A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF ROLE-PLAY IN TWO PACK-AWAY EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS.

Kingdon, Zenna Mary

Copyright Statement

RESEARCH DEGREES WITH PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY

A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF ROLE-PLAY IN TWO PACK-AWAY EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS.

by

ZENNA MARY KINGDON

A thesis submitted to Plymouth University
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Plymouth Institute of Education (Faculty of Arts & Humanities)

June 2016

Acknowledgements

My thanks go to several people who have supported me and cajoled me through this process. Thanks go to colleagues too numerous to mention at both the University of St Mark and St John and Newman University, but particular thanks go to Dr Scott Buckler and Dr Julie Evans.

Thanks go to all of the Plymouth University staff who have engaged in and supported this process; Dr Ulrike Hohmann, Dr Norman Gabriel, and Dr Julia Morgan.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends; particularly Jill Shapcott for proof-reading and editing. Lastly, I want to acknowledge the support and sacrifices made by husband and my sons. When I started this process, my children were little boys. It seems that during my journey they have become young men and are about to start their own university journeys. I am certain that they will continue to develop into amazing young people and I wish them everything that they would wish for themselves and more besides. They have provided inspiration when no-one else could.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Graduate Sub-Committee. Work submitted for this research degree at the Plymouth University has not formed part of any other degree either at Plymouth University or at another establishment. Relevant scientific seminars and conferences were regularly attended at which work was often presented (please see publications pp. 374).

Presentation and Conferences Attended: As above

Word count of main body of thesis: 76507

Signature:

Abstract

In this thesis, I explored children's experiences of role-play in relation to notions of self. The research took place in two pack-away settings in the Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). The experiences of eight children, aged between three-year-three months and four-years one month, were investigated over a period of seven months. I used an adaptation of The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) combined with a reflective lenses approach (Brookfield 1995) to create a three-dimensional view of the children's experiences. The children and I used a range of tools to gather data including digital cameras, conferencing, drawing and map-making. Children were conceptualised as agentic and capable of commenting on their lives and experiences (James et al 1998, Qvortrup 2004, Cosaro 2010).

The findings revealed that children engage in *Wave Play*, a fluid form of role-play in which they move both props and ideas from space to space. Practitioners support the children in finding the necessary props and allowing them to move from one area of the setting to another. The children displayed positive self-esteem and effective social behaviours showing an awareness of themselves as social beings. They were confident that their needs will be met when they request support. In their role-play activities, they showed their understanding of themselves as integrated selves; *beings, becomings* and *having beens* (Cross 2011). Adults in pack-away settings can support children effectively by adopting a flexible pedagogical approach.

Acronyms

DCSF Department for Children Schools and Families

DFE Department for Education

DFEE Department for Education and Employment

DFES Department for Education and Skills

EPPE Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (project)

EYP Early Years Professional

EYPS Early Years Professional Status

PVI Private, Voluntary and Independent (Sector)

REPEY Researching Effective Pedagogy in Early Years

SST Sustained Shared Thinking

Contents

Introduction

In this thesis, I set out to investigate young children's experiences of role-play, with a focus on self, in pack-away early childhood education and care settings. Play has been researched through various disciplines including: biology, psychology, anthropology, education and cultural studies (Wood 2007). Play is the dominant discourse of almost all writing which is concerned with the pedagogy of early years (Wood & Attfield 2005, Howard et al 2010, Moyles 2010, Rogers 2011). Despite some challenges, the rhetoric of the DfE (2014) remains that play, both child-initiated and adult-led, should form the basis of any early years curriculum in England.

Much of the early years provision in England occurs in the PVI (private, voluntary and independent) sector, yet most of research that has been and continues to be conducted in early years, occurs within the maintained sector (Roberts-Holmes 2012). In this thesis, I step outside of this, conducting my research within the PVI sector. Moreover, I specifically focus on pack-away settings, settings which operate in non-dedicated spaces such as village or church halls, where they are obliged to set up and pack away daily. Having worked closely with a number of pack-away settings through my work with Ofsted and in Higher Education, I am particularly interested in children's experiences in them. Through this study I am seeking to contribute to new knowledge by:

- undertaking research in pack-away settings, a specific aspect of early childhood education and care provision in which little or no research has been conducted.

- focussing on children's social behaviours particularly when engaged in role-play

- considering the relationships between the children and adults in the settings

The research will provide an insight into young children's perspectives and may provide a platform for further research within the PVI sector as further questions are initiated.

From the late 1990s onwards governments in countries from England to Australia and New Zealand, including many European countries, developed curriculum frameworks and regulated at national level what occurred in the early years sector (Oberhuemer 2005). There were many reasons for the increased interest in early years education and these included; recognition of the status of education in a knowledge economy, recent developments in neuro-science research that demonstrated the impact of high quality early years provision and for providing a framework in which there could be clear communication between parents and settings (Oberhuemer 2005). These curricula took several different constructs and were from overarching guidance through to prescriptions of what should be taught and assessed. In order that children become effective learners they need to develop three elements, '…dispositions to learn; social competence and self-concept; emotional well-being' (Pascal and Bertram 2002, p. 93). Whilst in many of the curricula there is a focus on literacy and numeracy, these three strands are also seen, along with recognition that children engage more fully where the adults demonstrate awareness and concern for their interests (Hedges et al 2011). In almost every early years curriculum in the Western World there is recognition demonstrated that the best way young children learn is through a play based curriculum in which they have choice and control.

In England and Wales, a series of curricula were developed with the initial curriculum – Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education (DfEE 1996), quickly being abandoned. The subsequent curriculum, Curriculum Guidance for the

Foundation Stage (2000), was developed in collaboration with the early childhood community. This curriculum began to demonstrate an awareness of research into child development (Soler and Miller 2003). The document acknowledges that a key way in which young children learn is through well-planned play opportunities that provide both enjoyment and challenge.

Following the introduction of Curriculum Guidance (DfEE 2000) came Birth to Three Matters (DfES 2002). Many within the early years sector saw the introduction of Birth to Three Matters (DfES 2002) as a positive step. It provided guidance demonstrating what was considered to be good practice for those working with these very young children. It adopted an approach that stressed the importance of relationships (Duffy 2010). Birth to Three Matters (DfES 2002) was a recognition, sanctioned by government that the needs of the youngest children and the ways in which they learn were different from the learning styles and needs of older children. In 2008 Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage (DfEE 2000), Birth to Three Matters (DfES 2002) and the 14 National Standards for Day Care and Childminding (DfES 2001) were largely amalgamated into The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DCSF 2008). The EYFS (DCSF 2008) created a distinctive phase for children that was considered to be developmentally appropriate, advocating a play-based curriculum that also merged notions of education and care (Roberts-Holmes, 2012). The EYFS (DCSF 2008) was referred to as a principled approach and was arranged around four broad themes; A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development.

The EYFS (DCSF 2008) is predicated on a socio-cultural theoretical approach in which children are seen as effective co-constructors of knowledge (Roberts-Holmes 2012). There

was a clear expectation that the curriculum would be delivered through a play-based

experiential approach. It drew on the work of both Vygotsky (1986, 1976) and Bruner (1976,

1987 and 1990) in its co-constructed approach in which play could be seen as a central

element.

Play pedagogy appears to bring together two disparate approaches to early childhood, on

the one hand there is the 18th Century Romantics notion of play as a natural part of

childhood and on the other, the 20th Century developmentalists' approach that suggested

that play was the most effective way for young children to learn (Brooker 2011). The

Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) (Sylva et al 2004) and Researching

Effective Pedagogy in Early Years (REPEY) (Siraj-Blatchford et al 2002) reports supported this

through their research in which they discovered that children in high quality settings were

offered appropriate opportunities to engage in a play-based curriculum and had their

learning supported by the practitioners through episodes of Sustained Shared Thinking.

The initial EYFS (DCSF 2008) was a complex curriculum that recognised the salience of early

childhood as a distinct phase in child development, the need for a broad and balanced

curriculum that demonstrated a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning experiences

based on close observation of the child and delivered through a play-based approach. It is

this approach to early years provision that I am interested in this thesis, with particular

emphasis on the children's experiences of play opportunities within the EYFS (DfE 2012/14)

in their settings.

The EYFS (DCSF 2008) had been being delivered for less than two years, when Dame Clare

Tickell was appointed to carry out an independent review of the Early Years Foundation

Stage (EYFS) (DCSF 2008) to consider how this could be less bureaucratic and more focused

on supporting children's early learning. The review was to cover four main areas: scope of

regulation, learning and development, assessment, welfare (DfE 2010). In total, Tickell

(2011) made 46 recommendations about changes that should be made to the EYFS (DCSF

2008). She recommended that personal, social and emotional development, communication

and language and physical development are identified as prime areas of learning in the

EYFS. Alongside the three prime areas she proposed four specific areas in which the prime

skills would be applied: literacy, mathematics, expressive arts and design, and

understanding the world. She commented that she also recommended that playing and

exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically, should be highlighted in the

EYFS as three characteristics of effective teaching and learning (Tickell 2011). It would

appear that her recommendations provide a number of dichotomies, on the one hand the

school readiness agenda was evident, on the other play remained a central domain for

children's learning and development. Within the sector there was disagreement. On the one

hand Thomson (2011) commented that the revised curriculum appeared to focus on how

rather than what children should learn and this was seen as a positive move. However, on

the other Langston (2011) argued that whilst a school readiness agenda was to be expected,

it was what was omitted more than what was included that was concerning; the notion of

valuing childhood in its own right appeared to be absent from the new curriculum.

The introduction of the EYFS (DCSF 2008) had provided a shift in early years practice in that

all registered daycare providers were expected to deliver it. Previously childminders and

those working with children under the age of three were not necessarily expected to deliver

a curriculum per se. This new curriculum called for an emphasis on interactions between

adults and children and particularly focussed on instances of Sustained Shared Thinking (SST).

 SST appears to be a new concept coming out of EPPE (Sylva et al 2004) and REPEY (Siraj-Blatchford et al 2002). However, whilst the phrase was not previously adopted, the concept was established through the work of socio-cultural constructivists, Cole (1998), Hoogsteder et al (1996) Göncü (1998) Trevarthen (1998) ultimately drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Bruner (1986, 1987, 1990, 1996). The REPEY report (Siraj-Blatchford et al 2002, p.8) defines SST as:

> An episode in which two or more individuals "work together" in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate activities, extend a narrative etc. Both parties must contribute to the thinking and it must develop and extend.

It is a pedagogically appropriate method of interacting with children which could be seen in both qualitative and quantitative observations (Siraj-Blatchford 2010). It is now part of the language of the early years sector in England and Wales, embedded in both the curriculum and practitioner qualification criteria.

Having worked with the early childhood education and care sector in England for over 15 years, I am interested by what occurs in it. Most of the settings that I have worked with are within the PVI (Private, Voluntary and Independent sector) which is under-researched (Roberts-Holmes 2012). I am particularly interested in role-play in pack-away settings because it provides its own challenges in such settings. These settings are not readily recognised by government, because they do not record how many of them exist (Allsopp by email 05/06/11). Pack-away settings provide the same education and care as any other setting, following the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (DfE 2014), yet they face

some unique challenges. In order to undertake this research, it was necessary to consider what issues underpin it. I considered these to be; role-play, pack-away settings and, children's perspectives. So, to consider the children's experiences further, three questions were designed:

1. How do children utilise resources: space and objects, in their role-play in pack-away settings?

2. How do children demonstrate notions of their social-self including notions of *being*, *becoming* and *having been*, through role-play activities in pack-away settings?

3. How do children perceive the adults in their settings with specific reference to role-play?

These questions provide the framework for interrogating the data.

The Chapters

Chapter 1 provides an analysis of the literature base that underpins both play and role-play, in the lives of young children in early childhood education and care settings in England. Consideration is given to concepts of the social self and children's notions of self, as well as the culturally located nature of the role-play. Consideration is given to the development of the recognition of childhood as a phase in its own right. The work of both Piaget and Vygotsky is explored. Role-play as a separate aspect of play is discussed with particular reference to its position in the development of playful pedagogies and the ways in which it can support children in developing personally and socially (Paley 1992, Gupta 2009). The notion of the social self as a concept that unifies philosophical, psychological and sociological approaches is explored alongside constructions of children as integrated beings

(Uprichard 2008, Cross 2011). Pack-away settings as a feature of Early Childhood Education and Care is discussed. A conspicuous feature of the pack-away settings in this research is their access to space. Children's use of space in discussed. The chapter concludes that role-play is a way in which children are enabled to exhibit notions of self in meaningful ways.

In Chapter 2 this thesis is framed within an interpretivist paradigm in which reality is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic and gendered values and experiences. I am concerned with seeking and understanding the views of young children in order to better understand their experiences of their lives (Greene and Hill 2005). Therefore, this research is child-centred. The children are positioned as active agents capable of commenting on their own lives. The notion that the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) can be both a methodology as well as a method is discussed. The impact of the UNCRC (1989) is explored in relation to carrying out research with children. The tools and methods used to gather the data were developed from an integration of The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) and the critically reflective four lenses approach (Brookfield 1995).

Chapter 3 provides a detailed overview of data that were generated for this thesis whilst also explaining how I did this and who the full range of participants were; children, parents, practitioners and settings.

In Chapter 4 'Role-playing with space and objects', I introduce the term Wave Play, a term which I coined to describe a form of fluid social-dramatic play, in which the play theme is carried from one space to another. I open the chapter with a discussion of the ways in which object play can be seen as a facet of role-play (Leong and Bodrova, 2012, Broadhead and Burt 2012). The challenges of offering these play opportunities in pack-away settings is

explored as well as the challenges of developing play opportunities over a period of time. I move on to discuss the use of space which links to Wave Play. Wave play is socio-constructivist in approach and draws on Vygotsky (1978) in its recognition of language as a central tool of the play. The definition of Wave play necessarily includes reference to space as children are observed moving equipment and resources from one locale to another whilst taking the play theme with them. I explore links between Wave play and outdoor play where children are given opportunities to build on a larger scale and to experiment with sound and movement. The children's ability to manage behaviour and conflicts is discussed.

In Chapter 5 '*Beings* and *Becomings*: An integrated Approach' I link the data to the development of the sociology of childhood. Engaging their *being, becoming* and *having been* selves in role-play opportunities supports children in understanding some of the complex structures of the world around allowing them to be capable social actors.

In Chapter 6 I explore children's perceptions of the adults in their settings with reference to role-play. I open with a discussion of the role of the practitioners and their responsibility for organisation in pack-away settings. Discussion of the ways in which the practitioners provide a secure base from which the children can explore follows (Rose and Rogers 2012). The ways in which children in pack-away settings are enabled to form relationships with all the staff and the ways in which they appear to choose who they wish to spend time with is investigated (Curtis and O'Hagan 2009).

In the conclusion, I return to the research questions. I take each of the three questions in turn discussing how these have been answered. I draw conclusions and discuss the implications for research, practice and policy.

Chapter 1 - The Literature: Play role-play and notions of the Social Self in Pack-Away settings

1.1 Introduction

The themes of play, role-play and children's notions of the social-self within pack-away settings provide the underpinning themes of this thesis. In this chapter, I will focus on the themes of play and role-play, examining the supporting literature. I consider the social self and children's notions of self, I investigate the development of pack-away settings. The children, involved in this study, are immersed in a western culture and as such the literature review will draw on texts that reflect this. Whilst experiences of children in other cultures will be referred to, they will not be explored in any significant depth.

Role-play is a type of play and therefore it is first necessary to consider definitions of play. The role and value of play in children's cognitive development is also discussed, with emphasis on the work of Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner. Play is the dominant discourse of almost all writing which is concerned with the pedagogy of early years (Wood & Attfield 2005, Broadhead et al 2010, Moyles 2010, Rogers 2011). Whilst play is a key factor in the early lives of all mammals, more research is necessary to scientifically substantiate some of the claims that are made about its position and value in child development (Smith 2010). The dominant discourse of play is challenged and some of the dominant theoretical perspectives are questioned (Grieshaber and McArdle 2010).

The notion that role-play is discreetly human is explored together with the ways in which language is necessary to support the development of such play. The position of role-play in playful pedagogies is explored. A definition is applied that can then be used throughout the remainder of this thesis.

The social-self as a concept which unifies philosophical, psychological and sociological theoretical concepts of early childhood and child development is explored. The ways in which this approach allows for a rich description of children as competent social actors that are framed by their socio-cultural experiences is also explored (James and James 2004, James and Prout 1997, James, Jenks and Prout 1998, Jenks 2005).

The necessity for children to form relationships which allow them to develop an understanding of themselves in relation to others is investigated, drawing particularly on Bowlby's (1958) attachment model. A theoretical model that allows for children as *beings, becomings* and having *beens* is analysed (Cross, 2011). The section concludes by recognising that role-play provides opportunities for children to demonstrate their awareness of themselves in these three temporal states.

Pack-away settings as a form of early years provision is considered. The initial work of Belle Tutaev is explored as well as the subsequent development of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The ways in which children are enabled to utilise space in pack-away settings is explored.

This review concludes by drawing the strands together to provide a definition of role-play, one which will be used throughout the thesis. I demonstrate the gaps in knowledge, indicating where further research is necessary. Finally, I develop the subsidiary questions that will frame the research.

1.2 Definitions of Play

Defining play is not an easy task but a clear definition of the construct play is required for research into play (Smith, 2010, Pellegrini, 2009a). Play is a behaviour that is demonstrated

by all mammals and several other orders of animals including birds and some invertebrates

(Smith 2010). Attempts to separate animal and human play behaviour show the complexity

of the concept (ibid 2010). The term play is often used colloquially to define all forms of

children's activities, which adds to the problem of definition (Pellegrini 2009a). Play is a

concept that is associated with juveniles and, 'its benefits relate to creativity and novelty'

(Pellegrini 2010, p. 27). Behaviours are often defined as play because they appear to be of

no benefit, yet 'perhaps paradoxically, play is typically seen as serving an important function

in children's development' (Pellegrini and Smith 1998, p. 53). Some benefits may be delayed

but may still occur whilst the person is a juvenile supporting the maturation process

(Pellegrini 2009a). Equally there is, 'emphases on means over ends and non-functional

behavior because they are probably antecedents for children later generating novel

behaviors and sequences of behaviors' (Pellegrini 2009b, p. 132). Those observing play can

consistently identify play when they see it, what they find more challenging is, 'presenting

an operational definition. Given the complexity of the phenomenon, it is generally

considered that no one definition is necessary or sufficient… thus definitions are typically

multi-dimensional' (ibid, 1998, p. 51).

In many European languages; English, French and Spanish, for example, there is only one

word for play however the Greeks used three different terms to describe play; Sanskrit has

four verbs associated with the concept and Chinese has words for different aspects of play

(Huizinga 1949). Sutton-Smith (1997, p. 49) states that children's definitions are concerned

with, '...having fun, being outdoors, being with friends, choosing freely not working,

pretending, enacting, fantasy and drama, and playing games...' Play appears to be '…a

function of the living, but is not susceptible of exact definition either logically, biologically,

or aesthetically' (Huizinga, 1949, p.7). One solution to defining play is concerned with the notion that play does not have an end in itself, but may have delayed benefits (Smith 2010). Children engage in play because they enjoy the activity it is fun. Simultaneously physical or exercise play, or pretend play may help to develop their muscles or their sense of creativity.

Play covers a wide range of behaviours, occurs in a diverse range of contexts and does not adhere to one definition. This has led to theorists developing taxonomies of play, at the opposite ends of the scale are epistemic behaviours and ludic behaviours (Hutt et al 1989). Epistemic behaviours are concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and information. Such behaviours are usually influenced by external factors and objects and are not dependent on the mood or emotional state of the child at the time (ibid 1989). Ludic behaviours are essentially concerned with self-amusement and are reliant on the emotional state of an individual or group (ibid 1989). The taxonomy, '… appears to take account of the behavioural distinction which characterizes different forms of play' (Hutt et al 1989, p. 225). Wood and Attfield (2005) state that definitions need to include reference to behaviours and contexts whilst Rogers (2011, p. 5) states that through both theoretical and empirical studies, there is evidence that children have an innate capacity to play and that this, '...appears to be central to their learning.' Likewise, '... it is not just play, but the capacity to play that has significance for human development and learning' (Wood 2010, p. 14).' Children who are unable to play, particularly due to social or emotional difficulties, will be disadvantaged in many areas; they will find difficulties in forming relationships and in engaging in new opportunities to learn.

Piaget[1], Vygotsky[2] and Bruner[3] all focus on the significance of play in their theories of child development seeing it as central to the ways in which children develop and learn. Both Piaget and Bruner adhere to a definition that is concerned with behaviour and the approach to action whilst Vygotsky is concerned with language and social interactions. Piaget and Vygotsky were born the same year. There was a period, prior to the lowering of the iron curtain, in which Piaget and Vygotsky were pedagogical collaborators (Gillen 2000 Pass 2007, and Kozulin 1989). However, much of Vygotsky's work was lost to the west until the late 1970s when translations became available.

1.2.1 Piaget's positioning of play in child development
The work of Jean Piaget has been influential on research and practice in both schools and Early Years settings, regarding play and learning (Smith et al 2003). His research has had specific implications for child-centred learning (ibid 2003). Piaget's prime concerns were with logical, mathematical, and scientific thinking. His theory of cognitive development placed problem solving at the centre of the process (Wood and Attfield 2005). He put the child at the centre of the learning process, seeing the child as an active constructor of knowledge.

Piaget (1951) was determined to give a clear explanation of play, examining when play begins. He argues that there is a relationship between the six stages of imitation and the stages of sensory-motor intelligence: preparation through reflex, sporadic imitation, systematic imitation, imitation of movement, systematic imitation of new models and

---

[1] 1896 – 1980 Born in Switzerland first texts seen in English from approximately 1926
[2] 1896 – 1934 Born in Russia, first texts seen in English from approximately 1978

[3] 1915 – 2016 Born in America.

representation of imitation. He begins by assessing whether play begins with preparatory

reflex, drawing on the work of Groos (1896 cited in Piaget 1951) who saw play as pre-

exercise of essential instincts. However, Piaget (1951) questions whether these are real

games. He then moves to question whether everything during the first few months of life

other than feeding and emotions is in fact play. He examines the work of Clarapede (1913,

p. 150) who states that the purpose of childhood is for play and imitation suggesting that

nature has implanted certain wants and desires in children that can only be satisfied by,

'play; even when imitation intervenes it is always in the form of play or in connection with

play'. Piaget (1951) was not accepting of this explanation, saying that if pre-exercise is

accepted as play then all children's activities would necessarily need to be considered play.

Piaget recognises that play has a role in cognitive development (1951, 1970). Like Vygotsky

he thought that play was central to children's learning. He linked it to concepts of self-

discovery and child-centred learning (Broadhead and Burt 2012). Unlike Vygotsky, Piaget

(1951) believed that cognitive development was part of a maturation process and not

necessarily as part of socio-cultural activities. He links his writing on play to his key theory,

that of equilibration.

Equilibration is the state of having been through a process of assimilation and

accommodation, it is in this way the child creates new cognitive structures (Piaget 1951,

1955, 1970, 1978). The child begins by believing that they are the centre of the universe

directing objects around them, they move to believe that the self is in a stable world

independent of personal activity (Piaget 1955). Piaget states that, 'it can be explained only

by the development of intelligence. By a process of assimilation and accommodation' (ibid,

p. 350). When a child meets a new concept, or challenge they move into a state of dis-

equilibration, one in which their current understanding or schema does not meet with the

new information that they have received or encountered. To move to equilibration the child

must either assimilate the new knowledge into their existing structures and understanding

or through a process of accommodation make changes to the existing structures to

accommodate the new information, experience or ideas and thus again be in a state of

equilibration. 'Assimilation and accommodation are therefore the two poles of an

interaction between the organism and the environment' (Piaget, 1955, p. 353). Assimilation

is, 'conservative and tends to subordinate the environment to the organism', integrating

external elements into evolving or completed structures (Piaget, 1955, p. 352).

Accommodation is, '… any modification of an assimilatory scheme or structure by the

elements it assimilates' (Piaget, 1970, p. 708). Both assimilation and accommodation are

necessary for a child to be able to engage in cognitive adaptation through the process of

equilibration.

Play is the primacy of assimilation over accommodation (Piaget 1951). Play is functional or

reproductive assimilation, it is concerned with the assimilation of things one to another and

ultimately to the ego. Piaget describes play as behaviours that are repeated simply for

assimilation, purely for pleasure. Imaginative play allows for, '... symbolic transpositions

which subjects things to the child's activity without rules or limitations' (Piaget, 1951, p87).

Play allows children to discover concepts and ideas for themselves.

Children move from motor-play to symbolic play through a process of ritualisation of

schemas making use of symbolism. It is in symbolic play that children begin to develop

situations that are not directly related to the objects that are available to them; instead they use the objects to signify an object which is absent. It is through this process that schemas begin to inter-communicate and become able to be expressed by signs. Piaget (1951) argues that in ludic or play symbols, imitation is not related to the object that is present, but to the object that is absent. Therefore, imitative accommodation remains subordinated to assimilation. In symbolic play signifiers and the signified are used to distort assimilation.

Piaget (1951) classified and described play, to find an interpretation. Given the number of theories of play it is not simple to understand. Previous theories have attempted to look at play in isolation as though it does not have any relation to other activities. Piaget (1951) establishes how it is possible to distinguish play from non-ludic activities. The main criteria used demonstrate that, '...play is not a behaviour per se, or one particular activity amongst others' is determined by the bearing of the behaviour (Piaget, 1951, p147).

Previous theories have established six criteria for play: play as an end in itself, spontaneity of play over the compulsion for work, play as an activity for pleasure, the lack of need for organisation in play, that play is freedom from conflicts, and it includes motivation for the player (Piaget 1951). He Despite this range of criteria offered to demonstrate the difference between play and non-ludic behaviour, they failed to make the distinction clear. So, in order to attempt to explain play he revisits three theories, Groos' (1896 cited in Piaget 1951) Theory of Pre-exercise, Hall's Recapitulation Theory (1916 cited in Piaget 1951) and the work of Buytendijk (Wolf 1934 cited in Piaget 1951). Piaget (1951) analyses Groos' theory demonstrating that whilst he cannot agree with the idea of pre-exercise, he does agree with the concept that there is a relationship between symbolic play and practice play. He is

however concerned that Groos' theory could lead us to believe that symbolic games train the imagination. Piaget (1951, p155) reminds us that imagination is not a faculty he claims that it is, '... one of the two poles of all thought, that of free combination and mutual assimilation of schemas.' Piaget (1951) felt that Groos failed to explain symbolic fiction.

Piaget (1951) investigates the three strands of Hall's Recapitulation Theory; games follow one after the other at relatively constant age stages, the content corresponds with ancestral activities and the function of the play is to liberate the species from these residues whilst hurrying its development to higher stages. Piaget (1951) was interested in the first strand; here similarities can be drawn with his own theory of ages and stages of cognitive development. However, he felt that the facts were in direct contradiction to the evidence. Piaget (1951) suggests that for Hall the content was important rather than the structure. It is commonly agreed that the content of games will be because of the child's natural and social environment rather than because of something that is inherited. Some games that children play have their origins in ancient magic and divinity, however children continue to play them because of social transmission rather than heredity.

Piaget (1951, p158) suggests that additionally to Groos and Hall's classic explanations of play there are numerous other interpretations of play but that they are, '... functional descriptions rather than causal explanations.' One of the few writers that has attempted to solve the operational problems of play is FJ J Buytendijk (Wolf 1934, cited in Piaget 1951) in his work on infantile dynamics. Buytendijk does not attempt to reduce play to a single function. Where Groos would suggest that children have a childhood in order to play, Buytendijk says that a child plays because he is a child. Buytendijk suggests that there are

four characteristics that can be used to identify play; firstly sensory-motor or mental lack of coherence, secondly impulsiveness, thirdly a pathic attitude as opposed to a Gnostic one – a need for sympathetic understanding rather than objective knowledge, fourth shyness with respect to things, leaving a child shifting between attraction and withdrawal. Piaget (1951) states that he agrees with infantile dynamics, however he is concerned that Buytendijk has not made clear the transition from dynamics, or transformational aspects of reality, to play.

Piaget (1951) interprets play specifically through the structure of children's thought. He explains that behaviours need two poles, the pole of accommodation and the pole of assimilation. In play, however the relationship between assimilation and accommodation differs from the relationship in cognition. Signs that are used in symbolic representation during play episodes are evoked temporarily for interest or immediate satisfaction. In ludic episodes assimilation is the dominant aspect between the child and the signified. Symbolic play is one of the poles of thought, the one in which assimilation is distanced from accommodation (Piaget 1951). He states that children recognise the difference between pretence and reality very early, however, he questions how pretence is to be explained and why ludic symbolism is divorced from belief. There are three types of belief: promise belief in which a child accepts the other particularly if an adult is involved, assertive belief which precedes that which is certain and that which is doubtful and reflective belief which is associated with mechanisms of intellect. Children from the age of 2 – 4 do not consider whether their ludic symbols are real (Piaget 1951). It is only after the age of 7 that children's play becomes make-believe rather than reflected belief. As for whether collective symbolism and group play strengthens or weakens belief appears to depend on the age of the child and type of play in which they are engaged. There is a direct correlation between

make-believe play and symbolic assimilation similarly between functional assimilation and

practice play, each play type serving a different purpose. Piaget (1951) concludes that a

static analysis of representative activity is unhelpful. It should include an understanding of

the fluidity of the roles of assimilation and accommodation. It can be argued that play is a

significant factor in this and the child's cognitive development.

Play provides children access to a language that is lively and active that enables them to

express their feelings and to re-live past experiences to understand and enjoy them. Piaget's

child-centred approach necessitates active learning (Smith et al 2003). Piaget was certain

that children learn best when they are given opportunities to actively engage with play

materials that allow learning to occur. Piaget was concerned with the process, the playing,

rather than the product and encouraged teachers to take this view, claiming that teachers

should be interested in what was behind the answer, the reasoning process rather than a

correct answer.

1.2.2 Vygotsky's positioning of play in child development

Like Piaget, Vygotsky is concerned with the ways in which learners make progress, focussing

on process as well as product in assessment (Daniels 2001). He puts the child at the centre

of the learning process, seeing the child as an active constructor of knowledge. Like Piaget,

Vygotsky considers play to be central to child development. However, his view of play is

very different to that of Piaget.

In his early discussions of play Vygotsky (1978) states that defining play as something that

gives pleasure to children is inaccurate on two counts. Firstly, there are other things that

give children sharper experiences of pleasure and secondly there are games which are not

pleasurable. He continues to suggest that pleasure cannot be a defining characteristic of play, but that its role in fulfilling children's needs should not be intellectualised out of existence (Vygotsky 1978). Vygotsky recognises that needs and motivations change with maturation. He claims that no-one has met a child, '... under three years old who wants to do something a few days in the future' (Vygotsky, 1978, p93). He suggests that play occurs from approximately three-years-old upwards as children wish to deal with their desires that cannot be immediately satiated by other means. In play children enter, '... an imaginary illusory world in which the unrealisable desires can be realised, and this world is what we call play' (Vygotsky, 1978, p93). For Vygotsky play tended to mean imaginary play rather than the range of play typologies to which we currently refer. Smith (2010) would argue that there are a range of different types of play, and these play typologies occur at different ages and stages of the child's development. Sensorimotor play for example tends to occur up until the child is two-years of age (Smith, 2010). It is probable that Vygotsky (1978) is referring almost exclusively to socio-dramatic or role-play type behaviour.

He argues that play is not, 'the predominant feature of childhood but it is a leading factor in development' (Vygotsky, 1978, p101). He clearly acknowledges the value of play in children's development, going on to suggest that children make progress through play activities. He recognises that play changes as children develop, so that in the early stages children are engaged in activities that are familiar, feeding the doll for example. He believes that as the play moves forward there is a realisation of its purpose, '...it is incorrect to conceive of play as activity without purpose' (Vygotsky, 1978, p103). He believes that through play a relationship is developed between the field of meaning and the visual field and between thought and reality. Vygotsky (1978) concludes that whilst on a superficial

level play appears to have little similarity to complex thought, it would only be possible to discover its role in development through insightful internal analysis. It would seem therefore that whilst he states that play is not necessarily something that gives pleasure, it is crucial in the intellectual development of the child and supporting them in moving from one stage to another.

Play is a psychological process which is not present in the consciousness of very young children and is absent in animals (Vygotsky 1978). His essential arguments that support his claims are based on research into young children's visual perception and thought alongside those of brain damaged patients; words are originally associated with spatial location. Therefore; young children are incapable of repeating something that they can see to be wrong. For example, if they are asked to repeat the sentence, "My friend is standing up," when their friend is clearly sitting down, then they will automatically say what they see. Brain damaged patients are not able to act independently of what they see. It is from this that, '...one can appreciate that the freedom of action adults and more mature children enjoy is not acquired in a flash' (Vygotsky, 1978, p.97). He argues that once a child is of pre-school age, approximately six or seven, that they can begin to separate fields of vision from meaning. In this way, it can be observed that in play, '... thought is separated from objects and action arises from ideas rather than from things: a piece of wood begins to be a doll and a stick becomes a horse' (Vygotsky, 1978, p.97). He argues that initially in the mind of children, and adults suffering from certain illnesses, that there is a relationship between objects and meaning. He sees this as a ratio of object over meaning. Later as children begin to use the stick as the horse, the ratio changes and it becomes meaning over object. It is in, '...this way a child's greatest achievements are possible in play, achievement that tomorrow

will become her basic level of real action and morality' (Vygotsky, 1978, p.100). He continues to argue that in a similar way to object over meaning there is a relationship between action and meaning. This begins with the ratio of action over meaning but develops to become meaning over action. The child can demonstrate in play meaning, for example stamping the ground pretending to be a horse. He suggests that in the normal course of everyday life this diminishing of the rules is unlikely to occur, however in play this becomes possible. Therefore, '...play creates a zone of proximal development of the child. In play a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself' (Vygotsky, 1978, p102). He makes a clear link between play and the Zone of Proximal Development his key theory of child development.

Vygotsky posited that it is as a direct result of the child's interactions with more knowledgeable others and social interactions with members of his community, that the child develops the necessary apparatus for thinking and learning (Smith et al, 2003). Vygotsky stresses that learning takes place within the specific culture in which the child exists demonstrating that cognitive development does not occur in isolation but as an aspect of socio-cognitive context. A central tenet of his work is concerned with the Zone of Proximal Development, something that a child can do today with support but tomorrow may be able to complete unassisted (Vygotsky, 1978). He describes it as,

> *... the distance between the actual development as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers* (Vygotsky, 1978:86 italics in the original).

Vygotsky's work is marked by three distinct phases and conceptual shifts (Daniels 2001,

Minick 2005). The first phase of Vygotsky's research took place between 1925 and 1930.

During this phase, he concentrated on an analytical unit which he refers to as the

instrumental act. In this phase stimulus-response was the foundation for learning and

behaviour in humans and animals. He argues that speech gave humans an exclusive form of

stimuli to control behaviour; it is a mechanism common to both social behaviour and to

psychological processes whilst being unique to humans (Minick 2005). During the second

phase from 1930 – 1932 his focus moves to psychological systems arguing that psychological

research must focus not on the development of new mental functions but the relationships

between them and the development of psychological systems (Minick 2005). These

psychological processes are known as higher mental functions and included: voluntary

attention, voluntary memory, and rational, volitional, goal-directed thought (Minick 2005).

The last two years of Vygotsky's life were marked by his greater and greater emphasis on

the analysis of the development of psychological systems and their relationship with social

behaviour (Daniels 2001). The significance of Vygotsky's contributions to social theory is his

study of general and meta-theory that underpin psychological phenomena (Daniels 2001). In

1932 Vygotsky delivered a series of lectures in Leningrad, these led to the publication of

Thinking and Speech in 1934 (Minick 2005). In 1932, he also completed a critique of Piaget's

work on children's egocentric speech (Minick 2005). Vygotsky (1989) recognises that

psychology owes much to the work of Piaget. He believes that it is no exaggeration to say

that Piaget revolutionised research concerning children's thought and speech. In his text,

Thought and Language (1989) he states that he will begin with a critical analysis of Piaget's

work even though, '...we consider this theory the best of its kind' (Vygotsky 1989, p.11)

However Vygotsky moves on to re-formulate the transition from social to inner-speech, his focus was on what he called, 'functional differentiation' (Minick 2005, p.43). He continues to state that he had developed his own theoretical position, '...in exactly an opposite direction' to that of Piaget (Vygotsky, 1989, p.11). His work focussed on the centrality of word meaning in communication and social practice, arguing that word meaning is part of the intellectual function of cognitive and social development key aspects of young children's play (Minick 2005).

For Vygotsky, the psychological tool was central to his view of children's development. Language mediated in socio-cultural contexts supported children's development of knowledge and understanding. He recognised that young children develop these skills when engaged in play. Both Piaget and Vygotsky see play as not merely significant but an essential aspect of child development. Whilst Vygotsky does not assign ages and stages to his theory of development, like Piaget he seems to believe that children under the age of three are not able to participate in meaningful ways in social pretend play.

1.2.3 Bruner's positioning of play in child development

Bruner has a clear view of the role of play in child development which has changed and been revised over his life span. Initially he was influenced by the work of Piaget later becoming familiar with the work of Vygotsky and being influenced by his writings. Like Piaget (1959) Bruner (1966) believes that children are pre-adapted for learning, however he comes to believe that this is a continuous process rather than a series of sequential stages. Similarly, to Piaget (1959) Bruner (1966) argues that there are stages of cognitive development, modes of representation. These modes are the way in which information and knowledge is encoded, however he suggests that they are integrated and that they are not

necessarily linear. Unlike with the stages of development suggested by Piaget (1959),

Bruner (1964) believes that it is possible to accelerate cognitive development and that it is

unnecessary to wait for the child to be ready. The modes themselves are related to; action,

image and language (ibid 1964).

The first; Enactive representation, involves encoding action based information often in the

form of movement such as a muscle memory (Bruner 1966). Iconic representation is the

second mode, in this information is stored visually in the form of images. Bruner (1966)

suggests that when we are trying to learn something new it is often useful to have images

and diagrams to support us in understanding new concepts. Symbolic representation is

language-based and represents the most flexible way of storing and ordering information

(ibid 1966). This final mode of enactment is particularly crucial because, '…language shapes,

augments, and even supersedes the child's earlier modes of processing information' Bruner

1964, p. 13). He recognises that for young children, much of this occurs through their play

both with their peers and with the adults that support them.

