



**MUMO  
MOVING UP MOVING ON**

**END OF YEAR FOUR  
EVALUATION REPORT**



**January 2020**

**MUMO is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund**

# MUMO: MOVING UP MOVING ON END OF YEAR FOUR EVALUATION REPORT

## CONTENTS

Context	4
Evaluation Approach	5
MUMO Project Overview	6
MUMO: January to December 2019: Quantitative Data	8
Feedback from the MUMO Team	13
Family Support	18
Counselling Sessions Delivered by Relate NI	22
Impact Story – Springfield primary School	24
Feedback from Teachers about MUMO	30
Impact Story – Primary School SENCO	32
MUMO Advisory Parents	36
Feedback from Parents	39
Parent Impact Story: One	43
Parent Impact Story: Two	45
Parent Impact Story: Three	47
Strengths, Achievements, Opportunities, and Challenges	48

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*This photograph is on the Springfield Primary School website, and has been reproduced with kind permission of the School Principal*

*I would like to acknowledge and thank the MUMO Project Team, Project Partners, parents, children, and teachers who have supported the collection of data and provided input to consultation opportunities within the evaluation process.*

*Jane Turnbull  
Education and Development  
January 2020*

## CONTEXT

MUMO – Moving Up Moving On – is a five-year Project (which could be extended for an additional two years), funded by the Big Lottery ‘Supporting Families’ Fund. The aims of the MUMO Project, which became operational in January 2016, are to:

- Provide in-school support to pupils at Springfield Primary School and St Clare’s Primary School
- Provide skills-based training, and health and well-being support to parents and families
- Provide support for children in transition from Nursery School to Primary School, from Primary School to Post-Primary School
- Provide joint Schools training opportunities for staff at Springfield Primary School and St Clare’s Primary School
- Help to develop improved relationships between Schools, families and Forthspring and the wider community.

The Project Team comprises a Project Manager (the new Project Manager started in May 2019), two Classroom Support Workers, and two Family Engagement Workers. The Project Manager and the Family Engagement Workers are based at Forthspring, on the Springfield Road in West Belfast. The Project works in partnership with the two Primary Schools – St Clare’s and Springfield – with a Classroom Support Worker based at each School. RelateNI delivers family counselling for parents and children referred by the Project team and the Primary Schools. Representatives from the Primary Schools and RelateNI are members of the MUMO Project Group.

In August 2016 Jane Turnbull, a Community Consultant and proprietor of Education and Development, was appointed to undertake a formative and summative evaluation of the MUMO Project.

Throughout the year meetings take place between the External Evaluator and the Project Manager, the Director of Forthspring, and MUMO Project staff as appropriate; and with the MUMO Project Partnership Group. Following a meeting with the Project Manager, the Forthspring Director, and the Evaluator it was agreed that the focus for the Year Four evaluation should be with children, parents and school staff; specifically addressing the impact of the MUMO interventions. This Evaluation Report draws on the information gathered during meetings, data collation and analysis from evaluation tools, and interviews with stakeholders. Some of the feedback presented in the Mid-Year Report is included again in the End of Year Four Evaluation Report.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

The overall aim of the evaluation is to provide the MUMO Project Team and Partners with an independent evaluation and review based on evidence collected throughout the project; and to understand and demonstrate:

- How the project is meeting objectives and outcomes.
- The extent to which the service is meeting the needs of the service population.
- Potential services changes, opportunities and developments identified through observation, analysis and discussion.

The evaluation process takes into account the project aims, objectives, outcomes, and outputs; and reflects and reviews the extent to which these have been met. The formative evaluation reports and conversations offer the opportunity for critical reflection; recording and presenting not only what is working well; but also where things are not going as planned and challenges experienced by the project team.

The overarching aim of the evaluation process is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the extent to which the MUMO Project is meeting objectives, achieving outcomes and effecting positive change for children, parents, and families. The Evaluation Reports present examples of what has worked well, and what the Project beneficiaries and other stakeholders most value. The Evaluation Reports describe and assess the effectiveness of the process as well as the outcomes and impact.

Data collected and analysed throughout the evaluation process includes:

- Primary data: data collected through questionnaires, interviews and focus groups designed and adapted specifically for the evaluation study.
- Secondary data: data previously collected and recorded by other organisations or researchers providing a useful source of information for the evaluation.
- Quantitative data: presenting numerical information: an analysis of data collected by the Project Team in relation to the MUMO Project
- Qualitative data: recording personal reactions, feelings, impressions and processes, collected through the questionnaires, interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

All data collected has been reviewed and analysed in accordance with the evaluation plan agreed with MUMO Project Manager. Where possible data has been 'triangulated' – i.e. feedback has been gathered from people with different perspectives about various elements of the Project development and implementation.

## MUMO PROJECT OVERVIEW

The MUMO Project has five overall aims:

- To provide intense, focussed support for children in schools to improve confidence, enthusiasm and attitudes to learning via CSW's.
- To provide supportive, caring, joined up and aspirational family support via FEW's.
- To develop relationships between schools, community groups and Forthspring.
- To offer access to activities, including after-School and holiday activities
- To strengthen and up-skill MUMO staff / volunteer team.

The Project is working towards four core outcomes, agreed with the Big Lottery Fund<sup>1</sup>. Initially three outcomes were identified; but eight months into the Project the Big Lottery Fund concurred with the proposal from the Project Manager that a fourth outcome be added; which explicitly addressed the outcomes sought for parents and families.

<b>MUMO Outcomes</b>	
1	Children make a positive transition from Nursery to Primary School, through Primary School and from Primary into Post-Primary School. Children approach learning with a positive, confident and enthusiastic outlook.
2	Families will be engaged with education and learning and will have developed educational aspirations and goals.
3	Improved relationships between school, family and community with an increased engagement of families in education and learning.
4	Emotional wellbeing will be raised/improved due to the provision and support provided to families and individuals, including access to specialist counselling.

Interventions and Programmes delivered in St. Clare's and Springfield Primary Schools by the Classroom Support Workers include:

- Small group support in numeracy, literacy, phonics, and English as a Foreign Language
- Lego Therapy
- Lunchtime Nurture Groups
- Speech and language
- Mindfulness
- One-to-one support for children

The role of the Family Engagement Workers, delivered at Forthspring, in schools, and across the community, includes:

- Targeted family Interventions, including home visits for identified vulnerable families
- Developing and delivering programme of activities for parents

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<sup>1</sup> Initially three outcomes were identified; but eight months into the Project the Big Lottery Fund concurred with the proposal from the Project Manager that a fourth outcome be added; which explicitly addressed the outcomes sought for parents and families.

- Working with existing services and partners to share information with parents and connect with them
- Developing a range of accredited learning opportunities (in partnership) for parents to engage with
- Working with current Forthspring and community teams to enhance and increase the use of the building
- Working with specialist agencies to promote awareness and training for parents and families.

A range of activities and interventions are delivered by MUMO at Forthspring, including:

- Programmes offering formal and accredited training opportunities for parents
- Family Matters, a monthly afternoon for parents and children
- Exercise sessions
- A Summer Scheme for children (in August).

In addition, children and parents may be referred for counselling sessions, delivered by RelateNI.

In 2019 a group of MUMO parents was established as the MUMO Advisory Parents group (MAP). Further detail about this new advisory group is included in this Evaluation Report.

## MUMO: JANUARY to DECEMBER 2019: QUANTITATIVE DATA

The tables below present the different programmes and interventions delivered under each of the four MUMO outcomes. The 'Total Unique' column in the four tables below presents the number of different individuals participating in the different elements of programmes delivered within each outcome (for example, in Outcome 1 below, 18 children engaged in the Lunchtime Nurture Groups in the first half of the year, and 18 children also participated in the second half of the year. However 2 children participated in both the January to June Programme and the September to December Programme, and therefore the unique number of children engaging in Nurture Groups during 2020 is 34). Many children and parents attended more than one programme. The number of unique users (children and adults) across all MUMO programmes is presented after the tables.

