**INTERVIEW**

**Attendees**

Interviewer (NF)

LSA M

HT M HT M

Teacher M

NF I have got everything recording. For the transcription, can you say your name and what your role is at School M?

LSA M I am LSA M and I am an LSA in Year six

HT M And EAL.

LSA M EAL, yes.

HT M I am HT M. I am Headteacher at School M.

NF And I am Naomi, and I am interviewing. Thanks very much as usual for your time today. We really appreciate it throughout the project, and I hope it is clear for you that the final interview is about reflecting on the toolkit, as it were, of itself, and seeing how it worked for you. Looking back at what we saw, when we came to your school, back in January. You were looking at the time, at sentence stems, enquiry lead, there seemed to be a lot of enthusiasm about the learning questions, and some of your teachers had moved to the groups of four, as well. Do you want to tell me how things have gone since then?

HT M It is still being used, and I have done lesson observations very recently, and one of the things I was checking is everyone still doing the learning objective as a question and it was. So, lots more discussion and lots more purpose, the learning objective, the children could see what they were doing, and I think it makes more sense to them that it is a question, and they have got to answer it. Still seeing the visuals being used, and the sentence stems. And one of things we talked about recently, one of the things on our improvement plan we are working on, is social skills and teaching children better social skills. The one, this half term, is losing gracefully. We have tied that in with when we have looked at it, what we have discovered is, that they have got to win gracefully too. Because often what makes someone lose disgracefully is that the winner gloats in their face; five-nil, or whatever it is and does a bit of a gloat around it. What we have done, has taught them some sentence stems, it works for all children, but definitely worked for our EAL, as well. Which is they all had to say, if they lost, ‘Well done for winning! I wish you luck in the next round’. So, we were teaching them just some phrases that they can say in those situations to enable them to be able to do it.

NF Wow. Does that sit in with sort of school belonging? That kind of bigger picture stuff?

HT M Our overall aim on our improvement plan is global citizens, and it is to enable children to be upskilled. To be excellent global citizens of the future. In with that, there is the wellbeing and social skills because we noticed that social skills was an area, that children were finding challenging.

NF That is really interesting. What you are saying is that was on the plan, you used the toolkit strategies for general oracy building, but then you have translated it into this kind of social wellbeing activity. That sounds really interesting. In terms of the children with EAL, is it the sentence stems that seem to be working best for them? That beginning of how to say, as it were?

HT M I think so.

LSA M Yes, definitely. Definitely. You can see it in everyday conversation because they have got those in the bank, and they know how to start that conversation with their peers and with adults.

NF So the sentence stems, you are using for these social skills, different, you have devised those separately, as it were, from…

HT M Yes, the new ones. Whatever game you are playing, you can say, ‘Well done for playing! I wish you luck in the future’. Or if it is a tournament ‘I wish you luck in the next round’. And that the winner had a sentence stem, and they were being taught how you could be encouraging, so ‘You tried hard’, ‘You nearly beat me’. So, they were being taught some phrases that they could use in those situations.

NF Lovely. Great. Is there anything that has been harder to maintain? Obviously, you have built on that. Is there anything that you felt has moved away from the forefront of everybody’s activity?

HT M When we (inaudible 00:04:47) just then, we said one of the things that actually, we looked at, was not overloading children with resources. So, that actually, they have got so much on their desk, they do not know what to do, what to use. So, that is one of the things that we have looked at, because you can come into these different things and go, ‘They must have the little pictures on the desk!’ And then, ‘They must have the sentence stems on the desk!’ And with the best will in the world, they are children, they are not going to look at all of them. I guess what we have learnt is, when you are introducing something new, you have got to decide what the best resource for the lesson is that you are doing. And not just put it all in front of them and trust they will know what to use, because they often don’t.

NF Great.

HT M [To LSA M] Would you like to add something?

LSA M Also, we have not overloaded the adults with things to use, because it works for adults as well. If there is too much for them to implement, it becomes too big.