Like Vygotsky (1986), Bruner (1957) sees a correlation between language and cognitive

development. Language is a tool with which the individual can code their ideas and

understanding '… generic coding systems that permit one to go beyond the data to new and

possibly fruitful predictions' (Bruner, 1957, p. 234). The development of language is a cause

of cognitive development rather than the result of such development. He argues that:

> Children, as they grow, must acquire ways of representing the recurrent
>
> regularities in their environment, and they must transcend the momentary by

developing ways of linking past to present to future—representation and
integration (Bruner 1964, p. 13).

Play provides opportunities for children to represent and integrate their ideas, thus he
suggests that it is also beneficial for cognitive development. Play affords junctures for
children to become active in the learning process and the addition of adults or more
knowledgeable others who can scaffold the learning enables them to progress further than
they would do if they were working alone (Bruner 1986). Play itself serves the role of
reducing the feelings of urge and enticement allowing them to engage in fundamental
learning (Bruner 1975). Like Vygotsky he feels that play is an essential element of
development '…it is first of all an attitude in which the child learns that the outcomes of
various activities are not as extreme as he either hoped or feared – it involves learning to
place limits on the anticipated consequences…' (Bruner, 1975: 135). Play provides
opportunities for children to explore and investigate for themselves as is argued by Piaget
(1951), however he believes like Vygotsky (1978) that the addition of the adult or the more
knowledgeable other enables the child to move beyond where they would be through lone
investigation. Bruner states that a child of any age can understand complex information if it
is appropriately presented, 'We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught
effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of
development'(Bruner 1960, p. 33). He believes that both play and the adults around the
child have a role in this process.

Bruner (1986) suggests that cultural psychology provides for human minds a reflection of
both culture and history. He (ibid 1986) suggests that the realities that people construct are

within a cultural world; they are social realities. In this way Bruner (1986) sees that in order that children can construct knowledge, they must draw on the ideas and knowledge around them thus scaffolding new knowledge. He recognises that for young children, much of this occurs through their play both with their peers and with the adults that support them. He argues that if we lose sight of this situated and distributed knowledge, then we fail to recognise not simply the cultural nature of knowledge, but also the cultural nature of knowledge acquisition. It is this situated and distributed understanding which he sees as a form of scaffolding in which different members of a cultural group draw on the knowledge and understanding of others to support themselves through their Zone of Proximal Development to construct new understandings and knowledge.

Bruner (1996) suggests that many of the teaching processes that occur are predicated on folk psychologies and folk pedagogies. He suggests that psychology professionals state that folk psychologies reflect certain human traits and tendencies and include ingrained cultural beliefs about the mind. From these folk psychologies arise concerns about how not simply the mind works, but how a child's mind learns. It is from these concerns that folk pedagogies arise. Bruner (1996) describes observations of parents, other adults and older siblings interacting with young children. He states that these observations demonstrate that these people all have ideas, which appear to have several similarities, about what is needed for children to learn. He suggests therefore that these individuals hold to a folk pedagogy even though they would almost certainly not be able to articulate it. He believes that much teaching is premised on folk beliefs of children as learners. Some of these beliefs have inadvertently supported children's learning, whilst some have equally worked against it.

Bruner (1996) claims that it is from these folk pedagogies four dominant models of children as learners arise: as imitative learners, as learning from didactic exposure, as thinkers and as knowledgeable. Whilst historically there has been a tendency for educators to adopt one stance, Bruner (1996:65) feels that the four should form, '... a broader continent, their significance to be understood in the light of their partialness'. For effective teaching and learning to occur, an approach should be adopted that advocates a balance between the four dominant theoretical perspectives. For Bruner (1986) culture is constantly in the process of being recreated, it is not a static form but a forum for negotiating and renegotiating meaning. Education is a key forum for fulfilling this function. He has long argued that it is not enough to simply explain what it is that children do, but that it is essential to better understand learning and cognition, to develop an understanding of what the children think they are doing and the reasons for their behaviour. This can only be achieved through a recognition that, '...knowledge about the world and each other gets constructed and negotiated with others...' (Bruner, 1996:65). He believes that learning is not about one-way transmission, in an effective community of learners there are opportunities to emulate, and, '...offer[s] running commentary...' (ibid 1996:21). Both adults and more knowledgeable peers scaffold learning in order that an agreed new understanding is reached. In early childhood play is where these opportunities and interactions occur.

Bruner, Vygotsky and Piaget all consider that play is essential for young children and that it is necessary for their development. Both Vygotsky and Bruner are social constructivists who believe that learning occurs through mediated experiences and that play can provide for this. Piaget is concerned with cognitive constructivism a process by which children produce knowledge and form meaning from their experiences as part of a maturation process. Again,

play provides an essential basis for this learning. All three would agree that play has a significant role in the cognitive development of young children.

1.3 Definitions of Role-play

Role-play is a central tenet of this thesis and therefore definitions are essential to demonstrate how I will be using the term. It appears that role-play is an aspect of play that is discretely human, it has been suggested that this is because of its reliance on language and the ability to use one object to represent another (Smith 2010). Like other aspects of play, role-play is problematic to define. It is often titled variously to include terms such as; socio-dramatic play, fantasy play, and pretend play (Hendy and Toon 2001, Bolton and Heathcote 1999). This thesis is concerned with role-play as socio-dramatic play, and recognises that it is necessary for there to be more than one participant that enters a play scenario. Whilst it is possible to engage in role-play activities as a lone player I am focussing on role-play in which there are interactions between children and a shared agreement about the scenario (Broadhead 1997, 2001, 2004, Partens 1932, Siraj-Blatchford 2009). Rogers and Evans (2006, 2008) borrow from Harris (2000:30), to define role-play as the, '... shared pretend play in which they temporarily act out the part of someone else using pretend actions and utterances.' Within this thesis, I will use the term role-play rather than socio-dramatic play. This is for several reasons; as Rogers and Evans (2006, 2008) indicate, it was the term that is used within the first iteration of the EYFS (DCSF 2008), which has continued to the current EYFS (DfE 2012/14) and it is the term with which practitioners are most familiar.

Role-play differs from other forms of play because of its inter-subjective nature (Whitington and Floyd 2009). There is a need for children right from birth to engage in inter-subjective relationships (Trevarthen 1998, Göncü 1998). New-born babies can imitate the expressions of significant people around them, often from only minutes after birth (Meltzoff 1999). By two months of age they can participate in proto-conversational activity, in which the baby is clearly seen to focus on the face of the speaker and to recognise the need for gaps in order that the conversation partner may respond (Trevarthen 1998, Meltzoff 1999). The attainment of inter-subjectivity is essential in psycho-social development, and one place in which this can take place is within role-play (Göncü 1998). For an activity to become inter-subjective three criteria must be met; there must be two or more players sharing a joint focus, these players must demonstrate meta-communication - the ability to step outside of the play to negotiate its content, and communication using actions and language to construct the play must occur (Whitington and Floyd 2009). For role-play to be successful then the children will need to have reached consensus about the play theme (Umek and Musek (2001). This definition will be used through this thesis.

1.4 Play, Role-play and Cognition

In England Pre-schools are educational establishments and therefore any discussion of role-play in such settings must consider the relationship between it and cognition (Rogers 2011, Rose and Rogers 2012, Howard 2010, Roberts-Holmes 2012). Play, and particularly role-play, have critical functions in supporting cognitive development. Research evidence demonstrates that quality role-play opportunities in preschool settings will ensure that children are ready to learn when entering the school environment (Leong and Bodrova 2003a, Hanline et al 2008). The EPPE (Sylva et al 2004) and REPEY (Siraj-Blatchford et al

2002) reports demonstrated that children in high quality settings were offered appropriate opportunities to engage in a play-based curriculum and had their learning supported by the practitioners. Role-play provides children with cognitively challenging opportunities allowing them to investigate and explore their world. Through both theoretical and empirical studies, there is evidence that children have an innate capacity to role-play and that this, '...appears to be central to their learning' (Rogers 2011, p. 5).

Children who have had pretend or role-play opportunities are better equipped to develop literacy and numeracy skills and have a better understanding of the purpose of reading and writing, particularly where they have engaged with such activities through playful pedagogies and in role-play scenarios (Roskos and Christie 2000, Hanline et al 2008). So, for example writing can be used in meaningful ways in role-play and will therefore become the child's self-chosen activity (Hall and Robinson 2003, Paley 1981 and Gupta 2007). The symbolic representations that children use in play and the language that they use in pretend talk can be a predictor of their levels of achievement in literacy and writing later (Hanline et al 2008). When children are supported to plan the play in advance, having been given some of the appropriate language, it is possible to observe them spending longer with the play theme and that they are less likely to be distracted by other things that they see occurring around them (Leong and Bodrova 2012). Practitioners who support children in planning their play, including taking them on field trips and showing them videos, are giving those children greater opportunities to develop. In this way adults are supporting the children's play by giving them access to new ideas and concepts. When children are left to initiate their own play, it is not necessarily as imaginative and stimulating because they, '...lack the knowledge of the roles and language needed' (Leong and Bodrova 2003: 53).

Lobman (2003) researched the relationship between role-play and improvisation. She states that historically children's play has either been child-initiated or teacher-directed creating a dichotomous approach (ibid 2003). Drawing on the work of Vygotsky and specifically the zone of proximal development she suggests that by adults entering children's play, offering skills and information that will enhance the play, allows it to move beyond the children's current experiences (ibid 2003). Using the lens of improvisation allows them to, '...go beyond the traditional dualisms of child-centred and teacher-directed approaches...' (Lobman 2003, p.132). For improvisational theatre to work both actors need to accept what has been said and build on it. In this way, a 'scene' can be created, similarly children engaged in role-play activities need to adopt these principles. Lobman (2003) conducted research in settings in which the practitioners were trained in improvisation and used it extensively when working with the children. She analysed the scenes that occurred in the setting, focussing not on the individual but on the event, that had occurred. She witnessed scenes that began simply as an interaction between one child and a practitioner and soon incorporated whole groups and lasted more than 20 minutes. The involvement of the adult in the play, '...created moments of rich and complex play and conversation' (Lobman 2003: 140). By carefully listening to the children's thoughts and ideas, the adults could support and extend the play in sensitive and appropriate ways.

Other researchers and practitioners have utilised such an approach in which children and adults work together in role-play scenarios (Paley 1981, Gupta 2009). Such role-play can be seen to be both, '... child initiated and adult directed' Gupta 2009, p.1042). Like Lobman (2003) Gupta (2009) is advocating adult engagement in the play. Her research was developed and changed over time. Gupta (2009) worked with a group of four-year-old

children in an early years setting, initially children were asked to choose stories to have read to them that they could then enact. As the project developed the children would become the writers of the story for enactment. Each day a different child would dictate a story to the practitioner, the practitioner's role would be to record the story. The story would then be read to the group and then be enacted by the children. The writer would become the director and responsible for casting and directing their story. Gupta (2009) found that whilst the stories often sounded incredible to the adults involved, the children themselves accepted them and supported each other in the enacting of their stories. She (ibid 2009) found that because of this process, children engaged in high levels of co-operation and interaction as well as the use of negotiating and decision-making skills. Gupta (2009) also argues that the children developed self-esteem and self-confidence with those children who were usually shy and reluctant to participate, wishing to do so. She (ibid 2009) comments on the content of the stories which led to discussions between the children, these included; the ethical considerations of hunting and killing animals, gender roles and differences, death, good and bad people, and the power which appears invested in kings and the police force, for example.

Where role-play opportunities are well planned, and supported by sensitive practitioners, children engage with cognitively challenging concepts. What appears to be crucial is the type of interactions that practitioners have with children, they need to be both supportive and responsive (Bennett et al 1997). The interactions need to accept rather than block the offer (Lobman 2003). Children whose cognitive development is supported through play-based activities have significantly higher achievement scores than children who are simply taught to do a task (Hirsh-Pasek et al 2009). There is a link between role-play and the

process used to resolve theory of mind tasks, those tasks in which the child demonstrates understanding of a different point of view and perceiving the mental and emotional state of others (Harris 2000). Piaget (1959) argued that children were unable to participate in such activities until they had reached the concrete operational stage at about age 7. In role-play children demonstrate an ability to see from a different perspective and to do this from about the age of three or four (Harris 2000). The opportunity to story events helps the children to make sense of their ideas; it is neither the objects nor the environment that are fundamental, it is the process of meaning making (Lindqvist 2010). There is research evidence of improved language and literacy skills of the children who have engaged in appropriate role-play activities (Paley 1981, Bennet et al 1997, Gupta 2009, Bergen 2002, Bodrova and Leong 2003, 2012). Through these experiences children can become critical thinkers, something which can support all areas of cognitive development (Hendy and Toon 2001).

1.5 Play, Role-play and Pedagogy

There has been significant exploration of the pedagogical implications of play for children's development and cognition (Rogers, 2011, Rogers and Evans 2008, Wood 2010, Dahlberg and Moss 2005, Clark and Moss 2001, Moyles 2010, Broadhead 1997, 2001 and 2006). Given that I am exploring notions of pedagogy in pack-away settings it is essential to explore the relationship between play, role-play and pedagogy, which includes notions of playful pedagogies: play, playful learning and playful teaching.

The current EYFS (DfE 2012/14) focusses on a balance of child initiated and adult directed play opportunities. This approach to using play pedagogically had been advocated by

researchers for some time. Moyles (1989) developed a notion of play spirals in which children are offered free play opportunities in between structured ones in order that they can consolidate learning. She suggests that children should have free play opportunities, followed by directed play activities which in turn augment and expand their free play opportunities (ibid 1989). Moyles' approach has parallels with Bruner's Spiral Curriculum (1960). He suggested that curricula should be iterative and that children or students should have opportunities to revisit topics or concepts, the re-visiting providing opportunities for them to deepen their understanding so that they moved from informal understanding of a concept through to a rigorous one (ibid 1960). Play spirals enable the deepening of understanding whilst utilising a playful pedagogical approach (Moyles 1989).

 Other approaches to playful pedagogies include ways of assessing children's development as part of the pedagogical process, whilst engaged in play-based activities. Two such approaches are; The Social Play Continuum (SPC) (Broadhead 1997, 2001, and 2006) and the Leuven Scales (Laevers 2004). Both approaches adopt a playful and child centred approach and are concerned with the child developing social interactions. However, both approaches consider play from the adult perspective, there is little opportunity for children to comment on their experiences. For children to have a voice it is essential to develop pedagogical approaches that enable the child to comment on their learning and their experiences.

Broadhead developed what she calls the; Social Play Continuum (SPC), an observational tool that can be used to gain insight into and to categorise learning processes whilst looking at three areas of behaviour that link to the learning process; language, action and interaction (1997, 2001, and 2006). She argues that children need to be observed at play, including

during role-play activities to conduct appropriate research that explores the cognitive development that occurs whilst children are engaged in a play-based curriculum. There are parallels between the work of Broadhead and the work of Parten (1932). Parten (1932) devised six hierarchical categories of social participation; unoccupied behaviour, onlooker, solitary independent play, parallel activity, associative play and cooperative or organised supplementary play. However, Parten only considered the final three stages to be indices of participation considering the first three to be types of non-social play (ibid 1932). Broadhead saw the different stages as part of a continuum. Her research was developed across three phases, the first phase of data collection occurred in nursery settings, whilst the data for the second two phases were collected in Foundation Stage classes (Broadhead 1997, 2001). Observations focussed on specific activities these included: water, sand, role-play, small and large construction as well as small world play. Broadhead used the continuum to identify characteristics of play in socio-cultural contexts (1997, 2001 and 2006). Her research builds on the social constructivist traditions of Vygotsky. She emphasises the early years' literature that supports children's learning in an environment where they can learn together in creative and investigative ways. In a more recent piece of research she discusses the work of Piaget, suggesting that it was his work that led the way in promoting active learning during the 1970's and 1980'a, where play was seen at the core of the curriculum (Broadhead and Burt 2012). Broadhead (2001, 2006) goes on to suggest that the work of Vygotsky contextualises children's learning, recognising the impact of social interactions on cognition. It is because of his work that researchers have focussed on children's interactions with each other something which is emphasised through playful pedagogies.

Like the Social Play Continuum (Broadhead 1997, 2001, 2006), the Leuven Scales of Well-being and Involvement are concerned with children's involvement with their learning and their relationships with those around them (Laevers 2004). The Leuven Scales were developed out of work that was initiated in 1976 when several Flemish pre-school teachers working with two advisory teachers began to investigate and critically reflect on their practice (Laevers 2004). The concepts drew on the notion of flow a concept developed by Czikszentmihyli (Laevers 2004). He engaged in, '…research on the positive aspects of human experience – joy, creativity, the process of total involvement with life I call *flow*' Czikszentmihyli, 2002, p. xi). The initial research in Leuven led to the development of the EXE-theory, Experiential Education which was an approach that suggested that the most economic and effective method to assess the quality of a setting was to focus on two areas, '… the degree of 'emotional well-being' and the level of 'involvement' (Laevers 1994 cited in Laevers 2004, p.5). Both the scales operate on a five-point system,

> ... from level 1 (no activity) through level 3 (child is engaged in an activity, but is functioning at a routine level) to level 5 (continuous, intense activity of the child, with purpose and pleasure) (Leavers, 2004, p. 6).

In the UK, the Leuven Scales were adopted as a method of assessing participation in the Effective Early Learning Project conducted by Pascal and Bertram (2000). Pascal and Bertram explain that they adopted the Leuven scales as part of the project because they felt that they were effective and focussed on the processes of learning whilst being appropriately theoretically underpinned (ibid 2000). The Leuven Scales were intended to support the development of quality in terms of content and outcomes (Laevers 2011). In terms of early

years education and care they support a pedagogical approach that values play as an effective method of engaging children and supporting their learning and development. The Leuven Scales are concerned with undertaking a playful approach in which the child demonstrates spontaneity and self-confidence.

Playful pedagogies; that advocate the supporting of children's social and cognitive development, making pedagogical use of both play and role-play, allows practitioners to respond both interactively and inter-subjectively. Such an approach allows for both child initiated and adult direct play opportunities. The pedagogical approach of the practitioner impacts on the cognitive development of the child. Much has been written that will support practitioners in developing role-play with children (Aldridge 2003). However, texts that examine role-play and how it supports the development of playful pedagogies are far fewer (Rogers and Evans 2008). There is an acceptance that children learn through play and that it is a central tenet of pedagogy of early years education and care (ibid 2008). Evidence suggests that play is significant in all areas of child development and that children who are not offered opportunities to play have difficulties in other areas of cognitive development (Paley 1981, Uren and Stagnitti 2009). Children enjoy being together and participating in joint play activities (Corsaro 1999). It is through these activities that they develop their own peer culture and that for young children it is the most significant activity in which they engage (Corsaro 2011). Three concepts need to be considered when discussing playful pedagogies: play, playful learning and playful teaching (Moyles 2010). Moyles (2010) argues that such playful pedagogies allow children to engage in first-hand experiences that support their cognitive development. Likewise, Goouch (2008) suggests that young children whose brains are developing at a significant rate need a specialised pedagogy. Pretend play

engages many areas of the brain; emotions, cognition, language and sensori-motor and this supports the development of dense synaptic connections (Bergen 2002). Therefore, pretend play experiences are not simply important, they are vital in children's early development. Adopting such an approach allows the practitioner to work alongside the child and to enter the play with them, to co-construct the stories and action (Goouch 2008).

1.6 Children's perspectives on Play

Concepts of play have usually been constructed from an adult perspective (Pyle and Alaca 2016). 'The overwhelming majority of research reporting on children's perspectives represents an adult interpretation of children's subjectivities' (Colliver and Fleer 2016, p. 1561). Adult definitions suggest that there is no one explanation of play but what can be stated is that it will be dependent on behavioural, environmental and social contexts, it is likely to be enjoyable, voluntarily entered, intrinsically motivated, and be concerned with process rather than an end-product (Huizinga 1949). Children's and adults' perceptions of play vary greatly and what constitutes play for one child might not be so for another. An activity such as singing may be considered work in the classroom but play when in the playground, which further complicates the discussion (Pyle and Alaca 2016). Little prominence has been placed on discussing children's perceptions of play; instead much of the focus is on adult definitions (Howard et al 2006, Colliver and Fleer, 2016). This absence of the child's perspective on play is concerning many researchers and practitioners (Pyle and Alaca 2016).

Not only is most of the literature concerned with adult constructs (Howard et al, 2006) but it seems that, 'Increasingly, play is viewed through an educational lens that privileges policy

imperatives to boost adult-determined outcomes through play' (Colliver and Fleer 2016, p. 1560). This privileging of policy and adult agendas again undermines the child's perspective and their experiences of play. Much of the developmental potential of play comes from children recognising it as a play activity, rather than perceiving it as adult directed and therefore learning (Howard et al 2006). Observations suggest that children define play using three different factors; behavioural, environmental, and social contexts (ibid 2006). For children to define an activity as play it is likely to include the following; it is enjoyable, it is likely to take place in a space other than at a table, it will not include adults but will include peers. Children were more likely to perceive parallel and co-operative activities as play, whilst they were less likely to categorise solitary activities as play (Howard et al 2006).

Considering children's perceptions of work and learning is also important (Pyle and Alaca 2016). They demonstrate that children often acknowledge that learning can occur through work and through play. They stated that in, 'the classrooms where opportunities to engage in varied types of play were provided, the students expressed the perspective that play and learning were connected' (Pyle and Alaca 2016). In other classrooms where the children did not acknowledge that play and learning are connected the children were also noted as describing their teachers' in terms of providing instruction demonstrating a more didactic approach in their classroom. Therefore, it is apparent that the pedagogical approach of the practitioner is essential in enabling children to recognise the connections between play and learning (Theobald et al 2015).

Children's early experiences influence their attitudes and therefore it is important that from an early age they become, '...used to adult involvement in their play and view adults as co-

operative play partners' (Howard et al 2006: 392). When children's reject adults in play situations, where children only see adult involvement as a task, has implications for the ability of practitioners to enrich and extend learning opportunities in those play situations (Howard et al 2006). The adults need to consider how they engage with the children in order that they recognise the play constructs. 'Including play into educational practices in an integrated way may avoid dichotomies between play and learning' (Theobald et al, 2015, p. 358). Play should not be something that only occurs away from adults unadulterated by their participation but equally adults need to ensure that their participation is supportive; that it values children as equal play partners and that it does not dominate the play in order that it becomes working rather than playing. Discussing the views of children about their play provides opportunities for the practitioners to develop and enrich their professional understanding (Theobald et al 2015). Children's concepts of play which are often quite different from those of adults has significant implications for early childhood education therefore a good understanding of the child's perspective is essential (Theobald et al 2015). Colliver and Fleer (2016) found that the children frame their understanding of play differently to adults, in terms of practice and governed by rules. The rules provide a framework for their understanding of what they are doing so where one child stated that they were learning, 'how to be a pirate, it became apparent that being pirate like was the aim of her game' (ibid, 2016, 1564). Consequently, learning was a process of engagement rather than attainment. For some children, the relationship between play and learning is inextricably intertwined. For others, where there are fewer opportunities to engage with adult-initiated in play activities, they do not recognise the relationship. For adults to fully

understand the child's perspective of play further research needs to be conducted

(Theobald et al 2015, Pyle and Alaca 2016).

1.7 Challenging the dominant discourse of play

Whilst play is certainly the current dominant discourse of practitioners and policy makers

concerned with early years provision some researchers are recognising that this discourse

can be problematic (Broadhead, Howard and Wood 2010). Pellegrini and Boyd (1993, p.

105) state that play is an, 'almost hallowed concept,' for teachers of young children.

Likewise, Smith (2010) suggests that it falls between two poles and is either idealised or

ignored. In early childhood education in many contexts including the UK play is a central

tenant of early childhood policy. However, once anything becomes the concern of

governments then necessarily the discourse must become non-specialist in order that it can

be successfully shared with the media, politicians and the general-public (Goouch 2008).

Idealising play leads to there being no scientific theory of play (Sutton-Smith and Kelly-Byrne

1984). Play appears to provide a central point at which the discourses of; childhood,

motherhood, education, family psychology and citizenship come together and impact on

one another (Ailwood 2003). Ailwood (2003) focusses on three discourses of play; a

romantic nostalgic discourse, a characteristics discourse and a developmental discourse,

saying that the first two are closely linked (ibid 2003). It is in this space that play becomes

idealised.

Many ideas about play are accepted without challenge, including ideas that play is, 'natural,

normal, innocent, fun, solely about development and learning, beneficial to all children, and

a universal right for children' (Grieshaber and Mc Ardle 2010, p.1). Vygotsky (1978) provided

challenge to the suggestion that play is fun likewise Sutton-Smith and Kelly-Byrne (1984) investigate negative behaviours that are also associated with play. It is also apparent that play 'is also political, and involves morals and ethics' (Grieshaber and Mc Ardle 2010, p.1). It is also about power relationships (ibid, 2010). Children in early childhood settings engage with adults through social relationships daily and these frame the power relationships. They, 'construct ways of thinking, feeling, being and acting' this impacts on the way in which children play (ibid, 2010, p. 60). Notions of pain and distress that can also be associated with play are often marginalised (Ailwood 2003). Investigation into some playground behaviours, which the researched children considered to be play behaviours, included bullying behaviours such as fights and other activities which demonstrate the dominance of some children over others (Sutton-Smith and Kelly-Byrne 1984). Similarly, they recognise that play can have sexual and erotic overtones, which would not be associated with innocence and fun (ibid 1984). They could however be seen as being natural and normal as children mature and gain a sense of their gender and role in society.

The positive associations with play are clear and easy to identify what is more difficult is to consider some of the challenges that arise and the conditions that enable them to develop. Power relationships occur in play and role-play activities, and these can be between children as well as between children and adults, such relationships can reinforce negative associations as well as positive ones. More research is necessary to fully understand the significance of play for children this includes the significance of role-play (Smith 2010). Role-play is usually considered to be a positive experience research may demonstrate ways in which not all role-play experiences are positive for all children.

1.8 Role-play: Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional development is linked to children's social behaviours and concepts of self which are explored in this thesis. Several researchers have made links between role-play experiences and personal, social and emotional development (Gupta 2009, Lobman 2003, Papadopoulou 2012, Leong and Bodrova 2005). Through role-play experiences children can play out their emotional conflicts which can then lead to them developing their self-confidence and self-esteem (Gupta 2009). Children create a playful space in which their play activities occur, demonstrating the children's sense of self and their sense of being part of a community (Lobman 2003). The review of the EYFS (DfE 2008) by Dame Clare Tickell (2011) identified Personal Social and Emotional Development as being a vital aspect of children's experiences in the Early Years. Well planned and appropriately supported role-play experiences can be seen to effectively support young children's personal, social and emotional development, as well as cognitive development (Goldschmied and Jackson 2004, Rogers and Evans 2008).

Role-play allows for a creative 'mimesis', an imitative representation of nature or human behaviour that allows children to recreate aspects of their lives and explore them for themselves, thus making sense of the structures and ideas (Papadopoulou 2012). Role-play supports both self-expression and self-development. Children need imaginative play opportunities and it is through these activities they develop both cognitive and social and emotional skills that are often considered the prerequisites for learning (Leong and Bodrova 2005). Play is linked to memory, self-regulation, something necessary for learning to occur, oral language and symbol recognition. Broadhead and Burt (2012, p.33 italics in the original) advocate open-ended play opportunities in which children can create their role-play in

spaces that are the, '...*whatever you want it to be place*...' Imaginative play opportunities allow children to, 'connect with reality so that cultural meanings and objects residing in reality can be reworked' (Edwards 2011, p.200). Likewise, role-play allows children to, '…layer the pretend world onto the real world…' (Sawyers and Carrick 2008, p. 139). Children constantly work and re-work these cultural meanings in animated ways that allow them to reorganize and make sense of their environment (Papadopoulou 2012). Where opportunities for role-play are fully developed, children are enabled to develop other skills including those related to; social development, mathematics, literacy and self-regulation (Leong and Bodrova 2012). Seemingly the, '... richer children's experiences are the more material they have to draw on to feed their imagination' (Edwards (2011, p. 201). 'PRoPELS', developed by Leong and Bodrova (2012) encourages children to Plan, to consider Roles, to use Props, to use an Extended time frame for their play, to use Language appropriate to the roles and to develop an appropriate Scenario. This positive approach to role-play supports social and emotional development enabling the children to develop realistic scenarios.

Role-play can provide opportunities for children to engage in humorous activities which also supports their social and emotional development. Humour is used by children to make discoveries about themselves and to support them in making comment on their lives and their experiences (McGhee 2015, Loizou 2011). Young children utilise social, emotional and cognitive concepts to frame their humour often deploying incongruous concepts to support their own ideas (Loizou 2011, Hoicka and Akhtar 2012). Humour can be a form of play in which the child appears to, '… derive pleasure from mentally distorting the world as they come to understand it' (McGhee 2015, p. 20). Children who are offered rich experiences, not necessarily specifically as learning experiences, throughout their lives will have more to

draw on as they develop their play scenarios, all of which can be seen to support their social and emotional development supporting the development of self-esteem.

1.9 The Social Self: Philosophy, Sociology of Childhood, Psychology

Early Childhood integrates several disciplines including; philosophy, sociology of childhood and psychology, drawing on their theoretical approaches to underpin notions of the social self. These approaches have often historically been considered in isolation; however new approaches that recognise the interdependent and correlating nature of these theories are now emerging (Murray 2012, Stoecklin 2012, Bosacki 2014 and Kalliala 2014). Murray (2012) argues for the of evidence from a range of disciplines including: ECEC, education, sociology, psychology and economics to inform our thinking about early childhood. Stoeklin (2012) suggests that if we are to better understand children then interdisciplinary investigation is necessary including into the ways in which they develop images of self. Likewise, Bosacki (2014) suggests that for children to flourish they need to engage in both social and attachment relationships. Whilst Kalliala (2014) notes how the different paradigms influence children's experiences and descriptions. My thesis draws on the three disciplines of philosophy, sociology of childhood and psychology in considering children's experiences and children's voices, particularly in relation to them as social beings and to their notion of self.

To engage in role-play activities, children need to participate as social beings, the social self (Rogers and Evans 2008, Broadhead and Burt 2012). Within each society an image of childhood is constructed and the adults scaffold the children in developing their own image (Schaffer 1996). From birth children are engaged in a process of discovering how they can participate in both the social and the physical world and form relationships with those

around them (Earnshaw 2014). The process of children asking questions from the mundane

to the profound, is part of the process of them searching for meaning in order that they can

establish their values and identity (Dowling 2005). Children will be engaged in a range of

often contradictory roles and situations, therefore developing a notion of self is a crucial

component of childhood (Adams et al 2008). Consequently, children need to comprehend

the ways in which they are part of a family and a community (ibid 2008). Both play and role-

play provide children with opportunities to find out about themselves both as individuals

and in relation to others (Piaget 1951, Vygotsky 1978).

Notions of the self are first described in Philosophy. It is from the work of Descartes[4],

commonly known as the father of modern philosophy, that notions of the self can be first be

considered (Scruton 1984). His work influenced many of the other philosophers more

closely associated with early childhood education; Commenius and Rousseau (Pound 2013).

Descartes engaged in a form of philosophy known as scepticism. His approach was

methodical in that he doubted everything in the hope of finding something that could not

be doubted. Through a series of Meditations Descartes dispensed with the external world

including his own body to a point at which he found that the only thing which he could have

no doubt about was that he was thinking (Kenny 1968). He therefore concluded:

Cogito ergo sum – I think therefore I am (ibid, 1968, p. 14).

Descartes so successfully dismissed the existence of the external material world, he never

successfully re-established it, never being able to demonstrate evidence of its existence

(Williams 1978). Williams (1956) also grappled with the problems of notions of self. He

---

[4] 1596 - 1650

suggested that there was a problem with personal identity for two reasons, firstly; humans,

are self-conscious and therefore aware of their own sense of self and secondly; personal

identity cannot be satisfied merely by deciding the identity of a physical body (ibid 1956).

Instead, '… other considerations of characteristics and, above all, memory must be invoked'

(Williams, 1956, p. 229). The real role of memory is in the way in which it reveals the person

to themselves. As a criterion of personal identity, memories are part of personal identity

going to build up who the individual is. Personal identity needs to include bodily identity; we

would not recognise a personality we knew in a body we did not recognise particularly if

they displayed different mannerisms. Both the personal and the bodily identity are co-

located within a spatio-temporal continuity in which they are part of a continuous series of

locations in space and time (Williams 1956). Descartes' discovery of a Self, marked a

milestone in Empirical Philosophy which meant that we are able to discuss this with a level

of certainty (Kenny 1968).

The notion of temporality in relation to the development of notions of the Self has links to

more recent iterations of children as beings and becomings that are conceived of in

sociology (Uprichard 2008 James and James 2004). In sociological terms from the 1970s

onwards a new paradigm for the study of early childhood has emerged. The social status of

children had previously been exceptionally low, they were perceived as being dependents in

need of socialisation (Mayall 2002). Much of the 20th century had been dominated by the

study of childhood from a psychological perspective; concerned with discussions about

rearing and training children. During this period three themes dominated the study of

children and childhood: rationality, naturalness and universality (Prout and James 1997).

These themes suggested that childhood was a natural phase that was associated with

biological maturation that children would pass through particular stages (ibid 1997). The

clearest proponent of this argument, though probably unintentionally, was Piaget (James et

al 1998). Considerations of childhood were focussed on the universal rather than the

particular (ibid 1998). Children were conceived as irrational beings that needed to mature

and become rational and were not afforded rights given their lack of rationality (Kay and

Tisdall 2012). Adulthood was perceived as a time in which one's life became established,

'Once an adult had a stable job and a stable intimate relationship, there would be very few

significant changes...' (Lee, 2001, p 7). It was set against this backdrop of assumption that

the *being* and *becoming* divide developed. The divide informed the relationship between

children and adults, a relationship in which the child was constructed as in some way lacking

or incomplete a *becoming* (Lee 2001). The, '...immaturity of children is a biological fact of

life but the ways in which this immaturity is understood and made meaningful is a fact of

culture...' (James and Prout 1997, p. 7) In a *becomings* model the biological factors impact

on the societal view of the child. In Western cultures children were considered vulnerable,

in need of protection and inferior to the adults around them (Wyness, 2006).

Children who are seen as *beings* are considered active agents, social actors, competent,

capable of co-constructing their lives and able to comment on things that affect them

(James et al 1998, Qvortrup 2004, Cosaro 2010). Through these new discourses of childhood

in which children are constructed as *being*, they are, '...conceived of as a person, a status, a

course of action ... in sum, as a social actor' (James et al 1998, p207). There continues to be

recognition that the child is not a static being, it has a past and a future; however, the new

paradigm of *being* enables an understanding of the current state (ibid 1998). Likewise, the

new sociology of childhood has developed in opposition to child development paradigms

that, '…focus on adults and adulthood as the "gold standard" …' Kay and Tisdall (2012, p.181). Malaguzzi, one of the pioneers of the Reggio Emilia approach, argues for the need, '…to change the dominant image of young children from adults-in-the-making, irrational, incompetent beings, to capable people in their own right' (Ebrahim 2011, p.121). Malaguzzi (cited in Rankin 2004) further advocates that both social and cognitive developments are interrelated, it cannot occur in one domain without simultaneously there being development in the other. He further argues that relationships are at the heart of the learning process and it is through these processes that the child can become aware that they are; continually re-constructing themselves - today they are not who they were yesterday (ibid 2004). This emphasis on the social and the cognitive brings together both sociology and developmental psychology. In this way children are recognised as capable and competent (James et al 1998, Qvortrup 2004, Cosaro 2010). Such structures of the notion of the self, links with psychological models in which children respond through socio-constructivist encounters that frame their notion of self.

Psychological theoretical approaches consider children to be, '… active processors of the experiences that they encounter' and it is from these experiences and encounters they begin to build a notion of self (Schaffer 2004, p. 154). Piaget (1978) considered children to be lone investigators or scientists scrutinizing their world and experiences and developing their own understandings and schema through the process. Vygotsky and Bruner suggested that children developed understanding through socio-cognitive approaches in which they were part of a social or cultural experience (Vygotsky, 1978 and Bruner, 1976 and 1986). Such approaches placed the child at the centre of any given experience and considered how they may be supported or scaffolded through an experience or cognitive encounter as a

social experience that will also support their understanding of self (ibid 1978, 1976, 1986).

Likewise, the child is considered to be part of the culture in which they are situated. Bruner

(1986) was particularly concerned with the cultural nature of both knowledge and

knowledge acquisition, arguing that children will be influenced by the culture in which they

are situated and by those with whom they interact.

This is echoed in the ecological theory of Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1979, 1994). He (ibid 1977)

suggests that if we are to understand developmental psychology and the way in which

humans develop then different approaches needed to be adopted. He suggests that many of

the experiments that had been conducted during the 20th century looking particularly at

child development were artificial, involved strange situations or people and were short in

duration (ibid 1977). Research had been conducted in a variety of settings independently;

home, pre-school, hospital, but not in multiple settings simultaneously. The examination of

multi-person systems of interaction that occur in a variety of setting will take account of

aspects of the environment beyond the immediate one in which the child is being observed

(Bronfenbrenner 1977). Hence the ecological model can be considered to allow for

reciprocity, one in which influences move in both directions. The use of different settings

allowed the researcher to notice that:

> … events in one milieu may influence the child's behaviour [*sic*] and
> development in another. Thus, the experience of a child in day care, in the
> classroom, or in the informal peer group may change his pattern of activities
> and interaction with parents or siblings in the home, or vice versa…
> (Bronfenbrenner 1977, p. 523)

These multiple experiences and different influences on the child lead to the child's development of sense of self. Whilst psychological research has been conducted that investigates the ways in which children develop, little has been done that considers, '…how ecological contexts affect the course of psychological growth' (Bronfenbrenner 1979, p. 844). Bronfenbrenner set out to investigate this and developed the ecological model to elucidate his findings.

