

Valuing parents as partners in children's ongoing learning

Case Study 1



Debbie's Day Care – Deborah Ford, Childminder

Deborah Ford, childminder, has care of four children of 16 months, 18 months, 4 years and 6 years. Her research concerns Joe who is four years old, and is summer born. He attends school during the day.

AIM

Deborah wanted to develop the relationship she had with the child's parents to help Joe and wanted him to be more involved in what he was doing and to take more initiative in his activities. Deborah was also keen to develop further links with his school provision.

ACTION

Deborah started by asking Joe what **he** wanted to do ... he wanted to be on a building site, to wear a hard hat, an overall and a yellow vest. His Mum is a HGV driver and his Dad drives the vehicles on a building site. Deborah shared with Joe's parents what she found out. She bought a plastic digger he could drive and got stones from a garden centre for him to maneuver. Dad got some barriers from work, some big yellow pipes and traffic cones and Mum bought JCB overalls and took Joe to visit a building site. Deborah created a building site in her front and back gardens. She collected children's books about the construction industry and its vehicles, small world toys and building blocks. Then Joe began to play and Deborah observed and listened and played alongside. She began to make comments in the school work book which goes between school and home, filling in the questionnaire about Joe's favourite books detailing all the books about building and vehicles which Joe loves.

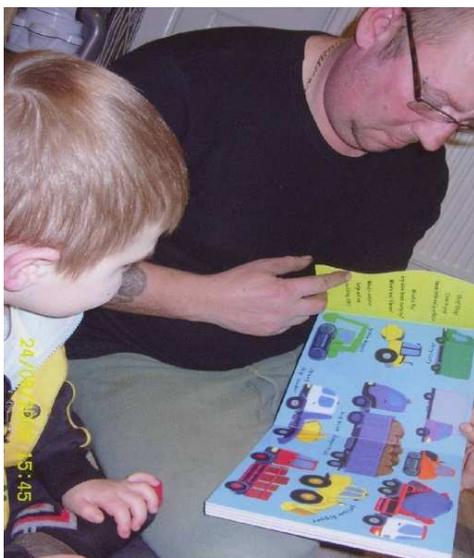


IMPACT

Joe enjoys what he is doing much more and sticks at it longer. His parents tap into his interests, he reads books with his Dad and Mum about vehicles, counts building materials and notices how heavy the stones are when his digger is full.



The school is responding to Deborah's insights into Joe's activities and is adapting the provision to build on Joe's interests. They are including diggers and construction materials in the role play. Deborah now regards herself as a colleague in supporting Joe's learning.



Deborah notices that Joe is learning much more because he is interested and can influence what is happening. He is making rapid progress in understanding weight, shape recognition, and counting. The school has noticed the same and that his reading is improving.

Deborah feels that the school values her knowledge of Joe and pays attention to her notes. The co-development network has given Deborah the confidence to share what she is doing and to persist in making links with the school. The other practitioners from

across the range of providers value her work and have given her ideas of how to go forward.

NEXT STEPS

Deborah has resolved to "have a brew and chat" with parents more often because she learns so much of value about the children, to ask children their views, to listen more and to give them real experiences which seem to make the learning stick.

