

Beach Schools Evaluation May 2015 (Article 28, Article 29, Article 31)

Trip date: Worthing Beach 20/5/15

Five Year 3 children and five Year 1 children

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



Individual Child Evaluation:

Child A:

Child A was actively engaged/communicating with peers in the group from the outset. They were partnered with Child I. Both worked well together and Child A was observed chatting to Child I on the journey to the beach, although they were seen to stand away slightly from Child I whilst the other pairs were happy to hold hands when walking. **Wow moment!** Child A chatted and laughed the whole trip with a marked progression in communicating with a peer they had not known previously. Child A confidently entered the rock pools to explore and moved carefully across the slippery rocks to paddle in the water, demonstrating a security and confidence in their environment. They were heard to say to their partner 'Be careful, it's slippery seaweed!' The two worked well helping each other to identify the creatures and objects they had found and used the camera to photograph some of their discoveries. Child A became very animated when a dried up 'cat shark' was discovered and was keen to talk and explain their thoughts about it. **'My best bit so far is finding the cat shark, it has sharp teeth still.'**

Child A chose to work with Child B on the activity of building a house for a sea creature. They were observed to be talking in an effective two way conversation to discuss which methods to employ for their task. **"We should make it for a shark, and have a bed and a seaweed roof camouflage so when the seagulls come they won't see the shark and the shark can grab their legs and eat them."**

Child A appeared confident when explaining the house design and reasoning to their peers.

During a period of independent free time Child A and B stayed together to climb on and explore the groynes. Child A moved cautiously to balance and demonstrated a good self awareness of movement and space. Child A was sad to leave the beach and said on the way back **“Are we coming again next Wednesday? I want to come again!”** indicating that they feel comfortable and confident in the beach environment.

Child B:

Child B worked well from the outset of the session with Child J to explore the beach and the rock pools although he was reluctant to hold hands on the journey to the beach as is usual for safety reasons. They became increasingly confident during the session; verbally drawing attention to the objects he discovered and laughing and chatting with Child J increasingly as the session progressed. There was great communication and teamwork observed with Child J and Child B clearly took their role of expert seriously as they repeatedly initiated conversation to discuss the objects they had found, indicating increased self confidence and esteem.

During the independent free time Child B orientated back towards Child A and the two were observed balancing on the groynes and throwing stones at targets (bigger stones) that they had placed on top of them as they moved up and down the set boundary of the beach.

Child C:

Child C was partnered with Child G for the rock pooling activity. Child C engaged actively in communicating and sharing their ‘expert’ knowledge with them, pointing out the objects in the rock pools and saying what they were, **“Look it’s an anemone, but it’s asleep. They live on the rocks.”** Child C was observed several times when sharing their knowledge to look at an adult for reassurance that they were correct and smiled broadly when given a nod of assent.

Child C decided to work with Child D on their sea creature home and create a hotel for the dead cat shark that had been discovered on the beach. **“We can bury it under the stones and it can keep guard to make sure the other creatures can stay safe when they visit. There is a door and these stones are for its pillow.”** Child C was considerate and took turns with Child D taking on-board his ideas and cooperating effectively as they worked.

Child D:

Focussed and actively engaged from the outset Child D was keen to reach the beach. However, they were less enthusiastic when partnered with Child F. They were observed to be a little self-conscious with their partner initially but eventually relaxed. During the rock pooling activity they did stay with Child F to begin with and was seen to pick up objects and show them what they had

discovered. Child D participated in effective two way conversation and was observed to listen appropriately.

Child C and D chose to work together to build a home for a sea creature with Child D being particularly enthusiastic about holding the dead cat shark rather than the construction of the home which was mainly left to Child C. Child D was heard contributing ideas for the home and responding to Child C's ideas but the lure of the cat shark was just a bit too strong for them to resist.

During free time Child D chose to work alongside Child A and B in throwing stones at targets on the groyne. Child D demonstrated effective social skills and self-regulation to ensure that no one was in front of them before they threw the stones.

Child E:

Child E was partnered with Child H for this session and quietly engaged and communicated with them from the outset. Child E was observed initiating conversation with Child H in the rock pool activity and would point to things in the rock pool as they explored. Child E worked cooperatively and guided Child H to support them to take photographs of some of the objects they had found. Child E was happy to put their hands in the water and handle the objects that they had found.

Child E chose to work with Child F, H and I to build a home for a sea creature. Child E and F demonstrated a great understanding of nature and the environment when heard discussing their ideas for the home so the creature would be comfortable. The four children worked collaboratively sharing out tasks to collect the resources they had chosen to use and all were seen constructing their design and supporting each other in order to finish it. During free time Child E explored the high tide zone with Child H and Child I for natural objects. Once again Child E was observed pointing things out and picking up objects to share with them. Child E was one of the quieter members of the group but was seen to be calmly focussed on their activities and interestingly some of the more enthusiastic children appeared drawn to their quieter manner.



