Well Being and Educational Attainment of Primary School Pupils in Northern Ireland

Final Report

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1. Overview of the research

The Centre for Effective Education (www.qub.ac.uk/cee) was commissioned to carry out this research by Barnardo’s Northern Ireland. The research was funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, with the main purpose of providing evidence to inform the development of Barnardo’s ’Ready to Learn’ strategy which seeks to design a service that will aim to promote educational attainment and positive child development for disadvantaged children in Northern Ireland.

The Barnardo’s and QUB team is committed to working in a way that is consistent with international children’s rights standards. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was used to guide the research and service design in two ways. First, children’s participation was actively sought and their views given due weight in all stages of the research processes and initial service design. Secondly, it informed the initial selection of outcomes identified by the Barnardo’s team. These initial outcomes, in relation to educational engagement and achievement, were audited from a children’s rights perspective (see Appendix 1). This review of potential outcomes against the standards in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child indicated that the intended outcomes were to a large extent consistent with the principles in the UNCRC. It was suggested that consideration might be given to outcomes: reflecting other non-traditional aspects of educational ‘achievement’ such as self-esteem, ability to resolve conflict, critical thinking; related to children’s capacity to form and express their views and sense that their views are being respected; and related to children’s awareness and respect for rights. It was acknowledged that no service could ever address all of these issues.

The research consisted of the following elements:

- A survey was conducted of 1081 Year 4 and Year 7 pupils in 28 primary schools randomly selected from across Northern Ireland. The main aim of the survey was to explore the distribution of educational outcomes and indicators of well being among Year 4 and Year 7 pupils, particularly in schools with low educational attainment located in deprived areas (Section 2).

- Two literature reviews were conducted. The first of these was a focused review about ‘hard to reach parents’ and the second was an extensive review of the literature pertaining to ‘out-of-school-hours’ learning (OSHL) and ‘community school’ type interventions. Both these literature reviews are reported elsewhere.
• An innovative element of the research was the Children’s Research Advisory Group of Year 7 pupils that was established to inform the outcomes, process and interpretation of the survey. This was in accordance with the children’s rights approach that both Barnardo’s and the research team took in relation to the service design and the supporting research (Section 3).

• Focus groups and semi-structured interviews were conducted with parents and teachers who work with Key Stage 1 children. The main aim of this was to gauge what the perceived need for services would be and how best to target them (Section 4).

**Ethical approval**

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the School of Education at Queen’s University Belfast. Data collection was carried out between March 2008 and May 2008.
2. The survey

The main purpose of the survey was to:

1. Provide quality baseline data on the distribution of educational outcomes and indicators of well being among Year 4 and Year 7 children, particularly in schools that have low educational attainment and are located in deprived areas.

2. Determine how these outcomes relate together and what socio-demographic variables might be associated with these.

3. Identify levels of need in relation to the outcomes in order to aid Barnardo's in deciding where best to target their intervention.

The sample

All primary schools in Northern Ireland were categorized as either high deprivation or low deprivation schools based on the level of free school meals uptake in the school and whether the school was located within a neighborhood renewal area. Schools were then randomly selected, stratified by area board. Eighty-two schools were selected and approached in the first instance (by letter and telephone) and invited to participate. Of these schools, 28 agreed to take part (34% uptake rate). Fifteen schools were located in an area of high deprivation and thirteen schools were located in an area of low deprivation. The map below (Figure 1) outlines the geographical position of the participating schools.
In total, 1081 pupils took part: 510 females (47.2%) and 571 males (52.8%). Five hundred and twenty seven (527) participants (48.8%) were in Year 4 and 554 (51.2%) were in Year 7. Age ranged from 7 to 12 years. The mean age of Year 4 participants was 7.8 years and the mean age of Year 7 participants was 10.8 years. Fifty-seven pupils did not give their consent for their answers to be included in the study. Table 1 shows the breakdown of schools and children from areas of high and low deprivation.

**Table 1: Breakdown of schools and children by deprivation area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Number of Year 4 pupils</th>
<th>Number of Year 7 pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High deprivation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low deprivation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measures

**Educational attainment**

Schools were asked to provide their pupils’ level of attainment on the English and Mathematics Key Stage assessments that were most recently completed. Children in Year 4 were assessed on Key Stage 1 standards and were classified at the following levels: W (working towards level 1), 1 (below nationally expected standard), 2 (nationally expected standard), 3 (above nationally expected standard) or 4 (exceptional performance). Year 7 children are assessed on Key Stage 2 and can achieve: Level 1 (below expectations), 2 (below expectations), 3 (below expectations), 4 (at level expected), 5 (beyond expectations) and 6 (exceptional performance).

**School data**

The following school-level information was collected:

- General school attendance level (for the previous year)
- The number of children with special educational needs in Year 4 and Year 7
- The overall number of children on the waiting list or in receipt of CAMHS

**Indicators of well being**

A questionnaire was compiled to include various indicators of well being that Barnardo’s wanted the survey to focus on. Each child was provided with a copy of the questionnaire in their own class room and a fieldworker read each question aloud while the participants recorded their answers in their questionnaire booklets. Consent for the children to take part in the study was gained from the parent/guardian and children were aware that they were free to withdraw from the research should they wish to do so.

A pilot study was conducted with 60 Year 4 and Year 7 pupils to test the feasibility of all the measures to be used. The questionnaire took on average twenty minutes to complete and contained the following measures:

**Self esteem**

A subscale of the Self Perception Profile for Children (Harter 1985) was used to measure self-worth (self-esteem). Internal consistency between the SPPC scales has been reported (Cronbach’s alphas) between 0.73 – 0.81 with stable intra-class test-retest correlation coefficients above 0.84.
Aspirations for the future
The Expectations/Aspirations measure (Loeber et al 1991) assesses children’s feelings about their goals and aspirations in life. Cronbach’s alpha for this scale has been reported between 0.79 and 0.82.

Enjoyment of education
The ‘liking school’ subscale of Pell and Jarvis’s (2001) attitudinal scale was used as a measure of enjoyment of school. The ‘liking school’ scale has sufficient internal reliability (alpha = 0.71) and remains relatively stable over the primary years for both boys and girls.

KIDSCREEn Questionnaire
KIDSCREEN is an instrument that measures perceived health and health related quality of life of children and adolescents (The Kidscreen Group, 2006). The study used the following five subscales from the KIDSCREEN measure:

Physical wellbeing
This subscale measures the level of the child’s physical activity, energy and fitness. A low score on this subscale would suggest that the respondent feels unwell, physically exhausted, unfit and/or lethargic. Conversely, a high score indicates feeling energetic, active, healthy and physically fit.

Psychological wellbeing
This subscale examines the psychological wellbeing of the child including positive emotions and satisfaction with life. High scores indicate happiness and that the respondent is emotionally balanced and satisfied with life.

Social acceptance – Bullying
This subscale examines feelings of rejection by peers and anxiety towards peers. High scores indicate that the respondent is not bullied and feels respected and accepted by their peers.

Peer relationships
This subscale examines the nature of social relationships. High scores on this indicate feeling accepted, supported and included.
School environment
This subscale explores the child’s perception of his/her learning and concentration at school. High scores on this scale indicate feeling happy at school and doing well.

Autonomy and parent relations
This subscale explores the relationship between the child and their parents. It also explores the perceived level of autonomy to create social and leisure time.

Additional participant data
The following additional information was collected from participants:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Postcode (as a proxy measure for socio-economic status)

\(^1\) A postcode is not generally considered to be the most effective indicator of socioeconomic status, however a more precise measure would necessitate asking parents for information which could potentially jeopardise recruitment.
**Internal reliability of the measures**

The characteristics of the measures used in the study questionnaire are presented in Table 2. With the exception of one scale (Aspirations for the Future); the alpha coefficients were above 0.70. A Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value of 0.5 or above is considered acceptable (Cronbach, 1951).

Table 2: Scale descriptives and internal reliability and consistency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale descriptives</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>No. of items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIDSCREEN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical wellbeing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological wellbeing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer relationships</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School environment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future aspirations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Perception Profile for Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self esteem</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell and Jarvis’s (2001) attitudinal scale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of education</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

The wellbeing and educational attainment of children in areas of high deprivation compared to low deprivation

This section of the results focuses on the educational and well being outcomes for children living in areas of high deprivation compared with areas of low deprivation. Deprivation in this sample was determined by the percentage of free school meal uptake and whether the school was located within a neighbourhood renewal area.

The effect size\(^2\) which is presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3 (below) provides a standardised measure of the size of the difference between the average scores for pupils in areas of high deprivation compared to pupils in areas of low deprivation. The central line scored at zero on the graph therefore represents the responses of the children in areas of low deprivation, with a negative score below this line indicating a poorer outcome for children going to school in an area of high deprivation, while a positive result above the line would show a more favourable outcome for children in areas of high deprivation. In interpreting the size of the bar or effect as a general rule of thumb a score of plus or minus 0.2 is considered a small difference, +/- 0.5 a medium difference and +/- 0.8 a large difference. The bars coloured in dark blue represent those differences that were statistically significant (p<0.05)\(^3\).

Year 4 - well being

Comparisons were made between the outcomes of Year 4 children going to school in areas of high and low deprivation using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). In terms of well being the Year 4 children in areas of high deprivation reported more positive outcomes than Year 4 children going to school in areas of low deprivation.

It can be seen from Figure 2 below that Year 4 children in areas of high deprivation were scoring slightly, but statistically significantly, better and more positively in terms of how they rated their school environment, their peer relationships, their sense of autonomy and parent relationships and their enjoyment of school.

There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on the other indicators of well being.

\(^2\) Effect sizes were calculated using Cohen’s d

\(^3\) A statistically significant difference means that there is a less than 5% chance that the difference observed between the two groups is due to random variation and is therefore likely to be the result of another factor i.e. in this case whether the child goes to school in an area of high or low deprivation.
Figure 2: Well being and education - effect size of difference between Year 4 children in areas of low deprivation (baseline) and Year 4 children in areas of high deprivation.

