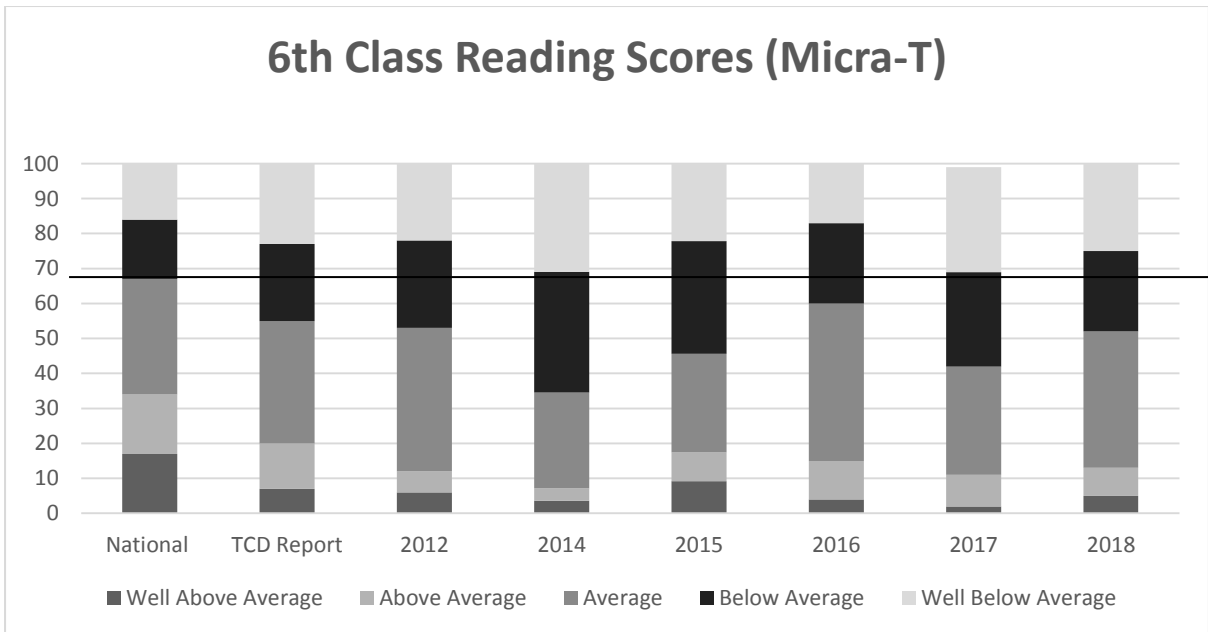


Figure 39. Sixth Class Reading Scores (Micra-T)

Figure 40 shows second class students Sigma-T scores. As can be seen the number of students scoring between average and well above average was similar to last year with 66% of students scoring in this range in 2017 compared to 64% in 2018.

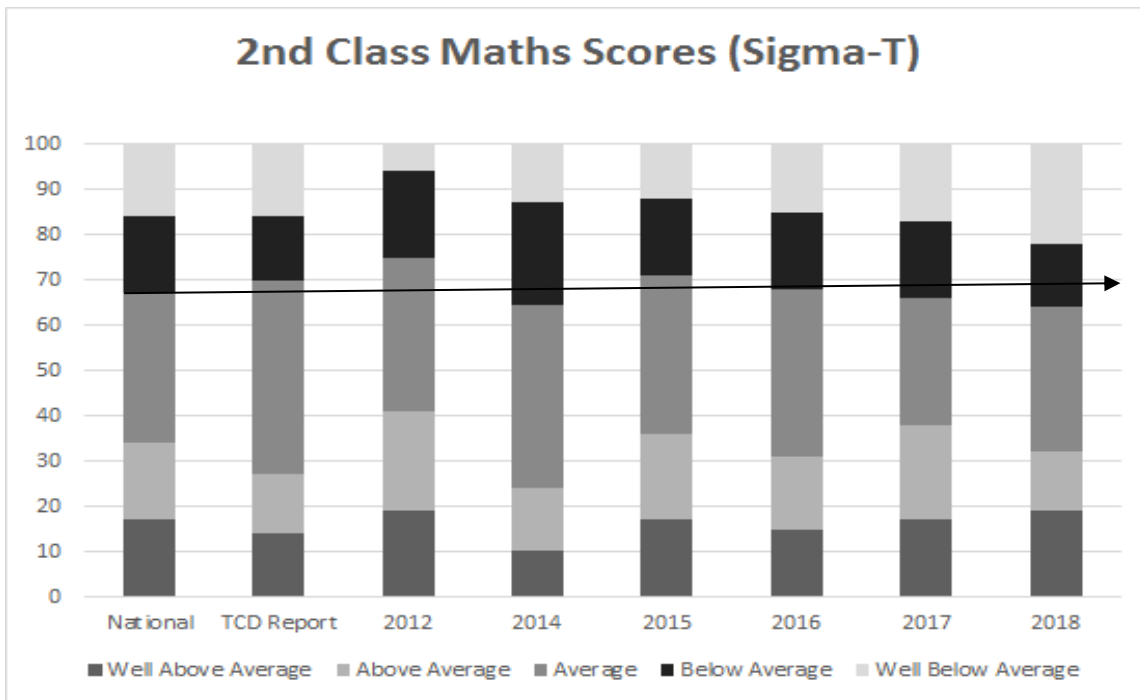


Figure 40. Second Class Maths Scores (Sigma-T)

Additionally, sixth class students Sigma-T scores have increased with the number of students scoring from average to well above average increasing from 52% in 2017 to 58% in 2018.

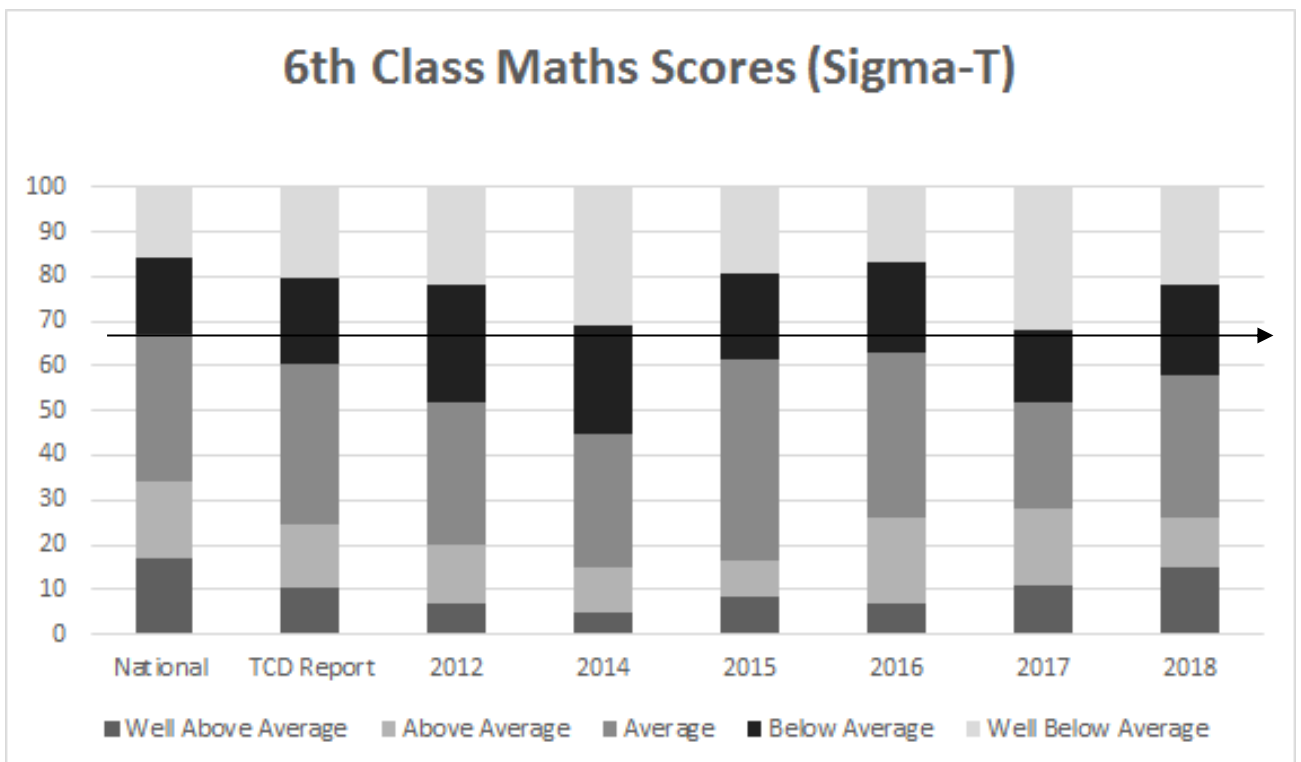


Figure 41. Sixth Class Maths Scores (Sigma-T)

Programme Outline 2018-19

The practice of collecting the results of the standardised tests from second and sixth classes in the primary schools, with which ELI works, will continue in 2018-19.

12.8 Financial Literacy Programme

The Ulster Bank Financial Literacy Programme was developed in 2014/15. Building on the success of the NEYAI Docklands Early Numeracy Programme (for children aged zero to six years), it was run initially in five primary schools. Since then, the programme content was adapted for use in afterschool services. In 2016/17, it ran in four after-school services with more funding awarded in April 2018 from the Ulster Bank Community Impact Fund to extend it to a new cohort of afterschools. The programme, which targets children aged four to twelve years old and covers topics such as income, budgeting, saving, borrowing and currency, will continue until the end of October 2018. Each topic had corresponding activities, materials and references with a focus on conversations and interactions to extend the learning.

Programme Delivery

The programme took place in three local afterschool services (Belvedere Youth Club, ASESP and Ringsend Afterschool) with initially four groups of children. One of the participating afterschools requested to continue the programme with two new additional cohorts of children as part of their summer programme. By the end of June 2018, 59 children will have taken part in the programme as part of their afterschool programme. Programme deadlines have been extended to October 2018 to include additional groups of children. As the timeline for the programme has been staggered to meet the needs of the afterschool services, scheduling for the programme has been challenging.

In September, each afterschool will create a storyboard under the theme ‘Classics & Finance’ which involved incorporating financial elements into a fairy-tale such as Cinderella. The programme will finish with a showcase of the storyboards to the participating children, their families and afterschool staff. Depending on funding, we hope to continue this programme in 2018-2019.

Programme Evaluation

In order to explore the impact of the project on students, data was collected pre and post programme delivery to explore student’s levels of financial literacy. Due to logistical challenges, complete pre and post programme assessments could only be obtained for two services. In addition, while pre-programme data was collected for 26 children, there is only post-programme data available for 16 children. This means that the results must be interpreted with caution.

Students were asked a number of questions in order to gauge their understanding of the key topics; income, budgeting, saving, borrowing and currency. Out of eleven questions answered, the number of questions which were responded to correctly or remained correct after the programme are presented below, by service. The size difference between the pre-programme and post-programme groups in the case of all services should be noted when interpreting these results.

Table 30. Pre- and Post- Programme Financial Literacy Assessments

Afterschool	AS 1		AS 2	
Stage	Pre-Programme	Post-Programme	Pre-Programme	Post-Programme
No. of Students	N=14	N=7	N=13	N=9
Increase at Post-Assessment	8/11 Questions		9/11 Questions	

Four questions (excluded above) asked the students to demonstrate their knowledge in relation to foreign currency, currency exchange, debit cards and tax expenditure. In the case of at least two of these questions, some students responded at pre-programme assessment with ‘I don’t know’. However, during post-programme assessment, students demonstrated a much better understanding of these principles and were able to answer these questions more accurately.

Students were also asked to complete post-programme evaluations to provide their feedback on how the programme went. In total, fifteen students returned completed evaluation forms. Of those who returned feedback, 73% (N=11) agreed that they learned a lot from the programme, 67% (N=10) agreed that they enjoyed taking part in the programme and 60% (N=9) agreed that they now understand that they and their family have to make choices with how to spend money.

When asked what the best things about the programme were, responses included “everything”; “all the games”; “Monopoly” and “I liked doing the storyboards”. Students were also asked what they had learned from the programme that might help them in the future. A number of comments centred around their new understanding of how to save money.

Programme Outline 2018-19

A review of our involvement in this programme is needed to ensure that it sustainable going forward. Moving on from one cohort of afterschools to the next without ensuring that the previous afterschool services have the capacity to run the programme independently of ELI is a concern. While the funding is very welcome and the programme is excellent, the uncertainty of the funding stream and the fact it must be spent on materials rather than staffing is also problematic. It is proposed to consolidate this programme, develop a programme manual and examine ways it can be embedded within existing afterschool services before moving on to additional services.

12.9 Robotic Coding Club

ELI Coding Clubs began in 2013 with a Coder Dojo Programme. Run in collaboration with NCI’s School of Computing, it differed from other Coder Dojo’s in that the children were recruited by ELI from the local DEIS schools and was much more structured. In 2015/16, with funding from SAP and laptops from Facebook, a Robotic Coding Club for primary school students aged ten-twelve years old was established in NCI. Funding from Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) in 2016/17 enabled us to extend the clubs to afterschool services in the area. The programme continued in 2017-18 with the 33 participants learning about robotics, programming and electronics with an mbot, which is an easy-to-assemble robot that provides infinite possibilities for students to learn STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics).

Objectives

- To introduce young people to programming, electronics and robotics through a fun and challenging learning experience
- To inspire and support young people to learn how to create technology
- To encourage collaboration, peer to peer mentoring and project work

Programme Delivery

As in previous years, the programme ran in the National College of Ireland (NCI) over ten weeks in Term 1 and in local afterschool services during the second term. One afterschool ran a pilot of the programme within their service with a younger cohort (seven to eleven years old), while the other participating afterschool had previously run the programme and it was encouraging to see the coding club become established as part of their service planning.

Students learnt about basic robotics, programming and electronics with a robot model called mbot which they programmed using Makeblock software. Makeblock bases its programming environment on the tried & tested ‘Scratch’ application with extension script specifically for the mbot model.

Each session involved short tutorials on an element of coding, robotics and electronics which was complemented with accompanying games and activities. Sessions focussed on being interactive and engaging, giving children ample opportunities to test and demonstrate the skills they have learnt.

The Junior Einstein Science Club featured as part of the programme and facilitated a workshop to teach children the core aspects of physics, chemistry and biology through messy experiments, quizzes and games. The workshop was very well received by the children and was a welcome addition to the club.

A member of staff from NCI's School of Computing was the tutor for the three coding clubs with ELI providing support around the organisation of the classes. The tutor was also assisted by volunteers from Deloitte and Hubspot. All volunteer mentors attended a volunteer induction and training workshop which covered child protection, health and safety, and key policies, etc. Volunteers had the opportunity to build their own mBot during the training workshop before they were introduced to Makeblock software. The tutor also covered a number of topics and teaching techniques with the volunteers in preparation for their involvement in the Coding Club.

The volunteer mentors provided a commitment to the coding club which ensured that the children had the consistent support network they needed to actively engage in the programme. The effect of this additional support was reflected in the children's progress as they were able to cover more content than previous coding clubs.

The coding club in the second term saw the introduction of the robot gripper extension to mBot which allowed children the opportunity to programme the gripper to open, close, rotate upwards and downwards to clasp and carry items. The gripper added another dimension and level of excitement for the children.

Twenty parents and family members attended the final event, the NCI Coding Challenge, where students were asked to code their mBots before they faced a series of challenges e.g. mBot football (two robots competed in a football match), mBot balloon battle (balloons were attached to the robot and students had to burst their opponent's balloon), the maze (robots had to navigate a maze and collect targets) and Rainbow Races (programming the robot's LED lights to change colour). There was a station at the competition which involved the children programming the gripper to carry balls. The competition was held in National College of Ireland for the first term and in the second term, Airbnb kindly offered to host the competition in their offices for the second term cohort of coding clubs. The second term competition featured the robot gripper extension as part of activities.

A 'Play and Learn' STEM showcase, collaboration with State Street, was organised for Tuesday 12th June 2018 to promote STEM learning for children aged four to twelve years. However, due to logistical issues, this was deferred to July 2018.

Programme Evaluation

The coding club aimed to develop students' knowledge and skills in programming, electronics and robotics, improve their attitudes and learning disposition towards STEM and increase their aspiration to work towards post-secondary education.