NF We were certainly hoping for the toolkit that it became small scale adaptations to practice, rather than something extra. So, I am hoping that is how people have felt about it rather than it being kind of burdensome. That is definitely not what was our intention.

HT M I do not think it is burdensome. I think it is more of us, that we have joined different schemes, we did the speech and language one, that had the widget and the pictures. Actually, what teachers were trying to do was incorporate all the small bits, from each project that we have been part of, and then found that there was just too much. So, what we were saying is make that professional judgement and choose, “Which one fits your learning objective question today?”

NF Makes sense, because it is horses for courses, isn’t it? I am looking at question 2, about how you use the toolkit with staff. My memory, and I may have this wrong, so you can correct me, is that you had decided to control access yourselves, and let staff work with particular resources that you had chosen, between you. Tather than that everyone dived in and had a look what was there. Did you carry on doing that?

HT M Yes. The only people with access were you [LSA M], me and Teacher M, I think.

LSA M Yes.

HT M Teacher M and I used it during inset day. So, we shared the key bits we wanted to, the bits that fitted with our focus. And we shared it in staff meetings as well. We gave out some of the resources, like the ones about, ‘If you are an LSA, how can you support ELL children? If you are a teacher, if you are a senior leader.’ So, we had time on an inset day to look at those.

TEACHER M Sorry.

NF Is Teacher M in, that is okay. Hello Teacher M.

TEACHER M Hi there.

HT M (inaudible 00:07:49) got five minutes.

LSA M It is fine.

NF We are being recorded, if you can just say your name and what you do for the tape.

TEACHER M My name is Teacher M. I am a Class Teacher here, but I also oversee the EAL provision and teaching staff.

NF Lovely, thanks so much, thanks for your time, I know you are doing other stuff that is rather more important. We are just around question 2 on the list I sent through. We are talking about that controlling access to the toolkit. I am really interested in this, in terms of how we move forward with it. If you would do the same, sorry. If you are presented with this in the future, is that how you would want to use it? This kind of some people have access to it, and they manage the content for all of their staff?

HT M We felt that worked best, I think.

TEACHER M Yes, I think because we were not focusing on all the elements of the toolkit because we were already implementing some of those in other areas. It was good for us to be able to limit their access simply because then we could really focus on what the toolkit was relevant and new. And we could make an effective role out of those new things. But now that we have introduced that, may be something to consider whether the access, is then opened up. So, people, when they revisit themselves for support, actually they will not need the… But I think if we were to do it again, we would still continue with how we did it, because of what we were introducing.

NF So your advice to another senior leadership team in another school meeting it for the first time would probably be to do it in that way. I guess that has allowed you, at risk of putting words in your mouth, so contradict me if not. That is what has allowed you to slide it in your school development priorities by doing it in that way.

TEACHER M Yes.

HT M And I also was not sure, we could have made it available to everyone. Teachers are really busy, and I am not sure they would have gone and used it. Then you have that moment, where you are hoping people are looking at it, and doing it, but in reality, you know they are probably not. So, we felt that if we chose bits we wanted and they were delivered at staff meetings and inset days, that was the most effective way. But I get, by name, it is a toolkit and a toolkit everyone would have. So, I understand that bit, but we selected which bits we wanted them to have.

NF We had no view really of how it would get used. What has been interesting is that the majority of our schools have done what you did. For the very clear reasons that you have articulated already, as well. I guess what we are interested in looking at question 3, is how would it something to which people went back? I guess one of my concerns is maybe, people will pick up what they like from it at first and then forget it was there. I wondered if you have gone back in at all? Or if it is something you might do.

TEACHER M Yes, for each of the staff meetings, we start with the principles of the whole toolkit. About why this is important, and I think it gave a really clear reason for why it was important and how it was going to help our students, our pupils. Since the inset and the staff meetings, when teachers have come to me about children in particular, I have then pointed them to some of the toolkit, things that we have spoken about in the past. So, it is something that we revisit and relook at regularly. Whether, I have got another staff meeting based around in future, but I have also individual teachers, as well, pointing them into the right areas of the toolkit.

