



Case Study 7

Children's Centre, Inverclyde

"Bookbug gives us a reason to spend time together."

How was Bookbug delivered at the Children's Centre?

The Early Years Worker at the Children's Centre was a key worker in the nursery who was seconded for two years to work with vulnerable children and deliver Bookbug. Bookbug is delivered in all of the nursery rooms (i.e. for all age-groups), and in addition is used as a tool to undertake one-to-one work with children selected due to issues with their behaviour.

This case study concerns two families whose children attend the nursery at the Children's Centre: the Wilson and Jones families.

This case study is based on an interview with the Early Years Worker at the nursery and interviews with the mum in the Wilson family and the aunt in the Jones family. We were also able to observe part of one of the sessions being delivered with the Wilson family.

The Wilson family

Sally Wilson, her daughter and her son, Tom (4), live in a town in Ayrshire. Sally is a single parent and is a former nursery nurse. Tom attends nursery at the Children's Centre.

Tom's mum knew about Bookbug already, having taken her son to some public Bookbug Sessions, and the nursery felt that it would be a good tool to use as part of the one-to-one support they were offering to Tom.

How did the Wilson family get involved in Bookbug?

Sally had been having challenges dealing with her son's behaviour at home and the nursery offered the family one-to-one sessions to try to address some of the behavioural issues Sally was experiencing. These took place in the nursery building, but in a space



separate to the mainstream nursery activity going on. The sessions took place once a week.

What did Bookbug set out to achieve with the Wilson family?

Tom exhibited very challenging behaviour at home and his mum approached the nursery asking for their help with techniques to manage him. Tom exhibits hyperactive behaviour and the Early Years Worker hoped that, by providing Tom with one-to-one support, they could encourage him to concentrate more, calm down, and learn how to take turns in a group. Both the mother and the Early Years Worker were keen to address the issues before Tom started school the following year.

The Jones family

Alison Jones looks after her nephew George (4) because his parents are not currently able to (both parents are currently in custody). George attends nursery at the Children's Centre. His behaviour can be challenging for his aunt to deal with and the nursery offered him one-to-one support through Bookbug to try to address some of his behavioural issues and support his aunt.

How did the Jones family get involved in Bookbug?

The nursery felt that George would benefit from Bookbug on a one-to-one basis. George's aunt agreed as she was keen to get support to address some of his more challenging behaviour and to help them to develop a stronger relationship.

The Early Years Worker delivers two one-hour Bookbug Sessions a week to George, and has been working with him for a period of ten months. His aunt also sits in on some of the sessions. The Early Years Worker uses the lycra and puppets in the Bookbug Sessions. In addition, she took photographs of the Bookbug Sessions to make up a photo book so that George could show it to his mum and dad if he saw them at a later date.

What did Bookbug set out to achieve with the Jones family?

Bookbug offered George and his aunt an opportunity to spend time together having fun, learning songs and being in a relaxed atmosphere. In addition, the Early Years Worker hoped that taking part in Bookbug would help to improve some of George's behaviour and give the aunt tools to use back in their home.



Impact on the Children's Centre

The Early Years Worker has observed huge benefits to the nursery of delivering Bookbug to all of the children, but in particular has valued the two-year opportunity to provide one-to-one support using Bookbug to address behavioural issues and support more vulnerable children.

Her own skills and enthusiasm are clearly a core component of the success of the model – she is dedicated and always keen to adopt new materials and approaches – often using YouTube for inspiration.

The Early Years Worker is keen to see this more intensive support continue but, at the time of this case study, it was unclear whether this would be possible.

How did the families benefit?

Impact on the child

Both the Early Years Worker and the families reported significant changes to the children's behaviour as a result of the support that they received.

Skills development and preparation for school

The Early Years Worker noted that the nursery tries to actively encourage skills development which help with pre-school preparation and through Bookbug also introduced the children to numbers and colours. In addition, she thinks that Bookbug helps to keep the children fit.

Tom has received the personalised support offered through Bookbug for two years. During that time his mum has observed him becoming much calmer and having much better concentration. He has also learned to take turns in a group setting, and is much more interested in imaginary play. He is better able to listen to instructions and his behaviour at home has also improved – *"If he's misbehaving I go and get Bookbug. He joins in after a while."*

Tom's mum observed the importance of the structure of Bookbug and her son's familiarity with the pattern of activities and the importance of this to his confidence and enthusiasm - *"He looks forward to the sessions. He knows the pattern and knows if something has been missed, like the lycra. He likes knowing what's coming."*



George's aunt reported that George is far more interested and has a better imagination than before he started Bookbug. She believes that it has helped George to control and manage his frustrations – *"It has given him words to describe his feelings – he does it using language he has heard at Bookbug Sessions. He relates situations to ones he has read about."* She also noted it has improved his ability to share his experiences with others.

Impact on behaviour and relationships at home

George's aunt noted that he is now far more interested in story-reading at home. She thinks that the Early Years Worker has *"a gift"* and that George will be *"lost not listening to her when he starts school."* George's aunt observed that George has become easier to settle down at bedtime now – *"he goes to bed willingly because he loves story time so much."* She also said that she spends more time with George now because Bookbug has given her a reason to do so.

The Early Years Worker confirmed that the support has brought Tom and his mother much closer together and has given them one-to-one time in the home as well which has been beneficial.

Impact on the parents/carers

Sitting in on the Bookbug Sessions has had a significant impact on George's aunt. She says that it has made her think about how to tell stories and be more creative and that this has spurred on George's enthusiasm back at home. She also says that it made her more conscious of pronouncing her words better than she would have before.

She reported that, as a result of sitting in on the Bookbug Sessions at the nursery, she now takes George to Bookbug Sessions at her local library, which George loves, and now uses the library to borrow books and DVDs which she never would have before - *"Bookbug influenced me going to the library for the first time with him. It has benefited me, it's helped me as a person too."*

The early years worker emphasised the changes to Tom's mother as well. It has impacted on how she interacts at home with Tom, and her relationship with him has strengthened. In addition, she feels more confident in undertaking activities with him and does so much more than she did previously.

In addition, her own confidence has grown significantly and, as a result of encouragement from the Early Years Worker, she has undertaken Bookbug for the Home training herself.



Summary

This case study highlights the role of Bookbug in supporting intensive one-to-one sessions with children who are exhibiting behavioural challenges.

The Early Years Worker and the families noted that the Bookbug Sessions have a positive impact on children's readiness for school in terms of developing skills like concentration, sharing and communicating with other children.

The regular structure of the Bookbug Sessions with a set pattern of activities is seen as important in helping the child know what to expect.

As with other case studies in this document, this one demonstrates the significant impact that Bookbug can have on relationship-building between parent/carer and child and the positive impact it has on a parent's/carer's confidence and approach to interacting with the child at home.

It also stresses the role that a professional working in such a one-to-one situation has, and the impact that their skills and enthusiasm bring to the situation.