Attitudes and Disposition towards STEM

In order to evaluate the impact of the programme on students' attitudes and learning disposition towards STEM, pre- and post-programme evaluations were completed. In Term 1, eight children (N=8) completed pre- and post-programme evaluations. In Term 2, there was a significant size disparity between the pre- and post-programme outcomes, as due to logistical challenges, fewer student evaluations were collected post-programme (N=9) in Term 2 than before the programme (N=17).

Accordingly, the views of even one student are more likely to influence the outcomes of these analysis and results should accordingly be interpreted with caution. Table 31 displays the percentage of students in Term 1 and 2 who reported strongly agreeing/agreeing to statements exploring their attitudes and learning disposition towards STEM. As can be seen below, six of these questions demonstrated a reduction post-programme, in comparison to last year when all questions either showed the same or increased levels of agreement post-programme. However, it should be noted that the percentage of children agreeing with these statements in relation to STEM before the programme were generally higher this year than last year, possibly indicating a higher baseline interest in and more positive attitudes towards STEM before participation in the programme. The post-programme reduction may also be explained by the difference in sample size, as highlighted above.

Table 31. Percentages of Students Strongly Agreeing/Agreeing to Statements exploring their Attitudes and Learning Disposition towards STEM

Coding Club Pre- and Post- Programme Evaluations	Pre-Programme (N=25)	Post-Programme (N=17)
Technology is something I get excited about	92%	88%
I like to participate in technology projects	92%	88%
I am curious to learn more about science computers or technology	92%	82%
I like to work on technology activities	96%	71%
I would like to have a science or computer job in the future	60%	71%
I want to understand more about science and computers (e.g. to know how computers work)	88%	94%
I like science, computers and technology	92%	94%
I like science	92%	94%
I like to be part of a team that designs and builds a hands-on project	80%	65%
I'm curious to learn how to program computers	88%	88%
I like to design and build something mechanical that works	92%	76%

Aspiration to Work Towards Post-Secondary Education

Students' aspirations towards third level education were measured by asking students 'would you like to go to college when you are older?' In Term 1, the percentage of children (88%, N=7) responding 'yes' to this question was the same before the programme as after the programme. In Term 2, 82% (N=14) of children responded before the programme that they would like to go to college. After the programme, 67% (N=6) reported that they would like to go to college with the remaining children choosing either not to respond to that question or stating that they didn't know. In interpreting these results it is again important to note the size difference between the pre- and post-programme groups in Term 2. These results are also quite different from last year when children's aspirations towards

third level education increased from 84% before the programme to 93% after it. These results will be taken into consideration in planning for next year's programme.

When asked 'what do you want to be when you are older?', students reported varied ambitions at both pre and post programme, including *teacher, coder, game designer, singer, actor, architect, model, dancer, vet, zookeeper and science teacher*.

Understanding, Knowledge and Skills

Pre and post-programme tests were administered to the students in order to explore the development of the students' understanding, knowledge and skills. This test was designed by the tutor as appropriate for the curriculum content. The baseline assessment was easier while the post programme assessment was more difficult.

In addition to the pre and post assessments, a mid-term review was conducted in Term 2 this year. This evaluation assessed the children's abilities to conduct a task related to what they had learned and gained some feedback on their experiences in the Coding Club at that point. All children who completed the mid-term review (N=11) successfully completed each of the four tasks. When asked if they were able to complete all four tasks by themselves, 45% (N=5) responded that they could complete the tasks by themselves, 18% (N=2) responded that they could not and 36% (N=4) responded that they 'almost' could. All eleven children reported that they enjoyed taking part in Coding Club and the majority of children (82%; N=9) responded that they would like to continue taking part in Coding Club. The remaining two children responded that they were 'not sure' about whether they would like to continue.

As part of the mid-term review, children provided comments about what they did and did not like about Coding Club. Things that children liked about Coding Club included 'it is fun', 'I got to learn new things', 'doing stuff with robots', 'playing on the laptops and with the robots' and 'everything'. In response to the question 'what do you NOT LIKE about Coding Club?' two children responded that they found it to be hard. Of the remaining nine children, responses were either that there was 'nothing' the children didn't like about Coding Club or 'I like it all'. Children were also asked if they had any other comments – responses to this question included 'It is amazing', 'I love coding', 'it was great to do new things' and 'I love my robot'.

Table 32 presents the average pre and post-programme assessment scores of children who completed both measures.

Table 32. Average Pre- and Post-Programme Coding Club Assessments Scores

	Term 1 (N=9)	Term 2 (N=8)
Pre-Programme Average Score	5	7
Post-Programme Average Score	6	7.25
Percentage of Children Improving Post-Programme	89%	50%

Parent Feedback

In order to capture the impact of the programme on parental understanding, confidence and encouragement, it was intended to carry out pre and post evaluations with parents. These evaluations were sent to parents, together with an invitation to the STEM showcase. As no completed evaluation forms were received, it is unfortunately not possible to present the results of these parent evaluations. It is intended to address this logistical challenge next year in order to ensure better return of parent evaluations.

Programme Outline 2018-19

While there is interest in establishing new Coding Clubs within the local community, resourcing and the availability of a tutor continues to be an issue. In 2017-18, a new tutor was recruited for the second term as the original tutor moved to new employment. It will be important to consider the tutor's

availability in future planning for multiple clubs and locations. There were discussions to include the Coding Club programme in the scheduling for NCI's School of Computing to ensure that more staff may have the option and the availability of facilitating the delivery of the Coding Club as part of the academic terms.

Taking the feedback and evaluations from the children into consideration, this programme and its evaluation needs to be reviewed for 2018-19 in order to ensure that it is meeting its objectives and is sustainable long-term

A 'Play and Learn' STEM showcase will be held on Thursday 12th July 2018 to promote STEM learning for children aged four to twelve years. State Street volunteers will co-facilitate activities with volunteers attending a volunteer induction and training workshop in preparation for the event.

Depending on resources, it is hoped to continue the Coding Club into 2019 and to feature the 'Play and Learn' STEM showcase as part of annual planning for the end of the academic year in June 2019.

12.10 Community-Based Tuition Support

Community Based Tuition is one of our longest programme beginning in 2007 with sixteen students in St Mary's Youth Club, East Wall. The programme has continued there and in 2017/18 was delivered to 22 students. Maths Tuition continued as in previous years, at both Junior and Leaving Certificate levels. Leaving Certificate Irish Tuition began running in April 2018 and ran until the end of the academic year for all levels. (East Wall Youth also delivered Leaving Certificate Foundation Level Maths tuition, which was paid for by the Youth Club themselves.)

Below is a breakdown of student numbers for each session:

Table 33. Participation Figures for Community-Based Tuition Support

Junior Cert Maths (mixed)	Leaving Cert Irish (mixed)	Leaving Cert Maths (Ordinary Level)	Leaving Cert Maths (Higher Level)
5 Ordinary Level 1 Higher Level	1 Foundation Level 5 Ordinary Level 1 Higher Level	7	2

Both Junior and Leaving Certificate groups for both subjects consistently attended the tuition support in East Wall Youth. The sole Junior Certificate Maths Higher Level Student stopped attending tuition sessions in the final few weeks of the year, possibly due to the fact that the session was mixed level.

Programme Evaluation

Evaluations were given in person to all tuition students in March and again in May 2018. In total, twelve completed student evaluation forms were returned by students taking part in Maths Tuition Support and three by students taking part in Irish Tuition Support. Students were asked a number of questions to gain an understanding of their experience of the programme.

Table 34. Community-Based Tuition Support Programme Evaluation for Maths and Irish Students

Having taken in part in Tuition Support, I agree that	Maths Students (N=12)	Irish Students (N=3)
the programme was helpful in improving my skills	100%	100%
the content was easy to understand	83%	100%
we spent enough time on each topic	75%	100%
the tutor was well prepared	100%	100%
the tutor was supportive	100%	100%

Students were asked to comment on what worked well in their opinion. Across both Irish and Maths programmes, many students commented positively on the small group size and how beneficial this was to their learning. Below are some further comments:

“Topics were based around our needs. Nice environment. Topics well explained” (Maths)

“The tutor was helpful in discussing difficult/content-heavy topics” (Maths)

“There was a small group so unlike in class there was more focus on me and what I struggled in and how to improve it” (Maths)

“Oral worked well talking with each other rather than writing notes” (Irish)

“The small classes and laid-back atmosphere made it easier to interact and learn” (Irish)

Students were also asked to comment on what didn't work well. Across both groups, many students commented that there wasn't anything they would change (N=10). Other comments focused on the time spent on each topic with some students suggesting more time was needed (N=3) or that too much time was spent on one topic (N=2).

Below are some of the suggestions students have on how the ELI could improve this programme:

- *“Introduce more subjects”*
- *“Keep the groups small”*
- *“Keep foundation/ordinary separate”*
- *“I think more frequent classes could contribute to faster and more effective improvement”*

Both tutors – of the Maths and Irish Tuition Support programmes – completed evaluation forms to provide feedback on their experience of the programme. When asked how well they thought the tuition support programme ran this year on a scale of 1 – 10 ('Not well' – 'Very well'), the average response was 7.5, indicating that the programme ran quite well for both tutors. In relation to how good the attendance of the programme has been this year, the average response was 6.5, indicating moderately good attendance for both. One tutor commented that initial attendance was much better but that graduations and projects later in the term conflicted with attendance of the programme.

Both tutors strongly agreed with the statement “The students benefitted from the support received through the programme”. When asked how they felt the students benefitted from the programme, comments from both tutors reflected the importance of the small group/informal setting in creating an environment in which students were more comfortable to raise specific issues causing them difficulty than in the general school setting.

Tutors were also asked if they had experienced any challenges in delivering the programme. Comments here included the difficulty of having a group of students of mixed academic levels and the challenge of holding students' attention at such a late time in the day. Overall, however, comments suggested that both tutors found the programme to be rewarding for them and the students.

Programme Outline 2018-19

It is hoped to continue this programme for both Irish and Maths for all levels in East Wall Youth in 2018-2019, with separate sessions run for all levels of Junior Certificate Maths and Leaving Certificate Irish, in order for students to benefit fully from the programme.

13 Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice (RP), which is funded by the Government's Area-Based Childhood (ABC) Programme and the North East Inner City (NEIC) Task Force, is an approach to building and maintaining interpersonal relationships, resolving conflict and repairing damaged relationships. It provides a framework that can support a wide range of organisations and sectors, including schools, early years' services, youth services, workplaces, communities and families – while complementing and supporting other approaches, such as coaching, mediation, and restorative justice.

It aims to build strong, happy communities and to manage conflict or tensions, by actively developing good relationships and resolving conflict in a healthy manner. Through working in a supportive and collegial manner a newly empowered group of active citizens in the local area will:

- Value and use an approach in the community that emphasises restorative practices.
- Appreciate the value of and use this approach in their own relationships as colleagues and in their extended families and friends.
- Advocate for the use of restorative ways of working in other areas of work.

Objectives

- Build a strong, happy, positive and supportive community in the Dublin Docklands and North East Inner City.
- Improve people's ability to resolve conflict and restore relationships in services, schools, in the home, in the community and in interagency settings.
- Enhance interagency collaboration and support the development of a shared approach to conflict management at an interagency level.
- Strengthen civil society by training and supporting children, young people and adults in the community to be reflective, critical citizens and actively contribute to the decisions being made about their local community.
- Support school, afterschool and youth services in to provide positive high quality play-based/active learning environments, through the provision of professional development in Restorative Practice and a supportive peer-learning network.

Restorative Practice was one of the suite of programmes introduced through the ABC Programme in 2014. A Restorative Practice Coordinator was recruited by the ELI in early 2015 to establish a community-wide **ABC RP Programme** that had the ability to meet locally identified needs. In 2015/16, over 130 people attended RP training with some services beginning implementation. Indicative evidence suggested that Restorative Practice had been very effective in building relationships and resolving conflict between adults, children and young people

In 2016/17, Restorative Practice was included as one of the recommendations in the Mulvey Report that would support the North East Inner City community to work together to envision and plan for a better future for the children and young people in the area. Initially funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the **NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative** provided Restorative Practice training to 285 young children (aged 4-12) from six local afterschool services; 110 young people (aged 12+) from six local youth services along with 212 community practitioners. Based on these engagements, the North East Inner City Young People's Report and Recommendations for the Future was launched by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone, and the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohue, in May 2017. A copy of the report and some of the media reports are available on: <http://blog.ncirl.ie/launch-of-building-hope-for-brighter-futures-listening-to-the-children-of-dublins-north-inner-city>. An additional, thirty-five organisations engaged in the ABC RP Programme in 2016/17 with 90 attending training.

In 2017/18, across both **ABC RP** and **NEIC Brighter Futures** programmes, over 1,000 children, young people, parents and professionals attended RP training, workshops and events. This included new services and community members beginning their restorative implementation journeys. Indicative evidence continues to demonstrate that Restorative Practice had been very effective in building relationships and resolving conflict between adults, children and young people – including instances relating to the violent incidents and on-going feud in the North East Inner City.

The **ELI RP Programme** is in the vanguard of what internationally is called ‘a restorative learning region’ or ‘a restorative society approach’ (Christie, Fattah, Johnstone, Llewellyn & Philpott, Maxwell & Lui, Strang & Braithwaite, Wilson, Wright). Creating a restorative community involves using a ‘restorative practices neighbourhood approach’ – where home, school, services and community have the skills to use restorative practices in their day-to-day lives. The **NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative** and **ABC RP Programme** are in their second and fourth year respectively, and continue to develop and grow.

The following organisations are currently involved in the **NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative** (mainly secondary schools, afterschool, youth and community organisations) and **ABC RP Programme** (early years services and primary schools). Levels of engagement vary, depending on the number and age of the children in the service along with the readiness and capacity of staff.

Table 35 Organisations Engaged in Restorative Practice

Organisations Engaged in Restorative Practice		
Early Years’ Services:	St Joseph’s East Wall NS	Youth Services:
CASPr (Community After School Project) Crèche	St. Laurence O’Toole’s CBS	Ballybough Youth Service
Cooperative Childcare Island Key Hill Street Family Resource Centre	St. Laurence O’Toole’s NS (JBS and GNS)	Belvedere Youth Club
Holy Child Preschool	St. Vincent’s Boys NS	Neighbourhood Youth Project 2 (NYP2)
Little Larriers & Smallies Crèche	Second Level Schools:	Ozanam House Resource Centre
Ozanam House Resource Centre Crèche	Larkin College	Swan Youth Services
Ringsend and District Community Crèche	Afterschool Services:	Youth Reach
St. Andrew’s Resource Centre Crèche	ASESP (After School Educational Support Programme)	Community Services:
Primary Schools:	CASPr	Charleville Mall Library
Central Model Infants School	Cooperative Childcare Island Key	Crinan Youth Project
Central Model Senior School	Foundations Project	Dublin City Council
City Quay National School	Neighbourhood Youth Project 1 (NYP1)	National College of Ireland
Gardiner Street NS	Ozanam House Resource Centre	The Talbot Centre
O’Connell’s Primary		Young People at Risk (YPAR)
Rutland Street NS		Charlemont Regeneration Project
Scoil Chaitríona NS		An Garda Síochána:
Scoil Chaoimhín		Bridewell
St. Joseph’s Co-Ed NS		Mountjoy Square
St. Joseph’s CBS Fairview		Pearse Street
		Store Street

RP Programme Evaluation

ELI's community action research processes are used to plan, do, and review the RP Programme throughout the year. Evidence is gathered through pre- and post-training surveys, event surveys, communities of practice, group discussions and observations.

The pre-training surveys collect demographical information and examined participants' experiences with conflict and relationship building, while the post-training surveys allows us to examine the impact of the training on participants. The surveys used by the ELI are similar in format to those used in the CDI Tallaght Evaluation of the Restorative Practice Programme undertaken by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway (Fives et al., 2013). Using similar surveys allows us to collect similar quantitative data to CDI Tallaght allowing for a comparison across both sites. There are two evaluation surveys used, one for community practitioners and another for primary and second level school staff. There are slight differences with one having more school-based questions, and the other with more neighbourhood-focused questions.

