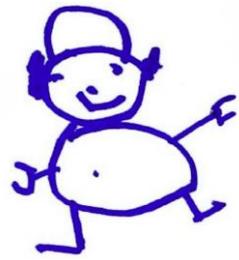


Case Study

Talking Tables

The Hall Day Nursery

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Description:

The Hall Day Nursery was founded in 1999 and is situated in North Anston. Our nursery team are all fully trained childcare professionals and we aim to provide activities for children that are both stimulating and educational. The nursery is split in to three units; The Baby Unit caters for 0-18mths, the Toddler Unit caters for 18-30mths and our nursery unit caters for 30-60mths.

Why we wanted to be involved in the project:

We wanted to be involved in this project to encourage and promote children's language and communication skills by learning about and using new techniques. We felt this approach would be enjoyable for the children, and that it would be a fun and exciting way to promote friendships, conversations and the development of language skills.

Impact of the training:

We feel that taking part in the project has provided us with an excellent opportunity to learn different strategies to support children's language and communication development, which have encouraged more communication and better interactions between staff and the children. After initial training we fed back to the rest of the staff in the nursery unit and they were all eager to use the different approaches in everyday conversations, which are now being implemented.

Getting Started:

The project started with a full day training from a speech and language therapist based on the Hanen approach. This was followed by two visits to our setting by the speech and language therapist and a further 3 half day training sessions which supported us to develop our Talking Tables approach and reflect on our Talking Tables journey.

To get Talking Tables started we collected various items that would be familiar to the children to use in our Talking Tables discussions. We chose our group of children which comprised of a variety of ages and different language stages.



Our Talking Tables sessions:

We chose 4 children of varied age and language development to take part. In our first session, 'Seth' the monkey had been to the seaside and brought along a bag with seaside objects to discuss. All of the children were a little shy to start with but as the session progressed the children became more engaged and interested. With each Talking Table session, the children remembered their previous experiences and more confidently used their imagination and language skills to extend the stories. We used the new strategies promoted in the training including OWLing (observe, wait, listen), following the children's lead, repeating back and responding with interest to support the discussions, whilst ensuring that we were using and modelling good language throughout.

Initially we used a large sheet of paper for the children make marks about their story, but this was not working well. Through discussion with the speech and language therapist during one of her visits, we changed this so that each child had their own, smaller piece of paper. This worked much better for us.

Heidi's journey through Talking Tables:

From the beginning, Heidi was very keen and excited about being part of the group. Our first Talking Table was around the theme 'holidays' and she was able to draw from her experience of her own holiday. During the second session, Heidi was still keen to join in, and as the sessions progressed, Heidi was using longer sentences by extending her ideas and sharing her past experiences with her peer group.

The impact of Talking Tables for Heidi:

At the start of our Talking Table journey, each child had start point data collected. This was repeated after the final session to show individual progress. Assessments indicated Heidi had made good progress. She demonstrated a more positive approach to turn taking, had built her confidence, increased her attention skills and developed her conversational skills and her ability to communicate well with her friends.