

Project Reception

Impact Review
2019/21



A project to inspire and develop leadership confidence in Bristol's Reception Classes



Improving outcomes for children by exploring:

- Effective pedagogy and practice in Reception
- Confident EYs leadership
- New Ofsted framework
- Importance of prime areas
- Toolkit of resources
- Early literacy and maths
- Responsive planning
- Balance of child initiated and adult led teaching and learning
- Observation and assessment



48 EYFS Leaders took part in the Project

Some of these leaders had been working in YR for a long time and some were new to leadership. Despite the covid-19 pandemic disrupting the project, almost all (42) of the leaders continued to attend the sessions, contribute to the reflective dialogue and complete their action planning.

Being an Ambitious Leader

The project provided opportunities for deep reflection about leadership and the challenge of being the year group that sits at the end of the EYFS but the beginning of school. Discussions have included leadership strategies and competencies that have enabled bravery, innovation and vision.

2500+ children in Bristol were influenced by the project and it's impact on teaching and learning in Reception

Children were observed closely as part of this project and benefits for individual children and whole groups have been widely documented and celebrated.

Championing Change through research

Evidence based research fuelled group discussions about practice and pedagogy which has increased knowledge and confidence about effective teaching and learning for under fives. Leaders have shared articles and case studies that have influenced decision makers and affected change in practice.

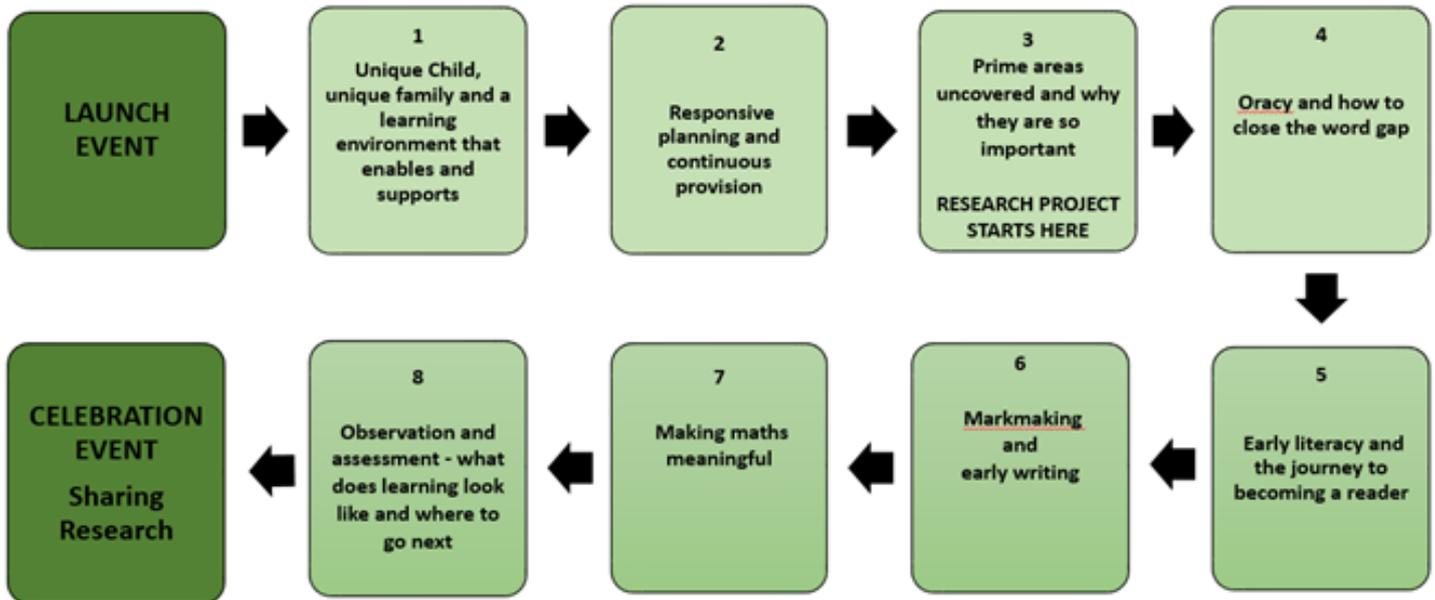
Effective Practice and Pedagogy in the Early Years

Each session focussed on an area of pedagogy for interrogation with Specialist Leaders sharing case studies to ignite further thinking. Reflective journals were used to document thinking and ideas for action.

