

# The Little Learners Programme

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Glenbrook Surestart In Partnership with Child Development Speech And Language Therapy Service

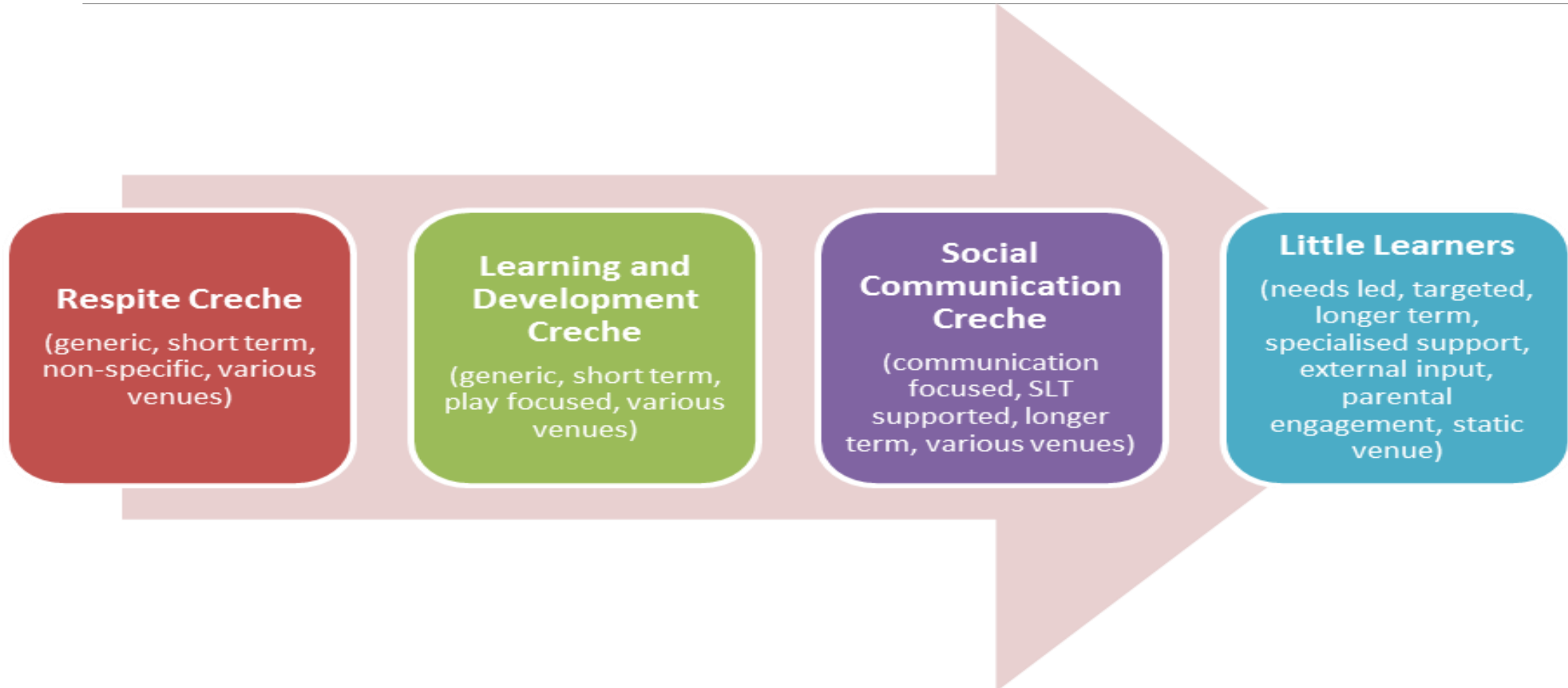
# Background

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- Over the years, Glenbrook Surestart has worked towards supporting families with children who are presenting with additional needs, providing additional needs crèche and targeted programmes.
- With increasing demand to meet the needs of young children presenting with suspected Autism and social communication difficulties Glenbrook believed the Developmental Programme for 2-3 year olds would not best meet their needs and so aimed to develop and deliver a new tailored programme.
- Glenbrook contacted CDC SLT to re-engage in a piece of partnership work.
- The Little Learners Pilot Programme commenced in September 2016.
- We are now in Year 3 of the pilot and continue to shape the programme in response to the children's needs, needs of the families, and growing skills of the Early Years Staff.

# The Journey to Little Learners

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# What we had to consider....

