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Enhanced Language & Communication initiative (ELCi)

An inclusive multi-disciplinary approach to supporting children with additional needs in reception classes

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Outline of session

- ❖ Rationale for pilot project
- ❖ Aims of the project
- ❖ Overview of the Pilot Project
- ❖ Impact Evaluation
- ❖ Reflection
- ❖ Questions

Rationale for Pilot Project

- Recognition of levels of need of children starting in mainstream schools.
- Challenges for teaching staff to enable the children to make progress.
- Using approaches that have evidence base of impact.

Project centred in Interactionist Psychology



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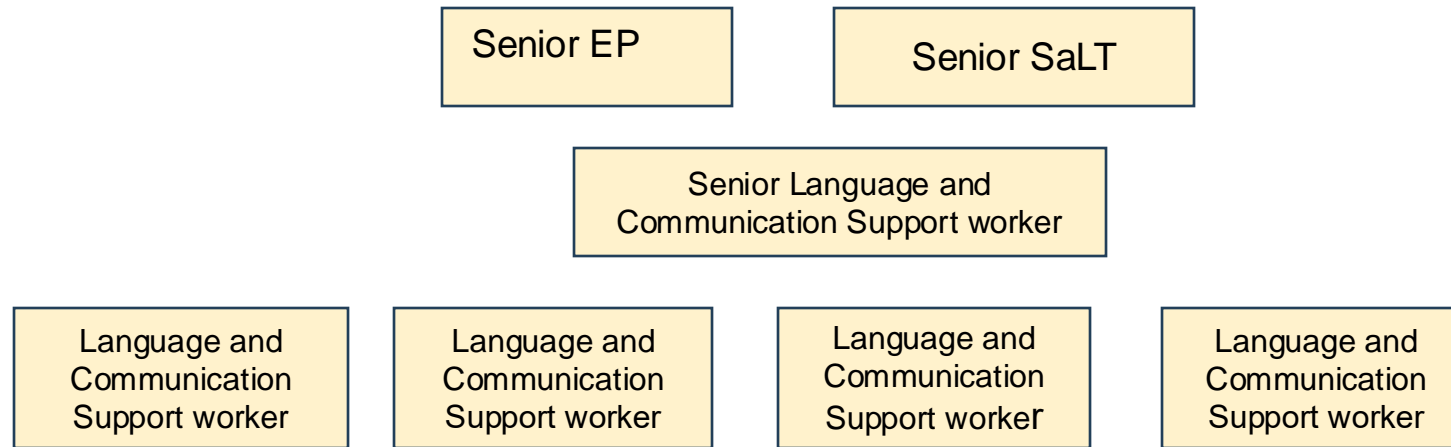
- Context and situations affect a child's development, learning and progress
- Impact of the expectations of significant others
- Impact of approaches taken to help the child learn
- Focus on **the class teacher** as the main agent of change

Underlying assumptions

- Pupils have a right to an education as part of their peer group
- Schools make a difference
- Teachers are skilled and effective professionals
- The ELCi team is not a direct agent of change for individual pupils
- The team can be most helpful by helping teachers through collaborative work

Overview of the Pilot Project

Jan – June 2024



Language & Communication Support Worker

- Visiting weekly/fortnightly for one term
- Work directly with the **class teacher** as a team to audit, problem solve and trial whole class strategies.



How is ELCi different from other initiatives?

ELCi focuses on

- Enabling, upskilling and empowering school staff, thereby **ensuring approaches are maintained** when the programme has left.
- Inclusion of all children.
- Working with the school staff and the environment as an effective way of supporting children to make progress rather than working with individual children.
- Problem solving 'in situ' so that practical applications of approaches are adapted to the specific school/ class.
- Utilising resources already available within the class and within school.
- Working within the classroom with the class teacher as lead, using and the whole class over a number of weeks to support and **embed strategies.**



The acronym “SCERTS” refers to the focus on:

“SC” - **Social Communication** – the development of spontaneous, functional communication, emotional expression and secure and trusting relationships with children and adults.

“ER” - **Emotional Regulation** – the development of the ability to maintain a well-regulated emotional state to cope with everyday stress, and to be most available for learning and interacting.

“TS” – **Transactional Support** – the development and implementation of supports to help partners respond to the person’s needs and interests, modify the environment, and provide tools to enhance learning. Specific plans are developed to provide educational and emotional support to families, and to foster teamwork among professionals.

