



Talking Matters:

**An Eiklan CIC Programme to improve
support for speech, language and
communication in early years settings**

April 2016

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Executive Summary

Talking Matters was a Department of Education funded programme to provide staff training and increase the quality of provision, in relation to speech, language and communication, within the early years sector.

The programme engaged with 6 local authorities and trained 1,329 practitioners across 128 settings, through a cascade model. 69 of the settings benefited from having staff within them, Key Communication Practitioners, trained to higher level by Elklan.

After the training had been undertaken the trainers, Lead Communication Practitioners, supported settings to change and develop practice in their settings and to undertake an externally accredited audit to achieve *Communication Friendly Setting* status.

Talking Matters has reached 8,964 children in less than a year.

The project was evaluated, using questionnaires, surveys and comments provided by participants, in terms of its effects on practitioner confidence, knowledge and practice and the value placed on it by local authorities and by settings, and the programme was found to be highly effective. The impact of Key Communication Practitioners on the success of the programme was also explored.

The impact of Talking Matters on children is being formally evaluated by the Department of Human Communication Sciences, University of Sheffield, outside of the Department of Education's time frame.

The programme of training and accreditation used in Talking Matters was found to offer value for money in comparison to other programmes and it was developed into Elklan's *Communication Friendly Setting* Programme, which is now available, on a commercial basis nationally. Additionally, the local authorities involved in Talking Matters have plans in place to sustain and develop the programme in their own areas.

1. Background

Talking Matters was designed to develop the innovative work evaluated within the *Early Language Development Programme (ELDP)*¹ into an embedded and sustainable programme, with potential reach across England.

Operating within early years settings, with places for 2- year olds, the programme has sought to tackle a widespread issue, speech, language and communication (SLC) needs, which affect 10%² of all children, and more than 50% of children from socio-economically disadvantaged areas³ or whom have SEND.⁴

SLC skills are fundamental to academic, social and emotional wellbeing and are required to access learning and attain across the Early Years Foundation Stage. As upwards of 50% of children have difficulties in this area it is vital that everyone working in early years settings (EYSs) supports children's SLC. However, even in effective EYSs, knowledge about SLC, and the implementation of key approaches, may be limited⁵.

Sustained, collaborative professional development (CPD) has been identified as necessary and most effective for changing staff behaviours and impacting on outcomes for children⁶.

A number of initiatives have sought to address this need, including Every Child a Talker and ELDP; each has had positive outcomes but sustainability and replication have been limited by reliance on external "specialists", budgetary constraints and access to CPD.

This proposal provides a model, fully sustainable locally, for increasing staff and parents' skills and knowledge and embedding changes in the practice of EYS; It extends the Elklan Communication Friendly Schools project, evaluated as effective with regard to increasing staff skills and knowledge, embedding changed practice and consequent changes to pupils' speech and language, into EYSs (evaluation and further evidence of the value of Elklan CPD: www.elklan.co.uk).

Talking Matters incorporated recommendations from evaluation of the ELDP:

- Securing buy in from LAs
Delivery partnerships with LAs to ensure they have ownership of the programme beyond the lifetime of the programme
- Flexible training
Listening to EYPs and using e-learning where appropriate Talking Matters ensured training was accessible and met the needs of a diverse workforce.

¹ OPM Evaluation of the Early Language Development Programme, London, 2014.

² Law et al (2000) Provision for children's speech and language needs in England and Wales: facilitating communication between education and health services, DfES research report 239

³ Locke, A., Ginsborg, J. and Peers, I. (2002) Development and Disadvantage: Implications for Early Years International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders Vol 27 No 1

⁴ I CAN (2006) The Cost to the Nation of Children's Poor Communication I CAN Talk Series – issue 2

⁵ Sylva, Kathy and Melhuish, Edward and Sammons, Pam and Siraj-Blatchford, Iram and Taggart, Brenda (2004) The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Final Report: A Longitudinal Study Funded by the DfES 1997-2004. [Report]; UCL, London

⁶ Bercow Review of Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs, 2008, DCSF-00632-2008

- Providing increased clarity to those involved regarding the necessary commitment to the programme
- Training more, more carefully selected, Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs) to ensure they could support each other, and ensure programme continuity in the event of unplanned leave or staff turnover.
- Ensuring accredited LCPs could deliver the programme relatively independent of Elklan or local speech and language therapists, increasing availability and decreasing cost.

2. The Programme

Elklan CIC was successful in bidding for a Department of Education voluntary and Community Sector grant within the Early Education and Childcare theme, for Talking Matters, to run from April 2015 to March 2016.

2.1. Talking Matters Aims:

Through Talking Matters, Elklan CIC, in partnership with 6 local authority areas, set out to achieve the following through building on the Early Language Development Programme (ELDP) and its evaluation:

- To increase the knowledge, confidence and skills of early years practitioners, in settings, in relation to developing speech, language and communication (SLC) in children from 0-5 years;
- To share knowledge and expertise, regarding SLC between early years practitioners;
- To develop the capacity of early years practitioners to support parents in developing their children's SLC;
- To improve the quality of provision, on an on-going basis for children by addressing the needs of all children for support in speech, language and communication (SLC), including the upwards of 50% of children in disadvantaged areas who have SLC needs and children with special educational needs or disabilities;
- To improve outcomes for children in early years settings, 0-5 years, in the development of speech, language and communication;
- To provide and disseminate an evaluated and fully sustainable model for implementation throughout England.

2.2. Talking Matters Components

The steps originally outlined for Talking Matters were to:

- Develop partnerships with services in a number of local authority areas, who each identified a local Project Coordinator.
- Recruit Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs) in each partner local authority.
- Recruit early years settings in each partner local authority and 2 Key Communication Practitioners (KCPs) from 50% of these settings.
- Provide LCPs and KCPs with training through a tried and tested course called *Speech and Language Support for 0-3s*. The course is accredited by Ascentis (previously Apt Awards) and can give learners 9 credits at level 3.
- Give Each LCP responsibility for cascading a lighter touch training course, *Communication Counts* to whole staff groups in early years settings, with an option for staff to gain accreditation for their learning at level 2, followed up by visits to the settings to ensure the implementation and embedding of changes to practice and an audit of settings to allow them to be accredited as *Communication Friendly Settings*.
- Completion of a portfolio of evidence, about how they helped to change practice and create *Communication Friendly Settings*, by LCPs, enabling them to achieve an accredited award: 6 credits at level 4.
- Facilitation of the formation and operation of early years practitioner (EYP) networks to share experience and knowledge
- Evaluation of:
 - Changes in the skills, knowledge and confidence of EYPs

- Changes in the capacity of EYPs to work with parents to enable them to support their children’s SLC development
- Outcomes for children in the area of SLC
- The value to the programme of KCPs
- The sustainability of the programme
- Dissemination and roll out of Talking Matters

2.3. Target Reach

Talking Matters was designed with the following anticipated reach:

Number of Local Authorities	Number of LCPs	Number of KCPs	Number of Early years settings	Number of early years practitioners trained	Number of children reached
6	30	150	150	1,800	4,500

Estimates for the numbers of staff and children to be reached within 150 settings were based on an assumption that the average setting would have 30 children and 12 staff on role.

2.4. The Budget

Elklan CIC’s funding bid to the Department of Education was for £143,465.00.

This included

- Project management
- Developing Elklan’s virtual learning environment for the delivery of *Speech and Language Support for 0-3s*.
- Tutors and resources to deliver courses to LCPs and KCPs
- Accreditation fees for LCPs, KCPs and settings
- A contribution to the time and expenses of LCPs delivering cascade training, visiting settings and supporting setting audits
- Evaluation of all elements of the programme except the evaluation of the impact of Talking Matter on outcomes for children; this to be undertaken by Sheffield University outside of the timeline and finance provided by the Department of Education.

2.5. Management

A part time project manager was allocated to the project by Elklan CIC.

Each local authority area put forward a Local Project Coordinator.

A Project Group was formed, comprising the Project Manager, the Elklan Head of Training and finance, and a Department of Education representative. Quarterly meetings of this group, to which Project Coordinators, Elklan Tutors, LCPs and managers of Early Years Settings were invited, were planned.

3. Methodology:

3.1. Partner Local Authorities

Elklan CIC publicised the programme to its own network of contacts and through information placed in The Communication Trust's newsletter. Those who expressed an interest were required to complete an application or bidding document (Appendix 1). Applicants were also provided with appendices 2-5 to ensure that those bidding were aware of the commitment that would be necessary to the programme, the requirements of the LCPs, the provisional project time line, and the value and process for financial reimbursement.

Bidding documents were scored, as detailed within Appendix 1, with the 6 highest scoring bids being offered participation in Talking Matters. A face-to-face meeting was held between the Project Manager and stakeholders in each area.

Each partner area was then required to complete a signed agreement with Elklan confirming each partner's commitment to the programme.

3.2. Identification of Lead and Key Communication Practitioners (LCPs and KCPs) and Settings.

Elklan provided local Project Coordinators with criteria and application forms to select 5 LCPs each (Appendices 4 and 5), who would be able to undertake training, cascade training and support settings to become accredited as *Communication Friendly Settings*. Elklan moderated these where requested.

Local Project Coordinators were also tasked with gaining commitment from 25 early years settings each to participate in the project and identifying 2 potential KCPs from 12 or 13 of these settings to undertake the higher level training to be delivered by Elklan tutors.

Local Project Coordinators were free to select settings using their own criteria. Some opened the opportunity to all settings in their areas to apply; others selected those which were in deprived areas or those that had previously expressed an interest in training in speech, language and communication.

3.3. Delivery of Training to LCPs and KCPs

Once the geographical areas for Talking Matters had been identified Elklan CIC identified tutors from their registered network to deliver training to the identified KCPs and LCPs.

Courses could be delivered either face to face or via Elklan's virtual learning environment. The most appropriate mode for delivery to each course cohort was discussed and agreed with the Local Project Coordinators.

Following a model previously established by Elklan maximum learner cohort size was 15 for face-to-face delivery and 5 for e-learning. E-learning cohort size was limited, by technical capacity in respect of the number of learners who could participate in webinars.

The primary course for delivery to LCPs and KCPs was Elklan's *Speech and Language Support for 0-3s* course, designed to be delivered over ten weekly sessions, each session lasting two hours, or ten one-hour webinar sessions. The course uses interactive teaching methods, practical activities, videos and group discussion to engage learners. The course outline can be found at Appendix 6.

Two areas requested, and were allowed, flexibility to deliver an alternative Elklan course *Speech and Language Support for 3-5s* to a subset of their learners, Appendix 7.

The identified Elklan tutors were issued with contracts whose requirements included:

- Delivery of the full content of the training programmes
- Marking learners' work
- Providing information to the learners on completing their portfolios accurately and gaining accreditation.
- Providing additional support to LCPs (through 3 X 3 hour sessions) to
 - Ensure LCPs were confident about delivery of the cascade course, *Communication Counts* to whole setting staff groups
 - Support the completion of tasks in the LCPs' portfolios
 - Support the LCPs in marking *Communication Counts* portfolios and in completing setting audits

3.4. Whole Staff Training

LCPs were provided with training notes and resources, together with support from their Elklan tutor, to deliver *Communication Counts* to whole staff groups in 5 settings each.

Communication Counts is designed to be delivered over five one-hour sessions but some LCPs were given some flexibility to deliver over fewer, longer sessions where requested.

The sessions of *Communication Counts* cover:

- What is communication?
- Interaction
- The link between play and language development
- The word journey
- The language journey
- Play planning to support and improve language

3.5. Support and Audit

LCPs were required to visit each setting where they had delivered training twice to support staff implement changes in practice, from the learning they had acquired through training. LCPs then supported settings in completing an audit for *Communication Friendly Setting* status. Further details of the audit can be found at Appendix 8.

3.6. Virtual Learning Environment

Elklan CIC used Elklan Training's virtual learning environment to support delivery of Talking Matters.

This was developed to be suited to the purpose. Developments included making *Speech and Language Support for 0-3s* available on line and improving the user experience and accommodating the range of mobile devices used by learners.

Pre and post questionnaires for all learners were made available on line, allowing Elklan CIC to collect data directly.

An area of the website was dedicated to the LCPs to ensure easy access to all the information and materials needed during the project.

3.7. Networks and the Sharing of Knowledge

Elklan CIC required each of the 6 areas participating in Talking matters to establish at least one network to share experience and knowledge gained through Talking Matters.

Project Coordinators and tutors were also provided with each other's contact details and linked through the Project Group and online.

3.8. Evaluation

Areas for evaluation were identified as:

- The impact of Talking Matters on early years practitioners' knowledge, skills and confidence in relation to speech, language and Communication
- The impact of Talking Matters on children's progress in speech, language and communication
- The impact of Talking Matters on early years practitioners' capacity to support parents to develop their children's speech, language and communication
- The benefits of Key Communication Practitioners to Talking Matters
- The attitudes and perceptions of early years practitioners and local authority leads to Talking matters
- The value for money of Talking Matters

External evaluation

Prior to agreement of the VCS grant for Talking matters Elklan CIC, after taking external advice, had acknowledged that it was not appropriate for the evaluation of the impact of Talking Matters on children's progress in speech, language and communication to be undertaken within the timescales of the Department of Education funded programme.

A decision was taken for Elklan to commission this element of Talking Matters outside of the grant funding and time line.

Elklan compiled a bidding document for distribution to individual researchers and University departments working in this area inviting proposals for this research.

Evaluation Tools

The following tools were used to collect data for the evaluation of Talking Matters, within the VCS grant funded programme:

- Pre and post questionnaires for all learners (Appendix 9)
Learners were encouraged to complete questionnaires on line where possible but a facility was available for them to complete in hard copy on request.
- Results of *Communication Friendly Setting* status audits (Appendix 8)
Not all settings achieved the necessary standards for the award of *Communication Friendly Setting* status at their first audit. Elklan collected information regarding settings which were audited by the end of February 2016, including whether the necessary standards were achieved on first audit and whether a KCP was present in the setting.
- Setting Survey (Appendix 10)
In the last fortnight of the project, when the majority of settings had undertaken audit, Elklan distributed a survey to setting managers.

- 'Wow Moments'

Each setting's audit for *Communication Friendly Setting* status included a response to the following:

Your Communication Friendly Wow Factor is the one thing which your setting has changed or introduced that you feel has had the most impact in supporting your children with their speech, language and communication. It could be something you do with the children, a change in the physical environment, a change in resources and how these are used or how you share information with parents.

Please describe your Wow Factor in about 100 words and attach a photo or something visual so that your good practice can be shared with other settings in the scheme.

- Pre and post Talking Matters questionnaires for local authority representatives/local Project Coordinators (Appendix 11)
- Ad hoc feedback from those engaged with Talking Matters including feedback received at Project Group meetings, within the 'any other comments' sections of the questionnaires and survey and through emails and telephone calls.

3.9. Time line

Prior to the agreement of the VCS grant Elklan submitted a proposed time line, with accompanying milestones, to the Department of Education. This timeline allowed for a 12-month programme duration.

In the event the grant was delayed in being finalized resulting in a 9-month project period.

Elklan agreed revised time lines for local implementation within each Talking Matters area and revised the overall activity schedule accordingly.

4. Outputs

4.1. Partnerships with Local Authorities

Elklan CIC entered into partnership with 6 areas in respect of Talking Matters, each of whom identified a local Project Coordinator.

Geographical area	Partner organisation	Initial Local Project Coordinator job role	Final Local Project Coordinator job role
Lancashire	Lancashire County Council	Children's Centre Manager	Cluster leader (change after initial coordinator left post and area)
Sefton	Sefton Local Authority	School Readiness Officer	Unchanged
Barnet	London Borough of Barnet	Senior Educational Psychologist and Chair of Leading Edge Language Group	Specialist Speech Language and Communication Advisory Teacher (delegated)
Essex	Essex County Council (Early Years & Childcare)	Early Language and Communication Adviser	Temporary change to another person with same role during project to cover sick leave
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	ECaT Consultant	Unchanged
Isle of Wight	Isle of Wight Council with Hampshire County Council Children's Services	Speech and Language Therapy Manager	Unchanged

4.2. Lead Communication Practitioners and Key Communication Practitioners

Numbers at end March 2016	LCPs (target: 5)	KCPs (target 24-26)
Lancashire	5	20
Sefton	5	20
Barnet	5	24
Essex	6	23
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	6	9 (+ 5 LCPs acting in dual role)= 14
Isle of Wight	5	17

Two areas chose to recruit an additional LCP each.

There was significant attrition in numbers of KCPs in some areas during the course of Talking Matters as a result of job changes, maternity and sick leave and an inability of either individuals or settings to commit to the time requirement for training.

4.3. Early Years Settings

The target was for each area to recruit 25 settings, 12-13 of which would have KCPs amongst the staff, to the programme. This target was set based on the assumption that each setting would have an average of 12 staff and 30 children on role. A large number of settings were much larger than this in terms of numbers of children, although some had proportionally fewer staff. Adjustments to targets were made to compensate for the size and complexity of settings allowing areas to count settings with multiples of 30 children on role to count as more than one “virtual” setting.

