

Is LIFE-R a useful tool for eliciting 'pupil voice,' identifying effective teaching interventions and developing FM users' self-advocacy skills to enhance the optimal use of amplification systems?

An Action Research Study

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this small scale Action Research project is to investigate whether LIFE-R is a useful tool for eliciting 'pupil voice', identifying effective teaching interventions and developing FM users' self-advocacy skills to enhance the optimal use of amplification systems.

Utilising a convenience sample of West Cheshire's FM users, inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. Participation methodology using consent forms, which fulfilled essential ethical considerations, was used. A pilot study was undertaken. Pupils' views were elicited using a semi-structured interview based on the LIFE-R scenarios. Jointly discussed, individualised teaching interventions and pupil self-advocacy targets were distributed to teachers, via a 'Pupil Feedback' sheet, to be undertaken during a 6 week research-phase. Follow-up LIFE-R interviews, Teacher and Pupil Self-Evaluation feedback systems enabled practices to be examined. Content and evaluative validity was promoted throughout with close liaison taking place with participants' families.

The research evidence demonstrated LIFE-R to be a useful starting point for valid pupil discussions and identifying personalised self-advocacy targets. The mechanism of the 'Pupil Feedback' sheet promoted joint partnership working, enhanced teacher co-operation in providing some, but not all, of the suggested interventions, and increased expectations for personal self-advocacy development on FM users. The need for further individualised-targeted support for developing pupils' self-advocacy skills and longitudinal follow-up to determine whether interventions would be assimilated into daily practice, formed the main recommendations of the study.