The ecological model is made up of a series of layers of structures that have bi-directional influences (Bronfenbrenner 1994). The microsystem is the first which begins with the immediate surroundings; the family, pre-school, religious institutions, neighbourhood, and peers. The second system, the mesosystem is concerned with interconnections between the microsystems, interactions between the family and teachers or practitioners, the relationship between the child's peers and the family. The next layer the exosystem, involves links between a social setting in which the child does not have an active role and the child's immediate context. For example, child's experience at home may be influenced by their parents' experiences at work. The macrosystem defines the culture in which the child lives. The child, their parents, their pre-school and the parents' work places are all part of a large cultural context. Members of a cultural group share a common identity, heritage, and values. The final system the chronosystem in which the passage of time and transitions such as home to pre-school impacts on the child's experience. This approach like others concerned with the psychological experiences of the child, places the child at the centre of the model (Bronfenbrenner 1994). The ways in which the child experienced their world through the different systems would necessarily impact on their social experience of self. Experiences of childcare or school impact on the family in the home therefore it is clear that

the influence is bi-directional (Bronfenbrenner 1986). Research evidence demonstrates the importance of positive relationships between the family and the setting and the ways in which these impact transitions into and within the setting which in turn influences the development of self (ibid 1986).

1.9.1 The Social Self: Attachment

Attachment processes are at the heart of the development of social relationships and a sense of self. Many early childhood systems adopt a system in which one person becomes responsible for the child and their family; Te Whariki in New Zealand, Reggio Emilia in Italy, are two such systems (Carr2001, Cagliari 2016). Relationships appear to be at the heart of many of the European systems of early childhood indeed it is central to the European policies on Early Childhood (Urban et al 2012). Research demonstrates that adult child interactions are central to positive early childhood experiences that enables the child to develop including developing self-esteem (White and Redder 2015). Prior to the introduction of the EYFS (DCSF 2008) there was no directive to use a Key Person system, however research demonstrated that where they were genuinely in place and the child and key person spent time together each day then it was of positive benefit to both child and practitioner (Goldschmied and Jackson 2004). The current statutory requirements of the EYFS (DfE 2012, p.7), states that, '…Each child must be assigned a key person…' The role of the key person is to provide appropriate learning and care for the child, to engage with the family and to encourage them in providing support for their child at home, as well as where necessary supporting them to seek additional support for their child (DfE 2012). Elfer (2012) suggests that the term key worker and key person have been used interchangeably within the early years sector. He argues that it is essential that we differentiate and use the term

key person; the term key worker has connotations of liaison and co-ordination and is the

term for the lead person in child protection cases, whilst the role of the key person goes

beyond this. The role necessarily engages both the child and the family in meaningful ways

and demonstrates, '... a professional relationship that has direct emotional significance' (ibid

2012, p. 24). Therefore, it is a key person whom each child is allocated.

The rationale for this approach is drawn from Bowlby (1988), it is hoped that the child will

form an attachment relationship with the key person that provides them, '… with a secure

base to venture from...' (Rose and Rogers, 2012, p.35). Bowlby and Ainsworth (1991) are

those who are most closely associated with attachment theory. Bowlby (1958) argues that

whilst previously it had been considered that the child developed a tie with its mother

because she fed him, this was unlikely to be the case. Instead he suggested that it was due

to the existence of an internal psychological model with several specific features that

included replication models of the self and the attachment figure. Attachment behaviour is

made up of several instinctual responses that, '…mature at different times during the first

year of life and develop at different rates; they serve the function of binding the child to the

mother and contribute to the reciprocal dynamic of binding mother to child' (ibid 1958, p.

351). There are three principal patterns of attachment (Bowlby 1988). Secure attachment; in

which the child is confident that the parent is available, responsive and helpful particularly

in times of adversity (ibid 1988). Anxious resistant attachment; demonstrated by a state in

which the child is not sure that the parent will be available, responsive, and helpful

therefore they are prone to separation anxiety, parents are sometimes available and helpful

but sometimes not (ibid 1988). Anxious avoidant attachment; in which children who are not

confident that they will receive care and support expect to be rebuffed (ibid 1988). Patterns

of attachment that are laid down in the first years of life tend to persist and influence their

personality and interactions with others (Bowlby 1988). The issue surrounding attachment

remains central to discussions on the way in which early years settings are organised, with

the key person taking the role of the attachment figure. Research undertaken in the 1980s

demonstrated that children were often handled by several different people in one day and

that this was unsatisfactory for both the child and the staff (Goldschmied and Jackson 2004).

Children are usually assigned their key person prior to arriving in a setting and they are not

part of the process of allocation, something that may prove problematic (Curtis and

O'Hagan 2009). Elfer et al (2012) suggest that the notion of key person in the setting and a

consistent workforce does mean that settings need to consider not simply the numbers to

maintain ratios, but also the actual staff in the setting and their relationships with groups of

children. Elfer (2006) explored children's attachment in two settings that organised their

care for children in different ways. Elfer (2006) states that there are two criticisms of

attachment theory in its application in nursery settings, the first being that attaching one

child to one person is a needless exercise in moulding nursery relationships on home ones,

secondly an emphasis on the adult ignores the role of the peer group. In one setting where

he conducted research the children were not encouraged to attach to one particular adult,

whilst in the other a strong bond was formed between key person and child. Elfer (2006)

suggests that both models have flaws. In the one in which the child forms a very strong

bond with the key person, something that he enjoyed, there were problems when she

wasn't present. When she wasn't available he did not appear to be able to manage his

feelings. In the other setting, the child could play with his peers engaging in similar

interests; however, he had no strong relationship with any adults in the setting.

More recent research suggests that the key person approach allows children to feel secure, enables them to participate in activities and make friends from as young as one and supports positive linguistic and cognitive behaviours (Elfer et al 2012). The nature of the key-person relationship is, '... complex, and fraught with divergent expectations' (Quan-McGimpsey et al 2013, p. 111). To form effective relationships with young children there needs to be an investment of a personal nature, the practitioner needs to demonstrate empathy, be responsive and able to develop a physical relationship with the child which is where some of the complexity lies (ibid 2013). There is at the same time an expectation that the relationship will be a professional one (ibid 2013). Hohmann (2007, p. 35) argues that there is a triangle of care between the child, the parent and the practitioner suggesting that, '… care practice can be either the basis of a trusting relationship between the adults involved in the caring triangle or a breeding-ground for tensions.' Within the early years sector care is central to the relationships between practitioners and children as well as with their families.

Notions of care have been queried in recent years, firstly from the feminist perspective and more recently from within the early childhood sector (Brooker, 2010). Care in a variety of sectors was often seen as women's work and thus was under-valued (Tronto 1998). Traditional care relationships within European society are being re-thought and are moving to a more ethical position in which the child's agency is recognised (Brooker 2010, Dahlberg and Moss 2005, Noddings 2002). Bath (2013) argues that this positive positioning of children may not be taking place if the United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child had not provided a focus. However, notions of ethics of care have been gaining ground since the 1980s (Noddings 2012). Noddings (2012, p. 53) suggests that care ethics are relational

and that they begin with thinking and that within a care encounter the carer, '... is attentive; she or he listens, observes and is receptive to the expressed need of the cared-for.' This approach appears to demonstrate the two aspects of care; the thought processes and the practices (Tronto 1998). Rose and Rogers (2012) discuss this relationship in terms of interactional synchrony; a way of being in which both the caregiver and care-receiver appear to mimic one another and be in tune with the other's way of being. This relationship enables children to develop a secure base from which they can explore. This relationship should in good practice be a genuine trusting relationship from which the needs of the child can be met, however this is not always the case and in certain circumstances parents can feel a sense of mistrust, dissatisfaction and tension (Hohmann 2007, Brooker 2010, Elfer et al 2012). Despite these challenges the key person system is generally considered to be best practice in supporting transitions and development (Brooker 2010).

1.10 Children's notion of self

The relationship between self-concept and the socially constructed child draws on both sociological and psychological concepts and therefore the two become interrelated in the development of the child. In psychological terms relationships, including key person relationships, are at the heart of the cognitive process, essentially because it is through the effective formation of early relationships that the child can develop an effective model of themselves in relation to others through the notion of attachment. The replication model is crucial in the child's ability to build a notion of self (Bowlby 1958). The child's concept of self develops as they become aware of themselves as distinct identities and this links closely with their self-esteem and is developed often in direct response to the ways in which they are treated by those around them and the ways in which they experience their world

(Smith, Cowie and Blades, 2003, Robson, 2012 and Siraj-Blatchford 2014). Schaffer (1996, p. 170) suggests that, '… the self begins largely as a socially constructed entity; in due course it attains a certain degree of autonomy…' Schaffer (1996) discusses research in which children from the age of 6 months to three-and-a-half-years were given tasks in which they were being asked to demonstrate both knowledge of themselves and knowledge of their mother using a combination of feature recognition and agency tasks (ibid 1996). The results demonstrated that the children recognised the mother's features before their own, though it has been suggested that this may be because they would have seen their mother's features more frequently than their own. However, in the agency task the knowledge of themselves appeared before knowledge of their mother. Schaffer (1996) suggests that children have a clear understanding of themselves as being separate from others from a much earlier age than was suggested by Piaget's work. A range of free or pure play activities including role-play allow children opportunities to develop notions of their own identity (Canning 2007).

1.10.1 Children's notion of self: being or becoming

Sociological approaches that have viewed children as either, '... human 'beings, or human 'becomings' tends to involve conflicting approaches of what it means to be a child' not necessarily supporting the child's ability to develop a notion of their own identity or self (Uprichard, 2008, p.304). Whilst historically these divergent discourses have been seen as conflicting, there is an argument for recognising the complementary nature of them (ibid 2008). In integrating these two images of the child as both *being* and *becoming*, the child is afforded greater agency. The child is a child in the present but they will be an adult in the future, even very young children appear to understand the concept and can articulate it.

Seemingly discourses that focus on a *becomings* construction are fundamentally flawed in two ways (Uprichard 2008). Firstly, the focus on *becoming* impacts on the *being*, that which is happening now. Ostensibly '...how we conceptualise something in future may influence how we conceptualise it in the present' (Uprichard 2008, p304). Our expectancy of the future may also impact on the present (ibid 2008).

Secondly within a *becomings* model issues of competency are raised. Children are seen as incompetent, competency is something acquired in adulthood it is, '... an adult characteristic, i.e. one that children *cannot* possess' (Uprichard, 2008, p.305). Whilst the *being* child is constructed as self-competent, there appear to be two further problems with this particular construction of the child (ibid 2008). In the first instance, the *being* child is a mirror of the *becoming* child and this relationship maintains the existence of the *becoming* child and the hierarchical nature of the relationships involved (ibid 2008). In the second, the *being* child ignores the, '*future* experiences of becoming adult', (Uprichard, 2008, p. 305). On the face of it whilst children are aware that they are growing up and changing, they are also aware that something of them remains the same. Uprichard (2008) draws on her own research with children in which they are interviewed about their lives and the city in which they live and how they think it will be in the future. One child discussed the fact that he is himself now and will continue to be so in the future, though older. He demonstrates an understanding of the future. Uprichard (2008) suggests that a *being* model of childhood does not sufficiently address the temporality question, the model fails to consider future constructions of the child. A model of childhood that combines the two discourses, unifying the characteristics of dependency, usually associated with children, and competency, usually associated with adults, allows for a more effective discourse (Uprichard 2008). She

concludes that a discourse that sees children as both *beings* and *becomings*, has a positive

effect on notions of agency, '... as the onus of their agency is both in the present and the

future' (Uprichard, 2008, p. 311). Children will not remain children forever, they will become

adults of the future. The adults that they become is likely to be influenced by the childhoods

that they have experienced, *being* and *becomings* both being affective.

1.10.2 Children's notion of self: being, becoming and having been

In this thesis, I consider a third dimension, *having been* (Cross 2011). Simply considering

beings and *becomings* is insufficient. We need also consider this third 'temporal stance' (ibid

2011, p.26). The *having been* impacts both on the *being* and the *becoming (Cross 2011).*

Cross (2011) draws on the work of Uprichard (2008) saying that she has created a useful

complexity framework that incorporates the two previous discourses and relates them to

temporal states. Other researchers have discussed notions of the *having been* child;

however, they suggest that most of this is research in which adults remember and comment

on their childhoods (Conrad 2011 and Brannen 2004). The assertion that Cross (2011) makes

is that children in both their current state of being as well as their future state of being are

influenced by what has already occurred in their childhood and that we need to consider all

three states of being in our construction of children given that it will be evident in their

behaviours. This approach is investigated through this thesis. Clearly, '... persons of any age

have a valid claim to both *being* and *becoming'* (Cross 2011, p. 30). Very young children

under 6 months who have been subject to neglect will demonstrate poor attachment that

will be reflected in the ways in which they behave in every new situation (Bowlby 1952,

Ainsworth 1970). Patterns or schemas will be laid down about each situation as it is

encountered and these patterns or ways of behaving will inform the next time that a child

meets a similar or new situation (Piaget 1959). So, whilst the notion that the past has a direct impact on the current and the future is not new Cross (2011) has articulated in a way that has not previously been seen and allows for new considerations of children's understanding and behaviours. She (ibid 2011, p. 31) suggests that, '... in bringing this third term into consideration, it is important to also consider children's own capacity to experience themselves as a human *having been*.' It would seem reasonable to argue that any interaction in the present will be influenced by what has occurred in the past. Whilst very young children may not be able to effectively articulate their understanding of what prompts them to behave in a particular way in each situation, it would appear that their previous experiences will impact on their behaviours.

Play and role-play opportunities provide demonstrable opportunities for children to be engaged in integrated way as *beings*, *becomings* and *having beens* (Cross 2011). In these, often complex, play scenarios the integrated *being, becoming* and *having been* is in evidence (ibid 2011). Children draw on their knowledge, memory and previous experiences to enact their play scenarios, consequently developing the necessary skills to enter their social worlds, developing an understanding of the complex structures found within them (Papadopoulou 2012). Here I am interested in how such experiences of role-play are offered and developed in pack-away settings.

1.11 Pack Away Settings

Pack-away settings in England can be considered to have developed from the initial work of Belle Tutaev. In 1961, the single mother started a playgroup in order that her child could make friends (Morton 2011, Crowe 1973). Tutaev later wrote to the Guardian offering to

provide support for others in order that they could open their own groups. This quickly led to the development of what was then known as; The Pre-school Playgroups Association. The organisation quickly, 'snowballed: from one child in 1961 to approximately 170,000 in 1970' (Crowe 1973, p.103). Over the following two decades the association developed further, impacting significantly across the early years sector. The association, which by that time was providing pre-school provision for 42% of all three and four-year-olds in England, was dropping the word playgroup from its title and becoming: The Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA) (Hofkins 1995). This was in recognition of the multi-faceted role that they had developed and to encourage parents to expect high standards (ibid 1995). From the outset, the work of the association had not simply been about simply providing care and play opportunities for the children, it had been about education. From its earliest days the PPA, now PLA, has provided training opportunities; supporting parents, usually mothers and others working with the children to be appropriately trained or qualified. The association was given a government grant from 1966 onwards to support its work, it has also been able to lobby successive governments on issues facing early childhood education and care (Crowe 1973, Morton 2011).

In 2011 the PLA celebrated its 50th birthday; by this time, it was supporting 800,000 children and their families as well as helping to shape early years provision in the UK (Morton 2011). The initial drive of the Pre-school Playgroup Association in the 1960s and 1970s was to support communities to create playgroups to meet their needs. Given these settings were generally organised on a voluntary basis, there was little in the way of funds and certainly not the sort of funds that would be needed to purchase dedicated spaces. The range of

spaces in which these settings operated included people's front rooms and church halls

(Crowe 1973). These early settings were almost exclusively pack-away settings.

We do not know how many pack-away settings currently exist in England. The Department

of Education draws on data provided by Ofsted when considering the different types of

early years settings that exist in England. Ofsted (2013) records whether settings are

providing full-day care or sessional day care and whether the childcare is provided on

domestic premises, non-domestic premises or whether they are childminders. Settings are

registered as full-daycare if they provide more than four hours per day (Ofsted 2013).

Ofsted does not record where the setting shares the accommodation with other user groups

who are using the space at other times. I contacted the Department for Education to

investigate this further. In an email response, I was told that they do not go into that level of

detail (Allsopp by email 05/06/11). The government does not know how many settings

operate in Pack-Away premises; some local authorities choose to record the information but

others do not. In the inner city in which one of the settings is located the authority does

record this information and 25% of settings are pack-away, this percentage usually rises in

rural areas.

Pack-Away settings have particular challenges. It is not simply a case that everything must

be set up and packed away every day; there are challenges around the shared use of space

and the ways in which children's interests can be followed through from one day to another

which can impact on pedagogical approaches (Wright 2010 and Jones 2010). The key to

coping with these issues and challenges appears to be organisation and routines (ibid 2012

and 2010). The EYFS (DfE 2014) demands an approach that combines adult-directed with

child-initiated approaches to the curriculum, using a play-based approach. Allowing for

child-initiated learning can be more challenging in Pack-Away settings, given that it is

impossible for all equipment to be available to the children at all times. Many of the

practitioners who work in Pack-Away settings are highly committed and demonstrate how

these challenges can be overcome (Wright 2010, Jones 2010). The key to be able to do

provide a range of opportunities in pack-away settings, is having a clear routine and

demonstrating an awareness of, and following, the children's interests (Jones 2010).

1.11.1 Pack-away Settings and Children's use of Space

The two pack-away settings in this thesis, Home-fell Nursery and All Hallows pre-school

operated in one room spaces. These spaces were then organised as nurseries daily by the

staff, who allocated meaning to different areas of the space setting up role-play, book

corners, small world play and other such areas. Spaces that are intended for the use of

young children are often organised with no reference to those children (Jansson 2015). Yet

place significantly contributes to children's sense of culture and the ways in which they

develop their individual identity (Green 2015). Therefore, children need opportunities to

develop their own spaces, 'for it is within these special places in an adult-structured world

that children gain control and construct their own place identity' (Green, 2015, p. 335).

In order that a place becomes the domain of the child they need to be afforded access to it

in such a way that they can physically interact with it and affect it in creative ways (Jansson,

2015). There is a difference between 'places for children' and 'children's places' with the

former being decided by adults and the latter by the children (Rasmussen 2004). Such

spaces become, 'a 'children's place after a child connects with it physically' (Rasmussen,

2004, p. 165). Such spaces are often created by children in spaces that are intended to be places for children, therefore in playparks and in this case pack-away settings it is perfectly possible for children to interact with the space and create their own spaces within them, making 'children's places'. Children can become involved in complex demarcations of spaces, allocating meaning to different places and spaces often with no recourse to the adults within the setting (Armitage 2005). In pack-away settings children are afforded opportunities to utilize space in ways other than that which was intended by the adults. In this way, the children are able to create 'children's places'

The notion of 'children's places' is closely related to the sociology of childhood in which children are considered social actors and co-creators of their lives (Rasmussen 2004). As children create the spaces they are also engaging in constructing their culture and their own identities (Corsaro 2011, Green 2015). Pack-away settings in which the structure of the space can change from day-to-day affords children opportunities to play with the space and use it in self-chosen ways thus making it 'children's places'. They utilise the familiar and that which they are comfortable with when creating their own spaces (Green 2015). Children in pack-away settings are often very familiar with the resources that are available to them, they utilise these resources in ways to support their play and their use of space. In this way, they demonstrate that they are active agents, social actors, competent, capable of co-constructing their lives and able to comment on things that affect them (James et al 1998, Qvortrup 2004, Cosaro 2011).

Space is a significant aspect in young children's lives, particularly where they have opportunities to manipulate that space in self-chosen ways with their peers. Pack-away

settings usually enjoy larger spaces than would be expected in conventional settings. This

access to space affords children opportunities to play with the space, to shape it

themselves, and to utilise it in ways other than those previously decided by adults

(Rasmussen 2004, Jansson 2015, Green 2015).

1.12 Conclusion

In this thesis, I am seeking the views of children in pack-away settings, with specific

reference to role-play activities and notions of themselves as social beings. Within this

chapter I have considered definitions of play and role-play, as well as examining notions of

the social self and the child's notion of self. I have identified where the knowledge gaps are

in relation to role-play, pedagogy, notions of the social self and pack-away settings.

Whilst the term, play, is central to discussions of early childhood and learning, definitions of

what constitutes play are complex, often determined by the players and the context

(Huizinga 1949, Howard et al 2006, Moyles 2010). Notions of play as a behaviour and as

dichotomously located in opposition to work have been explored (Wood and Attfield 2005,

Piaget 1952 Czikszentmihyli 2002). Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner all agree that play provides

an opportunity for children to explore for themselves and is crucial in learning and

development. Role-play is a specific aspect of play which is dependent on socio-

constructivist interactions whereby children work together to construct new knowledge and

understanding. It can be seen to be an aspect of play which is both; socio-cognitive in that it

supports children's development through a shared construction of knowledge and socio-

cultural in that it is located in a particular shared understanding. Role-play, in my thesis, is

considered to be an inter-subjective activity, it is an aspect of play for which children need

to have developed a level of maturity in order to participate (Harris 2000, Leong and Bodrova 2003, 2012). Children need to have reached a point at which they have separated object and symbol and they can then use objects symbolically. The significance of role-play in children's cognitive development is not fully understood (Smith 2010). Further research in this area is therefore necessary to provide additional understandings. My research will contribute to understandings of how children engage with objects and space during role-play activities.

The social self has been explored demonstrating how within current concepts of Early Childhood it is possible to merge philosophical, sociological and psychological theoretical perspectives, recognising that such an approach allows for a thicker description of the child's experiences (Murray 2012, Stoecklin 2012, Bosacki 2014 and Kalliala 2014). Children's notion of self has been explored drawing particularly on the work of Bowlby (1958) and Cross (2011). Their approaches consider how children necessarily need to be able to form relationships with others to successfully frame themselves as individuals and consider themselves in their current, past and future states. Recognition has been given to the fact that young children may not necessarily be able to articulate what prompts them to behave in particular ways but that evidence from research would suggest that their experiences will impact on their behaviours this is particularly relevant in their interactions with adults (Bowlby 1958, Uprichard 2008, Cross 2011). Role-play has been identified as a medium through which children can express notions of self in meaningful ways, however little research has been conducted in this area. Therefore, this provides a legitimate area for research.

Playing alongside children allows the practitioner to be both supportive and responsive to the children, ensuring that they can consider where the child may wish to take their learning next, providing and modelling the appropriate language that is needed (Leong and Bodrova 2012). Working with the children, using their ideas, does more than simply extending their learning it also supports other aspects of personal and social development (Paley 1981 and Gupta 2009). Many of the approaches to role-play that have been discussed within this chapter are also intellectual, supporting problem solving, problem clarifying, and allowing children to evaluate activities and extend narratives. Research into pedagogy enables practitioners to understand how children perceive of their play something that has been identified as an area which would benefit from further research (Howard et al 2006, Theobald et al 2015, Pyle and Alaca 2016, Colliver and Freer 2016).

Pack-away settings developed in response to community needs. Whilst their arrangements now fall under the auspices of Ofsted who regulates them it is apparent that there is no clear understanding of how many exist. Research in the PVI sector is thin and within pack-away settings little has been conducted. Therefore, undertaking research in such settings will be of benefit.

Undertaking qualitative research of children's experiences of role-play in pack-away settings will add to the body of knowledge about the early childhood sector. In order to do so it is necessary to develop further subsidiary questions to frame the research. Thus, from the gaps in the current knowledge following the questions have been developed that support the main research question:

1. How do children utilise resources: space and objects, in their role-play in pack-away settings?

2. How do children demonstrate notions of their social-self including notions of *being*, *becoming* and *having been*, through role-play activities in pack-away settings?

3. How do children perceive the adults in their settings with specific reference to role-play?

The next chapter will explore the methodological underpinnings for this piece of research that focuses on role-play in pack-away settings from children's perspectives. It demonstrates how these questions may be answered and the ways in which data can be appropriately gathered with young children.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I frame the research in methodological terms, demonstrating both my positionality as a researcher and the paradigm in which this research is situated. My research is situated in an interpretivist paradigm that is informed by critical reflection. I attempt to be child-centred in approach and focus on listening, '...to children in ways that faithfully represent their views and their experiences of life' (Greene and Hill 2005, p. 18). I position children as active agents in their own lives, capable social actors, able to make comment about their views and opinions. In this research, I am particularly interested in children's experiences of role-play in pack-away settings.

The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss) was selected as an over-arching approach to data collection for this thesis, it is underpinned by a paradigmatic approach that acknowledges children as active agents in their own lives, capable of commenting on their experiences. The Mosaic Approach was developed specifically to attempt to understand children's experiences of their lives. The approach utilises a range of methods for data generation and construction, using tools that have been developed to support children's active participation in research.

The methods that were used are described and critiqued including; observations, map-making, drawing, photography and conferencing activities. Additionally, Brookfield's lenses were adapted and used as a reflective tool that provided critical reflection through the four lenses (Brookfield 1995). The process of critical reflection supported the development of layered Mosaics in which different iterations of the mosaic enable a deeper understanding of each child. The adaptation of Brookfield's lenses is discussed (1995).

My research approach is underpinned by the adoption of the UNCRC (1989) which

encourages the participation of children in the research process. This has led to the

development of research methods which enable children to actively contribute to the

research process (Roberts-Holmes 2011). The influence of the convention is explored. The

power dynamics between the adult researcher and the children engaged in the process is

considered as well as the ways in which the power differential were recognised and

mitigated. I start by considering the rights of the child and the ethical concerns of working

with children as well as the issues surrounding research with children. I move on to discuss

the theoretical perspectives of paradigm, perspective and positionality. Finally, I discuss the

Mosaic Approach (2001) and its associated methods and Brookfield's Lenses (1995). The

purposive nature of sampling and the ways in which the data were analysed is discussed.

The research participants and the data generated are discussed in the subsequent chapter.

2.2 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The 1989 UNCRC brought about a challenge to the dominant discourse of children as objects

of research and began to recognise children as competent social actors who could comment

effectively on their experiences and perspectives (Smith 2011, Dockett et al 2011, Bitou and

Waller 2011). The convention has led to an expansion of research that attempts to listen to

the voice of the child. It has led to, '...a new culture in relation to children's rights and

interests' (Smith 2011, p. 12). The convention asserts the view of children as the holders of

rights (Kellett et al 2004, Clark 2005, Lundy 2007). The convention, '...resonates with the

emerging construction of children as active research participants and informs a new

sociology of childhood where children are seen as social actors and competent contributors

of valid opinions...' (Harcourt and Conroy 2011, p 39). It endorses a view of children as

stake-holders with rights (Clark 2005). Article 12 asserts that not only do children have the right to express their opinions; they also have the right to have those opinions heard. It has resulted in, '...a proliferation of activity around children's participation' (Schiller and Einarsdottir, 2009, p 125). Researchers who are committed to working with children are expected to position children positively, seeing them as reliable witnesses in reporting on their own lives. Article 12 is reliant on adults for its delivery and that this can be problematic because they may not be committed to it, they may have their own reasons not to support it or they may not be used to recognising young children as competent meaning makers (Lundy et al 2011). Including children as genuine participants of research remains a challenge however research projects must be created with consideration of the children's needs from design to dissemination (Te One 2011). The level to which children are involved will be partially dependent on the researcher's understanding of what Article 12 means. Researchers need to understand that, '…that respecting children's views is not just a model of good pedagogical practice (or policy making) but a legally binding obligation' (Lundy 2007, p.928).

The UNCRC has led to a new sociology of childhood (Clark 2007). Internationally childhood studies are interdisciplinary usually situated within the human and social sciences (Christensen and Prout, 2002). The interdisciplinary nature of the studies and research will necessarily lead to tensions and paradoxes. Childhood studies have grown out of several disciplines including: sociology, education, psychology, biology and cultural studies (Wood 2007). These disciplines position children differently and position themselves differently both as researchers and in relation to children.

Children occupy a marginalised position within society, partially because their views have not been sought or listened to, consequently there is an imperative to actively engage children in the research process (Hill et al 2004, Kellett et al 2004). Hence, whilst Article 12 may be more controversial than some of the others it is essential that children are involved in the design and delivery of research projects if their rights are to be fully respected (Alderson 2008). Within the convention children are citizens of the future, equally they have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives (Te One 2011, Dockett et al 2011). Such discourses, '...underscore advocacy for the rights of children to have their voices heard ...as well as the obligations of adults to listen' (Dockett et al 2011, p 70). Within the UK the adoption of the convention has led to a range of policies and legislation that support the rights of the child, including the 2004 Children Act and the Early Years Foundation Stage (DCSF 2008, DfE 2012/14).

Furthermore, Article 13 states that children, '...have the right to seek, receive and get information and ideas of every kind' (Christensen and Prout 2002 p 493). Whilst this is appropriate, some researchers are now beginning to demonstrate an air of caution on the ways in which research is constructed and conducted. There are challenges, paradoxes and dilemmas, these can therefore lead to ethical issues and problems (Schiller and Einarsdottir 2009).

Whilst this research is situated within Early Childhood Studies with a concern about children's voice, education as a discipline will also influence this study. My own practitioner experience as a primary school teacher located in Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage, as an Ofsted Inspector for care and education in Early Years settings, responsible for

registration, inspection and enforcement, as an Assessor for Early Years Professional Status,

and as a Principle Lecturer in Higher Education focussed on teaching Early Childhood

Education and Care, necessarily positions me in particular ways as a researcher firmly

rooted in an educational approach. Whilst my positionality is such that I am an advocate of

the ideas that are asserted via the UNCRC (1989), I am also aware that it is not without

challenges and tensions. The data generated for this thesis provides children opportunities

to express and have heard their ideas about play and role-play in their pack-away settings.

By utilising the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) the design of the research involves

the children and they are enabled to participate in ways that are meaningful for them as

well as being participants in the dissemination process.

2.3 Ethics and informed consent with Children
When working with young children ethical considerations has particular resonance

(Sarantakos, 2005, Roberts-Holmes, 2011, Cohen et al, 2007, Rogers and Evans 2008).

Ethical considerations frame research and are embedded in different methodological

approaches. Philosophers and researchers have shown regard for ethics for many centuries.

However, over the last two to three decades there has been a proliferation of writing and

concern surrounding the ethics of research and informed consent (Sarantakos 2005, Rogers

and Evans 2008). Many groups both nationally and internationally have drawn up strict

codes of conduct to which researchers are expected to closely adhere (Rogers and Evans

2008). Informed consent is central to the researcher respondent relationship. It essential

that participants within a given research study participate of their own volition free from

coercion.

Until the latter part of the 20th century there were few social studies and theories of childhood (James et al 1998). Childhood was variously seen as preparation for adulthood or a phase in which the child was a miniature adult in waiting. It was not seen a phase that was important of itself, therefore there were few studies involving children. The researcher's perception of childhood and their view of the status of children within society will have an impact on the way in which both children and their childhoods are appreciated and valued (Punch 2002).

Childhood is a social construct or structural form which children participate in for a period of time whilst they are young but move through to adulthood (Corsaro 2005). The structural form remains but its participants are ever changing. It is often not recognised as a structural form because it is assumed that it is a period in which children are prepared to become part of society (Corsaro 2005). However, '...children are already a part of society from their births, as childhood is part and parcel of society' (Corsaro 2005, p.3). The more recent constructivist studies of children and childhood do recognise the child, '...as an active agent...' rather than merely a consumer (Corsaro 2005, p.7). Seemingly, '...theoretical discussions and research by both Piagetians and sociocultural theorists influenced by Vygotsky have ... focus[ed] more on children's agency in childhood and the importance of peer interaction' (Corsaro 2005, p.17). Constructions of the self from a socio-cultural perspective suggest that the ways in which we relate to the world are established through the cultural context in which we find ourselves (Green and Hill 2005). So, for example, children who are brought up in a Western culture are usually spoken to and addressed as a co-respondent in conversations from birth, whilst cultures such as that of the Kaluli people in Papua New Guinea will not address babies, believing them to have no understanding

(Schieffelin and Ochs 1998). Increasingly peer culture studies have formed the central tenet of many researchers who are chiefly concerned with the notion of them as being vital to children to support them in gaining stable identities, a sense of autonomy from adults and allowing them to deal with what they perceive to be the uncertainties of an increasingly complex world (Corsaro 1998). Children have until recently been the subjects of research rather than actors within it (Rogers & Evans 2007, Punch 2002, Corsaro 2005, Greene & Hill 2005).

With the increased awareness of children and childhood has come an awareness of methodological questions of appropriate research tools and ethical considerations of informed consent. Research conducted with children, '...is generally perceived ... as requiring great sensitivity and robust ethical consideration' (Leeson 2007 p.129). It is the ethical considerations that are usually of central concern when working with children. Even very young children are capable, active thinkers who are competent at sharing their views on issues that affect them (Clark and Moss 2001). Significant information about children's lives can be discovered when children are actively involved in the process of researching it, where their perspectives, feelings and ideas are validated (Harcourt and Conroy 2011). Equally the researcher needs to have an awareness of the power relationships between researcher and child. In many of the institutions where researchers have access to children, the nature of the institution or the relationships between adults and children may make those children feel that they are unable to refuse to participate in the research even if that is their preference (Rogers and Evans 2008, Punch 2002).

Researchers usually access children through gatekeepers such as parents or teachers. Initially this is what I had to do; I approached the settings and explained my research to

them in order that they agreed to participate. Initially I began working in the settings with

the staff and spending time getting to know the children. As it became apparent which

children wanted to be engaged in the project consent letters were sent to the parents and

carers before any research with the children began; however, this process did not address

the concern of children being asked and giving their own informed consent to participate. It

is evident that, '...the researcher needs to be clear that the child can understand what they

are consenting to and are able to understand what may be expected of them' (Rogers and

Evans 2008, p.41). This can be problematic with very young children and it is therefore

necessary that researchers ensure that they make as clear as possible what it is that they

intend to do. They need to be aware of the language that they are using and confirm that it

is appropriate for cognitive developmental levels of the children with whom they are

working. It is therefore essential that time is taken by the researcher to ensure that as far as

is practicable the children are giving informed consent to participate in a study.

Once the process of informed consent has been considered, time needs to be given to

considering how children can document their consent (Harcourt and Conroy 2011). It is

essential that children understand that having given consent, this is not a one-off process.

Children need to give their consent prior to each data collection session and can withdraw

their consent without repercussions. If children are not passive participants in the process,

they are active agents who can effect change, then their human rights are being recognised

and they are being valued as humans (Harcourt and Conroy 2011). In a piece of research

conducted by Harcourt and Conroy (2005) they encouraged student teachers to consider

ways in which they could gain and record informed assent from young children. The student

teachers reflected on methods that they used to allow children as young as 1.8 years to

record their informed assent. Whilst researchers need to re-affirm consent on each

occasion, they need to be able to differentiate between a child deciding to withdraw from

the research and a child who simply does not wish to participate during that data collection

session (Harcourt and Conroy 2011). In Chapter 3 'Presenting the Data', I describe the ways

in which I gained informed consent from the children in this study.

Within the research assumed names were used and discussed with the children, Rosie

particularly liked her assumed name and why I had chosen it for her. Likewise, the two

settings were given assumed names; Home-Fell Nursery and All Hallows Pre-school. All

necessary consent from children, parents and practitioners was sought and gained.

2.4 Research with Children

With the development of the sociology of childhood the research that occurs that concerns

children, their lives and experiences, has been developing moving through four different

approaches: child as object, child as subject, child as social actor, and child as researcher or

co-researcher (Christensen and Prout 2002, Harwood 2010). As approaches to the

construction of childhood and society's view of children and their place in society changes,

then so too does the nature of children's roles in research (Powell and Smith 2009). The

view of child as object is often seen as a traditional approach in which children are viewed

as dependent and incapable of making their own decisions or sharing their views in

meaningful ways. This approach usually seeks to protect children. Approaches that view the

child as subject seek to place the child at the centre of the research. However, often within

this approach methodological designs are devised using judgements about children's

cognitive abilities and social capacities which can lead to children being excluded due to

their age and adult judgements about their cognitive competencies (Christensen and Prout

2002, Harwood 2010). The third approach places children more centrally within the research and recognises them as social actors. In the analysis of these types of research children are no longer seen simply as a part of a greater whole; family, school or social institution, on which they are dependent, but as an actor in their own right (Christensen and Prout 2002). The fourth approach develops from the third and sees children as research participants and co-researchers. Dahlberg Moss and Pence (2007) comment on the Reggio Emilia approach which insists that children and pedagogues work together to co-construct knowledge and identity. In the same way, Harcourt and Conroy (2011) recognise that research that validates children as active research participants, who are able to participate effectively in and comment on policy and decision-making processes, supports a new sociology of childhood. Seeing children as social actors demonstrates a view of them as reliable witnesses in the research process, whose data is considered valid. The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) argues for children as co-researchers and therefore in my thesis this is how the children are positioned, they are able to explore aspects of their experiences in ways in which they find engaging and meaningful for them.

2.4.1 Research with Children: The Power dynamics
When conducting research with children specific concerns arise in relation to the way in which power often remains with the adults and how that it impacts on their roles and relationship with the children. Access to children is controlled by adults and before any research can be conducted it is necessary to go through a series of gatekeepers, setting managers, parents, any of whom can deny access to the children this curtailing the research even before it begins (Skelton 2008, Rogers and Evans 2008). Several levels of consent have been sought before children are engaged in the process, therefore the researcher needs to

demonstrate an understanding of power in relation to gaining access to young children (Harwood 2010).

Adults usually hold an authoritative role in children's lives; it is therefore essential that researchers attempt to demonstrate to the children an awareness of power differentials when conducting such research (Smith 2011). It is not possible for the researcher to remain impartial instead a level of bias will occur within the research given that the adults will direct the research or children's responses will include those that they think that the adult wants to hear (Grieshaber 2001, Punch 2002). The children usually wish to please adults; simultaneously demonstrating a clear understanding of the power that adults have in relation to them. This can lead to difficulties in relationships between researchers and children. Pramling Samuelsson and Johansson (2009) acknowledge that as researchers in an early years setting the children often turned to them for support; seemingly aware that the researchers they were interested in what they were doing. Pramling Samuelsson and Johansson (2009) acknowledged that they often found it difficult to enable the children to understand that they were not there in an adult role, they would not for example intervene in disputes. Within their research, they were attempting to adopt a position of less adult (Rogers and Evans 2008). Even within participatory research methodologies, the adult often retains the power because they may well be giving instructions or have provided the initial design (West 2007). Whilst concerns about power are usually between the researcher and the child there also needs to be an awareness of the power relationships between children, who amongst them holds the power and how that in turn impacts on group dynamics, which can also impact on the research that is being conducted (Kantor et al 1998).

