

Better Finglas Interagency Evaluation Report

Kathy Walsh
April 2018



Working together with families to improve the developmental, health and educational outcomes of young children living in the area.

Help transform children's lives through our services; support parents; and challenge society where it fails our children.



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Foreword – Chairperson, Better Finglas

When writing of his time, the American writer John Steinbeck said “it is true that two men can lift a bigger stone than one man”. This is a statement about people working together to achieve more. This notion reflects exactly, the spirit of Better Finglas, from the founding consortium who managed the application process, to the later consortium who brought this to fruition and who developed the programme strands and the logic models. This later group became the Steering Group of the project and employed the Project Leader and the Project Team and also developed the initial administrative systems and procedures and connections which underpin the successful programme we are so proud of today. Reflecting the great spirit of Finglas, members of the initial consortia continue to stay in touch with the programme and retain an avid interest in its progress, and the Project Leader and her Team pursue the very highest standards in their determination to ensure that only the very best is good enough for the children of the community and their families. Long may this continue!

In keeping with national requirements, the Steering Group commissioned this evaluation project in 2016 in order to capture the learning from the interagency approach embedded within the Better Finglas Programme. From the conception of the Better Finglas programme, interagency work was identified as one of the five core strands. Finglas has a long history of successful interagency work but this evaluation is an opportunity to see how interagency work may be different under the Area Based Childhood Programme in order to share learning which could be replicated elsewhere.

We in the Better Finglas Steering Group would like to thank Dr. Kathy Walsh and her research associates for the comprehensive nature of this evaluation and the many hours spent observing meetings, interviewing key stakeholders and compiling this data. We would also like to thank Dr. Claire Hickey from the Centre for Effective Services who kindly provided substantial expertise at the initial tendering and commissioning stage of this evaluation project. Finally, a sincere thanks to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Atlantic Philanthropies for their vision and subsequent funding of the Area Based Childhood Programme. Without either, Better Finglas would not have been possible.

Joe Twomey

Chairperson, Better Finglas Steering Group

Foreword – CEO, Barnardos

Alongside the ever-increasing number of positive news stories relating to economic growth and consumer confidence in post-austerity Ireland, there exists the ever-increasing number of lost childhoods. These lost childhoods are often hidden in plain sight. Homelessness and overcrowded living arrangements. Parental stress due to financial uncertainty. Lack of basic necessities for development and contentment. Children not being permitted the opportunity to be children and have fondly-remembered childhoods. Though the number of childhoods lost to poverty and lack of resources is growing, Barnardos' vision of an Ireland where childhood is valued and all children and young people are valued equally is not waning.

When Barnardos was asked to be the lead agency for the Area Based Childhood Programme in Finglas, this was not the beginning of a new relationship. Barnardos has had a close affinity and connection to the children and families of Finglas for many years through a number of programmes; Finglas Early Intervention Service, Teen Parents Support Programme and Springboard to name a few. It has been exciting to watch as the Better Finglas project has developed from its early stages to now being in its third year and producing reports evaluating its own work.

Two pieces from this report have resonated with me. Firstly, when the well-being of children and families are kept to the centre of any planning by an organisation or a consortia of organisations, interagency work becomes obvious as the most effective way to improve outcomes for families. Secondly, this interagency approach has benefited children and families by providing more needs-based programmes and services. Collaborative planning has permitted the introduction of literacy, early years, parenting and home-visiting programmes in Finglas. Through this increased awareness of other services by local practitioners, families are guided to relevant services.

Ultimately, the growing emphasis on prevention and early intervention by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Atlantic Philanthropies, Barnardos and the Better Finglas consortium of agencies found concrete expression in the Area Based Childhood Programme in Finglas. I firmly believe if a child's development, learning and emotional well-being has been improved by the interagency work of Better Finglas, then the child's ability to benefit from life opportunities and manage life challenges will be improved and their childhood can be protected and enhanced.

Fergus Finlay

CEO, Barnardos



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Special thanks go to the parents of the 2017 Junior Infants and their teachers in St. Canice's Boys National School and St. Canice's Girls National School who participated in the survey undertaken as part of the Steps to School case study. Thanks are also due to the professionals who participated in the stakeholder interviews for the Triple P Case Study.

Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the valuable inputs of my colleagues Brian, Grainne and George who were involved in different stages of the evaluation process. Brian Harvey undertook much of the work central to the baseline, while Grainne Healy was involved in conducting interviews, with George Akomfrah overseeing the data entry and questionnaire analysis process.

Kathy Walsh

KW Research and Associates Ltd.



'We are all committed to making things better for children and families locally, we all play a part in this as part of our day jobs, while Better Finglas gives us an opportunity to do something collectively about it.'

Chapter 1

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Finglas was one of thirteen locations in Ireland selected to participate in the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme. The programme was initially developed as a three year cross-departmental initiative which was jointly funded by the Irish Government, through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and by Atlantic Philanthropies. The ABC Programme is jointly managed by the Centre for Effective Services and Pobal.

The Better Finglas Programme (Better Finglas) was developed by a wide consortium of agencies, organisations, groups, and individuals working in the Finglas area. The consortia included the Health Service Executive, Dublin City Council, Finglas Cabra Drug and Alcohol Task Force, Tolka Area Partnership, Dublin City Childcare Committee, Tusla, Barnardos, An Garda Síochána, early years settings, primary schools and youth services. Barnardos was asked to take on, and subsequently took on, the role of lead agency with responsibility for the day-to-day management and administration of the programme.

Better Finglas has a vision of a community where all services - voluntary, statutory and community - are working together with families to improve the developmental, health and educational outcomes of young children living in the area. Its objectives are to:

- Increase access to evidence-based programmes and evidence-informed activities from pre-birth to eight years.
- Enhance parenting skills and increase parental capacity to support their children's development.
- Improve children's developmental outcomes.
- Improve children's literacy in first and second class.
- Increase the capacity of service providers to deliver high quality and evidence-based programmes with fidelity in an appropriate, timely, and sustainable manner.
- Increase both use and community awareness of service provision.
- Build on effective interagency working to deliver a continuum of co-ordinated, high quality services.

Better Finglas sought to realise this vision through the provision of evidence-based programmes and quality services to children (aged up to eight years) and parents of children (from pregnancy to 11 years of age). Better Finglas has five key strands of activities as follows: Pregnancy and New Parents; Parenting; Early Years; Literacy; and Interagency.

1.2 Report Aim and Objectives

1.2.1 Aim

The overall aim of this report is to capture the learning from the interagency work supported by Better Finglas and to establish the following:

- 1) **How has the interagency approach affected work with children and families in Finglas?**
- 2) **What is the learning in relation to replicating the approach in other settings or areas?**

1.2.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the report are to:

1. Identify the nature of interagency working that has taken place.
2. Identify the outcomes of the interagency approach and work.
 - For the professionals involved (at process and practice levels in relation to information exchange, activity-altering, resource-sharing).
 - For the organisations involved.
 - For children and their families (referral pathways enhanced/gaps in services/duplication of services addressed).
3. Determine the value of the supports provided for interagency work (together with an identification of the enablers and barriers).

1.3 The Area Based Childhood Programme Policy Context

1.3.1 Prevention and early intervention

The Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme was designed as a prevention and early intervention¹ initiative, targeting investment in effective services to improve outcomes for children and families living in areas of disadvantage.² The ABC Programme was the result of years of policy developments in sectors and settings working with and for children and young people in the Republic of Ireland. A common thread within all of these policy developments was an increasing focus on prevention and early intervention approaches informed by evidence-based practice. The suggestion being that ‘successful prevention and early intervention may result in reduced need for services later in life, especially more expensive remedial services such as youth detention’.

Established in 2013, the ABC Programme was in line with the commitment in the 2011-2016 Programme for Government to adopt³ a new area-based approach to tackling child poverty which draws on best international practice and existing services to tackle every aspect of child poverty. The model was to be rolled out in Ireland’s most disadvantaged communities.

The ABC Programme also built upon and continued the work of the Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP) 2007-2013⁴, which was delivered in Ballymun, Dublin Northside and Tallaght West. PEIP provided demonstrations of effective approaches to improve outcomes for children and families. Evaluations of other initiatives such as the wider Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative and the National Early Years Access Initiative also generated learning on prevention and early intervention which provided the theoretical basis of the ABC Programme.

The aims of the ABC Programme included testing and evaluating innovative prevention and early intervention approaches in areas of disadvantages in order to improve outcomes for children, particularly children and families at risk of poverty. The multiple foci of the ABC Programme were: Child Health and Development; Parenting; Children’s Learning and Integrated Service Delivery.

Following on from the establishment of the ABC Programme, prevention and early intervention was identified as a key goal in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures report. A commitment⁵ in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures stated the intention to ‘implement the Area-Based Childhood (ABC)

1 The Department of Children and Youth Affairs in the 2017 document ‘Better Outcomes Brighter Futures’ define prevention as ‘developing strengths, supports and strategies to provide a problem from arising’ and early intervention as ‘anticipating, identifying and addressing problems as they arise or escalate’.

2 Area Based Childhood Programme Open Policy Debate Report, 14th February 2017.

3 Department of the Taoiseach, Programme for Government 2011-2016 (Dublin, 2011), p.51.

4 Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme Overview, 2017 <https://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=%2Fdocuments%2F20160729ABCProgrammeOverview.htm> [accessed 15 March 2018].

5 Commitment G13 in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures.

Programme to address the impact of child poverty and improve child outcomes in ten or more areas of disadvantage and mainstream the learning from the programme to services throughout the country”⁶. Another pertinent goal⁷ aspired towards a rebalancing of resources to place a greater emphasis on prevention and earlier intervention.

Other recent policy level supports for the ABC Programme included the publication of the ‘High-Level Policy Statement on Supporting Parents and Families’⁸ by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in 2015. In the same year, Tulsa’s Prevention Partnership and Family Support Programme⁹ was established based on the recognition that the best way to improve outcomes for families is to intervene at an early stage to resolve problems and prevent harm. The Programme for Partnership Government in 2016 also included the establishment of a prevention and early intervention unit within the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.¹⁰ This specialised unit is expected to produce an annual report on prevention and early intervention.

