



Govan Home and Education Link Project

Annual Report April 2011 – March 2012

C/o Govan Road Campus
635 Govan Road
Govan
Glasgow
G51 2BN
Tel/Fax 0141 445 6481
E-Mail hello@govanhelp.org

Website: www.govanhelp.org

Scottish Charity Number SC034834
Limited Company Number 256657



Foreword from Fariha Thomas, Project Coordinator (maternity leave cover)

2011 -12 has been a year of consolidation at Govan HELP, following the huge expansion and move to Govan Road Campus in 2010-11.

There have been some temporary staffing changes due to illness and maternity leave, but the work has continued to flourish due to the dedication of staff, volunteers and Board of Directors.

The Project has a large number of dedicated volunteers who help out within the schools/nursery, project and management committee. We are immensely grateful for their time and commitment without which we would be unable to carry out our work.

We wish to thank our funders who have supported us to carry out the work - Glasgow City Council, Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland, the Cattanach Trust and BBC Children In Need who funded Govan HELP in 2011-12, and new funders the Henry Smith Charity, Merchants House of Glasgow and Trades House of Glasgow who will be joining other funders to take us forward into 2012-13

I would personally like to thank the Govan HELP staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, parents, children and school staff who welcomed me to the project in October and have been so supportive of me and Govan HELP during my time with the Project. Thank you for all your support, kindness and patience.

Introduction

Govan Home and Education Link Project (formerly Hill's Trust Home School Community Project) is a family education support project.

Established in 1995, Govan Home and Education Link Project is a charity and limited company. The Project is funded primarily by Glasgow City Council Integrated Grants Scheme with additional grants for 2011-12 coming from Children In Need, Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland, and the Cattanach Trust.

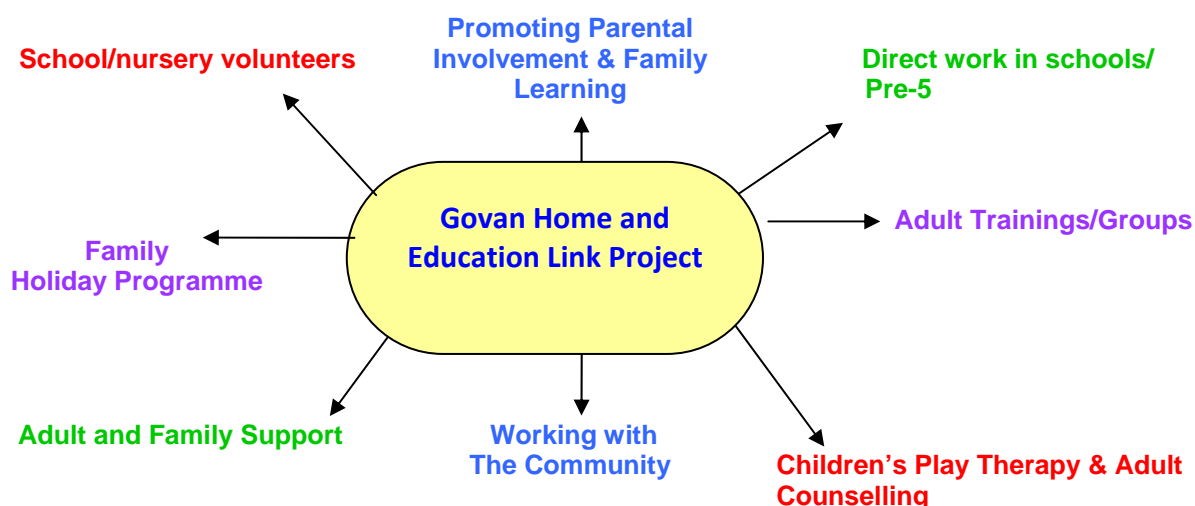
The Project offers a range of supports to children and their families attending Broomloan Nursery, Govan Family learning Centre, Pirie Park Primary, Riverside Primary and St Saviours Primary.

This report will provide an overview of the developments and work undertaken by Govan Home and Education Link Project from April 2011 – March 2012.

