



## Entry to Education Speech and Language Baseline Assessment

Crescent Children's Centre Area

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## 1) Executive Summary

The initial assessment of the speech and language ability of children in the Crescent Children's Centre Area has identified that 58.6% of children assessed had either a comprehension or word finding delay.

This figure of 58.6% of children with a delay in comprehension or word finding ability is relatively good in Stoke-on-Trent but poor when compared to the national average of 10% for incidence of comprehension or word finding delay.

Work is needed to improve the levels of comprehension and word finding ability and this should be reassessed by a second *Entry to Education Speech and Language Baseline Assessment* in 2007.

The contribution of the children from the Crescent Children's Area to the city profile has been positive by further reducing the incidence of comprehension or word finding delay to 61.3%

## 2) Introduction

In the year 2000 Sure Start set a national target to reduce, by 5 percentage points, by 2004, the number of children with speech and language problems requiring specialist intervention.

The drive behind reducing the number of children requiring specialist intervention from Speech and Language Therapists is to raise educational and social aspirations and abilities of children.

In Stoke-on-Trent the initial survey was carried out in the Stoke North Sure Start Area in 2001. This survey was used as a model for all those in Stoke-on-Trent which took place after it. Subsequent assessments have been made across Stoke-on-Trent concentrating on Sure Start Programme areas. That is, in 2002, Abbey/Bucknall (Kingsland), Shelton/Cobridge/Hanley (Thomas Boughey), Longton South (Westfield) Blurton and, in 2003, Bentilee (Treehouse). Assessments have been conducted on intervals of three years in these areas since that time.

The 2006 assessment in the Crescent Children's Centre area is the first one to be conducted in this particular area of the city. In line with all previous assessments the area is one of great need. That is, within the city of Stoke-on-Trent this area is classed as one of the most deprived (Office for National Statistics).

It had been recognised, by 2000, that there was an underlying 10% of children who had a need for speech and language therapy (Law, 2000) due to genetic or medical issues. This is significant as it establishes a minimum level of children who would be requiring specialist intervention.

Also of concern in Stoke-on-Trent is the high level of deprivation. That is, Locke and Peers (2002) demonstrated that children from an economically deprived background could be at considerable risk of language delay. This is significant for Stoke-on-Trent which, in 2004, was ranked as the 18<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority out of 354, nationally (Office for National Statistics).

The consequences of Law's and Locke and Peers' work for the Crescent Children's Centre Entry to Education Start Speech and Language Baseline Measure are enormous. That is, the closer the number of children who are within normal limits is to 90% the better the support and assistance given to children is. This is an important figure to consider as there have been no previous assessments in this area and the ability of the children is unknown.

The 2006 survey was carried out in the three settings that can be found in the geographical footprint of the Crescent Children' Centre. That is, St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Crescent Primary School and Grange Nursery School.

### 3) Assessment Methods

The assessment methodology was consistent in each of the three settings.

All assessments were carried out on children aged no younger than three years and six months and no older than four years. The assessments were carried out on children who:

- Lived in the Crescent Children's Centre geographical area, and
- Attended a nursery setting attached to a school that fell in the geographical footprint of the Crescent Children's Centre area.

Parental permission was gained for all children who took part in the surveys.

The surveys were all carried out in the first term of the academic year. This is because it is suspected that spending time in a nursery setting helps a child to develop speech and language ability (Cooper, 2002).

Two tests were used to assess the language ability of children:

- The Reynell Developmental Language Scales 3 Comprehension scale was used to assess comprehension levels.
- The Renfrew Word Finding Vocabulary Scale was used to assess vocabulary levels.

These tests are able to assess a child's ability to understand language and look at expressive vocabulary.

The Reynell Developmental Language Scales 3 Comprehension scale and Renfrew Word Finding Vocabulary Scale have been used in all assessments conducted in Stoke-on-Trent. This means that the results of the Crescent Children's Centre study is comparable with all other studies conducted across Stoke-on-Trent.

## 4) Results and Analysis

### 4.1) Results of 2006 Survey

#### 4.1.1) Anonymity

The results show the findings from each of the three settings without reference to either the school name or child's name. This is to conserve confidentiality.

