



Writing around a Foundation Stage Unit.

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1. Context

I have always been keen to encourage children to write for fun and without fear. I have spent the last 2 years evaluating my own practise and leading a team within a mixed Reception/Nursery unit.

Children enjoy play in our unit and are very successful writers. This case study aims to share some of the ways in which writing can be incorporated into all areas of an Early Years unit and highlight successes and some of the problems that we have met along the way

2. When, what, how.

Recently we joined our nursery and reception classes into a Foundation Stage unit. As FS co-ordinator it was within my job role to plan how all the areas of continuous provision could be arranged effectively into a newly extended room. I was keen to create a cosy yet engaging environment suitable for children aged between 3 and 5 years.

How I went about designing the floor space within the unit.

- I visited several units within the Tameside area in order to determine how to best use our area.
- I observed the children both in Nursery and Reception to allow me to see which areas of continuous provision required the most space.
- I noted which areas of provision were more suitable in carpeted or vinyl flooring!
- I costed the new furniture required.
- I drew a floor plan and ordered the furniture to create cosy bays for the continuous provision.

Barriers/overcoming barriers.

The mixed Reception/ Nursery unit opened in September 2010 along with the excitement of new resources and the implications of a shared space.

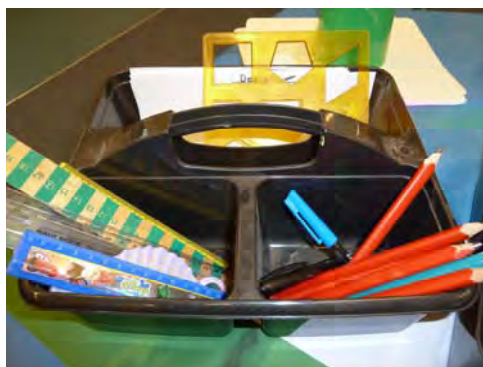
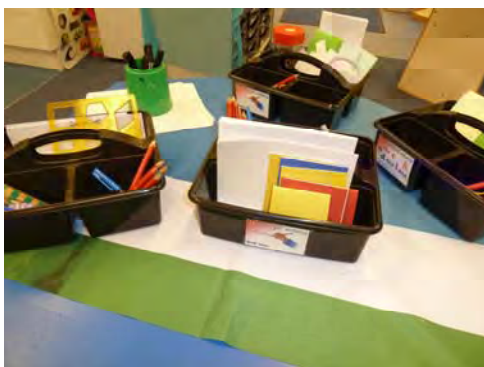
Barriers

- Children found it difficult to remember the many different access and tidying routines as there are over 11 areas of continuous provision.
- The size of the unit meant that it was extremely time consuming to maintain and resource all areas to a high standard.
- Through observation it was clear that the level of play from Reception children was more advanced than the new January starters that had just turned three! The Reception children sometimes became frustrated with the more immature play displayed by the Nursery children.

- Finding space and enough areas for key worker quiet times in the day to engage children in groups session was a problem.
- Timetabling staff ensuring that quality time is given to supporting child initiated play, observing children and leading focused activities both indoors and outdoors.
- Finding table space to allow children time to write freely without interruption.
- Our current has a high level of young boys (17 out of 26.) Trying to encourage them to write has been challenging.
- Offering children in our village an afternoon Nursery place.

Overcoming barriers/inspiring children to write.

- We have found that regular team meetings discussing relevant issues are crucial. As a team with constantly inspire each other as we have an open forum for sharing ideas, thought and opinions.
- Carpet spaces are timetabled and phonics and carpet sessions are mirrored in Nursery and Reception to allow children the opportunity to fully concentrate.
- Weekly planning meetings for continuous provision are held and time is given on a rota system for staff to change and replenish resources. Continuous provision is changed weekly unless there is a particular interest that is ongoing. There is space available on the planner for staff to scribble notes or comments from observation or discussion with children that may be relevant to the provision. All staff are clear about their roles each week.
- Writing boxing are in all areas and contain different resources depending on the area. They are clearly labelled so that children can share responsibility in organising them within the classroom.



