Every Person is Worthwhile

Evaluation of Camphill St Andrew's Project

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Acknowlegments

We are very grateful to the staff, parents, children and young people of Camphill (Aberdeen) and to local authority representatives for the time they have taken to talk of their experiences about the Camphill St Andrew's Project. The information you have given us is invaluable and without it we could not have hoped to understand the project and how it has helped the many children and families who use its services.

It has been a privilege speaking with all participants and learning about the innovative methods and approaches being used at Camphill to support children, young people and families to develop a bright outlook for themselves and their future.

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1) Background to Camphill and the St Andrew's Project

The Camphill St Andrew's Project is a recent venture into a new format of service provision at Camphill (Aberdeen). The St Andrew's Project has extended the range of service provision at Camphill to include groups of children and young people that have previously not received its support. They have accomplished this using a flexible and informal style of provision. This report is an evaluation of the Camphill St Andrew's Project.

To understand the aims and workings of Camphill's St Andrew's Project, it is helpful to take a step back in time to explore the origins and value-base of the Camphill Community. This makes it possible to see how Camphill (Aberdeen) has evolved over the years to address the changing needs of vulnerable children and young people whilst holding on to the original value-base.

The Camphill communities originated in rural Scotland in 1939, founded by a group of refugees from Austria who were mainly Jewish families fleeing the spread of fascism in Europe. All had been studying Rudolph Steiner's anthroposophy in Vienna with Dr Karl König. The group, described as being previously 'well-off members of Viennese society', sought to make this anthroposophical philosophy manifest in their new community in Scotland (Brennan-Krohn 2011). Refugees in Scotland founded Camphill, they embraced and welcomed children with disabilities who were themselves outcasts within Britain (ibid). From here, a network of Camphill Communities developed throughout the United Kingdom.

Those familiar with Camphill will be aware that a distinctive view of children, child development and in particular of disabled children. Following the thinking of Rudolph Steiner and drawing on anthroposophical insights, König viewed impairment as part of the child's life narrative, thus imbuing it with a spiritual meaning and purpose (Walter 2011). Co-workers at Camphill therefore do not see impairment as pathological inability, but rather barriers to growth that they can address through curative education (ibid, p. 125). Rather than regarding them as passive participants in the process of education, Walter describes staff endeavour to identify the 'sparks of individual initiative' (motivation and interest) in the children, encouraging children to develop using their strengths. This was in stark contrast to the more common perception at that time of the 'backward' or 'delinquent' child (Abrams 1998) that was evident in the developing Child Guidance movement in the early 20th century, where there was arguably an emphasis on medical diagnosis and categorisation. To this day, Camphill continue to work according to this value-base, aiming to remove barriers and develop children's strengths within a social pedagogical approach.

The Camphill environment is a large estate with abundant mature trees, fields, and interesting buildings for workshops and other activities.

Outline of the Camphill (Aberdeen) St Andrew's Project

In 2009, Camphill Aberdeen developed a new style of service that complemented its longstanding renowned social pedagogical support for disabled children. This new service, known as the Camphill St Andrew's Project, offers support to children and young people who are experiencing difficulties in their communities or mainstream schools, and to young people who are transitioning from school and children's

services to adult education and services. In a departure from Camphill's traditional residential provision, the St Andrew's Project supports children, young people, and families using a flexible timetable of activities, for the most part on a non-residential basis. However, while the project may superficially appear to have moved a long way from the prevailing model of the Camphill community, the underpinning values remain rooted in respecting the individuality of each child. The St Andrew's Project aims to remove barriers and help each child integrate into mainstream society, particularly their mainstream school.

The St Andrew's Project provides support through three programmes: the therapeutic programme, transitions programme, and respite care. The project provides bespoke support through the therapeutic programme to children and young people and their families who require extra help and support due to the risk of family or schooling breakdown. The transitions programme offers support to young people (post-16 years) to find suitable education, work placements and/or accommodation. The project offers respite care in two forms; firstly, it is available throughout the year to children, young people, and families who require additional support but not of the same intensity as the support provided through the therapeutic or transitions programmes. Secondly, the project offers respite care throughout holiday periods to pupils attending Camphill School (Aberdeen) where pupils spend time engaged in leisure activities at Camphill, and go on holiday and day trips with Camphill staff. We provide further information about the programmes in Section 3.b.

The Camphill environment provides additional opportunities and allows project co-workers to develop tailored plans for children and young people. The St Andrew's Project also holds registration to provide emergency residential care for 1 to 10 year olds or families, at the time of the research purchasing authorities had not yet utilised this facility.

The project develops an individualised plan for each child covering the three programmes outlined above. Typically, this includes therapies, specialist care and craft activities at Camphill. Plans are flexible and may include day, or part-day support, with some provision for overnight stays or residential care. Most plans also incorporate outreach work with the child or young person, family members or professionals. Outreach work can take place, for example, in the community, family home, mainstream schools or colleges. On occasion plans wholly comprise outreach work. We provide further detail about approaches used by St Andrew's staff members in their work with children in Section 3.c.

Local authorities refer children and young people to the St Andrew's Project. The referral process for the project is distinctive because children and young people (of school age) remain registered pupils at their mainstream school whilst receiving support from St Andrews. This allows children to maintain contact with and attend mainstream school, therefore facilitating the process of each child's integration.

Once the project accepted a referral, experienced staff members carried out an 'ecological assessment', highlighting the child or young person's perceptions of their strengths and challenges, and their vision for themselves. From this assessment, the child's individualised plan is developed and tailored to facilitate the child or young person's development.

Relationship-based practice

At Camphill, staff members believe that relationship-based practice is the key to children's development. St Andrew's co-workers promote the development of positive relationships by providing opportunities for children and young people to interact with staff and other children and young people at Camphill. Project co-workers believe that positive relationships promote children's interests and build children's self-esteem helping them develop new personal and social skills to participate in their communities without difficulty:

> *We believe that it is through relationships that individuals realize their potential. Our approach is of a relational nature and draws on positive psychological approaches (building resilience; solution focused, strength based, systems etc.) but is not exclusive of others of a more cognitive or behavioural nature.*

> *Consequently our approach is individually led. We aim to start from where an individual is and take their lead allowing space for choice of activity, length of time and people they wish to work with. Those working with an individual will attempt to boost their self-esteem by giving them the consistent message that they value them and recognise their strengths. (St Andrew's Project Internal Document)*

Evaluation of the St Andrew's Project

Camphill commissioned CELCIS to evaluate the St Andrew's Project: to identify the effectiveness of the project, evidence its impact and offer any insights about how the project might develop further. To do this the CELCIS research team was involved in examining processes and approaches to service delivery and support for children and families, and in assessing outcomes, particularly outcomes for children and young people involved with the project but also those of their parents and other family members.

1.a) About this report

This is the full report from the evaluation; as such, it contains a great deal of information. The document describes the methods we used and then presents the findings of the evaluation. The findings are the most extensive part of the report, and so we have divided them into five sections. We conclude the report with a discussion of the findings, conclusions and a short section looking to the future.

Readers will specific interests may find the contents list helpful in navigating to their areas of interest. Individual sections provide different perspectives, for example from staff, children and parents and those commissioning provision.

We have used participants' quotations throughout the report to illustrate our analyses; we feel it is important to reflect the voices of the different participants involved in this evaluation. To help protect people's identity, we attribute quotes to generic groups of participants rather than to individuals, and we select the quotes that best represent any particular subject. In the discussion and conclusions sections, we

bring together key findings and the viewpoints of different stakeholder groups, including their views of successes, achievements, and ways forward for the project.

To avoid excessive repetition, we vary the use of some terms, for example referring to' co-workers' and 'co-ordinators' (terms used in the project) sometimes using 'staff members' or 'workers' or similar.

2) Methods

A team of researchers at CELCIS carried out the evaluation of the St Andrew's Project, gathering information from the perspectives of different stakeholder groups, and information about children's progress to provide an overall idea of the impact of the project from diverse standpoints. During the evaluation a research advisory group met three times to support the research, providing advice on the methods, suggesting stakeholder groups to be included in the research and assisting with the interpretation of data. The group consisted of parents of children supported by the St Andrew's Project, local authority representatives working with the project, and St Andrew's staff.

Data collection using four methods took place over several months between December 2013 and July 2014. These methods comprised a Case Audit, Documentary Analysis, Focus Groups, and Semi-structured Interviews.

2.a) Case audits

St Andrew's staff members were significantly involved in data collection by creating a case audit for each child and young person who the St Andrew's Project supported, at the time of the audit, only one young person had ceased being supported, most cases were ongoing. St Andrew's Project Co-ordinators analysed all children and young people's files from the last two years and completed an anonymous audit for each (n=18). This included data such as age and disability, as well as descriptive content about issues children were facing, processes and approaches to working with children and young people, and progress children had made. This represented a substantial amount of work on the part of St Andrew's staff and we are very grateful for their efforts. The information contained in these case audits provided the research team with a very detailed and comprehensive understanding of the types of approach that St Andrew's staff used and of the wide-ranging backgrounds of children and young people supported by the project. The case audits were also very useful for highlighting children's outcomes or development and identifying areas where children and young people would still need support. For a copy of the case audit tool, please contact the research team.

2.b) Documentary analysis

St Andrew's Co-ordinators supplied a small number of relevant project documents (eg. proposals, plans, strategies, policies, records, promotional materials, existing feedback instruments, etc.) to the research team to inform understanding and analyses of the findings. These documents were useful for developing

understanding around Camphill and St Andrew's value base and for understanding the development and aims of the St Andrew's Project.

2.c) Focus groups

We conducted three focus groups to explore developments, progress, and impact of the St Andrew's Project, including suggestions about areas for future development. Two of the focus groups were from the St Andrew's Project team who were able to provide detailed information about these three areas; the first comprised co-ordinators (that is, supervisors and managers) and the second, co-workers (front-line staff). In total 12 members of St Andrew's staff took part in the two focus groups (seven in the first and five in the second); the sessions lasted between an hour and an hour and a half.

The third focus group involved local authority perspectives. The meeting took place on local authority premises and four participants shared their views of the project, reasons for referral and use of the project, expectations for children's progress, impact on children and families, partnership working and suggestions for future developments.. Each of the participants in this focus group was in a managerial position and contributed to decisions about the purchasing of services. We had also invited teachers from a small number of mainstream schools attended by some of the children to join the third focus group, but none was available to attend. The session lasted approximately an hour and a half

2.d) Semi-structured interviews

We invited various people to take part in individual interviews. This included all parents whose children were involved in the St Andrew's Project, children, and young people of parents taking part and Camphill school staff members. Five parents (of four children) agreed to take part; four parents took part in an in-person interview at Camphill and one further parent agreed to take part in a telephone interview. We also invited children of parents who took part, only one wished to take part in a joint interview with their parent. We asked parents and the child participants to tell us their views of the St Andrew's Project and any impact it had had on children and families.

We sent an email invitation to take part in the evaluation to all Camphill School staff, and four individuals with a broad range of positions within the organisation indicated that they would like to be involved. Two individuals spoke to researchers at Camphill in a joint interview, and we carried out two further interviews by telephone.

2.e) Consent and ethics

The researchers provided participants with information sheets and consent forms about the evaluation to confirm their agreement to all relevant aspects of the research. This including providing information to St Andrew's staff to provide information and case audits or to take part in an interview or focus group. At the start of interviews and focus groups, researchers again explained the purpose of the evaluation, offering

participants the opportunity to ask any questions. We ensured that all participants, including St Andrew's Project staff members, were aware that taking part was voluntary and there would be no consequences for them if they decided not to take part in the evaluation. However, this was not a one-off process and we considered 'consent' to be an ongoing process that we re-checked throughout interviews.

The University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee approved the study.

2.f) Analysis

Analysis of data included a review of interview data and project documents to provide an overview and descriptive account of the St Andrew's Project including its background, aims, principles, and approaches to service delivery.

Further analyses of interviews and focus groups captured perspectives and experiences from all stakeholder groups including St Andrew's Co-ordinators and Co-workers, Camphill School Staff, Parents and Children, and Local Authority representatives. Our approach was thematic analysis focusing on general satisfaction with processes, consistency with the project approach, examples of benefits and outcomes and any barriers, suggestions or issues reported. We entered Interview and focus group data into NVivo Software to assist with our analysis.

