



Rhyme day, sing away!

Gill Blowers Nursery School is one of 30 settings in Luton that is taking part in the Every Child a Talker (ECaT) project. ECaT provided the funding for a special Rhyme Day, which proved a huge success. Katy Neil, Early Language Lead Professional at the nursery, explains.



We wanted to do something exciting to stimulate children's language and listening and, at the same time, bring children and parents together. So we decided to organise a Rhyme Day and produce our very own rhyme CD. We have a strong focus on nursery rhymes and songs within our nursery to develop phonological awareness, language and pre-reading and spelling skills. Rhymes are universal and we can share them as a way of exploring different cultures. They are also fun! So a rhyme CD for

children to take home was the perfect project.

A month before the event we visited a local recording studio, which kindly allowed us to use their equipment free of charge. The children worked in small groups to record six nursery rhymes. They sang with real gusto! We sourced a company that made the CDs for us at a small charge and included a typed song sheet of the nursery rhymes.

Rhyme Day arrived and the nursery was heaving with parents, practitioners and visitors. Many brought younger siblings to enjoy the fun. Mums, dads and children worked together to decorate a small cloth rhyme bag for the CD and laminated song sheet. They also made a rhyme character puppet. We had a competition for the most creative rhyme bag and the winner won a set of the finger puppets. Musical entertainment was provided by a local early year's entertainer. The slide show of the making of the CD, accompanied by the soundtrack of the children singing, moved many parents to tears. The specially designed, homemade Rhyme Day cake also went down a treat!



Parents loved having a CD of their child singing to take home. One parent commented: "It is something I am going to keep and treasure forever". Helping parents rekindle an interest in rhymes helps them relate to their children in a fun way. After the event we had great feedback from the parents with many saying their children did not stop playing the CD or talking about their rhyme bag. We kept copies of the CD to give to our new starters and their parents so that they too can learn the rhymes at home. If funding becomes available it would be great to do this every year.