Year 4 – educational attainment

Despite the evidence above that indicates that Year 4 children in deprived areas were reporting a more positive sense of well being, their educational attainment still significantly (statistically) lagged behind the attainment of Year 4 children in areas of low deprivation (see Figure 2 above).

In deprived areas, 93% of Year 4 pupils achieved the national expected standard or above (Levels 2 & 3) in English and Maths, whereas, in non deprived areas, 99% of Year 4 pupils achieved the national expected standard or above in English and 97.5% in Maths (Table 3).
Table 3: Educational attainment in Year 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deprivation</th>
<th>Key Stage Data</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Maths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 7 - well being

The differences in well being between Year 7 children in areas of high and low deprivation were explored using a one-way analysis of variance and were less positive and pronounced than for the Year 4 children. Figure 3 below shows that generally speaking there was no evidence of any statistically significant differences between the two groups on most of the outcome measures. However, Year 7 pupils in areas of high deprivation reported statistically significant more bullying than Year 7 children in areas of low deprivation. Furthermore, Year 7 pupils in areas of high deprivation reported slightly (and statistically significantly) better autonomy and parent relations compared to their peers in areas of low deprivation.
Figure 3: Well being and education - effect size of difference between Year 7 children in areas of low deprivation (baseline) and Year 7 children in areas of high deprivation.

Year 7 - educational attainment

Although there were few differences between Year 7 children on the indicators of well being, it emerged that there were differences in educational attainment (see Figure 3 above). In deprived areas only 67% of Year 7 pupils achieved the national expected standard or above (Levels 4 & 5) in English and 68% in Maths. By comparison 79% of Year 7 pupils achieved the national expected standard or above in English and 90% in Maths in the areas of low deprivation (Table 4). Again, this represents a statistically significant difference and means that Year 7 pupils in areas of high deprivation performed significantly worse in their KS2 assessment than Year 7 children in less deprived areas.
Table 4: Educational attainment in Year 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deprivation</th>
<th>English</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The wellbeing and educational attainment of children in Year 4 and Year 7 in areas of high deprivation**

This section of the results concentrates on the difference in well being and educational attainment between Year 4 and Year 7 children going to school in areas of high deprivation.

**Well being**

From Figure 4 below it can be seen that in schools located in areas of high deprivation the Year 7 children are reporting statistically significantly worse on many of the indicators of well being than the Year 4 children. In particular Year 7 children are reporting significantly less satisfaction with their school environment, poorer peer relationships, poorer physical well being and less enjoyment of school. However they are reporting significantly more autonomy and better parent relationships than the Year 4 children.
Figure 4: Well being - effect size of difference between Year 4 children (baseline) and Year 7 children in areas of low deprivation.

**Educational attainment**

When the educational attainment of Year 4 and Year 7 children in areas of high deprivation was explored, it emerged that there was a drop in attainment of the national expected standard between Year 4 and Year 7. Over 93% of children in Year 4 achieved the national expected standard or higher (Level 2 or 3). However, for the Year 7 pupils the attainment of the national expected standard (or higher) dropped to 67% in English and 68% in Maths (Table 5).
Table 5: Educational attainment in Year 4 and Year 7 children in areas of high deprivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stage Data (Year 4)</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Maths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deprivation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stage Data (Year 7)</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Maths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deprivation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational attainment and well being for all Year 4 and Year 7 pupils

In this section the relationship between educational attainment and the indicators of well being for all Year 4 and Year 7 children was explored using correlations (Spearman’s rho).

Attainment in English in Year 4 was significantly negatively correlated with aspirations for the future and peer relationships as shown in Table 6 below. This means that Year 4 children with better peer relationships and higher aspirations for the future had poorer achievement in English.

In Year 7 children, higher attainment in English was correlated with lower levels of bullying, increased enjoyment of school and increased feelings of being happy at school and doing well. Similarly, high attainment in Maths was correlated with increased enjoyment of school, lower levels of bullying and increased feelings of physical wellbeing in Year 7 pupils.
Table 6: Correlations between attainment and well being for Year 4 and Year 7 pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Group</th>
<th>YEAR 4</th>
<th></th>
<th>YEAR 7</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirations for the future</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer relationships</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy and parent relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The effects of multiple deprivation on children’s outcomes

The previous section defined deprivation as percentage of free school meals and being situated within an urban renewal area, however this may be a crude way of defining deprivation and looking at the data. In this section the data has been analysed further but this time using Nobles’ Multiple Deprivation Measure as a more robust measure of deprivation.

Year 4 Children

Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships between the outcomes and the multiple deprivation measure. Results for Year 4 children are presented in Table 7. Significant negative correlations were found with deprivation and aspirations for the future, peer relationships, enjoyment, school environment and autonomy and parent relations. A negative correlation between these indicates that as deprivation worsened, all the related variables mentioned above increased or improved. The correlation between English and Maths Key Stage Results was statistically significant in a positive direction, so attainment decreased as deprivation increased.
Table 7: Correlations between the Multiple Deprivation Measure and outcomes for Year 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Correlation coefficients</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspirations for the future*</td>
<td>-0.100</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer relationships*</td>
<td>-0.150</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment*</td>
<td>-0.193</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.361</td>
<td>517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological wellbeing</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>0.711</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical wellbeing</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.997</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School environment*</td>
<td>-0.157</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy and parent relations*</td>
<td>-0.176</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Key Stage Results*</td>
<td>0.339</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths Key Stage Results*</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Denotes a significant relationship

Year 7 Children

Four outcomes were significantly related to multiple deprivation in the Year 7 group as shown in Table 8. Bullying, English and Maths Key Stage Results were positively correlated with deprivation and as deprivation score increased attainment decreased and bullying increased. Autonomy and parent relations were negatively correlated with deprivation; children in deprived areas reported more positive outcomes for autonomy and parent relations.
Table 8: Correlations between the Multiple Deprivation Measure and outcomes for Year 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Correlation coefficients</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspirations for the future</td>
<td>-0.057</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer relationships</td>
<td>-0.073</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.252</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying*</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological wellbeing</td>
<td>-0.008</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical wellbeing</td>
<td>-0.076</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School environment</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>0.463</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>-0.080</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy and parent relations*</td>
<td>-0.137</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Key Stage Results*</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths Key Stage Results*</td>
<td>0.243</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Denotes a significant relationship
Conclusions

When we looked at the differences in well being and educational attainment between Year 4 and Year 7 children going to school in areas of high and low deprivation it emerged that:

- Year 4 children from deprived areas reported a greater sense of well being, but achieved a lower level of educational attainment than Year 4 children attending school in areas of low deprivation.

- There were few differences in well being between Year 7 children from areas of high and low deprivation; however Year 7 children attending school in an area of high deprivation had poorer educational attainment than children attending school in an area of low deprivation.

- There were notable and significant differences between Year 4 and Year 7 children in areas of high deprivation. Year 4 children reported a better sense of well being on many of the indicators and a greater proportion of Year 4s (compared to Year 7s) achieved the national expected standard in their Key Stage assessments.

When we examined the relationship between educational attainment and the indicators of well being for all children, it emerged that:

- For Year 4 children educational attainment was largely unrelated to well being with the exception of those children who had better peer relationships and higher aspirations had poorer achievement in English.

- A clearer picture emerged for Year 7s which indicated that higher attainment was related to less bullying, more enjoyment of school and a greater sense of physical well being.

When a different but more sensitive measure of deprivation was used in the analysis, a similar pattern emerged from the data presented in the previous sections i.e.:

- Attainment in both Year 4 and Year 7 was lower in the more deprived areas.

- Year 4 children who attended school in more deprived areas reported an overall better sense of well being.

- There were fewer differences in well being between Year 7 children from areas of high and low deprivation.
3. The children’s perspectives

Children’s Participation in the Service Design

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child gives children a right to express their views and to have those views given due weight in all matters affecting them. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, which monitors and advises on the enforcement of the Convention, has emphasised that the right should be:

“anchored in the child’s daily life at home …and in his or her community; within the full range of early childhood health, care and education facilities, as well as in… the development of policies and services, including through research and consultations.”

(UN, 2005, para. 14.)

In order that the research and service design process would comply with Article 12, the project team established a Children’s Advisory Group (CAG). The remit of the group was (a) to advise on the research process, including the design and analysis of the base-line survey and literature review and (b) to provide advice on the main issues relating to educational underachievement and social disadvantage; and (c) to identify potential services which might address the problems. The CAG were not research subjects. They were invited to participate in the project in their capacity as a key stakeholder group with particular expertise on the issues under consideration.

Two of the research team met with the CAG on four occasions between February and June 2008. Sessions took place in the school’s art room and sessions lasted on average about two hours, including a twenty minute refreshment break.

Membership of the Children’s Advisory Group

The Children’s Advisory Group was composed of 8 children (4 boys and 4 girls) from Year 7, (ages 10-11) representing a wide range of academic ability. The children were pupils at a primary school in an area of severe economic disadvantage which has been significantly affected by the Northern Ireland conflict. One of the additional reasons why this particular school was approached to participate was that it is a school which has been designated as a UNICEF ‘Rights Respecting’ school. The team thought that the
children’s knowledge of children’s rights and the UNCRC might be an advantage, given the emphasis in the project on developing a children’s rights-based approach to service design.

**Assisting Children in Developing and Expressing Their Views**

Article 12 of the UNCRC requires that children are not only given opportunities to express their views but also be assisted in forming their views (Lundy, 2007). As such initial meetings with the CAG included capacity building activities, described below, designed to familiarise the children with the issues surrounding the project.

