

Dr Bell's Family Centre

Strategic Plan

2025-2028



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Dr Bell's Family Centre

Dr Bell's Family Centre's offers families in Leith a welcoming, safe place where they can get support, advice and encouragement to improve their wellbeing. We remove barriers and empower individuals who already face multiple challenges. The needs of the families we support are influenced by external factors outside their control, therefore at Dr Bell's we are flexible and responsive. This document sets out our strategy and is the product of many months of discussion and debate involving all stakeholders.

For clarity, when we say families we are referring to our families, parents, step-parents, grandparents, carers, caregivers, babies, children and siblings. When we say staff we mean our staff team, our volunteers, including our board trustees and our students who are on placement.





Letter from our chair

At Dr Bell's we believe every child will flourish when they are given the right start in life, as part of a resilient family, living in a supportive community. We exist to provide life-changing support to families in Leith and it has been our privilege to be able to do so for almost 20 years. To ensure we stay here and are able to respond to changing needs in the future, we have spent many months challenging ourselves and making decisions about every aspect of what we do. The result of that work is presented here, our strategy.

A guiding principle and cornerstone of our strategy is "seek first to understand", which means we continuously ask for feedback, actively listen and consult with the people we serve, in designing and delivering services. We do recognise however, there are limitations and we will need to prioritise from time to time. Our strategy will guide future decision making and help us to ensure we focus on the things that really matter to our families and our community.

We have chosen to focus our objective setting on Growth, Community and Wellbeing as our key themes, supported by constant attention to our Sustainability. Our hope is that this document will let you see our specific objectives and what we will do to meet them.



Andy Greig
Chairperson

Our Vision

Our vision is that families in Leith are living well, thriving, and overcoming the challenges they face.

Our Mission

Our mission is to offer holistic support to families through early intervention, to empower parents and equip them with the skills and tools to provide their children with the best start in life.

Our Values



What we do

We are community-based and accessible, and our services are part of the fabric of our local community. We support all families living in Leith with children pre-birth to five years (up to child's sixth birthday).

Dr Bell's works closely with many statutory and voluntary sector agencies delivering a range of activities and consistently seeks out opportunities to develop new partnerships. Membership of local and national networks provides further opportunities to develop collaborative partnerships with new agencies and professionals.

We act as a resources hub by bringing together, under one roof a range of services who then work together to deliver holistic early support to families. The benefits of this approach are staff work in a coordinated way with families to address their needs; families receive all-inclusive support and a greater range of resources than they would from any single provider; families can be prioritised for referral to partner services; and families build trust with multiple services, reducing 'exclusivity' or dependence on one relationship. Families also benefit by not having to travel to multiple locations, which can be very difficult with young children, becoming a real barrier to accessing support.

This means we must first seek to understand, by listening to families and to the other service providers who are offering support to them. As we cannot meet every need, we must work with families and others to focus on areas where there are gaps and where we can genuinely help.

Our services in the area are unique and non-duplicated and focus on early support to families with young children aiming to intervene before the need becomes critical. Specifically, we deliver workshops, drop-in sessions focused on health; counselling sessions and groups to help parents learn coping mechanisms and address mental health issues; parenting support groups and stay and play groups providing stimulating and developmentally appropriate environments for children and bring together the community for meals and networking.

Our Strategy



GROWTH

Dr Bell's will support families to thrive and become more resilient.

We will help families to grow through nurturing experiences and learning opportunities, which gives parents knowledge and understanding of child development and will lead us to getting it right for every child.



COMMUNITY

Dr Bell's will bring people together through a common purpose to create a sense of belonging.

We will help parents and carers to feel less isolated by developing new ways of supporting each other and building positive relationships.



WELLBEING

Dr Bell's will improve wellbeing for our families by bringing together a range of services to deliver holistic support.

We will understand and work collaboratively to support our families' and our communities' needs. We will ensure that families will be signposted and referred to partners' services when their need is best met by others.



SUSTAINABILITY

Dr Bell's is committed to support our community for years to come.

We will make choices that consider our long-term impact through financial resilience, environmental responsibility and community driven support.

Our Outcomes



Offer nurturing experiences

Offer learning opportunities

Understanding child development



Building positive relationships

Reducing Isolation

Developing new ways of supporting each other



Signposting and referrals

Supporting our families and communities needs

Improve wellbeing



Financial Resilience & Robust Governance

Environmental & Operational Responsibility

Community-Driven & Connected

Our purpose and context

Many families in Leith live within the bottom two deciles in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2020). Generational disadvantage has resulted in families living in a cycle of socioeconomic challenges such as poverty, low attainment, and poor health, passed on from parent to child and repeating itself over and over. Statutory services provide support, such as supported housing, benefits and childcare; however, there is consistent demand for the community based, family-centred services that we offer, that help address the causes of poverty, low attainment and poor health.

Dr Bell's works with parents and children - together and separately - to improve overall wellbeing through structured activities. Families who live with a complex set of interrelated issues, benefit most from a holistic, multi-agency approach to identifying and meeting their needs, resolving practical and personal problems and improving their immediate situation and long-term outcomes. We therefore co-produce services within the Leith community, to deliver what the community wants and needs. We work with multiple organisations and partners to deliver an extensive programme of activities, resources and services and we also provide volunteer and student placement opportunities to help increase employability skills.



Get Involved

JOIN OUR BOARD

Dr Bell's Family Centre is looking for new Board members to join us on our journey. This is an exciting time as we refresh our strategy and look to the future of our work with families in Leith. By joining the Board, you'll bring your voice, experience, and ideas to help guide our vision and support our community. It's a chance to be part of something meaningful, give back, and make a real difference in the lives of children and families.

To find out more: <https://reachvolunteering.org.uk/org/dr-bells-family-centre>

Have any questions, email: Andy@dbfc.org.uk

VOLUNTEER WITH US

At Dr Bell's Family Centre, volunteers are at the heart of our work. As we shape our new strategy, we're looking for people who want to share their time, skills, and energy to support families in Leith. Volunteering with us is a chance to be part of a welcoming team, build connections, and see the difference you make every day.

To apply: <https://wkf.ms/3vKJ3Tl>

Have any questions, email: info@dbfc.org.uk

JOIN OUR TEAM

Dr Bell's Family Centre will be looking for new people to join our team as we grow and move forward with our new strategy. We'll be sharing opportunities for both core staff and sessional roles on our website and Goodmoves. By joining us, you'll become part of a supportive, community-minded team that puts children and families at the heart of everything we do.

To find out more: <https://drbells.co.uk/get-involved/work-with-us/>

Get Involved

BECOME A FRIEND

If you value the work we do and can spare a little each month, please consider becoming a Friend of Dr Bell's. Even £5 a month (about the price of a coffee) can make a big difference, from providing healthy snacks for children in our crèche to helping us go the extra mile for a parent in need. It takes less than five minutes to set up a secure direct debit, which you can cancel anytime. And if you're a UK taxpayer, saying yes to Gift Aid means your donation goes 25% further at no extra cost to you.

Sign up here: <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/16089>

SUPPORT US

There are lots of ways you can support the work we do with children and families in Leith. From hosting a coffee morning or taking on a sponsored challenge, to organising a community fundraiser with friends or colleagues. Every effort makes a difference. By fundraising for Dr Bell's, you'll be helping us provide a safe, welcoming space where families can find support, connection, and care.

To support us email: info@dbfc.org.uk



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