



# ABC Grangegorman Interagency Action Plan for Children and Young People 2019-2021

Drafted by  
**Sarah Murphy, Research Consultant**

Commissioned by  
**ABC Grangegorman Consortium**

**September 2018**



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## **Glossary of abbreviations**

ABC	Area Based Childhood Programme
CCC	County Childcare Committee
CDETB	City of Dublin Education and Training Board
CDP	Community development project
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CYAG	Children and Youth Action Group
CYPSC	Children and Young People's Services Committee
DCC	Dublin City Council
DCCC	Dublin County Childcare Committee
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DIT	Dublin Institute of Technology
DoCCS	Daughters of Charity Community Services
DRHE	Dublin Region Homeless Executive
EYS	Early Years Services
FRC	Family Resource Centre
GLLF	Grangegorman Labour and Learning Forum
HACE	Henrietta Adult and Community Education Centre
HSCL	Home School Community Liaison
IY	Incredible Years
NCI	National College of Ireland
NWIC	North West Inner City (Dublin)
PCHP	Parent Child Home Programme
PHN	Public Health Nurse
SCP	School Completion Programme
TCM	Teacher Classroom Management
NWICWN	North West Inner City Women's Network
YPAR	Young People at Risk organisation (North East Inner City Dublin)

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## Executive summary

### Continuity with new initiatives

While this plan includes the continuation of programmes and activities that have been evidenced to have had positive outcomes for children, young people and their families in this area, the plan also includes new initiatives:

- The most ambitious of these is the flagship project to develop **two 'one-stop-shop community hubs'**. These hubs would provide space for community and youth services, as well as providing information about services, training and lifelong learning facilities, and space for creative programmes.
- **Family and parent supports designed to meet the needs of the most marginalised parents and families** in the area, many of whom are in crisis, in need of one to one supports and less likely to participate in more formal evidence based programme
- Early intervention initiatives to support the further development of the Parent Child Home Programme and provide **additional management supports for early years services**
- **Support initiatives for the obtainment of appropriate premises for community organisations in urgent need**
- Initiatives based on **exploring best practice in speech and language therapy and supporting development of original language development** and awareness of linguistic diversity
- Initiatives to develop **mental health and emotional wellbeing supports for children, young people and families** including increased local access to **range of therapists, including SLT, psychologists, play therapists, and art, dance, and drama therapy**
- Initiatives to provide a locally based **domestic violence non-residential support service and domestic violence training** for local organisations
- Further strategic activities to support **children, young people and families experiencing homelessness and in emergency accommodation.**

This interagency action plan for children and young people follows and builds on the ABC Grangegorman programme which was delivered between 2015 and 2017. The programme was delivered by a consortium of 27 organisations from the area and led by the DIT Access and Civic Engagement Office. Consortium organisations included local schools, pre-schools, crèches, community organisations, as well as statutory agencies including HSE, Tusla and the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb). ABC Grangegorman consisted of nine programmes, which included:

- **Six evidence based programme interventions:** Four Incredible Years (IY) programmes: IY Baby, IY Basic Parenting, IY Teacher Classroom Management, and IY Classroom Dina, Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) and Doodle Den
- **Two upskilling initiatives:** Level 6 Childcare Programme and Level 7 Aistear and Siolta Childcare Programme for pre-school and crèche staff in the area
- The **Referral Pathways programme** which aimed to improve interagency working in terms of referrals and transitions to different settings and provide non-formal upskilling.

The programme was evaluated in 2017 and a sustainability research process followed, the culmination of which is this action plan which aims to guide the future activities of the consortium. This action plan is based on several participative research and local consultations with the ABC Consortium, service and support organisations working with young people and their families, and young people, parents and caregivers themselves. These have included:

- The findings of the **process evaluation of ABC Grangeegorman 2015-2017** conducted by Sarah Murphy between June and September 2017<sup>1</sup>
- The findings of the **sustainability research** carried out by An Siol between September 2017 and December 2017<sup>2</sup>
- The recent views and priorities expressed by representatives of community organisations and agencies working in the area at **three consultation workshops** held between April and June 2018
- **Follow up consultations** which were carried out via telephone interviews following the workshops for clarification purposes. Many of these were with individuals who had experience of working in the area for up to 30 years.

There was a final consultation day in September 2018 to review this plan and prioritise actions.

Given the extent of the needs of older children and their families in the area, it was a recommendation of the process evaluation that the ABC Grangeegorman consortium consider expanding the age range of its activities beyond its initial scope of 0-6 years. This was further highlighted during the sustainability research and the consortium has expressed its support for expanding its scope to cover the prenatal stage up to 21 years. As will be discussed in more detail below, this has significant implications for the activities and actions that will be undertaken by the consortium, as well as for its governance and membership.

## Policy context

In terms of policy commitments relevant to children and young people and the importance of a prevention and early intervention approach, **Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures**, the Irish national policy framework for children and young people 2014-2020, states that:

‘Investment in the very early years (0-3) yields the highest returns, with significant returns incurred throughout childhood and early adulthood’.

The policy document goes on to state that Irish investment in early childhood education is low at 0.1% of GDP compared with an average of 0.5% across OECD countries. Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures acknowledges that a shift in policy has taken place. This shift involves “putting early intervention into action”, through, among other developments, the expansion of the ABC programme in 13 disadvantaged areas around the country, Grangeegorman being one of these. Through Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, Irish policy has prioritised the use of evidence-based interventions, espoused by the ABC programme, in this increased focus on early intervention:

“Ensuring that the road to a better future for Ireland’s children is not just paved with good intentions means basing investment in evidence-based policies. The evidence tells us that investment in early years care and education reaps significant dividends throughout a child’s life and to society as a result of better outcomes. The evidence

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<sup>1</sup> Murphy, S. (2017), Process Evaluation of ABC Grangeegorman Programme 2015-2017, DIT

<sup>2</sup> Doyle, G. on behalf of An Siol (2018), Sustainability Strategy, unpublished

confirms the importance of parents particularly in the early years of a child's life" (Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, 2014).

There has been an emphasis on the efficacy of cross-sectoral and cross-departmental strategies and initiatives in the development of early intervention approaches to address disadvantage. The ABC programme itself is a cross-departmental programme and its governance structures include an interdepartmental project team, consisting of nominees from relevant government departments and agencies. The Early Education Policy Unit involves both the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. There is an increasing acceptance among both academics and policymakers that cross-sectoral strategies are best suited to meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups and can best address and remedy the challenges and complexities of poverty, vulnerability and social and economic exclusion. To break the cycle of disadvantage, the European Commission has called for a more holistic and integrated approach to bring about multi-dimensional action against disadvantage and stressed the importance of early intervention and preventative approaches (European Commission, 2013). To address disadvantage, it is necessary to have a balance of universal supports with appropriate and responsive provision for the most marginalised children, young people and their families. This is in line with the aims of 'Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures' to support parents, listen to children and young people and promote effective transitions and interagency collaboration and coordination, as well as the policy's commitment to:

"Provide and commission both universal and targeted evidence-informed parenting supports and early identification of 'at risk' children and families to strength families and reduce the incidence of children coming into, and remaining in, care" (Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, 2014).

The Programme for Government in 2011 stated the intention to "adopt a new area based approach to child poverty, which draws on best international practice and existing services to tackle every aspect of child poverty".

In April 2013, €30 million was allocated for the **ABC programme**. This was joint funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and Atlantic Philanthropies. ABC's primary objective is:

"...breaking the cycle of child poverty within areas where it is most deeply entrenched and where children are most disadvantaged, through integrated and effective services and interventions in the following areas: child development, child wellbeing and parenting and educational disadvantage".

The ABC programme builds on the learning from the **Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEII) 2006-2013**, which was co-funded by DCYA and The Atlantic Philanthropies and delivered across three areas in Dublin. One of the main learnings from the research carried out on the outcomes of the PEII was that direct work with parents had had a positive impact on their children:

"Assisting parents in their parenting through support programmes not only helps parents directly, but offers an opportunity to promote the most important factor influencing child development" (CES, 2014).

ABC's stated aims are to improve health, educational and social outcomes for children and their families by reducing child poverty and ensuring that children get the best start in life. It was intended that this objective would be achieved through evidence based programmes which have been proven to achieve positive results for parents and children.

In terms of the future of ABC, funding has now been secured beyond 2018 and there are plans to move the programme under Tusla management. An ABC working group has been established within DCYA to explore learning from the 13 ABC sites from the national evaluation process conducted by the Centre for Effective Services. The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs has stated her commitment to exploring how ABC can transition into a national structure “sustaining the work of the ABC Programme within a new vision for a community based prevention and early intervention programme from 2019 and beyond” (Minister Zappone, 29 March 2018).

## Population profile

In terms of **age profile** of the children and young people in the area, North West Inner City has a particularly high proportion of 20-24 year olds. The socio-demographic profile (Census 2016) for the North West Inner City (including Arran Quay A, B, C, D,E and Inns Quay C) highlights a population of 4557 children and young people between the ages of 0 and 24 years. A significant majority (42%) were found in the 20-24 year age bracket; followed by 19% of 0-4 years. While the scope of this action plan is from the pre-birth stage to 21 years, many consortium members do provide supports and services for young people up to 24 years, for example the youth services and training and employment services. There is a commitment on the part of all members to look to develop supports for this age group further into the future.

