

Setting: Inch View Early Childhood Centre

Type: Supported friendship development English as an Additional Language

Inch View Early Childhood Centre in Perth applied for and was successful in four of the five completed funding rounds so far of the ELC Inclusion Fund. It's a local authority nursery which caters for children from the age of two up until school start.


The centre accommodates up to 112 children in the nursery at any one point, including up to 20 two-year-olds. It has a diverse catchment and half of the children in their care have an identified additional support need, including around a third who have English as an additional language.



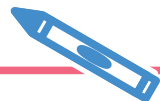
Left & below:
Children enjoy playing
with sensory toys



The challenge



The team at Inch View knew that with the right resources they could nurture their children with English as an additional language, provide support to their families and develop the relationships between staff, parents and carers. They wanted to show the children that they valued their first languages while also giving them the support needed to develop their English. To support staff, they wanted to invest in training and to support parents and carers to get involved, they wanted to create a parental learning library.



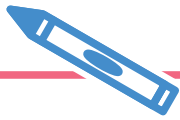
Actions and approach

With the help of the ELC Inclusion Fund, Inch View purchased a library of dual language story books. They set up a parental lending library, used the books with Parental Engagement Groups and encouraged EAL parents to come into nursery to read stories to the children in a variety of different languages. Unfortunately, these initiatives had to be put on hold due to Covid-19 restrictions but will be back up and running again as soon as mitigations allow.

As well as using the funding to support language and relationship building, it was also possible to direct it towards supporting their children with other additional support needs. In February 2020 (when Inch View took receipt of £1,471.00 in Round 4 of the Fund), they had 11 children in the nursery who either had a diagnosis of autism or were attending the Child Development Clinic for assessment.

The nursery allocated spend towards a variety of sensory toys, puppets and a 'cosy corner' den. These resources have supported the children to communicate in different ways and helped them to calm down and feel safe and comfortable when they have become overwhelmed or distressed. The toys and puppets have also helped the children to develop relationships with others, engage with the curriculum and meet targets identified within their Child's Plans or Individual Education Plans.





Impact and evaluation

The staff conducted thorough and detailed assessments to evidence the impact of the investment from the ELC Inclusion Fund.

Centre Leader Faye Gant says: "The funding provided has categorically helped us to improve outcomes for the children in our care, enabling us to purchase additional resources and invest in further staff training. Our work with families, observations of the children, assessments we have carried out and advice from, and collaboration with, specialist colleagues, have all helped us to build detailed pictures of each child and their individual additional support needs."

"We have then put interventions, Child's Plans and Individual Education Plans in place, with targets specifically designed to meet these needs, which primarily fall into four main categories – speech and language issues, social, emotional and behavioural challenges, fine and gross motor skills development, and sensory issues."

Comparing baseline and follow-up assessments, staff have been able to see the progress individual children are making towards achieving their identified targets and next steps.

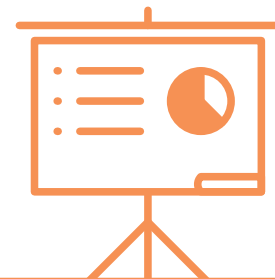
Faye added: "Positive feedback from both families and the other agencies we work with has confirmed the huge difference the support of the ELC Inclusion Fund has made. Without the additional spending the grants have allowed, we may not have been able to achieve as many positive outcomes or helped children to make quite as much progress towards meeting their developmental milestones."



Resources at the centre are designed to meet individual children's needs



The cosy corner den is popular with children at Inch View



Next steps

Assessment is ongoing and allows staff to continuously monitor the progress the children are making. Staff feel supported to put training into practice and positive feedback from parents and carers is encouraging the team to feel that they can meet more of the children's individual needs and provide them with additional high-quality learning experiences which otherwise they may have missed out on.