NF Great. There is a sense in which you are using it as an ongoing professional learning tool yourselves.

TEACHER M Absolutely.

NF That is really interesting to know. In my conversations with other schools, I was finding that people had done somethings, but did not realise there were other things there. Such as the medium-term plan examples, with the learning questions on, and things like that. You cannot control how people use it, but we need to make sure that we make clear, within its structure, that if you go back in, there will be something else. I am glad you are finding that, that is great. Looking at question 4, you have already mentioned the principles. It sounds like you have used them ongoing as part of the work with it.

TEACHER M Yes, we have. I like to start the staff meeting with the ‘Why are we doing this?’ And the principles really underline that one.

LSA M I think, also, it fits with our vision and values and our school improvement plan. We have EAL on our school improvement plan, in terms of attainment groups, and the community hub. So actually, three of our four ,and potentially the social skills as well, so probably all of the targets would fit with our EAL community. And our vision is very much about respecting difference and inclusion. I think the principles, it is great, but I think because it ties in so well ,with what we do anyway, and because we have so many EAL children. I do not think anyone would argue that it is not important.

NF No, because you are around, I think 33% you were saying in your last interview, many of your children, absolutely. Looking at question 5, I think some of this I know anyway, but in terms of how it has changed practice. We saw a lot of evidence of how it had changed practice back in January when we visited you. I wondered how far you felt that the change would be sustained over time. Things like the sentence stems, the enquiry-based learning questions, the groups of four. It might be hard to know, but I am interested on your take on that.

TEACHER M I think because we have made a position available for a EAL leader, they are always going to have that oversight of this, and as long as that remains as the current, and up-to-date practice, I would imagine, if it is me, great. If it is not, then continuing forward, they would always come back to teaching practice of EAL. Because we have got such a large community here, it seems like quite an important role. I think it is going to be sustainable because someone is always going to be in this role, pushing this forward.

NF What you are saying, is in a way, whether something is sustained or not is about leadership.

TEACHER M It is keeping it in the forefront, and it is that advocate. It is someone advocating for these children in this way, I think is really important.

HT M You know in teaching, if you do not keep revisiting something, it drops off.

NF Yes.

HT M When you get a new arrival in your class that does not speak English, absolutely, you are going to see LSA M, and you will do it, and you will do all the right things. It is for us, and from the toolkit, it is those ones that have gone beyond that initial language. Those are the bits that I found really interesting in toolkit, was the children who we sort of think are there, but actually, if you dig a bit deeper, they are not there yet, and we need to do a little bit more. I think there is an element of keeping that going, and if you do not revisit it regularly, it will drop off the radar. When we did the observations, definitely, some of the parts what we have been focusing on, were things we were looking out for in the observation, like ‘Was the learning objective as a question? Did we see sentence stems? Did we see a widget in use?’ So, there were bits that we are now checking on regularly.

NF That is interesting. Was there anything at the start that they did not like or found harder in terms of that changes of practice.

TEACHER M No one has come forward and said anything.

HT M No

LSA M No

NF That is good.

HT M You got to hear how buzzy some of them are about learning objectives as a question and how much they like that. And you talked to him, in the staff meeting the other day about sentence stems, where I was saying about social skills. Where you were saying you were teaching them what to say when you lose, what to say when you win, and so all those discussions keep it moving forwards, I think.

NF That is great. Question 6 might be slightly harder to answer, I am not sure. We can all see changes in practice, and very obviously in your school. I am wondering to what extent the toolkit could be said to have had an impact on how people just think about and respond to their children with EAL, in terms of mindset and positive reception of them. It might be hard to answer.

TEACHER M I think this year, we have had a push on what practice is best for our EAL community. With a focus on how does that also supports our other pupils as well and benefiting all. To say it has had a change of positive, I do not think there was ever a negative, on that anyway.

HT M (inaudible 00:17:11).

TEACHER M We have always been a welcoming school, who really enjoys our multiculturalism, and have celebrated that, but yeah.