We used data from case audit files to produce a detailed profile of children and young people and the different wide-ranging backgrounds and needs they had. Through the case audits, it was also possible to describe the individual variations in development, and the continuing but varying levels of support that children required.

3) Findings One: Describing the St Andrew's Project

The findings in this section look briefly at St Andrew's principles and values before moving on to describe: the different programmes offered by the project, the approaches used to support children's development, examples of success for children and young people, project challenges, successes and future developments.

3.a) Principles and values

At St Andrew's, it was explained to us, the Camphill principle that *every person is worthwhile* is embedded within the work of the project; this principle is at the core of all practice and interventions carried out. Without feelings of self-worth, staff members believe that children and young people's development will be very limited. Co-ordinators spoke of staff members' belief in the value and worth of children and families, explaining that helping children value themselves and develop a sense of self-worth is central and a fundamental aim of the work they do to promote children's development:

It's one of the values of Camphill to make every human being feel that they are worthwhile as human beings regardless of colour, regardless of vision. This is one of the Camphill mantras … and … is the ethos that has been built throughout 70 years. (Co-ordinator)

… believing in people, the children, the families. It's not just about the St Andrews project, it's part of [Camphill] School, together, and that is the very core to what we're doing, and with that belief we can experiment different ways of doing what Camphill School has more or less done for the last 70 years. (Co-ordinator)

When children value their own contribution and participation, it is St Andrew's staff experience that children will obtain many positive outcomes, often in abundance:

One of the outcomes that we're all talking about is that people feel increasingly recognised, they feel met and they feel recognised and they feel valued. And I think that's more like a cascading of outcomes, then in a sense that that has ripple effects within their own environment, perhaps within their own relationship with the family, perhaps the way they are in school, which can't necessarily be predetermined. (Co-ordinator)

Without this sense of self-worth, St Andrew's staff members explained that children and young people would not be able to engage effectively in education or take part in society:

I think fundamentally, unless you feel good about yourself, you're not going to be able to learn and function in wider society. (Co-ordinator)

However, staff members believe that they cannot force children to change; instead, they suggest their focus should be changing the child's environment so that it meets their needs more effectively. St Andrew's staff hoped that children and young people would build up resilience and capabilities to enable them to deal with any issues they faced throughout their whole lives. These beliefs underpin all of the St Andrew's Project's practice.

3.b) St Andrew's project programmes

The St Andrew's Project is registered to provide a number of children's services but does so through three main programmes: the therapeutic, transitions and respite programmes. The service is also able to provide emergency residential care for 1 to 10 year olds, but at the time of the research, no referrers had requested this service.

Within the therapeutic and transitions programmes, the majority of children and young people spend time at Camphill St Andrew's and in their school or college setting. Each child's plan typically involves elements of outreach work, which can happen in schools or colleges, within the family home or in other settings that children attend. Most children and young people attended as day students, but a number lived on site at the St Andrew's Project on a residential basis if they considered it to be in their best interests. For a small

number of children and young people, usually older young people, the project provided support mainly via outreach work with little or no attendance at Camphill.

Although the project offers therapeutic and transitions programmes as distinct services, St Andrew's co-ordinators explained that both programmes use a similar repertoire of methods and processes, and that Camphill's principles and values underpin all activity. In addition, the project integrates the two programmes, with children across the different programmes spending time together in the two St Andrew's houses, and taking part in some of the same activities or workshops.

In contrast to the therapeutic and transitions programmes, the project provides respite support mainly to children for enjoyment and relaxation. Whilst respite work encourages development, this is not the primary purpose. The project offers respite during holiday times to children who attend Camphill School; they also provide respite on a referral basis throughout the year. At the time of the research, a small number of children had received daytime respite (ie non-residential respite).

Referrals to the different programmes in the project came from neighbouring local authorities.

Ecological assessment

Once the St Andrew's Project accepted a referral and agreed to support the child or young person, an assessment of the child's needs was undertaken. For children for whom an individualised therapeutic programme was required, project staff conducted an ecological assessment to identify strengths, issues, and the interrelationship between the individual and the environment. Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological framework and the Circle of Courage framework for youth empowerment developed by Brendtro et al. (1990) inform the assessment process. Local authority staff particularly valued these assessments (see section 6.a.)

The ecological assessment aims to focus on: *'the child's views the 'world' as well as the 'world's' views of the child, and most importantly how the two interact'* (Ecological Assessment Tool, internal St Andrew's Project document). Ecological assessments may, for example, assess the child or young person's current situation, explore future transition plans, and present a proposal of how needs may be met in an ideal way.

Staff members gather evidence for the assessment from parents, family members, and professionals (including, where relevant, social workers, educational psychologists, and teachers). They also consult any documentation such as education plans and previous assessments.

Therapeutic and transitions programmes

Background of children and young people:

Children and young people who attended the therapeutic programme were school-aged, with the youngest around eight or nine years old, and described as:

… usually very bright, and they're walking and talking, but they really find it very difficult to integrate into and be part of the mainstream because mostly their needs are not understood and if they are understood they cannot be met due to very practical, and some not so practical, reasons. (Co-ordinator).

Children who are part of the therapeutic programme often come from a complex background. Staff explained that it was sometimes difficult to know initially what the most beneficial areas to work on with each individual child or family will be:

I think the therapeutic programmes, it's a very complex and unfocussed situation that we're asked to step into and to try to work with and there aren't necessarily clear predetermined outcomes. There are clearly issues that we're asked to work with but it's much more complex and multi-faceted. (Co-ordinator)

St Andrew's Project staff found that each child for whom they provided therapeutic support had already experienced at least one intervention, and usually more before joining the project. These interventions had typically taken place over a number of years. For example, one intervention involved a range of extra supports to help a young person cope in a new school environment; however, when the environment became overwhelming for the child, despite the school's support, the St Andrew's Project were asked to become involved:

We have a young person … and people knew that the young person doesn't like lots of people around, so, I think they [school] had this transitions week with lots of support, very nice people helping, but on the second day, they had lunch in the canteen with a thousand other youngsters and the young person completely, utterly, couldn't cope there. (Co-ordinator)

Young people who are part of the transitions programme tend to be older than those who are on the therapeutic programme. Usually they no longer attend school and are aged 18 to 22, although some young people in the programme may be 16 or 17. Some young people using the transitions programme previously attended Camphill School; others came from the local community. A number of the young people have complex learning disabilities or difficulties. Young people generally join to the programme to address or support a specific goal such as moving from a school placement to adult education, a move to new accommodation, starting college or, more generally, developing independence:

In some sense the transitions programme, it's something clear and it's focused what we're being asked to do. We are being asked to do an effective transition for somebody who has been at a school placement into more of an adult provision to learn life sills to develop independence and so on. (Co-ordinator)

Additionally, St Andrew's staff members felt that because young people on the transitions programme are moving into adulthood, it could be relatively easy to understand where their future paths may lie and what they might want to do with their lives:

So, if you're 18 you've finished school. They feel much more mature so that maturity counts as well, for one could say, okay this young person is in adulthood now so we can much better predict or see where this person is going. (Co-ordinator)

Aims of the therapeutic and transitions programmes:

Although the overarching aim of the St Andrew's Project is to address, ***what is needed for the young person to remain in mainstream or to be in mainstream*** **(Co-ordinator),** to achieve this, the St Andrew's Co-ordinators primarily view role a being enable children and young people to feel good about themselves. This is a particularly salient aim for the therapeutic programme as children and young people usually have a low sense of self-worth. As highlighted earlier, this is one of the fundamental principles of Camphill Schools and communities across the UK (Jackson 2006) which is linked to views of child development that suggest if children feel good about themselves, ***then we know everything else will come afterwards, the formal learning and the reintegration and all the rest*** **(Co-ordinator):**

…the first port of call is that they feel good about themselves because most of them are coming after lots of breakdowns, school breakdowns, maybe some family breakdowns and they're really feeling awful about themselves and their loss of confidence, but yes, we are working to make them feel good. (Co-ordinator)

Project staff explained that the St Andrew's Project offered a transitional phase that gave children and young people space to become comfortable and learn before moving back to the mainstream:

The two children I'm working with… they're kind of struggling to find their place where they can learn and be comfortable and overcome their challenges. [The St Andrew's Project] is like a bridge. They dip into the therapeutic programme but also they do life skills and they access all the workshops and take part in things to kind of bridge the gap. It's an educating system, but also to get away from the school and teachers and things. (Co-workers)

For the transitions programme, staff indicated that they were able to start working on specific issues quite quickly. This was because, although there could be the same types of issues as those addressed by the therapeutic programme, on the transitions programme, they knew young people's goals and aims in advance:

That part has a different focus [from the therapeutic programme], there might be wishes from the parent or from the individual to move to a certain adult provision but in order to do that there are certain [entry criteria], it's maybe there is no night support. (Co-ordinator)

An overarching aim for all St Andrew's staff is to help children and young people become independent by focusing on their strengths:

All of our youngsters are on their way to becoming more and more independent … and trying to build up their strengths in here [at St Andrew's] in what they are already good [at]. (Co-worker)

As well as recognising and building young people's strengths, St Andrew's staff members also aimed to address issues in the child's wider environment in order to facilitate integration into mainstream settings. For the therapeutic programme, staff told us that often they worked to change practice in schools and challenge professionals' perspectives of the child:

The focus is about what needs to change and how can we facilitate that change so that in the end child, moves from the place that they are in at the moment, which is usually disruptive, destructive, unhappy for everybody around, for the schools, for the family, for the child. Everybody's at war. So how to move from the war zone to a medium zone where everyone can start at least meaningfully talking with each other and how can we change the narrative that goes around the child. So, it's about what can we all change so we can facilitate the child to move from place A to place B. (Co-ordinator)

Co-ordinators suggested that they aimed to *change the narrative around the child*; they explained that they often find that those in contact with the child use negative language to describe them, locating the child as the source of the problem. For example, seeing the child as problematic and not engaging in education. Co-ordinators explained to the researchers that one of the aims of the St Andrew's Project is to encourage those working with the child to view the child positively and explore ways to change the environment and practice to enable the child to engage in activities, and reduce any challenging behaviour.

Recording development:

Project co-ordinators showed researchers examples of the *Outcomes That Matter* framework (Fulcher and Garfat 2013). This was used to record children's development within the therapeutic and transitions programmes on a weekly basis. Co-ordinators explained that the information recorded helped to show development (including dips) which supported their decision-making and approach to working with the child or young person. This framework was not widely mentioned by staff in focus groups; however, one co-worker suggested that this method of recording was particularly helpful for identifying small developmental steps:

The Outcomes That Matter forms, this is just my opinion, make it more easy for you to, for the student you are working with, to look at the small achievements because the really small steps, you can fill out in the form. Also for the co-worker to notice and realise the small steps and sometimes to build up the bridges to make it easier to try to intervene in these situations, then you have this new achievement. (Co-worker)

The *Outcomes that Matter* graphs had also been helpful for staff and some parents in identifying times, activities and approaches that increased stress or led to 'dips' in children's development. For example, staff identified that formal reviews could be problematic, with some children showing deterioration in some elements of the outcomes framework around the time of reviews. In another instance, the graphs showed

that one young person was relying on the support of one of the workers; this highlighted a need for encouraging confidence and independence. Where there were no dips and progress was increasing or steady, staff took this as an indicator that the approaches used with children and young people were effective.

Respite programme

There are two forms of respite programme within the St Andrew's Project. The first is a residential respite programme offered during school holidays. The second is a day school term-time respite programme offered to children and young people who needed a little extra support, but who did not require the intensive support offered by the therapeutic and transitions programmes.

Background of children and young people using the respite programme:

The holiday respite service provides support mainly to children and young people who attend Camphill School during term, but also to some children and young people on the therapeutic, transitions and day respite programmes. Staff told us that the respite programme could, in addition, be used to help identify children and young people from Camphill School who may be, *potential new candidates for the transition programme, for example, because they have been a few years in the holidays with us, they know the houses and they are looking for a place* (Co-ordinator).

