

New model of volunteer based family and child support

IDEAs has been successful in developing a new model of volunteer based family and child support based on Froebelian principles

- The role of play and creativity as central integrating elements in development and learning is embedded throughout every group session.
- The uniqueness of every child's capacity and potential is central to both the training and group work sessions.
- Volunteers are aware of the holistic nature of the development of every child through the undertaking of detailed observations of play.
- The integrity of childhood in its own right is a key element of the training of volunteers
- Play sessions focus on the outdoor environment in line with the Froebelian principle of the relationship of every child to family, community and to nature, culture and society.
- The right of children to protection from harm or abuse and to the promotion of their overall well-being is core to all Home-Start UK work

Families and Children

The Imagine, Discover, Explore, Adventures Project (IDEAs) was piloted in four (4) Schemes and 5 sites.

- 1.Home Start Leicester, Melton and Rutland (MEL)
- 2.Home Start Mid/West Suffolk-Stowmarket and Worlingworth (MSF)
- 3.Home Start Sutton (SUT)
- 4.Home start Wirral (WIR)

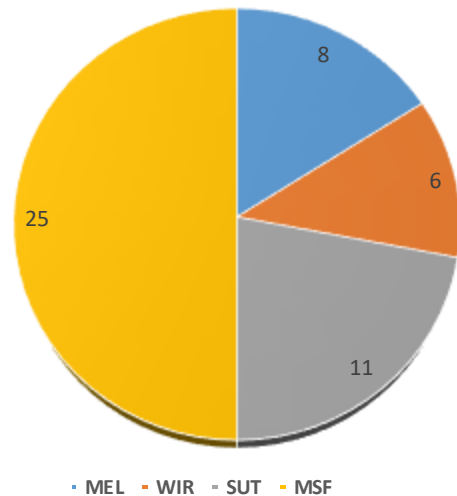
Overview of the project outcomes

- The data for this project has been gathered from all the families that have been involved with IDEAs
- The analysis of the data demonstrates that after attending four play sessions there has been a small increase in confidence for parents managing their children's behaviour and more significantly, confidence around being involved in their children's learning and development
- There is also evidence to indicate that parents have not needed to access as many additional services. This could be due to the support that they are receiving within the group setting

Number of Beneficiaries

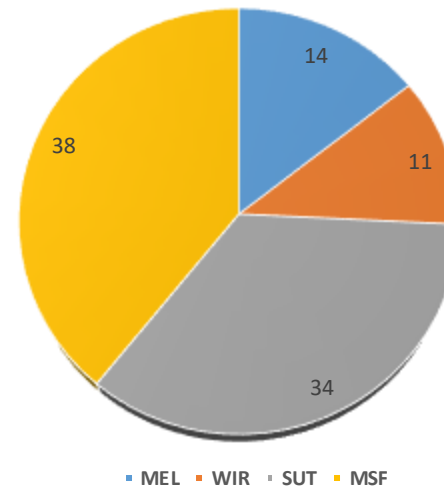
Actual Number of families and children in the 4 schemes involved in IDEAs Project are 50 and 97 respectively. Their representation is illustrated below

Number of Families Involved in IDEAs Project



- 25 families (50%) benefited in MSF
- 11 Families (22%) benefited in SUT
- 8 families (16%) benefited in MEL
- 6 families (12%) benefited in WIR

Number of Children Involved in IDEAs Project



- 38 children (39%) benefited in MSF
- 34 children (35%) benefited in SUT
- 14 children (14%) benefited in MEL
- 11 children (11%) benefited in WIR

Coping Measure (Outcomes) for IDEAs Project

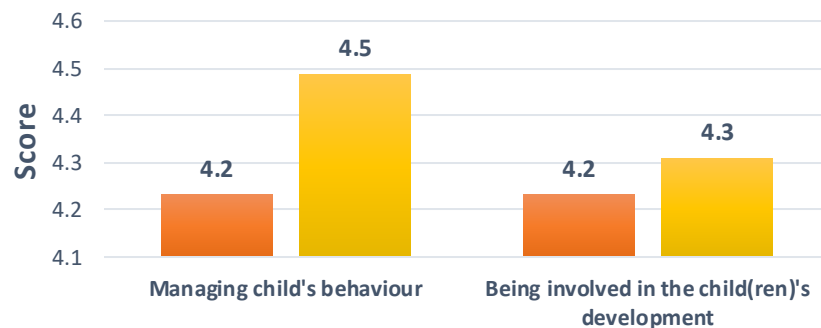
The 2 coping measures (needs) that the IDEAs Project tracked the changes from initial project visit right to the project end visit were;