The table shows the number of actual settings and demonstrates that although the number of these was lower than anticipated the number of children reached far exceeded target.

Reach March 2016	Number of settings with KCPs on staff	Number of settings without KCPs on staff	Total number of settings	Total number of staff trained	Total number of children reached
Lancashire	12	13	25	204	1,546
Sefton	10	5	15	108	741
Barnet	12	13	25	311	2,107
Essex	16	13	29	319	2,337
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	9	8	17	168	1,067
Isle of Wight	10	7	17	219	1,166
Total	69 (target 72-78)	59 (target 72-78)	128 (target 150)	1,329 (target 1,800)	8,964 (target 4,500)

4.4. Delivery of Training

8 Eiklan tutors delivered a total of eight face to face (6 X the 0-3s and 2 X the 3-5s course) and nine e-learning courses (0-3s) to the LCPs and KCPs.

KCPs were able to complete portfolios for accreditation at level 2 or 3 whilst LCPs, through going on to cascade courses and support the development and accreditation of settings, were able to gain a level 4 award.

The LCPs went on to deliver *Communication Counts* to the staff of 128 settings. LCPs recorded training 1,329 staff.

4.5. Support and Audit

A number of LCPs reported providing additional support over the 2 visits required, by telephone, email or additional visits, this was attributed to the requirement to undertake audits within Talking Matters’ timescales rather than when a setting considered it was “ready”.

Where settings did not achieve the standards necessary for accreditation as communication friendly at the first audit LCPs offered further support.

4.6. Virtual Learning Environment

The Virtual Learning environment was improved in the ways envisaged, that is the content and format was developed in order to enable tutors to deliver training through this medium, to allow pre and post questionnaires to be undertaken on line, to improve the user experience and to ensure that the variety of devices used by learners could be used to access the site.

4.7. Networks and the Sharing of Knowledge

Over the duration of Talking Matters two face to face and one virtual Project Group meeting were held for attendees to discuss and share their experience and to explore issues raised.

Each of the 6 areas also established some kind of knowledge sharing forum:

LCP meetings	(3 areas)
Multiagency speech, language and communication group established	(4 areas)
KCP forum established	(1 area)

4.8. Evaluation

External evaluation

The external evaluation, outside of the grant funded programme, of the impact of Talking Matters on children's progress in speech, language and communication is being undertaken by Dr Judy Clegg and Carla Rohde of the Department of Human Communication Sciences, University of Sheffield.

The evaluation includes 3 conditions:

1. Control settings
2. Settings receiving training who have Key Communication Practitioners in place.
3. Settings receiving training who do not have Key Communication Practitioners in place.

A maximum of 15 children, in each of 4 settings for each condition are involved (a total of 180 Children).

Baseline measures, using the PLS-5, were taken prior to Talking Matters training starting; outcome measures, using the same tool, will be taken in July/August 2016. The evaluation will report in October 2016.

Data Collection

- Pre and post questionnaires for all learners
1,329 learners participated in Talking Matters.
1,077 learners completed pre training questionnaires (81% response rate)
569 learners completed post-training questionnaires (43% response rate), by the date of this report
There were 473 matched responses to questionnaires, where pre and post data could be attributed to the same learners (36% of learners).
- Results of *Communication Friendly Setting* status audits
By the end of February 2016, 67 settings had been audited for the first time, 38 of these had KCPs within their staff and 29 did not.
- Setting Survey
Within the necessary, very short, timescales 20 settings returned completed surveys.
- 'Wow Factors were collected, within setting audits (question 8.0 in appendix 8)
- Pre and post Talking Matters questionnaires for local authority representatives/local

Project Coordinators

All 6 areas completed pre and post Talking Matters questionnaires (100% return rate)

- Ad hoc feedback from those engaged with Talking Matters was collected throughout the duration of the programme.

4.9. Time line

The programme was completed, as planned by the end of March 2016, although some data analysis took place after this.

5. Outcomes

5.1. The Value of the Training

The training and its effectiveness were evaluated through pre and post questionnaires undertaken by learners, pre and post questionnaires completed by local authority representatives, post Talking Matters surveys completed by setting managers and through comments collected throughout the Talking Matters programme.

Local Authority questionnaires (N=6)

Respondents were asked to score a number of statements from 0, not at all to 5, very strong agreement and to add comments.

- In the pre Talking Matters questionnaire respondents were asked to score the statement:

We value this opportunity to access training

All respondents gave this statement a maximum score, 5, with comments including:

- *This is a fantastic opportunity to make a difference by empowering and extending practitioner knowledge, confidence and skills*
- Respondents rated the following both before and after Talking Matters:

Staff in our early years settings [which have been part of Talking Matters] are well equipped to support children's speech, language and communication

No areas reported a decrease in this area, the average score increased from 3.25 to 4.17.

Setting surveys

- Settings were asked to agree or disagree with the statement:

The training Talking Matters has provided has been valuable.

100% of the 20 settings who returned surveys agreed with this statement, comments included:

- *We feel our Practitioners are now better informed and have the skills required to support the children in our setting with confidence.*
- *Helped adult /child interaction and with the implementation of visual timetables and communication friendly spaces and the understanding of Ekklan. This is helping to further children's communication/Language development.*
- *It has made all staff aware of the importance of language support in the Early Years and the fact it is not just Teachers but all adults in the setting that make a difference.*
- *Now that all practitioners have received training there is consistency in the approach to language and communication across the setting and not just in selected groupings*
- *The training has particularly supported those in the early stages of their careers and helped those with more experience to come at things with fresh eyes.*
- *All practitioners are now more mindful of the language they use with the children. We are introducing vocabulary planning as a matter of course across the rooms in the setting. Key words are chosen which link to planning ideas and words are sent home to embed further learning.*

- Practitioners appear to be more confident in their approach, are more aware of how to model and expand language and have a clearer understanding of how play skills impact on developing communication
 - Practitioners found the training interesting and it developed their knowledge – whole team training can be very valuable
- 61% of the setting managers reported that they had had some access to training in the area of speech, language and communication in the year prior to involvement in Talking Matters, but in only 2 cases had this involved all, or a significant proportion, of the staff.

Comments

Comments regarding the value of the training included:

Key communication Practitioner:

- *My tutor was amazing, really explained how children learn language and the ways to support them, supported with the audit too, the videos were useful too.*

Setting Managers:

- *Training for all Staff at the same time- really positive*
- *The higher-level training for the leaders was great and they disseminated it to the whole staff team.*
- *Settings are conveying enthusiasm and motivation following whole team training during Communication Counts.*
- *Strategies are proving successful already e.g. Baby room practitioners have introduced visual clues to support babies with gesture and to communicate their choices and feelings.*
- *Cascade training delivered to all staff within the setting has helped to embed good practice*

5.1.1. The Impact of the Training on Practitioner Confidence

The pre and post questionnaires completed by learners required them to rate their confidence on a scale of 1 to 5 in relation to 14 questions, the 2 questions concerning working with parents are considered elsewhere in the report. Responses to 12 questions are therefore reported below.

	All responses			Matched responses N= 473		
	Pre training questionnaires: N= 1,077 Average score	Post training questionnaires N= 569 Average score	Change (post-pre scores)	Pre training questionnaires: Average score	Pre training questionnaires: Average score	Change (post-pre scores)
How confident would you be to describe the difference between the terms "speech", "language" and "communication"?	3.12	4.14	1.02	3.07	4.15	1.08
How confident do you feel in identifying young children	3.23	4.18	0.95	3.21	4.18	0.97

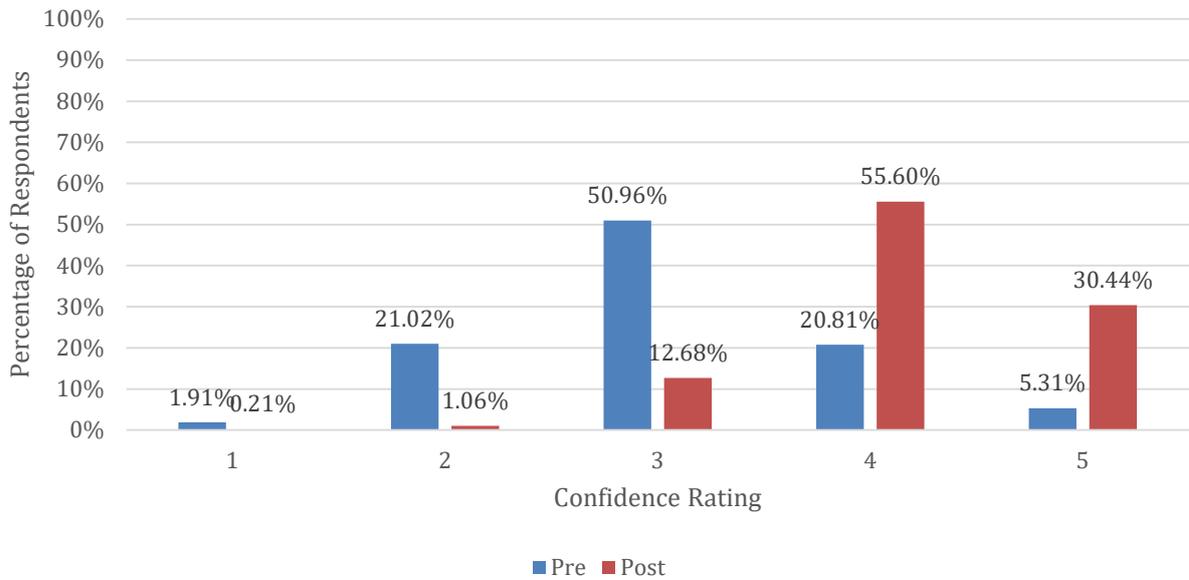
with speech, language and communication delay or who are at risk of delay?						
How confident do you feel in tracking the progress of young children's speech, language and communication skills?	3.09	4.10	1.01	3.09	4.11	1.02
How confident do you feel in knowing the difference between an environment which is or is not communication friendly?	3.26	4.32	1.06	3.22	4.31	1.09
Thinking about your interaction with young children, how confident do you feel that your style of interaction promotes the communication of all young children but particularly those who have or are at risk of speech, language and communication delay?	3.27	4.10	0.83	3.29	4.11	0.82
How confident do you feel in supporting children to understand and name new vocabulary?	3.26	4.16	0.90	3.27	4.14	0.87
How confident do you feel in helping young children to	3.39	4.18	0.80	3.40	4.19	0.79

understand things you say to them?						
How confident do you feel in helping children to develop their talking skills?	3.29	4.18	0.89	3.29	4.17	0.88
How confident do you feel in using play and everyday situations to promote the speech, language and communication skills of all young child but particularly those with a delay or at risk of a delay in these skills.	3.28	4.18	0.9	3.26	4.17	0.91
How confident do you feel in understanding the advice given to you by someone like a speech and language therapist or teaching advisor when they visit your setting to discuss a child?	3.32	4.12	0.80	3.29	4.13	0.84

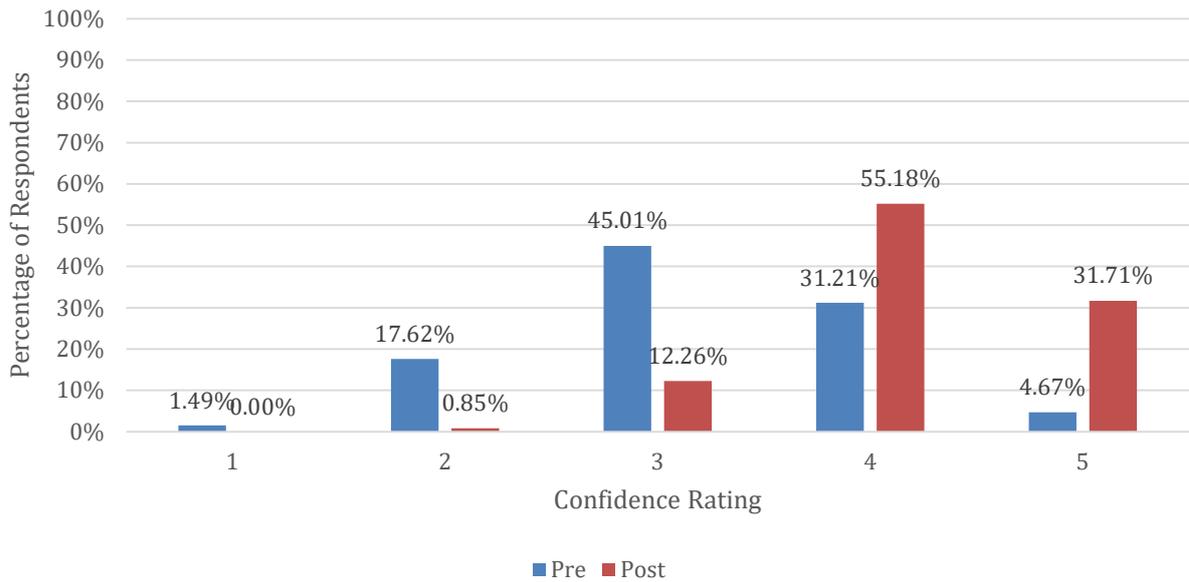
The wider range of responses yielded similar results the matched results, with respondents scoring higher for confidence after as opposed to before the training in all areas.

Results for matched responses, where the same respondents completed both pre and post questionnaires are shown graphically below:

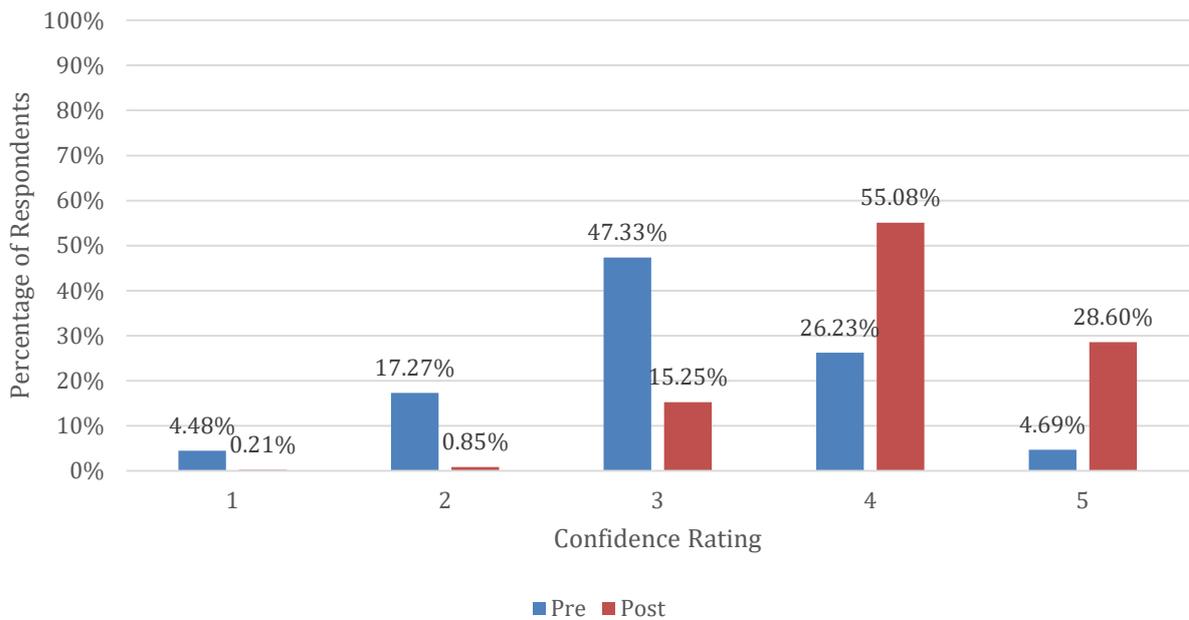
How confident would you be to describe the difference between the terms "speech", "language" and "communication"?



