

Key Findings from the Pori Drwy Stori Nursery (Oracy) Evaluation, 2018-19



About Pori Drwy Stori Nursery

Pori Drwy Stori Nursery (PDSN) is a bilingual programme designed to support oracy outcomes and parental engagement in learning for children aged 3-4 in Wales in the Foundation Phase.

It focuses on developing children's oracy skills through sharing rhymes and songs, reading for pleasure and sharing books. Children taking part in PDSN receive two sets of resources, each designed to be used over half a term and at home as well as in Nursery.



PDSN is funded by the Welsh Government Education Directorate.

It's time to rhyme! aims to increase rhyme sharing activity between children and parents and carers.



Book Talk aims to increase interactive book-sharing and specifically talk related to book-sharing between children and their parents and carers.



Oracy includes **speaking, listening, discussion and collaboration**. It also involves skills such as developing confidence and attention, and links closely to early speech and language development.

PDSN aims to support a number of specific oracy outcomes, including increasing children's enjoyment of and ability to listen to and join with rhymes, songs, books and stories in English and Welsh. It also aims to increase children's recognition of rhythm and rhyme, vocabulary, their confidence to join in with

activities and their ability to talk and express themselves.

PDSN aims to **increase parent and carer engagement in their child's learning** by focusing on **increasing communication between the home and Nursery** and supporting a strong home-school/ setting link. It also aims to **encourage behaviours known to support oracy outcomes** (e.g. sharing rhymes, songs, books and stories more often; re-reading the same books; talking about books) and increase enjoyment of these activities.

To find out more about Pori Drwy Stori visit www.booktrust.org.uk/poridrwystori or contact the BookTrust Cymru team at booktrustcymru@booktrust.org.uk

Main findings from the evaluation

This report presents key messages from the independent evaluation of Pori Drwy Stori Nursery (PDSN), carried out by Iaith and Wavehill between October 2018 and September 2019, and their implications for programme development.

Parents and carers felt the **resources were fun and interesting for children, straightforward to use and enjoyable**. The resources put the child at the centre of the learning.

The programme was **more effective when the approach taken by schools and settings was structured and planned**, either at a whole-school/ setting level (e.g. linking to School Development Plan), or as part of Foundation Phase and/ or classroom planning.

The programme was **successful in developing parental engagement in schools and settings, including those where it was not yet established**. Practitioners developed new and increasingly effective ways of communicating with parents and carers and developing home-school/ setting links.

Consistency and sustained communication were key: parents and carers reporting they often spoke to practitioners about the programme were more likely to report increases in parental engagement. The programme enabled two-way communication between the home and school/ setting, **supporting practitioners to gain insight into home learning environments**.

Parents and carer survey responses showed an **increase in oracy-related skills**, and in particular in **supporting children to develop expressive language skills and rhyme recognition** e.g. children's ability to express themselves clearly when talking about books, recognition of rhythm and rhyme, increased ability to talk and express themselves and knowledge of different rhymes and/ or songs. Practitioners described **positive impacts on children's confidence, vocabulary development, ability to manipulate rhymes and enjoyment of rhyming**.

According to the parents and carer surveys, **oracy outcomes appear to have been stronger for boys and children who are not eligible for Free School Meals (eFSM)**. However, practitioners often noted the specific value of the resources for children from less advantaged backgrounds. More work could be done to identify and share the practice that can particularly support boys' oracy, and to identify how to increase outcomes for eFSM children.

The evaluation found **increases in certain parent and carer behaviours:** reading the same book over and over again; talking about books more often; reading books and sharing rhymes in Welsh more often; and reading a book for fun. **Parents and carers attributed these increases to PDSN**.

The programme **helped practitioners develop their understanding of the benefits of rhymes and songs**. Just over half of practitioners interviewed (58%) said they used the programme to specifically support oracy outcomes. The evaluators recommend more support for practitioners to further engage with the oracy focus of PDSN, and to communicate to parents and carers the importance of oracy, sharing rhymes/ songs, sharing books and reading for pleasure.

The **bilingual nature of the programme supported the development of Welsh language skills**, particularly for children who are not from Welsh-speaking backgrounds (in Welsh and English medium schools and settings). It also supported practitioners who are less confident with Welsh, as well as parents and carers and children.

The **PDSN programme model was useful in helping to achieve aims and outcomes** i.e. high quality resources for children to be used over a period of time in school/ setting and at home; a recommended structure for using the programme with flexibility for practitioners to adapt to their local needs; a 'universal' offer i.e. resources for every eligible child in the school/ setting.

The programme is a **strong fit for the educational context in Wales** because it supports oracy and literacy development, bilingualism, and parent and carer engagement in their child's learning, all within the context of the Foundation Phase ethos and approach.