The North West Inner City has a population with high instance of **ethnic minorities**. For example, the national percentage of people identifying as White Irish is 85.09% compared with 57.02% and 49.2% in Arran Quay A and B respectively (CSO, 2016). It is important in this context to ensure that all services and supports provided to children, young people and their families are cognisant of this and be as accessible as possible in design and operation. While this plan does not explicitly address services for children and young people with disabilities, there has been a stated commitment on the part of the ABC Grangegorman consortium to equality-proof its activities to ensure maximum equity of access.



## Section 1: Introduction

This action plan guides the interagency activities of the ABC Consortium to improve outcomes for children and young people from pre-birth to 21 years for the next three year period 2019-2021. This section gives a brief overview of:

- The ABC Grangegorman: Vision Against Poverty programme 2015-2017
- Sources and local consultation processes that have informed this plan
- Aims of the action plan
- Name of the programme
- Current local context.

### ABC Grangegorman: Vision Against Poverty 2015-2017

This action plan follows on from ABC Grangegorman: Vision Against Poverty 2015-2017 which was aimed at improving outcomes for 0-6 children and their families in the Grangegorman area experiencing poverty. The programme was delivered by a consortium of 27 organisations from the area and led by the DIT Access and Civic Engagement Office. Consortium organisations included local schools, pre-schools, crèches, community organisations, as well as statutory agencies including HSE, Tusla and the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb). ABC Grangegorman consisted of nine programmes, which included:

- **Six evidence based programme interventions:** Four Incredible Years (IY) programmes: IY Baby, IY Basic Parenting, IY Teacher Classroom Management, and IY Classroom Dina, Parent Child Home Programme (PCHP) and Doodle Den
- **Two upskilling initiatives:** Level 6 Childcare Programme and Level 7 Aistear and Siolta Childcare Programme for pre-school and crèche staff in the area
- The **Referral Pathways programme** which aimed to improve interagency working in terms of referrals and transitions to different settings and provide non-formal upskilling.

This programme was initially for a two year period and since then the Consortium have been exploring options for sustainability and the continuation and development of the work outlined above. This action plan is intended to guide the future interagency activities of the ABC Consortium over the next three years.

### Aims of the action plan

The plan aims to guide the future interagency activities in the NWIC so that the work of the ABC Grangegorman programme can be built on and expanded in order to develop the best and most sustainable plan for the development of services and supports for children and families in the North West Inner City. This is similar in scope to the Mulvey report, published in February 2017, which consisted of a consultative process with schools, community organisations and statutory agencies to develop a plan for the social and economic regeneration of the North East Inner City. The report states that:

“The involvement and cooperation of the community itself is central if we are to succeed in making it into a community proud to say that this is our home, we have pride in where we live and we are part of an inclusive Irish society” (Mulvey, 2017).

## Sources and local consultation processes

The actions in this comprehensive action plan are the result of previous participative research and local consultations with the ABC Consortium, service and support organisations working with young people and their families, and young people, parents and caregivers themselves. These have included:

- The findings of the **process evaluation of ABC Grangegorman 2015-2017** conducted by Sarah Murphy between June and September 2017<sup>3</sup>
- The findings of the **sustainability research** carried out by An Siol between September 2017 and December 2017<sup>4</sup>
- The recent views and priorities expressed by representatives of community organisations and agencies working in the area at **three consultation workshops** held between April and June 2018
- **Follow up consultations** which were carried out via telephone interviews following the workshops for clarification purposes. Many of these were with individuals who had experience of working in the area for up to 30 years.

There was a final consultation day in September 2018 to review this plan and prioritise actions.

The **process evaluation of the ABC Grangegorman programme 2015-2017** included primary research findings from consultations in the form of 27 one to one interviews and 9 focus groups with 55 participants. This included representatives from 21 of the 27 members of the consortium and 10 members of the Steering Group. Children were not included in the primary research. Secondary research was also carried out, including a review of available data and existing reviews of the programme as well as evaluations of other similar initiatives. The evaluation identified the following issues through the consultations as important in terms of building on the learning from this programme and developing the future of interagency work in Grangegorman:

- Change of name for the programme
- Review model and governance structures
- Needs analysis and sustainability programme of work to review of age range, programme content and management
- Explore alternatives to evidence based programmes
- Community voice, increased collaboration and mutual learning
- Advocacy role and promotion of the programme.

The process evaluation identified priorities for future activities in the area which were raised by Consortium members during the consultations to be considered in light of future needs analysis and sustainability planning:

- Anti-poverty focus
- Community facilities and the development of one or more community hubs
- Homelessness

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<sup>3</sup> Murphy, S. (2017), Process Evaluation of ABC Grangegorman Programme 2015-2017, DIT

<sup>4</sup> Doyle, G. on behalf of An Siol (2018), Sustainability Strategy, unpublished

- Domestic violence
- More social supports and support for mental health issues
- More educational opportunities for parents and required supports to avail of these
- More hands-on work with parents and children, including parenting courses and homework supports
- More support to implement learning in early years providers
- More direct support for early years settings.

Similarly, the **sustainability research** carried out by An Siol echoed the findings of the process evaluation. The sustainability research included semi-structured interviews with 68 individuals who were representatives of member organisations of the Grangegorman ABC consortium; community and voluntary organisations and state agencies based or working in the area; homeless parents; and representatives from other ABC programmes. 12 focus groups were held. The research identified the following areas of need in the area:

- Anti-poverty focus
- Community facilities, including youth and sports facilities, and the development of one or more community hubs
- Homelessness
- Domestic violence
- Mental health supports
- Increased support for early years providers
- Early intervention services and supports from birth.

**Three local consultation workshops** were held in 2018 between April and June. These were attended by members of the ABC Consortium as well as agencies and organisations who work with young people in the area and were not originally involved with ABC Grangegorman programme. These consultation workshops lasted for three hours each and were facilitated by external consultants Caroline Gardiner and Aoife Dermody of Quality Matters. Notes were taken and distributed to members of the Steering Group to inform the plan. A final consultation workshop is planned for September 2018. As mentioned above, follow-up consultations were also carried out in July 2018 for clarification purposes and to obtain more information on issues raised during the consultation workshops.

## **Name of the programme**

While funding may be sourced through other non-ABC funding streams as part of the action plan and some of the activities may go beyond the stated ABC objectives, the **terminology of ABC** continues to be used in this document as the ABC Steering Group and Consortium are the established governance structures that will progress the action plan. The names of these groups and their membership may be altered in the future as appropriate.

Regarding the name of the Consortium, one of the findings of the evaluation carried out by Sarah Murphy was that participants in the programme reported not identifying their community with the name Grangegorman. In this light, the final evaluation report included a

recommendation that a change of name should be considered and discussed with consortium partners to ensure that the programme is as accessible as possible to the local community. This may include Dublin 7, though there may be issues with this choice as Dublin 7 extends as far as Cabra. North West Inner City may also be an option to be considered. This choice should be made by all members of the consortium if possible and include any other relevant stakeholders. The selection of a name that is agreed by the Consortium will have significant implications for future leadership and ownership of the programme.

## **Current local context**

Organisations working in the NWIC area have experienced significant cuts in recent years. The evaluation of the Grangegorman programme 2015-2017 found that it provided a valuable boost to an area that has not experienced large-scale investment at community level. This issue of limited and reduced resources with which to deliver services in the community is currently evident in the **urgent crisis in premises for community organisations**. It was expressed by several participants and representatives of community organisations during discussions at the consultations workshops and the follow-up consultations carried out afterwards, that several of the community organisations in the Consortium who are providing services for children and young people in the area are currently experiencing a crisis regarding their premises. These organisations, which include Step by Step, Stoneybatter Youth Service, Aosog and Rainbows Community Preschool are experiencing difficulties in paying increased rents; maintaining security of tenure of their premises; and operating from offices which are not sufficiently sized to cater for their activities with children and young people. In taking a strategic approach to the colocation of these organisations there may be an opportunity to gain efficiencies through a single premises rather than operating in separate buildings. More information regarding specific circumstances are outlined below. More details regarding specific circumstances are outlined below.

Having a secure premises as a base from which to work and connect with the community is essential to delivering quality services. In the context of this crisis, it should now be a priority of the ABC Consortium to lend support now to sustain and support organisations that have a proven track record of delivering quality service to children, young people and their families experiencing disadvantage in the area. There needs to be a coherent effort to collaboratively address this issue so that these organisations and the services they provide are not reduced in scope or by default cease to exist. While this action plan is the culmination of an exciting process of visualising future plans and activities, it is important to bear in mind that it is very difficult for local CDPs to engage in blue skies thinking and support new ventures when their capacity to continue their day to day operations is being undermined and challenged. As such, one of the first actions of this plan will address the issue of premises for organisations delivering services for children, young people and their families in the area.