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- > Effective supports for the autistic child: the child's journey
- > Building capacity and skills of the team: the educator's journey
- > How to best support and involve parents: the parent's journey
- > Making effective transitions to the next stage
- > Measuring outcomes / success

# It Started With .....

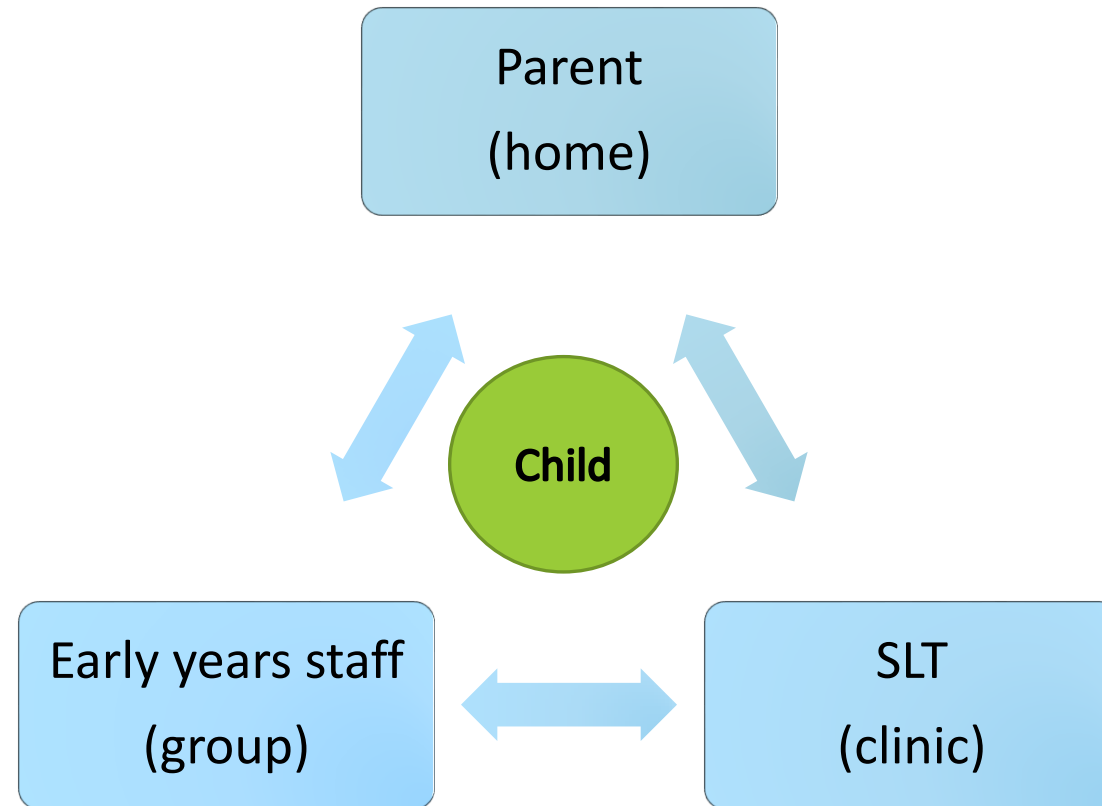
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- > An invitation from Surestart to CDC SLT
- > SLT prepared to survey the landscape to see what is possible
- > Commitment to working in partnership
- > Nurturing the synergy and combining resources to achieve more than we ever imagined possible
- > Developing respectful relationships – people make a difference

# Partnership is key to this model

“all participants are crucial for maximising outcomes”

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# The Little Learners Team

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Michelle Clarke, Room supervisor