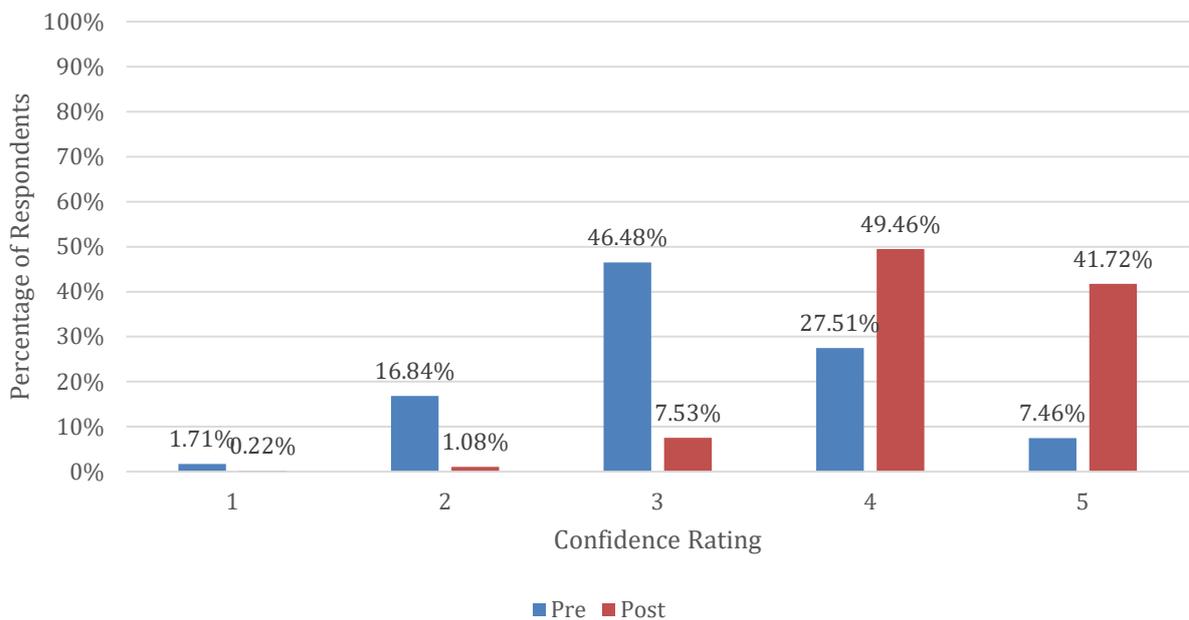
How confident do you feel in identifying young children with speech, language and communication delay or who are at risk of delay?



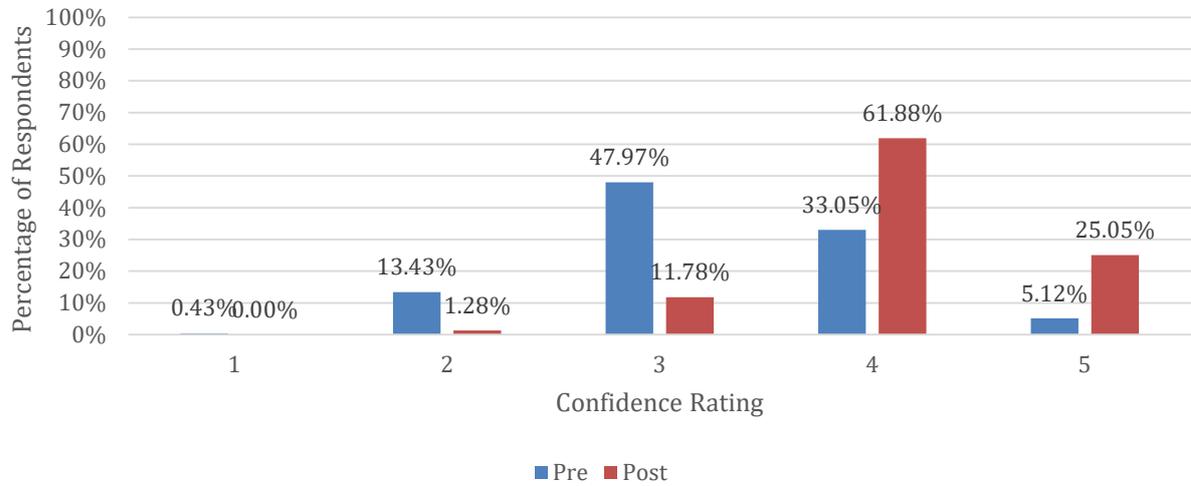
How confident do you feel in tracking the progress of young children's speech, language and communication skills?



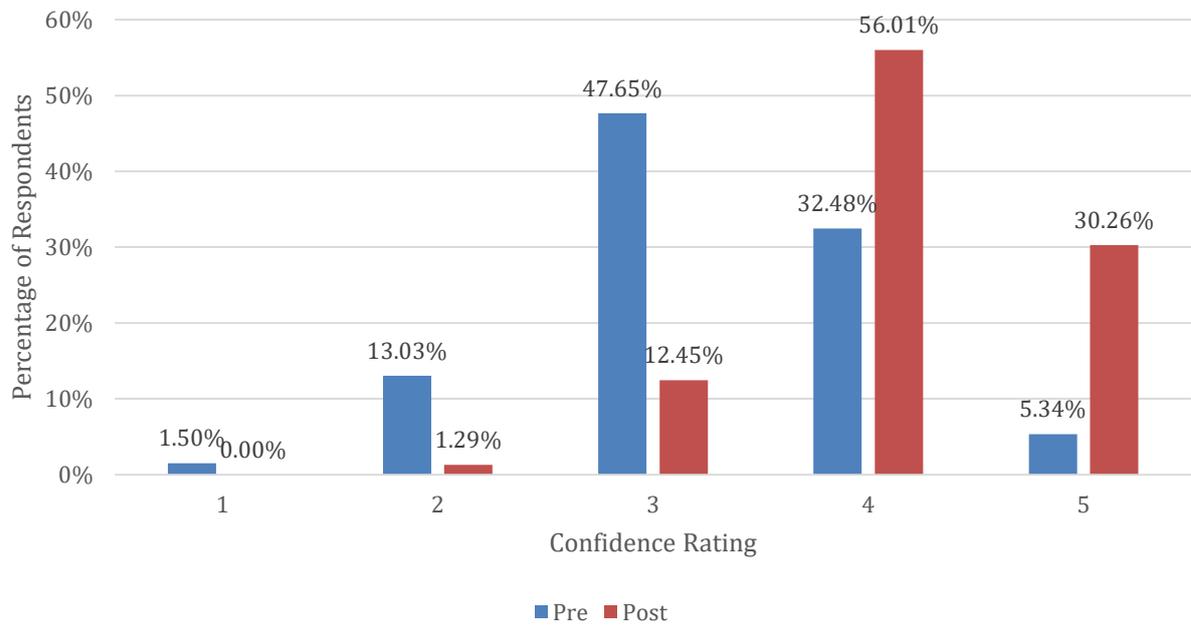
How confident do you feel in knowing the difference between an environment which is or is not communication friendly?



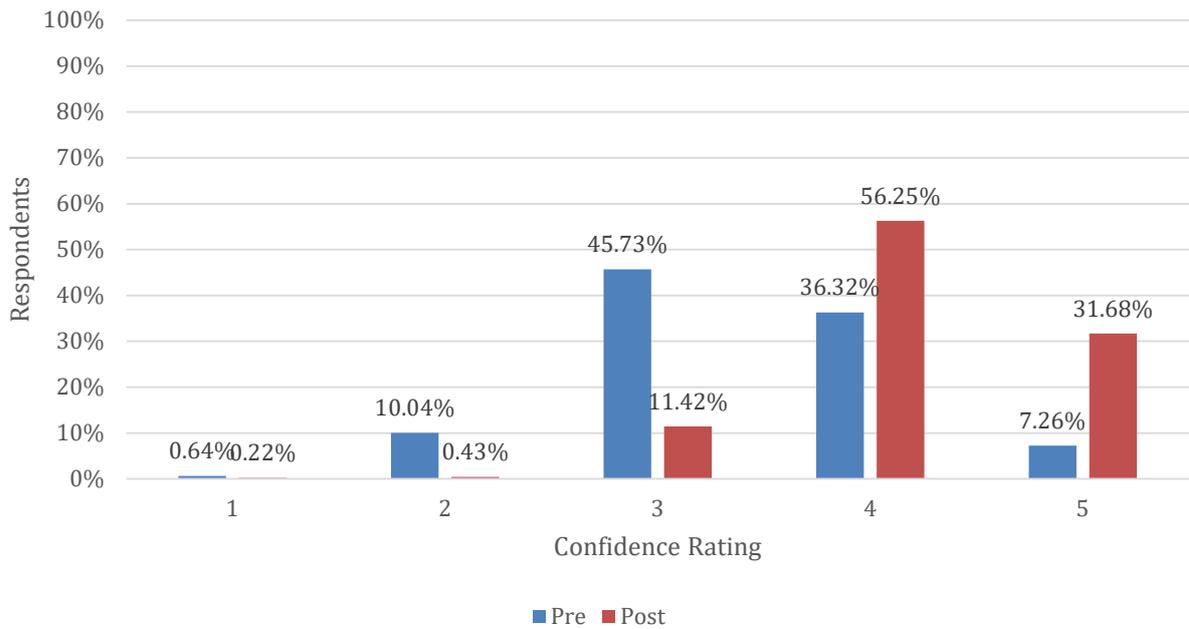
Thinking about your interaction with young children, how confident do you feel that your style of interaction promotes the communication of all young children but particularly those who have or are at risk of speech, language and communication delay?



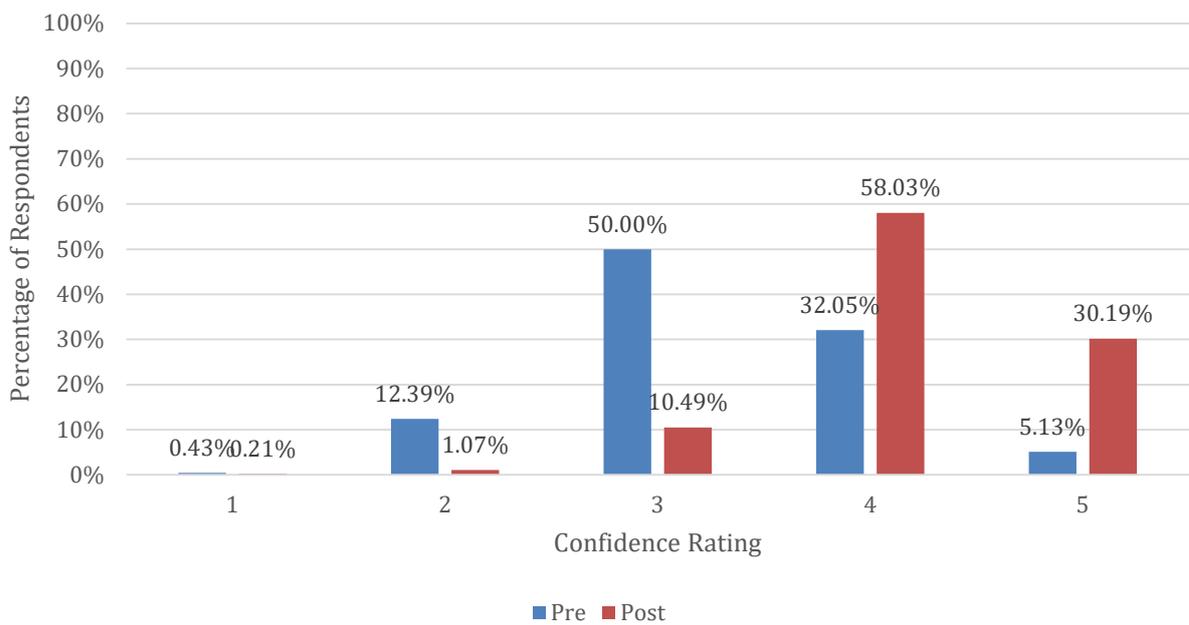
How confident do you feel in supporting children to understand and name new vocabulary?



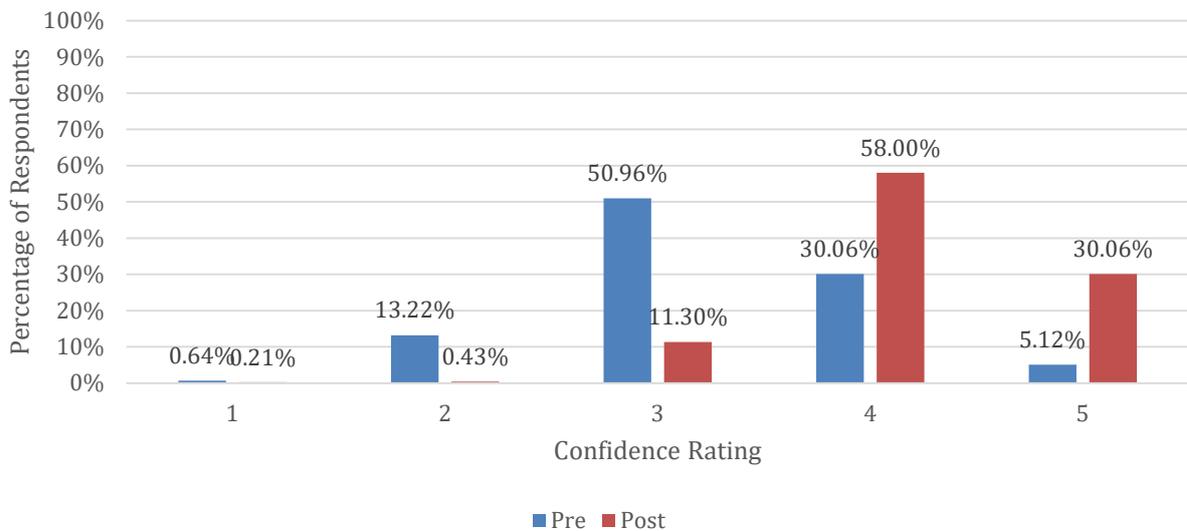
How confident do you feel in helping young children to understand things you say to them?



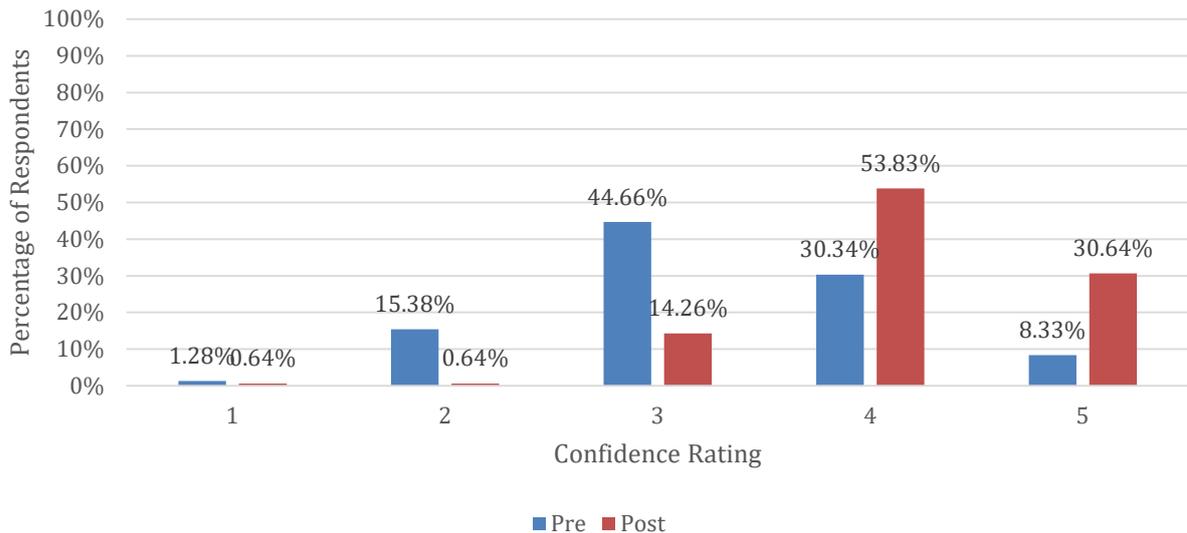
How confident do you feel in helping children to develop their talking skills?



How confident do you feel in using play and everyday situations to promote the speech, language and communication skills of all young child but particularly those with a delay or at risk of a delay in these skills?



How confident do you feel in understanding the advice given to you by someone like a speech and language therapist or teaching advisor when they visit your setting to discuss a child?



5.1.2. The Impact of the Training on Practitioner Knowledge, Skills and Practice

The impact of the training on practitioners' knowledge and skills was not directly measured. However, information was gathered from comments made by the practitioners, setting managers and local authority representatives. It can also be assumed that some changes in practice, including the use of new tools and strategies, in relation to children's speech, language and communication development, are a result of gains in knowledge and skills.

