

Context

Warout Primary School is in the Warout area of Glenrothes with around 192 pupils. The SIMD Map of the school's catchment area provides further information about the school's socio-economic profile. The school's improvement driver diagrams (7,8) and final improvement plan (9) outline the school's overarching approach to addressing the poverty-related attainment gap and the drivers which will lead to improvement. The school is in receipt of Pupil Equity Funding as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge and is using this funding to work on enhancing and extending vocabulary. The school aims to extend and enhance vocabulary understanding and usage which it has identified as an enabler to raise attainment. This work will initially involve pupils in P5-7, and eventually be extended across the school.

Data Analysis

Initially a speech and language therapist (SaLT) from NHS Fife SaLT Services carried out whole school classroom observations around teacher/pupil interaction and communication opportunities for children aided by Better Communication.

The SaLT observed a vocabulary lesson in the upper school and considered the teaching strategies already used by staff to develop pupils' vocabulary. This was followed by further qualitative analysis of P5/6 and P7 written work linked to the use of Tier 2 words used in the correct context and in grammatically correct ways. Subsequent data-gathering was supported by a structured 15 minutes of continuous writing by all pupils each day based on prompts in this presentation (5). The writing was analysed by the SaLT by counting the tier 2 words used. This was analysed daily from January to June and then following the summer break to see if results had been maintained.

Analysis was regularly monitored using improvement science techniques (run chart analysis). Tier 2 word usage was plotted graphically on a run chart so that change over time could be captured. These charts were then annotated and used as the basis for professional dialogue around 'peaks' and 'troughs' in the data set.

This supported professional discussions around barriers and enablers in Tier 2 word usage and therefore subsequent tests of change (PDSAs). Since whole class data were captured, this allowed staff to identify and concentrate on individual pupils requiring differentiated support.

WAROUT PRIMARY SCHOOL, GLENROTHES FIFE COUNCIL

Intervention

Extending and enhancing vocabulary understanding and usage in oral and written responses. Partnership working with NHS Fife Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) Services



Useful information

- The SaLT, headteacher and class teacher discuss the approaches at Warout, the importance of Tier 2 words, and next steps
- An interactive Yammer Group event with Warout will take place on Glow soon: Contact us to be notified when this will take place!
- Join the SAC Live Narrative Yammer Group on Glow
- Warout PS Video clip tells the story so far

The unfolding story: August 2018

Recognising that oral vocabulary required development across the school, there was a 'hunch' among staff that this was the result of vocabulary knowledge and use being lower than required to enhance one aspect of literacy development. Staff conversations suggested that pupil confidence levels in spoken contexts, for example sharing their ideas, required development and that this could best be improved through increasing pupils' vocabulary.

The SaLT carried out baseline informal assessment of pupils' written vocabulary by counting the number of tier 2 words used. The SaLT also observed teacher/pupil interactions in class starting with semi-structured observation using Better Communication schedules and drawing upon SaLT professional knowledge. In conjunction with these observations there was professional dialogue between SaLT and Class Teachers to discuss the teaching strategies already used and how these could be adapted and enhanced to increase pupils' understanding and engagement with new vocabulary instructed.

The next step involved increased liaison between class teachers and SaLT as well as focussed staff development sessions using the RVI refresher presentation (1). The SaLT was able to model the skill of being able to select the most appropriate tier 2 words to support pupil vocabulary improvement. Once this modelling had occurred, the SaLT also coached teachers through how to select tier 2 words from selected classroom texts. After 3 weeks of this, teachers were then able to take over the pedagogical aspects of the project. One aspect of coaching was creating pupil-friendly definitions of tier 2 words making use of supporting website resources.

A range of activities was developed for each of the words to support pupils in engaging with the words in context. This led to staff being up-skilled in supporting pupils with tier 2 words and has shown early promise as evidenced in two Warout posters (2,3) and these writing examples (6) which show increased appropriate vocabulary in a relatively short time. The school's PEF allocation has been drawn upon to timetable all staff to engage with the SaLT to develop the project further.