

The West Partnership presents:

King's Oak Primary, Inverclyde

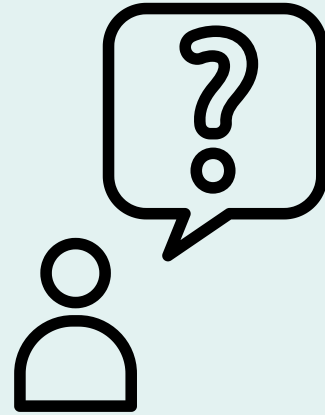
Maintaining family learning culture during COVID19



The storyboard details how the team at King's Oak in Inverclyde adapted to the pandemic in order to maintain a positive family learning culture. We hear how the school used a holistic approach to meet the needs of their families during a time of great uncertainty.

What was the problem?

In recent years, King's Oak Primary School has made a concerted effort to ensure a culture of family learning at their school. The school's family hub aims to provide inclusive experiences for all. Given that most of the activities of the school and family hub took place in person, the social distancing measures relating to the pandemic meant that alternate modes of delivery were required.



Why is this important?

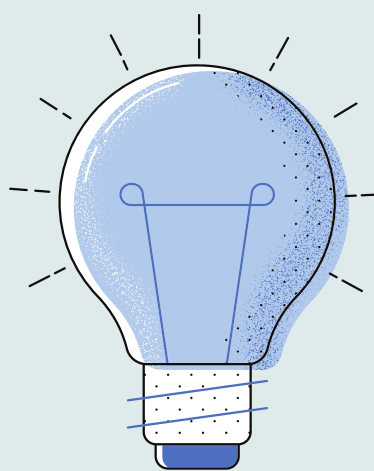
Research has demonstrated the importance of family learning and parental involvement on attainment and learner experience. Positive relationships between home and school have also been found to correlate with positive learner experiences and attainment. The positive work done by King's Oak prior to COVID19 had to be maintained to ensure a culture of family learning was retained.



Aims of the change to practice

The project had a number of aims:

- 1) To continue to understand the wellbeing of children and needs of families on a remote basis
- 2) To continue developing relationships and building new ones between the school and home
- 3) To continue a positive culture around family learning in socially distanced ways



What did you do?

Staff at King's Oak had to rethink several areas of delivery due to social distancing. Instead of pausing activities all together, the team worked to consider how remote alternatives could be achieved. This occurred across a number of areas. Firstly, the team identified ways of communicating with families in order to identify their needs and keep them up to date with the latest information. Secondly, the team drew on partnerships with CLD and health and social care where appropriate. One of the earliest interventions of the team was to work with CLD to disseminate learning packs. To overcome anxieties about entering a school building to pick up the learning packs, the team delivered bags in a way that adhered to social distancing. Thirdly, the team considered how they could best support families in learning remotely. The team produced 'how to' videos to explain how to use various pieces of digital technology. Fourthly, the team considered how they could deliver a number of socially distanced activities that would keep the relationship between home and school active. Finally, the team also considered how they could ensure a positive transitions experience for those families entering P1.

What happened?

Recently, the team has had good levels of engagement from many families. By tracking engagement they were also able to provide specific support to families with low engagement. In the summer of 2020, the school provided a number of achievement opportunities for pupils and their families that were well received. These include the 'mighty Oakers superheros' - a remote version of activities that would normally be completed in the summer hub, and the family skills challenge - where staff would ask families to complete a challenge. A number of pupils were encouraged to complete various award programmes (John Muir award, SQA Personal Achievement Gold Award Level 2). The team also encouraged a number of activities that meet the CfE responsible citizen capacity. For example, the school delivered a P6 community kindness campaign and also took part in an intergenerational garden project. The team also ran community-building activities like weekly quizzes and bingo - events that would consistently attract 12-15 families per week. This is ongoing.



What are the key points you have learnt?

The team have identified a number of key points from their change to practice. Firstly, the team quickly identified the need to reflect on 'what worked and what could be done better'. This was particularly important during the second lockdown. Secondly, the team noted that using all available tools to communicate effectively with families was of utmost importance. Thirdly, the team noted that the wellbeing and motivation of staff was key. The team identified the need to build on individual strengths within the team and also knew when to use external partners to best deliver their work.



What next for the project?

As it is unlikely that we will instantly return to delivering education in a pre-covid form, the team intends to continue their holistic approach to family learning in ways that adhere to up-to-date guidance. The team intends to continue identifying the needs of their pupils and families before putting into practice solutions to the difficulties caused by the pandemic. Family learning is a key element of the culture of King's Oak Primary, and one that they would like to continue to improve upon.

