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Enhancing oracy through targeted communication support

Building oracy skills for life and work

The Challenge

We have identified, in line with SEND research nationally, that those students with additional needs are most often impacted upon by barriers to communication and their ability to express themselves fluently and grammatically in speech.

This is a whole school issue, but we evaluated that if we focused on a discrete Year group where there was a prevalent need for strong Oracy over and beyond the norm, that this would best serve in this pilot case study as the cohort for intervention.

As such it made sense in this study to focus on this occasion on Year 10 SEND due to the dual pressures of undertaking Speaking and Listening assessments as well as the social communication expectations of Work Experience.

Our hypothesis therefore was that a focused intervention on skills development in communication/Oracy would enable this cohort to become more confident and able to engage effectively in work experience and speaking assessment.

Our timescale was September 2024 to April 2025 to enable preparation in advance of both Speaking and listening tasks and Work Experience.

A cohort of 12 SEND students was identified from data held on the SEND register based on Reading and spelling Ages initially. This was further cross-referenced via our Talk for Work test.

Training was undertaken by two members of the Hub Team in Speech, language and communication aligned to the Complex Communication Team's wider CPD to secondary schools' remit. The structure of the scheme allows for all pupils, in every lesson, to complete a DSA (Daily Sentence Accuracy) and here children write a sentence that is entirely accurate as the starter to their lesson. It does not have to be creative but accurate only and includes a grammar objective from the relevant year group planning.



What They Did

Time was ring-fenced for the two members of Hub staff to not only attend the CCT training sessions, but also to prepare, adapt and familiarise themselves with the necessary resources.

Students were withdrawn on a bi-weekly basis to work in the SEN Hub main teaching room 1.25. For intensive support on communication the cohort of 12 was split into 6 of equal gender. The curriculum spanned two terms in duration. The Hub practitioners were requested to carefully manage logistics for withdrawal, communication to parents, students and existing teachers – all stakeholders. Core was omitted from extraction.

A very thoughtful and considered meeting was initiated before the start to ensure that the chosen cohort all understood the rationale, purpose and expected outcomes. In this way they were all on board and presented as an engaged and willing group throughout.

In regards to the materials/resources the Hub colleagues actively tweaked and adapted these to ensure there was a direct positive impact on arguably the most daunting challenge for this cohort – work experience.

Outcomes and Anticipated Impact

Qualitative feedback from a range of staff indicated a noticeable enhancement in confidence, self-esteem. In addition the range of use of key words and fluency was improved.

This will be quantifiably ratified by assessment outcomes from speaking and listening March assessment as well as April Work Experience references and feedback.

This successful pilot will now be rolled out for the following 3 years and adjusted/improved with reference to oracy and communication educational research, development and peer reviewed articles.