

2022-23

ANNUAL REPORT



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CHAIR'S ADDRESS



Theresa Brady, Chairperson



On behalf of the Colin Sure Start Management Committee, I am pleased to present the annual report for 2022-23.



This annual report highlights the work and vital services that the organisation was able to continue to provide during the year ending in March 2023. This year saw the project really start to recover from the restrictions and challenges of the Covid-19 period and there are many areas where we have seen significant increases in the engagement and output of the project, a testament to the hard work of the staff team, but also a real encouraging drive on the part of parents and families in seeking out services again. In some ways I think that lockdown and the Covid period has only underlined how important the groups and services that Sure Start are in the community. Some of these gains include that our groups and services reached a total of 1255 children in the year, a 4% increase on the previous year, as well as 2496 home visits and one-ones across all our services, an increase of 50% from the previous year. We received 165 applications for our Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds that ran during this year, so you can see the demand for the services that Sure Start provide is as strong as ever. You will be able to read more about the numbers of programmes of support delivered in this report, and also about the outcomes and impact of these services.

Continuing to improve the quality of our services is something we remain committed to here at Colin Sure Start; we do this by listening to our families and also through a process of

evaluation and self-reflection. We have sought to develop both the spaces and environments in which we are operating, as well as the knowledge and skills of our team. Our staff receive a significant investment in training and a wide variety of early years experience that means we are delivering quality for our families – something we strive for and take great pride in as an organisation. I am pleased to say that in this reporting year we celebrated the re-opening of our mobile unit in Lagmore after a complete redevelopment in partnership with the Down and Connor Diocese and Christ the Redeemer Parish. This is something that has been many years in development and has taken a lot of work and planning. It is now an excellent space that we are using for one of our Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds as well as a range of other programmes and groups offered daily serving the Lagmore, Mount Eagles and Twinbrook areas and beyond.

Partnerships and good strategic leadership and governance are crucial to any organisation, and as Chair I am happy that we are building this up in the project too – we now have a full Board of 10 directors, with a vast range of experience and backgrounds, with representation from a wide range of community and voluntary organisations working in the Colin area, as well as the wisdom and experience from several members who have worked careers in Education

and Social Work and are able to use this experience and skills to support the project. We are committed as a Board to supporting the building back of good partnerships in this community that were restricted or limited during the past number of years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and you will find good examples of this in the report.

Working in the early years we must keep children at the centre of what we do, and we have seen the demand for our services since they have returned face-to-face increase significantly again. This is positive, and while there are still many challenges ahead for families we want to reassure you that we are still here for you and are as committed as ever to continuing our support. If there are

suggestions or ideas that you have for ways to support you as we find our way out of the pandemic we want to hear them and welcome the feedback of parents and our partner organisations.

I would like to thank the whole staff team for the amazing work on display here, and the Management Committee for continuing to provide strategic leadership to the project in challenging financial times. Members of the Board have once again gone above and beyond the call of duty in supporting the project not just in the regular meetings, but with a range of additional support, advice, and recruitment.

Theresa Brady
Chairperson



PROJECT COORDINATOR'S REPORT

“ Changing, developing and responding to emerging needs in the community has always been the way of Sure Starts – it's one of the things that make this community early intervention programme so unique. ”

As we have emerged from the Covid-19 crisis, followed closely by a cost of living crisis that still continues to impact on the Colin area and our families – this ability to change and respond quickly has been more important than ever. Colin Sure Start has changed and developed so much in our 21 year history, and while there are many challenges about for children and families in our community, I hope this report will highlight some of the many positive ways that our organisation is supporting children in the early years in these testing times with our well-known programmes of support as well as some new and exciting interventions and partnerships.

Evidence of the impact of the Covid period on families, parents and children in the early years is still emerging and services are still trying to make sense of it and respond. For our part, what is really positive is that we are seeing the bounce back of engagement in our services with many families coming forward and seeking out the benefits of getting involved. The 22-23 year saw the highest number of families engaged in services (869) since the 2018-19 year, and a rise of 248 from the previous year. This is a positive trend that shows a return to our face-to-face groups, so crucial to the Sure Start model, has meant families coming back. But it also reflects a huge effort on the part of our brilliant and committed staff team in meeting this uptake. In the early part of this reporting year, many restrictions

were still in place on group numbers and social distancing, so in many cases to meet this demand this meant running back-to-back programmes with smaller numbers to try and accommodate as many families as possible. In spite of these restrictions, our team managed to increase output and capacity. This is borne out in some of the statistics you will read about in the following pages – for example an 100% increase in the number of children attending our Rhythm, Rhyme and Story Time programmes from year to year, and the number who attended Baby Massage increasing from 53 to 90 in 22/23.