The **Children and Youth Action Group (CYAG)** has been leading efforts to address this crisis as is further described below. The CYAG is mentioned throughout this plan and constitutes a significant community asset and a functioning structure. Several actions in this plan have sought to build on and support work already underway through the CYAG. For this plan to be successfully and sustainably integrated in the work of the Consortium members, it is essential that the plan build on what is already happening in the area that is working well. In this way, this plan includes initiatives that are already underway, some of which pre-exist ABC. For effective ownership, leadership and collaboration it is vitally important that this is acknowledged and partners be recognised for their expertise and contribution. The

evaluation report conducted by Sarah Murphy included this quote from a recent evaluation of the Parenting Support Initiative (PSI) in Cavan/Monaghan:

“Collaboration doesn’t just happen. It requires leadership, clarity of vision and a whole lot of drive and energy. When it works well, collaboration is rich, productive and effective. Resources need to be available to promote, co-ordinate and ensure the crucial contribution of collaborative working, thereby, realising the enormous potential to get the best from partners and improved outcomes for children and families” (Carroll, 2017).<sup>5</sup>

This is an action plan to be led and owned by its Consortium of community actors with vested interests in improving outcomes of the most marginalised children and young people in the NWIC and their families. In order for this plan to be successful, it will be important that it embrace a range of community voices and interests. For the purposes of this plan, the community consists of:

- People living in the community and using local services
- Volunteers and those employed to work in the community, to listen and respond to the communities needs
- Agencies working in the area, supporting, advocating and coordinating services
- Other actors operating within the community and engaging in community outreach.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Carroll, M. (2017), Parent Support Initiative (PSI) 2013-2016: Supporting parents of the under 3s in their parenting role, Dublin: Katharine Howard Foundation

<sup>6</sup> Pobal 2018 [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)

## Section 2: Actions

The plan's actions are divided into the following **thematic areas**:

1. **Age range and approach**
2. **Premises** for organisations providing services to children, young people and their families
3. **Early intervention**
4. **Family and parenting supports**
5. **Mental Health**
6. **Domestic violence**
7. **Homelessness**
8. **Community facilities** including the development of a number of community hubs
9. **Governance and Communication**, including the development and implementation of a Children and Young Persons Strategy
10. **Continuation and further development of existing programmes.**

All actions are outlined in terms of the following:

- Who the **lead agency** will be. In most cases, this was discussed at the two consultation meetings. The lead agency is also a member of the ABC Grangegorman Consortium
- The **key steps** that it is expected the action will include
- The anticipated **outcome** of the action once implemented
- The **resources** expected to be required for the action to be implemented

A table summarising all of the actions is included in the appendix at the end of this plan.

### 1. Age range and approach

#### Extend age range from 0-6 years to prenatal to 21 years

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group and Consortium

**Key steps:** Community consortium members to be asked to sign up to a children and younger person's action plan from prenatal to 21 years old developed following four consultation workshops. Provided members sign up, the strategy the age range should be extended from prenatal to 21 years old.

This would have implications for the **membership of the Consortium** which is populated with groups working with children aged 0-6 years and their families. Membership should be expanded to ensure an appropriate representation of groups working with older children and young people.

**Outcome:** Extension of age range from 0-6 years to prenatal to 21 years.

**Resources required:** Coordination of decision-making process at Consortium level

## 2. Coordinate support for the obtainment of appropriate premises for community organisations

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group; CYAG

**Key steps:** Form a coalition to explore all of the options around premises to address this urgent identified need in the area. The CYAG has been leading these efforts up to now and it would be beneficial to have senior representation from DIT to maximise chances of successful negotiations. Options raised at consultation workshops and during follow up consultations are outlined below.

During consultation workshops and follow up consultations, it was expressed that there are **several consortium members who are without premises (Step by Step; Rainbow crèche) entirely or in sub-standard premises that curtail their work and activities with young people**. Stoneybatter Youth Service were until recently based in Donnycarney and now have secured an admin office at St. Paul's Community Centre, Blackhall Parade; Aosog's premises is insufficient for their service's needs. None of the youth projects have their own premises or premises provided by CDYSB or DCC. This is in contrast to other parts of the North Inner City and suburban areas of North Dublin. Some early years settings in the area have closed down due to lack of premises (Buddies Afterschools Project in the O'Devaney area). Step by Step have had to leave their premises due to rising rents in the Smithfield area. This lack of premises and insufficient premises was considered a matter of urgency and should be a priority should resources be available.

The CYAG have met with Dublin City Council (DCC) to request that they make properties available but have not had success to date.

**No. 9 Queens Street** was mentioned as an option though this would require community consultation, scoping of costs to outfit it and resources to complete this. If outfitted, this could provide a solution for many of the organisations experiencing difficulties. It was noted that several organisations need the use of premises at different times which could make sharing a space feasible.

It was also mentioned during consultation workshops and follow-up consultations that the former **Stanhope School** has been vacant for over ten years. The CYAG has had meetings with DCC in relation to opening this building up to provide office space for community organisations. There have been rumours in the area that there may be a private interest in this building. This should be clarified and the option of including senior representation from DIT in future negotiations with DCC should also be considered.

Given that Step by Step, Bradóg and Aosog have been paying over €100k to private landlords, it would make economic sense to secure a premises that could be shared for multi-agency use.

**Outcome:** Support coordinated for the obtainment of appropriate premises for community organisations

**Resources required:** Staff time and coordination of consultation process.

## 3. Early intervention

### 3.1 PCHP to engage with PHNs to increase the number of referrals to the programme and numbers of families participating

**Lead agency:** Daughters of Charity Community Services

**Key steps:**

- Set goals and targets to grow the PCHP programme in Dublin 7, in a multi-agency approach to maximise the number of families benefitting from the programme
- The programme will be reviewed at least twice annually.  
Undertake service visits and agree or re-visit referral protocols
- Have 6 monthly reviews
- Make changes to ensure increased numbers of referral is required

**Outcome:** Increase level of referrals of children going on to PCHP at 18 months and number of families participating

**Resources required:** The resources are currently in place to grow the programme to have 30 families participating.

### **3.2 Provision of additional management supports for early years services<sup>7</sup>**

**Lead agency:** ABC Grangegorman Consortium

**Key steps:**

There was previously an action in the template distributed at the consultation workshop on 22 May about the need for additional supports for early years services. During follow up consultations, it was expressed that while Dublin County Childcare Committee (CCC) were providing services with supports in the areas of administration and accounting, there was a gap in the area of management. This was highlighted as a need in the evaluation conducted by Sarah Murphy and the subsequent sustainability research. This additional support would meet the identified needs of EYS in the local context of voluntary management committees being overburdened and lacking capacity. In particular, it was mentioned that the biggest challenge for local EYS services was obtaining members of their boards of management and that one local service had almost closed earlier this year before eventually securing new members. Given the breadth of expertise on the Consortium, members could pool resources to volunteer on a rotational basis or support services to recruit from their organisations or wider networks.

It was decided by the group attending on 22 May 2018 that this was a national problem for EYS and therefore was unlikely to be successful in obtaining funding in a local context. It was also mentioned that it was under the remit of the County Childcare Committee. This issue arose again during follow up consultations and it should be reconsidered for discussion at the final consultation workshop.

**Outcome:** Additional management supports provided for early years services

**Resources required:** Staff time.

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<sup>7</sup> Dublin County Childcare Committee (DCCC) is providing supports to early years settings in the area. These include training programmes and supports in Management and Governance for managers and boards of management and management committees. DCCC also provide crisis management supports and mentoring for managers and boards of management. Services can self-refer to these DCCC supports.



## 4. Family and parenting supports

### 4.1 Endorse and support the work underway to develop a strategy / operational guidelines for the delivery of evidence informed parenting programmes and community supports that are accessible to the least engaged parents and seek new opportunities and expansion to existing and new groups

The local strategy should:

- Be undertaken to common principles and in line with high level strategy objectives such as BOBF
- Agree the range of common evidence informed programmes to be run locally
- Agree the distribution of programmes based on local need so that programmes cover all areas and age ranges and current gaps in service delivery are covered
- Outline/develop accessible routes into programmes to support the engagement of higher need parents, this may include outreach and/or introductory programmes
- Clarify how services will co-ordinate referrals across programmes
- Agree a co-ordinated strategy to seeking funding to fill current gaps, this could include a shared home school liaison role across a number of local schools
- Feed into the work of CYPSC, which is happening at the regional level

**Lead agency:** Children and Youth Action Group Subgroup on Family Support

**Key steps:**

- Scoping exercise in the local area
- Strategy / guidelines to be developed
- Gaps to be identified
- Communal applications made to fill gaps
- Annual monitoring of strategy / guidelines

**Outcome:** Strategy / guidelines provide clarity on delivery and co-ordinated actions fill gaps.

**Resources required:** Additional resources for programmes to meet gaps

It was stated during follow up consultations that this work is already ongoing. This work is being progressed by the **CYAG Subgroup on Family Support/ Strengthening Families**. This Subgroup had previously focused on the delivery of the Strengthening Families Programme and has now broadened its focus to look at the provision of supports for parents, and other people acting as guardians or primary carers of children, in the area. The aim of this work is to take an area-based approach to parenting supports, map what services and supports exist for parents and how a shared approach to supporting parents in the area can be developed in an interagency way to provide a continuum of services and supports. The group has representation from preschools, schools, child and family services and youth services.

