

EAL Impact Forums 2016 – 2017

Reporting on key impact questions and issues

Impact of adult learning on raising attainment in schools

Forum venue: Scotland's Learning Partnership, Edinburgh. Date: 27.1.17

Attended by: Education Scotland (ES); 7 community learning and development providers (CLD); Learning & Work Wales (LWW); England Impact Forum chair; Dundee University (DU); Museums Scotland; Learning Links Scotland (LLS); learning disability charity; Scotland's Learning Partnership (SLP); Monkton Primary School (MPS), Wales.

1. Key evidence used and presented:

ES presented 'The Scottish Attainment Challenge', a new government initiative linking low attainment in schools with a number of factors including poverty, worklessness, low parental attainment etc. The focus of discussion was the role family learning has to play in alleviating this.

LWW and MPS presented the state of policy in Wales and detailed case study from MPS, using the Pupil Deprivation Grant.

The discussion item focused on a project led by LLS called Home School Links, which is prototyping 'new' approaches to family learning. This is funded by another part of Scottish Government (CYP?)

2. Key impact identified: Health? Communities? Work?

'The Scottish Attainment Challenge' focused on "literacy, numeracy, health and well-being" with a focus on shared outcomes. This was reflected in the MPS case study

Although the impact forum continues to engage with policy makers and practitioners, lot of evidence is presented on outcomes rather than impact. For example, an outcome as described in the LLS project was 'parents having greater confidence' without looking at what impact that growth in confidence had.

I raised this issue and the GRALE 3 report interlocking 'benefits'. We discussed doing further research on this, using this model, rather than the evaluation of separate projects. ES and DU supported this.

3. Issues discussed:

- The link between CLD and the new attainment advisors in local authorities is not strong. CLD providers need to engage more with the 'The Scottish Attainment Challenge'
- Public equity funding for the 'The Scottish Attainment Challenge' is given direct to headteachers who have to consult parents (but not

- involve them in co-design). There was concern that the ‘The Scottish Attainment Challenge’ was dependent on the skills and experience of headteachers.
- There was a concern that the lack of awareness among headteachers of the importance/ impact of work undertaken ‘off-premises’ and that it was potentially fundable.
- CLD needs to put forward examples in order to influence headteachers and staff on the new National Improvement Hub. **Impact Forum members agreed to upload examples.**
- DU talked about joint teacher training for school teachers and adult educators to understand the other’s approaches. This promoted a more ‘holistic view.’
- The danger of family learning only meaning FLLN (as part of an ‘attainment’ debate) was discussed.

4. Links with Citizens’ Curriculum (English, Maths), youth employability and digital learning:

- MPS said if they put on a ‘basic skills’ course then few adults would turn up, so they use embedded approaches linked to what adults want to learn. ‘All the learning has to be for a reason.’
- The Site Safety Course resulted in measurable local job outcomes.
- Progression to further learning was measured.
- Estyn acknowledged that MPS attributed raising attainment to adult and family learning. However Estyn did not attribute it themselves, showing the difficulty of establishing causality.
- MPS is developing a financial capabilities course. **Is this linked to the CC?**
- School attendance figures were cited, and attendance has an impact on attainment—**so the causal link is not direct.**

5. Key questions and areas for further investigation:

- LWW is doing follow up work post-PISA with Bevan Foundation.
- **Should we do more work linking PISA and PIAAC?**
- It was suggested that there should be an impact study of school attainment and adult education.
- The IF is going to prototype collaborative approaches.
- ES has undertaken a thematic study of CLD plans which should provide useful background data on which areas to prototype in.
- Community Empowerment Act means communities can bid to run their own services. The potential impact on CLD should be assessed.
- MS suggested we looked at data on Creative Europe website for our EAAL impact report.

MR 27.1.17