Practitioner knowledge

The following are comments from practitioners in relation to the impact of the training on their knowledge:

- *Fabulous! Learnt a lot*
- *I found the communication trees helpful in relating where the children are developmentally and relating that to where they are regarding SLC*
- *The course was very informative and clarified a lot.*
- *It was enjoyable and interesting. I felt I came away with many new ideas.*
- *This was a very informative course, which has provided us with lots of strategies to use in our setting to promote the development of the children's language and communication.*
- *I have been an early years practitioner for 20 years and find many training courses don't offer new knowledge or skills. This course however was very interesting and taught me lots of new strategies and techniques to try and really made me reflect upon my practise.*
- *The course has been very beneficial to my practice and has made me reflect, it has been very informative and offered different strategies in ways to support children who have delays.*
- *I found this course useful and gained lots of ideas that will be implemented throughout the setting*
- *Thoroughly enjoyed and learnt a lot!*
- *I really enjoyed the course and feel it has given me a much wider understanding of how to support children and their families with speech delay.*
- *Having done the course, I now have a better understanding of speech & Language development and how to support children's communication skills.*
- *I found the course attended really helpful and gave me some new knowledge to help and understand how important certain aspects are when communicating with younger children/babies*
- *I found the course was very informative and the information provided through training material was set out in an easy to understand way.*
- *I now feel I have a clearer knowledge of children's communication development and will use these tools in practice.*
- *Overall I feel this course has helped me to improve my knowledge and become more confident in communication and language skills.*
- *I have found this training to be very fundamentally important in my career and useful in the learning and development of children under my care*
- *The course gave me some valuable information to use in my setting*
- *I feel I learnt a different range of new ways of helping children from doing this course. The course was also very good and easy to follow and was presented for anyone to understand.*

Some practitioners had more experience and prior knowledge than others; many of these found the training a useful refresher:

- *The training has been a good refresher*
- *This has helped to reinforce previous ECaT training. A good refresher and opportunity to assess needs of a new setting.*
- *Enjoyable Course - Good refresher and lots of practical strategies offered*
- *This was a great reminder of the complex work we do - thank you.*
- *The course was useful to reaffirm that my current setting and teaching is communication friendly. I have taken away quick tips to improve it further. I will also use the frameworks discussed - as a tool to talk to parents.*

One local authority representative highlighted the value of the training in regard to practitioner knowledge in a comment:

- *Evidence has been seen that most staff now have greater knowledge of how to support children, but for some this might take longer to embed in day to day practice, especially in light of the quick time frame for this project*

Practitioner skills

Again comments from learners indicated that skills were acquired as a result of the training:

- *Enjoyed the course and learning new skills to help a child's development.*
- *This has been a short intense course and I look forward to developing the skills and strategies learned.*
- *I found this course very helpful and has made more confident in using these new skills.*
- *This course has helped me with Speech and Language plans and ECAT plans.*
- *Even though the sessions appeared to cover simple concepts and ideas for better, more effective communication skills, I have become so much more aware of what and how I am saying things to young children. I try very hard now to wait longer for a child to think and respond and I am listening to conversations between children and children and adults with much more interest than I had before.*
- *I have learnt a lot from participating in the course. I have learnt new skills, which will benefit the setting, and children who we care for.*

Comments from setting managers were difficult to differentiate as to whether they indicated changes in knowledge or skills, resulting in good practice. They included:

- *Practitioners are more confident in what they are doing to support communication and language and also when discussing this with parents.*
- *Practitioners appeared to have a light bulb moment and seemed to understand more about why particular strategies were advised by professionals.*
- *Now that all practitioners have received training there is consistency in the approach to language and communication across the setting and not just in selected groupings.*
- *Staff using more child friendly language and extending communication with new words.*
- *It has made all my staff look at how they communicate with children of all ages, from imbedding simple words into babies to using the 10 second rule with the 2-5year olds to give them the opportunity to understand and process what we have said to them.*
- *The practitioners are more aware of ways to communicate with the children, using ages and stages-blank level of Communication including -Non verbal.*
- *We have now introduced a vocabulary strategy, which underpins our commitment to support children attending our setting to become skillful communicators.*
- *We feel our Practitioners are now better informed and have the skills required to support the children in our setting with confidence.*
- *In particular, we have introduced vocab planning; adult to child interaction checklists, and practitioner knowledge has been developed 10- practitioners fed back that observing the ten-second rule has been a main outcome for them.*
- *Practitioners found the training interesting and it developed their knowledge – whole team training can be very valuable*
- *This training has proved to be highly beneficial to all practitioners in my setting. We communicate very differently with children and are much more reflective in our practice.*
- *It has made all staff aware of the importance of language support in the Early Years and the fact it is not just Teachers but all adults in the setting that make a difference.*
- *It has helped us reflect on the time it takes to acquire language and the time needed for children to answer questions and ways we can aid learning*
- *Staff now recognize how to extend children's language skills.*

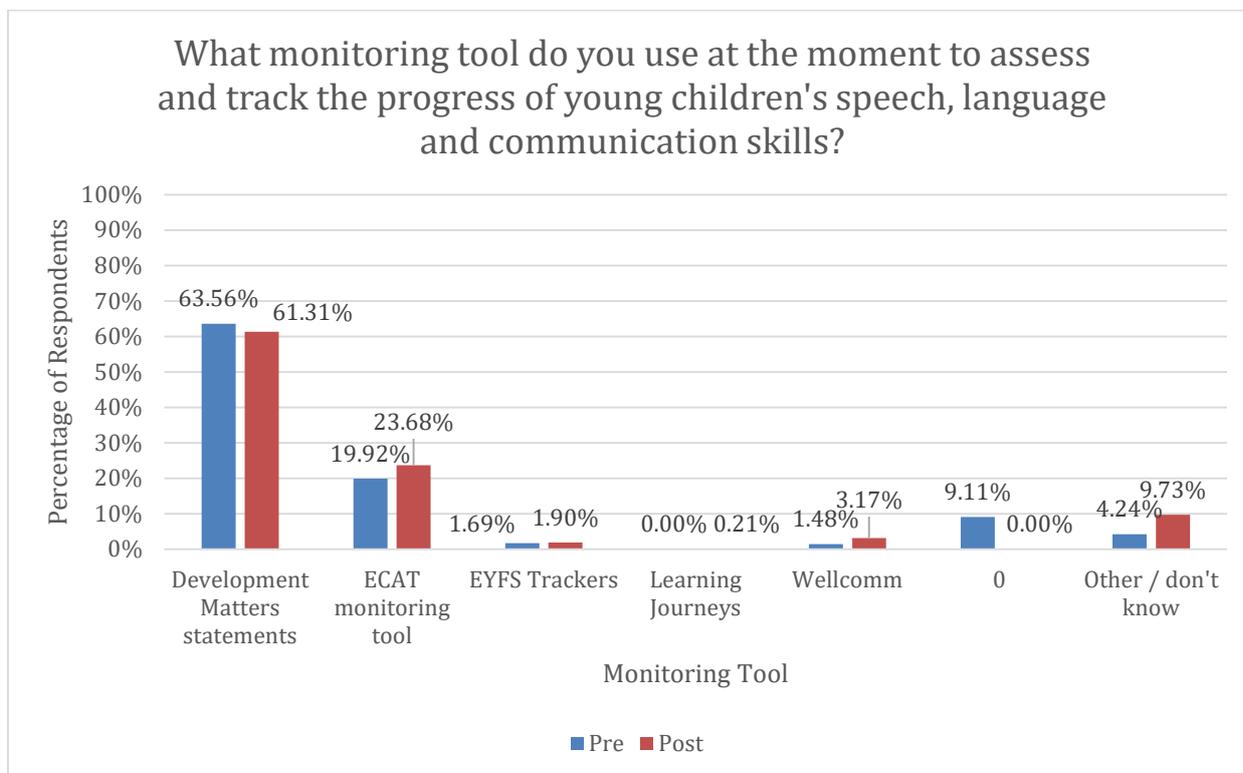
- Strategies are proving successful already e.g. Baby room practitioners have introduced visual clues to support babies with gesture and to communicate their choices and feelings.

Changes in practice

Learners were asked:

What monitoring tool do you use at the moment to assess and track the progress of young children's speech, language and communication skills?

The results of the matched responses are shown below. Significantly the percentage of respondents who use no tool to assess and track children's progress decreased from 9.1, before training to 0 afterwards.

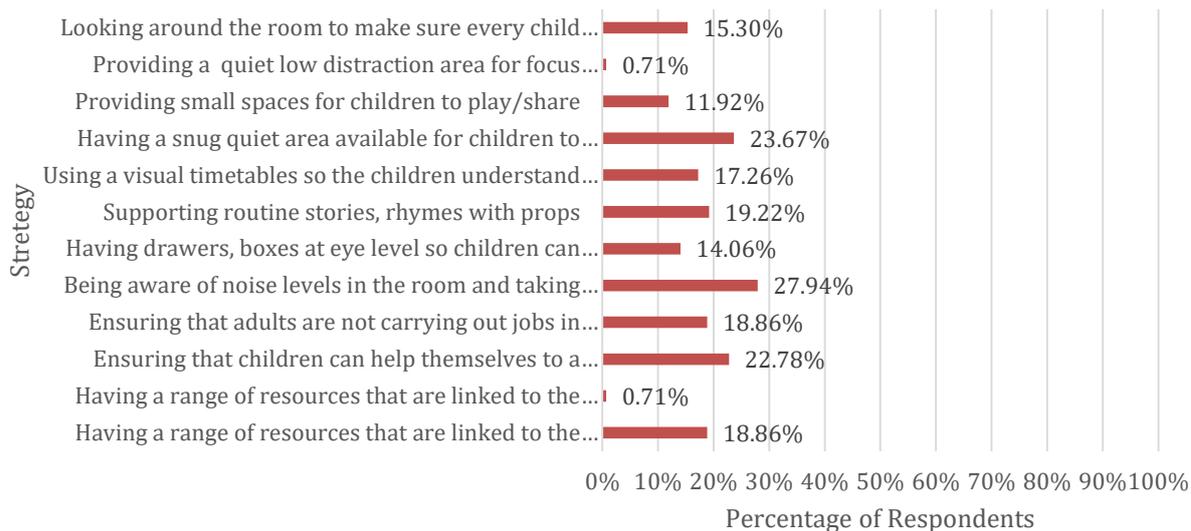


Practitioners were asked, in the post training questionnaire only:

Which two strategies have you found the most useful in making your setting communication friendly?

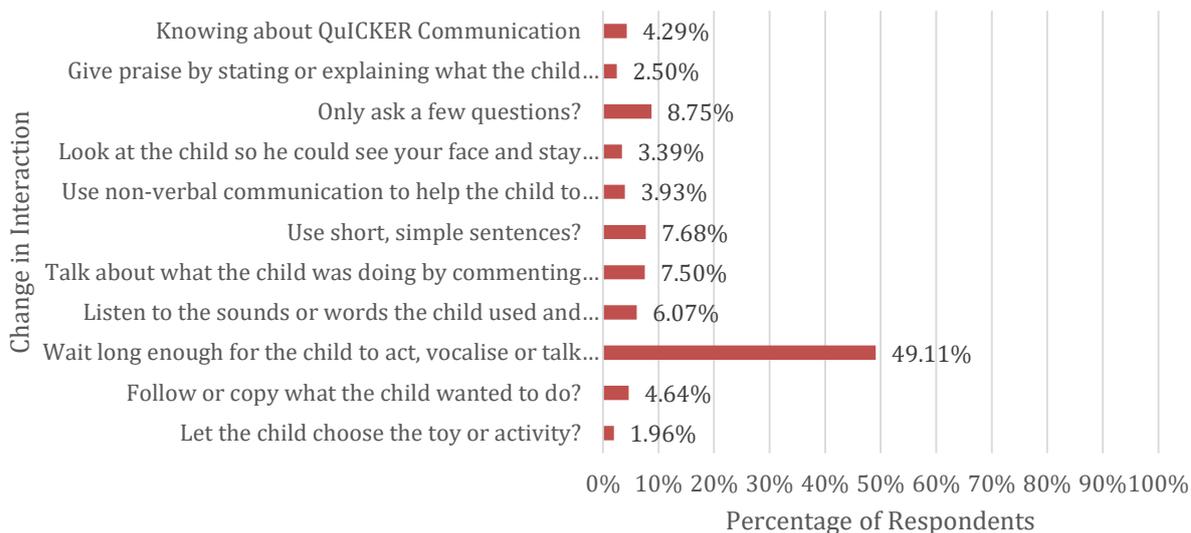
This was a closed question asking respondents which strategies, learnt on the course, were proving most useful. Results from all respondents are shown on the graph below:

Which two strategies have you found the most useful in making your setting communication friendly?

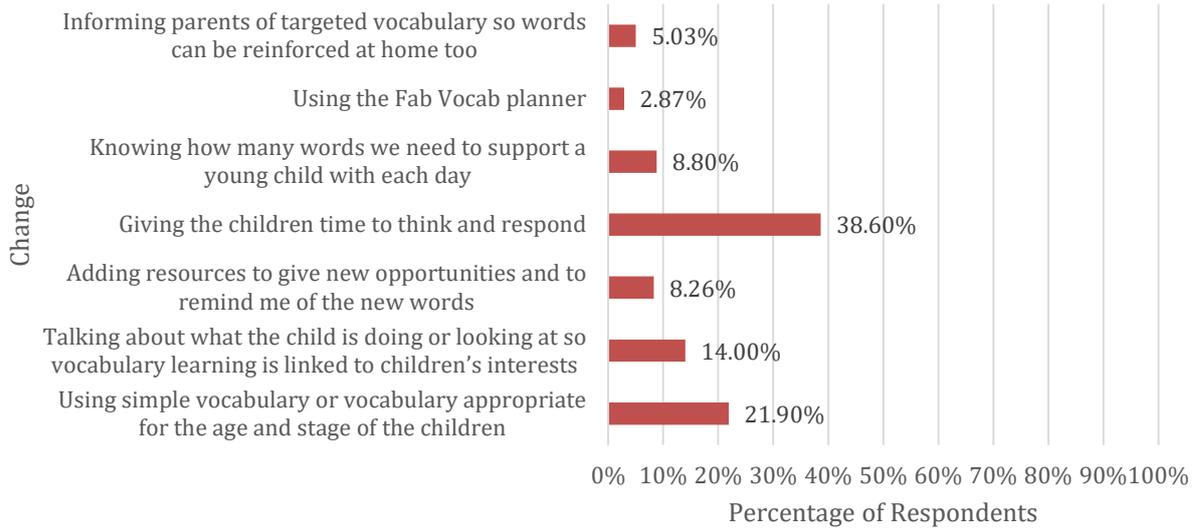


Four further questions, results shown below, asked directly about changes in practice:

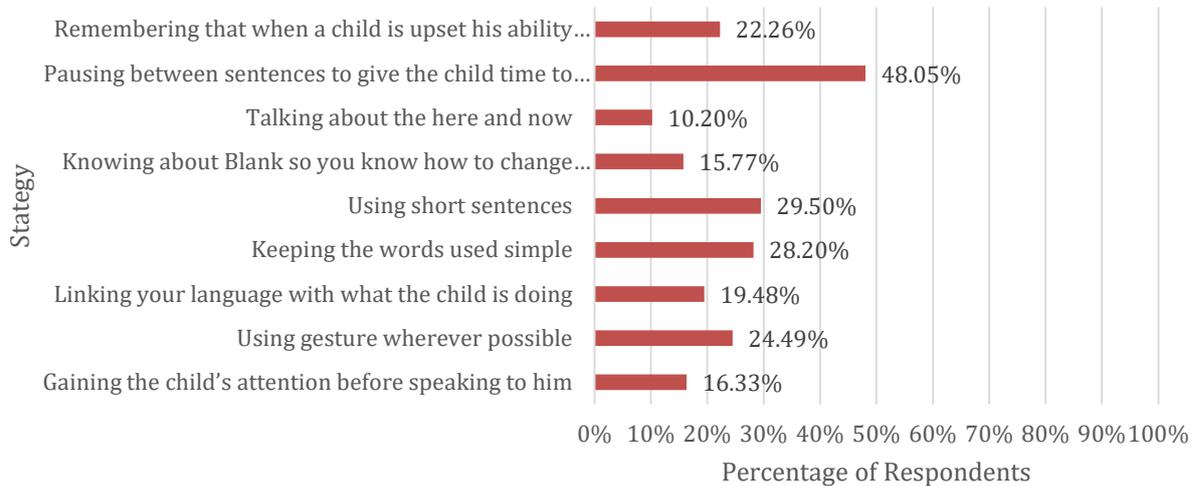
Which change in your interaction has had the most impact on encouraging children to communicate more:



Which change you have made has had the most impact on developing children's vocabulary:



Which strategies do you use now that you didn't use before attending Elklan training to help children understand things you say to them?





5.2. The Value of Setting Accreditation

Having had whole staff training and visits to support settings in implementing and embedding changes to practice all settings had the opportunity to gain *Communication Friendly Setting* accreditation from the awarding body, Ascentis.

Both the Setting Survey and the questionnaire for local authorities asked questions relating to the perceived value of the accreditation process, results were as follows.

Setting Survey:

How motivated are you to maintain Communication Friendly Setting Accreditation in the future? This would require a repeat audit every 3 years.

Settings were asked to provide a score on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is not at all and 5 was very motivated.

17 of the 20 settings scored this as either a 4 or 5; mean score 4.21.

Whilst one setting manager commented

- *As long as I feel the strategies are embedded in practice through our own self-evaluation I am not concerned with an accreditation;*

Others valued accreditation:

- *The audit process allowed us to reflect on how the Elklan training has impacted on daily practice.*
- *Audit works as a platform for embedding training*

Local Authority questionnaire

Settings have valued the opportunity to gain Communication Friendly Accreditation

Local authority representatives were asked to score this statement from 0, not at all to 5, very strong agreement and add comments.

Representatives of all 6 areas scored this statement either 4 or 5, mean score 4.5.

Comments included:

- *Communication Friendly Setting status has helped settings to review, evaluate and make positive changes within their settings*
- *We have seen the most impact for accreditation following Ekklan 10 week training*
- *Audit has been a platform to embedding training and ensuring good practice from all*

5.3. The Value of the Talking Matters Programme

Talking Matters consisted of direct training to Lead and Key Communication Practitioners, cascade training to whole staff groups, by the Lead Communication Practitioners, support and audit. Subsequent changes in practice were reported.