Occasionally, however, children were referred to the day respite programme because parents felt the Camphill environment would be beneficial for their child for *overall* development rather than to focus on a particular goal around mainstream integration or transition:

> *[Child] only came specifically, because of what we can offer environmentally, that's how the request came in. Because we have the environment that we have, I thought that makes sense for a positive experience. Parents are seeking, if they are not Camphill School parents, they are seeking something that they feel [their child] needs to have. (Co-ordinator)*

Aims and activities of the respite programme:

Unlike the therapeutic and transitions programmes, which aim to *facilitate some sort of change,* the holiday respite programme has less focus on bringing about change or development, aiming instead at promoting enjoyment and the experience of a 'proper' break or holiday:

> *Respite, it's about people having fun, having a break so there is no expectation, there is no programme set out. (Co-ordinator)*

> *For the first holiday respite, the main question was, what would truly a holiday be for the kind of children that are coming? Not this is the holiday programme that we are going to offer, what would be a holiday experience for them. (Co-ordinator)*

The researchers were told that children take part in enjoyable activities for fun and to relax, but this is also a time when staff can relax and enjoy themselves too:

> *We actually just let go. We go camping, we have a holiday house in Stonehaven, we make campfires, we just go swimming, to the cinema and we try to do that, a bit for the youngsters, but I suppose a bit for the house and the co-workers, because I suppose in a way, the house can then breathe again and we start again. I suppose it's a healthy rhythm, so it's a bit of a combination and I think it's very nice actually. (Co-ordinator)*

Staff suggested that the same approach was used for children who attend respite after school or in the afternoons throughout the year: **he's kind of there to chill and have a good time and relax (Co-ordinator)**. However, we found that there were also some elements of developmental work, for one child, this included encouraging independence, and developing self-esteem:

> *What I do with my student is to make him as independent as possible. Try out and push him as much as possible in these really small situations because we also have lots of students with Autism in our house and the varieties of autism are really different but it is small steps that we do with them. With this [respite] student we really try to find a small moment for them to find their self-esteem and to find themselves. That they realise that yes I can do the small steps, and we try to give them this routine, they really need for feeling sqfe, and not just over half a year, over weeks, over years, whether it's three years we try to give them this routine to try and build up in this routine and make more small steps. (Co-worker)*

3.c) St Andrew's project approaches to working with children

St Andrew's staff described a wide range of approaches that they used to help children and young people build a sense of self-worth and value, they emphasised that approaches are flexible and not tightly prescriptive. These approaches, which we outline below, align strongly with Camphill values and principles and included practice based on relationships, practical activities, and community ethos:

Time and space:

At the St Andrew's Project, allowing time for children to develop at their own pace, both personally, and in their relationships, is vital. Staff members feel that children's progress is often incremental and that it is likely to take many months to develop to the extent that children are able to feel valued and participate in multiple settings without difficulty.

Valuing children and young people:

Throughout the day, all members of St Andrew's Project and Camphill staff will do and say things that demonstrate to the child that they are valued. In this way, children receive this message consistently from the staff they encounter. Each staff member comes up with their own way of communicating to children how they are valued:

> *And each individual staff member I think finds their own way of giving that message out. There isn't a prescribed message that you have to ... do it that way, the thing is to keep to the message clearly, and there are loads of examples of that. (Co-ordinator)*

Staff members believe that constantly giving this message helps children to understand that they can achieve, and are able to participate positively in education or life in general:

> *We've got many people being here for a year and after a year they turn round and they say now I'm ready, I want to go and learn. And I think that's done through everyday life, people keeping giving that positive message. ... so you know it's everyday getting the message from everybody on the ground that it's okay to be who you are. (Co-ordinator)*

Developing relationships:

Valuing relationships and providing support in different and individual ways was part of the ethos and community of the St Andrew's Project. Staff informed us that they concentrated on building close relationships and bonds with children and young people in order to build up their sense of safety, trust, and belonging through communicating positive messages frequently in daily life. Equally, they supported children to develop relationships with peers and other adults at Camphill. The example below suggests that in addition to one-to-one relationships, group dynamics and relationships provided powerful support:

> *We have been hanging in with this young person through this crisis you know, I was so touched, I went in and there was [young person] sitting there, the same person was completely in a state, not very well, sitting down very quietly, very unwell. And they [other staff and children in the house] were sitting there reading stories to the young person, one person at a time not moving out of their sight. And I thought wow, you know, this commitment at that level, it's this hanging in there with the kids, even if they go through real, real rock bottom places. (Co-ordinator)*

Following the child's interests:

> *It's really about the relationships and the interests of the young people and children. I mean it's not about the workshop, it's about what the child likes. (Co-ordinator)*

St Andrew's staff drew attention to the efficacy of children's interests and enthusiasm as a catalyst for development. For this reason, children and young people were offered a variety of workshops and activities that they could carry out or take part in at Camphill and, sometimes outside in the local area. Children had the freedom to choose activities for themselves. Staff members told us that when children find an activity they enjoy, taking part in it would provide opportunities to develop a range of practical, personal, and social skills.

Holding on to (containing) anxiety:

Although spoken about less prominently than other approaches in this section, staff members explained that managing the high and varying levels of anxiety in the St Andrew's houses ensured the households ran as smoothly as possible:

All these young people that we are working with be it in the transitions, be it in the therapeutic programmes, they see a huge amount of anxiety so I think a lot of our work is actually to hold that anxiety and to know how to hold it and not to let that anxiety take over one's life and take over the whole house. You've got everybody in a state of whatever and it's a very subtle thing, individual people they take that [anxiety] along with them, they have that with them be it just themselves, be it the families, the schools. It does take a huge amount of, it does take staff that have got experience, who've got knowledge and ability to deal with all these 100,000 anxieties. (Co-ordinator)

At an individual level, staff also told us that considerable effort was spent helping children to reduce the high levels of anxiety they felt about their mainstream settings:

For some of them, it is also the aim to ease their anxiety in the normal school. So they have some therapy or some other time like some school time and, if they manage to feel a bit more secure [...] they also they have regular reviews, and they also raised the amount of time they spend in the school again... (Co-ordinator)

Using the environment and ethos:

Staff members thought that the Camphill environment and its accompanying ethos had a beneficial and therapeutic impact on children and young people. This effect came from the environment's peacefulness and purposefulness:

Some of the things that I think really benefit the children and young people who come to the St Andrew's Project; it's just this very peaceful environment and all the craft workshops [...]. Also it can't be discounted that this place has got this more than 70 year old history of people working, and striving, and developing. And I think that has an intangible impact on anybody who comes here. (Co-ordinator)

Staff members told the researchers that this positive community and family environment was present in each of the St Andrew's houses. Co-workers described the houses as being family environments where children established friendships and connected with new people of all ages. For day students, the family nature of the houses allowed then to look forward to staying at the St Andrew's Project for the occasional weekend:

For the children to be able to interact with each other, and not just having the support worker around them all the time, and being their friend. They can be friends with each other too, and look after each other and learn how to communicate with different people. I think that's really important, the family, the family feeling, the feeling of belonging is a huge sense because a lot of the children, I think we are working with, come from homes that are maybe not working so well. So to come in and to find that all these different people, different ages, different places are actually all really connecting and working as one team, you know, as a family unit, is a really positive thing. (Co-worker)

... students then stay as a special treat over the weekend once and that's also really nice. (Co-worker)

Non-judgemental approach:

Staff adopted a non-judgemental attitude towards children and young people by removing any pressure on children to take part in activities and by allowing them to be themselves. This aimed to help children learn that their views, opinions, and decisions were important and mattered:

No assumptions or judgements [are] made, they can just be themselves and everything is just taking it day by day. There's no pressure on the young people. (Co-ordinator)

In this way it was felt that children could take control over their own lives and choice of activities, and learn that it is ok to be themselves:

... to learn their personalities and to learn who they are, they get more sort of a choice here and they can sort of work on themselves before they have to go into the wider community. (Co-worker)

Observation:

Staff descriptions of the work they do with children and young people suggest that observing children's behaviour and reactions to different stimuli is an important part of supporting children's development. In the example below, staff were attuned to the young person's reaction to the word 'school', which they felt initially prevented the young person from engaging with learning. Again, this example shows the importance that St Andrew's staff place on young people's agency and control over the development process:

Already by the word school which is put on his hoody, close down and turn off, but by going to workshops, by building up relationships, by just feeling at home here, all of a sudden he starts to ask in my workshop can I go and learn something. I mean we have just facilitated it in that way, yes, it has to come from the young person himself as well. (Co-ordinator)

It also suggests that staff members are aware of the incremental progress and development that children make, including times when children may regress and have difficulties.

Boundaries and behaviour:

Part of the process of learning social skills involved learning about boundaries and acceptable behaviours. Like 'holding onto anxiety', staff emphasised this aspect of their work to a much lesser extent than other approaches. Staff members indicated however, that they would not tolerate or accept certain behaviours, whilst other boundaries were about learning appropriate levels of, for example, personal space, or touch:

> *It's trying to teach them things like boundaries and things like that which is good. So we can kind of channel towards mainstream school or you know even a job long term and that kind of thing. (Co-worker)*

Despite workers saying little about approaches to dealing with boundaries and challenging behaviours, staff described many examples of success, including reductions in challenging behaviours. This suggests that staff have effective approaches to addressing behavioural and boundary issues.

Workshops and activities:

The St Andrew's Project aims to promote social learning and personal development through tasks, workshops and other activities. This included not only formal activities such as crafts or lessons but also informal learning through mealtimes and leisure time within the St Andrew's houses.

Activities have various purposes: to be enjoyable, to encourage a sense of responsibility and independence, and to develop skills. Activities might include baking and household tasks such as clearing tables; equally, they may include play or other therapies or craft activities including pottery, metalwork, and woodwork. Project staff members do not require children to follow strict timetables or address to academic pressures that frequently cause them anxiety. They explain that children, learn social skills and establish relationships with staff and other children whilst spending time with others in a relaxed environment, and that this is particularly important for those on the therapeutic programme. For young people on the transitions programme, workers explain that the focus could be less therapeutic or less based around social-skills; instead, the focus of the work would be on broadening young people's skills and experiences. This might include trying new things; equally, it could include building a sense of stability:

> *All of them are working in a workshop or different workshops to see what they might like further on in their life and also just to have a bit of a taste of working, and how it is to be in the same environment for a longer period of time, a new kind of work or [to] produce something for others. (Co-worker)*

In this way, participants felt that children have a positive set of experiences, developing a sense of belonging and building up a store of enjoyable memories and learning that they can draw on in future situations. No single approach was responsible for children's development, but:

> *... it's a combination of building up the relationship and the environment that would enable children and young people to develop and allow them to 'be'. (Co-ordinator).*

3.d) Working with families, schools, colleges and other organisations

A large part of the work outlined by St Andrew's staff involved working with families and external partners; they described an array of processes they used with families, schools and other organisations. Most examples provided were for children and young people on the therapeutic programme and focused on facilitating change in these environments.

Staff suggested that work with families involved listening to parents, and understanding the family, school and other situations from parents' perspectives. St Andrew's staff offered parents insights into these situations and helped them to come up with strategies to improve circumstances at home, school or in the wider community. This support sometimes continued informally after children and young people had left the project, although staff pointed out that not many children had moved on from the project at that point in time:

> Actually still yesterday I wrote the parents two emails to see how things were doing so I do [keep in touch], yes, but we don't have that many yet but I think that also depends on their situation. With these two, I could imagine that they need a bit of, now and then just checking in, so to say. With others you might just know it's okay and they will check with you if that's needed. I think with some people it's the other way around, so I would so now and then do that. (Co-ordinator)

Staff felt that parents appreciated the continuity of support and the guidance provided over a longer time, which was something that parents had typically not experienced with other service providers:

> One of the things I think which parents say to us, what they value about the approach that we provide, parents and schools I think, is that we don't just do assessments and sort of helicopter in, parachute in for a couple of times to tell people what they should be doing and disappear again. But they really value the fact that we [are] really there, kind of guiding them, we're really trying to help and support and provide that advice over a longer period of time and when we're funded to do so in a way we can offer that. (Co-ordinator)

In their work with schools, co-ordinators told us that large schools could find it difficult to adapt to meet children's needs, so they worked with schools to introduce change gradually over time. Staff highlighted that part of this work could involve changing parents and professionals' attitudes about whether re-integration of the child into their mainstream school would work:

> As the child is still, for example, going one day at least to school and is at home, and you do need to have these meetings and this contact. You need to build this up so that when the child or young person is ready to move, to have all settings prepared for them. Sometimes it's parental hesitation, sometimes it's school, 'Oh my God we are being asked to re-integrate a child, we can't see this happening'. (Co-ordinator)

Another area that staff told us they focused on was encouraging professionals to agree appropriate priorities for the child or young person:

> We need to hold in balance the different kind of professionals that are around. So you've got the people saying 'Yes but she needs to be getting on, doing her exams, she needs to be you know moving through the school' but actually you know the girl is incredibly anxious and highly stressed at the moment. The challenge really is to help people to see, what really are the priorities in the situation and trying to work together with the child as well so that they're all on the same page. (Co-ordinator)

Co-ordinators reported that they had been welcomed into schools and other settings, and that they felt families, schools, and social workers appreciated the support provided by the St Andrew's Project:

> *We haven't met any, or I haven't met any, resistance to the approaches we've tried, the way we've gone about it. (Co-ordinator)*

3.e) Children and young people's achievements and successes

One of the aims of the evaluation was to capture and describe the achievements of children and young people using the project. In this section, we look at children's achievements from the perspective of St Andrew's staff, later in the report explore views of success from other stakeholders' perspectives (parents and local authorities) and from children's profiles. Staff outlined many examples of children and young people's development and achievement during the time that children spent at the St Andrew's Project. It was however emphasised that progress and development was not attributable only to the support of the project but also to the child, families, schools, colleges, and other organisations and professionals working with the child:

> *We are not miracle makers you know and so we don't attribute the successes just to us. I think it's a combination of factors. (Co-ordinator)*

It was evident from staff descriptions that many of the children's achievements were incremental, developmental steps that children made as they worked towards the goals of feeling good and at ease with themselves, and being able to integrate into mainstream schools, colleges and communities. Staff expected the achievement of these ultimate goals to take many months or longer.