#### 4.1.2) Setting 1

Setting 1 saw ten children surveyed from an intake of 27. Of the ten children surveyed four were boys and six were girls. All children assessed were of a white-British origin and spoke English as their first language. The results gained from the tests are shown in Table 1.

Child	Actual Age	Reynell Comprehension Age equivalent	Renfrew Word Finding Age equivalent	Delay identified	1 <sup>st</sup> Language
M1	3.08	2.06	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F2	3.09	5.07	3.09-3.10	WNL	English
F3	3.07	4.03	5.03-5.04	WNL	English
F4	3.08	2.02	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
M5	3.07	2.05	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F6	3.06	3.11-4.0	3.03	WNL	English
M7	3.10	4.01-4.02	6.07-6.08	WNL	English
F8	3.09	5.08-5.11	4.02-4.03	WNL	English
F9	3.08	3.09	5.02	WNL	English
M10	3.09	2.01	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English

Table 1 – 2006 Survey results from Setting 1

NB

WNL = Within Normal Limits      M = Boy      F = Girl

Table 2 gives a summary of the results.

	Number	Percent
Intake assessed	10	37%
Boys	4	40%
Girls	6	60%
Comprehension delay	4	40%
Word Finding delay	4	40%
Comprehension or Word Finding delay	4	40%

Table 2 – Summary of results from Setting 1

#### 4.1.3) Setting 2

Setting 2 had an intake of 44 children, of whom 21 fitted all requirements for testing. All of the children assessed were of a White: British background and spoke English as their first language. The results from Setting 2 are held in Table 3.

Child	Actual Age	Reynell Comprehension Age equivalent	Renfrew Word Finding Age equivalent	Delay identified	1 <sup>st</sup> Language
M1	3.10	3.11-4.0	<3.03	WNL	English
M2	3.08	3.0	<3.03	Word Finding	English
F3	3.09	3.11-4.0	5.02	WNL	English
F4	3.08	3.0	<3.03	Word Finding	English
F5	3.11	2.11	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F6	3.09	2.11	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
M7	3.08	3.10	3.10-3.11	WNL	English
F8	3.07	3.03-3.06	<3.03	Word Finding	English
F9	3.10	3.0	3.11-4.01	Comprehension	English
M10	3.09	2.05	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F11	3.10	3.02	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
M12	3.08	2.05	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F13	3.10	3.02	3.11-4.01	WNL	English
M14	3.08	2.10	<3.03	Comprehension	English
M15	3.06	2.05	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F16	3.11	2.11	3.09-3.10	Comprehension	English
M17	3.06	2.05	3.10-3.11	Comprehension	English
M18	3.11	2.02	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
M19	3.06	2.03	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
M20	3.08	3.07-3.08	4.01-4.02	WNL	English
M21	3.09	2.09	3.04	Comprehension	English

Table 3 - 2006 Survey results from Setting 2

Table 4 gives a summary of results.

	Number	Percent
Intake assessed	21	48%
Boys	12	57%
Girls	9	43%
Comprehension delay	13	62%
Word Finding delay	11	52%
Comprehension or Word Finding delay	16	76%

Table 4 - Summary of results from Setting 2

#### 4.1.4) Setting 3

Setting 3 had an intake of 49 children. Of these 27 children fitted the criteria for assessment. 25 of the children assessed were of a white-British origin and spoke English as their first language; two were of an Asian or Asian British Pakistani origin and spoke Urdu as their first language. Table 5 holds the results.

