

## Case Study for *What Works*

<b>Name of intervention</b>	Core Vocabulary
<b>Role</b>	Rachel Dryden, PT Speech & Language  Sarah Gray Speech & Language Therapist
<p><b>Context:</b> A speech, language and communication provision within a mainstream primary school. 10 children with significant speech and language impairment are allocated places from across the local authority and attend full time Monday-Thursday, returning to their local catchment school for Friday mornings. Children are withdrawn to work within a small group/individually or supported by specialist staff within mainstream.</p> <p><b>Child details:</b> Children with a phonological delay and/or disorder are targeted. This strategy is used alongside a variety of approaches.</p> <p><b>Adults:</b> Specialist teachers, speech and language therapist, Childcare Development Worker ASN, parents and carers working 1:1 with child.</p> <p><b>Practicalities:</b> Parents and class teachers create a list of vocabulary that is relevant to and used regularly by the child. Five words are selected as a short term focus. Each child has a diary including notes for parents/mainstream staff and a colour-in record chart. Short session 10-15 minutes daily/ twice daily Mon-Thurs with additional practise at home. Words removed from the child's list / word box once they are intelligible consistently in spontaneous speech.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Word list (formulated using information from parents),</li><li>• Word box with pictures,</li><li>• Traffic lights card to discuss progress</li><li>• Dice/spinner for number of attempts required</li><li>• Colour-in practise record sheet.</li><li>• Materials to display and celebrate words achieved.</li></ul> <p><b>Outcomes for children:</b> In our setting this has been very effective in improving intelligibility for children with persistent difficulties. The words selected are relevant to the child's context and their intelligibility facilitates conversations about things which interest the child. The child's success is highly motivating since they can make the connection between clearer speech and better, more enjoyable conversations about the things that interest them. Success with one word encourages the child to continue to improve the clarity of other words they would like to use. (Results quoted below are for one child.)</p> <p><b>Top tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure the approach is modelled to parents for home practise.</li><li>• Ensure parents and staff working on the words listen very carefully to speech.</li><li>• Adults and the child should update the list as new words arise.</li><li>• As you practise each sound try different syllable boundaries to help with trickiest sounds e.g. mac-er-o-ni or ma-cer-o-ni.</li></ul>	

- Write words phonetically and use visual prompts for parts e.g. point to knee for final syllable “mac-er-o – *knee*”. This appears to reduce the effort required for longer, more complex words.
- Practise the words regularly and carefully, encouraging the child to reflect on the quality of their own speech.
- Be positive but feedback honestly to the child. Reflect back orally or in writing to demonstrate what they said. We talked about “naughty (intrusive) sounds that occurred.
- Criteria for having achieved the word is that the child uses it in their spontaneous speech a specified number of times.
- Ensure each improved word is celebrated by putting on display and evidencing in IEP progress.
- Do not accept unclear words once they have been achieved successfully in spontaneous speech.

### Sample results - Child C

#### Assessment 1: South Tyneside Assessment of Phonology

**Results before intervention:** CA:5:1

Phonological disorder processes included substituting speech sounds for ‘d’ and ‘t’ at all word positions and final consonant deletion, cluster reduction.

**Mid-point results :** CA: 5:8

Still presenting with a phonological disorder but is now making greater progress with his speech sounds. Achieving a greater range of sounds, particularly at word final level.

The words that he has achieved in Core Vocabulary he is continuing to use in his spontaneous speech.

**Results after intervention:** CA: 6:6

Speech sounds within normal limits.

#### Assessment 2: Intelligibility in Context Scale (functional speech)

**Results before intervention:** CA:5:3

13.5/35 Rarely or never understood by both familiar and unfamiliar adults.

**Mid-point results:** CA: 5:10

18/35 Clearer and speaking for himself. When he was very excited less intelligible.

**Results after intervention:** CA: 6:3

33/35 Intelligible in all situations unless very excited.

#### Comment:

We have been using this approach with children whose speech is highly unintelligible despite intensive SLT and it has had a positive impact. We have found that it can be used very successfully by anyone who sees it modelled and then listens carefully to the child and feeds back sensitively.