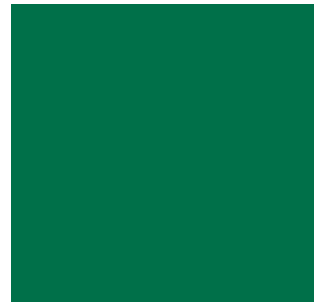
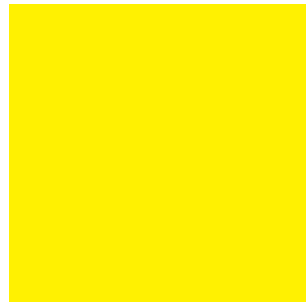




Impact 2010





Introduction

Welcome to CALA's new look review "Impact 2010". I hope you find this as informative and useful as our earlier style of annual review. Feedback has highlighted that the clear summary provided around each of the many areas of support and service delivered by CALA has been welcomed and helps to build a fuller picture of the breadth of service CALA offers. We have completed another busy and fast paced year delivering both universal and tailored services for parents, their toddlers, early years and school aged children throughout Highland and within early years support in Moray. This report provides a snapshot and overview of this work.

It is with particular pleasure that the CALA Board acknowledges the success of our bid to the Scottish Government's 'Go Play' initiative. In August this year our new Play Practice Advisor began her work with out of school clubs throughout Highland, working closely with the children and staff to expand opportunities for free play. We will be working closely with colleagues from Inspiring Scotland, the facilitators for the grant programme, to maximise the benefits of this support.

The current economical climate is on everyone's mind at the moment. As we look to the future, possibilities of growth and an expansion of service may seem unlikely when faced with likely funding cuts.

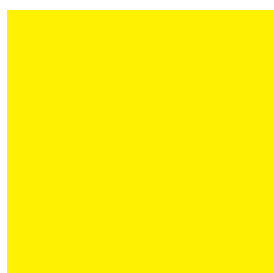
However, a lack of expansion doesn't bring a halt to the need for continual improvement and often during times of constraint, new ideas and innovative practice find a strong foothold.

Mirroring a number of national and local government pledges around developing the Childhood Practice workforce, CALA is continuing to focus on the development of strong leadership within the organisation.

Leadership training, involvement in a national innovative mentoring pilot programme and continual expansion of the use of the SSSC's Continuous Learning Framework (CLF) have all assisted the progression of improvements in staff development. As we move into the new sessional year, CALA, working with the CLF evaluation team, aims to strengthen leadership in all areas of our workforce in a planned programme of development.

As always, none of our activities would be possible without the continuing commitment of our staff and volunteer teams. My sincere thanks to them all for their hard work over this past busy year.

Capt. Alan Kennedy, MBE, Director



Family Support Services

'Family support is about empowering individuals, building on family strengths to embrace self esteem and engender a sense of being able to influence events in ones life' (*Commission on the Family 1998*)

CALA builds on this strong vision by delivering family support services through three often interlinked models;

- Family First
- Families in Focus
- Parent & Toddler Support

Through the commitment of our staff and volunteer teams, the three strands of support can be evidenced in appropriate programmes throughout Highland. Tailored one to one support often through home visiting is accessed by 28 families in Skye & Lochalsh & East Sutherland. 72 families are supported through peer group work.

Working closely with local health teams a number of targeted rural parental groups are supported by a skilled facilitator, helping parents to overcome their feelings of isolation and vulnerability.

An expansion of the more universal Parent & Toddler support programme has resulted in an increase of this service to Lochaber and West Ross and has supported a total of 208 families and 267 children over the past year. Recognised parental programmes encapsulating informal support can be directly promoted to large numbers of parents through these services. One positive example running throughout 2009/10 was the delivery of Play@Home. Successful partnerships between NHS Highland and CALA's parent & toddler programme led to the extended delivery and informed use of the Play@Home materials by 208 parents throughout Highland.



We were delighted to have secured continued funding for support for the Crossing Borders Bi-lingual Polish Co-ordinator who this past year extended her focus of support to work with Polish parents and their younger children in addition to early years and out of school aged children.



This 'connected' approach to family support through the various models delivered by CALA, and supported by co professionals in partner statutory services means services can be tailored to individual needs and delivered to families when most appropriate.

Following early development, our Family Support Services are now beginning to roll out our internal QA programme, facilitated by the CALA internal team. This work will continue throughout 2010-11.