HT M I think we were doing it quite well with our EAL children anyway because we had to. I think what doing this and doing the toolkit, enhanced it more, but I think it was always positive. You could not work here, there would be no point coming to work here, if you were not prepared to take on board that some children will arrive with no English, and there is the multicultural element. You only have to come, and look round, and you know. A lot of people make a conscious choice to work here, because it is so diverse.

LSA M I think EMTAS staff, we have a lot of bilingual assistants in. The general opinion is we do very well here, and it is a fully inclusive school, and they always comment on what we do well, here.

NF Lovely, I am sure they do. We certainly saw some lovely stuff when I came in. I am wondering if in some way, we could kind of say that there is a depth of response there. Like you were saying, HT M, thinking more explicitly about those children who are say at level C on the Bell Foundation Scales. Who are conversationally good, but needing that additional input on academic language, that sort of thing. Maybe it is about greater understanding of needs to respond to that proficiency.

HT M I would absolutely be saying that that would be the next step. I think we are doing really, really well by the children, as they arrive and do not have English. I think the next step will be, and we see it when we are doing writing moderation, the incorrect tenses, the plurals or not plurals. I have some lovely discussions with the children “But we don’t have plurals in our language! You would just say ‘two cow’!” And it is how we work with those children, to take them further.

TEACHER M I have got go. Thank you.

NF Thanks very much Teacher M.

TEACHER M No problem, thank you.

NF We are getting towards the end. Question 7 was is there anything you wish had been included in toolkit, that you were unable to find.

HT M We said no to that. We had a think about it.

NF Because there is plenty in there for getting on with as it were. Great. The last one we have probably talked about, this last one about how you think you might use it in future. Obviously, HT M, you will not be there but what would your thoughts be, LSA M?

LSA M We have said. I do not think anyone coming into the school could not realise how important EAL is within our school. It is on our school improvement plan. It is important and that will never go away.

NF Absolutely, so the toolkit might become a resource that is part of that.

LSA M Yes. I think we are so used to now, all our learning objectives being questions. It is an automatic thing now. People do not think any different. We always use questions for our learning objectives.

NF I remember there being particular excitement about that and how powerful that was. I was looking back at the notes from the meeting, and someone was talking about how it gave their children with EAL the power to respond that they had not had before, which is an amazing shift. Lovely. I do not have any more questions, is there anything else you wanted to share with me or ask me about, before we finish?

HT M We just wondered whether is there going to be more added, over time, to the toolkit?

NF As with a lot of research projects, it is always about funding. But what I hoping is, obviously this is a quite big pilot. Once we have analysed all the data and worked out what people like, and what we want to take forward, at some point, yes, I hope it will become an independent website. To which there would be yes, ongoing additions, as it were. I think that it how it will go. That will take a while, and in the meantime, I guess we will keep the EMTAS one up and running and yes, could add to that as well. Particularly we have come across a few nice things in some people’s schools that they might want to share. So, I will get back in touch with you about things to do or we want to take pictures and video practice where people will say yes, but that would be next term. But yes, we are definitely to grow it one way or another, funded or unfunded to be honest, because we have all put too much into it to just let it go.

HT M I think what would be useful is, whenever there is an update, that you get an email.

NF Yes.

HT M I think that would be really handy to go, ‘Oh, there’s something new on there, I’m going to dip in’. And it just reminds you to go in and have another look.

NF And that could come from EMTAS towards the school.

HT M Yes, done an update to the toolkit, do go and have a look.

NF Yes, lovely. We will definitely be doing that. Is that okay? Have you (inaudible 00:22:46) to say what you wanted to? Thank you.

HT M It was really enjoyable being part of it so thank you.

NF And we really enjoyed having you with us for the journey as well. Thank you so much, and I do not think this will be the end. We have got people’s contact details obviously. And will be back in contact because it will be really interesting, if people are willing to talk to us in 6-12 months’ time about how things have gone, we will be asking for that. We will see what we have got first, then take that forward, but thanks so much, it has been such a joy working with you.

LSA M Thank you.

NF And all the very best for your retirement, HT M.

HT M Thank you!

NF Bye everyone.