

# Enhancing child led opportunities

## Case Study 8

### Farington Moss St Paul's C.E. Primary School – Paula Parker

Paula teaches in a Reception class of 20 children. She has the support of a teaching assistant (Monday – Friday a.m.) As part of the project she wanted to enhance the outdoor area to make a more interesting and stimulating environment for child-initiated learning to take place. By zoning the indoor classroom, Paula felt that child-initiated play became more purposeful, built on previous learning and enabled children to discover new things in an exciting and meaningful way. She wished to extend this in the outdoor area.

- AIM**
- To improve the quality of child-initiated play in the early years foundation stage.
  - To make learning more active and fun.
  - To accommodate the needs of a wide range of learners.
  - To give children opportunities to find out about the natural environment and ask questions about the world around them on a daily basis.

- INITIAL STEPS**
- Audit of resources.
  - Case study group chosen.
  - Plan zoned outdoor area.
  - Annotated on planning outdoor teacher-led activities and continuous provision.

- ACTION**
- Outdoor area was zoned into a creative area, a sensory area, an imaginative area, an environmental area and an open space, although the environmental area was still under development.



**Construction area**

**Imaginative area**





**Sensory area**



**Creative area**



**Open space area**



**Environmental area – raised beds and sensory path**



**Environmental area – willow dome**

- Planning was annotated with outdoor teacher-led and continuous provision activities.
- Observations on the children in the case study group were made and used to inform planning and assessment.
- Meeting with a QCDA consultant took place to develop planning, starting from the children's own interests and linking to development matters in the EYFS framework.



An example of one of the planning charts

## OUTCOMES

- Children have daily access to outdoor provision which is purposeful and appropriate to their development.
- All children are more active as they have space to explore and move.
- Children are excited and stimulated by the new and evolving provision outdoors.

## THE IMPACT ON LEARNING

- Children are happy and motivated. They enjoy being outdoors, having more space and feeling independent.
- All children are now initiating their own ideas and have improved skills such as problem solving, counting and team work.
- They are confident to try new activities and talk about them with their peers and adults in the school.
- Concentration and perseverance is improved.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Continue to develop both medium term and short term planning incorporating the interests and needs of the children in my class.
- Encourage children to take ownership and responsibility for the environmental area once it is completed.
- Continue to use observations in the outdoor area to inform assessment and planning.

### **WHAT PAULA HAS LEARNED FROM THE PROJECT**

- Children enjoy being active and outdoors in any weather.
- Planning from the children's interests makes the curriculum meaningful and exciting.
- To think 'outside the box' and to be flexible enough to adapt to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. snowy days, requests to write to the head teacher etc.)