

## Family Learning Case Study 2021

### The Impact of Family Learning During Covid

We quickly realised after a couple of weeks into lockdown that new parents were really struggling during Covid, especially with their mental health, and supporting their babies' early development. All the classes locally had stopped or moved online – but parents felt these didn't offer the support they needed and were urging us to continue family learning face to face. For some we were their only source of support and the only place for them and their babies to interact and socialise with others.

Under the governments Parent Support Group Guidance, we made the decision to continue with our family learning offer as soon as we were allowed, in very small groups within Covid Safe council hubs. We risked assessed each activity and decided initially we could only continue with baby sessions and older children's sessions as it is virtually impossible to socially distance toddlers.

Despite the lockdowns we have still managed to continue to support 374 family/community learners, with the majority being new parents.

### Feedback from Sam Croxall - Children's Centre Staff

XXXXX was talking to me about feeling low in mood and has been struggling with her new son XXXX who was born during lockdown. XXXXX is feeling very tired at the minute as XXXX is at the age he is wanting a lot of time and attention. XXXX moved to England from Germany after meeting her new partner in Germany. She has no family nearby and the small family she does have haven't seen her for the last 18 months because of COVID so unable to travel from Germany or even met her son. XXXXX talked about people thinking she is different because she is German and her English isn't very good and she struggles to make friends as has had nowhere to go to make new friends, she even talked about how she herself is trying to be more open with people, so they include her which broke my heart when she said this.

Anyway the reason for my email is that she said she has been going to one of Sues groups and she said that ***'Sue has been amazing she is like having a mum I can talk to and she has really helped me this last year I just wish I keep going to Sues groups'***

This made me smile because as we all know this is the Sue we love and our parents and children love and I felt so proud to know that Sabrina had been able to come along to your group Sue and it has helped her so much through a difficult time.

Thank you for helping our families' xx ♥

### Feedback from Learner – Rachel Petty

“Me and my baby have attended baby play and book chatter courses run by sue. These courses meant a lot for me and my baby as these were the only things available to us during covid 19. I was diagnosed with postnatal depression just before these courses started and they helped with my mental health loads. Being able to talk to sue and other mums face to face helped a great deal. My son loved coming to see sue every week and being able to see other babies. His development came on massively doing these courses and his personality came out more and more with each week. Sue ran both courses really well. She definitely knows her stuff and was able to bring new ideas for us to try at home each week and lots of lovely new songs. Sue has been a great instructor who is great

with both children and adults. We will definitely be signing up for more courses as these become available in the future.”

### Feedback from Learner - Charlotte Buckler

“I have done 2 courses with Sue in Crowle, these were invaluable to me as the first course in November was during lockdown when everything else was cancelled, but being able to go to Sue’s class and meet other mums and children was so fantastic for me and my little boy. It was the only thing we were ‘allowed’ to do following government restrictions. Attending both courses has had a very positive effect on my mental health and well-being. The children my little boy has met on the courses have been the only children of a similar age to him that he could mix with and it’s been very positive for his learning to interact with other children of his own age.”



### Feedback from Learner – Melissa Cooper

“I don’t know what I would’ve done without the sessions provided for mums and babies throughout the past year. Not only have these sessions helped me to bond better with my baby, they’ve also given me the chance to make friends and feel less isolated. Before the book chatter and baby massage classes I hadn’t met anyone other local mums and as a first time mum I really struggled with my confidence and loneliness. These sessions helped me immensely; I’m so grateful to have had this opportunity.”

### Feedback from Learner – Lindsay Cowburn

“Your course was one of the first outings I had with my Daughter. Not only did we learn lots of new songs and gave me confidence to use props, but it made the difference between being stuck at home feeling a little lonely and actually being able to speak to new people whilst still feeling safe. During the course Grace became more confident and started to clap and join in with the songs. As I became more confident with using props etc we have had so much fun at home. It was amazing to see the impact of using the props and how engaging it was for Grace.”

### Feedback from Learner – Mahlah Smith

“The first class myself and Henry came to was baby play. Henry was only a few months old. I pushed myself to come to this class as I suffered with post natal depression when Henry was born. I knew I needed human interaction to help with my mental health. I am a first time mum and also a single parent from the start, I was petrified on how to parent and so worried I would do things wrong.

