

In October 2018, The Dales Teaching School Alliance approached Northumberland Educational Psychologists to complete a piece of evaluative research into their Parent Partnership Network.

During its four years of operation, The Dales TSA has developed a variety of networks, including a well-established Family Support Worker network. In September 2018 they were successful in a bid to monitor the impact that interventions by Family Support have on both parents' self-esteem and confidence as well as children's academic, social and emotional progress. The one year project is funded by the Laurel Trust, a charitable organisation which acts to support research and innovation in schools. In the past two years The Laurel Trust has supported 22 imaginative projects in diverse geographical areas including Northumberland and Sheffield, the rural and coastal areas of Suffolk and Blackpool. This year they are funding further projects that will make that make a difference to children's lives; one of which is The Dales Parent Partnership Network.

Working closely with staff from The Dales Teaching School Alliance we came up with some working research aims and a working title. These are likely to change throughout our research journey, however, working aims/titles help to guide the process.

To answer our research questions we will be holding three focus groups to try and gather participants views on the Family Support Project. Focus groups are known to be a very effective way of gathering high quality information. Each group will have approximately three/four participants and last up to an hour. Each focus group will be audio recorded and transcribed so that we can listen back to the views that were shared. Some quotes from the transcriptions will be used in the final research paper. Here are some example questions which we will be looking to explore during our focus groups.

After we have held our focus groups, we will read through the transcribed recordings and identify themes from these. We will then use these themes to create a map like this one and link this to our original question. This will help to evaluate the impact of this group and also help when planning ways forward for future family support and networks.

We look forward to developing the findings of this research and sharing them in a future blog. Keep posted!

If you are interested in finding out more about the types of research Educational Psychologists can undertake please contact [psychservices@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:psychservices@northumberland.gov.uk)

## Laurel Trust Research Project... First Steps

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### Proposed Research Aims and Working Title



#### Aims:

- Exploring the impact of work with parents on children's learning and behaviour
- Exploring the impact of work with parents on their own knowledge, skills and confidence and also on their mental health and wellbeing

#### Working Title:

- Parent perspectives on the impact of a collaborative parent learning network.
- OR
- Parental reflections on their experiences of a collaborative parent learning network.

### Example Focus Group Questions

- What has changed for you as a result of the parent group?
- What impact has the parent group had on your view of your own strengths?
- What impact has the parent group had on your view of your own psychological well being?
- What impact has the parent group had on your child's learning?
- What impact has the parent group had on your child's psychological well being?

### Analysis and Findings

- We will identify themes from the focus group recordings and link to our research question.
- This will hopefully help with evaluating this group and planning ways forward for this group.

