

Introduction

Sustaining Success was an innovative programme led by the Primary National Strategy and the National College for School Leadership. It was introduced in September 2005 and continued until summer 2006.

The aims were to:

- communicate and share successes to date, in terms of quality of education and standards;
- develop strategies for long-term sustainability of successes and for further improvement;
- contribute to national developments.

This was set within the agenda of Every Child Matters.

Fifty Early Years settings from the maintained, private and voluntary sectors, along with 500 schools at Key Stages 1 and 2, participated in the programme. Following national and regional networking and discussion about leadership development and building capacity, schools and settings undertook funded development work, each in their own context. The work undertaken by some of the Early Years settings is presented here.

The learning within each setting was very different, as was each setting's context. The chosen focus ranged from improving the Key Worker system, to learning, through the Reggio Emilia approach, to looking at transition for children. The common theme was that building sustainable success required investment of time and resources and an approach that involved the whole team and as many partners as possible. It is important to recognise that the settings described here were – and still are – on a journey of growth and development and these case studies reflect that journey.

It is hoped that these case studies will help leaders in other schools and Early Years settings to think about their own leadership work and see ways in which they too might begin to explore further the complexities of sustaining success.