

Elklan

Training to Support Children's
Language and Learning

Elklan's Communication Friendly Setting Research Programme

As part of the Department of Education's Early Years Recovery Programme, Pen Green Stronger Practice Hub in the East Midlands, The Great North Stronger Practice Hub in the North East, The South West Stronger Practice Hub and the EEF are working together to fund Early Years settings' access to Elklan's Communication Friendly Settings Programme. The University of Leeds, the University of York and the University of Sheffield will study the programme's influence on the knowledge, skills and confidence of the whole early years setting staff and on children's speech, language and communication.

What are the benefits of taking part?

- 2 practitioners from your setting, who will become Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs), will receive in depth training (Elklan's Combined Speech and Language Support Course for 3-5s and Creating Communication Friendly Settings for Early Years) so that they have enhanced knowledge about speech, language and communication development and how to support this for all children but particularly for those who have, or are at risk of having, a speech, language or communication need. These practitioners will gain accreditation at levels 3 and 4 through an Ofqual approved and regulated national awarding organisation.
- The LCPs will be equipped and supported to deliver five x 1 hour sessions of training to all the staff in your setting and to ensure that the environment and interactions across the whole setting support children's communication and learning.
- The setting will receive a Communication Friendly Setting award (renewable after 3 years).
- Your setting will receive a total of £1,337.60, towards the costs of staff time in completing the programme and facilitating the research. There is no charge to the setting for the training, resources or accreditation.



What is involved in the CFS programme?

- The prospective Lead Communication Practitioners (LCPs) complete 10 interactive self-study eLearning sessions, one before each webinar linked to the session. Each eLearning session takes approximately one hour but can be done at

the practitioner's own pace at a time that suits them.

- The LCPs attend 12 live group webinars in groups of approximately 10, they discuss their learning with an Elklan Tutor and with each other and have opportunities to reflect on the implementation of strategies from the course and share experiences in consistent small groups. The webinars total 15.5 hours and are held at the same time and day of the week throughout the programme, excluding half terms, school holidays and the immediate pre-Christmas period). An example timetable is provided on the final page.
- The LCPs complete online Learning Log tasks weekly to consolidate and demonstrate their learning. Implementing planned activities, whilst working with children in the setting, might take an hour a week and writing up the Learning Log will take up to an hour a week.
- The LCPs will receive a manual, power point presentations and support to cascade five one-hour Communication Counts sessions to the whole setting staff. In addition to delivering the one-hour sessions, the LCPs will spend approximately 30 minutes preparing for each.
- All staff will undertake tasks ('Challenges') between the training sessions and complete five 10-minute questionnaires. The LCPs will use the completed questionnaires as part of their level 4 learning logs, which will take approximately an hour about 2 weeks after each cascaded training session.
- The LCPs will visit another setting (for approximately 2 hours) to share ideas and best practice. Changes in the setting will be demonstrated by completing pre and post programme checklists and these will be shared during the LCP visits.



What is involved in being part of the trial?

- In order that we can evaluate the programme we need to complete assessments of a sample of children before and after programme delivery in the same academic year. This means we need to keep to strict timelines, as set out in the diagram below.
- A sample of 10 -12 children in each setting will be assessed by the University of York in mid-September/early-October 2024 and in the summer term 2025.
- Half of the recruited settings will receive the CFS programme in the 2024/25 academic year and half in the 2025/2026 academic year. This will allow us to use the summer 2025 assessments to compare the outcomes for children and staff who have had the programme with those that haven't.
- In addition to the assessments of children some staff will required to complete surveys, and a small number may be interviewed.
- Children will be excluded if they have a severe auditory or visual impairment or significant autism-related needs that would prevent them from accessing the assessments. If you are unsure about these requirements, please contact a member of the evaluation team at cfs-evaluation@leeds.ac.uk.

What is the cost to the setting?

- The training, resources and external accreditation are all fully funded by the EEF and the Stronger Practice Hubs.
- Settings who complete the programme will receive a contribution, of approximately 50%, towards the cost of their LCPs' time (£468.80 per LCP).
- Settings will receive incentive payments (totalling £400) at the beginning and end of the 2024/25 academic year for facilitating the University of York's assessment of children.

