

# 1.0 Family SEAL

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This scheme is a school based parent's education programme, Family Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). The programme is currently being piloted within three Nottingham City Schools - including a Pupil Referral Unit, in partnership with the School Improvement Service, Family Learning Service, and the Life Education Centre. The project is funded by the local Learning and Skills Council to raise awareness of the SEAL programme that is currently being rolled out to all City schools.

The main success criteria are:

**parents having improved confidence and knowledge of their child's social and emotional learning**

**parents gaining new skills and strategies for supporting their child with SEAL**

**Family Learning embedded in local schools**

The scheme was selected for the project because it provides an opportunity to explore the mechanisms through which parental engagement enhances school-based support to develop children's wider social and emotional skills.

## 1.1 Family SEAL – the menu of support

For the purpose of the action research project, Nottingham City Council Family learning service identified the following components to the scheme:

- ▶ **Nottingham City Council Family SEAL course material:** scheme developed, including various models piloted, including a Family SEAL within a Pupil Referral Unit.
- ▶ **Trainer- training** for delivering the course: based on training materials used within Nottingham City Council
- ▶ **Scheme documentation** – including schemes of work, session plans, examples of publicity and evaluations

The programme requires a link person with the school setting, such as a Learning mentor, teaching assistant, SEAL co-ordinator. The Family Learning tutor works with the school to devise the content of the programme which is usually dependent on what SEAL curriculum the school is covering that term. The tutor will then deliver the courses and the SEAL lead within the school will input in terms of content, planning and potentially co-delivery. This is dependent on school timetables.

Nottingham City's Wider Family Learning (WFL) programmes are targeted in specific areas in neighbourhoods where Children's attainment and aspirations are low. The service also looks at recruiting those participants that are new to learning with the vision that they will be progressed onto Family Language, Literacy and Numeracy (FLLN) Skills for Life provision.

In Nottingham City the continuity between WFL, FLLN and Adult and Community Learning is a seamless progression route for learners. The Local Authority, Further Education Colleges and Community and Voluntary Groups all work in partnership in order to offer excellent progression routes for learners.

The family SEAL curriculum is a recent development within Nottingham City Family Learning. Over the last two terms three four week pilots model have been developed and delivered within the City with an evaluation of the pilots scheduled for mid July 2008 for possible roll out in the autumn term of 2008.

## **1.2 Arrangements for replicating the scheme**

The following outlines the plans for transferring the scheme to the Isle of Wight.

### **Management arrangements**

The transfer will be managed by the Family Learning Service on the Isle of Wight. Additional consultancy support will be provided by NIACE, given that several new courses will potentially need to be established to achieve the Nottingham City SEAL model.

### **Strategic priorities**

The main priority for the Isle of Wight will be to gain overview of the national strategy SEAL curriculum. The Isle of Wight team will then need to identify Family Learning tutors who will be developing the Family SEAL model, who in turn require training on the Family SEAL model which has been tailored for Nottingham City.

It will be important for the research to capture the process of tailoring the course to meet the needs of the particular local community on the Isle of Wight.

### **The participant schools**

A cluster of three schools has been identified for the project – two primaries and a middle school, which have already received pathfinder funding for FLLN.

A teacher and Learning Support Assistant are already funded by the Pathfinder to work across the cluster of schools, providing a platform to build upon. MORI have measured the impact of pathfinder funding over two years, which showed progression to employment. The team would like to find a way to extend this tracking process for another year, and consider that the AR project might help to achieve this. The advantage would be to focus on the children's learning and development - a shift in focus from the evaluation to date.

### **Developing the project 'offer'**

Nottingham Family SEAL model is still being piloted, with evaluation scheduled for July 2008. Once the initial exchange visit has happened and an overview of Family SEAL has been disseminated, the Isle of Wight Family Learning team will need to identify key members within the team who will deliver the SEAL programmes. The Family Learning Service will then receive tutor-to-tutor training on the SEAL models and materials.

The particular tasks may include the following:

- 1 To establish contact within schools to identify SEAL co-ordinator and key partners.
- 2 To conduct a mapping exercise of what curriculum content the schools are covering, to ensure programme delivery is aligned to school practice.
- 3 To purchase additional resources needed for the project.
- 4 To agree the scheme of work with partners.
- 5 To recruit parents
- 6 To deliver an eight week Family SEAL programme; and,
- 7 To undertake a fully evaluation, from all key partners, to use in the research.

### **Challenges and risks**

The main challenges identified to date are:

- Buy-in from partners / sub-contractors - currently Nottingham City Family Learning provision is sub-contracted, and the City will need to ensure that a sub-contractor is identified within a short time frame without going through a formal commissioning process.
- Family SEAL within Nottingham City takes place in ten-week blocks, and Tutor time tends to get booked-out relatively quickly during these periods. The scheme will need to be carefully timetabled, so that there is not a negative impact on Tutors' existing workloads; and,

- Local Authority restructure: there is currently a Children's Services restructure taking place within the City. Staff capacity will need to be reviewed regularly.

## **Timescales**

- Visit to Nottingham City Council; overview of Family SEAL – early April 2008
- Training for staff, re-modelling and updating course materials – May 2008
- Publicity and recruitment for the tasters – early summer term 2008
- Delivery – summer term 2008 to spring term 2009
- Scheme completion; exit strategy – February 2009