1.3.2 Interagency approaches

Interagency working and information sharing have been highlighted in recent years as important for improving services for children and young people both nationally and internationally.¹¹ Guidance on interagency working (drawing on international examples) linked to children’s services was first produced in an Irish context by the Children Acts Advisory Board¹² in 2009.

Consistent with its origins, the ABC Programme (itself a cross-departmental initiative) emphasised the need for interagency collaboration in service delivery. This emphasis on interagency collaboration was to ensure the services being delivered were effective, timely and accessible with the potential to become sustainable and mainstreamed¹³. Applications were invited from ‘pre-existing or proposed area-based not-for-profit/statutory consortia’ only¹⁴.

Eligibility for the ABC Programme required collaboration among established services in the areas selected. A funding requirement stated that programmes and practices were to be implemented collaboratively by the relevant statutory and non-statutory service providers in the area dependent on existing resources.

Pre-development funding was made available in the initial design and development stage to support new entrants building the capacity of the associated lead agencies and consortia. Consortium agreements were required to be put in place between the lead agency and the consortium members detailing the roles and responsibilities of the lead organisation and the other member organisations. The overall logic model for the ABC Programme identified integrated service delivery as one of the five key outcome areas with indicators identified¹⁵ in relation to:

-
- 6 Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The national policy framework for children & young people 2014-2020 (Dublin: Stationery Office, 2014) p.30.
 - 7 Commitment G5 in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures.
 - 8 Department of Children and Youth Affairs, High-Level Policy Statement on Supporting Parents and Families (Dublin: Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2015).
 - 9 Tulsa, Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Programme, 2015 <http://www.tusla.ie/services/family-community-support/prevention-partnership-and-family-support-programme/> [accessed 15 March 2018].
 - 10 Department of the Taoiseach, A Programme for a Partnership Government (Dublin: Department of the Taoiseach, 2016).
 - 11 June Statham, A review of international evidence on interagency working, to inform the development of Children’s Services Committees in Ireland (Dublin: Government Publications, 2011)
 - 12 Robert Murphy and Ciarán O’Searcaigh, Inter-agency Co-operation in Irish Children’s Services; The Views of Some Stakeholders (Dublin: Children Acts Advisory Board and Hibernian Consulting, 2009).
 - 13 Centre for Effective Services, Area based Childhood Programme, <http://www.effectiveservices.org/work/article/area-based-childhood-programme> [accessed 15 March 2018].
 - 14 Pobal, ABC Programme Procedures and Guidelines: Information and instructions on the procedures required to comply with a Pobal ABC contract (Dublin: Pobal, 2014).
 - 15 Stella Owens, John Bamber and Joan McGarry, Design and Implementation Support and Contracting, 2014 <https://www.pobal.ie/Publications/Documents/Final%20PM%20Briefing%20Session%20Presentation%2030%20Jan%202014.pdf> [accessed 15 March 2018].

- Interagency collaboration in service delivery;
- Increased use of evidence-based programmes;
- Integrated accessible services being delivered between community and statutory services across education, health and social care sectors;
- Adherence to national quality standards;
- Strong local leadership and buy-in from local community;
- Effective links established between families, schools and communities;
- Internal self-evaluation structures;
- Collation and dissemination of learning.

Each of the 13 ABC Programme areas was ultimately required to prepare, implement and report on their implementation of a local Interagency logic model thus ensuring the interagency approach was embedded in the operation of the 13 ABC Programme areas.

1.4 Literature Relevant to the Area Based Childhood Programme

1.4.1 Prevention and early intervention services

Central to the literature on the rationale for prevention and early intervention and initiatives like the ABC Programme is recognition that a child's early years are critical in terms of their brain development and the impact which this can have on future outcomes¹⁶. While brain development continues throughout childhood and adolescence, the literature supports the view that early intervention when children are young is important to ensuring all children get the best start in life¹⁷.

A key issue identified by Bronfenbrenner is the importance of the early environment in which a child receives care, specifically in the home.¹⁸ This underlines the importance of the establishment of a positive and secure relationship between the primary caregiver and child in the first few months of an infant's life. A positive and secure relationship can contribute greatly to the development of the child's positive social, emotional, thinking and self-control skills¹⁹.

The Growing Up in Ireland longitudinal study also suggests that the quality of the early parent-child relationship can be an important predictor of how well children will interact with their peers later in life²⁰. Furthermore, positive parenting styles can clearly improve early child development outcomes, particularly for children experiencing disadvantage²¹. This finding makes a clear case for the provision of positive parenting supports for families in general and for disadvantaged families in particular.

Prevention and early intervention initiatives like the ABC Programme cannot however just be limited to young children. Effective prevention and early intervention approaches must also seek to engage with and tackle problems in their early stages. This specifically involves intervening early on, at the onset of difficulties or at key points in a child or young person's life where there is increased vulnerability such as school transitions, adolescence and parenthood.

16 Sarah Rochford, Nuala Doherty and Stella Owens, *Prevention and Early Intervention in Children and Young People's Services: Ten years of Learning* (Dublin: Centre for Effective Services, 2014).

17 Ibid.

18 Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The ecology of human development - experiment by nature and design* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

19 National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, *Working Paper 1: Young children develop in an environment of relationships* (Cambridge: Center for the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2004)

20 The Economic and Social Research Institute, *Growing Up in Ireland. The Lives of 9-year-olds: Child Cohort. Report 1.* (Dublin: ESRI, 2009).

21 The Millennium Cohort Study is the national longitudinal study of children in the UK

In overall terms the key elements of a successful prevention and early intervention identified with the literature include:

- Provision of a broad range of universal children's services, offered on a broad continuum, from those at high risk through to universal services;
- Strong focus on the earliest months and years of development;²²
- Early intervention to support older children experiencing difficulties;
- Provision of parenting supports.

It is noteworthy that all of these aforementioned elements were incorporated as cornerstones of the ABC Programme approach.

1.4.2 Interagency approaches

There is no single agreed definition of interagency. This often results in a variety of terms - partnership, integration or coordination - being used interchangeably to describe relationships which can simply be referred to as interagency or multiagency.²³

This lack of a common definition is succinctly described by Duggan and Corrigan²⁴ as 'slippage in terminology'. They suggest that interagency working may best be determined by the context in which it takes place and that defining different types of interagency approaches may be more useful than attempting to define the term.

Following this approach, Statham provides a simple definition of interagency as 'more than one agency working together in a planned and formal way'²⁵ and identified at least four levels of interagency work, originally described by Frost²⁶, ranging from:

- *Co-operation*: Services work together toward consistent goals and complementary services while maintaining their independence.
- *Collaboration*: Services plan together addressing issues of overlap, duplication and gaps in service provision towards common outcomes.
- *Coordination*: Services work together in a planned and systematic manner towards shared and agreed goals.
- *Integration*: Different services become one organisation in order to enhance service delivery.

The ABC Programme requires participating organisations to work together at a collaborative level, planning services and working to achieve common outcomes, with scope for some participating organisations to work together at a coordination level to deliver specific projects.

Obtaining evidence to demonstrate the impact of interagency approaches is difficult. There are several reasons for this: many different levels at which interagency working can operate; problems around defining and measuring outcomes; and difficulty in attributing any changes that occur to the impact of interagency working as opposed to some other factor. Most of the research evidence concerns changes in processes, experiences and practice such as the introduction of new tools or increases in inter-professional communication. In the longer term, these changes may lead to positive changes for children and families too. The Centre for Effective Services will explore this as part of their national evaluation of the overall ABC Programme, while the Better Finglas ABC Programme commissioned this

22 Hardiker levels are: 4: high risk; 3: families with complex problems; 2: services in areas of disadvantage; 1: universal.

23 Statham, A review of international evidence on interagency working.

24 Carmel Duggan and Carmel Corrigan, A Literature Review of Inter-agency Work with a Particular Focus on Children's Services. (Dublin: Children's Act Advisory Board, 2009).

25 Statham, A review of international evidence on interagency working.

26 Nick Frost, Professionalism, partnership and joined up thinking: a research review of front-line working with children and families. (Dartington: Research in Practice, 2005).

interagency evaluation specifically to explore and identify the role of and value of their interagency approach.

Interestingly where evidence for the impact of interagency working does exist, it is mostly positive with changes reported for²⁷:

- Service users such as children and parents (improved access to services and a speedier response);
- Professionals (enhanced knowledge and skills, better understanding of needs, greater enjoyment of work and more opportunities for career development);
- Agencies (greater efficiency, less duplication and greater involvement of service users).

Other impacts of interagency working have also been identified related to increased workload (at least in the initial stages) and increased demand for services as needs are identified earlier. The Better Finglas Interagency Evaluation will explore the impact of their interagency approach on these three discrete groups.

1.5 Evaluative Framework and Methodologies

1.5.1 The evaluative framework

One of the most comprehensive and rigorous frameworks of analysis of interagency collaboration literature was by Mattessich, Murray-Close and Monsey²⁸ who undertook a secondary data review and meta-analysis of the factors for successful collaboration. They used these factors to compile what is now referred to as the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory (WCFI) that includes 40 items under six themes. The WCFI inventory themes, together with some of the other common factors identified by Perrault et al.²⁹, have been used to provide the evaluative framework³⁰ for this study.

1.5.2 The methodologies

This report is a synthesis of learning arising from a staged research process³¹ which involved the application of a mixed methods approach. The various methodologies included:

Secondary data analysis

These included reviews of:

- National policies in relation to children and families; prevention and early intervention; interagency working and area-based approaches.
- Census 2011 and Census 2016 data, where available.
- Other relevant reports published locally and nationally.
- Minutes of various Better Finglas meetings and progress reports.

27 Statham, A review of international evidence on interagency working.

28 Paul W. Mattessich, Marta Murray-Close and Barbara R. Monsey, *Collaboration: What Makes It Work, A Review of Research Literature on Factors Influencing Successful Collaboration*, 2nd edn (Minnesota: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 2001)

29 Ellen Perrault, 'Working Together in Collaborations: Successful Process Factors for Community Collaboration' *Administration in Social Work*, 35, no. 3 (2011), pp. 282-298.

