

Parallel sessions (1)

12.05-12.50 .



Midlothian Sure Start & Parenting across Scotland

Parallel session 1c: 12:05-12:50

The McNeil Room

Open Kindergarten

WELCOME TO OPEN
KINDERGARTEN ♡



The Scottish
Government



- Background to the Open Kindergarten Project
- Phase 3
- A babies' rights approach
- Where next?





2015

*'In every location I visited, children's rights were mentioned, as part of the structure and of what informed childcare settings. Staff in these settings had a very high degree of awareness of the UNCRC, and saw it as leading their practice. This was evident in their work with children, but also with the wider family; **professionals viewed supporting the whole family as part of their rights supporting work.***

WINSTON
CHURCHILL
MEMORIAL
TRUST

Supporting families in the early years in Scandinavia



Clare Simpson



Feasibility study

2018

Open Kindergartens: Improving Family Support Provision in Scotland – Summary Report

The aim of the project was to consider an alternative model of low-threshold family support for parents with children aged 0 to 3 years of age – the Open Kindergarten.

Open Kindergartens are drop-in open sessions for parent and child staffed by early years practitioners and non-statutory social workers, which offer parents support through peer interaction and professional support.

Andressa Gadda,
Centre for Child Wellbeing and Protection, The University of Stirling
Marion Macleod, Children in Scotland
Clare Simpson, Parenting across Scotland

May 2018





Exploring Support for Families in the Early Years

The Open Kindergarten approach to early years family support originated in Sweden and has been widely adopted across the Nordic countries. Open Kindertgartens provide low-threshold support for families, firmly embedding parent-led and rights-based approaches in line with the UNCRC. This pilot project explored whether this form of universal provision for families could be adapted to Scotland to support parents and carers with children aged 0-3 years. A project evaluation was conducted by the University of Stirling.

Outputs (March 2019 - April 2020)



Trialed at **two** early years settings in Midlothian and Edinburgh



Two Open Kindergarten practitioners – one supporting families at each site



Two drop-in sessions at each site per week (lasting 2 hours)



51

families attended **drop-in sessions** to access professional and peer-to-peer support



18

families engaged in **outreach activity and home visits** to build relationships

Targeted sessions looking at a range of parent-identified topics



Baby Weaning



Sleep



Infant First Aid



Speech & Language Development



Play

Pilots 2019-2020

Open Kindergarten *'fits with the broader emphasis in Scotland on the importance of a consistent child rights based approach to services for children.'* (Phase 2 evaluation)



Key findings from pilots

- It fills a gap
- It helps those experiencing mental health challenges
- It provides peer support
- Babies and small children can play and interact
- It needs skilled practitioners
- It's relationship based



Key features

- Person-centred
- Parent led
- Open door
- Free
- Warm and receptive



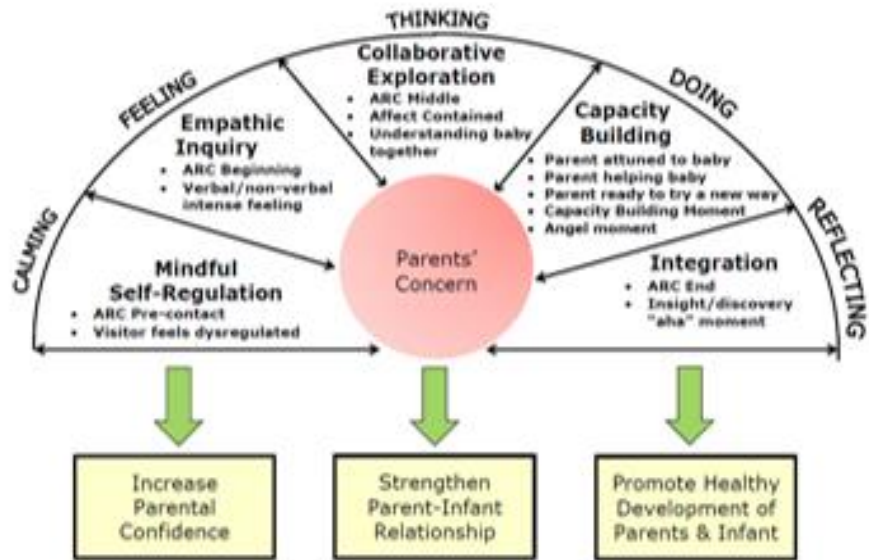
A light box sign with two rows of text. The top row reads "WELCOME TO OPEN" and the bottom row reads "KINDERGARTEN" followed by a black heart symbol. The sign is placed on a piece of burlap fabric. In the background, there is a white headboard, a small black figurine, and a vase with dried flowers.