Outcome 1	Programme	Jan - June	July - Dec	Total Unique	
Children make a positive transition from nursery to primary School and the transition from primary to secondary School with a positive, confident and an enthusiastic outlook	<b>Springfield Primary School</b>				
	Numeracy P6 and P7 pupils	13	6	19	
	Literacy and phonics support	6	2	8	
	P1 speech and language	4	-	4	
	One-to-one support	2	3	5	
	Lego therapy	4	4	8	
	Lunchtime nurture groups for those who lack confidence or who have complex behavioral needs P3 to P7	18	18	34	
	Mindfulness	-	2	2	
	P1 support	-	4	4	
	Referral from FEW	-	1	1	
	<b>St. Clare's Primary School</b>				
	Targeted numeracy and literacy support groups (all year groups as required)	18	28	22	
	EAL support groups for children of other nationalities	8	-	8	
	Lego therapy	8	3	6	
	Lunchtime nurture groups for those who lack confidence or who have complex behavioural needs	12	8	12	
	Other activities	-	7	7	
	<b>Forthspring</b>				
	Transition with P7s	85	-	85	
	Transition - Christmas fun day with P6s	-	45	45	

<b>Outcome 2</b>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Jan - June</b>	<b>July - Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Families will be engaged with education and learning and will have developed educational aspirations and goals	MUMO Tuesday women's group	8	12	12
	Family Matters at Forthspring	18 adults + 32 children	17 adults + 29 children	25 adults + 47 children
	Give It A Go Taster sessions	32	32	35
	Legs, Bums, Tums class	25	21	33
	Journey With Your Child programme	3	-	3
	Pilates	35	32	58
	Play Matters St. Clare's	6	-	6
	Numeracy workshop at St. Clare's PS	7	-	7
	Speakeasy	11	-	11
	Patient Council Workshop	5	-	5
	Families Connect (at St. Clare's Primary School)	-	7 adults + 7 children	7 adults + 7 children
	Theatre of Witness Workshop	-	9	9
	Sewing workshops	-	8	8
	Cooking workshops	-	8	8
	Zumba at Forthspring	41	20	49

<b>Outcome 3</b>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Jan - June</b>	<b>July - Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Improved relationships between School, family and community with an increased engagement of families in education and learning	Open morning at St. Clare's Primary School	40	-	40
	Cooking After School - Springfield	3 adults + 3 children	-	3 adults + 3 children
	Volunteer sessions (luncheon club)	9	8	0
	Residential	16	-	0
	Summer Scheme	-	57	57
	Family Fun Day	-	23 adults, + 51 children + 18 visitors from Springers	23 adults, 51 children 18 children from Springers

<i>Outcome 3 continued</i>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Jan - June</b>	<b>July - Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
	Summer Family Trip to Lady Dixon's	-	14 adults + 27 children	14 adults + 27 children
	Munch Bunch: after School cooking and sports programme	-	6 adults + 10 children	6 adults + 10 children
	MUMO Advisory Parents - MAP	-	6	6

<b>Outcome 4</b>	<b>Programme</b>	<b>Jan - June</b>	<b>July - Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Emotional Wellbeing will be raised/improved due to the provision and support provided to families and individuals, including access to specialist counselling	Autism NI Support Group	19	19	27
	Parent counselling sessions with RelateNI	1 parent 7 sessions	2 parents 7 sessions	3 parents 14 sessions
	Children's counselling sessions with RelateNI	11 children 85 sessions	9 children 78 sessions	20 children 163 sessions
	Autism NI sports days	-	8 adults + 8 children	8 adults + 8 children
	Trauma training for teachers		33	33
	Walking group		8	8
	Macmillan coffee morning		25	25
	Mindfulness and Art After School at Springfield Primary School	-	3 adults + 2 children	3 adults 2 children

## Unique Users

As noted at the beginning of this section, the 'Total Unique' column in the four tables above presents the number of different individuals participating in the different elements of programmes delivered within each outcome. Many children and parents attended more than one programme. The data presented below show the number of unique children and parents that the MUMO Team have engaged with from January to December 2019:

- 387 parents
- 85 children from Springfield Primary School
- 55 children St. Clare's Primary School
- 21 teachers from St. Clare's Primary School (in school)
- 8 teachers from Springfield Primary School (in school)
- 33 teachers at teacher training
- 264 children attended programmes delivered at Forthspring (including, for example, Transition, the Summer Scheme and Family Matters)

## Outcomes: Quantitative Targets

Quantitative Outcomes - Year Four	Original cumulative target Year 1 to end Year 4	Cumulative total achieved Year 1 to end Year 4
<b>Outcome one:</b> Children make a positive transition from nursery to primary school, through primary school and from primary into secondary school. Children approach learning with a positive, confident and enthusiastic outlook	161	270 children
<b>Outcome two:</b> Families will be engaged with education and learning and will have developed educational aspirations and goals	203	247 adults 54 children
<b>Outcome three:</b> Improved relationships between school, family and community with an increased engagement of families in education and learning	56	61 adults 86 children
<b>Outcome four:</b> Emotional wellbeing will be raised/improved due to the provision and support provided to families and individuals, including access to specialist counselling services.	23	79 adults 29 children

## Organisational and support meetings

Meetings	Jan - June	July - Dec	Total
Pastoral care meetings at St Clare's Primary School	3	1	4
Nurture room meetings (St. Clare's)	2	0	2
Partnership group meetings	2	2	4
MUMO team meetings	12	10	22
Classroom Support Workers and Project Manager	2	8	10
Family Engagement Workers and Project Manager	3	6	9
Forthspring Director with Project Manager	8	5	13
Forthspring Team Leaders meetings	8	9	17
Greater Shankill Family Support Hub	4	4	8
Greater Falls Family Support Hub	4	3	7
CES meetings	1	-	1
MUMO Team Evaluation Day	1	-	1
MUMO Team Planning Day	-	1	1

## MUMO Team Training

- Families and Communities in the Driving Seat: Learning from family support to inform policy and practice: CES conference
- Self-care
- Be Kind to Yourself – Building Resilience
- Training to deliver Families Connect
- ACEs level one
- ACEs level two
- “Deeper than Talk”: co-creational relationships
- Trauma informed practice with Dr. Sheila Lavery
- Female Genital Mutilation: information workshop
- Bereavement Training (CSWs only)

## **FEEDBACK FROM THE MUMO TEAM**

### **Focusing on how the MUMO outcomes have been met and how MUMO makes a difference for children and families**

#### **Working with vulnerable children and families**

- I work with a boy at school who doesn't have friends; parents of other children didn't want their children to have anything to do with him because he would turn on them. He came with a 'red flag'. On a one-to-one and in small group work I have worked with him to increase his social skills and address anger management issues. He likes adult conversation and is a high functioning autistic boy.
- We can mediate for children with other kids.
- The MUMO Team have links with the schools that gives teachers a different perspective about the kids and families. Also, the families tell MUMO staff things that the schools do not know. We are then able to suggest to mums that they do share certain information with the school, which will benefit their children. We have seen that for some teachers it seems that it is very hard for them to change their viewpoint about a certain child or family. Children can get labelled very quickly, and it can be hard to get teachers to see another perspective.
- How do we educate the educators on matters that really matter? However, this year schools have set out mental health as being a focus. MUMO has organised a joint inset day on Mental Health, that has been paid for by the School and MUMO. This will be a Mental Health programme for all P7 pupils and Teachers.
- Our hands can be very tied in relation to referrals; we hear about problems and information that parents and children share with us enables the MUMO Team to see the big picture.
- We keep contact logs; we know the families who are on the 'hit list'. Our extensive logs can be shared with Social Services, who do also contact MUMO.
- Three years in the depth of relationships with parents has led to trust and sharing relationships.
- If a child says something during a MUMO Session that raises concerns, the MUMO CSW will report this to the School Child Protection Officer.

#### **Outcome 1:**

*'Children make a positive transition from Nursery to Primary School, through primary School and from primary into secondary School. Children approach learning with a positive, confident and enthusiastic outlook.'*

- *Children will show evidence of improvement in confidence levels*
- *Children will show evidence of improvement in levels of positivity and enthusiasm*

The children behave differently when they come to MUMO – there are never any major issues such as they have at school. We promote enthusiasm and positivity in all the activities the children engage in; which in turn builds their confidence and self-esteem.

- The MUMO team works with children in the Playgroup at Springfield and St. Clare's Nursery School, preparing them for the transition into P1.
- One of the FEWs is on the Board and Committee with Springfield Playgroup, and attends Open Mornings and Parent afternoons.
- Journey with Your Child, looking at the transition from Nursery into P1. MUMO works with parents getting them engaged and involved with their children's education, and how support children through P1. This programme is delivered over two sessions.
- Numeracy and Literacy programmes in Autumn.
- Linking with Primary School staff, and having discussions about how to get the parent in, and not to focus solely on academic approach.
- Children are not robots, and something can happen to push them back. It's not about 'fixing' – it's a process.
- MUMO delivered a Save the Children Fund programme 'Families Connect' in St. Clare's October-December 2019. This supported parents with emotional, social, behavioural issues, literacy and numeracy. It was a joint programme involving parents and children, much of the focus was on doing activities together. This is planned for Springfield Primary School for January 2020.

### **The Transition Programme**

The children are involved interacting with other children who they have not met before. We can see their personality came out, as the kids work together. It gives them a taster of what it will be like at post-Primary. Most won't see each other again, but the programme does provide the building blocks that children can fall back on when they start Post-Primary School. The children become more confident/positive, at the start for many of them they are coming into a strange building. They have to interact with other children from a different School and different community. They are doing something new, such as the first aid; which gives them confidence in themselves as they grasp the new skills. We see them gaining confidence to get involved. For example, there were two children who at start were very quiet, they quickly became fully engaged and enjoyed expressing themselves and seeing what they can do.