30 Appendix 1.

31 Table 1.1.

Stakeholder analysis

This involved interviews with individual professionals involved with Better Finglas. Thirty-six interviews³² were conducted with a small number of individuals interviewed more than once. These interviews were supplemented by findings from observational analysis of a total of nine Steering Group and implementation team meetings.³³

Surveys

Two surveys were conducted as part of the preparation of the detailed 'Steps to School' Transition Case Study. The first was a survey of 66 parents of junior infants from St. Canice's Boys National School (23 parental respondents) and St. Canice's Girls National School (43 parental respondents) who made the transition from early years settings to primary school in September 2017. The second survey comprised of three junior infant teachers from the two schools.

32 Appendix 2

33 Appendix 3

Table 1.1 Overview of the Research Methodologies

Stage 1: Baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary data analysis and review including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Policy in relation to: child poverty; area based initiatives and projects; and interagency co-operation. – Census 2011 data and the 2011 Pobal HP Deprivation Index³⁴. Where 2016 data was available this was also used. – Local plans (including the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan (2016-2020)), various relevant national and local studies, reports, articles in the local newspapers, annual reports of various organisations operating locally (including the Local Drugs Taskforce and the Area Based Partnership etc.), evaluations and academic papers. – Data extracted from a range of directories including: Benefacts³⁵, mytown.ie³⁶, The Wheel, The Fingal Volunteer Centre and the '4 families in Finglas' website to identify the breadth of voluntary organisation based/operating locally. • Local contact and consultations with key stakeholders including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Contact was made with various early year and other organisations operating locally to access relevant documentation. – Interviews with five key individuals with a long history of working/ supporting work in the local area. • Site visits to map services locally and to ensure an accurate overview of the services operating in the area.
Stage 2: Interviews and Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary data analysis (including reviews of various reports and minutes of committee and implementation team meetings). • Interviews with 16 individuals representing 15 services (See Appendix 2 for full details). • Interviews and ongoing engagement with two Better Finglas staff. • Observation of nine meetings over the time period from September 2016 to January 2017 (See Appendix 3 for full details)
Stage 3: Triple P Case Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary data analysis (including reviews of relevant minutes of meetings). • Interviews with nine key stakeholders from across five organisations including: St. Helena's Family Resource Centre, The Finglas Centre, Tusla, the Finglas 'C' School Completion Programme and Mellow Spring Childcare Development Centre. • Ongoing engagement with relevant Better Finglas staff.
Stage 4: Steps to School Case Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary data analysis (including reviews of relevant meeting minutes). • Interviews with five key stakeholders (three early years services interviewees, one primary school interviewee as well as one lead agency interviewee). • Survey administered to 66 parents of junior infants who made the transition from early years services to primary school in Sept 2017 (23 parents from St. Canice's Boys National School and 43 parents from St Canice's Girls National School). • Survey of three junior infant teachers (two from St Canice's Boys National School and one from St Canice's Girls National School).

34 This index provides a method of measuring the relative affluence or disadvantage of a particular geographical area using data compiled from various censuses. A score is given to the area based on a national average of zero and ranging from approximately -40 (being the most disadvantaged) to +40 (being the most affluent).

35 Benefacts is a public database of civil society organisations in Ireland. It can be accessed at <https://benefacts.ie/>.

36 MyTown.ie is a local community website for towns in Ireland.

1.6 Better Finglas and its Resources

1.6.1 Membership

There are over 50 organisations involved in the Better Finglas consortium drawn from a wide range of organisations who engage with families and children locally. They include early years settings, community organisations, local schools, Health Service Executive, Tusla, Pavee Point, Dublin City Council, Dublin North West Area Partnership, Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force and a number of other agencies and institutions.

1.6.2 Structure

The consortium appointed a Steering Group to oversee and lead the development and implementation of the ABC Programme. A number of implementation teams were also set up to support the implementation of the different programme strands. These teams were made up of individuals with expertise in the relevant area. The exact composition and number of teams in place at any one time was dependent on the stage of implementation and the needs of the Programme. Overall, five implementation teams have been established and, at present in December 2017, there are currently three implementation teams in operation. See Figure 1.1 for details of the Better Finglas structure in December 2017.

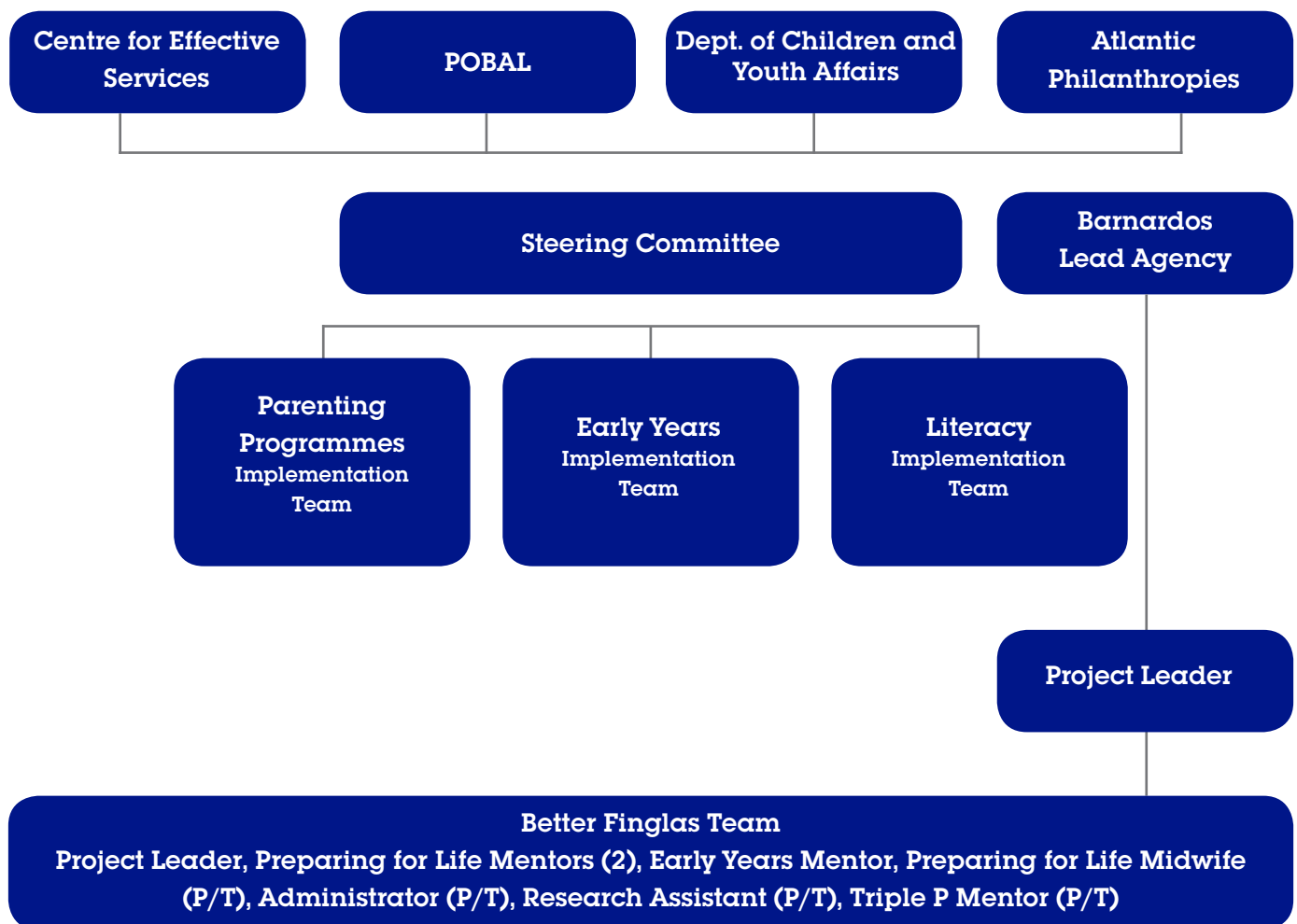


Figure 1.1 Organisational Structure of Better Finglas (December 2017)

1.6.3 Resources (staff and finances)

See Table 1.2 for details of Better Finglas staff team and Table 1.3 for financial resource details.

Table 1.2 Better Finglas Staff Team (December 2017)

Nature of role	Roles
Full time roles (4)	Project Leader
	Early Years Mentor
	Preparing for Life Mentor
	Preparing for Life Mentor
Part-time roles (4)	Preparing for Life Midwife (HSE funded)
	Triple P Mentor (Tusla funded)
	Administrator
	Research Assistant

Table 1.3 Better Finglas Financial Resources (2015-2017)


Source	2015	2016	2017 ³⁷	Overall Total Budget
ABC Programme	€364,058	€479,696	€484,813	€1,328,567
Other	€163 ³⁸	€8,800 ³⁹	€36,300 ⁴⁰	€45,263
Total Annual Budget	€364,221	€488,496	€521,113	€1,373,830

³⁷ Includes actual spend to the end of October and project spend for November and December.

³⁸ Source: Dublin City Council payment for the cost of a WOW Volunteer recruitment advertisement in the North and East Northside People newspapers.

³⁹ Source: Payments for staff (outside the Better Finglas area) to attend the Triple P Parenting Strand training.

⁴⁰ Source: This payment came from a number of sources. The primary sources were; 1) Triple P training places purchased by outside agencies, 2) A grant of €5,000 from the Dublin North West Area Partnership for Circle of Security Training, 3) Tusla PPFs parents participation seed funding for home visiting training as part of the Early Years strand (€4,900 euro), 4) Dublin City Childcare Committee grant for Baby Stay and Play in Finglas South (€1,000 euro), 5) Dublin City Council grant to establish new Baby Stay and Play Group in Finglas West (€2,000 euro) and a School Completion Programme (Tusla) contribution to Finglas Family Fun Day (€700).



'We all came together from our different disciplines, we all perceived things differently...once we knew the differences we could work to develop what our shared agenda was.'

Chapter 2

2. Findings

2.1 What makes Finglas Unique?

2.1.1 The socio-economic environment

The Finglas area is home to a well-established community with a growing population. The present population is 23,839⁴¹ compared with a population of 20,752 in 2011⁴². This represents an average growth rate across the area of 4.5% compared with a national figure of 3.8%⁴³. The population growth was not spread evenly across the area with growth rates as high as 9% in Finglas South B and as low as 2% in Fingal North B.