A vital part of the work the group is progressing is the **pre-supports** which are necessary to engage the most marginalised, harder to reach parents with recognised needs. The group is

exploring options for parents who are not in a position to participate in evidence based programmes such as Incredibly Years or the Strengthening Families Programme. It is focusing on providing consistent informal or less formal support such as walk-in support, weekly informal parent groups, yoga for parents, taster programmes and informal talks on issues that may be of interest to parents. This would be with a view to providing a formal evidence based programme at the end of the year for parents.

It was mentioned that many organisations running evidence based programmes such as Incredible Years are struggling to get sufficient numbers of parents to run courses. As such, the possibility of running one course per year in the area which all organisations could refer in to is being considered. This ongoing informal work focuses on the service provision context within which evidence based programmes are happening and seeks to build relationships with parents and prepare them to be able to participate in a longer more formal process of an evidence based programme if they would be willing to and if they and their families would benefit from this. In this way, the group is looking to develop a strategic approach to working with parents, both in terms of the work necessary to prepare people to take part in these programmes as well as the follow-up support following participation. Even where contact with parents might be very brief such as a chat at the school gates, the group is aiming to develop key messages so that there is consistent advice, information and support being given to parents in the area.

The CYAG Sub-group on Family Support has applied to Pobal via ABC Grangegorm for funding to provide four parenting support workshops aimed at vulnerable parents as a stepping stone into more 'evidence based' programmes. Their funding proposal has been accepted and they have been awarded €11,040 for this work. The CYAG Family Support Subgroup will oversee the roll out of this which starts in September 2018. The Subgroup has already held a workshop in June 2018 to bring together key stakeholders providing various forms of Parenting Support. The Subgroup is currently arranging for childcare to be available to facilitate parental engagement. The provision of childcare was highlighted as a significant factor in achieving the engagement and continued participation of parents and primary caregivers in the process evaluation by Sarah Murphy cited above. Regarding governance, it is anticipated that the Steering Group will look at broad issues and three Sub Committees will be established to work with parents with children in three age groups: 0-6 years; 6-12 years; and 12-18 years.

It was stated that it would be useful to include it in the action plan as resourcing will be needed. More funding will be required to ensure that formal and informal support can be consistently provided to parents and those caring for children in the coming years. It was noted that consistency in funding over a three year period would be hugely important to sustain interest and engagement among parents. Organisations will need to be supported to that:

- Staff can attend regular meetings
- They can run informal support groups throughout the year
- Professionals can be invited to speak on issues of interest at these informal parent support groups
- Activities such as yoga, food and refreshments, childcare and outings can be provided
- Formal courses can be run on an annual basis.

## 4.2 Seek opportunities for innovative pilot initiatives and explore other examples of best practice to develop supports and services in SLT

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group and Consortium

**Key steps:** Seek opportunities for innovative pilot initiatives and explore other examples of best practice to develop supports and services in SLT. It was raised during the consultation workshop on 28 May that it had been announced that a Speech and Language school-based service is to be piloted and that NWIC is not one of the areas chosen for new pilot scheme.<sup>8</sup> Advocacy should focus on being included in this programme for inclusion in the next round of the scheme it would be important to advocate that the current national pilot being undertaken in HSE Community Healthcare Organisation Region 7 for Speech and Language school-based services, be rolled out in the local area, post pilot. The Steering Group should monitor the outcomes from the pilot and to advocate for its extension through formal and informal mechanisms

**Outcome:** Pilots and other models of best practice are explored and scoped to assess their appropriateness and relevant for the local area; the area is selected for the next stage roll out of HSE programme

**Resources required:** Staff time to coordinate advocacy activities

It would also be useful to look to initiatives undertaken by other ABC programmes with a view to continuing to develop early intervention and preventative SLT services and supports so that families are appropriately supported where additional SLT needs are identified.

SPECS Bray ABC programme has focused on interventions which focus on the importance of building the capacity of parents and early years educators and adopt a universal model that is cognisant of the link between SLCN and economic disadvantage, with targeted supports where needs are identified.

In October 2017, SPECS Bray created a **part-time speech and language therapist post**, seconded from the HSE, in response to reported needs for increased SLT support for parents and pre-schools, lengthy waiting lists and the need for preventative SLT support. In order to have the widest impact on children, it was decided that this post would focus on building capacity of early years providers and staff, teachers and parents, rather than engaging in direct work with individual children. Activities and plans include:

- 1) **Early years practitioners with training and mentoring through the Hanen Learning Language and Loving it programme.** This takes the form of a slightly condensed version of the Hanen course for early years staff, including 6 2 hour sessions, 5 video sessions and a review and follow-up session to consolidate the learning.
- 2) **Early screening assessment in community based early years services.** This is aimed to enable earlier identification of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)
- 3) **Babbling Babies** universal communication session with parents and baby in conjunction with Public Health Nurse 7-9 month Development Check Up Clinics. This clinic will look for the precursors of language, often missing in children with autism. As children in disadvantaged home situations are starting off automatically at risk of lower language skills the clinic will take a preventative approach, encouraging

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/schools-speech-and-language-scheme-launched-worth-over-2m-1.3493737>

parents to read and communicate with their children. A baby communication group will be set up for parents and their babies who are identified as having needs in this are to provide additional support.

- 4) **Play and Talk group for parents with children aged 9-12 months.** This baby communication group will be set up for parents and their babies who are identified as having needs in this are to provide additional support.

**Chit Chat** is an SLT programme delivered by another ABC programme, the **Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) in Tallaght West**, also an ABC programme. This is an Early Intervention Speech and Language Therapy Service that has been developed to integrate education, health and childcare provision to promote accessibility of services, increase attendance rates, facilitate collaboration between educational, early years and health staff, and achieve more positive outcomes for children and their families.

Evaluations of this work have found that a dedicated speech and language service enables more children to receive the intervention earlier which helps to remove or reduce a significant disadvantage before starting school. The Chitchat approach has been found to achieve:

- Significantly improved parental participation, waiting times and amount of intervention required;
- 18% of children were discharged from the service as being within normal limits in comparison to 11% of children in the HSE service;
- Parents were the main referral source for Chit Chat.<sup>9</sup>

The **Chatterbox Speech and Language Project** has been rolled out as part of the **Cavan and Monaghan Parents Support Initiative (PSI)**. This has included the delivery of the Elklan Speech and Language (SLT) programme targeting parents in disadvantaged local communities in Cavan and Monaghan. This was evaluated in 2017 and the SLT early intervention was found to be having a significant impact on children and families experiencing disadvantage.<sup>10</sup>

The **Family Matters ABC programme in Ballyfermot** also prioritises oral language development as one of its three main strands of activities, as well as parent and family support, and youth mental health and wellbeing. Family Matters have also delivered the professional development Elklan with early years practitioners, teachers and SNAs. The Family Matters ABC Programme was evaluated in 2018 and reported that parents were facilitated to assist in implement targeted SLT strategies and improved their own capacity and knowledge of speech and language. Improved confidence and professional capacity of those working with children was found to have directly influenced practice and children's SLC development and findings showed a greater understanding of children's SLT development as well as improved understanding of the difficulties experienced by children with communication difficulties.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Hayes and Irwin (2016), Listen up: Reflections on the CDI and HSE Speech and Language Services in Tallaght West, Childhood Development Initiative, Dublin

<sup>10</sup> Carroll, M. (2017), Parent Support Initiative (PSI) 2013-2016: Supporting parents of the under 3s in their parenting role, Dublin: Katharine Howard Foundation

<sup>11</sup> Collins. K (2018), Family Matters Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme Oral Language Evaluation Report, Ballyfermot

Finally, the **Blue Skies ABC programme in Clondalkin** has also focused on oral language programmes in early years settings and in schools, as well as supporting the development of children's early language and communication skills in the home.<sup>12</sup>

Future activities should adopt a collaborative approach to utilise the skills and expertise of Consortium members and their organisations and services.

### **4.3 Explore ways of supporting the development of language awareness and linguistic diversity such as implementing Language Explorers programme through schools and early years services**

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:** Explore possibility of implementing Language Explorers programme through schools and early years services. **Language Explorers** is a new language awareness programme to promote an interest in languages from an early age and to raise awareness of linguistic diversity in the classroom and in the community.<sup>13</sup>

**Outcome:** Feasibility of implementing Language Explorers programme through schools and early years services ascertained

**Resources required:** Staff time for initial feasibility study.

## **5. Mental health**

### **5.1 Develop a communication strategy (in conjunction with the Dublin City North CYPSC) to endorse and support further dissemination of existing user-friendly information regarding youth mental health services to organisations, parents and young people**

**Lead agency:** Children and Youth Action Group

**Key Steps:**

- Re-print CYAG booklets on youth mental health, with the addition of service contacts, if needed
- Disseminate to local community members and services
- Ensure that CYPSC has all information to feed into regional actions

**Outcome:** Improved local awareness of mental health and services

**Resources required:** Budget for print and dissemination, estimated at €6,000

It was expressed during follow up consultations with consortium members that this action is already happening in that these good quality information booklets have been printed and disseminated and that there was not a need for additional booklets to be printed or for a separate communications strategy to be developed. There are plans to further disseminate the booklets at a community conference later in 2018. The **CYAG subgroup on Children at Risk** organised four workshops on mental health over two days. These workshops engaged children from primary school aged 6 years up to young people aged 18 years. The workshops

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<sup>12</sup> <https://blueskiesinitiative.ie>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.mothertongues.ie/>

were titled 'It's ok to not be ok' and they were recorded and a final DVD produced. The booklet and DVD were launched in November 2017.