Enhanced Language & Communication Initiative Pilot
(taken from SCERTS.COM)

Project overview

Activity	School personnel	School time	Project personnel	Project time
Initial visit: Observation in class SCERTS assessment Audit with class teacher	Class teacher Senco	2 hours	Support worker	½ day
6 – 8 Follow up visits: observation, modelling of approaches, discussion, agreement of next steps	Class teacher	Integrated into class plus ½ hour out of class	Support worker	½ day per week/ fortnight
Training session	Class teacher	variable	SaLT team/ EPS/ outside provider	variable
End of input SCERTS re-assessment	-	In class observation	Support workers	½ day
Final visit – summary, feedback and future steps	Class teacher Senco	1.5 hours	Support worker	1.5 hours
End of intervention summary report : approaches used and next steps for school	-	-	Support worker sends to school	2 hours
Project team meeting and psychological supervision	-	-	Support workers and EP/ SaLT lead	2 hours weekly

Rationale for approaches used

Evidence based approaches frequently recommended by EPs SaLT and other professionals



SCERTS® model

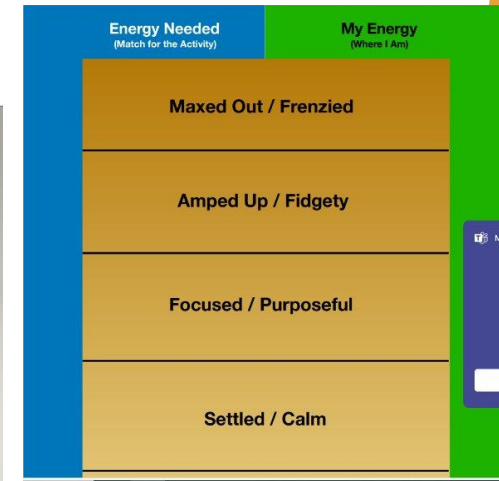
- -understands that the problems are not solely within child
- provided clear objectives for targeted input of the ELCi team during the pilot

Children are most available for learning when they can:

- attend to most relevant information in activity or setting,
- remain socially engaged
- process verbal and nonverbal information,
- initiate interactions using higher level abilities
- respond to others in reciprocal interactions
- actively participate in everyday activities

When the adults help by.....

- Designing meaningful and developmentally sensible activities
- Establishing predictability in natural routines
- Fostering social communication
- Fostering emotional regulation



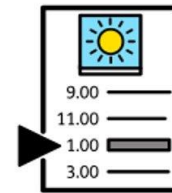
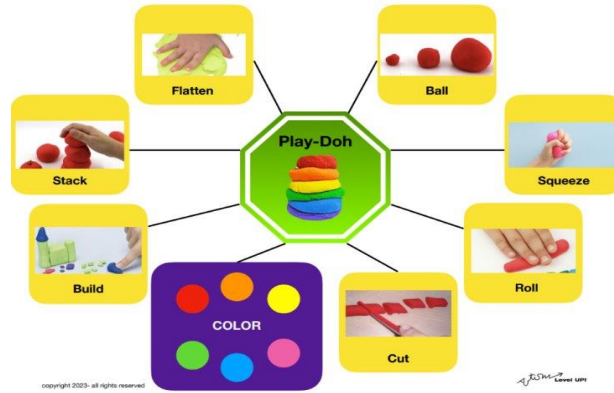
Key Strategies

Angry birds

I want	build	Pull down and... GO!	red	bird
I need help	put	more	green	pig
I got it!	knock down	finish	yellow	blocks
			black	catapult
			blue	

Pop Up Pirate Words

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20



Schedules

Now and Next

Now	Next	dancing	playdough	car	park
		toilet	iPad	goodbye	Mummy



Evaluation of pilot project

- Staff initial questionnaire
- Pre and post assessment SCERTS® data
- Post programme questionnaire feedback from school staff
- Collecting children's views
- Parental views