This report we have also included some of the outcomes data that we have been collecting as part of our drive to continue to evidence the impact that our programmes are having – so not just measuring the 'how many', but also what it means to participate for parents, and what you tell us you are getting out of it. We are really grateful to our parents and families for engaging with this process – at the end of each programme or group we are sending a link for a post-programme survey, which the majority of parents complete – a huge help, and can help us to improve services and programmes. But what we are also learning is what parents and families are taking away from these programmes – the benefits, the enjoyment, the learning, the sharing of experiences with others, just knowing you are not alone in facing whatever parenting

throws at you – this is what really matters. We can see that for parents who engage with these groups, the benefits are clear – both for themselves, and the benefits that they report for their children too – improved speech, language and communication, better social skills, a chance to play and really develop curiosity, new materials, experience new environments and play activities – and having fun! Relationships between parents and children are strengthened through joy and these shared experiences.

Another way that rebuilding since Covid has been taking place is in our partnerships in the local community. It is well understood that this period imposed restrictions on the ability of organisations to support families directly, but another consequence was that many of the forums and connections for organisations to work together were also disrupted during this period, so one of our aims and objectives since then has been to work to build these back up as we know the importance of partnership in achieving outcomes for children and families. During this reporting year, we re-established working relationships with Colin Neighbourhood Partnership in delivering a number of successful community events during the year, our partnership with Ionad Na Fuseoige in Twinbrook was strengthened, delivering regular weekly parent support programmes together from their centre, and we worked closely together in building back our strong relationship with the SET Health Visiting team and the new Health Visiting Manager there. Our Breastfeeding Support Group had lots of engagement from professionals including SET Peer Supporters,

trainee midwives and HVs and of course the visits from the UNICEF BFI auditors as part of our Level 3 accreditation, along with the other 4 Sure Start projects in the SE CCP area, which I am pleased to say we passed with flying colours – a great credit to all our staff and in particular Julie Anne Murphy, our Health Practitioner who spearheaded this for our project.

Our partnerships with other services in the community have always been crucial to what we do in Sure Start, and I would like to acknowledge and thank Stewartstown Road Health Centre, Speech and Language Therapy services, Barnardos, Save the Children, Colin Neighbourhood Partnership, Ionad na Fúiseoige, Footprints Womens Centre, Lagan Valley Education Project, Colin Family Centre, Lagmore Forum, the Mount Eagles Community Association, the South and West Belfast Food Bank, the local Nursery Schools and many, many more.

As Project Coordinator, I would like to acknowledge and thank all the Sure Start staff, the Directors, CCP and DE representatives, the other agencies and organisations who have worked with Sure Start, and particularly the families who use our services for their engagement and continued support during this reporting year of 2022-23, and looking forward to continuing this work with our spirit and enthusiasm which is who we are at Colin Sure Start.

Roger
Project Coordinator



VISION

Colin Sure Start aims to reach out to families with children aged 0-4 years..... laying foundations, creating opportunities and working in partnership to give every child the best possible start in life.

MISSION

Our mission is to help each child in the Colin area to reach their full potential by providing support to families and high quality experiences to children during the critical early years from pre-birth up to age 4. We do this by empowering parents and carers with social and educational programmes, home support and opportunities to have positive interactions with their children. We also aim to provide an environment where children are valued and respected, where they can access quality play, and where they develop imagination and skills through interaction with peers.