### **The Nurture Groups**

Children are placed in the Nurture Groups because they don't have the social skills they need, whether through their behaviour, communication issues, or because they have additional needs. Every day we do a different activity in the Nurture Groups. When they start they will often play alone with individual toys; as they develop there will be two and then three playing the one game, for example puzzles or board games. One girl is an elective mute – but recently she was helping another child with the game Guess Who? And another

day she helped a boy with EAL needs. Play Matters delivered a support programme with six parents, teaching them to support their children through play.

## **Outcome 2:**

*'Families will be engaged with education and learning and will have developed educational aspirations and goals.'*

- *Parents will complete a learning programme to support their children's education*
- *Parents will complete adult skills training workshops*

Parental attitudes to education have changed, not just for their children, but also for themselves. The parents participate in a lot of different courses; they enjoy learning together. Most of the parents really want to engage, they want to get qualifications, which is quite an attitude change from the early days when parents would only attend informal learning opportunities. This has meant that MUMO had to raise their game. Parents learning has an impact – not only for the parents, but also, they are encouraging their children to learn more; they have expectations about their kids and aspirations for them; which is encouraging. A lot of this is about opening doors for parents and children.

The mums have built up a support network for each other. On a Thursday they go as a group to the Shankill Women's Centre. One of the girls went to a Hog Roast on the Shankill Road on her own; she has really grown in confidence. The mums have seen the value of having a social life outside of the small world of social media.

The parents are connecting much more with the Schools; and the Schools are opening their doors more and more to MUMO; for example, the Principal has said that MUMO can use the school any evening. Schools say that they have tried to run workshops for parents before, but it has not really worked. School staff see MUMO as a bridge that parents will use, and the MUMO team are able to show the parents how getting involved and learning more about primary School education (which has changed a lot since they were at school) will benefit their children. Most of the parents are now aware of the stage their children are at, the days they have tests, and what they are learning; this shows that families are talking about the school day at home.

School teachers are not trained to work with parents, MUMO is. The Family Engagement Workers will meet parent at the point of entry, build capacity, and facilitate situations where they can share experiences. Very quickly, parents are able to let their guard down.

### **Outcome 3:**

*'Improved relationships between school, family and community with an increased engagement of families in education and learning.'*

- *Improved relationships between families of both schools and Forthspring through joint events*
- *Improved mutual understanding between schools and between schools and Forthspring through joint events.*
  
- Parents are saying that they want to be more involved with the School once they have engaged in MUMO activities.
- Parents are going into the schools and doing things in school with the kids, or helping out in the school library. MUMO parents wanted to and did get involved with the school disco; not just for their own children, but for others as well.
- MUMO parents facilitated a session at the transition day in December 2019
- Parents are enjoying giving something back and see the importance of becoming more involved with their children's school.
- Parents become empowered to know when something is not right, and how can it can be looked at or done differently.
- Parents want to have an input and MUMO invests in helping them to fill this gap and do something positive for the school or the community
- The Cook-It programmes have led to parents becoming involved as MUMO volunteers and cooking lunches for the Pensioners.
- For many parents it is no longer 'School vs us'.

### **Outcome 4:**

*'Emotional Well-being will be raised/improved due to the provision and support provided to families and individuals, including access to specialist counselling services'*

- *Parents will access family counselling support sessions and report positively*
  
- When people need counselling, they have been referred them to Relate NI
- The counselling "does what it says on the tin"
- We don't know what is discussed, but the majority of people who have been referred to counselling have now finished, which implies that issues have been worked through – "counselling is personal and we don't want to ask parents too much"
- Relate NI offers a bespoke service – which is what the children and families need
- Parents report that they have seen an improvement in children who have attended sessions with the Relate NI counsellor

## Comment

The MUMO Team report that from a school point of view things have been changing for the better over the past eighteen months. Communication between MUMO and school staff has improved, with more teachers having an awareness of the range of programmes and interventions that MUMO provides.

It is likely that this is due in part to the credibility that has been evidenced by children's academic progress, and improved social intelligence and emotional wellbeing. Furthermore, MUMO now has the benefit of 'longevity'. Over the years schools have seen projects come and go, and it is difficult for them to timetable and then embed initiatives into the school which are here one year and gone the next.

As one member of the Team said: "all of this (delivery of the MUMO project) depends on relationships we have with individual staff in the schools. As staff open themselves to MUMO they get more involved with MUMO. We can then do more work with those children and families who are most vulnerable or most in need".

At a strategic level, the MUMO Partnership Group has a crucial overall view of MUMO, steering, guiding and informing development of the Project. It is multi-disciplinary, with representatives from Relate NI, the two Primary Schools, and Forthspring. At partnership meetings the impact of MUMO programmes and interventions is discussed. Consideration has also been given to the role of MUMO as a shared education model of practice, which could be replicated by other schools. One of the Principals commented at a recent Partnership Meeting that: "MUMO is shared education done properly".

Partnership Meetings also give MUMO stakeholders ownership of the Project; their input influences development of the programme of activity, and they are pro-actively involved in the evaluation processes. This is matched by the recently established MUMO Advisory Parents group which, at operational level, has had significant input into the programme during the past six months (see MUMO Advisory Parents section, starting on page 35). This Project infrastructure ensures ownership by all stakeholders and at all levels of MUMO operationally and strategically.

## FAMILY SUPPORT

From January to December 2019, 35 families were referred to and engaged with the MUMO Family Engagement Workers by Schools, Family Support Hubs, Social Workers and other stakeholders. This section presents the issues that the families are facing, with the 'P' representing the 'presenting issue' for the family. As the table below shows, for every family engaging with MUMO 2019 there have been additional issues (represented by X). Each row represents one family.

Family separation / divorce	Anxiety / Stress	Depression	Family member with serious illness	Bereavement	School worries & problems	Family communication difficulties	Low self esteem	Trauma or abuse	Drugs inc. prescription drugs / Alcohol	Domestic Violence	Family member in prison	Bullying
X	X	P			P	X	X	X	X			
	X	X		P	P	X	X		X			
	X	X		P	P	X	X					
P	X				P	X		X				
P	X	X		P	P	X	X	X	X			
	P	X			P	X	P		X			
	P				P	X	P					
	P				P	X						
	X	P			P		X		X			
P	X				P	X	X					
X	X	X			P	P	X		X			
	X				P	X	X					
	X	X		X	P	X	X	X	X		X	
	P	X			P	P	X		X			
X	X	X	P	X	P		X	X	X			
					X	P						
			P		P							
	P		X	P		X						

Family separation / divorce	Anxiety / Stress	Depression	Family member with serious illness	Bereavement	School worries & problems	Family communication difficulties	Low self esteem	Trauma or abuse	Drugs inc. prescription drugs / Alcohol	Domestic Violence	Family member in prison	Bullying
		X		P		P						
				P		P	X					
P	P		P					P				
P	P	X	X			P	X					
	P		X	P	P	X						
P	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	P		P	P	X
X	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	P		X	X	X
P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X		X	X	X
P	P	X	X	X	P	P	X	X		P	P	X
X	P	P	X	P	P	P	P	P		X	X	X
X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	P		X	X	X
P	P	P	X	X	X	P	P	X		X	X	X
X	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	X		X	X	X
X	P	P	P	X	P	P	P	X		X	X	X
P	P	P	X	X	P	P	P	P		X	X	P
				P				X				
										P		

What is evident from the table above is that for many families the challenges facing them are very complex. It is not the case that a family is struggling to deal with one specific issue, that may be easily sorted; but that vulnerable families are facing a multitude of pressures and for the parents it can be very difficult to know where to start making changes. With the exception of the family who entered one-to-one support with the Family Engagement Worker with four challenging situations in their lives, the FEWs noted a range of other issues that the families wanted to talk about and needed support to address once the conversations began. This is in line with anecdotal comment and research, that vulnerable families have a number of challenges in their lives, and that it can be very difficult to know how or where to start finding solutions.

Other issues that the Family Engagement Worker identified when working with families, in addition to those shown above have included:

- Parents need support managing their children's behaviour
- Putting routines in place
- Financial support for respite through childcare for children.
- Foster parents needing support
- Getting children to school
- Addressing behaviours in the school setting.
- Parents who have become isolated, supporting them to get back into the community.
- The challenges of being a single parent
- Families struggling with finances
- The family had to move to a new house due to the anti-social behaviour of neighbours
- The transfer from primary to secondary school has not been smooth
- Costs of attending medical appointments for specialist services has been an added pressure on family
- Housing remains one of the main issues with this family, the lack of space and the condition of the housing has not helped the mental health of both parents and children.
- There has also been a suicide in the greater family circle, which has had an adverse effect on the eldest child.
- Family isolation

The most frequently noted issues facing the MUMO families, taken from the table above, are anxiety and stress, family communication issues, school worries and problems, and low self-esteem. When further analysing these data, it is noted that:

- School worries and problems were the most frequent presenting issue (26 families), with a further three families identifying this as an additional issue during their one-to-one support sessions with the FEW.
- 18 families presented with anxiety /stress related issues, with an additional 11 families also recognising this as a pressure on their families during their sessions with the FEW. In addition, 22 families were experiencing issues related to depression.
- 15 families identified family communication difficulties as a problem at the outset, with a further 14 families identifying this as an additional issue.
- None of the families raised drugs (including prescription drugs) or alcohol abuse as an issue, but this was identified as a problem for 9 families during family support sessions.
- It is noted that the 10 of the 18 families with issues around family separation / divorce were also experiencing domestic violence in the home.