Each setting put into place changes and developments, at whole setting practice level, in order to pass the *Communication Friendly Setting Audit* (Appendix 8). Within this they specifically had to identify and describe a “Wow Factor”, something that had changed or been introduced that had the most impact in supporting children with their speech, language and communication.

“Wow Factors” described:

- Change to the organisation and use of indoor and/or outdoor space
- The introduction of visual timetables
- The use of Story Sacks
- Changes to the way new vocabulary is introduced
- An increase in monitoring children’s speech, language and communication

Local authority representatives and setting managers reported very significant changes in practice at setting level:

- *Everyone is very enthused about the project and we are seeing a big impact already*
- *Made us review current practice to evaluate what we were offering*
- *New strategies put in place*
- *Re focusing our attention on both the indoor and outdoor environment*
- *Opening the minds of all the Nursery staff and building vocab and confidence in the children*
- *Changes in practice and environment evident on visits – vocabulary walls, word wheels, modeling, reducing questions.*
- *Changes that settings have made have had an impact on opportunities for children and their parent/carers*
- *The course has driven development planning in some settings and has put SLCN on the agenda.*
- *Noticeable difference in adult child interactions, calmer atmospheres in the settings and better modeling of language as well as more considered environments for limiting noise etc.*
- *The training was very helpful in supporting practitioners to take a step back and listen to how they speak to children i.e. instructions, understanding what the child can actually understand and how to support them in developing their speech and language within an early years setting. It was also good to see how the training has been implemented in practice and practitioners are using their gained knowledge for the needs of the individual child.*
- *We have implemented many ideas given from the training and all staff are more aware of extending children's language and communication friendly areas*
- *In particular, we have introduced vocab planning, adult to child interaction checklists, and practitioner knowledge has been developed 10- practitioners fed back that observing the ten second rule has been a main outcome for them.*

- *[Talking Matters] given us the chance to reflect as a setting, being able to make sure that communication development is central to our practice, affirming what we already do, making sure that we are swift to assess and put in place action plans and interventions to develop communication skills.*
- *Whole team training and accreditation which is a recognition of our commitment and can be used to share with parents/ promote the Nursery*

100% of setting managers who completed the Setting Survey agreed with the statement:
Talking Matters has changed practice in our setting.

The emerging good practice has also been recognised within reports of 2 Ofsted inspections, which have taken place since the Talking Matters intervention:

Children are making rapid progress in their speech and language development. Staff benefit from skills acquired at recent training; they use a variety of questioning techniques, clear pronunciation as they introduce new words, and make good use of opportunities to listen to and engage children in meaningful discussion.

Leaders and managers are extremely effective at involving staff in the evaluation of the provision. For example, staff have skillfully focused on children's communication, following training. They have made groups smaller to give less confident children opportunities to share their views. Later evaluation showed that children spoke more confidently and their social skills developed significantly too.

Staff are skilled at introducing vocabulary. They pronounce words clearly, use lots of descriptive language and demonstrate consistently high-quality communication skills.'

Within the questionnaire for local authority representative there was a specific item regarding the impact of the whole programme:

Talking Matters has had a greater impact than we anticipated

Respondents were asked to score this statement from 0, not at all to 5, very strong agreement and add comments.

The mean score was 3.83, with a range from 3-5.

Comments included:

- *I would say that the impact has happened quicker than I had anticipated*
- *Talking Matters has had a positive impact on setting and staff development.*
- *Greater volume of children [impacted] than expected.*
- *We are delighted with the impact particularly with the progress of our LCP's. Settings too are giving positive feedback on the progress children are making following Communication Counts training.*

5.4. The Value of Key Communication Practitioners to a Setting

Some settings had Key Communication Practitioners (KCPs) identified within them, who were trained at level 3 and able to support the changes in practice and audit process introduced by the Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs), whilst others did not.

Results of the first 67 audits were reviewed to explore whether the presence of KCPs within the settings had impacted on the likelihood of passing the audit at first attempt.

74% of settings with KCPs (N=38) passed the audit at first attempt compared to 65% of those without (N=29).

Local authority representatives made comments indicating the value of KCPs in motivating and gaining commitment from settings and increasing sustainability:

- *Those settings that have had an member of staff training in Elklan have benefitted greatly from the Talking matter project, it has been a little more difficult to embed the project within those setting that have just received the cascade training.*
- *Going forward, the project requires strong KCPs or SenCo/EYs lead on board with the project to drive it forward.*
- *The 2 settings who had poor and irregular attendance to their in house training were very slow to take strategies in to their practice. However the fact that their KCP's were confident in using the strategies meant that over time when the team could see the impact on individual children the senior managers decided to try again.*
- *Having a network of trainers and KCPs [enables us to drive this forward].*
- *KCP's are able to further support their team following the Communication Counts training to embed the strategies*

5.5. The Value of Talking Matters to Parents

Over 1,300 practitioners have had training, which has included information about an appropriate Elklan training course for parents: *Let's Talk with Under 5s* and how to access it through Elklan's network of registered trainers.

145 practitioners have received the training necessary, *Speech and Language Support for 0-3s* or *Speech and Language Support for under 5s*, as the first step to being able to deliver *Let's Talk with Under 5s* themselves. To complete this process the learners need to attend Elklan's *Let's Talk Training Package*, which is already scheduled for delivery 2 times in 2016. More can be arranged according to demand

Let's Talk with Under 5s consists of seven 2-hour training sessions and leads to the award of 3 credits at Level 1 by Ascentis the awarding body, previously Apt awards. The course aims include:

- To share information about speech and language development
- To know about the different communication difficulties children can experience
- To discuss ideas to help children listen, understand and talk

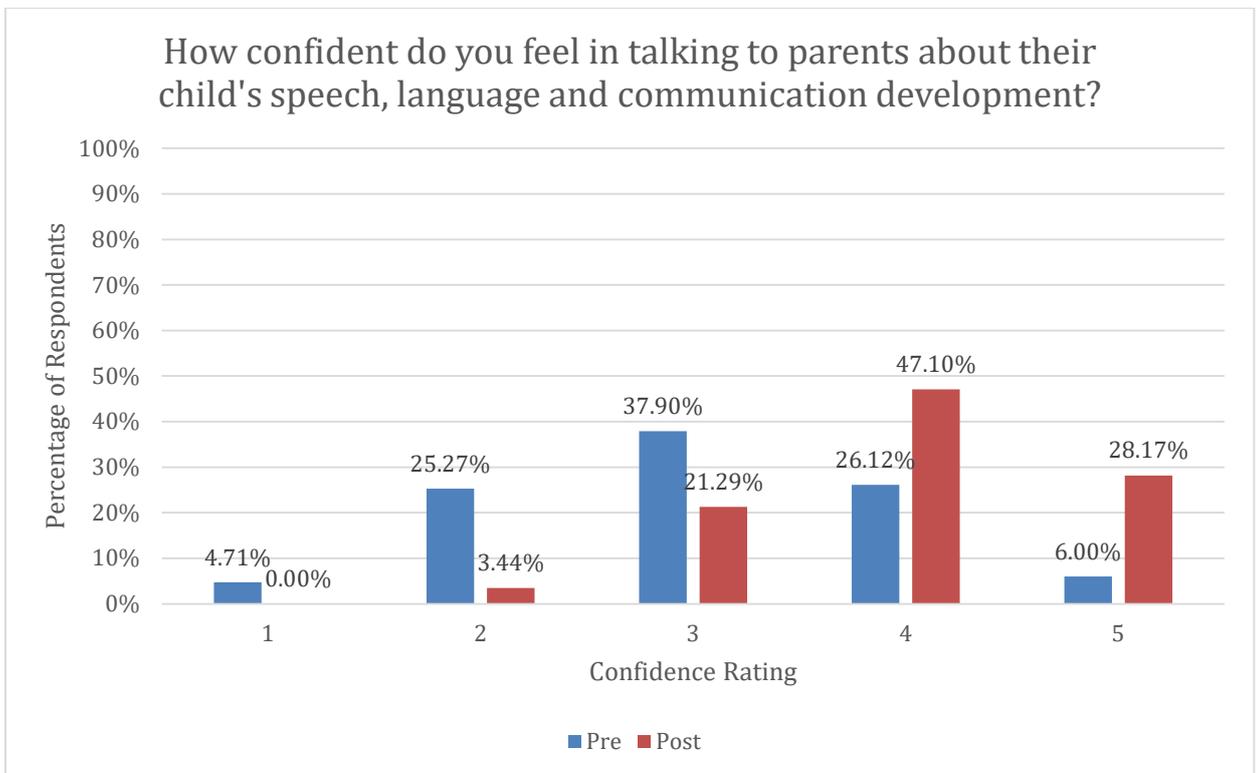
Practitioners who have completed pre and post Talking Matters questionnaires have rated their own confidence in relation to parents within 2 questions, on a scale of 1-5.

Over the course of Talking Matters average ratings have changed as follows:

- *How confident do you feel in talking to parents about their child's speech, language and communication development*

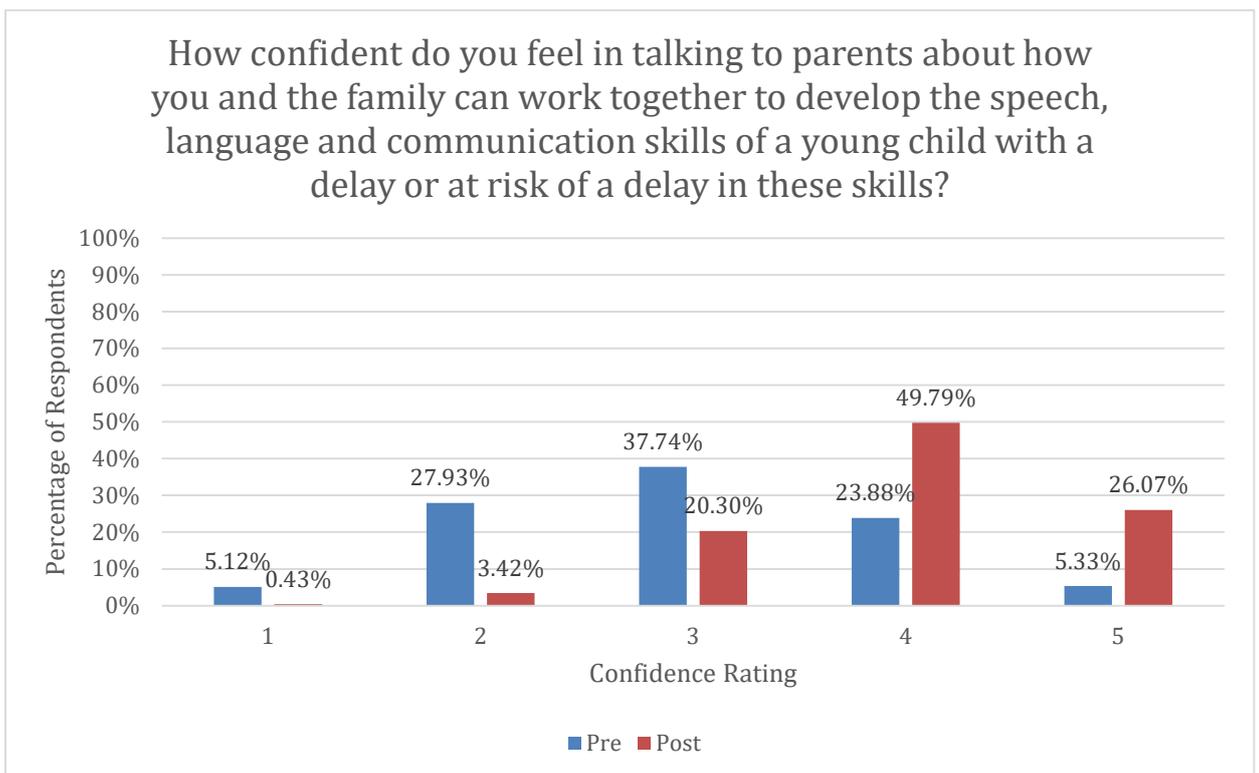
The mean rating increased from 3 to 4 (1062 pre implementation questionnaires and 560 post implementation questionnaires).

There were 473 matched responses to this question, where the same respondents completed the question before and after training. Their mean response increased from 3.01 to 4.01. Matched responses are shown on the graph below.



- *How confident do you feel in talking to parents about how you and the family can work together to develop the speech, language and communication skills of a young child with a delay or at risk of a delay in these skills?*

The mean rating for all respondents increased from 3 to 4 and the mean for matched responses from 2.96 to 3.98.



Practitioners provided the following comments:

- *I found this training very helpful with different ideas to work on involving both children and their parents/ carers.*
- *Parent partnership ideas very helpful*
- *It has helped us support parents too*

The setting audit necessary to achieve *Communication Friendly Setting* status, undertaken by 128 actual settings, specifies the following:

- *Prior to starting at the setting arrangements are made to see each child with their parent(s)/carer, ideally at home. At this meeting the child's speech language and communication skills are discussed.*
- *The setting works closely in partnership with parents/carers to support the children with SLCN.*
- *Parents are aware of the vocabulary planning and strategy.*

Therefore the settings, as part of reaching accreditation standards, have some appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure collaborative working with parents in respect of speech, language and communication.

A number of settings identified a "Wow factor" in their journey towards attaining *Communication Friendly Setting* status, in connection with working with parents, for example sharing vocabulary work, involving parents in a song of the week or producing "Chatter Packs" for parents.

Setting managers also commented on improvements in work with parents as among the most positive aspect of their involvement in Talking Matters:

- *Best thing- ideas to involve the parents more and support communication needs within the setting.*
- *Practitioners are more confident in what they are doing to support communication and language and also when discussing this with parents.*
- *Supporting children's development is paramount and we enjoy trying to get the parents involved to support their child's communication at home.*

5.6. The Impact of Talking Matters on Children

Direct measurement of the impact of Talking Matters interventions on children's progress is outside of the timescales of this project and is being undertaken by Sheffield University as described above.

However, anecdotal evidence has been provided by the local authority questionnaires and the setting surveys as well as through participants' comments.

Local Authorities

Local authority representatives were asked to score the following statement from 0, not at all to 5, very strong agreement and add comments, both before and after Talking Matters:

For settings involved in Talking Matters:

We consider that children's abilities in speech, language and communication will limit their attainment

The mean score for this statement decreased from 4.1, before Talking Matters to 3.5 after implementation.

Settings

Managers of settings were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement:

I am confident that Talking Matters will have a positive impact on children in our setting

There was 100% agreement with this statement.

Comments included:

- *We are seeing improvements in some children already*
- *Children are learning new words. They enjoy placing the new words they have learnt on our talking tree.*
- *The strategies promoted in the training definitely have a positive impact on developing the children's speech, language and communication skills.*
- *We are noticing a change in the children communication by implementing the strategies learned*
- *We are now introducing a wider range of age appropriate vocabulary to the children, monitoring and promoting new language and have already seen an impact.*
- *We focus heavily on our vocabulary and by introducing appropriate verbs on a regular basis in different areas; we have noticed a significant improvement in some of our children!*
- *I have no doubt that skills acquired from this training, will have a positive impact on all children at the setting*
- *Progress made by children through the implementation of strategies and monitoring tools.*

5.7. The Development of Networks to Share Learning

Each area was asked to consider plans for establishing a network for the sharing of knowledge, ideas and good practice when they applied to be part of Talking Matters. This was considered beneficial within initial implementation and to contribute to sustainability.

In most areas the networks started with the LCPs meeting and have been extended to permanent forums including multiagency representation.

The 6 areas and their tutors have networked together to share learning and provide mutual support, through face to face, video and audio calls and the use of shared progress documents.

3 Project Group meetings have taken place (4 were planned), with one of these being virtual. These have involved learners on the courses, tutors, local authority representatives, the Project Manager, the Elklan Director responsible for finance and the courses delivered within Talking Matters and a Department of Education representative. Further liaison between the Project Manager and learners, tutors and local authorities has taken place through face-to-face meetings, email and telephone contact.

One practitioner commented:

- *One of the best things about Talking Matters has been sharing good practice with other settings.*

5.8. Programme Structure

Feedback about the process for direct and cascade training and setting accreditation was sought in order that the programme might be amended and improved before any wider roll out.

Timing

Setting managers were specifically asked:

How long (approximately) has the process taken in your setting, from the start of delivery of training to the whole staff group to audit?

And

How long do you recommend this process should take?

Responses related to the time between the start of cascade/whole staff training and audit and did not include the training of LCPs and KCPs which had occurred prior to this.

Setting managers reported that the process had taken from 1-7 months in their settings, their recommendations were in the same range with 65% recommending a time scale of 5-7 months.