"A leader is anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential." Brene Brown

Developing Strong Leadership and Expert Teaching in the Reception Year

Programme Outline



Action Research based on a Line of Enquiry

Each leader was asked to formulate a question to investigate based on an area that had come up during the reflective discussions. Articles and case studies were used to provoke a line of enquiry related to the provision or practice in the leader's unique school setting. Many leaders tried out new approaches in their teaching and evaluated the impact on children's learning. Examples of action research questions:

How will using the story square approach increase children's motivation to write?

How will a focus on quality interactions support our "invisible" children?

How will developing the outdoor environment support physical development?

How might plan, do, review support children's thinking skills?

How will a team focus on the Prime areas of learning benefit our children?

What are the key ingredients for writing that will motivate children in Reception?

How will working with the whole school to develop the continuous provision from Nursery to KS1 have an effect on learning progress?

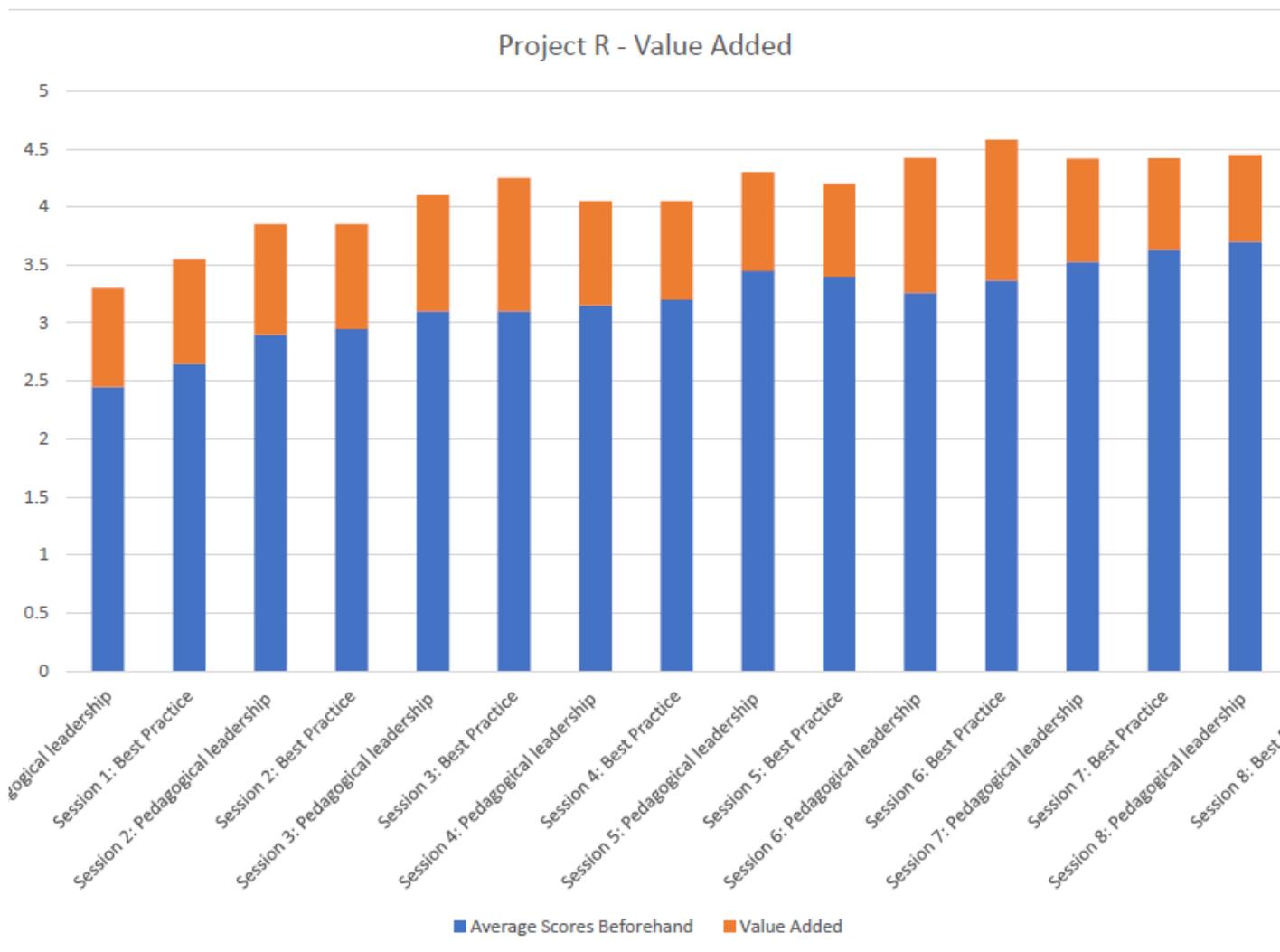


Participant Confidence Impact Chart

Before and after each session leaders were asked to rate their level of confidence from 1-5 (1 being not confident and 5 very confident) in 2 areas:

- Effective and confident EYFS pedagogical leadership in my school
- Developing a shared understanding of EYFS best practice in my school (related to focus of the session)

The chart below shows the increased confidence (in orange) and an overall movement from average scores of about 2.5 at the start, to average scores of about 4.5 at the end.



Each of the sessions had a focus on pedagogical leadership alongside a focus on an area of best practice with research articles to discuss and a case study to inspire further developments.

Session:

1. Unique child and unique family- a learning environment that enables and supports
2. Responsive planning and continuous provision
3. Prime areas and why they are so important
4. Oracy and how to close the word gap
5. Early literacy and the journey to becoming a reader
6. Markmaking and early writing
7. Making maths meaningful
8. Observation and Assessment- what does learning look like and where to go next

