

Appendix 1.

Genesis Project - Kath Dean Project Manager

The Genesis Project is a grass roots community project, based within the community of Grove Hill, in Middlesbrough for fifteen years. Grove Hill is in one of the most deprived areas of Middlesbrough (Source: IMD 2015) with its community members, children and families experiencing significant multiple and complex needs. We currently employ one part time of staff and could not continue to work with our children and families without the volunteers that support the work. We currently provide a range of activities based in 2 locations within Grove Hill. These include weekly children's and youth groups, community lunches, food and clothing banks and support for families accessing our centre-based services. We are familiar with emerging research around adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) and use a trauma informed approach in all our activities.

The demographic of families living in Grove Hill presents us with a range of challenges; there are high numbers of families which present concerns with regards to the safety and health and wellbeing of the family unit, many whom are known to local authority children's services. Mental health concerns, self-harm and suicide, addictions and substance misuse, domestic abuse and parental conflict, pressures on the ability to parent, single parent households and absent fathers, unemployment or low-paid work, poverty, debt and the impact of deprivation is endemic in this community. The Genesis Project recognises that many of these issues are prevalent in individual families and albeit, we are aware of a lot of these issues and do offer low level emotional support and signposting, we are currently restricted by the lack of resources and capacity of the project. There is so much more we could do to respond to these issues, at an earlier opportunity and in relationship with the range of more specialist agencies able to respond to these complex needs. One of the factors that positions the Genesis Project to offer earlier support that has the potential to reduce escalation in concerns within a family is the nature of the trusted relationship; because we are a local voluntary sector organisation and, because we are very rooted in the local community we are able to engage with those families who are often resistant to statutory sector support offers and/or more formal services.

We are a registered charity with strong local presence, sound partnerships with other services in the local community and our longevity comes with respect, credibility and sustainability. We are confident our grass-roots community-based approach has the potential to support real change in the lives of Grove Hill's families.