**Closing the Word Gap**

**Tranmere Park Erasmus+ Project Introduction**

**2019-1-UK01-KA229-061373\_1**

**21st October 2019**

The objectives of the project are to:

• analyse and share existing strategies and resources for improving oracy to close the gap between disadvantaged learners and their peers

• identify common areas of strength and priorities for development

• undertake study visits to partner schools to investigate the policies and practice in the context of those schools

• use the outcomes of the study visits to improve provision and practice in identifying and addressing oracy disadvantage

• produce a report on the outcomes of each study visit, sets of case studies and recommendations for school policy

• disseminate the outcomes widely

The outputs of the project will be:

• An online platform hosting the project website, reports and case studies

• A set of case studies

• An impact report incorporating recommendations for school policy

• A dissemination strategy including examples of best practice, online materials and events in 4 countries

**Tuesday 22nd October**

Kirsten Finley and colleagues shared details of the project she has been leading in Bradford and Leeds related to Early Years Oracy. Information about the training offered as part of the project was shared.

See PowerPoint “Noctua Project Overview”

The second part of the morning was David Owen and covered the development of oracy for children of all ages in the primary phase.

See PowerPoint: “Whole-school Oracy Development.”

Colleagues toured the school after lunch prior to the management meeting.

**Management meeting 22nd October**

See Powerpoint: Closing the Gap Kick off meeting presentation

Paul Harrison from EdEUcation introduced himself. He presented information about the types of projects available and the potential for future work.

KA1 applications suggested for teacher exchanges/CPD in future if possible. Deadline for KA1 February, with decisions made in May/June. This could be considered as an impact of the project.

Kirsten to check if funding is split over 2 years and confirm with partners.

Jan Linsley to ensure Certificate of Attendance are completed before the end of the visit.

Evaluation of project at the end, Kirsten to check if an interim is required too?

Results Platform to be completed with the 4 case studies by Jan Linsley at the end of the project.

Kirsten would work with Jan Linsley to agree a format for sharing information with all partners.

**Visit to Beeston Primary School Wednesday 23rd October**

Beth Tidy, deputy headteacher, explained size of school and its recent expansion, with additional 7 extra classrooms. Only just finished. Now 3 form entry with nursery. Strong pastoral care / well-being. Mindmate Champion status recognises school’s support for Mental Health of staff and children.

High levels of deprivation, children start school language poor. The school has introduced NELI and EasyPeasy in the school. Print-rich environment is used to model language in classrooms. This can also be seen in outside learning areas. Characteristics of learning are linked to the school rainbow design and differentiated as appropriate for each age group. This sets the school’s ethos and identifies strategies used in the classroom.

Beth also explained rewards – look for celebration boards – house system. Breakfast Clubs, Guiding Lights group (older pupils supporting younger children) builds confidence of both groups, restorative practice, pastoral team target pupils who would benefit from nurture groups. Behaviour managed by a step system – pupils move up and down the steps – a display on the board. Inclusion room used at Step 3 to re-focus children if they need to be removed from the classroom. Step 4 – longer time in inclusion room, parents contacted. Step 5 – exclusion form school (very rare).

Colleagues were interested in the roles of other adult in school. Don’t recognise the role of Teaching Assistants, but do use psychologists. Due to financial cuts / changes in LA role, school chooses to buy own professional support. School’s biggest SEND issue is communication.

Y1 (5-6 year olds) and Y6 (10-11 year olds) exercise books shared. Beth explained Learning Objectives and the children’s colour coding of them. Pupils books included teacher guidance such a steps to success, differentiated challenges, success criteria. Each book also contained details of how the work with be assessed – self-, peer-, teacher- marking – and the colour coding of marking. EU colleagues surprised about the amount of preparation and marking.

Before lunch, Beth and the headteacher, Nick Edeson, escorted colleagues for a guided tour of the school, seeing a range of classroom from nursery to Y6.

In the afternoon, colleagues spent time in different classrooms observing the teaching and learning.

**Thursday 24th October 2019**

Colleagues met at **Shakespeare Primary School, Leeds** and met colleagues involved in the Early Years Project in Leeds.

The first training session was by Sarah Alderson and covered aspects of Teaching and Learning in Early Years Foundation Stage. This training has been used to support many teachers across Leeds prior to the start of the project. The training has been proven to make a difference and was therefore included as part of the SSIF project.

See PowerPoint: Teaching and Learning in Early Years Foundation Stage

The second training session in the morning was led by David Owen.

See Powerpoint: Vocabulary

In addition, David Owen presented a typical KS2 timetable (7-11 year olds) which had a high level of focus on mathematics and English. Colleagues noted the absence of a modern foreign language, although there were a number of cross-curricula projects included.

In the afternoon, the participants went on a tour around the school, observing teaching and learning methods. This was followed by a question and answer session, discussion and comparison of different national systems. Participants discussed national, regional and local authorities’ support for pupils: training resources, pupil premiums. Other topics included: teacher salaries, conditions for support of SEND pupils, freedom or not to design/follow curriculum.

**Friday 25th October 2019**

Colleagues met with Kirsten for a short meeting to hand out attendance certificates, capture feedback and agree broad themes for the visit to Palermo in April 2020. Colleagues identified the limitations of EasyPeasy and NELI as they are published in English. A focus on Nursery Rhymes was identified as an approach for collaborative learning.

The next study visit will take place in Palermo, Italy on Monday 27th – Wednesday 29th April 2020.

As a result of the visit, the following summary of evaluation was completed and reflects the comments of the Latvian, Sicilian and Spanish partners –

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHALLENGES** | **STRATEGIES** | **EXPECTED IMPACT** |
| **Using the different topics addressed in the study visit, please identify any related challenges faced by your school / group of schools.** | **What strategies can you adopt in order to tackle the challenges described in the first column?** | **What is the expected impact of a proposed strategy and how will it be measured?** |
| Human resources – teaching assistants delivering interventions. | No Teaching Assistants in other European settings which an impact on classroom organisation | To identify suitable interventions to deliver in these circumstances. |
| Classroom behaviours | Work on pupil motivation |  |
| Parental involvement in the work of the school | Work with parents to inform them how they can help children with their learning |  |
| Teacher workload |  |  |