

Introduction

An average adult will know between 30,000 and 60,000 words. This means that between the ages of 5 to 15 years children need to learn 7 to 10 words a day. The vocabulary that a child is using by the age of 5 relates to the opportunities and life experiences at the age of 35 years. In Scotland, the gap between children from low-income and high-income households starts early. Over 50% of the pupils in our school live in the most deprived areas in Scotland and it is our job to ensure our children are being provided with vocabulary rich opportunities and learning. Improving our pupil's vocabulary will enhance their learning in all areas of the curriculum and will have a positive impact on their life-long learning and development.

Project aim:

By June 2019 the targeted P1 group (20 pupils) will know 50 new words at level 3 or 4.

Method

The improvement project was led through Kotter's eight stage process.

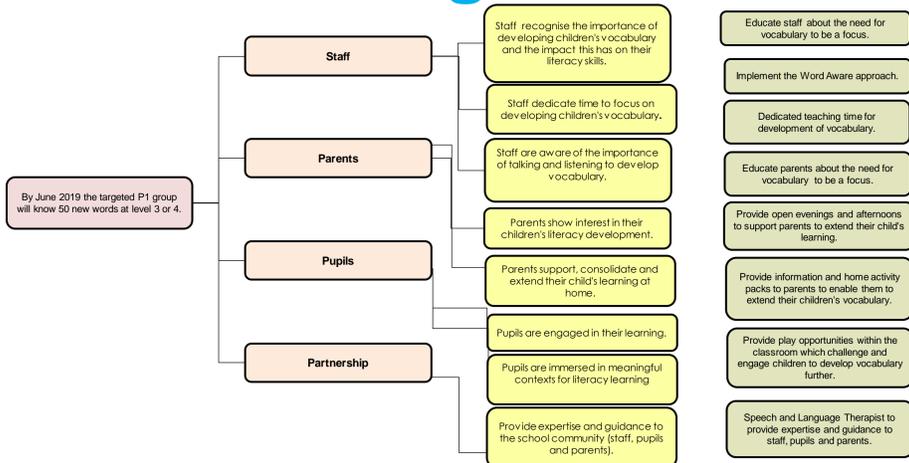


Specific improvement tools that were used were:

- Whole school audit – this identified that vocabulary was a specific area within literacy where changes were needed to lead to improvement
- Cause & Effect – this allowed us to identify and explore the possible causes related to the vocabulary gap
- Model for Improvement – regular PDSA cycles were used to test changes



Process change



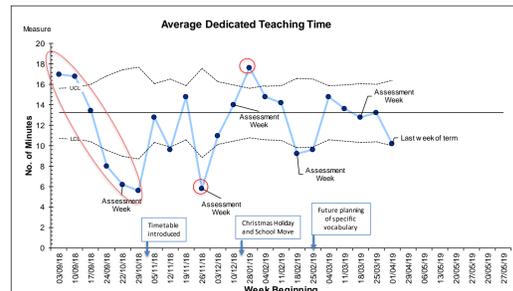
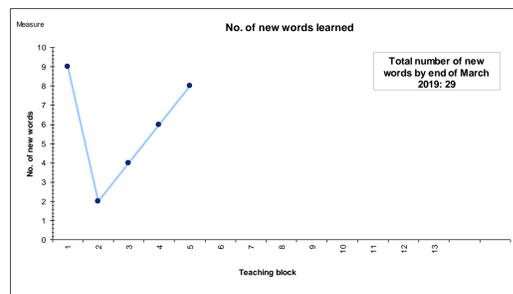
Key learning points

- Small steps lead to big changes for improvement – PDSA cycles have enabled me to recognise the importance of taking small steps for each change.
- Data tells a powerful story – the use and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data is required to support the leading of change
- Power of people – creating the right guiding coalition and gaining buy-in from your team is invaluable.

Key reference materials

Parsons, S. & Branagan, A. (2016) *Word Aware 2: Teaching Vocabulary in the Early Years*. Abingdon: Routledge

Results



Outcome Measure:

The data on the line chart shows that children are learning new vocabulary. The number of new words is increasing each teaching block. This has been due to teachers identifying unknown vocabulary and planning appropriate vocabulary rich learning experiences. No median is shown on this chart as there are not enough data points as yet.

Process Measure Aim: By June 2019 the targeted P1 group (20 pupils) will receive an average of 15 minutes of dedicated teaching of vocabulary on a daily basis.

The data in the above X-bar chart highlights a negative downward trend at the beginning of the project. However, the data is now beginning to show that we are at a stage where the average dedicated teaching time is becoming more stable and less varied.

Achievements

- Leading Change – I led, supported and encouraged the team to ensure changes led to improvements
- QI Charts - I have a deeper knowledge and understanding of the different types of data and the different charts that should be used
- Teaching the Model for Improvement – I confidently delivered and shared my learning with others that led to a positive impact on their practice

Conclusions

Small improvements have been made during the project. The implementation of dedicated teaching time for specific vocabulary has been a positive change. Children are learning new words on a daily basis. However, on the whole, I feel my project was too big. There is a lot of work still to be completed in engaging families and supporting family learning. This will become a separate project in the future.

Next steps

- Spread change ideas from ScIL project across other classes within my school.
- Consolidate my own learning, knowledge and understanding of improvement methodology by supporting colleagues as they undertake the ScIL programme
- Work with fellow Scottish Improvement Leaders within Angus and see how we can be utilised to lead and support further improvement.

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ScIL
Scottish Improvement Leader