

What is Collaborative Improvement?

Based on the recommendations from the 2015 OECD report, the Education Reform Joint Agreement[1] published in June 2018 had one of its key principles as

*'effective system-wide improvement requires **strong leadership**, **collaborative working** and **clarity of purpose** at all layers of the system – school, local, regional and national.'*

To take this forward ADES (the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland) and Education Scotland have developed a Collaborative Improvement (CI) model and have asked Local Authority Education Services to participate in taking CI forward. Fundamentally, Collaborative Improvement is an approach to bring about improvement through shared working.

During June 2022 Glasgow Education Services participated in a Collaborative Improvement with colleagues from ADES and Education Scotland. This was our first involvement as the lead Authority. Prior to the actual CI there was a series of planning meetings involving the leaders of the CI, and a significant gathering of evidence based on our data and self-evaluation processes. The planning process ensured that there was a clarity of purpose for the three days of the CI event. A preliminary report was produced to ensure that members of the team, especially those team members from outwith Glasgow, were aware of the strengths of the agreed area of focus and the key areas for development. Doing this ensured that the main discussions over the three days were focussed on improvement and capacity building.

[1] https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/agreement/2018/06/education-bill-policy-ambition-joint-agreement/documents/00537386-pdf/00537386-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00537386.pdf

Focus for Glasgow's Collaborative Improvement visit

The overall focus of the CI was to address the question, "To what extent does the Learning Community Joint Support Team (LCJST) improve outcomes for children and young people?". The LCJSTs have operated across all our Learning Communities for around twenty years and they are the key multi-agency forums which meet monthly to discuss children and young people referred to them by schools for support. These are a well-established and have been identified as a largely successful part of our systems approach to supporting children and young people and are jointly "owned" by Education and the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Through our planning and evidence-gathering process we identified four areas we wished to explore with our CI partners. The following sections outline each of the four themes - what we already knew, some the key questions within each theme[2] and, through considerable discussion, what should we now focus on to improve.

Theme 1 Is the purpose of the LC-JST well understood?

What we knew

A key theme was to establish if the purpose of the LC-JST was well understood by all partners in Glasgow. LC-JST data analysed by the Core Team prior to the visit showed a reduction in referrals to LC-JST over time as well as a change in the reasons for referral. Referral information also evidenced that there was no specific profile of children and young people being referred with many different reasons for referral.

Therefore, key areas of focus and discussion included exploring the reasons for changes in referral data, identifying possible improvements which would enhance the role of the LC-JST and ensuring that the forum was viewed as a multi-agency response going forward.

Strengths

- Revised and updated LC-JST Practice Guidelines have been helpful in building capacity and supporting staff at all levels with a clear understanding of LC-JST purpose and process.
- Glasgow's evidence indicates that schools are making effective use of Staged Intervention and Inclusion Meetings (SIIM) ensuring early intervention in supporting need at Learning Community and establishment level.
- Improved use of Area Inclusion Groups (AIGs) for support including a change to a child or young person's educational pathway.
- A range of interventions such as Glasgow Virtual School and PEF funded supports are supporting the learning and wellbeing needs of specific groups of children and young people.
- Strong commitment to collegiate work across partnerships - very good representation from Social Work colleagues. Health is a developing situation.

[2] Appendix 1: Collaborative Improvement Timetable

- Attendance from colleagues across all sectors is strengthening collaborative working and building professional capacity at Learning Community level.
- Development work at Children's Service Working Group and LC-JST Seminars is supporting development among LC-JST Chairs.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Ensuring access to helpful information on Staged Intervention Inclusion Meetings (SIIM) LC-JST and Area Inclusion Group (AIG) processes for parents and carers to support relationships and ensure transparency.
- Monitor consistency of approach across LC-JST to ensure equity of access to support and representation across all areas.
- Provide staff at all levels with a clear understanding of LC-JST and SIIM purpose and process, ensuring that confusion in navigating the system is not a barrier to accessing support for children and young people in a timely manner.

Recommendations

- Make sure information is available to parents via Council/school websites.
- Flowchart simplifying LC-JST referral process and access to resources and supports is circulated.
- Explore productive and effective methods of engaging Health professionals appropriately and timely.
- Develop Guiding Principles for Staged Intervention and Inclusion Meetings.
- Develop rolling programme of training for LC-JST members supporting and developing practice in Solution Oriented Approaches.

Theme 2 What is the impact of LC-JST on learners?

What we knew

The impact of the LC-JST on learners was fundamental to the Collaborative Improvement and one of the key areas of focus. The self-evaluation data that existed was more related to processes rather than outcomes for children and young people. Therefore, the focus in this theme was to explore a tool that some LCJSTs have started to use and that we would like to adopt across all the LCJSTs – Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS).