Aims and Objectives

Govan Home and Education Link Project aims:

“To improve and enhance the educational opportunities and life skills of children and families/carers within Govan Road Campus and Govan Learning Community, through a range of supports and with the development of partnerships between families/carers, education staff and the wider community.”



Govan Home and Education Link Project:

- Creates a community of support for the schools
- Promotes parental involvement in education through family learning initiatives.
- Supports pupils and families of the primary schools and pre-5 establishments with issues such as attendance, behaviour, learning and family issues.
- Delivers individual Play Therapy and therapeutic groupwork to children whose previous experiences and traumas are hindering learning.
- Delivers individual and group Triple P Parenting Programmes.
- Offers a range of practical and emotional supports to families on a needs led basis.
- Trains and Discloses volunteers to become school helpers in Pirie Park, Riverside, St Saviours and Broomloan Nursery.
- Delivers a Family Holiday Programme
- Works with Cardonald College and Glasgow Life to organise and facilitate adult training courses within Govan Road Campus.
- Runs a parents' support group "Time for Me".
- Works in partnership with voluntary and statutory organisations organising community and family groups and events.

1. Promoting Parental Involvement in Education & Family Learning

The Project recognises that children learn best when their parents are actively involved in their education.

We understand that some parents may themselves have had negative experiences of education. The Project aims to redress this by challenging any negative perceptions and helping parents to see the value nursery and school places on them.

Promoting parental involvement underpins everything that we do and our presence in Govan Road Campus allows the Project to facilitate a number of initiatives in order to achieve this.

Parental involvement can only be achieved by fostering positive relationships with parents, which develop as soon as the child enrolls and develops as they progress through school and nursery.

Parental involvement has also been achieved this year through the recruitment of School/Pre 5 Helpers within the schools/nursery and through Adult Training Programmes, which all help to promote lifelong learning. Both of these initiatives are outlined later in this report.

The Project continued this year to run a Family Book Club and this aims to strengthen family literacy and encourage home reading. Individual book bags, purchased by the Project contain a variety of books for babies/toddlers, children, teenagers, adults and all the family. The bags are sent home on loan and via the pupils for 2 weeks at a time.

Before returning the books families are asked to complete an evaluation form providing feedback on the scheme as well as reviewing the books. 62 families participated during 2011 -12

Parent volunteers took responsibility for running the club, with assistance from project staff, and 62 families received individual book bags during the year.

2. Direct Work within Schools/Nursery

The Project is based in Govan Road Campus which it shares with Broomloan Nursery, Riverside and St Saviours Primaries. Time has been taken to build strong working relationships with pupils, their families and staff. Project staff attended parents nights and school induction sessions to introduce the project to parents and to build on relationships by taking time to greet families in the morning and by helping out regularly in the playground. Project staff provided inputs to the schools' in-service training days, explaining the purpose of the project, range of supports available and referral processes. Project staff also spend some of their breaks in school staffrooms to enable informal contact with school staff.

3. School/Nursery Volunteers

This year the Project continued to encourage parents/carers to become regular volunteers within school and nursery.

The majority of volunteers are parents and by encouraging their involvement we aim to strengthen home school partnerships. Parents are the best role models to their children and their presence in the school helps motivate children and ultimately raises attainment.

For many parents, helping in the school is the first step in returning to education or employment. Volunteering helps raise confidence, self-esteem and increases skills.

Volunteers undertake an initial 2 session induction, facilitated by project staff looking at issues including roles and responsibilities, child centred communication and dealing with issues of concern. Volunteer training sessions were held covering all the schools, and took place in Govan Road campus, and Pirie Park primary. In 2011-12 Govan HELP trained 16 new volunteer helpers, with a further 12 long standing volunteers helping out in the primary schools, pre-5 establishments and with family activities

All volunteers undertook an Enhanced Disclosure check, which administered and paid for by CRBS (Central Registered Body for Scotland), with the Project Coordinator as lead signatory for Govan HELP.

3 Volunteer lunches were organised during the year to thank volunteers and give them a chance to meet each other, find out what else is happening around Govan HELP, and to raise any ideas or concerns. Many volunteers have struck up new friendships as a result of their volunteering.

