



Cabot Primary School

Bristol Aspiring for All (BAFA) Project

**Supporting and improving Communication
and Language skills in the
Early Years Foundation Stage.**

Reception – 2018/2019

Led by:

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(Reception teacher and Early Years Foundation Leader)

Research question:

‘How can we support children to feel confident to communicate?’

Bristol Aspiring for All (BAFA) Project:

The BAFA project is an action research project set up by Bristol City Council to address the gaps in Bristol's Early Years data and most importantly secure inclusive and equitable opportunities for all children. The aim of the project is to encompass the learning and development needs of each unique child in Bristol, engaging in action-research to identify effective ways to improve outcomes for the children who are at risk of underachievement.

Aims of the study:

- To support children to feel confident to communicate in a range of ways,
- To see if children can be encouraged to increase the amount/ways they communicate through implementing changes in practice,
- To address the national and Bristol's priority to narrow the gap in achievement of some groups of children, ref: 'Unknown children – destined for disadvantage' Ofsted July 2016.

Introduction:

Cabot Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups and a high proportion; nearly eight out of ten pupils speak English as an additional language. We provide full-time provision for children in Reception; where on average 80-90% of pupils enter below track.

Our story so far:

The aim of this project was decided upon due to entry data around Communication and Language (see table in progression section). On entry, data showed that the Communication and Language strand was one of the weakest and we had nine children come to us from their previous settings with identified SLCN (Speech Language and Communication Needs). Out of these nine children, two have individual education plans. For this project we decided to consider what whole class implementations and changes could be made, specifically focussed on supporting the identified nine children.

Implementations to practice:

In response to the baseline entry data, it was our decision to focus on the research question 'How can we support children to feel confident to communicate?' We implemented some new approaches and support systems. All of these were with the aim to help diminish the difference between boys and girls at the end of EYFS. Alongside this, supporting those children who have additional needs, with a particular focus on Speech, Language and communication and building confidence. Listed below are what we have continued or introduced to our daily provision.

- 'Objective led planning' Alistair Bryce Cleg approach – We have continued to follow this approach, taking the objective that you want them to achieve and steer this into their play. It is an alternative to calling children to you, interrupting their play.
- Colourful Semantics - an approach created by Alison Bryan. It is aimed at helping children to develop their grammar, by linking the structure of a sentence (syntax) and its meaning (semantics). Encouraging wider vocabulary, making sentences longer, helping children to answer questions or generate responses to questions, developing use of nouns, verbs, prepositions and adjectives and improving story-telling skills. The LSA worked with children in groups of two during basic skills, which is first thing in the morning, and over the year we have noticed an increase in their confidence with the approach.
- Word aware – linking in with the whole school who already follow this, Word Aware promotes a method called STAR, which stands for Select, Teach, Activate and Review. This process ensures the children encounter the new words many times and many different ways. The resource is of particular value for those who start at a disadvantage including children with Developmental Language Disorder, Special Educational Needs and those who speak English as an additional language, which includes a high proportion of our intake. We focus on a new word each week that relates to either our current topic or learning taking place in Maths and Literacy.
- A – Z Early Literacy Intervention– We re-introduced this intervention, teaching early literacy skills including concepts about print, directionality and one to one matching, applying phonic skills and to support children to build a bank of high frequency words in preparation for reading texts within pink and red book bands. This is completed during Intervention time over 6 week period. The LSA is timetabled to support children with this.
- Continued extra 1:1 reading opportunities with all adults. Not only does this promote a range of language to the children but it also gives them time to build relationships with the adults in the room on a 1:1 basis.
- CoEL (Characteristics of Effective Learning) – This year we ensure that children aware of own learning behaviours and have an interactive display up in the class. Rather than only adults monitoring, observing and commenting on the CoEL at the end of year report, the children are active participants throughout the year. It is about instilling motivation, not only in EYFS but for them to become lifelong learners. CoEL are often discussed between the children and adults and as a whole class.

Progression Chart for Communication and Language:

Child	Additional information	T1 - Bassline	T2	T4	T6
Child 1 – Boy	SLCN (Non-verbal, selective mute, Twin), EAL	8-20 High	8-20 High	22-36 Low	22-36 Low
Child 2 – Boy	SLCN (Non-verbal, Twin), EAL	8-20 Low	8-20 Low	22-36 Low	22-36 High
Child 3 – Boy	SLCN, SEN, EAL	22-36 Low	22-36 High	40-60 trace	ELG Met
Child 4 – Boy	SLCN (stammer – SALT), EAL	30-50 Low	30-50 High	40-60 Mid	ELG Met
Child 5 – Girl	SLCN/SEMH – Receiving play therapy, PP, Summer born,	30-50 Low	0-50 Mid	40-60 Mid	ELG Met
Child 6 – Boy	SLCN, Summer born,	30-50 Mid	40-60 Trace	40-60 Mid	ELG Met
Child 7 – Boy	SLCN/MLD, SEN, EAL, Summer born,	22-36 Mid	30-50 Low	30-50 Low	30-50 Mid
Child 8 – Girl	SLCN (ASD?), PP,	30-50 Mid	40-60 Trace	40-60 Mid	ELG Met
Child 9 – Boy	SLCN,	30-50 Low	30-50 Mid	40-60 Trace	ELG Met

Came on track

From implementing the changes above we have noticed that all the children’s abilities to communicate have been developed and every child has made progress. Seven out of nine children have made more than expected progress and six out of nine children are now on track. We have observed these children and it is noticeable that they feel more confident to communicate with both their peers and adults, including visiting adults. We have also

noticed an increase in their enthusiasm to join in with group activities and share answers during teacher inputs, which in September some children were very reluctant to be a part of. Unfortunately not all areas of the CL strand were able to be assessed for two individuals who are selective mutes. However, progress has been made non-verbally and their confidence to communicate in this way is admirable. The whole class changes made not only benefited the targeted children but also had impact on those children not specifically focussed on for this project. The initial baseline percentage for the whole class on track was 26% (5 children) and summer data concludes that 67% (14 children) are now on track.

Evaluation:

On the whole the EYFS team are really pleased with the progress all of the children have made. Even those children not yet on track have made excellent progress and it has been great to watch them flourish and feel confident with their communicating and language skills. We feel that everything that has been implemented this year has made a huge difference and we will be continuing this practise next year. Data shows how the changes we have made to the provision around CLL have supported all children's learning not just the identified children and we are very pleased with the end of year outcome.

What next:

- Continue to implement changes made this year and monitor progress of the next cohort comparing baseline, mid-year and end of year data;
- Train new staff in the specific interventions/schemes of work to ensure consistency through communicating;
- Continue to improve the outdoor area to ensure this is also communication friendly and accessible.