

BLOG

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PEDAGOGY: HELPING CHILDREN TO LEARN USING THE SHREC APPROACH

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INTRODUCTION

Communication and language skills impact on all areas of a child's development and this includes as an indicator of child wellbeing (Law, Charlton and Amussen, 2017). By focussing on supporting children's language development, we can greatly impact overall development and learning. Communication and language is the 'golden thread' that runs throughout all aspects of the Educational Programmes in the statutory EYFS (EYFS Statutory framework, 2024). In some areas, up to 50% of children start school with speech, language and communication needs (Public Health England, 2021).

INTENT

Our intent is to have high quality interactions at all times, in all contexts. Through the delivery of a carefully planned curriculum, which is rich in experiences, to provide opportunities for rich conversations and for children to be exposed to and learn new vocabulary. By using the ShREC approach to support staff to further improve their interactions, the children will make good progress in their language development. We also place a strong emphasis on wellbeing and involvement (Laevers, 2006), and so practitioners are skilled in tuning into children's play and interests, in order to foster high levels of involvement.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing the ShREC approach was overseen by our nursery leader, who delivered training to practitioners around the key concepts; Shared Attention, Respond, Expand and Conversations. We made small cards, with these concepts on, for practitioners to put on their lanyards as prompts to support them. Following this, practitioners videoed themselves interacting with a small group of children, practicing the strategies. They then watched back their interactions with a colleague to identify how effectively they were using the strategies. This also provided the opportunity to highlight any further opportunities for development. Each practitioner had their own plan of action, focusing on which strategies needed further practice and which were already embedded.

It was really important that as part of the implementation process, time was given to enable practitioners to have quality interactions. Routines allowed for this time to be firmly established along with reductions in written assessment tasks



IMPACT

By strengthening the quality of interactions through using the ShREC approach, and providing a range of experiences for children, there was an increase in the amount of quality interactions and subsequently improved vocabulary and progress in language development. One practitioner describes how the approach to implementation “allows us to slow down our thinking and really reflect on what is useful language. It gives us chance to pause and think critically”.

SUMMARY

An approach to CPD, where practitioners continue to reflect and develop a skill in relation to a pedagogical approach, is really effective when revisited over time, embedded and evaluated. Through using the key strategies in the ShREC approach to support quality interactions, practitioners are able to better develop children’s language skills effectively.

REFERENCES

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