

REFLECTING ON FAMILY BOOKS AND LEARNING STORIES

Auchlone Nature Kindergarten

QUALITIES DEMONSTRATED

Reflective

Looking back and sharing memories and having further thoughts using the photographs and quotes from the children's family books to stimulate discussion.

Collaboration

The staff share the facilitation role of discussion, helping children question and evaluate their own learning.

Skills and knowledge

Children and staff share their knowledge – both vocabulary and understanding.

The children look back on the family book as staff read out children's quotes and point out the drawings and photographs from previous experiences



EXPLANATION OF BEST PRACTICE

This footage shows staff reflecting with children upon their Family Books (or Profiles), in a quieter moment of the day. These children are aged 3-5 years old.

Reflection and reviewing our learning is a big part of the work we do at Auchlone Nature Kindergarten.

Children can do this alone, independently with their friends or with the help of

staff who read out statements or discuss drawings and photographs to help stimulate memory recall.

In the footage the staff sit with their key children, and occasionally one of their friends, to talk about their favorite past experiences and help them recall the learning that took place.

 **See footage** Reflecting on Family Books and Learning Stories at <https://youtu.be/FFwzMgOKc5A>

WHY THIS EXPERIENCE?

The staff work with the children to create their own Family Book; these are compiled chronologically using Learning Stories to record their time at Auchlone Nature Kindergarten. These books document an individual child's learning alongside Talking and Thinking Floorbooks (the group learning experiences). These methods of documentation and consultation have been developed by Mindstretchers Ltd over 20 years and include the use of Talking Tubs, Talking and Thinking Trees and 3D mindmaps™.

Staff use Floorbooks and Family Books as a reflective tool to evaluate past experience and embed prior learning (Metacognition). They are also used to plan future experiences. During and following a discussion with the children, staff make observations, scribe children's quotes or reactions and then write PLODS (Possible Lines of Development) to move the learning further forward. (For further information visit www.mindstretchers.co.uk about Talking and Thinking Floorbooks/ Participatory Planning)

THE BOY BECOMES ANIMATED THAT HE HAS FOUND A TRICERATOPS. THEREFORE, JESS JOINS THE CONVERSATION DESCRIBING HOW HE MATCHED THE TOY DINOSAURS WITH THE ONES IN THE BOOK.



This footage shows two staff members reflecting upon the children's individual Family Books during a quieter moment of the day, with three children aged 3-5 years old.

Jess (practitioner 1) shows excitement at seeing the dinosaur learning story. She asks the boy: "What kind do we have here?"

A: "A Brachiosaurus."

J: "...and how do you know that?"

A: "It has a very big, long neck."

J: "Like a giraffe?"

A: "Yes... their necks are taller than a giraffe."

Jess then turns the page and starts to discuss that he was looking at the colours. The boy becomes animated that he has found a Triceratops. Therefore, Jess joins the conversation saying he matched the toy dinosaurs with the ones in the book. The Triceratops has three horns.

We then see Mona (practitioner 2) talking with two girls. "What are we up to here?"

I: "Building."

Mona: "What is that?"

I: "A cement mixer" She then describes what she was doing with the cement, where she put it and what she did with it."

We return to look at A's book. He asks: "Why do I have no waterproofs on?"

Jess: "Do you think it was a warmer day? Maybe spring or summer?"

A: "Spring time" she agrees with him. They compare it to today's weather.

We finally return to Mona and the girls narrating the process of making pot pourri".

I then identifies the best one.

Mona says she will buy that clay again.

NOTE FROM THE PRACTITIONER



Mona Morrow, Auchlone Nature Kindergarten Manager says:

"We believe children learn best by reflecting upon their own learning and seeing photographs of themselves undertaking experiences, talking about their ideas or drawing pictures into a book.

Just think how empowering is it for a child to know that at the age of two or three, they are the author and illustrator of a book! They see that their words are so important that an adult has written them down straight into their very own Family Book. Other key people, like parent/carers or friends can also add to their book. It is strong way to form a home-setting link.

The children, families and staff at Auchlone love the Family Books; we feel there is something so valuable at leafing through the pages of a book with friends and colleagues. In an age of the paper free and technical revolution, we thrive on the experiences that celebrate the written word. The books are treasured for many years after they leave us."