Among the most notable examples of success that were spoken of were children and young peoples' motivation to engage, improved behaviour and sense of belonging and integration with mainstream schools and communities. The examples, outlined below, mainly come from the therapeutic and transitions programme, with one example from the respite programme. Where there were examples of 'full' integration into communities, these were for young people on the transitions programme, as at the time of the research, no children on the therapeutic programme had fully integrated back into their mainstream schools.

Motivation to engage:

Staff suggested that one cornerstone of development was for children to become motivated to engage in activities, learning or social situations. This achievement showed children were beginning to take part in opportunities and develop an interest in the world around them. Staff used a range of methods and choices to encourage children to broaden their interests; this included allowing them to choose their own timetable:

> *The girl I work with, she still goes to [mainstream] school two days a week and three days a week she's here. She's started to go to a workshop which she really, really likes. It*

was a bit chaotic for her between school and skipping lessons in school and not really attending and not really finding it important. But now with this project she's started to come and at the beginning she just had baking lessons and crafts which she really likes and then we showed her all the workshops that we had and she could arrange her own timetable which was very helpful for her because then she had a bit more motivation to come and to really do things. (Co-worker)

For other children, the multicultural nature of St Andrew's peaked their interest and encouraged them to engage with staff, to get involved in cooking and learning about other cultures:

It's amazing to learn, my kid is always asking people now, where are you from, and before he would never ask, before it was always to staff, Are you English? And now, it's, Are you [nationality]? And, he's asking different words, how do I say hello in this language, how do I say hello in this language, or about food or cultures, so it's fantastic. There's loads to learn here that you would never find anywhere else. (Co-worker)

Sense of purpose:

For some children developing a sense of purpose was critical. The example below shows how one young person came to value the tasks he was doing because he felt they were important, and valued by others:

We finally found a workshop which he really enjoys. That's the main reason that he wants to come two hours every morning and goes back every afternoon to home by bus, independently, because he has this feeling that he is needed for workshop. That's what motivates him. (Co-worker)

Belonging:

Workers provided numerous examples of children and young people who had come to feel like they belonged at Camphill. Staff felt that 'belonging' was a particularly positive outcome because many of the children and young people came from circumstances where breakdowns in relationships were common. A feeling of stability, security, safety, and belonging was something children had not experienced in their homes, schools, or communities. Some children were able to develop this sense of belonging in a relatively short space of time; others took longer:

The little boy I am working with at the moment, we're baking one day and he says, aw this feels like my second home, he's like, this feels like a family. He feels really special, everyone says hi to him when he comes in, always happy to see him in the morning. This is really new to me and I think that the nurture side to it [the project] is fantastic. (Co-worker)

The language used to describe St Andrew's and Camphill as 'home' possibly helped children to feel part of the community and that they belonged:

Yes, I think that they really feel like they belong in a way to Camphill. They know that their parents and their home is maybe somewhere else, somewhere in Scotland but they have kind of two homes and they say they go home to wherever but then they also come

to Camphill. For example, if we go to Newton Dee and have a snack then, then we say ok let's go home, they know that they won't go to their home town now, they know that we go to St Andrews. (Co-worker)

Again, the multicultural nature and practices of Camphill and St Andrew's may also play an important role for some children, being in an environment that is quite different to what a typical Scottish household might look like:

I also had a conversation with one of the students who is able to speak and said that in some ways he really feels a bit that he's also 'Camphill,' that he's not just Scottish, he said, that, for example, he takes over some of the habits that are, for example, very specific for Germans. The Germans always just make nice salad and he learned in Camphill to make salad which he wasn't, which he didn't know how to do from home because they don't do it there. (Co-worker)

Improved behaviour:

It was common for staff to report reductions in the frequency of challenging behaviour displayed by children on the therapeutic programme, both in Camphill and at home. The description below highlights that the pace of change and development for children and young people may differ across the home, school or other environments:

[Child] was not having a great time at home, it seems like he doesn't have the same anger as he was before he was coming here. We don't see those outbursts he's not challenging he's not punching anyone. They're still maybe seeing that at home but we've managed to come to a place where it's really, it's positive all day. We don't really see any aggression or any of that kind of side of things, where they can't say no to him at home but we can say no to him here without being challenged the same. (Co-worker)

Reduced anxiety and feeling safe:

Children and young people often experienced high levels of anxiety; staff suggested that this reduced as children and young people continued to attend the St Andrew's Project:

First, he was doing really many workshops and was really busy and then slowly they started to reduce the time he's spending here and the time he's spending in school. We could really feel this difference because suddenly he came here to release all his anxieties and all this pressure that he was on and he could feel quite safe and fine that he can do it to a certain extent here and its ok with people, people still accept him and he can still manage well in school. (Co-worker)

Akin to developing a sense of belonging, it seems reductions in anxiety connect to a sense of security and safety. For example, the co-worker above described how a young person had felt 'quite safe and fine' to 'release all his anxieties and all this pressure'. This and other evidence suggests that young people have learnt to trust St Andrew's staff and feel safe to talk about the issues they are facing.

Cascading of outcomes:

One of the views of child development raised earlier was that once children were secure and felt good about themselves, various outcomes would follow. Although staff suggested that it might be difficult to predict what these outcomes might be. Numerous descriptions provided by staff offer some evidence for this 'cascading' of outcomes. The following example highlights multiple outcome areas for a child, illustrating how children's engagement in household and workshop activities helped the child to learn about responsibilities, respect, social skills and rules, using equipment safely, and feeling valued:

> I think the workshops, although the workshops create jobs for people to do when they're living here. Everyone has one [job] whether they come for the day or they live overnight, everyone has something to do like setting the table or taking in the milk, everyone really does have responsibility to help us all as a family, kind of work. I think for the workshops, they learn skills, well for my younger boys, I think for one particularly, he has learnt that he can learn in a positive manner so the workshops, we're not sitting at a desk in a classroom, we're not doing maths, English, but he's still learning, how to follow rules, how to use equipment properly. He is working with other people and I think he's learning how to respect people that are maybe a bit older than him, and that kind of thing that you need to have to go through life, to be able to listen to people and learn and follow rules. So although he's not going to be working metal, or he's not going to be a potter but the skills that he's learning, the self-esteem that it gives him to feel good when he goes home. You know when he's made the treasure chest, sword, he's made mugs, bowls, loads of things. I don't think his mum has seen him come home with anything ever from [mainstream] school, and for him to be going home with wooden chests and things it's fantastic and it gives him a bit more faith that not all adults are negative or out to boss him around or to make him learn. (Co-worker)

Integrating with the mainstream:

Integrating within mainstream environments was a different process for those on the therapeutic and transitions programmes. Children on the therapeutic programme generally had negative experiences within their mainstream schools and communities which they needed support to overcome. Those on the transitions programme were more likely to benefit from support to increase independence to attend college or find accommodation, and were not as likely to have had negative experiences and breakdowns within their communities.

There was evidence of children and young people on the therapeutic programme beginning to integrate with their mainstream schools or communities of their own volition, for example, through asking to attend particular lessons, after school clubs or evening activities. In the excerpt below one young person had become motivated to engage in mainstream school, and felt confident and able to cope in an environment about which he initially held negative views:

> Another success was that he, we talked about school and he said the project was help for him to go to school and he talked about it really negatively and it seemed like he would never go back to school on his own. After a couple of weeks he told his mum that he

would like to go back to school in the afternoon for a club, I don't know what club it was but it came from himself that he felt safe and confident enough to go back to a place where he actually said, it's hell to go there. Of course he maybe wouldn't go back to his normal lessons but to go back to this old place, and no one kind of pushed him to go there or to do that, it just came from himself and that was a big success I realised. (Co-worker)

Co-ordinators spoke of young people on the transitions programme learning to become independent and attending college on their own after a period of support from project staff who initially accompanied them to college and provided emotional support around managing relationships and the college environment:

It's been a complete success, total success and the college actually said that [young person] has an attendance of 98+% which is unusual. [Young person] takes responsibility for [their] actions and [they're] the best in [the] class and is a really integral part of that social setting and [young person] feels proud, we feel proud so great, great success. I meant tangible success and tangible outcome, not only the process outcome. (Co-ordinator)

Co-ordinators explained that initial levels of support provided to young people to help them achieve and progress could vary in intensity but the different types of success and progress that young people on the transitions programme had made included:

- o The development of a goal to attend college
- o Young people learning to travel independently
- o Becoming part of a group (belonging to the college / class community)
- o Developing skills to function within the college (and other) environments
- o Taking responsibility for their own actions (locus of control)
- o Improved attendance at college

'Rucksack' of skills:

The St Andrew's Project aimed to help children build up a bank of experiences, skills, and feelings to take with them to help them in the future. It was felt that this would help them be resilient and adaptable in the future. However, staff recognised that given the small numbers of children and young people who had left the project, and the relatively short timescale since the start of the project, it is not yet possible to be certain of the long-term impact of the project:

I think the one thing that we cannot take away from any of them is the experiences they have, the positive experiences they have whilst going through the programme, and that sense of belonging that they have is not going to be forgotten. However I think it stays there I think for whenever, you can always go back to those memories, you can always go back to that how did I do it before. There's no guarantee, but I think there is something there that doesn't go away that stays with them. (Co-ordinator)

3.f) Challenges to working with children and young people

Co-ordinators noted that children and young people did not always make consistent, linear progress, they attributed this to many different factors. Children could have experiences that caused them to revert to higher levels of anxiety. These experiences could include external factors or things connected to the project. For example, one young person's progress faltered when they found out in an unplanned fashion that they were going to move on from the St Andrew's Project. Prior to this, the young person had been doing very well, had made progress with reduced challenging behaviour, and was developing a sense of achievement:

> *[The young person] had reduced [their] challenging behaviour tremendously, sense of belonging, sense of achievement, sense of independence; all were high, very, very high. (Co-ordinator)*

Despite this set back, the co-ordinators all agreed that the young person would be able to overcome this crisis and continue to make progress again.

On one occasion, some staff felt progress with a particular child was slow and it was difficult to see whether what they were doing was having an impact. Discussions with more senior members of staff helped co-workers to understand that the work could take a long time and it was important to continue in a positive fashion. Sometime later, the young person had begun to make progress:

> *Well actually, he comes to school every day and he really wants to do it, it's already a big achievement with him. For example, for such a long time he didn't go to school at all and now he eats with us, at a huge table with so many people who actually he has not known before and so yea, so you can see these little things that they are actually already achieving. (Co-worker)*

Other challenges to working with children included the group dynamic and managing the age ranges and stages of development of children and young people in the houses, for example, having a nine-year-old and 22-year-old in the house together. Issues could arise 'depending on the mood of students' and staff had to figure out what was causing negative moods to try to help children:

> *We just had a situation in our house and that's sometimes really challenging and to figure out why that's going on and why that happened. Especially if they are day students and you have to find out what's going on at home and what social workers say at home and family and all these different influences that are part of their life and figure out what's your task and what you can do and how you can help them and what other issues like homework, or what social workers need to tell and do with them, that's sometimes really difficult. (Co-worker)*

3.g) Organisational success and future developments

Reflecting back over the five years that the St Andrew's Project had been in operation, staff identified several dimensions that they felt were indicators of the project's success:

Growth of project:

Staff saw the growth of the project from one child to 23 as a marker of success and an indicator of demand. They thought this true, particularly given that the project had grown from one to two houses, both of which were full to capacity. For the first time the staff saw that there was a small number of applications and a waiting list for the service. They attributed this success in part to word of mouth, but significantly to the local authorities' support and valuing of the service provided.