OUR IMPACT IN THE COLIN COMMUNITY OUTPUTS

NEW CHILDREN
REGISTERED 22-23

450

NEW MOTHERS
REGISTERED 22-23

355

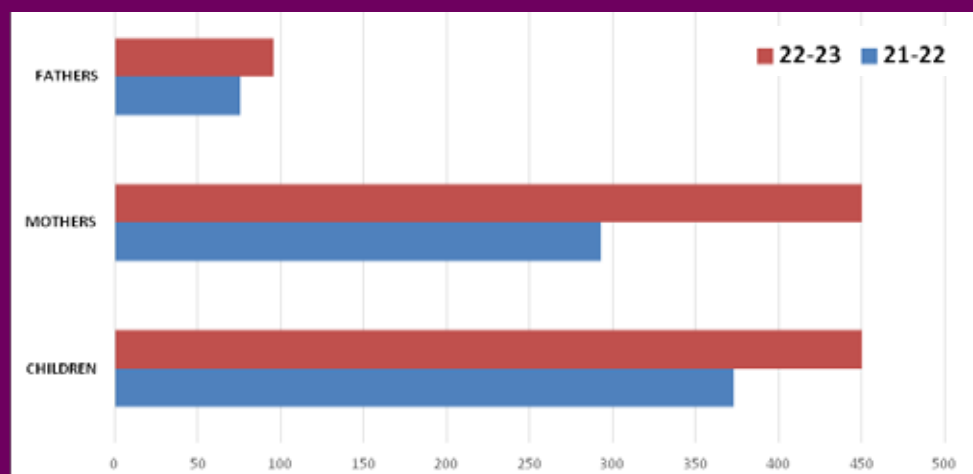
NEW FATHERS
REGISTERED 22-23

96

ANTENATAL MOTHERS
REGISTERED 22-23

21

NEW REGISTRATION COMPARISON 21-23



ACTIVITY ENGAGEMENT COLIN SURE START

Number of
Children
registered

1255

% uptake of
Children using
services

70.0%

Number of
Mothers
registered

1071

% uptake of
Mothers using
services

74%

Number of
Fathers
registered

234

% uptake of
Fathers using
services

58%

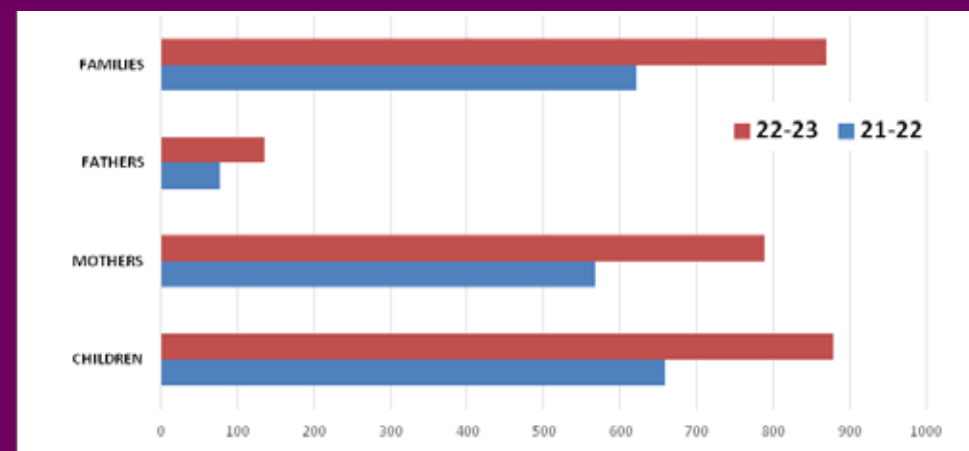
Number of
Families
registered

1133

% uptake of
Families using
services

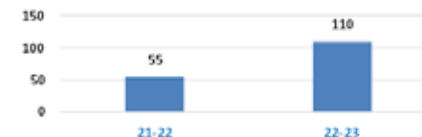
77%

SERVICE ENGAGEMENT COMPARISON 21-23

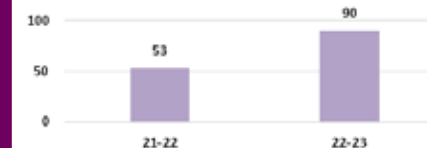


ACTIVITY ATTENDEE COMPARISON 2021-2023

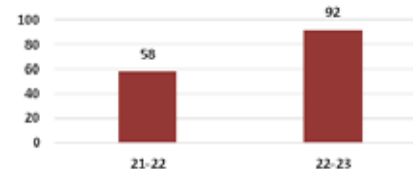
RHYTHM, RHYME & STORY TIME



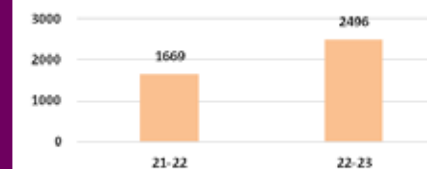
BABY MASSAGE



AQUABABES



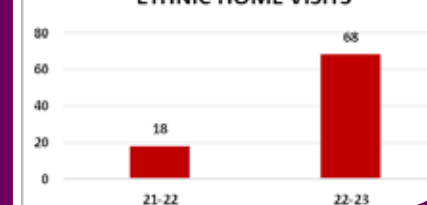
HOME VISITS



DADS DIGGING



ETHNIC HOME VISITS



OUR IMPACT IN THE COLIN COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

SPEECH & LANGUAGE

Baby Party Parent Evaluations 22-23 - 15 Respondents

Attending this session has given me the confidence to know how to help my child to listen and learn how to talk..

80%
Strongly Agree

20%
Agree

Participating in the Help Kids Talk Baby Time session has helped me to increase my knowledge of:

New Nursery Rhymes & Songs **92.86%**

How singing and talking makes my baby's brain grow **92.86%**

Booktrust Parent Evaluation 22-23 - 22 Respondents

Has the pack encouraged you to attend your local library? **YES 72.73%**

What changes have you noticed in your child by attending this session? **81.82%**
Joining in more with singing and rhymes

EVENTS

Event Parent Evaluations - 55 Respondents

This event gave me an opportunity to spend time with my child and promote bonding.

83.64%
Strongly Agree

16.36%
Agree

By attending this event I have improved the following:

My knowledge of activities that are appropriate for my child that they enjoy. **70.91%**

Improved my mood as it was a fun experience for my child/ren and me. **81.82%**

PROGRAMME FOR 2-3 YEAR OLDS

DP23YO Parent Evaluations - 21 Respondents

Participating in this programme will support my child's transition to nursery school.

100%
Strongly Agree

The parental engagement aspects were carefully thought out and supported my child's development.

100%
Strongly Agree

POSTNATAL JOURNEY

Weaning Workshop Parent Evaluations 22-23 - 17 Respondents

I have increased knowledge of weaning and infant nutrition.

70.59%
Strongly Agree

29.41%
Agree

How likely are you to prepare your own baby food?

