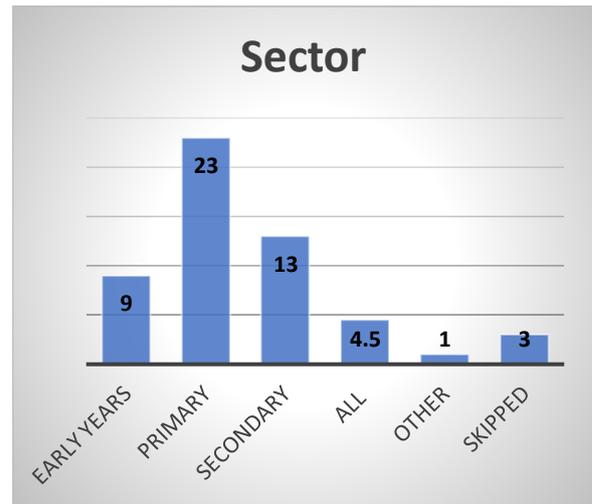
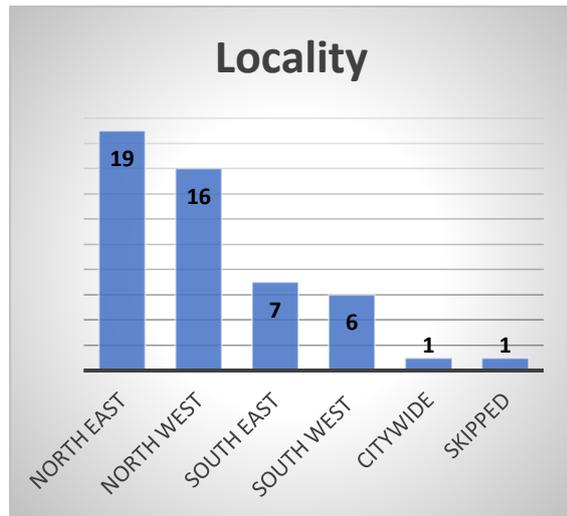


Edinburgh School Communities Family Support Mapping Feedback Summary

Staff who work in School Communities were asked to respond to the Family Support mapping exercise which was recently undertaken in Edinburgh by the Locality Operational Groups (LOGs) with the support of the Lifelong Learning Parent and Carer Support Development Officers.

There were 50 response to the survey.

The responses can form each locality and different sectors.



MH/Trauma/ Counselling Gaps

In the mapping exercise a number of organisations identified a lack of Mental Health services for children, young people and their parents as a gap.

92% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

36% felt there were insufficient mental health resources, some attributed this to funding cuts or could not afford services in school such as Place to Be. A couple were unaware of what support was available.

31% mentioned the challenges posed by long waiting times to access Mental Health support.

'There could be other services provided, at a lower level, to help plug this gap a little.'

'..the nature of mental health issues requires prompt, timely intervention to avoid deterioration of the situation'

18% Felt there was a high need for Mental Health Support and 16% felt that the need had increased since lockdown.

The impact of a parental mental health issues on children was recognised as was the need for local support. Informal phone support to parents was felt to be

important. The support offered by Psychological services by phone during lockdown was felt to be valuable but limited due to capacity.

A key theme where parents had reached out for support was struggling to support young people with anxiety and where that anxiety exhibits as aggression.

'So important for parents to be supported to support their young people'

'Good mental health and emotional regulation is a foundation for better engagement in learning'

The restrictions and online support were sited as barriers to accessing or providing support.

'..not having the ability to have the same contact with parents to help support due to Coronavirus is greatly impeding the service we would be offering to parents'

61% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Additional Support Needs Gaps

In the mapping exercise a number of organisations felt there were gaps in relation to the support available for children with additional support needs and their families.

88% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

32% felt there were insufficient resources for children with ASN or their families 11% mentioned the challenges posed by long waiting times and 11% felt the need had increased during Covid. A lack of intensive behaviour support was highlighted by some, as was the need for age appropriate support for teenagers and their parents. Diagnosis follow up was highlighted as important for families but lack of availability and time restricted access to this. Lack of Support for Roma families was mentioned by one response.

'more services need to be provided in the school environment to prepare children for the big jump of attending a group outside school. A change in people and place is too much for many Autistic children.'

Schools reported that lack of ASN support or access to resources in school presented many challenges for staff.

'Schools are expected to provide more support than is possible'

'Significant ASD related behaviour concerns in school which are not equipped to support effectively in terms of resources or trained staff'

'ASL PSA support has had to be withdrawn from children with needs in order to support children with even greater needs in other schools- this is detrimental to the children who have no longer access to that additional identified level of support.'

18% felt there had been a huge impact on ASN children and their families created by COVID restrictions. Some services were not offering any or full direct support resulting in -needs not being met, delays in assessment and regression for some

children. Familiarity and face to face support was felt to be crucial for some children and those with anxiety. It was mentioned that many children were unable to access nursery places.

There was felt to be a very significant impact of the reduction in supports on parents' emotional wellbeing and ability to cope.

'A number of parents have been in touch to report feeling helpless/ overwhelmed and unable to cope with their children's behaviour/ mental health/ additional support needs.'

'..the support which is on offer is not giving parents support to access individual support for themselves to assist in their coping mechanisms.'

14% felt there was a lack of holiday respite or age appropriate local social clubs. This not only prevented parents receiving respite and support but limited important social opportunities for children. One school felt they would like to develop outdoor forest space.

48% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Gaps in Support for Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Communities

In the mapping exercise a number of organisations felt there were gaps in provision for families from BAME families.

63% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

It was felt existing services such as Multicultural Family Base (MCFB) are beneficial, but resources were stretched. It was also felt that some BAME families didn't know who to ask for support or were reluctant to access services, because services were unfamiliar, or due to cultural beliefs and pressure for example from a partner, which resulted in isolation. A couple of respondents felt families with English as an additional language had more difficulties accessing support.

The need for local support and advice was highlighted in this area, where professionals were from BAME backgrounds and literature should be available in schools.

46% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Gaps in Parenting Groups/ Programmes

In the mapping exercise a number of organisations felt there was a need for more local community groups for parents to offer support, target isolation, Mental Health issues, etc. Some organisations felt there was limitations in workforce or capacity to deliver parenting programmes. Some felt there was a lack of childcare to allow parents to attend groups or access support or training.

73% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

Some felt that as groups and programmes were mainly running online this could be a barrier for some parents, but one respondent felt an online parenting programme was popular with some parents as it gave parents more flexibility. Two were unaware online parenting programmes were running.

'a high percentage of parents feel that due to their present circumstances they have no desire to access (support) online but are extremely isolated, most report that they need to have a conversation or just to have someone listen and be able to share their experiences through these unprecedented times.'

Additional barriers were felt to be a lack of childcare, lack of confidence and lack of availability. One felt there was a stigma attached to attending a parenting programme and one felt wait time was a problem.

Some felt the restrictions were creating a gap in the support they could offer parents in school. Some had planned their own groups either online or worked hard previously to engage parents in groups.

'..there are many single parent families with no support networks in the community who are by enlarge coping but are very vulnerable to any challenge or change in circumstances.'

42% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Gaps in Befriending/ Mentoring

In the mapping exercise some organisations felt there was a need for more befriending or mentoring services to be available over a longer period of time for children and young people.

65% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

40% felt there was a real gap in the availability of services in this area which was caused by funding cuts, the wait required, or services not yet back up and running.

'With the evidence that children thrive in a relationship with a trusted adult this is key'

A couple felt that outdoors meetings had not been successful or that suitable outdoor spaces weren't available.

Many had had positive outcomes for young people who linked with a befriender, but one felt the length of time offered was too short. One respondent suggested Youth Workers were helpful in this area.

'I am aware of the difference a befriender has made to a family in our community and feel greater access to such support could be beneficial to many families, especially during this time of extra stress.'

41% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Following a Child Becoming Accommodated

In the mapping exercise some organisations felt there was a gap in specialised therapeutic support for parents who suffer the loss of their children to foster and permanent care.

35% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

Those who commented were either unaware of any supports available or felt this was a gap. One felt parents channel their distress into legal action. One felt access to support for families in crisis was difficult, and recognised some adults are not able to change their circumstances immediately.

'often we no longer see families after a child is accommodated so the relationship with the keyworker is not always available to that person'

Only 9% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Gaps in Family Learning Activities/ Transitions/ Outdoor Spaces

In the mapping exercise some organisations felt there was a need for more family learning opportunities and support around transitions and felt there was a lack of safe places for families to meet and play outdoors at present.

50% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

30% felt the restrictions around having to meet outdoors had had a huge impact on families. Many felt there were not suitable or safe places for families to meet, some families felt play parks were too busy, it was felt that families with low income had even less opportunities available and may not be able to afford transport to go to more suitable spaces. The impact of not being able to meet others was making parents feel isolated and preventing children having necessary social interactions.

One respondent felt it would be useful if an organisation could arrange meet ups for families outdoors.

A couple mentioned transitions for children did not run or were limited due to restrictions. Although some transition work was carried out online this did not suit all families and did not allow families to meet up which is felt to usually be positive.

16% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Digital Access/ Financial/ Employment/ Housing

Within the mapping exercise gaps were also raised around digital access, practical and financial assistance for families living in poverty, support and advice for adults with education and employment.

71% of school respondents were aware of these gaps

38% felt there were significant challenges for families around the lack of digital access, this had had an impact on children being able to access learning during lockdown. It was recognised it is not just access to devices but also Wi-Fi, data and training that is needed by many families.

One respondent stated many children were in temporary accommodation and little was being done for them. Quality of housing was felt to be detrimental to young people, impacting on associated health conditions and sleep.

Some felt COVID highlighted inequalities and poverty resulting in many families really struggling and facing added disadvantages. A couple of respondents felt there had been challenges accessing food banks and housing support for families during lockdown.

51% were aware of services who may meet these gaps

Other gaps identified not previously listed which were felt to impact on families in the school community

- EWO has been reduced in the last few years, but we can call for help when we need it
- Lack of services at the stage before formal intervention is required e.g. youth groups, informal sports (i.e. for fun without the need for skill!) opportunities for young people to have fun in safe space - they are bored and making their own entertainment.
- Lack of Arts/Creative supports e.g. there is lots of outdoor/RUTS type of support available but what about for the quieter pupils - something like the WHALE arts project.
- No community facilities available in our area and no space anywhere in school, even when it's safe to do so
- Fetlor not being able to open
- There is a lack of support for children who are experiencing extremely difficult family splits/separation which is affecting the child's mental and emotional health for months/years
- ...Loss of health visitor at transition...
- Citizens Advice - near local area Community Hubs are shut down post COVID - further COVID supports needed Lack of LGBT
- There is a lack of support from social work
- ...The lack of interaction and limited communication is leaving families more isolated in times that are becoming more challenging, more families are experiencing crisis which could have been averted if the support networks were there to assist
- Informal drugs advice and parental support re boundaries within the family home
- Lack of funding and reduction in capacity over the years has left the system very vulnerable in times of challenges like the one we are experiencing

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