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Additional information:

The three documents relate to the Education Committee Report entitled Improving Outcomes for All - Raising Attainment Strategy Update for the 21 June 2022 Education Committee.

Authorised By	Nicola McDowell
Designation	Head of Education
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REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: June 2022

BY: Executive Director for Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Improving Outcomes for All – Raising Attainment Strategy Update

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the work underway across Education and Children's Services to improve outcomes for all, through raising attainment and achievement and reducing the poverty related attainment gap.
- 1.2 This report also gives some high level messages about the impact of recovery work upon pupil attainment in East Lothian schools in response to COVID-19 related school closures in previous years and the related ongoing challenges presented this current school session 2021-22.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
 - (i) Note the contents of this report and the positive impact of recovery work in East Lothian schools on achievements of East Lothian learners.
 - (ii) Note the key successes, areas of progress and actions being taken by schools and the Education Service to improve pupil attainment during the current school session 2021-22.
 - (iii) Note the key areas of focus and priorities within the Raising Attainment Strategy for 2022-23 to support a relentless focus on improving outcomes for all across East Lothian schools.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In recent years, East Lothian Council schools and Education Service have had a strong focus on improving pupil attainment for all learners. School improvement plans and the service improvement plans have referenced these priorities and actions, and a summary of the key priorities for 2021-

22, along with supporting data, were approved by Education Committee in November 2021.

3.2 School education is fundamental to ensuring positive long-term outcomes for young people and it impacts on Scotland's economy and society. The Scottish Government's National Improvement Framework (NIF) clarifies the vision for education in Scotland as:

- Excellence through raising attainment: ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the knowledge and skills necessary to shape their future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors.
- Achieving equity: ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Broad General Education - Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL)

3.3 From June 2016, East Lothian schools collated pupil attainment data for key stages in the Broad General Education (P1, P4, P7 and S3) on an annual basis. This is a requirement of the National Improvement Framework. As a result of school closures from March to June 2020, Scottish Government announced that the collation of this data would not be possible for June 2020. Whilst aspects of the national collation of this ACEL data resumed in June 2021, this was only for P1, 4 and 7. At the time, Scottish Government advised that data should not be collected for pupils in S3 or those with additional support needs in special schools. For June 2022, schools will report on ACEL for P1, P4, P7 and S3 pupils once more.

3.4 The purpose of this data is to track, monitor and inform future improvements across schools in relation to pupil attainment. This data is based on the professional judgement of teachers of the overall progress made by a learner through Curriculum for Excellence levels in Literacy and Numeracy at the key stages as outlined above.

3.5 Throughout this current session, East Lothian schools and the Education Service's Quality Improvement Team have engaged regularly with live attainment data from SEEMiS Progress and Achievement in order to monitor pupil progress across the Broad and General Education from Primary 1 to S3. As a result, schools have made use of this to interrogate pupil progress data and to accurately identify where attainment gaps occur and the potential reasons for these. This level of data analysis has allowed many schools to regularly review and evaluate the impact of planned interventions for groups and individual pupils, and has informed the strategic allocation of resources in order to better meet the learning needs of identified pupils.

3.6 Robust challenge discussions with Head Teachers during QIO Quality Improvement visits and Associated School Group (ASG) Meetings indicate that schools have made good progress towards recovering from the impact of the pandemic, and that significant progress has been made by schools during this session towards addressing the impact of the pandemic period upon pupil attainment and achieving combined June 2022 attainment

targets for Literacy and Numeracy. Finalised data will be collected by Scottish Government in August, and will be published in December.

Senior Phase Attainment June 2021

- 3.7 As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic in 2019/20, the 2020 national examination timetable was cancelled and externally assessed SQA qualifications at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher were instead awarded based on centre estimated grades.
- 3.8 The Alternative Certification Model (ACM) was developed for National 5 courses, in response to the Deputy First Minister's announcement on 7 October 2020 of the cancellation of National 5 exams. Following the cancellation of Higher and Advanced Higher exams on 8 December 2020, it was decided that the ACM would be expanded to cover Higher and Advanced Higher, as well as National 5.
- 3.9 Due to this change in the assessment and awards process, SQA results for 2019/20 and 2020/21 cannot be directly compared to those in previous years and cannot be used to directly demonstrate school or authority improvement compared with previous years.
- 3.10 However, the ACM attainment data can be used to compare East Lothian schools with their Virtual Comparator and with National measures for June 2021.
- 3.11 The measure for East Lothian school leavers achieving 5 awards or more at SCQF level 5 or better was in line with both virtual comparator schools and the national average for June 2021.
- 3.12 The measure for East Lothian school leavers in a positive initial destination was in line with virtual comparator schools and above national average.
- 3.13 The measure for school leavers achieving qualifications in literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 5 or better was in line with the national average.
- 3.14 Attainment levels for East Lothian pupils at Senior Phase for session 2020-21, based on the Alternative Certification Model, indicate that these were in line with virtual comparator schools and with national averages.

Next Steps 2022-23

- 3.15 East Lothian schools will continue to have a relentless focus on raising attainment at both the Broad General Education and at Senior Phase. Based on their quality assurance and self-evaluation data, all schools will align their improvement priorities for 2022-23 with the Education Service's improvement priorities of:
 - Curriculum - Meeting the Needs of All
 - Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion
 - Leadership
- 3.16 School improvement priorities will also be aligned to the refreshed National Improvement Framework (Scottish Government).

- 3.17 The Quality Improvement Team will continue to offer support and challenge to schools in the areas of quality improvement, self-evaluation, data literacy, curriculum development and continued improvements in teaching and learning. Schools will be supported to develop their use and interrogation of data further to plan, implement and evaluate targeted interventions to address identified gaps in pupils' attainment.
- 3.18 The Education Service has established a Pedagogy Team, consisting of five Principal Teachers of Pedagogy, who are supporting continued improvements in teaching and learning in some East Lothian schools. The level and type of support is identified in an individual school's service level agreement and reflects the school's capacity for improvement in response to the school's own self-evaluation, or as a result of findings from inspection or authority review.

Raising Attainment Strategy Progress

- 3.19 Despite the significant disruption to education since March 2020, a considerable amount of work was undertaken during school session 2020-21, to develop our Raising Attainment Strategy for East Lothian schools. Head Teachers used data tools to analyse attainment data over time and to identify key barriers to pupil attainment. Having undertaken significant analysis, the key priorities and areas of focus identified were:
- Overall attainment at Primary 1 (Early Level)
 - Attainment in writing in the Broad General Education
 - The gender-based attainment gap
 - The poverty related attainment gap
- 3.20 In 2021-22, work streams aligned to each of these barriers began collaborative work across schools, based on practitioner enquiry approaches, to develop classroom based interventions designed to address one of these specific barriers to learning. Unfortunately, this work was inconsistent for the period October 2021 to March 2022 due to the impact of COVID related staff absences and the subsequent capacity of schools to support this. However, several practitioners were able to continue this intervention approach, and were supported by the Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative (CYPIC – Scottish Government) and Education Scotland in aspects of quality improvement to underpin their intervention projects. The content and outcomes from these intervention projects will be shared with schools before the end of this session, both in person at a twilight drop-in and in digital format on the service's EduHub space. This will allow them to reflect on good practice and use this to drive forward continued improvements in their own contexts.
- 3.21 Last session, schools interrogated their attainment tracking data to identify which attainment barrier best described their 'attainment gap' and to plan appropriate targeted interventions to address these during 2021-22. The Quality Improvement Team provided regular support and challenge to schools during this session to evaluate the impact of these interventions upon the attainment of targeted pupils.

3.22 As a result of the improvements in the quality of data informed interventions at school level, and the increased opportunities for professional collaboration, support and challenge, there are early improvements in each of the identified 'barriers to learning' for targeted pupil groups. This is emerging at both individual school level and at local authority level to indicate that pupil attainment levels are beginning to show improvement and returning towards pre-pandemic levels compared to the June 2021 measure.

Scottish Attainment Challenge

3.23 The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was established to promote equity in education by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. It is underpinned by the National Improvement Framework, Curriculum for Excellence and Getting it Right for Every Child. It focuses on improvement activity in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing. Reducing educational inequity and closing the poverty-related attainment gap is a long term strategy which aims to impact on societal culture and thinking. On the 23 November 2021 the Cabinet Secretary announced the expanded mission statement, included below, of the refreshed SAC:

“To use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty with a focus on tackling the poverty related attainment gap.”

3.24 East Lothian Council's PEF allocation from April 2017 to March 2020 was £4,695,360. It also received the CECYP allocation equalling £332,400 between April 2019 and March 2020. In February 2020, 10.6% of P4-S6 pupils in East Lothian Council schools were registered for Free School Meals, an increase of 1.1 percentage points on the previous year. At the same point, 4.2% of pupils lived in Quintile 1 while 21.3% of pupils lived in Quintile 5. 1.4% of all pupils in East Lothian schools were recorded as being Care Experienced. In measuring poverty related gaps in East Lothian it should be noted that the numbers of pupils living in Quintile 1 is significantly less than those living in Quintile 5.

3.25 East Lothian Council's PEF allocation for 2022-23, based on the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge is approximately £2,175,124. This is based on:

- PEF allocation to schools: £1,775,025
- Care Experienced Young People Fund: estimated £200,000
- Strategic Equity Funding to local authority: £200,099

3.26 A short life working group will plan for the use of Scottish Equity Funding which over a four year period will give East Lothian almost £2M.

3.27 All East Lothian schools are supported by our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor and the Quality Improvement Team in the planning of Pupil Equity Fund resourced interventions. The interrogation and analysis of school based data and information provides schools with the opportunity to ensure that PEF resource is allocated in a targeted way to address individual pupils' barriers to attainment and wider achievement, and to address the poverty related attainment gap.

Progress with Reducing Inequalities - Key Successes and Next Steps

- 3.28 In order to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategy and school based interventions in reducing inequalities for pupils in SIMD Quintile 1, the Quality Improvement Team and Head Teachers have been able to regularly use live data and information to monitor in detail the attainment of this cohort of pupils.
- 3.29 During this current session, the ongoing analysis and evaluation of this data shows that East Lothian schools have reduced inequalities and improved outcomes for Quintile 1 pupils overall as a result of targeted interventions. Key measures to support this evaluation show that the average attendance rate for all Q1 pupils has remained consistently positive throughout the current session. The percentage of Quintile 1 pupils making good or very good progress in literacy and numeracy within the Broad General Education has continued to improve during this session. For June 2021, achievement levels for Q1 Senior Phase pupils, in terms of total tariff points, was higher than virtual comparator schools.
- 3.30 To further support the reduction in inequalities for pupils, and maintain a relentless focus on raising attainment next session, schools will focus on ensuring that their curriculum offer meets the needs and aspirations of all learners and provides the opportunity for pupils to achieve their potential.
- 3.31 Schools will also have a commitment to further develop professional knowledge, understanding and application of statutory guidance and policies to ensure a universal commitment to inclusive and equitable practice.
- 3.32 The Education Service is committed to the further development of learner voice at school and authority level to develop the potential of pupil leadership and to ensure that the UNCRC Rights of the Child are intrinsic to future policy development and service provision.
- 3.33 **Case Studies** – A case study from Pinkie St Peter’s Primary School and Sanderson’s Wynd Primary School and provides an overview and information relating to two Pupil Equity Fund interventions that have had a positive impact upon reducing inequalities for targeted pupils and have been lodged in the Members Library.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial –
Total PEF allocation to schools for 2022/23: £1,775,025
Care Experienced Young People Fund for 2022/23: estimated £200,000
Strategic Equity Funding to local authority for 2022/23: £200,099
- 6.2 Personnel - None
- 6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Case Studies – Pinkie St Peter's Primary School and Sanderson's Wynd Primary School have been lodged in the Members Library.

