



# Case Study: Unlocking the Potential of Every Child

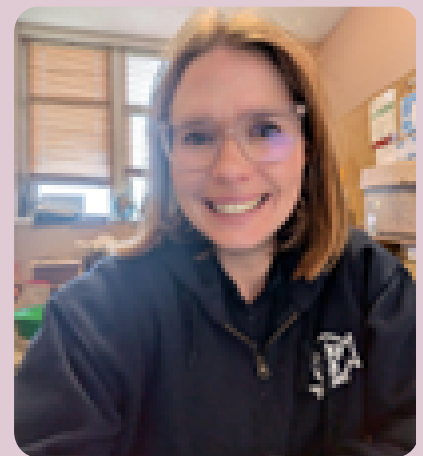
## *Supporting Bilingual Children and Families*

Bristol & Beyond  
Stronger Practice Hub

Jen Wylie, Manager at Sticky Fish Pre-school in Bristol, recently attended the Unlocking the Potential of Every Child programme, which focuses on supporting bilingual children and families. The programme was delivered by Andrina Flinders, Headteacher of Fullbrook Nursery School and Lead Practitioner for the Thrive Together Stronger Practice Hub.

Jen chose to attend as she had not previously accessed training in this area and wanted to strengthen her knowledge and confidence in supporting the increasing number of bilingual children and families joining the setting.

Following the programme, Jen and her team have embedded a range of inclusive strategies to enhance their practice. These changes are helping children and families feel genuinely welcomed, cared for and valued, while nurturing a strong sense of belonging within the setting.



***“This training has certainly impacted the way I interact with bilingual children”***

### What did the programme help you reflect upon?

“Making sure that the pronunciation of the child's name is spelt and said correctly by every staff member as this will help provide the child with a sense of belonging at the setting. Gathering an in-depth story of their life before Sticky fish can be very beneficial: do they have siblings? Where were they born? What was their life like before they came to our setting? Gathering this information can allow us to have

an insight into how the child is feeling, how our setting might feel extremely different from what they have been used to, so small adjustments could be made initially, helping them to settle in. How important it is to encourage families to speak in their home language, not just English.”





## **What have you implemented since attending the study day?**

“We have so many ideas! We are going to invite parents to read a book in their home language to all the children as this can benefit the child hearing their home language spoken so freely within the setting.

We have been reflecting upon the way we see children who are bilingual, as the silent learners, to speak to them as we would other children.

We are printing the national flags of all the different nationalities we have at our setting to put up, to include everyone, from every background.

In our latest newsletter for families we have asked for donations to our home corner. These could be items such as saris, kimonos, dashikis, ponchos, accessories or fabrics such as scarves, hats, shawls or cultural household items. We hope these will support children to see themselves in the environment and to learn about different traditions.”

## **What difference has it made to the children, families and team?**

“Families have fed back that the translation of emails using digital tools has been really helpful. We hope that children and families sense of belonging will increase in the setting as well as supporting children’s communication and language so they can express themselves and build their communication and language. The team now feel more confident with practical strategies to support children and families who are bilingual.”

## **Would you like to further explore supporting bilingual children and families?**

- Explore this [blog about hearing the silent child by Andrina Flanders](#)
- Watch [part 1](#) and [part 2](#) of this webinar about hearing the silent child by Andrina Flanders
- Explore the Education Endowment Foundation [downloadable summary of the evidence supporting communication and language in the early years](#) and the [Early Years Evidence Store](#)