Whereas setting managers did not appear to feel strongly that the process was rushed local Project Coordinators and tutors did, reflecting the challenges they faced in identifying settings and Lead and Key Communication Practitioners for involvement in Talking Matters, and the amount of support tutors and LCPs needed to give settings before successful audit. Comments included:

- *Timescales were too short – not enough time to embed training before evidence file and assessment visits were complete.*
- *The last minute element of collecting evidence was challenging*
- *Project timescales have created hurdles along the way with the need to achieve delivery of the cascade whilst ensuring there is no compromise on the quality of the delivery.*
- *Timescales to roll out project and maintain effective training were an issue*
- *Ability to have time to embed techniques such as modelling in the time frame, would benefit from more opportunity*

It is therefore recommended that the length of time between enrolment of clusters of settings or local authorities and the start of cascade training and between completion of the training cascade and setting audit is extended. The total time for Talking Matters implementation was approximately 9 months. The programme time period has been extended to a recommended 5 half terms, or 10 months, for future roll out.

Communication

Elklan CIC did not communicate directly with settings during implementation of Talking Matters. Details of the content and process were shared by local Project Coordinators (who, in some cases, delegated to Early Years Advisors, and tutors and then to LCPs). Elklan provided some suggested wording on request but was not prescriptive in this regard.

Feedback (below) indicates that there were difficulties in ensuring clear and consistent communication:

- *Mixed messages from Early Years Advisors*
- *Would have like more thorough information prior to the course.*
- *Would have liked more information on the process and how the course will run*
- *Information sharing and organization – a lot of the time I didn't feel that I knew / was in control of what was happening.*
- *Lack of clear communication – Throughout the project there has been different information shared or request for information. It would have been helpful from the start of the project to have this clearly outlined in terms of expectations for monitoring and evaluation.*

As a result it is recommended that information explaining times and processes is made available to settings and practitioners at the beginning of the programme. Participants will be directed to the Elklan website where video clips explaining each step of the programme, as well as the programme as a whole, will be available. Further, consideration will be given to a regular newsletter for settings undergoing the process in any future large multi-site project.

Virtual Learning Environment

Elklan's virtual learning environment was extended and developed to meet the needs of Talking Matters.

A number of participants reported difficulties in accessing questionnaires, resources and e-portfolios. However, these problems were not universal. Where there was a difficulty with the website these were quickly addressed. Most of the problems were to do with internet access at the point of the user. This was beyond Elklan's control. Where necessary Elklan took action to support settings e.g. by making questionnaires available in different formats.

Remaining issues in use of the virtual learning environment were chiefly:

- That the portfolios for the LCPs (level 4), were not available in an e-portfolio format., This will be a future development of the programme;
- Difficulties with learners accessing or having competency with information technology, It is recommended that this is audited before implementation in other areas.

5.9. Value for Money

The Talking Matters programme described in this report was coordinated across 6 geographical areas and included development of the website, partnerships with local areas, monitoring, evaluation and preparation of the programme for roll out. In looking at the value for money of the programme it is necessary to look at the costs of the programme, as ready for roll out, in comparison with other programmes purporting to offer similar outcomes.

Comparison with other programmes

Talking Matters is being rolled out as Elklan's *Communication Friendly Setting* (CFS) programme and is most closely aligned to national charity ICAN's Early Talk Accreditation at Supportive level.

Both programmes involve whole staff training and an audit and accreditation process that lasts for 3 years before requiring renewal. However, the training courses are not necessarily covering the same content or to the same depth.

At the completion of its programme I CAN awards its own accreditation to *Communication Friendly Settings*. Settings which have been through the Elklan programme are accredited as *Communication Friendly Settings* by Ascentis, an external awarding body.

Both organisations allow for local delivery by a local licensee, and consequently there may be no, or only a nominal, charge for this element.. Costs exclude practitioner time and venue costs but include resources.

Comparative costs for a setting with 10 staff to achieve Communication Friendly status.

	I CAN Early Talk Delivered by I CAN	Elklan CFS Delivered by Elklan	I CAN Early Talk Delivered by licensee	Elklan CFS Delivered by tutor
1. Accredited Level 3 course provided to 1 practitioner in every 10 within setting	Not applicable	£375 10 x 2 hour sessions or a 3 day course	Not applicable	£77
2. Trained practitioner trains others and provides portfolio of	Not applicable	£165	Not applicable	£55

evidence- becomes a Lead Communication Practitioner (Accredited Level 4 certificate)				
3. Annual license for LCP/tutor/Licensee	Not applicable	£15	£60	£15
4. Trainer/LCP delivers training to all staff in setting	£700 1 day course * (£40 per delegate if combined with other settings=£400)	0 5 X 1 hour sessions	Variable 1 day course	0 5 X 1 hour sessions (Optional accreditation is available)
5. Setting accreditation fee	£250 For 3 years Setting accredited by I CAN Accreditation required each 3 years	£50 Annual fee Setting accredited by Ascentis (an external awarding body monitored by OfQual) Accreditation required each 3 years	£250 Setting accredited by I CAN Accreditation required each 3 years	£50 Annual fee Setting accredited by Ascentis Accreditation required each 3 years
Total initial cost	£950 (*£650)	£605	£310 plus costs for training delivery	£197

*: Where training can be provided to delegates as part of a larger group the cost is reduced.

In addition to differences in the content of both training courses and audits for setting accreditation there are very significant differences in the programmes' structures, for example;

- Group sizes for Elklan's courses are limited to 15 delegates to ensure quality
- Elklan's CFS programme requires one in every 10 practitioners within a setting to undertake **an externally accredited** level 3 course (Item (1) in the above table) in order for the setting to be accredited.
- LCPs, within Elklan's programme, develop their skills and knowledge further through an externally accredited level 4 award (Creating Communication Friendly Settings) I CAN's Early Talk has no such requirement, this necessarily impacts on the level of skills and knowledge within the settings accredited through the 2 programmes.

Furthermore, the LCPs, within Elklan's programme are able to deliver the whole setting training (*Communication Counts*) to unlimited settings (item 4 above) once they have gained their licenses.

Comparative costs for 3 settings, each with 30 staff to achieve Communication Friendly status. The notes applicable to the table above apply

	I CAN Early Talk Delivered by I CAN	Elklan CFS Delivered by Elklan
Externally accredited Level 3 course provided to 1 practitioner in every 10 within setting	Not applicable	£375 X 9=£3,375
Trained practitioner trains others and provides portfolio of evidence- becomes a Lead Communication Practitioner (Externally accredited Level 4 certificate)	Not applicable	£165
Annual license for LCP/tutor/Licensee	Not applicable	£15
Trainer/LCP delivers training to all staff in setting	£40 X 90= £3,600	0
Setting accreditation fee	£250 X 3= £750	£50 X 3=£150
Total initial cost	£4,350	£3,705

Staff training and development

Talking Matters and the resultant CFS programme provide 20 x 2 hour sessions (or 3 days) of staff training to KCPS and LCPs. The practitioners undertaking this course achieve 9 credits at level 3. Where the training is delivered directly by Elklan, rather than through their network of registered trainers the cost per delegate is £375 per person.

9 settings within Talking Matters responded to a question about what they expected this type of training to cost. Their responses were in the range £100-£500 with a mean of £270.

The Talking Matters/CFS programme also includes whole staff training, at no cost to a setting where they have access to an LCP, settings valued this training within the range £100-£500 with a mean of £308.

In the model used within Talking Matters those settings with KCPs received training for 2 KCPs plus whole staff training. Using the figures provided by settings this had a perceived value of £ 848 [(270 X 2)+ 308]. Settings buying the equivalent training within the CFS programme, which has been developed as a result of Talking Matters, the cost for this training is £750 [375 X 2].

5.10. Exit Plan and Sustainability

The programme was established as a time limited intervention. From the outset the local authorities, settings and practitioners involved did not have an expectation of on-going input under the programme, from Elklan CIC, after March 2016. However, some practitioners are still working on portfolios which will allow their learning to be accredited and some settings are part way through the final developments necessary for them to achieve Communication Friendly Status. Elklan has secured local support for these practitioners and settings to complete the process and will complete necessary moderation and liaison with Ascentis, the awarding body, itself.

Elklan CIC, with the partner LAs it has been working with through this programmes, has developed plans for the programme to be sustained and rolled out:

- Within the approximately 128 settings which took part in Talking Matters 2015-16;

- Within other settings in the 6 local authority areas who have partnered Elklan CIC within Talking Matters 2015-16;
- Within additional local authorities and settings.

Issues of sustainability were included within the original selection process for the 6 areas working within Talking Matters and the Project Coordinators of the 6 successful areas have continued to consider this, with the Project Manager, through face to face and virtual working groups.

Sustainability within the 128 settings involved in Talking Matters to date:

The Setting Survey asked setting managers to provide a rating for the following question, on a scale of 1-5, where 1 was not at all and 5 was very motivated:

How motivated are you to maintain Communication Friendly Setting Accreditation in the future? This would require a repeat audit every 3 years.

17 of the 20 settings who responded gave a rating of 4 or 5, indicating a high level of motivation.

Settings were also asked about services that Elklan could provide to maintain focus on providing a communication friendly environment.

As a result of this feedback Elklan has incorporated the following into the programme prior to roll out:

- Providing a new *Quicker Communication*, on line course for new staff to undertake when they join a setting previously involved in the initiative, and for returners. *Quicker Communication* is available to all settings who have achieved CFS status. This addresses the level of staff turnover within the sector, which requires that training be offered to new starters amongst Early Years Practitioners in settings, which are part of Talking Matters, on an on-going basis.
- Requiring *Communication Friendly Setting Accreditation* to be renewed every 3 years, a stipulation strongly supported by all 6 LAs. Details of the process for this were circulated by Elklan CIC in March 2016.
- Commissioning a monthly newsletter specifically for Early Years CFS settings. This will include one item of news concerning research or key information and one 'Wow' Factor from one of the settings to encourage the sharing of good practice within the Elklan CFS community.

Each local authority has also made plans to sustain the initiative within the newly accredited settings, for example:

- Providing *Communication Counts* training, at least annually, at a central venue, for new starters at settings and for any staff who have missed the initial courses.
- Making a named officer responsible to provide supervision and evaluation to Talking Matters settings (data collected termly).
- Providing refresher training
- Providing regular forums for KCPS based in settings to meet and share information, supported by LCPs
- Providing support from the local speech and language therapy team to Talking Matters settings.
- Using web pages, newsletters and Facebook pages to share good practice

Further roll out of the initiative to other settings within the 6 Talking Matters areas

The 6 local authority areas within Talking Matters each have a minimum 5 trained, experienced LCPs (total 32) as a result of this programme. These LCPs are able to deliver the *Communication Counts* (whole staff training) in unlimited numbers of EYs, to unlimited numbers of practitioners.

The LCPs developed during the Talking Matters programme will join the Elklan network of Community Tutors, delivering subsequent courses under license; Elklan will provide them with updates.

LCPs will be able to deliver an Elklan course written for parents called 'Let's Talk with Under 5s'.

Each areas has set up quality assurance processes to ensure the quality of cascaded training.

Each of the 6 areas has established a local group for sharing good practice and planning the future of the initiative. They all hope to improve future take up of the training and development programme by using feedback from delegates trained to date, the final project report, which Elklan CIC will supply in a shortened format for them and the measured impacts for children (available autumn 2016).

A number of the local Project Coordinators have sought funding from their local authorities to cover practitioner time in delivering and receiving training and development under this initiative post March 2016. In some cases this is being supported by work undertaken locally to map training and key competencies across the Early Years Workforce and identify gaps in practitioner knowledge and skills.

Other areas are looking to settings to fund their own involvement through paying for LCP time and materials to cascade.

Each area has developed detailed plans for roll out of Talking Matters including, for example:

- Ensuring the programme is embedded in the workforce development programme and /or that early years workforce development in speech, language and communication is a strategic priority
- Setting KPIs for the extent of roll out year on year (to 100% of settings by 2018 in one area)
- Seconding one or more LCPs as area Language Leads
- Establishing a multi-agency management group to oversee Talking Matters rollout
- Pairing each setting which has been accredited as a *Communication Friendly Setting* within this initiative with another who is embarking on achieving CFS.
- Extending the initiative to Child Minders and Children's Centres
- Holding celebration events for accredited settings and making them Champion Sites.
- Making each existing LCP responsible for overseeing roll out in a specific geographical area
- Prioritising roll out to settings identified as inadequate or in special measures and those where SLCN is viewed as a priority.
- Using Talking Matters as an intervention for those settings wanting to move from Good to Outstanding in their Ofsted rating
- Providing at least one Level 3/4 course each year to develop further LCPs and KCPs.
- Planning the next level 3/4 course in the area.
- Integrating the programme with local quality initiatives

Potential national roll out

Findings from the evaluation are being disseminated within the Communication Consortium/The Communication Trust, of which Elklan CIC is a member, and through Elklan's own

communication channels. The relevant pages on Elklan's website can be found at <http://www.elklan.co.uk/information/commissioners-schools/0-5yrs/becoming-an-elklan-communication-friendly-early-years-setting>

Elklan is seeking opportunities to submit articles to professional journals and present at conferences alongside our local authority and early years setting partners to promote the programme.

Elklan CIC undertakes to continue providing the LCP training, necessary to replicate the programme, for a minimum of 5 years.

The programme will be marketed to settings and local authorities other than those involved in Talking Matters.

This initiative has implemented and compared 2 models for delivering whole staff training, through a cascade model, in terms of effectiveness and cost:

In one model of delivery support to embed changes in practice, as a result of the learning was supported by 2 trained Key Communication Practitioners based in each setting. The second model did not have Key Communication Practitioners and was therefore cheaper to implement. The evaluation has found that the use of KCPs had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the programme and will therefore be promoted in national roll out.

The Talking Matters evaluation, together with the pre-existing evaluation of the Early Years Development Programme have ensured that the final training and development package (amended as a result of the evaluations) is:

- Cost effective;
- Inclusive;
- Nationally applicable.

Additional data, to support roll out, will be available from an evaluation of impact on children's attainment, which will report outside of the grant's time frame.

6. Conclusion

Elklan CIC delivered the Talking Matters Programme under a Department of Education funded grant for the voluntary and community sector from May 2015 to March 2016.

The programme engaged with 6 local authorities and aimed to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of practitioners in up to 150 early years settings, in the area of support for the development of speech, language and communication, and to implement and embed changes in practice as a result of this training.

1,329 practitioners were trained, in 128 settings, using a cascade model of delivery. The training has resulted in a reported increase in the knowledge, skills and confidence of practitioners. Those delivering the cascade then supported settings to embed changes in practice and to audit their support for speech, language and communication.

Practitioners were using a wider number of tools and strategies to monitor and support children's speech, language and communication by the end of Talking Matters programme and were able to describe changes in practice at both setting and practitioner level.

Although the reach, in terms of numbers of settings and practitioners involved in Talking Matters was lower than anticipated when the project was planned this was because the settings were larger than anticipated meaning that the reach, in terms of numbers of children impacted within the project timeframe, was much higher. The target reach was 4,500 children. The actual reach was 8,964.

Talking Matters was evaluated through surveys, questionnaires and feedback from practitioners, local authority representatives and setting managers. It was found to be a positive experience for all and feedback has been used to develop a sustainable, self-financing programme for national roll out.

Appendix 1



Talking Matters

Elklan CIC bidding guidance

SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW OF THE BIDDING PROCESS

1. Organisations are required to submit a proposal that meets the stated Elkland CIC priorities which are set out in this document.

Timetable

2. Elkland CIC will aim to follow the timetable below but it should be noted that whilst Elkland CIC does not intend to depart from the dates provided, it reserves the right to do so at any time.

Milestone	Date
Deadline for proposals	By 10am 24 th April 2015
Applicants notified re decision	By 5pm Monday 27 th April 2015
Delivery plans discussed and agreed with successful applicants	By Thursday 30 th April 2015
Funded activity begins	May 2015
Funded activity ends	March 2016

3. The deadline for completed proposal is **Friday April 24th 10am**. Please e-mail a copy to XXX, contact details are on the front of the document and henrietta@elkland.co.uk. Late proposals will **not** be considered. It is the responsibility of the bidder to ensure that their proposal is delivered no later than the appointed time.

Costs and Expenses

4. You will not be entitled to claim from Elkland CIC any costs or expenses which you may incur in preparing your proposal whether or not your proposal is successful.

Freedom of Information

5. Elkland CIC is committed to openness and to meeting its responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted may need to be disclosed in response to a request under the Act. If you consider that any of the information included in your proposal is commercially sensitive, please identify it and explain (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure if a request is received, and the time period applicable to that sensitivity. You should be aware that, even where you have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, we may still be required to disclose it under the Act if a request is received. Please also note that the receipt of any material marked 'confidential' or equivalent by Elkland CIC should not be taken to mean that we accept any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking. If a request is received, we may also be required to disclose details of unsuccessful proposals.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRANT FUNDING ELKLAN CIC HAS RECEIVED AND HAS ASKED ELKLAN CIC TO ADMINISTER

Introduction

Elklan CIC has been successful in bidding for money through the DfE National Prospectus Grant Programme.