4. Adult Training Courses and Groups

Cardonald College once again helped us to provide adult training courses in Govan Road Campus.

Having parents present and learning within the campus sets an excellent example to pupils, who come to understand that learning is life long. There is a high take up of adult courses in the campus and this may be because we have worked hard to make parents feel comfortable and welcome. Parents, who have been out of education for years, often lack the confidence to attend a new learning environment themselves. Courses in the campus allow them a taster of what is available at college and allows them to participate alongside other parents.

This year weekly ESOL (English as Second or Other Language) took place attended by 15 parents. This group is invaluable to migrant and asylum seeker families who are often unable to be fully involved in their child's education because their first language is not English.

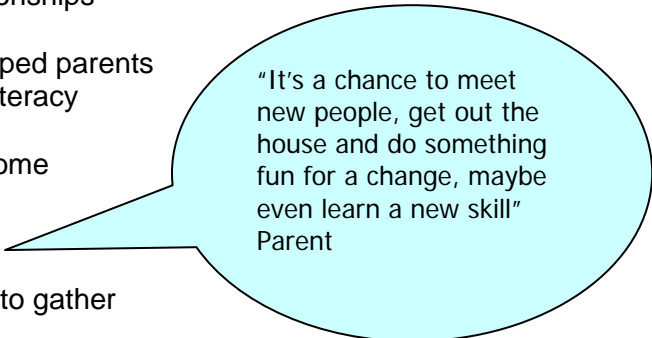
A 3 week Introduction to First Aid class was attended by 8 parents.

Two introduction to computing courses were run with a total of 20 parents involved. Free crèche was provided for this after school parents' class.

We also organised Talk 2 training by NHS staff for 4 parents on communicating with children re adolescence, changes and relationships

Through information sharing, the Project helped parents access a variety of courses including adult literacy classes thus increasing confidence, skills, employability and again resulting in better home school partnerships.

Parents are also welcome to use the Project Internet, phone and resource library to gather information themselves on opportunities.



"It's a chance to meet new people, get out the house and do something fun for a change, maybe even learn a new skill"
Parent

Our **"Time for Me" Parents Support Group** continued this year with a range of activities. The group aims to bring parents together for friendship, support and

information. The group is of real benefit to parents who are isolated and friendships have developed as a result.

The group takes place during school hours so parents can have a little time free from their children.

The timetable of activities is suggested by the parents themselves. Project staff then organise the speakers, demonstrations and workshops.



Our "Time for Me" activities this year were attended by 37 parents and included two yoga sessions, Christmas crafts, de-stressing, sewing, and a trip to the official opening of the Riverside Museum.

In addition an event was held during the 16 Days of Action Against Violence Against Women featuring the DVD "Aisha's story". Discussion was followed by an inspiring music and poetry workshop with artist Gracie Flair. A trip to a South Women's Voices event at The Burrell Collection was also organised and 6 women attended both events.

5. Family Support

The Project understands that issues at home can impact on the child at school & nursery. Difficulties in the home and community can adversely affect the child's learning due to poor concentration, tiredness, and irritability. School attendance and timekeeping can also be affected.

Similarly it is difficult to link parents successfully into school/nursery life, education or employment if they are experiencing family, financial or emotional problems.

The Project therefore offers support to families to ensure that the family is coping to its best ability and the child is freed up to work towards her/his potential within school. While families are welcome to drop in at any time when there is an emergency, from April 2012 drop in times around the start and finish of the school day are being piloted to free up staff time to undertake other work.

Emotional Support – Parents can drop by for support on any issue. The Project can offer direct support and/or signpost parents to specialist resources within the area or citywide.

"I think I can truly say that without this Project I might not be here now"
Parent

Project staff are not trained counsellors but use listening and solution focussed counselling skills to support parents. The Project also offers emotional support by making referrals and escorting parents to counselling services to help them deal with their own experiences including childhood traumas or relationship issues. In

January we also re-started our Adult Counselling service provided by a qualified volunteer counsellor, Julian Boyle, and 4 parents have benefited from this so far.

