



Barnardo's Scotland - In This Together

COVID – 19 - Responding to the needs of children,
young people and families

27th April – Schools-based support

Barnardo's Registered Charity
Nos. 216250 and SC037605



**Believe in
children**
**Barnardo's
Scotland**

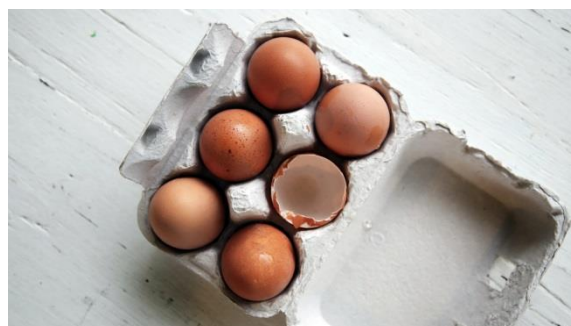
Activities, games and emotional support

With lockdown now extended into May, many families are understandably feeling the strain of being home together 24/7.

With the new school term starting, our Barnardo's Scotland services working in partnership with schools have been in touch with head teachers and class teachers to check what support is needed. Lots of schools have requested we increase our reach so more families can access the practical and emotional supports from our Family Support Workers. This has meant more people are able to get help with essentials like; food, IT equipment, wellbeing activities, regular chats over the phone and video, doorstep visits, and support to access local hubs.

Barnardo's Scotland staff are providing lots of recreational activities and games; such as the emoji game, yes/no challenge game, story time, puppet shows, mindful drawing and activity books, virtual birthday parties, birthday presents, and Easter packs to families.

After a specific request one Family Support Worker included a pack of eggs in a food parcel so one of our young people could show his mum his French toast recipes which he'd learned at the Barnardo's Scotland service a few weeks ago. He then shared photos of himself flipping his 'eggy bread' and sent them to his Family Support Worker!



A Barnardo's Scotland member of staff commenting on how these activities have been received said:

"The feedback has been really positive. Families have commented how useful for their children to see and hear staff they would normally be seeing at this time through the videos. It has also opened up a bit of dialogue and eased that dreaded feeling of being so isolated. It also seems to have taken pressure off parents to come up with activities themselves to keep children busy at home"

Another service has replaced the weekly coffee and chat group which we would usually run within a school, with a virtual catch up which has been a brilliant way of keeping parents from across the school feeling connected to each other.

One family working with our Aberdeen schools-based service said the following of their fabulous Family Support Worker Jacqui:

"The support my family have been given by Barnardo's has been a god send. My daughter has suffered multiple losses in her life from the age of 2 and has

struggled with having no confidence for years. She spends time with her Barnardo's worker at school which she enjoys and always looks forward to it knowing that someone is there to listen and just have fun time with, they play games and if she just wants to play that's fine.

During lockdown she has needed the support that she gets at school by her worker, they enjoy FaceTime and playing games or even a text just to say hi, my other daughter benefits with the same support.

Without that support I honestly don't know what we would do. The amazing support that we get as a family is something that all families would benefit from. The support I have received has been something that I couldn't do without just someone listening and being supportive and helping me. It hasn't been easy and knowing that I have a great support network from Barnardo's this is something that I will always be grateful for"



Emergency Payments and financial support

Along with our partners at Action for Children, we were delighted to secure funding from the Scottish Government Wellbeing Fund to enable us to extend our support to children and families. Below are some examples of how we have used the fund so far:

- A child who is attending a local Education Hub was short of reasonable clothing, clothing was purchased for them from the fund.
- Families were applying for a crisis loan as they were short of money for utility supplies and money was transferred to their bank account from the fund.
- A parent was going to her mother's house to do her laundry before lockdown as she did not have access to a washing machine. As she has young children & was unable to leave the house safely during lockdown a washing machine was purchased using the fund.
- Parents have been provided with phone top ups and additional data using the fund which has enabled our Family Support Workers to keep in contact with families and them with us, as well as ensuring wider connections to support are maintained for families.

- A Head Teacher called to advise that a child did not have access to a laptop or tablet for school work; a laptop was purchased for the child using the fund.
- After giving birth prematurely to twins a mother has been discharged from hospital whilst her babies remain in hospital. The parents can't afford to both travel every day to see the babies so we have provided them with the cost of transport to and from the hospital through the fund.



With regards to our work to facilitate Emergency Payments to families through our partnerships with schools, schools have said:

"This will be so much help to this family."

"This is a great support during a very challenging time."

"Can I take this opportunity to thank you for the support and professional response that you have demonstrated in helping to support a family through this difficult time."

Spotlight on our Falkirk PEF Service



Barnardo's Scotland staff continue to provide support to a number of local primary and secondary schools in Falkirk, working with families and pupils to address issues that affect their education, such as behaviour and who are at risk of exclusion.

Project Workers are in weekly contact with social work, schools and families to ensure that the most vulnerable families have ongoing support and access to food and other resources.

Families and young people have been supported both by telephone and virtual means, including drawing activities and making Easter cards, which were shared on WhatsApp. Story-telling activities have also taken place by telephone and virtual media and activity sheets are shared by email.



One young person even had a virtual birthday party with her worker! A birthday gift was also delivered and left on the doorstep for her. She was delighted with this as it was the only gift she received that morning, having been given gifts from her family early.

"I want to go back to school to see my friends"

Some families have children in P7 who are worrying about their transition to high school and the possibility of not returning to their primary school to say goodbye to staff. Work is being done with these young people to provide reassurance around this.

"The kids look forward to the video chats".

"It makes me feel special when you call to see how I'm doing".

"I'm overwhelmed by the kindness you have shown in contacting me every week".

One family was experiencing a difficult relationship between parents who are separated. The children had not seen their mother for over 3 weeks. The worker liaised with Social Work staff to support the parents to come to an agreement and they now have a plan in place so the children can see both parents frequently whilst following Covid-19 guidance.

Another family is struggling financially and has received money through Barnardo's Scotland Covid-19 funding to allow them to purchase food, gas and electricity. The worker linked with Safebase and Camelon Community Hub for the family to receive two food packages (1 per week). One of the young people in this family loves to cook. They did not have enough ingredients in the food pack to cook what the young person had planned for his family so additional ingredients were delivered to enable this.

"The service you are providing is invaluable. It gives the kids another service to contact during the Easter holidays and beyond".

One mum has reported having experienced difficulty when calling the Covid-19 Helpline, having been told that she was not entitled to any support as her children do not permanently live at her address. She is unable to work at the moment and is receiving Universal Credit however does not receive payment

until the end of April, which is barely covering her bills. She stated that she felt embarrassed and upset when she came off the phone and has therefore appreciated the support we have provided as she has not been judged and has been able to be honest about how much she is struggling at the moment.

Project Workers also remain in regular contact with parents to discuss their child/ren's Boxall Profile ¹ and work covered by the Nurture Groups in schools.

Barnardo's Scotland works with more than 16,300 children and young people in over 140 specialised community-based services across Scotland, and 95 shops across the country directly supporting the services. Our work includes: fostering and adoption services and support; helping children break free from sexual exploitation; supporting young carers; helping young people in to employment and helping children living in poverty.

Visit www.barnardos.org.uk/scotland to find out how you can get involved and show you believe in children. **Twitter:** [@BarnardosScot](https://twitter.com/BarnardosScot) **Facebook:** [Barnardo's Scotland](https://www.facebook.com/Barnardo'sScotland)

¹ https://boxallprofile.org/?gclid=FAIaIQobChMI9MSGwJaI6QIVObTtCh338A1TEAAYASAAEgIRFPD_BwE