Power sharing and genuinely engaging with children is complex and subject to a range of competing agendas. For power to be shared there needs to be a genuine attempt on the part of the researcher to gain an insight into, or an understanding of, the life of the research subject (Grieshaber 2001). Mackey and Vaeliki (2011) acknowledged some of these concerns and considered ways in which they could mitigate them. They employed three main strategies; firstly, they waited for children to invite them into their play or routines. They attempted to engage children in conversations rather than simply asking questions and within these conversations they attempted to take a tentative approach. Finally, they tried to ensure that data gathering was as natural and inconspicuous as possible. I certainly utilized the first two strategies, however given the nature of the two settings I was not inconspicuous. The children though were curious about my presence and would often choose to come and talk to me about what I was doing.

Children are more likely to participate in open and honest ways if they feel valued and secure (Smith 2011). It is particularly important to consider ways in which power imbalances could be reduced and to ensure that time was given to building relationships. Therefore, the importance of the relationship cannot be overstated (Harcourt and Conroy 2011). Time given to developing the relationship is not necessarily the central issue; however, what is essential is the quality of the conversations and interactions. At the same time as building the relationships it is necessary to consider that this will only be a temporary relationship and as such, 'planning for closure is equally important as entering the research field' (Mackey and Vaeliki 2011, p85). Ethnographical research necessitates moving into the world of the subject, in the case of Mackey and Vaeliki (2011) the children's kindergarten. Initially they had spent time building relationships and moving into the children's space. At the end

of the data collection they would have to withdraw and do this whilst continuing to

demonstrate their commitment to the research and to the relationships that they had built.

This process highlights the need for researchers to develop the necessary skills to recognise

hierarchy and to share power in democratic and meaningful ways.

In my research, I was obliged to consider both how I entered the setting and also how I

would leave again, whilst continuing to demonstrate my commitment to the research that I

had conducted with the children. Like Mackey and Vaeliki (2011) I spent time during the first

few visits to each setting, getting to know the children before I started to conduct any

research. Throughout my time in the setting I explained that I was not a member of staff

and finally I went and said goodbye to all of the children in each setting in order that I did

not simply disappear. I felt that it was important to thank all of the children in the setting

not simply those that I had been working with, because whilst I had only focussed on four

children many of the other children in the settings had talked to me, had wanted to know

what I was doing and had shown genuine interest in the research. I was able to thank all the

children for enabling me to be in their setting and for the individuals for their participation

in the research.

Through these processes, I attempted to demonstrate a genuine desire to develop an equal

relationship with the children and to enable them to participate in my research in a genuine

way and meaningful way in order that their voice could be heard (Smith 2011, Docket et al

2011). Despite this I accept that an unequal relationship remained because the children

recognised me as an adult (MacNaughton 2005).

2.5 Paradigm and Perspective

It is unusual for researchers to define their work in terms of the paradigm, but they do tend to acknowledge whether they are adhering to quantitative or qualitative methodologies (Cohen et al 2013). Historically the two have been mutually exclusive. However more recently researchers have recognised the value of both methodologies and used them in conjunction with each other. One such example is the Effective Pre-school Practice and Education project (Sammons et al 2005), which used mixed methods to attempt to simultaneously answer both confirmatory and exploratory questions. Alongside the previously defined paradigms are the perspectives of feminism, critical race theory, queer theory and cultural studies (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). The, '...differences between paradigms and perspectives have significant and important implications at the practical, material, everyday level' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p. 189). Each paradigm will provide the framework for the methodologies employed by the researcher.

Paradigms and perspectives are not one and the same. A paradigm is, '...a basic set of beliefs that guide action' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p. 183). These are principles or ultimates, by contrast perspectives are, '...not as solidified nor as well unified' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p. 183). It is possible that a perspective may share methodologies or epistemology. A paradigm is concerned with four terms: ethics, epistemology, ontology and methodology (Guba and Lincoln 2005). Other definitions suggest that, '... a paradigm is a set of propositions that explain how the world is perceived' (Sarantakos 2005, p.30). Sarantakos believes that paradigms are philosophical; they provide the position to inform methodology. He states that, '...methodologies are closer to the research practice than paradigms; it is therefore understandable that researchers refer to methodologies rather than the

paradigms when describing their work' (2005, p.31). There are generally regarded to be

three paradigms; positivism, post or anti-positivism usually referred to as interpretivist, and

finally critical theory. This thesis can be considered to sit within an interpretivist paradigm.

The interpretivist paradigm is concerned with understanding the subjective world of human

experience and is reliant on thick descriptions to illustrate the complexity situations, to

share experiences (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011). I am concerned with understanding

children's experiences and as such the interpretivist paradigm supports such research.

2.5 Methodology and Positionality

Methodology is framed by the positionality of the researcher. The methodology is part of a

theoretical framework which includes the epistemological and ontological approaches to

the research. The paradigm, ontology and epistemology all influence the methodology

(Cohen et al 2011). Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality, whilst epistemology is

concerned with the nature of knowledge (Guba and Lincoln 2005, Sarantakos 2005).

Dependent upon the paradigm in which they are operating, the ontological and

epistemological arguments will differ. Therefore, within a positivist paradigm ontology will

be seen to be objective, knowable and a real reality (Gray 2004). At the same time, the

epistemology will be concerned with empirical testable data gathered using the senses.

Within an interpretive paradigm, the ontology is subjective and constructed; the

epistemology is concerned with interpretation of data and information (Sarantakos 2005).

Ontology is concerned with a reality which is shaped by social, political, cultural, economic

and gendered values and experiences (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Epistemology is

transactional; it is a negotiated reality which is subjective, containing value-mediated

findings. This research adopts an ethnographical methodology, which is discussed later in

the chapter, and is situated within an interpretive paradigm informed by critical reflection in which children are seen as active agents in their own lives, capable of making comments about their experiences of their lives.

2.6 Qualitative Research

A qualitative approach, '...is inevitably interwoven with and emerges from the nature of particular disciplines...' (Guba and Lincoln, 2005, p.191). Unlike quantitative methodologies, qualitative ones are not seeking to define laws or principles that can be tested. Qualitative research recognises that there are many different experiences of life and enables researchers to collect data that reflects and illuminates these different perspectives (Cohen et al 2013). From both interpretative and critical theory paradigms, there is an adherence to the belief that knowledge is constructed, subjective and is not necessarily quantifiable. Qualitative research draws on data that is usually found in three different formats; text, image and sound (Cohen et al 2013). In this thesis, the first two formats are utilised as data collection methods and ways of recording data that are later analysed.

2.6.1 Ethnographical research

Ethnography is the study of culture and behaviour, it is, '...a portrayal and explanation of social groups and situations in their real-life contexts... (Cohen et al, 2013, p.223). Ethnography is concerned with; the researcher developing a relationship with the social actors, engaging in their environment, observations and descriptions of social action, with the researcher engaging in everyday experiences of the social actors and the researcher learning to understand the social actors' experiences (Gobo and Marciniak 2016). The studies are usually situated within the natural setting of communities and cultures and involve observations that are comprehensive, in depth and conducted longitudinally (Fox et

al, 2007). As such it has long been associated with sociology and anthropology. Margaret

Mead (1901 – 1978) was one of the first ethnographers to be concerned with children. She

conducted two ethnographical studies of childhood in Samoa and New Guinea (Kellett,

2010). Ethnographic studies are interpretative, they aim to; '... provide a holistic account

that includes the views, perspectives, beliefs, intentions and values of the subjects of the

study' (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford, 2001, p. 194). Ethnography does not offer

particular forms of data collection, but rather it is situated in a variety of different

methodologies (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford 2001). Ethnographic studies have been

used by Early Childhood researchers for a range of purposes and specifically to gain an

understanding of children's experiences in particular settings and when researching play.

Ethnography can, '...paint in the fine-grained reality of educational processes within early

childhood settings' (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford, 2001, p. 194). The data for

ethnographical research are usually gathered using a range of different sources, with

observation and informal conversations being seen as key (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-

Blatchford 2001). The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001) could be argued to be an

ethnographical methodology. It provides appropriate tools for such ethnographical research

and is underpinned by a paradigmatic approach which is concerned with giving voice to the

child. The Mosaic Approach was initially developed in order that researchers could gain an

understanding of individual children's experiences within their early childhood settings

(Clark and Moss 2001). In order to utilise The Mosaic Approach (ibid 2001) researchers had

to develop a relationship with the child and engage in their environment, all of which I did

as part of my research project. Whilst the data for a mosaic can be collected over a short

period here I collected over an extended period of weeks and months, hence the

ethnographical nature of the research. The research that was conducted for this thesis

utilised this ethnographical methodology; concerned with the experiences of young children

within specific settings.

2.8 Methods and Tools to allow child participation
With an increase in interest in participative research with children, particularly young

children, there has been an increase in interest in appropriate tools for data generation

(Harcourt et al 2011). Methods that are suggested to be particularly suitable for use with

younger children include: drawing, photography, observations, semi-structured interviews,

child conferencing, setting tours, and videos (Clark, 2005, Cook and Hess 2007, Einardottir

2005). Drawing, map-making, photography, observations and semi-structured interviews

and child conferencing, a '…formal structure for talking to young children…' were adopted in

this research (Clark and Moss 2001, p. 15). These methods in themselves are not without

challenge (Harcourt et al 2011). Assumptions have been made by some researchers that all

children will find these methods entertaining and engaging (Dockett et al 2011). Across a

number of research projects, they have found children who are neither entertained nor

engaged by these research methods, they recognised that the methods need to make the

children feel, 'empowered and enabled' (ibid 2011, p 73). At the same time, the provision of

choice supports recognition that children are diverse individuals with differing needs and

views. Whilst striving to provide choice it is essential to recognise that there can be a

tension between utilising interesting methods and simply providing an approach that is little

more than a gimmick (Dockett et al 2011). In utilising the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss

2001) I felt that I was utilising research tools that were tried and tested.

2.8.1 The Mosaic Approach – the tools

Clark and Moss (2001,2005) created what they called The Mosaic Approach, which is also

referred to as a 'Framework for listening,' (Ibid 2001:5). The approach is grounded in a

perspective which, 'acknowledges children and adults as co-constructors of meaning,'

(2001: 1). The mosaic is a multi-sensory approach that allows the researcher to gather a

clear picture of the child's perspective or view of their experiences within a setting. Clark

and Moss (2001) developed this approach to work with very young children; it was initially

intended for use with children under five and has been used extensively with three-year-

olds as well as children under two (Clark 2005). They developed several data collection

strategies and advocate that not all need to be utilised to create a mosaic. To gather the

necessary information, the researcher engages with the child in a number of activities

within the setting, these can include: a map of the setting, photographs of the setting taken

by the child, drawings of the setting or people within it, key-person interviews or

conferences, child conferencing, observations, parent interviews, tours and audio or video

tapes of the setting. Clark and Moss (2001) demonstrate that whilst not all the activities

need to be undertaken to complete a mosaic, a number of them must be utilised in order

that the child has the best opportunity to demonstrate his or her opinion and in order that

there are sufficient data from which conclusions can be drawn. The researcher then brings

together the different pieces of the mosaic to provide a holistic view of the child's

experiences and voice.

I utilised The Mosaic Approach as my data collection method because I felt that it was a

particularly salient method for working with young children. It gave the children and I access

to a range of tools that we could practise effectively. From the Mosaic Approach, we used

the following tools: observations, photography, drawings, map-making, child conferences, key person conferences and parent conferences.

2.8.2 Observation

Observation is considered to be a fundamental skill for all early years practitioners, it is essential in understanding the way in which a child is developing, allowing the practitioners to plan for the child's next steps (Moyles 2010). Likewise, observation is considered a powerful tool in gathering data for research. Observation is a tool that is particularly resonant with research in education and in particular in early childhood (Connolly 2016, Mukherji and Albon 2010, and Clough and Nutbrown 2007). Observation can be utilised to gather both quantitative and qualitative data (Mukherji and Albon 2010, Connolly 2016). Observations that generate qualitative data can be used to specifically support the researcher to look critically at a situation.

Observation as a qualitative data collection method is not without challenge. Clough and Nutbrown (2007) suggest that sometimes observation can be undertaken without sufficient consideration into what is to be observed, how and why. However, Connolly (2016, p. 145) suggests that whilst interviews can be seen as the art of 'hearing data', observations can be considered to be the art of 'seeing data'. Qualitative observations are an essential element of the Mosaic Approach (2001). The observations allow the researcher to respond to what the child whom they are observing is doing. Through the observations, I attempted to create unbiased recordings of the authentic activities of the children (Palaiologou 2012). Whilst the settings had role-play areas set up each day this was not necessarily where the role-play occurred (Broadhead 1997).

The observations that are part of the mosaics in this research focus on children's role-play activities and were a combination of non-participative observations in which I stood back and simply observed what was happening, participative observations when I responded to the children's requests for me to play with them engaging with them and some snapshot observations which lasted only one or two minutes. The use of a pencil and paper to record the observations was generally less obtrusive than other methods in which children are asked to where voice recorders and allowed me to move around the setting and follow the child. The length of the observation was dictated usually by either the child's engagement with an activity or in a role, or it was dictated by the routine of the setting. Shorter observations could be from a couple of minutes to 5 or 10 minutes. Longer observations lasted upwards of 30 minutes often ending because the children were expected to go to register time or to tidy up for snack or lunch. The length of the observation was not necessarily an indicator of the quality of the observation of the value of the data that it yielded.

2.8.3 Photography

Photography is now regularly used as a method of data collection in research concerned with listening to children's perspectives (Clark and Moss 2001, Rogers and Evans 2008). There is also research in which photography is the central method of data collection (Cook and Hess 2007, Einarsdottir 2005). Photographic methods have been developed as, '... methods for listening to children's perspectives on their life recognising that methods need to be appropriate for child participants (Einarsdottir, 2005:523).

Photography is being expanded as a method of research with children. In some instances, it is one tool amongst several, whilst in others it is the central tool for a particular piece of

research. Giving children cameras allows them to take some control. Photography is used, '... as an attempt to find ways of hearing children's voices, and to represent their thoughts, understandings and constructs...' (Cook and Hess 2007, p32). When children are given a camera, they have control over whom and what they choose to photograph. This then ensures that they are empowered in later discussions and conferences. In this way, it is the children who, '... are the experts, the ones who know about the pictures, and they decide through the pictures what will be talked about...' (Einarsdottir 2005:527).

When Clark and Moss (2001) began their work, the children were offered disposable cameras. Such an approach meant that there were limitations, the researcher told the children that they needed to think very carefully before using the camera because they were limited often to only 12 pictures (Rogers and Evans 2008). More recent research has utilised digital cameras or a combination of digital and disposable ones (Einarsdottir 2005). In much of the research where children are given digital cameras, adults are with them when the photographs are taken, whilst where they are given disposable cameras they can be alone with the camera. Clark and Moss (2001), Rogers and Evans (2008), Einarsdottir (2005), all found that when the children were enabled to be alone with the camera they took a greater number of photographs and photographed items and areas that would not necessarily be approved of by adults. The children engaged in this research were given digital rather than disposable cameras. The cameras were made by a children's toy manufacturer and were therefore specifically for children consequently the children were enabled to use them independently.

I encouraged them to use the cameras as they saw fit. Many of the children took large numbers of pictures, one child was proud that he had taken nearly 200 photographs.

Children photograph each other, they appear to need to photograph what their friends are photographing and they play with the camera (Einarsdottir 2005). The photographs in this research were the basis for one of the conferences that I conducted with each child. The conferences were conducted slightly differently with each child depending on how many photographs that they had taken. With some of the children I simply sat with them and went through all their photographs. With Caleb for example who took 188 pictures, I initially selected some photographs to discuss with him which appeared to support some of the emerging themes; role-play, friends, the role of adults for example. I then gave him the opportunity to go through all his photographs and select his favourites to discuss with me. Some of those photographs were ones that we had already looked at others were ones that I had found difficult to interpret. Caleb gave some insights into why he had taken them.

2.8.4 Drawing
Drawing is another tool for data collection which is gaining prominence and was used in this research. Einarsdottir et al (2009) have undertaken research using children's drawing as the tool for data collection. Pillar (1998) argues for the importance of research into how children view their drawings stating that teachers do not recognise the relationship between drawing and the cognitive process. Much of the existing literature concerns children's use of drawing with specific reference to connections between children's mental models and the drawings that they create (Einarsdottir et al 2009). By the second year of life children appear to have a well-defined theory of mind in which they can understand actions and goals of other human subjects (Meltzoff 1999). Children are considered to use internal models to demonstrate their understanding about everyday concepts for example what the

world looks like and utilise these in their drawings (Panagiotaki et al 2009, Vosniadou 1992).

Some researchers have moved away from discourses that see children's drawings simply as

representation of form, to focusing on their intentions and seeing this as a, '...constructive

process of thinking in action...' (Einarsdottir et al, 2009, p.218) a space where '… action and

thought are related' (Pillar, 1998, p.85). New discourse that sees drawings as forms of

meaning making also recognises the importance of context (Einarsdottir et al 2009).

Children's drawings are influenced by several factors; the adults, the children around them,

the ways in which the activity is introduced and the purpose for which they perceive the

drawing is to be used. Cox (2005) observed children undertaking drawing and talking with

each other. She noted that the children's drawings changed as the conversations went on.

Thus, the children influenced each other and themselves through the process. She noted

that the talk would sometimes influence the drawing and other times the drawing

influenced the talk, in each case the child's intention was transformed. 'Sometimes these

processes are apparently concurrent (Cox, 2005 p 123). This fluid process suggests that

drawings can support the co-construction of knowledge, demonstrating that children

change their meaning and ideas as they move through the process (Einarsdottir et al (2009).

A consequence of this is that researchers need to record the narrative that children provide

whilst completing their drawing. Similarly, Bitou and Waller (2011) discovered that the

meaning of the video that a child had created in his setting was not what it seemed. The

items that appeared in his film were not there because they were important to him, quite

the opposite, but because they were not real and were therefore disappointing.

Consequently, it was necessary to talk to the child to understand his meaning. This is often

the case, the '...narrative and the drawing together reflect the meaning...' (Einarsdottir et al,

2009, p 227). The drawing is a process rather than an end-product, something that supports

the children in creating meaning and getting their voice heard.

Given that some of the drawings that were created as part of this research were not

necessarily recognisable it was essential that the dialogue that went alongside the image

was recorded. I sat with the children whilst they drew and discussed what it was that they

were drawing and why. In this way, the meaning could be deciphered.

2.8.5 Mapmaking

Clark and Moss (2001) demonstrate that they include maps, that the children have created,

in the mosaics; these maps reflect the areas of interest or of importance to the child in the

setting. At the beginning of the research period I decided that this was one of the tools that

I would include in my mosaics with the children. This became one of the most challenging

aspects of data collection. Both settings said that they had recently created maps with the

children and felt that they should have a concept of what maps look like and the purpose of

them. I found that few children were willing to provide me with a map of their setting

demonstrating the areas that were important to them, others drew unrelated maps, whilst

others appeared to perceive this as an adult directed exercise that they were being asked to

complete. In these instances, their maps were abandoned and the children had no further

engagement with the activity because I did not wish to use adult power and authority to

generate data. I initially considered many of the maps to be unsuccessful because they did

not reflect areas of the setting that were of interest or importance to the child. However, as

I reflected on the data that the children had generated, I came to recognise that whilst the

maps had not generated the data that I had hoped for, they had allowed me one-to-one

time with the child during which they had often talked about their home and family life and

what they like to do. By critically reflecting on the data, I was able to see that the maps gave

me a meaningful insight into the child.

2.8.6 Child conferencing

Child conferencing is an informal structured interview which was developed in order to

discover young children's views of their early learning environment, initially developed by

Pascal and Bertram (2000) as part of the Effective Early Learning Project it was later adapted

by Clark and Moss (2001) to be a central pillar of the mosaic approach. The conference

usually focussed on something visual that would allow the child the opportunity to

demonstrate their knowledge and feeling about something that affected them. In this

research, I had opportunities to engage children in conferences through three different

activities; map-making, drawing and discussion of their photographs. The children engaged

in these activities with varying levels of engagement. They were happy to discuss ideas with

me through these processes, they appeared to be most excited to discuss their photographs

and least engaged with the maps. There are many challenges in listening to children's voices

and engaging them in meaning-making conversations (Pascal and Bertram 2002). However,

for researchers to understand the lived experiences of children it is necessary to attempt to

overcome these challenges and to listen to what they say.

2.8.7 Adult conferencing

The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) advocates what they refer to as conferencing

with practitioners and parents or carers to further develop the picture of the child. These

conferences take the form of what might otherwise be called a semi-structured interview

with a framework of questions as a starting point for a conversation (Mukherji and Albon

2010, Clough and Nutbrown 2007). Each conference is a one-to-one semi-structured

interview, between me and either a practitioner or a parent, utilising a pre-prepared

interview schedule for either practitioners or parents see Appendices 9 and 10. Semi-

structured interviews can be considered to be conversational with further questions being

asked as themes and interests emerge (Mukherji and Albon 2010). Such an approach does

not necessarily allow the researcher control over the interview as the interviewee can lead

the conversation in a direction in which they are interested (Clough and Nutbrown 2007).

Therefore, '… meanings that ostensibly reside within individual experience' may be

considered interesting by the adult participant and the semi-structured interview provides

an opportunity for them to discuss them (Holstein and Gubrium 2016, p. 69). So, whilst the

interview process can be subject to bias and to unforeseen directions in conversation it is an

effective method of gaining insight into individual perceptions and experiences (Mukherji

and Albon 2010, Clough and Nutbrown 2007, Holstein and Gubrium 2016). In total, I

conducted 8 one-to-one conferences with practitioners and seven one-to-one conferences

with parents. These conferences formed a reflective layer of the mosaics which is discussed

below.

2.8.8 The Mosaics: piecing it together

In my research children drew pictures and maps, took photographs, participated in child

conferencing, had informal conversations and they were observed. Three iterations of each

child's mosaic were created. The first was created once I had completed my data generation

and collection with the child. This formed the first layer of the three-dimensional mosaic,

see Appendices 1 -8. I then conducted a conference with the child's key person, as per Clark

and Moss (2001) using the semi-structured interview schedule in Appendix 9. At the end of

the conference I showed the key person the first layer of the mosaic and asked them to tell

me what they felt that I had missed. In each instance, I only showed them the mosaic once they had completed their semi-structured interview in order that they were able to provide their own reflections without influences from the previous mosaic. The information they then gave was added to create the second layer of the mosaic. Finally, I conducted a conference with the child's parent using the semi-structured interview schedule in Appendix 10. When I finished the parent conference I showed them the second version of the mosaic and asked them what the key person and I had failed to observe. The information that they gave provided the third layer of the mosaic. In every instance, there were interests added by the key person and further ones added by the parent. I chose to show the mosaic to the conference participant, practitioner or parent at the end of the semi-structured interview, because I did not want them to be using the mosaic as the starting point for their conversation. I wanted initially to elicit their views before they made any comments which I would later add as an additional reflective layer of the mosaic.

At the start of the research period the parents and carers gave their informed consent (see the Ethics section in this chapter) to their children participating in the research and to them participating in the parent conference. Seven of the eight parents participated in the parent conferences. One parent chose not to take part in the conference but continued to allow their child to participate in the research. There are therefore 8 fully developed mosaics and one that is only two layers rather than three. The reflective process was an essential element of this thesis in understanding children's experiences.

This critically reflective process supported the development of the three- dimensional mosaics whilst at the same time deepening my understanding of the children as individuals

and their interests and motivations (Hickson 2016). This development of the Mosaic as a three-dimensional or layered approach does not appear to have been done elsewhere. The layering of the mosaics allows for thick descriptions of the children's experiences and for critical reflection on the data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011).

2.9 Brookfield's Lenses
Critical reflection informs the outcomes of this research. Brookfield (1995) developed a method of critical reflection that was intended to support teachers in becoming critically-reflective-practitioners. He suggests that critically reflective practice is concerned with practitioners trying to, '...discover, and research, the assumptions that frame how they work' (1995, p197). His lenses provide multiple ways of critically reflecting an approach which supported the outcomes and analysis in this thesis. This thesis has implications for practice, critical reflection is central to practice in early childhood therefore an adaptation of the lenses that supports reflection on both practice and data are helpful here. He states that critically reflective practitioners have four critically reflective lenses through which they could evaluate their work. He describes those lenses as being: autobiographical, the student's eyes, colleagues' experiences and theoretical literature (Brookfield 1995). The autobiographical lens relates to self-reflection, allowing the practitioner to consider their role in the learning environment, it enables them to consider how effective they are as a practitioner. Brookfield (1995, p 29-30) suggests that it is through personal reflection that we, '...become aware of the paradigmatic assumptions and instinctive reasonings that frame how we work.' The second lens is that of the students' eyes. Seeing through the students' lens allows the teacher to see themselves as the students see them. This can support challenging power dynamics in the classroom. The third lens is that of colleagues who can

provide critical reflections on the practice that would otherwise be missed by the teacher. This can be conducted through observations of both the practice and the practitioner commenting on the outcomes. Through this third lens the practitioner can critically reflect on their practice as it is seen by other practitioners. This enables professional conversations to occur in the workplace. The fourth lens or the literature lens provides an understanding of experiences in the classroom that are supported by theories of cognition and development, as well as recognising that teachers are often, '...caught at points of political contradiction...' (Brookfield, 1985, p 37).

In this instance, the four lenses are necessarily adapted to provide appropriate reflective tools that are applied to the children's mosaics. The use of Brookfield (1995) supports critical reflection on the data generated with and by the children. The autobiographical lens becomes that of the researcher. It is the first lens through which my reflection occurs. As the researcher, I reflect on my understandings and perceptions of the data that was generated with the children. As I become aware of further reflections my understandings and perceptions may change or adapt. The second lens becomes that of the service users, whilst in this instance this is both the children and their parents. The data is generated by the children whilst most of the reflections are generated by the parents looking at the mosaics. Each mosaic is wholly concerned with one particular child; therefore, for them the second lens reflects all aspects of the mosaic. At the same time, the parent's view of the child also contributes to the mosaic, creating a further reflective layer. The second lens allows me to reflect on their experience and understanding of the child's experiences and perspective. The third lens becomes that of practitioners in the settings. Whilst they are not my colleagues in the sense that I do not normally work with them in my day-to-day

workings, they must be such in this context. The practitioners in the individual settings are

the experts in those settings. They will have a greater understanding of the children and

their lives than me as a researcher who participates for only a fixed time-period. The third

lens allows me to reflect on their understanding and views of the experiences with which

the children engage. The final lens, that of the literature remains unchanged. However, in

this instance the literature becomes that which is concerned with the experiences of young

children in Early Years settings and ways in which it is possible to attempt to gain an

understanding of their views, opinions and perspectives. The children's experiences, '... and

perspectives should be central to all four lenses of reflection' Papatheodorou et al (2011, p.

107). Throughout the reflective process the experience of the individual children becomes

the focus and concern, asking what is it like to be a child in that particular setting at that

time. No process can sit in isolation from socio-cultural context in which it is located. In this

instance, the research is situated in the South West of England within a political and policy

context that was laid out in the first chapter of this thesis. In this first image, the process

demonstrates Brookfield's diagram of the process.
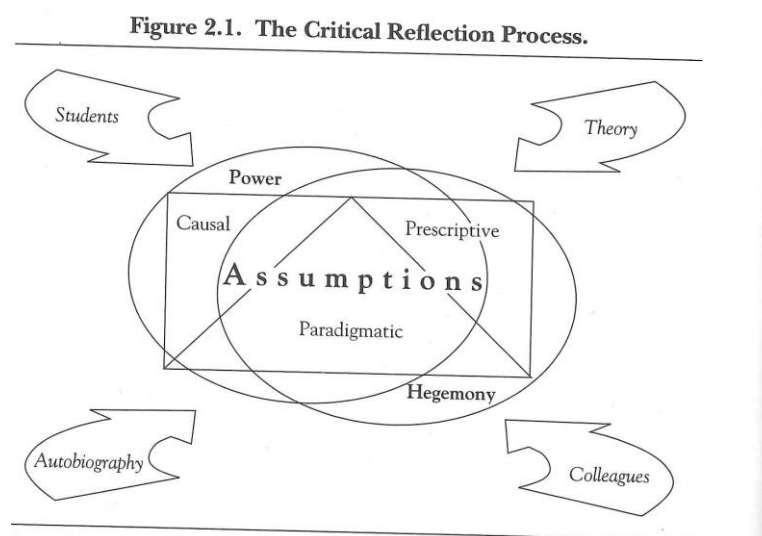
Figure 1: Brookfield's lenses (Brookfield, 1995, p.197)

2.9.1 Adapting Brookfield's Lenses and the Mosaic Approach
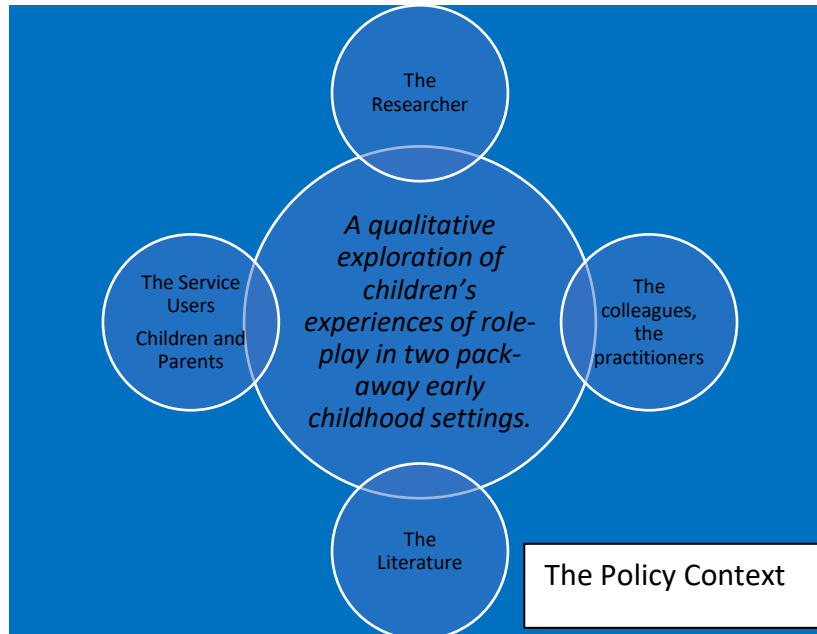
Figure 2: Adaptation of Brookfield's lenses

Brookfield's lenses are generally considered to be a methodological framework that can

support critical reflection and transition (Oldland 2011). The lenses may be used to reflect

on observations that have been gathered to support either learning or research and should

reflect the experiences of the child. The mosaics and the lenses together enable critical

reflection on the individual experiences (Papatheodorou et al 2011).

Initially I had considered that Brookfield (1995) would provide a useful reflective tool with

which to analyse and interrogate the data generated from this research. In practice as the

research developed, the lenses became useful in considering how the mosaics could be

reflected on by the practitioners and the parents and in supporting the extension of the

mosaics to include the data that the practitioners and parents generated. The layering of

the mosaics in a critically reflective manner is directly related to the lenses hence the initial

layer of the mosaic is my lens, the second layer of the mosaic is the practitioner's lens and

the third layer of the mosaic is the parent's lens. In the figure 2 the research question is

articulated in the centre; the different lenses are then applied. The children, the parents and

the practitioners have relationships with each other that are separate from those that are

shared with the researcher. It is hoped that by applying the critically reflective lenses rather

than merely being subjects of the research, all parties become active research participants

co-constructing the research. What is then created is a three-dimensional mosaic from the

integration of the two tools.

2.10 Sampling

I made use of purposive sampling or non-probability sampling (Cohen et al 2011, Mukherji

and Albon 2010, Roberts-Holmes 2011) given that I required access to settings where the

staff would be willing to work with me and that I would be able to access regularly whilst

continuing my work in a university. I wanted to see high quality pack-away provision and

therefore sent out a request through the local Early Years Professional Status Network for

appropriate settings that would be willing to participate in a research project. All settings

within the network have staff who have engaged in Higher Education, some to Foundation

degree level, some to full Early Years Professional Status. Two pack-away settings responded

immediately, one was in a rural location whilst the other was in an inner-city area

considered to be an area of deprivation (DCLG 2015). I was familiar with both settings and

felt that they would provide good opportunities for data collection. The children were also

selected using a purposive approach. The age of the children had two implications. Firstly,

they needed to be old enough to engage in conversations with me. Whilst most children will

have fully formed language from approximately 36 months, they also needed to be willing

to engage in conversations with someone who was effectively a stranger (Whitehead 2009).

Secondly the data collection period became time limited given that all but one of the

children would be leaving pre-school at the end of the academic year in July to move onto

primary school. This meant that I had to ensure that the children and I generated sufficient

data in the period during which we could meet. So, whilst the children that engaged in the

project were self-selecting in that they demonstrated an interest in doing so, they were

purposively selected by the setting managers who knew the children and were able to say

whether or not I would be able to elicit ideas from the children and whether they would be

willing to participate in conversations and activities with me in order to gain the data

necessary to create the individual mosaics.

2.11 Analysing the Data
The mosaics themselves are a method of organising data and creating them is the first stage

of analysis. The mosaics were then analysed utilising a systematic approach looking at the

ways in which they provided evidence for the themes that arose. Both Cohen et al (2013)

and Miles and Huberman (2014) argue that coding is analysis. Buckler and Walliman (2016)

take this a stage further suggesting that the process of coding itself is analytical, it requires

the researcher to review, select, interpret and summarise information without distorting it.

As I observed the children playing I noticed themes emerging. Thus, I could begin to utilise

thematic coding which is recognised as an effective way of coding qualitative and

ethnographical data (Rivas 2012). I immersed myself in the data by reading and re-reading

it, sometimes writing reflections in my field notes journal, on the data or the experiences

that I had had in the settings to help me to get a feel for the data and to understand and recognise the themes that were emerging (Clough and Nutbrown 2007, Rivas 2012). I then began to look for those themes in further observations, so for example in many of their play scenarios adults appeared to be of importance to the players in others the props that they used appeared to become signifiers of who controlled the play, costumes were used and were not necessarily directly related to the play that was occurring. As I became aware of the themes I was also able to see that some of these same themes were reflected in the photographs that the children took and their conversations that they had during our conference activities. As I spent time with the data I began to recognise that some of the issues that I had initially ignored were of real importance to the children and therefore I made further notes to myself to investigate this further (Rapley 2016). Children's photographs of feet were one such issue. The individual mosaics were revisited to look for common themes that emerged from children in both settings and the themes that were observed in both settings provided the basis for each of the empirical chapters. Common themes that emerged from the data were; the roles of adults in young children's lives, the notions of themselves as *beings* and *becomings*, the use of object play and Wave Play, a term that I coined to try to describe the ways in which children used the space in Pack-Away settings. All of these themes could be seen in the literature and the links between the literature and the data was considered and discussed.

2.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have set out to position my research in terms of both the paradigm within which it sits and the methodological approach that frames the ways in which the research has been conducted. This piece of research utilises a qualitative methodology. The ethical

concerns of working with young children have been addressed demonstrating that ethical clearance was sought and the principles applied. The UNCRC (1989) has led to an escalation of writing and research concerned with the rights of the child. Research that recognises these rights is not without tensions and paradoxes with reference to power. These concerns have been explored recognising that researchers need to develop the appropriate skills to work appropriately with children and gather data in co-constructed ways. I draw on some of the devices of ethnography, to gain children's perspectives and listening to their voice, something that The Mosaic Approach enables me to do. The approach demonstrates ethnographical traits because it necessitates immersion in the children's settings to understand the lived experiences of their lives. The research has been conducted over a period of time in the children's settings, gathering data that relates specifically to their experiences of role-play and notions of self.

The recognition of children as *beings* rather than *becomings* has led to the development of a recognisable sociology of childhood. This new discipline has meant that it has been necessary to develop appropriate research tools that allow children to actively participate in co-constructed research in meaningful ways. The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) employs such a range of tools that allow children to generate and record their own data enabling them to share their views with the adults around them. Brookfield's lenses (1995) provide a methodological framework for critical reflection that supports the analysis of the data. The integration of the two tools ensure that the views and opinions of the children are gathered, respectfully listened to and critically reflected on.

The following chapter describes, the participants that engaged in the research, their settings

and the data that was generated.

Chapter 3: Presenting the data

3.1 Introduction

At the start of the research period I had spent more than a decade going into early years settings either as an Ofsted inspector or as a lecturer in Higher Education working with students on either Foundation degrees or Early Years Professional status programmes. Entering these settings this time was different, I was there neither to make a judgement about the quality of provision within the setting nor to provide support to members of staff or students in the setting. I had to find a way to make this experience strange, to look with new eyes at what I was seeing. A process that was challenging, I needed to almost forget my understanding of what was happening and to consider the experience from a child's perspective in a way that I had never done before. This chapter provides a brief overview of the way in which I did this, showing how I accessed the settings, the settings themselves, the children and their families as well as the data generated. The data collection period occurred between January and July 2013 with an additional period trialling data collection methods having occurred in December 2012. During the data generation period, it was necessary for me to attempt to immerse myself in the settings to understand the children's experiences and to work closely with the children and staff through this process.

3.2 The Fieldwork

Ethical clearance was gained in September 2012. From the outset, I was familiar with the process of using The Mosaic Approach (2001) to generate data with children, however, I was not sure how I was going to do this in the two settings that had indicated that they were willing to allow me to conduct my research there. In both settings, I spent time getting to know the children and establishing a relationship with them before I began any research.

The ages of the children were taken as of 1st January 2013, and data used in the thesis was collected post this date.