Practical Support – The Project can help advocate on behalf of parents and assist them in accessing services. This includes letters of support to housing associations, help in accessing benefits, training or employment and assistance completing forms. Help with forms is of particular benefit to parents with literacy issues or those whose first language is not English.

The Project also offers support to asylum seeker and migrant families who require assistance integrating into Govan and Ibrox and coping with the challenges of a new country.

In addition the Project supports homeless families who have been placed in temporary homeless accommodation and support is offered while they await permanent housing.

42 parents/carers received a range of 1:1 practical and emotional supports.

The Project is aware that Christmas is an expensive and stressful time for families, especially those on low incomes. As a result the Project successfully supported applications for 113 children, to **Clyde Action Cash for Kids**.

An application was made to the SECC for Christmas Carnival tickets and 10 tickets were distributed to especially vulnerable families who would benefit from a trip out over the Christmas holidays.

Interagency Work - The Project works in partnership with statutory organisations including social work, education, health, and psychological services as well as a large number of voluntary organisations. Project staff liaise on a daily basis with other professionals and attend child protection, planning and review meetings to offer professional feedback and to support families in attendance. Project staff also attend Children's Hearings.

Positive Parenting - Promoting positive parenting is a major feature of the Project. The Project will initiate regular meetings with parents and school/nursery staff to look at the child's behaviour and help develop strategies for consistency between the home & school.

Parents call into the Project office on a daily basis to talk about issues and difficulties they are experiencing with their children. The Project takes time to listen and offers both emotional and practical parenting support.

Anne McGrath, our Project Worker, co-facilitated 2 Positive Parenting Programmes with NHS staff reaching 18 parents/carers. Anne also assisted 16 families with individual Positive Parenting Support.



6. Play Therapy

For 7 years the Project has run an individual Play Therapy service for children, aged 3 – 12 years, whose adverse life experiences are hindering learning.

Children referred for Play Therapy will have experienced difficulties and trauma within their lives including domestic violence, bereavement, abuse, parental drug or alcohol misuse, poor attachments and separation. Play Therapy also benefits children with additional support needs, behavioural and social difficulties.

Schools/nursery, other organisations and parents themselves can refer children for this support.

The Play Therapist meets with the child for 45 minutes at the same time each week and carries a mobile play kit, which is set up in a private playroom within the child's learning establishment.

We believe that seeing the child in their school/nursery proves easier for the child as this is an environment they are familiar with and comfortable in. They do not have the same level of anxiety they would have if they were, for example, to attend a specialist clinic.

During 2011-12 we provided individual Play Therapy support to 26 children aged 3 - 12 years, group support to 8 children and filial therapy to 4 families



Due to the complex difficulties of the children referred to us this year, the average length of Play Therapy interventions was 15 sessions.

While the therapist works individual with the child, project staff offer additional and complementary parent support.

The Play Therapist is employed by the Project on a freelance basis and this service is funded by Children In Need.

7. Family Activities

Holiday Programme - The Project remains open during the school holidays and this is the opportunity to offer support to families who struggle during these times.

Each year the Project organises a Family Holiday Programme. The programme aims to alleviate the boredom & stress some families experience over the holidays, allows families participate in activities they would otherwise not experience and helps strengthen family & community relationships.



At Easter there was a trip to Glasgow Green attended by 23 families (68 individuals) while in the Summer there were day trips to Summerlee Heritage Park, Calderglen Country park, Pollok Park Family Day, Glasgow Green and Ayr Beach and Pirate Pete's- this being the highlight for most people. 43 families/152 Individuals attended 1 or more trips during summer 2011.

For younger Children, the Project and The Village Storytelling Centre ran a weekly "Wee Tales" over the summer attended by 16 parents/carers, 23 children.

After School Family activities -

Promoted family learning through family cookery course with Elderpark Housing Association (2 families) and arts and crafts with Plantation Productions (3 families).

This has been built on to develop a very successful family activity club piloted in summer term 2012.