There are limitations to the findings as much of the data is qualitative in nature consisting of participant reflections and evaluations rather than scientific pre- and post-test assessments. In addition, the gap between training sessions means that participant retention rates can sometimes fluctuate; thereby making pre- and post-test evaluations difficult to collect at times. However, results are compared across training sessions and consistent indicative trends can be tracked through repeated action research cycles. Overall findings from our surveys and observations indicate that participants recognise the multiple benefits of RP; are beginning to see the impact of utilising the skills and knowledge learned through training and workshops; and the further need for community-wide engagement. The following sections outline the delivery of the various elements of the RP Programme in 2017/18 and highlights some of the key findings.

13.1 RP Training, Mentoring and Support

Professionals, educators, parents and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend training and workshops, and become skilled at using restorative practices in their personal and professional lives. The restorative skills taught and learned during these workshops include:

- Understanding the core principles of restorative practices and how they differ from traditional or punitive approaches.
- Acquiring knowledge about how to use restorative practices in many situations where punitive discipline approaches might have been used in the past.
- Applying knowledge to introduce and lead circle dialogues with children, young people and adults.
- Practising the use of restorative approaches e.g. restorative questions, fairness, doable requests etc.
- Demonstrating affective communication and supporting relationship building.

The aim is that the participants will embed these restorative practices in their interactions with children and young people (from birth to emerging adulthood), thereby modelling best restorative practice and enabling these children and young people to learn how to use restorative practice in their interactions with others.

In 2017/2018, forty-six organisations engaged in restorative practices in the Dublin Docklands and North East Inner City, this is an increase of eleven services since last year. The majority of services have been involved with this programme in some capacity since it was introduced to the community in 2014/2015, while others have come on-board during this past year.

In 2017/2018, 347 adults participated in restorative practice training and workshops, between the **NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative** and **ABC RP Programme**.

Table 36 Participants Attending Restorative Practice Training 2014 - 2018

Participants Attending RP Training			
Total Number of Participants		ABC Funded	NEIC Funded
2014-2015	32	32	0
2015-2016	139	139	0
2016-2017	406	180	226
2017-2018	347	106	241

Of these figures, 234 people participated in ‘Introductions to Restorative Practices’ and ‘Getting Started with Restorative Practices’ and seven people took part in ‘Restorative Practice Upskilling’ through the **NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative** – completing 96 hours training. Meanwhile, 106 people participated in ‘Getting Started with Restorative Practices’, ‘Restorative Practice Skills for Positive Classroom and School Norms’, and ‘RP Training of Trainers’ workshops through the **ABC RP Programme** – carrying out 92 hours of training.

In addition, 17 parents took part in ‘Restorative Parenting’ workshops, completing 25.5 hours training, in two school-based sites. A further 30 PCHP home visitors also participated in upskilling workshops in restorative practices with a focus on emotional literacy during 2017/18, to support 200 parents and families engaging in restorative-themed, emotional literacy-focused PCHP home visits.

Directly, through ELI’s engagement in school, afterschool and youth services during 2017/18, 170 children (aged 4-12 years) participated in RP CREW play-based activities facilitated in afterschool services, with 115 young people (aged 12+) taking part in RP CREW youth activities e.g. Relationship Keepers with Larkin Community College, Discover University, Opening the Door Between Corporates and Community with Arthur Cox and Belvedere YC.

Indirectly – through training, mentoring and coaching – in the course of implementation and supporting the practice of restorative approaches in services across the Dublin Docklands and NEIC during 2017/18, ELI connected with:

- 93 early years and afterschool educators
- 73 youth workers
- 138 primary and secondary school teachers, and
- 50+ statutory and non-statutory community-based professionals, in the education, guidance and support of over 1,500 children aged 4-12 years, and over 925 young people aged 12 years and above.

The diversity of the participants continued to increase and included Early Years Practitioners, Youth Workers, Community Workers, Child and Family Support Workers and Managers, while those who identified in feedback as ‘other’ professions identified as; Social Care Workers, Counsellors, Students and Students Interns, Librarians, Community Volunteers, Residential Care Workers, Domestic Abuse Counsellors, Administrators, Gardaí and ELI staff, and is illustrated in Figure 42.

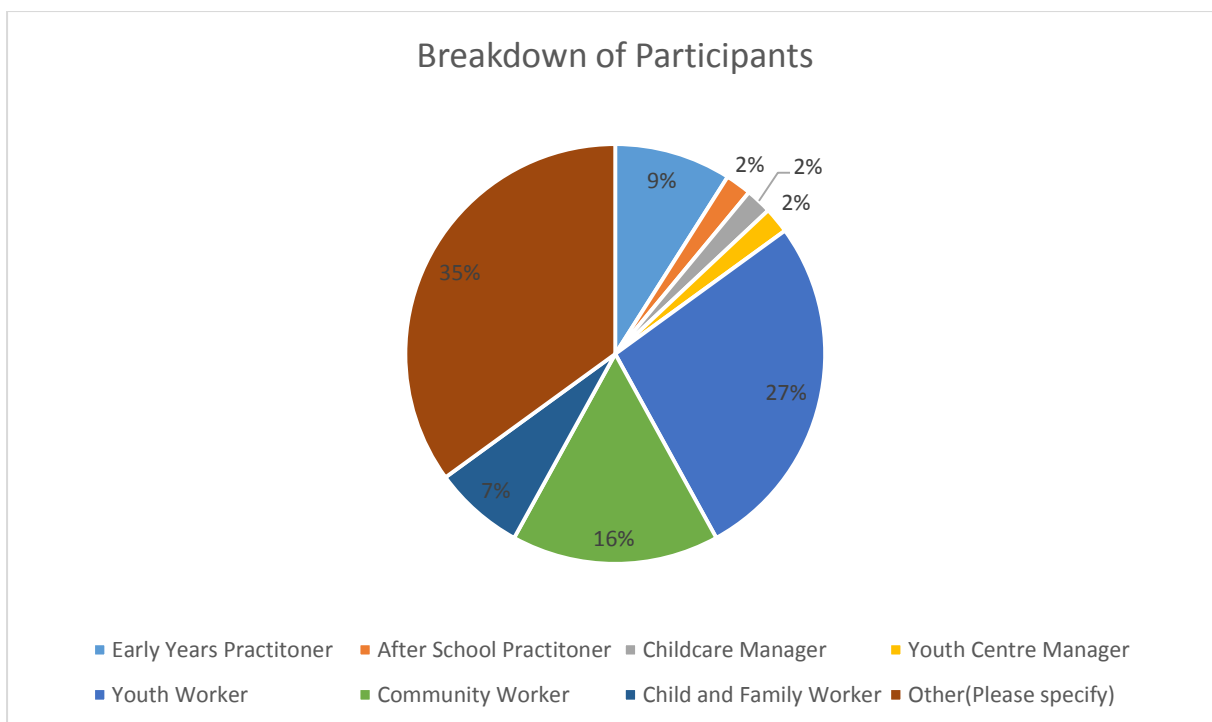


Figure 42 Breakdown of participants at Restorative Practice Training 2017-2018

The 2017/18 Restorative Practice Training, Mentoring and Support with Adults were as follows:

- Restorative Practice with Schools
- Introductory/Taster Workshops in Restorative Practice
- ‘Getting Started with Restorative Practices’
- ‘Restorative Practices Upskilling’ Training
- ‘Training of Trainers’ in Restorative Practices
- Mentoring and Support

13.1.1 Restorative Practice with Schools

As mentioned, the **ABC RP Programme** is in its fourth year in the Dublin Docklands and East Inner City, and for the first time primary and secondary schools were afforded two options by which to engage in restorative practice training opportunities – the Drumcondra Education Centre accredited ‘EPV Summer Course for Teachers’, as well as an ‘Introduction to RP in a School Community’ that individual schools can avail of using their Croke Park or Continuous Professional Development allowance.

As part of the **ABC RP Programme**, ELI’s accredited ‘EPV Summer Course for Teachers’ RP training for schools (both primary and second level) was held at the National College of Ireland three times during July 2017 and August 2017 with 58 local teachers and principals attending the weeklong courses. During each training course, teachers, principals and SNAs were taught ‘Restorative Practice Skills for Positive Classroom and School Norms’. This course is accredited by the Drumcondra Education Centre as a ‘Summer Course for Teachers’ and is recognised by the Department of Education and Skills. The majority of the participants taking part in these courses (86%, N=30) were mainstream class teachers and female (80%, N=28).

As mentioned, schools were also given the opportunity to engage in RP training on-site during school hours that are dedicated to continuous professional development. In 2017/18, three primary schools engaged in this way i.e. St. Laurence O’Toole’s CBS, St. Joseph’s NS Fairview and Rutland NS. Forty-eight local primary teachers, principals and SNAs took part in RP training using Croke Park hours, and

of those who responded, 76% (N=35) were female and 67% (N=31) were mainstream class teachers. The lower number of mainstream class teachers in this cohort is due to the fact that these training sessions incorporated the whole school staff in each school, ensuring higher numbers of learning support, SEN teachers as well as SNAs. One secondary school, Larkin Community College, also began their restorative journey using CPD hours, with ten staff, including their principal, deputy principal and other senior staff taking part in introductory meetings and development workshops.

Schools using Croke Park hours or time dedicated to continuous professional development to engage in restorative practices did so for a number of reasons:

- To introduce a school community to the idea of restorative practices as a new way of working together.
- To agree and develop plan for intensive RP support within the school community to support children and families impacted by the ongoing inner city feud.
- To encourage staff already trained in restorative practices to rediscover their skills with refresher and upskilling sessions.
- To assist staff and students in problem-solving (to support children, parents and/or colleagues) through the use of restorative circles and restorative meetings.
- To support staff already using restorative practices by introducing the approach to the whole staff body in an effort to create a whole school approach.
- To advocate for the children and young people using restorative practices outside of the school community and utilise their skills within the school.
- To promote the use of restorative practice to parents in the school community.

The structure and content of each course was tailored to meet the individual needs of each setting, with some schools completing the full 'Getting Started with Restorative Practices' training course and others concentrating on differing aspects of 'Upskilling Training' where there was already some knowledge of restorative practice. For some schools it was the first time to engage in RP training and thus, facilitation involved a more introductory format. Schools who requested restorative practice training using hours dedicated to CPD did so through their principals, HSCLs and School Chaplains.

This is the first year that ELI have been asked to facilitate onsite training in restorative practices in schools, thus, when participants were asked pre-training about their reasons for taking part in Restorative Practice their responses reflect this. Participants in the summer course (N=35) reported their motives were:

- *To improve my ability to deal with conflict (66%)*
- *It sounded interesting (54 %)*
- *To help with specific issues at work (46 %)*
- *I was asked to by my Principal (6%)*

Those who reported engaging with restorative practices in order to improve their ability to manage conflict increased significantly from 30% in 2015/16, to 55% in 2016/17, to 66% in 2017/2018. This is notably higher than that reported in CDI Tallaght (17%) where the greatest motivation reported there being their manager/principal asking them to do the training. Meanwhile, the majority of those who filled out in-school training evaluation forms (N=19) reported that they attended because they were asked to by their principal (79% N=15) with 37% (N=7) attending to improve their ability to deal with conflict. This is owing to the fact that schools undertaking RP training in-house do so on a whole school basis.

The majority of participants reported having little or no knowledge of Restorative Practice prior to beginning the training. Of those who attended the summer course (N=35), only 57% had a little knowledge; 29% reported not having much knowledge; while 6% reported having no prior knowledge. While the number of participants who had a little or not much prior knowledge of RP are similar to those reported in the last two years, less participants this year reported having no prior knowledge this year (6%, N=35), compared to last year (21%, N=17). One participant this year also reported having quite a lot of prior knowledge about RP.

However, of those who attended the in-school training (N=19), only 37% had a little knowledge; 37% reported not having much knowledge; while 26% reported having no prior knowledge. One participant had completed an RP summer course and stated that they had a lot of prior knowledge. It is interesting that most (71% N= 25) of those who attended the summer course heard about RP from outside their organisation compared to 58% (N=11) of those who attended the in-school training. This would highlight the need for more whole staff training in RP if it is to be embedded in school practice and policy.

Participants (N=54) were asked to self-rate their ability to manage conflict. As reported last year, about half (56%) reported either high or quite high capability regarding effective conflict management, while 8% said that their ability to manage conflict was low or quite low. This self-reporting for conflict management is quite similar to last year's findings.

Participants reported that they spend between 5% and 80% of their time dealing with behavioural problems, with the average amount of lost time being 23%. In addition, 51% of the staff reported experiencing conflict every day, while 23% reported that they experience conflict almost every week.

Post-restorative practice training, all the participants agreed that the course had improved their teaching and/or leadership skills and that they could see themselves using the skills acquired in practice.

Participants were asked about the ways in which they foresee RP making a difference at their school/organisation. Responses centred around creating a more positive and calm atmosphere; the wider impact that the change in the participant's own skills and outlook/attitude as a result of training will produce; and increased ability to manage and reduce conflict.

Participants were also asked to consider what supports might be required to assist initial implementation in their schools, responses included, posters and prompt cards, listening pieces, follow-up support sessions, programme supports (playground/yard buddy programme) etc.

13.1.2 Introductory/Taster Workshops in Restorative Practice

Introductory/Taster Workshops in Restorative Practice are for organisations and services who would like to introduce a restorative way of working to their service. These workshops are tailored to meet the needs and specifications of each service and can range from one to three-hour introductory sessions. These sessions provide participants and organisations with an exploratory knowledge of the essential areas of RP, and are a foundation for how restorative practices might benefit their practice. The following are examples of some of the introductory/taster sessions developed and facilitated by ELI during 2017/18.

Learning Together, Working Together Community Programme

The Learning Together, Working Together course is run by the Talbot Centre for the past sixteen years and is designed to assist voluntary, community and statutory workers in the North Inner City to recognise and respond to substance use in their client group whilst developing closer working relationships with other agencies. It is an eight week course, run during October and November, with a variety of speakers from different agencies and is funded by the HSE Dublin North City Addiction

Service and the Department of Education. In 2017/18, ELI was asked to facilitate one of these weeks and did so in collaboration with An Garda Síochána.

During this restorative practice session, participants were given an overview of Restorative Practice and how to use it effectively in their work with families and young people, especially those using support systems connected to addiction. Feedback and observations from participants suggested that they were unconsciously using restorative approaches, without having the language and processes, and that further training would be beneficial to support their practice as well as the families and young people that they work with.

Ozanam House Introductory Workshop and Summer Project RP Training

In 2017/18, ELI continued their work with Ozanam House Resource Centre in supporting their engagement and implementation of Restorative Practices across all programmes delivered through their Mountjoy Square service. As well as participating in cross-community 'Getting Started with Restorative Practices' training, Ozanam House also engaged with ELI through their afterschool and youth groups. Eleven participants took part in an introductory workshop in restorative practices in February and were provided with exploratory skills and knowledge to bring to their role in Ozanam House. Participants included staff from the early years and afterschool service, men's group and holistic therapy groups, as well as other service workers, with four participants going on to do 'Getting Started with RP' training in March and May with ELI.

ELI also facilitated the restorative practice section of the Ozanam House Summer Project training for both returning and new volunteers in June (36 participants). Again this introductory session was tailored to meet the needs of summer volunteers working with 235 children participating in the summer projects. Volunteers take part and lead activities each and every day, facilitating both in-house activities and day trips. Skills provided during this session included, supporting children to label and manage emotions, using restorative questions to repair harm and support reduction of conflict, and encouraging fairness and problem solving. Volunteers felt supported in using restorative techniques with ELI also providing lesson plans for RP games and activities for children.

NCI Student Leader Restorative Practice Workshops

At the beginning of the new academic year ELI facilitated Student Leader workshops in restorative practice in collaboration with the Learning and Teaching team and the Students' Union. Fourteen students involved in these workshops were tasked with supporting the larger NCI student body with workshops focussing on a community-building, as well as providing practical tools and skills to support incoming and current students. Participants felt that creating community circles and building relationships with students and faculty staff would successfully build community and repair harm if/when it occurs. Students also stated that workshops gave them practical skills to approach group work and peer assessment in a new way that would prevent conflict.