It was suggested during the follow up consultations that the model used by the Rialto Youth Project might be applied. The **Rialto Youth Project** focuses on face to face work with young people; provision of youth services and related supports and building links between community and school to foster an ethos of school attendance among young people.<sup>14</sup>

Since 2015, the CYAG have organised a **Halloween Event**, the overall aim of which is to divert children and young people in the NWIC away from anti-social behaviour. Over the last three year this event has been really successful with participation of over 300 children and young people. The Halloween parade is being planned for 2018. Children and young people from the NWIC will be given the opportunity of participating in a range of workshops leading up to Halloween, which will culminate in a dance and drumming performance on stage in Smithfield on Halloween night. As per previous events, the CYAG will work through local schools and projects in the organisation of this event.

## **5.2 Seek funding and/or secondment of a range of therapists, including SLT, psychologists, play therapists, and art, dance, and drama therapy to work as a team to provide mental health supports for children under 12 years in the local area**

It was agreed at consultation workshops that a range of therapeutic supports are needed in order to address a significant gap in local services.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

### **Key Steps:**

- To make a case for the provision of a range of therapists or access to a range of therapies and apply for funding
- To agree an agency/ organisation(s) to employ and provide clinical governance for these roles
- To establish an outcome framework to attest to the value of the roles
- To establish effective referral routes and interagency support mechanisms

**Outcome:** Children have access to mental health supports

**Resources required:** Substantial resources for salaries, estimated in the vicinity of €180,000 for two professionals. If another model outlined below is applied to include advocacy for greater access to a range of supports for the area this may be reduced.

It was expressed during follow up consultations with consortium members that selecting only child psychologist and play therapist positions were too specific and that access to a wider range of therapeutic supports, including art, dance, and drama therapy would be preferable. It was also felt that rather than directly employ professionals it would be better to lobby agencies already employing these professionals, such as HSE and Tusla, to allocate the local area with increased access to these professionals and resources regarding the management and supervision which would be required. This would involve engaging in advocacy activities on this issue with the DCYA.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://rialtoyouthproject.net>

Ballyfermot ABC employs psychologists to work directly with children. The psychologists are employed through the partnership.

It could also be an option to upskill staff within organisations to obtain qualifications in therapies identified as beneficial. In terms of the experiences of other ABC programmes, SPECS Bray has seconded staff from the HSE, with employment governance provided by the local partnership. SPECS Bray has also supported the upskilling of its own staff to train in play therapy.

If staff are funded or supported it would be useful to consider two part-time rather than one full-time such as has been applied in the Inchicore Domestic Violence Service and works well as it provides the opportunity to work with a colleague as part of a tea.

### **5.3 Deliver co-ordinated mental health training and supports and develop a substitution budget so that services can avail of training and resolve barriers preventing attendance**

**Lead agency:**

**Key Steps:**

- Training to cover skills related to strengthening mental health resilience of children, young people and their parents, as well as suicide prevention
- Establish a substitution budget and application process
- Ensure there is a nominated person to manage this, with appropriate time and resources
- Develop a calendar of events
- Manage the substitution

**Outcome:** High attendance at effective training

**Resources required:** €7,000-20,000 approximately

It was mentioned in the follow-up consultations that training in FaceTalk, the suicide prevention programme has already been carried out in the area. The MindOut programme from the NYCI was mentioned as a programme which helps those working in the community with young people to incorporate practical skills around mental health and resilience into the daily running of their work. This integration of mental health into everyday work of community organisations was seen as especially valuable as it provides a shared sustainable approach in the area rather than an external person coming in to deliver one-off training.

### **5.4 Develop a specific interagency Children & Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy for the NWIC**

**Lead agency:** ABC Grangegorman Consortium

**Key steps:** There is a need for a **specific interagency Children & Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy to be developed in the NWIC. This should involve all the main stakeholders i.e. Early Years Providers, Child & Family Projects, Schools, Youth Services, Tusla, HSE Primary Care team, Counselling Services etc.**

There are examples of these strategies being developed, particularly in the UK, in Liverpool<sup>15</sup>, Hull<sup>16</sup>, and London<sup>17</sup>. This approach recognises that children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing is everyone’s business and not just the responsibility of a few agencies and should be developed within the framework of the Better Outcomes Brighter Future policy document, with a specific focus on the NWIC.

This would involve an interagency approach which could include the provision of three main areas of service provision: Universal, Targeted, Specialist.

<p><b>Focus on promotion and prevention (that is embedded into wide range of service e.g. EYS, child &amp; Family Projects, schools, youth services, Primary Care Teams etc.)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting positive mental health and increased resilience in children and young people</li> <li>• Through effective awareness campaigns – help remove the stigma associated with mental health</li> <li>• Ensure the provision of services to support positive parenting and attachment in the early years</li> <li>• Developing programmes and workshops for delivery in schools and within the community</li> <li>• Dissemination of information regarding existing services and supports for children and young people (e.g. CYAG Booklet etc.)</li> <li>• Developing information re Parenting Supports available in NWIC (being developed by CYAG)</li> <li>• Hold annual mental health &amp; wellbeing event/s – promoting positive mental health and wellbeing (e.g. CYAG days in February 2017 – for children 6 – 18yrs)</li> <li>• Promote the use of the ‘arts’ in events and awareness raising</li> </ul>
<p><b>Early Help</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early identification and intervention for children and young people with emotional or mental health issues</li> <li>• Ensure provision of and access to appropriate specialist services – advice/consultation/counselling etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Quick and easy access to specialist services for children and young people with complex mental health needs who are the most vulnerable</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure access to specialist services for children and young people for further</li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> <https://liverpool.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/children-and-families/children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-camhs-strategy/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.hullcgg.nhs.uk/uploads/chronicler/document/document/121/children-and-young-peoples-strategy-emailable.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/aboutthecouncil/strategies/Documents/Mental%20Health%20and%20Emotional%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%20for%20Children%20and%20Young%20People.pdf>



	<p>assessment, diagnosis and treatment to prevent problems recurring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure no waiting lists for CAMHS etc.</li> <li>• Interventions that would take place in a variety of settings, including home and community</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency assessment/interventions and supports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the provision of emergency assessment and therapeutic interventions for children and young people with severe mental health problems</li> <li>• Intensive support available for families to care for their children at home</li> </ul>
<b>Improved training for staff working with children and young people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a range of appropriate training to upskill and develop knowledge which will enable all staff to identify issues early and respond appropriately –</li> <li>• Continue to provide training re suicide prevention</li> <li>• Continue to provide training re young people who sexually offend</li> </ul>
<b>Co-ordinated and integrated response which ensures a structured arrangement with specialist mental health services and local providers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a holistic and co-ordinated response to ensure supports are provided by all relevant agencies for children, young people and their families</li> </ul>

The above strategy would involve the need for a group/project to lead, steer and oversee the implementation of this strategy - e.g. to hold regular meetings to discuss progress and share information; arrange relevant training and upskilling; identify specific gaps in local service provision and specific local needs; and facilitate integration and collaboration between specialist mental health services like CAMHS and child, youth and community agencies.

In terms of best practice from other ABC programmes in the area of youth mental health and preventative and early intervention approaches, SPECS Bray ABC programme is implementing the **Infant Mental Health Framework** which seeks to promote social and emotional development, prevent mental health difficulties and provide intervention to challenged parent-infant relationships from pregnancy to three years. It is being implemented with a multi-stakeholder group including SPECS, CYPSC Wicklow and CYPSC Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown and in partnership with Young Ballymun and Young Knocknaheeny in Cork, both also ABC initiatives. A taster session was offered to a wide range of professionals working with children and families and a 2 day Infant Mental Health foundation course provided. Another ABC programme, Better Finglas, is also working in the area of infant mental health.

There has also been an action research study conducted on child emotional health and wellbeing in Finglas North A, Dublin 11(Finglas West). It was commissioned by the Dublin City North CYPSC. The overall aims of the research were to profile and scope the current context of emotional health and wellbeing needs, supports and provision for young children, aged 6-12 years, within Finglas North A and to develop a framework of action in response to the wellbeing and emotional health needs of children aged 6-12 years. Then findings were published in March 2018 and could provide a useful model.<sup>18</sup>

**Outcome:** Develop a specific interagency Children & Young People’s Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy for the NWIC

**Resources required:** Staff time to develop strategy and consortium buy-in and contributions regarding strategy implementation.