58.82%
Very Likely

41.18%
Likely

Baby Massage Parent Evaluations 22-23 - 39 Respondents

I feel assured that I can perform a baby massage routine confidently and safely.

82.05%
Strongly Agree

17.95%
Agree

How likely are you to continue baby massage at home?

92.31%
Very Likely

5.13%
Likely

Baby Yoga Parent Evaluations 22-23 - 27 Respondents

I have increased knowledge of the benefits of baby yoga.

77.78%
Strongly Agree

22.22%
Agree

I was able to participate in and learn safe postnatal exercises with my baby in a supportive environment.

77.78%
Strongly Agree

22.22%
Agree

Grobrain Parent Evaluations 22-23 - 22 Respondents

Parents able to name one parental stress management technique the programme taught them.

100%

I have increased knowledge of baby brain development.

86.36%
Strongly Agree

9.09%
Agree

GRANDPARENTS

Grandparent Services Parent Evaluations 22-23 - 9 Respondents

This programme gave me an opportunity to spend time with my grandchild and promote bonding.

66.97%
Strongly Agree

33.33%
Agree

By attending the Grandparents Group the following were improved.

General health & wellbeing.

88.89%

PLAY

Grandparent Services Parent Evaluations 22-23 - 9 Respondents

This programme has increased my confidence in supporting my toddler through this stage of development.

56.25%
Strongly Agree

37.50%
Agree

Toddler Time provided my child with multiple play opportunities.

87.50%

HEALTH PROMOTION

Colin Sure Start continue to be committed to provide a portion of fruit or veg to all children under the age of 4 in the Colin area attending Pre-school, Nursery or any Colin Sure Start Activity. This benefits 664 children on a daily basis, covering 7 nurseries, 3 creches and all Sure Start activities. This healthy eating scheme encourages healthy eating within the setting in the hope that it will lead to the children making healthier choices at home.

Colin Sure Start aim to increase children and parents knowledge and skills by having a healthy eating ethos and consistent good nutrition messages embedded across all programmes and supports. Free piece of fruit distributed each day at groups during healthy break time, providing one of the children's five-a-day. The healthy eating scheme, with an emphasis on food education helps increase the awareness of the importance of eating fruit and vegetables, encouraging healthy eating habits that can be carried into later life.

We offer a variety of seasonal fruit and veg that children may not usually have access to or are unfamiliar with. The children are encouraged to eat or at least try the fruit and often mimic their peers in doing so. Families have commented that the service has been extremely useful and that their children are now eating more fruit and of a wider variety, than they otherwise would not get the opportunity to experience.

Colin Sure Start also delivered 40 fruit & vegetable hampers, including healthy recipes and ingredients to families during the 2022-2023 period.

During the 2022-2023 period a total of 10 weaning workshops took place with a total of 56 families attending. The results from the evaluation distributed to attendees showed that 100% of respondents had an increased knowledge of weaning and infant nutrition and 94% were likely to recognise the signs of readiness for weaning with their babies. The feedback also highlighted that 100% of respondents were likely to prepare their own baby food and agreed that by attending the workshop felt increased confidence as a parent. Family support one to one weaning support also continued during this period.

Colin Sure Start's Toddler Time is a 6 week programme with each week dedicated to a specific area of toddler development. One of these weeks is Fun with food and during this session parents are made aware of how to provide a healthy diet for their toddler. This includes portion sizes, the Eat Well Guide, sugar content of common foods and there is also an opportunity for the children to identify, touch and sample various fruits & veg. During the 22-23 period 66 children attended this group.

5 healthy cooking programmes were also completed this year. These programmes offer hands-on, practical experience of cooking and preparing food, as well as improving knowledge of healthy eating on a budget. Ingredients and recipes were provided for a total of 31 families this year and following a survey at the end, 100% of the respondents agreed that by completing the programme their understanding of healthy eating and their confidence to make healthy meals on a budget had increased.

Colin Sure Start promote Physical Activity as well as good nutrition and during the 2022-2023 period 114 families benefited from various physical activity programmes facilitated - including Aquababes, Pramastics and Mum & Baby Circuits. 53 families also benefited from the 12 Physical Health Promotion Workshops that ran in Colin Sure Start's Parent & Toddler groups.

Colin Sure Start's Fathers Worker continued to work on the allotment this year where the children and their dads really enjoyed the digging and planting. The allotment is a fantastic way to help the children develop a better understanding of how things grow, how seeds need to be cared for and, of course, the best bit is when the children see the fruits of their labour and can actually eat the food they have helped

to grow. Working in partnership with parents to encourage the exploration of different foods at an early age increases the acceptance of new foods and results in a more diverse diet and better eating habits.

'Cook-it programme was great, I tried things I never would have before! Was brilliant having adult company and laughs along the way while learning to cook different recipes. Bernie is helpful and amazing – thank you for letting me take part!'

'It's great to have fruit delivered weekly, the children look forward to the box arriving!'