Goal Attainment Scaling is a method of measuring the extent to which a child or young person's individual wellbeing goals are achieved in the course of an intervention.

Strengths

- GAS provides a person-centred approach with each child/young person having their own personalised wellbeing goals that are meaningful and important to them.
- A baseline score is set and the achievement of goals is reviewed and scores allocated based on the level of progress made. Referrers find it easier to observe and measure improvements.
- Feedback indicates that the goals and outcomes set by referrers are now much clearer and easier to communicate with children and families.
- Having standard referral and outcome paperwork across the Learning Community assists with data analysis –.

Opportunities for Improvement

There was a positive reaction from ADES and Education Scotland representatives to the GAS methodology and further developments were discussed:

- Wider application of GAS across Inclusion such as Staged Intervention and Inclusion Meetings (SIIMs) and Area Inclusion Groups and potentially embedding the GAS approach across wellbeing.
- Using as a planning tool to make connections for children and young people with additional support needs.
- Wellbeing supports/decisions can take time to show an impact on the child or young person. This tool would be able to be used over a longer period of time to show impact and track personal progress/achievement. at LCJCT having an impact on learning and wellbeing there was discussion about tracking achievement over a longer period.
- Improved use of impact data from GAS to determine trends/gaps in services and supports.

Recommendations

- Implement GAS across all LC-JSTs.
- Recognising that this is a good way to make incremental progress over time, explore the use of Goal Attainment Scaling in other areas of inclusion such as SIIMs, AIG and ASN more generally.
- As part of the self-evaluation processes of the LC-JST conduct longitudinal case studies to track learners' journeys and review the impact of the LC-JST on outcomes for children and young people.
- Use data to identify successful supports and gaps in supports available.

Theme 3 How robust are the self-evaluation and continuous improvement processes of the LC-JSTs?

What we knew

Most LC-JSTs conduct an annual self-evaluation process, based on HGIOS4, that feeds into a continuous improvement cycle. Few LC-JSTs produce action plans as an outcome of self-evaluation and, instead, have more informal approaches in place. Families and young people are not routinely involved in self-evaluation. The data used to inform developments is not analysed consistently across all LC-JSTs.

Strengths

- There are good examples of systems analysis at city level over the years through using the bi-annual LC-JST seminars as an opportunity for sharing practice, feedback and a 'you said- we did' approach.
- Data is collected and tracked centrally to provide local, area and city-wide perspectives.
- There are various methods used to involve parents/carers and children and young people in self-evaluation.

- Clear structures are already in place to support development work such as Children's Services Working Groups at an area level and the LC-JST City Steering Group.
- LC-JST Chairs provide challenge and support to referrers that builds knowledge and understanding across learning communities.

Opportunities

- Build on self-evaluation approaches to move from process improvement to evaluating and improving the impact of decisions/interventions on children and young people.
- Use existing structures such as Glasgow's Improvement Challenge and Children's Services Working Groups to better understand how we access resources and address identified gaps to meet the individual needs of children and young people.
- Use data collected more systematically to drive improvements.

Recommendations

- Consider how to better use Children's Services Working Groups to support self-evaluation, moderation and share practice such as the engagement of children and families in self-evaluation processes.
- Review what data is gathered locally and centrally and how to improve the use of data to inform self-evaluation processes.
- Consider how Glasgow's Improvement Challenge resources can support individual children and young people.
- Consult with chairs on appropriate professional learning methods to support them in their roles such as peer review, POLI process.
- Consider the benefits of accessing local resources and funding streams that would enable LC-JSTs to access support and interventions to address specific barriers to learning and wellbeing. The benefits of these supports/interventions could be collated to evidence what is the most effective interventions for children and young people across the city.

Theme 4 How well do LC-JST partners listen to children, young people and their families?

What we knew

Whilst there is evidence of improving engagement, the views of children and young people were not routinely noted on referrals. Parent and carer views were more consistently noted, however, 22% were still not noted in referrals. Some LC-JSTs involved young people and parents in the LC-JST self-evaluation process though this approach was not consistent across all learning communities.

Strengths

- There are best practice guidelines and training on engaging children and young people to support those referring to the LC-JST.
- The process of involving families and young people in gathering their views is in line with process and procedures for developing Wellbeing plans for children and young people.

- Recently, very helpful resources such as the parent video and information leaflet have been co-produced by Education and the Glasgow Parent Forum to support families and carers.
- Children and young people have been involved in producing helpful materials, including in sign language, to support the understanding and involvement of learners.
- A small number of LC-JSTs are using Microsoft Forms to gather the feedback of children, young people and families.
- A small number of LC-JSTs have already developed a process which involves families attending the meeting.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Developing the practice of involving families more in the meetings across LC-JSTs, sharing existing practice widely.
- Development of linking the Wellbeing Application development with the work with families, children, and young people.
- Learning from existing practice in identified establishments around the supporting and developing of attendance, for example Attendance themed SIIM.

Recommendations

- Ensure clear communications and sharing of materials and resources to support the gathering of the views of children, young people and families to develop a more consistent approach.
- Meaningful communication and consultation with children, families and young people should be developed with measures and evaluation of these processes which are effective. This is essential in light of the incorporation of the UNCRC and the Morgan Review, which focussed on supporting learners with additional support needs.

Next Steps

This report and the detail from the focus groups will be shared with colleagues from ADES and Education Scotland, LC-JST City Steering Group and the wider LC-JST community.

The LC-JST City Steering Group will be charged with developing and implementing an Action Plan to prioritise and take forward recommendations.

Finally, the overall experience of the Collaborative Improvement activity was overwhelmingly positive. It supported learning at a faster pace and a depth than would have been possible through other self-evaluation processes. As an approach, it is one that should be recommended to other Local Authority Education Services and should certainly be developed within Glasgow itself.

Appendix 1: Collaborative Improvement Timetable

Thursday 9th June 2022 (Recordings will be available to Education Scotland Colleagues)		
9.30am	Welcome and Introductions	Executive Director of Education
9.45am	• The Glasgow Context • Overarching Question • Key Themes	Head of Inclusion
10.30	Aims of Collaborative Improvement	ADES/Education Scotland
10.45am	**Tea/Coffee**	
11.00am	Glasgow Staged Intervention Framework	QIO Inclusion
11.15am	Multi -agency context	QIO Health and Wellbeing
11.30am	Questions / Discussion	ADES/ Core Team
12.15pm	**Lunch**	
1.15pm	Area Inclusion Group Supporting Inclusive Practice	AIG Lead/HT
1.30pm	Glasgow Virtual School Supporting Inclusive Practice	GVS HT
1.45pm	Follow up discussion/ questions from context presentations	ADES/ Core Team
2.30pm	Close	
Friday 10th June 2022		
10.00am	Welcome Education Scotland Colleagues Welcome back – recap of day 1	Head of Inclusion
10.15am	**Theme 1** -**Is the purpose of the LC-JST well understood?** Overview of theme 2 x Focus Groups	ADES/Education Scotland/ Core Team/Partners/ School Reps

Theme 1	**Focus Questions**
Is the purpose of the LC-JST well understood?	• In what way have referrals to LC-JST changed over time and why? • What is the emerging role of LC-JST going forward? • What further information and training could more broadly support the aims of the LC-JST ? • Is it viewed as a multi- agency response?

11.15am	Feedback from focus groups - key areas discussed / questions	Core group members
11.30am	**Tea /Coffee**	
11.45am	**Theme 3 -**How robust are the self-evaluation and continuous improvement processes of the LC-JSTs? Overview of theme 2 x Focus Groups	ADES/Education Scotland/ Core Team/Partners/ School Reps

Theme 3	**Focus Questions**
How robust are the self-evaluation and continuous improvement processes of the LC-JSTs?	• What would support the LC-JST on a continuous improvement journey?

		• How do we involve children and young people and parents/carers in the self-evaluation process? • Is our current self- evaluation focused on improvements in process rather than outcomes – what are the implications of this?
12.45am	Feedback from focus groups - key areas discussed / questions	Core group members
1.15pm	**Lunch**	
1.45pm	**Theme 4-** How well do LC-JST partners listen to children, young people, and their families? Overview of theme 2 x Focus Groups	ADES/Education Scotland/ Core Team/Partners/ School Reps
Theme 4		**Focus Questions**
How well do LC-JST partners listen to children, young people, and their parents/carers?		• Is it important to engage with children, young people and families in the JST process? • How do we get better at hearing and considering children and young people's views? • What impact will the incorporation of the UNCRC have? • Are there lessons from The Promise on how we do this better?
2.45pm	Feedback from focus groups - key areas discussed / questions	Core group members
3-4pm	**Plenary Discussion**	Core Group

Monday 13th June 2022		
10.00am	Whole Group Welcome and recap	Head of Inclusion
10.15am	**Theme 2-** What is the impact of LC-JST on learners? Overview of theme Presentation Goal Attainment Scoring	GPS JST Chair
Theme 2		**Focus Questions**
What is the impact of LC-JST on learners?		• How do we know that LC-JST is having an impact on learners? • Is there a focus on education outcomes rather than multi – agency outcomes? • How do other Local Authorities measure and track success of multi-agency approaches to supporting young people?
11.00am	**Tea/ Coffee**	
11.15am	Key questions/ discussion – whole group	All
12.30pm	**Lunch**	
1.30pm	Sharing Findings	ALL

3.30pm	Close of Review	Head of Inclusion Executive Director of Education