Continuity of relationships post-St Andrews:

Staff also suggested that another measure of success was that children had continued links with the St Andrew's Project and staff. This could be contact by letter or email or coming back to visit staff. IN some cases children and young people continued to keep in touch with each other after moving on from the project. Staff felt that this was a success because children had developed relationships and positive experiences that encouraged them to maintain a number of stable and meaningful relationships.

Respite support:

Project staff also acknowledged that being able to give respite support to Camphill students was beneficial for staff across the school. This provided staff with a break from their duties and additionally facilitated good communication across the campus.

Future developments:

At the time of the research, co-ordinators and co-workers at the project were not sure what the future direction of the St Andrew's Project would be. St Andrew's Project staff highlighted issues they thought important to address; we list these in the box below:

Box 1. Staff thoughts on developing the St Andrew's approach

For the delivery of programmes the following issues were identified by staff:

- Staff shortages and how these can be resolved without increasing the burden on existing staff
- Physical space (accommodation) shortage as the project has grown
- Processes to deal with new applications and waiting list
- Processes to take on new children and young people must take into account any potential need for pre-existing children and young people to receive continued support, for example, in the event of a breakdown post-St Andrews
- Improved communication with parents

- Ensuring staff receive proper rest and recuperation, which can be difficult in St Andrew's houses (where staff live) because children don't always understand that a member of staff is having a day off
- Ensuring sufficient information and time is allocated to staff updates about children and young people, especially over the weekend and following staff days off, when children and staff have been away
- Supporting the Camphill-wide staff group to acclimatise to the development of a new way of working and service provision
- Better preparation and usage of holiday respite, perhaps assigning it as a staff responsibility
- Maintaining the quality of work with children and young people whilst meeting demand for the service

Staff suggested that partnership working should be further developed these two areas:

- Improved communication systems for working with social work and other professionals, for example, to carry out mental health and other assessments at appropriate times
- Continuing to work with professionals to overcome challenges around agreeing priorities for children and young people

4) Findings Two: Profile of children and young people using the project

St Andrew's staff collated 18 anonymous case audits of children and young people using the St Andrew's Project for the research team to analyse. Of these children and young people, eight were involved with the therapeutic programme and 10 with the transitions programme.

In this profile, we provide aggregated information about the characteristics and backgrounds of these 18 children and young people. Table 1 provides a summary of age and length of time at the project, as well as some of the issues that children and families were facing in each of the different programmes. We also describe some of the general background characteristics of children and young people using the different programmes, and some of the outcomes achieved by children and young people.

Table 1: Children and young person's profile

	Therapeutic Programme (n=8)	Transitions Programme (n=10)
Age (years)	8-16 years (6 of whom were over 12)	17-22 years (5 of whom were aged 19)
Gender	1 female, 7 male	3 female, 7 male
Social, Emotional, Behavioural or Developmental (SEBD) Needs	All children and young people were identified as having SEBD needs	All young people were identified as having SEBD needs
Other characteristics and context	Five children and young people had learning disabilities, five were known to have poor school attendance and one young person had some involvement with the criminal justice system	All of the young people had learning disabilities, two had physical disabilities, one young person had a long-term physical, or mental illness and one young person identified themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.
Family	Family circumstances varied. A small number of children and young people lived with both birth parents, others lived with their mother and her partner, and a small number of children lived with their mother. Most children who didn't live with their father had regular contact. The majority of children had siblings, who they either lived with or saw on a regular basis.	Some young people lived at the project as weekly boarders and a smaller proportion attended daily. Young people who boarded received regular visits from family and/or regular visits to their family home. In the family home, most young people were living with both birth parents. A small number of young people lived with their father and partner, or with their mother and siblings. Most of the young people had siblings whom they either lived with or saw on a regular basis.
Length of time at project	At the time of the research, two children and young people had been supported by the project for less than a year, four had been supported for around 1 year (1 year to 1 year 4 months), and two had been supported for two years or more (up to two years and four months)	At the time of the research, one young person had been supported by the project for less than a year, six young people had been supported for around 1 year and 4 months, and two young people had been supported for two years or more (up to two years and four months)

4.a) Background of children and young people using the therapeutic programme

In each of the case audits for children and young people on the therapeutic programme, St Andrew's staff gave an account of families' experiences prior to the involvement of the St Andrew's Project. They described highly intense, aggressive, and conflictive situations within schools or families. The audits indicated that referring professionals generally viewed children as aggressive (verbally and/or physically), defiant, refusing to engage and resisting support, they saw children as problematic, unmanageable, and uncooperative. In some instances, a perceived explanation or cause for the child's problems was identified: this could be the parents, school or the child, depending on the perspectives of different professionals involved and/or parents.

Because of all these problems, many children had experienced exclusion by their school, sometimes at a very young age, and many refused to attend school or only attended sporadically. Children often had disrupted eating and sleeping patterns and limited social interaction in their neighbourhoods. In some extreme cases, children stopped venturing outside altogether. The audits showed that children and young people were described variously as confused, viewing themselves as bad, having a restricted sense of belonging, low sense of responsibility, low sense of well-being, feeling unsafe and needing to protect themselves or being isolated from their school and communities.

The audits showed that parents felt these measures did not go far enough and that professionals did not properly understand the needs of their child, often in connection with a lack of understanding about Asperger's syndrome, autism, ADHD or learning disabilities or difficulties. The audits suggested that some families felt excluded from complex, professional proceedings, misunderstood, and that their views, and the views of their children, were not valued.

The audits showed that in some cases, schools had offered help, but having tried a number of strategies that had not worked, did not know where to turn or what to try next. St Andrew's staff thought that the strategies that schools and professionals had introduced attempted short-term behavioural fixes, rather than a long-term relational approach; they suggested this was the main reason that these strategies had not worked. Many of the case audits, indicated that prior to involvement with St Andrews there was a sense of helplessness and parents and professionals were at a loss for ideas about how they could support their child or young person.

4.b) Progress, success and continuing development: therapeutic programme

The case audits described examples of the approaches used by the project with each child and young person. We have already outlined these in Section 3 and do not repeat them here. Case audits also contained individual-level information about children's progress and areas where challenges to development occurred. Positive changes included; children's developing abilities to make friends, enjoying the company of others, engaging voluntarily in activities, and asking to engage in new and different

activities such as archery or ice-skating. The audits show that many children and young people experienced a sustained sense of enjoyment, in many cases they report that was the first time in years that children had had these positive experiences. Further achievements included attending Camphill regularly, being on time, reading signposts at Camphill and improved sleeping patterns for many of the children.

We note that children were proud of what they had achieved; they had developed goals and a more positive view of the future that they wanted to participate in, several were asking for formal education opportunities. There were examples of children achieving English and Maths awards, and developing a positive outlook towards future education, for example, hoping to go to college or university, take on an apprenticeship and/or stay on to work at Murtle Farm at Camphill. These shifts and developments are significant for children and families who had previously been living in the moment, unable to think about their future because of the many challenges they were facing.

Some had opportunities for further development, for example, young people taking steps towards independence managing 'work experience[1]' on their own, including their own travel arrangements.

The audits revealed many examples of behavioural improvement, with reductions in physically and verbally aggressive behaviour including less nipping, reduced destruction of property and reduced swearing and rudeness. Other children had become less competitive in their interactions and had developed better self-control when events or situations annoyed them. Some young people had learned to express their negative feelings verbally rather than in a physically damaging or aggressive manner. Others learned to identify when they were likely to become agitated and remove themselves from the situation.

For one young person, progress was slow and difficult. Parents had made a huge effort and the young person had accomplished small but significant steps. These included indications that they understood others, a better relationship with siblings, and being able to back down from confrontations. The young person was also more engaged in conversations and had begun to speak confidently. This young person still found it difficult to make decisions and, at the time of the research, they were not yet ready to integrate with school.

The audits revealed that many of the children were trying hard to overcome the challenges they faced; their own efforts contributed significantly to their success. Many children and young people were beginning to reflect on their own behaviour and develop important insights. One young person, for example, was able to have conversations about their behaviour and now recognised that they struggled with the pressure of group situations. It was also a time when some children and young people began to acknowledge and come to terms with diagnoses they had been given. They were beginning to assess how this might fit with their identity.

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[1] Work experience offered for one or two weeks within the mainstream school curriculum

Positive developments were interspersed with ongoing challenges that children, young people and families faced. Workers only identified or understood some of these challenges as they became more familiar with the child or as the child became more willing to share their thoughts and feelings. Ongoing challenges for some children and young people were around developing a sense of responsibility for their own actions and learning. Low self-esteem, self-worth, and low confidence continued to be problematic for some, and staff described other children as continuing to become easily confused and highly anxious. Developing appropriate ways to behave towards friends, peers, and potential romantic partners was another area where children and young people, continued to face challenges and where they needed to build up skills.

4.c) Background of young people using the transitions programme

A number of the young people involved in the transitions programme had previously been students at Camphill School, whilst other young people were transitioning from other schools or placements. The transitions programme shifts the focus from an educational context towards the development of life skills, social skills, and independence to support the young person in their transition from education into adult support, placements, work experience, and / or college.

The case audits indicated that young people on the transitions programme were usually friendly and engaging; however, they often experienced high levels of anxiety and stress, particularly in relation to change. In addition, the audits suggested that this group of young people had difficulties regulating their emotions resulting in a variety of challenging behaviours and vulnerabilities. Other issues identified included difficulty around understanding relationships, time, or events or, low motivation to engage in education or other activities. Workers therefore suggested that an individualised response was required focusing on developing independence, self-confidence, and appropriate social behaviours, and providing reassurances about safety and security within different contexts. Work with young people included diet plans, encouraging independent travel, provision of work placements, finding appropriate accommodation and placements, and helping young people deal with issues which disturb them in the environment. The project's approaches to development took into account individual needs, and any learning and physical disabilities that young people may have.

4.d) Progress, success, and continuing development: transitions programme

Young people had made a wide range of social and emotional developments. Many were able to develop and maintain strong relationships with workers and peers and enjoyed weekly one-to-one conversations with staff. The audits indicated that being in an environment where peers and adults understood young people was beneficial and facilitated a sense of belonging. Some young people exhibited increased self-esteem and self-worth, by making contributions to the Camphill community. The audits showed that some young people were keen to learn and happy and that that some had made significant progress by adjusting well to the St Andrew's Project. Enjoyment of activities was also important and helped young people to develop a sense of purpose.

The ability to do things independently was valued and the audits provided evidence of many young people developing necessary skills. This included attending college independently, or travelling to Camphill independently, sometimes on complicated routes. Workers encouraged young people to join in with daily life and activities at St Andrew's, for example, daily tasks such as cleaning, tidying, laundry, making sandwiches for college, budgeting, washing fruit and laying tables. Young people need varying levels of physical support and encouragement to engage in some of these activities, but in some cases the amount of support young people initially required had reduced.

The project staff spent time finding and developing communication systems that work for young people, this was important in helping them become independent and able to voice their thoughts and feelings. Approaches included non-verbal approaches such as emotions cards, or other symbols. Approaches also included understanding the best way to communicate verbally with a particular young person, for example, using short, direct sentences or questions.

Audits showed that improvements in sleeping patterns were common, and for one young person this eventually meant there was no longer a requirement for a member of staff to remain awake overnight. Becoming independent by staying away from the family home overnight was a big achievement for one young person. Some young people made notable progress by beginning to take responsibility for improved levels of hygiene.