13.1.3 'Getting Started with Restorative Practice' Training

'Getting Started with Restorative Practice' Training is for those who are engaging with RP for the first time, and provides an overview of the origins and development of Restorative Practice, the evidence of outcomes that can be expected from adopting RP, and an outline of the skills that are used when taking a restorative approach. This training takes place over two days, and participants in this training gain the knowledge and skills to start:

- Using Restorative Language to consciously build relationships and prevent the escalation of conflict

- Having Restorative Conversations that can creatively transform and resolve inter-personal conflict.

Six cross-community 'Getting Started with Restorative Practice' training sessions took place during 2017/18, from 18 organisations.

At the pre-training stage for those undertaking 'Getting Started with Restorative Practices', 51 participants responded to the questionnaire survey while 46 participants responded to the post-questionnaire survey. There was 95% retention across the full year, with a total of three participants out of 51 unable to return for the second day of training.

As can be seen from the graph below, the majority of participants (N=51) reported having fair (51% N=26) or poor (37% N=19) knowledge of Restorative Practice prior to engagement in training, with 12% (N=6) having good or very good knowledge. This percentage of 88% (N=45) having not much knowledge of Restorative Practice is an increase from 72% in 2017/18 and would indicate that there is still work to do in regards to promoting and encouraging the use of restorative practices across the community, especially with the level of staff turnover across all services meaning that new staff are continually being introduced to services in the area.

Following engagement in training, the majority of participants (N=46) reported having a good (22% N=10), very good (61% N=28) or excellent (13% N=6) knowledge of restorative practice, similar to improvements seen over the past few years. This highlights the significant impact of engaging in restorative practice training in terms of the knowledge and information participants feel the gain. Even more important is that 93% (N=43) stated that they were likely to use the Restorative Practice skills they had learnt during training with everyone reporting using RP between sessions, whether at home or at work.

Comments included:

- *"It enables me to initiate confidently. Boosts a climate of restorative ways of being & communication hopefully but also gives skills & tools to think and name feelings and deal with scenarios in a constructive way."*
- *"Yes, I'm looking at my work through the lens of relationships, feelings, connection and empathy."*
- *"Yes. It helps to resolve conflicts in a fairer way & over a shorter timeframe."*
- *"Positive difference to conflict resolution between Young People who attend & who are in a relationship with one another. Can play out arguments in project."*
- *"Yes, useful approach to use with young people to allow them to voice their opinion and feel like they are listened to."*
- *"It helps youth workers give value to young people by avoiding shame."*
- *"Yes, I will be able to communicate better, resolve conflict in a proper manner and I will be able to build better relationships using RP."*
- *"Yes. I can use the R.P process even with younger children at a simple level. Encourages even young children to begin / develop skills of reflecting on own behaviour & developing empathy."*

There were 122 responses given to the question on why they were engaging in Restorative Practice training with the most common reason given 'to improve my ability to deal with conflict' (27%, N=33), which is similar to last year. Other reasons included:

- *To help with specific issues at work (18%, N=22)*
- *It sounded interesting (16%, N=19)*
- *Was asked to attend by supervisor/manager (17%, N=21)*
- *To improve relationships (16%, N=19)*

Participants were also asked to report on the frequency of their experiences of conflict (if any) as well as the types of conflict witnessed (Figure 43). The most common frequencies reported (N=30) were either 'annual' (33%, N=10) or 'everyday' (31%, N=9). The percentage who experienced conflict only

an annual basis increased from 26% in 2016/17 to 33% in 2017/18. However, the percentage who experienced conflict everyday also increased from 21% in 2016/17 to 30% in 2017/18. The types of conflict witnessed (N=51) ranged from personal intimidation (24%, N=12), property crimes (22%, N=11), vandalism (22%, N=11), personal assault (20%, N=10), gang activity (20%, N=10), car crimes (18%, N=9), graffiti (12%, N=6) and other (12%, N=6) (Figure 43). Interestingly, while experience of gang activity has decreased from 28% in 2016/17, personal intimidation (11% to 24%), personal assault (4% to 20%), property crime (12% to 22%) and vandalism (13% to 22%) have all increased significantly.

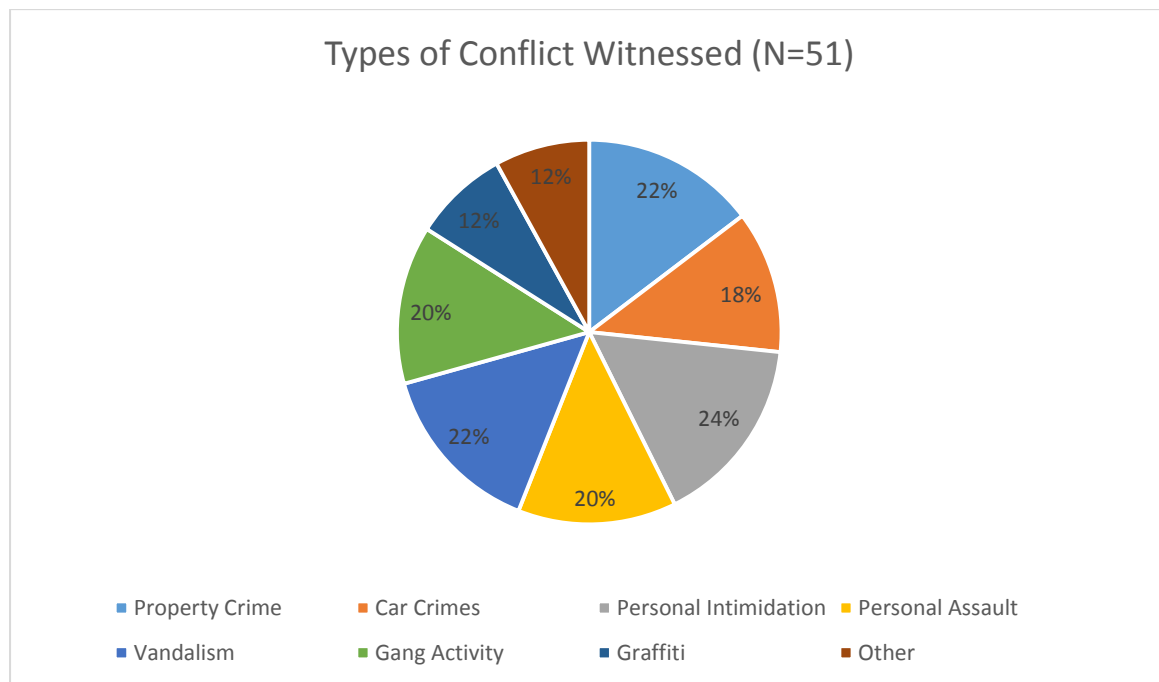


Figure 43 Types of Conflict Witness 2017-2018

It is evident from the post-training data that RP is quite effective in building capacity to manage conflict in different settings – with children and young people, parents, colleagues, interagency settings and the wider community. This year a trend is emerging, in relation to the level at which participants are self-reporting their ability to manage conflict under different settings pre-training. Indicative evidence suggests that those participating in training for the first time are reporting higher levels of confidence in relation to managing conflict compared to previous years. As to whether this suggests an assimilation of restorative knowledge – consciously or unconsciously – it is too early to tell, but warrants further investigation.

Finally, and with regard to moving forward and supporting the embedding of restorative approaches within organisations, participants were asked what supports might be needed to aid with further training, implementation and resourcing etc. Responses included, but were not limited to:

- Further training and upskilling for all staff in services, in particular whole staff approaches to working together to implement practically and restoratively.
- Further opportunities to put new skills into practice – taking theory to real-world experiences.
- Further guidance with links to local evidenced-based research i.e. conferences, readings, video links, contacts, networks etc.
- Visits to workplaces/organisations to give further advice and training day with practical ideas.
- Direction in relation to linking with local and national policy documents and/or mission statements within organisations.
- Introduction in college courses locally e.g. social care, ECCE etc.
- All young people to get the training in the community.

- *Visual aids and materials for rooms and buildings, especially child-friendly posters and materials.*
- *Follow-up with community members and organisations to measure effectiveness and progress.*

13.1.4 ‘Restorative Practice Upskilling’ Training

‘Upskilling Training’ is for those who have already completed the initial workshops and who are interested in developing their skills. Training provides participants with the tools and confidence to facilitate restorative circles, restorative meetings and restorative conferences. Participants in this training gain the knowledge and skills to consistently take a restorative approach to their life and work.

Following the three days training, including 20 hours contact time, participants are equipped to facilitate:

- Restorative Circles – for building good relationships in groups and for undertaking creative problem-solving
- Restorative Meetings – for transforming and resolving group conflicts, and
- Restorative Conferences – for addressing wrongdoing and supporting those impacted by wrongdoing to overcome the harm done to them.

This training was delivered in June 2018 with seven people attending. All participants in attendance had completed initial ‘Getting Started with Restorative Practices’ training through ELI during 2017/18. Following these workshops, all participants stated that they had a very good RP knowledge-base and described themselves as having very good skills at dealing with children and young people; while feeling moderately skilled at dealing with conflict with colleagues, parents and within the community. All who responded (100%, N=6) were extremely satisfied with the training and would definitely use Restorative Circles; were likely to use Restorative Meetings; and would maybe use Restorative Conferences.

Knowing that Restorative Practice is about building/strengthening community and repairing harm to restore relationships, participants identified several ways in which they envisaged RP making a difference. These responses were themed, with respondents suggesting that restorative approaches will make a difference in the following ways:

- *Conflict resolution*
- *Relationship-building*
- *Improved communication*
- *Teaching essential skills of life*

Other foreseen ways of making a difference included, “building awareness of self and community”, and encouraging “compassion and broadening points of view”.

Following training, participants highlighted the need to engage in more practice, having more time to practice and more challenging role plays. To support implementation and learning, participants would welcome follow-up support and training in the form of:

- *Participating in further training opportunities*
- *Shadowing RP trainers to observe and follow others to build confidence*
- *Ensuring that all staff get the opportunity to complete restorative practice training in their services*
- *Encouraging all managers to get training, making it compulsory for all staff.*

13.1.5 ‘Restorative Practice Training of Trainers’ Course

Two school/community-based professionals participated in the week-long ‘Restorative Practices in Schools – Training of Trainers’ course, which was delivered by CDI Tallaght and accredited by the Drumcondra Education Centre and Department of Education and Skills as a ‘Summer Course for Teachers’. Following the course, participants had to facilitate RP training in their own service and/or community organisation and participate in three communities of practice. Over 2017/18, each trainer delivered multiple training workshops and was observed in their practice by accredited professionals, with both graduating as certified trainers. Both graduates will deliver restorative practice courses for teachers during 2018/19.

An NEIC ‘Training of Trainers’ course is currently in development with the aim of having an RP trainer in each service. The first ‘Training of Trainers’ course will take place during 2018/2019 to help build capacity and encourage sustainable restorative practices across the community.

13.1.6 Mentoring and Support

Mentoring and support is offered to all services that are engaging in Restorative Practice through on-site visits, phone calls, e-mails and Monthly Community of Practice Meetings. Establishing strong systems of support is a critical component in supporting the development of a restorative learning region. Utilising non-directive mentoring and support approaches post-training compliments restorative practices’ solution-focussed approach to dealing with challenges and/or harm.

As previously mentioned, engagement varies across the community in regard to how and how often organisations are engaging in these supports, and the communities of practice is outlined in the graph below.

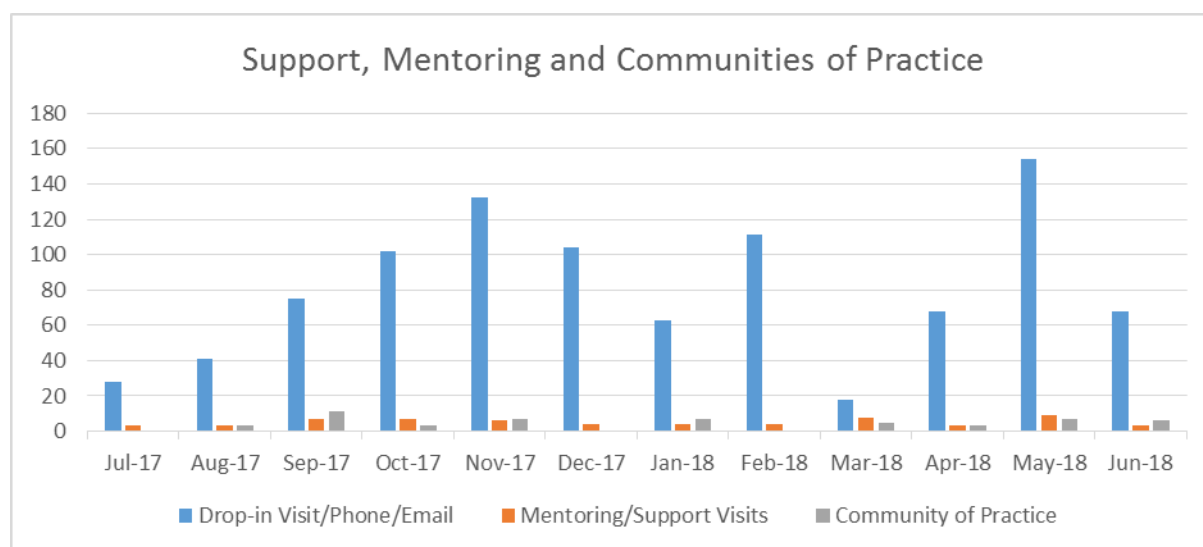


Figure 44 Support, Mentoring and Communities of Practice

Since July 2017, there have been ten interagency RP communities of practice with an average of five participants. Communities of practice are an important vehicle for the dissemination and implementation of restorative approaches as they provide a model for connecting people, providing a shared context, enable dialogue, stimulate new learning and generate new knowledge. Building this type of learning community requires ‘cultivation’ so that it can emerge, grow and flourish, and this will take time.

Where an organisation is developing as a restorative one, this mentoring and support is an essential element to establishing, embedding and sustain restorative approaches. Having the opportunity to speak about and listen to implementation successes, challenges and dilemmas, maintains the commitment, motivation and energy levels of those involved. When considering individual organisations and their levels of engagement and implementation it is important to note that these classifications are in their early stages, with services being encouraged to self-assess their progress. For the purposes of this report, a preliminary measure of engagement has been devised, which will further developed in collaboration with services in 2018/19. Encouraged by CDI Tallaght's 'Community-Wide Restorative Practices Programme: Implementation Guide' organisational engagement could be positioned as follows:

Level 1: Getting Started – Exploring and Preparing

For organisations at Level 1 of their implementation journey there are a number of exploratory and preparatory activities taking place including, but not limited to:

- Seeking buy-in from staff and boards of management in relation to using RP as an approach.
- Arranging initial meetings/introductory workshops to acquire and share information.
- Giving staff and management opportunities to attend initial training sessions and bringing knowledge back to the organisation.

Level 2: Starting Implementation – Experimenting, Planning and Resourcing

For organisations at Level 2 of their implementation journey there are a number of experimental and resourcing activities taking place including, but not limited to:

- Identifying champions within organisations through meetings and shared practice.
- Supporting the use of RP through attendance at local communities of practice (COPs) and availing of direct mentoring supports.
- Including and introducing children and young people to age-appropriate restorative workshops and initiatives.

Level 3: Partial Implementation – Implementing, Operationalising and Evaluating

For organisations at Level 3 of their implementation journey there are a number of implementation and operational activities taking place including, but not limited to:

- Utilising circle dialogue on a regular basis with adults and children/young people.
- Fostering buy-in to RP across a range of stakeholders.
- Developing organisational capacity through upskilling and continuous professional development.
- Delivering programmes targeted at children, young people and their families, and in collaboration with children and young people themselves.
- Ensuring that RP training modules are included in the professional development journey of all staff.
- Evaluating the use and effectiveness of RP in the organisation.

Level 4: Full Implementation – Business as Usual

For organisations at Level 4 of their implementation journey there are a number of 'business as usual' activities taking place including, but not limited to:

- Ensuring RP is an integral element of training for all those working with children, young people and communities
- Guaranteeing all children and young people in the community are dealt with restoratively by the adults in their lives.
- Sharing learning about how RP is developing in the organisation and supporting other organisations to begin their journey
- The organisation being widely recognised as a restorative one.