The CAG were asked to think about what might help children be ‘ready to learn’, to chat about this in pairs and to then share their ideas with the whole group. The children found this quite difficult. The question was then reframed in terms of children ‘not being ready to learn’ and the children found it much easier to make suggestions. Once several ideas had been generated the children were then asked to produce, in groups, a large drawing of a child who was ‘not ready to learn’ and to attach their reasons and suggestions to different parts of the drawing.

A range of issues emerged from this activity, which were categorised as below:

- **Intrinsic child-based factors** e.g.
  - problems with concentration,
  - tiredness
  - experience of bullying
  - feeling sad or heart-broken
  - being hungry

- **Home-based factors** e.g.:
  - parents neglecting children,
  - parents not caring about school work
  - no help with homework
  - nowhere to do homework

- **School-based factors** e.g.:
  - Peers: bullying, no friends, don’t fit in, lonely
  - Teachers: shouting, not explaining, no extra help, not listening
In the next session children were asked to create new drawings, but this time of children who were ‘ready to learn’. New issues which emerged from this activity (and were not merely a reverse of previous activity) were categorized as below:

- **Intrinsic child-based factors** e.g.:
  - pupils ready to work
  - pupils excited about learning

- **Home-based factors** e.g.:
  - pupils having everything they needed for going to school
  - a range of suggestions associated with parental expectation
  - parents being able to help with school work

- **School-based factors** e.g.:
  - emphasis on teacher’s ability to explain things well;
  - teachers being ‘clever’ in addition to being ‘nice’;
  - range of issues attached to teaching and learning strategies

### The Survey

The CAG were invited to participate in the design of one of the main research instruments used in the survey (see section 2). This work was carried out in the second session with the CAG.

#### Children’s input to the questions

The research team explained the rationale for using the proposed survey questionnaire. As such, the children understood that they could not make major changes to the survey but could suggest additional questions. The children reviewed the general themes and individual questions on the survey, matching these to the ideas generated during their drawing activity. Through this they identified a number of issues that they had thought might affect a child’s readiness to learn but which had not been addressed in the survey. The children suggested the following questions for inclusion in the survey:

- Have your teachers listened to you?
- Do your teachers shout too much?
- Have your teachers been fair?
- Has your school taken your advice?
- Do you get enough privacy in school?
These questions were then adapted by the research team and included in the survey, as described in Section 2.

**Children’s interpretation of the results**

*Presenting the results to the children*

The research team discussed with the CAG the rationale for choosing children from areas of high deprivation and areas of low deprivation and children in both Year 4 and Year 7 to complete the survey. The CAG were asked to predict the results of the survey: comparing outcomes for children in Year 4 and Year 7; comparing outcomes for children in areas of high deprivation (‘richer children’) and children in areas of low deprivation (‘poorer children’) based on the following measures (and how they were explained to the children):

- **School environment** (‘Happy with their learning in school’)
- **Autonomy and parent relations**/ (‘Get on with parents/ have more of a chance to make their own decisions’)
- **Physical health**
- **Psychological well being** (‘Good mood’)
- **Social acceptance – Bullying** (‘Bullying’)
- **Peer relationships** (‘Get on with classmates’)
- **Aspirations** (‘Hopes for the future’)
- **Enjoyment of school**
- **Self-esteem** (‘Feeling good about yourself/who you are’)

The children were asked to provide reasons for their predictions. The research team then discussed the actual results from the survey with the children, asking them to comment on the findings.
Comparing outcomes for Year 4 and Year 7 pupils

Children were asked a question for each of the measures. For example, ‘Who do you think is happiest with how they are learning in school? Children in Year 4 or Year 7?’ There were relatively few areas of disagreement amongst the children as they made their predictions and they also accurately predicted the results for almost every measure. Table 9 below summarises their interpretation of the results:

Table 9: Children’s interpretation of the survey findings (comparing outcomes for Year 4 and Year 7 children)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Children’s Advisory Group’s interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School environment</td>
<td>The finding that Year 4s were more satisfied with their school environment was explained in relation to ‘work load’ in the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Year 4 have less hard work to do so they’d feel better with it’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents/autonomy</td>
<td>The finding that Year 7s enjoyed more autonomy and better parent relations was explained broadly in relation to increased maturity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Year 7s get on with parents and have more of a chance to make their own decisions’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Year 7s are more sensible’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health</td>
<td>The finding that Year 7s reported poorer physical well being was explained in relation to their increased knowledge of health issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Year 7 know more about the problems so know they’re not as healthy’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological well being</td>
<td>The children predicted that Year 7s would not be in as ‘good a mood’ as Year 4s based again on the idea of increased workload at Year 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Children’s Advisory Group’s interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bullying</strong></td>
<td>The finding that Year 7s reported less problems in regard to bullying was explained by the children as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’Year 7s are the oldest and pick on younger children’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’Year 7s are more mature and don’t bully each other’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer relationships</strong></td>
<td>The finding that Year 7s reported poorer peer relationships was explained as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’Year 7s know each other well so might not like each other as much’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aspirations</strong></td>
<td>The children predicted that Year 7s would not have ‘as high hopes for the future’. As one child explained:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’In Year 4 they don’t realize what they can’t do’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enjoy school</strong></td>
<td>The finding that Year 7s enjoyed school less than Year 4 children was explained again in relation to increased workload and also in relation to concerns regarding transition to secondary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’Year 4 is easier work and there’s more play’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’In Year 7 you’re worried about going to high school’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-esteem</strong></td>
<td>The children predicted that Year 7s would have higher self esteem. As one child explained:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>’Year 7’s think they’re great because they’re the biggest’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Comparing outcomes for children in areas of high deprivation and low deprivation**

Children were asked a question for each of the measures. For example, ‘Who do you think is happiest with how they are learning in school? Children in ‘poorer’ areas or children in ‘richer’ areas?’. There were relatively few areas of disagreement amongst the children as they made their predictions and they also accurately predicted the results for almost every measure. Table 10 below summarises their interpretation of the results:

Table 10: Children’s interpretation of the survey findings (comparing outcomes for children in areas of low and in areas for high deprivation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Children’s Advisory Group’s interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School environment</strong></td>
<td>The finding that children from areas of high deprivation were more satisfied with their school environment was explained as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Richer kids wouldn’t appreciate what they’d got- they’d moan all the time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Poorer kids would appreciate it’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents-autonomy</strong></td>
<td>The finding that children from areas of high deprivation enjoyed more autonomy and better parent relations was explained in relation to time spent with parents and greater responsibilities in the home:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Richer kids get less time with their parents’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Poorer kids help out more in the home and do work so are seen as more mature’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical health</strong></td>
<td>There was some disagreement regarding which children would have reported better physical well being. The children concluded that ‘richer’ and ‘poorer’ children would probably be the same since:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
'Richer families can afford better medical care but richer kids overeat'

**Psychological well being**
The children all agreed that there would be 'no difference'. They explained this suggesting that there would be 'different reasons for children from different backgrounds' but generally thought children on the whole in Northern Ireland would not score well on this measure.

**Bullying**
There was some disagreement regarding this measure. Some children thought that 'richer children would be bullied more because they had more possessions'; other children suggested that 'richer kids' would experiencing less bullying because 'rich kids' parents would sort the bullying out quicker'.

**Peer relationships**
The finding that children from areas of high deprivation reported better peer relationships was in relation to competition amongst children in areas of low deprivation:

'Richer children are competitive and try to outdo each other'

**Aspirations**
The children accurately predicted that there would be no significant difference in relation to aspirations for children from areas of high deprivation and children from areas of low deprivation. As one child said:

'We’re all just the same and want the same things'

**Enjoy school**
The children predicated that children from areas of high deprivation would probably enjoy school more due to the access it gave them to resources they might not have at home.

**Self-esteem**
The children predicted that children from areas of high deprivation would have the same level of self esteem as children from areas of low deprivation. This again was based on the notion that all children were the same and had the same types of problems with their feelings.
The interpretation of the survey results concluded with a general discussion regarding why children from areas of high deprivation were generally scoring the same, or in some areas better than, children from areas of low deprivation in the measures in the survey.

The suggestions from the children focused primarily on the idea that school was a positive and supportive environment for children from areas of high deprivation.

‘School is a safe place to meet friends’

‘School provides shelter, protection - don’t need anything more than this’

This idea that schools provided for their needs was developed by one child who stated:

‘Schools give them what they don’t have at home, they have lots of stuff in school that they can get and borrow’

It was generally agreed by the children that children from areas of high deprivation appreciated what they had: they ‘weren’t spoilt’. They also agreed that children from areas of high deprivation would have more responsibility in the home which they linked to ideas of increased autonomy and better parent relations. In sum, the Children’s Advisory Group indicated that children from areas of high deprivation were doing ‘just as well or better’ than children from areas of low deprivation in the matters covered by the survey largely because they had good relationships with their friends, parents and teachers.

