



Rationale

Hillview Nursery is situated in the 3rd most deprived area in Stirling. The Scottish Government Growing up in Scotland (GUS) Study (2015) found that 54% of children in the lowest income quintile have below average vocabulary. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report (2014) highlighted that children only spend 15% of their waking hours in school, whereas 85% is spent at home or in the community. The GUS study (2015) also found that less advantaged households are less likely to engage in home learning. Our data showed that; 72% of our children (3-5 years) are experiencing poverty related barriers, 40% are not on track within literacy and many of our families find it difficult to engage. This research, alongside our findings, enabled us to identify the need to improve children's literacy and parent's engagement in learning

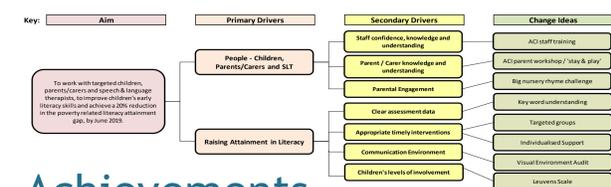
Aim: To work with, parents / carers, speech and language therapists and targeted children in the 3-5 room, to improve early literacy skills and achieve a 20% reduction in the poverty related literacy attainment gap, by June 2019.

Method

A variety of QI tools were utilised to shape our work, which included creating a driver diagram to support planning of project and using a Pareto chart to help us understand our problem and create a theory of change. We used a project charter to plan rhyme time challenges and used run charts to measure progress over time. We also used the PDSA cycle to test changes for measuring children's levels of involvement. We identified outcome measures (key word assessments, phonological scores and achievement of learning intentions) and process measures (parental engagement in rhyme challenge, Leuven's scale of involvement and staff and parent feedback).

Process Change

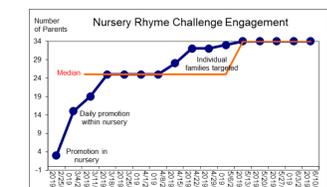
We planned three key interventions at the start of our work. Phase 1 was the provision of targeted support within the nursery for an identified group of children. Phase 2 was a home link project, 'The Big Nursery Rhyme Challenge', which aimed for 100% of families to be engaging in the challenge by June 19 (engagement defined as taking rhymes home, 'reading' together and then returning when child able to recite rhyme). Phase 3 was a joint project with Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) to audit existing practice and plan improvements. This work included staff training on communication friendly environments and adult: child interactions (ACI) and providing ACI workshops for parents.



Creating a driver diagram helped us explore the different measures that would help us achieve our aim

Achievements

Parental engagement with our 'Big Nursery Rhyme Challenge' steadily increased over a 16 week period. Our data showed that many families needed persistent support and encouragement to engage and most of the families who were not readily engaging were the parents of children who most needed support. We found that staff promoting the challenge to individual parents and celebrating children's achievement had a positive influence on participation. By the end of the challenge all 34 families were engaging



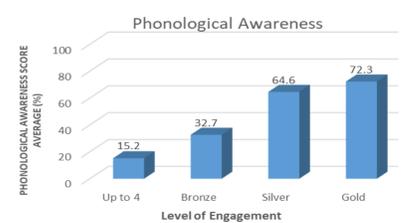
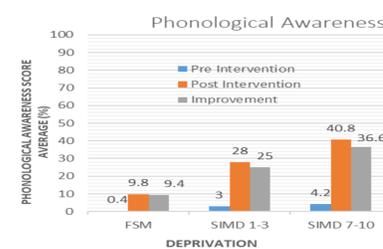
On average parents reported a 32% increase in their confidence and knowledge and commented **"I am going to listen more and follow my child's lead"** and **"I will find ways to build language through play"**.

Key Learning Points

We now recognise the need to 'slow down to speed up!' To allow us to do this we aim to use the QI Network and other local SCLIPs to support us to take time to make best use of QI tools and techniques. We have also learned that it's not about trying to prove you have achieved your aim, it is more about learning from what actually happened. We now understand the importance of taking time to analyse data as we have realised throughout this project that our initial 'analysis' was often flawed or influenced by presumptions.

Results

We assessed children's phonological skills at the beginning and end of the challenge. Children's scores on average increased by 33%. The increase for the most deprived children (SIMD 1-3) was only 25% in comparison to an increase of 36.6% for the least deprived (SIMD 7-10) and for children receiving free school meals (FSM) the increase was only 9.4% (chart 3). Our data also showed improvements in phonological awareness was closely linked to the level of engagement in the challenge with average scores increasing from 15.2% for the least engaged to 72.3% for the most engaged.



Conclusions

Our evidence demonstrates that we have improved children's phonological skills and the poverty related gap in children's key word understanding has reduced by 33%. As a result of this work, parental engagement has increased and parents have greater confidence in interacting effectively with their child. This project has resulted in a more knowledgeable and confident staff team who have benefited from training from SLT and 2 staff becoming qualified PEEP Practitioners.



Most importantly this work has allowed us to try out QI tools and techniques. We recognise that we have made many mistakes along the way, however we feel we have learned more from the mistakes as it provided opportunity for us to think more deeply about the QI process

Scale / Spread

We believe there are elements of our project that we can adapt and spread, for example, ways to engage parents in their child's learning. We also want to upscale our work on the process of measuring children's levels of engagement by testing with more children in different settings. However, we recognise that it is now vital that we spread knowledge and understanding of QI within the team and ensure we include them more in QI process.