AUTHOR'S NAME	Nick Trussler
DESIGNATION	Quality Improvement Officer
CONTACT INFO	ntrussler@eastlothian.gov.uk
DATE	21 June 2022

Pupil Equity Funding Speech and Language Therapy Project

*Pinkie St. Peters' Primary School
August 2020-June 2021*

Background

In 2017 the Scottish Government released Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) directly to schools as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. This funding was targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap.

PEF Speech and Language Therapy projects have been developed due to the increasing evidence base highlighting that the presence of a language and communication gap in the early years can have a significant negative impact on children in later life (Dockrell et al. 2015) and speech, language and communication needs are the most common type of special educational need in 4-11 year old children (RCSLT 2016).

There is a significant link between children and young people living in areas of social disadvantage and lower levels of educational attainment when compared to their better off peers (Webber and Butler 2005). 50% of socioeconomically disadvantaged children lag behind their high-income counterparts at school entry by up to 16 months in vocabulary, and the gap in language skills is very much larger than gaps in other cognitive skills (Waldfogel and Washbrook 2010; Scottish Government 2015).

Senior Management Staff at Pinkie St. Peters Primary School used part of their PEF money to purchase 2 sessions (1 day per week) of Speech and Language Therapy time for the academic year 2020-2021. The aim of the PEF project was to focus on developing the social-emotional and oral language skills of the children in the early years. At the beginning of the project, this was to focus on supporting the children and staff in the nursery and P1.

Project Aims

- By June 2021, 85% of the nursery team will demonstrate use of 3/4 Adult-child interaction strategies during a live observation, in line with the Language Is Fun Together (LIFT) project.
- By June 2021, the number of Primary 1 children demonstrating adequate listening skills will have improved by 10%.
- By June 2021, children across Primary 1 will increase their vocabulary scores when retelling a story by 10%, to support their literacy development.
- By June 2021, over 50% of Primary 1 children assessed will be able to understand and respond to all 4 Blank Levels of questions.

The table on the following page outlines the interventions chosen, the evidence base for the chosen intervention, the level of support provided and the aims of these interventions.

Summary of Input in Pinkie St. Peters Nursery and Primary 2020-2021

Input	Evidence Base	Level of Support	Aim
Language is Fun Together (LIFT)	‘The central role of the parent is not to push massive amounts of language into the child’s ears...but to notice what is coming from the child and respond accordingly’ (Bronson and Merryman 2009). There is a direct link between ACI and early language development (Dockerell et al, 2004).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training to nursery staff • Regular face-to-face or virtual check-ins with staff to answer questions/problem-solve 	To develop staff’s understanding of communication difficulties and how best to support these using Adult-Child Interaction strategies.
Teaching Children to Listen	Learning to listen is a vital part of communication development and is the building block for playing and interacting with others, understanding, and talking. All these foundation skills need to be present for children to successfully develop literacy skills (Spooner and Woodcock 2019).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training to P1 teaching staff • Whole class approach, modelled by SLT to teachers and games carried out throughout the week 	To develop the listening skills of children in Primary 1, as a foundation for their learning and development of all other communication skills.
Pinkie Plays	Play is vital to a child’s development, and children learn a variety of skills through play; language and social development, problem solving and cognitive skills, etc. (UNICEF 2018). Symbolic play is a key pre-literacy skill, as children are being encouraged to develop language skills, in particular narrative skills, and organising their thoughts. Symbolic play in the early years parallels language development (Stagnitti, 2013).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual parent workshop in the importance and development of imaginative play skills • Weekly background information for staff on play development and how to support these skills in the classroom • Weekly information for parents and families on play and how to support this at home 	To develop an understanding in parents and teachers in the importance of play and how it develops and supporting children to develop their play skills.
Oral Storytelling	Oral language skills are crucial to development of literacy skills (Snow 1983). Narrative ability has been found to be a significant predictor of later academic performance (Fazio et al. 1993).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole class approach for P1, delivered by teachers and supported by SLT • Training to teaching staff about choosing stories and resourcing approach 	To develop children’s vocabulary and oral language skills, to in turn support their literacy skills.
Parental engagement	It was important to this project to ensure that the interventions being introduced at school were being supported at home. Parental engagement “has a significant positive effect on children’s achievement and adjustment even after all other factors shaping attainment have been taken out of the equation.” (Desforges 2003).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing what was being done during the project on twitter • Information sent out to parents via Google Meets 	To ensure that parents/carers were informed about the interventions being introduced to the school, and to share information about how best to support their children’s speech, language and communication needs at home.

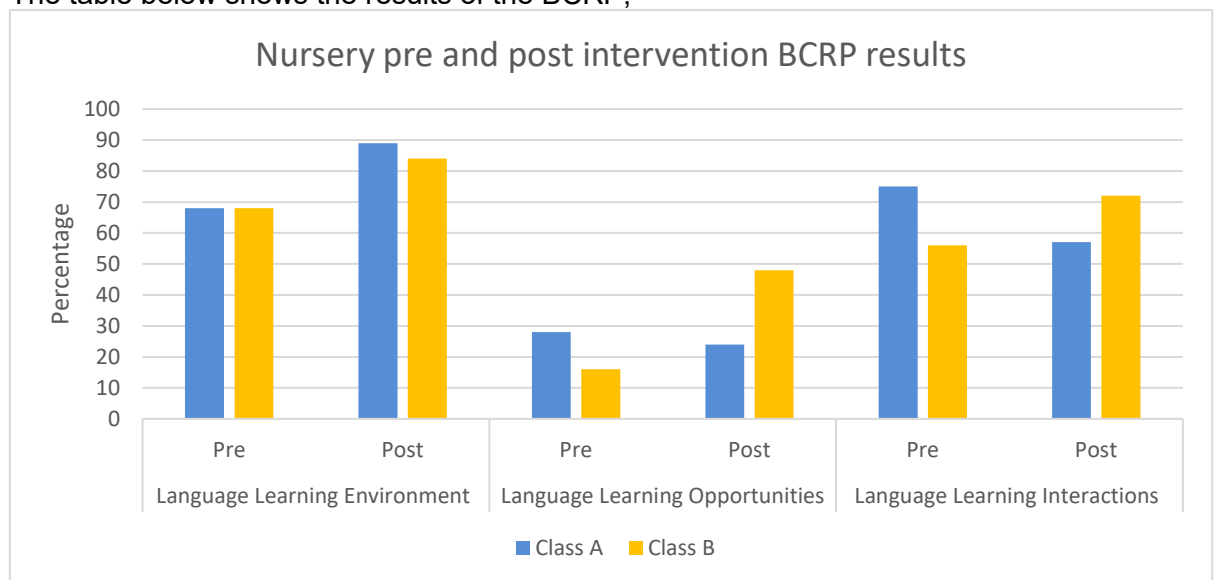
Language is Fun Together (LIFT)

Input:

The nursery staff received training in LIFT; looking at the importance of Adult-Child Interaction (ACI) on children's speech, language and communication development and the LIFT strategies for supporting interaction skills (see *Appendix 1*). As part of the LIFT project, each staff member was encouraged to choose one child to complete targeted ACI strategies with and measure the impact that using these strategies had on the child during their interactions. This was completed in the nursery rooms. Each staff member completed a pre and post intervention overview of the child's communication skills, to measure any areas of progress during the 6-week targeted ACI block (see *Appendix 2*). The LIFT programme also incorporates peer reviews through video feedback; where the staff record short videos of themselves interacting with a child and review the strategies they were using (see *appendix 3*). Information about the LIFT strategies was shared with the nursery parents via Twitter and on nursery notice boards once a week.

Measures:

The Overview of the Communication Supporting Classrooms Observation Tool (BCRP 2012) was completed on the 2 nursery rooms in October 2020, then again in June 2021, to evaluate the communication environments of the nursery rooms. This tool looks at 3 areas; Language Learning Environment (physical environment and learning context), Language Learning Opportunities (structured opportunities present in the classroom to support language development), and Language Learning Interactions (the way the adults talk with the children). The table below shows the results of the BCRP;



The results above demonstrate that both nursery classrooms were excellent environments for supporting language development – that included visual supports (timetables and environmental labels), well managed background noise and transitions and appropriate resources, toys, and books for supporting language development. Differences in the Language Learning Opportunities were dependent on what was happening during the observation, whether it was free-play time, or whether there were more structured opportunities with the adults, e.g. to engage in structured conversations, or engage in interactive book reading. However, room B in the second observation showed an increase in these types of opportunities. Both rooms showed significant improvements in their Language Learning Interactions across the year – an increase of 12% in Room A and 23% in Room B, which highlights the positive impact of the LIFT project on the Adult Child Interaction strategies being used by the staff. For example, staff were observed to be making more comments about what children were doing, reducing questions asked, or asking more open-ended questions to encourage conversation, and modelling new words for the children to use.