At present, the 46 organisations currently involved in the **NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative** and **ABC RP Programme** are engaging as following:

Level 1: Getting Started – Exploring and Preparing	17
Level 2: Starting Implementation – Experimenting, Planning and Resourcing	19
Level 3: Partial Implementation – Implementing, Operationalising and Evaluating	10
Level 4: Full Implementation – Business as Usual	0

13.2 Restorative Practice Initiatives with Children and Young People

In 2017/18 Restorative Practice Initiatives with Children and Young People were as follows:

- RP CREW Afterschool activities
- Relationship Keepers with Larkin Community College
- Opening the Door Between Corporates and Community with Arthur Cox and Belvedere YC
- Discover University

This training with children and young people aims to empower young people of all ages by providing life skills and strengthening people’s ability to express themselves safely and imaginatively. Restorative practices provide young people with a range of skills and methods that promote mutually respectful relationships while building community cohesion. It is an asset-building endeavour in which young people develop a greater sense of self-efficacy, self-esteem, sense of community and empathy and emotional literacy.

13.2.1 RP CREW – Community Relationships Encourage Working together

The focus in primary schools and afterschools (children aged 4-12 years) is to introduce them to the idea of working together in restorative circles, the use of talking/listening pieces and to encourage the development of emotional literacy, connecting feelings with needs, making doable requests, fair processes, problem solving etc. These sessions build on pilot sessions delivered within afterschools during 2016/17 with adjustments made to the content, length of sessions and size of groups.

In 2017/18, two separate RP CREW six-week programmes took place in Cooperative Childcare Afterschools with 22 children taking part. Eight children participated during January, February and March (aged between five and nine-years-of age), and 14 children (aged between five and seven-years of age) took part during April, May and June. Children participated in a range of activities discussing restorative values, building and maintaining friendships, feelings and problem solving activities, among others.

In evaluating the RP CREW activities children were asked to complete a feedback form. When asked about how they felt having taken part in RP activities over their six week programme, the first group of older children’s responses (N=7) were themed and children responded in the following ways:

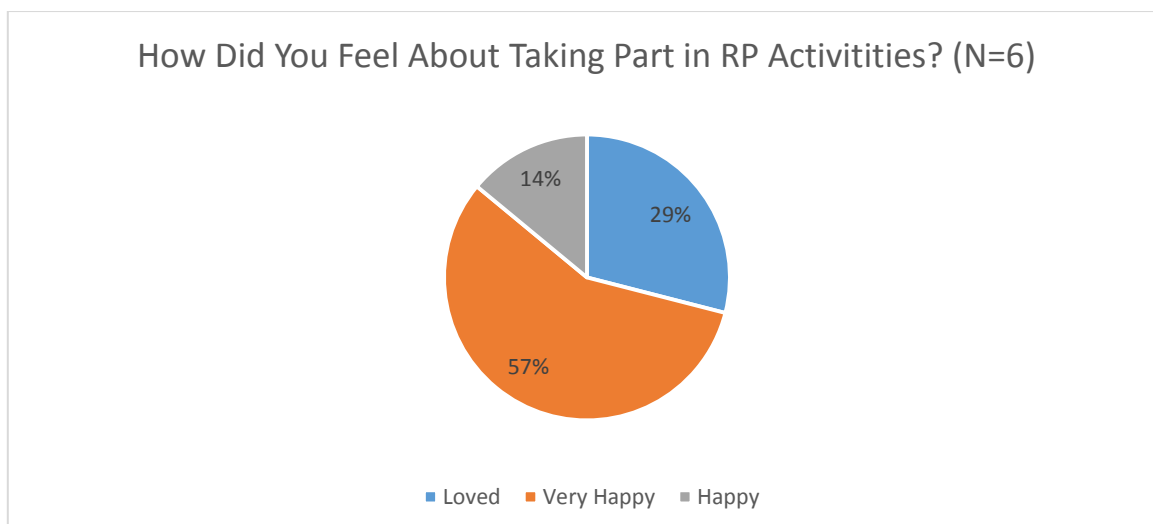


Figure 45 Children's feelings on taking part in Restorative Practice activities

Over the course of the six week programme children were able to identify and name feelings words, describe how anger, shame and blame affected them, and apply problem-solving techniques with friends, siblings and family. Following initial sessions children readily got into circles, and participated fully in circle dialogue, excitedly giving their energy and mood levels and reflecting on what they liked and didn't like about the themes and topics chosen. All sessions were delivered using play-based activities that were age appropriate and suitable for each group.

When asked what they didn't enjoy, one response that stood out was "the closing circles because I had to wait". With younger groups of children this response is often cited, which highlights the importance of working with smaller groups of children, while also using succinct opening and closing circles.

13.2.2 Relationship Keepers with Larkin Community College

In June 2018, fourteen students from the local community took part in two days training in restorative practices in National College of Ireland. This group are the incoming 4th, 5th and 6th Year students from Larkin Community College for 2018/19, and took part in a two-day restorative practice training course to support them in becoming 'relationship keepers' in their school. This course equipped them with the restorative language, skills and tools necessary to build positive relationships and to resolve conflict – with the initiative is being funded by Dublin's North East Inner City.

Having initially participated in a sequence of one hour-long RP taster sessions in their school in April – alongside over seventy fellow students – these young people applied and interviewed to become 'relationship keepers', and from September 2018 they will support the incoming 1st Year students to create a sense of connection and belonging within the Larkin school community. Following their appointment, they met and introduced themselves to incoming 1st Year students and their parents at a follow-up meeting, before embarking on this two-day RP course.

Students were joined by their School Chaplin, and completed their training alongside one of their teachers who had been previously trained in restorative practices during an ELI Summer Course in 2015/16. They graduated alongside Discover University students

One of the ways students envisaged bringing restorative practices to life, was through developing a whole school culture of respect, identifying this restorative value as one of the most important in the early stages of implementation and something of utmost importance in their role as relationship keepers. Comments included:

- “Respect is knowing that everyone is unique and has a value in this world, and that everyone has a voice and the right to talk.”
- “Respect is good communication between people that protects all values. Respect allows you to understand from someone else’s perspective, it allows you to listen to someone without judgement”.
- “Respect someone the way you would like them to respect you. Listen when someone else is talking. Being kind to everyone. Making everyone feel equal.”

When asked what skills they thought they had acquired that would be imperative in their role as relationship keepers’ responses included, but were not limited to:



Comments from the adults involved in these workshops included:

- “This has been a wonderful opportunity for these students to support their peers, develop life skills that will not only help them with future career choices, but also build relationship skills to live a happy life.”
- “We hope that this mentoring programme will ease the transition from primary to post primary for incoming first year students. We are so proud of you all! Well done!”

Larkin Community College are committed to becoming a restorative school, and a place where students, teachers and the wider community can work together to encourage and inspire all of the young people in our community. ELI are equally committed to supporting their journey and will continue to support the students from September in their new mentoring roles.

13.2.3 Restorative Conversations: Opening the Door between Corporates and Community

Restorative Practice Conversations between corporate employees and local young people is a new programme developed as part of the NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative. The aim is to build trusting relationships between the young people and corporate volunteers; enhance the participants interpersonal and communication skills and increase the professional employability of participating young people. Arthur Cox, a long-standing ELI partner, piloted **Phase 1** of this programme during October, November and December 2017, and continued with **Phase 2** during April, May and June 2018 — with 13 Arthur Cox employees and 14 young people from Belvedere Youth Club (along with two youth leaders) taking part.

Restorative conversation sessions between Arthur Cox employees and local young people, through facilitated workshops, will encourage the establishment of trusting relationships, while inspiring those corporate volunteers involved to:

- Augment the work of the Early Learning Initiative and the service it provides to the Docklands and East Inner City communities
- Provide community participants with positive meaningful interactions to enhance their interpersonal and communication skills
- Allow young people and volunteers to make a contribution to the community as well as developing young people’s employability skills
- Encourage corporate participants to use their skills and experiences for the benefit of young people in the community and wider society
- Enable an organisation to deliver on its corporate social responsibility agenda.

Phase 1: Programme Description and Evaluation

Phase 1 of this pilot project involved four separate interactive RP sessions with corporate volunteers and young people (aged between 12 and 15 years), both separately and cooperatively. Each session lasted ninety minutes, with methodologies employed ranging from storytelling, reciprocal teaching (e.g. think, pair, share), cooperative learning, and problem-solving instruction. The first week was spent preparing young people and corporate volunteers in their separate organisations in advance of the two collaborative sessions during weeks two and three. Week four involved the young people and corporate volunteers reflecting on and evaluating their experiences separately.

Session 1: Values and Attributes:

To determine the importance and/or similarities between youth and adult values word clouds are used below, to illustrate the more frequently used and prominent values during this activity. (Figure 1). Connection, respect, listening, empathy and perspective were important attributes emphasised by each group.



penalties were uncompromising. *“Their mams should have been called and got into trouble because they should have known better...the Gardaí should give a punishment...They (young people) are not to come in anymore. If I see you anymore I will take your ball or ring your mum or dad...”* Despite the fact that no definitive wrongdoing/harm had been named, the groups readily came up with ‘appropriate’ punitive responses to the unnamed harm.

Groups then discussed using a more restorative approach to the same scenario. In this instance, groups highlighted that the same events might have occurred i.e. *‘noise distractions for workers, possibility that damage could be caused’* etc. In this illustration groups were asked to **ascertain if harm had been caused, and if so, to whom?** Two groups decided that, in fact, no harm had been caused at that point, with the other groups suggesting that initial harm affected the young people, ‘kids might have been scared (by security guard)’ and ‘lads told to move, so they are angry’. When asked **what was needed to make things right**, solutions avoided punishment completely. Instead, a more understanding approach could be seen *“The security guard was thinking (of) a way to help people get a pitch...Maybe the DCC (Dublin City Council) could build more pitches and parks?...They (young people) could (ask to) play in clubs. They (both) should apologise and talk about it and figure out some solution. Both need to be more understanding.”*

Session 4: Reflections, Considerations and Evaluations

Akin to the first preparatory sessions, these final get-togethers took place separately, with corporate participants meeting in Arthur Cox, and young people gathering in Belvedere Youth Project.

Young People’s Perspectives and Feedback:

In evaluating their experiences, young people spoke about their involvement in the separate and collaborative sessions, and how their confidence has grown since. They talked about speaking in public, especially in an environment and in front of people they had only met, how it was a challenge at first but once they started they “didn’t want it to stop”. Young people also discussed the opportunities available to them after this process. Prior to this they would have looked at the corporate sector as somewhere that is ‘not for people from the inner city’. However, they are now confident that should they want to embark on a career in this sector, that they have the relationship-building capacities and knowledge to support this. While completing an evaluation of the process, the young people also discussed the opportunities and possibilities ahead of them, and how they were unaware of the many different careers available to them within their community. One young person talked about Arthur Cox opening a new door for him, “I always wanted to work in a big office and wear a nice suit, and I didn’t think this was possible because of where I come from”. Another young person talked about how being invited to a place like Arthur Cox and being treated well and respected, without expecting anything in return. “In the inner city there is a great community, but people don’t give me anything unless I have something to offer them”. For this young person, Arthur Cox provided him with “the ‘thing’ that I don’t think I could repay, however they did not expect anything in return.” Finally, the group of young people involved expressed a genuine interest in continuing this initiative with Arthur Cox, to further develop the budding relationships that have been established.

Corporate Volunteer’s Perspectives and Feedback:

And what other benefits, if any, do you think the programme had on the young people involved?

- *“I hope it has given them a view of the human faces behind the corporate world.”*
- *“I feel it shortens the gap between “them and us” having a common thing to talk about shows them they could work in a place like our firm.”*
- *“Confidence building, being able to have a laugh and a real conversation with an adult – for any child is important.”*

- *“Simply physically being able to see and touch what they may have in the future makes it a possibility.”*
- *“I really hope it opened the door for young people and gave them an interest in someday working in a law firm or corporate world.”*

For corporate volunteers the desire to reflect on their experiences, their hopes for a ‘next stage’, and their concerns as to whether “we achieved what we wanted to achieve” were paramount, with many verbalising that they were “very eager to be involved in another session and work further with the young people, as I really feel our journey had only begun!” Following unanimously positive feedback from both corporate and youth participants following Phase 1, it was agreed to continue with Phase 2 post-haste.

Phase 2: Programme Description and Evaluation

Following on from the success of Phase 1 and the willingness of all participants to continue developing Restorative Practice Conversations, Phase 2 of RP Conversations: Opening the Door between Corporates and Community aimed to further support young people and corporate volunteers in the building of new and exciting relationships, while also including their parents and families in these restorative conversations. Working with the same team of with corporate volunteers and young people (aged between 12 and 15 years), Phase 2 of the project involved six interactive sessions and took place in Arthur Cox offices, Belvedere Youth Club and National College of Ireland. Each session again lasted ninety minutes, with methodologies employed ranging from storytelling, reciprocal teaching (e.g. think, pair, share), cooperative learning, and problem-solving instruction. Young people and corporate volunteers were more heavily engaged in deciding on themes during this second phase especially in regards to the visit by volunteers to Belvedere Youth Club.

Discussions and evaluations with Corporate Volunteers and Young People at the end of Phase 2 resulted in the following feedback:

When asked about what they enjoyed about Phase 2 of initiative, young people (N=10) responded:

- *all of it/everything (38%)*
- *meeting new people (25%)*
- *how nice and friendly everyone was (25%)*
- *It was G! (12%)*

Corporate volunteers, when asked if they thought that the second phase of the ‘restorative conversations’ initiative was an enjoyable experience as a volunteer, responded (N=7) similarly with 86% agreeing that it was an enjoyable experience.

When asked if participating in ‘restorative conversations’ gave corporate volunteers an opportunity to make a contribution to Belvedere Youth Club and the local community, 100% of volunteers responded (N=7) that it was likely they had.

Asked whether volunteers thought their visit to Belvedere Youth Club added value to the programme and the experience of young people, comments included:

- *I think it was very beneficial to show the kids how much we care about taking the time out to go to their home and feel it really helped continue to build and grow the relationships and bonds being made.*
- *I think it showed the teenagers that we are very interested in hearing more about them and that we want to see all the things they do in club and it gave them a chance to show their wonderful club.*

- *It was really good to see the young people in their own environment as it gave us an opportunity to see the many activities they have worked on. It was also wonderful to see and meet the adults involved — both parents and board members of the club.*
- *Provided an opportunity for volunteers to understand the daily lives of the young people and what activities/skills they are working on. Also, to appreciate how important a youth club is to young people.*
- *It made the kids proud of their world as we were so impressed with it. It helped me understand them and their world better.*
- *It gave me insight as to how important the youth club is to both the young people and parents of the area.*

Finally, when asked on a scale of 1 - 10 if young people would like to engage in more of these restorative-focussed initiative, their responses were unanimous. 100% of young people (N=10) gave the highest ranking of ten, including two who gave '100' as their score.

Comments from young people included:

- *"It was great...Thanks for the support."*
- *"Thank you for taking the time to work with us."*
- *"Relationships are very important, it's important to nice and friendly."*

Similarly, when corporate volunteers were asked about their experience, comments included:

- *"I LOVE this initiative and cannot wait to continue and see where it goes. I really do think it will impact positively on some of the kids which is what it is all about."*
- *"Participating in the ELI programme has been so rewarding and meeting and forming friendships with the teenagers and [the adults involved] has been the best part. I really hope the teenagers have enjoyed it."*
- *"The initiative has been a very positive experience and it has been wonderful to be able to share the corporate world, hopefully making it a little less intimidating to the young people!"*
- *"I think this is a really good initiative. My favourite part was the introductory session in our offices. I loved the discussion about what exactly is the problem we're trying to solve and, what is the best way to go about solving it. It was interesting, exciting and taught me a lot."*
- *"I loved it and I think it works and all parties come away with a sense of pride and growth! It reminded me something I was taught in school — everyone is 100% smart — but that is made up of different types. The young people are creative and capable beyond their years which if they use it will set them apart from any other children."*

13.3 Restorative Parenting and Home Visiting Initiative

Funding from the NEIC enabled the development of a Restorative Parenting Initiative, which aims to give parents/guardians the training and support they need to provide for a nurturing home learning environment. Restorative Parenting is a tool to support healthy parent-child relationships, improve communication, and build stronger families, while enabling parents to cultivate new relationships with other parents, practitioners and professionals in the community. The Restorative Parenting and Home Visiting Initiative consists of two elements: Reportative Parenting Group Workshops and 'Let's Talk' Home Visiting and Parent Support Sessions.