The area is disadvantaged by both national and by Dublin standards with some electoral divisions scoring among the most highly disadvantaged within the Dublin City Council area. All seven electoral divisions are below average, while four are classified as disadvantaged - Finglas North A (-16.64), Fingal North B (-14.4), Finglas South A (-14.5) and Finglas South D (-16.43) - and one, Finglas South C (-20.29) is classified as very disadvantaged⁴⁴.

Finglas has an older population than the national profile. But within this age-based profile, there exists a growing young population with an average age dependency ratio⁴⁵ of 54.1% which is a little higher than the national figure of 52.7%⁴⁶.

An above average number of the Traveller population live in the area and closely adjacent to the area. Travellers make up 1.74% of the population of the area, compared with a national figure of 0.7%⁴⁷. There is also a higher than average proportion of one parent households in the area. One parent households make up 49% of households in Finglas, which is almost twice the national average percentage of 25%.

For the number of individuals at work, studying, caring, retired or disabled in the area, Finglas is below the national average. While for those seeking a first job or unemployed, Finglas is above the national average in these social indicators. In June 2016, there were 5,187 people on the live register in Finglas, of whom 799 were under 25, giving a youth unemployment rate of 15.4%⁴⁸. Adult educational attainment levels are poor compared with the national average. The area has a mature infrastructure of education, local authority and health services in place, one whose density would match adjoining areas⁴⁹.

The area has a range of services for children and young people including 25 early years services, 13 primary schools, seven secondary schools and three School Completion Programmes (A, B and C) operating in all the aforementioned primary and secondary schools. A 2008 study identified a number of issues, in relation to education services locally, including lower than average primary and secondary school attendance. Lower attendance levels were typically from an early age and concentrated in some families who struggled to cope.⁵⁰ At that time the researchers also noted that services were unable to meet the demand in relation to: educational psychology assessments; special needs; emotional and behavioural difficulties; speech therapy, literacy and/or numeracy, as well as families in crisis.

41 Central Statistics Office, Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 1, n.d. <http://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/presspages/2017/census2016summaryresults-part1/> [accessed 15 March 2018].

42 Central Statistics Office, Census 2011 Reports, n.d. <http://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2011reports/> [accessed 15 September 2016]

43 Central Statistics Office, Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 1.

44 Pobal, Pobal Deprivation Indices, n.d. <https://maps.pobal.ie/WebApps/DeprivationIndices/index.html> [accessed 15 September 2016]

45 Age dependency ratio is the ratio of dependents - people younger than 15 or older than 64 - to the working-age population - those between the ages of 15 years and 64 years. Data are shown as the proportion of dependents per 100 working-age population.

46 Central Statistics Office, Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 1.

47 Central Statistics Office, Census 2011 Reports.

48 Central Statistics Office, Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 1.

49 The information included in this section is drawn from Census 2011 and Census 2016 (where it was available).

50 Finglas Cabra Partnership, Falling through the net - post-primary education research; Cracks in the pavement - primary education research. (Finglas: Finglas Cabra Partnership, 2008).

2.1.2 Interagency cooperation

The Better Finglas baseline study concluded there were about 30 voluntary and statutory-based organisations operating locally (excluding schools, hospitals and religious groups)⁵¹. The baseline also identified a small number of locally based partnership-type structures that predated Better Finglas including:

- The Finglas Children and Family Support Network established in 2012 by Tulsa. This was one of the groups approached and advised of the potential opportunity for funding under the ABC Programme.
- The Dublin North West Area Partnership which works in the areas of employment, enterprise support, education and local development.
- The North-West Area Joint Policing Committee (which comprises the five councillors from Finglas, the Gardaí and one community representative) who is responsible for public safety.
- The Finglas Cabra Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force, a partnership between statutory, voluntary and community sectors, whose role is to implement the national drugs strategy through a locally agreed action plan.

In addition to these partnership-type structures, there have also been various practical examples of groups and organisations (statutory and community) coming together over the years, on an interagency basis, to implement various projects and programme of work (e.g. various Equality for Women Projects and Back to Employment Programmes).

2.2 The Nature of the Better Finglas Interagency Approach

2.2.1. Key features of the Better Finglas interagency approach

The key features of the Better Finglas approach can be captured using the themes of the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory framework⁵² as:

- Membership - The decision by Better Finglas to attract a membership that was appropriate, inclusive and collaborative. Considerable attention given to fostering mutual respect, understanding and trust between members.
- Structures and processes - The establishment and focus on the operation of processes and structures facilitated multiple layers of participation. Alongside the development of clear roles and guidelines, there exists the ability and adaptability to amend processes and dissolve structures when they had served their purpose and were no longer required.
- Communication - The establishment of clear communication channels and links both between organisations and between Better Finglas and other organisations built on the informal relationships established through earlier collaborations.
- Purpose and vision - The establishment of a shared vision, clear goals and common objectives among the organisations involved with Better Finglas.
- Resources - The location of adequate additional funding to enable Better Finglas to access resources to build capacity locally (e.g. buy in training) and to employ the necessary skilled staff.

⁵¹ Kathy Walsh and Brian Harvey, Better Finglas Interagency Co-operation Baseline, unpublished [Dublin: Barnardos, 2017].

⁵² Paul W. Mattessich, Marta Murray-Close and Barbara R. Monsey, Collaboration: What Makes It Work.

2.2.2 Membership

Using the wider consortium as the vehicle, Better Finglas attracted and engaged a comprehensive cross-section of over 50 relevant agencies, organisations, and groups involved with children and families locally. The collective nature of the processes used to develop the ABC application, which included the use of a Barnardos staff member to act a facilitator to support the group to make decisions, played an important role in building trust between consortium members. It also contributed to the ability of the consortium to make the decision to establish a smaller Steering Group who would take responsibility for overseeing and driving the programme.

'There were a lot of compromises required at the start, when it was being decided what we would do. We could not do everything. For example, the decision to focus on early years (zero to eight-year olds) was not popular with those who work with older age groups. But the people around the table were prepared to compromise for the sake of improving things for parents and children in Finglas.'

Source: Steering Group Member

2.2.3 Structures and processes

The interagency capacity-building work of Better Finglas has been supported by the way it operates and, specifically, by the structures and processes it employs. The structures developed by Better Finglas offer local professionals and organisations opportunities to participate at multiple levels - as consortium members, as Steering Group members, as implementation team members and, at times, within working groups working under the auspices of a particular implementation team. Each structure has a clear role and purpose. The Memorandum of Understanding, between Barnardos (as the lead agency) and the Better Finglas Steering Group, also provides important clarity in relation to their different roles and responsibilities. Where a structure is no longer needed, it is ceased and any outstanding work re-allocated to a different/new structure (to-date one implementation team has been dissolved following completion of its work while two were combined into a new implementation team due to overlapping workloads). Each structure also has a chairperson, a vice chairperson/co-chair and a Better Finglas staff member who acts as support/facilitator for the group. Generally, the chairperson and the Better Finglas staff member responsible for a group meet in advance of the group meeting in order to finalise the agenda and ensure the meeting runs smoothly. A schedule of regular meetings for each group is generally agreed by the group early in the year. Meetings usually run for 90 minutes finishing on time or ahead of schedule which attendees appreciate.

The provision of a facilitator (by Barnardos) to support the development of the Better Finglas Programme and the decision to use logic models⁵³ has facilitated both collective agenda setting and collective oversight of implementation. The ability of Better Finglas to adapt has also contributed to interagency capacity. A good example of this is the work completed during 2017 by the Steering Group and the implementation teams in relation to the future of Better Finglas and its work. All of these processes and structures have contributed to the building of trust and relationships between those involved in Better Finglas.

'I found the revisiting of the logic models very useful to the interagency approach, we all came together from our different disciplines, we all perceived things differently and the logic models amplified these difference, this was a good thing because once we knew the differences we could work to develop what our shared agenda was.'

Source: Steering Group Member

2.2.4 Communication

The culture Better Finglas has created is one of open communication. Individuals are encouraged to speak their mind at meetings which is facilitated by the way meetings are chaired and run. Connections between structures are clear and strong. Each implementation team chairperson is a member of the Steering Group ensuring open lines of communication between these different structures. Better Finglas also proactively provides an opportunity for professionals to meet informally both before and after the meetings. As a consequence, this has supported the establishment of good personal connections between professionals working across Better Finglas.

'Our meetings often start with a cup of tea and a general catch up, some people might think this is a waste of time, it is not, it gives us a chance to catch up with one another and that is important. When we get down to the official business, we know what we need to do, and we all know one another well, so our meetings are generally focused, but not too serious and that is what makes them enjoyable.'

Source: Implementation Team Member

53 Logic models are used for planning, implementation and evaluation purposes. For planning purposes, the logic model structure helps programme developers articulate the parameters and expectations of their programme, as well as, the changes among participants, systems, or organizations that are expected as a result of programme activities. As an evaluation tool, the logic model enables programme planners make program design decisions that will influence the trajectory of the evaluation. It can also be used to oversee programme implementation.

2.2.5 Purpose and vision

Better Finglas was able to capitalise and use the strong commitment to/connection with Finglas that existed within individual professionals working locally **‘to improve things for families and children locally’**. It worked with key individuals locally to build a collective sense of purpose, helpfully captured in a vision, which encouraged buy-in from individuals.

The work of translating this shared vision, into clear goals and specific objectives, was also a collective interagency process that focused on what needed to be achieved in order to address the key gaps in services.

The approach of Better Finglas was always to fill gaps and address needs, through the provision of support for existing organisations locally (e.g. training and mentoring), ensuring that there was no risk or fear at an interagency level in relation to duplication and/or displacement.

‘We are all committed to making things better for children and families locally, we all play a part in this as part of our day jobs, while Better Finglas gives us an opportunity to do something collectively about it.’

Source: Joint Steering Group and Implementation Team Member

2.2.6 Resources

Better Finglas was successful in drawing down over €1.2 million of ABC Programme funding for services for children and families in the Finglas area over the period from 2015 to 2017. These resources enabled Better Finglas to do three key things which, in turn, supported its interagency capacity building work. Firstly, the resources enabled the Programme to formalise its ongoing relationship with Barnardos (a national organisation with significant experience in relation to the delivery of services for families and children). Barnardos was identified as the lead agency before funding was secured. The award of the funding enabled the formal employment of Barnardos to act as the lead agency for the Programme. Secondly, it enabled Better Finglas to recruit and employ a skilled staff team. Thirdly, as a requirement of ABC funding, resources would be used to implement evidence-based programmes.