Caroline Donnelly, Assistant

Kathleen Ingham, Assistant

Laura McCabe, Assistant

Dorothy Mc Whirter, Early Learning Coordinator

Sheena McGartland, Surestart SLT

Elaine Mc Greevy, Clinical Lead SLT for children with ASD, BHSCT



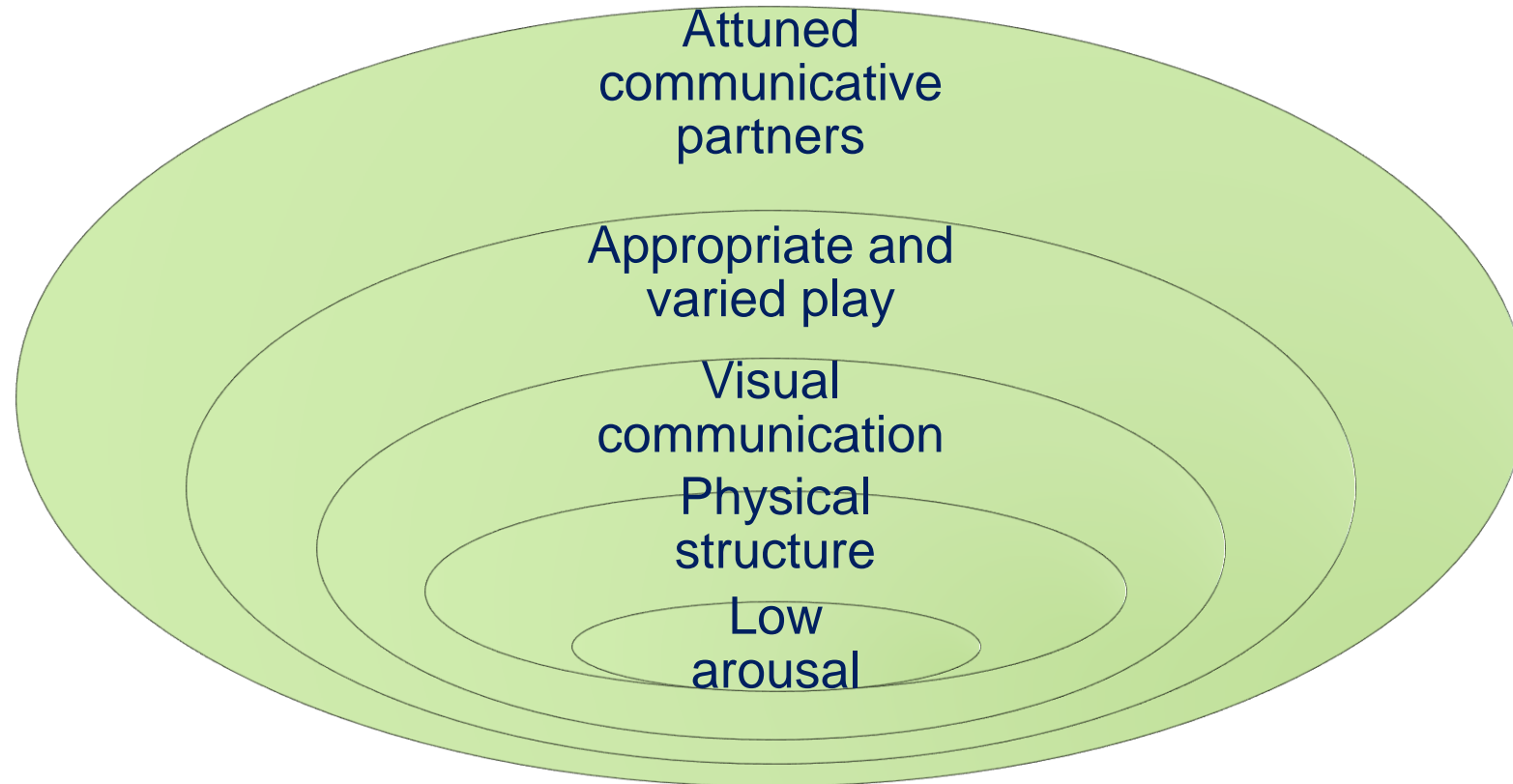
# The Pilot Programme

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- > Targeted support for concerns regarding a child's development
- > Targeted support for concerns regarding speech delay
- > Targeted support for concerns regarding social interactions
- > Targeted support for concerns regarding play skills
- > Targeted support for concerns regarding specific sensory seeking / avoidance and / or anxiety related behaviour

# Little Learners offers a communication-rich playroom

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# The Little Learners Programme Content

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- 2 x 2 hour sessions pw x 30 weeks
- Two groups offered per year.
- Maximum capacity is approximately 6 children per group.
- Parents receive training from CDC SLT and ELC:
  - Introductory Workshop
  - Make and Take Workshop
  - Communication Workshop.
  - Applying for a pre-school place workshop
- Parents attend one focused Stay & Play session per term.
- Progress reports
- Transition reports (communication passport)
- Early Years staff receive other relevant ASD specific training and mandatory training.
- CDC SLT provides two bespoke training sessions to EYS to maintain knowledge and skills.
- Home visits