Walking through the door into MUMO can be very hard for some families. Parents have reported that "making that first step was so difficult"; "I only had the courage to come because my Mummy had been going to MUMO so I went with her"; and "finding that I could speak to someone and be able to trust them was something new to me". However, feedback from parents have shown the impact that engaging with the family workers has had for them

### **Feedback from the Primary School SENCO**

“The work that the Family Support Workers do with families is wide ranging. They have supported families that I know of with Social Services, housing issues, transport and, childcare. They put the family in touch with other services that can provide support, they fill in the paperwork, and keep track of how the family are doing. The FSWs build rapport with parents, which builds their confidence and self-esteem. Their work gets parents motivated to be able to support their children; with additional MUMO opportunities in place, such as the parenting programmes and the Summer Scheme.

“We had two complex cases in school, with P7s due to make the Transition into Post-Primary School. The FSW went out to the home and helped parents fill in the forms and took the parents and children to look at different schools; they made sure that each child would successfully transition to the school that was right for them.

“The FSW attends multi-discipline meetings – these are safeguarding and wellbeing meetings, where we look at options and the best ways to support vulnerable families. The FSW helps us to find best supports for these families and does any ‘homework’ we ask for. They have a fountain of knowledge, and signpost parents and families not only to MUMO but to other places.

“We try hard in school to improve parental support, but to get full support from some parents can be very hard. MUMO gets parents enthused, who wouldn’t otherwise be either able to or motivated to effectively support their children’s education”.

## COUNSELLING SESSIONS DELIVERED BY RELATE NI

Counselling sessions, delivered by RelateNI, take place at St. Clare's Primary School, Springfield Primary School, at Forthspring, or at the RelateNI office in Belfast, dependent upon which location was most beneficial and appropriate for the individual. The table below shows the counselling sessions delivered by RelateNI through the MUMO programme from January to December 2019.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Appointments offered</b>	<b>Appointments attended</b>
8 years	15	15
11 years	12	11
6 years	6	6
8 years	6	5
7 years	10	9
11 years	9	8
9 years	8	8
10 years	18	18
5 years	1	0
9 years	5	4
10 years	8	5
11 years	19	18
17 years	11	7
10 years	5	4
10 years	8	5
10 years	11	10
11 years	11	7
9 years	11	10
5 years	10	9
10 years	6	4
Adult	11	7
Adult	7	6
Unknown	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>210 sessions offered</b>	<b>177 sessions attended</b>

A total of 23 individuals were referred for counselling during 2019; of which 20 were children and 3 were parents. A total of 210 counselling sessions were scheduled, with 177 of these taking place; 84% of the appointments offered were attended. At the end of the year four of the individuals (three children and one adult) were continuing with their counselling sessions; all other files were closed.

Presenting issues and additional issues identified during counselling sessions included:

- Bereavement by suicide
- Bullying
- Anxiety
- Low Self Esteem
- LAC Traveller
- Traveller family difficulties
- Family difficulties
- Family breakdown and parental separation
- Anti-social behaviour
- Self-harm
- Child on the Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Neglect.

#### **Feedback from the Primary School SENCO**

“A number of our children have been referred to counselling sessions at RelateNI. Having this service available is really important to us, as it can be hard to find counsellors who are experienced in working with children and who have spaces. The children we have referred through MUMO have had emotional difficulties, behavioural issues, or complex family backgrounds. The counselling sessions allow them time and support through more difficult moments”.

#### **Feedback from a Parent**

“When the kids are happier the whole family is happier. I never knew counselling support was available for children; the Relate NI counselling sessions have been very beneficial for my children”.

## **IMPACT STORY - SPRINGFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Context**

Two Primary Schools work closely with the MUMO Team; one of which is Springfield Primary School. This impact story presents feedback from an interview with the school Principal, Steven Osborne, and a focus group with three P6 pupils who have engaged with the MUMO Nurture Groups.

### **Interview with the Principal of Springfield Primary School**

The Principal was invited to give examples of the impact for children, their families, and/or the school under each of the four MUMO outcomes.

#### **Outcome 1**

*Children make a positive transition from nursery to primary School and the transition from primary to secondary School with a positive, confident and an enthusiastic outlook.*

#### ***Transition***

The focus that MUMO has placed on Transition is very positive. We have received feedback from pupils and teachers that the P7s who have left Springfield Primary School and moved into Y8 at their Post-Primary school are so far ahead of others in their class in terms of settling in and working well in their new schools. The Transition programme for P7 pupils blends in very well with the school; the Classroom Support Worker (CSW) filters in and does her work as part of everyday school life; it is very much a part of the ethos. This is in addition to the three Transition days that MUMO ran last year for the P7s from our school and St. Clare's. We have also noticed that the children who are sitting the Transfer Test are able to cope so much better than in previous years – when we saw many of them experiencing stress and tears. This year the children used breathing exercise and calmness strategies during the weeks up to the Transfer Tests and we had no stress-related issues this year. We have incorporated breathing exercises as part of the school ethos in all classes.

The MUMO CSW also helps with the children transitioning from Nursery into P1, helping them to settle into School life.

#### ***Wellbeing: Nurture Group and Lego Therapy***

We have some children in school (for example those with ASD and other issues) who find it very difficult to cope with being outside in the playground, for them there are too many people in one place and too much noise. The CSW helps these children to explore issues, targeting the children who most need the help. Pupils are identified by the SENCO or class Teachers (included as part of our safeguarding strategy); they might be children with additional needs, or those who have experienced trauma. It is such a valuable resource to have the CSW who is there for a child experiencing unexpected trauma or a family crisis.

The Lego Group and Nurture Groups (at lunchtime) have whole class benefits; if a child has anxiety this can be displayed in behaviours that affect the whole class.

## **Outcome 2**

*Families will be engaged with education and learning and will have developed educational aspirations and goals.*

### ***Educational Aspirations***

MUMO programmes and interventions with parents and their children has definitely had a positive impact on educational aspirations. Parents bring MUMO into the equation when they attend the workshops. It seems that the school has become more and more the hub of the community (whereas in the past this used to be the Church). Parents see education as important because it is part of the community

## **Outcome 3**

*Improved relationships between school, family and community with an increased engagement of families in education and learning.*

### ***Families engaging with the School***

I would say that the 'MUMO families' engage better with the school and our teachers. Initially very few parents got involved, and at the start we knew which parents were engaging with MUMO – but now being part of MUMO seems to be a natural part of parenting. MUMO is now seen as very normal; it's all about relationships. Parents can go and chat with the MUMO team and have confidence in them. They see MUMO as another link with the school.

## **Outcome 4**

*Emotional Wellbeing will be raised/improved due to the provision and support provided to families and individuals, including access to specialist counselling.*

### ***Counselling and Emotional Wellbeing***

In the past the school didn't really make use of the counselling element of MUMO. However, this is developing as a benefit for vulnerable children and families, and the RelateNI Counsellors are seeing more and more children. The fact that we can offer this service, along with the flexibility of venue (school, home or the RelateNI city office). For our staff the Family Support Worker (FSW) is the first port of call. She will then suggest counselling if it is appropriate. The FSW is fantastic at what she does; for example, we signposted a family today (end of term), and we know that the FSW will contact them before Xmas. She will

arrange to meet the family and will go through the different opportunities that they can access through MUMO or other community, voluntary, or statutory services somewhere else.

We have a new plan in place, which is that myself (Principal), the Safeguarding Teacher and the FSW will meet once every six weeks. This way we will all know what is happening, and when interventions start and finish.

### ***The MUMO Project***

I strongly believe that we should be able to offer this service [MUMO] the whole way through Primary School. We need to be able to help families and their children during early childhood, and to be able to intervene quickly if there is trauma or a crisis in the family, so that we can signpost the individual child and the family to the right place. A child experiencing trauma needs specialist support. School is central to the child and MUMO and other elements feed in to children's holistic wellbeing. I think what MUMO does is right, and the interventions, programmes, and workshops work well, supporting children, families, and our school ethos.

### **Suggestions for the future**

I would like to see something additional for the children with ASD. I wondered whether there could be a group of children with ASD from St. Clare's and Springfield Primary Schools brought together, with involvement from both the CSWs. They could use, for example, the Sensory Complementary Therapy room here and the Sensory Room at St Clare's; which would bring in an added cross-community element.