**Children’s views regarding achievement differential**

The research team explained to the Children’s Advisory Group the nature of the educational achievement differential between children from areas of high deprivation and children from areas of low deprivation. They were reminded that children from areas of high deprivation scored the same or in some areas better than children from areas of low deprivation in the measures in the survey. They were asked to consider what other factors might contribute to this achievement differential. The issues which emerged from this conversation could be broadly categorised into two key factors: educational opportunity and the value placed on education.
• **Educational opportunity**

The children in the CAG unanimously agreed that children from ‘richer areas’ would have access to better educational resources inside and outside school:

‘Their (‘richer’) schools have more stuff and they have more stuff at home to learn with’

‘Richer children have more access to more practice tests and tutoring’

During this part of the discussion one child suggested:

‘Maybe they’re just smarter’

When asked to explain this statement the child clarified that this didn’t mean they were born ‘smarter’ but rather linked the statement back to the idea of educational opportunity stating:

‘Richer kids probably got to go to playschool’

• **Value placed on education**

A persistent theme in the work carried out with the CAG was the importance of parental involvement in the education of their children. The children in the CAG all agreed that parents of children from ‘poorer areas’ would not place the same value on education as ‘richer parents’. They suggested that this was largely due to the parents’ own experience of education

‘Parents take them away to do other things like to earn money or help out at home’

‘Parents from poorer backgrounds didn’t get a good education’

The discussion developed to include the impact this might have on children from ‘poorer areas:

‘Maybe poorer children don’t think education is important’

One child also raised the idea that the lack of value placed on education by parents and children could make life difficult for children who did achieve in school, implying it could result in bullying. As he or she explained:

‘Poorer children might be called ‘geeky boy’, ‘nerd’ if they do well’

Conversely the CAG suggested that educational success in ‘richer’ families would lead to competition, encouraging children within the family to do well. As one child explained:

‘Richer kids want to do better than their older brothers or sisters’
Finally one child implied that ‘richer children’ were motivated to achieve in school because:

‘They (the richer) want to keep what they’ve got’

**Service Design**

*Children’s views on most beneficial services*

The research team explained to the CAG that Barnardo’s were intending to design an out of school hours service to help improve the educational achievement of children from areas of high deprivation.

The children were shown their drawings of children who were ‘not ready to learn’ and children who were ‘ready to learn’ and asked to think of services that might help ‘bridge the gap’ from *not being ready* to *being ready* to learn. They wrote each suggestion onto a paper ‘bridge’. The research team then explained the role of the literature in assisting Barnardo’s with their service design. Children were introduced to the idea of ‘enabling, extending, enriching’ after-school activities and asked to match their suggestions to these categories and to add any new suggestions.

A range of issues emerged from this activity, which were categorised as below:

- **Supporting children** e.g.
  - friendship club
  - homework club
  - games room
  - outdoor activities *during* school
  - anti-bullying room

- **Supporting parents** e.g.
  - to help them look after children
  - to help with school work
  - to increase communication between parents, teachers and pupils

- **Supporting effective teaching** e.g.
  - time for ‘teachers to talk about the how to help children learn’
  - ‘help teachers to teach better’
The research team provided the children with more information from the literature review, and reminded them of the survey findings. The children were then asked to prioritise the services they had suggested. Their top three services (in rank order) were:

1. Work with parents (‘helping parents to help children learn’)  
2. Homework support for children  
3. Stopping bullying

Figure 5: Children’s artwork
The ‘ideal’ service

In the third session with the CAG, the children were asked to design what they thought would be an “ideal” out of school service which would help children from more disadvantaged areas to do better at school. This was undertaken as part of a whole group discussion based around the children’s drawings and written comments on the ideal service. During the discussion, the researchers provided the children with summary information about the types of out of school programmes that are considered to work best, based on the findings of the literature review. This included information on contact time, informality, planning, cost, transport, sustainability and voluntary participation.

The activity was based on the following five key questions, depicted in the diagram below.

Who? When they were asked who should attend the programme, the children began once again by discussing and drawing parents. However, when we asked them whether children and their parents should attend together, they were adamant that parents should attend a different programme and illustrated this by drawing a line down the page, separating the images of children from the images of parents.
The children then mentioned “teachers” but, after discussion, concluded that these teachers, whom they suggested might be called “tutors”, would not be their normal teachers at school. They identified a set of characteristics for the tutors, which included requirements that they should be “fun” and “funny” and “kind”.

**What type of activities?**

The children identified a range of activities that it would be beneficial for the children to do in the out-of-school service. Foremost among these was that they should get help with their homework or work that they were finding difficult in school. However, the children also thought that it would be useful if children could access a variety of enrichment activities, including computer skills, dance and trips. Overriding all of this was an emphasis on the fact that out of school activity should be “fun”. By way of example, one of the CAG suggested that children could learn Maths through playing Dominos.
Where?

The CAG’s initial reaction was that this should not be in the school building. They suggested that a good location would be local community centres. However, they recognised the practical issues with this regarding the availability of centres, transport etc. This led to a discussion about what the type of environment the out-of-school service should take place in. The CAG suggested that it should not look like a classroom but should be bright, comfortable and have plenty of outdoor space.

When?

The CAG suggested that the out-of-school service should last between one and two hours. They considered that there should be a clear distinction between the service and school and that this should be marked by there being a break before hand when the children could go home and change their clothes.
They emphasised that there should be real choice for the children about whether they had to attend or not and thought that a published timetable of activities would enable the children to opt in and out of sessions as they considered appropriate.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{1 or 2 hours} \\
\text{break be 4:16} \\
\text{start 9, mars!}
\end{array}
\]

**Who should be involved in service design and delivery?**

The CAG considered that the design of the service should be a partnership between children, teachers and parents. They were interested in the extent to which all partners would be involved in various aspects of decision-making, raising a query about who would get to decide who spends the money. They recognised that, if communities got to design their own service, it ‘wouldn’t be the same everywhere’. They also identified a need for evaluation, a way of checking whether it was ‘any good’. Their initial suggestion in this regard was “secret inspection”, an idea which they later disregarded on the basis of their previous experience at school and in youth clubs when they said that they always knew that inspectors were visiting. Their alternative - ‘hidden cameras’ - was also rejected on the basis that it would compromise their ‘privacy’ as well as that of the adults.

**Summary**

The children in the CAG provided interesting perspectives on the factors affecting children’s ‘readiness to learn’. They were aware that this might include matters related to children’s social and psychological well-being as well as the academic and practical support they had for learning. The CAG were particularly insightful in regard to the limited extent of the relationship between these factors and children’s socio-economic background, demonstrating awareness that children from disadvantaged backgrounds would not necessarily have reduced self-esteem or poorer relationships with their peers, teachers or parents. The CAG also provided thoughtful explanations for the educational achievement differential between children from areas of high deprivation and areas of low deprivation. In general
terms they related this attainment gap to issues surrounding educational opportunity and to the general value placed by the family on education.

The CAG provided equally useful perspectives on the potential role of an out-of-school provision in addressing the problem of educational underachievement and social disadvantage. It was striking that, when asked about the role of out-of-school provision in addressing the issues, the CAG’s initial responses emphasised the need to ‘help parents help children learn’. Children also saw a crucial role for a service to work with children after school, providing them with fun and engaging activities to help them learn. Children’s right to be engaged in decision-making – both in terms of designing the service and then in deciding whether to attend it – was emphasised.

Children have a right to be actively engaged in decisions. In this sense, there should be no need to prove the value of their input, any more than one should have to justify the input of adult stakeholders. However, the growing body of literature that demonstrates the benefits that flow from the involvement of children in decision-making resonates with the research team’s experience on this project. This was also the perception of the adult stakeholders when the views of the CAG were presented to them at the residential. The children’s perspectives were not just considered to be interesting but were ultimately highly influential in helping Barnardo’s to identify the type of service it would like to prioritise. This reinforces the need to maintain this approach in all stages of service design, delivery and evaluation, in line with an express commitment to children’s rights.
4. Adult perspectives

A focus group and a semi-structured interview were conducted with parents and teachers from a primary school located in an area of high deprivation in East Belfast. The first group consisted of seven parents and the other group of two teachers. There was also a residential conducted by Barnardo’s that teachers and other education professional stakeholders were able to participate in. Some of the children’s views were put to the adult stakeholders who then had a chance to respond to these. Questions were asked in a focus group format and the session was tape-recorded. Both sessions lasted no longer than thirty minutes. The purpose of the discussions was to investigate parents’ and teachers’ opinions of how Barnardo’s could structure a potential new service to increase educational attainment in primary school children. The agenda for the focus groups are shown in Figure 6 below.
1. What makes a child not ready to learn? (Think of things outside the classroom)
2. What do you think makes a child ready to learn?
   a. Is there anything parents can do to help a child become ready to learn?
3. Our research found that children living in disadvantaged areas did less well on English and Maths assessment than children living in advantaged areas. We also looked at other areas such as self-esteem, psychological and physical wellbeing, family, friends and bullying and did not find any differences between children living in advantaged areas and those living in disadvantaged areas.
   a. Does this finding surprise you?
   b. Why do you think this would be the case?
4. Eventually, Barnardo’s will want to develop an out of school service to support parents and children. We want to learn from you about the type of programs or activities you think parents and children would like. Try to think not about yourself but all the parents in your community and in Northern Ireland and what they would think. When we carried out interviews with children we found that they placed great emphasis on supporting parents to help children with homework and learning.
   a. Who in your community would these parents and children want to receive help from?
   b. Who should the service be targeted at? Who would use it?
   c. Where would the service take place (e.g. in school, community centre)?
   d. How long would it last? (length of time, number per week)
   e. Would you actually attend/participate in this program/activity?
   f. Should it be voluntary or compulsory?
   g. What words/ideas should be used in a program title/description to appeal to parents? (optional question)
5. Ask each parent to write the three most important things needed for improving educational attainment. Give them a minute or so to do so and then ask the parents to write their answers on a poster and rank them.
6. Is there anything else you would like to say about this topic?

Figure 6: Focus group agenda for the parents and teachers
Results

A total of seven parents and two teachers took part in the focus group and semi-structured interview. The results of which are presented below.

Parent perspectives

1. What makes a child not ready to learn?

The group of parents initially found this a very difficult question to answer but they were able to come up with reasons why a child might not be ready to learn. Suggestions were that children were too dependent on their parents, disability (e.g. dyslexia), poor language skills, discipline, their home life, lack of routine in home life and lack of resources such as no books at home etc.

"...children (who) haven't had much experience of routine then it's difficult to learn in school when so much of school is quite structured and organized and disciplined."

2. What do you think makes a child ready to learn?

Parents suggested that children needed a good preschool to give them the best start as it provides them with invaluable social skills. They also suggested that parents needed to spend time with their children reading to them etc. Characteristics of a child who was ready to learn would be being independent and naturally curious.