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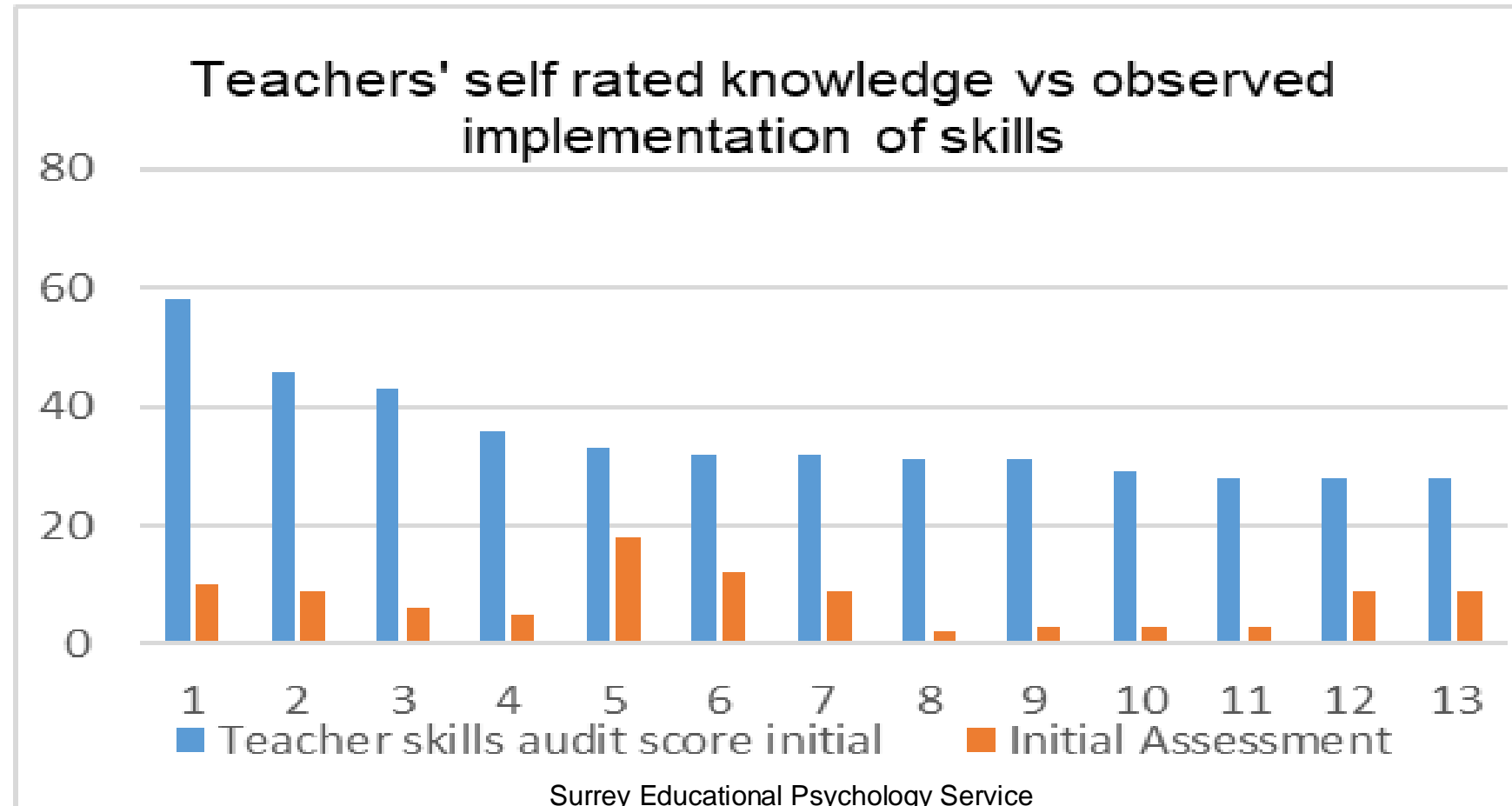
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Evaluation of pilot project – key themes