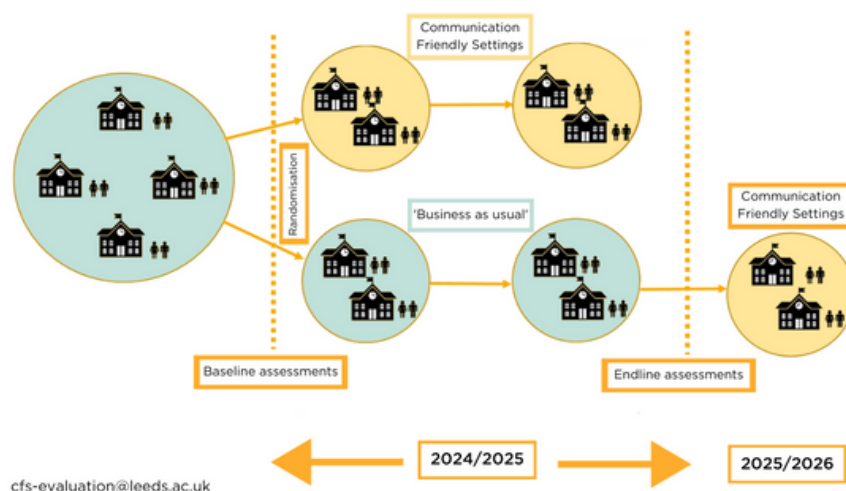
Who can take part?

Settings

- Settings in the Pen Green Stronger Practice Hub area:
 - Leicester, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, North Northamptonshire, Rutland and West Northamptonshire Local Authorities.
- Settings in the The Great North Stronger Practice Hub area:
 - County Durham, Newcastle, Northumberland Local Authorities.
- Settings in the the South West Stronger Practice Hub area:
 - Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Isles of Scilly, Plymouth, Torbay Local Authorities.
- State maintained, private, voluntary and independent settings.
- Settings must have a minimum of 12 children aged 3-4 expected to attend at least 15 hours per week in the 2024/25 academic year AND must be willing to distribute information to, and collect consent forms from, their parents or carers.
- Settings who have not previously gained a CFS award through Elklan or EYPDP 1 (the first EYPDP programme which focused on language and provided accredited awards for both learners and their settings).
- Settings who will not be taking part in EYPDP 3 in the 2024/25 academic year.

Early years practitioners

- EYPs who have an existing level 3 qualification, A levels or equivalent standard of academic achievement.
- EYPs who have not gained an Elklan SLS 0-3s or 3-5s award.
- EYPs who did not take part in EYPDP 1 or EYPDP 2 (also called 'Building on Success').



- Visit the project page at www.elklan.co.uk/CFSResearchProgramme where you will find detailed information, booking links for information webinars, privacy, safeguarding and consent forms as well as an online application form and memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Example Timetable

Below is a timetable used for a course running in 2023/24, so you can see how activities are spread across months and terms. A precise plan for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 groups will be provided, accommodating the term dates of the participants on each course.

Activity & Practitioner	Speech and Language Support for 3-5s			CFSe			
	e-learning modules (LCP)	Webinars (LCP & Tutor)	Learning Log L3 (LCP)	Virtual seminars (LCP & Tutor)	CC Session delivery (LCP & All staff)	Challenge questionnaires completed after strategies applied (All Staff)	LLog L4 & Audit (LCP)
Oct 9-13 2023	1. What is communication?						
Oct 16-20 2023	2. CFS, ACI and working with families	1		1. 1.5hrs CFS and CC1&2 prep	CC1: What is communication?		
Half-term							
Oct 30-Nov 3 2023	3. Listening/attention, NVC and using visuals	2	1			Challenge 1 What is communication?	
Nov 6-10 2023	4. Vocabulary	3	2		CC2: CFS and ACI		
Nov 13-17 2023	5. ICWs	4	3				
Nov 20-24 2023	6. Blank	5	4			Challenge 2 CFS and ACI	
Nov 27-Dec 1 2023	7. EL and narrative	6	5	2. 1hr Feedback CC1&2 CC3 prep			
Dec 4-8 2023		7	6		CC3: Word journey		
Dec 11-15 2023			7				
Christmas Holidays							
Jan 8-12 2024	8. Play and links with language development					Challenge 3 Word journey	LLog L4 Sessions 1-2 deadline
Jan 15-19 2024	9. Unclear speech and Phonological awareness	8		3. 0.5hr CC4 prep	CC4: Language journey		
Jan 22-26 2024	10. Stammering and course reflection	9	8				
Jan 29-Feb 2 2024		10	9			Challenge 4 Language journey	
Feb 5th-9th 2024			10	4. 1.5hrs F/back CC3&4. Prep CC5&6 & audit			
Half-term							
Feb 19-23 2024					CC5: Families and linking tog		
Feb 26-Mar 1 2024							LLog L4 Sessions 3-4 deadline
Mar 4-8 2024			LLog deadline (including amendments)			Challenge 5 Work with families	Audit visits
Mar 11-15 2024						Challenge 6 Evaluation and Wow	Audit visits
Mar 18-22 2024			LLog deadline (amendments completed)	5. 1hr Feedback CC5&6 and celebration!			
Easter Break							
April 15-19 2024							Audit & LLog L4 LLog L4 Sessions 5-7 deadline
Speech and Language Support for 3-5s Certificate				CFSe Certificate			