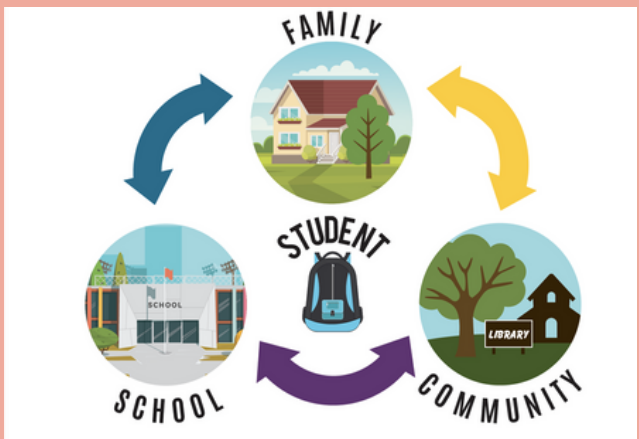
Start at my feet

During bridging days, I have witnessed how schools give opportunities to parents and the wider community to in turn receive positive feedback that has begun to influence the teaching, learning and other aspects of school life for the better.



INTRODUCTION

In todays society, I have witnessed through bridging activities that schools are beginning to work together with their communities to help release some of the burden modern parents are facing. This can take the shape of free school meals, the ability to provide transportation for their children, and other possibilities that directly benefit the community, such as the potential to obtain additional certifications through school-based volunteer work. However, in the aftermath of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic, getting prompt medical treatment is difficult, transportation is unreliable, and there is a lack of affordable housing, all of which contribute to the issues that school communities confront in our society today. All of these issues have an impact on attendance, health, and well-being, and have a direct impact on how teachers teach, how students learn, and how parents and the wider community deal with day-to-day living for themselves and their children.

CHALLENGES

Challenges affecting teaching

A increasing concern for schools in Wales is the pace at which teachers leave their employment due to burnout, resulting in a teacher shortage in the country. According to reports, 55% of instructors intend to quit the profession sooner than expected. This comes after a suspected lack of support, teacher strikes for higher pay, and a continual strain. Due to the lack of teachers, educators must push themselves to accomplish a task, which affects not just the time and effort they put into actually teaching, but also the passion in their classroom, impacting the child's experience of school.

Challenges affecting learning

There is an increasing number of refugee children being introduced to local community schools in the region. This presents several difficulties, such as language hurdles, different religious practises, and health issues. Language obstacles can have an impact on students' learning by causing stress and impairing their capacity to study. Furthermore, it will have an impact on their parents' well-being if they are unable to understand their child's work, or their teachers' reports, and may be unaware of what is going on in their child's education, resulting in them being unable to support their child's learning to the extent that they would otherwise.

Challenges affecting student well-being

Poverty makes children more vulnerable to various illnesses, poor nutrition, material deprivation, and mental health issues. Furthermore, if the larger community suffers from poverty, according to deprivation data, it indicates that communities are unable to support one another by sharing resources such as food, transportation, and blankets, affecting the pupils' well-being.

BRIDGING

Specifically within bridging activities

My bridging experience has shown me countless *difficulties* that my bridging school have to face almost on a daily basis. This includes...

- multiple families with difficulties understanding English is a growing challenge they face in this new world.
- 33% of 598 students qualify for free school meals
- The school is also within an area of high deprivation
- Low attendance

However to counter this my bridging schools puts multiple *opportunities* in place for teachs, students and the community. This includes...

- Inviting families in to observe lessons.
- Hosts cooking lessons for parents
- have five working ELSA's
- provide breakfast for all children
- visits forest schools weekly for children with parents in the army.
- Available online support
- Additional language teachers are able o be trained and hired
- Mini Explorers programme
- Provide hot meals for all staff in growing cost of living crisis
- Provide transportation to and from school
- community have a chance to gain additional qualifications through their volunteer programme in partner with local college
- Have support available to help relocate families without a home

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities affecting teaching

The increase in parental engagement enhances communication between parent and teacher and helps the teacher to alter their teaching depending on their prior knowledge of the child, significantly influencing classroom teaching as well. It also offers teachers with such a platform to modify their instruction based on whether a child has any additional learning needs.

Opportunities affecting learning

Opportunities for pupils' learning have expanded as a result of socioeconomic transformation. more opportunity for more effective training and hiring of additional language teachers, online support for both children and the community available in schools, and formal transition plans that can be adapted to a child, implying that the well-being of certain children is taken into account. In addition, many schools are beginning to provide visits to a forest schools which have been shown to boost students' focus and enthusiasm to learn.

Opportunities affecting student well-being

Well-being of all children is considered, more and more schools are beginning to provide breakfast prepared for them every morning at registration time, often including toast and a drink, in the case of children who were unable to have breakfast that morning at home due to poverty. In addition, a family Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) is a programme for parents who may want assistance, in turn impacting the well-being of the student. This has been shown to help with the impacts of grief, relationships, social skills, anxiety, and behaviour.