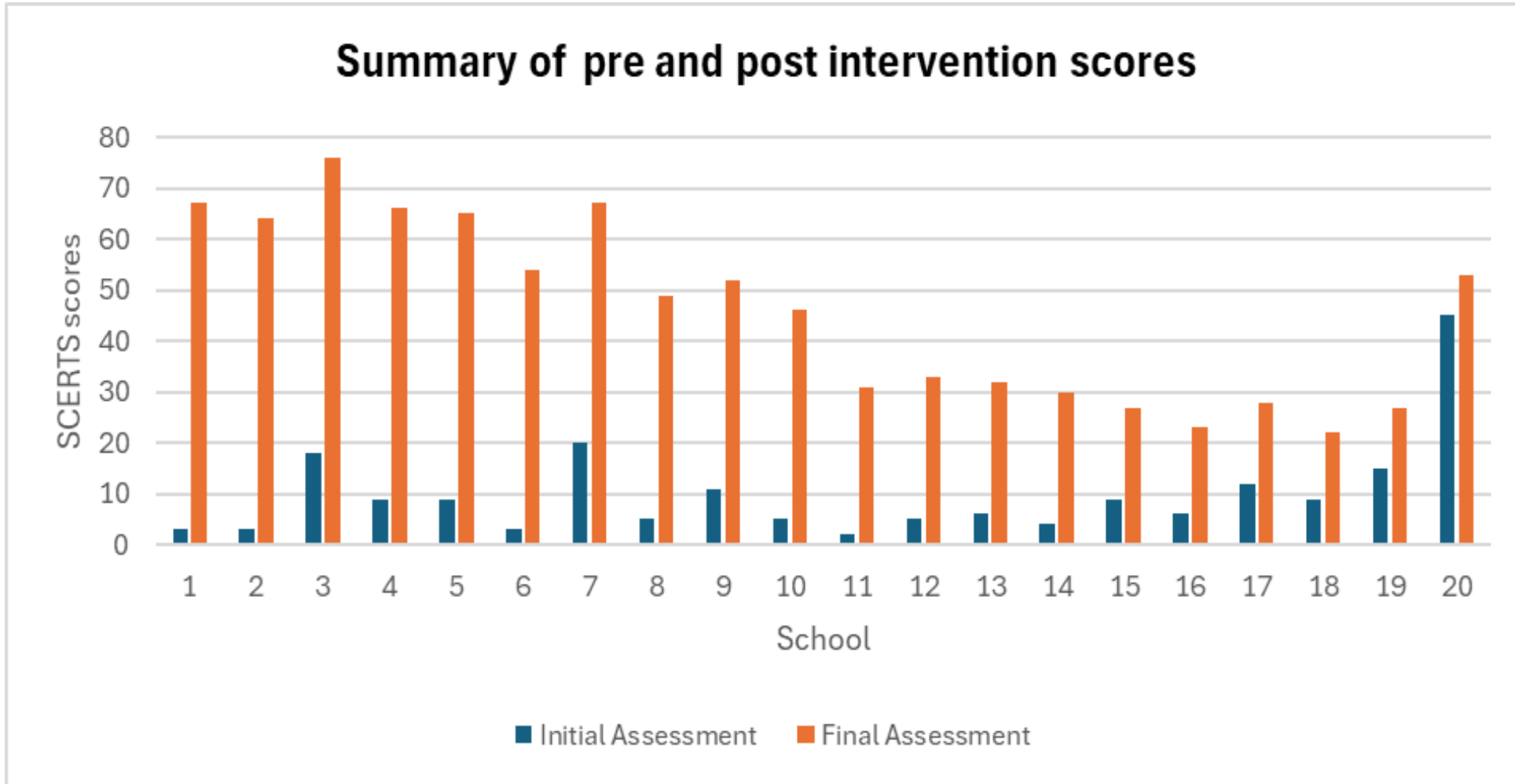
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Pre intervention, school staff reported knowledge of interventions but were not observed to implement these in class



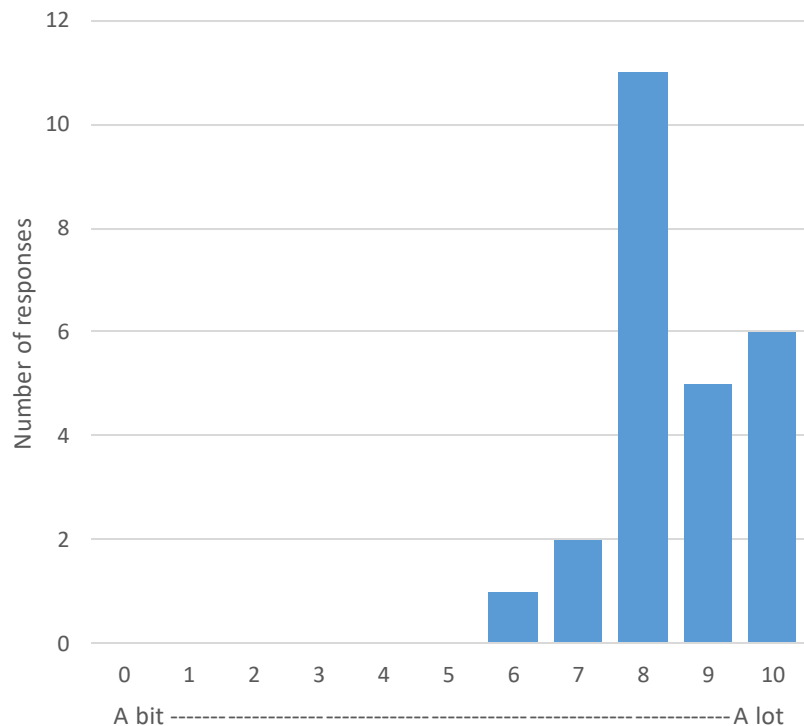
Input from the ELCi team showed change in use of SCERTS Transactional Support strategies by school staff in Reception classes