Child	Actual Age	Reynell Comprehension Age equivalent	Renfrew Word Finding Age equivalent	Delay identified	1 <sup>st</sup> Language
M1	3.10	4.01-4.02	3.10-3.11	WNL	English
M2	3.09	4.01-4.02	3.04	WNL	English
F3	3.06	3.01	0	Word Finding	English
M4	3.07	3.02	3.08	WNL	English
F5	3.06	4.01-4.02	4.08	WNL	English
M6	3.07	2.07	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F7	3.08	3.0	3.05	WNL	English
M8	3.07	2.09	3.04	Comprehension	English
F9	3.08	3.0	<3.03	Word Finding	English
F10	3.11	4.02	6.0	WNL	English
F11	3.10	4.0	4.02-4.03	WNL	English
M12	3.11	2.11	3.03	Comprehension	English
F13	3.11	3.02	<3.03	Word Finding	English
M14	3.11	1.11	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	Urdu
M15	3.10	2.04	3.03	Comprehension	Urdu
F16	3.07	2.11	4.08	Comprehension	English
M17	3.09	2.06	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
M18	3.11	3.10	4.04-4.05	WNL	English
M19	3.10	<1.09	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
M20	3.06	4.03	4.04-4.05	WNL	English
M21	3.08	2.10	4.11-5.02	Comprehension	English
M22	3.11	3.07-3.08	3.03	WNL	English
F23	3.09	3.02	3.07-3.08	WNL	English
M24	3.10	2.10	<3.03	Comprehension & Word Finding	English
F25	3.07	2.02	3.09-3.01	Comprehension	English
M26	3.08	4.01-4.02	4.07-4.08	WNL	English
M27	3.06	6-6.06	6.02-6.03	WNL	English

Table 5 - 2006 Survey results from Setting 3

Table 6 gives a summary of the results.

Entry to Education Speech and Language Baseline Assessment  
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	Number	Percent
Intake assessed	27	55%
Boys	17	63%
Girls	10	37%
Comprehension delay	11	41%
Word Finding delay	8	30%
Comprehension or Word Finding delay	14	52%

Table 6 – Summary of results from Setting 3

#### 4.2) Analysis

The three settings have differing levels of requirements for specialist help. The collective results for the four settings are held in Table 9.

	Number	Percent
Intake assessed	58	48%
Boys	33	57%
Girls	25	43%
Comprehension delay	28	48%
Word Finding delay	23	40%
Comprehension or Word Finding delay	34	59%

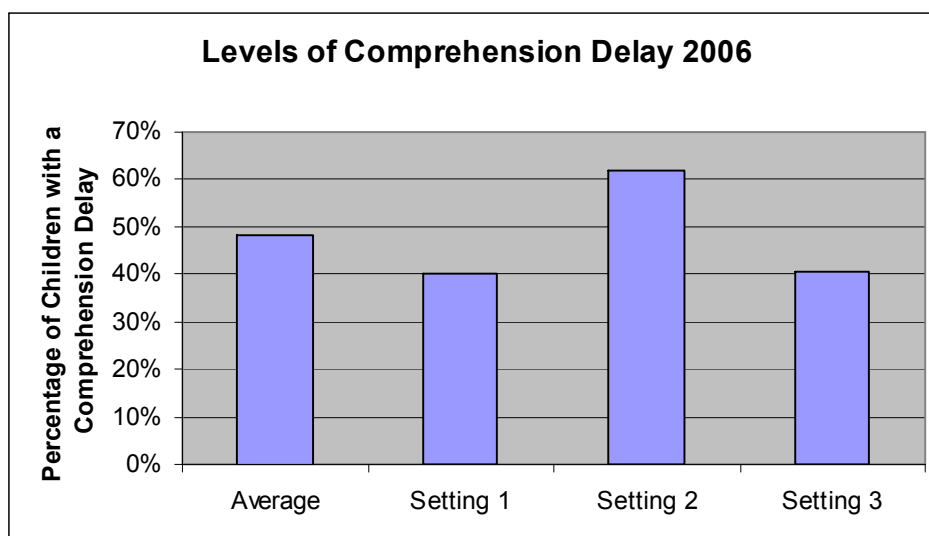
Table 9 – Summary of results from all four Settings

Twenty four children were identified as being 'Within Normal Limits'. Of these twelve were boys and twelve were girls. Within the population this means that 41% of the surveyed children displayed the comprehension and word finding ability that is consistent with their age. These figures also show that 36% of the boys and 48% of the girls were within normal limits.

##### 4.2.1) Comprehension Delay

Twenty eight children were identified as having a comprehension delay. Graph 1 illustrates how the three settings compare against each other and against the average level of comprehension delay from the assessment.