'It has been of great benefit as it's ensuring that they get some of their 5 a day. It also allows for a good conversation around healthy eating and the Eat Well Guide'



SPEECH & LANGUAGE SERVICES

2rhymesby2

The Speech and Language Therapy team continue to work with all members of the Sure Start team and parents/carers to make "Communication Everybody's Business".

This summer we were delighted to train 16 Colin Sure Start Staff in Neurodevelopmental Foundations for Language. This training focuses on the importance of how to make our groups and settings sensory safe spaces to help regulate little brains to feel calm, safe and ready for learning. We can't wait to put this learning into practice!

We continue to encourage parents in all our groups to Sing a rhyme anytime and start their child learning for a lifetime. Our rhythm, rhyme and story time sessions continue to be a weekly hit with families promoting a fun morning out where your little one can sing songs, practice using musical instruments, listen to stories and most importantly have fun with others.

This past year the SLT team joined forces with our sure start colleagues to ensure that our important speech, language and communication messages are an integral part of every group in sure start. This past year we have been involved in/visited Dads Den Bookstart sessions, Babytime sessions, Learn to explore sessions, Grandparents group, Childminder's sessions, Incredible Years Group, and the Breastfeeding Group. We love to show parents and carers how they can play their part right from the start and how children need us to talk and play every day in order to support their speech

and language development. Through this regular contact we can meet parents/carers/ children and support their journey with advice, activities and signposting to health services e.g. SLT, CDC, Paediatrician etc.

We have been working in partnership with the healthcare practitioner this year in order to enhance our provision with the antenatal population in Colin Sure Start. Our SLTs have completed "Communicating with your bump" evening sessions for 20 expectant mothers and partners over the past year. This partnership allows for key messages to be provided about connecting

with your baby in utero as well as giving these new parents information on how to connect with baby in those early days/weeks/months to set their child up for a lifetime of learning. This year we are hoping to be able to provide each expectant mother with a specially designed antenatal

book "I wonder" which will help develop that important bond between mum/significant others and baby in the womb.

We had so much fun in our new "Toddler Talk" outdoor summer programme which ran for 4 Wednesdays during the summer and saw 36 children attend over the weeks. We wanted to show how the outdoors allows for so much language learning and sensory exploration and our kids had the best time in the dinosaur swamp, making potions, making ice cream, blowing bubbles, playing with ice, pouring tea etc.



DP23YO AND PLAY2LEARN

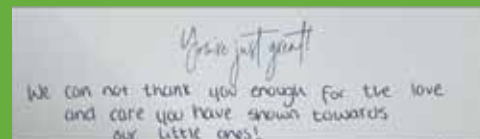
The Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds is a vital service in the Colin area which receives a high level of interest every year when the applications are released for the following year. Our aim is always to give children and families the best possible start in life and providing them with opportunities for learning and development which they otherwise might not experience as we are situated in what is deemed by NISRA as one of the most socially deprived ward areas in Belfast. Every child has the right to learn, play and have fun as stipulated by the UNCRC and we firmly believe this to be true and this is at the heart of everything we do in our Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds.

We achieved our target for 2022-2023 which was to provide 48 places in total over 4 programmes in various settings within the Colin area. The demand for a place in our Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds is always highly sought after as we see from the number of applications we received by the closing date in February which was 122 applications. In order to give as many children and families the invaluable opportunity to learn, play and develop in the pre-preschool year and to meet the needs of the families in the Colin area, we also ran 2 Play2Learn Programmes over two settings. Play2Learn consists of 10 places and is ran over 3 blocks from September to June. Our target was again achieved for this year with Colin Sure Start providing 60 places in total

Our setting in Lagmore received a refurbishment just in time for the children coming to start their journey in the

programme in September 2022. The transformation from what the setting was before to what it is now is remarkable and the environment is now better suited to meet the needs of the children, their families and our staff team.

Our Developmental Programme Specialists Tanya Cummings and Anca Adams are very impressed with the new and improved setting and have invited other staff members from other Sure Starts to come for viewings for some inspiration and to gather ideas to utilise in their Developmental Programmes for 2-3 Year Olds.



DP23YO AND PLAY2LEARN CONT...

'Brilliant programme, it really helped my son with his independence from me and how he plays with others, he's also picked up alot of words/sentences from being in the programme and does imagination play more in the house with his toys, brilliant programme for mums and kids, I love it, so sad to finish the programme but it has been an amazing experience '

'Caragh has greatly enjoyed her time in the programme. She has came out of her shell playing alongside and with the other children. We both feel that this programme is worthwhile and beneficial in preparing Caragh for nursery. We would love to thank you all for the help and support you have given to us and caragh over the year. I know she will miss Tina, Danielle and Caoimhe alot.'

