



## **Re- Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:**

### **Linking Home and School Project**

For the purpose of this evaluation I met with Rachel, Steven, Mahamoud, Mathew, Kai and John.

The project continues to support children who show challenging behaviour at school and also continues to support the family as a whole so that the behaviour may also improve at home.

The support is still structured to meet the individual needs of children and the needs of the family rather than the family being left in isolation to cope alone. Mrs Swinburn continues to co-ordinate the project but, since the last evaluation, has tried to involve older children who access or have accessed the project in the past to get them to talk to younger children about their behaviour. This has been one of the major developments in the project. The children who support other children are chosen based on the relationship they have with other children who access the project during lunch times.

The school continues to take the approach of being much more supportive of the children rather than excluding those children who show inappropriate behaviour. The young people who access the support are referred by members of staff from the school and receive a targeted amount of support.

### **Opportunities for Dialogue and change**

The self-referral method continues to offer young people the opportunity to decide when they want to access the project. This open approach has seen more children accessing the support on offer.

Steven, who I met last year, told me, "I still come in here because I want to talk about my day". Steven also told me, "I come in here sometimes because I just want to play on the play station and meet up with Celia".

The project has respected that some young people continue to want to access the project and reflect this in the structure. They are more inclusive and sensitive to the needs of some young people who attend Byker Primary School and continue to respond to what the children say on a daily basis.

Mahamoud told me, "I spend time talking with Celia and other children who come in here and she always helps us with things in school and makes it better". This highlights the positive relationship between children and staff, which is built on mutual trust and respect.

### **Behaviour and Strategies**

This continues to be an ever-evolving process based on what the young people decide to talk about and behaviour strategies are then put in place based on the individual needs of the children.

Rachel told me, "I talk about my behaviour and I try to make it better". She told me, "I have been talking about why I get angry in class and what I do. Celia always asks me how I can make things better and I think it is really good in here".

The project continues to respond individually and then designs behaviour strategies based on the dialogue they have with the children they work with.

### Peer Led Programme

The project has continued to develop the Peer Led Programme, which was suggested in last year's evaluation as a positive method to encourage children to support one another and develop dialogue further. Mahamoud explained to me what has been happening this year, "We now sit together around the table and talk to each other about what we can do to make things better and some of us now speak with the young children who have just started to come in here, with the support of Celia".

This development has allowed older children to support younger children who are accessing the project for the very first time and, as more children have been accessing the project this year, children are now working in partnership with Celia and other staff members on improving behaviour.

I would like to recommend that the Linking Home and School Project receive Investing in Children membership. I am pleased to see the changes that are occurring based on the ideas and needs of young children who are accessing the project for support on a daily basis and the inclusive methods they take to reduce behaviour incidents in the school.

This report has been read by and approved by the following young people: Mathew, Brandon, Kai, Mahamoud and John. I would like to finish by saying thank you to all the young people and staff at the project for the support when carrying out the evaluation.

**Rob Johnson**  
**Investing in Children**  
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