

Working together to support the development of listening and attention within early years



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Listening and attention is a vital foundation skill for all language and literacy development. With this in mind, we began this project by identifying settings where listening and attention had already been identified as an area of concern. Stobhill Primary School was eager to be involved in the project, as the Head Teacher, together with the early years staff had noticed a decline over time, in children's listening and attention skills. Many children were unable to settle, had difficulty focusing and remaining on task.

- Aim 1:** All practitioners working in Stobhill Nursery Class are able to profile children's listening and attention skills in order to identify children that are at risk of delay by November 2018
- Aim 2:** 80% of targeted preschool children in Stobhill Nursery Class will make progress* with their listening and attention skills by June 2019

**Operational Definition: targeted children are the children who are in the lowest 20% of overall scores on the Listening and Attention Profile. Improvement defined by a 15% increase in a child's scores at the end of the year*



Method

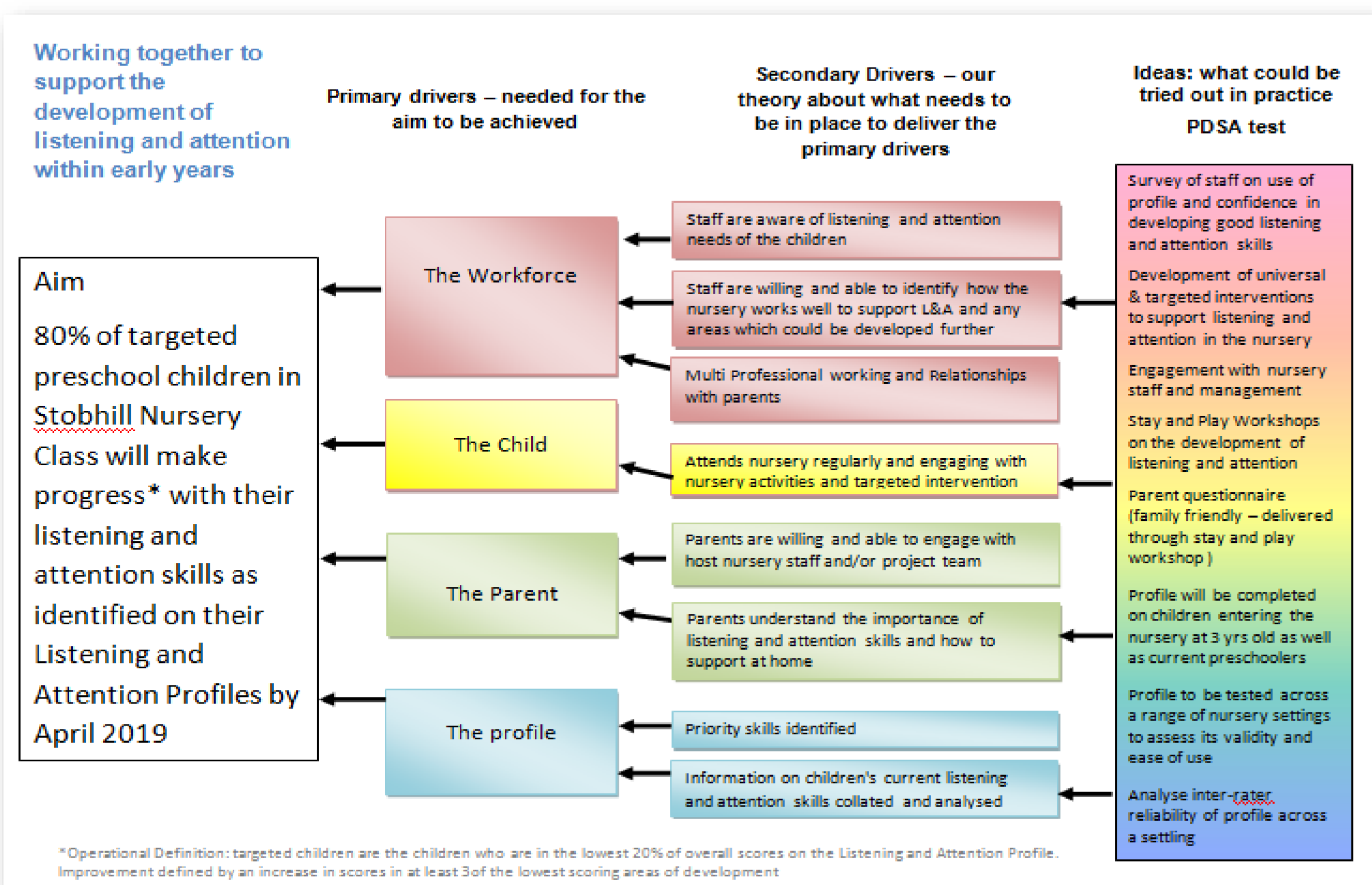
- We researched existing listening and attention profiles, adapted ideas & created our own user friendly and manageable profile for practitioners.
- We used a PDSA approach to test small scale changes in practice adopting Universal approaches to supporting Listening & Attention
- We held regular discussions with lead practitioners and staff. We made changes to the tool and ideas for scale up/ intervention were developed.
- We used a questionnaire to measure staff confidence in using the profile and in supporting children's listening and attention over time.
- We adapted a Targeted Intervention and skilled shared implementing this with nursery staff to achieve sustainable changes to practice.