- Two writing tables are available allowing Nursery children to engage in writing activities at their own level. The second writing area tends to be accessed by the more confident writers who prefer to sit for longer periods of time in a more peaceful environment.



- We give children blu-tak and allow them to independently display their own work around the classroom with blu-tak. They are proud of their writing and inspired to do even more!!
- Parent/Carers are invited to attend weekly open door sessions allowing them to participate in quality play alongside Practitioners.
- Children have specific termly writing targets that are shared at parents meetings.
- Daily phonics in differentiated groups with an opportunity to apply what they have learned.
- Handwriting supported with 'roll n' write' to boost confidence.

Impact

I am amazed at the level of writing that is being produced in a child initiated way. Children are keen to participate in daily fun phonics session which they independently apply to their writing.

All children except 2 children with IEP's are able to write using an initial sound. All children are able to access writing at their own level.

Children are using writing to support their own play and love writing notes and reports in our structured play area. Our police and fire station were particularly successful with the boys!





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Next steps

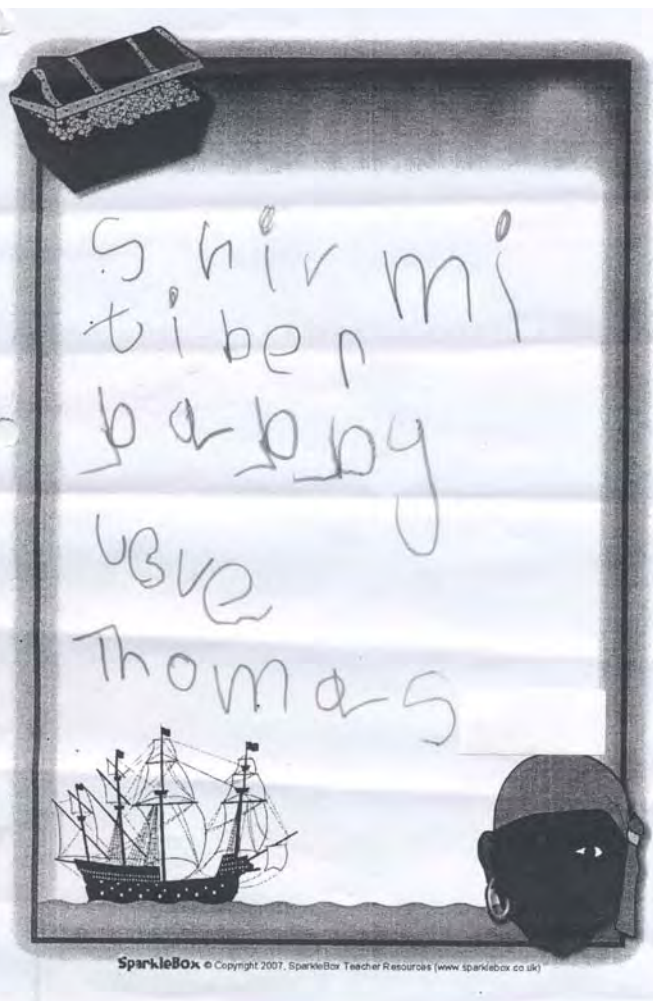
- To maintain high levels in writing by constantly evaluate cohort and own practice.
- Fundraise to finance buying suitable writing resources for the outdoors. Writing resources are easily ruined outside and appropriate equipment needs to be bought and routines need to be taught and modelled.

Conclusion

In conclusion children will write when they feel secure and are inspired. By observing their play and preferred learning styles Practitioners can tailor make enhancements to the continuous provision to suit their pupils. The examples of children's work in the appendix show that children can write all areas of a Foundation stage unit and with purpose.

Appendix





Shiver my timbers daddy
Love Thomas.