The two settings were visited sequentially. I began by initially accessing Home-fell Nursery in December 2012. My intention was simply to spend time observing the way in which the children made use of the setting, focussing on the role-play area. I recorded my observations using a pencil and paper in a fieldnotes journal. The journal and a pencil was the way in which I recorded almost all my notes. The visits in December became a pilot for the main study. During this time, I went into the setting and drew a plan each time of the way in which the main room was set up. This was something that I continued to do throughout the research period.

Each morning on arrival at a setting I would draw a plan of the way in which the room had been set up for that day. It seemed important to know where everything was, it also meant that when I followed children around the setting it was possible to discuss where they started and where they went demonstrating that they did not necessarily use the space in the way in which the practitioners intended (Christensen et al 2015, Dyment and O'Connell 2013, Thomson and Philo 2004). The plan below is dated 12/12/17 and would have been the first plan that I drew.

Figure 4: Plan of Home-fell Nursery layout 07/12/12

During the visits in December 2012 I focussed on undertaking observations of the role-play area concentrating on the children that were utilising it at the time and rehearsed data collection methods. Initially I had intended to use voice recorders to capture children's conversations and for child conferencing opportunities. Given the extremely poor acoustics of the settings and the high levels of echo it was not possible to use such recorders. Instead all field notes had to be recorded by hand with a pencil and paper. This raw data was later typed up.

Observations and notes of conversations and conference activities were recorded at the time as they were occurring. Reflections were written afterwards sometimes later in the day sometimes one or two days later. All of this was put in my fieldnotes journal. In total, I made approximately 150 A4 pages of notes, reflections and diagrams. These were added to with documents and notes that setting staff gave me, that they thought were relevant for my research. Further information was added in the form of drawings and notes from the children which were additional to any collaborative activities such as drawing and mapmaking.

3.3 The Visits

I visited Home-fell nursery on 14 separate occasions in order to collect data with the staff and children. Two visits were very much exploratory, giving me an opportunity to trial data collection methods and occurred during December 2012. The further visits all occurred during February and March 2013. These visits were for at least a half-day session so from before the children arrived until the beginning of lunchtime. I also visited the setting on two further occasions to meet with parents to conduct conferences with them and to share with them the Mosaics for their child. I visited All Hallows Pre-school on twelve separate occasions during June and July 2013. Whilst I was collecting data at Home-fell I was only able to attend two mornings per week due to teaching commitments, so I spent Wednesday and Friday mornings, each week in the setting over a period of six weeks in February and March. Whilst I was collecting data at All Hallows I could often attend on consecutive days going in up to four mornings a week. In total, I conducted 12 setting visits across three weeks of June and one week in July.

Setting	Visits
Home-fell Nursery	December 2012 – 2 half day visits to trial data collection.
	February and March 2013 – 12 half day visits to collect data
	March 2013 – 2 further visits to meet with parents and complete semi-structured interviews.
All Hallows Pre-school	June 2013 – 3 half day visits per week for three weeks.
	July 2013 – 2 half day visits in the first week to finish data collection.

On each occasion that I visited a setting, I ensured that I arrived before the children and could assist the staff in laying out the setting for the day. I then had an opportunity to discuss any specific plans that they had for the day. It was often at this time there would be an opportunity for the staff to discuss my research and anything that had occurred to them about any of the children involved. For example, if the children had used the cameras whilst

I'd been away or if they had done something and related it to the research project this would be shared with me.

In the initial stages of data collection in each setting I arrived with no plan other than to spend time with the children, getting to know them and following their interests in order that I could begin to understand their interests and motivations. As the research developed I would reflect on what data I had collected and how this related to creating a mosaic for each child. As I recognised the gaps in the data I would consider what was needed to fill those gaps. I would then begin to plan, in advance, activities that I hoped the children would be willing to participate in and that I would be able to undertake on a particular day; this included drawings, photographs and mapmaking. In each instance, I discussed with the setting manager and other members of staff what I wanted to do before the children were due to arrive. It was usually possible to for me to arrange to undertake particular activities around those planned by the setting for that day. There were some occasions where this was not possible, but the settings usually informed me in advance of any events or outings that may impact on my ability to collect data.

3.4 The settings

The two pack-away settings were accessed via the local Early Years Professional Status Network, anonymised names were chosen for both settings and all other participants in the project. In total eight children, their key persons, their parents and two setting managers participated in this research project. There were four children in each setting. I had hoped to have an equal gender balance across both settings, unfortunately this was not possible as there were insufficient boys at Home-fell Nursery whose parents responded who had

demonstrated an interest in participating in the project. However, given the focus of my research was role-play and notions of self rather than gendered responses in play I was not concerned by this imbalance and did not feel that it would have a negative or unduly biased impact on the research (Rogers and Evans 2008).

3.4.1 Home-fell Nursery

Home-fell Nursery is a pack-away setting that operates from a memorial hall in a small village approximately 10 miles from a major city. The setting is registered for 34 children from 2 to 8-years-old. The setting provides breakfast club care for some children before school and then takes them to school in the setting's mini-bus. The setting operates during term-time only and is open from 07:30 – 4 pm three days of the week and closes at 1pm after lunch club on the other two days. Within the building the setting has access to; the main hall, a kitchen, toilet facilities and a large storage cupboard. There is an additional room within the building but they rarely have access to this. Outside there is a secure garden area that has been fenced off and is intended to be for the use of the nursery only; however, this cannot be guaranteed and there are no facilities such as climbing frames or swings that are permanently left outside.

3.4.2 All Hallows Pre-school

All Hallows Pre-school is a pack-away setting that operates within a socio-economically deprived area of a major city in a church hall (DCLG 2015). The setting is registered for 30 children and provides care for children from the age of 2-years to 5-years-old. The setting offers two sessions a day, one from 09:00 to 11:30 and the other from 12:30 – 3:00 with a lunch club in between from 11:30 – 12:30. The setting operates during term-time only. The

setting has access to; the main hall, a kitchen, toilet facilities and an office that has been

built for them, and a large storage cupboard. Outside there is a garden area that is solely for

their use and includes a climbing frame and a shed in which they can store outdoor play

equipment. The garden is accessed via a steep flight of concrete steps which means that the

area needs close supervision when being used. A staff member also told me that due to the

location of the setting items such as beer cans and occasionally hypodermic needles are

discarded over-night by passers-by; therefore, the garden needs carefully checking each day

before the children can go into it.

3.5 The children

Home-fell Nursery		All Hallows Pre-school	
Child	Age	Child	Age
Bea	3yrs – 3 months	Eve	4yrs-old
Caleb	3yrs-6 months	Jack	4yrs-1month
Hannah	3 yrs-5 months	Michael	3yrs- 10 months
Penny	3 yrs- 11 months	Rosie	4-yrs-old

At Home-fell Nursery the four children who participated were: Caleb, Penny, Hannah and

Bea, all of these are pseudonyms. At the start of the research period Caleb was 3-years-6-

months old, he lived with both his mother and father and was the youngest of four

brothers. Penny was 3-years-11-months, she lived with both parents and her younger

brother who was less than a year-old. Hannah was 3-years-5-months and lived with both

parents and an older brother. Bea was 3-years-3-months, she lived with her mother and

father and two elder half-sisters. Her mother's first husband died, she subsequently re-

married and had Bea with her second husband. Caleb, Penny and Hannah were in their last year at nursery and would be moving to school the following academic year, whilst Bea would have another year in the setting before moving on to school. The children were going to be going to a variety of schools some in the immediate vicinity and some that were further afield.

At All Hallows Pre-school the four children who participated were: Michael, Jack, Rosie and Eve. Michael was 3-years-10-months and lived with his mother and father and a younger brother. Jack was 4-years-1-month and lived with his mother and younger brother. His parents had separated a few months before the start of the data collection period. Jack was continuing to have contact with his father and other members of that side of the family. Rosie was 4-years-old and lived with her parents and a younger sister. Eve was also 4-years-old and lived with her mother, older sister and mother's partner. All four of the children would be leaving the setting at the end of the summer term in order to move onto school. Some would be going to the school next to the pre-school whilst others were going to other schools within the city.

3.6 The parents

Child	Parent
Caleb	Joanne
Penny	Clare
Bea	Anne
Hannah	Rachel
Rosie	Tara

Eve	Josie
Jack	Natasha
Michael	Sue

All the children in the study live with one or both of their biological parents none of the children lived in a care arrangement. On entering the settings, I participated in circle times in which I discussed what I would be doing and how I would like children to participate in my research project. The children could ask questions about what I was doing and what they would be doing. Information and informed consent forms were given to the parents of children who demonstrated interest in participating in the research. I handed some of these to the parents myself, others were given to them by staff from the setting. Most of the parents agreed to their child participating in the research and agreed that they would also be interviewed via a parent conference as part of the data collection (Clark and Moss 2001). One particular child said that she would like to participate in the study however I was told by the setting manager that her family would not allow her to participate and was asked that I did not approach the family, something that I respected. Another boy said that he would like to participate however despite his parents being given information sheets and a consent form and the setting manager speaking to them about the research, they did not return the form and seemed reluctant to engage in any conversation with the setting about the research. I did not speak to them and respected their refusal by omission. Only children whose parents had given permission were enabled to participate in the research. Once I had received completed forms from the parents I then completed the forms with the children in the setting.

Of the eight children's parents seven of them also participated in the conference aspect of the research. Caleb's parents had agreed that they would participate and whilst both I and members of staff from the setting attempted to negotiate a time when I could conduct a conference with them this did not happen. They were happy for Caleb to continue to participate in the project. When I met with the parents they were all keen to discuss what their child had done as part of the project. I discussed this in broad terms, discussing the types of data generation that they had engaged in. They all asked for copies of the children's photographs and I explained that these were the children's and therefore I would be giving these to the setting in order that they could share them with the children.

3.7 The managers

Both setting managers had been working in the early childhood sector for approximately twenty years and had both completed foundation degrees before going on to top these up to a BA honours degree and to gain Early Years Professional Status (EYPS), which was at that time the graduate professional qualification in the early childhood sector in England and Wales. This has more recently been superseded by Early Years Teacher Status. Mrs Geoffrey owned and managed Home-fell Nursery, whilst Susan was the manager of All Hallows Pre-school.

3.8 The practitioners

Whilst eight children participated in the research project there were not the same number of key persons. Each child was assigned a key person by their setting as is expected in the EYFS (DfE 2012/14) Many of the children that participated in the research shared a key person. Therefore, in each setting there were two key persons who undertook key person

conferences discussing the children for whom they had responsibility. Conferences were

conducted with the key person for each of the eight children that participated in the study.

Other members of staff often had informal conversations with me, they had discussed the

research with me and had all signed informed consent forms (see Appendix 11) and were

therefore aware that I was in the setting to collect data. Some of their comments about

what they were doing or about the children who were part of the research informed my

thinking and constituted some of the data generated. Staff were content with this and

understood that data and images would form part of the study. The staff often encouraged

the children to take photographs of them and were willing to pose for them when the

children asked them to do so.

Key Person	Child
Lorraine	Caleb, Penny and Hannah
Sarah	Bea
Lara	Michael
Verity	Rosie, Eve and Jack

Other Practitioners

Home-fell Nursery	All Hallows Pre-school
Jane	Morwenna
Lesley	Heather
	Diane
	Tom

3.9 Informed consent with children

Informed consent and on-going informed consent was sought and gained from the children throughout the project. The University ethics committee was clear that informed consent needed to be recorded in a written format, which created several challenges, see Appendix (13). The forms involved a series of questions that the children needed to agree to as well as signing the form. Having spent time in the setting before starting the research the children were used to me being present and were happy to talk to me. However, when the forms were produced several of them said that they couldn't write and, whilst I said that that was fine and that they could make an alternative mark to demonstrate whether or not they understood what I had talked about and whether or not they wished to participate, the children were generally not happy with this process.

Field notes 1: Homefell Nursery 20/02/13
> *Hannah completed the front cover of the Consent form (Appendix 13) she made a*
> *mark in the first two yes boxes. She found recording her marks difficult and didn't*
> *wish to do so. I then discussed questions 1 – 6 with her. Hannah assented that she*

understood what was being said and that she was happy if I marked yes on her behalf in these boxes giving her consent to participate and for the data generated to be used by me for a range of purposes. Hannah 'signed' her name on the final page which I also signed and we dated it – 20/02/13.

Jack was particularly uncomfortable with the process and Michael at one point said, 'Can I just go and use the camera now?' The number of questions that were included on the consent form meant that the children needed to spend a concentrated period discussing the form with me which was less than appropriate for their age. Whilst they were happy to talk about their understanding and confirm that they wished to participate, they were not keen to record their consent on the forms. However, given that we had had a detailed discussion and I had explained that it was important that their consent was recorded, they made marks in most of the boxes on the form. Some of them gave up part of the way through the process and asked that I recorded their agreement and understanding in the final boxes which I did. As part of this process we discussed my using the photographs that they took as part of my research project I made it clear that the photographs were theirs and that they would be getting copies of them. The children all agreed to this. This was further discussed when I conducted a conference with them looking at their photographs (Clark and Moss 2001).

Fieldnotes 2: All Hallows Pre-school 28/06/13

Today I spent my time conducting conferences with Michael, Eve, Rosie and Jack. In these conferences, we looked at their photographs together. I had selected some photographs prior to meeting with the children that I wanted to focus on. I then gave each child time to look at all their photographs. We discussed which were their favourites and why. I asked the children whether I could use their photographs in my project. They agreed. Jack said that he would like a copy of some of the photographs.

I explained that I would be giving them all their photographs as they were theirs, they had taken them. The children seemed excited to hear that they would be getting the photographs.

However, this consent was not considered to be sufficiently robust by the University Research Ethics Sub-committee. This has meant that children's photographs will not be included in the thesis. I will however include descriptions of some of those images in my analysis of the data.

At the beginning of each session I reminded them about their right to withdraw, mindful of Harcourt and Conroy's (2011) concern about researchers misconstruing children's withdrawal of consent on that occasion with permanent withdrawal from the research project. It was my intention that I would draw on the work of Harcourt and Conroy (2011) in keeping an on-going record of the child's consent. In this way, I would have been able to remind children that they have previously consented to participating in my research and discover whether they are continuing to consent to participating in my research. However, the children were happy to record initially their consent but on subsequent occasions they did not wish to repeat the process, but would verbally affirm their assent.

On 20th June Eve and Rosie wanted to use the cameras again. I asked questions about whether they understood what I was doing and how they were contributing to my research, 'Are you happy that I will use your pictures in my writing? Can we show that you are happy to work with me?'

Fieldnotes 3: All Hallows Pre-school 20/06/13

Rosie and Eve asked to use the cameras again today. I got them out for them. I started to discuss recording consent to be working on my project and taking photographs. The girls were reluctant to do so. Rosie said, 'we wrote yes before' and

> *Eve said, '… yes, we said yes'. I did not try to get them to record anything given that they were reluctant to do so. I felt satisfied that they were giving their on-going consent.*

There were times when children did not wish to participate in particular activities, or decided that they had finished their contribution when I had hoped to have gathered more data with them. The children would say no, that they did not want to do something or that they had finished. On each occasion, I respected the child's choice and stopped the activity or the conversation.

Whilst gaining the children's written consent at the outset of the work with them was challenging it was achieved and the children demonstrated their understanding of what I was doing and their consent to participate in the research project they discussed what they would be doing saying that they would like to use the cameras, that they were happy for me to watch them playing or to play with them, that they would engage in a range of other tasks. On-going consent was not recorded, but consent was given by the children each time they worked with me. Through these processes, I could satisfy the university ethics requirements whilst working in an appropriate way with young children. I would certainly look to recording informed consent differently in the future.

3.10 The Data

A range of methods were utilised in order that the children and I could co-construct data. These are all methods utilised by Clark and Moss (2001) as effective methods of generating data with young children and enabling the child to have their voice heard. In this project: observations; participative, non-participative and snapshot, child conferences, key person conferences, parent conferences, children's photographs, children's drawings, children's

maps and informal discussions with the setting managers were used. Observations of the

children and their photographs were key in generating data and were the starting point with

the other activities including conferences building on the initial data.

Observations	Approximately 30 useable observations (many were stopped as children went to do other activities which were not role-play after only a couple of minutes).
Child Conferences	24- 1:1 conferences, these were conducted whilst children were discussing their photographs, drawing and map making. Many of these were only partially completed if the children were not engaged in the activity.
Key-Person Conferences	8
Parent Conferences	7
Children's Photographs	931
Children's Maps	8
Children's Drawings	15
Setting Photographs	61 photographs which I took of role-play set up before the children were present.
Setting-Manager: informal discussions	4 – these were conducted in response to events in the setting. So, for example Susan discussed with me Jack's interest in the police.

3.10.1 Number of photographs taken by individual children

Each child was given regular access to the cameras during the time I was working with them in the settings. The cameras were left in the setting between visits in order that the children could access them should they choose to do so. Whilst the settings were supportive of the children being able to do this there were few occasions that the children did access them. It seemed that the children were not really encouraged to use them and my presence seemed to provide the reminder that they were available to them.

Penny	181
Caleb	188
Hannah	80
Bea	79
Jack	69
Michael	89
Eve	165
Rosie	80
Total:	**931**

3.10.2 Children's drawings

There was an occasion in each setting during the project where I invited the children to undertake a drawing which demonstrated where they liked to play in the setting. This was completed with a range of levels of enthusiasm, some children appeared to find the process engaging whilst others appeared to complete a drawing because they felt obliged rather

than because they enjoyed it and found it an effective method of communication (Dockett et al 2011). The drawings provided an opportunity for me to conference with them whilst they were completing their drawings (Einarsdottir et al 2009). The children often produced images that were not necessarily recognisable but the talk that went alongside them was what was of value. Equally some of the children spontaneously produced drawings and colourings for me. These different activities provided data for their mosaics. In particular, two of the children; Penny, from Home-fell nursery, and Rosie, from All Hallows Pre-school, both utilised drawing and emergent writing as a chosen form of communication. They both gave me drawings and pieces of emergent writing that they had completed at other times and wanted to share with me. Some of these pieces of data are employed within the project, particularly Rosie's emergent writing which provided insight into her interests and her cognitive development.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter has served to demonstrate how, where and what data was collected as well as considering the children's response to gaining their initial and on-going informed consent. Descriptions have been provided of the settings, and the children as well as their familial arrangements. My observations, the photographic data generated by the children and my conferences with the children provide the most significant proportion of the data that was generated. The following three chapters provide analysis of the data that has been generated with the children using their mosaics, (see Appendices 1- 8), answering the subsidiary questions and reflecting the dominant themes that emerged.

Chapter 4: Role-playing with space and objects

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I set out to answer the question:

> How do children utilise resources: objects and space, in their role-play in pack-away
>
> settings?

In the first part of the chapter I focus on the different ways in which children utilise objects

in their play. Object play within role-play is a significant element from the data generated by

the children and through my own observations of their play. This was most evident in four

of the children's mosaics (see Appendices 1 – 8), most notably those of Caleb, Hannah, Jack,

and Michael, but was also seen in observations of Rosie, Penny and Bea. This theme is not

addressed directly by the staff or the parents but within aspects of their conferences and

reflections, notions of the children's use of objects within their imaginary play were

discussed.

In the two settings in this study the role-play area was never seen to be the same two days

in a row. A consequence of this is that the objects available to the children will almost

certainly change. Sometimes when they arrive the items that they were using on a previous

day may be available on other occasions they will not be; however, other items will be. In

many pack-away settings, staff will ensure that if children ask for specific items that they will

try to get them for them from the storage area. Home-Fell Nursery and All Hallows pre-

school were no exception in this respect.

Secondly, I discuss the term Wave Play a term which I coined to describe the way in which

children are seen to move their play themes from one area to another taking the ideas and

the roles and themes with them. A feature of Wave Play is the use of multiple play sites for

role-play activities. It is probably a unique form of play in Pack Away settings, allowing children to extend narratives, travel with their play themes and participate in socio-dramatic role-play in ways that would not be considered acceptable in more conventional settings.

Wave Play is a form of socio-dramatic role-play that occurs Pack-Away settings. The term Wave Play, describes the fluid nature of the play as children move their play resources and themes from locality to locality within the setting.

I conclude that object play is part of role-play. The use of objects can be signifiers of themes and of power or authority within the play. Space is an essential feature within children's role-play activities. Within Pack-Away settings activities are likely to be enabled to occur including Wave Play in which children move play themes and objects from space to space creating their own spaces for their play.

4.2 Object play as a facet of role-play

In both settings children used objects within their role-play and the objects appeared to be a facet of the play itself. Evidence to support this is taken from an observation of children in the role-play area in All Hallows Pre-school, photographs[5] taken by Jack and Michael at All Hallows pre-school and from an observation at Home-fell Nursery in which a range of objects were used to support the development of Bea's play. In some instances, the objects were used to enhance the play particularly in the scenario below, in others the objects were simply part of the play often seemingly not directly related to it, as can be seen in the discussion of the children's photographs, in others such as the observation of Bea the

---

[5] See chapter 3 Methodology to for an explanation of why the photographs are not present here.

objects do not appear to be being used to develop a theme but the play probably would not occur without it.

Field notes 4: Observation All Hallows Pre-school.
The role-play area has been set up as a building site. There are hi-visibility jackets, tools and cardboard boxes, diggers and Duplo.

Several children are instantly attracted to the role-play area. They dress up, use the tools, and make piles of boxes. Rosie sits amongst it and uses a laptop whilst building occurs around her.

Michael arrives in the setting. He goes straight over to the role-play area and puts on a hi-vis jacket. 'Where's there a hat?' Rosie walks over, 'I'm a builder too, everyone's a builder.' She leaves shortly after this exchange. Michael remains. He and a girl seem to find the coins from the previous day's pirate day. 'Hey mate I've got some coins,' he says to some of the other builders. Michael leaves the role-play area but appears to have gone to collect building materials. Many of the materials are being moved from the role-play area to the large mat.

Both Michael and Rosie chose to enter the role-play area that had been organised by the staff that morning. They seemed to accept the offer and engage with the play as it was suggested that it could occur (Lobman 2003). In order that children are enabled to participate in the highest quality role-play opportunities, then amongst other things they should have access to props, 'real, symbolic and imaginary' (Leong and Bodrova 2012, p. 29). In the above scenario, the children were offered several real objects as well as some more open-ended materials that allowed them to develop their own play; clothing, tools, toy versions of machinery and cardboard boxes, that could support this play opportunity, as they pretended to be builders. The hi-visibility jackets and the hard-hats were items that

would be found on a real building site, whilst the cardboard boxes were not however these objects were all accessed and used by the children as part of their role-play.

Rosie went into the role-play area taking additional props with her; she selected a lap-top from another area of the setting. She, like the other children, put on a hi-visibility jacket and sat with the role-play occurring around her. As soon as Michael arrived in the setting he entered the role-play, donning suitable clothing and appearing to develop a role, using the boxes to signify building materials. Michael appeared confident as he moved into role, using tools and materials and developing an appropriate script as he talked to the children around him (Rogers and Evans 2008). He was not usually heard to call people mate. However, on finding the coins, which had been used as the treasure the previous day (Pirate Day – see later in this chapter) he called to the other children trying to gain their attention in a way that a builder might, 'Hey mate I've got some coins'. His use of the hi-visibility jacket and hardhat demonstrated that he wanted some objects that would signify who he was; however, he also made use of the more open-ended play materials as objects with which he made object substitution, using them as building materials, demonstrating his understanding of the role-play in which he was engaged (Vygotsky 1978). Rosie participated differently in the role-play; she was seen to put on some of the role-play clothes and did briefly suggest that she was organising jobs using the computer. Her engagement was not as full as Michael's however she appeared to enjoy what she was doing.

The role-play scenario had been set-up by the staff before the children arrived that morning. The children readily engaged and were clearly excited by some of the props that were available to them, they were not offered any opportunities to plan their play, nor had they

been engaged by staff in activities that modelled the language and behaviours that could

extend their play (Leong and Bodrova 2012). Some of the children demonstrated how they

could use objects to signify something else in their play. As children mature and use object

substitution they are also able to begin to develop thematic content that reflects their

understanding of events that they have observed or that they can imagine, rather than

something that they have necessarily engaged in (Frahsek et al. 2010 and Vig 2007). It is

unlikely that the children have engaged in working on construction sites, but through their

role-play activities using the objects that were available, it is possible to see what they

understand about what occurs in such places. The use of objects was central to the role-play

in this scenario.

Some of the children's photographic data also suggests that they see objects as an

important aspect of their role-play opportunities. Jack took several photographs of his

friends wearing various costumes, that demonstrate aspects of the importance of objects. In

one image, a friend is wearing a super-hero costume. The focus of the photograph appears

to be on the costume rather than on the child, the child regularly came to pre-school

already dressed in a superhero costume, something that the children, including Jack,

commented on. In the second picture, two children are engaged in a game in which they are

playing with a wooden marble roll game. However, both children are wearing costumes.

One child appears to be wearing a super-hero costume whilst the one is wearing; a white

coat, a stethoscope and a police officer's helmet. Later in this chapter the notion of children

entering a role and then engaging with another activity seemingly unrelated to the role or

the costume is discussed in greater detail.

In a series of photographs taken by Michael, the children can be seen to be wearing police

helmets and appear to be engaged in some form of role-play activity. Many of the children

were seen in the setting to regularly engage in role-play activities utilising the police as a

play theme. The use of the hats appears to be a strong indicator of the roles in which they

were engaged (Piaget 1951, Vygotsky 1986). The theme of the police was an extremely

strong play theme for Jack, which was repeated many times during the time I spent in the

setting. In one of Michael's photographs Jack can be seen wearing a police helmet whilst

also carrying his camera. This does not necessarily mean that he was excluded from the

play he may have been stepping in and out of the play whilst also taking the photographs

(Lobman 2003). Michael demonstrated a broader interest in a range of play themes, but was

regularly seen using the dressing-up clothes that were available. He then usually took on the

role signified by the clothing that he had put on. The props are a signifier of the roles or

games in which they are engaged (Leong and Bodrova 2012).

Field notes 5: Observation All Hallows Pre-school
> Jack is walking around with a mobile and a laptop. He is talking to another child via
> the phone about being in town. He is walking around with a girl who takes the
> laptop off him. He protests but hands it over. They go to the role-play area which is
> set up as an office. He re-claims the laptop. The mobile seems an important
> possession; it has to be placed in his pocket and checked regularly. He shows it to a
> member of staff saying, 'I've got a phone. [The phone is a ruler with a calculator on
> it – hence buttons.] He then uses it as a zapper at another member of staff.

Jack was often seen keen to demonstrate his prowess within any play situation, usually as a

policeman, sometimes as a doctor; in all his play objects appear to be essential to

demonstrating his role and his authority within the role. This occasion was no different,

Jack's use of the mobile and the laptop seemed to be signifiers, the items appeared to hold

importance for him and demonstrate that he held a powerful position within the play

(Kantor et al 1998). The mobile phone appeared to hold the most significance and it was

that that he held onto whilst he was more willing to hand-over the laptop.

All three examples demonstrate how objects can be a central aspect of children's role-play.

The objects are not necessarily used as they are intended however they appear to be central

to the children's role-play activities. Likewise, costumes are props or objects that are also

utilised by the children in a range of different ways to support their role-play.

4.3 Using objects to develop play themes

Across the two settings there was evidence that children used props or objects to extend

play themes and to demonstrate to others what role they were engaged in. The three

scenarios are all observations from across both settings. In these the children use a range of

objects some for their intended purpose and others for other reasons to extend their play.

Jack is seen using bikes and police helmets to clearly identify the play in which he is

engaged. Hannah is seen to use a mixture of purposed objects, some other objects that she

accesses herself and a range of imagined objects. Caleb is seen to use chairs in an imaginary

way to develop a theme of playing trains.

Field notes 6: Observation All Hallows Pre-school.
> *Play has moved outside. The 3 boys including Jack have their police helmets on and*
> *are playing a police game. They are on ride-on cars and trikes.*
>
> *[Researcher: Are you arresting people?].*
>
> *Yes, in cars and if someone's naughty I'll arrest them and put them in jail real. And*
> *then I'll get my gun and shoot them up.*
>
> *[Researcher: Are you allowed to do that?]*

Yes, my auntie says so.

[Researcher: suggests that they can't]

He insists that they can his auntie has told him so. He goes off on his trike.

In this first scenario Jack is seen playing a police game with his friends. This is not an unusual game for him he repeats the theme many times during my time in the setting. It appears that he enjoys accessing objects that support his game. The objects are clearly identifiable and identify what he is engaged with. All the boys engaged in the game were wearing police helmets and riding either a trike or a car. The use of the objects enabled them to extend their play. Jack demonstrates his concepts of the role of the police and what he can do as a police officer. He uses a range of objects to support his ideas. However, the objects themselves are not necessarily what is of importance. What is, is the children's opportunity to story the events and for meaning making, making sense of their world (Lindqvist 2010). In the above scenario, Jack was seen to utilise props or objects to enhance and extend the play. This play scenario appears to support both him and his peers in developing their social relationships an essential element of their long-term development which object play enables (Siraj-Blatchford 2014, Earnshaw 2014).

Field notes 7: Observation Home-fell Nursery Hairdressing role-play
> *A practitioner is sat at a hairdressing table providing some modelling for the children on how to use the different hairdressing equipment.*
>
> *Hannah gathers up several items and carries them to the other table away from the practitioner. She appears to demonstrate clear determination to work on the hairdressing head even though the hair appears difficult to brush and the head tips around. The practitioner leaves the area.*

Hannah then finds and uses a paintbrush to apply [unknown substance imaginary] to the doll's head. She pours a lotion [imaginary] over the dolls head and uses straighteners and a brush on the hair. She then appears to dry the hair using a hairdryer. She goes and selects further items from the first table, more brushes, combs, and bottles. She finds a mobile phone and immediately has a phone conversation.

She returns to working on the head. Lots of brushing occurs, more than one brush is used as well as a comb. She goes to collect more items; bottles and combs.

A mother and two children enter the role-play area. Hannah remains engrossed in her play and does not communicate with them or acknowledge them.

Further products [imaginary] are placed on the hair and more hair brushing occurs. A new child arrives and speaks to her. Hannah indicates that the 2nd girl should collect a hairdressing head. The 2nd girl does this, but almost immediately takes it back to the original table and leaves.

Again, Hannah is using a paintbrush to apply [imaginary] items to the head. More hair brushing occurs. 4 girls arrive and ask her what she is doing. She doesn't respond to them.

The bell rings for registration and all the children leave the area.

In this second scenario Hannah is engrossed in her play, she is neither interested in the modelling that the practitioner offered nor in engaging with other children or adults that enter the setting. She appears to use a range of objects to extend her play and these include the objects that were offered, the hairdressing materials, a paintbrush that she accessed separately and imaginary objects that she was observed to mime using. Children are usually able to manage object substitutions from about 24 months of age (Frahsek et al, 2010). It is usual to see that children use one object to represent another. Children's use of objects moves through stages from pre-representational play where the child merely investigates a

toy, to representational where they use a toy literally but demonstrate some aspects of pretend such as pretending to drink out of a cup, through to symbolic play in which object substitution occurs one toy may be used to represent another object (Vig 2007). Hannah is demonstrating object substitution as she engages with the objects to extend her play. As they mature and use object substitution they are also able to begin to develop thematic content that reflects their understanding of events that they have observed or that they can imagine, rather than something that they have necessarily engaged in (Vig 2007). The play is associated with the objects that were offered and that she found but it is derived from her own ideas rather than from the objects themselves (Vygotsky 1978). Hannah was seen to be engrossed in this play and was not distracted by those around her. The objects appeared to be central to this allowing her to develop and extend her play theme she utilised a range of objects that can be seen to be used as intended and those that were being substituted. In the following scenario, Caleb and his friends substitute objects to develop their imaginative play.

Field Notes 8: Observation Home-fell Nursery
> *Caleb and a group of children have gathered a number of chairs and have laid them out in a row. They are playing being on a train.*
>
> *[During register Caleb's photographs had been discussed. This included some of his photos of trains. He was asked why he had taken them. Caleb said that he'd done so because his friend likes trains.]*

In the above snapshot observation Caleb was seen to bring together several chairs with his friends in order that they could play a game of trains. This activity occurred in response to discussion during register and circle time where he had been encouraged to share his photographs with the other children in the setting. Caleb had stated that he had

photographed the trains not because he liked them particularly but because one of his friends liked them. This appeared to lead to the group of boys wanting to create a train. Broadhead and Burt (2012) discuss creating open-ended play spaces and resources. In these spaces, crates, tarpaulins, tyres, drainpipes and planks of wood are provided as open-ended resources for the children to access and use. These open-ended play materials can be used in a range of self-chosen ways rather as pre-determined by adults. Pack-away settings are unlikely to be able to store such a range of materials given that they often have limited storage facilities, which they may have to share with other users of the facility. However, they do often have chairs, something that the children appeared to make use of in their play.

The children used the objects available to them to develop themes that were of interest to them. The showing of the photographs had enabled the children to discuss the theme of trains. Caleb then led some play in which he and his friends set up and played being on a train. The chairs were being used as signifiers, they were the train (Piaget 1951, Vygotsky 1986. This appears to be evidence of mature play in which the children demonstrate use of their imagination and object substitution (Vig 200, Frahsek et al 2010, Leong and Bodrova 2012). In Vygotskian terms, the ratio has changed and through this mature play activity the ratio has become meaning over object (Vygotsky 1978).

There is increasing research evidence of the positive effects of well-developed and extended role-play on many areas of their development including; social skills, mathematical skills, language and literacy development as well as the ability to self-regulate (Leong and Bodrova 2012). For children to engage in high quality, meaningful role-play scenarios, they need to

be supported to understand how to play, this may include supporting them in

understanding how different objects are used or work. This scaffolding of children's play

allows them to plan and through this process the most mature play is developed (Leong and

Bodrova 2012).

In all three scenarios, the children used the objects to extend their ideas and their play. In

the one scenario in which scaffolding was offered by the adult, the child chose not to accept

it and took her play elsewhere, taking the objects with her (Leong and Bodrova 2012). The

objects were used both as intended and in substitution (Vig 200, Frahsek et al 2010). The

objects allowed the children to develop role-play opportunities that they may not have been

able to develop without them.

4.4 Holding the object: signifiers of power

The four short excerpts of observations of the children across both Home-fell Nursery and

All Saints Pre-school demonstrate the ways in which object possession can be a signifier of

power in children's interactions with their peers. Some of the objects can be directly related

to the play scenario as is seen with the flag (Field notes 6: All Hallows Pre-school). Some are

simply considered by the children in that instance as with Bea and the harmonica next to be

signifiers of power and enable the holder to demonstrate their authority in that situation.

The cameras which Eve and Rosie are seen using were given to them by me and appear to

be imbued with a level of authority that even the practitioners in the setting are willing to

respond to. Finally, Jack is seen using a pretend mobile phone. The significance of mobile

phones as signifiers of power is discussed.

Field notes 9: All Hallows Pre-school

On this day, the setting was having a pirate day. Children had been encouraged to come to pre-school dressed as pirates.

Jack arrived late and went straight outside to join in with the finding treasure game. Having given the treasure to a member of staff, he goes onto the climbing frame. He is shouting, 'On the ship, on the ship! Wave the flag, give the flag to me! On the ship! On the ship!

A little later, Jack has taken the flag from the ship and is walking around waving the flag and saying, 'Yo, ho, ho!' [He has 10 pirates following him and he's going to a special island to find treasure.] 'Listen pirates, listen, let's go find some treasure.' Jack goes inside to the role-play area. He sits in the role-play area. 'This is the ship – the real one. I'm going to a special island and there's treasure there. (Pointing to a child), 'This one is Finlay.'

The children had been informed in advance that there was to be a pirate day; they had been encouraged to come to the setting dressed as pirates. The activities that were available on the day were to be pirate themed. In the scenario above, Jack started his play in the garden of the setting. He climbed on the climbing frame, which had a flag on the top and was being used as a pirate ship; he then removed the flag and took that with him as he moved the play scenario. The possession of the flag appeared to be central to leading and deciding the direction of the play. This use of a signifier to demonstrate who can participate in a play scenario appears to have resonance with the work of Kantor et al (1998). Whilst Jack did not seem to be expecting that other children should have flags, in fact he seemed keen to keep possession of the object, his possession of the item allowed him to demonstrate his authority and leadership within the play.

156

In the first part of the scenario, Jack held the flag whilst telling the other children what they should be doing. He wanted them to climb on the ship, to wave the flag and then give the flag back to him. The children around him were compliant and appeared to accept his leadership in the play. Jack was part of a peer culture in which he was enabled to take the lead; the other children appear to accept his role as a leader of the group. Peer cultures are central to the relationships that children build in early years settings and influence the ways in which the children develop future skills of interaction (Corsaro 2005, Lofdahl and Hagglund 2007). Research evidence is explicit that for children to function effectively within society they need to be able to participate successfully within their peer culture (Corsaro 1998, 2005, Kantor et al 1998, and Schaffer 1996). Pretend play supports children's development of social understanding and effectiveness (Uren and Stagnetti 2009). This effectiveness impacts on their cognitive development. Here Jack appears to be able to enact the appropriate cultural element that allowed him to be the leader rather than isolating him from his peers through his obvious need to lead. Jack's possession of the object, demonstrated his power within his peer culture (Kantor et al 1998, Corsaro 2010).

Later the same morning Jack took the flag from the pirate ship and used it to lead children around the setting. On that occasion, a group of approximately ten children followed him from the garden inside the setting to the role-play area that had been set up as a treasure island. Jack joked about a child who was already there, suggesting that he was the treasure. The other children appear to join in and share the joke with him. The child who was the treasure appeared bewildered rather than particularly upset by the behaviour. Several researchers argue that play provides an arena in which children demonstrate their power in relation to other children (Grieshaber and McArdle 2010, Lofdahl and Hagglund 2006).

Throughout the play, Jack maintained control of the flag, the signifier that he was in charge

of the play. The fact that the children followed him and did not appear to be coerced into

doing so, would suggest that they were accepting of his role of leader. In the following

scenario, Bea used an object as a signifier of power and control in a different way. Instead of

using this to lead others, she appears to use it to demonstrate her own autonomy in a

situation.