## **6. Domestic violence**

### **6.1 Seek funding for a domestic violence training programme (with, for example Women’s Aid) that will be available to champions all organisations in the area Lead agency: NWICN**

#### **Key Steps:**

- Establish a budget for domestic violence training and supports for a broad range of agencies
- Identify an agency that can provide training on a champions model basis that meets requirements
- Training should include recognising, responding and referring; screening; child protection in the context of domestic violence; assisting services in developing their own domestic violence policy

**Outcome:** Increased capacity for general service providers to support families experiencing domestic violence

**Resources required:** To be clarified, potentially up to €10k for training and

There were differing views expressed at the consultation workshops on 28 May and 13 June about whether additional training was required. Training has previously been coordinated by Tusla in the area and delivered by Women’s Aid. This would be a critical question for the last consultation session to review this plan.

**Awareness raising** within the community regarding the issue of domestic violence, the difficulties faced by those experiencing, and how to support them, it is of huge importance. This could be aimed not only at professionals working in the community but also at members of the public.

### **6.2 Advocate for the establishment of a domestic violence non-residential support service for the area**

**Lead agency: ABC Steering Group**

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<sup>18</sup> Kinlen, L. and MacDonald, E. (2018) Child Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Finglas North A: Report on findings of an action research study and setting a framework for the future, Dublin City North CYPSC

**Key Steps:**

- Establish a subgroup or identify lead organisation to identify a process for establishing need, models and funding pathways
- May include a worker or team of workers, considering models such as that in Dublin 12

**Outcome:** Increased access to specialised domestic violence support for families

**Resources required:** Staff salaries estimated at €100,000. Other capital costs to be considered also regarding premises and resources

The process evaluation mentioned above highlighted that a gap had been left since the closure of the community development project (CDP) which provided support relating to domestic violence in the area that was closed in 2012 during cuts to CDPs.<sup>19</sup> The NWIC Women's Network (NWICWN) worked through 11 locally based women's groups which operated independently but were supported by the NWICWN. The NWICWN offered support, information, advocacy and advice on a range of issues including domestic violence. The NWICWN was centrally based on Manor Street. It was a place where women could go for general information and support on a range of areas. This general nature was important as it meant that women who were experiencing domestic violence could discreetly drop in and access information without it being publicly obvious. The service offered information and advice and accompaniment to court. The closure has left a vacuum in terms of local support for women and there is a need for a local project in the area to replace it.

It was suggested at the consultation workshop and during follow-up consultations that the model used by the **Inchicore Domestic Violence Outreach Centre** could be applied. The Inchicore Outreach Centre forms part of the overall St. Michael's Estate Family Resource Centre. It is a community based service and employs two Domestic Violence Workers. The service works from a community development framework and provides:

- One to one support, both short and long term
- Information, advice and advocacy
- Assistance with court preparation
- Court and legal appointments accompaniment
- Education and training on the issue of domestic violence
- Access to locally-based counselling.

### **6.3 Engage MOVE or other similar organisation to provide a perpetrators programme in the area<sup>20</sup>**

**Lead agency:** NWICN

**Key Steps:**

- NWICN to contact MOVE to assess process for bringing perpetrator programme to NIC
- present process back to group, seeking budget / host organisation etc. where required

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<sup>19</sup> Murphy, S. (2017), Process Evaluation of ABC Grangegorman Programme 2015-2017, DIT

<sup>20</sup> DoCCS Santry currently run a perpetrators' programme and this model could be explored for suitability. **Dublin Safer Families** is a domestic, sexual and gender based violence services and offers services for parents and children to increase family safety and to prevent and stop violence.

**Outcome:** Perpetrators have access to support to overcome violence

**Resources required:** to be clarified depending on business model options

It was mentioned during the follow-up consultations that the priority for resources should be given to establishing supports for victims of domestic violence in the area and that a perpetrators programme should only be considered once this has been achieved. It was also mentioned that if a service was established, as outlined above, that the development of a perpetrators programme could be incorporated into the outreach programme and the domestic violence outreach workers could liaise with MOVE. It was felt that it would be important for any work with perpetrators to be within an overall framework of support for victims.

## 7. Homelessness

**In partnership with the YPAR Homelessness Working Group, run a public event or series of events for service providers in the area to highlight the unique challenges experienced by homeless families, and to create a shared learning environment where service providers can review how they can better serve the needs of this highly vulnerable population.**

**Lead agency:** Children and Youth Action Group / YPAR

**Key steps:**

- Develop an overview of the approach considering existing work of YPAR and avoiding duplication
- Deliver facilitated learning spaces

**Outcome:** Increased confidence and ability of service providers to support families experiencing homelessness

**Resources required:** admin time, space and refreshments e.g. €500

It was mentioned as part of the follow-up consultations that the Consortium could engage in negotiation with YPAR to request that **membership of its working group on homelessness be extended to include Dublin North West Inner City**. It was stated that Consortium members had good relationships with YPAR and that as it had very good representation of key agencies in its structure, it would be preferable to seek to integrate with it rather than extend resources on replicating a similar structure for the area. It was also expressed that a formal link between YPAR and ABC Grangegorman would be a welcome development.

It was also mentioned that the **lack of public housing** is a huge contributing factor to homelessness in the area and that the Consortium should focus on engaging in advocacy on this issue.

Several consortium members are already delivering practical initiatives to support children, young people and their families experiencing homelessness. The Henrietta Adult and Community Education Centre (HACE), a service of Daughters of Charity Community Services, offer a **'Me Time' Programme for Parents**. This is a craft workshop that is open to everyone with priority given to those experiencing homelessness. As well as crafts, an outreach worker is involved in the group to offer support advice and guidance and there are information sessions available on issues relating to social welfare, education and housing. It is a space where adults can have time to themselves, avail of support and reduce their stress

levels while their children are at school. It also aims to provide a source of relaxation and stress reduction for parents while their children are at school.

With funding from Healthy Ireland, Dublin City North CYPSC has partnered with all ABCs in the region, including ABC Grangegorman, and also Focus Ireland and the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) to develop a **mobile playmat for babies 0-18 months living in emergency accommodation**. The aim is to increase physical activity of babies in confined accommodation, develop cognitive and motor skills, and increase parent-baby bonding. This will be rolled out across the Dublin City North area on a pilot basis between 2018 and 2019. Funding was applied during the summer of 2018 to **family hubs** to support the purchasing of family activity vouchers and day trips which can act as respite for families living in homeless accommodation. There is potential for local projects to engage and form strategic links with local family hubs in terms of the provision of their services and supports.

In terms of the **educational needs** of young people experiencing homelessness, the Children's Rights Alliance commissioned research in 2018 to focus on how to develop supports in this area. The final report calls for:

"Targeted initiatives (such as DEIS, the School Completion Programme, Education Welfare Services, ABC programme) which focus on hard to reach children, run by the relevant Departments and constituent Agencies, could consider developing additional supports and local community response plans to address the educational needs of children experiencing homelessness. The School Completion Programme plays an important role in supporting this group of children. Tusla, the Child and Family Agency should consider increasing its supports to children experiencing homelessness and the Department of Education and Skills could give consideration to increasing HSCL provision where there is increased demand and extending the service to non-DEIS schools who are supporting children experiencing homelessness."<sup>21</sup>

These recommendations could be further explored by the Consortium given that Tusla, SCP and schools and their HSCL are members and could add their knowledge and expertise to activities.

## **8. Community facilities and the development community hubs**

### **8.1 Develop an interagency strategy for the development of two 'one-stop-shop' community hubs**

These community hubs would provide space for community and youth services, as well as providing information/signposting services, training facilities, and space for creative programmes.

One of the recommendations of the process evaluation of the ABC Grangegorman programme 2015-2017 was to develop community hubs. The report stated that rather than a temporary and finite programme, this would be a **coherent and sustained response to addressing disadvantage** experienced by young people and their families through social and educational interventions and crisis support. The hubs would be an opportunity to **embed principles of community development and have a community based centre which could combine objectives of providing lifelong learning opportunities for staff with the provision of emotional support to children and young people and their parents**. It could also

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<sup>21</sup> Scanlon, G. & McKenna, G. (2018), Home Works: A Study on the Educational Needs of Children Experiencing Homelessness and Living in Emergency Accommodation, Children Rights Alliance

maintain the valuable links with DIT as a local centre of excellence in education and could form a centre for conducting research on the work and its outcomes.<sup>22</sup>

This model is one that has been realised already in Ireland in the form of **Familibase** (formerly Familiscope) in **Ballyfermot** and has been proven to be a successful way to provide a community-based interdisciplinary approach to improving children's and young people's welfare and enhancing the capacity of those that live and work with children and young people, including parents, teachers and childcare staff from local preschools and crèches. Familibase services are delivered by an interdisciplinary team, are carried out in the community-based centre and on site in primary and secondary schools, and include services in the areas of speech and language, parenting support, family support, emotional support and behavioural support. While it is generally acknowledged that cross-sectoral work is more difficult to evaluate and that it can take some time for measurable outcomes to present, evaluations of Familibase have found an increase in school attendance as well as improvements in children's oral language skills.<sup>23</sup> National and international research has also highlighted the benefits of this model for social and educational outcomes for young people and their families as well as for the professionals working with them.<sup>24</sup>

It was agreed at the consultation workshops that the hubs would ideally be located within:

- The new **O'Devaney development**. There is an agreement for a multiagency centre. However, this needs to be reprioritised and there is a potential to develop and extend the vision for the centre. There is also an opportunity for the Consortium, including senior representation from DIT, to negotiate with DCC that the community centre could be among the first of the buildings to be built so that it could be completed in advance of the expected date in 2025.
- The **Markets area** has also been named as a site where a centre is needed.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:**

- Develop two clear proposals and engage in discussions with policy makers
- Agree a negotiation and advocacy strategy to gather support for the hubs from key decision makers.

