

## South Belfast LPG Meeting

**St. Bride's Primary School & Nursery Unit,  
Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast, BT9 6FP**

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 10am**

Name	Organisation	Present	Apology
Emily Keenan	Chair	✓	
Róisín O'Neill	Vice Chair	✓	
Charlene Mitchell	LPG Coordinator	✓	
Sarah Rafter	RAISE, Belfast City Council	✓	
Michelle McDonagh	South I FSH	✓	
Karolina Morgan	South II FSH	✓	
Otteran Joyce	St. Bride's Primary School	✓	
Cathy Hunter	St. Bride's Primary School	✓	
Elise Smyth	Outer South and East FSH	✓	
Scott Byrne	King's Trust	✓	
Catherine McCann	RISE NI	✓	
Alison Robinson	South Belfast Sure Start	✓	
Fiona McMahan	RAISE	✓	
Áine Groogan	Forward South Partnership	✓	
Gail McLaughlin	Ark Housing	✓	
Angela Johnston	GVRT		✓
Chloe McCann	Toybox, Early Years		✓
Emma Duncan	Bryson Pathways		✓
Joe McGovern	Extern		✓
Julia Carson	W5		✓
Kerri McCarry	Health Improvement Team, BHSCT		✓
Lucy Baxter	Cedar Foundation		✓
Meliosa Sturgeon	Macs NI		✓
Michelle Weir	Papyrus		✓
Pamela Hughes	Kids Together		✓
Rachel Balchin	Action Mental Health		✓
Sinead Campbell	Advice NI		✓
Tinya R Parkes	Libraries NI		✓
Eleanor Ellerslie	Cruse		✓
Maria Armstrong	King's Trust		✓
Ruth-Ann Delija	Relate NI		✓
<b>In Attendance</b>			
Jennifer Heverin	LPG Administration, BHSCT		✓

	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>

<b><u>Action</u></b> <b><u>by:</u></b>	
	<p><b>1. Welcome and Introduction</b></p> <p>Róisín O'Neill opened the meeting by welcoming our new Chairperson Emily Keenan. Emily, from Forward South Partnership introduced herself and facilitated a round of introductions.</p>
	<p><b>2. Previous Minutes</b></p> <p>The previous minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> September were read through and agreed as accurate as proposed by Áine Groogan and seconded by Michelle McDonagh.</p>
	<p><b>3. Presentation – RISE NI</b></p> <p>Catherine McCann presented an overview on Regional Integrated Support for Education NI (RISE NI). Catherine is the Team Lead for South Belfast.</p> <p>RISE is funded via the BHSCT who receive funding from the PHA. They cover 122 educational settings managed by 22 staff.</p> <p>RISE is a multi-disciplinary service that works within mainstream preschool and primary schools. The 2 key aims of the service is to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce underachievement by optimising children's access to learning within the educational environment.</li> <li>2. To foster health, well-being and school inclusion and improve the life chances of children.</li> </ol> <p>This is achieved through a 3-tiered model of support; Universal, Targeted and Specialist.</p> <p><b><i>Universal</i></b></p> <p>There are lots of training modules available on the RISE website for both staff and parents, e.g. Solihull approach, Sound Sleep, Build a Block etc. Accredited courses for Classroom Assistants are also available. The easiest way to navigate the website is to search via the target age group and go to courses from there.</p> <p><b><i>Targeted</i></b></p> <p>This makes up the majority of RISE's work. RISE will work with schools at the beginning of the school year to see what support is needed and small group or whole class programmes can be delivered by RISE staff on specific topics. Parent workshops and staff training is also conducted.</p> <p><b><i>Specialist</i></b></p> <p>This is currently only available to preschool to P4, KS2 funding hasn't been made available. Under specialist support consultations take place to provide advice and</p>

signposting. Assessment of individual children can also be carried out; however, work is still mainly done in small groups.

In the 2024/2025 year, there were 383 programmes completed with 4123 children being reached. 687 specialist referrals were received.

#### 4. FSH Updates

<b>FSH Area:</b>	Outer South & East Belfast
<b>Timeframe:</b>	August 25 – 5 Nov 25
<b>Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:</b>	<i>50 Referrals</i> <i>Sep – 14</i> <i>October – 23</i> <i>Nov – 13</i>
<b>Number of Service Requests Received to date:</b>	173
<b>Source of Service Requests:</b>	Self – 18 School – 15 Social Worker – 2 Education Welfare – 2 Rise – GP – 7 HV – 3 Community – CAMHS – 2 Nurse – Voluntary - 1
<b>Key Gaps identified:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Support for under 4's outside Sure Start area.</b></li> <li>• <b>Counselling and Therapeutic services Awaiting ASD Support</b></li> </ul>
<b>Key Successes identified:</b>	Sense family support service.
<b>AOB for Sharing:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

A short discussion took place regarding the gaps in South Belfast. Forward South Partnership noted that they have capacity for more referrals, their funding is citywide (not just South Belfast) and is appointment based only.

<b>FSH Area:</b>	SB1 Hub
<b>Timeframe:</b>	Sept-12 <sup>th</sup> November
<b>Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:</b>	Sept 13 October 14 November 24 Total td: 51
<b>Number of Service Requests Received to date:</b>	Number for the Year: 150
<b>Source of Service Requests: October &amp; November</b>	Self: 16 School: 4 Community: 27 Gateway 2 HV:1 Camhs:1

**Key Gaps identified:**  
Winter pressures – families seeking support with Gas & Electric

**Key Successes identified:**

AOB for Sharing:

Mindfulness Programme at Lorag – currently closed to new referrals.