Field Notes 10: Observation Home-fell Nursery
> *Bea and friends have been engaged in role-play for some time. They have moved*
> *some chairs and are playing that they are on a bus.*
>
> *All three girls get off the chairs and go and find some pencils. Bea finds a*
> *harmonica that she plays. The girls go and sit back on the bus. A few minutes later*
> *they again leave the bus. This time they go and play on a mat at the bottom of the*
> *hall.*
>
> *Bea seems to follow her friend Amy. Amy has a large stick like instrument - flute.*
> *Bea wants it, but is refused it. Bea gets out the harmonica and plays it. Bea appears*
> *to be controlling her own play choosing to sit on the floor not a chair as Amy would*
> *prefer. Caleb arrives and irons her back. 'Do you like that?' he asks her. 'No!' she*
> *replies. Bea appears to play her harmonica at him in retaliation. Amy asks her to go*
> *and do something else. 'I don't have to,' says Bea.*
>
> *The play continues until the bell rings for tidy-up time.*

In this scenario, Bea is seen engaged in role-play in which she and her friends spent time on

a bus that they had created out of some chairs that were available within the setting. Here

Bea makes use of the harmonica not as a way of leading the play and demonstrating power

and authority, but seemingly as a way in which she can protect herself and demonstrate

some autonomy in her play. Mary was the leader of the play, the one with whom the power

lay; she was Bea's friend, but always appears dominant in any play situation. The flute that

Mary used was also a signifier of her power and dominance in the play (Kantor et al 1998).

Bea attempted to wrest the instrument from Mary but was not able to do so. It was at that

point that Bea found an instrument of her own. It was only after Bea had selected the

harmonica and was carrying it with her that she appeared to gain the confidence to disobey

Mary's rules. Mary wanted Bea to sit on a chair in the bus, but Bea did not want to and

suddenly she chose to sit on the floor. Later when Caleb pretended to iron her back, Bea

played the harmonica at him seemingly to protect herself and ward him off. Finally, Bea

seemed to summon the courage to refuse a request from Mary. Pretend or role-play

activities allow children to develop the necessary skills to enter the social world and

understand the complex structures found within it (Papadopoulou 2012). Likewise, when

children play free from adult intervention then they are enabled to develop their own

identity within the play (Canning 2007).

Rosie and Eve use an object, a camera to demonstrate their power in the following scenario.

Field Notes 11: Observation All Hallows Pre-school
> *Rosie and Eve are working with their cameras. Eve seems to follow Rosie. Rosie*
> *announced that she wanted all the children to line up on the bench so that she*
> *could photograph them. A member of staff turns the music off and rings a*
> *tambourine in order to organise this. Rosie accepts that not all children will*
> *participate. A number of children and some staff line up on the bench for the*
> *photos. Rosie took a series of photos of the people. Eve took some as well, Eve*
> *seems more reticent. As they finished the children went back to playing.*

In this short scenario both Rosie and Eve used their cameras as objects that were signifiers

of power (Kantor et al 1998). This object possession enabled them to ask things of both their

peers and the members of staff. The process of taking pictures enabled them to hold the power. Several members of the staff appeared to allow the children to lead them, responding compliantly to their requests to sit on the benches with the other children in order that their pictures could be taken. Seemingly children are not, '…passive recipients of experiences… but that they often exercise agency, '…shaping the direction of events and activities' (Rose and Rogers 2012, p.69). In this instance both Eve and Rosie can be seen to be doing this. During a conferencing session Eve commented on these photographs saying,

'… I'm waving and Susan is waving. I don't know what the rest are doing. We shook the tambourine and they all lined up and I took the picture.'

Likewise, Rosie said,

'… I wanted to take a big picture of people in a row.'

Both Eve and Rosie appeared to understand that they had been able to do something that they would not normally have been able to do. The possession of the camera had conferred power on them and they had been able to lead in a way which would not normally be possible.

In the two of the three scenarios, the objects that the children held were objects that may be found regularly in early childhood settings. The ways in which they were utilised by the children imbued them with significance and power. Whilst cameras are often found in early childhood settings the children are not always enabled to access them which is possibly why Eve and Rosie appeared to be empowered to ask things particularly of the adults that they may not normally have asked.

4.5 Object Play in pack-away settings

In the following three scenarios observed in both Home-fell Nursery and All Hallows Pre-school the use of slides and activity apparatus is utilised. Some of the play scenarios that are observed have connotations of rough and tumble play but appear to be tolerated in the pack-away settings in ways in which they may not in other spaces that are more confined (Rogers and Evans 2008, Holland 2003, Bilton 2010, Pellegrini 1987). Children's access to space and their ability to transport objects from one space to another is observed in these pack-away settings.

Field notes 12: Home-Fell Nursery
Two wooden slides have been set out beside each other.

Four boys are using the two slides in the setting as a ship. "Telephones" seem central to the play and it appears essential to be holding one at all times.

Caleb appears to be the central male in the boys' games. A practitioner arrives at the slides; she is concerned that the play appears to be too rough. Caleb walks over and talks to her. He is keen to demonstrate his physical prowess on the slide, demonstrating how he can use it. At all times, he carries his phone. Once the practitioner has gone, he moves to a table where four boys are using pegboards and creating patterns. He tells them about his magic trick. Caleb sees that the practitioner has returned to the area near the slide. He goes and joins her and a group of children using a microphone and singing. Caleb is engaging with the insides of the tape machine to which the microphone is attached. He appears to be deeply engaged with the way in which the machine works. Caleb begins to climb on the slide again. He immediately takes out his mobile phone. The practitioner leaves the area. 'Watch this,' Caleb says to me and some boys. Again, he shows the mobile. He talks to some girls who have come to the slide. 'Do you want to see my magic trick?' He climbs through the slide, all the time he is holding the mobile phone in his hand.

In this scenario, the slide was being used as a ship and the boys particularly Caleb seemed to enjoy engaging with it. It allowed them to work creatively extending their ideas in order to engage in a game about ships. At the same time, they were afforded opportunities to develop physical skills, climbing the slide (Bilton 2010). The use of the slide as a multi-function object is often necessary in settings that have limited space. The practitioner who arrived did not actually enter the role-play area and did not attempt to enter any play that was occurring there. As the practitioner left the area, Caleb and friends returned to their own self-directed play, climbing on the slide. The use of the slide allowed Caleb opportunities to share with his peers and with members of staff his physical prowess, he appears to believe that climbing through the slide in different ways was important. The children appeared to demonstrate interest in objects that were not available on a daily basis, probably because they were new and interesting. The slides were such equipment and when they were available they appeared to provide a range of opportunities. In the scenario that I observed Caleb seemed keen to demonstrate his physical prowess and the slide provided a perfect opportunity for him to do so (Holland 2003, Bilton 2010). The children appear to be attracted to play materials that are only available some of the time. In this instance, the slide combined both the new and an item that allowed for physical play opportunities, making it a particularly attractive object. Items such as the slides, which provided opportunities for physical play, seemed particularly attractive to children (Holland 2003, Bilton 2010).

Field notes 13: Observation All Hallows Pre-school

> *Children start each morning with wake and shake. They then do a visual timetable. Children do sign, but this is being emphasised. Children are being asked to observe and copy the sign as remembering the order of the day. Children are shown the symbol of playtime to go and start choosing.*

> *Eve is helping to construct the slide. She has arrived with a large Peppa Pig. She is finding ways of carrying Peppa Pig whilst fixing the slide.*

The slide appeared to be what was of interest to Eve in the above scenario. The church hall provides more space than is regulated (Dfe 2014) for the numbers of children however sometimes it remained necessary to set things out after something else had occurred. The slide was erected on the large map where the children had done wake and shake so could not be put up until that had happened. Eve appeared to be interested in becoming involved with helping. At the same time, she also had hold of an object which she had brought into the setting from home that day, her Peppa Pig toy. The toy is of interest to other children and Eve appeared concerned that if she put it down another child would take her toy. Even in this snapshot observation several things are occurring; Peppa Pig appears to be of importance to Eve, the toy allows her access to her peer group with the associated notions of holding an object that is of significance to the peer culture (Kantor et al 1998, Corsaro 2011). Eve is simultaneously engaging with the slide with the member of staff. Other observations and photographic evidence from the children, suggest that the slides are important signifiers for the children (Piaget 1951, Vygotsky 1986). Home Fell Nursery appeared to have more than one slide and these slides appeared to be of interest to several of the children, appearing in their photographs. One photograph, taken by Penny, shows a slide which was attached to a plastic climbing zone. It is possible to see that a child is

approaching this slide with a teapot in one hand and a kettle in the other. Caleb's

photograph shows a different slide, but again there are several children gathered around it

and making use of it. The children appeared to demonstrate interest in objects that were

not available daily, probably because they were new and interesting. The slides for example

were not available daily but appeared to provide a range of opportunities. Eve appeared to

be making use of two different objects both of which were signifiers and allowed her access

on different levels to her peer culture (Corsaro 2011).

In the final scenario below an activity park which includes numerous physical opportunities

were available to the children. The children appeared to have transported some of the

theme from the role-play area which was set up as a café as well as engaging in physical

activities. The object, the activity park, appeared to frame the type of role-play in which the

children engaged.

Field Notes 14: All Hallows Pre-school
> *The activity park is out. Many of the boys are using it for Rough and Tumble play.*
> *The children are enabled to continue their play. The boys are seen; climbing,*
> *jumping and swinging.*
>
> *The role-play area is largely ignored. Two children, one boy and one girl, play with*
> *the cooker. They look at the cafe, but don't appear to use it. The children exit but*
> *return a few minutes later. Their play appears to move in and out of the role-play*
> *area.*
>
> *Some further children, who were on the activity park, join in, in the role-play area*
> *pretending to be monsters. 'Go and get Harry, Harry is even tastier. Get out of my*
> *house.' Again, the children exit the role-play area. However, the play is clearly*
> *continuing. Jack has become one of the monsters [not a role previously seen, or*
> *seen on any other occasion]. Several of the children have joined in some of the*

physical play. All of the children seem to understand the rules of the game. There is pushing, pulling and some light hits and slaps. The children are not upset by this; it is clearly part of the game. Some children shout, 'It's a crocodile!' as Jack appears to use his arms as snapping jaws.

The play comes to a natural end and the children move off to engage in other play opportunities.

In this episode, the children were engaged in an episode of rough and tumble play. The play began with the activity park, then spilled over into the role-play area before incorporating much of the nursery. Children were seen to use some of the props that were laid out to provide a café role-play area, but whilst the children engaged in cooking-based play for some of the time, they were not using the area as a café. The children were engaging in exuberant play that included pretending; to make food, to eat it and to eat each other.

Whilst a range of objects were available to the children and some use was made of them, the dominance in the play appeared to come from individuals who demonstrated physical prowess and could lead the play in that way. The dominant players were those that could effectively engage in rough and tumble play (Pellegrini 2009). Rough and tumble play can be seen to support the development of peer cultures; children need to enjoy being with one another if they wish to participate (Corsaro 1998 and 2011). There was evidence within the episode of children engaging in this social play behaviour even when it appeared to be aggressive.

The term Rough and Tumble play, was originally coined by Groos in his work in 1898 (Jarvis 2007). However, whilst some research on this area of children's play has been conducted there is a distinct lack of in-depth analysis of this form of play (Smith 2010). It has been considered, '... a neglected aspect of play' (Tannock 2011, p. 14). Whilst there is evidence

that rough and tumble play has a positive effect on children's behaviours and their abilities to form social relationships with others, this aspect of play has largely been ignored seemingly because it is not considered to effectively contribute to cognitive development (Pellegrini 1987). Children's ability to participate in peer cultures may not simply be important with regards to children having an enjoyable time; it may also serve as an important aspect of learning (Tannock 2008).

In All Hallows Pre-school staff appeared to be accepting of this approach to play. Given most young children will find themselves in the care of early years practitioners; there is a need to understand how they interpret such play (Tannock 2011). In conversations with the manager of the setting, it was apparent that she and her staff had considered this type of role-play and had moved from a position of previously undertaking a zero-tolerance approach to demonstrating an understanding of the need for children to engage in this type of play. During a discussion of rough and tumble play Susan (the setting manager at All Hallows Pre-school) stated:

> *Going through an FdA and EYPS (Early Years Professional Status) meant I had to think about practice, what was good what wasn't... I realised how important rough and tumble was, particularly for boys.*

Some forms of rough and tumble play and superhero play are reliant on object possession. Kantor et al's (1998) research demonstrated that the children needed to have hold of the capes or the sticks, though preferably both, to be fully integrated into the super-hero play. In this play scenario the pushing and pulling, the slaps and hits are central to the play. Jack

was able to manoeuvre himself into the central role by becoming the crocodile that was threatening to eat the other children.

Rough and Tumble play, has some particular features, which set it apart from other forms of play (Pellegrini 1987). There has been concern that this type of play is a form of aggression, however there is evidence that children take turns at being the aggressor and will self-handicap particularly where they are playing with children that appear to be physically weaker than themselves (Pellegrini 1987, Scott and Panksepp 2003, Smith 2010). It was evident in the play scenario that the children were laughing and entering positively into the play experience. This play scenario occurred in an indoor environment where children are afforded greater opportunities to move around, to participate in activities such as rough and tumble play, than may occur in other indoor spaces. Such opportunities are often limited in many early years settings that suffer from poverty of space and in which children are encouraged to specifically participate in play activities or play behaviours in particular areas or spaces (Rogers and Evans, 2008). The space afforded these children could enable them to engage in play behaviours, that may not be encouraged in other early years settings.

4.6 Wave play: a definition

Wave Play is a term that I have coined to try to describe some of the play activity that I have observed in the two settings in which I conducted my research. Often when we consider that a play episode has ended it may actually not have done; the children may simply have decided to move to another area of the setting, they are remaining in role or working with the theme or idea that has interested them but they have taken it somewhere else. It is often possible to observe that the play will begin in one area, move to another and then

may return to the starting point. It can seem to incorporate large areas of the setting and be being conducted within all of them. The notion of Wave Play leads on from Object play because the children often use signifiers, objects or play costumes, to demonstrate the play in which they are engaged. In the following three scenarios, it is possible to see some of the features of Wave Play and demonstrate how it can be considered to be a fluid form of role-play.

Storli and Hagen (2010) argue that where the environment, in their research the natural environment, is more complex and diverse children are seen to engage in more complex play opportunities, likewise in pack-away settings where children can move easily from one play space to another Wave Play occurs. Whilst it is not possible to say that this play can only be found in pack-away settings I would argue that this is probable, children in permanent settings are likely to have less access to space than those in pack-away settings. The confined space in many permanent settings impacts on and can impede children's play opportunities. Play can become static and hindered by the poverty of space made available to the children (Rogers and Evans 2008).

Like the tide, Wave Play appears to move backwards and forwards, being carried by the children's interests as they are taken in different directions. In the first play scenario, the use of objects, a mobile phone as both a phone and a zapper, appeared to be the central theme, something that all three boys were engaged with. There also appeared to be some interest in Super Hero play, Caleb talked at some length about his Power Rangers phone (Holland 2003). What is also apparent is that as the boys moved from one area of the room to another the theme and interest is taken with them; it is not abandoned as they appear to abandon a play area or activity. This taking the play and the theme of the play from space to

space is part of what constitutes Wave Play. It can be considered to be situated in a co-

constructional theoretical approach as suggested by Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1976 and

1986). The children are using the play space in ways in which they choose and co-

constructing their knowledge and understanding with their peers through the process. This

enabling process supports both cognitive development and personal, social and emotional

development. Play themes are extended and developed which of itself will support cognitive

development (Siraj-Blatchford 2012, Wood and Attfield 2005); likewise, Wave Play supports

children's personal, social and emotional development which helps children to feel secure

and to be able to explore (Elfer 2012).

Field notes 15: Observation Home-fell Nursery

A group of three boys including Caleb along with two girls are engaged in role-play. The boys all have either a mobile phone or some other signifier of a hand-held device. The boys communicate with each other and other imaginary people using the 'phones'. The devices are regularly put into and taken out of their pockets often accompanied by 'pow' noises.

The two girls have left the play. The boys are moving around the room and showing the devices to people as they go. They demonstrate that the device can be used both as a phone and some sort of zapper, with which to zap people. (It appeared to stun rather than kill).

The boys spend time in the reading area, they move to the slide and then to the garage. They spent time using the slide with their zappers in hand making noises and aiming at people. They then moved to the garage where again the zappers appeared central to the play, though they also engaged with the cars and vehicles that were available at the garage.

The boys stopped and spoke to a member of staff about a Fireman Sam outfit, before moving off again. Caleb and Thomas compare how their zappers work and what is happening with them. All three boys go to investigate the Christmas tree,

zappers in hand. The third boy pulls some tinsel off the tree. A member of staff asks him to put it back.

The three boys moved to the other end of the room and engaged in conversations with a member of staff and me. Caleb explained the importance of his Power Rangers phone to me and that it also acted as a zapper.

The three boys left still concerned about their hand-held devices and went and engaged with a car steering wheel and gear lever toy.

(See Appendix 14 for a map of the setting on this day).

It appeared that the roles that the boys were developing were what was of importance rather than the specific place in which the play occurred. So, whilst the practitioners had carefully organised the setting prior to the children arriving, Caleb and his friends seemed to largely ignore how the setting was laid out, instead they focussed on their self-directed play, using and substituting objects and materials to develop their play themes.

Wave Play is certainly dependent on a pedagogically appropriate environment in which children are enabled to move freely between areas and activities. Caleb and his friends could do this seemingly continuing and possibly developing their interests as they went. In this play scenario, it was possible to identify that the boys were engaging in socio-dramatic play, and Super Hero and Rough & Tumble play (Holland 2003, Pellegrini 2009, Jarvis 2007). Whilst there was the occasional interruption of their play by adults to remind them of rules, most of the time the boys were enabled to extend their play in the ways in which they saw fit. This enabling of them to move from space to space positively supports the children's opportunities to develop their personal social and emotional development; they can be confident about who they are and what they wish to do (Storli and Hagen 2010). Research

evidence such as that conducted by Aubrey and Ward (2013) suggests that supporting PSED

is essential if children are to be supported to develop to their full potential.

Field notes 16: Observation Home-fell Nursery

> *Penny has put on a dress and gone to the drawing table. She is sitting alone*
> *drawing. Betsy came and joined her sitting next to her. Neither girl appears to*
> *acknowledge the other. Another girl arrives and speaks to them. They ignore her*
> *and she leaves. Betsy leaves and Penny continues colouring in a pre-printed picture.*
> *She doesn't appear to be concerned that she is alone. She is concentrating on*
> *colouring.*
> *The bell rings for registration. Penny immediately takes off the dress goes and*
> *hangs it back up before going and sitting on the carpet for register time.*

In the short snapshot observation above Penny is seen to access the role-play clothing and

then seemingly engaging in another activity. However, given that she carefully took off the

dress when the bell rang for registration she appeared to remain aware of what she was

wearing. It must therefore be assumed that this was a purposeful activity. Therefore, she is

engaged in one play theme whilst apparently engaging in a different activity. This suggests

that there is a layering to her play with different aspects being of different significance but

all part of her play activity (Vygotsky 1978 and Piaget 1951). Given that I did not question

Penny about this I can only make some broad assumptions about what was happening for

her based on my observations. She entered the setting and selected a role-play dress which

appeared to be a purposeful act. She went to the drawing table and engaged in an activity

there. Again, this seems a purposeful act. These could be two unrelated acts; however,

children are often engaged in activities simultaneously which are part of meaning making

process (Lindqvist 2010). Wave play provides opportunities for meaning making as the

children combine activities or move activities from one space to another as is seen in the following observation.

Field notes 17: All Hallows Pre-school

> *Children are facilitated to continue the building role-play theme outside. A tub with mud and water and paintbrushes has been provided. The children are using the paintbrushes to paint on the paving slabs. Rosie and Eve had gone outside. [I had asked them to come and do something with me, but they refuse saying that they were too busy.] They continue for some time determinedly painting. They discuss the fact that it is mud and they don't want anyone standing in their mud.*

> *Rosie: 'We have to do it all by ourselves.'*

> *A boy says to her, 'That's the last.'*

> *Rosie: 'We need to paint the fence.'*

> *[Member of staff comes and tells the girls that they need to find a sunhat.]*

> *Rosie: 'I've lost my best paintbrush.'*

> *Eve: 'I've found this one.'*

> *The two girls physically grapple; Eve wins the tussle keeping hold of the paintbrush. Rosie leaves in tears. She returns from inside the building with a paintbrush. Within seconds she persuades Eve to swap. Rosie now has the paintbrush that she started with. Another girl arrives wanting a paintbrush.*

> *Rosie: 'Go inside, I'll show you.' She takes the girl inside to find a brush. Eve follows. The three girls come back. The third girl is now carrying a paintbrush. All three girls engage in painting the fence. This play continues for some time until staff open the shed in order that the cars and bikes can come out.*

This scenario was a development of the theme that had already occurred indoors, where the children had engaged on a building site. In this one the girls were engaged with the same adult-initiated play theme, using paint brushes and mud and water to paint the slabs.

This can be considered as part of Wave Play because the theme had been transported from one space to another.

The painting that Rosie and Eve were engaged in had been initiated by adults, they had provided the materials, however they further developed the scenario. The language that they used when telling me that they were too busy to engage with me because they had a job to do, suggests that they are drawing on their knowledge of the world of work. Rosie and Eve appear to have an understanding of how an adult may respond to a request whilst they are already engaged with something else (Cross 2011). Their interactions demonstrate an understanding of socially appropriate inter-subjective interactions (Göncü 1998). Both Rosie and Eve appear to have agreed the play theme, something which is essential in a social context (Goouch 2008, Whittington and Floyd 2009, Umek and Musek 2001). The girls demonstrate persistence in their play, they painted the paving slabs and when they had covered all of them they looked for something else to paint, eventually choosing the fence.

The outdoor environment supports children's social and emotional development, leading to children being better able to manage disputes with peers (Maynard and Waters 2007, Tovey 2007, Moser and Martinsen 2010). In this scenario, Rosie and Eve fell out over the paintbrushes, but Rosie chose to go back into the building and find another brush which she then brought out. What can be seen is that she had found a resolution without needing to seek the intervention of a member of staff in the dispute, evidence that she is developing social skills that enable her to manage her emotions and her inter-relationships with others (Gupta 2009, Laevers 2004, Bergen 2002). Children who are regularly given appropriate

role-play opportunities quickly become more effective in handling their emotions

demonstrating emotional skills and competencies (Bergen 2002 and Gupta 2009).

The outdoor environment often means another space that the practitioner is responsible for

planning and the connection between the indoor and outdoor environment can be difficult

to create (Rose and Rogers 2012). Moving the play from one area to another and finding

and taking the resources necessary did not demonstrate a challenge for Rosie, her

engagement in Wave Play in which children move the play from one space to another to

meet their personal requirements would appear to support this independence. The

choosing to take a play theme from inside the setting to the outdoor environment

demonstrated that they were continuing the theme rather than abandoning it and could

make links between what had occurred indoors and what they were doing outside. Rosie

and Eve were demonstrating their independence and aptitude in using resources in a variety

of different ways. This scenario demonstrates how Wave Play can not only occur inside the

setting but may move between an indoor and an outdoor environment.

4.7 Wave Play as role-play
The following three scenarios which were observed across the two settings serve to

illuminate the ways in which Wave play can be observed to be a facet of role-play. In the

first Hannah and friends are seen utilising the dressing-up clothes and using objects, dolls

and buggies, whilst moving from one area of the setting to another. In the second Jack is

seen to use the dressing up clothes as a signifier of the role in which he is engaged, whilst

also using several areas of the setting in his play. In the third scenario, Hannah and a friend

are again seen engaged in role-play activities whilst utilising different areas of the setting

and using dressing-up clothes as a signifier to denote the play in which they are engaged.

The following scenario illuminates Wave Play as a form of inter-subjective play or role-play (Göncü 1998). I am arguing that Wave Play appears to support extended periods of play that are not observed when children remain static within one area of a setting. Therefore, is possible to argue that Wave Play is a form of role-play that includes movement from one area of a setting to another with the theme of the play carried as the children move from one place to another.

Field notes 18: Observation Home-fell Nursery

> *Many of the girls have put on the dresses that are available. As more put them on others follow. Some of the girls put the dresses on but simply continue with their other activities.*
>
> *A group of three girls including Hannah and Betsy begin some role-play; they are dressed up and have buggies and car seats with babies in them. They make use of the large area of the setting and move around the setting before returning to the role-play area. One of the girls is now less engaged and leaves the play. The two girls sit at the table and create some food. They become interested in some bags that are available in the role-play area and add them to the buggies before going for another walk around the setting with the babies. They discuss going home. A mobile phone is taken from one of the bags. Hannah makes a call. Again, they take the babies off for a walk.*
>
> *They stop at the drawing table. The babies are parked beside them whilst they undertake some colouring. Soon they leave the drawing table and return to the role-play area again. Again, the phone comes out. Betsy asks, 'Can I wear the bag on me?' Hannah appears to agree but again they go out for a walk with the babies, with Hannah wearing the bag that contains the mobile phone.*
>
> *Hannah and Betsy go to a table that has been set up with some painting materials. Again, they park the buggies right beside them. They collect aprons and put them on over their role-play dresses.*

They are still painting when the bell is rung for register time. Children at the painting table can continue whilst everyone else sits in the book corner for register. When they have finished their paintings, they go and sit on the carpet for register, taking their babies with them.

The girls began their play by putting on princess dresses, whilst they did not appear to be engaging in the role of princesses, the dresses were important to their play. In many respects, the donning of the dress appeared to be related to the stepping into a role, the beginning of improvisation (Lobman 2003). Parallels can be drawn between role-play and theatrical notions of improvisation. In role-play children step into a character and they often accept the offer from another child (Lobman 2003). Where role-play and improvisation differ is that within an improvised scenario the actors rarely step outside the role to discuss what they will do next. Within inter-subjective role-play scenarios, children will regularly step outside the role to negotiate what will happen next and how the play will develop. Hannah and Betsy moved the play in and out of the role-play area stepping in and out of role to negotiate what would happen next. It appeared that the home-corner was both a starting point and a base from which new aspects of the play developed. The play is by its nature inter-subjective, with the two girls reliant on each other to further develop it (Göncü 1998). As Hannah and Betsy created food they talked to each other about what they were doing and what they were making. The three criteria of inter-subjectivity are being met; firstly, there are two or more players, secondly meta-communication is occurring, where they are negotiating the play and stepping in and out of it, thirdly they are using actions and language to construct the play (Göncü 1998).

The two girls appear to remain in role, that of mothers, whilst engaging in other creative activities. So, for example when they participate at the drawing table and later when they go and paint they do not abandon their babies and buggies, quite the opposite they seem concerned to have them close by where they can continue to see the babies whilst they participate in their other activities. Seemingly they are remaining in role throughout these activities. They appear to be enacting roles behaving in ways that they have seen; their own parents, family members and friends behave keeping a young child close whilst they participate in another activity. These processes are creative, they may draw on previous experiences of observation but they are not simply a re-enactment of what they have seen, '...but a creative reworking of the impressions that he has acquired' (Vygotsky 1995, p.11). There is an argument that all imagination and creativity is based in both reality and experience, no child or adult can imagine something that they have no knowledge of, imaginative creations are developed from experiences that one has previously had. If we want a child to have a firm foundation for creativity, '... what we must do is broaden the experiences we provide him with' (Vygotsky 1995, p. 15). The ability to have multiple experiences, to be both in role and engaging in creative activities – drawing and painting, would suggest that the children are being given broad experiences that support their imaginative selves.

It seems that as adults we often assume that something is or is not happening dependent on where it is taking place. Broadhead (2001, 2004) in her work on the Social Play Continuum noted that areas such as construction and the water tray were often places in which she could gain rich observations of children engaged in role-play activities. Likewise, when children are engaged in Wave Play the physical spaces are not automatically central to the

play, the play may well be moving from one space to another with the theme remaining throughout and the children giving different meaning to the different spaces. Language is central to inter-subjective role-play scenarios in which children are negotiating with each other to create their play scene (Broadhead 2006). Bodrova and Leong (2003) refer to this play as mature play; play in which children participate in a range of roles often using props symbolically. Even in this relatively short scenario the children were seen to participate in defined roles and use items in the role-play area to create meals from objects that they were substituting to represent something else (Frahsek et al, 2010 and Vig 2007). In Wave Play the children negotiate with each other using language as both a form of communication and a way in which they can create the imaginative play, language is central to decisions about where and when to move the play from one space to another. Wave Play is a form of socio-dramatic role-play, one in which children make use of their imaginations in order that they can continue with their play to its logical conclusion.

In the following observation, Jack is seen in two different roles. He began in one role – that of a doctor, later he is observed to be a police officer. In both the dressing up clothes are important signifiers at the same time the ability to use the space in self-chosen ways appears to be significant.

Field notes 19: Observation All Hallows Pre-school
> *During the early part of the morning children ignored the role-play area.*
>
> *Later they got some dressing up clothes and engaged in role-play. Jack dressed as a doctor and used the library area as a doctor's surgery. Jack saw several patients. He is dressed as a doctor and using the medical equipment. After some time, he relinquishes the coat and kit to T. Jack finds a policeman helmet. Jack has previously had a long conversation with me demonstrating his interest in the police. He arrests one of the girls. Shortly afterwards he*

arrests a boy. The first girl was not keen on being arrested. The boy is quite compliant in the
game. Jack brings him to me and says, 'He's in gaol.' [Why? I asked] 'He's killing somebody.'

In the first part of the observation Jack is seen to enact the role of the doctor. This is clearly a role-play activity, he has put on clothes which signify the role and is seeing patients which is an activity associated with the role (Kantor et al 1998, Lobman 2003). His use of the library area as the doctor's surgery demonstrates his ability to utilise the different spaces in self-chosen ways. He appears to have used features of the book corner in his play whilst also creating something that his own (Gupta 2008, Paley 1981). Role-play provides opportunities for children to develop their own peer cultures and to utilise space to support these developments (Corsaro 2011). Jack's use of the library area enabled him to demonstrate that he could modify a space for his own role-play activity (Jansson 2015). When Jack hands over the doctor's clothes and equipment he seeks other clothes that will signify a different role. He chooses to identify as a police officer. In this role, he again steps into character and is seen to move the play around the setting as he suggests at one point that the gaol is where I am sitting. In the two different activities Jack appears to be engaged in Wave play as role-play, developing an identifiable role and moving the play from one space to another giving meaning to the different areas of the setting.

The third observation was conducted at Home Fell Nursery. Hannah spent much of the morning engaged on two levels firstly in playing with the Knights and Castle table but also in the role of a mother carrying a baby doll with her. Dressing-up clothes again appear to be significant within the play.

Field notes 20: Observation Home-fell Nursery

Hannah and Betsy went to the Knights and Castle table. Two younger girls and a boy followed them. Hannah and Betsy appear to dominate the play. They negotiate how a ladder attaches to the castle. Betsy manages to sort it and says to Hannah, 'There you are.' Hannah then says, 'Put this on that horse.' Hannah attempts to put another ladder on the castle whilst Betsy places a horse inside the castle.

Hannah brings a knight and helmet to me, 'How does this work? 'I try to show her.

Hannah suddenly says, 'I want to play with something else.' She and Betsy leave the play table. They go to the role-play area and select some dresses. They bring them back to the Knights and Castles table to put them on. They work co-operatively. 'Shall I do your back up?' asks Betsy doing up Hannah's dress.

Once dressed, they run back to the other end of the room. They meet Caleb who is carrying a chainsaw. They are immediately into a game of chase with him. He loses interest and returns to the tool station.

The girls are continuing to move from one end of the room to the other. Hannah suddenly decides that they should take their shoes off. Both do so and take their shoes to the appropriate coat racks. Betsy collects a baby doll and offers it to Hannah. She refuses the offer. The doll is left. The girls collect bags from the role-play area. Betsy comes back for the doll. This time Hannah agrees to take the doll. Again, the girls move from one end of the room to the other. They decide to swap dresses. Betsy suddenly says, 'The baby!' She has misplaced it during the dress swapping.

The two find the doll and go to the book corner. The doll is dropped. They choose a picture book and share it. Hannah reads the book first and then tells Betsy to read it 'properly'. Betsy looks at the book. Hannah is distracted by other children in the room. The book is discarded and they move back to the knights and castle table. Here they are joined by a boy. They seem to tolerate his intervention in their play, however he soon leaves.

The two girls engage in play with the ponies. Betsy, 'I found that for you,' handing over a horse.

The girls then engage in some discussion. Hannah, 'Am I allowed in?' Betsy, 'No because you're too small.'

Betsy discusses brushing the, 'hair of the ponies.' Hannah says [to me] 'this is a big one.'

Betsy, 'It's the mummy.'

Hannah, 'It's eating this one's hair.'

[Me – 'Why is it doing that?']

Hannah, 'Because I'm a naughty mummy.'

A new boy comes over to the table and attempts to interrupt the play. Betsy is clear that he is not allowed to move the set up. They allow him to play with them because he agrees to play on their terms. However, he again disrupts the play. Hannah says, 'You're knocking it over.' He attempts to join in again with a pony and is allowed to do so.

Hannah: 'I opened the playground myself.'

Betsy: 'I opened the gates too mummy.'

A younger girl briefly joins and leaves the play. A second boy joins the play. He is happy to use the ponies in a way that is acceptable to the girls. Another child joins. Hannah and Betsy leave.

They go over to a member of staff and speak to her about what she is doing. They are back to moving all around the room, carrying their bags. Each girl holds her bag tightly during her play including whilst balancing on the tyres.

The two girls get into a rocker. The play finishes for snack time.

(See Appendix 15 for a map of the setting)

Hannah and Betsy choose to carry a doll that represents a baby with them. In her parent interview Hannah's mother noted that this theme along with the possession of a handbag and a mobile phone is a common theme in her play at home. At one point the baby was lost, they accidently left it behind as they moved from one area of the room to another; the ability to move from one area to another, taking props with them, allows these incidents to occur. Their behaviour appeared to demonstrate their confidence that within the setting that they would be supported to find things that were lost or that they needed. Socio-constructivist approaches allow children to feel nurtured and to develop resilience, they are essential for positive outcomes in later life. Children need to develop these skills and attitudes at an early age (Aubrey and Ward 2013). Both Hannah and Betsy demonstrate these characteristics of resilience; they can deal with the loss of the doll seemingly secure that it will quickly be found, they simply retrace their movements through the spaces in which they have been playing. Wave Play would seem to be situated in a socio-cultural co-constructed approach in which the children are enabled to participate in play that allows for them to work with a range of people in a range of spaces.

Hannah and Betsy seem to spend a certain amount of their time travelling from one space to another within the room. They appeared to base much of their play in one area, in this instance the Knights and Castle table, from which they move out and return, at intervals. As they moved around the room they were observed encountering other children. The encounter with Caleb was one such, there they engaged in some chase before he lost interest and returned to his chosen activity. These encounters appear to be a feature of Wave Play. As with encounters in outdoor environments it appears that in Pack Away settings conflict is more easily resolved and the children demonstrate an ability to form

relationships and work with their peers when they have the space necessary to move away

from a situation if they choose to do so (Maynard and Waters 2007, Tovey 2007). So, for

example here when Caleb loses interest in the game of chase he moves away from Hannah.

Wave Play in Pack Away settings shares many of the positive attributes of outdoor play;

where children can move more freely and participate on a larger scale.

Much of the research that looks at provision in the outdoor environment (Tovey 2007,

Broadhead and Burt 2012, Knight 2013) discusses the length of engagement with activities

when they occur in an outdoor environment, demonstrating that engagement appears to be

for greater periods of time in the outdoor environment. Hannah and Betsy were engaged

for approximately forty-five minutes in the same play theme. The play ended not because

they had lost interest but because the bell was rung for snack time. The time that they did

spend engaged would seem to be longer than would normally be expected for four-year-

olds to persevere with a given task or activity (Piaget 1959, Canning 2007).

These three scenarios share some important features that enable them to be described as a

facet of role-play. The children were each developing a theme or a scenario which could be

considered a role. The use of dressing-up clothes was a feature which demonstrates their

use of signifiers within the play (Kantor et al 1998). The movement of the play from one

space to another within the setting, giving meaning to each space, identifies this as Wave

play. Taken together it is possible to suggest that Wave play is a facet of role-play.

4.8 Wave Play and the colonisation and use of space

Space is central to Wave Play; children need to be able to move a play scenario from one

space to another. As children utilise the space they create their own sense of place and

identity (Green 2015). Their experiences with the physical environment are part of developing a sense of who they are and taking control of their lives (Corsaro 2011). These three scenarios demonstrate ways in which through Wave Play children use spaces which have been organised for children as their places organised in self-chosen ways (Rasmussen 2004).

In the first scenario, Jack and his friends use a number of different areas of the setting as part of the play with which they are engaged. The play appears to flow and move from one area of the setting to another. Interestingly the role-play area, from which this scenario starts, is set up as a veterinary practice with medical equipment and soft animal toys. Despite the clear intention on the part of the practitioners the children seem to decide to participate differently using the props to become doctors rather than vets and to deal with human rather than animal patients.

Field notes 21: All Hallows Pre-school
The role play area was set up as a Vet's practice.

As soon as the children could go and play Jack went to the dressing up clothes and selected a white coat and case of medical equipment.

He spent some time in the role-play area trying to put on the coat. Eventually he asked for some assistance. Jack then found another friend. They both had on white coats. They then began to move their play around the nursery making siren noises as they went.

Jack was clearly leading the play.

They go into the role-play area, 'Oh no he's hurt,' says Jack about another child. He opens his case and gets equipment out; he appears to fix the child. 'Let's go!' Seemingly the emergency is over and they are off again around the nursery. [Jack

and his friend attempt to run but are stopped by a member of staff. Running is against the rules.]