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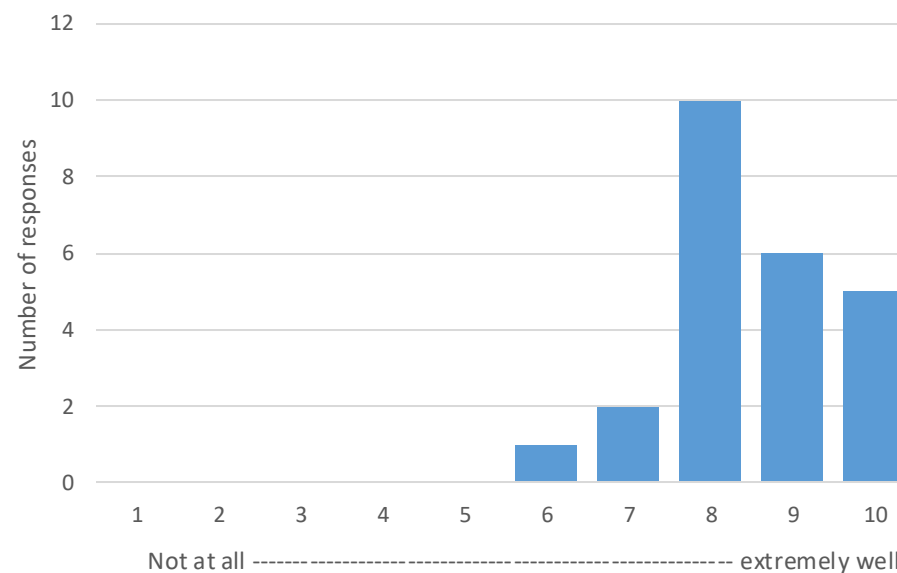
Teachers felt more confident working with the range of needs in their class

Do you feel more confident working with the range of needs in your class following your participation in ELCi?



Teachers reported strategies used enabled all children to demonstrate active engagement in whole class learning

