

# Vocational and LLN Collaboration

How can an LLN tutor and a vocational tutor successfully collaborate to create an embedded course which will positively impact on learners, their aspirations and progression into mainstream educational provision? (looking specifically at embedding ESOL and childcare)

**Context:** This is a pilot project at Kirklees College, Huddersfield. It involves a group of thirteen Level 1 ESOL learners. The learners attend one level 1 introduction to childcare session a week taught by a child care specialist and two ESOL sessions taught by myself, Isabel Moore ESOL teacher. The course lasts six months and is all female with learners from Poland, Kurdistan, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and China. There is also a second embedded ESOL and childcare course run at another site with Entry 3 students.

**Why are we investigating this research question?**

As Kirklees College does not currently have any embedded ESOL and vocational courses there is a serious need for this type of course.



## Aim 1:

To develop appropriate resources and model for an embedded ESOL and childcare course.

### How to do this:

- Liaise with vocational teachers
  - Have weekly meetings and exchange schemes of work.
- Peer observation – It is important for both ESOL and vocational teacher to observe each other. The ESOL teacher is able to gauge any difficulties which SS have in vocational lessons and then address them in ESOL lesson.
- Adapt activities & tasks – general ESOL activities can be easily adapted to fit the context of childcare. For example a requirement for ESOL level 1 is that learners give a 10 minute presentation in which they must explain something - learners on the embedded course speak about an aspect of childcare.

Key words:

- Contextualise
- adapt
- liaise
- observe
- collaborate

## Aim 2: To investigate the impact this has on the learners

### Findings: Interviews with learners at the beginning of the course showed that:

- The majority of learners were very enthusiastic about the prospect of an embedded ESOL and childcare course stating that they thought the course would be more interesting and relevant to them.
- One learner felt apprehensive about the course as she was aware this is the first time KC has run any type of ESOL and vocational embedded course. She felt daunted at the prospect of being a guinea pig. However the same learner also said more recently that her worries were completely unfounded. She found the course more interesting than her previous ESOL class as she was very interested in the topic it made learning more meaningful and she also liked the fact that what is learnt in her childcare class can be reviewed and discussed further in the ESOL class.
- Other learners were originally worried about the writing and reading tasks required for the childcare course. Again these learners remarked that they had been pleasantly surprised as the ESOL class works directly with childcare lessons to ensure learners are supported in these tasks.
- All learners on the course enjoy it and the majority have plans to progress to Level 2 ESOL and childcare next year with the intention of eventually working in either childcare or education.

### Findings: Interviews with learners at the end of the course showed that:

- All students graded the course as either good or excellent.
- Students felt positive about the collaboration between ESOL and vocational teacher:
- "I think is very good idea because my ESOL tutor got possible to see what we doing on childcare course and use this on ESOL." Rasha Tabel.
- All students would like to continue with the course next year.

### Findings: Interview with childcare teacher at the end of the course:

- Peer observations are an invaluable experience: "The more I see of the ESOL class the more I realise how much I need to adapt my own teaching." Kim Summers
- Learners would benefit further from more collaboration between the ESOL and vocational teacher on specific assignments
- Learners would also benefit from more individual time with both ESOL and childcare teacher
- "Kirklees College should open more courses like this not just ESOL and childcare." Michalina Dominika Level 1 ESOL and childcare student at Kirklees College.

## Recommendations

1. Peer observations – set terms for peer observation – what do you want to find out? What is the other teacher looking at? Discuss afterwards.
2. Vocabulary sheet for learners – Learners should be given a vocabulary sheet which is used in both vocational and language classes. The new vocabulary from vocational course can then be explained, elicited in ESOL class. Pronunciation of words can be practiced in ESOL session also.
3. Share resources - Resources should be exchanged between vocational and LLN tutors. Vocational resources will inform LLN tutor lessons.
4. Contextualise resources - when giving learners a reading text for example look for a text relevant to the vocational course (for learners doing a childcare course, a text about children or the care of children would be a meaningful resource).

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