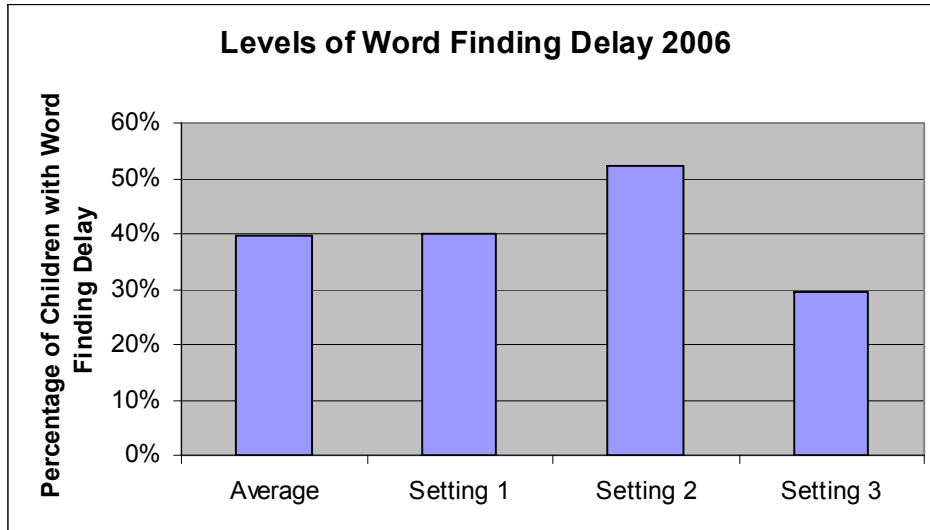
Graph 1 shows that both Settings 1 and 3 had a below average score in terms of comprehension delay. The high score gained by Setting 2 has pulled the average result for comprehension delay up.



Graph 1 – Levels of Comprehension Delay 2006

#### 4.2.3) Word Finding Delay

Word Finding delay was identified in 40% of children. The 23 children who were in need of specialist help to increase their word finding ability came from all three settings. Graph 2 shows the levels of word finding delay found.

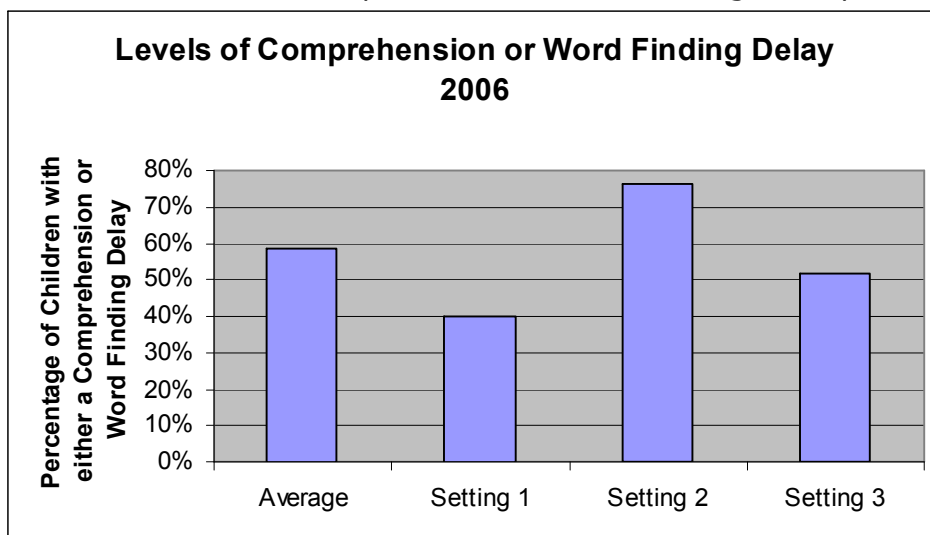


Graph 2 – Levels of Word Finding Delay 2006

The average of 40% for word finding delay is the same score achieved by Setting 1. Setting 3 gained a noticeably lower score of 30% whilst Setting 2 was decidedly higher at 52%.

#### 4.2.4) Comprehension or Word Finding Delay

The level of children with either a comprehension or word finding delay is higher than that for either comprehension or word finding. The percentage



Graph 3 – Levels of Comprehension or Word Finding Delay 2006

of children who had delay was 59%. Graph 3 shows how the three settings compare with the average.

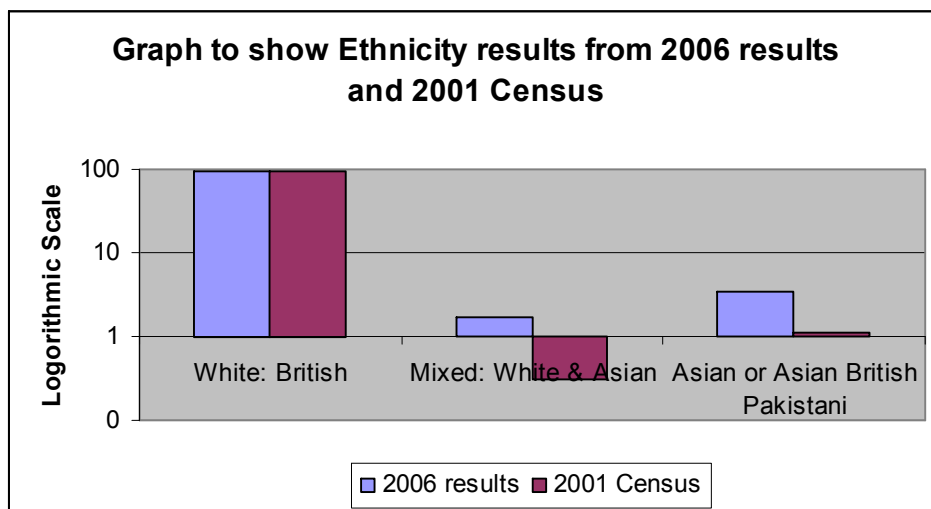
The percentage of children exhibiting either comprehension or word finding delay is higher than for the individual categories but does follow the same pattern as for comprehension delay.

#### 4.2.5) Ethnicity

The ethnicity found in the Crescent Children's Centre area is predominantly White: British. There were, however, three children from different ethnic backgrounds. Of these one spoke English as their first language and two spoke Punjabi. Graph 4 shows the ethnicity of the children assessed and the actual levels of ethnicity found in the 2001 census.

Graph 4 shows that English speakers account for the greatest percentage in both the 2001 census and the 2006 assessment. It also shows that the percentage of non White British children assessed was higher than actually found in the 2001 census.

Of the three children who were not of White British origin two spoke Urdu as their first language and one spoke English. The English speaker was within normal limits but the two children who spoke Urdu both had a comprehension delay and one also had a word finding delay.

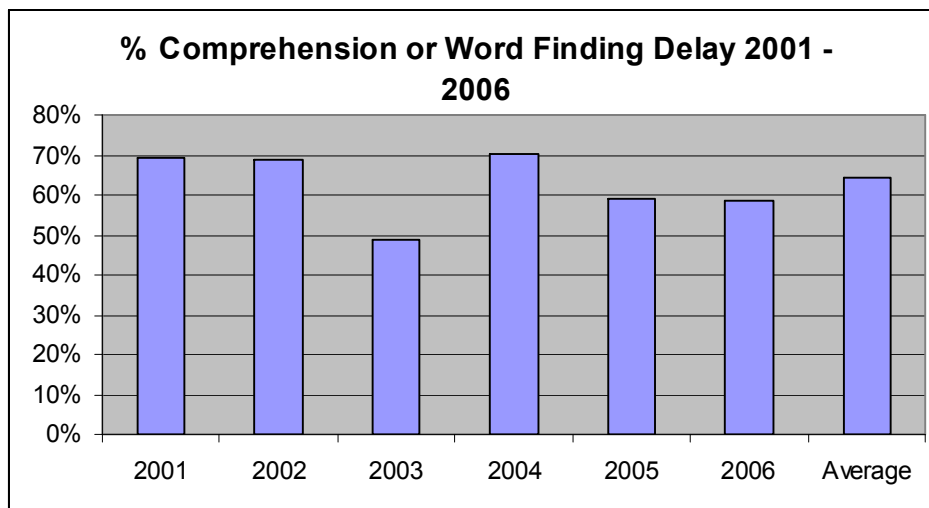


Graph 4 - 2001 Ethnicity for Crescent Children's Centre area and of Children taking part in 2006 Assessment

## 5) Conclusion

The ability levels of the children assessed in the Crescent Children's Centre area are poor. This can be seen by the 58.6% of children who exhibited signs of comprehension or word finding delay. Compared to the national average of 10% (Law, 2000) this 48.6 percentage point difference is disturbing.