- Managing child's behaviour
- Being involved in the child(ren)'s development

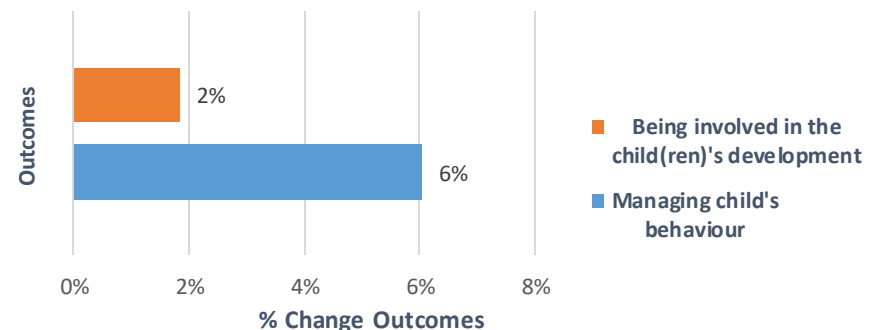
Scheme Code	Coping Description	Average Initial Score (for all families where coping is collected)	Average Review Score (for all families where coping is collected)	% changes in Scores
MEL	Being involved in the child(ren)'s development	3.3	3.6	9%
MEL	Managing child's behaviour	3	4	33%
MSF	Being involved in the child(ren)'s development	3	4.2	40%
MSF	Managing child's behaviour	4	4.4	10%
SUT	Being involved in the child(ren)'s development	3.4	4	18%
SUT	Managing child's behaviour	2.7	3.2	19%
WIR	Being involved in the child(ren)'s development	3	5	67%
WIR	Managing child's behaviour	3	4	33%

We notice that in all the schemes, there were increases in the outcomes from initial visits to review visits as shown on the table above

The Average Coping Progress for all the Four (4) Schemes in the IDEAS Project From Initial to Project End Visit



Total Percentage Change in Outcomes in IDEAs Project From Initial Visit through to Project end Visit



From the graphs above, we see that there has been a percentage increase in the overall coping score registered for all schemes in the project from the initial project visits to the end visits via a vis “managing child behaviour” and “being involved in the child’s development”

Outcomes

- All schemes have noted that there has been a percentage increase in parents reporting a better understanding of the role of play and creativity as central integrating elements in development and learning of their children. This was most noted in the Wirral with 67% increase in coping scores.
- Managing children's behaviour – Play sessions focus on the outdoor environment in line with the Froebelian principle of the relationship of every child to family, community and to nature, culture and society. Parents have reported that this has had an impact on their children's behaviour.

