REAL at Green Fold Special School: Environmental Print in Progress

In this case study, the team share how they have applied their REAL learning in practice, using environmental print and personalised resources to engage children in meaningful literacy experiences, while strengthening partnerships with parents and carers to support learning both at school and at home.

Our teaching team provided opportunities for children to develop their early literacy skills by creating personalised environmental print books using familiar symbols, images, and words. Sending books home extended these opportunities beyond the setting and encouraged children to explore literacy in different environments, both indoors and outdoors.

Staff recognised and valued children's individual interests and existing knowledge by incorporating familiar images, symbols, and logos into the bespoke books and learning environment. This helped children make connections between print and their everyday experiences, supporting them to recognise familiar symbols, understand that print carries meaning and develop confidence in their emerging communication and literacy skills.

The environmental print books encouraged interactions between children and staff as they explored the familiar images, developed their communication skills and shared attention. Sending the books home also encouraged parents and children to share books, explore familiar print and engage in literacy activities together, strengthening the connection between home and school.

Staff encouraged parental engagement in early literacy, sharing low cost, no cost activities during play and stay sessions in school. The teaching team modelled the environmental print books, including home languages, drawing attention to symbols and demonstrating the total communication approach.

Parents feedback:
"Thank you so much for the activity ideas, we will try them at home".
"He's never really shown interest in books before so it's nice to see".