**Outcome:** Two resourced and timed plans for the development of these centres

**Resources required:** Staff and team time. There may be a need for some supports to develop reports etc.

It was mentioned as part of the follow-up consultations that it would be important to make clear that these hubs would be run according to **community development principles and have a focus on addressing disadvantage for young people under the age of 21 years and promoting social inclusion in the area**. The hubs would be managed by the ABC Steering

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<sup>22</sup> Murphy, S. (2017), Process Evaluation of ABC Grangegorman Programme 2015-2017, DIT

<sup>23</sup> Familiscope (2011), Internal evaluation of speech and language therapists support for schools based on teachers' and principals' responses, Dublin: Ballyfermot

<sup>24</sup> Edwards, A. & Downes, P. (2013), Alliances for Inclusion: Cross-sector policy synergies and interprofessional collaboration in and around schools, European Commission; Downes, P. (2011) Community Based Lifelong Learning Centres: Developing a European Strategy informed by International Evidence and Research, Research Paper for NESET, NESET

Group, or delegated to an organisation/team, ensuring community representation and ownership.

It was emphasised that when calling for a community hub for the Markets area, it will be important to stress that it would be significantly different from the services available in the Macro centre.

It is also important to emphasise that an objective of these proposed combined community multidisciplinary team based, lifelong learning hubs, linked also with schools, should be to enhance and add value to the services currently being provided in the area and not to duplicate or replace these services. Space and support for existing services in the area, including potentially office space and space for activities, should be provided. Existing services would also be able to refer young people and families to the supports offered by the professional multi-disciplinary teams operating from the hubs.

In terms of the types of support and resources that could be offered by the hubs, these could include:

- Community café
- A range of professional multi-disciplinary team supports including psychology, play therapy
- Lifelong learning support for professionals, parents and others working or caring for children and young people experiencing disadvantage in the area
- Activity space open to local community groups
- Potentially office space and meeting and training rooms which could be accessed by local community groups. This should be free or at a fair and affordable rate agreed by the Consortium
- A drop-in support service and place to spend time for families in crisis
- In some areas, hubs provide technical supports to services on areas such as IT, governance, strategic planning and evaluation. This would be useful to consider in the context of the issues facing EYS voluntary management committees outlined above.

## **8.2 Develop a community spaces plan which will advocate for investment into accessible priced community and youth sporting and activity spaces.**

This plan is to involve specific engagement with DCC in relation to the resurfacing and provision of floodlights for the Aughrim Street facilities.

**Lead agency:** Children and Youth Action Group with support from the ABC Steering Group

### **Key steps:**

- Brief proposals to be developed
- Agree a negotiation and advocacy strategy to gather support for the hubs from key decision makers

**Outcome:** Increased access for local youth and community groups to community spaces at appropriate prices

**Resources required:** Staff and team time. There may be a need for some supports to develop reports etc.

### **8.3 Develop a community spaces liaison group to interface with local developments in relation to ensuring community needs are effectively considered and delivered on**

**Lead agency:** Children and Youth Action Group with support from the Steering Group

**Key Steps:**

- Agree a terms of reference for the group
- Seek funding / and or a role in influencing how local consultation is undertaken, i.e. empowering the local committee to engage
- Monitor progress

**Outcome:** The local community is engaged in informing local developments such as O'Devaney Gardens etc.

**Resources required:** Staff and team time. There may be a need for some supports to develop reports etc.

Increasing accessibility to DIT was removed from this action as this was considered unlikely to be successful given the fact that current demand for facilities is far greater than availability, and there are prior agreements with many local community groups. There was some opposition to this expressed at the consultation workshop on 13 June.

### **8.4 Work with the principals' network regarding making school facilities more accessible for running programmes with a community benefit.**

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:**

- Engage with principals network, to agree where additional access could be provided
- Inform local services of any increased access

**Outcome:** Increased access to space for community programmes

**Resources required:** Staff time.

## **9. Governance and communication: Development and implementation of a Children and Young Persons Action Plan and Strategy**

### **9.1 Seek funding for core staff to ensure the success of the programme the next round of the ABC programme to ensure the success of the ABC Grangegorman programme**

The complement of staff to be proposed, as agreed at the consultation workshop, is: CEO/Coordinator full time; Administrator full time; Outreach Worker full time; An in-reach worker full time seconded to a community group



The ABC to include supporting the capacity of local groups to apply for funding to be included in the next ABC plan and this role to be part of specific staff persons role.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:** In consultation the steering group to develop proposals for Pobal for the new ABC round

**Outcome:** Approval for ABC round 2 for local area

**Resources required:** Staff time.

## 9.2 Continue to Review Leadership and Governance of ABC

To date, DIT has provided the lead agency role for the ABC Grangegorman Programme. As the scope and reach of the Programme expands it is timely to review the role of the lead agency and ensure that there is an appropriate governance and management structure in place to meet the needs of funding authorities and stakeholders into the future.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:**

- An expression of interest for running the ABC programme to be established
- If there is sufficient interest this to move to a closed or open tender process, which will allow for renegotiation
- If there is not sufficient interest a time limited governance subgroup to meet to agree ways in which systems and structured can be strengthened.

**Outcome:** Agreed leadership, governance systems and operational structures

**Resources required:** Staff time

## 9.3 Expand membership of Steering group and reform and creation of Subgroups

To ensure appropriate governance and lead progress on actions, it will be necessary to expand membership of the Steering Group and reform and create Subgroups.<sup>25</sup>

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

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<sup>25</sup> The process evaluation carried out by Sarah Murphy found that the community was underrepresented in the composition of the Steering Group; the Steering Group was not sufficiently linked to programme implementation; and that there had been a failure to develop the programme working groups as planned which contributed to a deficit of programme-specific governance. The evaluation stated that "in one case, the Chair of a Working Group opted not to accept a position on the Steering Group to report back as was intended in the reporting model. This was carried out by another member of the group who was also a member of the Steering Group and some felt that this confused the role of the Chair and had implications for effective communication between the working group and the Steering Group". This perceived distance between the working group in question and the Steering Group was mentioned during several interviews. There was a reported lack of feedback mechanisms; a forum for discussion of implementation issues and sharing of learning; there was a perceived lack of transparency and/or insufficient explanation of issues discussed at meetings; difficulties were reported regarding Consortium members' following decision-making procedures, particularly those relating to budget expenditure.

**Key steps:**

Once this action plan has been signed off on by the members of the Consortium and the lead agency has been established as outlined above, the following actions should be undertaken:

- **Expand membership of the Steering Group** to reflect the increase in age range from 0-6 years to prebirth to 21 years. Groups and agencies in the area working with young people should be invited to attend, subject to agreement from the Consortium. If funding streams other than ABC are successfully obtained it may be appropriate to change the title of the Steering Group<sup>26</sup>
- **Subgroups** should be formed to ensure that all actions can be implemented in an efficient way and decisions made at the level of an operational oversight group level rather than requiring recourse to the Steering Group. This may involve the reformation of previous working groups that had not been functional or the creation of new groups to reflect the nature of the actions
- In some cases it may be appropriate for **existing structures to function as subgroups** under the plan such as the CYAG Family Support Subgroup. Given that this group is already working well and has multi-agency membership it may be sufficient to add to the membership where appropriate to ensure appropriate representation of all p[layers involved in implementation of the action

**Outcome:** Membership of Steering Group expanded, existing Subgroups reformed and new Subgroups created.

**Resources required:** Time of ABC staff and Steering Group

#### **9.4 Coordinate the production of a community directory of services in conjunction with local groups and the Dublin City North Children's and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC)**

This will build on mapping work begun in the area by a number of groups. For purposes of clarity it should map out the relevant pathways for, service access, post treatment support and referral to specialist mental health services.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:**

- An expression of interest for running the ABC programme to be established
- If there is sufficient interest this to move to a closed or open tender process, which will allow for renegotiation

**Outcome:** Community directory of services

**Resources required:** Staff time.

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<sup>26</sup> Kathleen McCann, Steering Group Member representing the Grangegorman Labour and Learning Forum (GLLF), has drafted notes on ways to improve the efficiency of the Steering Group and its associated tasks, including the creation of a learning space for programmes.

