

CASE STUDY: Remote Delivery of Speech and Language Therapy in Early Years Settings – A Partnership with Essex County Council

Introduction:

Speech Club is an innovative online Speech and Language Therapy course, providing structured video content for children. This service, presented by two qualified Speech and Language Therapists, is aimed at children identified by nurseries as having delayed Speech and Language skills. It serves as an early intervention measure, especially for children who are yet to access individual community SLT services.

Service Overview:

The course content is rich, inclusive of handouts, parent information booklets, progress and assessment tools, and information for teaching assistants. Initially designed for family usage at home, Speech Club evolved to be incorporated within preschool settings, receiving positive feedback and subsequently being adapted to suit such environments better.

Objective and Methodology:

Essex County Council, seeking to level up their educational plans, conducted a pilot study with Speech Club in seven nurseries. The objective was to assess the effectiveness of Speech Club and its impact on children and families accessing it. Observations and feedback were meticulously recorded to evaluate the program's success and adaptability.

Impact and Observations:

Following the successful trial in seven nurseries, Essex County Council expanded the program to 42 different nursery settings. The participating nurseries observed substantial engagement and responsiveness from the children, noting:

- Improved attention and listening
- Enhanced peer interactions and friendship groups
- Complementarity with other Speech and Language interventions
- Ease of use and adaptability of the website and its content

Measuring Progress:

The progress chart provided by Speech Club serves as a pivotal tool to monitor children's advancements and to communicate these developments to parents. This structured approach has been acknowledged as making a tangible difference in the developmental trajectory of the participating children, with settings gradually developing their expertise and effectively integrating this additional resource.

Customization and Adaptation:

Nurseries have employed various strategies to maximize the benefits of Speech Club, such as:

- Assigning speech buddies to each child to enhance interaction.
- Assigning dedicated staff members to implement Speech Club, enabling effective engagement.
- Encouraging parent involvement to ensure continuity of progress at home.
- Utilising progress information to demonstrate added support for Speech, Language, and Communication to Ofsted.
- Continual implementation of activities suggested by Speech Club throughout the week.

Conclusion:

The implementation of Speech Club within the Essex nurseries has demonstrated the program's efficacy and adaptability in early years settings. The positive impact observed in the children's developmental progress, combined with the ease of integration and customization of the program, underscores its potential as a valuable resource in addressing Speech, Language, and Communication needs in early education. The continuity and regular implementation of Speech Club's activities have been identified as crucial in sustaining and enhancing the developmental gains achieved.

Further Information:

For additional details, please visit [SpeechClub.com](https://www.speechclub.com)

Staff Quotes:

"It seems to be making a difference, which is what it's all about. So we're thrilled."

"The children are really responding well to the activities and we've already seen an impact."

"It's a really good resource and a good reminder of activities, especially for those simple things like attention and listening, which often they said that they sometimes forget about. But then when they've watched the videos and focused on that, they've really appreciated why they need to focus on attention and listening."

"The children are really engaged, especially when the adult is really familiar with the lessons and know when to pause the video and engage with the children."

"Our settings also use TalkBoost but they said that actually the two together have really complement each other really well."

"In one nursery they've chosen specific children that they think would benefit from Speech Club but then they invited their best friends in order to develop their friends skills in communicating with their peers. It's really built up their friendship groups."

"We also use Elkan training and it's really just brought things together, you know, where they're focusing on an intervention, but then their overall practice is really improving as well. Speech Club adds an extra dimension."

"The website's really easy to use. The children like the props with the activities They're planning to use it within small groups"

"There has been a lot of positive feedback about the progress chart as well."

"For me, it feels that the settings have gradually over the years been developing their own expertise, whether that be funded opportunities or self funded. And then they've got this extra resource that they've just been able to put in place really simply."

"We are hoping it's going to have a long term effect for these children, as some interventions are very short sighted."