"Instill a natural curiosity, if you can, encourage your child to be asking questions"
a. Is there anything parents can do to help a child become ready to learn?

The group felt that there were a number of things that parents could do to help their child become ready to learn. The group suggested that parents spend time playing and talking with their child, taking them to the library, limit time spend on computers and watching television, and encouraging social time with other children. The parents also spent some time discussing the notion of independence, self-discipline and natural curiosity in children.

3. Our research found that children living in disadvantaged areas did less well on English and Maths assessment than children living in advantaged areas. We also looked at other areas such as self-esteem, psychological and physical wellbeing, family, friends and bullying and did not find any differences between children living in advantaged areas and those living in disadvantaged areas.

a. Does this finding surprise you?

b. Why do you think this would be the case?

The group did indeed find these results surprising and suggested reasons for this:

"They think they are alright, they don't know any different"

"A lot of children don't have that language yet (to be able to describe their feelings)"
The group also felt that this all came back to the parents but also discussed problems within the school system including the increased reliance on information technology.

“Too much on computers and acting in schools.....not enough on the basics”

“Too much technology....computers have spell checks and do all your grammar for you”

The parents also felt that parents in advantaged areas could afford to pay for tutors outside of school for their child and that there would be more daycare and a better quality of daycare than parents in disadvantaged areas could afford. They also felt that parents in advantaged areas put too much pressure on their children to achieve and therefore their children have no time to be children.

4. Eventually, Barnardo’s will want to develop an out of school service to support parents and children. We want to learn from you about the type of programs or activities you think parents and children would like. Try to think not about yourself but all the parents in your community and in Northern Ireland and what they would think. When we carried out interviews with children we found that they placed great emphasis on supporting parents to help children with homework and learning.

a. Who in your community would these parents and children want to receive help from?

It was generally felt that teachers or similarly qualified professionals would be best to deliver this service as parents could be supported by the class teachers and ‘learn alongside’ or one step ahead of the children. One suggestion was that it was someone with a teaching background but not someone who taught in that school.

b. Who should the service be targeted at? Who would use it?

The parent group felt that everyone needed to attend i.e. the child, parents and extended family like grandparents etc. It was acknowledged that all these groups have different needs
so some aspects of the service would be these groups being separate but also opportunities for 
the parent and child to attend together. This notion of an integrated parent and child service 
was difficult as it was felt that older children would not want to be seen going to services like 
this with their parents.

“One club doesn’t fit all so whilst the parents are happy to P1-P3 afterschool clubs 
with their children and their children are happy for their parents to come, once 
they get to Year 4/5 the kids are starting to go ‘I don’t want you coming to my 
afterschools club, you’ll ruin my street cred and my fun’.....so maybe you need to 
reach those parents in a different way”

Ideas such as parenting classes, homework help classes and classes specifically to engage 
fathers to encourage father-child interaction were suggested.

c. Where would the service take place (e.g. in school, community centre)?

The group decided that the ideal place for this service to take place would be in a school 
setting. They dismissed the idea of a library or a community centre as these might be more 
difficult for a parent to get to whereas they would be going to the school anyway to collect 
and pick up their children.

“Benefits in being close to the school......parents get comfortable around the school 
so more likely to interact with the teachers”

“There is some value with being connected to the school but separate”
d. How long would it last? (length of time, number per week)

The group did not reach consensus on this issue. A one hour session two or three times a week had been suggested but others disagreed indicating that this was too rigid and might put people off.

The parents felt that the service needed to be able to adapt to change, keeping fluid so people could dip in and dip out of what they wanted rather than having a compulsory program.

“That's a wee bit too restrictive, I think to say let's just have 1 hour a week.....a family could be attending many others things and the hours add up”

e. What words/ideas should be used in a program title/description to appeal to parents? (optional question)

It was decided that the most important thing would be to let the children devise a name that would be fun and appealing to them. The parents also felt that they personally would be more likely to go if there was a hook for them so a free tea and buns.

“Children should be involved - it’s their club they should decide the name.”

“If you appeal to the kids if they are excited about something then they bring their parents into that.”

5. What are the three most important things needed for improving educational attainment.

Individual answers to this included:
The group then came to consensus and agreed that the three most important things needed to improve educational attainment are (in order of importance):

1. Parental involvement
2. Support
3. Fun learning

**Teacher perspectives**

1. **What makes a child not ready to learn? (Think of things outside the classroom)**

   The teachers focused predominately on the child’s experience prior to school. Whether or not they had any preschool provision, their developmental stage, natural curiosity and parental influence all could affect their readiness to learn. They felt that parents simply talking to their children had positive effects of the child’s language development and their readiness for learning experiences.

   “Natural curiosity….they go through a stage where they are ask why? Why? Why? all the time and it’s important to answer them and explain to them why, we find a lot of parents sometimes find that a bother and don't want to and the children then stop asking because they haven’t been addressed properly and spoken to and explained and then they just give up. So then they go into their own wee world doing their own wee thing and the natural curiosity is taken away from them..........so it's keeping them inquisitive.”
2. What do you think makes a child ready to learn?

A ready to learn child would be attentive, good at listening, have natural curiosity.

a. Is there anything teachers can do to help a child become ready to learn?

The teachers felt that they could help a child become ready to learn by playing practical games to help capture their imagination and nurturing their speech and language skills. They also felt that a lack of formality in education at this stage really helps and noted that the Enriched Curriculum goes a long way towards achieving this.

"......its actually much easier to teach a lively child who is interested.....then it is a child who is switched off....even in P1 we find children who have lost that zest for discovery."

3. Our research found that children living in disadvantaged areas did less well on English and Maths assessment than children living in advantaged areas. We also looked at other areas such as self-esteem, psychological and physical wellbeing, family, friends and bullying and did not find any differences between children living in advantaged areas and those living in disadvantaged areas.

a. Does this finding surprise you?

b. Why do you think this would be the case?
The teachers were not surprised at this outcome and felt that this difference was due to parental background and outlook and experience of education. Different parents have had different education experiences and this could affect the value they place on their child’s education.

“I think it's a different value system.....within the school children who have parents who are very motivated they usually do better than even more clever children who don't have parents that support them.”

One teacher expressed anecdotally that she herself could notice a difference when shopping in different areas in the behavior of the children and how they were treated by their parents.

“I notice a big difference shopping in different areas in supermarkets. In one area they are talking their children along with them and children are part of the shopping experience and the other area I see where they are just shouting at them all the time ‘be quiet’, 'get out of my way' and the children are in the way because they are not being channeled.”
4. Eventually, Barnardo’s will want to develop an out of school service to support parents and children. We want to learn from you about the type of programs or activities you think parents and children would like. Try to think not about yourself but all the parents in your community and in Northern Ireland and what they would think. When we carried out interviews with children we found that they placed great emphasis on supporting parents to help children with homework and learning.

   a. Who in your community would these parents and children want to receive help from?
   b. Who should the service be targeted at? Who would use it?
   c. Where would the service take place (e.g. in school, community centre)?
   d. How long would it last? (length of time, number per week)
   e. Would you actually attend/participate in this program/activity?
   f. Should it be voluntary or compulsory?
   g. What words/ideas should be used in a program title:description to appeal to parents?

It was felt that the service needed to be delivered from someone with teaching experience but maybe not delivered in the school environment. It should be targeted ideally to preschool children, perhaps in a crèche as parents might feel more at ease there and it is a good place to start building rapport with parents. They felt that is was very important for the service to be flexible and to suit the needs of the individual users. Something which concerned the teachers was the funding, resourcing and sustainability of the service. It was also felt that the service should be marketed to parents as something fun but beneficially and maybe entitled ‘Keep up with your kids’.

“Obviously for educational purposes the earlier you get the child the better – we’re talking pre-school.”
5. What are the three most important things needed for improving educational attainment?

The teachers rated the three most important things for improving educational attainment as being:

1. Parental involvement and attitude
2. Improving attention and listening skills
3. Overall wellbeing & feeling secure in the learning environment
5. Summary and conclusions

The survey explored the extent to which levels of deprivation, educational attainment and indicators of well being were related in a sample of Year 4 and Year 7 pupils. It emerged that Year 4 children in areas of high deprivation reported better well being and slightly poorer educational attainment than Year 4 pupils in areas of low deprivation. There were very few differences, in terms of well being, between Year 7 pupils from areas of high and low deprivation. However Year 7 pupils in areas of high deprivation still had lower educational attainment than Year 7 pupils in areas of low deprivation.

This would suggest that the differential between children from areas of high and low deprivation changes between Year 4 and Year 7. In terms of well being the gap appears to close and by Year 7, pupils are reporting similar levels of well being regardless of their level of deprivation. However, there is a gap in educational attainment between children from areas of high and low deprivation that has already emerged by Year 4 and is still evident at Year 7.

The results also suggest that well being is unrelated to educational attainment since, in particular, despite the low educational attainment for both Year 4 and 7 pupils in areas of deprivation, children were either reporting a greater sense of well being (Year 4) or there simply was little difference in reported well being (Year 7).

These findings would indicate that in order to improve educational attainment for children going to school in areas of deprivation, services or interventions should focus on strategies directly related to improving educational attainment rather than indirectly through improving different aspects of well being. This resonates with the views of the CAG who anticipated these results.

When the differences in children’s well being and educational attainment were explored with the Key Stakeholders (children, parents and teachers) the following factors emerged as important issues that should be addressed:

1. The value placed on education by the family
2. Providing educational opportunity outside ‘class time’
3. Building the capacity of parents to assist their children in learning (including the role of the parent in encouraging the natural curiosity of the child)
The implication of the survey findings for Barnardo’s is that any service that is designed should be targeted at improving educational outcomes rather than indicators of well being for children going to school in areas of high deprivation. Moreover, given that a significant gap in educational attainment is evident by Year 4, this would suggest that any intervention should be early and targeted towards children before this stage in their schooling.

