

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

with Midlothian's Third Sector



Midlothian is home to some of Scotland's most innovative, influential and well regarded third sector organisations. In this short guide we highlight just five local organisations who between them retain over £6M annually within the local economy, employing over 60 professionals and many more volunteers. Investing in local services benefits the Midlothian economy and people who live here. By third sector organisations we mean charities and social enterprises, sharing the same key characteristics:

- **resources are only used for social good (not investor profit)**
- **those who run them have an affinity for their clients.**

This does not mean that standards are lower than in the private sector. Statutory demands are high and because third sector organisations report to multiple funders they constantly have to prove the value of what they do. In this guide we tell you more about what our third sector organisations do, the impact they have on clients and how they can help you.

MYPAS supports those aged 12-21 to improve their health and wellbeing, specialising in areas of mental health and substance use. Demand for MYPAS services is high. Services include:

LGBTQ Young People - support group for LGBTQ young people and their allies and one to one support focusing on emotional wellbeing

Counselling - counselling sessions for vulnerable young people with mental health difficulties, counselling groups with young people

Art Therapy - art therapy sessions with young people and for young people with mental health issues



Family Counselling - family counselling sessions for young people with mental health issues and their families

Young Mens Work - 3 types of work with young men who would traditionally not access therapeutic services - Healthy and Resilient minds groups, Issue-based therapeutic groups and individual therapy

Drug and Alcohol Work - with young people, individually or in groups, who want advice, info and support about drug and/or alcohol use

Mental Health Work with Education - mental health themed groups with young people in education, workshops, training and support for teachers.



Play Midlothian helps children flourish through play. It provides a range of services for children of all ages and their families, and expert advice for other children's settings. Services focus on prevention and early intervention, ensuring that children experience the play their developing bodies and brains need for health, wellbeing and learning - and that adults have the skills to support this. Stimulating play in schools can compensate for a lack of play at other times in a child's life. Services include:

Supported self-directed large group play sessions - at break or lunch time, or during class time (or a session a week covering all three or one-off events such as a messy play day)

Supported 1:1 / small group play - during class time

Supported family play sessions - during class time, open days or after school hours.

Play Midlothian's use of self-directed play delivers the following outcomes:

Improved emotional and stress regulation - academic research shows that play supports readiness for education

Improved executive function - academic evidence shows that self-directed play improves attention, planning, decision making and problem solving

Stress reduction - children learn to work through real life issues using play

Building positive connections through schools - creating positive memories and a history of being happy together on which to draw.

Working with Schools

Play Midlothian and St David's Primary work in partnership to provide high quality play sessions. Trained Play Midlothian practitioners provide tailored play opportunities within and beyond the school day. The partnership supports wider opportunities for family engagement and helps learners acquire essential skills to support learning.

"The partnership enables St David's to build capacity and use PEF funding to deliver a stimulating programme responsive to the needs of our learners. Play Midlothian provide a professional service which is well considered ensuring clear timescales, details of interventions and evidence of impact. This is having a significant impact on improving the outcomes of our school community"

Gill McPherson, St David's RC Primary School.



Home Link Family Support provides practical assistance for parents with young children. Families often experience multiple vulnerabilities, including physical and mental health issues, alcohol and substance misuse, poverty, poor housing and social isolation. Home Link intervene at an early stage to provide person-centred, practical and emotional support to families, ensuring families function better and children get a good start in life and are school ready. Home Link Family Support services include:

Volunteer Family Support - trained volunteers provide regular home visits to families and children, improving parents' confidence and encouraging families to engage with local community services

Systemic Family Counselling - including art therapy to improve relationships within the family unit

Young Parents Support Service - for young parents with children aged 3 and under

Early Years Family Practitioner - encouraging families to use their early year's placement

School based therapeutic Support - including art therapy, group work, family therapy, 1-2-1 support and consultation/drop in for parents, staff and pupils.

Quality and Evaluation

In services for children and families quality must be at the heart of everything. All of our third sector organisations operate quality and evaluation systems so you can see the benefits. One example is **Outcome Ratings Scale** used by **Homelink Family Support**, **MYPAS** and **Midlothian Sure Start**. This determines the impact of sessions for families and individual members. It captures information on four overlapping areas of measurement:

Personal or symptom distress - individual wellbeing

Interpersonal well-being - managing intimate relationships

Social role - satisfaction with work/school and relationships outside of the home

Overall wellbeing.

