



Spotlight on Every Sheffield Child Articulate and Literate (ESCAL)

Sheffield City Council won the Working Together Award at the 2013/14 Shine a Light Awards – the third year in a row that they have scooped awards. Judges were impressed with their work supporting schools in the Sheffield South East Learning Partnership (SSELP) and Sheffield’s Speech and Language Therapy Service.

ESCAL is a city-wide literacy strategy to develop the speech, language and communication skills of children and young people ages 0-19. It is supported by partners including Learning and Inclusion Service, Speech and Language Therapy, NHS, Multi-Agency Support Teams, EAL and New Arrivals Service, the Parent/Carer Forum, the Universities, the voluntary sector, the Cultural Industries, Business Community etc.

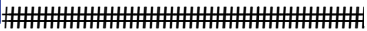
ESCAL works closely with Sheffield schools and Early Years settings, as shown through their work with Sheffield’s SLT team and 15 SSELP primary schools, to establish consistent and innovative speech and language practice across all the schools. The experienced Speech Therapists provided training and in school mentoring, as well as monitored progress.

SSELP schools have high levels of deprivation; with 75% of children living in the 20% most deprived areas nationally and 46% are eligible for pupil premium funding. ESCAL was set up to help children develop their communication skills by identifying and supporting children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and to equip staff with knowledge, expertise and confidence.

Over 43 languages are spoken in SSELP schools. ESCAL sought to value pupil’s mother tongue and enable practitioners to meet the language needs of bilingual learners. The schools have received a comprehensive toolkit of resources to support children and young people with SLCN as well as mentoring on areas such as Autism and Down’s Syndrome.

850 practitioners have attended training and four SSELP schools have gained ESCAL’s externally validated Communication Friendly Schools Quality Mark. End of Key Stage data shows early signs of impact with a significant 9% rise over the year compared with 1% nationally.

ESCAL has made nurturing and supporting children and young people’s communication fun and engaging. SSELP schools have taken part in a range of activities and initiatives including a Mad Hatters Tea Party for nursery children, a 10 week creativity project for schools on speaking and listening and pupil participation in talk activities including ESCAL City Talks and debates in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.



The Communication Trust
Every child understood

