

Focus On: Collaborative Activity

Case study - Scot Skip: Introducing A Fundamental Motor Skills Project to Preschools in Glasgow

Where: The Scot Skip project took place in four Early Years (EY) Settings, in the most economically disadvantaged areas of Glasgow. The programme had an on campus training element for early years staff and student volunteers from the PGDE (Postgraduate Diploma in Education) Primary Course at the **University of Strathclyde**.

Date: From October 2015-July 2016

Impact: The practice was introduced as part of the first pilot of Scot Skip (a program which focuses on increasing physical activity and addressing Motor Development Delay). University staff worked in collaboration with Professor Jacqueline Goodway from **Ohio State University** to adapt and implement their own version of SKIP (*Successful Kinesthetic Instruction for Preschoolers*). This involved an on-campus training programme for PGDE Primary students, as part of a 10 credit professional specialism module. Setting staff also came onto campus for two full-day training sessions; this helped with delivery of the content of the programme and to build networks across learning communities. To support and extend communication, learning and networking, all staff (University and EY setting) and students were able to access an on-line space which hosted relevant reading, resources and spaces to chat on-line.

Following the project Glasgow City Council have requested a knowledge exchange event to disseminate information about the approach and its importance to early years learning and development (to be held in October 2016). They are also keen to develop 'training days' for a selection of early years settings across Glasgow.

Number of students affected: 14 PGDE Primary Students

Contact: jenny.carey@strath.ac.uk



Abstract:

Scot Skip is a project that embraces research, knowledge exchange and student experience.

It is unique, in that University Staff, early year (EY) setting staff and students learned together from an international expert in the field to develop and implement the programme in Scotland.

The aim of improving outcomes for young children in areas that face massive economic challenge helped this collaboration to have a clear focus that opened channels of discussion about ways in which we could modify our roles and adapt our participation throughout the project. The project created opportunities for ongoing Knowledge Exchange through professional collaborations.

Students had to learn to negotiate timings of involvement around their studies. They learned about ways to collect and analyse evidence; this student group have become Scot SKIP ambassadors and want to be part of training future students (2016-17).

Description:**What was the rationale behind this work?**

Scot Skip was part of a pilot study to assess the feasibility of using the SKIP framework to support issues with motor development delay in young children.

How was the work developed and implemented?

This work was developed in collaboration with Professor Jackie Goodway of Ohio State University and colleagues in the field of early education. Heads of Centre and members of staff had identified an interest in the work and willingness to participate in staff development that would support their theoretical knowledge and practical application of skills. At this point a timetable for staff training, implementation of practical sessions with setting staff & children was completed. University staff and students were involved in staff training and collecting evidence from filming children during pre and post-tests that focused on specific fundamental motor skills. Students worked in groups within two settings and liaised with staff to arrange visits and timings for filming; this provided them with a new perspective of child development over the course of an academic year and helped them to collaborate as a member of a professional team.

What resources were needed?

Staff time, cameras, P.E. equipment.

What enablers helped the work to succeed?

Early collaboration with settings, frequent communication with students.

What advice would you provide to others trying something similar?

Establishing collaboration with professionals in the field who are willing to be flexible in the initial stages of planning and part of ongoing evaluations is essential. Having resources ordered, labelled and ready for pilot sessions would have been beneficial to the early stages of implementation.

Outline any potential improvements/enhancements that you would like to make or are planning to make since first developing the work/project?

This year (2016-17) we are using the pilot to extend our work with the same EY settings and will look at ways to change the initial training and ongoing collaboration. Alongside this, we are extending the project to include one new EY establishment and a primary school to compare preschool, with the early years of primary.

Perceived benefits:

For students

- Real life context for deepening subject and curricular knowledge in the specified area
- Collaboration with fellow students, University staff and professionals in the field
- Increased opportunity to learn about research and knowledge exchange

For staff

- Opportunity to develop teaching and knowledge exchange based on aspects of research and ongoing interactions within the field of education
- The work links to current Scottish Government policy agenda and could be used to inform future policy and practice
- Increases staff profile within the field

For the institution

- Adds to reputation of the University as an institution that contributes to the community it works within
- Contributes to knowledge exchange and research portfolio
- Connects aspects of international and national collaborations

Issues/challenges:

For students

- Balancing ongoing participation with studies and placements

For staff

- Using time effectively to balance research aspects with issues related to ongoing implementation of programmes.