WELCOME TO OPEN
KINDERGARTEN ♥

Phase 3

July 2024 – December 2025

- Relationship focused
- Accessible
- Parent and child led



Where now?

- Testing the model in different contexts (Locations, Venues, Times, Communities)
- 0.9 FTE Manager
- 0.8 FTE Family Support Worker (2 staff working 14 hrs per week each)
- Midlothian, East Lothian. West Lothian and plans to deliver in Edinburgh

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Midlothian	Woodburn Community Hub (AM)	Bonnyrigg Guide Hall (AM) Loanhead Library (PM)		Gorebridge Family Learning Center (AM) Young Parents Penicuik Family Learning Centre (PM) Loanhead Library Evening (Planned)	Millerhill Community Hub (AM)	Gorebridge Family Learning Centre (AM)
East Lothian			First Steps (AM) Joint outdoors group in planning		Dunbar Medical Centre (AM)	
West Lothian			David King Partnership Centre (PM)			

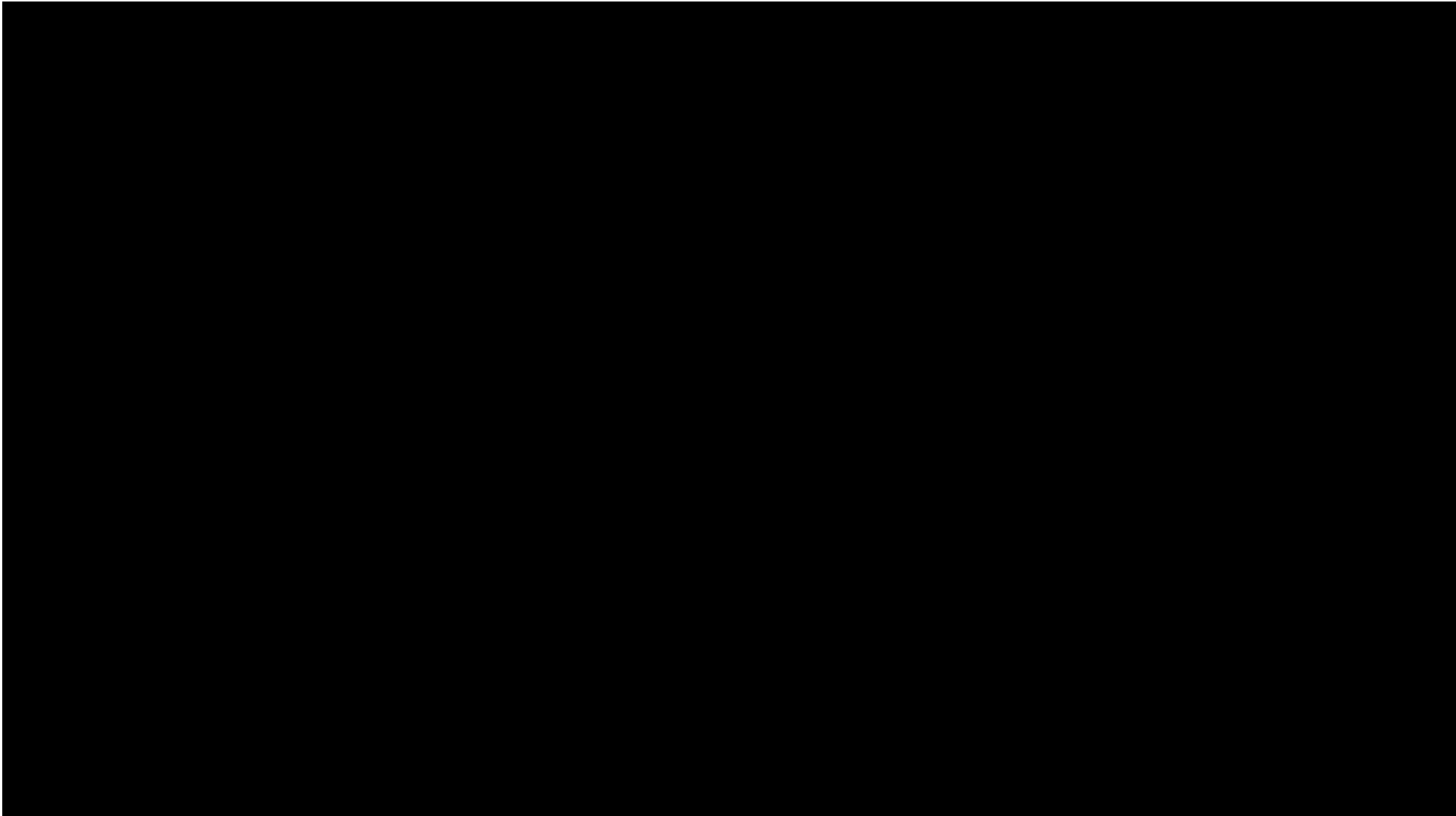


A babies' rights approach to Open Kindergarten

- **Curating the space**
- **Building sensitive, informed relationships**
- Navigating identity
- Respecting and validating
- Making time