‘There is a growing recognition that no single organisation can deal with the issues and that what is needed is connection with others to resolve serious issues in the community.’

Source: Implementation Team Member

The careful management of these resources, together with the approach of Better Finglas in focusing on engaging with and upskilling professionals and existing services locally, made a significant contribution to Better Finglas’ ability to sustain high levels of interagency involvement and goodwill, and build interagency

capacity. Better Finglas was also able to add value to its resources by working in partnership with the HSE and Tusla who provided the necessary resources to facilitate the establishment of two additional part-time positions. The calibre and leadership skills of Barnardos staff and the Better Finglas team further supported the interagency capacity-building work. These skills and abilities were utilised to facilitate and support a sense of interagency leadership across the various structures. This sharing of leadership was supported through the adoption of a consensual process of decision-making and influenced by the individuals and organisations involved who were supportive and wanted to make the shared ownership of Better Finglas work in practice.

2.3 Outcomes of the Interagency Capacity-Building

2.3.1 Overview

Outcomes have arisen at a number of levels, and for a range of groups, as a direct result of the interagency capacity-building work of Better Finglas. Outcomes arise at a number of levels for children and families as well as for individual professionals/practitioners and organisations involved in Better Finglas. These outcomes are explored in more detail within this section.

2.3.2 Outcomes for professionals/practitioners

The individual professionals and practitioners involved in Better Finglas identified a series of positive personal and professional outcomes as a result of their involvement with the programme as follows:

- Increased levels of specialist skills, knowledge and confidence gained through training and mentoring.

All of the professionals interviewed believed that their skills, knowledge and confidence had improved as a result of their involvement in Better Finglas. According to one interviewee,

'I have had the opportunity to gain new skills through Better Finglas, I have not been able to do the training yet, but I appreciate that fact that it is there and it is open to me, that is huge for me'.

Other interviewees described it in the following terms,

'I definitely have a better understanding..... of the needs of children and families and the availability of services across a range of agencies and sectors, before I just tended to think about it only from the perspective of my organisation'. 'I have learned a lot, both my knowledge and confidence have increased, it has been very beneficial and I can see that I am now more willing to innovate and take calculated risks, I think I had gone a bit stale and this (Better Finglas) has shook me up'.

Another interviewee perceived herself as,

'being more willing to innovate and change how I do things because of Better Finglas'.

- Strengthened/created new relationships with other professionals working locally

While some individuals were already known to one another, their involvement in Better Finglas strengthened and deepened these connections. Involvement also enabled the creation of new cross sectoral connections between individuals working in different sectors e.g. early years and primary school practitioners. According to one interviewee they were,

'at Steering Group level were able to build on existing relationships, while at implementation team level.... built new relationships'.

According to another interviewee, the purpose of her involvement with Better Finglas was to,

'enable me make contact with other early year professionals, we rarely ever get the chance to meet'.

- Access to peer support

Some professionals were able to access peer support as a result of their involvement in Better Finglas (e.g. from other service managers locally, from other Triple P trained trainers),

'Being a manager is a lonely place, now I have more allies in the same position as me, I can and do talk to them, I guess you could call it manager to manager peer support.'

- Increased levels of motivation

Quite a number of interviewees enjoyed and were motivated by their involvement with Better Finglas,

'I have found my involvement motivating, being part of a bigger process of change with other committed individuals'.

- Better informed about what is going on locally

Many interviewees indicated that a key outcome of their involvement with Better Finglas was the fact that they were much better informed about what was happening in relation to children and families locally and nationally. An interviewee noted that,

'information sharing happens at every meeting and at every meeting I attend I take something useful away with me.'

- Increased levels of trust

According to the interviewees, levels of trust between the individuals involved in Better Finglas have deepened to the point where individual professionals feel confident that they can speak off the record and expect these confidences to be respected,

'I know that whatever I might say off the record at our meetings will stay within the confines of the group and that means that I and others can be very clear in our communications, and that individuals around the table can really know why things are happening the way they are'.

- Time Commitment

The one negative outcome was the time commitment required to participate in Better Finglas, which required busy individuals to step away from their core work for a time,

'Attending the Better Finglas meetings takes me away from my immediate work and that can be tricky particularly where something arises that has to be dealt with as a matter of urgency'.

2.3.3 Outcomes for organisations involved in Better Finglas

- Outcomes for the organisations involved in Better Finglas identified by individual professionals included:
- Opportunities for learning, skills acquisition and capacity building

Participation in the Better Finglas Programme offered the participating organisations access to quality accredited training and for their staff at no cost,

'Staff in my organisation were able to avail of training opportunities that they would otherwise not have got with the funding cutbacks- this has fed directly into improved working practices and more fulfilled staff'.

These trained staff were, in turn, **'able to advise and support their colleagues'** thereby adding further value to the organisation.

- Positive practical changes in working practices

Some organisations reported making changes to their practices as a result of Better Finglas, while others got new ideas in relation to making their practices more structured. One organisation indicated now they had,

'tweaked what they were doing as a result of learning gained from our involvement in Better Finglas'.

Their view was that these changes had,

'improved their working practices and contributed to a better quality of services for parents and children locally'.

Another organisation described how their organisation and staff had received,

'lots of news ideas about and from the Aistear and Síolta guides, as well as the learning journals and plans'.

Their view was that the application of this learning in turn had made their **'practices more professional'**. It was also noted that some common templates and resources developed by Better Finglas were for the first time, being used by all the early years setting locally in relation to preparing children for the transition to primary school.

- Establishment of new connections and relationship building

Participation in Better Finglas gave some smaller and locally based organisations access to larger organisations. Conversely, for these larger and less locally based organisations, it ensured they were aware of local needs and the on-the-ground situation. One smaller organisation described it in the following terms,

'We would never have got to meet the organisations or the individuals we are sitting around the table with in Better Finglas, it has been so useful in terms of meeting key individuals working locally'.

A larger organisation described how,

'its involvement with Better Finglas had definitely enhanced its relationship with other organisations involved with Better Finglas but also how it had also gone wider than that to other organisations working locally'.

Several organisations also noted that some parents were more positively disposed to their organisation when they became aware of their connections to other organisations and other settings.

- Enhanced levels of information and resource sharing

Many of the organisations consulted as part of this study indicated that they had benefited from the sharing of information which, in some instances, had also facilitated the sharing/donation of resources. One organisation described it in the following terms,

‘Because of our involvement with Better Finglas we are much more aware of possible funding opportunities and more than that have been able to access sound advice on making a successful application’.

Another organisation described it thus,

‘We (the organisations around the table) have been able to harness the resources of individual partners. Dublin City Council for example, provided Better Finglas with space in the civic offices in the early stages of its developed and supported Better Finglas locate its current premises. We and others were also able to provide venues for the delivery of training and the like at no cost’.

It was also noted that organisations as a result of information sharing now have more opportunities to refer clients to evidenced-based programmes operating locally. It was also noted that information on organisations involved in Better Finglas is shared widely by Better Finglas with other local organisations as well as individual parents.

2.3.4 Outcomes for children and families

Consultations with parents and individual professionals involved with Better Finglas identified a series of outcomes for children and families as a result of the interagency work. These outcomes included:

- More services/enhanced services

The various evidence-based programmes (including Wizard of Words, Baby Massage, Triple P, Preparing for Life Home Visiting Programme etc.) rolled out by Better Finglas, delivered in a range of venues often by a range of organisations, have enhanced the breadth of services available to families locally. Interviewees commented that,

‘pre-school children (attending early years settings involved in the Better Finglas programme) making the transition to primary school were prepared and excited about starting in primary school’.

‘Children participating in the Wizard of Words programme had improved literacy skills’.

‘Trained Traveller Triple P practitioners and baby massage instructors have delivered peer-led programmes to Traveller families locally’.

The quality of existing services available to families locally has also been enhanced through Better Finglas by the provision of access to quality training and mentoring for the individuals who provide these services. Some of the organisations trained by Better Finglas have also begun to deliver the programmes, which Better Finglas provided access to, outside the local area (e.g. St. Helena’s Family Resource Centre staff have delivered Triple P workshops to parents located in the Baleskin Reception Centre). The joint needs analysis undertaken by the various organisations involved in Better Finglas has ensured that the services provided/enhanced are relevant to the needs of families locally and do not duplicate services already in place. The training of significant

numbers of practitioners across a range of organisations to deliver Triple P in particular has effectively eliminated waiting lists for universal parenting programmes locally, with courses commencing as soon as they are full.

- Better information and communication by/from professionals

The fact that individual professionals were better informed about what services were locally available meant these professionals were more equipped to inform and encourage parents to take advantage of the various programmes on offer locally. With parents increasingly referred to an initiative by more than one service, for some this dual referral reinforced the value of the initiative they were being referred to. It was also the case that the informed and, in some cases, upskilled and more confident professionals provided similar messages using a common language, thereby avoiding any mixed messages,

‘Staff that have been trained are more confident in their practice, making them better at communicating with parents, in turn making it more likely that parents will be able to understand and absorb what the professional is saying’.

- Better connections between services

Better Finglas has facilitated better connections between services. It collates a calendar of training courses so that services who wish to refer parents/families to a programme can easily access the next programme. Useful referral pathways have also begun to emerge for families who may need additional supports,

‘Triple P participants who needed additional supports are now routinely referred to the local Family Support Service to access the supports they need’

Useful connections have also been established between early years setting and primary schools that provide Junior Infant Teachers with a clear contact point should they require any additional background information on an incoming junior infant child. These connections ultimately benefit parents and children alike.

2.4 The Challenges to Interagency Capacity-Building Work

A variety of challenges to Better Finglas’ interagency work were identified and grouped under five themes⁵⁴ as follows:

- Contextual challenges
- Organisational challenges
- Cultural/professional obstacles
- Commitment and prioritisation issues
- Challenges for the Better Finglas Programme itself

2.4.1 Contextual challenges to interagency work

Many of the issues Better Finglas has sought to address have a strong structural component. The risk was always present that unrealistic expectations would be placed on Better Finglas. Better Finglas sought

⁵⁴ These themes are taken from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs’ Review of international evidence on interagency working in 2011, which was undertaken to inform the development of Children’s Services Committees in Ireland.

to manage this by putting in place logic models, which detail the expected outputs and outcomes. The overall Better Finglas logic model is included as Appendix 4. Other challenges for Better Finglas related to the fact that few organisations, participating in Better Finglas, had co-terminus boundaries. This was particularly an issue for national and regionally-focused organisations whose staff found it hard to justify their involvement in a local initiative. The geography of Finglas was also a challenge, given that it was historically divided into four areas and some services still use this outdated structure.