In a local context the ability of children in the Crescent Children's Centre area is relatively good. Compared to previous assessments in Stoke-on-Trent these children have shown that they have a fair grasp of comprehension and word finding skills. Graph 5 shows how the results from 2006 compare with those gained in previous years.

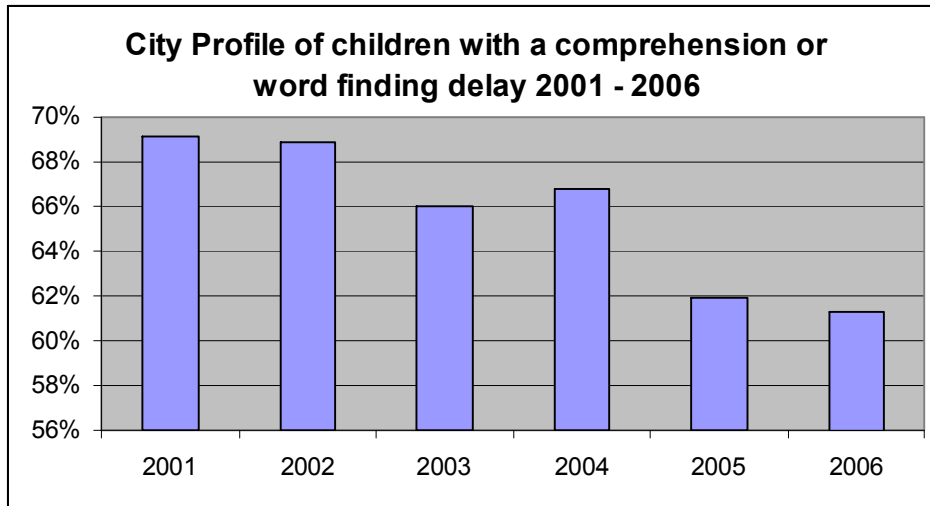


Graph 5 - Comprehension or Word Finding Delay 2001 - 2006

Graph 5 clearly shows that the results from 2006 are below the average score of 64.3% achieved over the six assessments. It also shows that, except for the 2003 assessment, the children of 2006 have a greater ability than any other children assessed.

If the results from the 2006 assessment are fed into a rolling average put together over the six assessments it can be seen that the number of children with a comprehension or word finding delay across Stoke-on-Trent has continued to fall. Graph 6 shows how the City Profile of children with a comprehension or word finding delay 2001 - 2006 for Stoke-on-Trent has continued to improve year on year; falling from a high of 69.1% in 2001 to the 2006 figure of 61.3% in 2006.

The impact of the children assessed in 2006 on the city figures is encouraging as it has continued to reduce the number of children with an incidence of comprehension or word finding delay. Despite this locally encouraging result work is needed to reduce the incidence of comprehension



Graph 6 – City Profile of children with a comprehension or word finding delay 2001 - 2006

or word finding delay to national average levels and provide the children of Stoke-on-Trent with a solid start to life.

## 6) Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- A second *Entry to Education Speech and Language Baseline Assessment* is conducted in the Autumn term of 2007 in the Crescent Children's Centre area. This is to assess any improvements that the children in the Crescent Children's Area may experience.
- Work is needed to improve children's comprehension and word finding ability. This can be done by increasing the stimuli that children are exposed to. By enriching the experiences that children have and then talking about them to embed the vocabulary children should be able to improve both word finding and comprehension ability.
- Concentrated, recorded intervention activity is needed across the Crescent Children's Centre area throughout the academic year of 2006-2007. This is needed so that each child that passes through an activity can be recorded in readiness for the second *Entry to Education Speech and Language Baseline Assessment* to be conducted in the Autumn term of 2007. If improvements are seen at this point then the types of activity that the children have engaged with will identify the most beneficial activity in terms of developing comprehension and word finding ability.

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