As part of the LIFT project, a Live observation of staff in the nursery took place in June, to assess how the strategies had been embedded in the room. Across both rooms, all staff

<p>Staff feedback:</p>	<p>members demonstrated that they were using at least 3 out of the 4 ACI strategies (face to face with child, following the child’s lead, asking few questions, using positive language building strategies), therefore achieving LIFT accreditation.</p> <p>Staff gave feedback on the impact of LIFT both through questionnaires, written feedback, and verbal feedback. On a wellbeing web, 100% of the nursery team reported that they were ‘very confident’ in using strategies to support children’s communication skills since participating in LIFT. The nursery team did a lot of reflection on the types of children to choose for targeted ACI, which was beneficial for them in identifying which children would get the most benefit from more specific support. When doing the targeted ACI in the playrooms, staff could at times find it challenging to focus on their chosen child when other children were around and wanting to also engage in the play. However, this also raised positive learning experiences such as waiting for your turn to talk. The staff commented that they felt there had been a positive impact in them being more actively involved in supporting the children’s communication skills; they could see the potential in some of the children and knew how to support them further. For some children they have seen positive changes in; building relationships, increased confidence, increased verbal, and non-verbal communication and building vocabulary.</p> <p>Amongst the staff team, there was a consensus that recapping adult-child interaction strategies proved to be positive, to keep them at the forefront of their minds during interactions in the playrooms. The team found that they were most aware of asking questions and changing this to making comments instead was challenging initially. They also reflected that some children may need to be given more time to respond to a question, and to give this time instead of answering their own question.</p>																
<p>Parent feedback:</p>	<p>Parents informally provided feedback on the LIFT strategies that they had found most useful, using sticky dots on the posters put up outside of the nursery door (<i>See appendix 4</i>). The table below highlights the responses from parents.</p> <div data-bbox="284 1093 1501 1653" data-label="Figure"> <table border="1"> <caption>Which strategy did you find most useful?</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Strategy</th> <th>Number of responses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Turn screen time into talking time</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Reduce questions</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Copy + 1 action or word</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Talk about what your child is doing</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Give your child time to think and talk</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Get face to face</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Let your child lead the play</td> <td>19</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Strategy	Number of responses	Turn screen time into talking time	6	Reduce questions	8	Copy + 1 action or word	8	Talk about what your child is doing	14	Give your child time to think and talk	13	Get face to face	15	Let your child lead the play	19
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<p>Next Steps:</p>	<p>The nursery team will continue with LIFT next year; reviewing progress in children they have been targeting this year and looking at new children entering the nursery who may benefit from targeted ACI. Children that they have concerns about will then have further evidence of progress/difficulties which can support a Request for Assistance to the SLT department. The team are also keen to continue to share the strategies with parents and now that they have achieved accreditation, they are able to deliver workshops to parents on these strategies. Targeted Talking Time language groups are also a priority in the nursery for the next academic year.</p>																

Teaching Children to Listen (TCTL)

Input:

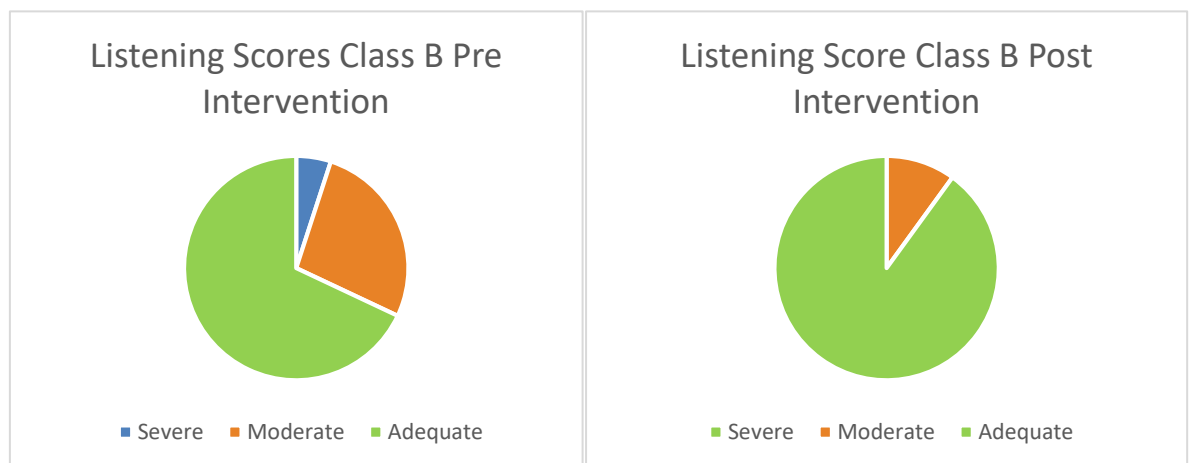
The P1 teachers were provided with a training session on the benefit of working on listening skills and the TCTL approach. In each classroom, activities were modelled around the 4 listening rules; Sitting still, Looking at the person who is talking, Staying quiet, Listening to all of the words (See Appendix 5). This was introduced universally; through whole class engaging games and activities, and information about how to embed the listening rules across the school day.

Measures:

Rating scales were completed at the beginning and end of the academic year by the SLT and teachers, to gather data on the children's listening skills. This identified the percentage of children in each class who demonstrated; severe (below 8), moderate (8-11) or adequate (above 12) listening skills, along with the average listening score in each class.

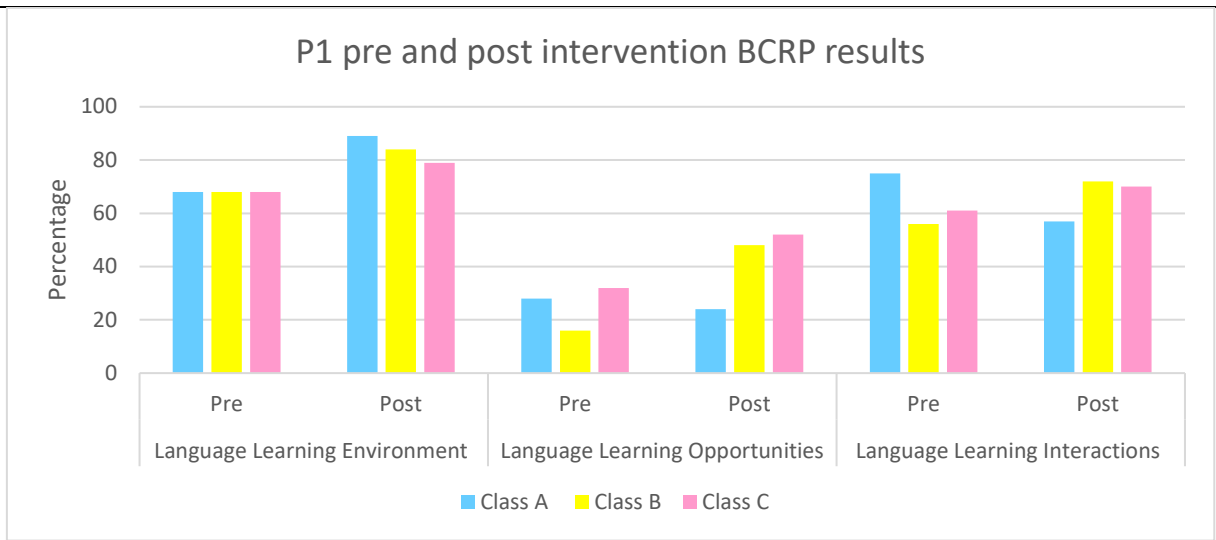
Class	Severe listening skills	Moderate listening skills	Adequate listening skills	Average listening score (out of 16)
A	5%	28%	67%	12
B	5%	27%	68%	12
C	14%	29%	57%	12

The pie charts below highlight the progress in 1 of the P1 classes from the beginning to the end of the year. Further data about the other classes can be gathered from the school, but all classes demonstrated improvements in the number of children showing 'adequate' listening skills. In class B, the total listening score increased from 221 pre intervention, to 290 post intervention, with the average listening score increasing from 12-15 across the year, an improvement of 19%. By the end of the year, none of the children in this class were felt to have 'severe' listening skills, and the number of children demonstrating 'adequate' listening skills increased by 22%.



The BCRP was completed in all 3 classrooms to gather more evidence about the language environments, opportunities, and interactions in the classrooms. The following table highlights positive improvements across all 3 language learning areas. Each classroom environment score increased; demonstrating an increased use of visual supports, and designated and well labelled areas for learning throughout the classrooms, with a wide range of learning materials, e.g. real/natural resources, role play areas, fiction and non-fiction books, and a range of books of different genres. The language learning opportunities highlighted staff engaging in more structured conversations with the children, interactive book reading and including all children in small group activities. The language learning interactions highlighted the staff using the TCTL strategies to praise good listening, and both verbal and non-verbal communication, using natural gestures and Signalong to aide communication skills and the teachers actively supporting vocabulary learning.

P1 pre and post intervention BCRP results



Staff feedback:

All 3 P1 teachers felt that the TCTL approach had benefited the children in their class, and they were using the language and praising the children for good listening skills across the teaching day, and not just whilst practising the games, or highlighting the listening rules. The teachers felt that the listening rules ‘looking at the person talking’ and ‘listening to all the words’ were the two that children made the most progress in, which was reflected in the data (in Class B the number of children achieving a score of 4/4 for ‘listening to all of the words’ increased from 4-13 across the year.

“The approach has benefitted the whole class as it was simple to introduce and deliver at a universal level. Additionally, it has supported individuals where the term ‘good listening’ is too complex – having the vocabulary and visuals to target specific skills has made listening more achievable for particular individuals who display SLCN.”

Due to the nature of this academic year, with disruptions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this was felt by some of the staff to have an impact upon the children’s listening skills;

“I feel the listening skills of my class have deteriorated compared to pre-lockdown, although this might just be to do with the late stage in the year. The children seem less able to listen to me or one another without interruption. I believe the lockdown break was responsible for some relapses with the children, but ultimately I feel the skills- particularly staying quiet and good sitting- still prove extremely difficult for at least half the class.”

“Upon return to school after periods of home schooling, I feel that the children have benefitted from Teaching Children to Listen input, reminding them of listening rules. Opportunities for turn taking in conversations has also been necessary as often children will talk and expect to be heard by their immediate audience, showing a frustration if they do not feel their voice is being heard.”

Feedback on the games and activities;
 “The children enjoyed all the games – they were quick, adaptable and engaging.”
 “The class loved all of the circle-time type games, particularly ‘what’s missing?’ (hidden items under a blanket), ‘giant’s keys’ and the listening game where each child has to say a different animal/ fruit etc. Some games were considerably easier for the children (like ‘who has changed?’) but they still enjoyed revisiting them again.”

Next Steps:

The school has been provided with the relevant resources and materials for continuing with TCTL next year. This will be carried on to P2 with this years’ P1 cohort and introduced to the new P1 cohort for 2021-2022.

Pinkie Plays

Input:

Following the return to school at the beginning of 2021 following further home schooling, it was not possible for the SLT to be in the school to provide interventions face to face. This, along with the need to gradually settle children back into the classroom, is where the idea for Pinkie Plays arose. The teaching staff were keen for a gentler play-based re-introduction to school, so we created a programme around this; integrating teaching methodologies around play development (schemas) with stages of imaginative play development. The Pinkie Plays programme involved using information and resources from Karen Stagnitti's Learn to Play programme (Stagnitti, 2013). Each week, a new area of imaginative play was targeted, alongside a language strategy. Resources were provided to the teachers with background about the development of that skill, and ideas of how to support this in the classroom. Information was also sent home each week to parents (*see Appendix 6*) with further ideas. A virtual workshop on the importance of and development of play skills was delivered to parents and teaching staff by the SLT.

The goals each week were as follows;

Week 1:

Play focus – doll/teddy/character play

Language strategy – modelling and using action words

Week 2:

Play focus – object substitution

Language strategy – descriptive vocabulary

Week 3:

Play focus – sequences of play actions

Language strategy – repeating and expanding language

Week 4:

Play focus – role play

Language strategy – Blank levels of questioning

Week 5:

Play focus – social interaction in play

Language strategy – developing social skills – eye contact, turn taking, etc.

Week 6:

Bringing it all together and reflection

Measures:

It wasn't possible to gather quantitative data on this intervention, however, the following quote from both teachers and the children highlight the positive impact that this had on all involved. The interventions were so successful that the P2 children and teachers became involved as well, and the information was shared across a wider audience. The quotes from the children highlight the great language being used during play as well. Parents and teachers posted weekly updates and photographs of the play both at home and at school on Twitter, to be shared with all, and the P1 team put together a presentation with photographs and quotes at the end of the term to highlight the success of the programme.