## 10. Continuation of existing programmes

### 10.1 Incredible Years

The programme to be developed to include:

- IY Baby to be continued and the possibility of further mainstreaming it through the HSE to be explored<sup>27</sup>
- As a progression from the IY baby funding should be secured for the **Integrated Play programme** developed by ABC Grangegorman
- The **preschool Basic Parenting course** to be continued or developed in line with other actions in the plan impacting on parenting support
- **Teacher Classroom Management** to be further developed and continued
- **Classroom Dina** has had an important impact and should be continued. Small group Dina to continue also<sup>28</sup>

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:** All points to be incorporated into next application process for ABC

**Outcome:** Existing programme continued and developed where agreed

**Resources required:** Programme implementation costs

### 10.2 Parent Child Home Programme

This programme has significant potential and should be further developed and continued.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:** All points to be incorporated into next application process for ABC

**Outcome:** Existing programme continued and developed where agreed

**Resources required:** Programme implementation costs

### 10.3 Doodle Den

This has been one of the largest programmes delivered by the ABC Grangegorman and should be continued, evaluated, and alternatives explored. There should be a case made for mainstreaming a literacy programme within the ABC schools.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:** All points to be incorporated into next application process for ABC

**Outcome:** Existing programme continued and developed where agreed

**Resources required:** Programme implementation costs

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<sup>27</sup> An update on this was requested from the HSE but no response received to date

<sup>28</sup> There were issues with the contractor who held the Irish licence mentioned at a consultation meeting. This may need to be explored further

## 10.4 Referral Pathways

Continue to develop the **non-formal upskilling initiatives** aimed at early years staff with HSE specialists and others. Continue to roll out the **Transition Programme** and seek to have it mainstreamed by the relevant government departments.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group

**Key steps:** All points to be incorporated into next application process for ABC

**Outcome:** Existing programmes continued and developed where agreed

**Resources required:** Programme implementation costs.

## 10.5 Upskilling

- The **Early Childhood Care and Education programme** to be rolled out to new staff or staff not yet engaged
- Funding to be sought to provide **access routes to additional higher-level courses** in childcare and early childhood development
- Provision of access to **specialised training and supports** for crèche and preschool workers working with children under 3 years with undiagnosed extra needs
- An **audit of training and development needs** within early years settings should be carried out.

**Lead agency:** ABC Steering Group; Early Years Subgroup to be established

**Key steps:** All points to be incorporated into next application process for ABC

**Outcome:** Existing programmes continued and developed where agreed

**Resources required:** Programme implementation costs.

### **Section 3: Monitoring and review**

It is important that this plan, and the progress in implementing its actions, are regularly monitored and reviewed. This plan should be a working document that can be changed and amended to more accurately meet the changing needs of the NWIC as they arise.

The various changes in governance structures will impact on these processes of monitoring and review. The lead agency, whether DIT or another organisation, will lead these processes and they will be embedded in the revised terms and reference of the Steering Group and its Subgroups. While Subgroups will be monitoring implementation of actions on a regular basis, the Steering Group should review progress regarding the plan's actions every six months and invite participation from all Consortium members.

It may also be useful to decide as a Consortium on appropriate key **indicators** which would represent success for each of the actions.

## Appendix: Summary table of actions

Action	Outcome	Lead agency	Resources
<b>1. Age range and approach</b>			
<b>Extend age range from 0-6 years to prenatal to 21 years</b>	Extension of age range from 0-6 years to prenatal to 21 years.	ABC Steering Group and Consortium	Coordination of decision-making process at Consortium level
<b>2. Premises</b>			
<b>Coordinate support for the obtainment of appropriate premises for community organisations</b>	Support coordinated for the obtainment of appropriate premises for community organisations	ABC Steering Group; CYAG	Staff time and coordination of consultation process.
<b>3. Early intervention</b>			
<b>PCHP to engage with PHNs to increase the number of referrals to the programme and numbers of families participating</b>	Increase level of referrals of children going on to PCHP at 18 months and number of families participating	Daughters of Charity Community Services	The resources are currently in place to grow the programme to have 30 families participating.
<b>Provision of additional management supports for early years services</b>	Additional management supports provided for early years services	ABC Consortium	Staff time
<b>4. Family and parenting supports, including SLT</b>			
<b>Endorse and support the work underway to develop a strategy / operational guidelines for the delivery of evidence informed parenting</b>	Strategy/ guidelines developed to provide clarity on delivery and co-ordinated	Children and Youth Action Group Subgroup on Family Support	Additional resources for programmes to meet gaps. Resources to pay for staff time; professionals to speak on issues of interest at informal parent support groups; activities such as yoga, food

<b>programmes and community supports that are accessible to the least engaged parents and seek new opportunities and expansion to existing and new groups</b>	actions to fill gaps		and refreshments, childcare and outings; formal courses to be run on an annual basis.
<b>Seek opportunities for innovative pilot initiatives and explore other examples of best practice to develop supports and services in SLT</b>	Pilots and other models of best practice are explored and scoped to assess their appropriateness and relevant for the local area; the area is selected for the next stage roll out of HSE programme	ABC Steering Group and Consortium	Staff time to coordinate advocacy activities
<b>Explore ways of supporting the development of language awareness and linguistic diversity such as implementing Language Explorers programme through schools and early years services</b>	Feasibility of implementing Language Explorers programme through schools and early years services ascertained	ABC Steering Group	Staff time for initial feasibility study
<b>5. Mental health</b>			
<b>Develop a communication strategy (in conjunction with the Dublin City North CYPSC) to endorse and support further dissemination of existing user-friendly information regarding youth mental health services to organisations, parents and young people</b>	Improved local awareness of mental health and services	Children and Youth Action Group	Budget for print and dissemination, estimated at €6,000

<b>Seek funding and/or secondment of a range of therapists, including SLT, psychologists, play therapists, and art, dance, and drama therapy to work as a team to provide mental health supports for children under 12 years in the local area</b>	Children have access to mental health supports	ABC Steering Group	Substantial resources for salaries, estimated in the vicinity of €180,000	
<b>Deliver co-ordinated mental health training and supports and develop a substitution budget so that services can avail of training and resolve barriers preventing attendance</b>	High attendance at effective training	TBD	€7,000-20,000 approx	
<b>Develop a specific interagency Children &amp; Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy for the NWIC</b>	Specific interagency Children & Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy for the NWIC developed	ABC Grangeogor man Consortium	Staff time to develop strategy and consortium buy-in and contributions regarding strategy implementation.	
<b>6. Domestic violence</b>				
<b>Seek funding for a domestic violence training programme (with, for example Women's Aid) that will be available to champions all organisations in the area</b>	Increased capacity for general service providers to support families experiencing domestic violence	NWICN	Potentially up to €10k for training and	7
<b>Advocate for the establishment of a domestic violence non-residential support service for the area</b>	Increased access to specialised domestic violence	ABC Steering Group	Staff salaries estimated at €100,000. Other capital costs to be considered also regarding premises and resources	



	support for families		
<b>Engage MOVE or other similar organisation to provide a perpetrators programme in the area</b>	Perpetrators have access to support to overcome violence	NWICN	To be clarified depending on business model options
<b>7. Homelessness</b>			
<b>In partnership with the YPAR Homelessness Working Group, run a public event or series of events for service providers in the area to highlight the unique challenges experienced by homeless families, and to create a shared learning environment where service providers can review how they can better serve the needs of this highly vulnerable population.</b>	Increased confidence and ability of service providers to support families experiencing homelessness	Children and Youth Action Group / YPAR	Admin time, space and refreshments e.g. €500
<b>8. Community facilities including the development of a number of community hubs</b>			
<b>Develop an interagency strategy for the development of two 'one-stop-shop community hubs', which would provide space for community and youth services, as well as providing information/signposting services, training facilities, and space for creative programmes.</b>	Two resourced and timed plans for the development of these centres	ABC Steering Group	Staff and team time. There may be a need for some supports to develop reports etc.
<b>Develop a community spaces plan which will advocate for investment into accessible priced community and youth</b>	Increased access for local youth and community groups to community	Children and Youth Action Group with support from the	Staff and team time. There may be a need for some supports to develop reports etc.

<b>sporting and activity spaces</b>	spaces at appropriate prices	steering group	
<b>Develop a community spaces liaison group to interface with local developments in relation to ensuring community needs are effectively considered and delivered on</b>	The local community is engaged in informing local developments such as O'Devaney Gardens etc.	Children and Youth Action Group with support from ABC Steering Group	Staff and team time. There may be a need for some supports to develop reports etc.
<b>Work with the principals network regarding making school facilities more accessible for running programmes with a community benefit</b>	Increased access to space for community programmes	ABC Steering Group	Staff time
<b>9. Governance and communication: Development and implementation of a Children and Young Persons Action Plan and Strategy</b>			
<b>Seek funding for core staff to ensure the success of the programme the next round of the ABC programme to ensure the success of the ABC Grangegorman programme</b>	Approval for ABC round 2 for local area	ABC Steering Group	Staff time
<b>Continue to Review Leadership and the Governance of ABC.</b>	Agreed leadership, governance systems and operational structures	ABC Steering Group	Staff time
<b>Expand membership of Steering Group and reform and creation of Subgroups.</b>	Membership of Steering Group expanded, existing Subgroups reformed and new Subgroups created.	ABC Steering Group	Time of ABC staff and Steering Group
<b>Coordinate the production of a community directory of services in conjunction with local groups and the</b>	Community directory of services	ABC Steering Group	Staff time

<b>Dublin City North Children's and Young Peoples Services Committee (CYPSC).</b>			
<b>10. Continuation of existing programmes (see action plan for details)</b>			