SERVICE USER DIRECT FEEDBACK

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of your staff involved in the two year developmental programme in Lagmore am session 2022-2023 for the amazing love and the support they gave to my daughter...This programme was fundamental in helping her achieve milestones she could not have achieved at home. The structured, fun environment, alongside the support from the staff enabled our daughter to thrive and develop...One of the many skills she learnt was putting her coat on independently. Although this sounds like a very simple task, getting dressed is a great struggle for her, learning this was a huge achievement. We still practice it at home...This programme has enabled our daughter to thrive beyond what I thought she could or would. Not only did the team look after our daughter, but they provided myself and husband with love and support when we needed it."

'This programme was a life line not only for my children's development but for the beginning to their individual journey in life'



EARLY YEARS SERVICES

The 2022-23 year saw us getting back to what we missed during Covid restrictions – our face-to-face groups and programmes again! This meant our 4 weekly Parent and Toddler Groups resumed across all different areas of Colin! And what a return, as many families had really missed this crucial social play, interactions and the benefits for parents too of getting together back in groups. Our Rhythm, Rhyme and Story Time programmes returned in full swing too, with our 2 weekly programmes back, and the number of families and children who were able to get involved for fun, rhymes and songs and stories increased from the previous year – double the number! We also wanted to bring a real emphasis on the outdoor environment into our groups in this year, the benefits of outdoor play for children's health, wellbeing, physical health and gross motor skills. We put together some new programmes focussing on this – a monthly 'Outdoor Explorers' programme that is now up and running in local parks or outdoor spaces – with some really good interest and feedback from our initial sessions! We have continued this work going forward – nature and outdoors are such a key part of early years play and development.

'A break from home life and good to have my baby around other babies.'



'Great programme, well planned with different themed weeks. New skills learnt and plenty of fun had. Good to chat to other parents and staff. Another lovely part of the Colin Sure Start journey'

'I am a registered childminder and attend a lot of colin sure start groups. These groups are fantastic for the children and also great for us as childminders to meet with other childminders/parents. The children are so lucky to have these sure start groups around our areas'



EVENTS GALLERY







'My daughter loved attending the Christmas event she had a great time interacting with other children & trying out the activities. I felt so welcome and all the girl's remembered my oldest daughter who used to attend sure start and is now 6 years old. I recently had a new baby and the girls were letting me know all about the new baby programmes that were starting I can't recommend sure start enough for children!'



FAMILY SERVICES



During 2022-2023 Colin Sure Start Family Team continued to offer the families in the Colin area home based support around key areas of development including routines, behaviour management and speech and language support. The support was structured to meet the needs of the family with strong links maintained between all professionals working with the families including Health, Speech & Language and Additional Needs. The support was offered in a variety of means including home based, group based and telephone calls.

Families in Colin continued to benefit from the Home Safety Checks carried out by trained Sure Start staff alongside RoSPA guidelines and assessment procedures. Appropriate safety equipment was allocated to each family.

Throughout the year the families have experienced times of financial need and Colin Sure Start Family Team were able to access support from a number of outside organisations to provide additional support including Building Blocks (Save the Children), BBC Essentials, Cash For Kids and local Foodbanks. This has been a vital addition to the Family Team Toolkit as by supporting the families practically it allows the parents space to focus on the child.

Building on pilot of Colin Sure Start 0-1 journey we have seen continued success as parents and children joining Colin Sure Start are signposted into the age appropriate programme and follow the 'journey' from then on until their child turns 1 whereby that are then offered other programmes that are appropriate developmentally. The 0-1 journey builds and supports the parent-child relationship through key programmes such as GroBrain, Baby Massage, Mum and Baby Yoga, BabyTime and Aquababes. During each of these programmes parents are encouraged to engage with their parents supporting their development and staff are imparting key pieces of information around responsive parenting, tuning into baby's cues and baby brain development.

The Family Team continue to facilitate the evidence based Incredible Years programme – Babies and Toddlers - These programmes focus on strengthening parenting competencies and fostering parental involvement in children's experiences, to promote children's social and emotional skills and reduce challenging behaviours.

The Family Team had much to celebrate in 2022-2023 with the welcome additions of 2 babies with 2 of the Family Team having babies!

Christmas 2022 was an exciting time for Colin Sure Start as we were able to back to a face to face Christmas Event welcoming Colin families to visit Santa and participate in lots of activities in Brook Activity Centre. It was fantastic to see all the families coming through the doors again and experiencing a brilliant experience!



'I enjoyed doing the baby massage very much with my baby & enjoyed meeting new parents and their babies Julie was great at communicating with all the mummy's & babies including myself & my baby. I enjoyed the class very much as did my daughter - thanks so much'

'Julie Anne has been amazing throughout every session. I am so happy that I got the opportunity to do this course. It not only helped me learn how to massage my baby but when I came home I showed my other children what I learned and they had a go at massaging the baby too... which is great bonding for them. I absolutely loved it thank you!



'A really excellent programme which my son thoroughly enjoyed attending each week and I can see definite progress from when he attended the first class to the last class. So lovely to have the routine of a little class like this to go to each week and of course to provide the opportunity of social interaction with other children in his age group in a relaxing and friendly atmosphere with great activities to do. A big thank you to the



'Yet another great session at Colin Sure Start. All content was relevant and answered all my questions without me even having to ask any. This has definitely increased my confidence to continue my weaning journey - Also thank you for weaning pack!'