13.3.1 Restorative Parenting Groups

Restorative practice workshops were delivered to parents/guardians in Rutland St NS and City Quay NS during 2017/18. This pilot involved six-week workshops concentrated on building relationships and supporting parents to resolve and manage conflict – with initial sessions discussing the skills, attributes and methods utilised by parents in their day-to-day lives. Topics discussed included: general parenting strategies and concerns; concerns about growing up in this community that is negatively impacted by crime, violence and drugs; how children/young people in this community are perceived/treated/impacted upon, and how we can create safe and successful futures for children.

Eight Restorative Parenting workshops were delivered in Rutland Street National School from November 2017 to January 2018, with an average attendance of 6-8 parents in attendance. Another six Restorative Parenting workshops were delivered in City Quay National School from March-June 2018, with an average attendance of 6-9 parents in attendance. Feedback has been very positive and it is hoped, to extend this initiative to other schools in the area. While participants in the Rutland St. Course were not asked to complete evaluations, observation notes from the sessions were analysed.

The skills, attributes and methods utilised by parents in their day-to-day lives were discussed at the first session. While parents could list the numerous actions, roles and responsibilities that they carried out, they were less confident in naming the many skills, characteristics and qualities that they possess. As can be seen from the chart below, the majority of participants associated parenting with negative feeling of stress, worry and money.

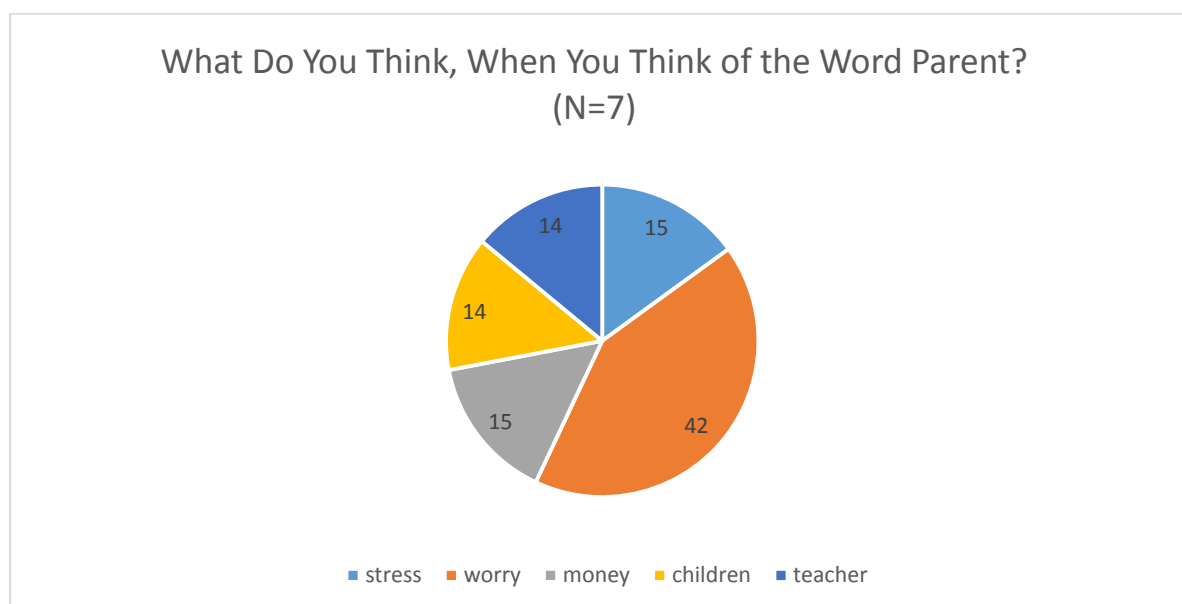


Figure 46 Parent perceptions of the word 'parent'

Over the number of weeks spent together, parents became more aware and more vocal in regards to their many talents, and how these talents could impact positively on both their children, families and wider community. There was also a greater understanding of the values and attributes held by the wider community, with parents becoming more aware of the impact both their and other's actions had on children and young people. It is also important to note happiness and peace were the two most important gifts that parents wanted to give their children.

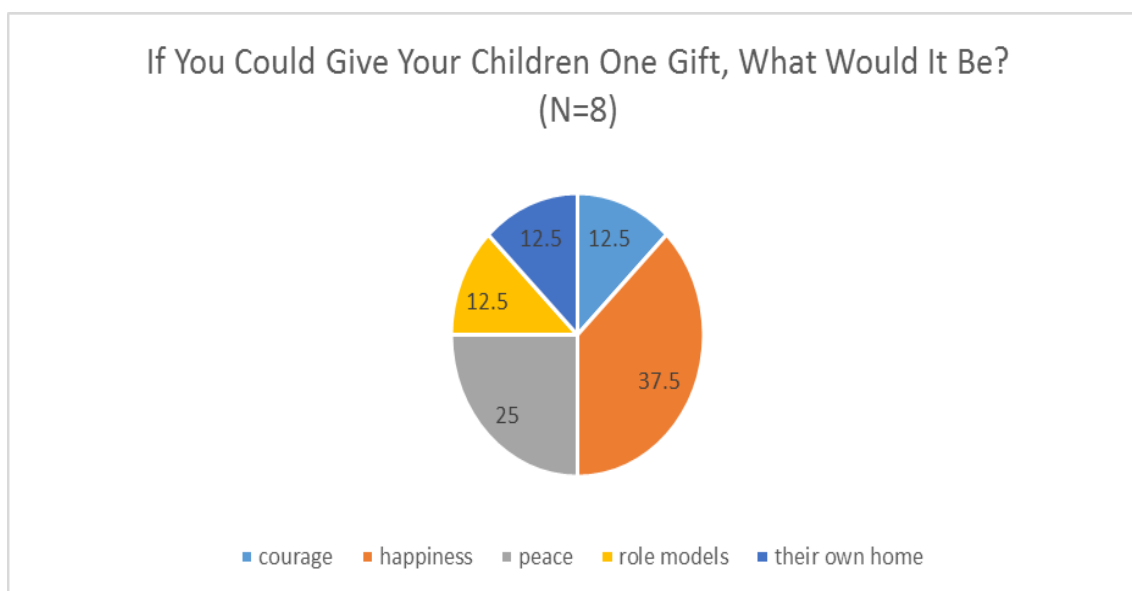


Figure 47 Gifts that parents want to give their children

Participants in the City Quay Course filled out evaluation forms at the end of the course with 100% (N=9) finding the course enjoyable; that it helped develop their parenting skills and they would use what they had learned from the course to approach situations differently (whether with their children, family or friends).

Comments included:

- *“On days of feeling low, when I’d go to course it lifted me up and gave me some confidence back.”*
- *“I have gained so much confidence in doing the course.”*
- *“Push it a lot more, it’s a great course but I would like to have more parents involved.”*
- *“I really enjoyed this group & sharing with other parents, but also listening to others stories.”*
- *“As HSCL (Home School Community Liaison teacher) and a parent I think the course was extremely useful as a parent in resolving conflicts at home. It also gave me the opportunity to share my experiences with other parents which I think has really helped my relationship with parents and enhanced my role as HSCL.”*

12.3.2 ‘Let’s Talk’ Home Visiting and Parent Support Sessions

The ABC 0-2 and Parent Child Home (PCHP) Programmes aim to promote positive learning interactions between parents/guardians and their children and help parents/guardians and extended family develop the understanding, skills and knowledge needed to support their children’s developmental, educational and life journeys. As well as home visiting, these programmes support parents to access group parenting sessions as well as other services in the community. More information on these programmes are available in Section 9.

A six week RP programme was developed and incorporated into the existing curriculum for these well-established programmes. The aim was to equip Home Visitors with the skills and knowledge to model for parents how to use restorative practice when talking, reading and playing with their children. The growing recognition of emotional intelligence, and in particular emotional literacy, as an important factor in a child's social and emotional development was at the heart of this innovation. The programme involved:

- Delivering three restorative practice training sessions with Home Visitors during November 2017 to enable the Home Visitors to implement this RP theme with confidence.
- Developing *Let's Talk*, an emotional literacy book and accompanying resources, which was launched on 24th January. Materials included Lesson plans/VISM lists for the Home Visitors, handout for parents that included emotional literacy learning activities and songs, a mirror and turtle, which can be used as a talking piece.
- The *Let's Talk* Programme was delivered to 200 parents in March.

Parents' Feedback

The book, *Let's Talk*, was developed to support parents in building emotional literacy in the home and help children increase their understanding of emotions and feelings, through pictures, words, songs and activities. Evaluations undertaken in this instance were conducted by a PCHP Specialist and formed part of a final year project on NCI's BA in Early Childhood Education degree programme.

Indicative evidence suggests that 100% of parents/guardians liked the book. When asked whether the book has changed the way parents speak to children, responses included:

- *"Yes, we've started communicating better about how we feel."*
- *"I am conscious to explain the feelings and emotions I use now. I am using more words now after using the book."*
- *"This book helped me by increasing my range of feelings words that are commonly used in society...build her vocabulary and support her to understand and name the emotions to express herself."*
- *"I use more facial expressions to explain myself and my child's feelings."*

In relation to parent-child interactions and how these conversations were happening in the home, there were clear suggestions that conversations around emotional language and feelings words were happening through play.

- *"He loved it. He sits and looks at the real pictures all the time. He smiles and says 'happy,' and pretends to cry on the 'sad' photo."*
- *"I used it with all my kids. They liked the photos and were copying the facial expressions and having lots of fun."*
- *"My child loves this book, there are so many colours in the book. Also, the kids with emotions makes the book more fun for my kid. She just opened the book and pretended to make the faces like the kid in the book."*

Parents were also asked how they would describe the book (Figure 48).

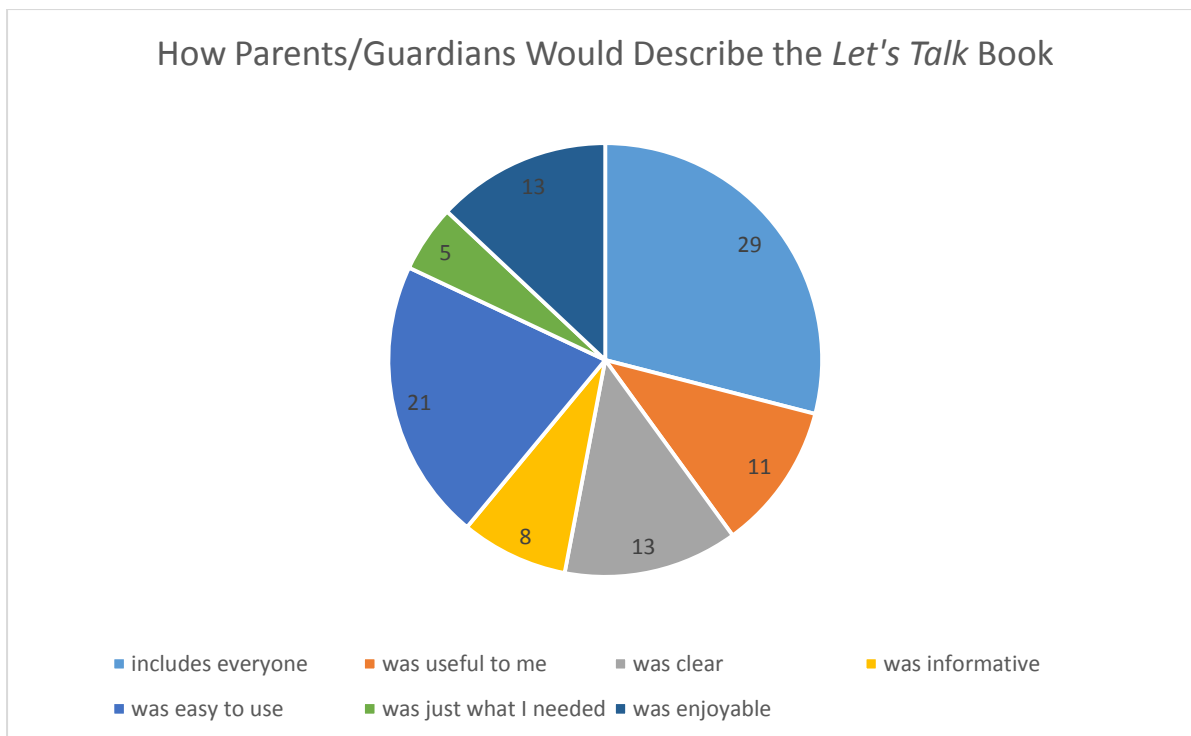


Figure 48 How parents/guardians would describe the *Let's Talk* Book

Going forward, *Let's Talk* will be embedded in our Home Visiting and Parent Support Curriculum and we have requests from Tusla family support workers, early years' services and schools for the books and learning materials, as well as training workshops in how to use them, which we are hoping to accommodate.

Programme Outline 2018/19

Restorative Practice is an on-going project, which needs to be sustained and developed further if it is to realise its objectives of building a strong, happy, positive and supportive community in the Dublin's Inner City; and ensuring that adults and children alike have the ability to resolve conflict and restore relationships in services, schools, in the home, in the community and in interagency settings.

In collaboration with all services and organisations, both statutory and non-statutory, the **NEIC Brighter Futures Initiative** and **ABC RP Programme** will include the following initiatives in 2018/19:

Restorative Practice Training and Workshops

A continuation of RP training and upskilling, along with on-going mentoring and support and monthly Community of Practice Meetings. This will involve:

- 'Getting Started with Restorative Practice' training
- 'Upskilling Training'
- 'Training of Trainers'
- RP Training with Corporate Organisations
- Individualised Training for Services
- Mentoring and Support Visits
- Monthly Community of Practice Meetings

Brighter Futures: Young People's Voices Programme

To sustain the efforts taking place in the NEIC in relation to embedding restorative practices, this will involve:

- NEIC Youth Restorative Practice Councils — involving 10-16 young people representing 5-8 local youth organisations, meeting once a month to discuss issues which impact on them
- Young People as Relationship Keepers and Student/Young People's Councils within schools and services
- Discover University — the inclusion of a restorative practice strand for 2018/19

Restorative Parenting and Home Visiting Programme

To continue to support parents and guardians in improving relationships in the home learning environment and wider community, this will include:

- Restorative Parenting Workshops — building on existing Restorative Parenting initiative and extending it to other schools and services
- Restorative Practice and Home Visiting Programmes — sustaining the work of embedding restorative practices into the already established ABC 0-2 and Parent Child Home (PCHP) Programmes, via home visiting and community parent support sessions
- Providing Tusla family support workers, early years' services and schools with the *Let's Talk* book and the accompanying learning materials and workshops as part of a restorative practice and ABC continuous professional development

Opening the Door between Corporates and Community

Broadening the pilot *Opening the Door between Corporates and Community* programme, thereby facilitating restorative conversations between corporate organisations and young people living in the Dublin Docklands and North East Inner City, will include engaging with the following corporate organisations:

- Arthur Cox - continuing
- Citco
- Central Bank
- NTMA
- Facebook (in conjunction with the Facebook Mentoring Programme)

The International Restorative Justice Week will take place all over Europe and beyond during the week of the 18th – 25th November 2018, with the theme for this 'expanding the restorative imagination'.

14 Educational Guidance

The main focus is on supporting young people, parents and communities' understanding of the education system and the impact of certain decisions such as subject choices on young people's ability to access further education and career opportunities; thereby, ensuring that the children and young people in the area achieve their educational and career goals. These programmes, which are developed through careful collaboration with local schools, afterschools, youth and community services, are Educational Guidance, Love Education, Mentoring Circles and Discover University.

Objectives:

- To raise children's and young people's educational and career expectations
- To widen participation in higher education within the Docklands

14.1 Love Education Showcase

In collaboration with the Taoiseach's North East Inner City Initiative and Túsla Educational Welfare Services (EWS), the ELI held an educational showcase event to demonstrate the positive aspects of education in the North East Inner City (NEIC). The ELI led the event by planning and collaborating with local schools, educational services, and corporate partners.

