

Foundation Stage Cluster Group

St. Mary's Primary School, Portglenone
Practitioner: Briege Milner

Background

- Briege was a co-presenter at the CCEA Foundation Stage seminars.

Baseline

- Foundation Stage teachers felt isolated.
- No Foundation Stage cluster groups were available for the teachers to attend.
- Feedback indicated there was a strong desire to meet with other professionals to share expertise and to improve practice.

Effective Communication:

- Key figure driving the cluster group forward
- Face-to-face meetings and online communication for greater collaboration
- Encouraging all participants to be pro-active
- Identifying key areas in advance and clear communication channels allowing for greater productivity
- Reflecting on and talking about learning to develop and improve practice



Pedagogical Leadership:

- A positive climate allowing for open discussion, sharing thoughts and ideas
- A specific focus at each session allowing for greater collaboration
- Teachers able to reflect on their practice and make changes to improve learning opportunities



Impact of the Cluster Group on the Children:

- Greater engagement of pupils
- Heightened enjoyment of play sessions
- Enhanced Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities
- Increased independence in learning



Teachers:

- Improved planning as a result of sharing ideas
- Better awareness of the need to provide challenging, stimulating and engaging activities
- Increased knowledge and confidence to improve learning opportunities in play



Middle Leader:

- Developed a greater understanding of how children learn through play
- Encouraged reflection on the children's needs
- Promoted the development of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities through stimulating and challenging activities



Senior School Staff:

- Monitored and reviewed planning for play
- Monitored the impact through observing play
- Reviewed the evaluations of play

