

Case study

Year 2 pupil Moderate to severe deafness-diagnosed at 3yrs.

Inconsistent hearing aid wearer. Once use in school was established a personal bodyworn FM system was introduced. Still unsure if aids are worn consistently at home.

Support in school and from Sensory Service:

- Full time teaching assistant
- Regular fortnightly visits from a teacher of the deaf
- A programme of speech and language for 6 weeks on and 6 weeks off-delivered by TA

Issue:

- Child making slow progress and the gap appeared to be widening-making inclusive lessons challenging for the teaching assistant
- Child very reluctant to use voice
- Concern that there is another difficulty-but difficult to identify specifically
- ADHD had been diagnosed using a questionnaire approach with the parent, Inclusion Manager and class teacher
- Little consultation about this with the teacher of the deaf or the teaching assistant.

Process of external support from deaf+:

- ✓ Discussion with ToD
- ✓ Observation of the child working with the teacher of the deaf -withdrawn(TA present)
- ✓ In class observation of TA support in mainstream numeracy and literacy
- ✓ Discussion with the Inclusion manager, teacher of the deaf and teaching assistant
- ✓ Agreement that the attention issues were most probably as a result of living in a small high rise block and little external play, in school a lack of differentiation in the curriculum, language delay and moderate learning difficulties. When subjects were of the right level and delivery style, concentration was sustained. In class he was fidgety when on the carpet (40 minutes) but there was little visual content and he was unable to access much of it.

Strategies-to raise self esteem-so praise at every opportunity:

- ✓ Focus on his strengths as a starting point, not correct anything he said but rather encourage him to extend one word answers to a short phrase then to a sentence level.
- ✓ ICT training to use Clicker 5 to record him saying what he wanted written for his own story book or topic book. Let him feel his voice is acceptable and valued.
- ✓ To use conversation in regular short sessions with a sympathetic partner (TA) so that he is in control even if subjects are limited or repetitive at the early stage. 5 minutes a day will make a difference.

Focused training for TA based around her particular anxieties:

1. Encouraged not to worry about what he is missing but rather concentrate on what he can gain from this lesson to build on his achievement to date and produce some progress. Work using his strengths whenever possible. Cut the content of every lesson taking the learning objective and interpreting it at his level to enable some related aspect of learning that would serve him best for the stage he is at and his difficulties of abstraction and retention. Always

use the curriculum as a vehicle to develop receptive and expressive language and skills rather than knowledge if you cannot do both. Value the process as the useful learning aspect rather than the finished work product. Praise him for and recognise what he achieves.

2. Specific advice on the phonic book in use during literacy. The order of the worksheets was adjusted to suit the level of language and phonology. Instead of 10 words used in each lesson these were reduced to 5 and where possible at least three were in his vocabulary. This enforced some existing knowledge whilst gently extending without overload. Use of a personal word book to help him build up some key vocabulary.
3. Mental maths- best to let him experience inclusion a couple of times a week taking the lowest level example and pursuing this without worrying about pace. Then withdraw to practise mental maths at his level and speed.
4. Science –materials and properties. Focus on 2 materials to contrast properties and make a book about one of them –so building up abstract idea about properties. Link with class book ‘about me’. Aim to be able to find items made of the 2 different materials, to describe them simply and to know their main use.

Teacher of the deaf: to do an additional Reynell after 6 months; to complete phonological record and see what sounds he is saying to help his spelling.

Outcome:

- ☺ After 3 months self esteem is much improved. Free spoken expression is growing and reading is now progressing well. He still has issues with remembering and abstract concepts so needs little steps forward, lots of revisiting. Finally making friendships and much more settled.
- ☺ Was writing from right to left following his Saturday teaching. Suggested to ask family if this teaching could be delayed for a year until he was secure with writing in English.
- ☺ Discussion about whether he would benefit from a less academic placement maybe in a school where there is a unit for speech and communication difficulties. Sibling had just started this local school so deferred to next Annual Review.

What helped?

- ☺ Shared knowledge of detail of phonology and language acquisition and the application of that knowledge to everyday classroom experience.
- ☺ New ICT skills gained to encourage speaking, story telling and writing.
- ☺ Discussion helped TOD and TA learn more about the child and language acquisition.
- ☺ Tighter focus on some specific activities which had been causing concern for TA. Shift in her attitude from negatives to positives so less anxiety.
- ☺ In class observation of TA issues and skills
- ☺ Acceptance that the speed of learning could always be an issue but finding multi sensory ways to alleviate this.
- ☺ Raising the profile of the specialist TOD visits with regular liaison time built in with school management.