ANTENATAL SERVICES



In 2022-2023 Antenatal Provision within Colin Sure Start afforded itself to run in 3 cycles throughout the year offering the pregnant mums more of an opportunity to engage in a key number of programmes including Antenatal Workshops, Pregnancy Yoga and Antenatal Swim. In each quarter each one of these programmes are run.

birth partners at this very special time.

'Fantastic support, brilliant courses!! The yoga and swimming resulted in a very positive labour experience for me!!'

In 2021 the Health Practitioner was trained in The Real Birth Programme and facilitated her first programme January – March 2023 with 3 couples completing the programme. This programme provides relevant, up to date evidence based antenatal information that is imparted with a positive attitude to birth. It is used as a platform to share knowledge with confidence to empower pregnant women and people and their

Much of the referrals for Antenatal Services were self referrals or possibly through the Midwife and/or Health Visitor. NIMATS has afforded Colin Sure Start with a number of pregnant mums that live within the Colin area which we could contact and offer out the programmes. This contact was historically made via letter – however in line with the development of a number of our Media Platforms, the Health Practitioner alongside the Project Manager recorded a video. The link is sent to mums that are referred to Colin Sure Start which will then take them to our very own YouTube Channel. It's a work in progress and we are finding that uptake is getting better and more immediate.

'I cannot recommend Colin sure start enough. The staff are so friendly and welcoming, and have created a lovely sense of community. They made me feel very supported during my final trimester and gave an added enjoyment to my pregnancy I would not have had without their antenatal programmes, to which I am very thankful for.'

'It really helped me feel comfortable being able to talk about the worry's of labour. It was great to talk to other Mummies that were due around the same time as me and have stayed in contact with some Mummies that attended the groups.'

'Myself and my partner both really enjoyed the programmes, Julie Anne was really informative and friendly and we felt very welcome and enjoyed meeting other soon to be parents. We both feel we learned a lot and are feeling more confident about labour and the arrival of our baby. Thank you.'

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT



Staff had a great morning at the UNICEF celebration event

In February 2023 Colin Sure Start, alongside the other 4 Sure Starts within the South Eastern Trust area successfully passed Stage 3 as part of our ongoing assessment for UNICEF Baby Friendly. This is testament to the hard work and dedication of Colin Sure Start staff to uphold the standards required to support and promote positive parent/child relationships, the development of programmes and services for both antenatal and postnatal mums valuing the importance of breastfeeding and early relationships to the health and wellbeing of their baby and our commitment to protect and support Breastfeeding in all areas of the service.



Celebrating 8 years of Breastfeeding Support @ Colin Sure Start. In July 2022 the Colin Breastfeeding Group moved to Colin Family Centre and the group continues to thrive offering group-based support. We also had the additional and vital support from the South Eastern Trust Peer Support Service continuing to add value to Colin Sure Start existing services.

'We loved it! It was good just to get out of the house and chat to you and relate to other mum's! Thank you so much!'

'The group was so helpful! It's nice to hear everyone's success stories too!'

'Hi Julie Anne, I really liked the Breastfeeding session yesterday evening. It was good to understand it all a bit better and a lot to think about. Thank you!'

ADDITIONAL NEEDS SERVICES



Our additional needs service is indispensable in the Colin area. Our additional needs family worker supports many families in a variety of ways ensuring each child receives the help and support they need to learn and develop. We offer home based support in the family home and also group sessions providing advice, a listening ear, educating parents on a range of topics and skills, as well as running monthly sensory sessions in St. Kierans. The additional needs worker tailors their approach based on each individual family and will provide support with the child's play skills and development as well as providing support and advice around Child Development Centre referrals, assessment panels, and Nursery applications. The additional needs team work closely and form strong links with a variety of other professionals to ensure our families receive the best support and information they can get on their additional needs journey.

In addition to the work of our additional needs family worker, we also have a pre-preschool programme called Little Rainbows for children who would benefit from a smaller group running two sessions two days a week from September to June. This programme provides children with opportunities to develop their play skills

in a stimulating age and stage appropriate environment tailored to their needs and interests. The additional needs team liaise with professionals regularly such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and other professionals from the Child Development Clinic to monitor the development of all of the children attending the programme, sharing information and supporting them and their families in their transition into Nursery School.

Play and Grow is another additional needs service available to families in the Colin area which has proven to be invaluable in supporting families for those with children that have or are presenting with additional needs. This programme runs over 6 weeks in 3 blocks throughout the year with 10 spaces available for families and each week has a specific focus to provide parents/carers with information and strategies to support their child at home. A creche facility is available on the premises for the weeks which require this to enable the additional needs worker to run the educational workshops and then the parents are brought into the play room to put the learning into practice with their child with the guidance and support from the staff.