# In Little Learners we...



- Presume potential
- Value child-led interactions
- Respond to all communication, in all its forms
- Encourage communication, in all its forms
- Guide, model and show
- Wait
- Make it meaningful and motivating
- Make it fun
- Value teamwork with parents and professionals



## Role of the Early Years Staff (EYS)

- Chart the progress
- Provide developmentally appropriate play
- Monitor the sensory environment
- Prepare for seamless transition
- Liaise and take advice from all relevant professionals and parents
- Support and empower parents
- Lead the Stay and Play focused sessions
- Co-deliver workshops

## Role of the Child Development SLT

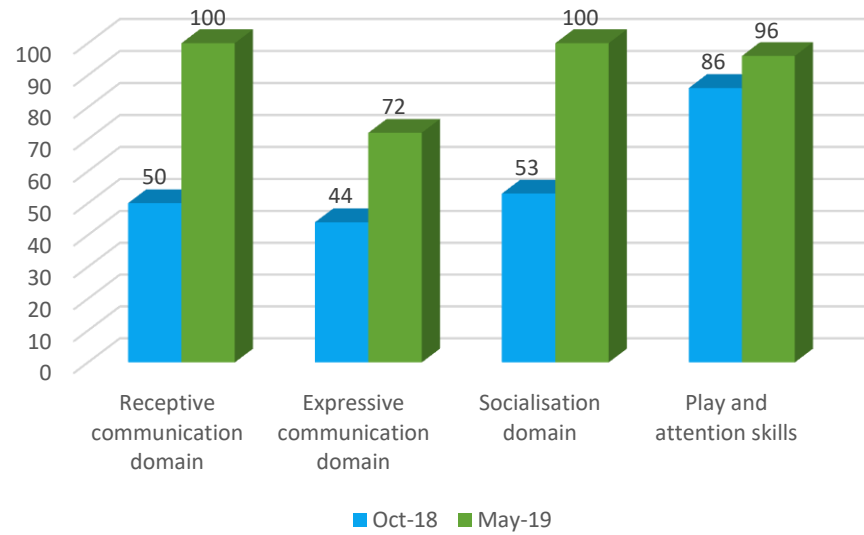
- Baseline assessments
- Monitor progress, provide individual care plans
- Advice and training for EYS
- Parent Workshops
- Home visits

## Role of the Parents

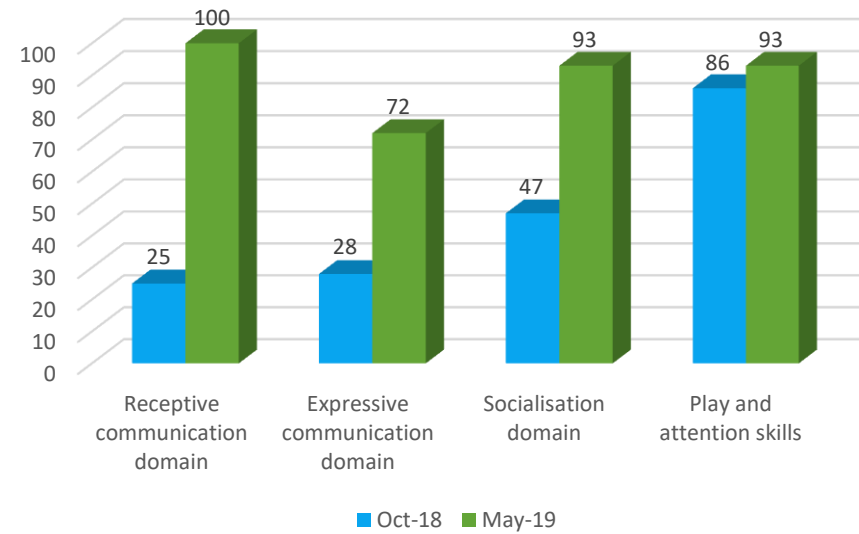
- Commit to all aspects of the programme
- Share information including engagement with other services e.g. CDC, ASD assessment, SLT, OT, Education Psychology
- Carry out home practice as demonstrated by EYS and/or SLT