Confidence scores showed most change in sessions 3 (Prime areas) and 6 (early writing). This leadership confidence and interest led to many actions and developments in Reception classes eg. a focus on high quality interactions to support prime areas and storytelling to support early writing.

Evaluations and Reflective Journals

Leaders were asked to document their Project Reception journey and reflect on their personal learning.

It's given me permission to think boldly about this and to go back to basics – how does this fit in with our pedagogy and how will this impact on the children. It's also given me the headspace to properly articulate our pedagogy and to find the words to get it across to others.

I have been given the framework to think carefully about our 'invisible children' and to ensure that we are always thinking about them and getting to know them as deeply as possible.

If I am asking others to think about something or change an element to our teaching and learning, then I need to understand the theory behind it so I can share ideas clearly and concisely but also see the importance to child development.

We are developing our outside environment so that we can promote problem solving, observation and exploration.

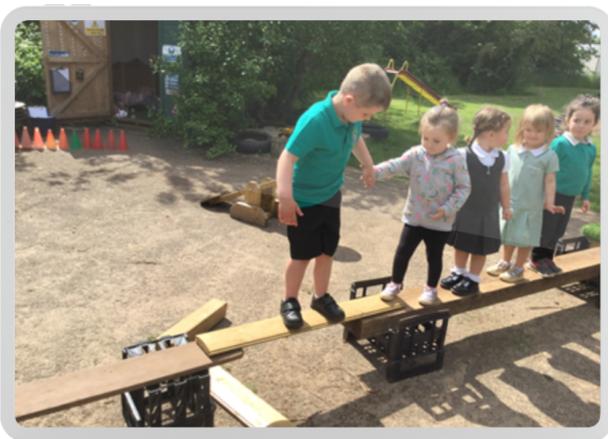
I will continue to research and explore best practice in EYFS and carry this forward to Y1 as well. I will be confident as an EYFS leader to make decisions based in theory of child development and have confidence to voice this within school and to external agencies.

With such a deep understanding now of EYFS pedagogy I can articulate to SLT why we do what we do, using the techniques in project reception to support this. I can also easily see gaps in our practice and how to work to develop these.

We have introduced both Story Squares and Poetry Basket to our weekly routines and the change that we see in our children is really exciting. Children in our setting see themselves as authors, whose stories are valued by the adults and other children.

A Powerhouse of Early Years Leaders in Bristol

Project Reception will continue to bring these leaders together as a network that supports and inspires by connecting, sharing practice, researching, problem solving and championing children in Reception.



To find out more about the Project Reception in Bristol please contact ali.carrington@bristol-schools.uk