Objectives

The objectives of the Love Education Showcase were to:

- Provide an opportunity to demonstrate the breadth and quality of educational provision in the North East Inner City
- Enable the community and wider world to see, hear and experience a positive Inner City stories.
- Showcase success stories that demonstrate the benefits of engagement in education.
- Establish links between education and career opportunities.
- Provide a platform for sharing innovative practices.
- Provide a fun learning experience for all involved.

Event

A full day event was organised to celebrate the educational initiatives in the NEIC and to encourage access to and participation in the educational services available. As the basis for Love Education, educational partners in the NEIC were invited to participate in a poster presentation which illustrated their greatest achievements and hopes for the future. Fifteen schools and services participated in the poster presentations where a photograph of an aspect of their service they were proud of was also captured and they highlighted what their service aims to do. Education partners included; schools, early years services, school completion, community training centres, adult education and libraries.

The event was divided into three stages to allow for age appropriate activities for the participating services. In the morning, activities were set up for Early Years Services and Primary School pupils from Junior Infants to first class. Activities included a range of career-related materials for building, horticulture, and hospitals, in addition to reading and painting resources. 152 children from local schools and services attended the morning time session. This was then followed by the Educational Guidance Exhibition for fifth and sixth class from two participating primary schools. Details on this event can be found in the Educational Guidance section.

A corporate showcase for second and third level students as well as other adult learners was organised for the afternoon. The ELI is currently working towards enhancing our Stretch to Learn programmes to deliver more programmes for the second level age range. A showcase to bridge the link between the corporate world and education was used as a way to begin building stronger relationships with local schools and build on the theme – Love Education. 28 volunteers representing twelve corporate organisations participated in the event to illustrate the work that their organisation conducts and to discuss the link between their own education and employment opportunities. 40 students from local secondary schools attended the event. Although these numbers appear low in comparison to the numbers in attendance for the morning component of the programme, it is important to note that the event was rescheduled from February to April due to hazardous weather conditions on the original date. Many schools were now coming into end of year exams and were unable to facilitate numerous students attending the showcase. We will aim to hold this event at an earlier time of the year in 2019.

Programme Delivery 2018 – 2019

Love Education will be reviewed to build on the success of the event in April 2018. We will deliver the programme in conjunction with the Educational Guidance event and incorporate learning activities for Early Years Services, Primary and Second Level Schools, Afterschool services and Community Based Educational Services.

14.2 Educational Guidance (fifth and sixth Classes)

This project-based learning Educational Guidance programme is targeted at fifth and sixth class in primary school. Beginning in 2009-10 at the request of local primary school principals, it aims to raise the awareness among students, parents and teachers of the necessity of having a third level education if one wishes to pursue certain careers. It is also meant to inform the local community of how choices made at the end of primary school can limit life chances in terms of accessing further education and career opportunities.

Programme Delivery

While the programme has evolved over the years, it did not run during 2016/17 as it coincided heavily with other programmes and targeted the same age group and schools as the mentoring programme, thereby limiting the number of schools available to take part.

In 2017/18 there was an opportunity to hold the Educational Guidance Exhibition alongside the Love Education Showcase as the project work complimented the theme and spirit of the showcase. Two primary schools expressed an interest in taking part with each teacher receiving the appropriate teachers' manual and accompanying resources.

Due to bad weather conditions on the originally planned date in February 2018, both events were postponed until 30th April 2018. Ten projects were exhibited from the two schools and ten representatives from local companies acted as judges for the exhibition.

As part of the Love Education Showcase, representatives from ELI's corporate partners were available to talk to the children involved in the Educational Guidance Programme about their educational and career options. A scavenger hunt was incorporated into the event to encourage the children to start conversations with volunteers at the stands about job opportunities, education paths and skill sets etc.

Programme Evaluation

Normally students receive their feedback certificates and evaluation forms shortly after the event but unfortunately due to ELI capacity issues and logistical challenges, this only happened in one school.

The second school will receive their certificates in September. Feedback was very positive from the school that completed the evaluation forms with the majority of students who filled out the evaluation forms (N=25), agreeing that they had learnt a lot from (88% N=22), while a small number of students (12%; N=3) reported being unsure. Similarly, 88% of students (N=22) reported that they had enjoyed the programme while 8% (N=2) reported being unsure and 4% (N=1) disagreed.

The majority (92% N=23) of students hoped to go to college when they finished school, while the remainder were unsure (8% N=2). This is a slight decrease on the 2015/16 figures of 94% (N=17) but a significant increase on the 2014/15 figures of 73% and the ELI Baseline Evaluation figure of 84% (Share, et al., 2011). They also compare favourably with the findings from the National Assessments (ERC, 2010), where 69% of sixth class students indicated that they wanted to go to college. Some students also reported feeling better prepared for secondary school (48% N=12) as a result of the programme. When asked what they learned from the project, 28% (N=7) reported they had learned how to further their education and career, 32% (N=8) reported they had learned about their career 40% (N=10) reported they had developed their skills and attitudes.

Corporate Volunteer Feedback

Volunteers from local companies were judges at the educational guidance event with all the judges reporting on the high quality of projects. The judges were particularly impressed with the quality of the work undertaken, the students' confidence, and their ability to speak about their projects. As with last year, mystery judges were included. Judges were asked to give feedback on the project.

Feedback from the judges included:

- *"Excellent presentation. Very well thought through and planned- an important point was that everyone had the chance to present. A credit to the school".*
- *"Excellent presentation- I particularly liked how they presented the journey from primary school, university and practice towards becoming a veterinarian. Very detailed project and clearly a lot of work had been done".*
- *"Great teamwork! The group supported each other, and they gained more confidence as they were speaking. They are a credit to their teaching, school and family".*
- *"Excellent presentation, great communication and it was great to see how enthusiastic the team were about the different types of artists they were".*

Programme Outline 2018-19

The Educational Guidance programme will be reviewed and re-structured in light of the success of the Love Education Event and ELI's strategic decision to support PCHP children as they progress on to second level. The programme will be incorporated in to an ELI Educational Guidance Programme that spans primary and second level education and support children and parent in their decision-making processes. There will be various activities for second level schools, afterschools, youth and community services, which will incorporate the Restorative Practice Programme.

14.3 Mentoring Circles Programme

In 2014/15, in collaboration with the Facebook Women's Group, a Mentoring Programme for eleven to thirteen year old girls was developed. In 2015/16, it was extended to include boys. The now-renamed Mentoring Circles Programme connects the students with a mentor in Facebook for four group-learning sessions followed by an interview session, which focused on building the skills needed in order to complete and present a final project. The aim of the programme was to enable the participants to:

- Clearly and confidently present a project to the judges/ mentors and parents

- Conduct an interview with a person in business and produce a report and presentation around this
- Display enhanced communication skills in the areas of questioning, listening, starting, and holding conversations with adults and their peers.

Programme Delivery

The Facebook Mentoring Circles programme continued in 2017-2018 with the support of core Facebook staff to coordinate and deliver the programme. Sixty-one students from same four schools as in previous years engaged in the programme over two days a week for four weeks. The final event was hosted by Facebook over two evenings with invitations to the graduation event extended to parents and family. Both events were very successful with all parties involved highly impressed with the performance of the students.

Planning for the programme will need to be reviewed in order to provide schools a confirmed schedule at the beginning of the academic year in late August/early September. The support of Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teachers was invaluable to coordinating the programme within schools and to ensure more effective communication between schools, the Early Learning Initiative and Facebook.

Programme Evaluation

Programme evaluations were sent to HSCL teachers to complete with their class. These evaluations were only completed and returned by one service.

Children's Feedback

Of the children who filled out evaluations forms, 89% (N=24) agreed that they had learnt a lot and enjoyed taking part in the Facebook mentoring programme. 81% (N=22) reported that they enjoyed taking part in the interview sessions, while 85% (N=23) enjoyed getting involved in the sessions. When asked whether the mentors were easy to talk to and answered their questions, 96% (N=26) reported they were.

When asked to comment on what skills they had learnt through participating in the programme, 81% (N=22) mentioned communication skills, 70% (N=19) mentioned public speaking skills, 63% (N=17) mentioned team work skills, 52% (N=14) mentioned presentation skills and 44% (N=12) reported leadership skills. When given the open option of adding additional skills, 15% (N=4) commented that they had learnt listening skills, while 11% (N=3) commented that they had learnt eye contact/body language skills.

Parent's Feedback

Parents feedback on the Facebook mentoring programme was very overwhelmingly positive with all parents who completed evaluations (100%; N=7) reporting that the experience was an enjoyable and valuable learning opportunity for their child.

When asked to comment on what worked well, comments included:

- *"The boys and girls standing up and talking in front of crowds"*
- *"The public speaking really allowed the girls to express themselves and gave them tools on how to better communicate"*
- *"I enjoyed the part where the girls were asked that they want to be when they grow up"*
- *"Getting to know the staff who worked there, doing the interviews and watching it back last night".*

Teacher's Feedback

Feedback from the teachers was also very positive, with both teachers who returned evaluation forms reporting that the programme was a valuable and enjoyable opportunity for the children.

When asked to comment what worked well, comments included:

- *"The mentoring aspect- getting to know and work in small groups with adult professionals. Presentations- a great opportunity for students to practice their skill"*
- *"Well structured, great engagement with children, very inclusive program. Educational content"*.

When asked for suggestions for improvement both teachers commented that direct communication between Facebook volunteers and the school may have allowed the project to run smoother.

Feedback from Facebook

A meeting was held with Facebook to discuss the programme. Feedback was very positive. Volunteers really enjoy the programme and get a lot out of it. Having teams of people working as mentors ensures that there is always someone there to support the children. Over the five sessions, the mentors built a great relationship with the children. They found the children were very engaged, well prepared, very well behaved – *so good, they were amazing* and thought that the standards were increasing year by year. In some schools, this was the second year participating for some children and they felt that this showed in their performance and engagement. Girls tended to be better communicators than boys and this showed in the number of girls' teams who won prizes. Facebook also really appreciated the teachers working on the content outside of the programme.

Communication between ELI, schools and Facebook was an issue, particularly when Facebook staff had a lot of demands on their time. It was agreed to fix the dates early in the calendar in September. Being aware of and avoiding school mid-terms was also important. There was also a need to refresh the content and it was thought that incorporating Restorative Practice training into the programme would be helpful.

Programme Outline 2018-19

It is hoped, pending the continued support from Facebook that this programme can continue into 2018/2019.

14.4 Third Level Options Drop-in Clinics

A new addition to the ELI's suite of educational guidance programmes in 2017/18, the third-level options drop-in clinic was a pilot programme specifically targeted towards second-level students and their parents.

The aim of the Third Level Options Drop-in Clinics was to provide the local community with information on accessing further education and career opportunities as well as increasing their understanding of how certain educational choices can limit further education, career and life chances.

Third-level option Drop-in Clinics for local second-level students and their parents began at the Love Education Showcase event on April 30th, and continued weekly every Thursday in the NCI atrium for two hours from May 24th until the end of June. The clinics were staffed by the second-level programme coordinator along with two NCI interns. The drop-in clinics were advertised among the schools, youth services and community services in the local area. Information was provided on the following:

- CAO process
- Apprenticeships
- PLC/ETB Courses
- Grants available for third-level students
- HEAR Scheme

- DARE Scheme
- NCI and other college/university undergraduate courses

Ten people engaged with the clinics in 2017-2018. There were queries on the following:

- Apprenticeships
- General information on NCI
- Disability supports
- PLC course entry

Programme Outline 2018-2019

In 2018/19, it is hoped that the programme will be further developed based on findings from the 2017/18 pilot programme. It is planned that the clinics will run in various locations in the North East Inner City, such as local libraries and family resource centres, as well as in NCI, in order to maximise their reach among students and parents in the local community. Additionally, it is planned to run the clinics at more strategic times for the year 2018/19, rather than every week. Possible dates could be planned around CAO dates/deadlines, SUSI grant deadlines and Leaving Certificate results. Additionally, in 2018/19, more training and resources will be provided to staff members/interns who run the clinics on the topics listed above, in order to provide the most beneficial and accurate information to the local community.

14.5 Discover University

Discover University (DU) is a summer programme that aims to give young people aged fourteen to seventeen from disadvantaged communities across Dublin the opportunity to experience a taste of life at NCI and to see college as part of their future. One of ELI's suite of educational guidance programmes, it is a collaborative venture between the Early Learning Initiative, NCI Schools of Business and Computing and ELI's corporate partners. Discover University first ran in 2009 and has continued every year since. Over the years various changes have been made to the programme, particularly the move to a more project based learning and the involvement of corporate volunteers.

This year, students could choose one of four academic taster projects in the core subject areas of Business/Marketing, Psychology, Computing and Early Years Education. Over the course of two weeks, they complete a group project in their chosen subject area, as outlined in a project brief they are given at the beginning of the programme. Students also participate in a myriad of other activities throughout the programme to give them a well-rounded taste of the entire university experience. These include workshops, team building exercises and mini-lectures. The programme also includes a visit to exciting and innovative companies in the Docklands to show how higher education translates into the working world.

Current NCI College students who themselves come from the same communities act as team leaders and positive role models for the second level students and encourage, support and guide them through the programme. Students are also supported in carrying out their project work by NCI faculty staff, and attend lectures given by NCI lecturers.

Throughout the programme, students present their projects at various stages of inception to volunteers recruited from ELI's corporate partners. Midway through, they must present their project idea to a panel of corporate 'Dragons' as part of Dragon's Den. Then, on the project delivery day, corporate volunteers will act as 'mystery judges', secretly marking students on their teamwork and organisational skills. On the final project showcase day, students will present their final project presentation to a Head Judge (a member of NCI faculty staff) who will be joined by corporate

volunteers. The programme finishes with a Graduation Ceremony and BBQ for the students, their families and invited guests to celebrate their achievements.

Programme Delivery

Thirty-eight young people aged fourteen to seventeen years old, from Dublin city, the Docklands and Ballymun participated in DU from the 19th – 27th June 2018 and were given the option of participating in one of four projects: Business, Computing, Early Years and Psychology, with the latter two added as new project strands this year. There were sixteen Computing students, five Early Years students, nine Psychology students and eight Business Students. Students were split into smaller groups – three Computing, one Early Years, two Psychology and two Business groups.

The Business students participated in an enterprise project called 'Tropical Tuesday', modelled on the Citrus Saturday project initiated by University College London (UCL), which encourages the development of basic business and life skills through lemonade-selling. Students worked in small groups, to effectively run their own business in order to make a profit. Throughout the week, they came up with a plan to produce, market and sell their own homemade lemonade in two locations: CHQ and Grand Canal Dock.

Computing students created video games that incorporated either Augmented Reality or Virtual reality using Unity software and specialist Virtual Reality hardware equipment called Oculus. These games were presented to the public in the NCI atrium to test out and play on the project delivery day.

Early Years students worked with recycled materials from ReCreate to create sensory environments targeted towards three to six year olds. They were tasked with creating a play environment that appealed to the different senses, targeted towards children of all abilities, cultures and backgrounds, regardless of gender. A group of children from Island Key Community Childcare Service visited the students' projects in NCI to 'test' and 'play' in the sensory environments on Project delivery day.

Psychology students carried out an experiment around multisensory integration and how our senses often fool us. This involved asking participants to taste samples of liquid dyed different colours, in order to ascertain if the visual appearance of the liquid altered their sense of taste. The experiments were set up in the offices of ELI's corporate partners McCann Fitzgerald, where employees were invited to participate as subjects for the experiments.

Students attended the programme in NCI every day from 10am – 4pm, with a check-in with all Team Leaders and the project coordinator held every morning. Various extra-curricular activities were also held throughout the two weeks, including a Restorative Practice workshop, a drama/ice-breaker workshop, a presentation skills workshop and three team building activities. Citco volunteered to run a table quiz as one of these team building activities for the Computing and Psychology groups. Early Years students (& one Computing Group) participated in a creative workshop run by a ReCreate facilitator and Business students experimented with lemonade recipes and taste-tested their homemade lemonade in the NCI canteen as their team building activity.

Students presented their projects at various intervals during the week to corporate volunteers, who gave them advice and support on improving their projects and acted as judges. The programme finished with a Project Showcase on Wednesday 27th June, attended by the newly-elected Lord Mayor of Dublin, Nial Ring and President of NCI Gina Quin. This was followed by an official graduation ceremony for students and team leaders and a BBQ for all, including invited guests.

