

Beach Schools Evaluation Spring 1 2016 (Article 28, Article 29, Article 31)

Session Dates: 13.1.16, 22.1.16, 29.1.16, 2.3.16

Focus: Confidence building, social skills and the Five C's.

(Enhance personal and social development and develop a deeper relationship with nature).

Twelve Year 1 children.

Individual Session Evaluations:

13.1.16 – Worthing Beach

This was the first session for this group of children and behaviour expectations were discussed prior to the trip. Once on the beach the children practised the call back and we reminded ourselves of the 'Beach Code' and safety rules and the area boundaries for the session were set. The majority of the children demonstrated self-regulation and control by staying within the boundaries independently and responding quickly to call backs and open activities set. However, Child A's enthusiasm impacted on their listening skills and self-regulation detrimentally and resulted in a firm reminder of boundaries and safety rules.

Independent exploration (connected to aims): - The group had time to explore the beach independently with resources available (Magnifying glasses and pots, identification sheets, rubber gloves) for them to use should they choose to. Without exception the group chose to explore independently, with communication and social skills evident as the children were observed to approach peers to share and discuss the objects they'd discovered collaboratively. Child B and Child C chose to approach the adults to share their discoveries; Child B hesitantly at first using exaggerated facial expressions to convey their conversation and a quiet voice, but then with increasing confidence and louder voice as the session progressed. Child C asked lots of questions about their discoveries, talking animatedly about what they could be and was encouraged to engage with peers by sharing their discoveries. They began to do this more independently as the session progressed (suggesting an increase in confidence).

The rest of the group were heard discussing between themselves the possible identity of their finds with adults on hand to facilitate where appropriate to unobtrusively ask an open question to extend critical thinking skills and questioning further eg: 'Do you think this has always been on the beach? Where could it have come from? How do you think it got here?' etc.



The decision was taken to finish the session earlier than planned due to the low temperature and chill factor of the wind.

22.1.16 - Indoor Beach Schools

Activities and resources were available for the children to access independently that supported beach exploration, knowledge of marine life and encouraged the development of social skills (hidden natural objects in sand, learn pads for fact finding/identification, books, sketching equipment with a variety of media, a tent environment, identification resources, magnifiers). The sounds of the sea were played during the session.

The tent proved instantly popular with the majority of the children eager to be inside from the outset and their social skills were challenged once they realised they could not all fit inside at once and a compromise of turn taking was reached. Once the initial excitement of the tent subsided a calmer learning environment was established. Some children took the sea shore books into the

tent to read and were observed being considerate to others in order to create a 'fair' shared space. Discussions were heard around the pictures and text they were exploring and collaboration evident as books became shared between several peers. **(Article 12, Article 29).**



"Look a real cuttlefish, not bone!"

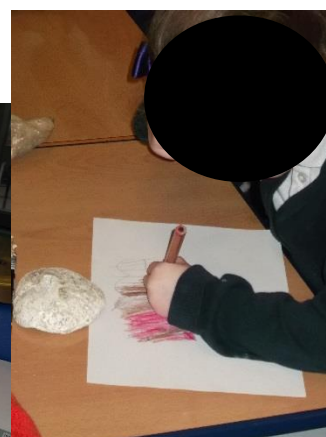


"I've seen this on the beach!"



"It's just like going camping. I'm an explorer."

Child C was observed choosing to explore the natural objects with a magnifying glass and using what they found to create an observational drawing. Child C was engaged and focussed during their observances and keen to share what they could see with his peers and adults alike. "It's spikey and rough. I like the lines." Child C's shared enthusiasm resulted in other children joining them at the tables to carry out their own observational drawings. A calm, absorbed environment naturally evolved with the children heard sharing their thoughts and observations with each other.



29.1.16 - Indoor Beach School in the pagoda

Due to the adverse weather conditions the visit to the beach was cancelled and a short 45 minute session in the school grounds pagoda was arranged in place. Resources and a variety of media were available for independent observational sketching and modelling of marine creatures and objects, followed by hot chocolate and a snack.



The children worked well in the chill with everyone engaging quickly in selecting an activity of their choice. Child D and Child E were observed discussing the best way to draw a crab and sharing the chalks. The majority of the children chose to work alone on their creations but were enthusiastic to share the outcomes with the rest of the group. An increasing knowledge of marine life became evident in their sharing as they were able to name what they had chosen to draw / model. "This is a spider crab shell, it sticks seaweed on it to hide and it's spiky." (Child A).

During the drinking of the hot chocolate the children shared stories of their own experiences of the beach. Everyone shared a story and effective collaborative group conversation was seen to take place. **(Article 12, Article 29).**

2.3.16 - Worthing Beach.

Extra session put in place due to previous adverse weather conditions. The session began with independent exploration of the mid tide zone. The children were quick to move off and it was evident that they were engaged and focussed in their exploration.



"There are lots of lovely stones and slipper limpets."



"I'm looking for a spider crab shell."

Evidence of previous learning was observed as the correct names of the different marine creatures and objects discovered were heard being used during peer conversations. Once again the group dynamics worked well on a social communication level as they approached each other enthusiastically to share their discoveries and to look at the discoveries of others. Child C chose to approach and share mainly with the adults but with encouragement was able to approach, communicate and share with their peers.

A game of 'pirates pearl' was introduced as a prequel to creatively inventing games using natural objects / resources found on the beach within the set boundaries. Child E and Child F immediately found each other and moved to the wet sand that had been exposed by the outgoing tide to use as the base for their game. Collaboratively they worked alongside each other sharing the jobs to draw shapes and outlines for their target game. Effective two way conversation was heard demonstrating that successful team working skills were being utilised.



Child G and Child A demonstrated their creativity by choosing to invent a game that utilised effective listening and communication skills. They were seen concentrating intensely whilst discussing the rules of play and listening to each other's ideas. They adapted their rules as they collaborated before deciding on their final rules and 'how to play'. One person would say the name of a marine creature and the others would strike a pose that reflected the creature named.



"Starfish!"



"Crabs!"

The game proved popular with their peers who quickly approached to join in the game. All followed the set rules and collaborative turn taking took place with cries and shouts of pleasure heard. Other children had their ideas accepted into the game as they thought of the different creatures or objects they could name.

Summary: The focus of confidence building and developing social skills within these sessions has been observed to have taken place and progressed for most of the children participating in the trips. A deeper knowledge of marine creature identification and understanding of the coast environment has been demonstrated by the children over the duration of the four sessions. This supports the previous findings that levels of knowledge, wellbeing and social communication skills develop when using the beach as a learning environment and a tool to provide the opportunity to build social relationships safely in small groups outside of the classroom.