2.4.2 Organisational challenges for participant organisation

Organisational challenges included:

- A lack of local offices (for some organisations).
- Staff not having a specific geographical remit.
- A lack of understanding, at organisational level, of the time required to support interagency work, with no core protected time allocated for this purpose.
- A lack of engagement at senior management level resulted in making learning transfer difficult.
- Changes in key senior personnel and transition to/with new staff.
- Professional, technical and ethical obstacles to information sharing. Particular agencies' policies, procedures and systems (e.g. data protocols which may impact on the ability of an organisation to share data).
- Maintaining a focus on those who most need services rather than those who access them.

2.4.3 Cultural/professional obstacles/challenges

Cultural/professional obstacles, in relation to Better Finglas interagency work, included:

- Some agency professionals have a particular organisational perspective that they report finding it hard to deviate from.
- Stereotyping of particular professions and occupations.
- Different levels of qualification and experience, leading to different views.
- Building connections with professionals who do not work on a geographical basis (e.g. maternity services).
- Building connections across sectors (where there are few opportunities for cross-sectoral meetings (e.g. early years services and primary schools).

2.4.4 Commitment and prioritisation issues

Commitment obstacles, in relation to Better Finglas' interagency work, included:

- Professionals finding it hard to carve out the time to attend meetings, training and other events.
- Burnout for those working for years on what are seemingly intractable problems.
- Better Finglas is a time bound programme, which may make some organisations and individuals more reluctant to get involved.
- Differing levels of buy-in, with some agencies more reluctant/unable to engage often because of limited resources.

2.4.5 Challenges for the Better Finglas Programme

Challenges for Better Finglas, identified by individual professionals in relation to Better Finglas' interagency work, included:

- The challenge of sustainability, linked to the lack of certainty for the staff and for the professionals involved, in relation to the future of Better Finglas post 2017.
- Continuing to keep Better Finglas relevant and connected in a crowded space with so many groups set up locally (e.g. Children and Young People's Services Committees, Family Support Health Working Groups, etc.).
- Finding ways to constructively connect with the wider consortium members.
- Continuing to find ways to connect directly with local residents (to date family fun days and other events have been held).
- Engagement with communities and individuals living in poorly served locations within Finglas West.

2.5 Case Studies

Case study 1 (Figure 2) and Case study 2 (Figure 3) provide two practical examples of the Better Finglas interagency approach in action. The first examines the interagency approach used in relation to the rollout by Better Finglas of the Triple P Positive Parenting Programme. The second examines the application of an interagency approach to the development of a transitions programme which supports local children to make a smooth transition from early years settings to primary school.

Figure 2: Case study 1 - The Better Finglas Interagency Approach to Triple P

What is Triple P and why was it chosen?

The Positive Parenting Program (better known as Triple P) is a parenting and family support system designed to prevent and treat behavioural and emotional problems in children and teenagers (from birth to age 16). It aims to prevent problems before they arise in the family, school and community, and to create family environments that encourage children to realise their potential. It does this by offering a suite of interventions of increasing intensity designed to increase parenting skills and parenting confidence, by engaging, encouraging and empowering families to address common children's and adolescents' social, emotional and behavioural issues⁵⁵. Better Finglas chose Triple P because it was widely recognised and evidence-based. They also chose it because it provides a wide range of supports that made it suitable for a broad range of families. Course-length was shorter than other programmes and cost effective.

The interagency approach:

The interagency approach to Triple P began with a collective decision-making process in relation to the selection of the parenting programme for Finglas. The involvement of all Steering Group members in this decision-making process meant that members were ultimately prepared to release staff for training. Better Finglas ultimately decided to use their resources to cover the cost of training a cross-section of professionals working locally to deliver six Triple P Training Programmes and, subsequently, to provide supports (including a Triple P Mentor and the organisation of regular Peer Assisted Support and Supervision Sessions) for the individuals trained. Trained practitioners send delivery plans for the year to Better Finglas who act as a centralised administration hub. This enabled Better Finglas to compile a combined calendar of training and parenting supports, thereby eliminating waiting lists. The Triple P programme was made accessible to all agencies due to the fact that the programme was made available to all parents and that the training for practitioners to act as Triple P facilitators was provided at no cost to the agency.

The outcomes:

The 30 local practitioners/professionals trained to deliver Triple identified a series of positive personal and professional outcomes including: increased skills; knowledge and confidence; increased motivation; and enhanced relationships with other professionals. The outcomes for participating organisations included: trained staff adding value to the organisation; beneficial links with other organisations; a common parenting programme that organisations can refer parents to (with no waiting lists); as well as a sharing of information in relation to families who might benefit from the training. A total of 381 participants attended Triple P parenting courses over the two-year period from November 2015 to November 2017 with additional courses delivered to parents outside of Finglas (e.g. Baleskin Reception Centre). Better Finglas were also able to leverage support for their investment from Tusla who agreed to provide and fund the part-time Triple P Mentor. The role of this Mentor was to support the implementation and fidelity of the programme, thus ensuring best practice within the programme rollout. This specifically involved linking with and supporting the trained practitioners, reporting on progress, attending and providing feedback at the relevant Implementation Team meetings as well as delivery of courses.

The learning:

The proactive involvement of the cross-sectoral Steering Group in the selection of the Triple P Programme smoothed the way for the recruitment of the practitioners to be trained. The population level approach of the Programme ensured that it had a resonance with and relevance for all organisations working to support parents locally. The decision by Better Finglas to use their resources to provide local practitioners with free access to Triple P training at a time when few local organisations had access to resources for training was also key. The provision of other supports, in the form of supports from the Triple P Mentor/ Better Finglas Research Assistant together with regular peer support sessions and general admin support, served both to support quality control and the motivation of the trained practitioners. Other resources were also provided by Better Finglas including booklets for parents with projectors, screens and laptops made available for practitioners. The key challenges for the initiative were the recruitment of parents and the availability (because of other work pressures) of some of the practitioners to deliver the training.

Figure 3: Case study 2 - The Better Finglas Interagency Approach to “Steps to School”

What is the “Steps to School” Transition Programme?

The transition from preschool to primary school is a key stage of a child’s life. Better Finglas established a working group to consider the feasibility of, and ultimately developed, a programme that all local pre-schools and primary schools could use to support this transition. Key elements of the programme included: sectoral and cross-sectoral training; the creation of transitions boxes⁵⁶; the distribution of school welcome packs for incoming junior infant parents; a photobook (which provides a visual representation of schools); and a transition form. The purpose of the transition form was to encourage and facilitate the sharing (with the consent of the parent) of key information between settings.

The interagency approach:

Invitations to participate in the initial interagency working group were sent to a wide cross-section of early years settings and primary schools locally. This group was made up of a unique combination of practitioners from 16 organisations which included early years settings and primary schools, often two sectors that rarely get to meet. The initial meetings of the larger group were facilitated by a National Expert in transitions. This meeting helped establish a shared understanding of the importance of children’s transitions. Workshops were also held with early years practitioners to connect transitions work with the national early childhood frameworks (Aistear and Siolta). The fact that the Working Group was established under the auspices of the Early Years Implementation Team ensured that findings emerging from the group were fed back to other agencies and organisations working locally. The work of the group was facilitated by the Better Finglas Early Years Mentor while the school welcome packs (which included information on a range of local organisations and services) were compiled by the Better Finglas administration team. Better Finglas also provided training and funding for transition photobooks in an early years setting participating in the programme.

The outcomes:

As a result of receiving the concise transition forms, Junior Infant teachers reported that they were better informed about their new pupils. Early years staff reported being motivated by the recognition that they have an important role to play in supporting children and their parents prepare for a significant event. Participation in the working group and attendance at the workshops provided early years practitioners with a useful opportunity to meet and work together, creating a sense of collegiality in a sector that can often be quite fragmented. Participation in the working group also provided an opportunity for staff from both settings to meet and establish contact. Parents benefited from the opportunity created by the discussion of the transition form which often turned into a school readiness discussion. Many parents were of the view that their children were excited and more confident about the transition because of the programme while Junior Infant Teachers were of the view that, ‘children from early years services are generally better prepared ... because of the work done with them in the local early years settings’.

The learning:

Among the key reasons that the “Steps to School” Transition programme worked was that it satisfied both the policy and practice needs of early years settings. It also met the goals of primary schools in relation to transitions. It created unique opportunities for cross-sectoral work, as well as useful opportunities for collaborative work and learning in the early years sector. The cross-sectoral working group was a key driver. The other key drivers were the input and skills of the Early Years Mentor and the related financial resources provided by Better Finglas. Challenges for the programme going forward include the need for feedback from the schools to the early years settings as well as the early years settings being able to locate the resources necessary to provide relief cover permitting staff the necessary time to complete the transition forms.

⁵⁶ A transition box contains practical materials to support children, in the preschool setting, with their transition to primary school. Examples of resources included in these boxes include: Story Books (that relate to going to school), local school uniforms, school accessories (like lunch boxes, pencils and pencil cases school bags, etc), as well as photos of older children in their school uniforms (with the permission of their parents).

'People around the table were prepared to compromise for the sake of improving things for parents and children in Finglas.'

A woman with dark hair, wearing a red cardigan, is smiling and looking at a young girl. The girl is wearing a light blue sleeveless top with a green apple graphic and is stacking colorful blocks (yellow, red, green, blue) on a table. The woman is also reaching for a red block. The background is plain white.

Chapter 3

3. Capturing the Learning from the Interagency Work

3.1 Conclusions

3.1.1 The value of the interagency capacity-building work

'Interagency' was defined for the purposes of this study as at least two agencies or organisations working together in a planned and formal way. The type of interagency work facilitated by Better Finglas went far beyond this definition. Interagency in the context of Better Finglas was clearly both a goal and a capacity building way of working. The interagency capacity building work of Better Finglas has been valuable both for the practitioners and organisations involved as well as for parents and children locally.

