

## Case Study: Early Years Foundation Stage Village Project

### 1. Why were we working with schools and settings in this way?

- We were in particular wanting to look at transitions, from home to Early Years setting, from setting to Reception class and finally from Reception into KS1. We wanted to explore successful transitions which produce a high degree of continuity and consistency in approach, including continuation into Key Stage 1.
- The aim is to create an emotionally and physically secure environment where nursery and reception age children can be totally integrated and would not have to experience another transition until the start of Y1. Therefore our wish is to work with schools, nursery classes and pre-schools as early education providers to implement seamless integrated high quality provision for the whole of the foundation stage – to create a Foundation Stage Village.

The intended outcomes from the project include:

- formal partnership agreements around the quality of service provided to parents.
- expansion of provision to include additional places for 2 year olds.
- narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation stage profile and the rest.
- to improve partnership with parents and carers.
- early identification and shared responsibility for children in need of additional support.
- Seamless transition across the Early Years Foundation Stage

Our definition of Seamless Foundation Stage provision can follow a number of models,

- fully integrated where both school and nursery provider share the same physical space.
- partial integration where space is shared for some of the day.
- parallel provision where there is shared practice and ethos but in different buildings.

### 2. What have we done?

#### What we did

- ESCC have been reviewing the methods of delivering the Foundation Stage for all young children from birth through to the end of the Reception year in all types of Early Years provision.
- During July and August 2012 an in depth analysis of East Sussex statistical neighbours identified key local authorities to explore their approach to the delivery of the foundation stage. OfSTED Good practice examples were explored. Additional finances were provided by the LA to support the research and implementation of a project.
- Visits were arranged for Head of Education Improvement, Early Years Development Manager, Head of Whitehill Infants and Head of Churchwood CP School to learn from experiences of other authorities - both the challenges and the successes from developing a Foundation Stage unit approach. Visits were made to Hartlepool (a

statistical neighbour to Hastings), Berkshire, Devon and Westminster.

- We initiated a Foundation Stage Village project for academic year 12/13 working with schools which have either a nursery class, a Governor or Third Party run early years provision and for some schools there will also be strong links with the local children's centre. East Sussex only has 17 nursery classes but of the 145 primary schools a further 43 have either a governor run nursery or a third party childcare provider on their site and a few will also have a children's centre on their site.
- Two events were held for Head teachers and foundation stage leads and all schools with their own nursery or a pre-school on site were invited to attend. The first event outlined the proposals and the second brought Head teachers from Hartlepool and Berkshire to present on what impact the 'village' approach had on whole school improvement.

### 3. What has the impact been?

30 Schools have formally participated in the project and presented formal proposals for the development of their 'Village'. Some have made physical changes to their premises and all have completed a formal assessment of partnership working. In addition, the message of working in close partnership with feeder preschools has expanded beyond those schools taking part in the project. Headteachers regularly comment about having a Village approach to their Early Years Foundation Stage.

30 schools with their 30 partner nurseries are now 'Villagers'

2014 data shows an average improvement of Good Level of Development for Village schools to be 30.2% (ESCC average 23.5%).

One school which participated in Phase 1 of the project has recently received an OfSTED Outstanding grade in its inspection.

**(See the attached Village school data table)**

Strengthening assessment at transition at transition into reception year has been a consistent improvement for all 'villages'.

***(See the attached Manor Primary School Case Study on the impact of the Village and the development of an Early Years Hub for the town of Uckfield)..***

### 4. What are the next steps

The EYFS Profile outcomes indicate that language development remains a top priority and, despite extensive training, the pace of change needs to be further accelerated. Therefore, a further programme of support, advice and training to focus on the consistent development of early language through pre-schools into Reception and onto Year 1 will take place in 2015/16.

Share what has worked well from the different Village projects with other schools and preschools.

Increase the number partnership agreements between schools and pre-schools on a shared site.

- The final phase 4 Village Project will start October 2015.