Outcome Ratings Scale provides a baseline and then a progression update every 3 months thereafter until the end of the support and it is just ONE example of the systems used by our third sector services.



Home Link Family Support



Midlothian Sure Start (MSS) supports children up to 12 years and their families to build resilience by 'building best beginnings'. It delivers evidenced programmes which are strengths-based, respectful and person-centred. MSS works collaboratively with families, communities and statutory services. Families are integrally involved in all levels of planning and development and services are delivered through six Family Learning Centres which offer:

Early learning and childcare, family support - 1-2-1 counselling, peer support, parenting support, welfare rights, intergenerational support and support into work, education or training

Dads Services - 1-2-1 and group support, outdoor play, counselling and play therapy

A Good Start - for babies in Midlothian incorporating baby massage and sessions on brain development and play

Parenting Support - to help families raise children with confidence, skills to talk so children will listen and sleep advice amongst others

Therapeutic services - such as art therapy, mindfulness, yoga, systemic family counselling, 1-2-1 and group work for children, parents and staff, storytelling in early years settings and group sessions for adults with Post Natal depression

A Good Time to be 2 - including welfare rights, intergenerational support and assistance into training, education and work.

What Can Change?

The **Lawfield Community Project** was a partnership between Lawfield Primary School, Midlothian Sure Start, Play Therapy Base, Homelink Family Support and Children 1st. The school has reported a number of positive outcomes including:

- Absconding was dramatically reduced to virtually none
- A major reduction in **exclusions** and **late attendances** reported
- An increase in **reading attainment** for almost every child
- A **Fathers Adventure Club** was set up with growing attendance and engagement and a discernible change in culture with schools being more 'dad inclusive', staff more reflective of impact of community and family on children and more inclusive of families
- Parental **Engagement** improved with an increase at parent's night from 50% up to 85% and an increase in community engagement with, for example, 300 attending the Dads Festival of Talent.



Play Therapy Base delivers play therapy services, offering children opportunities for developmental play, emotional and social development and supporting parents to meet their child's needs. Approaches are effective in addressing developmental problems and reducing withdrawn, challenging or concerning behaviours such as aggression and anxiety. Services include:

Individual Play Therapy - for nursery/primary aged children involving a therapist who, using play and stories, allows developmental gaps to be filled and life-experiences processed

Group Play Therapy - enabling children experiencing similar challenges to work with others in small groups

Filial Therapy - supporting parents and carers to use therapeutic play to support children at home with parents engaged as partners

Lunch-time play therapy drop-ins - short therapist appointments for any child which Head Teachers report helps catch difficulties before they become more difficult to address

Consultations - for staff, parents and carers to think through a child's difficulties and explore effective supports and CPD training for school and nursery staff to promote understanding and effective support of children's distressed behaviours.

What does it mean for our children and families - some real life outcomes

Filial Therapy: A 4 year old's father had died. His behaviour became challenging, he struggled to sleep, was distracted at nursery and angry with peers. But in Filial Therapy his Mum learnt how to respond to his feelings of loss by joining in the stories that he made with figures and puppets, helping him make sense of what had happened.

Consultation: A parent and teacher had asked for time to think about a child who was withdrawn in school but angry at home. The child was anxious and the effort of holding herself together in school was resulting in her 'falling apart' at home. Ways of reducing her anxiety in school and at home were identified.

Play Therapy: A young boy was not engaging in school and involved in risky behaviour in his community. He had experienced domestic abuse which had affected his self-esteem and his trust that the world was safe. His academic and social progress were seriously affected through not accessing opportunities young children would usually access. When finishing therapy, behaviour that concerned the adults around him had reduced significantly. He still struggled to 'get it right' at times but was confident enough to use trusted adults at home and school to continue to improve.



Our support programmes can be tailored to suit your needs. Costs will vary but can range from small group or one-to-one support at £48 per hour and sleep counselling at £245 per family through to family counselling over 20 sessions at £2,000 per family and supported art therapy groups over 10 weeks at £2,425 per group.

Contact any of the services below to discuss further:



MYPAS

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Play Midlothian

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Home Link Family Support

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Midlothian Sure Start

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Play Therapy Base

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