

Case study:

Enabling environments



National Day Nurseries Association

Name of setting: Staffordshire University Nursery

Date submitted: Date here

Information supplied by: Lisa Newman

Title: Early Years Educator

Key points of your Maths Champions improvements

- To make each room in the nursery a maths enriched environment
- To develop the outdoor area with a maths focus

Background detail

Staffordshire University Day Nursery was registered in 1992. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications from level 3 and above, including, two with qualified teacher status, four of whom hold early years professional status, one with level 7, one with level 6, two with level 5, one with level 4 and six with level 3. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday and all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. They support a number of children with English as an additional language and a number of children who have special educational needs or disability. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Section 2

Highlights and lowlights of the programme so far

I have worked with the whole team to develop awareness of maths and highlight areas for improvement across the setting. At first, not all staff were on board with the programme and had low confidence levels when discussing maths. This was one of the first barriers that I encountered. Not all practitioners had experienced positive influences during their time at school which had an impact upon the attitudes of maths.

Through meeting with each practitioner and supporting them individually, I feel that the confidence levels of the staff have improved, and attitudes are changing towards maths, especially supporting the children in the setting with maths skills.

During the programme we have involved parents and carers and have worked closely to support their understanding and confidence in using maths with their own children. Some parents, especially

those of the young babies did not know the importance of early activities and the links made to maths. This was another barrier faced. Staff from each room have been able to confidently support the parents of the children using the EYFS and information sheets that had been made by myself. I feel that parents have been supportive and engaged with the project, asking questions and wanting to know more.

Staff have worked together in teams to look at the environment to see how more maths can be incorporated. Alongside this we were also preparing for a local authority health check. During this time, one of the main focuses that the LA were looking at was maths so the two have worked together hand in hand.

Baby room – more visible numbers are available in context – (child height clock) (shopping list in the home corner) (number line) as well as increased use of number rhymes and games. The baby room identified that through their continuous provision a lot of resources were available to the children which they had not realised were maths focused.

2-3 years- number lines in the sand and water play area, different sized equipment in the home corner to promote language such as big and little. Numbers in the environment in context such as a clock, shopping lists. Again staff identified that through their continuous provision a lot of resources were available to the children which they had not realised were maths focused.

3-5 years – maths area introduced with opportunities for children to find and match numbers, use equipment for measuring etc. more numbers around the environment in context and activities and resources provided daily to promote maths for this age range.

Outdoor environment - words displayed with positional language, different sized containers to explore, numbers on the cars and on the house, number lines displayed. Equipment available to measure and explore

Impact of the programme

Staff have come on board with the idea and everyone is talking about maths! We plan to further embed this into our practice through regular environment audits and improvement plans. We have planned stay and play group where we are having a maths focus and we can continue to share best practice with parents and carers. Our audits show that our children have made progress in their maths during this project.

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

I have developed my own confidence through the programme to not only deliver maths to the children but to share this knowledge with the parents and carers to continue to make an impact in the home environment.

As a whole setting we worked as a team to develop our overall knowledge and confidence to use maths across the early years. We grew in confidence together

To prepare for the Local Authority Health Check which an emphasis on maths development

We have supported all of the children in the setting to develop an interest in maths, progressing in their learning and development.

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

I have developed my own subject knowledge across all areas of the EYFS. As I am based in one room I am sometimes looking at a particular age and stage of development. I have refreshed my own knowledge of how babies learn right up to the ELG.

I have grown in confidence to lead, delegate and work together with my team

I have grown in confidence to work with parents/ carers and make an impact in the home environment.

Next steps

To carry out a stay and play with a maths focus, to further support parent and carers and to also continue to develop staff confidence in talking about maths. This should continue to have a positive impact upon the children in our setting. The stay and play will be a whole team approach. The agenda will include lots of maths based activities both in the indoor and outdoor environment.

To brief/ induct any new staff with the information which in turn will support the children.

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