The audits suggested that like those in the therapeutic programme, young people in the transitions programme were increasingly able to reflect on their own actions and intentions. This included the ability to let staff know what they needed to do to de-stress. For example, several young people used a communication card or other system to let staff know that they would like to go to their room to relax or remove themselves from a stressful situation. Some young people developed the ability to make choices and good decisions for themselves, during craft and daily living activities. Other young people were better able to reflecting on behaviour, allowing them to behave less impulsively and manage situations. Importantly, the audits showed that some young people became increasingly empathic and developed a genuine understanding of other people's difficulties.

Details in the audits suggested that young people on the transitions programme, often benefited from a structured day as a safe and predictable environment helped them to deal with anxiety. The project developed timetables and structures carefully to suit individual young people.

Audits showed that challenges varied for young people on the transitions programme, these included understanding appropriate behaviour in different contexts, for example, understanding when it is appropriate to ask for money. For other young people, it was about understanding appropriate sexual behaviour. Challenges also persisted in areas where young people had made progress, but where further progress would be beneficial, for example, some needed ongoing support to eat an appropriate diet or maintain a good level of hygiene. There were also challenges getting some young people to communicate their concerns to staff, to make good decisions about what they were doing, and to understand the needs of others.

Anxiety and worry were factors in many case audits and as a wider theme across the therapeutic and transitions programme. The audits showed that another ongoing concern was managing young people's anxiety about the future. Children and young people expressed varying degrees of anxiety how they would manage or coping in their environment, some worried about what would happen after the removal of St Andrew's Project support.

The audits also reveal a number of organisational, structural, and systemic challenges for these young people. These included difficulties finding appropriate accommodation as suitable placements were not always available; in these cases, St Andrew's staff continued to help search for other options. Equally, for one or two young people, staff had to deal with physically challenging and unpredictable behaviour.

Although we have portrayed these issues as challenges, many could be viewed as appropriate and expected 'next steps'. Some of these steps would be difficult or impossible for the young person without intense support to overcome the issue.

5) Findings Three: Parents' and young people's views

5.a) Parents' general views of the St Andrew's Project

> I don't know how, it's like they've waved a magic wand you know, people that are stuck in our kind of situation are like, please someone has to be able to do something. This project's done it for [my son]. These people have done it for him you know without a doubt and helped us to be able to do [it] for him as well. (Parent)

Prior to their involvement with the St Andrew's therapeutic programme, all parents we spoke to described a range of approaches and strategies they and others had used to try and support their child, these has limited or no success. With overwhelming positivity, these families talked about the impact of the St Andrew's Project on the wellbeing their child and their whole family. Several contributing features stood out as significant in creating positive changes in children and family life. As researchers, we could feel the relief and joy that parents experienced because their child could now take part in family and community life:

> She sits down and has meals with us at home now, because she sits down here and has meals, she's just a totally different person from a couple of years ago. (Parent)

> I can go to my parents now with [young person], [young person] was too high risk to be around so [young person] has never had a really good relationship with his Grandparents. (Parent)

> We don't have violent outbursts anymore…never, it used to be, it's gone from maybe one a day at home, and in a school setting extreme, to being none. You know we get verbal but nothing like the verbal we used to get. (Parent)

You've no idea, I've not had my son at school every day for years. He's never stayed a whole day at school, he was never allowed to. (Parent)

Parents described their child's new ability to cope in situations that would have caused stress, and without any recourse to problematic physical or verbal behaviour, as a considerable relief. They linked being able to cope to a better sense of self, capacity to regulate emotions and development of strategies to overcome the issues that children and young people faced:

[Young Person] can take a disagreement now you know, if someone doesn't agree with him, he goes 'well I think you're wrong because'…he has become very vocal about how he feels about things, rather than worried and tense. (Parent)

Like two to three years ago he wouldn't think consequences, whereas now he sees consequences, he thinks about [things] quite a lot before he does his actions. (Parent)

Another area of development that parents were highly pleased with was in their child's broader social and emotional skills that helped children and young people to maintain relationships, both at Camphill and in the mainstream school or community. This difference was stark for some children and young people who had previously been isolated from peers or family:

…even in quiet times [young person] has made friends now in the house, the fact he can make friends here was a big step for him because since then he's made a really good friend at home in our village. (Parent)

…he wanted to go to school because he has friends out our way now because he can keep friends, you know he's not constantly kicking off and they like shouldn't be around him you know. (Parent)

…feeling better about himself helped him to cope better at school and since then he was able to last in a class for an hour or so and maybe start mixing more and start speaking to other people. (Parent)

He managed to mix with all the different characters even the people that couldn't communicate through speaking. He got to know them and could communicate, he showed a lot of empathy towards other people as well. (Parent)

All parents felt that the skills their children were learning in the project transferred to the family home:

…it's got better here, better home life because I'm learning, because he's learning himself, you know? There are things that he never wanted to do, but he sees everybody else doing [it] so he thinks 'Oh I should be doing that then', cause children do sort of learn off of each other, but obviously [being] away from school [before] he didn't learn… (Parent)

Two parents described how, for their children, being part of the Camphill community had resulted in greater awareness of others and their needs:

I'll drop him off with his scooter and whatever, and he'll go 'Oh no, don't put that there because [young person] always walks down that ramp' or 'shh, so and so is still in bed' and so he's learning these things where before he would, he wouldn't have given any thought to the others and it was just [him]. (Parent)

Parents also explained that their children's development was a welcome step towards independence. This was particularly significant for one young person who was able to attend local youth clubs, had secured a summer job, and was looking forward to going to college after the summer:

I mean [young person] goes out now, he gets the bus in [to town] with his friends and goes to [local] youth club, a year and a half, two years ago that would not have been happening! (Parent)

In a discussion between one parent and child, it was apparent that the child felt more secure at the St Andrew's Project than in the mainstream school and did not feel the need to contact their parent:

I think it's made a huge difference. I think [to child] you're more, I think you're more able to look after yourself now. You're not quite, when you're here you don't phone me a hundred times a day. You always need to know where I am when or if you're at school. We don't argue so much and stuff doesn't get broken. (Parent)

We spoke to one young person who split their time between the St Andrew's Project for the majority of the week and mainstream school for a smaller proportion of the week. This young person particularly enjoyed going to mainstream education to meet up with a network of friends. Given this, the young person was clear that they did not like having to come to the St Andrew's Project and that they did not feel that the project was benefiting them.

This contradicted the view held by the young person's parent, who felt strongly that the project had had an extremely positive impact on their child's wellbeing. Importantly the parent highlighted that, although their child may communicate that they do not want to be at Camphill, their attendance at Camphill is greater than their attendance at the mainstream school:

He very rarely goes to mainstream school on the days that he's supposed to at the moment but he gets up every morning to come here. That day he's in the taxi and away, he knows what he's doing, so. (Parent)

In addition, we found that the young person was engaging with many of the activities available at Camphill. They highlighted that they had learnt to bake and cook whilst there, and enjoyed talking to some members of staff at the project.

The parent felt that tensions and difficulties were associated with their child's anxiety about attending mainstream school combined with an associated desire to see friends and socialise at school. Engagement in schoolwork at Camphill was challenging for the young person did not use the time allocated to do this. The young person explained that they did not like doing schoolwork because teachers did not mark it:

But it doesn't get marked, so I stopped doing it…yeah then I don't have anything, but 'cause I know it doesn't get marked, I just don't do it anymore. (Young person)

There were also difficulties for this the young person completing work at mainstream school. The young person told us why he does not do any schoolwork whilst at school:

Not sure, well I don't really have much classes to be going to, so that is, sometimes they just put me in like a room and I have nothing to do, so I just sit there. That's when I go home. (Young person)

Although increased integration into mainstream education was yet to commence for this young person, for two of the young people the process of reintegrating with mainstream education had begun. Given the objectives of the St Andrew's Project, parents viewed these developments positively. One young person had himself instigated the decision to return to mainstream education by his own desire to go to school:

He wants to be like everybody else, he wants to be in school and do things, it's just that it's not necessarily that he will even cope with it properly yet but Friday afternoon, he really looks forward to that time when he goes to mainstream now. (Parent)

Parents felt that re-integrating back into mainstream education should take place gradually and in a way that works for the child or young person. For example, one young person initially had support from a schoolteacher who came to Camphill, but this integration of education at Camphill only lasted a short while because the young person wanted to go to school. The parents were elated that their child was motivated to engage in work at school, and did not only want to attend to see friends:

And he's doing the work that he was going to be doing with a tutor at school you know he's doing a little bit of maths, a little bit of reading, a little bit of writing, so he is actually doing it when he's there. We did think, hmm he is probably just want to go to see his mates, you know, but. (Parent)

These developments, for example, fewer outbursts, taking part in family and community activities, attending a class at school and making and keeping friends, may seem like small acts, but for the children and families enrolled on the St Andrew's therapeutic programme these were momentous steps. The parents we spoke to felt the experience of working with the St Andrew's Project had been life changing; some could see a much brighter future for their children. Although for most children, parents felt more progress would be beneficial, they were overjoyed to have confident, happy, and energetic children:

They really did help build his confidence with people and build himself up, really quite quickly and these are the changes after about two months (parent).

[Young person] has got the most energy I've ever seen, and he's always wanting to be busy, so it quite suits him. (Parent)

…he's far more comfortable than he ever was at school… (Parent)

5.b) Parents' awareness of St Andrew's aims and approaches

Most parents were aware of the aims of the St Andrew's Project for their child, telling us that the project focused on building the young person's confidence, self-esteem and relationships so that they were better placed to cope with, and manage situations, and get along with others. Parents often mirrored the language of Camphill, stating that the aim was to make their child feel 'comfortable with themselves' and to use the child's strengths to help development:

> It basically evaluates the child, tries to make the child feel comfortable in their own skin if you like, which is something [young person] isn't…Just to try and settle them, evaluate them so that they can try and, not manipulate them as such, but to see what their strengths are, what their weaknesses are, where they can help them, where they can back off a little bit and help themselves. (Parent)

Parents were aware of the approaches used at St Andrew's to achieve these aims, by allowing their child to go at their own pace with no stringent goals or timeframes within which activities needed to be undertaken. Parents were perhaps less aware of theories behind approaches and techniques that staff used:

> They didn't speak to us so much about the programme…I know they built up activities that he liked doing, and the workshops he liked going to, and I know a lot of the socialisation he's done has been between the [St Andrew's] houses. (Parent)

5.c) Parents' views of communication and support

The approach adopted by St Andrew's involves working closely with parents, supporting them, for example, through one-to-one meetings. Parents talked about the importance of having this space to share challenges and concerns, explore approaches, and consider what should be the next steps for their child:

> They also help me to deal with things…As I said I have a meeting with [staff member] every week. She comes up with a different way of dealing with something and I'll go 'I'd never thought of that, I'll try that'. And, I'll try that and sometimes that works, it might not work every week, but it works more often than not. So even I'm learning how to deal with things… (Parent)

Parents valued this type of support highly:

> Or if we need to call her we can call her and come in which is great because we've never had that much support anywhere else for working with [young person]... (Parent)

> It's quite nice ... to come and say oh God he did this, I just don't know what to do, how do I handle this and have some help, constructive help. (Parent)

Equally, parents valued the sharing of information and feeling included in conversations relating to the approaches used with their children, as well as discussions of what was and was not working successfully for the young person:

And everything is thoroughly discussed, we are never left out of the loop…they are always discussing with us exactly what they want to do. Which again is a new thing, because sometimes you go to meetings and they're pre-decided… But here you know, and you can see, even if they don't tell you something, if something's changed a little bit because something else will be a little bit better, or a little bit worse. And, you can come back to them and say 'he was a bit off on that day'. And, they'll go 'that's the day we tried to do that, but it wasn't working because we just went into that'. But it's open communication all the time, it's brilliant. (Parent)

They keep in touch, I can email at any moment, I sometimes email in a morning or an evening if we've had a particular trouble with him, so they are aware of it for the next day. Because obviously it might change what care worker they have…There's always lots of emails back and forth. Ringing me just to make sure I'm alright, is he alright, especially if he's had a bad day. It's quite nice that they ring up and say, how are you? How did you get home, you know, that sort of thing. (Parent)

One parent found the Outcomes that Matter graphs used by the St Andrew's Project to be a particularly useful visual representation of successful or less successful progress in their child's wellbeing:

…even with [young person's] charts you could see the times that he's slept right and the times that he hasn't slept right. It's all in the charts…you could see he drops. It's like you could tell which days, you could pinpoint which days, just by these graphs, whether he wasn't sleeping. Just because his self-worth went downward, the way he didn't want to do anything went downward… (Parent)

