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A S S O C I A T E S

Training & Development Consultants

Early Years

Impact Evaluation for the Early Years Foundation Training Programme

Early Years Foundation Stage Training Programme commissioned and funded by The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea: October 2007 - June 2008

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE TRAINING PROGRAMME (HIGH/SCOPE IMPLEMENTATION COURSE)

This Early Years Foundation Stage Programme Training (High/Scope Implementation Course) was commissioned by Royal Borough Kensington and Chelsea during October 2007.

The Borough's rationale for selecting this particular programme of training is that they are committed to implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage through a well researched active learning approach to early years practice; committed to social change.

High/Scope's longitudinal research indicates that this form of education for children results in them achieving:

- Higher levels of academic achievement.
- Less chance of receiving social services intervention in their lives
- Less chance of engaging in criminal activity.

See significant benefits by Schweinhart and Weikart 1993.

"The recent findings from the EPPE Project provide crucial empirical evidence which supports the High/Scope approach. Case studies from the research revealed a number of factors which contributed to better outcomes for children (Sylva 2004).

These are: cognitive and social development are complementary; knowledge of curriculum and child development, and the ability to provide formative feedback during activities are essential for practitioners; a balance of quality adult and child initiated activities relates directly to the quality of children's learning; supporting children in conflict resolution leads to better socialisation for children; improving practices in sharing educational aims with parents

*and adult-child interactions which encourage sustained, shared thinking, all benefit children. When these factors are juxtaposed with the principles underlying the High/Scope approach, they complement one another in their entirety. Combined with the findings of the High/Scope Perry Pre-school study provide a compelling rationale for using a quality, child centered care and education approach such as High/Scope." **High/Scope at Working UK in the 21st century Joanne Basford***

The High/Scope Implementation Course focuses on the principles and practice guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Through the training modules - new skills, knowledge and concepts are introduced.

Participants reflect on their current practice and apply new learning to their relationship with the unique child; with themselves, team members, parents and other professionals. They review, assess and evaluate the enabling environment: indoors and outdoors and the children's learning and development.

A matrix is available illustrating how this programme links with the EYFS.

This reports some of the evaluation of the outcomes and future development.

REPORT AND EVALUATION

We have approached this evaluation process via three different routes. Initially we will give a summary of the feedback from Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's evaluation of the programme, then we will share our summary of the programme period and the feedback we received on a questionnaire issues to the participants at the last session.

Finally, in an effort to further measure the effectiveness of this programme we have chosen to use a tool developed by High/Scope UK (PIP). This programme implementation tool is designed to assess implementation at the participants setting, prior and post training. It is a very effective setting evaluation tool which fits perfectly with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Mid and post evaluation Royal Borough of Kensington

and Chelsea.

The mid-term evaluation concluded that participants were highly satisfied with the course. Many mentioned that they wished the books had arrived earlier, three of the settings felt that if their manager had knowledge of the programme and were more supportive, they would be able to implement even more effectively. The child minders commented that there would be greater benefit if other participants were child minders, instead of nursery practitioners.

The post course evaluation concluded that participants were highly satisfied with programme; they increased their knowledge, developed new skills and changed attitudes. Below are just a few of the many comments that participants made on the evaluation forms:

“I think I increased my communication skills and the way to solve problems. I try to use more encouragement instead of praise. I learnt about transitions and the way I interact with children has totally changed”

“It was the best training I ever attended because it did not stay at the theory level, but helped me to change my practice”

“As this course involved some introspection I understand better the way I react and am therefore able to change the areas I do not like. In particular with the team members, using the High/Scope problem solving approach. I try to acknowledge peoples feelings, rather than making decisions and finding solutions for them”.

WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS SAID

Evaluation forms were provided by High/Scope UK. Participants were asked to rate the following statements, using a point 5 scale. 6 participants completed these evaluations at the last session.

Scale: 1= Disagree with the statement, 5 = Strongly Agree with this statement

The results are as follows:

Statement	Disagree					Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	
The course was well organized				3		3
The objectives of the course were clearly evident				2		4
The trainer demonstrated a high degree of professional skill				1		5
The course included an effective level of participant involvement				1		5
Facilitates and accommodation were conducive to learning				2		4
The course provided the necessary ingredients for me to have an effective learning experience				2		4
I will be able to use the information and/or skills acquired through the course to improve my effectiveness in my work						6

Participants were asked to make suggestions that they feel would improve the effectiveness of the course this is what they said:

- 3 commented that receiving the text books at the beginning of the programme would have been more useful - *this delay was due High/Scope UK's delay in processing our order!*
- 1 commented that the Wednesday evening session was too short. *“I think we should only have all day long session”*

They were asked what were the highlights of this course for them. This is what they said:

“the change of environment indoors and outdoors, we worked a lot on that”

“the fact that it was directed towards changing our practice and the fact that we were given a chance to look at ourselves and understand how it will affect our practice”

“Problem solving approach to conflict, working in a team, group participation in module activities”

“sharing experiences and ideas”

They were asked which future topics would be most helpful and to make any additional comments? They said:

“More on planning around the Foundation Stage”

“I would very much be interested in developing management leadership and teamwork within an High/Scope practice”

Everyone made comments about how much they enjoyed the course valued the tutors support and that it had an impact on their practice.

PIP DATA (SETTING EVALUATION TOOL)

This evaluative data has been compiled, after meeting the participants, individually at their settings. We used the first three sections of the PIP Programme implementation tool (a fantastic tool for self-evaluation of the setting, a tool developed by High/Scope to assess implementation). These sections reviewed the following:

- Physical Learning Environment (EYFS Enabling environment);
- Schedules and Routines (long-term, medium term and short-term planning),
- Adult/Child Interaction (EYFS Positive Relationships/reflective practitioner)
- Together, we reflected on their setting prior to the course and post training.

All of the settings were visited and the PIP was discussed. 4 Settings completed the before and after rating, these were the results:

Conclusions from PIP data - the table below provides an illustration of PIP scores prior and **post** the implementation course.

Setting	Physical Environment	Schedules and Routines	Adult/Child Interaction
(2-3's) Setting 1	24 29	17 31	12 30
(3-5's) Setting 2	16 29	24 49	12 28
(2-3's) Setting 2	14 24	12 37	11 28
(3-5's) Setting 3	25 31	30 54	22 29
Family Centre Setting 4	No Score	No Score	No Score
Child Minders Setting 5	No Score	No Score	No Score

We visited 5 settings, within one of those settings I gave feedback on two age groups.

CONCLUSIONS FROM DELIVERING THE HIGH/SCOPE IMPLEMENTATION COURSE

- All participants were reflective and demonstrated learning and attainment of new skills.
- All participants implemented change within their settings.
- Participants were motivated throughout the programme.
- A high percentage of these participants completed the programme to the required standard for national accreditation with High/Scope Uk.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPEMENT

We plan to map this training programme against the Early Years Foundation Stage Certificate and partner an assessment centre to provide this national certification, either in its own right or in addition to High/Scope UK certification.

We plan to continue to deliver the programme as a vehicle for implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage