CASE STUDY

Engagement with parents, families, and employers

Our primary school identified priority area five: Engagement with parents, families and employers area as a priority after reviewing our current practice. We invited parents from a range of professions into school to speak to a class of year 6 pupils about the importance of communication in their roles.

The class teacher and speech and language therapist began the session by recapping the definition of communication and highlighted 3 key components: listening, speaking and body language. This was followed by small group activities to highlight these skills for the children.

Activity 1 focused on attention, memory and listening using the cumulative sentence "I will go to secondary school and I will see....". Pupils discussed the strategies that they used to help them attend (ie looking at the person speaking or who had previously given the response, no other distractions) and to remember (eg using repetition, visualisation or mnemonics). The adults then spoke about how they use this skill in their job, and shared a time that they hadn't listened carefully and the impact of this.

Activity 2 focussed on speaking and giving the right information using an 'Articulate' style game to describe words on cards. Again pupils discussed the skills used in speaking (eg using specific vocabulary, thinking time to organise sentences) and in listening (asking good questions, combining the answers). The adults shared how they use this skill in their jobs, a time when they hadn't given information clearly and the impact of this.

The pupils learnt about real-life applications of communication skills and the adults learnt how to communicate about communication!

Activity 3 focussed on non-verbal communication using Charades. Again the pupils were asked to reflect on the strategies that made their communication effective (eg using familiar gestures, facial expression) and the adults shared how body language was important in their jobs and the impact of what happened when it wasn't used effectively.

The feedback from the day was positive all round. The pupils learnt about real life applications of communication skills that they already had some awareness of, and the adults learnt how to communicate about communication!