Staff feedback:

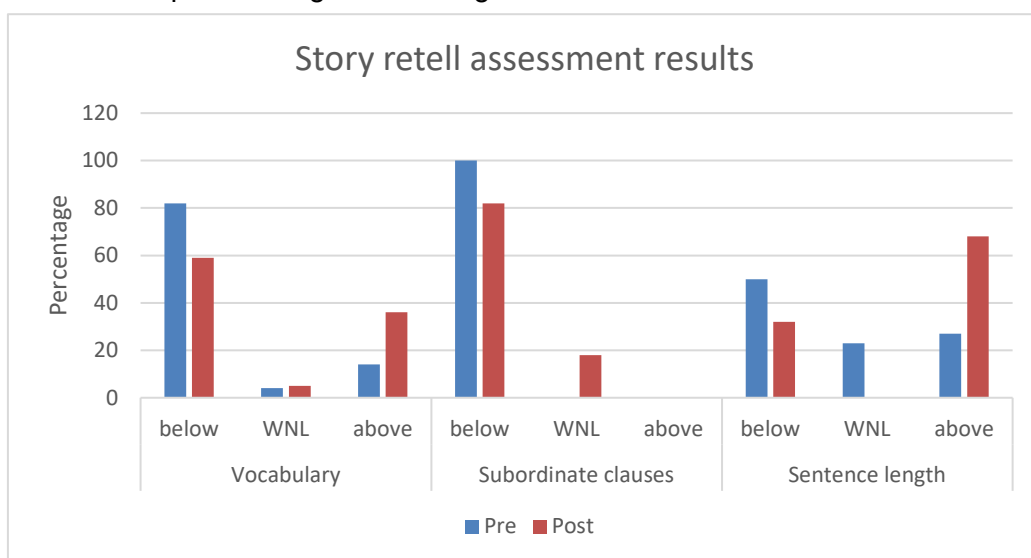
"The Pinkie Plays approach allowed us to keep children engaged when learning at home through launching the play at home week. Having a weekly focus with parent and staff guidance supported staff in recognising the different play types and how to extend this learning. It supported our engagement levels with the classroom, observing how children were interacting within different areas."

<p>Children's comments during play:</p>	<p>“The approach helped us to focus more on the actual learning outcomes we wanted to elicit and observe. Although we use a play-based approach every day it can tend to be less structured or without particular teaching and learning direction. The children simply enjoyed spending more quality time with their teacher in an informal, relaxed way, and were more comfortable with chatting and using their language to describe their actions/ what they were creating etc.”</p> <p>“I think Pinkie Plays could have been a permanent fixture across the whole year- it would have really helped me focus my resources and encouraged me to spend more quality time playing with the children.”</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; width: 30%; background-color: #e6f2ff;"> <p><i>Two girls playing hairdressers in the shop using doctors role play equipment to cut hair. “So, what can I do for you today?”.</i></p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; width: 30%; background-color: #e6f2ff;"> <p><i>“I found a ball in the imagination box - but you can't touch it without my fireproof glove.”</i></p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px; width: 20%; background-color: #e6f2ff;"> <p><i>“I'm taking the baby for a walk - Can you help me carry all of the nappies”.</i></p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; width: 20%; background-color: #e6f2ff;"> <p><i>“I'm a police and I'm going to protect the shop.”</i></p> </div> </div>
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<h3>Oral Storytelling</h3>	
<p>Input:</p>	<p>Oral Storytelling Sessions were delivered as a whole class approach for P1 in the summer term. All children participated in weekly sessions that were based on familiar fairy tales such as ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’ and ‘Little Red Riding Hood’ etc. Each story was covered over 3 weeks, to allow for lots of repetition of the vocabulary and story. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, it was not possible for the SLT to model these sessions initially, so the SLT provided training and resources for the approach, and the P1 teachers led these sessions. The SLT modelled a session once possible to do so in school again.</p> <p>The sessions aimed to promote the children’s understanding of narrative question words ‘who’, ‘where’, ‘what happened’ and ‘when’ and the children were also encouraged to develop their understanding of language during sessions by asking them questions based on Marion Blank’s Levels of Questioning (Blank et al. 1987). (See Appendix 7). For each story, a selection of targeted vocabulary words were taught and repeated throughout the sessions, encouraging the children to learn and use these new words in their retelling of the story. The children made story maps and the teaching staff used the story as a theme for their Big writing each week, whether this was writing about a character or creating an alternative ending to the story. During the retelling, the children used a range of props, e.g. puppets and masks to support their retell. Teaching staff also supported the children to expand the learning through a range of activities, and by supporting the learning of new vocabulary into everyday experiences (See Appendix 8).</p>
<p>Measures:</p>	<p>The impact of this approach was measured through formal assessments. The Renfrew Action Picture Test was used to measure the children’s ability to answer a range of Blank Levels of questions, and The Bus Story to measure the children’s narrative skills (story retell). When assessing narrative skills, this assessment looks at the information scores (content/vocabulary used in the children’s stories) and the number of subordinate clauses (complex sentences</p>

using words like ‘because’, ‘when’, ‘who’). The class teachers also completed questionnaires at the end of the year to gather more qualitative data on the impact of the approach.

At the beginning of the year assessments were completed on all P1 children (except those already known to SLT whom have more significant speech, language and communication needs, or those children where English is an additional language, due to the requirements of the assessments). At the end of the year it was decided to re-assess a sample of children from each classroom; children from a range of academic abilities, to measure impact of the approach on their language skills. These scores are based on a sample of 22 children across the 3 P1 classes. The children are scored on whether they achieve below/within normal limits/above the expected range for their age.



As can be seen from the graph, children’s storytelling skills improved over the course of the year, with 41% of children’s information scores falling within or above normal limits for their age, compared to 18% previously. At the beginning of the year none of the children assessed used a complex sentence (subordinate clause) within their retell, but by the end of the year, 18% were able to use an appropriate number of complex sentences for their age. The most significant change in language skills was in the children’s sentence length. At the beginning of the year 50% of children’s sentence length was below the expected range for their age, and by the end of the year 68% of children achieved a score above the average range for their age. Informally, this was also observed during the classroom and on assessment; the children were able to demonstrate increased confidence in retelling a story, they included more vocabulary, talked in longer sentences, and almost all children started their stories with “Once upon a time.”

On the Renfrew Action Picture Test, children achieving vocabulary scores within the expected range for their age rose from 55-59%, with 9% of children achieving scores above the expected range for their age. Age-appropriate or above age-appropriate grammar scores rose from 59% to 86%, again showing significant improvements in the language skills of the children.

There was also a marked improvement in the children’s understanding and ability to respond to all 4 Blank Levels of Questions. Pre-intervention 27% of children were able to respond to questions asked at all 4 levels, which would be expected for children around 5 years of age. This rose to 59% post intervention.

Staff feedback:

“Oral storytelling approach has had a significant impact on our teaching and consequently the learning. The sessions were well planned, easy to follow and resourced to provide us with a starting point to develop our own resources. It provided a sequence of engaging literacy lessons which we could then use as our writing stimulus. The children are very confident in

	<p>the approach and all can retell the stories with varying degrees of support. It has also supported in our approach to writing and we have seen vast improvements in the quality and quantity some of the children are writing now due to their increase in confidence.”</p> <p>“The children have loved focusing on stories of which they already have some knowledge, and the children I focused on in class really surprised (and delighted!) me in the structured way they could retell the stories independently, and the level of detail they could include. I believe it has encouraged them to think about their language and actions in a more structured way. They also loved the questioning and role-play activities, elements of P.1 I have found difficult to encourage in previous years (especially role-play in front of the class).”</p> <p>“ Big Writing – same stimulus for 3 weeks with a different writing focus meant that the children experienced lots of literacy input, contributed to class word bank, re-enacted the story through play, created alternative endings, performed puppet shows and lots more – all of this meant that when the children sat down to write they had first-hand experience and had something to say/write! A huge impact on both learners and teaching!”</p> <p>“We used the Story Map activities and other writing tasks (such as create a new character and write a different ending) for our Big Writing activities. I provided different craft and painting activities every week for each story which were always popular, particularly with a group of about 7-8 children. We also used our grounds to introduce stories, most notably Billy Goats Gruff at the bridge over the burn. We also made bread in class after reading The Little Red Hen and the class really loved tasting freshly baked bread (a new experience for many of them).”</p>
Next Steps:	<p>Resources and information about the approach and a range of stories has been provided to the school. It is recommended that for the next years’ P1 cohort that this approach is introduced earlier in the year to be able to embed the approach further, and support the children’s oral narrative skills.</p>

Conclusion:

Overall, this has been felt to be a successful project by all involved and all aims have been met and, in some cases, exceeded. The comments included in the report by the teaching staff show how the interventions have been embedded and have been felt to be successful. Results from the language assessments and Oral Storytelling approach highlight the benefits and successes of implementing this kind of structured approach to oral language development in the early years to close the language and attainment gap. This approach has had a significant impact both upon the teaching staff and the children receiving this intervention.

Despite this being a challenging year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and a lot of changes for both staff and children with home and school-based learning, it has been really positive to see the impact upon the interventions that have been possible to implement and embed. Feedback from the staff throughout the project highlighted that they had more opportunities to trial interventions without the SLT which in turn created opportunities for self-reflection and creative thinking. The staff teams across both the nursery and P1 have demonstrated the benefits of creating an inclusive communication environment in the classrooms and creating opportunities and positive interactions with the children to support speech, language, and communication skills development.

Pinkie St. Peters Primary School are continuing to work towards embedding the interventions and approaches that have been introduced. They have ensured these will be sustained, by including these interventions in their School Improvement Plan for the following academic year.

The Speech and Language Department and staff at Pinkie St. Peters Primary School will continue to liaise regarding the whole school universal and targeted interventions introduced, to support in measuring impact and evaluating changes in educational attainment in the children.

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List of Appendices:

- 1. LIFT strategies**
- 2. LIFT checklists**
- 3. LIFT peer reflection tool**
- 4. LIFT feedback**
- 5. Teaching Children to Listen – Listening rules posters**
- 6. Pinkie Plays examples**
- 7. Marion Blank's levels of questioning**
- 8. Oral Storytelling examples**

Appendix 1: LIFT strategies

Use the traffic lights to help build children's language skills!

RED

STOP and **LOOK** at
what the child is doing
WAIT for them to start
the interaction
LET THE CHILD LEAD
the play

AMBER

LISTEN to the child
Give them lots of **TIME**
to think and talk

GREEN

DESCRIBE what the
child is doing
COPY and **EXTEND** their
action/words
Keep **QUESTIONS** to a
minimum

Remember positive language building strategies

KEEP IT SIMPLE! Use short sentences + pause while the child is
thinking



ADD LANGUAGE Repeat what the child has said and add 1 word



COMMENT! Turn questions into comments. Remember the 5 finger
rule, 4 comments to 1 question!