Through the project entitled Talking Matters, Elklan CIC in partnership with 6 Local Authorities is required to achieve the following aims:

1. To increase and share the knowledge, confidence and skills of 1,800 early years practitioners, in settings, in relation to developing speech, language and communication in 4,500 children 0-5 years, and thereby improve outcomes for those children;
2. To improve the quality of provision, on an on-going basis for children in 6 LAs by addressing the needs of all children for support in SLC, including the upwards of 50% of children in disadvantaged areas who have SLC needs and SEN/disabled children;
3. To provide and disseminate an evaluated and fully sustainable model for implementation throughout England.
4. To develop a single coherent narrative of how the vcs grants programme is contributing to speech and language development for children in the early years.

Talking Matters plans to:

- Work in partnership with 6 Local Authorities (LAs) who will each identify a project manager.
- Each LA will recruit 5 Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs).
- Each LCP will receive in depth training through a tried and tested course called 'Speech and Language Support for 0-3s'. The course is accredited¹: 9 credits at level 3.
- Each LCP is given responsibility by the LA to cascade training (5 x 1 hr) to **all staff** in 5 early year's settings. There is an option for staff to gain accreditation¹ at level 2. Each LCP will support 5 settings making a total of 25 settings across the LA.
- The LCPs will visit each setting a minimum of 2 times to embed the knowledge and practice from the training and work towards achieving accredited¹ *Communication Friendly Setting* Status.
- The LCPs will complete a portfolio of evidence about how they helped to change practice and create *Communication Friendly Settings*. This will achieve an accredited¹ award: 6 credits and level 4.
- 2 x Early Years Practitioners from 50% of the settings (15) will be offered in depth training too (at the same time as the LCPs) on the course 'Speech and Language Support for 0-3s'. (The difference in impact between settings receiving and not receiving this 'in depth' training will be evaluated.)

¹ Accreditation is awarded by Apt Education. Apt Education is an independent awarding body monitored by OfQual. This means all Elklan courses are externally verified. 'Speech and Language Support for 0-3s' is on the QCF so has national recognition.

FUNDING

Elklan CIC is asking for bidders to state how they would roll out the project outlined in the proposed agreement (see Appendix 2).

There is a tight time schedule because the project must be completed by March 2016, this includes analysis of data and the writing of an evaluation report. Projects need to start as soon

as possible to give practitioners time to implement ideas before feeding back impacts and outcomes. Elklan CIC is asking for bidders to state how they will ensure that the milestones will be met (see Appendix 4)

Remuneration

Successful LAs will receive funding in accordance with Appendix 5 subject to key milestones being met (see Appendix 4). If a milestone is not met, payment will be made pro-rata for the work completed .

BIDDING

Bidding information should be set out in the template provided in Appendix 1.

Applicants are encouraged to be realistic about the feasibility of meeting the Key Milestones and Performance Indicators (See Appendix 4). The project needs to be completed and written up by March 2016. This means all local projects must be completed by mid-February 2016).

Scoring Framework

LAs should be aware that not all applications that meet the requirements of Elklan CIC will necessarily be funded. This is a competitive process with a limited budget, which means that only the highest scoring proposals will be awarded grants within the available funding. The table below sets out how we will score each proposal, providing a total score out of 100 marks.

Section	Content	Maximum Marks
	Applicant Organisation Details	Not Scored
1	Previous involvement with Elklan	10
2	Track record in co-ordinating the delivery of training to early years settings across the LA	10
3	Identifying a key member of staff within the LA who will manage the local Talking Matters project and liaise with Elklan CIC on a monthly basis.	20
4	Plans for recruiting 5 Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs)	10
5	Plans for recruiting 25 settings, making sure each setting understands their commitment to the project and that each setting meets the milestones involved (See Appendix 4)	15
6	Plan for establishing a network for the sharing of knowledge, ideas and good practice	10
7	Venue arrangements	5
8	Plans for sustainability of the project in the 25 target settings and more widely in your area beyond March 2016	10
9	Risk factors	10
10	Financial arrangements	Not Scored
Total		100

Each section above will be scored out of a maximum of 5 using the rating scale below. This score will then be multiplied by the stated weighting i.e. 1x 5 (5); 2x5 (10) 3 x 5 (25) 4x5 (20).

0	No evidence/response
1	Poor response. Very little information.
2	Unsatisfactory. Some information. Meets requirements in some areas but with important omissions.
3	Satisfactory. Reasonable evidence of appropriate capability, experience or expertise. Meets requirements in many areas but not all.
4	Very Good. Detailed evidence provided of appropriate capability, experience or expertise.
5	Excellent. Very strong evidence of appropriate capability, experience, or expertise.

If you have any questions or queries about this bid please email XXX at XXX

STAGE 2 PROPOSAL FORM FOR ELKLAN CIC/TALKING MATTERS FUNDING

Applicant Organisation Details (Not Scored)	
LA applying	
Person in the LA responsible for the project	
Address	
Position	
Email	
Phone number	
1. Previous involvement with Elklan Maximum 150 words (10 marks)	
2. Track record in co-ordinating the delivery of training to early years settings across the LA Maximum 150 words - a list is preferable (10 marks)	
3. Identifying a key member of staff within the LA who will manage the local Talking Matters project and liaise with Elklan CIC on a monthly basis (20 marks)	

4. Plans for recruiting 5 Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs) (10marks)	
5. Plans for recruiting 25 settings, making sure each setting understands their commitment to the project and that each setting meets the milestones involved (See Appendix 4) (15 marks)	
6. Plan for establishing a network for the sharing of knowledge, ideas and good practice (10 marks)	
7. Have you arranged a training venue? Please note there are no additional funds available for venue or refreshments. (5 marks)	
Suitable venues for training can be arranged and it is understood that no additional funding is available for this.	YES/NO
8. Plans for sustainability of the project in the 25 target settings and more widely in your area beyond March 2016 Maximum 250 words (10 marks)	
9. Risk factors (10 marks)	
10. Financial Arrangements (Not Scored)	

Please state who will invoice Elklan for each of the activities below (delete as applicable)

Lead Communication practitioner activities:

Local Authority/Setting/Lead Communication Practitioner

Travel for attendance at Project Group (if applicable)

Local Authority/Setting/Lead Communication Practitioner

DECLARATION

Note: Please ensure that a person who is appropriately authorised to act on behalf of your organisation(s) completes the following declaration and submits the Expression of Interest by e-mail, as described in the bidding guide.

I confirm that the information given in this application is true and complete and that, if successful, the organisation or individual will administer any grant in accordance with the Terms and Conditions applied by the Elklan CIC. I understand that the information will be used in the evaluation process to assess my organisation's suitability to be invited to provide services under the auspices of Elklan CIC.

FORM COMPLETED BY

Name:

Position (Job Title):

Date:

Telephone number:

APPENDIX 2

Draft agreement for participation in the Elklan CIC/Talking Matters project effective from April 2015

The Local Authority will

- Support the Talking Matters Project and assign a project manager who will liaise with the Lead Communication Practitioners and Elklan CIC project manager on a monthly basis.
- Recruit/identify 5 x Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs), in accordance with the criteria in Appendix 3. These are lead practitioners who have a significant level of knowledge and experience and interest in supporting young children with SLCN, can study at level 4 and deliver training to others.
- Identify 25 early years settings and secure their agreement to participating in the project through:
 - Nominate 2 Key Communication practitioners each (Elklan will select 50% of settings who will have KCPs trained whilst other settings will act as controls). These KCPs will complete 'Speech and language for 0-3s' course alongside LCPs and submit a portfolio of assignments to gain accreditation (9 credits and level 3).
 - Release KCPs for training
 - Receive whole staff /whole setting training from LCPs
 - Work towards achieving "Communication Friendly Setting" status
 - Allow access for an Elklan evaluator to assess pre and post language levels of a sample of children (with parental permission)
 - Provide feedback on training received
- Identify 2 early years settings outside of the project able to act as control settings for the project by allowing access for an Elklan evaluator to assess pre and post language levels of a sample of children (with parental permission)
- Work with the identified Elklan CIC tutor to agree dates and venues for training.
- Complete a short questionnaire before training is underway regarding their aspirations for the project and another at the end of the project regarding their experiences.
- Set up a network to enable the LCPs and settings involved in the project to share local expertise and knowledge and link into a network with 5 other LAs across England.
- Ensure that the milestones of the project are met.
- Participate in a maximum of 4 Project meetings (face to face or remotely) at the request of Elklan CIC.
- Inform Elklan CIC as soon as practicably possible if for any reason the LA, LCP or any of the settings involved in the project are unable to meet the contractual obligations
- Develop plans, during the lifetime of the project, for sustainability within the 25 project settings and for roll out to others within the LA.
- Participate in, and support, marketing and dissemination activity undertaken by Elklan CIC and the DfE in relation to the project, including the agreement of any local publicity.

The Lead Communication Practitioner will

- Have knowledge and experience in supporting young children with SLCN, meet the Talking Matters level 4 entry criteria (Appendix 3), can study at level 4 and deliver training to others.
- Meet all the milestones set out in Appendix 4.
- Complete the Elklan training 'Speech and language for 0-3s' course and submit a portfolio of assignments to gain accreditation (9 credits and level 3). This training will

either be face-to-face or via blended-learning (e-learning and live webinars) and will involve 90 hours of study. There will be no charge for the training, book or accreditation fees but LCPs will not be funded for the time needed to complete the course and portfolio.

- Provide feedback on the training they receive.
- Deliver Communication Counts which comprises 5 x 1 hour training sessions to all members of staff in each setting (5 settings).
- Gather feedback from the training they deliver and provide it to Elklan CIC.
- Support Communication Count learners who may opt for accreditation at level 2. This means marking a simple portfolio of evidence of applying strategies from the training in their own settings.
- Visit each setting involved in the project x2 to help embed change in practice following Communication Counts training.
- Help the setting towards completing the Communication Friendly Setting Audit and submit the final audit.
- Complete a portfolio of evidence of the work undertaken to help change the practice in the settings. LCPs will gain an award 'Creating Communication Friendly Settings', 6 credits at level 4. There will be no charge for the accreditation fee but LCPs will not be funded for the time needed to complete the portfolio.
- Be eligible for payments in accordance with Appendix 5.
- Inform Elklan CIC as soon as practicably possible if **for any reason** the LCP is unable to meet the contractual obligations.
- Sustainability within 25 settings- cascade and audit
- Collect data on training

The Elklan CIC team will

- Co-ordinate the project
- Provide 'Speech and language for 0-3s' training to LCPs and KCPs.
- Provide resources needed to deliver the Communication Counts training
- Internally verify accredited learners at levels 2, 3 and 4
- Internally verify the audit for Communication Friendly Setting Status

KING MATTERS

Lead Communication Practitioner level 4 - Application form

Name:	Role:
Name of LA:	Email address:
	Phone number:
<p>What I can expect from the Talking Matters Project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training from an Elklan Tutor/SLT on a course called 'Speech and Language Support for 0-3'. This involves 20 hours of direct teaching to enhance my skills and knowledge within the field of Speech Language and Communication (SLC) for 0-3s. 2. 9 credits at level 3 on completion of the course and a portfolio. 3. A copy of the book Language Builders for 0-3s and accreditation fees paid for by the project. 4. Access to training resources to download to deliver a course called Communication Counts for 0-3s (5 x 1hr workshops to staff in early years settings). 5. Payment to cascade training to whole setting staff. 6. Support from an Elklan tutor to complete a portfolio of evidence of creating a Communication Friendly Setting and achieving 6 credits at level 4. 	<p>What I will commit to the Talking Matters project:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend all sessions of the course 'Speech and Language Support for 0-3'. 2. Complete a portfolio of work at level 3 and commit 40 hours of self-study to achieve this (including reading, discussing, observing and planning as well as writing). 3. Help the LA to identify 5 settings to take part in the project. 4. Ensure the settings understand their commitment and what has to be achieved within a short period of time (project end is February 2016). 5. Cascade 5 x 1hr workshops to all staff in the target settings. 6. Plan time to visit each early years setting at least twice to embed good practice learnt from the training course and to help each setting work towards Communication Friendly Setting Status. 7. Support each setting in completing an audit which provides evidence of being Communication Friendly 8. Be prepared to monitor the impact the training has on staff and the staff and children within the target settings as part of the level 4 award 'Creating Communication Friendly Settings'.. 9. Complete the entry profile below.

Lead Communication Practitioner level 4 - Entry requirements

Aptitude	Tick or leave blank	Academic qualifications	Tick or leave blank	Work experience	Tick or leave blank	Training experience	Tick or leave blank
High level of interest in promoting the communication skills of 0-3s but particularly those with SLCN or who are at risk.		Qualified Early Years Practitioner		Minimum of 3 years experience specifically working with 0-3s.		Have trained groups of adults within the field of SLC and/or child development.	
Have attended training courses specifically about the communication skills of 0-3s within the past 12 months.							
High level of interest in sharing knowledge and skills with others across a range of agencies.		'A' levels or NVQ level 3 or 4 in child development, education or other.		Position of responsibility for the development of members of staff.		Have trained groups of adults in a different field.	
Desire for personal Continued Personal Development (CPD) within the field of SLC and SLCN.						Have worked to up-skill individuals within the field of SLC or child development within the past 2 years.	
Prepared to compile a portfolio which monitors the impact of training and evaluates the outcome of implementing specific strategies with 0-3s.		GCSE Maths and English at grade A-C					

Minimum requirement

Optional but desirable

Please provide details about the following:

1. Training courses you have attended specifically about the communication skills of all babies and young children within the past 12 months.
2. Academic qualifications.
3. Brief outline of your work experience.
4. What training courses have you delivered in the past 2 years? Please indicate which were about the communication skills of babies and young children.
5. Outline your role in up-skilling individuals within the field of SLC or child development within the past 2 years. (This is different from delivering training courses – this is about working alongside early year's practitioners in setting to develop their skills and knowledge.)

APPENDIX 4

Talking Matters Milestones

Planned Activity 2015-16	Outputs/Milestones	By
Develop partnerships with Elkland CIC	Agreements between Local Authority and Elkland CIC in place. Contracts are signed and returned to Elkland CIC	End of April 2015
Identify 5 Lead Communication Practitioners	LA identifies 5 Lead Communication Practitioners. LCPs complete contracts and return them to Elkland CIC	Early May 2015
Identify, and gain commitment from 25 Early Years Settings, and 2 Key Communication Practitioners within each, to participate in the programme. Each LCP will be assigned to 5 settings	Signed agreements with all settings completed and returned to Elkland CIC	Mid-May 2015
Identify 2 "Control" Early Years Settings and gain their agreement to participation	Elkland determines which of the Early Years Settings will have trained KCPs (50% of settings).	Late May 2015
Establish Project Management Group and hold first meeting	One LA Talking Matters project manager will be asked to attend. LCPs from 2 settings from different LAs will be invited.	May 2015
Local Authority completes questionnaire regarding their aspirations for the project		May 2015
Samples of staff receiving training at all levels (LCPs, KCPs and other practitioners at identified settings) complete questionnaire on their existing knowledge, skills and confidence in supporting speech, language and communication		June 2015
Elkland evaluator assesses baseline language levels of sample group of children at settings (including control settings)		June 2015
Elkland CIC starts delivering training to Lead Communication Practitioners and Key Communication Practitioners; ten 2 hour sessions (20 hours)	LCPs and KCPs will attend 'Speech and Language Support for 0-3s'. This will involve 10 x 2 hour sessions delivered once a	June 2015

	week or to a different time schedule in agreement between the LA and Elklan CIC.	
Second Project Group Meeting held to review progress	Second Project Management Meeting held. This is likely to be a virtual meeting via webinar	August 2015
Elklan Tutors (SLTs) complete training to Lead Communication Practitioners and Key Communication Practitioners	All Lead Communication Practitioners and Key Communication Practitioners have completed training.	October 2015
Lead Communication Practitioners to start delivering 5 x 1 hour sessions of training (5 hours) to all staff in their clusters of 5 x settings	LCPs start delivering Communication Counts to all staff in all participating early years settings. Completed registers will be sent to Elklan CIC	Early-October 2015
Establish networks within each Local Authority area for sharing expertise and knowledge	LA establish Networks for sharing expertise and knowledge. This should link into a national network. LA to inform Elklan CIC of the nature of the network	October 2015
3rd Project Group meeting held to review progress and plan dissemination	3rd Project Group meeting held – probably virtual	November 2015
Lead Communication Practitioners cascading of training to early years settings completed	Training delivered to all staff in all participating early years settings. Completed registers will be sent to Elklan CIC	December 2015
Lead Communication Practitioners conduct at least 2 visits to each of the settings in which they delivered training to support the implementation and embedding of changes to practice.	Lead Communication Practitioners have visited each setting in their cluster x 2. A record of visits is submitted to the LA	January 2016
Lead Communication Practitioners have supported settings to complete Communication Friendly Setting Audit	LCPs support settings to complete Communication Friendly Setting Audit	Mid-February
Lead Communication Practitioners submit Communication Friendly Settings audit.	LCPs submit Communication Friendly Settings audit	Mid-February 2016
Lead Communication Practitioners submit their level 4 portfolio of evidence of the change in practice in the settings to Elklan CIC for verification	LCPs complete and submit their level 4 portfolio – Creating Communication Friendly Settings	February 2016

Local Authority completes questionnaire regarding their experience of the project		February 2016
Samples of staff receiving training at all levels (LCPs, KCPS and other practitioners at identified settings) complete questionnaire on their knowledge, skills and confidence in supporting speech, language and communication		February 2016
Communication Friendly Setting Audit will be verified on site by an Elklan Tutor	Elklan Tutor will visit some sites to verify the audit. The settings will be randomly selected by a formula given to the tutor by Elklan CIC	Early 2016 -March
Elklan CIC work with the LA to develop plans for sustainability	LA will have plan in place for sustainability of the programme within the 25 settings and more widely within their areas. Communication Friendly Setting Status can only be awarded when this plan has been submitted to Elklan CIC	Early 2016 -March
All Early Years Settings awarded accredited Communication Friendly Setting Status by Apt awards	Settings awarded accredited Communication Friendly Setting Status by Apt awards. Settings will be sent a certificate and given use of a logo.	March 2016
Elklan to analyse data collected to evaluated the effectiveness of the project		March 2016
Project and evaluation report completed	Project and evaluation report completed	March 2016
Final (4th) Project Group meeting held to review progress and dissemination activities	Final (4th) Project Group meeting held	March 2016
Elklan evaluator assesses language levels of sample group of children at settings (including control settings)		June 2016

APPENDIX 5: FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

No charge will be made by Elklan CIC for:

- Lead and Key Communication Practitioners attending the course “Speech and Language Support for 0-3s’, for the book which supports the course or for the accreditation of this training, representing a saving of £365 per person trained.
- Access, by LCPs, to training materials to cascade the 5 x 1 hour training sessions called Communication Counts for 0-3s.
- Accreditation of settings as “Communication Friendly Settings”.
-

Funding will be available for:

- LCPs to cascade training to the settings (to include travel):
£2,031.33 per LA
- LCPs to visit each setting twice to embed good practice(to include travel):
£2,062.50 per LA
- LCPs to support audit in all settings (to include travel)
£1,031.33 per LA
- Travel for attendance at the Project group by selected representatives
Actual cost of 2nd class travel or LA mileage rates

Funding will not be available for other activities, including:

- Time taken to attend the courses or complete portfolios.
- Time and cost of down-loading and printing documents and powerpoint presentations necessary to cascade Communication Counts for 0-3s to whole setting staff.