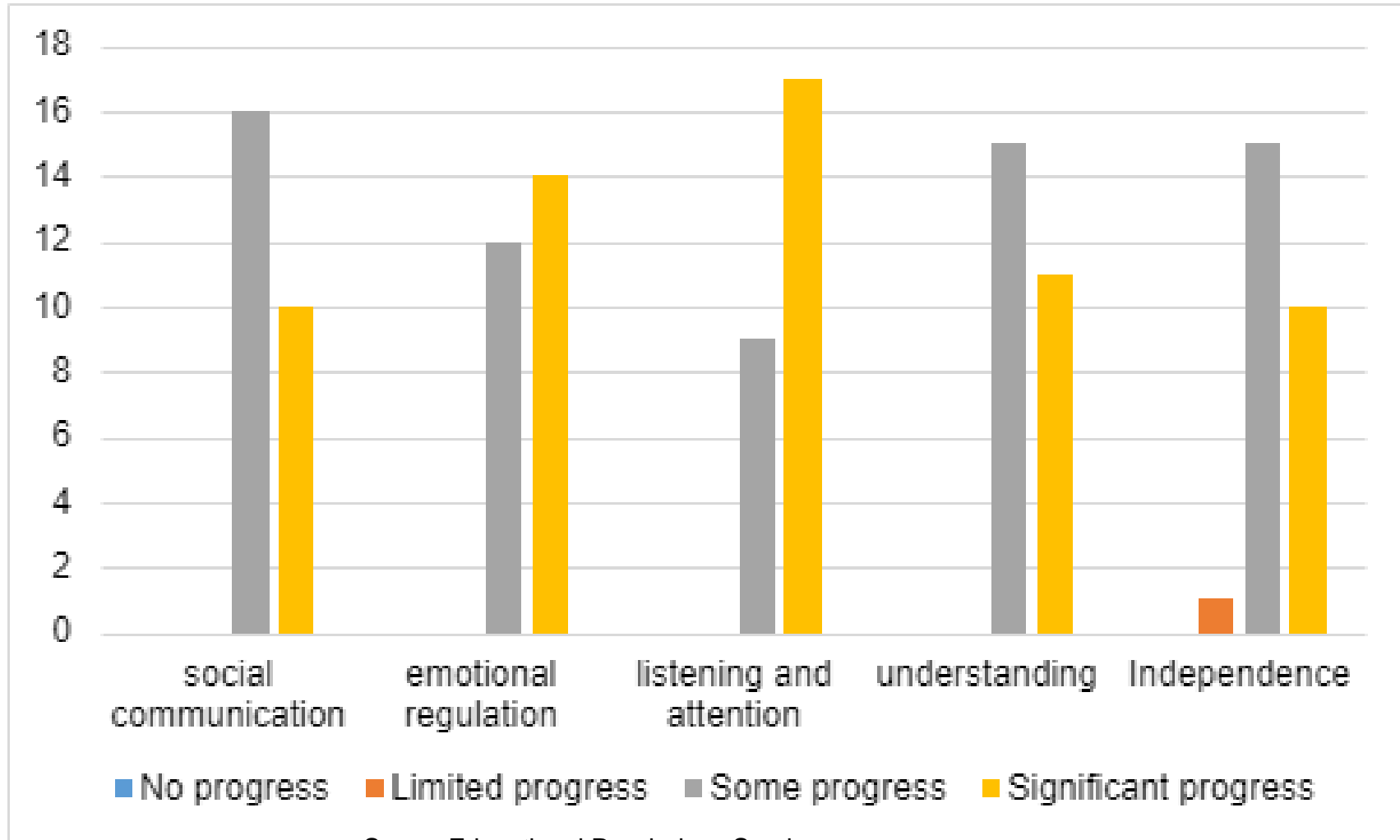
How well did the strategies enable all children to demonstrate active engagement in whole class learning?





Teachers reported that ELCi approaches helped children to make **additional progress** in a range of areas

*Has implementing ELCi approaches helped children to make **additional progress** in these areas?*



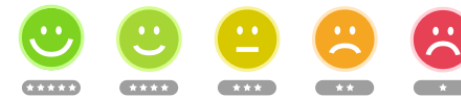
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A small change in children's views post intervention*

A sample of children from each class in the project took part in a sorting task which aimed to gain their views on their enjoyment of various activities in class.

Feedback indicated that post ELCi intervention, showed

- Overall more pointing to 'happy' face (greater enjoyment of activities in class? overall increased well-being?)
- More positive views about phonics
- More positive views about free- play activities



*NB – no control group – so not clear whether this is natural development through the term

Analysis of themes from teacher feedback

Teachers valued:

- Practical, hands-on support
- Incremental learning and strategy implementation
- Feelings of enhanced confidence and competence
- Strong collaboration and communication

Effective strategies

- Whole-class integration of strategies
- ALD Boards and visual supports
- Now/Next Boards
- Attention Autism
- Emotion cards and lanyards

Examples of "further comments / suggestions" from questionnaire feedback

*"We have loved working with ELCi! It's been brilliant for our cohort and has really supported us in supporting them. **My wellbeing has improved, as well as the children's**, from how much more manageable it has made my class. "*

"It would be great get this support throughout the school. Exclusions would reduce, engagement would increase and staff knowledge would be the best it can be. I would also love transition work so that what has been embedded in YR moves into year 1.

"It has been so helpful to have you in the classroom, learning strategies to help all children not just our SEN and EAL children. Thank you for all you have been doing, I feel it has made me a better teacher."

"We have seen a dramatic improvement and we are keen to roll this out, consolidate the strategies and implement further."

"I've just had the most amazing feedback from a MAT senco/inclusion lead about ELCi. She said it was the single most important offer that she has EVER received from Surrey. They were part of the pilot and their MAT lead who had the child in their school last year said he could not believe the difference in that pupil and engagement with learning."

I thought you would like to know that MPs praised the above (ELCi) when I met them today in Westminster

Reflections

Importance of

- Multi-disciplinary working with Speech and Language therapy colleagues
- Consistency of approach
- Maintaining the psychology: focus on interactionist approach: working with the adults (rather than within child)
- Focus on working with whole class approaches
- Psychological team supervision