Appendix 2: LIFT checklist examples

Name _____ Date _____ ACI block _____

To be completed before and after a block of Adult Child Interaction



Language and Communication checklist								
(refer to key word assessment to complete the following section)	Before ACI				After ACI			
	Not Yet	A little	Often	All the time	Not Yet	About the Same	A little more	Lots more
Understanding								
Understands the use of objects for what is happening next (i.e. when shown a plate, he/she knows its lunchtime)								
Understands the steps involved in a regular routine (i.e. wash hands, sit down for snack, put plate in the sink, etc.)								
Understands and follow gestures, e.g. follows a point, gesture for 'come here', sit down, etc.								
Follows instructions with 1 key word (i.e. can give you objects you ask for at any time and in any situation without you pointing)								
Understands sentences with 2 key words e.g. Give a book to Susan								
Can follow simple actions e.g. hide, jump, sleep, wear								
Understands some describing words e.g. long, short, blue, fast, dry								
Understands sentences with 3 important key words "Get the <i>big spoon</i> out of the <i>drawer</i> ."								
Understands sentences with 4 important key words "Put the <i>big teddy</i> under the <i>table</i> ."								
Can understand instructions given to a group of children								

Targeted Adult Child Interaction (ACI) Child's name: _____ DOB: _____ Block number _____



Remember to... Let the child choose the play; try not to talk straight away; keep leaving lots of quiet pauses and describe what the child is doing.

	Date	Any Comments		Best 3 phrases/words of the session
Week 1		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	
Week 2		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	
Week 3		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	
Week 4		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	
Week 5		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	
Week 6		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	
Week 7		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	
Week 8		<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates the play <input type="checkbox"/> Looks at the adult during play <input type="checkbox"/> Copies words/phrases	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates some talking <input type="checkbox"/> Takes turns talking <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to enjoy the play	



Appendix 3: LIFT Peer reflection tool

Reflection Tool: Adult-Child Interaction

Name _____ Date of peer support session _____ Session number: _____

With your peer, watch your video **twice**:

1. The first time, **both of you** should observe your general impressions. Complete the column on the right (yellow boxes).
 2. The second time, **you** should count the number of times you use each of the following types of utterance (orange boxes);
 - Asking questions
 - Directing the child/ making suggestions
- Your peer** should record the number of times you use the following techniques (green boxes);
- Repeating and extending what the child says/ copying the child/ praising the child
 - Saying something about what the child is doing

ASKING QUESTIONS	DIRECTING CHILD/ SUGGESTIONS	COPY CHILD / REPEAT + 1/ PRAISE CHILD	SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT CHILD IS DOING	Face to face?	Y / N
				Giving the child extra time to think and talk?	Y / N
				Using language at the right level for the child?	Y / N

Count up your scores. Following a dialogue with your peer, write down;

1. Key strength/s _____
2. Identified areas for development (general) _____
3. Learning goal (specific) _____

Appendix 4; Parent feedback on LIFT strategies



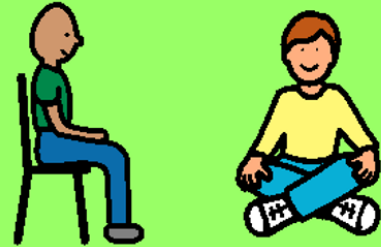
Appendix 5: Teaching Children to Listen – Listening Rules Posters

Good Listening is



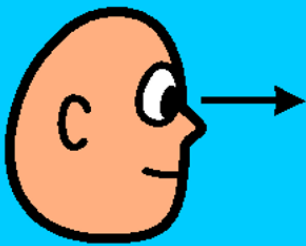
Listening to all the words

Good Listening is



Good Sitting

Good Listening is




Looking towards the person who is talking

Good Listening is




Staying Quiet

Appendix 6: Pinkie Plays – examples of parent handouts








Pinkie Plays



Welcome to week 1! This week we are focussing on...
Doll/teddy/character play

A character can be anything...

You can help your child develop their character by:

- Helping them give their character a name
- Talk about what the character likes to do
- Play with the character—they might do things your child likes to do, or do different things
- Talk about how the character is feeling, e.g. happy, cheeky, tired, etc.
- Talk to the character! Does it talk to your child or does it have it's own voice?


During character play, try using different types of **action words** (doing words), to talk about what the character is doing.

gobbled	created	splashed	dived
stomped	snoring	laughing	
roared	hid	sprinting	hopping
		poured	


"Teddy **gobbled** up his lunch."

Try to avoid action words like 'put' or 'do'. Instead, show your child how to use new and more interesting action words.

*Please share what you have been playing with your teacher!
#pinkieplays*




Pinkie Plays



Welcome to week 4! This week we are focussing on...
Role play


This is where your child acts out a different 'role' or character in their play, e.g. Mum/Dad, pirate, teacher, astronaut, etc. As this part of their play develops, your child will move from being different roles during play, to sticking to one role throughout the game.


You can help your child by:



Showing them how to act out that role and pretending to be the character too.

Talking about what different characters/roles do, objects they need, things they might say.






Playing dress-ups and having fun!

Think about **questions** when you're playing with your child. Questions are really important—children need to understand different types of questions and how to respond to them.


BUT...sometimes we can ask too many questions, and it can feel like a test! Try the following:

- **Think about the kinds of questions you ask your child.** Are they open-ended (What's going to happen to the astronaut?) or closed-ended (What's this?). Try asking more open-ended questions, as this will help your child talk more.
- **Try not to ask too many questions.** Every so often, can you turn a question into a comment? For example; instead of saying "What are you building?" you could say "I see you're building something really cool/big," etc. This will help to open up more of a conversation with your child.
- **Give your child plenty of time** after you ask a question. They might need time to think about what you said, or how they can answer your question.
- **Some questions are harder than others.** When/How/Why? questions are much harder than Who/What/Where? If your child doesn't answer your question, try to make it an easier question for them, or give them the answer to help them learn how to respond.

*Please share what you have been playing with your teacher!
#pinkieplays*




Pinkie Plays



Welcome to week 5! This week we are focussing on...
Social interaction


Social interaction skills are really important for your child in developing friendships and communicating with others, for their self confidence and self-esteem. As your child's play develops, they will move from playing alone, to copying you/other children in play. Around nursery-age children will play alongside/parallel to their friends, then as their language develops they will start playing cooperatively, and use their language to negotiate in play.


Did you know that up to 80% of the way we communicate is non-verbal?! So these are really important skills for your child to learn;



Eye contact


Facial expressions






Pointing, gestures and body language


Ideas for developing these skills:



Encourage sharing and taking turns. Your child might enjoy playing turn taking games at home, or in the park.



Talk about feelings and facial expressions, e.g. "I can see you are feeling... (angry/sad/happy, etc.) and encourage your child to notice this in other people too. You could play games where you have to guess how other person is feeling, or use story books to talk about the character's feelings. This is really important for helping them to develop their social skills.



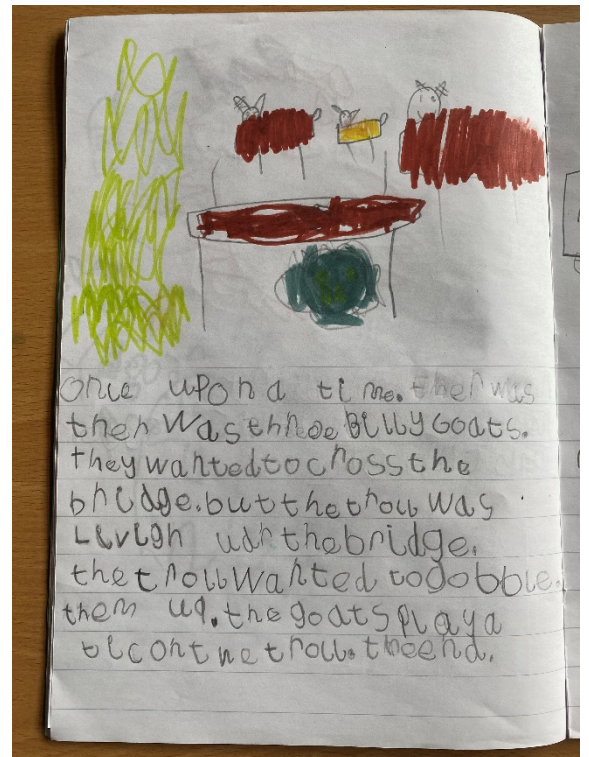
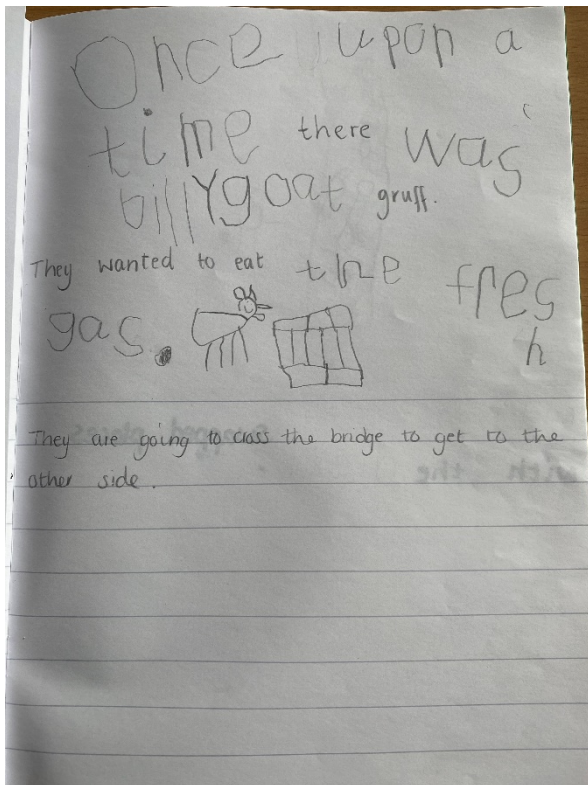
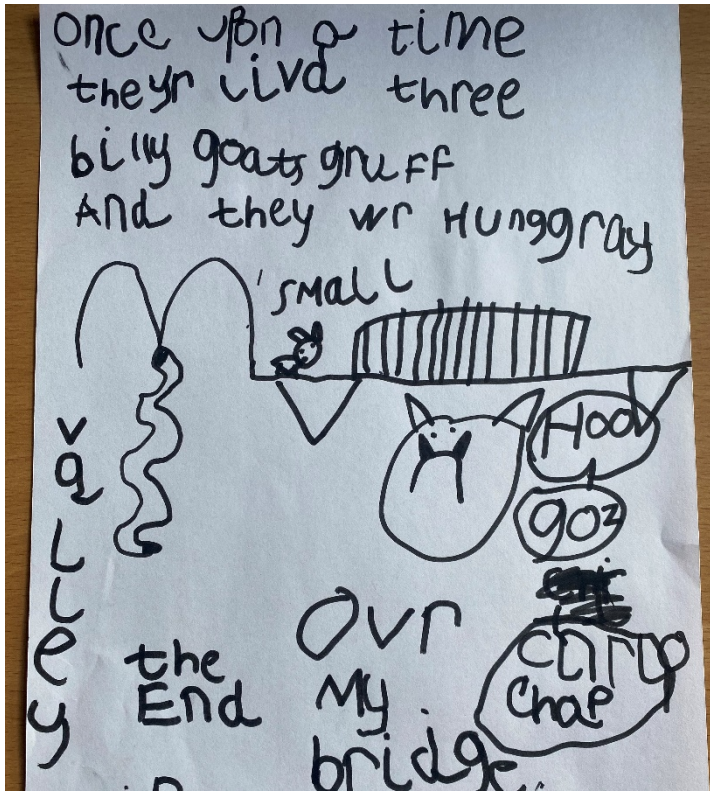
Get face to face with your child when talking and playing with them. This will help them make eye contact with you.