Child F:

Child F was fully engaged and embraced the activities enthusiastically from the outset. They were partnered with Child D and were observed to frequently initiate conversation during the rock pooling activity. Child F responded positively to instructions and was keen to help and support Child D with identifying the natural objects they discovered. **“I’ve found seaweed actually attached to the rock so it doesn’t float away in the sea.”** Child F was confident moving over the slippery rocks, showing that they were self-aware and conscious of moving safely.

Child F chose to work with Child E, H and I for the ‘sea creature home’ activity and appeared happy, smiling and laughing. Child F was heard sharing lovely ideas about what a creature would need to be comfortable and demonstrated a good understanding of the beach environment and the creatures that live there. **“What about some nice wet seaweed as a blanket to make them feel at home and comfortable? It’s what they are used to.”**

They continued to demonstrate a high level of self-awareness during the free time on the beach, choosing to walk, balance on and explore the cracks in the groynes. Child F moved cooperatively with their peers who were doing the same ensuring that all could move and pass without incident as they were balancing.

“I love coming to the beach.”

Child G:

Child G was one of the quieter, gentler members of the group and was paired with Child C for the journey to the beach and the rock pooling activity. They were observed sharing and listening to Child C attentively as they imparted their knowledge about the objects they had found. They both stayed together during the activity waiting for each other as they moved through the pools and using magnifying glasses and jars to look closer at their discoveries. Child G was seen smiling and appeared to be wholly focussed on the task in hand, working well in the pairing as they took turns to photograph the objects they had discovered. Child G thought carefully about what the creatures would like to have in a home expressing an empathy with the creatures and their environment; **“When the tide comes in this bit will fill with water and they will have a water slide. Most of the animals like it in the water because when they are up on the beach the seagulls like to eat them.”**

Child G and Child J paired up during the free time choosing to play on the shingle with Child G ‘burying’ Child J under the stones. The two of them were giggling and laughing as they played together. **“This is so much fun!”**

Child H:

Child H was calm and focussed within their pairing, and was observed to self-regulate their behaviour appropriately, becoming quieter when working with a

serener peer. Child H enthusiastically explored the rock pools, smiling when using the camera to photograph some of the objects they had discovered. Child H stayed with their partner and was observed to be focussed and engaged in two way conversation during their exploration.

Child H worked collaboratively with Child E, F, and I to build the 'sea creature home'. They participated fully in collecting the resources that the group had chosen to construct the home, demonstrating a sense of self-awareness as they safely moved carefully across the beach. Child H was keen to share some of the objects they'd found whilst searching for resources and approached adults and peers to share a particularly fine piece of weed that had been discovered.

During free time Child H stayed with Child E and Child I exploring the high tide zone. Child H was observed picking up objects to take and share with the other two and they would look carefully at each item conversing as they investigated. **"I love finding new things on the beach!"**

Child I:

Child I was initially reluctant to participate in the beach visit but once partnered with Child A began to relax and converse along the route. Child A's enthusiasm appeared to influence Child I as they rock pooled with Child I bending down to explore and point out objects they had found to Child A. Child I responded well to their partner and was observed moving carefully amongst the slippery rocks becoming more confident in their movements as the session went on. Child I became animated with the discovery of the cat shark but was reluctant to touch it or get as close as their peers. **"Look it still has teeth, it's a shark!"** Child I did pick up a rock to observe closely but very quickly put it down and rubbed their hands against his trousers suggesting that they were uncomfortable with the feel of the beach.

Child I worked with Child E, F and H to create the 'sea creature house' participating equally in the sharing of ideas and collection of resources with an increase in initiated conversation observed as the session progressed. **"We can use whelk eggs for a pillow because they look fluffy and comfortable."**

Child I appeared more confident and comfortable in touching objects on the beach when collecting with peers than they had been during the rock pooling session, and was keen to share their discoveries with others.

Child I stayed with Child E and H during free time choosing to explore the high tide zone with any reluctance to touch objects completely disappearing as they continually picked up lots of lovely discoveries.

Child J:

Child J actively engaged in activities from outset, responding positively to instructions and helping others. They were partnered with Child B and were observed to take part in effective two way conversation. Child J stayed with

Child B during the rock pooling activities, self regulating their movements to negotiate their way around the slippery rocks.

Child J chose to work with Child G for the sea creature home activity. They worked well socially within the pairing and was observed to participate in effective turn taking and sharing.

During free time Child J stayed with Child G and they explored the mid tide zone. At the request of Child J, Child G covered them with shingle from the beach. Both were observed giggling, laughing and working well together. Child J demonstrated a great deal of enthusiasm and was a positive role model to their peers. **“I loved going to the beach, when can we go again? I liked being in the stones they felt cold and smooth on me.”**



Conclusion: The focus of confidence building and developing social skills within this trip has been observed to have taken place and improved for the children participating. The pairing of older children as ‘Beach Experts’ to work

and share their knowledge with younger children has proved to be a valuable partnership during this session. Those who find talking in front of their peers challenging blossomed within the small group in the beach environment and two way communication and group interactions were observed to flourish. This further validates and demonstrates the value of using the beach as a learning environment and a tool to enable opportunity, experience and space to participate and build social skills, self confidence and relationships safely and securely in small groups outside of the classroom.