# Outcomes (Sept 18 – June 19 year)

Child 1



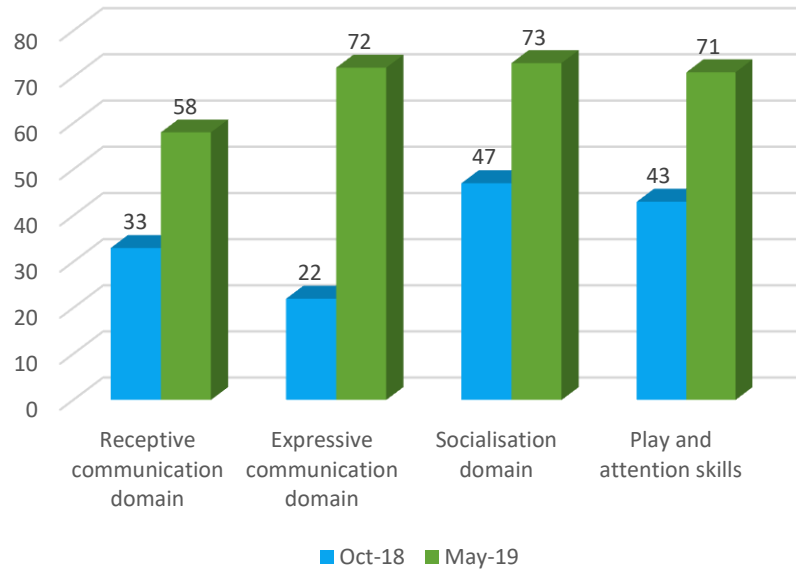
Child 2



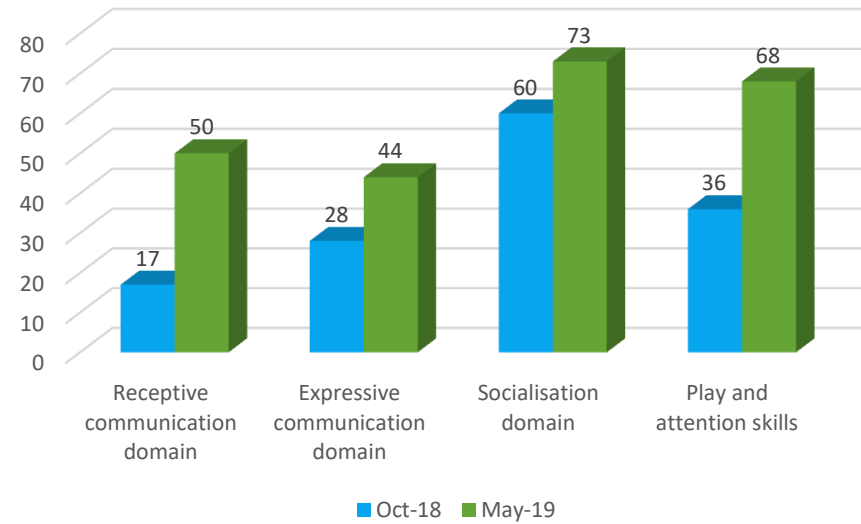
# Outcomes

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**Child 3**

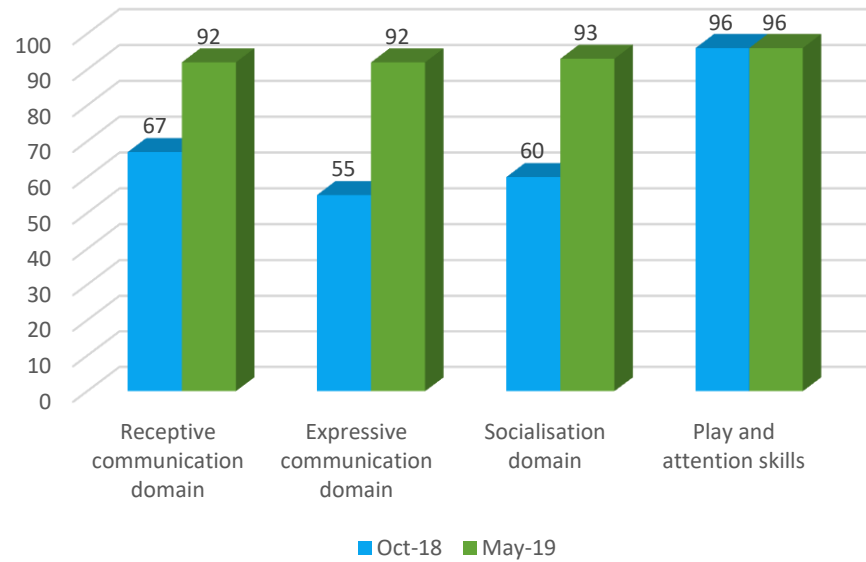


**Child 4**

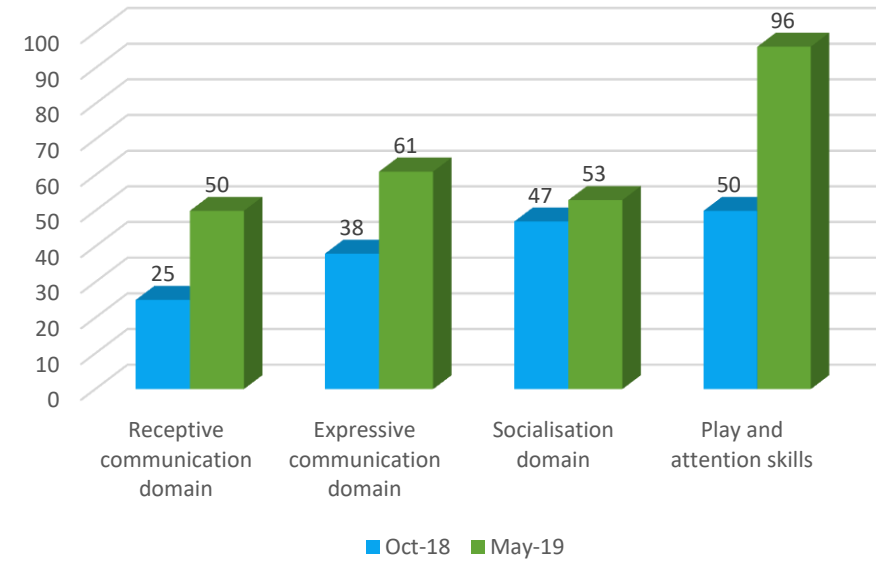


# Outcomes

Child 5



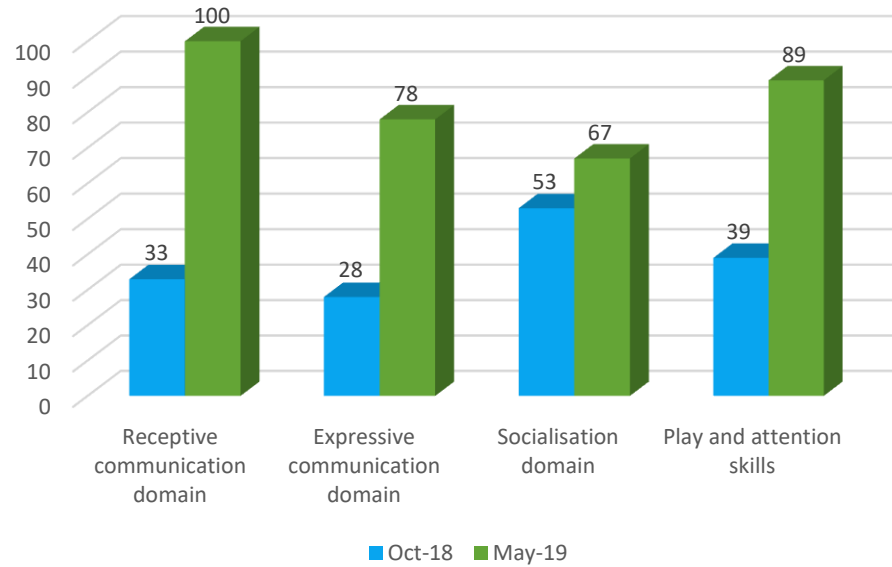
Child 6



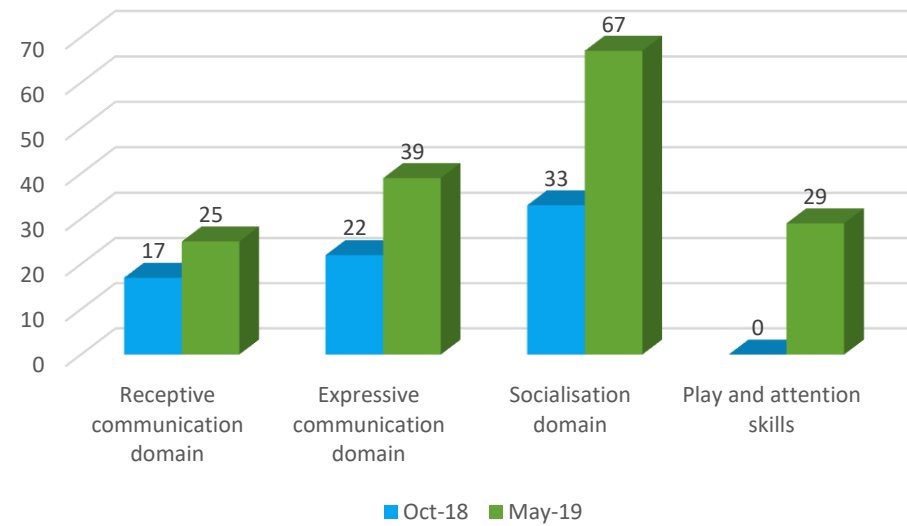
# Outcomes

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## Child 7

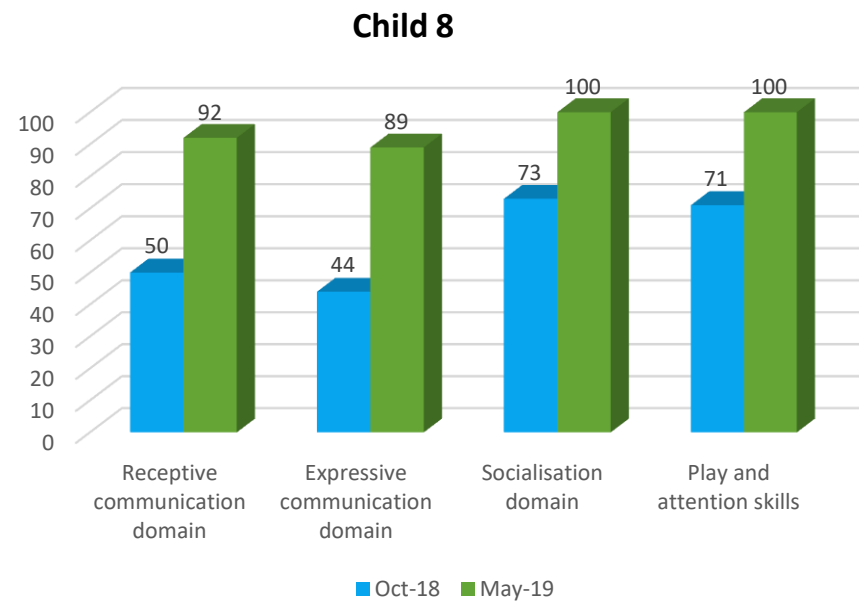


## Child 8



# Outcomes

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## Advantages

- Providing specialist intervention early, when and where it is needed.
- Maximises the learning opportunities and the likelihood of success for the child and the family.
- Building capacity by empowering others.
- Effective use of SLT resource.
- Building parental confidence to advocate for their child.
- The 'Ripple Effect'

## Challenges

- Financial challenges.