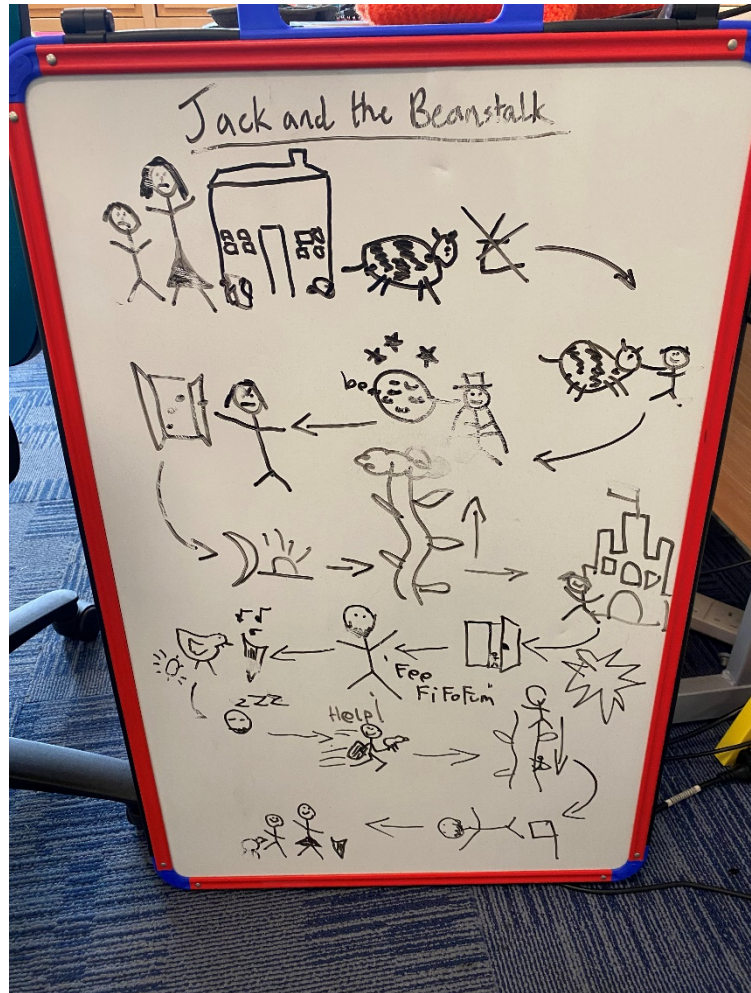
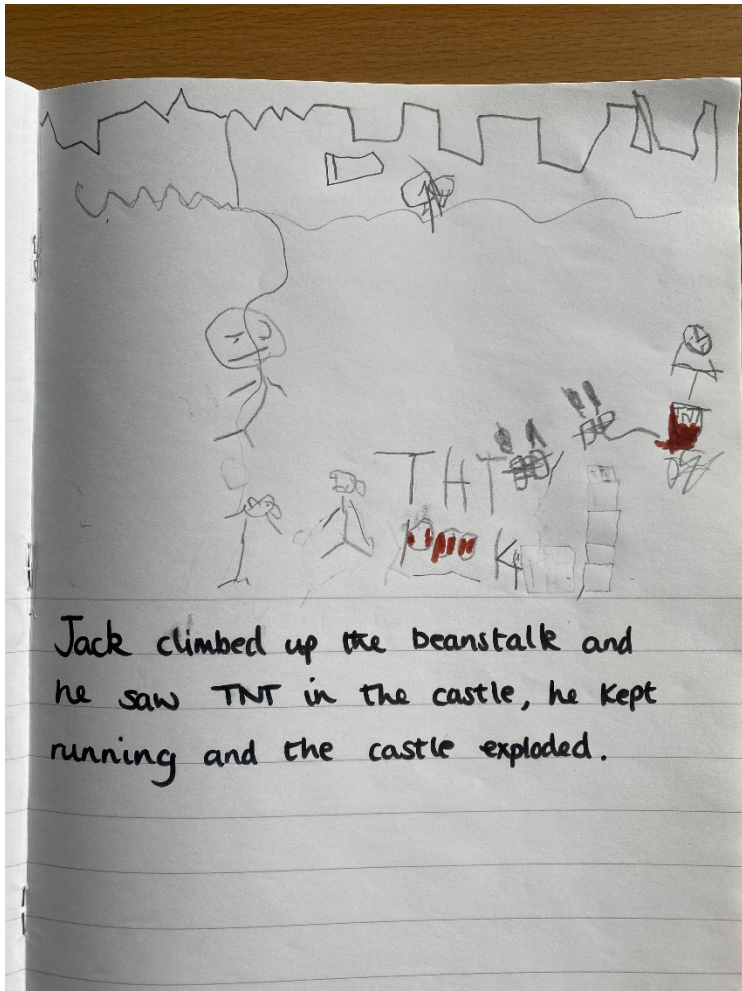
*Please share what you have been playing with your teacher!
#pinkieplays*

Appendix 7: Blank's Levels of Questioning

Blank level	Examples of questions	Typically developed by
<p><u>Level 1 – Naming</u></p> <p>Matching the language to directly what you see</p>	<p>Point to an object, e.g. Point to an apple</p> <p>Match an object, e.g. Find another one like this</p> <p>Name an object, e.g. What is this?</p>	2-3 years
<p><u>Level 2 – Describing</u></p> <p>Still matching language to what is seen, but now focussing more on parts or details. Includes descriptive language, understanding concepts (size, colour, shape, etc.), understanding and describing object functions and understanding and responding to simple “wh” questions</p>	<p>Function, e.g. Which one do you sleep in?</p> <p>Finish the sentence, e.g. You eat with a...</p> <p>Categorisation, e.g. Name another fruit</p> <p>Concepts, e.g. Find a red ball</p> <p>Show a picture and ask Who? Where? What? e.g. Where is the...?</p> <p>What goes together, e.g. A bucket and a...</p>	3-4 years
<p><u>Level 3 – Retelling – talking about stories and events</u></p> <p>Using knowledge to make simple predictions, links or generalisations. The child starts to use higher level language skills at this stage, sequence language and talk about how someone else might feel</p>	<p>Prediction, e.g. What might happen next?</p> <p>How does a character feel, e.g. How does a character feel?</p> <p>What might a character say, e.g. “What is Dad saying to the baby?”</p> <p>Re-telling a story, e.g. Can you put the cards into order and tell me the story</p>	4-5 years
<p><u>Level 4 – Justifying and Problem Solving</u></p> <p>This stage relies on the child’s own knowledge, experience and ability to think about the past and the future. The child will have to justify why something has happened and make connections.</p>	<p>Predicting changes, e.g. What would happen if...</p> <p>Causes, e.g. How did that happen?</p> <p>Justifying, e.g. Why can’t we go out in the rain?</p> <p>Explanations, e.g. How can you tell she is happy?</p> <p>Inference, e.g. How can you tell it is a new football?</p>	5-6 years

Appendix 8: Oral Storytelling examples







Pupil Equity Funding Speech and Language Therapy Project at

Pinkie St. Peters' Primary School

August 2020-June 2021 and beyond

Context - In August 2020, Nursery and P1 children 47.9% were in SIMD 2 and 3. We had no children in SIMD 1.

There is a significant link between children and young people living in areas of social disadvantage and lower levels of educational attainment when compared to their better off peers (Webber and Butler 2005). 50% of socioeconomically disadvantaged children lag behind their high-income counterparts at school entry by up to 16 months in vocabulary, and the gap in language skills is very much larger than gaps in other cognitive skills (Waldfogel and Washbrook 2010; Scottish Government 2015).

Following professional dialogue with nursery and early level staff it was apparent that children were coming into our setting unable to communicate effectively and had poor social and emotional and oral language skills. In our nursery setting we did not have any hard data but our skilled practitioners knew our children and families and we looked beyond the P1 data.

In September 2020 when we tracked our P1 children in SIMD 2 and 3, 50% were meeting expected progress in Listening and Talking, whereas 67% were meeting expected progress in general (SIMD 1-10), showing a poverty related attainment gap in Listening and Talking of 17%.

Creating our curriculum rationale at Pinkie

The Senior Leadership Team contacted the SALT team who put us in touch with Linzi Fowler, SLT. We created a contract with Linzi over and above the authority's service level agreement with SALT bespoke to our school's context – we knew we needed something but didn't know what.

Senior Management Staff at Pinkie St. Peters Primary School used part of their PEF money to purchase 2 sessions (1 day per week) of Speech and Language Therapy time for the academic year 2020-2021. The aim of the PEF project was to focus on developing the social-emotional and oral language skills of the children in the early years. At the beginning of the project, this was to focus on supporting the children and staff in the nursery and P1.

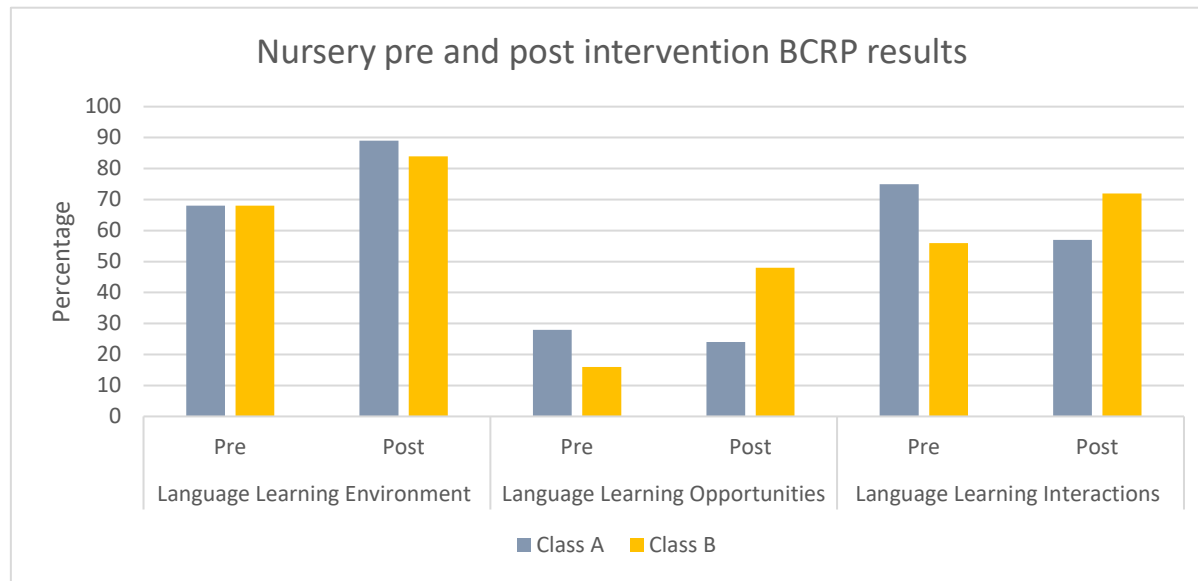
Project Aims

- By June 2021, 85% of the nursery team will demonstrate use of 3/4 Adult-child interaction strategies during a live observation, in line with the Language Is Fun Together (LIFT) project.
- By June 2021, the number of Primary 1 children demonstrating adequate listening skills will have improved by 10%.
- By June 2021, children across Primary 1 will increase their vocabulary scores when retelling a story by 10%, to support their literacy development.
- By June 2021, over 50% of Primary 1 children assessed will be able to understand and respond to all 4 Blank Levels of questions.

