



Lynne Jones
— Therapeutic Mentoring —

CASE STUDY

Creating a Safe Base for Parents to Grow, So Children Can Thrive

Working with Schools in the Vale of Glamorgan

Background

When I began working with the Pencoetre cluster schools in Barry, the scale of the challenge was immediately clear.

- 38% of children were living in low-income households (compared with 24% across the Vale)
- School attendance sat at 89.2%, below the Vale average
- There was a 42% attainment gap between pupils in the East and West Vale

These inequalities weren't just educational—they shaped health, wellbeing, relationships, and long-term life chances. The schools recognised that meaningful change required targeted, compassionate support for families, not just pupils.

The Challenge

The cluster's vision was simple but ambitious: to make a real difference by engaging with parents, families, and the wider community.

Each school had a family engager, but many of the barriers' parents faced were deeper- rooted in intergenerational cycles of stress, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Past experiences had left many parents feeling disconnected from school, unsure of their own value, and hesitant to engage.

For children to flourish, parents first needed a safe, supportive space to grow.

The Solution: The Safe Base Programme

I created the Safe Base Programme to offer tailored, non-judgemental support that meets parents exactly where they are. The focus is on trust, compassion, and removing shame so parents can reconnect with themselves and their children.

Through the programme, parents are supported to:

- Identify and address the real causes of stress, anxiety, and disengagement
- Be heard in confidential one-to-one spaces designed for personal growth
- Learn practical tools to regulate emotions and improve wellbeing
- Understand how neuroscience and attachment patterns shape behaviour
- Break unhelpful cycles and build healthier patterns for the future

The Impact

The changes were powerful, both in the data and in the lived experiences of families.

- 100% of parents who gave feedback said “yes” to all of the following:
- I have learnt to break negative and unhelpful cycles
- I feel better able to support my family
- I felt listened to and less isolated
- I have learnt ways to support myself better
- Wellbeing scores rose from 40% to 63.5%, with improvements across every area measured.

Schools also reported:

- Stronger engagement from parents
- Noticeable improvements in children’s wellbeing
- Positive shifts in attendance and behaviour

What Parents Said

“The whole course has helped me realise who I really am and not let the things that happened in my past affect my future.”

“I’ve attended many counselling sessions but never connected with the material like I did with this course. It felt like it was written for me. I’ve walked away more confident, clearer, and my children are already benefitting.”

What Schools Said

“The impact of Lynne’s groups with our families has been phenomenal—personal growth, confidence, self-esteem. But the power of them building positive, healthy relationships with themselves is priceless.”

“We’ve seen changes not only in the parents and how they engage with school, but noticeable improvements in children’s attendance and behaviours too.”

Conclusion

The Safe Base Programme has shown that when parents feel safe, supported, and empowered, the ripple effect on children and schools is transformative. By addressing the root causes of stress and disengagement, we’re not only improving family wellbeing—we’re strengthening attendance, attainment, and long-term life chances.

For me, this work reinforces a simple truth: When parents grow, children thrive. And that is how we begin to break cycles and create lasting change across communities.