

The Friday Group: Kilkenny and Carlow ETB.

Family learning in this context is very much a partnership between Kilkenny and Carlow ETB and a Kilkenny DEIS primary school. It is a holistic model with children, parents, the school, and the community all benefiting hugely from the collaboration between the school and the ETB. The programme is school based with two tutors – a craft specialist and an experienced literacy tutor working with up to 16 women in a very relaxed atmosphere in a room within the school.



My daughter loves it that I come down and that we made all the things for the classroom and she was telling all the other kids.
Friday Group Member

By design, the activities of the family learning group are closely related to the life of the school. Each year, the Friday Group undertakes a number of projects related to the life and learning activities in the school. These are literacy related explicitly or in how they are applied. The group tutors discuss the current literacy focus in a particular age group and prepare complementary activities and materials with the Friday Group.

The Friday Group have been involved in numerous activities in the school and they have become an integral and prized part of the annual school calendar.

As encouraging participation in adult learning is the goal of the ETB, the Friday Group is also a means of engaging learners that is made accessible through their child's school.

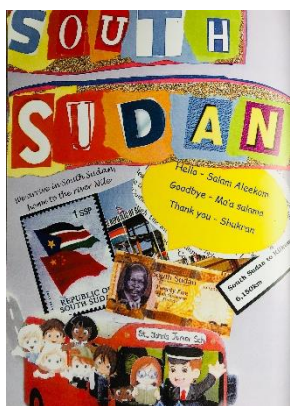
The ETB element in the partnership facilitates progression along appropriate learning routes, and the established relationships mean that parents have a

connection to further learning when they feel ready.

Now, the highlight of the school year is the Intercultural Day, and the highlight of that would be launching whatever project the Friday Group have done, every year.
DEIS School Principal

I started here in September and my son is in the school here. I am happy because I have been able to know the ladies in this group.
Friday Group Member





Beyond the field of literacy and adult learning, the group's book on multiculturalism and the related wall hanging has attracted attention across the county. Their contribution to intercultural understanding is important in the group, in the school and in the wider society that sometimes struggles to find good role models for interculturalism.

We did this book last year. There's an intercultural day here every year in the school and we launched the book at that. The Friday Group were all signing the book for their families and it was a really brilliant day. One of our famous hurlers launched the book. The work was on display in the local Council Offices and the group's pictures were in the paper! KCETB Family Literacy Tutor

...and the success story as well is that the wall hanging, you'll see in the hall —that's gone to the County Council offices. It was displayed in Rothe House and in the library during Arts Week. It's on the Kilkenny People and one of the parents she spoke on Radio Kilkenny. DEIS School Principal



Key take aways from the Friday Group

- *'It all starts with a cup of tea'* KCETB AEO. A relaxed and friendly atmosphere encourages parents to take the first steps towards getting involved with their child's school.
- Exceptional collaboration between the school and the ETB is the key to success for both partners.
- Clarity about the goals of the group leads to pride in achievement.

By the end of the year, we nearly always have everyone linked into something else. It may be a one-to-one in literacy or something else. Some of the women go to the English class here ... we'd chat about that from early on. KCETB Family Literacy Tutor

[Click here](#) to read more in: **Family Literacy Practice in ETBs Guidelines**, Case studies and Recommendations Pages 34 – 38.