



## Ealing Case Study: ICT in the Foundation Stage 'Listening to Young Children' (Visit #1)

### Context/Rationale:

Our 2005 Early Years conference on 'Listening to Young Children' was delivered by Penny Lancaster from The Coram Family. The impact of participation in the conference is being supported through this new follow up project focused on empowering practitioners to use ICT as a 'listening tool' in the Foundation Stage.

Listening to Young Children is centred on the belief that children have the right to a voice, and that their 'voice' is valued. By listening to the thoughts, ideas and contributions of children we can help them to achieve their full potential by valuing their participation in matters that affect their lives. Technology has an exciting part to play in giving a multimodal communication tool to children. Beliefs, interests, and ideas can be expressed and shared through visual, sound and video mediums.

Notes on the context of the Case Study:

- The case studies have been collected in the first visit to settings two weeks after the training.
- This captures the beginning stages of reflective practice in the area of Listening to Young Children.
- These case studies will be revisited in the second visit to settings to gather evidence of further reflection.
- These case studies were completed by the practitioners from the settings and collated by the project trainers Ellie Hagreen and Ruth Irvine.

### Setting Name: Edward Betham Primary School Nursery Class

The teachers of both the morning and the afternoon Nursery attended the initial training day on Using ICT as a Listening Tool. When asked to assess their own ICT competence, both teachers scored themselves quite low, saying that it was their Nursery Nurse who was good with computers. On my visit, I saw good use of ICT for classroom labelling, including signs in a range of different languages.

There was also a display of print-outs of the children's work using 'Goldilocks' on My World 3. They decided that they wanted to focus their enquiry on the home corner and would use the camera, drawings, discussion, etc, to find out what the children liked/disliked and would like to change.

### Process:

In my visit to the Nursery I saw that the practitioners had begun by introducing the idea of changing the home corner to the children as a 'carpet session'. The teacher commented that the children "had lots to say" about what they wanted. They had come up with a range of ideas for additions to the provision, including some everyday technology – "Washing machine, one that looks like a washing machine." The children didn't like the washing machine they already had because "there is no glass." They also wanted a microwave that had "\*\*\*\*\* to press." One child asked for "things that make noises like the kettle." Some children were also keen to update the decoration, as well as getting comfortable chairs and a bedroom/bathroom.



Photo #1 Child's photo of the current washing machine



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The next step was to introduce the camera to the children. They showed the children how to use it on a 1:1 basis, giving each child a turn at taking 'before' photos in the area. The children have so far only used the cameras with supervision from an adult. Children also drew pictures of the home corner as it was and talked about what they would like to change.

*Photo #2 Things children like in the home corner*

The two teachers had been given staff meeting time to discuss the project and had used this time also to download the photos together, supporting each other in the process. They have also been using the cameras to take photos for their assessment of the children.

### Practices:

There was good evidence that the staff have started to adopt the Listening to Young Children approach, as shown by their recorded discussions with the children, the pictures and the photos. They had begun to let the children use the cameras by themselves, and had ideas for how they could extend the project further, within the parameters of schemes of work.

The 'listening approach' in the role play area has provided opportunities to hear about the ICT children are familiar with in their homes and how this can be used in the Nursery context through real to life experiences. The children are showing an awareness of real and role play technology.

The use of the camera has given them a 'voice' to share their preferences.

*Photo #3 Children enjoy improvised beds*

### Possibilities:

**The teachers have identified the following next steps:**

- Try to implement changes the children have talked about, such as a TV made out of a cardboard box
- Involve parents in the project, hoping they can provide some items such as soft cushions, etc
- Possibly develop outdoor play area along the same lines