A look at our Childhood Practice Workforce

Throughout the year CALA has retained a strong work focus on direct employment services. For the first time the total number of centres and clubs accessing supportive CALA management has exceeded 50, resulting in a workforce of 142 practitioners. These front line staff work throughout Highland across a breadth of Early Years, Daycare and Out of School. CALA is currently supporting a further 2 staff through the transfer process to direct management support.



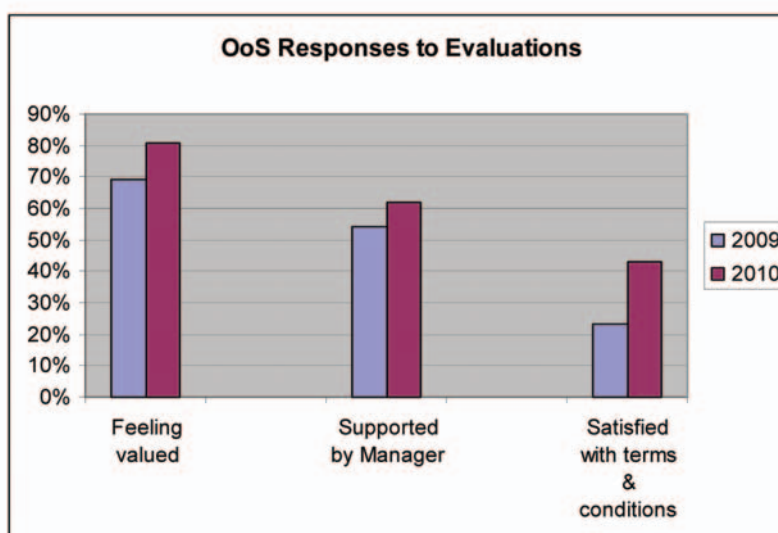


In last year's review, positive recognition was given to the work of the Early Years Practice Support Advisor. This in house practice support to early years practitioners continues to be highly valued and it is with pleasure we are able to confirm the appointment of a similar practice support officer for our out of school practitioners through the Go Play, initiative. Information is currently on its way to all member clubs highlighting opportunities for them to access this additional support.

Our human resource team have had a very busy year, not only in supporting the previously mentioned transfer of staff between employers but also in dealing with the ongoing programme of recruitment and selection. 75 new appointments have been made over the past year. A slight drop of 7 from 2009.

In terms of the ongoing internal evaluation of service it was heartening to see improved feedback from the CALA early years and out of school practitioners.

CALA has been working within out of school services for a relatively short period of time (since 2006). Out of school staff responses within the evaluation of service returns highlighted major improvements in terms of feeling that their opinions were listened to and counted, showed improvements in areas of staff retention and in general satisfaction with terms and conditions of employment. You can see from the charts however that we still have along way to go! Many of the concerns with the workforce around current rates of pay and conditions of service require a boost and positive action from a national perspective to help CALA make real improvements.



The **CALA staffbank** continues to flourish with 190 casual workers currently on the bank. Throughout the year 5 staff have moved into permanent employment either with CALA or other providers.

Strengthening Leadership

In recognising the need to continue to develop the skills, knowledge and practice of our workforce and in particular the managers who support these services and following an internal leadership training day, a CALA working group reviewed the manager's roles and responsibilities. A sharper, more tailored remit for Childhood Practice Managers (CPM's) was developed, closely reflecting the key responsibilities defined in the SSSC – Standard for Childhood Practice (2007).

Supporting this change internal CPM induction material and information has also been improved by benchmarking it closely against the Standard for Childhood Practice and the Continuous Learning Framework.

Together with a programme of ongoing learning, reflection and self-evaluation the pathway for supporting leadership within CALA is progressing.

Representatives from CALA's senior management; the Chief Executive, Human Resource Manager and Quality Manager, all successfully completed the Advanced Mentoring Programme with Edinburgh University in May 2010. New approaches to developing mentoring for the childhood practice workforce were explored during this course and following the production of national mentor guidance later this year, CALA has a clear target of using these valuable learning experiences to assist the development of mentoring support for our internal workforce.

Membership & Support Services

In addition to the specialist services delivered by CALA, general membership support and all important payroll services continue to be delivered by staff based in the Inverness and Dingwall offices. Members continue to access information and advice, insurance and disclosure processing, payroll and financial guidance from these bases.

In addition the office teams work hard at providing the often hidden essential admin support to training, quality assurance and management services.

