

Early Years Pupil Premium Project
Developing Parental Partnership to Support Learning and Development



Ask yourself a question?

Granby House Nursery, Parkgate is a private day care setting for children of ages 0-5 years, in Rotherham.

In this Case Study, Kirsty Buckley a nursery practitioner and the nursery team, look at how 2 key questions about involving children's families in their communication and language development made a big difference for everyone.

Introduction

As a setting we decided to look at the way in which we could develop supportive partnerships with parents and the importance of children's communication and language development.

We started by looking at children's progress and noticed some gaps especially in language development. For example children who are attending speech therapist sessions and children who are learning English as additional language.

We also noticed that children were not as interested in books and listening to stories as much as we would like them to be and this was hindering the development of their language and literacy.

We believe that the partnerships we make with parents are very important as parents and families are the most important people in a child's life, so we asked ourselves the following questions;

"What could we do to engage more parents and carers in the setting?"

"How could we develop communication and language skills and promote the importance of reading at home?"

This is what we did.....

Having thought about and discussed our questions we came up with some simple changes and purchased a few resources to use both in the setting and home environment to develop communication and language skills and reading at home as well as involving our families;

- **Introduced a library system with reading friends;** reading friends are soft toys which children can borrow along with a favourite book. This is something that we are slowly introducing as we wanted to make sure it was going to be used effectively - so far so good.
- **Bella the Bedtime Bear;** Bella is a bear that enjoys sleepovers with different families. The children are encouraged to take a book home to read at bedtime, we include a diary to write comments and add photographs. We have had lots of positive feedback from parents and the children are excited to share their experience. One parent said "Can we keep the bear? My child stayed in their bed all night for the first time in months!"
- **We display photographs** to show parents what fun and interesting things their children have been involved in during the week. We have added speech bubbles to include children's language and encourage parents to talk with their child about the photographs and what they have been doing at nursery. These are displayed on the door by the main entrance.
- **Home learning posters** encourage parents and carers to use the same language and reading skills we use in nursery at home with their children. We model these skills in nursery for example taking the time to enjoy stories with our key children not only at group times but one to one. The posters are changed once a month and we add photographs to show parents and carers that we are practising the same skills at home and within the setting.
- **Newsletters** are sent to previous and new parents explaining any changes we have made, upcoming events and how they can be more involved in the nursery with their children.

Our Newsletters.....

We discussed *'show and tell'* time in our newsletters. Show and Tell is a time when children are able to bring in something special from home and share with the other children. After one Show and Tell time a parent asked if she could come in and show some interesting natural materials (conkers, leaves, pinecones, acorns, chestnuts) that they found on a day at a national park on their family holiday.

This was very successful, the children loved it. They really enjoyed exploring the autumn resources and we heard lots of interesting language as they talked about their own family holidays and experiences of finding interesting things such as shells on the beach. As a result we have set up an autumn atelier for all the children to enjoy.

We decided to invite parents to their child's Show and Tell which has turned out to be another successful way of getting parents involved and developing our partnership with them.



Our autumn table created by using resources from the family's holiday

Impact the of the EYPP Parent Partnership project....

Making a few simple changes to the nursery and the way in which we communicate with our parents and carers has made a significant impact. We have received so many positive comments from parents and are very happy to hear about new ideas parents bring. For example one of our parents said "Could I please have a copy of the photograph on the home learning newsletter and the speech bubbles to go with it? This is a fantastic idea and put a big smile on my face when I saw my child's picture on the wall, its lovely"

By making small changes and buying a few resources we are beginning to build up stronger partnerships with our parents and families and becoming more involved in the children's home environment, just by showing our interest and providing appropriate materials.

Using the ECAT stepped approach to answer our own questions and think about how we could develop strong partnerships, supported us to start with the basic foundations, taking small steps and building on these gradually. This has proven to be the best way to engage with our families.

Next steps

- We will carry on using the ECAT stepped approach when introducing new ideas
- To continue building close partnerships with children and their families
- Mapping our children's progress to show how the EYPP training has made an impact on their development