

After being asked to help improve staff knowledge and skills in speech, language and communication at a local nursery Victoria used the SLCF to great effect. She will soon be providing a day of bespoke training to the nursery staff using her findings from the SLCF to create it.

“I work as a Speech and Language Therapist for the West Midlands Independent Speech and Language Therapy Service. The manager of a local nursery contacted us as she was keen to improve staff knowledge and skills around speech, language and communication. I met with the manager to discuss how we could achieve this. We decided to use the SLCF to measure confidence levels amongst the nursery staff. I spent a morning getting to know the staff and provided them with a brief outline of my purpose. I set up each member of staff on the SLCF and created a group profile which allowed me to see the results of all staff members. The staff then completed the online self evaluation for the Foundation and Universal levels.

During the same morning, I spent some time signposting them to useful documents and had photocopies the 'Universally Speaking' document for each member of staff. The idea was that they would all have a personal development folder which they could add to according to their requirements.

The SLCF self evaluation scores provided me with a baseline of staff confidence levels in the three main areas - Understanding and Identifying, Supporting, and Roles and Responsibilities. In further discussion with the nursery manager we decided to follow this up with a detailed nursery audit of each member of staff. I used the 'Ealing Quality Indicators Supporting All Children's Communication Development' audit. This was done on all members of staff and provided more detailed information around practitioners' use of strategies to support: speech, language and communication; language opportunities provided; the listening environment and staff awareness of specific SLCN need. It also looked at organisation, planning and engaging families. I spent one day auditing the staff across the three age ranges in the nursery (babies, 2-3 yrs and 3-5 yrs).

I presented my findings to the nursery manager at a 1:1 meeting, providing a detailed written report. I linked my findings/recommendations to the five priority areas of the Communication Commitment and suggested that she use this framework and my recommendations to develop an action plan. She wants to do this and has registered on the framework herself. As part of the 'workforce development' recommendations, I will be providing one day of bespoke training to all nursery staff. I will be using my findings from the SLCF and also the audit to create this training- I am currently in the process of writing this!”

*Victoria, Speech and Language Therapist
West Midlands Independent Speech and Language Therapy Service*