I think it would be useful if the Counsellor could explain that a counselling intervention is going to take time; "many parents seem to expect that their child will be 'fixed' in a couple of days (like a medicine). Parents need this message and understanding, and also to know the role they can play". Whether this happens on a one to one basis when a child is referred to the RelateNI Counsellor, or whether there would be benefit in RelateNI facilitating an emotional wellbeing workshop with parents to talk about strategies that may be used with any child at home to support emotional wellbeing.

I also think it would be useful to explore whether MUMO could also support emotional wellbeing for staff.

## **Focus Group with P6 Children at Springfield Primary School**

The Focus Group with the children was informal; encouraging the children to talk about what they did in the Nurture Group sessions, what they did or did not enjoy, and how it makes a difference to them. The children have different needs, including one pupil with ASD, another with behaviour management issues, and the third with additional needs. Their class teachers identified them to participate in the Nurture Groups, believing that this would be beneficial to each individual child. The children all attend the lunchtime Nurture Groups on different days of the week.

### **What do you do at the Nurture Groups?**

#### ***Challenges***

“We try to do challenges that we have never done before” – for example:

- Making a tower with dry pasta and marshmallows “who would ever have thought of doing that?”
- Batman – “like a video game, but all about tactics”
- Jellybean challenge – “where we have to say the different flavours which might be bubble-gum, toothpaste, or watermelon”
- Chubby Bunny marshmallow challenge “you put them in your mouth and have to say ‘chubby bunny’”.

“If you win normally it’s only one person gets the prize, but she [the CSW] is fair and everyone can win”.

***Scrapbooks*** – “For Christmas we made a Scrapbook for our families or friends. I did a painting for my family. I’ve wrapped it up and will take it home for Christmas Day”. “My Scrapbook is for my best friend – I printed off loads of pictures and wrote something about each picture. Making something for someone is more special than just going to the shops”.

#### ***Talking about how we feel:***

- “I was chosen to go because this group is all about feelings. My feelings weren’t that good. In P4 people would laugh at me. I would fall and people would laugh at me”.
- “We do fun things and share ‘emotionals’ – she [the CSW] helps us keep calm. She talks to us and asks us ‘how do you feel?’, and we will tell her”.
- “It is good when she says ‘how do you feel’; I have Autism and I can feel mad, or bad, or scared of something. But I can talk about these things to her, with some people I can’t”.
- “She’s taught us to put head on the table and try to feel relaxed. It works”.
- “I can go to her and tell her about a boy who always gets other people in trouble by telling lies; he always points the finger. He is a bully. She talks to you about bullies and why it is not good to behave like that; and that hitting back doesn’t help anything”.

- “She asks what would you feel, or how would you feel about that if someone did that to you? Like if you were bullied how would you feel? I think it is like a ‘breaking zone’ – you feel ready to break. So bullying isn’t good”.
- “She asks about what happened over the weekend, and ‘how’s your day’? I can now express my emotions to her rather than keep it bottled up”.

***We have fun:***

- “It’s really, really good”
- “When it’s the day to be with the group I know it will be fun”
- “I like the other people who go”
- “It’s good to be with her [the CSW] because she is very generous, energetic, and fun”.
- “She asks you what you want to do, so we feel part of it”.
- “If you do something hard one week you do different things the next week. She has a diary – so she writes down the challenges, and games and other things that we do each time. I like it that she is organised”.

**How has going to the Nurture Group helped you?**

- “It helps in school in lots of ways”
- “If I lost at football in the past, I would have got angry, now I go and shake hands. You learn things like this from the challenges, which are very hard (like Batman), and when you loose you loose and that’s it”.
- “She [the CSW] is the person to talk to. You need someone you can express your emotions to, and you need to trust them with talking about emotions or secrets. You can trust her”.
- “If something bad happened in school and it wasn’t sorted then I can’t tell my mum because she will go and shout at the teacher and I don’t want that because I really, really like my teacher. But I could tell her [the CSW] and telling someone can make it feel better”.
- “My brother has a bad illness. One day another boy said when my brother walked out Breakfast Club another boy said, ‘why does your brother walk like a penguin?’ I know that he does, but I don’t want other people saying that. On the outside I was trying to keep it ok. But inside I just wanted to punch him. It helped to talk to her [CSW] about that”.
- “I’ve learnt that everyone is different – so we need to realise that people don’t think the same or do the same things”.
- “She gives you the ways to sort things out, and then we learn to use these ways for ourselves”.
- “If something is upsetting me, I wait until she [CSW] comes back into school as she is not here all the time. When she is not here, she has told us how to cope: ‘smell in the strawberries and blow out the candle’. These breathing exercises helps us, and make you feel calmer”.

- “If someone is stuck in a problem, I can help them now”
- “We can share things with others who are in group. If you feel bad, they look out for you – and will say ‘remember your breathing exercises’. And I look out for them. We all know that we help people in our group”.
- “I have an idea - we should be able to help each other – us three”. *General assent and smiles from all three children*
- “I used to get really frustrated, but now I can control my anger and emotions. I don’t slabber back – I can go to see her [the CSW] or someone from my group. or now one of these two. We can sit on the bench and talk to each other. And that helps”.

## FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS ABOUT MUMO

Thirteen Teachers from the two Primary Schools (St. Clare's and Springfield) completed and returned the Evaluation Questionnaire in June 2019. Their feedback is presented below, with questions asked shown in bold typeface.

**In what way has the MUMO project supported the children in your class / School?**

<b>MUMO Supports</b>	<b>No. of Teachers</b>
Nurture Groups at Lunchtime	10
Lego Therapy	6
Small group support – e.g. Maths, Phonics	5
Counselling with RelateNI NI	3

**Do you think the MUMO Project is helpful for the children involved?**

All 13 Teachers said 'yes'.

**Do you think the MUMO Staff treated the children well?**

All 13 Teachers said 'yes'.

"Children from the class have accessed Lego Therapy, the Lunchtime Nurture Group, and Counselling sessions with Relate NI. Three children in my class have become more open to sharing how they feel about things they are upset or worried about. MUMO has been a great support to the children in my class. The MUMO team are always there to offer advice to the children when they need it".

*Teacher, St. Clare's Primary School*

**Have you seen any improvements in the children that have been supported?**

<b>Impact for Children</b>	<b>No. of Teachers</b>
Children have built good relationships with their MUMO support staff	13
Children are more confident in their learning	10
Children are more positive about learning	8
Children are more enthusiastic in their learning	6
Children have made progress	3

## What other support / activities would you like MUMO to offer?

Additional MUMO Supports for the School	No. of Teachers
Training opportunities for staff	8
After school clubs for children and parents	7
Increased number of focused intervention groups	7
Opportunities for schools to work together	5
Counselling (for staff)	3

## Additional Comments made by the Teachers

A number of Teachers gave additional comments, which have been presented in full below:

### *Staff Training*

- I really enjoyed the bereavement training we had in Term 2; it was very interesting and useful as a class teacher

### *Small Group Support*

- Very helpful
- One young boy is 'buzzing' about the support provided. He now loves spelling. All pupils love the support.
- Delighted with the support provided this year with the CSW. The pupils love working with him; he has a good way with pupils.

### *Lunchtime Nurture Group*

- The pupil (boy) is much more confident in class and will communicate in whole class discussions. Thank you for all you do – your work with our kids is amazing
- Children have enjoyed the sessions
- A pupil in the class has enjoyed his time with MUMO; it has helped to develop his language skills (EAL child)
- The children really look forward to attending their lunchtime sessions

### *Lego Therapy*

- Children have enjoyed the sessions
- The child receiving MUMO support through Lego Therapy often asks for the MUMO staff member on a daily basis

### *Training suggestions from Teachers:*

- PE training x 2 responses
- Training for staff on MUMO interventions would be amazing

### *General*

- The MUMO staff are very helpful. They form great bonds with the kids concerned.
- The children always look forward to working with the MUMO support staff
- Fantastic support provided; MUMO staff engage superbly with staff and children alike

### **Comment**

The Teachers are unanimous in their praise for the MUMO interventions, and in particular the good relationships that the MUMO Family Engagement Workers and Classroom Support Workers have developed with the children. They all reported that the children are treated well and that the MUMO programmes are helpful to the children. Impact for children, which meets the MUMO outcomes, includes that the pupils are more confident, positive, and enthusiastic about their learning. The area in which the least number of Teachers saw an impact was in children's progress. However, if children's attitudes are confident, positive, and enthusiastic about learning, experience shows that they will progress and learn more effectively.

Teachers would like to see more staff training, and also opportunities for the schools to work together. A number of programmes have been delivered by MUMO involving children from both Schools (for example the Transition Programme for P7 classes involving 85 children; and opportunities for joint staff training events.

Unsurprisingly, given the impact identified for the children identified by the Teachers, they would like to see more focussed interventions available within school. However, there is also a lot of interest in MUMO developing and delivering After School Clubs. There may be a conflict of time and resources, as there are a range of programmes delivered at Forthspring after school for children and families. However, this is an opportunity to consider; and it may be possible for schools to contribute resources to After School Clubs for children or children and their parents through Extended Schools resources.