5.d) Parents' views of multi-agency reviews and partnership working

It was evident that multi-agency reviews had been, and in some cases continued to be, difficult and disheartening for parents, in particular because they felt that professionals focused on problems and adversities relating to their child. For some parents, however, the support and advocacy provided by the St Andrew's Project enabled them and their young people to take part more positively in meetings:

Just everybody sharing the information I think is really important. I think as well you could see, to begin with, before the involvement of the St Andrew's Project, the meetings were very negative. [Young person] and I both felt very deflated, like facing a brick wall, as the meetings went on things got progressively better and it became more positive which made me feel better and also gave [young person] more confidence, 'oh this can get better, it's not all doom and gloom'. (Parent)

Young people are encouraged to attend and participate in their review meetings. Where they did not feel comfortable with this, staff ensured that someone represented their opinions, as discussed in this exchange between parent and child:

> Young person: *Yea well, like if I had like a problem, then I would speak to [key worker], or like before like reviews and that. Then she always asks me for like questions.*

> Parent: *So, [Key Worker] will come in and show all of [young person's] work and read out exactly what [young person] said, her point of view that she wants put across.*

There were other benefits of St Andrew's staff being involved in review meetings. These included the fact that staff took responsibility for responding to local authorities' questions about the child's progress and explaining the need for the intervention, this removed some of the anxiety that parents felt when dealing with the local authority:

> *Well [local authority] obviously have to pay for this, so, I suppose they come to see how their investment is going I guess…But it's nice, because if it was me I would be like, 'Oh God'. But [St Andrews Project] are like 'This is where we are', […] there is no pushing [young person] at that time. We're just unbelievably grateful, because we've only ever been where it's [..] money-controlled, where, 'we've got to do this', 'no, we can't do that anymore, we've got to do this', and he's been pushed [around] according to the cost of it. There is no consideration of that here, it's just him. (Parent)*

6) Findings Four: Camphill school staff perspectives

6.a) School staff members' general views of the project

This section represents the perspectives of four Camphill School staff who chose to take part in interviews. They spoke about similarities and differences between the two Camphill services, Camphill School and the St Andrew's Project. They highlighted that children attending these two services often interacted. These staff noted that there had been some tensions in working relationships across the campus, and made some suggestions about improving and taking forward future work to facilitate a unified Camphill approach.

Figure 1 below highlights some of the key similarities and differences noted by these staff, and approaches to working that they saw as being used more extensively by the St Andrew's Project than by Camphill School:
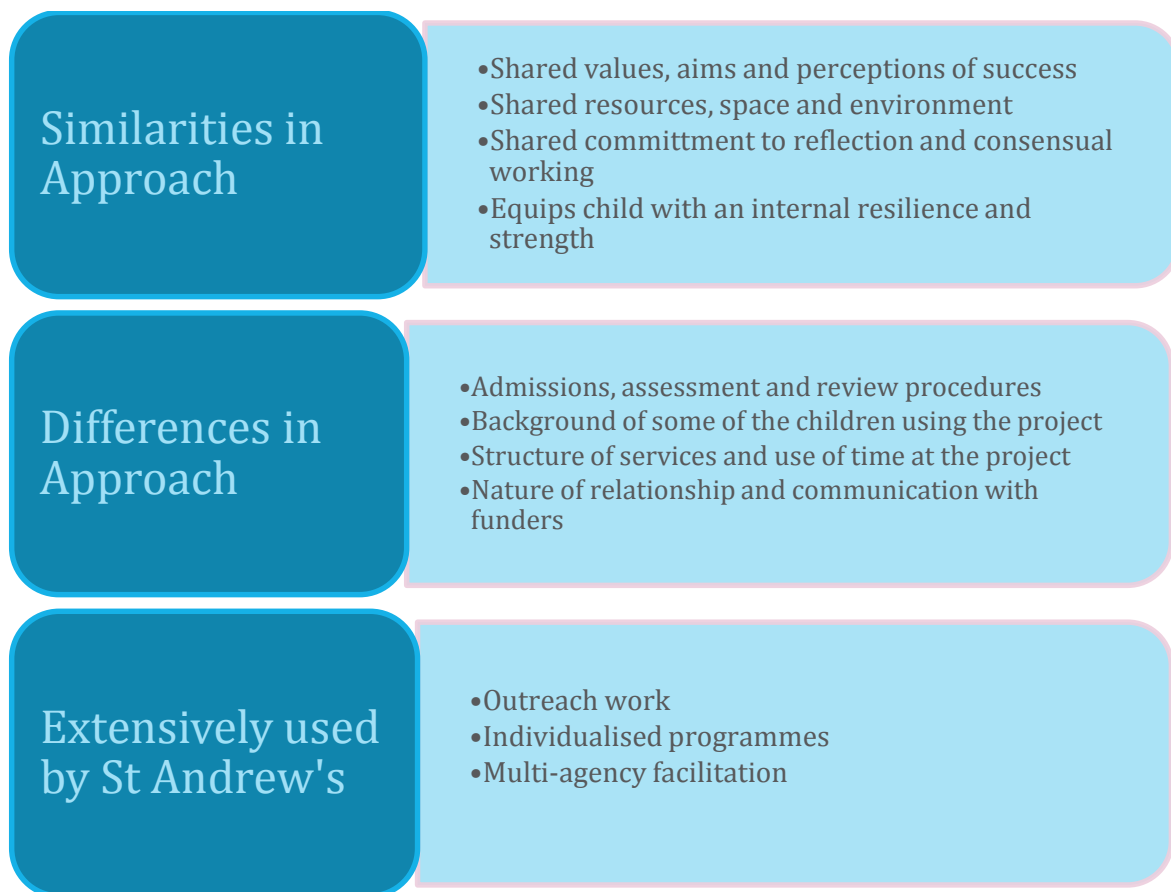
Similarities in Approach	•Shared values, aims and perceptions of success •Shared resources, space and environment •Shared commitment to reflection and consensual working •Equips child with an internal resilience and strength
Differences in Approach	•Admissions, assessment and review procedures •Background of some of the children using the project •Structure of services and use of time at the project •Nature of relationship and communication with funders
Extensively used by St Andrew's	•Outreach work •Individualised programmes •Multi-agency facilitation

Figure 1: Camphill School staff reflections on the St Andrew's Project

Camphill School staff highlighted that the Camphill philosophy and aims, including the importance of the environment and breathing space for children's development, were key similarities. They portrayed all Camphill services as working towards achieving independence for children, upholding the dignity of the person and supporting children to be the person they are, and supporting them to their best potential (Camphill School staff member). When reflecting on the development of the project, they felt that the nurturing and supportive environment of the school was an integral part of the project's success.

They thought that Camphill offered children and young people multiple opportunities to develop socially and emotionally, and to work together in small teams through all its programmes. The school and the project made use of the same space and resources, including the use of therapies, workshops and the outdoor environment. By contrast they explained that children at the St Andrew's Project, did not attend Camphill School lessons, although children from the two services did come together to take part in other activities such as sports, workshops and free play.

These staff viewed friendships as important for all Camphill children and young people. They explained that typically children and young people wanted to have friends, but often had great difficulties making or keeping friends, for example, because they became easily upset. Staff across Camphill therefore placed value on providing children with opportunities to play with others.

The key differences that these staff identified were the background of children, the structure of St Andrew's programmes compared to a typical Camphill School day, and organisational elements of the project such as reviews and admissions.

School staff pointed out that many of the children attending the St Andrew's Project came from a background that was characterised by a number of significant breakdowns, and this was different to those attending Camphill School who were more likely to have complex health and/or care needs. In addition, they explained that the programme structure differed because many children did not attend daily at St Andrew's, whereas Camphill School pupils attended daily and their placements were mainly residential.

They regarded the therapeutic day support offered by the St Andrew's Project as a distinctive feature and one that was new for Camphill. These staff explained that the St Andrew's Project children were involved in 'learning by doing' rather than engaging in academic and school work. School staff felt that children at the St Andrew's Project were more likely to decline to engage with activities in the first week and may not attending pre-arranged activities. They suggested that children sometimes spent many months outdoors before they engaged in any of the timetabled and structured activities and workshops available at Camphill. They felt that this was something they rarely experienced with Camphill School pupils.

In terms of organisational processes, funding streams, admissions, assessments and reviews, they identified several more differences. For example, school staff recognised that children using the St Andrew's Project remained a registered pupil of their mainstream school:

> *[These] are children who the authorities don't want to go to Camphill School but want children to receive support whilst maintaining links with their schools and communities. (Camphill School staff)*

These staff felt the authority viewed the St Andrew's Project and the Camphill School as being very different services.

Although they considered Camphill School admissions reviews to be holistic, they saw the ecological assessment offered by the St Andrew's Project as particularly flexible. These staff felt this assessment generated a wider understanding of the child's life, including family and school, the child's needs and perspectives, and that it explored how, and by whom, these needs could be met. They explained that this could include a range of changes to the child's wider environment. Schools staff felt that a further benefit of the ecological assessment was that it used a strengths-based approach that focused on the child's needs without detailed restating of their past or problems.

These staff members commented that the St Andrew's Project internal review meetings would benefit from an approach similar to the one used by Camphill School, that is, an approach that includes all staff at Camphill who were involved with the child or young person, such as therapists and the Camphill doctor. In this way, they felt it was wrong to restrict meetings to project staff.

School staff members also identified a wider difference in the way the St Andrew's Project and Camphill School communicated and interacted with funders. School staff felt the project managed to be closer to

funders than the school, that the project communicated more frequently with the authority and that it used terminology that they tailored to the preferred style or needs of the authority. All Camphill School staff who participated in the evaluation felt that the local authority liked the *Outcomes that Matter* graphs that the St Andrew's Project used for reporting children's development (however, we note below that local authority representatives found them complicated and hard to interpret).

These participants held mixed views about the extent to which three elements of provision, outreach work with families and schools, individualised programmes for children and young people and multi-agency facilitation, were distinctive features of the St Andrew's Project. Some felt that aspects of these elements were also evident in the work of Camphill School, there was agreement, however, that the project used these approaches more extensively. In their explanation for this, some school staff explained that there was more scope for the St Andrew's Project to do family and school outreach work, because children spent more time in these environments. They viewed this outreach approach as being very successful, and they felt it should set the trend for Camphill School to be more open to this type of work, reaching out to families and professionals.

These staff thought that a wider benefit of the outreach work of the St Andrew's Project was that it helped to address the 'enclosed' view of Camphill that they felt was present in the local community, although they suggested that not everyone held this view.

6.b) School staff members' views of children's successes

Camphill staff had observed that children using the St Andrew's Project had become happier and more confident and relaxed since their arrival at Camphill. They noted improved relationship and social skills as children learned to join in small groups, engaged in problem-solving activities together at workshops, played sports with children from Camphill School, and dropped-in to see friends at the schoolhouse. This was something children would not have been able to experience before. These staff attributed the project's successes to the choice and freedom that children had, commenting that breathing space without any pressure seemed to allow children and young people to thrive. They explained that these successes were similar to those achieved by children at Camphill School.

School staff said that another consequence of the St Andrew's Project was that the work with families could have a significant, positive impact on home life. For example, these staff had observed that at first St Andrew's children would sleep at all morning because they hadn't slept at home, but gradually the project helped the family build up a routine such that children would sleep at home and could stay awake at the St Andrew's Project. They noted further successes, and mentioned children who now felt ready to engage with academic work, who of their own volition, would ask for pieces of work to complete.

6.c) School staff members' views of working relationships

Although staff spoke of some tensions between the school and the project, they felt that communication to raise awareness and the introduction of common organisational approaches would address these issues.

For example, they explained that an issue had arisen when children from the St Andrew's Project had distracted school pupils by playing sports in the school grounds during class time; they said this tension had easily been resolved through a discussion between school and project staff.

Although these participants explained that St Andrew's Project and Camphill School staff members did work together, they thought this was in a limited and informal way. For example, they felt this was of working was generally limited to arranging times for children to meet and play, or come together for sports days or carnivals. Camphill School staff members valued these opportunities to work together and felt there was more scope to work with St Andrew's project staff.

These staff felt that there was scope (and some plans) for common working practices to be developed. One participant indicated that it would be useful to have one common admissions process, streamlining the admissions review and ecological assessment, ensuring that assessments are holistic. Another participant noted plans for some restructuring of line management arrangements that would bring the two staff teams more closely together.