The literature reviews and the views of the Key Stakeholders advocate that the focus of an intervention or service should be on out of school provision that is structured and builds on what happens during class time. Furthermore, there should be an element of the service that is targeted at parents in terms of building their capacity to facilitate their child’s learning, whether that is through encouraging the child’s natural curiosity or better equipping parents to help their children with their school work.
References


Appendix One

Barnardo’s Northern Ireland AP Project

A children’s rights-based background to the outcome areas under consideration.

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Introduction:

The aim of this paper is to provide background information on relevant international human rights standards which will help to inform the project’s selection of outcomes for children. The starting point is the initial outline of potential outcomes compiled by the Barnardo’s team (Appendix 1). Given the explicit focus on children’s rights, this paper concentrates on the outcomes for children rather than parents.
or school, although there is inevitably a significant degree of overlap between them. The paper commences with an introduction to the relevant rights in the CRC and in particular the four cross-cutting principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Section One). Following on from this, and using the outline of potential outcomes for children as a template, the paper highlights the relevant standards and includes some discussion of those standards by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (‘the Committee’) (Section 2). Section 3 summarises the CRC standards and Committee’s observations in relation to the areas identified as ways of achieving the outcomes (out-of school supports, programmes with parents and multi-agency working). Appendix 2 clarifies the significance of the international standards for the work of an NGO such as Barnardo’s. The full text of the CRC is set out in Appendix 3.

N.B: emphasis has been added (in bold) on statements of the Committee on the Rights of the Child which appear to be particularly relevant to the project team.

Section One: Overview of the CRC and relevant children’s rights.

The CRC was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1989 and came into force in September 1990. It is the most widely ratified and therefore internationally accepted statement of children’s rights standards. The CRC is legally binding in international law. However, individuals cannot make complaints about breaches of their rights under the CRC to a court. The primary enforcement mechanism is through a system of periodic reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Individual countries report on their progress in relation to the implementation of the CRC every five years. The Committee on the Rights of the Child last reported on the UK’s progress in implementing the CRC in 2002 (UN, 2002).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child also issues General Comments which elaborate on the meaning of the various rights. This paper draws on the Committee’s observations in the following General Comments:

- The Aims of Education (General Comment No.1, CRC/GC/2001/1) (UN, 2001)
- General Measures of Implementation (General Comment No.5, CRC/GC/2003/5). (UN, 2003)

Committee on the Rights of the Child (2002), Concluding Observations: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, CRC/C/15/Add.188.
The proposed project has a primary focus on children’s education. The CRC has two Articles which are directly related to education. Article 28 defines the right of access to education and Article 29 defines the aims of education (see Appendix 3). However, it is a basic principle of human rights that all rights are interconnected, inter-dependent and interrelated. Of particular significance in any consideration of service provision for children are the CRC’s four general and cross-cutting principles, which are as follows:

- **non-discrimination (Art. 2):**

“States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status”.

Article 2 of the CRC prohibits discrimination against children across a wide range of groups. The Committee has called on states to ensure equal access to “appropriate and effective services”, emphasising that particular attention should be paid to the most vulnerable groups of young children and to those who are at risk of discrimination. This includes girls, children living in poverty, children with disabilities, children belonging to indigenous or minority groups, children from migrant families, children who are orphaned or lack parental care, children living in institutions, children living with mothers in prison, refugee and asylum-seeking children, children infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS, and children of alcohol- or drug-addicted parents.” (UN, 2005, para 24). In its comment on the Aims of Education, the Committee highlighted the fact that discrimination against children with disabilities is also pervasive in many formal education systems and in a great many informal education systems” (UN, 2001, para. 10). It is recognised that addressing discrimination may require changes to legislation, administration and resource allocation, as well as educational measures to change attitudes. However, the committee has emphasised that “the application of the non-discrimination principle of equal access to rights does not mean identical treatment.” (UN, 2003, para. 12).
• the best interests of the child are a primary consideration (Art. 3.1)

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

The best interest principle in Article 3 applies to “public and private social welfare institutions”. The Committee has said that it requires a systematic consideration of: “how children’s rights and interests are or will be affected by their decisions and actions” (UN, 2003, para. 12). The principle of best interests applies to all actions concerning children and requires “active measures to protect their rights and promote their survival, growth and well-being, as well as measures to support and assist parents who have day-to-day responsibility for realizing children’s rights (UN, 2005, 13).

• the right to life, survival and development (Art.6)

“1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.

2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.”

Article 6 gives the child a right to life, survival and development. “Development” is to be understood in its broadest sense as a “holistic concept, embracing the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development” and implementation measures should be aimed at achieving the optimal development for all children (UN, 2003, para. 12). The Committee has observed that the right to survival and development can only be implemented through the enforcement of all the other provisions of the Convention, including rights to health, adequate nutrition, social security, an adequate standard of living, a healthy and safe environment, education and play …as well as through respect for the responsibilities of parents and the provision of assistance and quality services.” (UN, 2005, para. 10)

• the right to express views and have them given due weight (Art. 12.1)
“States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”.

Children’s right to have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them is considered to be a cornerstone of the CRC, reinforcing the status of the child as an active participant in the promotion, protection and monitoring of their rights. The Committee has said that the right should be “anchored in the child’s daily life at home …and in his or her community; within the full range of early childhood health, care and education facilities, as well as in… the development of policies and services, including through research and consultations (UN, 2005, para. 14.) It has also observed that respect for this right in relation to young children “requires adults to adopt a child-centered attitude, listening to young children and respecting their dignity and their individual points of view. It also requires adults to show patience and creativity by adapting their expectations to a young child’s interests, levels of understanding and preferred ways of communicating” (UN, 2005, para. 14)

Section Two: High level outcome: to improve children’s engagement and achievement in education.

Art. 28(e) of the CRC requires the state to: “take measures to encourage regular attendance at school and the reduction of dropout rates”. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has not provided specific guidance on acceptable levels of school attendance or drop-out rates. States are expected to strive implement these rights progressively, striving for ongoing improvement. The Committee monitors levels of engagement in education in its individual country reports. The most recent report on the United Kingdom did not mention attendance levels or drop-out rates as a specific concern but did highlight differential rates of exclusion and “sharp differences in educational outcomes” for children according to their socio-economic background and to other factors such as gender, disability, ethnic origin or care status” (UN, 2002, para, 47).
Children’s “achievement” in education is defined broadly in Article 29(1)(a) to include the following: “the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential”. In its General Comment on the Aims of Education, the Committee has defined the right to education as follows:

“The education to which every child has a right is one designed to provide the child with life skills, to strengthen the child’s capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights and to promote a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values. The goal is to empower the child by developing his or her own skills, learning and other capacities, human dignity, self-esteem and self-confidence. “Education” in this sense goes far beyond formal schooling to embrace the broad range of life experiences and learning processes which enable children, individually and collectively, to develop their personalities, talents and abilities and to live a full and satisfying life within society.”

In its General Comment on Child Rights in Early Childhood, the Committee has said:

“For the exercise of their rights, young children have particular requirements for physical nurturance, emotional care and sensitive guidance as well as for time and space for social play, exploration and learning.” (UN, 2005, para.5).

The specific potential outcome areas for children have been identified by the Barnardo’s team as follows:

- improved relationships with peers & school personnel
- more pro-social behaviour (less disruptive / aggressive behaviour)
- improved mental and physical health
- improved levels of engagement (e.g. attendance) & achievement

The comments of the Committee which are relevant to these are summarised below.

- improved relationships with peers & school personnel
Art. 29 (1) (d) of the CRC requires that the education of the child shall be directed to:

The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

The Committee has made the following observations about Article 29(1)(d).

“part of the importance of this provision lies precisely in its recognition of the need for a balanced approach to education and one which succeeds in reconciling diverse values and respect for difference. “(UN, 2001, para. 4)

“The Committee wants to highlight the links between Article 29(1) and the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance…A reliable antidote to all of these failings is the provision of education which promotes an understanding and appreciation of the values reflected in Art. 29(1). (UN, 2001, para. 11)

The Committee has not made specific comments on relationships with school personnel, except in so far as it emphasises children’s right to be educated in a rights-respecting environment which reflects the spirit and philosophy of the Convention (UN, 2001, para. 18).

• more pro-social behaviour (less disruptive / aggressive behaviour).

In addition to Article 29(1)(d) above, under Article 28 (2) of the CRC, States Parties are required to take:

“all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.”

Also relevant is Article 19 of the CRC which states that:
“States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child”

The Committee has expressed concern about “widespread bullying” in schools in the United Kingdom (UN, 2002, para. 47) and commented that:

“Education must also be provided in a way that respects strict limits on discipline reflected in Article 28(2) and promotes non-violence at school” (2001, GC1, para. 8)

“A school which allows bullying or other violent and exclusionary practices to occur is not one which meets the requirements of Article 29 (1).” (2001, para 19)

• **improved mental and physical health**

Article 24 of the CRC requires States to:

“recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures …

(e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;
The Committee’s comments have emphasised the need to actively engage children in activities which promote their health, observing that:

“**Young children are themselves able to contribute to ensuring their personal health and encouraging healthy lifestyles among their peers**, for example through participation in appropriate, child-centred health education programmes” (2006, para27).

“And from an early age, children should themselves be included in activities promoting good nutrition and a healthy and disease-preventing lifestyle.” (2005, para.10).

- **Improved levels of engagement (e.g. attendance) & achievement**

As discussed earlier, the CRC requires States to take measures to encourage school attendance. The Committee on the Rights of the Child monitors educational achievement, placing particular emphasis on disparities across the categories in Article 2 of the CRC.