## **IMPACT STORY – PRIMARY SCHOOL SENCO**

**‘CHILDREN MAKE A POSITIVE TRANSITION FROM NURSERY TO PRIMARY SCHOOL, THROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL, AND FROM PRIMARY INTO SECONDARY SCHOOL; and CHILDREN APPROACH LEARNING WITH A POSITIVE, CONFIDENT, AND ENTHUSIASTIC OUTLOOK’ ~ Outcome 1**

*This Impact Story has been written following an interview with the SENCO at St. Clare’s Primary School*

Programmes and interventions delivered by MUMO in the school this year have included:

- Numeracy and Literacy with P6 pupils
- Lunchtime Nurture Group
- Newcomer Support
- Lego Therapy
- Support for families with complex issues

In addition to the programmes delivered in School, the P7 classes have been involved in the Transition sessions, with P7 children from St. Clare’s and Springfield Primary Schools, which take place at Forthspring. The school also has the opportunity to make referrals for children to receive counselling support from Relate NI.

“The MUMO programmes have a very positive impact on our pupils. The small group programmes delivered in school result in the children having increased confidence, improved attendance, and improved results in the classroom. The newcomer support provided by the Classroom Support Worker boosts the children’s confidence and self-esteem activity based on conversation and also building the pupil’s conceptual understanding of the English language.

“During the Lego Therapy the CSW works with pupils who have challenging behaviours, or social and emotional difficulties. Lego Therapy sessions build social and communication skills, gives the children a bit of time, and someone to talk to. The children absolutely love the Lego Therapy time.

“The Family Support Worker is able to reach out to families that the school can’t reach out to; these are very vulnerable families who have and complex issues at home – which can have a negative impact on the child’s ability to work well in class. It can be difficult to engage these parents in school, but the FEW reaches out, provides support, and gets the parents involved and engaged with the school and their child’s education”.

This impact story looks at two of the Programmes delivered in school and the P7 Transition Programme in more detail.

## **Numeracy and Literacy with P6 children**

“It’s a huge transition for children when they move into P6; more is expected of them, they should have more independence, and they are doing a number of activities to prepare for Post-Primary school. This year we had the added challenge of amalgamating two big classes with twenty-eight children in each into two large classes with new children joining the school. So we decided to use the Classroom Support Worker to work with small groups of P6 pupils; sometimes the children were withdrawn from the class to go into sessions with the CSW, and sometimes the CSW worked with a small group of pupils in the classroom. The CSW was allocated a room this year and was involved in the planning.

“We have evaluated this in school, and the children’s scores have improved bigtime. In addition, only four P6 children have had school attendance levels of 84% or below (for two children this was due to bereavement). Teachers report a greater understanding by children on topics that the CSW went through and explained.

“The outcomes have been very fruitful. Teachers feedback has been very positive. In addition to improved attainment and school attendance, the teachers say that the children are more motivated to learn and that homework hasn’t been an issue this year. Furthermore, due to the CSW involvement, Teachers could spend more time with those children sitting the Transfer Test, without feeling that other children might be missing out. One of the great things about the MUMO interventions has been that ‘average kids’ have benefitted, as well as those children with complex issues.

“Another nice thing for us was that as the CSW is male he is a nice role model for our boys. There is an absence of father figures in many of the homes, and the CSW has a nice rapport with the kids (The P6 Teachers are both female). We had two lovely P6 classes; having the extra pair of hands and input with attention for the children has had academic benefits, given children positive motivation, improved attitudes to learning, and as a consequence has improved results’.

## **Lunchtime Nurture Group**

“It is a godsend for us to have someone with the skills and expertise to work with a small group of children at lunchtime. The pupils participating in the Nurture Group feel safe, relaxed, and looked after. The Classroom Support Worker engages them in structured activities such as drama, painting, and games (such as ball games in good weather); all the while promoting social skills that the children can transfer into less structured larger sessions.

“When the children return to class after the lunch break Teachers are not mopping up all the issues that would have happened in the past – such as behaviour issues or accidents – so

they are not spending time on resolution but can get on with teaching. The Lunchtime Nurture Group gives children who need a bit of extra support (due, for example, to ASD and other complex issues) the time and space they need. They have the choice of joining in or sitting quietly in a safe space and reading a book. The whole class benefits from this, as the children settle happily back into class after lunch”.

### **MUMO Transition Programme**

The MUMO Transition Programme takes place over three sessions, involving the P7 classes from St. Clare’s and Springfield Primary School. The children work together to solve problems, engage in new activities, and learn new skills.

“The P7s loved the Transition sessions; there were great activities organised for them at Forthspring. This is also an opportunity to build cross-community links; for some of the children it is the first time they have ever had that opportunity to be with kids from the ‘other’ community. The Transition sessions have helped the children develop interpersonal skills and cultural awareness. It helps prepare them for the big transition into Y8 and moving out into the big bad world – but in fact they can carry these skills into adulthood”.

### **In Conclusion ...**

“MUMO is invaluable, and without it our jobs would be made much more difficult. The staff are easy to work with, and the commitment of the workers is second to none. Whenever we need help they are there, and they are persistent in making sure that the right parents and children are involved. The MUMO Programme is an asset to our school. The input and impact of the whole MUMO support package has had such a positive impact for pupils and their families in many different areas – I can’t praise highly enough”.

## MUMO ADVISORY PARENTS

From the outset MUMO has worked with some of the most vulnerable families in the community, many of whom have very complex needs (as highlighted in the *Family Support* section above). At the start of the project it was a challenge to engage parents on informal half-day workshops; but four years into the project there are parents eager to sign up to courses delivered over a number of weeks, many with accreditation on successful completion of the course.

In the same way, many parents had never spoken to someone 'from the other community'; and four years into the MUMO Project parents from both communities engage on programmes and activities together, often with their children – for example Family Matters and Summer Trips. They are also delighted that their children have the opportunity to engage in cross-community programmes such as the Summer Scheme, the Transition Programme, and many other activities; and that the two Primary Schools (St. Clare's and Springfield) have built a relationship, with parents and children going to activities at the different schools – for example the Christmas Fair and school plays. The mums also arranged a camping holiday for themselves and their children, with families from both communities.

In 2018 parents first got together, facilitated by MUMO, to provide lunches and activities for pensioners in the area. The Mums reported enjoying working together as a team, preparing the meal, serving the pensioners, and clearing up afterwards.

In June 2019 the MUMO Team suggested to the parents that they might like to establish a 'parent council', with the opportunity to advise the MUMO team on ways in which MUMO could further develop to meet need in the community. This suggestion was raised as an opportunity in the Mid-Year Evaluation Report (June 2019). The first 'meeting' in June was more of a 'conversation', when it was agreed that parents would:

- Think of a name for the group
- The Parents Group would meet three times a year
- Different people would take it in turn to take notes at meetings
- Different people would take it in turn to chair the meetings
- Group members would attend a meeting with ideas to inform MUMO staff planning day based around the four MUMO outcomes
- The first formal meeting would be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019, with breakfast provided and childcare provided if needed.

At the first meeting the parents agreed that as a group they would be known as MUMO Advisory Parents (MAP). They felt that this name effectively presented role of the group, i.e. bringing ideas to the MUMO team, advising, and mapping the way forward.

At the two MAP meetings held in 2019 the parents generated a number of ideas for activities and interventions that they would like to see for children, parents, and families.

### ***Activities for Children***

- Drama class

#### *Summer Scheme Activities to include:*

- Music workshop
- Art workshop where children make instruments and then do musical performance at the end of the session

### ***Activities for Families***

#### *Family Matters (FM)*

- Team building
- Cooking together (scones; pizzas)
- Art work with families
- Fashion show
- Camp out/sleepover

#### *Give it a Go*

- Well-being classes
- Mindfulness

#### *Family Trips*

- W5
- Ulster Museum
- Botanic Gardens
- Streamvale Farm
- Armagh Planetarium

### ***Activities for Parents***

#### *Workshops*

- Theatre of Witness workshop for Good Relations Week
- Credit Union workshop
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- Sewing classes
- Benefit entitlements
- Back to work skills
- History classes
- Mental health workshops

- ACEs workshop
- Sign language
- Flower arranging
- Learning about each other's culture

#### *Groups*

- Walking group
- Luncheon Club
- Macmillan coffee morning

#### *Courses*

Course with the Community Pharmacy looking at health and wellbeing

Many of the suggestions made were incorporated into the second half of the year, including for example the Macmillan Coffee Morning, Theatre of Witness Workshop, a Walking Group, and Give It a Go sessions.

The parents have also had input into the application for extended funding from the Big Lottery. Their ideas included:

- Keep doing what MUMO is doing well
- Develop MUMO: for example, involve other schools
- Share good practice of programmes such as Lego Therapy or delivering Family Matters in other schools
- Share learning/inform policy especially in the area of shared education

#### **Comment**

Establishing the MAP group demonstrates the impact of MUMO interventions for parents. When these mothers initially engaged with MUMO they were experiencing isolation, mental health issues, difficulties with family relationships, and a range of other complex issues. Additionally, most felt that the education system had failed them, and they had a lack of understanding about or aspirations for their children's education.

