

Smart Start Project Case Study

Case Study Title

Settings' experience of engagement with the FFL Smart Start Programme

Background

What is the background to the case study?

The first Quarter of delivery for the FFL programme has depended on engaging 3 Children's Centres (with known links to the Local Authority) and 10 Private sector Nurseries/settings (with little or no known links to the Local Authority). The level of engagement was unknown prior to commencing and all settings are located in the County's 'most hard to engage' locations. This case study gives a summary of our initial experiences and feedback on the first quarter, prior to direct one-to-one delivery.

Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

- We began with an initial telephone call to all the EY's settings from a 'long list' of 19 to ask if we could send information on FFL to the setting. Requested the name and email address of the relevant person to send some information to (manager, Nursery Leader, Head Teacher)
- Sent an email containing a project outline, what SS FFL could offer the setting and the cheat sheet containing bullet point information on SS FFL asking if they were interested in more information to call or email Helene Heath
- The email was followed up with a phone call to ask each setting if they would like to either decline the programme or agree a date to meet with Helene to hear more/enrol.
- If more information was requested a visit took place at the setting to show them the EY's pack and describe SS FFL. In every case on visiting each setting they enrolled online with the help of Helene

Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

- 19 settings were approached in total
- 3 Children's Centres have enrolled

- 1 Children's Centre want to attend SS FFL training with the hope of enrolling after the training but no guarantee
- 10 private nurseries have enrolled
- Children's Centres were difficult to enrol for 2 reasons:
 1. Children's Centres were in a time of uncertainty due to being recommissioned whilst SS FFL were recruiting. The timing made CC's nervous to sign up to a programme when they were concerned that staff/budgets might be reduced and their quantity of work would increase. Many could not commit to taking on another piece of work during this time of uncertainty.
 2. Children's Centres work in groups and many were unsure about signing up one CC to the programme but it was explained that we could work with the whole group in the future if one centre found the programme beneficial. This seems to be something CC's Managers in each area of Warwickshire need to think about in relation to their own logistics of putting all of their group through the programme and how they could support each other during the process.

Quote/Testimonial

Feedback given from the individual

Helene conducted a short survey of a sample of the engaged settings to collect their initial feedback on the support so far. The results are iterated below:

What made you get involved with FFL SS Programme?

'In the current economy, parents are not just looking at the cost of the childcare they are paying for, they are looking further into nurseries and they no longer class us as just childcare. The FFL SS programme allows us to provide healthy balanced meals to our children which is supported by the guidance and support from FFL. It therefore allows us to demonstrate to parents our commitment to encouraging these healthy balanced meals, as well as promoting a healthy lifestyle. This will allow their children to be able to build up their knowledge of the importance of balanced diets and learn where their food comes from.' *Abacus Day Nursery*

'I was really interested in how we could expand on what we already offer our children for snacks, breakfast and tea and how we could involve the children and the parents in what they eat and where it comes from.' *Peter Pan Nursery*

What has been your experience of FFL team so far?

'Very positive, good explanation and demonstration of materials by the lady who visited relevant/useful emails and quick response from the helpline when we had difficulties logging on.' *Warwick Nursery School*

'I have found the team very helpful and have already booked two of my staff onto some courses for early years next year.' *Peter Pan Nursery*

'The team are very enthusiastic about what they do and promoted FFL well. They helped us set up FFL successfully whilst they were here and left us with the necessary resources to be able to start the FFL programme instantly.' *Abacus Day Nursery*

Has it been easy to get enrolled/started?

'Enrolling was very easy as we had the support of the local team! We were set up and ready to go instantly.' *Abacus Day Nursery*

'Getting enrolled was really easy as I had the help of Helene, it was a little more difficult logging in as it would not accept my details even when I changed them. However this was rectified quickly by one of the team and we are now up and running and I have logged in several time to see what's going on.' *Peter Pan Nursery*

'Little hiccup with initial log on, but soon rectified by phone call to help desk.' *Warwick Nursery school*

Have you any experience of FFL resources or online support yet?

'We have already enrolled on a couple of courses but as yet have not started collecting evidence for the online course.' *Peter Pan Nursery.*

'We have logged in since we were set up to book onto some training provided by FFL, the website is very easy to navigate. I have started reading the FFL Early Years Award Resources pack however not quite got all the way through yet!' *Abacus Day Nursery*

What are you most looking forward to?

'Producing freshly prepared food for our children and moving away from some of the food that they shouldn't be eating, but unfortunately is sometime less time consuming! Putting more energy into the basics to ensure the children get the best start in regards to food!' *Abacus Day Nursery*

'We are most looking forward to working with the children and families and learning how we can make and enjoy nutritious, wholesome food that is healthy and enjoyable from local sources and even grow our own.' *Peter Pan Nursery*

'The training, sharing experiences with other practitioners. We aim to go through all the areas and then develop an Action Plan (using the resources) of any gaps.' *Warwick Nursery School*