They move to the book corner where two patients are lying on cushions. Jack makes a mobile phone call to summon assistance. This doesn't appear to work he moves to the role-play area and explains, 'Someone is hurt.' Two friends, one of whom is also dressed as a doctor the other carrying equipment, come with Jack back to the book corner. Jack and the other doctor assess the patients and give injections. Jack appears to take the patient's blood pressure. Another child arrives. 'You're not a doctor,' he says. Jack ignores him and uses a stethoscope on Michael's stomach. The child who arrived had brought two laptops with him. The second doctor is now using the laptop. Jack puts a plaster on his patient. He then moves to assess the newly arrived child. There are now 6 boys involved the play they all appear to engage in conversations related to the play. 'Back to ....' [I didn't hear what they said.] They all leave making siren noises and return to the role-play area. They spent a few minutes there before returning to the book corner. Every movement is accompanied by siren sounds. Jack says, 'Right what shall we do now doctors?' One of them replies, 'Let's go and find patients.' Jack leaves then returns. 'Doctors there is somebody hurt.' Jack leads the doctors across the stepping stones on the large mat several times. Jack announces, 'Baddy, baddy,' following a child dressed as batman. A member of staff tells him that Batman is not a baddy. Jack realises that graduation photos are being taken. A member of staff has to explain to him that he cannot use the camera. A long conversation follows.

Jack has gone to the dressing up rail. His is holding onto the medical case. He looks at a space suit but leaves and returns to the book corner. Others leave but he remains. A member of staff engages him in conversation; he goes over and explains what he is doing. The boys return.

I've got handcuffs at home.'

[MoS] 'What do you do with them?'

'I arrest people who are naughty [something that was missed] I'm going to be a real policeman and I'm going to have a real police-car.'

[MoS] 'Will you show me your police-car?' 'I'm going to show everyone my police-car.'

Jack went off with other children still in the doctors' clothes. A member of staff asked the boys to write her some prescriptions. The children including Jack sat at the table to write their prescriptions. Jack drew on the paper. 'That's my mummy,' turns over the page, 'that's my daddy.

Jack leaves the table taking the prescription and medical equipment. He asked a member of staff who didn't seem to hear, 'Can I go and play now?' He is clutching the prescription and appears to be looking for someone to show it to. He returns to the role-play area. Jack calls to someone else, 'Doctor, I tried to ring you. Doctor, come to me – thank you.'

The bell rings for 5 minutes until tidy up time. Jack loses his white coat but continues to keep hold of the medical case. He and his friends sit in the role play area exploring the equipment.

Jack has spent more than an hour engaged in this role play activity.

(See Appendix 16 for a map of the setting).

Several themes appear through this scenario, they include; the use of physical play, travelling, demonstrating distance and subverting the use of both place and objects. Other themes that have been prevalent earlier in the chapter are also visible here with the use of objects as signifiers within the play, laptops and mobile phones.

In the above scenario from the outset Jack and his friends are constantly moving from one area of the setting to another. As they set off they were usually heard making a siren sound demonstrating that they were involved with some form of emergency. The children were

given the opportunity to be noisy. Whilst there were rules within the setting, Jack was reprimanded for running indoors, there were also opportunities afforded the children that would not be available in more conventional settings. This meant that the children were enabled to participate in more active play, akin to rough and tumble play that they engaged with, something that supports opportunities for, '...a vital socialising experience...complex physical and linguistic responses...' (Jarvis 2007, p.186)

Travelling and demonstrating distance travelled seemed central to Jack's play scenario. The leading of the children backwards and forwards across the stepping stones appeared to reveal that were travelling some distance to the emergency. Mobility supports cognitive development; it is through the ability to move that children find new information (Storli and Hagen 2010). Jack appeared to want to move much of the time, this movement may have added to his ability to learn. Much of what appears important in Western education policy is narrowly focussed on cognitive skills rather than physical and social ones, yet these are equally important in order that children grow into healthy and competent adults (Jarvis 2007). Wave Play includes opportunities to travel and to move the play from one space to another as part of what occurs. This movement could be argued to be supporting the children's abilities across several domains; they are being supported cognitively, socially and physically.

Jack and his friends appeared to use the book corner as a house in which several sick people were living. They used it as a lived space, a space of imagination, where they had created something different than that which was intended by the adults (Russell 2014). Practitioners who have confidently adopted playful pedagogies are able to accept children's play

narratives assured that cognitive development will occur for the children (Goouch 2008).

The children had ignored the purpose of the area as it had been arranged by the adults,

however equally the practitioners did not attempt to challenge the children's use of the

space, enabling them to use it creatively within their play (Green 2015). This approach could

be seen to include two of the three strands that Moyles (2010) suggests constitutes playful

pedagogies. Indeed, it could be further argued that the children were using the book corner

as what Papadopoulou (2012) refers to as a shelter; she states that she frequently observed

children using such a space and enacting family roles including the giving of medicine when

someone was ill. Whilst Jack and his friends were not part of a family, they were clearly

caring for others and doing so within a confined space. Likewise, the role-play area was

another confined space that they used in a particular way, there they appeared to go back

to base to re-visit what the play was about and to look at and discuss the medical

equipment prior to going out to work with other sick people.

In this scenario, Jack and his friends were seen to occupy a series of spaces within the

setting to enact the play. The movement between the spaces was also clearly part of the

play itself. This appropriation of multiple play spaces appears to occur given that the

children are afforded space in which their play can occur all aspects Wave Play.

Field notes 22: Observation All Hallows Pre-school
> *A member of staff and some children are sat on the large mat they appear to be*
> *playing doctors. The member of staff is showing the children how the different*
> *instruments work. She is also allowing them to experiment on her. Michael goes*
> *over and gives an injection to the member of staff and peers into her mouth. He*
> *begins collecting equipment and puts some of it in the case. He then left everything*
> *and went over to the drawing table and continues to make letters something that*

he was doing earlier. He puts the letters in his bag. He finishes making the letter and put the bag over himself and sets off. He collects an Indian headdress and checks what it looks like in the mirror. He goes and collects the case of medical equipment. He interacts with a different member of staff who is now sat on the mat.

Michael sits on the mat and takes off the dressing up clothes but continues to engage with the medical equipment. He then walks to the other end of the hall announcing to some children that the doctor is here. A syringe in taken out then put back in the case. He has a mobile phone in his hand which he continues to hold.

Michael goes and talks to the member of staff sat at the drawing table. He moves to the book corner continuing to keep the medical case with him. He spends time in the book corner interacting with a set of spider puppets whilst holding the case with one hand. (He does appear to have handed the phone to a female doctor.) Other children come and engage with him and the spiders. He leaves and goes to the large mat, then moves to the other end of the hall. He goes back to the mat holding the case throughout. He finds a member of staff and gives injections. He then uses (unidentified) instruments on her fingers and thumb. Another child takes one of the instruments. He quickly closes the case and leaves the area on his mobile phone. He finds a batman mask and tries it on, he then gives it to the child wearing the batman costume. Again, he goes off on the phone. He finds an abandoned Father Christmas costume and tries on the jacket. He takes it off again. Michael goes and sits partially behind a screen still clutching the case. He walks over to the CD player and turns the volume down and then back up. Throughout he holds onto the case. He becomes involved in a chase game using a spider puppet keeping the case with him. Michael moves to the mat where children are using musical instruments. He participates one handed only. He leaves and goes to the paint, taking the case with him. A member of staff puts it on another table saying that he should leave it there encase someone else wants to play with it whilst he's painting.

As with many of the role-play scenarios in which Michael engaged, he sustained the play for an extended period; on this occasion, approximately forty-five minutes were spent occupied in the theme of doctors and medics. It appeared that the play ended since it was snack time rather than that Michael had lost interest in that theme. The use of space within Wave Play is demonstrated by Michael as he moves the play around the room, starting and returning to the large mat at intervals. The mat provides the base or the safe space from which he can develop his play (Papadopoulou 2012, Green 2015). He appeared to initially be drawn to the activity because there was an adult involved with the play. Michael was interested in the medical equipment; however, he may not have initially engaged with it had there not been a staff member sat on the mat given that he did not appear to arrive with peers or particularly join those that were there initially.

As with many socio-dramatic play scenarios the objects are central to the play, in this instance Michel appeared to find both a mobile phone and a case of medical equipment as important signifiers within his play (Kantor 1998). These items were carried carefully from place to place within the room, he was observed at one point playing musical instruments one-handed as he kept a firm grip on the case of medical equipment. The mobile phone was relinquished to another child; this was something that I had not observed any other child do in either setting, in this instance the medical equipment appeared to be the more central theme of Michael's play and was guarded more closely. The use of multiple play spaces demonstrates Michael's needs and desire to move from one space to another which is a feature of Wave play.

Field notes 23: Observation Home-fell Nursery

A group of children including Hannah remove all the fire engines from the play table. They take them to the mat with the slide.

Some of the boys are now letting the fire engines run down the slide. Hannah is using a wooden fire engine and letting the engine down the slide.

'The car can go there; the fireman can go inside (the car).' She then joins in a game taking the cars and fire engines around the mat, then off down the length of the hall.

She comes back and looks into the role-play area, she picks up and puts down a mobile phone.

She goes into the role-play area with a friend, she parks a car and goes and sits at the table.

'You stay there,' says the friend.

Hannah sits at the table mixing items in a bowl as she is instructed by her friend. Her friend then moves away from the table to take a phone call. She returns to Hannah at the table. (This seems unusual because I have only witnessed Hannah leading the play – here she is not).

Hannah remains sitting at the table pulling a range of faces. Her friend says, 'Lick the fork.' Hannah does as she is told. The fork is then taken away. The friend serves a meal for Hannah, some dolls and herself. The friend says, 'Eat it.'

Hannah does as she is told.

Suddenly the friend goes and collects the fire car that Hannah had parked up, 'Can I play with this?' Hannah says, 'Yes.'

Hannah moves to start playing with the kitchen itself. (I am trying to be unobtrusive, but she does seem to be aware that I'm watching her.'

Hannah goes back to sitting at the table. Penny walks in and looks at the two girls but she leaves again.

Bell rings for register.
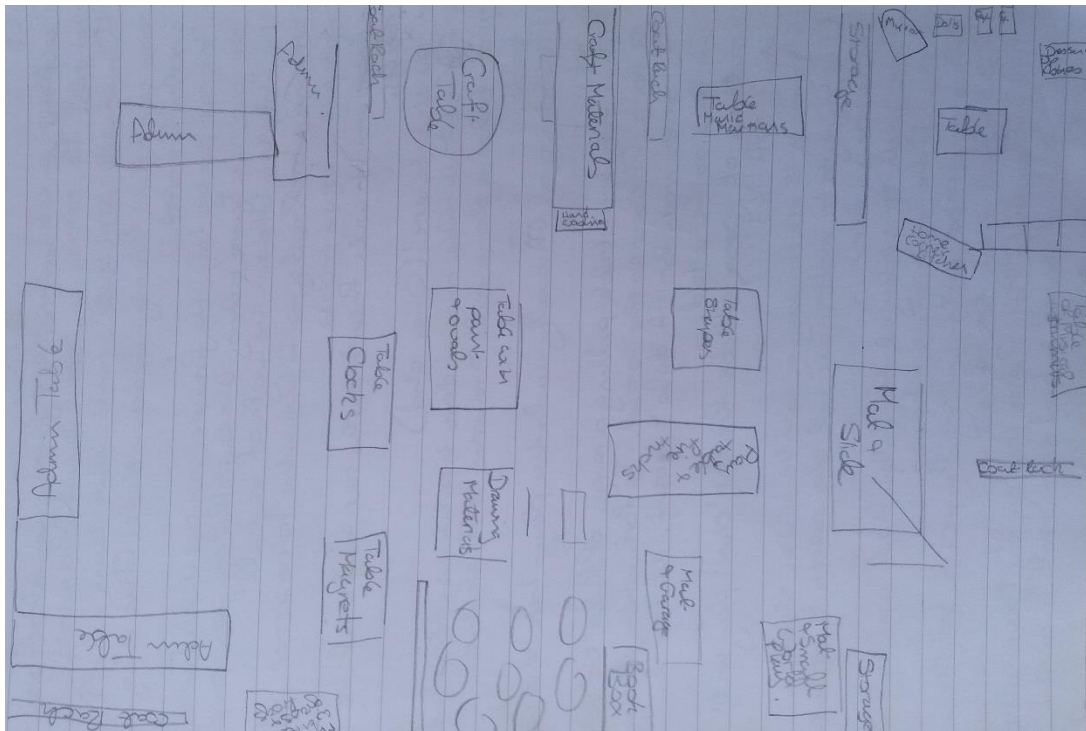
(Fieldnotes: Plan for Home-fell Nursery on the day of the above scenario)

In this scenario, Hannah is seen moving the play across three different spaces within the setting. The fire cars started on a table away from the slide. They were taken to the slide and then later parked up close to the role-play area. The role-play area was set up as a home corner with a range of associated props. It appears that the home corner was the only area of the setting that the children used as was intended. The slide and the fire trucks were used differently to how the adults had intended that they be used. The spaces were modified by the children and used in ways in which they wanted to use them (Jansson 2015). The slide was a ramp for the fire trucks and the children could run them up and down. As Hannah discusses putting a fireman in the car, she is engaging in some form of imaginative play developing her own scenario (Lobman 2003, Paley 1988). The children were enabled to utilise the space and socialise in ways that they chose (Green 2015, Corsaro 2011).

In all three scenarios, the ability to move from one space to another and to use the space in self-chosen ways appeared to be important. The pedagogical approach of the practitioners enabled the children to use the space in this way and appeared to be accepting of behaviours that might usually be associated with outdoor provision. In Wave play children utilise space in ways that may not have been intended but allows them to develop their sense of place and identity.

4.9 Conclusion

Across the range of scenarios in the two settings it was possible to observe the importance of both objects and space in the children's play. Children engage in object play as part of their role-play. Object play appears to be an essential element when developing themes within their play. Wave Play is a form of socio-dramatic role-play. Wave Play can be like the tide ebbing and flowing as the children's interests are taken in different directions as they utilise and colonise the space.

Object play is an aspect of role-play, props are important if children are to develop their role-play activities in mature ways that allow for their learning and development (Leong and Bodrova 2012, Broadhead and Burt 2012). The ability to participate in object substitution demonstrates a mature ability to develop a theme within their play and is closely associated with higher level thinking skills (Vig 2007, Frahsek et al 2010). The need to pack-away each day means that there is a lack of continuity and therefore children can be hampered in the development of themes and scenarios over a period (Leong and Bodrova 2012, Siraj-Blatchford 2009). This can mean that practitioners need to develop pedagogical approaches that continue to support and extend children's interests and ideas.

Object play can demonstrate who holds the power within a peer group (Kantor et al 1998). Similar scenarios were observed at both Home Fell Nursery and All Hallows Pre-school, with Jack using a flag and Bea using a musical instrument to demonstrate that they had power and autonomy in specific play situations. These scenarios also demonstrated the importance of peer cultures and social understanding and effectiveness (Corsaro 2005, Uren and Stagnetti, 2009). Object play is highly significant in the lives of young children in several ways and in Pack-Away settings children appear to use the objects to demonstrate what play they are engaged with. They utilise objects such as slides and activity parks in different ways to those intended by the practitioners to fulfil their play themes.

Pack-away settings, which usually operate in large halls, can support Rough and Tumble play, where space is necessary (Holland 2003, Pellegrini 2009, Bilton 2010). Children need to be able to move freely in Rough and Tumble play; equally, such play is predicated on social play behaviours in which children demonstrate that they understand that harm is not intended (Smith 2010). Such play was witnessed in both settings and links both the use of objects and the use of space.

Wave Play episodes, evidence the inter-subjectivity of role-play, as play partners co-construct their play using language and actions, negotiating roles and themes as they enter the play (Göncü 1998, Lobman 2003). In these improvised play scenarios, it is possible to watch children stepping into characters as they don play-clothes or costumes (Lobman 2003). The recognition of creativity as a central tool in children's play draws on a Vygotskian (1978) tradition of the use of creativity; not to re-enact but to re-work into something new,

to support the co-construction of knowledge. This social constructivist approach is one of the key themes that can be identified within Wave Play.

Space plays a central role in the definition of Wave Play. In Pack-Away settings children often access larger play areas than in conventional settings and this undoubtedly impacts on the ways in which they develop their play, whilst areas may be designated for a specific role or activity children are enabled to move freely between them moving equipment and resources. The scenarios provided in this chapter provide evidence of this in the ways in which the children engaged collaboratively and used the physical spaces in ways that they choose (Green, 2015, Jansson 2015). There are opportunities for Wave Play to be developed outdoors (Bilton 2010). Wave Play is dependent on the children's ability to move play resources and play themes, something which Pack-Away settings appear to support the children to do.

In Pack-Away settings children are seen role-playing with space and objects They utilise the objects and space in self-chosen ways. The use of objects is important in signifying the role or activity in which they are engaged. Equally it can demonstrate who holds the power in any given situation. Wave Play is an aspect of role-play, that is dependent on the children's opportunities to use space in self-directed ways. In pack-away settings children appear to move themselves and objects between a range of spaces extending their play and their ideas.

Chapter 5: *Beings, Becomings* **and** *Having beens* **– notions of the social self**

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the data that demonstrates the ways in which children utilise the three temporal states of *beings*, *becomings* and *having beens* in their role-play and in demonstrating their social selves and social behaviours in the two pack-away settings. Data includes; observations, children's conferences whilst map-making, their photographs and key person conferences. My analysis of the data shows that role-play, costumes and the practitioners are all essential elements in enabling children to move seamlessly between the three temporal states. Notions of social selves and social behaviours appear to draw on the three temporal states and children are seen particularly to utilise *having been* knowledge to support one another.

Role-play appears to provide particularly extensive opportunities for children to explore and examine ways of being that draw on the three temporal states of; *being, becoming* and *having been*. The children's role-play is often informed by reality, they enact roles now in a *being* state, that they may wish to become, *becoming*, in the future (Papadopoulou 2012). This role-playing is often informed by experiences that that they have already had, *having been*, that they can draw upon to inform their play. For example, Jack is seen extensively role-playing being a police officer, drawing on his understanding of his aunt's role, something that he also states that he wishes to be when he grows up. He supports his play with appropriate props, sometimes creating objects such as guns, from construction materials when what he wants is unavailable. Likewise, Rosie is regularly seen writing stories as part of her play. She reads her stories to anyone who wants to know what they say and discusses being an author in the future.

The integration of the three temporal states appears to have links with notions of the social self. The relationship between home and pre-school is explored. Rosie, Eve and Bea all demonstrate the ways in which they can make links between their experiences at home and their experiences in the settings. The integration of the different temporal states as well as the integration of home and pre-school appears to lead to high levels of self-confidence. When children enjoy high levels of self-esteem they can discuss their ideas, confident that they will be listened to and that their ideas will be acted upon (Smith, Cowie and Blades, 2003, Robson, 2012, Siraj-Blatchford 2014, James et al 1998, Cosaro 2010).

Social behaviours link with the social self and again provide opportunities to explore the integration of the three temporal states. Here the children can demonstrate the different social behaviours that they associate with different roles or situations. In this chapter, the relationship between attachment behaviours and the three temporal states is explored.

In the conclusion, I argue that the children are enabled to demonstrate the integration of the three temporal states, *beings*, *becomings* and *having beens* through rich role-play opportunities (Cross 2011). Role-play provides opportunities that allow children exciting chances to step between the three states as they enact roles that are of interest to them now and may be of interest to them in the future. The peer cultures in which the children are situated forms an essential element of these play experiences and opportunities. Likewise, the integration of the three temporal states extends to their notions of their social selves enabling them to integrate their home and pre-school lives. Social behaviours are similarly linked to the three temporal states and have close links with attachment behaviours.

5.2 *Beings*, *becomings* and *having beens*: An integrated approach to play

The three temporal states of *being, becoming* and *having been* are often seen to be

integrated during children's play experiences (Cross 2011). During these experiences

children can be seen to move through different states from *being* to *becoming* often

drawing on *having been* knowledge to inform their play (Cross 2011). On other occasions

children are seen in a becoming state from the start of their play. The different states are

usually informed by *having been* knowledge. In the three scenarios discussed here it is

possible to see that children move between temporal states. The different states are both

ways of being and something that informs their play.

In this first scenario Penny stepped out of her play to engage me in conversation. She had

identified that she would like to participate in the research and the necessary permissions

had been sought and gained. The conversation that she had with me was purposive, I

already knew which days that she attended the setting.

Field notes 24: Home-fell Nursery
> *Penny walked up and started a conversation with me.*
>
> *"I don't come on Fridays, but I come on Wednesdays."*
>
> *"You can talk to me on Wednesdays. You can play these instruments, play the instruments." Penny insists that I play a series of musical instruments with her. She then dances whilst I played the instruments, some more children join in. The children were all dancing and insist that I danced too (which I did).*
>
> *Penny stayed playing instruments when the others left. "Come on play the band," she shouted at me when she realised that I had stopped. Penny dances around the space but regularly returns to the mirror where she observes herself dancing. She seems to like to look at her dress and how it moves as she is dancing. Suddenly she puts her hood up.*
>
> *"How do I look Zenna?"*
>
> *"Very nice" [researcher].*

She seems concerned with her image whilst dancing. She suddenly stops, moves to the table where the pegboard activity is laid out and immediately puts her hood down.

Throughout this scenario, Penny demonstrates that she was in control of the situation and moving between a conversation and a play scenario. Penny had identified herself as a child that would be interested in participating in the research; her behaviour demonstrates that she is a *being* child (James and Prout 1997). She appeared to understand that her views were of importance to me and the way in which she spoke to me appeared to be suggesting that I needed to prepare myself and my research in order that I could work with her on the days that she would be in the setting. She appeared to move seamlessly between temporal states, she held her conversation with me as well as moving into role-play which appears to be informed by *having been* knowledge. During the dancing episode, she drew on knowledge of what performers might look like, clearly concerned by the image appearing to have an expectation of what she should look like, and how they would move. As she went to work on the pegboard, she changed her appearance back to her pre-dancing dress. Here Penny demonstrates that she is a capable social actor who is keen to comment on her life at the same time she moves seamlessly between temporal states.

The following extract is part of the conference that I conducted with Penny looking at her photographs[6]. One of the photographs that she identified as being important showed two children, Caleb and Holly.

---

[6] See Chapter 3 Data Presentation on the discussion of why the children's photographs are not included.

Penny's Photographs

That's Holly and Caleb. I took lots of photos of Caleb because he's in blue in group. It's important because I'm in it. I'm a princess super-hero. Holly is my best friend.

In this short discussion, we see Penny move between narrative and imaginative language, discussing who she can see and what she likes to do. She then comments on herself as being a princess super-hero. This appears to be something that she considers herself to be in the moment. Uprichard, (2008, p.304) suggests that an approach that sees children as either, '... human '*beings*, or human '*becomings*' tends to involve conflicting approaches of what it means to be a child'. She suggests that these discourses should not be conflicting but as complementary. In integrating these two images of the child as both *being* and *becoming*, the child is afforded greater agency. The child is a child in the present but they will be an adult in the future, even very young children appear to understand the concept and are able to articulate it. Penny makes no comment about her future when looking at the photograph, she simply makes a statement about what she can see and why she took it. In that instance, she was *being* in the moment. The *being* state is temporal and she will move through it however it is part of the three temporal states and supports her opportunities to play and role-play.

In the following scenario, Jack is engaged in a role-play scenario in which he is again playing the role of a police officer, a theme that is repeated frequently through the research period (see section 5.3 in this chapter).

Field notes: All Hallows Pre-school

Play has moved outside. The 3 boys including Jack have their police helmets on and are playing a police game. They are on ride-on cars and trikes. [Researcher: Are you arresting people?].

Yes, in cars and if someone's naughty I'll arrest them and put them in jail real. And then I'll get my gun and shoot them up.

[Researcher: Are you allowed to do that?]

Yes, my auntie says so.

[I suggest that they can't]

He insists that they can his auntie has told him so. He goes off on his trike.

In the role-play scenario Jack can be seen to draw on information that has been gathered from experience of conversations with his aunt, as well as from his imagination. His knowledge from his aunt is his *having been* knowledge. Given his interest in the police he has discussed with her what she does and what police officers can and cannot do. He is enacting the role of a police officer in his play, *being*. The two temporal states inform his play and he moves between them to continue the play theme. Jack appears to believe that his aunt has told him that as a police officer it is acceptable to shoot people who are not behaving in an acceptable manner, he therefore enacts this in his play. He refuses to be dissuaded from his position because he believes that he has been given this information by his aunt. Often during play scenarios Jack discusses how he wishes to be a police officer in the future. Therefore, in his play it is possible to observe all three temporal states of *being*, *becoming* and *having been*. Cross (2011) argues that children's behaviour in the present will be influenced by their experiences of the past and that this is true even for very young children. In role-play, it is possible to see the children move quickly between all three temporal stances. In the first scenario Penny is seen to engage in a stylised form of dancing in which a certain image needed to be maintained. Whilst the play was occurring now, *being*, it was informed by previous experiences, *having been*. Likewise, her discussion of being a super-hero princess, was influenced by knowledge that she already had, *having*

been. Jack's play appeared be influenced by his knowledge of his aunt's work, *having been*, it was occurring now, *being*, but also informed his future self, given that he regularly discussed his desire to be a police officer in the future, *becoming*. Play provides rich opportunities for children to enact a range of roles demonstrating their integrated temporal states as *beings*, *becomings* and *having-beens*.

5.3 Role-play: *beings*, *becomings* and *having beens*.

In this section, I explore the ways in which role-play provides opportunities for the integration of the three temporal states, enabling them to explore their emerging selves. The first two scenarios focus on Jack and explore different aspects of his interest in the role of the police, whilst the third focuses on Caleb's interest in the role of a shopkeeper and his knowledge of money. In the following field notes Jack can be seen to have left one play scenario to engage a member of staff in conversation. The conversation to be Jack's understanding of what his aunt had been doing whilst on duty as a police officer that weekend.

Field notes 25: All Hallows Pre-school
> *Jack had been playing a game of police with a friend, he leaves the play and walks over to the setting manager Susan and says:*
>
> *'My auntie didn't catch no baddies,' (he repeats this several times) 'I said what type of policewoman are you, you didn't catch no baddies?'*
>
> *{Susan} 'Did you want her to arrest people?'*
>
> *Jack: 'Yes I want her to catch the baddies.'*
>
> *{Susan} 'Perhaps everyone was being good.' [Some missed dialogue.]*
>
> *Jack: 'Someone-else was arresting baddies but she was just sitting and thinking. I was cross. '*
>
> *{Susan} Why were you cross?*

Jack: 'I want her to arrest baddies, what type of policewoman is she? I phoned my dad.

{Susan} 'Did you talk to him about it?

Jack: 'Yes and we phoned my auntie.'

{Susan} 'Ooh my you talked to everyone.'

Jack: 'Yes we were all cross, my auntie was cross.'

{Susan} 'Oh she was cross too?'

Jack: 'Oh yes we were all cross.'

Jack then left with his friend both were still in role as policemen. They continued to look for people to arrest.

Jack's role-play appears to provide a clear illustration of his working and re-working of cultural meanings (Corsaro 2010, Wyness 2012). Jack's aunt is a policewoman and it appears that Jack would also like to join the police force when he is older. He spends much of his time in role-play enacting the role of a policeman. He was also seen in role as a doctor on more than one occasion, however the role of the policeman appeared to be the more consuming role. Children's pretence is usually grounded in reality and it is in this play that children begin to engage with the world around them and gain an understanding of the complex structures that it presents (Papadopoulou 2012). These pretend play episodes enable them to develop, '... the competences that are crucial for their successful cultural adaptation (ibid, p. 576). Jack's conversation with the member of staff demonstrates that he is thinking about his aunt and her real-life experiences as a police-officer. Here Jack can be seen to be using his *having been* knowledge, his understanding of his aunt's role, to inform his thinking about what his aunt's responsibilities were whilst she was on duty (Cross 2011). He seemed extremely perturbed about the fact that she had not arrested anyone the last time she was on duty. This concern he explained at length to the staff as well as the fact that

204

he had discussed the issue with his father and other members of his family. In his own play,

he was regularly engaged in arresting his so-called baddies. Whilst Jack is aware that his

aunt neither; arrests suspects as often as he does, nor does she carry a gun on the street.

However, through his play he can reflect his understanding of her role. His role-play reflects

an understanding of reality (Papadopoulou 2012).

Field notes 26: All Hallows Pre-school
> *Jack and two friends are wearing police helmets.*
>
> *[Yet the dressing-up clothes don't appear to be out].*
>
> *They are engaging in a game police role-play. Jack walks over to me. 'We are real policemen and we put naughty people in jail. Look at my hat and the top.'*
>
> *[Researcher: Is it a real police helmet?] 'Yes, and I've got handcuffs. I've got a gun too it's back at the police station.'*
>
> *[Researcher: Oh, my goodness I hope it stays there.]*
>
> *'I haven't got a gun so I'm going to have to make one – but it will shoot real. Are you naughty? [Jack arrests me, then lets me go]. 'We have to go someone else is being naughty.'*
>
> *Jack leaves.*

Children draw on their knowledge, memories and previous experiences to enact their play.

The role of the police appeared to drive much of Jack's play and conversations. On this

occasion, Jack spent time explaining to me that the plastic hat that he was wearing was a

real police hat and that given he was a policeman he would also need a gun. There were no

guns available in the setting, he gave an explanation that he would need to make one, but

the made item would, 'shoot real'. Jack repeated the notion of it 'shooting real' several

times. He later demonstrated that he had made a gun from interlocking plastic construction

materials but again assured me that it would, 'shoot real.' It would seem that Jack is

thinking on several different levels (Bodrova and Leong, 2003, 2005, Leong and Bodrova

2012). Jack is operating on an imaginative level suggesting that his gun will, 'shoot real'. He

is demonstrating his understanding of what a gun can and should do. Equally his use of the

construction materials demonstrates that he is aware that he is creating something for

which he will need to use his imagination to make his play more meaningful. Jack's use of

construction materials mirrors that of the children in the study by Broadhead and Burt

(2012, p. 33) in which children were encouraged to use open-ended play materials to create,

'… whatever you want it to be,' places and objects. Jack was planning his play, thinking

about the role he would inhabit, using props, the hat and the gun, considering the language,

talking about arresting people and developing an appropriate scenario. Much of this draws

on Leong and Bodrova's (2012) PRoPELs in which children can extend their role-play and

gain significant meaning from it. This finding of props to extend the play and moving them

from one area of the setting to another also links with notions of Wave Play (see Chapter 4).

Jack is *being* a policeman now; he also intends to be *becoming* a policeman in the future.

The temporality of his current state does not appear to register, Jack appears to see himself

as a policeman now as well as in the future (James et al 1998, Conrad 2011). It seems that

Jack is both *being* and *becoming* with experience of *having been* (Cross 2011). He draws on

conversations with his aunt and his father to ensure that his play and in particular his role-

play is based in reality whilst also demonstrating an understanding of how he would like to

be in the future.

On a further occasion, Jack was heard talking about the same theme of the police. His

knowledge about his aunt supports his imaginative role-play activities drawing on his *having*

been self. Similarly, this informs his *being* self, he richly enacts the role of the police officer

not simply imitating what he has seen but making it his own (Vygotsky 1978). It also informs

his *becoming* self as he discusses what he will do in the future.

In all these scenarios Jack appears to juxtapose both his current, *being* and *having been* experience with his notion of his *becoming* or future self. Jack does appear keen to share his ideas about both what his aunt is doing now and what he will be doing in the future with members of the staff team and me. On several occasions, he was prepared to interrupt or step out of another role-play situation to have his discussion. Children have been constructed against a backdrop in which they are conceived of as incompetent and needing the support of adults until such a time as they have become adults in their own right (Lee 2001). Jack does appear to seek the approbation of adults in these interactions, yet at the same time it can be argued that in a setting where the children are encouraged to demonstrate their views and ideas they are also being supported to move between their three selves; *beings*, *becomings* and *having beens* and to use this knowledge and these experiences to support the development of rich play experience and their interactions with others to support those experiences (Cross 2011, Rogers and Evans 2008, James et al 1998, Cosaro 2010).

In the following scenario, a play activity was set up by a student in the setting. Several of the children in the setting appeared interested in what she was doing and followed her into the role-play area to engage with her activity.

Field notes 27: Home-fell Nursery

A student went to the role-play area. 5 children went and joined her. They all gathered round the tills and showed an interest in the money.

Caleb and his friend chose to sit at the table and showed engagement with the tills, money and card machines. Percy demonstrated his understanding of scanning items. Caleb appeared to be counting the money. He tells the student, 'I have a mobile,' offering a card machine.

A child comes and takes the card that Caleb was swiping. Percy attempts to get it back and quickly takes the card to Caleb. Caleb then shares the card with Percy.

> *As the children bring Caleb items he scans them and asks for the money. {He seems to use plausible amounts according to what is being purchased, for example 50p for a tin of beans.}*
>
> *Caleb helps a child to put items into the basket.*

Caleb's father works in a shop and he has spent time at work with him. Like Jack, Caleb can draw on *having been* knowledge to inform his role-play. Caleb appeared confident in this role-play scenario; scanning items confidently, asking for money using plausible amounts, using a credit card and placing items into bags and baskets. In much of this scenario he is seen to draw on reality to inform his play, using plausible amounts for the beans for example. He is also making the play his own by engaging in object substitution, using a card and suggesting that it was a mobile phone (Papadopoulou 2012, Vygotsky 1978 Vig 2007, Frahsek et al 2010).

Role-play provides opportunities for children to demonstrate the integration of the three selves as; *beings, becomings* and *having beens*, in meaningful ways. In these, often complex, play scenarios *being, becoming* and *having been* selves, are often in evidence. Whilst fantasy themes are offered in role-play areas to children, it is more usual to find that day-to-day scenarios such as shops, hospitals, cafes, travel agencies and vets are what are on offer to the children and it is in these day-to-day scenarios children can draw on their *having been* knowledge to support and develop their play (Rogers and Evans 2008, Cross 2011). Certainly, during the period of research at both All Hallows Pre-school and at Home-fell Nursery straightforward literal scenes were provided. Whilst the children were often engaged in a complex game in which there was an element of fantasy, their play scenario was grounded in real experiences (Papadopoulou 2012). The rich experiences that are stored in their memory and link with *having been*, allowing them to plan their play and the

roles that they will enact (Cross, 2011, Leong and Bodrova 2012). Role-play appears to

reflect all three domains of *being, becoming* and *having been* and provides rich play

opportunities for children to move between temporal states and to demonstrate their

integrated selves.

5.3.1 Role-play Costumes: *Beings*, *Becomings* and *Having beens*

The following three illustrations demonstrate the importance of costumes for children in

developing their role-play considering their current interests and future possibilities. The

illustrations include; a discussion of the children's photographs[7], my reflections on

observations and a practitioner key person interview. This will include an analysis of both

fantasy costumes and role-specific costumes.

Many of the photographs taken by the children show their peers in both conventional and

fantasy type costumes. Several the boys are seen wearing police costumes; often they

simply wore a police helmet and the rest of the costume and associated props were either

imagined or developed from other play materials that were found in the settings using

creative and imaginative opportunities to create the necessary accessories (Broadhead and

Burt 2012). These role-play opportunities are located in possible future roles or identities

but here the children are engaging in play as *beings*, simply enjoying their current play. The

children can be seen to be using both their *being* and *becoming* knowledge to develop their

play (Cross 2011, Uprichard 2010). These role-play opportunities are grounded in reality but

also allow children to develop creative representations of their lives and that which they

wish to explore (Papadopoulou, 2012). In one photograph, it is possible to see a child in a

---

[7] Please see Chapter 4 Data Presentation for the discussion of why the photographs were not included here.

Batman costume. Both Jack and Michael made comments about this costume during the period of research. The child in question was regularly seen to come to pre-school wearing the costume. He is engaged as a way of *being* currently, participating in play opportunities that he appears to enjoy and that allow him to explore in open-ended ways of *being* (Cross 2011, Uprichard 2010, Broadhead and Burt 2012). Donning a costume is often associated with Lobman's (2003) notion of stepping into a role; however often children were seen to don the costume and retain it even whilst they were going about other activities; for example, Hannah and Betsy are seen in Chapter 4 to put on princess dresses and participate in role-play as parents, then to engage in a painting activity putting aprons over the role-play dresses. This appears to evidence them as both *beings*, *becomings* and *having beens,* as they engage simultaneously in more than one role, drawing on past experiences and future imaginings to develop their play (Cross 2011, Uprichard 2010). Their activities further demonstrate meta-communication as they step in and out of role negotiating the play (Göncü 1998, Lobman 2003).

In one of the photographs Rosie can be seen in what appears to be a Chinese costume; in a conference with her she discusses how she has chosen the costume to represent a dancer's costume. On more than one occasion Rosie discussed a desire to be a dancer, a *becoming* role, in the future saying that she wanted to be a dancer when she grew up like her friend. Yet in her conversations about this photograph Rosie appeared to only associate it with a current or *being* role in which she was simply enjoying the role that she was enabled to inhabit in the present (Cross 2011, Uprichard 2010).

My observations suggested that children engaged longer with a role if they were in a

costume rather than when they are not. The costume appeared to provide a form of

scaffolding that supported and extended the play (Bruner 1986). In the following reflections

from my field diary I discuss the use of costumes on two different days. The two days were

consecutive.

Fieldnotes 28 – Reflection 17 06 13 All Hallows Pre-school
> *The role-play was used only for a very short period of time today. Interestingly there were no dressing up clothes available. The does seem to have impacted on the length of engagement and level.*
>
> *The small world play has been used more than usual with up to 6 children in the area. There have been more boys than girls using it.*
>
> *Field diary – Reflection 18 06 13 All Hallows Pre-school*
>
> *The children were clearly excited about being dressed as pirates. Not all children arrived dressed for the occasion. The children who weren't dressed were often quite upset. Some were less bothered. The theme seemed to be sustained throughout the morning. It seems that days when children are dressed up they engage more with their play, they stay in role longer.*

During the research period, I did not write reflective notes daily but in response to anything

that interested me or that I felt was noteworthy. The role-play clothes seem to provide a

framing of the play for the children enabling them to enter a role (Lobman 2003). In both

settings, the role play area was set up differently each day. On the 17th June 2013, the role-

play area at All Hallows Pre-school was set up an office complete with laptops despite this

appearing to be an engaging role-play opportunity the children appeared to show little

interest in it and certainly did not engage with it for any extended period of time. The

following day 18th June 2013 in the same setting was a Pirate Day. The day had been

planned in advance, information had been sent home and there were posters in the setting

to inform parents and carers as to what would be happening and encouraging the children

to come to pre-school dressed as pirates. The costumes could not be construed as in any

way informing the children of future roles. However, their play was based in their *being*

experiences but for many of the children, their *having been* knowledge informed the ways in

which they engaged with the roles. The costumes appeared to have an impact on the length

of time that the children remained engaged with a role with many of the children remaining

in role for the whole of the session. In the following excerpt from Jack's keyperson interview

the importance of costumes and dressing up clothes are raised.