School staff members were aware that the St Andrew's Project played an important part in the future sustainability of the whole school and felt that demand for this type of service was likely to increase. They recognised that discussions about accommodating the expansion and growth of the St Andrew's Project were likely to include consideration of which parts of the project to expand, the therapeutic or transitions programme. They said that one idea was that teenagers and young people on the transitions programme could come to Camphill School because school staff members had experience of working with young people with complex health and care needs, whilst the St Andrew's Project would support children experiencing breakdowns in mainstream schools or families. These staff anticipated that an arrangement such as this would help alleviate any tensions with the arrival of new pupils, and decisions about which service was more appropriate for the child or young person.

7) Findings Five: Local authority (purchaser) views

In this section, we look at the views of local authority representatives who have different experiences of the St Andrew's Project; most of these participants have direct knowledge of some of the children using the project. In the focus group, local authority participants gave their views on a wide range of areas including St Andrew's Project processes and approaches, partnership working and the project's impact on children and families.

7.a) Local authorities' general views on the project

It is apparent that local authority participants saw the St Andrew's Project as something unique, suggesting it was 'half-way' between sending a child to a residential school and 'struggling on' in mainstream schooling. They saw the project as able to provide an intensive service to the child and family without a residential placement. Authority participants also saw the project as something apart from and different to

Camphill School; however, their prior positive experiences with the school influenced their expectations of the project. Because of prior experience of working with Camphill, local authority participants had very high expectations in terms of the quality of the work that would result.

Local authority representatives recognised a number of strengths of the project. They saw the ecological assessment as being highly important. They suggested that the assessment enabled all concerned with the child to develop a far better understanding of the child and their situation. This in turn allowed the project, the authority, and the child's school to develop a more appropriate response to the child's needs. Local authority participants additionally valued the fact that whilst the project conducted the assessment, the child and their family could feel protected and supported. They stated that this period allowed children time and space in an appropriate environment that suited their needs, and provided families with a breathing space, away from perceived battles with schools and local authorities.

Local authority participants also saw the direct work done with families as being highly beneficial, along with the fact that the project often successfully engaged families with community activity. They saw this as something that would help children and families to maintain friendships, use community resources, and ultimately require less support in the longer term.

Local authority representatives also felt that communication between the authority and the project was one area of relative strength: for example, when comparing the project to various residential placements, they felt more closely involved with the details of what the project was providing for the child.

Despite the many strengths they perceived, local authority representatives also felt that the project represented an expensive and intensive option in comparison to some other forms of support. Connected to this, they expressed a slight concern that the project may find it challenging to progress children in a timely manner and withdraw their support when the child is ready. These participants remained open-minded about the latter, seeing these issues as potentially problematic within the context of increasing need and the fact that parents sometimes argued for specific services for their child.

7.b) Understanding the local authority position

One way to understand the local authority position is to consider their assertion that 'children should be educated in their home communities whenever possible'; ie local mainstream schools. This repeated position was strongly normative. It appears to arise from various concerns; we group these into two categories: ideological and pragmatic (see Figure 2):

Figure 2: Local authorities' pragmatic and ideological drivers for why children should be educated in their home communities

This position (ie children should be educated in their home communities whenever possible), structures and determines which factors local authorities want to see reflected by the work of the project; some of these are shown in Figure 3:

Figure 3: What local authorities want from the project

We feel there are potential tensions between these factors. For example, whilst local authority participants want parents and children to see the project as a neutral space, they also want the project to support the

authority's stance such that the authority was not always seen as the 'bad guys', eg when it came to ending the service and transitioning back to the local school. Local authority participants felt this was important, not least because they needed to maintain a positive ongoing relationship with the family in the longer term.

We feel that tensions such as this can be resolved through effective collaborative working. We also note that local authority participants felt it was still relatively 'early days' for the project and were optimistic about the prospects of continuing to work together, increasing the frequency of meetings and establishing protocols to help define the parameters of partnership. They suggested that they based their optimism on the positive, trusting, transparent, and honest relationships they had thus far experienced.

8) Discussion and conclusions

8.a) Evaluating the project

As it stands, the St Andrew's Project presents a significant departure from Camphill's traditional education services, with its key aim to provide a flexible service to help children integrate or re-integrate into local schools, colleges, and communities. However, the Camphill philosophy and beliefs continue to underpin the work of the project. In this regard, St Andrew's project staff members focus on helping children and young people to feel positive about themselves and feel valued for who they are; this is the vital first step towards successful integration with their communities. Staff members achieve this by building strong relationships with children and young people, and supporting them to build a relationship with their self and then relationships with others.

This evaluation draws on data from several different sources and concerns the different programmes within the project. Collectively, this information indicates clearly that the St Andrew's Project creates positive impact for children and their families.

Perhaps, the clearest evidence of success relates to those supported through the therapeutic programme. There were several key effects for these children and families: families were able to function again in a positive way, households were now comparatively peaceful, and family members had positive views about children's futures. Children on the programme were learning to think about others and to express their emotions in a positive manner, that is, they were now using skills that were beyond their reach before their involvement with the St Andrew's Project. A testament to the programme's focus on developing relationships was the fact that many children and young people quickly felt that they 'belonged' to St Andrew's, we feel this is a noteworthy step for children who had previously felt excluded from their local communities and schools.

Significantly, in terms of the goal to promote re-integration with mainstream settings, most children in the programme had become interested in new activities and many were keen to attend their mainstream schools. There were positive outcomes for family members too, parents felt that St Andrew's Project staff

supported them to overcome and deal with problematic issues and experiences, they were provided with ideas and parenting approaches that helped their child and family. Parents also felt supported by St Andrew's staff at multi-agency meetings, with some commenting that meetings about their child had now become much more positive than previous meetings that had focused on problematic behaviour and issues.

The significance of the programme's impacts for these children and families is considerable. We found that they had received substantial supports from other services over a number of years prior to their involvement with the St Andrew's; however, these earlier supports had not been able to provide the same level of benefit to children and families as they appear to have gained from this programme. With St Andrew's project support, these families and children were much happier. Parents could see the progress that their child had made and they felt that the St Andrew's therapeutic programme had resulted in brighter prospects for their future.

Young people on the transitions programme also benefitted greatly from the support they received in several key areas. As with those on the therapeutic programme, these positive outcomes included the development of good relationships with staff and peers, increased independence in undertaking activities associated with daily living, opportunities to make a positive contribution to the Camphill community and being a valued member of the households and community.

The transitions programme had a strong focus on enabling young people to communicate in a positive manner, often with symbols or signs, to help young people recognise stressful situations and react more positively to these. This enabled children to have a voice and communicate this through an appropriate and relevant method. As with children on the therapeutic programme, young people on the transitions programme had achieved substantial progress within the one to two years that they had been at the project.

St Andrew's staff described children's progress as a process of gradual development, where children and young people were learning skills 'by doing' rather than through academic learning. However, we note that most of these families had been supported by other services for many years but had seen little progress or improvement. We would contrast this with the progress made in one to two years by children at the St Andrew's project. In other words, whilst staff may have portrayed this as a gradual developmental process, the fact that children made unique achievements, may represent an acceleration in development for these individual children.

Despite this, staff and parents acknowledged that for most children and young people on the therapeutic and transitions programmes, continued support, and development opportunities were required to enable them to develop sufficient depth and breadth of skills to participate in schools or in other settings with confidence and ease. In particular, they felt that they needed to do more work with other professionals in schools and other services to enable them to provide suitable environments and practices that would promote children's ongoing development and inclusion. This view accords with the local authority desire that the St Andrew's Project facilitates schools and other settings to learn effective strategies.

Local authorities were supportive of the project and identified particular impact on families and parents in improving relationships. Local authorities were managing significant pressures of time, capacity, and financial limits; they had to consider these factors when allocating resources. In the future, they would like to see clearer progress towards children integrating with mainstream schools and greater engagement in academic activities. We also felt that some parents felt their child was capable of engaging in further academic work, although they often spoke about their full-time child's return to mainstream education as a long term and potentially distant objective.

Study limitations and areas for further enquiry

There were areas of the evaluation where we did not have sufficient data to enable us to provide strong conclusions. One of these areas was partnership working with schools. There is evidence of children's continued or renewed interest in taking part in mainstream schools or activities, but we are not able to identify to what extent this was because of changes in the child or because of changes in the school. Nor can we reliably comment about the extent to which the project had facilitated changes in the school environment. St Andrew's staff and local authority participants highlighted improved working with schools and partners as a key objective for the future, suggesting that there is room to develop this area further.

In addition, in respect of the effectiveness and challenges of the therapeutic programme, we rely heavily on data provided or gathered by St Andrew's staff. Our sense is that staff members have been objective in their provision of information, especially the information presented through the structured case audits. However, we acknowledge that no parents with children supported by this programme responded to the invitation to take part in the evaluation. This is perhaps a reflection of the fact that the therapeutic programme provides support to a new group of children with different background characteristics to those traditionally supported at Camphill.

It is not possible to tell from the findings how the different approaches used at Camphill interact to promote children's development, or the contribution each provides. For example, how value-based messages work with messages about appropriate behaviour to ensure children's positive development.

8.b) Moving forward

At the time of the research, in terms of moving forward, Camphill were at the early stages of developing plans about future provision of their educational services and in particular, what the relationship of the St Andrew's Project and Camphill School would be. Staff from Camphill School and the St Andrew's Project felt there were opportunities for integrated working. There was a desire from Camphill School staff for the development of a common admissions approach, including common assessment and review procedure, to inform decision-making about which services and staff will support different children. Specifically within the St Andrew's Project, staff members were considering issues around staff capacity, physical (accommodation) capacity, and processes for dealing with waiting lists. They suggested that consideration should be given to capacity for 'post-project' support for children, young people, and families. They thought this would be appropriate, when parental or child anxieties were high or in the event that a breakdown between home and school occurred.

In light of study findings, we would like to suggest two key areas that may be helpful in further developing the services to meet the needs of children and families, Camphill and local authorities. The first of these relates to educational attainment, engagement, and integration. St Andrew's staff identified that further partnership working and approaches to integrating children in mainstream education is a key area for development, and we would agree that work in this area would be beneficial. For example, the St Andrew's Project could consider how they can further exploit their existing use the environment, facilities and workshops at Camphill to highlight potential links to key curriculum areas (eg maths, science, geography). Local authority education specialists and schoolteachers may be able to support this process whilst at the same time learning from the Camphill approach.

The second key area for development relates to improving knowledge and information around the length of time children and young people are likely to remain in the project. As we have seen from this evaluation, children make significant (but not necessarily sufficient) progress within one to two years, this obviously better than making little or no progress over this time. However, this represents a significant investment of resource and funders understandably want to understand the likely extent of service requirement and benefits that may accrue. Many potential approaches could be used here, for example, it may be useful to develop an agreement in partnership with the local authority, schools, and other relevant organisations about what constitutes 'readiness for moving on'. As St Andrew's supports increasing numbers of child and young person, information could be extracted from assessments and plans to develop guidance on minimum or typical expected timeframes for children's involvement.

8.c) In conclusion

This evaluation has shown that the St Andrew's Project has been very effective in meeting the needs of children, young people, and families. At Camphill strong, shared organisational values and culture are distinctive features underpinning the support provided. Staff across Camphill, both in the St Andrew's project and Camphill School, worked towards the same goals, believing in the philosophy that by showing them that they are valued, children will be helped to develop and increase interest in learning and engaging in communities. Staff also shared the same positive view of environmental resources and which methods promoted children's development. It is likely that that children and young people learn from consistent approaches and messages that facilitate and model positive methods of interacting with others.

The St Andrew's Project has been highly valued by parents and authorities for the ability to reach out to children and families that have been experiencing difficulties for many years, and to young people who needed extra support to transition to adulthood. This new model of flexible support, provided whilst ensuring children can continue to stay at home and maintain links with mainstream settings, looks very promising. We look forward to seeing the project's continued progress and development at Camphill.

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About CELCIS

CELCIS is the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland. Together with partners, we are working to improve the lives of all looked after children in Scotland. We do so by providing a focal point for the sharing of knowledge and the development of best practice, by providing a wide range of services to improve the skills of those working with looked after children, and by placing the interests of children at the heart of our work.

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