The MAP parents have gained confidence and self-esteem; they have successfully achieved qualifications as well as attending non-accredited programmes; they engage with their children's schools and communicate confidently with teachers; and have embraced the cross-community element of MUMO, which is now taken for granted. The parents are actively taking on roles within their community; and through MAP have a voice that is heard in terms of developing opportunities that meet the needs of themselves and other local families.

## FEEDBACK FROM PARENTS

### How MUMO has Benefitted Parents

Nine parents engaged with the External Evaluator to provide feedback about their experiences with MUMO.

The first table shows the different interventions and programmes in which the group of parents have engaged.

<b>MUMO Interventions and Programmes</b>	<b>No. of Parents</b>
Family Matters	6
One to one with the Family Support Workers	1
The Tuesday Club	3
MUMO Advisory Parents	2
Physical Activity Sessions	2
Programmes at the Primary School	3
MUMO Training Programmes at Forthspring	5
Other Training Programmes	1
Give It a Go	2
Counselling (for my child or me)	-

Parents were asked to give a rating to a series of statements; their feedback is presented in the table below.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Very True</b>	<b>True</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
I understand more about my child's education	6	-	2	1
I can better support my child with their school work	6	-	2	1
I understand the importance of my child being confident about school	5	-	2	2
Relationships between me and my children have got better	4	1	1	3
I feel more confident talking to the Teachers at my child's school	5	-	1	3
I feel more involved in my community	6	2	1	-
MUMO has helped me feel less anxious and less stressed	7	-	1	1
Because of MUMO I have participated in training programmes for the first time in years	7	-	1	1
I feel more confident about me	8	-	-	1

The statements in the table above all related directly to four MUMO outcomes. Feedback indicates that parents believe that engagement in MUMO interventions has had a positive impact on their day to day lives.

Parents were asked to give words or phrases to describe how they feel about MUMO. All feedback is presented below:

- Great for mental health
- Fantastic always there for us
- I get excited going
- My kids love it
- I am more confident and better educated
- Nice people
- Fun
- I have more confidence
- Being together
- Enjoy meeting new people and making friends
- Doing things together as a family I feel less stressed
- Family fun time
- Good feeling; welcoming; helpful.
- Very friendly; helpful; supportive.

Additional comments by the parents about what being involved with MUMO means to them and their families included:

- Excellent summer scheme my daughter loves it just wish it was on for longer; The staff are great and there is plenty to keep the kids entertained.
- Zumba is amazing
- My home life is manic due to my child's illness, MUMO provides a safe space and caring staff that help keep me sane
- Great team at MUMO
- I look forward to getting to my class to get me out and interacting with other people
- Keep the project going
- MUMO covers a wide range of programmes, catering for everyone
- Learned so much to build my confidence, understanding, and learning through courses and meeting others.
- Being involved in cross community activities; it's a great way to get communities to come together
- I feel good helping others, and understanding other feelings and my wn.
- Volunteering making others happy especially elderly.

"Since joining MUMO my family have thrived; we have met friends and made new relationships that are so important to us now. I honestly would not be the person I am without MUMO. My confidence has soared, I can deal with my

kids bad behaviour with confidence and keep things from getting out of hand. Everything about MUMO is amazing, especially the staff".

*MUMO Mum*

One parent suggested that MUMO could offer more sewing classes, and another suggested complimentary therapies for mums and staff. Parents said they would like to see a longer MUMO Summer Scheme for their children, more outdoor activities, and additional Fun Days (which could be for parents and children together); and one mum suggested dance classes for children.

### **Exercise Sessions**

Physical wellbeing promotes emotional wellbeing. During 2019 physical exercise classes at Forthspring, delivered through MUMO by external instructors have included Zumba, Pilates, and Legs, Tums and Bums and a walking group. The data below is feedback gathered from the parents at the end of two of the exercise programmes.

#### **Zumba**

- I really enjoyed Zumba, sorry it's stopping until September
- Great class, helped with stress
- I look forward to Monday nights at Zumba
- Good exercise and good to meet other people to have a laugh. For £2 we get our money's worth
- Will really miss the class over the summer, the instructor is fab
- Great fun, good for the body and mind
- I love coming,

#### **Legs, Bums, and Tums**

- I enjoy the class; the instructor is great and so are all the girls
- Enjoy the class, it gets me out of the house
- I enjoy the class with all the girls, and feel good after it
- It gets you motivated for the day
- I enjoy the people and the class. It gets me involved with different people. I love the exercise. The instructor is the best
- It's good to meet new people, the MUMO worker and the instructor are great fun
- I enjoy the class, the instructor is a great teacher and it's great for meeting people.  
Thank you MUMO for arranging the class for us. It would be great if the instructor could be kept on.

#### **Comment**

The feedback shows that the participants not only enjoy the exercise element of the classes, but also the opportunity to spend time with others. Feedback about both classes also shows respect for the Instructors of the exercise programmes.

One opportunity would be to look at possibilities of having some classes during the summer months. MUMO could consider doing exercise programmes or taster days involving both parents and children in July; response to taster sessions could determine programmes to be delivered in the Autumn.

## PARENT IMPACT STORY: ONE

### **'FAMILIES WILL BE ENGAGED WITH EDUCATION AND LEARNING AND WILL HAVE DEVELOPED EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND GOALS' ~ Outcome 2**

*This Impact Story has been written following an interview with a mum who has engaged with MUMO on her own and with her family*

Pauline (not her real name) first came in contact with MUMO through the Family Engagement Workers at St Clare's Primary School. "My wee girl was going to St Louise's Comprehensive College and she and I just hadn't got a clue. We had applied for a place at St. Genevieve's, but she didn't get in. The MUMO girls helped us through the confusion of paperwork and got us sorted out. Through them I have come to see the value and importance of education for my children; daughter is now doing very well at St. Louise's".

Pauline's wider family has since engaged with MUMO, including her older daughter and her children, her sister ("who was very antisocial, but is coming to enjoy it"), and her own three children, one of whom was referred by MUMO to counselling sessions with RelateNI. The family have engaged in many MUMO activities including:

- A painting and decorating workshop, and DIY "learning to change a plug and things like that"
- Tuesday Club
- Cook-It
- A workshop about Teenagers "we learnt about what bothers them, and how to deal with and listen to their feelings"
- Young at Art "which I did with my two youngest who are at Primary School"
- Pilates "it works for me people say I go to all sorts of MUMO Programmes, but if go then I don't miss out, and I always learn something new"
- Family Matters "which has brought us more together as a family, we sit together and take time out"
- The Numeracy Workshops "I hated Maths at School, but, I did the Numeracy Workshop at St Claire's because the Family Support Worker said that I should do it for the kids, and it was worth it"
- Suicide Awareness
- Summer Scheme "they love it there, it's a chance for my two to get out and socialise with other kids; which one of my girls wouldn't have done before we got involved with MUMO"

"I wouldn't necessarily aspire much for myself, has I can see how important it is for my girls at St. Louise's and Primary School. I can recognise the importance of school work, and see that I can learn through Maths and English and encourage the children to as well. When you didn't do well yourself at school it is hard, I think back then if you didn't want to learn the teachers didn't care. Now I encourage the kids to do well at school and push them more – I get it off the Family Engagement Workers, they are always pushing us Mums and the kids to try something new and to give it your best shot".

“I’ve grown in confidence, and I’m now driving. MUMO helps because you listen to someone else’s story; it seems that someone there always knows something or someone and helps everyone out. In day-to-day life people hide things, and you feel you are the only person who is finding it hard to be a good parent. MUMO has really helped me”.

“Another thing is that I’ve made new friendships – for example we went camping all together. We got together and everyone worked out the date that suited us all. Last year we had the most fantastic weather in Castlewellan. The kids who came camping don’t know or care about the difference between Protestants and Catholics; it’s just being together as a family, being outside, and doing things together”.

## PARENT IMPACT STORY: TWO

### **'IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOL, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY WITH AN INCREASED ENGAGEMENT OF FAMILIES IN EDUCATION AND LEARNING' ~**

#### **Outcome 3**

*This Impact Story has been written following an interview with a mum who has engaged with MUMO on her own and with her family*

Susan (not her real name) has three children at Primary School, one of whom is on the Autistic Spectrum. Her mother attended the Tuesday Group at MUMO and suggested that Susan came along as well. "Mummy said to me 'why don't you come up with me and meet the girls'. I have tremendous social anxiety and I find going to places really hard. At the start it was hard, I was quite shy and wouldn't really talk. But MUMO is different; now I get excited on a Monday evening because the next day is Tuesday. That's how I got into it".

