

Case study:

Maths Champions



National Day Nurseries Association

Name of setting: Ireland Wood Children's Centre

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Title: Early Years Teacher

Key points of your Maths Champions improvements

- Reflection on practice in relation to Maths.
- Reflect and amend/develop/ enhance for maths areas and resources.
- Stronger relationships and communication with parents.

Background detail

There are currently 120 children aged between 3 months and 5 years on roll. The children attend the setting on a daily or session basis.

The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is registered to provide full day care for 55 children up to the age of 5 years and is open from 7.30am to 6pm.

The setting operates from 3 playrooms 0-2's, 2-3's and pre-school room. There are 2 fully enclosed outdoor play areas available for outside play and activities at all times.

The Centre's aims are 'To provide high quality care and education for children primarily below the statutory school age. Work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop and offer children and their families a service that promotes equality and values diversity.'

Section 2

Highlights and lowlights of the programme so far

What have you done? What elements have worked really well? What, if any, barriers did you come up against and how did you resolve these? What are the key learning points?

Completing the Maths Champion programme has given opportunities for us as a staff team to reflect on our practice and provision and encouraged us to think more about the activities

we provide for children in relation to maths and how the children learn and experience these activities. Many of the staff team see changes to the way we do things as barriers and more paperwork but in order to improve the activities and learning process we must continually reflect on what we do and why we do it on a day to day basis. We have looked at different theoretical perspectives which reminds us why we need to do things in a particular way in order to support the children to the best of our development and gives us evidence as to what we do and why we do it.

We have continually used the resources audit sheet to ensure we are considering all aspects of maths resources and areas of learning in order to provide a variety of resources and activities to challenge and reaffirm children's knowledge and their ability in relation to mathematical development. The staff who have embraced this programme have also developed their own confidence levels in relation to maths and we have built up a bank of new ideas and activities for the different ages of the children we look after and also communicate more with parents who have embraced their own involvement with their child's learning.

Impact of the programme

*What has the impact been on your environment, your staff team/individual practitioners?
What has the impact of the project been on children's development across all age groups or for your parents/families?*

By continually re assessing our resources and activities and by using the audits we have ensured we are continually checking and re stocking our resources and activities which we use with the children.

We have had a difficult time with low levels of staff employment throughout this year and had to rely heavily upon agency staff so this has also been a barrier to embracing the maths programme, allowing employed staff time out to complete tasks associated with the programme and completing maths assessments and completing paperwork in relation to this.

When staff members were asked about their own mathematical knowledge and confidence some were less confident than others, but with support from the more confident staff and communicating and sharing different activity ideas they have begun to embrace the challenges which the programme and maths as a subject gave them.

Did you achieve what you wanted from the programme? If so, how?

When we looked at local authority assessment grades in relation to maths it showed that we were lower than the national average, this is what prompted us to take part in the programme and to assess what strategies we would need to put in place as a setting in order to ensure we were doing the best to support these children in their mathematical development. It has encouraged parental involvement and increased the communication between parents and staff.

How has the programme helped you further develop your own practice?

The programme has helped me as an individual to think more about the maths environment, what resources we have and how best to use them to create an environment that is conducive to children's learning. The more confident members of the staff team have also embraced the challenge of providing different activities which in turn would challenge the children's ability, and by observing how this has been in practice, the less confident staff members are also beginning to challenge their own thinking when planning for and completing activities with their key children.

The relationships with parents of children who attend the setting and staff members who work with them has also been strengthened through implementation of individual next steps. These are a working document which we have introduced to ensure we consider and plan for the individual child in order to further develop the individual child rather than as a cohort of children.

Next steps

How are you going to develop your practice further and why, what will the impact be? Who will be involved? How will your practice support good outcomes for children?

We will continue to use the audit sheets to ensure we are thinking about our resources, activities and room layout, so that there is a continuation of activities which will interest and challenge all children's abilities. This will help us as a setting to continue to provide a stimulating environment for all the children and families who access the centre.

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