From the moment I stepped into that class the staff were incredible. So warm and welcoming and also reassuring. She was great with not only me but Henry too. We attended every class for 5 weeks and I gained so much confidence. We learnt lots of ideas and ways to make play stimulating for Henry and also affordable. We used what we had around the house. I would never have had the confidence to do this if it wasn't for the baby play class.

The next class we attended was baby book chatter, Henry was 11 months old. I always feel quite nervous when I go to new classes but the staff remembered us and that was such a nice feeling.

Henry had mastered crawling by then and wasn't too keen on staying in one place but the staff were so engaging with Henry and reassured me that it was okay for him to explore all the amazing props that she had organised.

We both loved this class as there was a different theme each week and new songs to match.

Myself and Henry are currently attending lets play and explore. We have been 2 weeks now and Henrys confidence is growing each week. Not only that, so is mine!

I honestly can't sing their praises enough. Henry loves to show off his new milestones to her and every class is so friendly, warm and welcoming which is great.

### **Feedback from Learner – Faye Pincher**

The courses that myself and Margot attended helped enormously with her development and guided me on how to play and interact with my daughter.

I learnt how to communicate with her and words to use (describing the object e.g. look at the big, round, shiny bubbles, and ensuring the words are spoken slowly), examples of games we can play at home and moving her body to flex her limbs to aid with her physical development.

Mentally, it was a much needed break from the house! to communicate and chat to other mothers, this was a very relaxed session and for this, friendships have been built in the classes that now carry on which is lovely.

### **Feedback from Learner - Elaine Slater (See #Bailey SEND Case Study)**

Good afternoon, I just wanted to send some feedback. Myself and my son attended the let's get cooking course today and want everyone involved to know that it was fantastic. We ended up being the only ones there and the staff were still willing to let us attend. My son fully enjoyed himself and staff gave him plenty of time to get used to them. If we could rate this course it would definitely be 10/10. Staff attitudes towards children with suspected needs was excellent/outstanding. Well done everyone involved.

### **Snapshot of Feedback from Evaluations/ILP's (Summer Term 2021)**

I've really loved meeting other mums and babies and making new friends. We have set up a WhatsApp group to arrange walks and outings together."

"I am happier that T has been able to get out and meet others – he enjoys interacting and socialising

"A fantastic course with. I have learned lots over the past 5 weeks. I now feel much more confident that I can support G's development."

"We have truly enjoyed the course. I have learnt lots of new songs as well as how to make cheap sensory items to play and develop. My head is bursting with ideas of what I can do at home and make"

"We now enjoy practising yoga daily, introduced Dad to yoga and he has enjoyed this bonding time with A. We have made sensory bottles that A enjoys" These classes have helped me bond with baby and relax me, I will continue to use at home"

"I think after the course I built my confidence incredibly. Before I came to the class I was afraid to not move the baby too strong but Jo explained everything so clearly. It is amazing course!"

"I have more tips to help me and E relax and bond, also ways to help with trapped wind and promote better sleep"

"Have learnt lots of yoga moves and breathing techniques to practice at home and made some new friends with babies of a similar age"

"I feel the bond between me and my baby has improved and I will continue with the skills I have learnt."

"I really loved seeing my baby interacting with other babies"

"Since coming to these session I am feeling much happier which has helped with our family life."

"I love the socialisation and how it makes me feel more confident to be out and about."

"How my baby became braver with every session and enjoyed it more every week."

"The course helped me to learn and develop skills to support my baby to grow more confident and independent."



"This course helped me to feel happier and much more confident"

"Fantastic course, much appreciated in lockdown. Helen is fab and made us feel at ease."

"Brilliant that we could do it in Covid times. We have missed out on so much, so lovely to do this thank you"

"The course has helped me meet new people, made new friends and this helped with socialising supporting each other"

Bailey enjoying the sensory Tover-Tafel during out Let's Have Fun Together Fuelled (HAF) workshops.



Parents modelling sign language at their session at 2021 Visual Arts Centre. Small groups of 4-6 learners to support covid safety.



Dad practising baby yoga at home. Which he has been shown by his partner who attended our class.

Small groups during covid 4-6 learners per session. Individual learner resource kits to support safety.