One of the issues which the team might wish to discuss is its definition of “achievement”. While the outcomes that have been identified in relation to social relationships and health are consistent with a child-rights focus, there is a number of other areas which might be considered. In this respect, the Committee has said that education must be aimed at ensuring that essential life skills are learnt by every child and that no child leaves school without being equipped to face the challenges that he or she can be expected to be confronted with in life:

“Basic skills include not only literacy and numeracy but also life skills such as the ability to make well-balanced decisions; to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner; and to develop a healthy lifestyle, good social relationships and responsibility, critical thinking, creative talents, and other abilities which give children the tools needed to pursue their options in life”
• **Additional areas to consider as outcomes?**

Other potential rights-based outcomes relating to education that the team might wish to consider include:

• Children’s participation: capacity to express their views and belief that their views are being respected in accordance with Article 12.1 of the CRC,

• Awareness of and respect for rights. This is an obligation under Article 42 of the CRC which requires the state to make the provisions of the Convention widely known to both adults and children.

**Section Three: Implementation:**

The potential provisions for achieving the intended outcomes have been identified by the Barnardo’s team as follows:

• out-of-school hours opportunities for learning and development

• family support and parent programmes

• multi-agency working with other voluntary, community and statutory services

The comments of the Committee which are relevant to these specific forms of service provision are summarised below.

• **Out-of-school hours opportunities for learning and development**

The Committee has indicated that all of the rights in the CRC apply to children, irrespective of where their education is taking place, commenting that:

“efforts to promote the enjoyment of other rights must not be undermined, and should be reinforced, by the values imparted in the education process. **This includes not only the content of the curriculum but also the educational processes, the pedagogical methods**
and the environment in which education takes place, whether it be the home, school or elsewhere.” (UN, 2001).

It has not made specific recommendations in relation to out of school supports but has recommended the provision of additional services to disadvantaged children, recommending that:

“State parties should ensure that parents are given appropriate support to enable them to involve young children fully in such programmes, especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. In particular, Article 18. 3 acknowledges that many parents are economically active, often in poorly paid occupations which they combine with their parental responsibilities.” (UN, 2005, para 21)

- **Family support and parent programmes**

The CRC places an obligation on the State to assist parents in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities (Art. 18). It states that:

States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.

3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.
The Committee has observed that “realizing children’s rights is in a large measure dependent on the well-being and resources available to those with responsibility for their care” and that recognizing these interdependencies is a sound starting point for planning assistance and services to parents, legal guardians and other care-givers.

The Committee has suggested that appropriate services might include:

- the provision of parenting education, parent counseling and other quality services for mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents and others who may be responsible for promoting the child’s best interests.
- Support to parents and other family members in ways that encourage positive and sensitive relationships with young children and enhance understanding of children’s rights and best interests. (UN, 2005, para 20)

In providing assistance to parents in their performance of their child-rearing responsibilities (under Art. 18.2), the Committee has said that States should take all appropriate measures to:

“enhance parents’ understanding of their role in their children’s early education,
encourage child-rearing practices which are child-centred, encourage respect for the child’s dignity and provide opportunities for developing understanding, self esteem and self-confidence. (UN, 2005, para. 29)

The Committee has expressed concern that “insufficient account is taken of the resources, skills and personal commitment required of parents and others responsible for young children, especially in societies ….with a high incidence of young, single parents. (UN, 2005, para.20)

The Committee has also emphasised that parents should be involved in the planning of comprehensive services (UN, 2005, para 22)
- **Multi-agency working with other voluntary, community and statutory services**

The Committee has recognised the importance of multi-agency co-operation for the achievement of children’s rights. It has urged States parties are to develop “rights-based, coordinated, multi-sectoral strategies in order to ensure that children’s best interests are always the starting point for service planning and provision” and recommended that comprehensive services should be coordinated with the assistance provided to parents and will fully respect their responsibilities, as well as their circumstances and requirements (UN, 2005).

In its General Comment on the rights of younger children, it has highlighted the “acknowledgment that traditional divisions between “care” and “education” services have not always been in children’s best interests and that the concept of “Educare” is sometimes used to signal a shift towards integrated services, and reinforces the recognition of the need for a co-ordinated, holistic, multi-sectoral approach to early childhood”. (UN, 2005, para 30)

**Potential areas for further consideration in relation to the planning of service provision?**

- **Non-discrimination in access to services**

The Committee has issued a warning about ensuring that services should be provided without discrimination:

"Potential discrimination in access to quality services for young children is a particular concern, especially where health, education, welfare and other services are not universally available and are provided through a combination of State, private and charitable
organisations. As a first step, the Committee encourages States to monitor the availability of and access to quality services that contribute to young children’s survival and development, including through systematic data collection, disaggregated in terms of major variables related to children’s and families’ background and circumstances.” (2005, para. 12).

**Programme standards:**

Article 3.3. of the CRC states that:

“States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform to the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision”

In its recent comment on the rights of young children, the Committee has provided guidance on the quality of services which should be provided:

“States parties must ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for early childhood conform to quality standards, particularly in the areas of health and safety, and that staff possess the appropriate psychosocial qualities and are suitable, sufficiently numerous and well-trained… It is essential that they have a sound up-to-date theoretical and practical understanding about children’s rights and development...; that they adopt child-centred care practices, curricula and pedagogies; and that they have access to specialist professional resources and support, including a supervisory and monitoring system for public and private programmes, institutions and services” (2006, para 23).

**Children’s and parents’ participation in the service planning process**

This has been discussed by the project team. Children’s engagement is required under Article 12 of the CRC. The Committee has repeatedly emphasised the need to engage parents in the planning of services (see, for example UN, 2005, para. 22).
Summary

The potential outcomes identified by the Barnardo’s team appear to be fully consistent with a child- rights based approach to the provision of services for children. The primary objective of this paper is to prompt further discussion on and subsequent refinement of the selected outcomes, in order to incorporate an explicit children’s rights-based approach to service provision. While it is apparent first that there is no form of service provision that can deliver on all aspects of the CRC and secondly that the CRC does not provide detailed guidance on all aspects of children’s lives, the team might wish to consider whether to include in its potential outcomes:

- Outcomes which reflect other non-traditional aspects of “achievement” such as self-esteem, ability to resolve conflict, critical thinking.
- Outcomes related to children’s capacity to form and express their views and sense that their views are being respected.
- Outcomes related to children’s awareness and respect for rights.

The team also identified some of the ways in which it might achieve the outcomes. These too are fully consistent with the CRC and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. From a rights-based perspective, the team will need to consider:

- How it will ensure non-discrimination in access to services
- How it will ensure that the services provided are child-centred (and of high quality).
- How parents and children will be actively engaged in the planning of services
Appendix 1a: Barnardo’s NI AP Project – Outcome areas under consideration

High level outcome – to improve children’s\(^5\) engagement and achievement in education.

How we will do this – by addressing the barriers which prevent children reaching their full potential through the provision of

- out-of-school hours opportunities for learning and development
- family support and parent programmes
- multi-agency working with other voluntary, community and statutory services

Outcome Areas for Children

Overall – children will be ready to learn and take advantage of the opportunities provided through education

- improved relationships with peers & school personnel
- more pro-social behaviour (less disruptive / aggressive behaviour)
- improved mental and physical health
- improved levels of engagement (e.g. attendance) & achievement

Outcome Areas for Parents / Families

Overall – parents will be better able to support and help their child through school

\(^5\)‘children’ currently refers to the 0 – 11 years age range and will be further refined during the planning / research process
• improved parent-child communication and relationships
• improved parent – school communication and relationships
• more use of positive parenting techniques
• more meaningful involvement in school life (support with homework, attend parent-teacher mtgs etc)
• will have basic skills to offer practical support with school work

Outcome Areas for Schools and Communities

Overall – improved school climate and improved levels of engagement and achievement

• improved levels of engagement and achievement
• improved behaviour and relationships
• fewer incidents of anti-social behaviour
• school will become ‘hub’ of community life (offering access to range of services & support across statutory / community sectors)

Appendix 1b: To what extent is Barnardo’s (as a non-State actor) bound by international human rights law?

The contracting parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child are the States which are signatories. The vast majority of obligations under the CRC are placed on these individual States Parties. One of the ongoing debates in human rights law is the extent to which non-state actors such as NGOs are bound by the provisions of international human rights law. While there is no direct obligation on Barnardo’s to comply with the standards in the CRC, the State is under an obligation to ensure that:

“Non-State service providers operate in accordance with its provisions, thus creating indirect obligations on such actors.” GC5, 2003, para. 43.
The Committee on the Rights of the Child has also called on non-state service providers:

…to respect the principles and provisions of the Convention and, in this regard, reminds States of their primary obligation to ensure its implementation…

However, it has also cautioned that:

“In this context, States parties are responsible for service provision for early childhood development. The role of civil society should be complementary to – not a substitute for – the role of the State. (2006, para. 32)

**Appendix 1c: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Recognizing that the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,
Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for
the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the
necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the
community,

Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality,
should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and
brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in
particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity,

Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva
Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child
adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal
Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in
particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural
Rights (in particular in article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized
agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by
reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including
appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth",

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the
Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption
Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the
Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) ; and the Declaration on the Protection of
Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict,

Recognizing that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult
conditions, and that such children need special consideration,

Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the
protection and harmonious development of the child,
Recognizing the importance of international co-operation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries,

Have agreed as follows:

**PART I**

**Article 1**

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

**Article 2**

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

**Article 3**

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.

3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities,
particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

**Article 4**

States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation.

**Article 5**

States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

**Article 6**

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.

2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

**Article 7**

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.
**Article 8**

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.

2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity.

**Article 9**

1. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. Such determination may be necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse or neglect of the child by the parents, or one where the parents are living separately and a decision must be made as to the child's place of residence.

2. In any proceedings pursuant to paragraph 1 of the present article, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known.

