

Talking Partners

Talking Partners is a Wave 2/3 intervention to enhance speaking and listening skills in the classroom.

It is linked to the Primary Strategy and mentioned in Leading on Inclusion (p 251).

Talking Partners was developed by Education Bradford initially for those with English as a second language, but quickly developed to meet the needs of all those for whom language presented some difficulties.

The Specialist Teaching Team was trained in 2004.

Since then Talking Partners training for mainstream schools has been available through the Inclusion Book and delivered by a team of Specialist Teachers. Those schools taking part in the training have also received 3 additional sessions in their schools to help establish the programme.

It is supported by the Communication and Interaction Team, and once established will become part of the school's planning and Provision Mapping.

Refresher courses are also available for mainstream staff through the Inclusion Book (cathy.rogers@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

The key principle of the programme is the centrality of talk in supporting learning. It mirrors the Speaking Listening and Learning documents, and should be seen, not as a literacy intervention but rather as a language enhancement, enrichment and access programme across the curriculum.

However in schools where the programme is established it has become evident that it can be used additionally to develop writing once the children become confident with speaking and listening.

Talking Partners is evidence based, and pre and post assessments are carried out to track pupil progress via standardized assessments.

Talking Partners is an intensive 10 week course with groups of 3 children with one adult.

These groups are monitored by a school co-ordinator, usually the SENCO in conjunction with the Communication and Interaction specialist teacher if appropriate.

There are 3 sessions of 30 minutes each week, and the programme is enhanced by the class teacher using the strategies in the classroom.

The materials used in the group sessions are taken from the curriculum being delivered in the classroom at that time.