What we did:

Input	Evidence Base	Level of Support	Aim
Language is Fun Together (LIFT)	‘The central role of the parent is not to push massive amounts of language into the child’s ears...but to notice what is coming from the child and respond accordingly’ (Bronson and Merryman 2009). There is a direct link between ACI and early language development (Dockerell et al, 2004).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training to nursery staff • Regular face-to-face or virtual check-ins with staff to answer questions/problem-solve 	To develop staff’s understanding of communication difficulties and how best to support these using Adult-Child Interaction strategies.
Teaching Children to Listen	Learning to listen is a vital part of communication development and is the building block for playing and interacting with others, understanding, and talking. All these foundation skills need to be present for children to successfully develop literacy skills (Spooner and Woodcock 2019).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training to P1 teaching staff • Whole class approach, modelled by SLT to teachers and games carried out throughout the week 	To develop the listening skills of children in Primary 1, as a foundation for their learning and development of all other communication skills.
Pinkie Plays	Play is vital to a child’s development, and children learn a variety of skills through play; language and social development, problem solving and cognitive skills, etc. (UNICEF 2018). Symbolic play is a key pre-literacy skill, as children are being encouraged to develop language skills, in particular narrative skills, and organising their thoughts. Symbolic play in the early years parallels language development (Stagnitti, 2013).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual parent workshop in the importance and development of imaginative play skills • Weekly background information for staff on play development and how to support these skills in the classroom • Weekly information for parents and families on play and how to support this at home 	To develop an understanding in parents and teachers in the importance of play and how it develops and supporting children to develop their play skills.
Oral Storytelling	Oral language skills are crucial to development of literacy skills (Snow 1983). Narrative ability has been found to be a significant predictor of later academic performance (Fazio et al. 1993).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole class approach for P1, delivered by teachers and supported by SLT • Training to teaching staff about choosing stories and resourcing approach 	To develop children’s vocabulary and oral language skills, to in turn support their literacy skills.
Parental engagement	It was important to this project to ensure that the interventions being introduced at school were being supported at home. Parental engagement “has a significant positive effect on children’s achievement and adjustment even after all other factors shaping attainment have been taken out of the equation.” (Desforges 2003).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing what was being done during the project on twitter • Information sent out to parents via Google Meets 	To ensure that parents/carers were informed about the interventions being introduced to the school, and to share information about how best to support their children’s speech, language and communication needs at home.

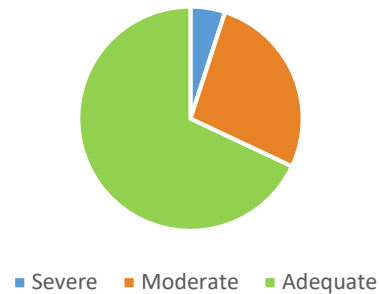
Language is Fun Together (LIFT)



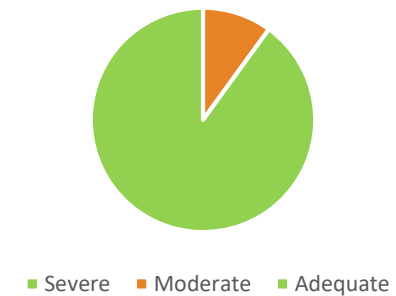
Teaching Children to Listen (TCTL)

Class	Severe listening skills	Moderate listening skills	Adequate listening skills	Average listening score (out of 16)
A	5%	28%	67%	12
B	5%	27%	68%	12
C	14%	29%	57%	12

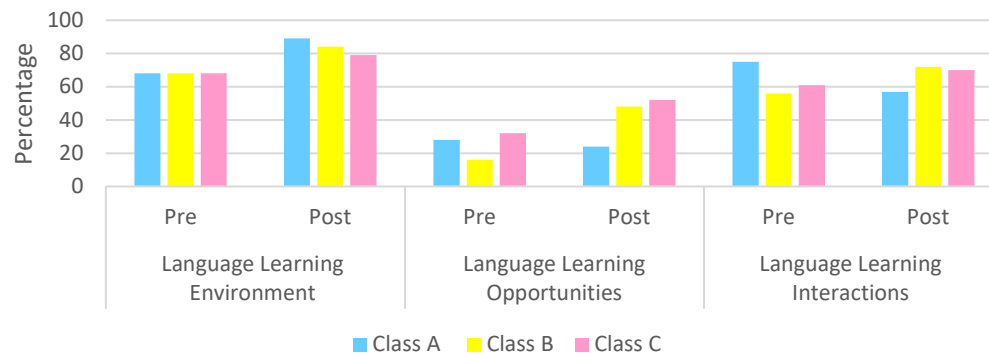
Listening Scores Class B Pre Intervention



Listening Score Class B Post Intervention



P1 pre and post intervention BCRP results





Pinkie Plays



Welcome to week 1! This week we are focussing on...

Doll/teddy/character play

A character can be anything...



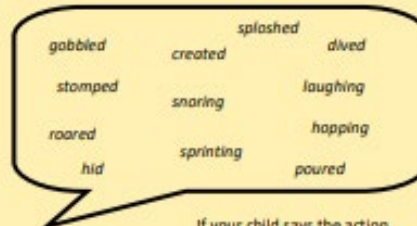
You can help your child develop their character by:

- Helping them give their character a name
- Talk about what the character likes to do
- Play with the character—they might do things your child likes to do, or do different things
- Talk about how the character is feeling, e.g. happy, cheeky, tired, etc.
- Talk to the character! Does it talk to your child or does it have it's own voice?

During character play, try using different types of **action words** (doing words), to talk about what the character is doing.

"Teddy **gobbled** up his lunch."

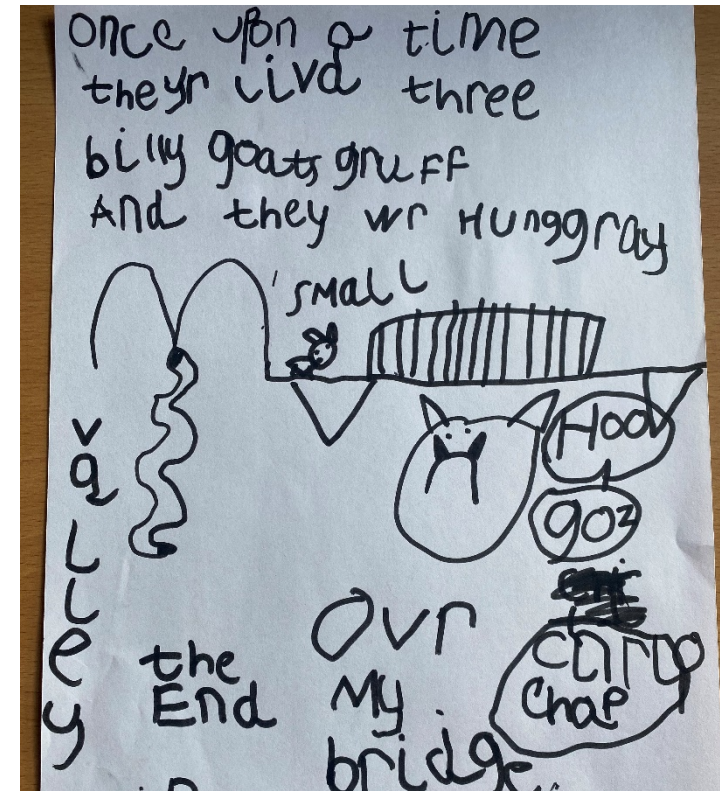
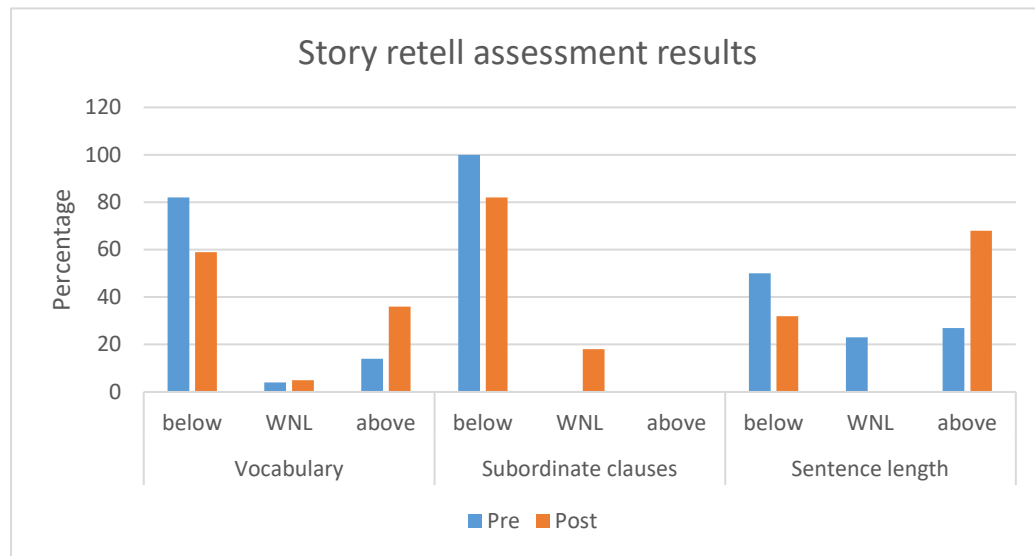
Try to avoid action words like 'put' or 'do'. Instead, show your child how to use new and more interesting action words.



If your child says the action word wrong, e.g. 'runned' instead of 'ran' just repeat the word back to them in the correct way!

Please share what you have been playing with your teacher!
#pinkieplays

Oral Storytelling



Impact of Interventions on Pupils

In July 2021 when we tracked our P1 children in SIMD 2 and 3, 76.7% were meeting expected progress (had achieved Early Level), whereas, 83.6% were meeting expected progress in general (SIMD 1-10), showing a poverty related attainment gap in Listening and Talking of 6.9%.

What's next?

- Continuation in our School Improvement Plan to further embed approaches
- Part of our curriculum rational and 'Pinkie Way'
- Lead Learners in these areas
- Focus at attainment discussion data
- Focus of progress between a level
- Look at impact on other areas of literacy

Sanderson's Wynd Primary School – PEF Case Study



Context

Sanderson's Wynd Primary School is one of 3 schools that serves the town of Tranent. Sanderson's Wynd has 13 classes from P1-P7, an Early Years Centre which operates on the 48 week model and 4 classes in The Hub, which is an authority provision for children with ASD and Severe and Complex Needs. Although the Hub is an authority provision, it is very much at the heart of the school community and benefits from the PEF funding the school receives.

The school has a very mixed demographic. From a mainstream roll of 310 children, the school has 126 children (40.6%) living in Quintile 1. The Senior Leadership Team within the school are aware that this is a conservative number given that there are numerous families living in private lets/rented accommodation in higher decile areas, living in hidden poverty, some of which are just above the threshold for receiving benefits and are surviving by working 2 and 3 jobs. The 93 children in receipt of FSM/Clothing grants is also lower than the school knows it should be and the Senior Leadership Team are signposting supports to families as required. In addition to this, 33% of the school population have a recognised additional support need.

PEF Allocation:

2021/2022: £109,000

2022/2023: £84,240



Sanderson's Wynd

Challenges and Key Drivers

- Lower levels of attainment - Literacy in particular
- Children's readiness to learn
- 33% of children with a recognised additional support need across the school
- Hidden additional support needs across school – undiagnosed
- Social and emotional challenges due to trauma - ACE's, pandemic related, community issues, mental health (children and parents/carers)
- Poverty and hidden poverty
- Impact of lockdowns – bereavements, anxiety, lack of social experiences, reduced contact with peers, parents juggling with working from home at the same time as home schooling, caring responsibilities (Families and staff)

What we wanted:

- To raise attainment within Literacy
- For children to be effectively supported within their classrooms as a universal approach
- For children to be emotionally regulated and feel supported
- For families to feel known, to experience key relationships and to feel supported effectively by school

What is Working?

Nurture Group - Whole School Nurture Approach (No additional cost)

In 2016, the school invested a significant amount of their PEF money in creating a Nurture Room. This was much needed due to the level of distressed behaviour being seen across the school and the impact that this was having on Learning and Teaching. The staff were extremely well trained in the Nurture Principles and the room was resourced and set up as per the Nurture guidelines.

The Nurture groups targeted 6 children as part of a morning session and 6 children as part of the afternoon session. Boxall assessments were used to identify the children who would most benefit from a Nurture intervention, to identify areas to work on and as a tool to assess and measure progress. The majority of children attending the Nurture groups had a lovely experience and made some progress. However, the school also experienced a few children, who going by the data, required a higher level of support. They were still showing extremely distressed behaviour, even within the smaller group environment.

Whilst it was evident that there was some progress, there was very little evidence of transference of skills from the Nurture Room into the classroom environment and very little improvement in their engagement. Through classroom observations, looking at the data and looking at the needs of the children within the school, there needed to be a whole school intervention focusing on developing positive, motivated and resilient learners who have more confidence, self-belief and high aspirations for themselves.

The Senior Leadership Team and staff felt that following a whole school Nurturing approach would have the greatest impact on the learners. All staff (teaching and support staff) undertook learning, supported by the school's Educational Psychologist, to gain a knowledge and understanding of the Nurture Principles and how to apply these in the classroom setting.

School also bought into the 'Building Resilience' programme to support the work happening in classrooms. An Educational Psychologist within the council, supported the roll out of this and ensured the Acting Principal Teacher, who took responsibility of this at school level, was adequately trained. This has supported the children in learning about themselves and gaining skills linked to building their own resilience.

The school has focused on embedding the Nurture principles within the classrooms to ensure that there is a consistency to approach for the learners in the school.

Outcome/Impact:

- The majority of children are now being very well supported within their classrooms using the Nurture principles and CIRCLE document as guidance. The school's Quality

Improvement Officer and Educational Psychologist have validated the school's self-evaluation that improvements have been made in this area.

- The quality of learning and teaching has improved due to less distressed behaviour being evident within the classrooms. Where distressed behaviour does occur, staff support the learners well, in line with Council and School policy. Staff feel supported by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Clear expectations and the predictability of how things will be managed and dealt with support our learners and staff
- Nurture sits at the heart of our school visions and values – this helps everyone feel heard, understood, supported and most importantly, loved.

Strong and robust universal approaches to supporting learning across the school (No additional cost)

Additional Support for Learning – 1:1, small group, team teaching, Well-being groups, Literacy groups

There are a wide range of children with identified additional support needs within Sanderson's Wynd Primary School (33%). In addition to this, the school are very aware that there are a significant amount of children in classes across the school who are undiagnosed.

In order to make any PEF interventions successful, it was essential that the appropriate procedures and processes were in place, at a universal level, to support all learners.

SLT, along with the SfL team, reviewed the processes and procedures in place for supporting learners with Additional Support Needs (e.g dyslexia, ASD, ADHD, dyspraxia etc). The previous SfL model involved individuals and small groups being extracted to work on particular targets. There were no measurements of success recorded to look at value added and it was extremely difficult to be able to gauge impact.

Actions:

- Triage system set up with representatives from SFL and SLT to look at individual referrals.
- Referrals identify any important characteristics (e.g SIMD, Care Experienced) and in addition to this, previous strategies that have been tried/used. Teacher identifies the next steps in learning for the pupil along with assessment data to show where the gaps are.
- SFL team plan for short interventions and these are planned against a Learning Intention and Success Criteria and are evaluated with assessment data to support evaluations.
- Teaching staff and support staff training, to upskill staff with supporting learners. Support staff meetings focused on areas of development – linked to School priorities.
- Team Teaching to support learners where appropriate. Also opportunities to release class teachers to work with individuals and groups whilst SFL teacher teaches class.
- Literacy Profile that identify strengths and strategies for learners as well as diagnosis e.g DLD, dyslexia.
- Small group work sessions and 1:1 sessions where appropriate targeting Literacy and Health and Wellbeing

Outcome/Impact

- Visible consistencies within classrooms – support learners in being successful
- Classrooms environments equipped to support children with additional support needs, with equipment (e.g sloping boards, wobble cushions, sensory) and also common strategies (e.g visual timetables, movement breaks, sensory play, coloured backgrounds on Interactive Whiteboard) This ensures that there is an expectation of almost every child's needs being met at a universal level; even supporting children with undiagnosed additional support needs.
- Clear process in place for identifying support for children who require it, along with clear assessment and evaluation of interventions. Staff are clear on next steps for children and how they can be supported both in the classroom and as part of focus groups
- Interventions in place to support children's academic development and meet emotional needs, supporting them to meet their full potential.
- Support Staff who are skilled in supporting children

Speech and Language Intervention

As part of the PEF spend, the school, in conjunction with NHS Lothian (Speech and Language service) employed a Speech and Language Therapist one day a week. This was due to an identified need within the school, after looking at the attainment data for Listening and Talking. The trends showed that there was a dip in performance within the skills of listening and talking and that there was a significant amount of children, particularly coming from

Nursery into P1, requiring Speech and Language Intervention. This was closely linked to the significant period of lockdown experienced by this cohort of children.

This intervention is also closely linked to our drive to raise attainment within Writing. As Pie Corbett (2017) states: 'If you can't say it, you can't write it.' Therefore, in order to improve attainment within Writing, it was also essential that the school addressed the dip in Listening and Talking attainment.

Actions:

- Qualified Speech and Language Therapist in school one day a week.
- Individuals learners identified requiring Speech and Language input
- Whole class inputs – modelled for the teachers by SaLT
- Resources purchased to support the delivery of high quality listening and talking lessons
- Skills explicitly taught – Initial focus on Hub and P1-P3
- Additional teacher twilight training sessions delivered
- Additional training for support staff
- Engagement with the Visual Supports project
- Parent sessions offered to families to support at home

Outcome/Impact:

- Highly skilled professional, in house, has increased confidence of staff.
- Upskilled teaching and support staff through regular training sessions and opportunities.
- Individual programmes in place for learners who require it – support staff able to deliver this
- Engagement with parents/carers able to happen in school – less threatening environment than a clinic environment
- Intervention based on knowledge and research is supporting class teachers to identify SaLT support required and to support learners effectively within their classrooms – e.g children with Delayed Language Disorder, children with ASD
- Visual timetables to support all learners are in place in every classroom
- Visuals are placed around the school to support learners
- Bronze level achieved with Visual Supports project. Being assessed currently for Silver level.
- Intervention carrying on next session focusing on carrying on current work and extending to Nursery and upper school

*Data is currently being gathered to look at measurable impact. This will be available in the next few weeks.

Creative Learning Den (1 Teacher and 1 ASN Auxiliary)

The Creative Learning Den was established to support a cohort of 3 learners that were disengaged from learning and at risk of exclusion. These children were all identified as Quintile 1 and had been disengaged for a significant amount of time. A variety of supports had been tried to support the learners back into class. All of the learners attended school

full time, however engagement was really low and very little assessment data could be gathered to ascertain their level of attainment.

Actions:

- Creative Learning Den space set up – play opportunities along with formal classroom set up.
- Individual Educational Plans and Positive Support Plans set up to support the 3 learners – contributed to by class teacher allowing placing within class groups
- High quality learning and teaching provided by a creative and innovative teacher and supported by a highly skilled member of support staff – the teacher also supported other small groups of children with Literacy/Numeracy and HWB interventions
- Learning to learn focus in Creative Learning Den- learning the skills required to be resilient with their learning
- Phased return between being in Creative Learning Den and being back in class – this was only ever a 9 month intervention so supporting the children back into class as timely as possible was essential. Learners supported by teacher and support staff to successfully access class.
- Emotional regulation strategies taught alongside academic curricular areas. Creative Learning Den as a safe space for the learners

Outcome/Impact

- 2 out of the 3 learners are back in class full time requiring minimal support. Pupil 3 is still accessing the Creative Learning Den space with a member of support staff. Work is planned by class teacher and Pupil 3 accesses their classroom for parts of learning and the Creative Learning Den for others
- Robust assessment data linked to attainment now held on each pupil.
- Pupil 1 – on track with learning; Pupil 2 – just off track (interventions in place to support with getting back on track); Pupil 3 – off track (support and interventions in place)
- Exclusions reduced significantly. No exclusions for Pupil 1 and Pupil 2. One exclusion for Pupil 3.
- 2 of the 3 learners are fully engaged with learning and have the strategies to attack and learn new concepts.
- Improved status and perception with peers – positive interactions with classmates due to behaviour and emotions being more regulated
- Positive and trusting relationships with the adults

'The Creative Learning Den helped me get back into class after me being out for ages. When I was angry and upset I learned how to get myself calm. I learned that I am really good at Maths.' - Nurture Pupil

Lessons Learned/Future Steps

- Can't do anything in isolation –needed to have a joined up approach to make a difference
- Knowing families well makes the difference
- Revisit Curriculum Rationale – ensure that it is reflective of the needs of the learners and what pathways the school offer the learners.
- Focus and push on Literacy attainment – ensuring that staff are confident with the school data and that they are aware of the narrative behind the data.
- Continue being creative and using staff to their strengths
- Keep high aspirations for the amazing learners – trust that change will come from hard work and doing things consistently well
- Most importantly, embrace change and opportunity!