[Starcatchers \(2024\) Voice of the Baby Reflective Guide for the Arts](#)

Curating the Space - Husby Open Kindergarten, Sweden





Group Discussion: Curating the space

What stood out about how the Husby space was curated?

How could you recreate that in a multi-purpose setting?



Curating the Open Kindergarten Space

“They [practitioners] just make you feel like you’re at home basically when you come in, which just makes you feel relaxed the minute you walk in the first door, before you get into the play group, which is nice.” (Mayfield parent 9)



Group Discussion: Building sensitive, informed relationships

How might we foster a babies' rights approach in the following relationships? (pick one)

- Babies with each other
- Babies with parents / carers
- Parents / carers with professionals
- Babies with professionals
- Parents / carers with each other



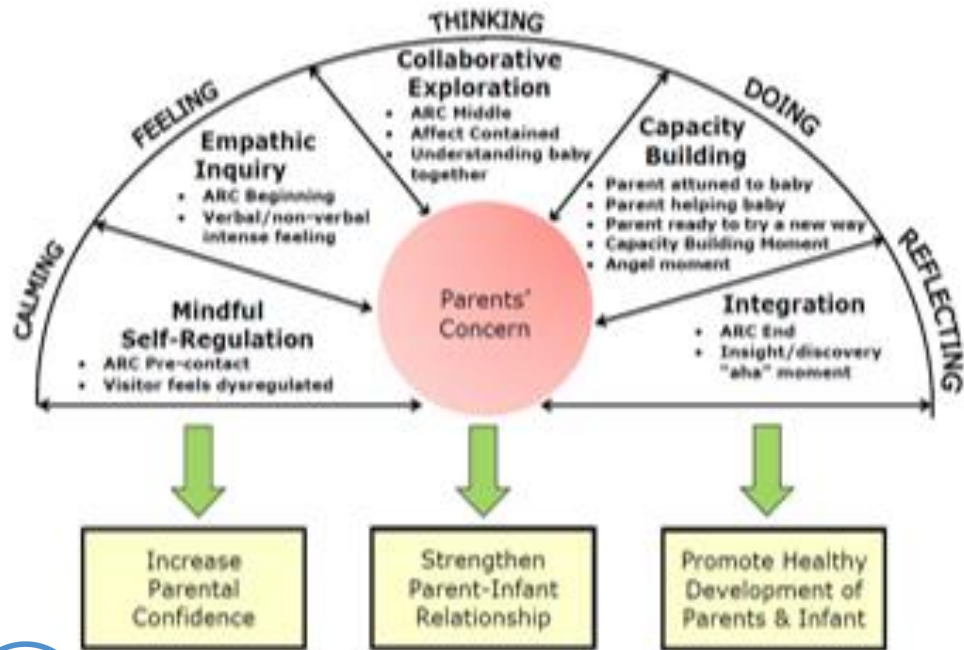


Building sensitive relationships

'But I knew that I had to come for him and I really want him to meet wee people, like his age, because if we're going to hopefully get housed here then he'll grow up with the children rather than just grow up with me being the only person he sees.'

(Parent, Midlothian Family Learning Centre)

Building sensitive relationships



Where next?

- Evaluation report on learning from the upscaling (Locations, Venues, Times, Communities)
- Exploring how OK fits with other types of support available
- Sharing the key components of the model to enable upscaling (e-module)
- Exploring how we maintain fidelity and quality in wider roll out





Want more information:

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OPEN KINDERGARTEN

JOIN OUR RELAXED GROUP FOR
PARENTS AND PARENTS-TO-BE!
BRING YOUR KIDS TO PLAY,
SOCIALISE, AND CONNECT WITH
OTHERS IN A FRIENDLY
ENVIRONMENT.

Groups on Monday-Friday
across Midlothian &
Surrounding Areas



*Sign up
Here*



Any questions?





Thank you!