- Securing the workforce to maintain the programme.
- Having flexibility to deliver a programme to meet the individual needs of the child/family – one size doesn't fit all.
- Maintaining a balance of Surestart ethos and specialist intervention strategies.
- Challenges with resources to partner - capacity v's need.
- Ensuring time to reflect, prepare, and make resources.

## What our parents say...

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*“Thank you teacher for giving my child the best possible start in the world. You’re the best. Thank you so much.”*

*“Thank you so much for your absolute dedication to providing the best support to the Little Learners children. Your attention to detail, patience, compassion and skills is exceptional.”*

(end of year feedback)

***“very useful (workshop on communication) in terms of learning that communication / interaction is key, as opposed to getting full speech.”***

***“Enjoyed today, getting to observe how the girls work with all the children and how they operate the room. It was good to see how \*\*\*\*’s progressing and developing an understanding through pictures.”***

**(parent’s feedback from stay and play session/ workshop)**

“Behind every statistic is a child that needs help  
**Behind every statistic is a parent or guardian who worries and  
sometimes cries alone**

Our beautiful son \*\*\*\*joined Surestart’s Little Learners  
programme in November 2018

**The great thing about Surestart is that they don’t see our son  
as a statistic**

**They see him as a child with the world at his little feet**

They help him, they nurture him and they teach him

And they help us, as parents not to worry

Surestart will help \*\*\*\* bloom. We are sure of that

We will be forever indebted to the people of Surestart”

# Where we are now.....

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National Autistic Society Autism  
Professionals Awards – 2019 Winner

**Inspirational Education Provider Primary  
Schools and Early Years**