

A language intervention for children with Down syndrome

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Dear All

The end of the school year is fast approaching and the end of the language intervention is in sight! Group B are just over half way through their 10 week block so I thought I would share how things have been going.

Group A finished their intervention block at the end of March and we were really pleased with the positive feedback from the schools. All of the children were then assessed on a variety of language measures in April which allowed us to compare the progress of Group A who had received the intervention to the progress of Group B who had been carrying on as usual. We were very pleased with the early results.

Group B then started their intervention block at the beginning of May and have just completed week 6. Despite bank holidays, school trips and sports days the TAs have been ploughing on and I really appreciate their hard work and dedication to the project.

What have the children been doing?

- The children have been following a 10 week intervention which follows a similar weekly structure.
- Each week the children are introduced to 4 new verbs that they focus on for the week.
- The children then complete a range of activities using these 4 verbs including story retell, acting out, role play, verb games and then recording the work they have completed. Each activity is designed to be adapted to the individual child and here are some examples of the fantastic work that has been going on.

What happens next?

Group B will complete the intervention over the next 4 weeks. All of the children will then be assessed on the language measures again in July to look at the progress of Group B and how Group A are scoring after a further 10 weeks.

At the end of the intervention the school will send home the manual for parents to read. The manual gives all the details of the programme, the activities and the resources. As part of the intervention the children have been keeping record books where they keep all of the work they have produced. These books will be collected at the assessment but will then be returned to the children later in the summer holidays.

To give more information about the intervention and to talk through the project we are going to hold an information morning in the summer holidays. Full details of the date and venue will be circulated in the next week so keep an eye out for the email and please respond if you are able to come along.

That will then be the end of the language intervention project for you but just the beginning for me as we plan to run the whole thing again next year with another group of children. If you know any families or schools who have children with Down syndrome and will be in Years 3-6 from September please pass on the information and ask them to get in touch. Thanks as always for all your support.

Some reminders:

- I will be contacting schools in the next couple of weeks to arrange dates to visit schools to assess all the children in July 2017.
- Parents – many thanks to those who have completed and returned your questionnaire. If you have not completed this yet please return it to languageintervention@letsgouk.org or send a hard copy to Unit F1724, 27 Standard Way, Fareham, Hampshire, PO16 8XJ. If you would like me to resend a copy please email me and let me know. It is really helpful information to look at patterns of progress and to review the speech and language input the children receive. Many thanks.