Susan says she has learnt many different things, for example "how to bake – I'd never been taught or shown how to bake before; I knew the basic ingredients, but I never knew the techniques. Now my partner bakes his own scones as well. Sometimes people come and talk about issues like Housing Rights or Autism – you're always learning something at MUMO. Another thing I did was the Speak Easy programme, and I got a certificate for that. The tutor came in and talked about things like about assertiveness versus someone being domineering; and that how you speak to someone makes a reaction. It was really good. I felt brilliant getting the certificate. I've not had anything like that since I left School. I was feeling trapped in the house, but this certificate is the start of many more to come. I would be quiet and let everyone else speak and now I can give my opinions".

Susan heard about Family Matters from the MUMO Team and began attending with her children. "Family Matters is good, I didn't really go out alone with the kids and other people; it is good seeing the kids interact with other people, and I can interact with other parents. We feel like a family. I am comfortable, and for me and my anxiety I feel totally at ease there". Susan says that all the children have enjoyed activities at MUMO and benefited from the environment. "My eldest daughter never had any real problems in school, she is bright and always kept up. But confidence wise I see a difference in her since she got involved at MUMO. She has made a lot of new friends through MUMO, I think the kids feel part of a big family".

Susan's son Ben (not his real name) has Autism; he attends Family Matters and the MUMO Summer Scheme; "he really looks forward to going. Ben wouldn't go to Birthday Parties or After Schools clubs or anything, he would rather stay at home. Literally if I say we are going to Family Matters or that the Summer Scheme is on he can't wait to go. Ben loves the MUMO staff and it is great there is somewhere he is happy to go".

“I think the staff have taken time to understand Ben, with his Autism he needs to be doing something and likes it when things are structured. Free play causes him anxiety and he doesn't like it. I didn't know whether or not to send Ben to the Summer Scheme. I was worried about if he would get involved; and he can cause problems and get annoyed or a wee bit angry. After each day of the Summer Scheme I ask the girls [MUMO staff] how he has been and they say 'brilliant' – like yesterday he made a fantastic -shirt and he loved the praise he got. The fact that Ben wants to go is real progress. He has actually made a friend in the Summer Scheme; and looks forward to seeing him”.

“What is great is that Ben plays and runs about with the other children. He feels more at ease, and comfortable with himself. He trusts the MUMO team. He has a real relationship with the girls. I feel better able to help Ben now. I can go into the school and talk to the school teachers and not feel inferior. I used to be very withdrawn at meetings with the Teachers and didn't say much. I now can start conversations and can be me and feel ok being me, which helps me help the kid's education better”.

“I've noticed that Ben is more open to giving things a chance – new food, new activities, and new places. This benefits the whole family. Before MUMO Ben wouldn't want to go on family days out; so we would have to try and get him looked after, or if he came he would spoil things for the rest of the family. This wasn't fair on the others, but now we can all go out together, because he is more calm and more open to new things”.

“I'm Catholic and my partner is Protestant, I love that MUMO is cross-community; there is no sectarianism, you're just a person, it doesn't matter where you live. Everyone, mums and kids, meet to have fun with other people”.

“I've been doing things I never thought I could do. Now I get up in the morning and open the door without any kind of panic attack. MUMO has broken down all the barriers and fears I had about meeting people; it makes me feel I am normal; which is better for my kids too. Me and the family have been involved with MUMO just over a year now. It has been most productive year ever for me”.

#### **Feedback from the Primary School Principal**

“We have had a fantastic year with MUMO. What I really like is that MUMO has supported us in our wish to focus on mental health and emotional wellbeing next year across the board; with staff, parents and children. MUMO provides such a valuable service and has supported the development of a great partnership between the two Primary Schools, who had not previously worked together”.

## **PARENT IMPACT STORY: THREE**

### **'EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING WILL BE RAISED/IMPROVED DUE TO THE PROVISION AND SUPPORT PROVIDED TO FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING ACCESS TO SPECIALIST COUNSELLING SERVICES' ~ Outcome 4**

*This Impact Story has been written following an interview with a mum who has engaged with MUMO on her own and with her family*

Mary has two children attending the Primary School locally. Mary felt that the children both had a couple of problems, but said that she did not receive any help or support from the Health Visitor or other support services. A friend told her about the Family Support Hub; Mary contacted the Hub and they referred the family to MUMO. "I had not heard about MUMO, and it was amazing how quickly everything happened. From being put in touch with MUMO they quickly referred us to RelateNI for counselling support for the two children. We got an appointment straight away".

Mary's son, who was five years old, "had a really bad temper and anger problems; he would have fought a lot with his sister". The RelateNI counsellor saw Mary's son in the RelateNI office in Belfast. Mary's daughter "had bad anxiety; she was worried about going to School and cried every night when going to bed and then again every morning before School". The counsellor came to the Primary School to see Mary's daughter. The counsellor gave the children exercises to do (coping strategies) between sessions.

"It made a difference for both of them so quickly. The children's father and I are going through a divorce, and I was worried about whether that was affecting them. The counsellor said that 'they are happy kids' and the divorce is not affecting them; which was a big relief. The whole time my son was seeing the counsellor it was great, there were no outbursts and no problems. He seemed to be able to handle his anger issues - although I would have welcomed a bit of advice about how I can help him now the counselling has finished"

"The school were very good with the kids, they were aware of my daughter's anxiety issues about school; they have started Take 5 in School, which is a relaxation first thing. The children are now both going to the Summer Scheme – where they see school friends and make new friends. They seldom want to go to anything out of school, but they feel safe at MUMO because they know the staff and the building".

"When the kids are happier the whole family is happier. I never knew counselling support was available for children; It has been very beneficial".

## STRENGTHS, ACHIEVEMENTS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

The table below presents an alternative to the well-known SWOT analysis

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-disciplinary partnership group</li> <li>• Staff team: commitment, capacity, expertise and experience</li> <li>• Linkages and connections with schools</li> <li>• Forthspring is seen as a safe environment by parents and children</li> <li>• Delivery of programmes for parents and children (jointly and individually) that meet interest and need</li> <li>• Relationship building between families</li> <li>• Facilitation and support to build individuals self-esteem and confidence</li> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Cross-community element of the project</li> <li>• Credibility due to relative longevity of the project</li> <li>• Empowering parents</li> <li>• Bespoke counselling service</li> <li>• Promoting positivity and enthusiasm in all activities</li> <li>• Range of early interventions to support learning and emotional wellbeing with children in Schools</li> <li>• The new 'Parent Council' – MAP - which facilitates parent involvement in the development of MUMO</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Achievements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting quantitative targets</li> <li>• Delivering outcomes</li> <li>• Developing links with Social Services through Case Meetings and referrals</li> <li>• Parents engaging in programmes and progressing from informal learning to accredited training programmes</li> <li>• The Transition Programme</li> <li>• Support networks being built by parents and families themselves, as well as through MUMO</li> <li>• Changing attitudes to education</li> <li>• Parents getting involved with School activities</li> <li>• Improved emotional wellbeing of parents and children through range of MUMO activities tailored to need</li> <li>• Establishing the parent volunteers working with local pensioners</li> <li>• Delivery of a structured inclusive Summer Scheme</li> <li>• Building strong relationships between the two Schools and the community</li> <li>• Parents growth in capacity and confidence</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify MUMO Ambassadors</li> <li>• Work with RelateNI to identify ways to bring parents on board to develop strategies to support their children</li> <li>• Support Springfield Primary School to develop their Pastoral policies</li> <li>• Develop more links with other community initiatives with the potential</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands can be tied in relation to referrals; parents and children share problems and information with the MUMO team, that they can't take further forward</li> <li>• Twelve months until current Big Lottery funding ends, and the need to find sustainable options</li> </ul>

<p>for win:win opportunities – for example: work with Sólás to deliver workshops on Autism Supports in the classroom; or with community health workers to deliver Take 5 through MUMO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop sessions to run with school staff on ‘matters that really matter’; and how they can identify and best support children with difficulties</li> <li>• Communication with school staff is much improved, but could still be further developed</li> <li>• Look at options for parents to move on whilst still being linked to MUMO. For example, could parents develop and run a group or two themselves, based in Forthspring, but without full engagement of MUMO staff</li> <li>• After school clubs in partnership with the Primary Schools, with the possibility of the schools putting in Extended Schools resources as well</li> <li>• Work with families to give them the capacity and confidence to be a local voice within their own community</li> <li>• Could MUMO develop a Kids Council with some of the older children who have been through MUMO and are now in P7 or at Post-Primary Schools?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping on top of issues that are affecting the community, and identifying ways in which MUMO can provide support to address issues (e.g. suicide, housing, and drug abuse)</li> <li>• To continue to engage new families on-board without spreading the work of the Team too thinly</li> <li>• Is the budget being deployed most effectively – for example, can the benefits of the evaluation tools purchased for the Schools be demonstrated?</li> <li>• Not to get complacent, but to continue to look at new opportunities, whilst at the same time continuing to deliver programmes that have been proven to make a positive difference</li> <li>• Beware of ‘over-dependence’ of families; look at ways to promote independence</li> </ul>
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