

Rationale

Due to Covid-19 schools and nurseries in Scotland were closed, with the exception of critical provision for children of key workers and vulnerable families. St Joseph's staff are early adopters of Quality Improvement (QI) methodology having already participated in Fife local QI training and undertaken several improvement projects. Quality Improvement methodology provided the opportunity to systematically plan and test out change ideas to support our children emotionally and academically during these unprecedented times and gain learning into 'what works' in terms of pupil engagement.

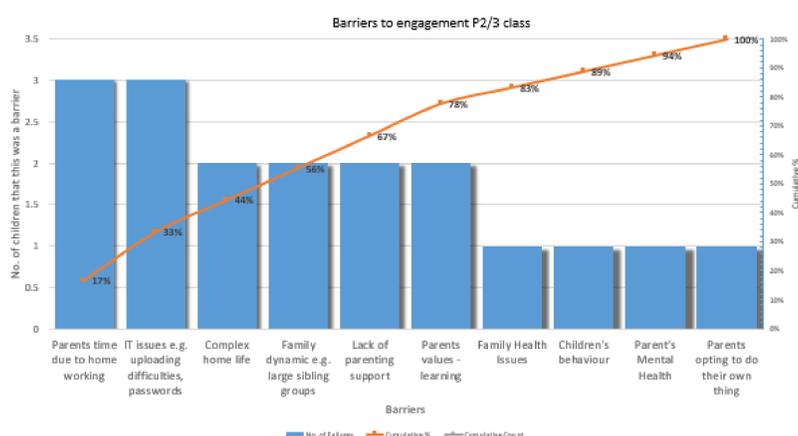
By 30th May 60% of P2/3 will be engaging* in academic learning (Baseline: 27%).

Operational Definition:

*engaging: piece of work submitted, child indicates 'hand in' function and you know through contact with the child/parent that they have engaged in learning.

Method

- Established an Improvement Team.
- Received Quality Improvement coaching support through weekly virtual calls.
- Used Quality Improvement tools to gain a better understanding of children's home circumstances and barriers to learners.
- A pareto chart enabled us to organise barriers- Parents time to support children due to working commitments and IT issues (uploading difficulties', password problems) posed significant challenges.
- Many children faced multiple barriers.



- The Model for Improvement provided a route map to establish improvement aims, agree our operational definition of 'engagement', measures and change ideas to test.

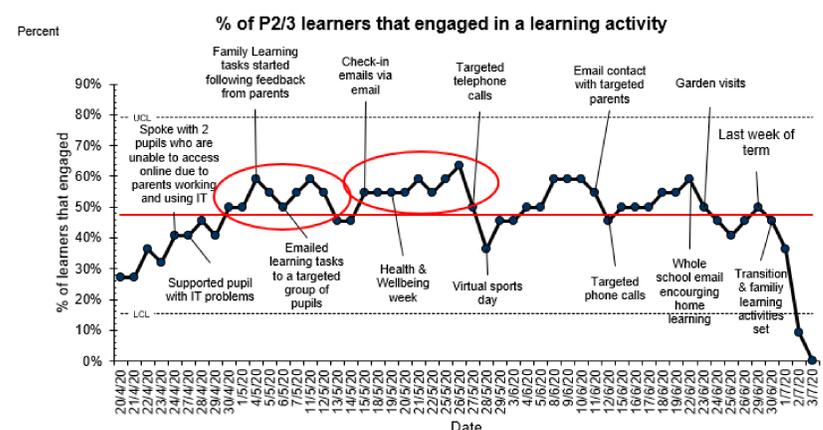
Process Change

- Check in phone calls from class teacher and Senior Leadership Team.
- Targeted emails sent directly to parents.
- Family learning activities coordinated across school for all stages.
- ICT support given from staff to help access Microsoft Teams.
- Garden visits dropping off paper packs, resources and opening up opportunity for face to face conversations.
- Whole school promotion of home learning.

Achievements

- We hold improvement data demonstrating pupil engagement at an individual level daily.
- There were significant improvements (data shifts) in the % of pupils engaging in a learning activity.
- By 01st May over 50% of learners were consistently engaging* in a daily learning activity.

Results



Conclusions

- Barriers to home learning required an understanding of the families circumstances and a tailored response.
- Family learning activities coordinated across the school coupled with direct check ins with families increased pupil engagement.

Key Learning Points

- Home learning proved challenging for many families.
- Many children faced multiple complex barriers making home learning challenging.
- A pivotal step was to agree an operational definition for 'pupil engagement' in order to be clear in terms of our improvement aim and measurement plan.
- Daily measurement of engagement levels was manageable and provided a framework to monitor engagement.
- Some parents preferred a paper pack however this method proved difficult to assess engagement and relied on follow up contact.
- Parents' perceptions surrounding expectations of home learning varied greatly with many families reporting they did not see it as a priority. Staff were reluctant to add pressure/challenge parents for fear of this having a detrimental impact.
- Families with children across different stages of the school felt overwhelmed and difficult to manage. We looked at how we could cover aspects of the curriculum across stages and set family learning activities that proved popular for families with high levels of engagement.

Next Steps

- Spread learning to enhance how we support children with homework.
- Continue to offer whole school family learning activities encouraging families to learn together and supporting parents on how to support their children's learning.