

Case study:

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National Day Nurseries Association

Name of setting: Tortoise Nursery

Date submitted: 5th December 2017

Information supplied by: Steph Thomas

Title: Manager

Key points of your Maths Champions improvements

- Improve math in the environment
- Improve staff confidence in putting math's into outside play.
- Improve parental involvement in supporting math's at home

Background detail

We are a small nursery of only 2 rooms and in a converted building on the site of an old people's home. We have a very low income so resources are always way down on the budget so we wanted to learn some new ways to utilise our staff, natural resources and using current resources better. We were due Ofsted this year and one of recommendations last time was to increase math opportunities further outdoors and in the daily routine. We thought this programme would help us identify ways of doing this that we hadn't already done in previous years.

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?

- We used the audits really well to assess things that needed improving, buying or moving around. We made lists of things that could be bought and one of things to collect or get donations for. We managed to get most things off our list and therefore improve our resources and environment. A barrier we came across with the environment was figuring out where to put everything it suggested was displayed! As a small nursery, we don't have a lot of wall space. I also felt I didn't want to just put words everywhere that didn't relate to or mean anything to the children. In the end we looked at the communal spaces of the nursery and spaces that could be used meaningfully. We have a small ramp in the foyer, so we displayed the words up and down next to it. We put numbers on the toilet doors and mirrors and a measuring line under the toilet roll holders! We added pictures of shapes in the environment in the toddler room instead of plain shapes so they could apply the shape to objects they know. Both rooms added displays using the children's interests of TV characters to display numbers.

- Key learning from this showed us that all of the words etc. didn't need to be in one area, every room and all of the time- we were able to apply the words to interactive displays so they had a purpose.
- We used the activities off the math's champions site to make a book for outside activities, the staff are still making their way through them and there is an ongoing list of resources we can make for some of them. That was the barrier we came across; however, we are just taking a section each and planning a little ahead for the adult led activity so any resources can be made or sourced in plenty of time. The staff have already started showing more confidence in what can be done outside from these activities and have adapted them or extended time further as well!
- As stated in my action research, we also did lots of work with the parents. Barriers were found in getting them involved, bringing things back and their own confidence in what they could be doing. We overcame these by creating math home bags with a range of resources inside for simple math activities at home. We also did leaflets and staff were instructed to discuss any math next steps required fully with the parents. Key learning from this is that when we did something different creative and different, and also showed confidence in what we were asking them to do, they engaged much better! The bags have been out to quite a few families, and are still out now!

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?

The impact has been positive on all aspects. All staff have a vast catalogue of activities to use outside and are finding it easier to implement math into physical activities out there. The environment is more engaging and there is ample opportunity to extend math learning through the children's immediate environment. Parents have increased their involvement with us and are using the math home bags well. Input into the children's learning journeys have increased too.

Development levels in maths have improved (see EYFS trackers) due to the volume of activities having math included in them.....it seems to have reached children more often and in a variety of ways that suit their individual learning styles and interests.

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

The programme has helped my own practice in monitoring areas specifically and honing training opportunities to single areas. This has helped my coaching and mentoring skills develop quickly within the rooms and singling out activities that could have had math involved more. It has given me a wealth of activities that I can use to model teaching methods to staff and also give them tips and ideas of what they can do.

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 are going to continue to improve parental engagement. We will plan a termly stay and play session at the weekends, based on maths and keep creating the math bags. This will further

increase children's experience of using simple maths at home so will provide a good base for them to build on whilst with us....it means we can hopefully raise our expectations of what they can do in maths; moving on to sums or more complicated concepts earlier.

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