Increasingly the CALA website – www.careandlearningalliance.co.uk is used by committees, parents and all stakeholders to access relevant information quickly and efficiently.

Training and Quality Assurance

The completion of the Rhythm and Rhyme out of school programme in Moray last year has resulted in a slight downturn in the number of workshops delivered in 2010. However, the training team have continued to deliver an extensive programme of high quality in-service training days and tailored workshops throughout Highland and Moray.

44 days of in-service training, including 18 jointly (with the local authority) workshops have been delivered in Highland. Once more our Early Maths and Numeracy training received particularly positive feedback. An increased focus continues to be given to the Curriculum for Excellence support programme as practitioners and managers put their new learning into practice.

A programme of 22 additional workshops have also been delivered in Highland, Moray and one in Argyll and Bute.

The successful foundation courses in both Early Years (3 x 7 days) and Out of School (2 x 5 days) have also been delivered with participants engaging from throughout Highland. The Highland in-service programme for 2010-2011 is now with all centres.

Recent training courses delivered to Moray based centres have proved positive and more courses are planned for 2010/11.

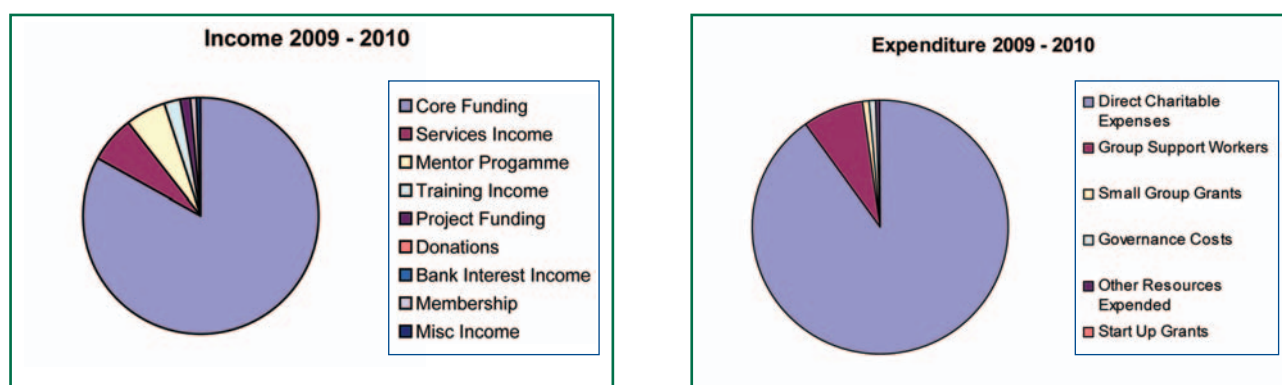
Quality Assurance

With funding secured for a part time QA post in Highland, CALA has developed and delivered QA to all our managed out of school clubs this year. Results have been positive and improved practice evident as a result. We are pleased to be able to confirm funding for this work for a further year and are looking to extend the programme to member out of school clubs working closely with the Highland Council.

The proven internal QA for managed Early Years centres is now embedded as an integral part of ongoing development. Once again improved quality can be evidenced through the recent HMIE and Care Commission inspection reports.

Finance

Sustained funding from both the Highland and Moray Authorities resulted in the consolidation and further development in all of the services delivered by CALA..



Once again targeted funding has been able to be provided to 34 member groups helping them to extend their services to 58 children with additional learning and/or social needs. A small integrated working group made up from representatives from CALA and the Highland Council monitor this programme of support.

35 Member Toddler and Under Fives groups were again able to access funding support to assist with rent and heating costs.

To the Future

CALA continues to work closely with voluntary agency partners in Highland. Continuing the theme of ongoing development for our workforce CALA will be working closely with HiMATS on the delivery of the piloted SSSC approved Practice Learning Qualification (a level 9 accredited course for those working in the sector that have responsibility for supporting other staff) and in the development of a new level 9 Childhood Practice award.

During 2010/11 CALA is working closely with Direct Childcare to launch a commercial social enterprise – ‘Smart Childcare – the clever solution’.

Smart Childcare offers event crèche services for weddings, seminars and family celebrations; Hotel & Holiday Sitting ‘babysitting’ for those staying in the Highlands on business or pleasure and introduces Plus 1 – help to families before and after the birth of a new baby.

Watch this space!

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Photos by kind permission of Kinraig under 5s, Drakies Out of School Club.

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