



CASE STUDY REPORT

LEAP - Language Enrichment Activity Programme

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This study was originally published in 2010 as part of the 'What Works Well' initiative, part of the National Strategies for Education in England.

Abstract

Background: The purpose of the study was to improve the outcomes of Y1 children with SEN by implementing the LEAP programme with the support of a Speech and Language therapist. The success criteria were measured by test results and wider outcomes such as improved behaviour and social interaction.

Aims: The main aim of the LEAP project was to improve the communication, language and literacy skills of Y1 children with SEN, through regular, short sessions with a familiar adult.

Methods: The participants in this case study are the Deputy Headteacher, Early Years Foundation Stage Practitioner, Headteacher, Middle Leader, Senior Leader, Senior Leadership Team, Teacher, Teaching Assistant, and Speech and Language Therapist. The LEAP project used regular, short sessions with a familiar adult, entry assessment tests, dialogue with the school's Speech and Language therapist, and resources such as key word and symbol cards, body outline sheets, and picture/object packs. TAs were trained and observed by the Speech and Language therapist.

Findings: The LEAP project aimed to improve communication skills in Y1 children with SEN. Short-term success was measured by improved scores in TROG and RAPT tests. Long-term success was measured by improved sub-level scores in reading and writing. Wider outcomes included improved behaviour and social interaction.

Implications: The LEAP project has had positive implications for pupil learning, teaching, and school organization and leadership. It has improved communication skills, behavior, and social interaction, and enabled children to access the curriculum more easily. It has also provided TAs with better knowledge of how to support language development.

This abstract was generated by Camtree using a large language model (LLM) and added to the original report in 2023.

Keywords: Infant education; Communication, language and literacy

Introduction

What were your reasons for doing this type of development work?

As part of the Achievement for All Project, our school needed to involve the Y1 children with SEN in a programme to improve their outcomes. We choose to implement LEAP (Language Enrichment Activity Programme) with the support from our Speech and Language therapist.

Who might find this case study useful?

- Deputy headteacher
- Early years foundation stage practitioner
- Headteacher
- Middle leader
- Senior leader
- Senior leadership team (SLT)
- Teacher
- Teaching assistant

Description

What specific curriculum area, subject or aspect did you intend to have impact on?

- Communication, language and literacy

How did you intend to impact on pupil learning?

Communication skills are the bedrock of any learning. Children need to understand what is being said to them and need to be able to respond appropriately. This LEAP project aimed to develop children's understanding of and ability to use language effectively.

What were your success criteria?

Short term success criteria during the period of the project were an improvement in scores in both a TROG (Test for Reception of Grammar) and RAPT (Renfrew Action Picture Test) tests. Longer term, by summer 2010, we expected an improvement in sub level scores in reading and writing. Wider outcomes were an improvement in behaviour and better social interaction between individual children.

What information or data did you use to measure progress towards your success criteria?

- Test results

Describe the CPD approaches you used

The TAs were trained in school by the Speech and Language therapist. This consisted of information giving and supported sessions with the children. TAs were then observed to assess their capability to deliver the programme.

The project formed part of the AfA implementation plan (enc) and has since becoming part of our provision mapping for vulnerable children and children with SEN.

What CPD materials, research or expertise have you drawn on?

Speech and Language therapist expertise.

Who provided you with support?

- External agency

How were you supported?

Speech and Language therapist

Impact

What has been the overall impact on pupil learning?

The progress varied according to the initial level and type of need. Other interventions have also been used so the scores from the language specific tests will be a more accurate comparison.

Children have begun to understand and use more complex sentences which has had implications for their conduct and behaviour and how they interact with other children. Improvement in their social interaction skills has enabled them to enjoy playing and working with other children and improve outcomes across the curriculum.

They have also been able to access the curriculum more easily which has enabled them to increase skills and knowledge and rely less on the support of teachers and teaching assistants.

Thoughts you think are relevant to overall impact on learning

We would expect progress in reading to occur before writing so were happy with the difference. The impact of the project may not be as effective as normally - it is designed to work with Reception age children.

Quantitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Periodic teacher assessment

Qualitative evidence of impact on pupil learning

- Pupils' work

Describe the evidence of impact on pupil learning

What has been the impact on teaching?

6 Teaching assistants will have a better knowledge of how to support children's language development. The programme can be rolled out in Reception next year and impact earlier or inform further intervention at an earlier stage.

Evidence of impact on teaching

- Teacher perceptions

Describe the evidence of impact on teaching

Children have been observed to have more productive interactions with staff and each other. This has led to less reliance on support in class from teachers and teaching assistants.

Teachers are now more able to identify children requiring intervention from the LEAP project and are suggesting this during pupil progress meetings.

Teaching assistants are using the skills and knowledge from the LEAP in other group and individual work.

What has been the impact on school organisation and leadership?

The programme formed part of a number of interventions for the Y1 children, but we do believe that supporting children's early language development has benefits throughout all the rest of school. Children whose language development is delayed find difficulty accessing the rest of the curriculum and can also struggle with social interaction which can then impact on behaviour. We intend in the future to identify children with these difficulties as early as possible eg: FS2 and support them with this intervention and other speech therapy programmes.

Evidence of impact on school organisation and leadership

This academic year, teachers have identified children for the project. TAs have screened them and are implementing the project. It now forms part of our provision mapping and has been rolled out to younger children.

Summary

What is the crucial thing that made the difference?

Regular, short sessions with a familiar adult.

What key resources would people who want to learn from your experience need access to?

Suggested entry assessment details eg: Renfrew Action Picture Test - RAPT and Test of Receptive Grammar - TROG.

Dialogue with school speech and Language therapist.

List of resources to use with children:

Key word and symbol cards

Body outline sheets

Picture/object packs for: Home & Transport, Food, Body Parts, Actions, Clothes

What CPD session and resources were particularly useful?

Time for the Speech and Language therapist to train and observe the Teaching Assistants.

If another individual or school was attempting to replicate this work, where would they start and what would the essential elements be?

You would need to speak to the school's Speech and Language therapist. Children would need to have a suitable level of language and communication skills to begin with. The Speech and Language Therapist would train the

TAs and screen the children to begin. This programme would be particularly suitable for FS2 children.

What further developments are you planning to do (or would you like to see others do)?

We intend to seek further training for our TAs to enable them to deliver programmes related specifically to speech and language disorders. Then once children have been assessed by the therapist we can provide support in school on a more regular basis. We will not have to rely on therapist visits. We are also keeping examples of speech and language resources to provide a bank for the future.

Supplementary Materials

This report is accompanied in the library by the following supplementary material:

- September implementation plan

About Camtree

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About 'What Works Well'

This case study was originally published as part of the 'What Works Well' section of the National Strategies for Education in England. The National Strategies were professional programmes aiming for improvements in the quality of learning and teaching in schools in England. 'What Works Well' involved teaching practitioners from all phases and areas of education sharing accounts of real developments which had improved learning and teaching, and made a difference to pupil progress. 'What Works Well' case studies were designed to support practice transfer and include sufficient detail and resources to enable others to implement the effective practice described. Most were reviewed by experts prior to publication as 'User Generated Content' (UGC) under a licence which encouraged reuse and derivative works, but which precluded commercial use. This report was awaiting final approval when the National Strategies site was archived.

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