Practitioners and professionals gained increased levels of specialist knowledge and skills. Some also reported being increasingly confident and motivated by their involvement in a more collective type of action. Relationships were strengthened between professionals and practitioners with new relationships and connections formed. Practitioners also reported being better informed about what was going on locally and that their engagement with Better Finglas has provided them with access to peer support from others working locally.

Organisations involved in Better Finglas gained through being able to access quality training for their staff at no cost. These trained staff added value to their respective organisations and were generally very motivated as a result of the training. These organisations were also better informed about the work of other organisations locally as a result of their involvement. For many organisations, their involvement with Better Finglas generated new contacts/deepened existing relations with other organisations working locally. There is also evidence that for some sectors (e.g. early years settings), participation in Better Finglas provided useful opportunities for organisations working within a sector/across sectors to meet and created a valuable sense of collegiality in sectors that are often very fragmented.

Parents and children locally benefited both from more services and programmes (e.g. the Wizards of Words Programme for children in local schools and the Triple P and Preparing for Life Home Visiting programme for parents) as well as from enhanced services (e.g. the introduction of a more formalised school transition programme). Parents also benefited from local professionals/practitioners being better informed about the services on offer locally, as well as the emergence of referral pathways, whereby a parent needing additional supports or services was routinely referred to the additional services they needed.

3.1.2 The enablers

The five key features of the Better Finglas approach, that supported the interagency work, included:

1. The inclusive and collaborative nature of the membership.
2. The structures and processes employed provided organisations and professionals with opportunities to participate in the work at multiple levels. Each structure had a clear purpose, role and meeting schedule which were supported by a Chairperson and by at least one Better Finglas staff member, as well as the Better Finglas project leader who attends all of the Better Finglas governance meetings. The Memorandum of Understanding between the lead agency and the Better Finglas Steering Group provided important clarity in relation to roles and responsibilities. The use of logic modelling throughout the process of application development and programme implementation was also important in relation to the process of collective agenda-setting, oversight and implementation management.
3. A culture of open communication has permeated the work of Better Finglas. The Chairpersons of the different structures have strived to ensure that meeting participants could make their views known. Decision-making was by consensus with clear lines of communication between the different structures of governance. Better Finglas also provided more informal opportunities for individuals to interact.

4. The development of a shared purpose and vision. Better Finglas was able to capitalise on the already strong commitment to Finglas that existed among professionals/practitioners working locally. It achieved this by working with and enabling existing organisations to identify, and ultimately address, unmet needs.
5. Three resources were put in place to support the programme:
 - A skilled lead agency and staff committed to the principle and practice of interagency collaboration, many of whom had good connections with professionals locally;
 - Additional funding and support from consortium members to support specific initiatives;
 - Financial resources enabled the provision of training and the organisation of information sharing events and activities that would otherwise not have happened.

3.1.3 The challenges

The four key challenges to Better Finglas' interagency work were identified as follows:

1. The structural dimensions of many of the issues Better Finglas is seeking to address.
2. Organisational challenges related to the fact that some organisations' staff had a thematic rather than a geographical remit. There was also a lack of understanding within some organisations of the time required to support and engage in interagency work. Changes in key senior personnel and transition to/with new staff also proved challenging in some instances.
3. The existence of cultural and professional obstacles (including stereotyping of particular occupations and different levels of qualification and experience leading to different viewpoints) were also challenges. A lack of opportunities existed to build connections between professionals working in different sectors and with professionals who do not work on a geographical basis. Some professionals also found it hard to find the time to participate in interagency work.
4. The lack of certainty in relation to the future of Better Finglas posed challenges in relation to staff retention and related staff replacement issues.

3.2 Learning Arising from the Work of Better Finglas

3.2.1 At a local level for future work with children and families in Finglas

The learning includes the following:

- Significant levels of goodwill and commitment exist among professionals working in Finglas that can be tapped into for future interagency work.
- The importance of the creation and resourcing of regular and structured opportunities for sectoral and cross-sectoral meetings between professionals working with children and families locally, in relation to the establishment and sustaining of useful working relationships between professionals.
- The provision of high quality/accredited training for staff working locally at no/low cost can function as a useful incentive to encourage organisations and professionals to become involved in interagency work locally.
- The Better Finglas structures and processes have the potential to be used to oversee and support the implementation of other programmes targeting children and families locally, and/or the continuation of the ABC Programme.
- Barnardos has the capacity and experience to act as the lead for future interagency work to support services for children and families locally

- Individual professionals working locally and worried that their attendance at interagency meetings and events will take them away from their day-to-day work need to be regularly reassured and reminded that the networking and information-exchange opportunities afforded at these events has been found to have significant value in terms of:
 - Fostering relationships with other professionals;
 - Being motivated by being part of a wider collective action and;
 - Being better informed in relation to wider local developments for children and families.
- The recruitment of parents within formal school settings (to attend parenting programmes) is more challenging than in other settings as it can take time to develop relationships of trust with parents in this particular setting.
- The work undertaken in Finglas has the capacity to be replicated by those who also work in other locations.

3.2.2 For future work with children and families in other areas

The learning includes the following:

- Successful interagency work takes time and is resource (human and financial) intensive. Where there is no history of interagency work within an area, time and resources will need to be made available to support the initial establishment of the interagency group. This will assist the group to identify the key needs it wants to address as well as the processes it will use. The Better Finglas Programme built on a positive history of interagency work and benefited from, firstly, their appointment of Barnardos (a nationally recognised, highly respected and skilled children's charity, with local offices) as the lead agency and, secondly, the financial resources allocated to them under the ABC Programme.
- There is a clear difference between an interagency approach and an interagency capacity-building approach. The interagency approach focuses organisations and groups working together for a common purpose. The interagency capacity-building approach also does this but, in addition, it also dedicates significant levels of resources to upskilling the participating organisations to deliver enhanced services locally. It specifically focuses on equipping and supporting existing agencies and professionals to upskill and to review, reconfigure and update the services they provide. This approach is clearly more sustainable than employing additional service delivery staff who will be withdrawn when funding ends.
- Interagency capacity-building approaches cannot address the structural nature of the inequality, however, they can clearly enhance service provision at a local level.
- The key preparation work required to establish an interagency approach includes:
 - The identification of a cross section of organisations operating locally and interested in working together to enhance local supports for children and families. Potential funding opportunities may provide an incentive for a group to come together.
 - The creation of a shared vision/purpose among the participating organisations.
 - The creation of relationships of trust between the key individuals involved. The adoption of consensus approach to decision-making can contribute to the development of these relationships of trust and mutual respect and also ensure that pragmatic decisions get made.
 - The collective development of logic models with resources and skilled facilitation support provides a very useful mechanism for ensuring a shared sense of purpose from the outset.

- Ideally, the group would be supported in this preparatory phase by a skilled and independent facilitator who would work to support the group develop its shared vision and purpose. Resources will need to be found to employ this facilitator.
- Finding the resources to support the work:
 - Once clarity is established about what the group wants to achieve, the next task is to locate the financial and human resources necessary to enable the group achieve its targets and goals. This will generally involve the completion of funding applications of varying degrees. The group needs to ensure that it has made adequate provision, within their application, to support the interagency way of working which is particularly human resource intensive. Individual organisations may be able to locate some financial or indeed staff resources to support the work of the group.
 - As part of the process of developing a successful funding application, it will be necessary to identify a lead organisation who will take responsibility for the day to day management and operation of the initiative on behalf of the group. The selection of this lead organisation is a key decision and the group must seek to identify a locally respected organisation with the necessary skills, previous positive experience of supporting interagency work and, ideally, experience of interagency capacity-building work. A Memorandum of Understanding needs to be put in place between the agreed lead agency and the group providing clarity from the outset in relation to their different roles and responsibilities.
 - As soon as the group's funding application is approved, staff recruitment can begin. Staff working to support interagency work need excellent people skills and ideally some previous experience of interagency work.
- The implementation of a successful interagency capacity building approach
 - Successful interagency work requires the creation of multiple opportunities for participation at different levels. This can be done through the establishment of a number of related interagency structures (e.g. committees/groups). Each of these structures needs a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson as well as at least one resource staff member who both reports to and facilitates the work of that group. These groups need to meet regularly with clear lines of communication between the different structures. Individuals involved in these various groupings need to be encouraged to speak their mind. Opportunities also need to be created, for individual professionals involved in the interagency work, to meet more informally.
 - The use of evidence-based programmes will ensure the interventions supported have the capacity to generate outcomes for all those involved.
 - The organisations and professionals involved need to be incentivised to participate through the provision of quality training at no/low-cost, access to information and mentor support. Organisations that avail of capacity-building supports need to be required to put these supports into practice. Where groups/organisations avail of training or mentoring and do not put this into practice within a certain time period, there needs to be some form of sanction (e.g. re-payment of the cost of training) in order to ensure the maximum benefit is derived from the resources available.
 - The logic models provide a useful mechanism for facilitating collective oversight, monitoring and evaluation of the extent and nature of implementation by the group.



Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 1: Adapted Version of the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

Theme	Factor	Item
Environment	History of collaboration/co-operation in the community	1. Local agencies/organisations have a history of working together?
		2. Trying to solve problems through collaboration has been common in the community.
	Collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community	3. Leaders in the community who are not part of the collaborative group seem generally hopeful about what the group can accomplish?
		4. Others (in the community) who are not a part of the collaboration would generally agree that the organisations involved in the project are the “right” organisations to make it work.
	Favourable political and social climate	5. The political and social climate seems “right” for starting a collaborative project like this one.
		6. The time was right for this collaborative project
Membership	Appropriate cross section of members	7. The people involved in the collaboration represent a cross section of those who have a stake in what the group are trying to do.
		8. All the organisations that need to be members of the collaborative group have become members of the group.
	Mutual respect and attention to trust and relationship building ^{57 58}	9. People involved in the collaboration trust one another
		10. The individuals involved have respect for the other people involved in the collaboration.
	Members see collaboration as in their self-interest	11. The organisations involved will benefit from being involved in this collaboration
	Ability to compromise	12. People involved in the collaboration are willing to compromise on important aspects of the project
	Members share a stake in both process and outcome	13. The organisations that belong to the collaborative group invest the right amount of time in the collaborative efforts with a commitment of time to the collaborative process
		14. Everyone who is a member of the group wants the project to succeed.
		15. The level of commitment among the collaboration participants is high.