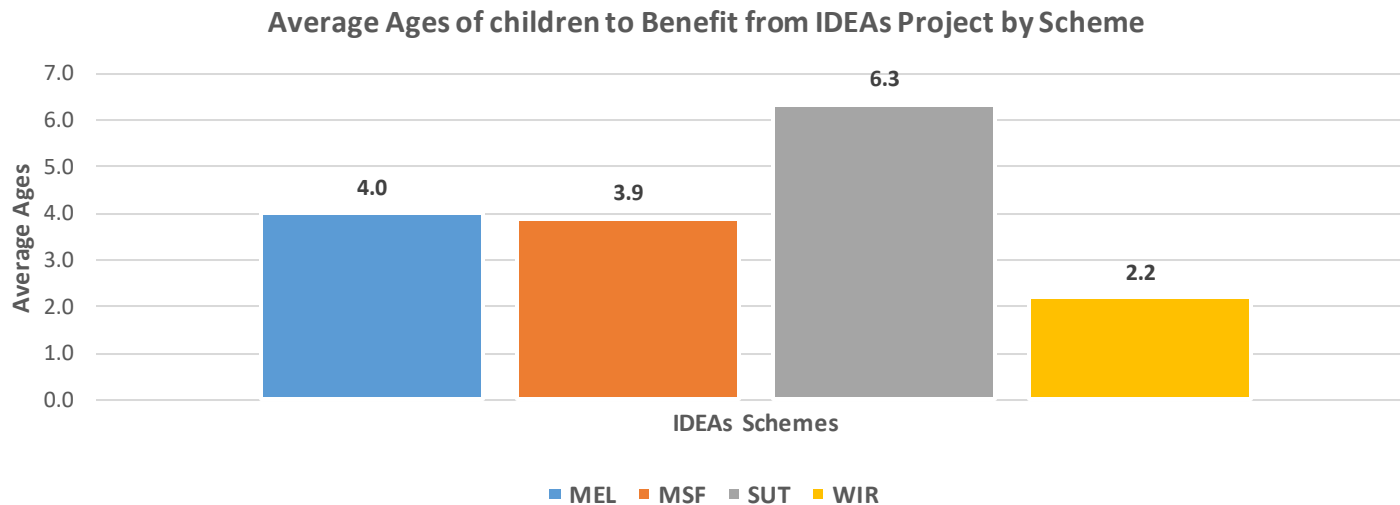
Family Constitution in IDEAs Project

Here, we focus on:

- Average Ages of children in IDEAs
- Gender representation of children
- Ethnicity of the beneficiaries of the IDEAs Project

Average Age of children

The average age of the children to benefit from the IDEAs project by the Schemes is represented as follows

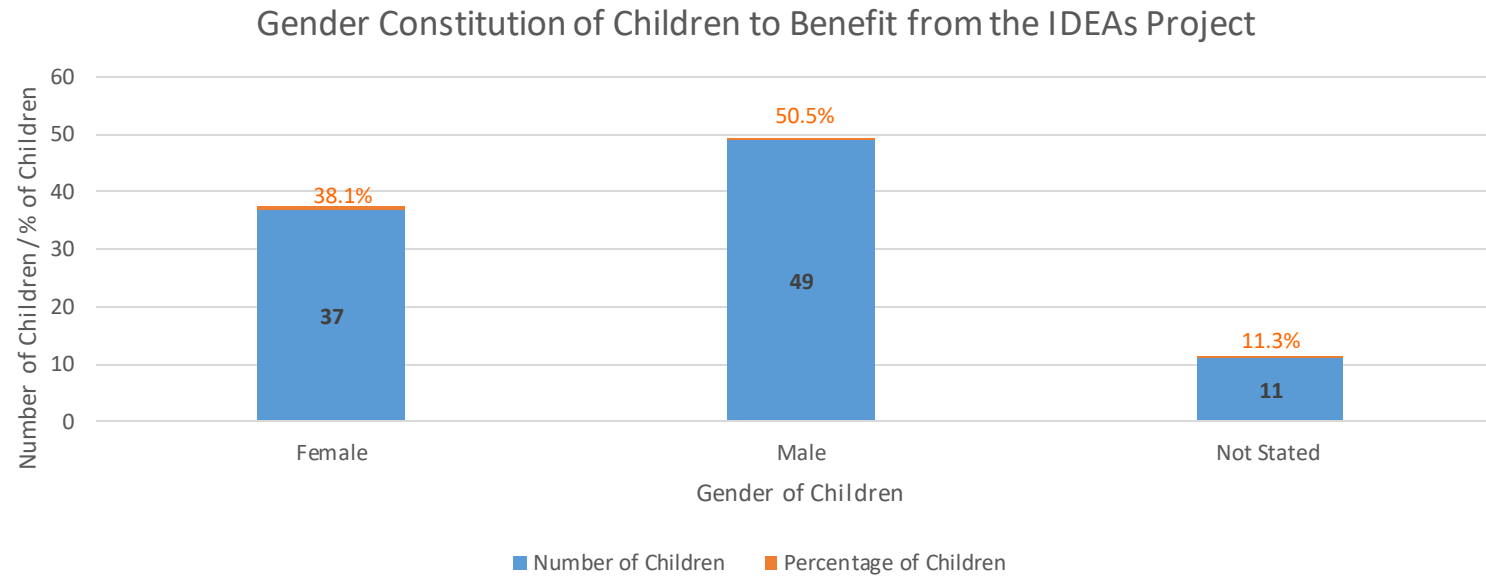


WIR has the youngest children to benefit from the program averaging 2.2 years old

SUT has the oldest children within the IDEAs project averaging 6.3 years

Gender Representation of Children within the IDEAs Project

Of the 97 Children to benefit from the IDEAs Project, the following graphs represent the number of females, males and gender not stated children



Of the 97 Children who benefited from the IDEAs Project.

