



HELLO case study

The Willows Nursery

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What was the gap/problem?

What gap were you trying to address with this action plan?

On our Initial Audit we identified areas in practice that was 'observed occasionally' within the practitioner skills and knowledge section.

We decided to focus on section B1 of the tool.

We completed a tick sheet observation to look at staff : child interaction closer. We completed this all staff members to identify areas of improvement both individually and as whole staff team. (we used the Ekklan adult/baby interaction checklist)

The results of this checklist showed us that out of 23 checklist complete only 6 of staff (26%) used non verbal communication to help the child understand what you were saying, and 16 staff members 'sometimes' used sign, and 1 staff member 'never' used sign at all.

We also identified out of 23 interaction checklist complete only 6 off the staff members waited long enough for the child to act. Vocalise or talk – 10 second rule.

13 staff members 'sometimes' used the 10 second rule and 4 staff members 'never' used the 10 second rule.



What were your goals?

What were the goals of your action plan? How will you measure this impact?

-Our aim was to increase the amount of staff who confidently used sign to support language. Help them to understand the importance of non verbal communication and reasons behind this.

-For staff to understand and implement the 10 second rule when talking with children.

We will complete the Ekklan Adult / Child interaction checklist again to see results.

We will also ask staff individually if they recognise any new skills in themselves that they now feel confident to use when interacting with children

What did you do?



We decided to use staff who are confident in sign to create a sign rich environment. It was important staff used sign at key times within our daily routine such as register, story and song times. Staff were actively encouraged to sign 'Good Morning' and 'Good afternoon', including the first letter of the child's name.

We also invited an inspirational young lady called Jade in to sign with children and staff. She visited the nursery once a week for 4 weeks to do a sing and sign session with the children and staff to show how educational and fun signing can be.

The sessions were delivered to both our 2-3 year children and also our 3-5 year children.

The staff continued to practice the new songs and new signs everyday with children.



What did you do ?

We invited a children's story teller called Ray Stearn into nursery who read stories with children and staff. He read to all ages including babies, toddlers and pre-school. Ray used props and other resources to support his story telling.

The children and staff loved listening to Ray who showed them a fantastic example of how stories should be told.





What was the impact?

Staff are now confident and using more sign to communicate. All of our staff have become excited and showing lots of enthusiasm when using sign to communicate. We have also found that this has had a massive impact on the children. This is evident as children now know their colours, their initial letters of their names and also basic animals. We are getting positive comments from parents who are asking about learning signs at home.

The Adult/ Child checklist was completed again with all staff and the results were...

Out of 23 staff members 17 staff members were observed 'always' signing and using non verbal communication. 11 staff members were observed using sign and non verbal communication 'sometimes'.

This was a huge increase in staff using non verbal methods to communicate with children.

Two weeks after Ray had visited nursery, we asked the staff for feedback.

They were asked 'After Ray's visit, have you changed the way you read stories in any way?' ...

Some of the comments we received were...

'I now use more props, and read a little quieter',

'I have been reading more slowly',

'I have been remembering to let children comment on the pages a lot more',

'I have been using lots more props'.

The Adult / child checklist results on 'did staff wait long enough for the child to act, vocalise or talk – 10 second rule'

8 staff members were observed using the 10 second rule, 10 staff members were observed 'sometimes' using the 10 second rule and 3 staff members were observed 'never'.

This was a slight increase to the staff using the 10 second rule. lit@literacytrust.org.uk



Reflect on the plan

Participating in HELLO has helped us to identify and focus on targeted areas of Communication, Language and Literacy and assess how we engage with children.

HELLO has helped us to identify key areas of practice both as a setting and as individual practitioners.

By improving communication between practitioners and children, we hope for long term change to routines and practice and therefore improve language and communication skills within all adults and children.

The Adult / child checklists will continue to be used during peer observations and reflected upon individually with practitioners, showing areas for development but also areas of strength.

We will continue to use the Hello tool to reflect on our practice as skilled practitioners as we identify other areas of improvements, such as key language, commentating, assessing how staff support reluctant communicators.