57 Kathryn P. Derose, Amanda Beatty and Catherine A. Jackson, Evaluation of community voices Miami: Affecting health policy for the uninsured (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004).

58 Tom Zizys, 'Collaboration practices in government and in business: A literature review', in Joan Roberts and Pauline O'Conner, The Inter-agency Services Collaboration Project (Toronto: Wellesley Institute, 2007), pp.68-88.

Process and Structure	Multiple layers of participation	16. When the collaborative group makes major decisions, there is enough time for members to take information back to their organisations to confer with colleagues about the decision?
		17. Each of the people who participate in decisions in this collaborative group can speak for the entire organisation they represent, not just a part.
	Flexibility	18. There is a lot of flexibility when decisions are made; people are open to discussing different options.
		19. People in the collaborative group are open to different approaches to how to do the work. They are willing to consider different ways of working.
	Development of clear roles and policy guidelines	20. People in the collaborative group have a clear sense of their roles and responsibilities.
		21. There is a clear process for making decisions among the partners in the collaboration. There is equal sharing of decision making.
	Adaptability	22. The collaboration is able to adapt to changing conditions, such as fewer funds than expected, changing political climate, or change in leadership.
		23. The group has the ability to survive even if it had to make major changes in its plans or add some new members in order to reach its goals.
	Appropriate pace of development	24. This collaborative group has tried to take on the right amount of work at the right pace.
		25. The group is able to keep up with the work necessary to coordinate all the people, organisations, and activities related to the collaborative project.
Communication	Open and frequent communication	26. People in the collaboration communicate openly with one another.
		27. People in the collaboration are informed as often as they should be about what goes on in the collaboration.
		28. The people who lead communicate well with members.
	Established informal relationships and communication links	29. Communication among the people in this collaborative group happens both at formal meetings and in informal ways.
		30. Individuals have informal conversations about the project with others who are involved in this collaborative group.

Purpose	Concrete, attainable goals and objectives	31. Individuals have a clear understanding of what the collaboration is trying to accomplish.
		32. People in the collaborative group know and understand the goals.
		33. People in the collaborative group have established reasonable goals.
	Shared vision	34. The people in the collaborative group are dedicated to the idea that the group can make this project work.
		35. Individuals' ideas about what the collaboration wants to accomplish seem to be the same as the ideas of others.
	Unique purpose and sharing of the credit	36. What the group is trying to accomplish with the collaborative project would be difficult for any single organisation to accomplish by itself.
		37. No other organisation in the community is trying to do exactly what the collaboration is trying to do.
		38. There is a sharing of the credit for the group's accomplishments
		39. There is also learning purpose.
Resources	Adequate funds, staff, materials, and time	40. The group had adequate funds to do what it wants to accomplish.
		41. The group has adequate "people power" to do what it wants to accomplish.
	Skilled and shared leadership	42. The people in leadership positions for the collaboration have good skills for working with other people and organisations: with leadership is shared across the collaboration.

Source: Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory www.wilderresearch.org

Appendix 2: Better Finglas Evaluation Interviewees

Sector/ Organisation	Organisation	Individual
Early years settings	Finglas Childcare Centre	Betsy Burdis, Childcare Development Manager
	Mellow Spring Childcare Development Centre	Rachel Duff, Operations Manager
	Butterflies Community Playgroup	Rita Kiberd, Manager
Community organisations	Dublin North West Area Partnership	Anne Fitzgerald, LESN Coordinator
	The Finglas Centre	Catriona Nally, Voyages Programme Coordinator
HSE	Fingal Cabra Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force	John Bennett, Coordinator
	HSE Public Health Nursing	Marianne Healy, Director
		Gary Byrne, Clinical Psychologist

Tusla	St Helena's Family Resource Centre	Audrey Cruise, Manager
		Gráinne O'Sullivan, Former Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Programme Manager
		Evelyn Murphy, Family Support Manager
		Debbie Keogh, Triple P Mentor (p/t)
		Tracy Fox, Former Triple P Mentor (p/t)
		Teresa Nyland, Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Programme Manager
Schools	Primary Schools	Marian Farrelly, Retired Principal
	St Canice's Girls National School	Dearbhla White, Principal and Coordinator of Principal's Network
	St. Oliver Plunkett School	Aoife Kavanagh, Principal
	Finglas C School Completion Programme	Fionnuala Feely
	Home School Community Liaison	Donal Ward, Former Home School Community Liaison Teacher (St, Canice's Schools)
Other Steering Group agencies/ institutions	Dublin City Council	Larry Dooley, North West Area Community and Social Development Officer
	Dublin City Childcare Committee	Eimear Collins, Former Business Support Officer
Non-Steering Group agencies/ institutions	Children's Research Network	Caroline O'Neill, Researcher (Member of the Evaluation Implementation Team)
	Dublin City University (DCU)	Liz McLoughlin, Psychology Lecturer and Programme Chair (Member of the Evaluation Implementation Team)

Lead Agency- Barnardos/Better Finglas	Children's Services	Siobhan Greene, Assistant Director of Children's Services
		Kerri Smith, Assistant Director of Children's Services
	Teen Parents and Early Years Services	Mary Corrigan, Project Leader
	Better Finglas Team	Rebecca Moore, Project Leader
		Sharon Byrne, Early Years Mentor
Keith Adams, Research Assistant		
Independent Chair of the Steering Group		Joe Twomey, Retired School Principal

Appendix 3 Better Finglas Meetings Attended by the Evaluation team

Meeting type	Meeting date
Steering Group meetings	25 th January 2017
	9 th November 2016
	14 th September 2016
Early Years Implementation Team meetings	14 th December 2016
	19 th October 2016
Literacy Implementation Team meetings	14 th December 2016
	19 th October 2016
Parenting Implementation Team meetings	7 th December 2016
	6 th October 2016
Pregnancy and New Parents Implementation Team meetings	7 th December 2016
	6 th October 2016
Total	11 meetings

Appendix 4: Better Finglas Overall Logic Model

Vision of Better Finglas Consortium: Our vision is of a community where all services voluntary, community and statutory, are working together with families to improve the developmental, health and educational outcomes of young children living in the area. We will do this by the provision of unified evidence-based programmes and quality services to children and their parents from pregnancy to 8 years of age.

Monitoring and Evaluation: We will evaluate the outcome of our programmes by gathering data at key points using an agreed set of instruments aligned to the national ABC Programme. All service delivery will be monitored to ensure programme fidelity. Some programmes have in built pre and post testing that will monitor child outcomes. For example, the Wizard of Words (WOW) Programme uses WIAT Single Word Reading Assessment, York Reading Accuracy, York Reading Comprehension, BPVS, WIAT Spelling, and Phonemic Awareness.

Objectives	Inputs	Key Activities & Outputs	Short Term Outcomes (By 2016)	Longer Term Outcomes
To increase access to evidence-based programmes and evidence informed activities from pre-birth to 8 years	Consortium committed to vision and implementation of Better Finglas	PREGNANCY & NEW PARENTS Expand the delivery of the Community Mothers programme	Prospective and new parents have an increased knowledge of their roles and responsibilities	Improved developmental outcomes for children
To improve children's developmental outcomes	Better Finglas Steering Group to oversee implementation and the development and sustainability of local collaborative partnerships	Deliver PFL home visiting programme to prospective and new parents	Improved learning and development opportunities in the home	More confidence in parenting skills
To improve children's literacy in first and second class	Participation of families living in Finglas	Facilitate prospective and new parents' access to information	Increase knowledge of available services	Reduced parental stress
To enhance parenting skills and increase parents capacity to support their children's development	Local and National expertise	Map current provision of evidence-based parenting programmes including Incredible Years, Parenting Plus and Triple P in the area	Increase in service providers skills and knowledge in delivering evidence-based programmes and evidence informed activities	Improved capacity to support their children's development
To increase the capacity of service providers to deliver high-quality, evidence-based programmes with fidelity in an appropriate, timely and sustainable manner	Role of Barnardos as Lead Agency	Develop process/committee to oversee funding and coordination of evidence-based programmes	Increased access of evidence-based parenting programmes	Improved parent-child relationships
To increase community awareness of and use of service provision	Facilitated sessions to develop Logic model, consortium structures and governance models	Fund and support organisations to access training and materials	Provide a coordinating role and support organisations to access funding and training in the delivery of evidence-based parenting programmes	Increased numbers accessing services
To build on good inter-agency working to deliver a continuum of coordinated, high quality service provision from pre-conception to childhood	Investment by partner agencies	EARLY YEARS Support early years providers to develop quality enhancement plans for their services	Increase in staff knowledge and confidence in delivery of child-centred, quality services	Increased capacity of service providers to deliver evidence based and evidence informed programmes on a sustainable basis
	Philanthropies		Improve in identification of need and referral processes	Enhanced delivery of quality EY services
	Ongoing technical support, advice and guidance from CES and POBAL		Children experience a positive early year learning environment	Improved developmental outcomes for children
	Expert inputs by programme developers	Support the implementation of Aistear, Siolta and High Scope	Increase in time spent reading with an adult phonics, vocabulary building, reading comprehension and fluency	Increased parental capacity to support their children's development
	Staffing- project leader, administrator and mentors	LITERACY Deliver the Wizard of Words programme in partnership with schools		Increased school readiness
	Local staff trained in evidence-based programmes and implementation of evidence-based programmes	Local volunteers trained and delivering evidenced based reading programme		Improvements in reading comprehension, reading fluency, vocabulary building and phonemic awareness
	Volunteers trained in delivering Wizard of Words Programme	INTERAGENCY Develop a strategy for effective inter-agency work, focusing on concrete and specific themes such as identification of gaps in service provision, volunteering, referral pathways, and information sharing within local agency and national context		Improvements in enjoyment of reading
	Resources/ materials to deliver programmes	To provide opportunities for Better Finglas consortium to reflect, share and record learning.		Children more engaged in learning and participating longer in the education system
	MOU's with key partners in place		Improvement in information sharing and collaborative working across organisations	Increased use of evidence-based programmes in statutory and voluntary services

'There is a growing recognition that no single organisation can deal with the issues and that what is needed is connection with others to resolve serious issues in the community.'

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The **A**rea **B**ased **C**hildhood Programme 2013 – 2017