8. Networking with other organisations

Govan HELP believes that by linking with other organisations and working in partnership we can achieve much more than by working on our own. This is particularly important in this time of reduced finances for the voluntary and statutory sectors. Pooling resources has helped us and our partner agencies to successfully run activities such as the education classes and family activities that no single organisation could have done on its own. Sharing knowledge and cross referral has ensured our work complements that of others but does not duplicate, allowing us to maximise the benefit of our time, expertise and resources.

- Govan HELP has continued its involvement with the South West 16 Days of Action to Eliminate Violence Against Women events sub group, helping to organise a programme of events in November/December and the South Women's Voices event in March.
- We are involved in Voluntary Sector Voice, the South West Voluntary Sector Network, which aims to coordinate work in the Voluntary sector across South West Glasgow.
- We have regularly engaged with Govan and Craigton Integration Network and linked with them on a range of issues related to asylum seekers and refugees.
- The Project has continued to increase its profile and in the last year linked with a number of local and national organisations and networks including: Cardonald College, East Pollokshields Mobile Crèche, Elderpark Housing Association, Fab Pad, Galgael, GCVS (Glasgow Council Voluntary Sector), Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Life, Glasgow Regeneration Agency, Govan and Craigton Integration Network, Govan Lifelink, Quarriers, Money Matters, GYIP (Govan Youth Information Project), Homestart, Govan/Craigton Integration Network, The Pearce Institute, Plantation Productions, Starter Packs, Strathclyde Police, Tea in the Pot, the Village Storytelling Centre, and the learning establishments which make up Govan Road Campus and Govan Learning Community.

Publicity

Parents are kept informed about the project via our **Newsletters**, which are sent home to families keeping them up to date on activities within the project and community. Newsletters are produced on average twice per term.

Govan HELP has now developed and launched its website www.govanhelp.org, a means for families and others interested in the Project to be kept up to date with what is going on.

Govan Home and Education Link Project Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is made up of parents, school/nursery staff and community representatives. Its role is to oversee Govan Home and Education Link Project and ensure it meets its objectives in the best possible manner. The Board meets monthly during the school year. Sub Committees have been established to deal with personnel issues and review of policies. During this year the Board reviewed and revised many of its key policies and procedures to improve effectiveness and governance.

Office-bearers include the Chairperson and Treasurer.

The Project Coordinator is line managed by the Chairperson.

Govan Home and Education Link Project Board of Directors for 2011/2012

From April 2011

Barbara Ferguson, Chairperson
 Mat Loryman, Treasurer
 Louise Brimelow
 Carole Fisher
 Patricia Hanley
 Jane Robertson
 Rosaleen Smith
 Colette Wilson

From September 2011

Barbara Ferguson, Chairperson
 Barbara Brown, Treasurer
 Ferhana Bata
 Louise Brimelow
 Carole Fisher
 Fiona Fleming
 Jane Robertson
 Mary Rice

Plans for the future period include:

- To continue to offer a range of services that are responsive to the needs of the children and families within the schools we link with.
- To overhaul and improve the Volunteer Programme to ensure that Volunteers and everyone involved receive maximum possible benefit
- To secure continued and sustainable funding.
- To develop more ongoing family activities to engage parents and children
- Continue with review of policies and procedures to ensure good governance

Govan Home and Education Link Project staff team:

Project Coordinator – Joanne Aitken / Fariha Thomas (maternity cover)
Administrator – Elaine McCrindle / temp administrator Ashley Daniels
Project Worker – Anne McGrath
Play Therapist – Keeley Morris

Volunteers actively involved or trained during the year:

Ahmed Abdullah
Ferhana Bata
Julian Boyle
Lorna Campbell
Kimberley Chapman
Ashley Daniels
Heather Dundas
Carolanne Eldridge
Barbara Ferguson
David Gallacher
Theresa Gallacher
Josie Girvan
Scott Gray
Doris Jones
Riffat Khan
Agnes Lyall
Halima Mabrouk
James Mackenzie
Marie McGrory McLean
Helen McCrindle
Jackline McGurran
Joe Quinn
Susan Packer
Christina Rae
Farida Rashid
Margaret Tazzar
Lisa Wright
Shamas Yusuf