Case study of local good practice in identifying children with SLCN

Peacehaven Community School
East Sussex

Introduction

Peacehaven Community School is an inclusive Local Authority Secondary School, soon be converted into an Academy for years 7 to 11. There is a high prevalence of SLCN in the area and for those pupils in the school with particularly high needs there is a specialist facility for SLCN.

The school employs a specialist speech and language teacher (Clare O'Rourke) for 4 days a week to support the whole teaching faculty with speech, language and communication who also works directly with pupils with SLCN in the school.

Universal Good Practice

The school implements a universal approach to support all pupils' speech, language and communication development and prides itself on its inclusive approach. The specialist facility has received an Accreditation by I CAN in the 'Secondary Talk' programme at specialist level and at the enhanced level for the whole school. This means that good practice in supporting speech, language and communication and identifying SLCN is implemented across the whole provision.

Specialist skills & tools

As well as working with pupils with SLCN directly, the specialist speech and language teacher is the first point of contact if a teacher has concerns about a child's speech and language development. Clare shares checklists and screening tools based on The Communication Trust's Progression Tools with the class teachers to gain further information about the pupil's skills before then making classroom observations. There is a clear process for all teachers which enables early identification of pupils with SLCN.

From this initial screening and classroom observations, a targeted support programme is then put in place and if further, more detailed assessment is required then Clare uses the Secondary Language Link.

Knowledge & skills

The school also use inset days to keep their knowledge and skills up to date in speech, language and communication; all learning support assistants are trained to use their Language Toolkit which includes templates for vocabulary maps and cartoon strips to support conversation, and there are regular drop-in sessions for teachers to discuss specialist subjects.

The school compares national SEN data with their own local data to understand the prevalence of SLCN in their school which helps in the identification process. Once a pupil is identified with SLCN, the school then works closely with specialist services to support pupils' individual needs.