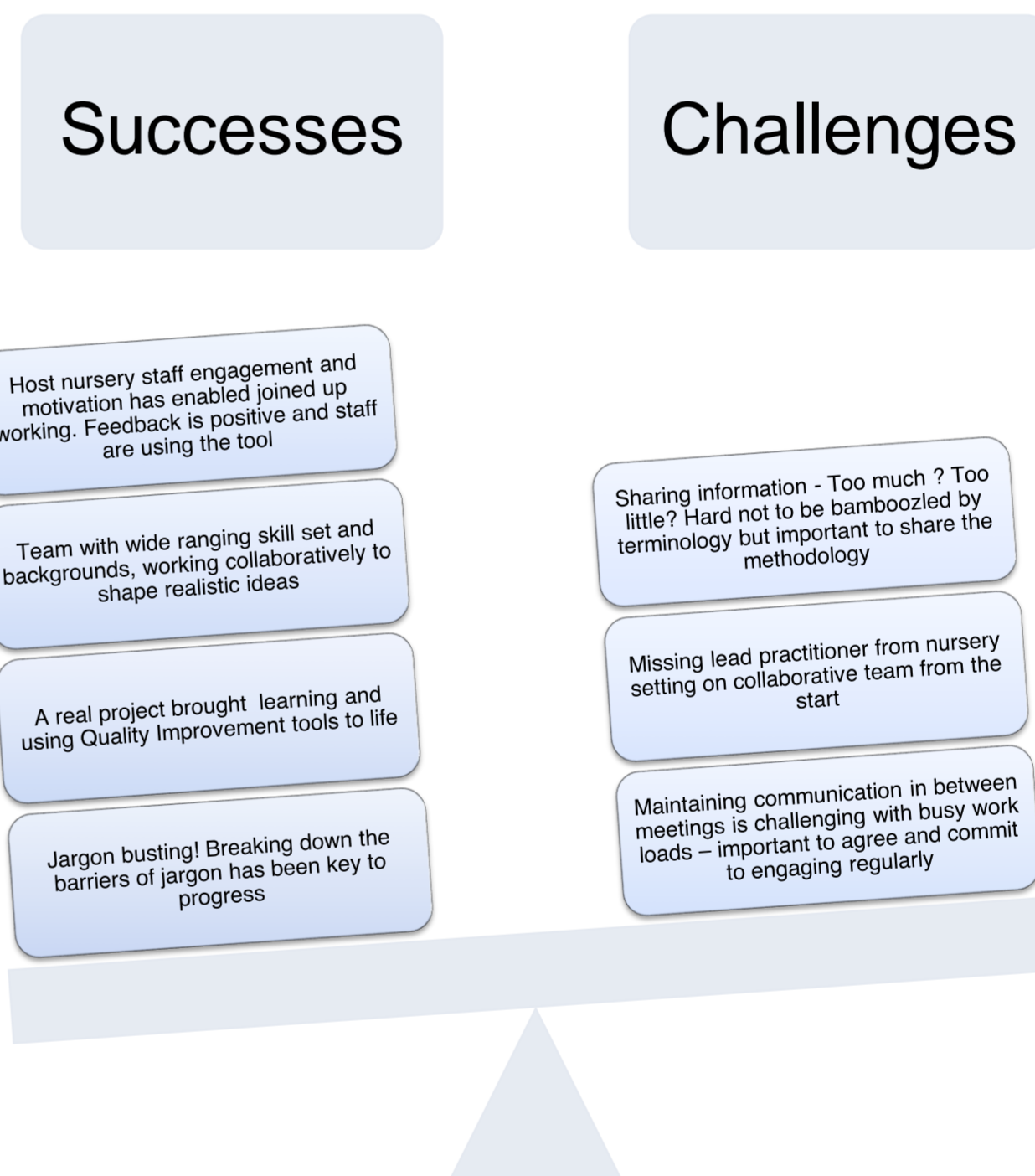
Achievements



Process Change

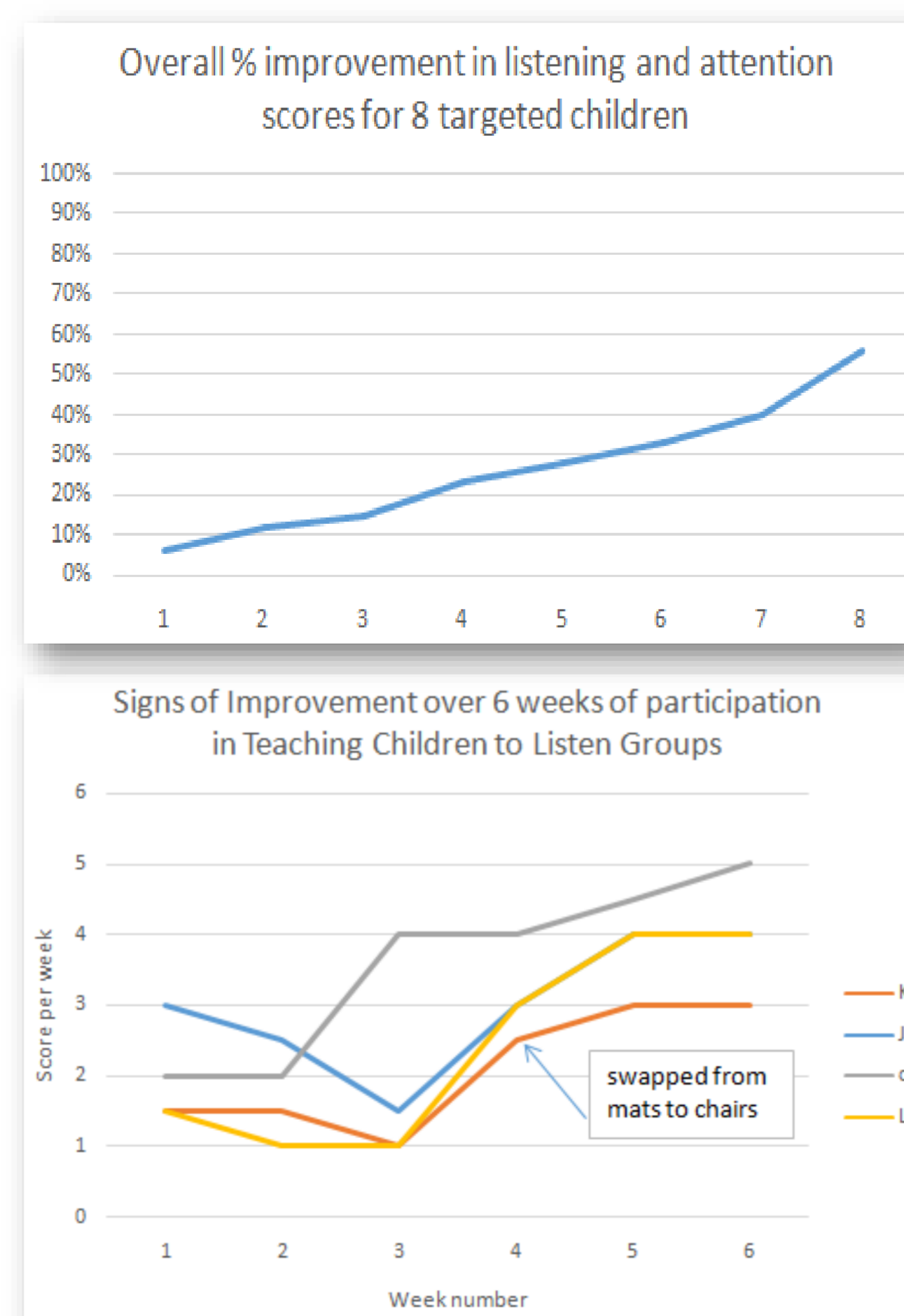


Key Learning Points



Results

- The tool identified which children required support & a target group of 8 children were identified.
- The tool identified the areas in which children were finding it difficult to listen and attend – mainly activities which were more adult led such as story times.
- Through liaison with the staff team & small scale PDSA's we evidenced key areas where nursery needed to focus their support – developing and improving story time opportunities to encourage more children to attend & engage.
- Universal approaches increased the numbers attending story time sessions but did not capture our targeted children.
- Targeted intervention showed improvement in a range of listening & attention skills with one child making a 56% improvement in his overall profile score.



Conclusions

Our Listening and Attention tool has provided a way of profiling children's development in this specific area, quickly and efficiently. For some children it also highlighted when being able to listen and attend was more of a challenge.

Staff awareness of the importance of listening and attention skills is paramount. Universal and Targeted approaches to supporting listening and attention skills in children were implemented and did impact on the targeted children's progress. Running groups jointly between SLT and the host nursery meant a sustainable intervention could continue.

Scale / Spread

We hope to be able to continue to support our original host nursery by further developing both staff and parent training packages around Listening and Attention. Plans to roll out to another nursery within the authority are being made. From the outset, the lead practitioner will be part of our team. In collaboration we will be looking at further ways to incorporate sensory motor elements as small scale PDSA's. We are also looking at how we can combine our package of support with other innovative projects such as the LIFT project currently being rolled out in Midlothian.