Family Support Worker now available in Lorag – open to referrals for South Belfast

Choice Housing have donated £5k to provide winter support over December & January in the form of vouchers. This will enable the family support hub to help a large number of families during this period.

Michelle advised that their Hub had received £5,000 from Choice Housing for vouchers. They will probably use this money on gas and electricity vouchers. Applicants do not need to be Choice tenants but must reside in South I locality.

Lorag's mindfulness programme is now closed.

A new family support worker will be starting in Lorag soon.

<b>FSH Area:</b>	South Belfast II CASA FSH
<b>Timeframe:</b>	From 01/09/2025- 30/10/2025
<b>Number of Service Requests Received in timeframe:</b>	27
<b>Number of Service Requests Received to date:</b>	118
<b>Source of Service Requests:</b>	Top referrers: Self-referrals, Schools, Pre-school, Sure Start, Edu. Psychologist, CHAMS, Voluntary,
<p>Key gaps identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioural issues Primary School age - Awaiting ASD / ADHD assessment.</li> <li>• Financial pressures - Assistance with household bills / family necessities, especially gas and electricity bills support</li> <li>• Anxiety / Low mood child / young person support</li> <li>• Early Years Support for children outside Sure Start area.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Key Successes identified:</b> Meeting with Paula Bradshaw from Alliance Party. Paula wanted to find out about issues of the families in South Belfast and about FSHs work.</p>	
<p><b>AOB for Sharing:</b> N/A</p>	

Following the Hub updates, Otteran Joyce took the opportunity to express her thanks to the South Belfast FSH's and how she always finds them very helpful in offering advice and guidance.

## **5. Members Updates**

### ***Róisín O'Neill – Barnardo's***

Róisín is now the manager of the Traveller Services in Barnardo's throughout Greater Belfast. Early Years and transition support is available.

### ***Sarah Rafter – RAISE, BCC***

Decisions are now being made on the next steps. On 25<sup>th</sup> November an event is taking place in Crumlin Road Gaol for young people. Children and young people were asked their opinions and views and this event is to feedback the outcome of this.

Alternative education provision is also being looked at for school avoidant children and examining how they can access the curriculum if not in school.

### ***Gail McLaughlin – Ark Housing***

Ark provides temporary accommodation for those experiencing homelessness. Those seeking help do not need to be tenants of Ark, but they do need have dependent children. Ark takes a holistic approach to the issue, looking at the reasons why someone has difficulty maintaining their tenancy.

### ***Áine Groogan – Forward South Partnership***

Their STEP Programme has had the biggest response to date from schools. They can provide workshops in schools, community settings and with families at home. They still have some capacity and are open for referrals.

### ***Scott Byrne – King's Trust***

Targeted groups are 16-30 year olds who are economically inactive. King's Trust run many courses, often accredited, and provide lots of employment opportunities in retail, security, IT etc. Anyone undertaking courses with them can avail of childcare costs and also have access to a wellbeing adviser.

## **6. LPG Updates**

### ***Action Plan***

The draft copy of the Action Plan was circulated on 18<sup>th</sup> September with a request for feedback, but nothing has been received to date. The group were therefore urged to have a quick read through the document now to ensure it is applicable to the current work that is being done.

The Action Plan is a working document subject to amendments and change.

It follows 4 main priorities that apply citywide and then it is funnelled down into each of the 4 localities with actions that are specific to that area:

#### ***1. Early Intervention Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing***

The South Belfast part of this is twofold to; 'Improve knowledge and awareness among practitioners around emotional wellbeing / mental health and Trauma' and also to 'Improve access to 1-2-1 and home visiting services for teens.'

#### ***2. Early Intervention / Early Help Family Support***

The South Belfast action under this objective is 'Connecting local services and provision.'

	<p><b>3. School Disruption</b> Again, South Belfast's role is 'Connecting local services and provision.'</p> <p><b>4. Poverty / Cost of Living</b> As before, we are looking at 'Connecting local services and provision' in South Belfast.</p> <p>As the plan states, it is all about linking in with organisations who are carrying out the work and sharing information and ideas.</p> <p>Emily Keenan advised that there was some discussion about bringing back the South Belfast Round Table, not much information at this stage but she will keep the group updated.</p> <p><b>Belfast Area Outcomes Group</b> The BAOG has been postponed until 18<sup>th</sup> December. Issues as per the Action Plan will be raised at the meeting, however if anyone has anything else they wish raised, please let Charlene Mitchell know.</p>
	<p><b>6. A.O.B</b></p> <p>If anyone has a venue that could host the next meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> January, please let Charlene or Jennifer know.</p> <p>No other business was discussed and the meeting ended with Emily thanking all those in attendance.</p>

### 2025/26 Dates for South Belfast LPG Ordinary Meetings

<b>DATES (Wednesday)</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>VENUES</b>
8 <sup>th</sup> May	10am	Shaftsbury Community & Recreation Centre
10 <sup>th</sup> July	10am	Cancelled
11 <sup>th</sup> September	10am	Shaftsbury Community & Recreation Centre
13 <sup>th</sup> November	10am	St. Bride's Primary School
15 <sup>th</sup> January	10am	TBA
12 <sup>th</sup> March	10am	TBA