



**Northern Ireland
Executive**

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**DELIVERING SOCIAL CHANGE
THROUGH THE SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND**

Belfast South SIF Early Intervention (BSEI) Project

Overview

Introduction

The Social Investment Fund (SIF) has strategic objectives of a) tackling the systemic issues linked to poverty and deprivation, b) building pathways to employment, c) increasing community based services and d) addressing dereliction and promoting investment in the physical regeneration of deprived communities.

The SIF was designed to target areas that are most disadvantaged without duplicating existing or planned provision and the target areas include:

- Areas within the top 10% most deprived super output areas on the multiple deprivation measure 2010.
- Areas within the top 20% most deprived super output areas on the key domains of income, employment, education and health.

The Belfast South Social Investment Fund (SIF) Zone Steering Group identified the Belfast South Early Intervention (BSEI) project as one of its strategic priorities. This project has taken into consideration the range of work in early health and education interventions and family support being carried out by various sectors and initiatives in Belfast South. This new initiative will build on, and add additional value to that work.

The Belfast South Early Intervention project is a large, collaborative early intervention project will be delivered across the eligible areas within Belfast South Social Investment Fund Zone. It is specifically designed to provide interventions and family support to tackle systematic issues linked to deprivation from earliest stage (pregnancy) through to primary and post primary school. The project will be managed through the South Belfast Partnership Board acting on behalf of the Belfast South Early Intervention delivery partners - South Belfast Sure Start, Belfast South Community Resources, Barnardo's and Sólás.

The project will contribute to both children and young people and their families being better supported. Each child and young person will be supported to get them the best start in life and allow them to develop from a health, education and personal perspective in order to reach their full potential. Parents will be supported in their parenting role. The programme of proposed interventions, whilst working closely with some local schools, will almost exclusively be delivered within the local community and home settings and will actively work to build, grow and sustain targeted interventions to improve development in the Belfast South SIF zone in the lead up to Nursery, primary & post primary education.

The project comprises of four strands, namely:

- **Strand 1 – Perinatal. South Belfast Sure Start** will offer a range of specific interventions for expectant mothers and fathers and children up to 1 year old and will engage with a number of families who will be recruited from the eligible Belfast South SIF areas.
- **Strand 2 – Transitions.** The Transitions programme has two components.
 - a) **The Pre- Nursey (“Loving Learning”)** targets 2-3 year olds in four communities across Belfast South, including South West; Inner South; Outer South (Taughmonagh; Minnowburn; Ballynafeigh; Woodstock) and BME communities. We will work with those children most unlikely to take up opportunities at Nursery. The “Loving Learning” programme will support parents to promote routine and enhance social cognitive behavioural development. **(South Belfast Sure Start).**
 - b) **The play support and transitions (Big Step & 7UP)** targets 3-11 year olds potentially impacted by moving from nursery - primary, primary - post primary schools. Sessions will explore the social and emotional issues affecting children in transition, seek to increase emotional wellbeing and resilience and enhance educational experience. The programme will include social development and play support covering issues such as how young people can be impacted by transition and the challenges they may face, ensuring school readiness and offering new motivational techniques and ways to cope with change to ensure they reach positive milestones. **(Belfast South Community Resources).**

This in turn will facilitate strong support links between schools and communities by linking into existing educational intervention projects e.g. homework clubs, after school clubs. It will develop school and study routines at Key Stage 1-4 as well as support for parents/carers to ensure effective engagement and retention of children in school.

- **Strand 3 – Family Support.** Will provide family support services for Tier 2 families with 4-10 year olds across nine communities (Taughmonagh, Village, Donegall Pass, Markets, Woodstock, Ormeau/Botanic, Annadale/Ballynafeigh, Belvoir, and Sandy Row). They will deliver a family support programme for parents/caregivers combining home visits and small group work. This service will build on family support services provided by Sure Start and will work closely with the four family support hubs. **(Barnardo's)**
- **Strand 4 – The Special Educational Needs (SENS) programme for children and young people.** This programme will support families with children and young people who have special educational needs (SENS) offering support for parents and direct support for children and their siblings. Provision will include sensory play, music therapy, arts and crafts, sport etc. and will provide home support for those families who require additional support. **(Sólás)**

Strategic Objectives:

- a) To provide interventions and support to parents, families, children and young people from earliest stage (pregnancy) through to primary and post primary schools.
- b) To support children and young people to give them the best start in life in order each reach their full potential.

The core focus is to deliver early intervention programmes /interventions of support to children, young people and their families, to promote strong parent-child attachments, positive behaviour, strong families and social connectedness. In particular, it is recognised that community support for the project will be essential to its success. Activities, which will be delivered will include but are not limited to:

- One to one work with children and their parents/caregivers
- Home visits
- Small group based support
- Cognitive and behavioural development programmes
- Play support
- Information workshops

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes from delivering the four strands of the BSEI project are:

Behaviour and social and emotional well-being levels

Improved emotional wellbeing

Improved behaviour

Reduced anxiety and depression

Reduced levels of aggression

Reduced engagement in risky behaviours (substance misuse, self-harm, smoking and alcohol consumption, etc.)

Engagement with education and training

Improved attendance and active participation in school, education or training

Better developed school and study routines

Improved performance in key stage 1-4

Increased in attendance rates

Increased punctuality rates

Increased parental involvement in children's education

Improved experience of educational transition for child and parent/caregiver

Improved family and peer relationships

Improved preparation for labour and birth experience

Improved parental attachment with new born baby

Improved parenting knowledge and skills

Improved family relationships

Improved family management skills

SOUTH BELFAST

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This project is funded by the Northern Ireland Executive's Social Investment Fund.