

BACKGROUND:

“A quality learning environment with high quality interactions will enable young children to support and to extend learning, deepen thinking and make progress” (Realising the Ambition 2020, Scottish Government).

EV and SLT are routinely required to provide advice and strategies to nursery settings as part of an individual child’s intervention for children at risk of speech, language and communication delays. Providing advice on a 1:1 basis is ineffective and inefficient for services. Early Education staff can find it difficult to apply suggested strategies in their setting due to a range of barriers including a lack of understanding of the underlying difficulties a child has,, a lack of confident in applying strategies, limitations of the environment or conflicting demands on staff time. It can be difficult for visiting professionals to understand the barriers specific to a setting which hinder strategies from being implemented. These challenges impact on the quality of service offered, the effectiveness of the advice provided, the equity of provision across settings and outcomes for children. SEED was developed by applying the model for improvement to test a coaching based, whole setting intervention for improvement of learning settings by enabling staff to embed high quality child-adult interaction, supportive communication environments and a child-centred reflection to improve practice. SEED was offered to Kelloholm Nursery between October 2023 and February 2024 and is the 3rd PDSA cycle of the project. This setting was identified due to issues highlighted in a Care Inspectorate Report. Nursery management recognised that the staff team would benefit from the SEED approach to help build skills and confidence with providing quality adult-child interactions that would support the best outcomes for children.

AIM:

By February 2024 the levels of engagement in play based language learning activities of children in one pre-school setting will have increased across identified improvement areas.

Method:

- * The observation tool was used to gather baseline data and to compare observable improvements following the SEED coaching sessions.
- * Discussion and surveys were used to engage with staff.
- * Staff identified three areas for development. Two focus groups were formed to take these areas forward:
 - 1. Communication**
 - 2. Visual supports**
 - 3. Managing challenging behaviour**
- * Each member of the nursery staff team joined one of the focus groups, each facilitated by an EV and a SLT. 3-4 focus groups coaching sessions took place with topics and learning led by staff.
- * A full day session was used to reflect on learning, share resources and strategies and develop an action plan for the nursery to take their learning forward.



Our reflections:

- * Staff have started to demonstrate an increased understanding of the links between behaviour and communication.
- * Staff are beginning to use their own visual supports more consistently in the nursery environment.
- * Cooperative planning between nursery management and EV/SLT allows for further embedding of learning.
- * Consideration of how, when and who records the data using the Leuven’s Scales would need to be considered in order to ensure accurate and detailed data was collected.

Next Steps:

- Ownership of the project and need for improvement is vital therefore buy-in to SEED needs to emerge from settings themselves potentially by having a recognised outcome they wish to achieve from the project. Requests for future SEED projects settings will request this at the outset.
- Leuven’s scales data collection and reporting needs to improve.
- In person full day session worked well—will retain this in addition to the Teams based focus groups.
- Would be useful to scale up the no. of SLTs and EVs able to deliver SEED each to work up to scale.

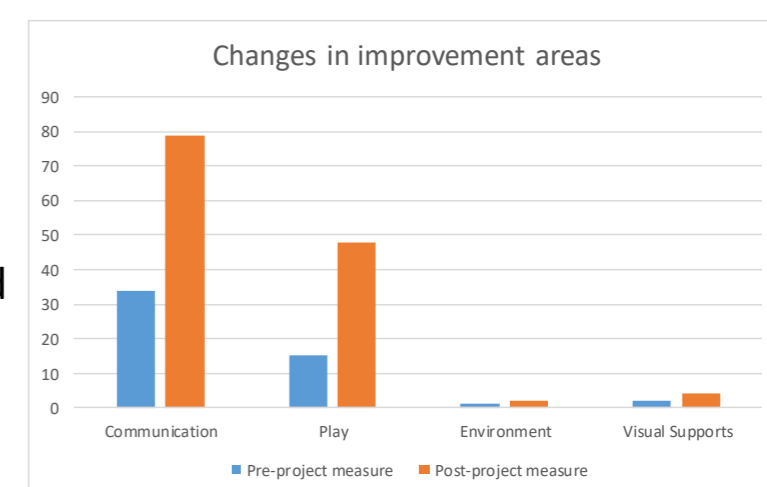
Measurement Plan:

Learning from previous cycles suggested changes to the measurement plan as indicated below.

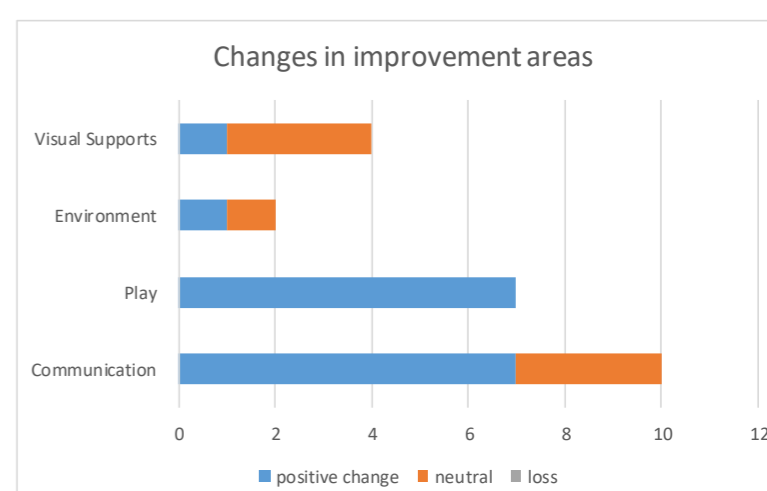
1. A pre-project observation of adult-child interactions was completed by 1 SLT and 1 EV.
2. This observation was completed again post project and comparison data collected.
3. Participant feedback was gathered from verbal feedback on the inset day and from post inset and post project questionnaires.
4. Leuven’s scale data re: children’s levels of engagement and well being was collected by the Equity and Excellence Lead in the setting.

Results

1. Measurements collected on pre– and post-project observations.



2. Clinician measured improvements were noted across 4 key areas of adult-child interaction.



3. Feedback collected from participants post in service training and post project was mainly positive.

“I feel like I consciously evaluate my interactions with children at the end of each day and how I can be better tomorrow. I also feel like the project has encouraged me to really think about why the resources we have to children are out and how to use these effectively.”

4. Leuven’s scale data was not able to be used to make any comparison or record change over time.