- 49 (50.5%) children were Male
- 37 (38.1%) children were Female
- 11 (11.3%) children's gender were not stated

Indices of Deprivation

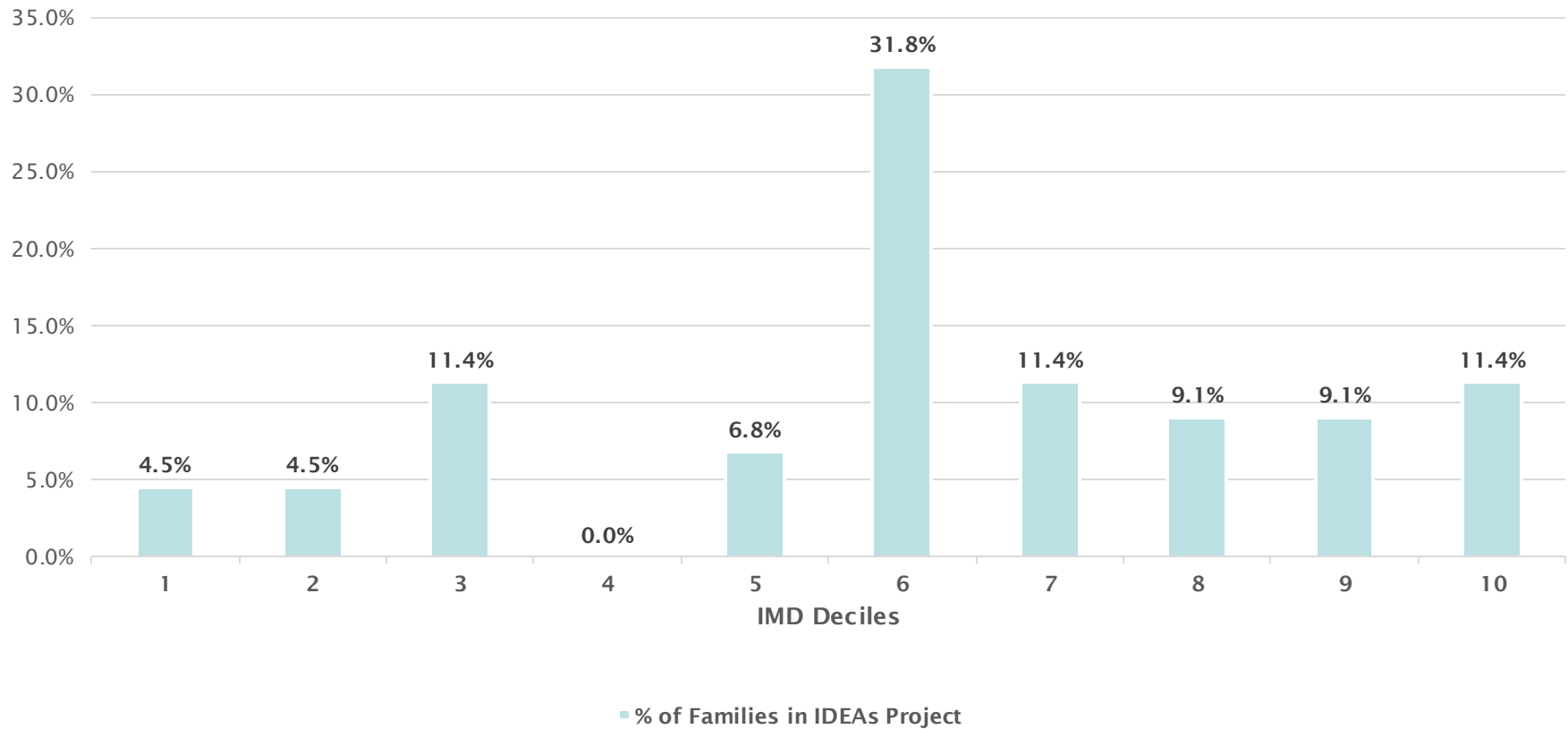
- Decile 1 will represent the most deprived areas and 10 being the least deprived areas. The 7 factors considered are:
- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

Indices of Deprivation

- From the 44 families that took part in the IDEAs project the following findings were made with regards to their locations and their indices of deprivation.
- This report highlights the families that participated in the IDEAs project and looks at the constitution of these families using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

Percentage of families in the IMD Deciles for all Families in the IDEAs project

Percentage of All Families in IDEAs Project within the IMD Deciles



The chart shows the proportion of families in the IMD deciles

- A significant proportion of families are within the 6 decile 31.8%.
- Over 20% of families are within the 3 most deprived decile
- 29.9% of families are in the 3 least deprived regions
- The families from Home start Wirral (WIR) are all with decile 1 and 3 meaning they are in the 3 most deprived regions.

