Head Teacher – Building a Positive Working Environment

An owner and manager of a preschool in East Sussex embarked on developing a positive, inclusive working environment, by building relationships between staff, children and staff and families and staff. They used the Working With Others Programme which was developed from a Teaching and Learning Research Programme research project - SPRinG.

After implementing the programme and embedding it within practice, she noted the impact on her setting.

Benefits of programme for my children:
- Emotional well-being
- Working together led to increased communication skills and trust
- The WWO resources supported labelling of emotions and discussion around feelings – empowering the children to voice or communication feelings physically (safe manner)

Benefits to my team:
- Increase in their understanding regarding the children and staff working together
- Communication skills
- Teaching styles
- The WWO resources supported team building and communication skills

Personal benefits:
- Reflecting on our current practices and dentifying challenges
- Strategies to engage all staff – all staff unique qualities and utilising their 'strengths' to benefit children and families
- Communication techniques
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Change- recognition for change and managing the implementations-time bound and facilitating the changes
- Collaboration with colleagues on the course, sharing of good practice, reflecting on techniques
- The resources WWO provided were 'tools' for change

In our recent Ofsted Report the inspector commented;
"The personal and emotion welfare and development of the children is cultivated and enhanced by sensitive interaction, discussion and activities. Children are independent, show high levels of self esteem and confidence. The children in this setting are kind and caring towards each other. Their behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate a real sense of belonging which staff carefully foster and reinforce.
The children are all developing skills which will support them in school and beyond. They are self-assured when using technology, communicate effectively and often at a level above their age. They work in groups showing high levels of cooperation and independently with independence and initiative."

For more on this see:
www.workingwithothers.org
https://www.spring-project.org.uk/
http://reflectiveteaching.co.uk/deepening-expertise/tlrp-research