

## Practice Profile:

Hazel Whitters, Senior Pre-5 Worker at the Jeely Piece Club Nursery, talks about working holistically with children and their families

### What does the Jeely Piece Club do?

The Jeely Piece Club holds an important and integrated place within the community of Castlemilk in Glasgow. Its services include the Nursery (pre-5), the PlayZone (p.1 t–p.7s), the Cafe and the Learning Centre, providing opportunities for children and young people, parents, schools and other organisations to get involved. The Jeely has built strong relationships with the people that use its resources and encourages service users to give back to the Jeely in whatever way they can. 'We access people's talents – anything that they can offer,' Hazel explains, and this inclusive and supportive attitude has seen lifelong relationships develop within the Jeely community.

### What is unique about the Jeely Piece Club?

The Jeely Piece Club Nursery has adopted a holistic approach to its pre-5 care, emphasising working closely with families and keeping the individual child's learning and development at the centre. Elements of this holistic approach include:

*Therapeutic Play Model* – Many children at the Jeely come from vulnerable families and require additional support to deal with difficult circumstances in their lives, such as parents with addictions, moving house, or a breakup of the family. The Jeely now uses play therapy techniques to help children explore these issues and their feelings in a supportive and stimulating environment. This technique allows children to access learning opportunities that they might otherwise miss out of because they are struggling to cope with outside pressures and stresses.

*Sensory Room* – In March 2010 the Jeely created a sensory room at the centre. This is a relaxation with soft music, lighting and furnishings. Children can access this space if they need time and space away from the activity of the nursery. See a video about the sensory room [here](#).

*Home Play* – Home play is a service for families that need a little extra support in transferring the skills they learn at the Jeely to the home environment. A Jeely worker will visit the home and work with an individual family to develop parenting techniques and positive relationships within the home.

### A story from the Jeely Piece Club

Recently the Jeely employed this holistic approach to work with a family with four children. The parents were both battling addictions and the children were placed in care for a year. The two younger children attended the nursery and the two older children took part in activities at the PlayZone, while being supported 1-to-1 basis by the Jeely staff. In addition to their struggle with addiction, the parents also seemed to have 'missed out on self-identity' during their own development. The Jeely helped them deal with issues from their childhoods so that they were able to create a better environment for their own children — they needed to discover who they are as individuals and who they could be as parents. 'You see people at their lowest points and you empower them to help themselves,' Hazel says. With the support of the Jeely community, the family was reunited.

### Website and further information

Find the Jeely Piece Club online at [www.jeelypiececlub.org.uk](http://www.jeelypiececlub.org.uk).

Strathclyde University is currently researching the therapeutic play model of the Jeely Piece Club and will be producing an independent report of its findings later this year.