Indicators of success



- 60 children and 40 families engaged in creative play. This target has been exceeded.
- Imagine, Discover, Explore, Adventures has been highly successful
- The project has increased the target and met the needs of 25% more families (50 families) and 63% more children (97 children) between April and August 2017

Indicators of success

- Exceeding Targets
- Children will have improved communication through increased interaction and engagement
- 97 children have been engaged in creative play 97 children have been engaged in creative play (See portrait and observations of play)
- A video clip demonstrating some of the play activities has been created and could be used in the future to promote the project



Indicators of success

- Exceeding Targets
- 60 children will have increased confidence and be more involved learners - 97 children have taken part in the project, displaying increased confidence in their learning
- 40 families will be more engaged with child's learning and development and will have a greater understanding of Froebelian principles -50 families have shown an increased level of engagement with their child's learning and development using the Froebelian principles as a guide



Indicators of success

- Exceeding Targets
- 30 volunteers will have improved skills and knowledge around early years and child development and be able to apply these to support new families
- 31 volunteers have supported families in developing their child's through the application of the Froebelian principles. Volunteer confidence has improved, volunteers have taken the lead on activities and observations (noted through observations/case studies and quotes from volunteers about the impact of the project).



Achievements



- The successful development of a new model of volunteer based family and child support based on Froebelian principles
- Development of a comprehensive training package based on the Froebelian principles of play and creativity as central integrating elements in development and learning
- Volunteers observations of play linked to children's schemas
- Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance for schemes
- Design of a outdoor risk assessment safety card for children to promote children's overall well-being
- Production of a video clip to promote the importance of creative and imaginary play

Case study - Sam

Sam is almost three years old and lives with her mum, step dad, 10 month old brother and her step sister who is 4. Her step sister has physical disabilities and cannot walk without her frame for support. She requires a considerable amount of care. The family live in a flat and have a park that is approximately ten minutes' walk from their home. They would like to be rehoused but want to remain within the same geographical location.

Sam's mother, Anna sometimes feels overwhelmed by the demands of family life and that she hasn't sufficient time or energy to spend playing with her children. Sam has some issues with communication and can become frustrated when unable to express her needs, this often leads to tantrums. She has recently been referred for speech therapy. Sam enjoys spending time playing with dolls, small world figures and balls. She will often throw toys across the room which has led to some confrontation.

Case study– Sam (continued)

Sam attended the four IDEAs sessions with her mum and siblings where Anna gained an understanding around schemas in play and the Froebelian principles. Since the group activities Anna has made a concerted effort to take the children out to the park at least three times a week and attends the Home-Start group regularly, where she has made some new friends. She has modelled a range of play activities with Sam and ensures that ball games are high on the agenda! Sam has loved spending more time outdoors. Last week, she went to the park on her scooter. It took a long time to get there as she was unable to scoot it with her feet! At the Home-Start group, Anna reported a new development in Sam's approach to play. During a recent visit to the park, Anna observed Sam playing in the muddy area with toy animals, using the play to create individual voices for each animal. Whilst Sam has very few words that are understood by adults the imaginary play has given her time to express her emotions and explore her understanding of the world.

Volunteer Observation Homestart - Stowmarket

Aim: Observing play and interactions between children and adults in the setting. Focus on children's schemas play with garage and road layout (incomplete track) and cars which is set out on the floor. Cars can be joined together with magnet at front and back. At the start of the observation play was in progress with adult helper (Lynn) and child, Jasmine (under 2 years). Children had chosen own activities.