FATHERS SERVICES



Moving out of lockdown and into a post-covid world, the Fathers Services continued with the supports that were adapted to meet the needs of families during that difficult period. Fathers' services have always been in the shadow of the mainstream services in Sure Start, due to the nature of society and people's working and child-caring roles, so lockdown offered opportunities for fathers to spend quality time with their children, and this is something that we focused on facilitating, with respect to the rules of social-distancing. Outdoor activities at the allotment, in Colin Glen, with small group activities at our indoor sites were maintained, and continued into 2022-2023, with increases in figures for attendees, and reductions in the amount of home visits due to the lifting of lockdown measures, and the ability for dads to meet up in groups and for 1-2-1s.

The biggest challenge for many was the need to address mental health issues, and the anxieties around emerging from lockdown into society after almost 2 years of face masks, social distancing, sickness and deaths, and Sure Start was there to offer

the help and support needed to ensure that individuals and families overcame all that they had to, and prosper.

As the year progresses, we will continue to offer the intensive supports necessary to build strong families and stronger communities.

'Colin Sure Start run excellent programmes & activities for children. The staff are so welcoming and put in so much effort to deliver age appropriate activities. My children love attending them to learn, play and interact with other children. I love attending them for the social engagement with other parents / carers & also the Sure Start staff.'

'Great staff and great to get the dads and kids out. From a walk to activities - even if it's just a get together for a chat. It's a class service'



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) SERVICES

Colin Sure Start's ESL services and supports, now in its second year, continued throughout 2022-2023 and are going from strength to strength. ESL home visits have more than tripled compared to the 21-22 period and we now have 10 regular families that the ESL Programme on a weekly basis. The Colin Sure Start ESL annual outing took place again this year with a trip to Tannaghmore Gardens & Animal Farm, the day was really well enjoyed and the feedback from families was great!



GRANDPARENTS SERVICES

During 2022-2023 the Grandparents Group ran bi-monthly and over the year 28 eager grandparents attended to spend some quality play time with their grandchildren. The response from the families has been very positive with one grandparent stating 'Thank you very much, I have only been involved with sure start a very short time and the groups & events I have been able to bring my granddaughter too are amazing, very helpful for me and the child, staff are so friendly - can't thank you enough'. The Grandparents Day Event and annual Outing were also well attended with numbers being the highest since the service began.



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WATSON

EARLY LEARNING
COORDINATOR

AUDITORS

LYNN DRAKE
& CO.



FUNDED PARTNERS

In 2022-23 Colin Sure Start funded a number of local partners to help us to deliver core services in the Colin area. We would like to thank these partners for their

continued cooperation and dedication in delivering early year's services in the Colin vicinity.

IONAD NA FUISEOIGE

Colin Sure Start provided funding to assist Ionad Na Fuisioige to deliver a Developmental Programme for 2 to 3 Year Olds and also morning and afternoon crèche services.

SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST – SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICE

Colin Sure Start provided funding to assist the SEHSCT in delivering various early year's speech & language services in the Colin area. These services included the early identification, intervention and prevention screening in the Developmental Programme for 2 to 3 Years Olds, Rhythm Rhyme and Storytime and other early years services.

BARNARDO'S TRAVELLERS EARLY YEAR'S SERVICE

Colin Sure Start provided funding to assist Barnardo's in delivering their Traveller Early Year's Services in the area. This included one to one support, parent programmes and cultural awareness workshops.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- IONAD NA FUISEOIGE
- ST LUKE'S FAMILY CENTRE
- BARNARDOS TRAVELLERS AND REFUGEE SUPPORT SERVICE
- STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP PLANNING GROUP
- SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST
- DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- CHRIST THE REDEEMER PARISH
- LAGMORE COMMUNITY FORUM
- COLIN NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP
- NICVA
- EARLY YEARS THE ORGANISATION
- SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD
- ORTUS
- FAMILY SUPPORT HUB
- CHILDREN IN NORTHERN IRELAND
- UNICEF
- SOUTH / WEST BELFAST FOOD BANK
- LAGANVALLEY EDUCATION PROJECT
- CASH FOR KIDS
- PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY
- SAVE THE CHILDREN
- MOUNT EAGLES COMMUNITY FORUM
- FOOTPRINTS WOMEN'S CENTRE
- BUSY BEE FRUIT & VEG
- BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
- HOUSING EXECUTIVE
- SUPERVALU
- AMH – NEW COLIN COUNSELLING
- COLIN FAMILY CENTRE
- BROOKE LEISURE CENTRE
- TRANQUIL RETREATS
- PARENTING NI
- LYNN DRAKE ACCOUNTANTS
- COLIN EARLY PARENTING PROGRAMME
- DEPAUL, IRELAND
- LITTLE YOGA HOUSE
- JACKIE HENNING - BF PROJECT LEAD
- NIKKI MCMILLEN – TRIBAL FITNESS
- LEEANNE MARLEY ZUMBA
- LOUISE BERRY - FIRST AID
- LEANNE DALY - AQUABABES
- MARIA MCALEESE INCREDIBLE YEARS
- BF PEER SUPPORT - LEAH BEST & KELLY ANNE O'NEILL





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