Invoicing:

LAs are required to specify on their proposal who will invoice Elklan CIC for the activities for which funding is available.

Payment will be available inline with the amounts specified above providing that milestones are met. However 50% of the funding for visiting settings and supporting audits will be withheld until all an LA’s 25 settings have achieved Communication Friendly Setting Status. If less than 25 achieve Communication Friendly Setting Status the final payment will be pro-rata based on the number of setting who do achieve Communication Friendly Setting Status only.

Appendix 6: Speech and Language Support for 0-3s Course Outline

What is Communication?

- Identify the processes involved in communication.

Adult-child interaction and non-verbal communication

- Examine the effect of adult-child interaction on the development of communication skills.
- Explore the importance of non-verbal communication behaviours.

Play for Language

- Explore the link between play & language development and the development of social play.
- Develop skills to promote play & support language development at key developmental stages

Listening, attention and understanding spoken language

- Develop strategies to promote listening and attention and link these to the EYFS Development Matters statements.
- Develop strategies to encourage the understanding of language including additional languages.

The Language Journey

- Explore typical development of language learning.
- Learn strategies to help children to develop a wide and varied vocabulary.
- Consider how to meet the needs of the different EYFS age groups.

The Blank Language Scheme

- Facilitate development of supporting verbal reasoning.
- Practise modifying the adult's language according to individual needs.

Encouraging the development of spoken language and clear speech

- Develop strategies to encourage the use of early phrases and sentences.
- Explore how we articulate sounds and their typical development.
- Discuss strategies to support young children with unclear speech.

Sharing books, using rhymes and exploring the link to early literacy

- Consider the link between speech, language and early literacy development.
- Explore how to use songs, rhymes and books to support communication.

Working with parents and carers to support communication development

- Discuss effective ways of supporting parents to develop their child's early communication skills.
- Discuss how knowledge gain from the course links with the two year review process.

Linking it all together

- Present evidence of applying knowledge gained across the course during everyday activities.

Appendix 7

Speech and Language Support for 3-5s Course Outline

What is communication?

- Identify the processes involved in communication
- Demonstrate the wide range of communication difficulties

Communication friendly settings, adult-child interaction and working with families

- Consider what a Communication Friendly Setting is and how to achieve it
- Understand the effect of adult-child interaction on the development of communication skills
- Reflect on how to engage families to support their child's communication skills

Play and social communication

- Explore the link between play and language development
- Know how to develop play to support language and communication
- Identify skills required for successful social communication and share ideas as to how to promote these

Listening, looking and understanding spoken language

- Understand the development of listening and attention and how to support this
- Explore the importance of non-verbal communication behaviours
- Reflect on the use of visual information to help children learn and understand

Promoting the development of vocabulary

- Explore how children learn words and the typical pattern of vocabulary development
- Discuss strategies to help children develop a rich and varied vocabulary

The BLANK Language scheme (or Language for Thinking)

- Discuss supporting verbal reasoning skills, including why & how questions, inferencing, sequencing, predicting
- Practise modifying the adult's language accordingly

Modifying adults' speech to help a child understand language

- Practise modifying the adult's language through an understanding of information carrying words
- Consider how to use information carrying words to develop all aspects of communication

Encouraging expressive language and narrative skills

- Develop strategies to encourage the use of sentences and expressive language
- Discuss how to support children learning additional languages
- Share ideas to develop narrative skills

Supporting children with unclear speech and developing phonological awareness skills

- Know the development of speech sounds
- Discuss strategies to support children with unclear speech
- Consider the link between speech, reading and writing
- Review phonological awareness and the four main components

Management of stammering and other issues raised during the course

- Explore the appropriate management of children who stammer
- Revise any issues from the course as requested by the course participants
- Present evidence of applying knowledge gained across the course during everyday activities

Appendix 8

COMMUNICATION FRIENDLY SETTING AUDIT

Listings of the areas covered are included here as the full audit tool is commercially sensitive.

This audit is based on evidence of 'what works' by including parameters from The Better Communication Research Programme Observation Tool (2012). Elklan also thanks AFASIC particularly for the parameters concerning the Communication Policy for the setting.

- Setting Details, contact details and Communication Champion in setting responsible for special educational needs and or speech, language and communication development.
- Details of Elklan verification
- Details of how to complete the audit
- Process for verification

The standards themselves are presented in 7 sections along with details of the evidence required to demonstrate their achievement. In some cases templates are provided in order that information can be provided to Elklan in a standardised format.

1. Setting Aims (7 standards)
2. Setting's environment for communication (5 standards)
3. Identification and support for communication (3 standards)
4. Interaction (5 standards)
5. Play for Language (1 standard)
6. Vocabulary (3 standards)
7. Modelling (3 standards)

Settings are also required to respond to section 8:

8.0 Communication Friendly Wow Factor:

Your Communication Friendly Wow Factor is the one thing which your setting has changed or introduced that you feel has had the most impact in supporting your children with their speech, language and communication. It could be something you do with the children, a change in the physical environment, a change in resources and how these are used or how you share information with parents.

Appendix 9

Contents of Pre and post training questionnaires for all learners

Those questions only present in the pre training questionnaire are shown in blue, and those only in the post training questionnaire in red.

Date:

Name:

Role:

Setting:

Name of your LCP:

Course attended:

Rating Scales:

1= not at all

2= a little confidence/limited knowledge and skills in this area

3= reasonably confident/I feel there are some gaps in my knowledge/skills

4= confident/I often feel that I support children effectively in this area

5= extremely confident/I do this routinely and I could support others in this area

1. How confident would you be to describe the difference between the terms 'speech', 'language' and 'communication'?

1 2 3 4 5

2. How confident do you feel in identifying children with speech, language and communication delay or who are at risk of delay?

1 2 3 4 5

3. How confident do you feel in tracking the progress of young children's speech, language and communication skills?

1 2 3 4 5

What monitoring tool do you use at the moment to assess and track the progress of young children's speech, language and communication skills?

Which of the following monitoring tools do you currently use to assess and track the progress of young children's speech, language and communication skills?

- None
- Development Matters statements
- ECAT monitoring tool

- Other _____

4. How confident do you feel in identifying an environment which is or is not communication friendly?

1 2 3 4 5

Which two strategies have you found the most useful in making your setting communication friendly?

Check all that apply

- Having a range of resources that are linked to the developmental stage of the children
 - Having a range of resources that are linked to the children's interests
 - Ensuring that children can help themselves to a suitable range of books and resources and choose freely
 - Ensuring that adults are not carrying out jobs in view or earshot during key group or story time
 - Being aware of noise levels in the room and taking action to reduce it
 - Having drawer, boxes at eye level so children can easily find what they need
 - Supporting routine stories, rhymes with props
 - Using a visual timetable so the children understand the sequence of the day and any changes that might happen
 - Having a snug quiet area available for children to relax, have a conversation, and share a book
 - Providing small spaces for children to play/share
 - Providing a quiet low distraction for language focused adult led activities
 - Looking around the room to make sure every child is involved and focused on his activity of choice
 - Being aware of which children need support and encouragement with their communication
5. Thinking about your interaction with young children, how confident do you feel that your style of interaction promotes the communication of all young children but particularly those who have or are at risk of speech, language and communication delay?

1 2 3 4 5

Which change in your interaction has had the most impact on encouraging children to communicate more:

Mark only one

- Let the child choose the toy or activity?
- Follow or copy what the child wanted to do?
- Wait long enough for the child to act, vocalize or talk-10 second rule!
- Listen to the sounds or words the child used and interpret the gestures he used to work out the message he was trying to tell you?
- Talk about what the child was doing by commenting on what was happening?
- Use short, simple sentences?
- Use non-verbal communication to help the child understand what you were saying?
- Look at the child so he could see your face and stay at eye level?
- Only ask a few questions?
- Give praise by stating or explaining what the child was doing well?

- Knowing about QuICKER Communication?
- Other _____

6. How confident do you feel in supporting children to understand and name new vocabulary?

1 2 3 4 5

Which change you have made has had the most impact on developing children's vocabulary?

Mark only one

- Using simple vocabulary or vocabulary appropriate for the age and stage of the children
- Talking about what the child is doing or looking at so vocabulary learning is linked to children's interests
- Adding resources to give new opportunities and to remind me of the new words
- Giving the children time to think and respond
- Knowing how many words we need to support a young child with each day
- Using the Fab Vocab Planner
- Informing parents of targeted vocabulary so words can be reinforced at home too
- Other: _____

7. How confident do you feel in helping young children to understand things you say to them?

1 2 3 4 5

Which strategies do you use now that you didn't use before attending Elklan training?

Check all that apply

- Gaining the child's attention before speaking to him
- Using gesture wherever possible
- Linking your language with what the child is doing
- Keeping the words used simple
- Using short sentences
- Knowing about Blank so you know how to change the level of language you use
- Talking about the here and now
- Pausing between sentences to give the child time to work out what you are saying
- Remembering that when a child is upset his ability to understand can be reduced significantly

8. How confident do you feel in helping children to develop their talking skills?

(Talking skills = ability to get their message across, e.g. through gesture and vocal sounds, say words and/or sentences)

1 2 3 4 5

Which strategies do you use now that you didn't use before attending Elklan training to develop children's talking skills?

Check all that apply

- Waiting for the child to talk
- Reflecting on the style of adult-child interaction

- Using QuICKER communication
- Modelling as taught on the Eklan course
- Giving children a reason to communicate
- Talking about what the child is looking at/doing
- Using short words and sentences
- Knowing how important it is to focus on verbs/action words
- Focusing on describing words
- Planning and using consistent short phrases and sentences
- Sharing information about things a child says with their family
- Not correcting mistakes in grammar, word order or word mispronunciations

9. How confident do you feel in using play and everyday situations to promote the speech, language and communication skills of all young children but particularly those with a delay or at risk of delay in these skills?

1 2 3 4 5

10. How confident do you feel in talking to parents about their child's speech, language and communication development?

1 2 3 4 5

11. How confident do you feel in talking to parents about how you and the family can work together to develop the speech, language and communication skills of a young child with a delay or at risk of a delay in these skills?

1 2 3 4 5

12. How confident do you feel in understanding the advice given to you by someone like a speech and language therapist or teaching advisor when they visit your setting to discuss a child?

1 2 3 4 5

Please add any other comments

Appendix 10 Setting Survey



Talking Matters

Eiklan CIC would like to thank you and your setting for working with us on the Talking Matters programme, we very much hope you have found it a positive experience and that knowledge, skills and confidence have been developed in your staff and you are beginning to see positive effects on outcomes for the children in your setting.

We have a lot of data, which we will be reporting to you, from the staff pre and post questionnaires and the setting audits but we are anxious to ensure we don't miss any feedback so would be grateful if you could complete this very short survey and return it direct to the project manager, XXXX, as soon as possible, but definitely by the XXX.

The feedback will inform our evaluation and our plans for roll out of the initiative. Any identifying information regarding, areas, settings or individuals will be deleted before information is analysed or used.

Please feel free to answer as many questions as you wish

1. Talking Matters has changed practice in our setting?

Agree/disagree

Comment:

2. The training Talking Matters has provided has been valuable.

Agree/disagree

Comment:

3. I am confident that Talking Matters will have a positive impact on children in our setting

Agree/disagree

Comment:

4. Supporting children's speech, language and communication development is a priority for our setting

Agree/disagree

Comment:

5. How long (approximately) has the process taken in your setting, from the start of delivery of training to the whole staff group to audit?

How long do you recommend this process should take?

6. Have your staff had access to any other training in speech, language and communication since April 2014?

If so, can you say what this is and what the cost to the setting was?

7. If you were purchasing training for your staff what would you expect to pay, for:

- A single staff member undertaking accredited level 3 or 4 training including 20 directly taught hours?

- Whole staff training over 10 hours?

Approximate figures are acceptable.

8. How motivated are you to maintain Communication Friendly Setting Accreditation in the future? This would require a repeat audit every 3 years.

On a scale of 1-5, where 1 is not at all and 5 is very motivated.

9. Please tick any of the following that you feel would be helpful:

- A regular newsletter from Elklan with updating information, and news concerning Talking Matters
- Access to a Talking Matters area on the Elklan website with updating information, and news
- Regular visits from a Lead Communication Practitioner

10. Please list the most positive things about your involvement with Talking Matters

11. Please list the most negative things about your involvement with Talking Matters

Feel free to add any other comments

MANY THANKS!

Return to: XXXX by XXX

Appendix 11

Pre and Post Talking Matters questionnaires for Local Authority representatives/Local Project Coordinators

Elklan CIC

Questions in blue were only included in the pre Talking Matters questionnaire.

Questions in brown were only included in the post Talking Matters questionnaire.

Questionnaire for representative of Local Authority

Name of Local Authority:

Person completing form:

Position:

Date:

Please score each statement or question from 0, not at all to 5, very strong agreement and add comments.

	Statement or question	Score, 0-5	Comments
1.	Speech, language and communication in the early years is an identified priority in this area		
2.	Staff in our early years settings are well equipped to support children's speech, language and communication		
2.	Staff in our early years settings which have been part of Talking Matters are well equipped to support children's speech, language and communication		
3.	We consider that children's abilities in speech, language and communication is limiting their attainment in this geographical area		

3.	For settings involved in Talking Matters: We consider that children's abilities in speech, language and communication will limit their attainment		
4.	We plan to continue investing in support for speech, language and communication after 2015/16		
5.	We have difficulties accessing staff training and development in speech, language and communication		
5.	Talking Matters has improved access to staff training and development in speech, language and communication during 2015/16		
6.	Staff training and development opportunities are limited by the availability of expert tutors		
6.	Talking Matters will improve access to staff training and development in speech, language and communication during 2016/17		
7.	Staff training and development opportunities in SLC are limited by the availability of financial resources		
8.	Staff training and development opportunities are limited by opportunities to release staff from settings		
9.	We value this opportunity to access training		
9.	Talking Matters has had a greater impact than we anticipated		
10.	Elklan Training appeals because it is accredited		
10.	Learners have valued		

	the opportunity to have their learning accredited		
11.	We value the opportunity to gain Communication Friendly Accreditation for our settings		
11.	Settings have valued the opportunity to gain Communication Friendly Accreditation		
12.	We value the opportunity to be part of a national, DfE funded project		
13.	We value the opportunity to be part of a national evaluation into the impact of training		
14.	After involvement in Talking Matters we are more likely to consider other Eiklan training packages than we were previously.		

The Best things about Talking Matters :

Please list at least 4 and up to 10

The Worst things about Talking matters

Please list at least 4 and up to 10

15. What difference do you consider having KCPs in settings has made?- comparing Talking Matters settings with and without KCPs

16. Sustainability

A. Sustainability within the approximately 150 settings involved in Talking Matters to date

B Further roll out of the initiative to other settings within the 6 Talking matters LAs