3. States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests. 4. Where such separation results from any action initiated by a State Party, such as the detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the State) of one or both parents or of the child, that State Party shall, upon request, provide the parents, the child or, if appropriate, another member of the family with the essential information concerning the whereabouts of the absent member(s) of the family unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall of itself entail no adverse consequences for the person(s) concerned.
Article 10

1. In accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunification shall be dealt with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall entail no adverse consequences for the applicants and for the members of their family.

2. A child whose parents reside in different States shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis, save in exceptional circumstances personal relations and direct contacts with both parents. Towards that end and in accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, States Parties shall respect the right of the child and his or her parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country. The right to leave any country shall be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and which are necessary to protect the national security, public order (ordre public), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Convention.

Article 11

1. States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.

2. To this end, States Parties shall promote the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements or accession to existing agreements.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.
Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

   (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or

   (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 15

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 16
1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.

2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

**Article 17**

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. To this end, States Parties shall:

(a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;

(b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;

(c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;

(d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;

(e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

**Article 18**

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

Article 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Article 20

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.

3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

Article 21

States Parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:

(a) Ensure that the adoption of a child is authorized only by competent authorities who determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures and on the basis of all pertinent and reliable information, that the adoption is permissible in view of the child's status concerning parents, relatives and legal
guardians and that, if required, the persons concerned have given their informed consent to the adoption on the basis of such counselling as may be necessary;

(b) Recognize that inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child's care, if the child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner be cared for in the child's country of origin; (c) Ensure that the child concerned by inter-country adoption enjoys safeguards and standards equivalent to those existing in the case of national adoption;

(d) Take all appropriate measures to ensure that, in inter-country adoption, the placement does not result in improper financial gain for those involved in it;

(e) Promote, where appropriate, the objectives of the present article by concluding bilateral or multilateral arrangements or agreements, and endeavour, within this framework, to ensure that the placement of the child in another country is carried out by competent authorities or organs.

**Article 22**

1. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.

2. For this purpose, States Parties shall provide, as they consider appropriate, co-operation in any efforts by the United Nations and other competent intergovernmental organizations or non-governmental organizations co-operating with the United Nations to protect and assist such a child and to trace the parents or other members of the family of any refugee child in order to obtain information necessary for reunification with his or her family. In cases where no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment for any reason, as set forth in the present Convention.
**Article 23**

1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child. 3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development.

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

**Article 24**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To diminish infant and child mortality;
(b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;

(c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;

(d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;

(e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;

(f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

**Article 25**

States Parties recognize the right of a child who has been placed by the competent authorities for the purposes of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health, to a periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement.

**Article 26**

1. States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law.
2. The benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child.

**Article 27**

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.

3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.

4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents or other persons having financial responsibility for the child, both within the State Party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having financial responsibility for the child lives in a State different from that of the child, States Parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other appropriate arrangements.

**Article 28**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

(a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;

(b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;

(c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
(d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;

(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 29  General comment on its implementation

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.
Article 30

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

Article 32

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular: (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;

(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;

(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

Article 33

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic
substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.

**Article 34**

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

(a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;

(b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;

(c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

**Article 35**

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

**Article 36**

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child’s welfare.

**Article 37**

States Parties shall ensure that:

(a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age;

(b) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;
(c) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age. In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;

(d) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.
Appendix 2: Survey questionnaire

How I feel about........

Please read the following carefully and listen carefully to the instructions given.

We would like you to answer the questions on the following pages so that we can find out some things about what you think. However, you don’t need to answer them if you don’t want to. Also, if there are some questions you don’t want to answer you can leave them as well. It’s completely up to you.

Everything you tell us today is confidential. That means we will not show your answers to anyone, not even your teachers or your parents. To make sure that your answers remain confidential we will cut off your name from the form below.

If you have any questions at this point, please raise your hand and ask the researcher.

Please fill in the following answers by putting a √ in 1 box like this [√] or use the spaces provided_________________.

If you do not know what a question means, please circle it and move on to the next one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are you a boy or a girl?</th>
<th>How old are you?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ girl</td>
<td>____________years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ boy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the name of your school?

____________________________

What class are you in?

- P4
- P7

What is the name of your teacher?

____________________________

Do you give us permission to look at your answers? Yes  

What is your Name (please use capital letters)? First Name _____________________

Last Name______________________

# Section A

## 1. Physical Activities and Health

### In general, how would you say your health is?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Not very good
- Poor

### Thinking about the last week...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>not at all</th>
<th>slightly</th>
<th>now and then</th>
<th>very</th>
<th>extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Have you felt fit and well?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Have you been physically active (e.g. running, football, swimming)?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Have you been able to run well</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. General Mood and Feelings about Yourself

#### Thinking about the last week...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Have you felt full of energy?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>not at all</th>
<th>slightly</th>
<th>now and then</th>
<th>very</th>
<th>extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Has your life been enjoyable?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Have you been in a good mood?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Have you had fun?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Have you felt sad?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Have you felt so bad that you didn’t want to do anything?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Have you felt lonely?  
- never  
- not very often  
- quite often  
- very often  
- always

7. Have you been happy with the way you are?  
- never  
- not very often  
- quite often  
- very often  
- always

3. Family and Free Time

Thinking about the last week...

1. Have you had enough time for yourself?  
- never  
- not very often  
- quite often  
- very often  
- always

2. Have you been able to do the things that you want to do in your free time?  
- never  
- not very often  
- quite often  
- very often  
- always

3. Have your parent(s) had enough time for you?  
- never  
- not very often  
- quite often  
- very often  
- always

4. Have your parent(s) treated you fairly?  
- never  
- not very often  
- quite often  
- very often  
- always
5. Have you been able to talk to your parent(s) when you wanted to?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Have you had enough money to do the same things as your friends?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Have you had enough money for what you wanted to do and/or buy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Friends

**Thinking about the last week...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Have you spent time with your friends?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Have you had fun with your friends?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Have you and your friends helped each other?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. Have you been able to trust on your friends?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Bullying

Thinking about the last week ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Have you been afraid of other girls and boys?</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Have other girls and boys made fun of you?</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Have other girls and boys bullied you?</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6. School and Learning

**Thinking about the last week...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>not at all</th>
<th>slightly</th>
<th>now and then</th>
<th>very</th>
<th>extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have you been happy at school?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Have you got on well at school?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thinking about the last week...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Have you been able to pay attention?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Have you got along well with your teachers?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### In general...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>never</th>
<th>not very often</th>
<th>quite often</th>
<th>very often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Does your teacher listen to what you have to say?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Does your teacher shout too much?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Is your teacher fair to you?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you get enough privacy in school?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How likely is it that your school would listen to your views?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For 9, please use the following scale:
- not at all
- slightly
- now and then
- very
- extremely*
Section B

Now we would like you to tell us a bit about yourself. Tick the sentence which is most true for YOU.

**Example**

- Some children like ice-cream √
- Some children do not like ice-cream

And is that REALLY true or SORT OF true for you?

- Really true for me √
- Sort of true for me
1. Tick the sentence which is most true for YOU.

- Some children are often unhappy with themselves
- Other children are pretty pleased with themselves.

And is that REALLY true or SORT OF true for you?

- Really true for me
- Sort of true for me

2. Tick the sentence which is most true for YOU.

- Some children don’t like the way they are leading their life.
- Other children do like the way they are leading their life.

And is that REALLY true or SORT OF true for you?

- Really true for me
- Sort of true for me
3. Tick the sentence which is most true for YOU.

- Some children are happy with themselves as a person
- Other children are often not happy with themselves.

And is that REALLY true or SORT OF true for you?

- Really true for me
- Sort of true for me

4. Tick the sentence which is most true for YOU.

- Some children like the kind of person they are.
- Other children often wish they were someone else.

And is that REALLY true or SORT OF true for you?

- Really true for me
- Sort of true for me

5. Tick the sentence which is most true for YOU.

- Some children are very happy being the way they are.
- Other children wish they were different.

And is that REALLY true or SORT OF true for you?

- Really true for me
- Sort of true for me
6. **Tick the sentence which is most true for YOU.**

| Some children are not very happy with the way they do a lot of things. | Other children think the way they do things is fine. |

And is that REALLY true or SORT OF true for you?

| Really true for me | Sort of true for me |

---

**How important is it ....**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. How important is it to have a well paying job later?</th>
<th>Not important at all</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td>Not very</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>important</td>
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<td>important</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. How important is it to you to have a good reputation in the community?</th>
<th>Not important at all</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td>Not very</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Very</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>important</td>
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<td>important</td>
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<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. How important is it to you to work hard and get ahead?</th>
<th>Not important at all</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td>Not very</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>important</td>
<td></td>
<td>important</td>
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<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td>Not very important</td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>How important is it to you to save money for the future?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>How important is it to you to be careful about how much money you spend?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>How important is it to you to have a happy family life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do you want to be when you grow up?
### Section C

1. **How do you feel about writing?**

| Really don't like it | Don't like it but only a little | Don't mind, it's ok | Like it a little | Like it a lot |

2. **How do you feel about reading?**

| Really don't like it | Don't like it but only a little | Don't mind, it's ok | Like it a little | Like it a lot |

3. **How do you feel about spelling?**

| Really don't like it | Don't like it but only a little | Don't mind, it's ok | Like it a little | Like it a lot |

4. **How do you feel about doing sums?**

<p>| Really don't like it | Don't like it but only a little | Don't mind, it's ok | Like it a little | Like it a lot |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. How do you feel about working with shapes?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Really don’t like it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. How do you feel about using the computer?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Really don’t like it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. How do you feel about doing science experiments?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Really don’t like it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. How do you feel about working by yourself?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Really don’t like it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. How do you feel about coming to school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Really don't like it</th>
<th>Don't like it but only a little</th>
<th>Don't mind, it's ok</th>
<th>Like it a little</th>
<th>Like it a lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