Time	Behaviours and interactions	Review/analysis
10.45	Jasmine is sat with a car, and keeping hold of it she pushes it on the track.	
10.46	Adult leaves and goes to another play area	
10.46	New child, boy aged over 2 (yellow t shirt) stands by the side of Jasmine and takes a car and leaves. Another boy, Michael (aged 4) picks up a car and goes to the garage at the side of the road track. He sits down and puts the car on the top level of the garage and watches as the car rolls down the track. He repeats this. Jasmine goes to where Michael is playing and speaks to him (can't hear her words). Michael is not responding he turns aside and continues to play with the cars.	Positioning Connecting
10.47	Jasmine leaves and comes to her mum who is sat on a chair near to the road track and garage. Mum asks "What do you want to do now?" Jasmine points across the room and mum responds "Go over there?" Jasmine pulls her mum to the new play area. Michael left playing with the garage. He puts cars onto the top level of the garage and lets them slide down the track as he watches. He repeats this then walks away and collects another car and adds this to his cars linking all three together. He is engrossed in his play. He arranges the cars in a linked line and watches them slide down. He stands back and watches.	Positioning Connecting
10.50	Michael slides cars up the garage track and pushes each of the four cars up the slope. He now adds a fifth car and connects it to the rest of his line of cars. Two cars start to slide down the slope. Michael puts them back to the top of the garage. He starts to play with the garage lift. He drops a car down the lift shaft. Puts it back at the top and repeats the drop. He starts to make the lift work pushing and turning the lever to raise the lift from the bottom to the top and putting a car on the lift and works it until the lift with the car drops to the bottom. He uses both his hands to make the lift work and loads another car and drops it to the bottom.	Positioning Connecting Rotation
11.05	Michael joined by a younger child (light blue t shirt). The child's mum says to Michael "Are you going to share?" "That's a good boy". Michael looks at the child but does not respond. The new child stands back and watches and then picks up a car. Michael shields the garage so that only he can play with the cars. The new child's mum walks to the garage and bends down to talk to her child (cannot hear the words). Michael gets up and walks off to a different play area.	

Table of 18 volunteers who completed evaluation Evaluation (Feedback for each of the sessions)

Volunteers were asked to grade each of the 5 sessions with a score of 1 – 5 with 1 being low/poor to 5 being excellent. Quotes from volunteers about the IDEAs training *‘Really interesting looking at the barriers adults and care givers put up against outdoor play, much reflection, ideas and useful discussion.’*

‘We all ended up inspired to improve the group sessions using the resources provided at the training session.’

Grade	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
Session content	Children’s voices- Observation, questioning and first hand experiences.	Let’s Play! – Leading, modelling and planning play sessions with families.	Limitless Imagination! – Imaginative play using household, natural and recycled materials.	Outdoor Play and nature’s way – Finding suitable play spaces, considering risk and challenge, promoting the benefit of outdoor play.	Understanding what play is and why it is central to a child’s well-being and development.
5 (Excellent)	67%	83 %	78%	89%	72%
4	28 %	17%	17%	11%	28%
3	5 %	0%	5%	0%	0%
2	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
1 (Poor/Low)	0%	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %

Quotes from volunteers about the impact of the project:

- 31 volunteers have supported families in developing their child's through the application of the Froebelian principles. Volunteer confidence has improved, volunteers have taken the lead on activities and observations. *'I watched baby T picking up objects from the woodland floor and squeezing them. I used the frog puppet with him and he was communicating with me during the frog songs=choosing one and saying "that one". First time I have heard him speak. He waved at the end too. Communication and expression flourishing.'*
- *'T was pretending to be the gruffalo outside and when we sang the gruffalo song we changed the words such as knobbly nose, they were coming up with lovely stuff.'*
- *'We were walking in a line along the woodland path singing my walking song (jumping, hopping etc). The story sticks and the tree with the owl story really brought it alive and connected them with their surroundings and brought interest and ownership over engaging with the story beautifully.'*

Future opportunities

Addressing disadvantage and valuing diversity

- The project has actively supported disadvantaged families in a number of locations across England. To further the development of Froebel IDEAs, a business model of different structures to deliver the programme in numerous areas across the UK could be developed. There would also be adaptations to formulate a model to deliver the project for children with additional needs.

Future opportunities

- **Childhood under stress (focusing on those environments in which young children cannot play freely or with agency)**
- In the future the IDEAs project could be delivered in more urban areas where accessing outdoor play is challenging. This would be supported by volunteers becoming involved in the community mapping of safe play spaces. In order to support families under stress, group sessions would be preceded by some preparatory work with families within their homes. This would involve volunteers visiting families for a limited number of sessions within the home to build confidence and relationships prior to attending group sessions. An additional measure to monitor and evaluate the outcomes for children would be part of an on-going work for the project.

Future opportunities

Adult (staff and parental) engagement with young children

- The development of the Froebel project IDEAs has had an impact on the way that schemes have managed existing group work. Families, staff and volunteers have reported better engagement and understanding of the role of play and creativity as central elements in development and learning. The next stage for the project would be to formalise and implement a model for volunteers and families to observe play. This will enable adults to recognise how children learn and provide activities that link to their schemas. This year the project has supported existing group work. In the future we would like to see new groups established, an update of a best practice guide for group work and to enhance the program to include preparatory work with families. This work would include the development of a 'listening model' to help parents hear the voice of their child. Plans to hold webinars to share good practice and provide further information including website references on the Home-Start Intranet would be included

IDEAs Video

