

An Overview of the Little Minds project.

Supporting early years educators to improve children's speech, language and communication skills through a mindfulness based approach

Who was involved?

- Early Years educators
- Children aged 3-6 years old
- Academic researchers
- Subject matter experts

Why this focus?

- Increasing numbers of children start school with poor speech, language and communication skills

Educators developed a focus on

- Noticing
- Modelling
- Describing
- Listening
- Responding
- Reflecting

Educators worked on children's (and their own)

- Bodily awareness
- Emotional attunement
- Present moment awareness
- Curiosity
- Non-judgemental approach

The Little Minds approach is developed to be

- Developmentally appropriate
- Inclusive
- Adaptable not prescriptive
- Aligned with the EYFS framework

Outcomes seen in the children following the 10 week pilot programme included

- Improved language comprehension
- Improved emotion knowledge
- Improved self-control
- Improved language expression
- Improved working memory
- Improved cognitive flexibility
- Improved attention
- Improved emotional wellbeing and involvement
- Improved focus

One child said

“when you have a feeling you just do rainbow breaths or star breaths and it makes you feel braver and better.”

One practitioner commented

“I can see from the children daily the impact it had on them...their confidence at talking...”

The Little Minds team have created

- Staff training
- A companion handbook
- Practical resource posters
- Language prompts
- Activity guidance examples
- A mindful environment tool
- A reflective practice and welling tool

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