Programme Evaluation

Evaluation of Discover University was carried out at the end of the programme. Students, their parents and team leaders were asked to provide feedback about their experience of Discover University through the completion of evaluation forms on the day of the graduation ceremony. Of the nine questions asked (see Table 35 below), a higher percentage of students responded positively to seven questions when compared to responses to the programme in 2016/2017, indicating that a higher percentage of students found the programme interesting, felt that they developed stronger communication skills and are now better prepared and more excited for third level education.

Table 37. Students', Parents' and Team Leaders' Evaluations of the Discover University Programme

Having taken part in Discover University, I/my child agreed that I/my child	Second Level Students (N=34)	Parents (N=18)	Team Leaders (N=9)
had an enjoyable experience	100%	100%	89%
found the programme interesting	94%	-	89%
would recommend the programme to a friend	94%	-	89%
developed stronger communication skills	94%	-	89%
am now better able to work in groups	94%	94%	89%
am better able to work with people from different backgrounds	87%	94%	89%
More excited about 3 rd level education	97%	100%	-
Have a better understanding of third level education	94%	100%	-
Is better prepared for third level education	97%	100%	-

Of the second level students who took part and completed evaluation forms 97% (N=34) reported feeling the programme would be useful for their future. The majority of team leaders who completed evaluation forms (89%, N=9) reported the programme improved their leadership skills (Tables 36 and 37).

Table 38. Best Things about Discover University

In the opinion of the stakeholders, the best things about Discover University were		
Second Level Students N=34	Team Leader N=9	Parents of Second Level Students N=18
Meeting new people 68%	Opportunity to work with young people 100%	New Skills/Experiences 78%
Project Experience 27%	Enjoyment 22%	Experience of Third Level 72%
Experience/Learning 21%	Learning new skills 11%	Meeting New People 67%
Other 6%		Having Fun 44%

Please note: participants could select more than one response to this question.

Table 39. What the Second Level Students Learned Through Discover University

In the opinion of the stakeholders, second level students learnt the following through Discover University	
Second Level Students (N=34)	Parents of Second Level Students (N=18)
Communication Skills 59%	Team Work 78%
Team Work 47%	Confidence 89%
Confidence 41%	Communication Skills 50%
IT/Business Skills 21%	Independence 50%
	IT/Business Skills 33%

Please note: participants could select more than one response to this question

When the students and parents were asked to comment on what worked well comments included:

- *“The focus on learning through fun workshops/lectures and educational projects. All programmes involved were very interesting and beneficial and I now have a great idea of what career I want to pursue in the future and hopefully study it here at NCI”*
- *“The lunch worked out well. I wrote about this in the box asking about the best things in Discover University. I also enjoyed the psychology lecture. The atmosphere of the lecture hall helped”*

- *“When we worked as a team”*
- *“Working as a team and helping decide what way we wanted to design our project”*
- *“I thought the programme was well thought out. In my opinion everything worked well. Although the people messed and had fun we got our work done and communicated well with everyone”*
- *“For me everything went I really enjoyed, at first I was scared to meet new people and communicate with them but then I got confident and then I could stand by myself”*
- *“I think how well planned the days were and how everybody got the project done on time”*
- *“In my opinion, the lemonade stand went really well because the weather was nice, the lemonade was tasty and we got lots of customers”*
- *“My daughter really enjoyed herself this week. She talked about her experiences every day. A big thank you to the staff of NCI for the opportunity”*
- *“The opportunity of a fun, third level taster is a brilliant opportunity out for my child. My child has learned several new skills and made new friends. Overall brilliant!”*
- *“Team leaders were great with the students”*
- *“Well organised, everything went well. Nothing but a positive experience”*

There were a number of suggestions for improvement, which included:

- *“I felt more time could have been given for project work”*
- *“I don’t think the location (for selling lemonade) worked out at first but as soon as our group members put on music and started dancing, it attracted more people”*
- *“It would help if at the start of the programme, participants would introduce themselves and talk about their interests in a considerable level of depth”*
- *“Ice breakers at the start were helpful but we spent too much time on them”*
- *“More appropriate cutting materials for early years materials (under team leader supervision of course)”*

Comments from the team leaders on what worked well included:

- *“I found that there was great communication between the team leaders. The groups worked very well together”*
- *“The project itself was enjoyable. The other activities were a nice break and the students had a good time.”*
- *“Everyone (staff) was very cooperative. Lectures were informative.”*
- *“Helping the students to build their games”*
- *“The variety of different activities throughout the day worked very well”*

Programme Outline 2018-2019

It is hoped to continue the programme in the usual format with all four project strands in 2018-2019.

14.6 Third Level Support

The ELI Third Level Internship programme offered eligible students the opportunity to work with ELI during the academic year, as well as partake in personal and career development opportunities with ELI corporate partners. Due to staffing issues and lack of resources, the internship programme was run with limited capacity until March 2018, when another Stretch to Learn Coordinator was appointed. Having reviewed the format of the existing third level support programme, it was decided to run a skills-based internship programme for 2017/18. The internship was advertised to the entire NCI

student population. Thirteen students applied and nine prospective candidates were interviewed in March 2018.

Five NCI interns were hired by ELI in April 2018 and began their internship in May 2018. Their contract with ELI ran until August 2018. Interns were able to tailor the third level support programme to address their own needs and areas for improvement by opting for tasks that reflected their skills and interests.

Out of the five student interns were hired, four were psychology students and one was a computing student. As part of the programme, they attended an induction session and received regular training. All interns were regularly encouraged to attend events and activities being run by ELI and the NCI Careers Service, to further enhance their personal and career development. Interns also received support and supervision from the project coordinator and their line manager. Bi-weekly check-ins were held, a What's App group was created and interns were thoroughly briefed before each task. Tasks were scheduled through Outlook Calendar and the reporting staff member was included to ensure open communication between all parties.

They undertook a wide range of tasks, working on programmes such as Financial Literacy, Third-Level Options Drop-in Clinics, and Discover University, at events including the ELI Conference, ELI Monopoly Challenge, ELI Coding Challenge and Sports Day. They also undertook research activities for ELI Numeracy programme, Restorative Practice and Brighter Futures.

All five interns completed evaluation forms and all interns agreed that being part of the intern programme helped their personal development and was a rewarding opportunity. The majority (80%, N=5) of interns agreed that the programme helped their career development, while one reported being 'not sure' this was the case. Interns were also asked to comment on the best things about the programme, responses included:

- *"I really enjoyed getting first-hand experience working with the children and the educators, for example, doing the numeracy assessments and events"*
- *"Working with the staff and the event support. The ELI staff were very cheerful and welcoming towards me"*
- *"The programme allowed me to interact with children in a meaningful way, while providing them with knowledge and guidance in learning. This was very rewarding"*

Interns were also asked to provide feedback on any aspects of the programme that they would change. Comments in this regard centred around the type and frequency of tasks available for the interns and on practical changes that could be made to the task sign-up procedure, which will be taken into consideration when planning next year's programme.

Programme Outline 2018/19

The NCI skills-based internship programme that piloted in 2017-2018 will continue in 2018/19 and give interns meaningful work experience across all ELI programmes and events. It is envisaged that five student interns will be hired in September 2018 from the NCI student body, with priority given to students from the local area (North East Inner City and Dublin Docklands).

14.7 Educational Support Fund

In 2017/18, a grant of €20K was donated to ELI by very generous donor to support young people in Dublin's Inner City achieve their educational goals. An Educational Support Fund was advertised in April 2018. Applicants has to be attending a primary (4th class – 6th class) or secondary DEIS school (as set out by the Department of Education and Skills) or a local community or voluntary service with priority given to people living in Dublin's inner city. Funds could be spent on one of the following:

1. Educational Equipment to be used in school or another educational setting e.g. books, laptop, art materials, musical instrument
2. Educational Assessments/Support for a child with Learning difficulties or disabilities e.g. educational Assessments, speech and language therapy
3. Extra-Curricular Educational Courses/Activities - A course, camp or activity that serves to improve a student's performance in a school subject e.g. language camp, art course, music lessons

An independent panel of volunteers from Dublin Port, Citco and The Panel rated the 88 applicants on the following criteria:

- Level of need or negative impact of not receiving the grant on their educational opportunities
- No history of extended family engagement in education e.g. parents were early school leavers
- Immediate benefit to candidate's education
- Understanding of the long-term benefit and impact of this grant on their educational opportunities
- A clear commitment to staying in education and pursuing a career in the future

Forty-one candidates were successful with 20 receiving funding for educational equipment, mainly laptops; 18 getting funding for educational assessments and 3 receiving funding for educational courses.

Appendix 1: Governance Code

Public Statement of Compliance with the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charity Organisations in Ireland



Name of Organisation: National College of Ireland
Address: Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1

Wish to state that we have completed the process set out for a Type C organisation and now comply with the principles and practices of the Governance Code for a three-year period from 18th May 2018 when our Board certified our compliance.

Principle 1. Leading our organisation.

We do this by:

- 1.1 Agreeing our vision, purpose and values and making sure that they remain relevant;
- 1.2 Developing, resourcing, monitoring and evaluating a plan to make sure that our organisation achieves its stated purpose and objectives;
- 1.3 Managing, supporting and holding to account staff, volunteers and all who act on behalf of the organisation.

Principle 2. Exercising control over our organisation.

We do this by:

- 2.1 Identifying and complying with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements;
- 2.2 Making sure there are appropriate internal financial and management controls;
- 2.3 Identifying major risks for our organisation and deciding ways of managing the risks.

Principle 3. Being transparent and accountable.

We do this by:

- 3.1 Identifying those who have a legitimate interest in the work of our organisation (stakeholders) and making sure there is regular and effective communication with them about our organisation;
- 3.2 Responding to stakeholders' questions or views about the work of our organisation and how we run it;
- 3.3 Encouraging and enabling the engagement of those who benefit from our organisation in the planning and decision-making of the organisation.

Principle 4. Working effectively.

We do this by:

- 4.1 Making sure that our governing body, individual board members, committees, staff and volunteers understand their: role, legal duties, and delegated responsibility for decision-making;
- 4.2 Making sure that as a board we exercise our collective responsibility through board meetings that are efficient and effective;
- 4.3 Making sure that there is suitable board recruitment, development and retirement processes.

Principle 5. Behaving with integrity.

We do this by:

- 5.1 Being honest, fair and independent;
- 5.2 Understanding, declaring and managing conflicts of interest and conflicts of loyalties;
- 5.3 Protecting and promoting our organisation's reputation.

See also the attached Explanation Form (Form 3), which sets out where we do not comply with specific practices and reasons why.

Email: infor@ncirl.ie

Geographic area of operation:

Nature of services:

Phone: 01.4498500

Nationwide

Education and Training

Chairperson Name: Fr Leonard Moloney S.J.

Signature: 

Date of signature: 9 July '18

Secretary Name: Mr John McGarrigle

Signature: 

Date of Signature: 12 July 2018

Please scan and email this completed form to: info@governancecode.ie

Form 3 - Explanations
Explanations of why our organisation has decided not to comply with one or more recommended practices of the Governance Code for Community, Voluntary and Charity Organisations in Ireland



Name of Organisation: National College of Ireland
Address: Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1

In the full Code document, an organisation can comply with the Code while not adopting all of the practices normally associated with full compliance. If your organisation has decided not to comply with one or many aspects of the Code, please set out the details below.

Indicate clearly the specific practices that are not being adopted (by using the number from the relevant checklist) and explain in adequate detail why you have decided not to comply with those aspects of the Code.

Name of Organisation: National College of Ireland
Address: Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1
Organisation type (A, B, or C): C

Date that your board signed Public Statement of Compliance

Practice number	Practice statement	Explanation of why organisation has not complied
2.2 (b)	Consider whether production of accounts according to a best practice standard, for example the charity SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice), is appropriate for your organisation. Sign off on yearly audited accounts	At present, given that accounting regulations under charities legislation are pending in the Republic of Ireland, the application of the SORP is not mandatory, but may be adopted on a voluntary basis.

Chairperson Name: Fr Leonard Moloney S.J.

Signature:  Date of signature: 9 July 2018

Secretary Name: Mr John McGarrigle

Signature:  Date of Signature: 12 July 2018

Please scan and email this form to: info@governancecode.ie

Appendix 2: Child Safeguarding Statement

Child Safeguarding Statement Template

National College of Ireland (NCI) is a third level learning, teaching and research institution. Its Early Learning Initiative (ELI) is a community-based educational initiative, which provides educational support to children, parents and professionals.

In line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (2017), and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*, NCI's Governing Body has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

Governing Body recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of college life, in particular ELI, and must be reflected in all of the college's policies, procedures, practices and activities.

NCI will adhere to the following principles and practices in relation to children and any adult student with a special vulnerability:

- recognise that the protection and welfare of children and vulnerable students is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
- fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children and vulnerable students;
- fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child and vulnerable students protection and welfare matters
- adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and vulnerable students; and protect employees from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;
- develop a practice of openness with parents and encourage parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealing with child and vulnerable students protection matters.

The following procedures/measures are in place and are available upon request:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against employees/volunteers of a child/vulnerable student availing of our service;
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers to work with children and vulnerable students;
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm;
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla;
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons;
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

In NCI, Governing Body has appointed the DLP, **John McGarrigle**, as the "relevant person" (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) to be the first point of contact in respect of the child safeguarding statement.

NCI is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children and vulnerable students safe from harm while availing of our services.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed on 16th March 2018, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

This Child Safeguarding Statement was adopted by NCI's Governing Body on 1st March 2018.

Signed: 
Chairperson of Governing Body

Signed: 
Secretary to Governing Body/DLP

Date: 5 March 2018

Date: 7 March 2018

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child or vulnerable, please contact:

John McGarrigle, DLP and Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015, National College of Ireland on 01 4498639 or john.mcgarrrigle@ncirl.ie

Josephine Bleach, Deputy DLP and Director, Early Learning Initiative, National College of Ireland on 01 4498639 or josephine.bleach@ncirl.ie

Tusla Child and Family Agency, 492 North Circular Rd, Tel: 01 8566856

Gardaí, Store Street Garda Station: Tel: 016668000; Confidential Line - 1800 666111

Appendix 3: Commonly Used Acronyms

ELI: Early Learning Initiative

NCI: National College of Ireland

RP: Restorative Practice

ABC: Area Based Childhood

PCHP: Parent Child Home Programme

CPD: Continued Professional Development

STEM: Science Technology Engineering Maths

DCYA: Department of Children and Youth Affairs

DES: Department of Education and Skills

US: United States

CES: Centre for Effective Services

AMIF: Asylum Migration and Integration Fund

NEIC: North East Inner City

CRM: Customer Relations Management

MOOC: Massive Online Open Course

UK: United Kingdom

DIT: Dublin Institute of Technology

EWS: Educational Welfare Services

DCC: Dublin City Council

PHN: Public Health Nurse

CYPSC: Children and Young People's Services Committees

HEA: Higher Education Authority

DES: Department of Education and Skills

SFI: Science Foundation of Ireland

ECEC: Early Childhood Education and Care

QASS: Quality Assurance & Statistical Services

CBT: Child Behaviour Traits

PACT: Parent and Child Together

NICCC: North Inner City Community Coalition

PEIN: Prevention and Early Intervention Network

NEARI: Network of Educational Action Research in Ireland

ARNA: Action Research Network of the Americas

CARN: Collaborative Action Research Network
HSE: Health Service Executive
GUI: Growing Up in Ireland
DSCP: Dublin South City Partnership
DoCCS: Daughters of Charity Community Service
SLT: Speech and Language Therapist
OT: Occupational Therapist
PHN: Public Health Nurse
NEYAI: National Early Years Access Initiative
NCCA: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
UCD: University College Dublin
ECCE: Early Years Care and Education
AIM: Access and Inclusion Model
HSCL: Home School Liaison Officer
SEN: Special Educational Needs
NS: National School
YPAR: Young People at Risk
CDI: Children's Development Initiative
CREW: Community Relationships Encourage Working Together
YC: Youth Club
DARE: Disability Access Route to Education
PLC: Post Leaving Certificate
CAO: Central Applications Office
SUSI: Student Universal Support Ireland
DEIS: Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools