

# Sunderland Talks Reading Project

## Impact Report July 2016

### **What we set out to do**

There were three strands to this project which would enable it to be successful.

- Increasing children's achievement in their language development through sharing quality books and stories in a well-planned and structured programme.
- Improving practitioner knowledge and skills.
- Measuring impact within a universal and shared criteria which would enable robust moderation.

### **Starting Points:**

Each of the nine nursery schools were invited to develop a set of core books based around a project or area of development within their specific nursery school. The aim was to develop an approach to storytelling with children that included a level of repetition of the same story and a frequency that allowed children to develop their understanding of vocabulary and story language. The ranges of topics identified were;

- Developing mathematical vocabulary
- Family understanding of SMSC and British values
- Engaging more able boys
- Core books for two year olds
- Natural elements (weather)
- Following specific authors

Each of these areas had been identified in school development plans and through entry baseline scores.

Guidance delivery was shared at Nursery Headteachers meetings and opportunities for leading staff to come together to share ideas, and to establish partnerships if development topics were similar were planned.

Basis of the guidance was:

- Identify the group of children to take part in the project
- Establish a routine of when, where, how story time would happen
- Select the books linked to the topic
- Repeat books over a period of time exposing children to other activities linked to the stories.

### **Developing the Project**

A library session was arranged. This was to enable staff to look for specific books to support their identified topics. It was also an opportunity for the Librarian to recommend new books on the market and offer support to school staff in choosing books.

The nine maintained nursery schools in Sunderland have a wealth of experience of using the ECAT ( Every Child A Talker development tracker). To support this further, a planning tool was developed that would focus on all the aspects from the tracker.

- Listening and Attention
- Understanding
- Speech sounds and Talk
- Social Skills.

### An Example of the planning tool:



#### Story Planning - There was an old lady who swallowed a fly

Purple, yellow and orange group, 9<sup>th</sup> May – 20<sup>th</sup> May

Select 1 story book	Identified Vocabulary / new words	Key Questions Linked to ECAT stage of development	Links to ECAT (every child a talker)
<p><b>Which story have you chosen -</b> There was an old lady who swallowed a fly.</p> <p>Linked to concept in / out Big / bigger /biggest 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> / etc</p> <p><b>What resources / props could you use? Extension activities during the week.</b></p> <p>Mark making – recall the story with drawings and marks.</p> <p>Play 'Kim's game using the character's from the story.</p> <p>Children to act out the story using available props and puppet.</p> <p>Sequence the story using pages from the story.</p>	<p>Old Lady, fly, spider, bird, cat, dog, cow, horse, stomach</p> <p>Maths vocab First, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth</p> <p>What was the biggest animal the old lady swallowed?</p> <p>What was the smallest thing the old lady swallowed?</p>	<p><b>There was an old lady who swallowed a fly</b></p> <p>Why did the old lady swallow the fly?</p> <p>Who are the characters in the story?</p> <p>I wonder why the old lady swallowed a spider, then a bird, then a cat, then dog, then a cow, then a horse?</p> <p>Who did she swallow first, <u>second</u>, third, fourth etc.</p>	<p><b>Listening &amp; attention;</b> Beginning to listen with interest. Recognises and enjoys children's songs and story books. (3years) Enjoys listening to stories in a group and can focus for 5 minutes or more. (4 years)</p> <p><b>Understanding language ;</b> Understands simple who, what and where questions. (not why) (3 years) To be able to use visual memory to see which item is missing</p> <p><b>Speech, sounds &amp; talk ;</b> Can link 4-5 words together. (3 years) Asks who, what and where questions. (3 years) Can reason, predict, explain and describe. (5 years)</p>

All of the nursery schools involved trialled using the planning tool before it was shared with their partner's from the PVI sector. The planning sheet proved to be a useful guide for practitioners and a good evaluation record of what went well, how it could be improved and children's interest.

However, some schools changed the planning tool to match their planning systems but found aspects of it useful and transferred to own planning formats. This was great as the project was always designed to flexible and meet the needs of individual settings.

Once the projects had been run in the individual nursery's the school were then partnered with a Private, Independent or Voluntary daycare provider. Each of the leads supported their PVI setting with guidance on the delivery, the planning tool, identifying target children and in some cases identifying a topic area.

Support to the PVI sector continues as projects had different start and finish dates based on the needs of individual settings.

### Reviewing the books

Evaluation of each book was important as it recording good and bad points about the books, how well the book motivated children's interests, how well it met the objective of individuals identified focus.

Each of the nursery schools compiled a list and review of books they used. This was shared with partners which has helped with identifying future projects.

### **Some examples of how reviews have been useful**

#### **Review of the books – Patricia Lillycrop**

##### 1. Pants –Nick Sharratt

Mathematical vocabulary - counting, size, shapes, pattern and repeated pattern. Good introduction of new vocabulary: animal names camel, kangaroo, zebra, panda. Good questioning skills "How do you know it is a pig?" "What clues help us identify the animal?" "What can you tell me about a camel?" "Where does a camel live?" Why does the camel have ices creams on his pants?" The children discussed their holidays in hot countries, why you eat ice creams (because it is hot?) ***I would recommend this book as the illustrations are effective and colourful. There are lots of opportunities for discussion and questioning.***

##### 2. When the moon smiled – Petr Horacek

Mathematical vocabulary - first, second, third – tenth, number names 1-10, vocabulary more, less, altogether. Good vocabulary about nocturnal animals "What does nocturnal mean?" "What animals are nocturnal in the story?" Can the children answer who, what and where questions relating to the story? ***I would recommend this book as it was good for on-going assessment of the who what and where questions.***

##### 4. 10 Little penguins – Kate Toms

Mathematical vocabulary - counting backwards from 10-1 number names, pattern and language of size. Rhyming words ( fun -begun, high – sky, happy – snappy, cake – ache) Good descriptive language regarding pattern on the cakes, ***I would not recommend this book as the concept of counting backwards confused the children. At this point the children were not ready to be introduced rhyming words.***

### **Hylton Redhouse Book List**



**"Shh! We Have a Plan" - Chris Haughton**

Four friends, three big and one little, are out for a walk. Suddenly, they spot it - a beautiful bird perched high in a tree! They simply **MUST** have it and - **SHH!** - they have a **PLAN**. So they **tip-toe, tip-toe** very slowly, nets poised - "Ready one ... ready two ... ready three ... **GO!**" But, at the turn of the page, we find a ridiculous bunch of very tangled characters and a blissfully oblivious bird, flying away. One hilarious foiled plan after another and it's clear that this goofy trio **CANNOT** catch that elusive birdie! But the littlest of this group, a quiet spectator up until now, knows that a bit of kindness and sweetness can go a lot further than any elaborate scam. Will his three friends follow his gentle lead or will they get themselves into even more trouble? Age 2-6

**why we chose it:** A subtle, minimal words picture book about kindness and friendship winning out over force and enmity. The note inside the front cover includes a quote:

"Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding."

Albert Einstein

**was it successful?** Staff found the book difficult to read - particularly with 2s. With older children, it was more successful when it was read to include physical movement / counting / joining in. The message of kindness over force was too subtle and had to be explicitly discussed. However, it did lead to lovely discussion about being kind to animals (linking with behaviour / harmony / contributing positively).

*NURSERY*

**Impact in raising children language development across maintained nursery schools**

	<b>October 15</b>	<b>Jan 16</b>	<b>June 16</b>
<b>Listening &amp; Attention</b>	<b>48% @ risk of delay</b>	<b>12% at risk of delay 41% expected 47% ahead</b>	<b>0% at risk of delay 40 % expected 60% ahead</b>
<b>Understanding</b>	<b>66% at risk of delay</b>	<b>25% at risk of delay 75% as expected</b>	<b>27% at risk of delay 46% expected 27% ahead</b>
<b>Speech, sounds &amp; talk</b>	<b>88% at risk of delay</b>	<b>25% at risk of delay 75% expected</b>	<b>22% at risk of delay 54% expected 23% ahead</b>
<b>Social Skills</b>	<b>97% at risk of delay</b>	<b>19% at risk of delay 81% expected</b>	<b>17 % at risk of delay 66% expected 17% ahead</b>

This is a representation of the data shared across the nine nursery schools.

**Wider Impact of the Project**

This is a summary of information shared by all the nine nursery schools as to the wider impact of the project.

Working in partnership with other early years colleagues has significantly raised practitioner knowledge and understanding of language development. Through shared practices and ideas of supporting young children there has been an increased awareness of the characteristic of effective learning in all areas of the EYFS.

There has been an impact in raising attainment in other areas of the EYFS curriculum. For example staff have observed and documented high quality play linked to stories leading to increased scores in **being imaginative**. Other areas of noted impact are; **literacy, reading and writing**. Children have shown a raised interest in looking at books, awareness of print and replicating stories through pictures, and making marks which shows their understanding of stories. Practitioners have noted that children's **personal, social and emotional development** has improved. Children's self-esteem has made a positive impact on children's learning particularly their social skills in making and sustaining relationships.

The data clearly shows that targeted groups of children have made significant progress through this intervention. The impact of targeted literacy based activities has developed children's language and communication skills and given children a vehicle to talk and express their creativity in a language they have become familiar with and confident to use.

Many nursery schools have developed and embedded this approach into their daily routines and there is an expectation that staff carefully plan for children's story time with an understanding of language development. Reflecting upon and sharing evidence of individual story has developed practice, raising aspirations and staff taking responsibility for identifying and having resources available.

There has been lots of opportunities for staff to access training throughout the 'Sunderland Talks' project which has helped to link the common thread of raising children's language development.

## **What Next**

The nine nursery schools are committed to working in partnership and to invite other agencies to become involved. Network meetings and shared practice dates have been arranged for the next academic year whereby early years practitioners will be invited to look around each of the nursery schools.

An action plan for the next shared project is being developed. 'Parental engagement' will be the focus of our next research project.

The PIP is in the process of identifying the strengths within staffing structures and developing effective middle leaders through CPD training to further develop their capacity to work with identified partners.