Practitioner interview

    Jack's KP interview

    1. What do you think that they enjoy about nursery?
    The dressing up. He loves dressing-up. He likes to play the teacher, to be in charge.
    But he doesn't like drawing or anything like that.

    2. What do you think is important to them about nursery?
    I don't know, not sure actually. If we didn't get dressing up out – I wonder what he'd
do.

    ………
…..

    6. Do you have any other comments about Jack's play that you would like to add?

    Not really – no, just he does love role-play.

The first thing that Jack's Keyperson commented on was his engagement with role-play and

the costumes that he uses to support his play. She mentioned the role of the teacher,

something that I had not witnessed during my research period. However, she did mention

that he particularly enjoys dressing-up, something that I regularly observed. The costumes

appear to help Jack to step into a role (Lobman 2003). Role-play allows for a creative

'mimesis', an imitative representation of nature or human behaviour that allows children to

recreate aspects of their lives and explore them for themselves, making sense of structures

and ideas (Papadopoulou, 2012). With his repeated themes, it is possible to see that Jack is attempting to make sense of his life drawing on his understanding of conversations with his aunt and his father, his having *been experience*, which he enacts in his role-play his *being*, experiences. Imaginative play opportunities allow children to, '... connect with reality so that cultural meanings and objects residing in reality can be reworked' (Edwards 2011, p.200). In conversations Jack was very concerned about what the police can do and how he could re-enact that in his play using objects. Role-play allows children to, '…layer the pretend world onto the real world…' (Sawyers and Carrick, 2008, p.139). Jack's use of role-play costumes and props appears to demonstrate this layering of the real and the pretend world. Rich experiences are stored in children's memories and link with, *having been*, allowing them to plan their play and consider the roles that they will enact (Cross, 2011, Leong and Bodrova 2012).

Costumes and props are important in supporting the children to make their play real. They use a range of costumes, uniforms and fantasy costumes to support their role-play activities. They also draw on their knowledge, memory and previous experiences to enact their play, linking *being*, *becoming* and *having been* experiences in their play.

5.3.2 The role of the pedagogue: Beings, becomings and having beens

Three illustrations are used to demonstrate the pedagogical approach of practitioners to support play opportunities that enable children to demonstrate the three states of *being*, *becoming* and *having been*. The illustrations include an observation from my field notes and two keyperson conferences. The one practitioner works at Home-fell Nursery and one works at All Hallows Pre-school.

Field notes 29: All Hallows Pre-school

> *Michael arrived in the setting one morning. He chose to go straight to the dressing-up clothes, where he initially selected a chef costume. "I'm the cooker," he said to me as he walked past. Michael went and sat in the role-play area and pretended to eat food. Two friends, one dressed as batman arrived and all three went running off around the hall. The children are asked by a member of staff to remember the rule about no running.*

> *The two friends came back and engaged with the food.*

> *Michael suddenly re-appeared having put on a Postman Pat outfit and carrying an accompanying post bag. He was also carrying a laptop and told me that he watched dvds on it. He then decided that he didn't need it.*

> *He went still dressed up to the writing or mark making table. He used paper, made marks and folded the paper then he put them in his post bag. Michael spent some time creating letters. They were all folded carefully in half. He placed the letters one at a time into his bag.*

> *Suddenly he began singing to himself, "...wiggle, wiggle, shake," whilst writing his letters. He spent over ten minutes creating approximately twenty letters.*

> *Michael suddenly heard instruments and turned to listen to the sound. He sees a group of children and a member of staff playing on the large mat immediately he goes over and joins in.*

In pack-away settings the pedagogical challenge is to provide appropriate opportunities for children to follow their own interests whilst developing skills, knowledge and understanding (DfE 2012/14). Through his role-play, Michael demonstrates that he understands the roles of many occupations. Whilst wearing the chef outfit he demonstrated that he understood his role was to prepare food. He made use of the objects or props provided to enact a scenario. The role-play could not be said to be developed in the ways advocated by Leong and Bodrova (2012), there was little planning that occurred, Michael simply arrived and put on a costume and began to play. He did however draw on his understanding of the role of a chef. Likewise, as the postman he demonstrated an understanding of the role and of the purpose of the occupation. His creation of the letters seemed to demonstrate some understanding of the fact that the letters that are delivered by the postman convey meaning

from one person to another (Bromley 2006*).* Providing opportunities which are part of daily life and real experiences, '...offer children powerful examples of the nature and function of the written word' (Bromley 2006, p.60). The letters that he created were pages that were simply covered in marks and then carefully folded in half. There were no discernible letter strings. However even this simple mark making suggests that Michael has concepts about writing and the notion that print conveys meaning, he is beginning to develop the necessary skills to communicate in a written format. Michael seemed to enjoy these writing activities. The open-ended play, materials in the setting allowed him to create props that support his play aiding him in developing the skills required to support and develop his play (Leong and Bodrova 2012, Broadhead and Burt 2012). The opportunity and ability to create these props extended his play and demonstrated some of his current knowledge. He is drawing on his *having been* knowledge, demonstrating some understanding of the role of a postman and some understanding of letters he will undoubtedly have seen letters delivered at home. He also seems to be *becoming*, he is attempting to do something, writing, that he does not fully understand but appears to have some concept that he will understand in the future (Cross 2011).

 In these two different roles, the chef and the postman, notions of *beings* and *becomings* are evident. Michael is being a chef, but conversations with him would demonstrate that he does not believe or wish to undertake the role in a real cafe or restaurant. He states that whilst he cannot be a chef now, he could be one in the future. He demonstrates an understanding that as he grows he will take on a role in life, going to work. It can be further argued that he is also drawing on his *having been* knowledge to inform both his *being* and his *becoming* (Cross 2011).

The organisation of the pack-away setting allowed Michael to move easily between the different spaces gathering the materials necessary for his play. This support allowed opportunities for him to explore his play in ways that were meaningful for him. The development of the letters demonstrates an integrated understanding of print conveying meaning, the ability to create the letters and then incorporate them into his play allowed for a meaningful use of his writing activity.

Children extend their learning opportunities by co-constructing knowledge using a range of materials and by working with practitioners or more able others (Bruner 1996). The scaffolding provided for Michael was the way in which he was enabled to find the materials to develop his play theme further. Through his play activities it was possible to see how he was integrating his three selves; *being, becoming* and *having been*. In the following two illustrations, it is possible to see how the practitioners are considering the needs and interests of the children.

Bea's keyperson interview

3. *How do you find out about what they like and what interests them?*

Observing them really, what they prefer to play with, talking to them, knowing their interests at home, knowing their backgrounds. When they first come in some of the information is on forms and from talking to the parents when they first start. She will discuss things here for example talking about Peppa Pig at home and asking to get it out here. If they say they've been to the zoo we'll get the animals out.

The EYFS (DfE 2014/16) sets out a clear responsibility for the adult to know the children and to plan a suitable range of play based learning opportunities for them to engage with, engaging them in Sustained Shared Thinking (Sylva et al 2004). In this part of the keyperson conference I asked how the practitioners found out about what interested the children and what they did with that knowledge. Here Sarah discusses the way in which she uses documentation supplied by the parents as well as talking with them and talking with the

child. Providing play materials that support activities that have occurred outside of the

setting supports Bea in both *being* and *having been* (Cross 2011). Visits to the zoo will mean

that she has knowledge of animals, the integrating of them into play opportunities in the

setting allow her to develop a relationship between what occurs at home as well as what

happens within the setting. In this way, Bea can consider her experiences at home and

within the setting, making clear links between the two (Bronfenbrenner 1994). The

pedagogical approach that supports her in making those links demonstrates the ways in

which the practitioners believe that they are supporting SST which also allows her to

demonstrate different states; *being* and *having been* (Siraj-Blatchford 2002, Cross 2011).

Little evidence was shown of the practitioners engaging Bea in the ways of thinking

necessary for Sustained Shared Thinking. However, the integration of the

different states and the different aspects of Bea's life lead to high levels of self-confidence

or self-esteem which further supports her ability to be agentic and to discuss her ideas

(Smith, Cowie and Blades, 2003, Robson, 2012, Siraj-Blatchford 2014, James et al

1998, Cosaro 2010).

Rosie's keyperson interview

> *3. How do you find out about what they like and what interests them?*
> *Observation. Observing what she likes doing. She pretty much tells me. Mum will come in and tell me what book she has been reading and often she'll bring the book in.*

As with Bea, I asked Verity the same as I had asked Sarah about how she gets to know what

interests Rosie. Like Bea, the relationship with the parents and home formed an important

element of understanding what interested the child. Rosie had a particular interest in books

and whilst this was discussed by the practitioners and her mum, it was not apparent in my

interactions with her. Yet the practitioners could point to two different displays in the

setting which were based on work that was developed because they understood her interests. Rosie regularly took books into the nursery that she had read at home. She wanted to share the books and the stories with her friends in the setting. The practitioners developed activities in the setting that drew on this knowledge and then allowed them to create displays from the work that the children undertook. The practitioners stated that this was evidence of them engaging in Sustained Shared Thinking. Whilst they are supporting an area of interest there seems little evidence of the attributes included in REPEY (Siraj-Blatchford et al 2002), of contributing to thinking, extending a narrative, problem solving, clarifying a concept or evaluating an activity. However, these interactions enabled Rosie to demonstrate all three states, *being*, *becoming* and *having been* (Cross 2011).

These illustrations demonstrate that the practitioners supported the children's play. They provided access to materials that extended play activities as well finding out about their interests and giving them opportunities to develop these within the setting. The activities provided the children with opportunities to integrate their notions of *being*, *becoming* and *having been*.

5.4 Beings, *Becomings, Having beens* and the social self

Here I analyse the data in which the children demonstrate their understanding of the interrelated nature of their lives, including the relationship between pre-school and other aspects of their lives. The three illustrations in this section are taken from an observation of Rosie at All Hallows Preschool and two map-making conference activities, the first with Caleb at Homefell Nursery and the second with Eve at All Hallows Pre-school.

The social self as a concept unifies philosophical, psychological and sociological theoretical concepts of early childhood and child development. The integration of these approaches allows for a rich description of children as competent social actors that are necessarily framed by their socio-cultural experiences. The child is not in a static state they experience their lives in their families, settings and communities; in these differing places, cognitive experiences will occur that impact on them as individuals influencing their experiences and their development drawing on the three temporal states of *being*, *becoming* and *having been* (Bronfenbrenner 1979, Cross 2011).

Field notes 30: Observation – All Hallows Pre-school

> Rosie is on the prescription table. She has been writing clear strings of letters. When asked what she is doing she replies;
>
> 'Fairy tales, cos I've got a book for fairy tales at home. I've drawn a line so I don't go over the line. I've got fairy shoes at home and they are all sparkly. I've found scissors.' [She moves away from the table to get the scissors.]
>
> She then cut out her piece of paper.
>
> One of the practitioners told Rosie that I would like a fairy story. Rosie returned to the table and wrote me a story. She brought it to me.
>
> {What does it say?}
>
> 'The fairies were in the house and they went out into the garden and that's it. Now you'll think about fairies all the time.'
>
> {I will.}
>
> 'I do and they look lovely when they're lying in the flowers and all sparkly and they fly everywhere.'

Rosie demonstrates two themes in much of her play, fairies and ballet. Both these interests were regularly demonstrated in pre-school. Rosie spent a great deal of her time writing stories. These were often fairy stories about fairies living at the bottom of her garden. The discussion of her garden provides a link between home and pre-school, linking her interest

in fairies to both places. As such she demonstrates her awareness of the relationship between home and pre-school. Rosie often demonstrated her knowledge of books and stories to staff in the setting. During this short exchange with me she demonstrates a clear understanding of the interrelated nature of her life as she discusses both home and pre-school moving seamlessly between the two. She discusses the way in which stories are used at home and brought into pre-school, showing what she is doing and how it relates to other aspects of her life (Bronfenbrenner 1993). Whilst she does not on this occasion discuss her desire to be an author in the future, she had on other occasions and her writing is related to her future self – *becoming*, whilst being embedded in both her current *being* and her experiences of reading fairy stories, her *having been* (Cross 2011). She appears to be scaffolding her own learning throughout this process as she discusses the way in which she had drawn a line to provide a guide for herself to keep her writing neat (Bruner, 1976 and 1986). No other child at All Hallows Pre-school demonstrated the sustained level of interest in texts and writing as Rosie did, Eve occasionally mentioned books that she had read at home but they did not appear to be an enduring theme in the same way. Rosie appeared aware that she was doing was something that other children were not doing and that it was part of how she identified herself, as a writer. There was evidence that the staff supported her interests; they appeared to be proud of her themselves. The fact that a practitioner told Rosie that I would want a copy of her writing suggested that setting practitioners were proud of her achievements and were keen for her to demonstrate to an outside audience what she could do. Rosie's assumed that I would be interested in not simply her writing but what she had to say about herself and her life, more broadly demonstrating an interest in what she had to say and accepting her as an agentic child (James et al

1998, Cosaro 2010). She could make links between home and pre-school and with me as another member of the community, recognising that there was a relationship between all of them. In the following map-making conference Caleb makes less overt links between home and pre-school, nonetheless they are there.

> *Caleb's map and conference*
>
> *'I'm drawing a space-ship. It's a metal one.'*
>
> *[Researcher: What else do you like?]*
>
> *'I'm going to find out.'*
>
> *'Whoo, whoo, - this is the train track.'*
>
> *'This is my fishing rod.'*
>
> *'Hoola-hoops which is crispies – because I like them. I have them in my lunch box.'*
>
> *Caleb announces that he has finished his map.*

At the time that I conducted the research I felt that the maps were one of the least successful elements of the research. However, on re-visiting the maps it became evident that they often provided insights into the children's lives that I would not otherwise have been given and it is through these insights that I was able to understand the different and interrelated aspects of their lives. During the map making session the children were expected to demonstrate what and where in the setting was important to them. Caleb's drawing and associated discussion drew on his imagination, his knowledge of the setting and his experiences from home. There was no spaceship in the setting. On more than one occasion Caleb discussed the train track and the trains. He claimed that he had no interest in trains but that he photographed them and discussed them stating that this was because his friend liked them. This discussion demonstrates some of his knowledge of his social self and the way in which he is part of a peer culture or friendship that is important to him (Corsaro

2010, Wyness 2012). Caleb then goes on to discuss two items that are associated with home rather than the setting. His fishing rod was something that he had at home, likewise his lunchbox which contained hoola-hoops was brought to the setting from home. The knowledge of items brought from home and the interests of friends come from *having been* knowledge and demonstrate Caleb's active processing of experiences (Cross 2011, Schaffer 2004). The ability to frame himself in relation to others ensures that he can frame himself as an individual and consider his current, past and future states (Bowlby 1958, Cross 2011). Like Caleb, Eve makes links between home and pre-school.

> *Eve's Map*
>
> *Eve states that she can't do a map of pre-school. 'I can only do a treasure map.'*
>
> *[Researcher] Can you do it as a treasure map of pre-school?*
>
> *Yes. It looks like a cat. There's its ear.*
>
> *[Researcher] What do you like doing at pre-school?*
>
> *Eve points to the blocks saying that she can't draw them. 'This is a cat I'm going to colour it in. Is my camera filled up?'*
>
> *[Some discussion of deleting some of the photos]*
>
> *This is a circle and a cat – a circle for mummy. This is a kite. I've coloured the kite so no-one else can see it.*
>
> *[Where do play with kites?]*
>
> *At the park*
>
> *[Do you play at pre-school?]*
>
> *No only at home. (mentions her sister)*
>
> *[Do you play kites with your sister?]*
>
> *No, she's naughty.*
>
> *[Are you drawing the park?]*
>
> *Yes. It's finished now. I'm drawing this for my mummy.*
>
> *[What do you like doing at home?]*

Drawing, drawing cats and dogs.

(She then says that she doesn't want to draw).

I'll do it on the other side. (She traces a dog) This is my dog. Oh, he needs a tail. A lovely doggie tail. And a lead and on the lead the disc. Need to write my name on it. I can't do it. There isn't enough room.

[We could pretend]

Yes- I've finished. I'm going to colour my dog. This dog's been naughty. (Something about going to the park with her dog 'two times'. She talks about her younger sister growing like her).

I've got a drawing teddy.

[What does it do?]

It doesn't you just draw on it and daddy cleans it off when it's too full.

(Eve has coloured in two pre-printed dogs whilst we were talking).

'I'm done'. Eve goes off to put them somewhere to take home.

In Chapter 6, I will discuss the evidence that demonstrates that Eve appears to enjoy spending time with adults. Here, from her map-making session, it is evident that she was happy to talk to me. Eve controlled the conversation deciding what she would share with me and what she wanted to discuss. Practitioners in the pre-school had recently engaged in creating pirate treasure maps with the children and this is what Eve is referring to at the beginning of the conference. Eve demonstrates an interest in cats, she has one at home that has recently had kittens and Susan the setting manager is having one of them. She is happy to discuss the use of the camera with me, something that she has enjoyed using in the setting. As the conversation develops she begins to talk more and more about her life outside of the setting discussing both of her parents. She discusses a younger sister, however from the practitioners my understanding was that there was an older sister rather than a younger one. Here Eve appears confident in expressing this, whilst it may be her desire rather than actuality she shares it with me in an agentic way (James et al

1998, Cosaro 2010). She makes several links between home and pre-school particularly with reference to her cat and the kitten that Susan will be having. She discusses going to the park to fly her kite, she talks about how her daddy helps with cleaning the drawing teddy and how she is drawing something for mummy. The relationship between pre-school and home appears to be secure and Eve is aware that her life includes relationships in both places (Bronfenbrenner 1993). Like Caleb and Rosie, Eve demonstrates knowledge of the relationship between home and setting drawing on *having been* knowledge and demonstrating dynamic integration of experiences (Cross 2011, Schaffer 2004). Her ability to position herself in relation to others ensures that she can position herself as an individual and consider current, past and future states (Bowlby 1958, Cross 2011).

In the three scenarios, it is possible to see that the children demonstrate their notion of self in relation to others and the relationship between different aspects of their lives, home and setting (Schaffer 2004, Wyness 2012 and Corsaro 2010). In several of the illustrations it is possible to see that the children draw on all three temporal states of *being*, *becoming* and *having been* to inform their play and conversations (Cross 2011).

5.5 Social behaviours: Beings, becomings and having beens

The following discussion establishes the ways in which whilst integrating the three temporal states the children reveal social behaviours, that they associate with different roles. This section draws on three pieces of data, Bea's map of the setting and associated conference, field notes of an observation of Bea and field notes and observation of Rosie playing. Social behaviours are related to the social self, often associated with attachment behaviours and provide opportunities to explore the integration of the three temporal states of *being*, *becoming* and *having been* (Bowlby 1958, Cross 2011).

In this first example Bea agrees to make a map of where is important to her in the setting. She appears to be engaging in the task as she has been asked to do, however it is apparent that she is doing so on her own terms. Her conversation appears to move between reality and imagination.

Bea's map and conference

Bea begins to draw and talks to me as she is doing so.

'This is the party bus. There's a slide and we come down.'

'This is the garden at nursery.' [Researcher: What do you like to do out there?] 'I like playing.' [Researcher: What do you like playing with?] 'I like the bikes, I like playing with the bikes. I'm drawing the bikes.'

'I'm drawing jumping beans. They're in the garden with their mummy and their daddy under the shed.'

'There's lots of friends.'

'Those are goggles.' [Researcher: Why have you drawn goggles? She doesn't have an answer.]

[Researcher: Are you adding any else to your map?] 'No I just doing this.' {Shows that she has a pencil in a sharpener.}

Bea's map of the setting

The jumping beans are characters drawn from her imagination or previous experiences her *having been* knowledge. Bea shows her understanding of the culture in which she is situated and appears to wish to create and re-create specific scenarios, the notion that the jumping beans like her have a mummy and a daddy and have friends (Papadopoulou, 2012, Corsaro, 2005, 2011, Bronfenbrenner 1993)*. Friendships appear to be particularly important for Bea, and was demonstrated in her Mosaic (Appendix 3) and was apparent through observations, as well as conferences with her, her key person and her mother. Socio-cultural encounters, or friendships are important in developing social behaviours and in supporting the child's development (Vygotsky, 1978 and Bruner, 1976 and 1986). The way in which she discussed her map, her *being*, was informed by *having been*, she understands the role of different relationships within a family and that is based on her own prior experience. Her knowledge of the roles of adults demonstrates *becoming* knowledge.

Whilst Bea did not engage in the activity in the way that I had hoped, she did not draw a map of the setting, through the process I could gather useful data about Bea. She confirmed some of what interests her at nursery but beyond this she has demonstrated both her knowledge and some of her concerns particularly regarding friends and family. She reveals a range of social behaviours in her conversation and an understanding of where they are appropriate. Bea was also seen to demonstrate concerns for the welfare of those around her, in one observation she was seen to attempt to support a child who was upset because her mother was leaving.

Field notes 31: Observation - Home-fell Nursery
> *Another child arrives with her mum but doesn't want her mum to leave. Bea turns to the girl and says, 'You can share with me.' The mother leaves and the practitioner takes the upset child. Bea asks,*

> *'Where is Mrs Thomas going with Ben?'*

> *No-one seems to answer her. Suddenly Bea and Mary jump up and run to the other side of the room.*

Bea can attempt to provide support for others, in this snap-shot observation she is seen to try to help the child whose mother was about to leave. Bea also appeared slightly confused by what was happening with Mrs Thomas, she expects that adults will provide support for the children around them (Rose and Rogers 2012). Bea recognises both the roles of peers and friendship groups as well as the role of adults. Her understanding is supported through the three temporal states of *being*, *becoming* and *having been* (Cross 2011).

Rosie like Bea demonstrates a range of social behaviours, which are mostly associated with friends and providing support and care for children who are having difficulties settling.

Field notes 32: All Hallows Pre-School
> *Rosie has dressed up in the same clothes that she had on yesterday, in a fairy or ballet costume. With a friend, she goes to do ballet.*

> *Later Rosie moved to the centre table where she is writing. Clear strings of letters can be seen.*

> *[Researcher] "What are you doing?"*

> *"It's another fairy tale." Rosie is cutting out some of the letters. "I've done another story for you."*

> *[Researcher] "Are these fairy wings?"*

> *"Yes, no – they're angels. And do you know that when you see a fairy you get wishes?"*

> *A member of staff came over and asked Rosie to help settle an unhappy child. Rosie left. She clearly attempts to do so. She takes her off with an arm around her shoulders to join in with the dancing.*

> *Later in the garden:*

"I've come outside now. Did you write down my fairy stories?"

[Researcher] "I did and I have the one in here and one in my other book."

She disappeared then to re-appear with a friend both holding toy laptops.

"We're doing important work."

Her friend suggests that they go and do something else. Rosie refuses and stays sat beside me. She appears to understand something of how a laptop works. Her friend returns. Rosie states that she is doing something important. After a few more minutes her friend says,

"I'm cold let's go inside."

The two girls go inside taking their laptops with them.
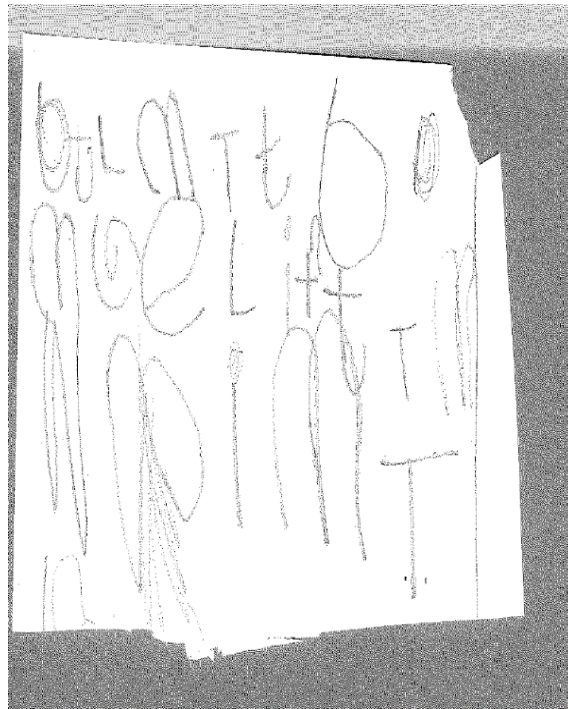
Amongst the strings of letters can be seen wings.

Through this observation, Rosie is seen interacting with several different people, some self-chosen and some chosen by the practitioners. She is asked to support an anxious child and does so willingly giving her a hug in the process, something which appears to be informed by

her *having been* knowledge (Cross 2011). She is later seen to agree to a friend's request, going inside, something that she initially refused. Rosie shows her understanding of being part of a peer culture or friendship group (Corsaro 2010). During this observation, Rosie was seen demonstrating both of her interests, dancing and writing, as well as engaging with other children and practitioners. On a previous occasion whilst she was sat with me she announced,

>   "When I grow up I want to be a ballerina like my friend."

Here Rosie is seen to be participating in dance activities in the setting. She regularly dressed up as a fairy or a ballerina. In these activities, she could be seen to be *being*, she was participating in dance in the moment (Cross 2011, Uprichard 2008). When she engaged in dance activities she often did so with other children, demonstrating being part of a peer group (Corsaro 2011). She could also be seen to be the *becoming* child; she was rehearsing a role that she would like to embody in adulthood. Through her play opportunities Rosie was seen to draw on *having been* experiences often drawn from the stories that she had had read to her to create rich role-play opportunities (Rogers and Evans 2008, Leong and Bodrova 2011). From her activities, it became evident that Rosie had a good understanding of what a book looked like and how stories work.

As with previous occasions, Rosie demonstrated writing using a pencil, writing the story above which she then gave me. Her stories provide evidence of emergent writing skills. She can form letters correctly and can attribute meaning to her work and appears to expect others to do so too. She uses a combination of letters and images in order to tell her story; it is possible to see the *fairy wings* in the middle of her writing. Rosie can create strings of

correctly formed letters, many of which are those that appear in her own name. This is what would be expected for a child engaged at the emergent end of developing writing skills (Bromley 2006). These interests allowed staff to consider ways in which they could engage Rosie in activities that were of interest to her and would further develop her skills and knowledge (DfE 2012, Rose and Rogers 2012). She equally appears to demonstrate an understanding that her writing is not as she would find in a book. Her work illustrates that she is both *being* and *becoming*, her writing holds meaning for her in the moment, but she knows that in the future that she would like to able to produce something that is more closely aligned with the published texts that she has brought in and shared in the setting (Uprichard 2008, Cross 2011). Her knowledge of writing links to social behaviours, she is demonstrating an understanding of the ways in which as humans that we communicate with each other and that writing is one form in which we do so (Paley 1981, and Gupta 2007).

In this same observation, Rosie is seen to interact with two different children as well as a practitioner. Rosie responds positively to the practitioner, willing to support them to try to settle an anxious child (Bowlby 1958, Rose and Rogers 2012). Equally the practitioner appeared to demonstrate a level of respect for Rosie in the interaction with her, demonstrating her belief that Rosie would be capable of providing solace and support for another child. This interaction suggests that the practitioner framed Rosie as an active agent, a social actor, competent and capable of co-constructing her life as well as being able to comment on the things that affect her (James et al 1998, Cosaro 2010). Rosie's interaction with the child and the practitioner's interactions with Rosie all demonstrate social behaviours in which expectations are given and met (Corsaro 2010, Wyness 2012). Similarly, Rosie's interactions with the two different children in the observation

demonstrated her understanding of herself as part of a community and peer culture

(Bronfenbrenner 1993, Corsaro 2010). She was happy to attempt to support the child who

was upset. The putting her arm around her shoulders demonstrated an understanding of

the fact that if you are feeling upset you may need to have physical contact or a cuddle from

someone else, she understands how such interactions will help the child to feel more

settled. This is informed by her *having been* knowledge (Bowlby 1998, Cross 2011). Her

further interaction with her friend, whose first request is denied but her second is

subsequently accepted, demonstrates her *being* state, situated within a peer culture in

which she has relationships with her friends which are not subject to adult intervention

(Corsaro 2011, Uprichard 2008). In this short observation, Rosie demonstrates that she

integrates the *being, becoming* and *having been* in her social relationships and behaviours in

her interactions with both adults and peers in the setting (Cross 2011).

Bea and Rosie demonstrate social behaviours which are linked to the three temporal states.

In different situations, they appear to behave in appropriate ways demonstrating their

awareness of the need for a range of social behaviours dependent on the circumstances. As

they enact different roles they appear to demonstrate appropriate social behaviours

informed by their *being*, *becoming* and *having been* knowledge and experiences (Cross

2011).

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have set out to explore the notions of *being, becoming* and *having been,*

considering how these themes can be identified through children's role-play activities (Cross

2011). The integration of the temporal states is also linked to children's notions of their social self and social behaviours (Corsaro 2011).

Role-play allows children opportunities to understand complex structures of the world around them drawing on *being, becoming* and *having been* knowledge (Uprichard 2008, 2010, Cross 2011). Rich role-play experiences appear to allow for an integration of the three temporal states. The children use their knowledge and experiences to develop and inform their roles as well as to allow them to inhabit possible future roles. Jack and Rosie were both regularly seen doing this. Jack repeatedly utilised his knowledge of work undertaken by his aunt, a policewoman, to inform his role-play. Similarly, he would use this as a basis for discussing the roles that he hopes to inhabit in the future. Rosie often used writing activities as part of her play. She discussed her knowledge of books and stories that she had read at home to inform her current writing activities whilst also discussing her desire to be an author when she is older. The role-play allowed the children to develop rich scripts whilst integrating *being, becoming* and *having been* (Cross 2011, Rogers and Evans 2008).

These opportunities occur within their peer cultures or friendship groups, where the children work with each other to create specific scenarios (Papadopoulou, 2012, Corsaro, 2005, 2011, Wyness 2012). The photographs, taken by the children of their peers in various dressing-up clothes demonstrate the importance that they place on these role-play opportunities.

The integration of the three temporal states appears to extend to notions of themselves and as social beings and in their interactions with others. Eve, Rosie and Bea illustrate their understanding of how their life in pre-school relates to their life at home (Bronfenbrenner

1993). The practitioners in the settings supported the children in bringing different aspects of their lives together, which led to them displaying self-confidence and self-esteem (Smith, Cowie and Blades, 2003, Robson, 2012 and Siraj-Blatchford 2014).

Social behaviours demonstrated by the children can be seen to be directly related to the three temporal states. This aspect of their lives can be argued to link with theories of attachment (Bowlby 1958). The children responded to requests from staff members to support other children. Rosie's attempt to comfort an anxious child demonstrates her concern, she knows what to do for someone who is feeling unhappy. She would not be able to do this if she did not have secure attachments and *having been* experiences to draw on (Bowlby 1958, Rose and Rogers 2012, Cross 2011). Therefore, social behaviours are demonstrated in integrated ways.

Framing children as integrated beings who are; *beings, becomings* and *having beens* allows for a more appropriate construction of the child in which they are recognised as being agentic in their own lives, capable individuals who can comment on their experiences and future desires. The children appear to embody more than one temporal state at any one time and stepping between them seamlessly. From the data, I have shown that rich role-play experiences allow for an integration of the three selves, children draw on their experiences to inform their play, often finding props and costumes to support their play. The final data chapter will explore the children's perceptions of the adults in their settings.

Chapter 6: The role of adults in Pack-Away early childhood settings: Children's Perspectives

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I draw on data including; observations, conferences with children, parents and practitioners and the children's photographs. The data is used to explore the question:

> How do children perceive the adults in their settings with specific reference to role-play?

The chapter opens with an exploration of the role of the practitioners with specific reference to the organisation in pack-away settings. I emphasise their pedagogical approach which includes considering routines and the ways in which they facilitate children's role-play. The role of the adult as an attachment figures in pack-away settings is explored discussing the ways in which adults can provide a secure base from which children can explore, develop and extend their role-play activities (Rose and Rogers 2012). Parent conferences provide supporting data that illustrates the importance that their children place on the adults in the setting and the way in which those adults provide familiar routines which the children can have a sense of, that support them in feeling secure. This was something that appeared to be a central concern to many of the parents.

The role of the adult as creator and facilitator of role-play is then explored. The ways in which the adults structure and organise the setting, particularly through role-play, and the ways in which children are made aware of the offer to them is discussed, acknowledging that children are rarely involved in the planning process. In both settings, the opportunities that are made available are based on observational knowledge of the children's interests (Leong and Bodrova 2012; Sylva et al 2010). However, in neither setting were children given opportunities to plan with the adults. The data suggests that the adults in the settings rarely

participate in the role-play activities that are on offer to the children; however, they actively support the children in further developing these play experiences providing the props and materials that are necessary to extend their role-play opportunities.

The role of the adult in relation to power is also examined. Even where there is a genuine attempt to move to a position of diminished power and to engage in equitable relationships with children, a power dynamic remains (MacNaughton 2005). The children were seen to cede power to the adults even when there was no need to do so. However, the data suggests that there are occasions in which the children appear to take back the power. In some of their conferences with me they set the agenda actively changing what had initially been designed. Likewise, they made use of objects to redress the balance of power; the use of the cameras to control what both their peers and the adults did was evidence of this.

The recognition that as adults we often make assumptions based on our ideas about what children are trying to say or share with us is explored. As adults, we sometimes misinterpret children's work or their intentions. An extended example of this is children's deliberate photographs of feet, usually their own but occasionally other people's. This area of interest for children had gone unnoticed both by me as the researcher but also by the practitioners who worked with them.

Each of the themes is investigated in depth drawing on the children's perspectives and on their parent's thoughts about those perspectives. Conclusions are drawn about children's views of the role that the adults have in their lives, particularly those adults that actively demonstrate an interest in them and in what they do (Pramling Samuelsson and Johansson

2009). The children appear to perceive the adults to be important in providing care and support as well as enabling them to develop their play opportunities.

6.2 Organisation and Pedagogy in Pack-Away settings

Organisation in a pack-away setting is crucial. In pack-away settings, where the same materials are not available daily, where everything is set up and packed-away each day, the children are unable to have a sense of, with any certainty, what the setting will look like each day as they enter. Therefore, the pedagogical approach of the staff is crucial. The children need to develop secure relationships with the staff in order that they have a secure base from which to explore (Bowlby 1988, Rose and Rogers 2012). The routines that the staff develop enable the children to have a sense of what will occur at different times throughout the day and again this supports them in feeling confident and comes from a pedagogical approach in which developing secure confident children is valued (Rose and Rogers 2012).

The following excerpts of data include observations and parent conferences, demonstrating that a pedagogical approach has been adopted, one in which the staff recognise the diverse ways in which they can meet the needs of the children. They provide an appropriate environment in which the practitioners are the secure base from which the children can explore, where their reasonable requests will be met and where there are clear routines that frame their day.

At Home-fell Nursery children are part of a specific keyperson group for part of the day which is based on their age. In this group, they undertake an adult led activity related to the topic that they are following. In the following observation, the children were engaged in an activity that was related to Easter.

Field notes 33: Observation of group time at Home-fell Nursery
The children have been given little jewel shapes to stick onto their eggs. This was to follow up on a previous discussion with the practitioner about shapes. (However, no mention was made of the shapes that they were using.)

One of the boys (James) asked for some eyes that he could stick on his egg. The practitioner went and found some. The boy then offered them to both Penny and Hannah. Both asked to have some eyes. Penny then said, 'Not yet in a minute.'

The children finished the activity quickly and went to play in the garden.

The children appear relaxed and confident, secure that their needs will be met, enjoying their play experiences. Elfer et al (2012) argue that children expend their energy in combating the stress of being in an early years setting, rather than in being able to engage in cognitive development opportunities. The daily changes to the environment seen in a pack-away setting could increase the levels of stress experienced. Here no such experiences were in evidence. The children demonstrated confidence that not only would their request for materials be met but that they would be enabled to use them in self-chosen ways. As part of the parent conference, I asked what they thought was important to their child about the setting, what they enjoyed and what they would miss if it wasn't there. In response to these questions four of parents made comments about the setting organisation and routines.

Parent Conference: All Hallows Pre-school, Tara – Rosie's mother

2.   What do you think is important to them about pre-school?

'She likes routine. If she's had a good day it's because they've kept to the routine, she likes routine. She gets agitated if it's not kept to.'

The notion of agitation that Tara mentions links with Elfer et al's (2012) opinion that the children need to feel secure. Routines appear to provide some of this security. Anne, Bea's mother also comments on this.

Parent Conference: Home-fell Nursery, Anne – Bea's mother

2. What do you think is important to them about pre-school?

'Mostly the things that I've already said. She likes routine and finds it important. She is very attached to her key person and continuity is very important. She likes painting, messy room (?), going outside. Good variety.'

Natasha, Jack's mother also commented that the routines that the setting follow were

important to him.

Parent Conference: All Hallows Pre-school, Natasha – Jack's mother

1. What do you think that they enjoy about pre-school?

'He likes playing with other children. He's very sociable. He also likes the routines.'

Alongside the routines that were important to the children, Clare suggests that many of the

changes that occurred because of the pack-away nature of the setting were something that

her daughter, Penny, actively relished. Clare suggested that the diversity and change each

day was a strength of the setting.

Parent Conference at Home-fell Nursery with Clare – Penny's mother

2. What do you think is important to them about pre-school?

'She wouldn't like it if it was too large a group, she wouldn't like that. If it was too noisy she wouldn't like that. The relationships with the staff are important. She likes the continuity of the children and the staff. She likes variety and change, every day there is something different, she likes the stimulus. She likes the outside space. She likes predictability, structure, but not too much structure.'

In many respects, this appears to be in direct contradiction of the notion that children need

continuity and prior knowledge of the environment to flourish (Elfer et al 2012). However,

the parent conferences demonstrated that the organisation of the setting appears to be

significant in helping to allow their child to feel secure and to be able to participate and

enjoy their experiences of pre-school. Four out of the seven parents that participated in

parent conferences emphasised the importance of regular routines. Routines in early

childhood settings are important, such routines may provide the necessary scaffolding for

children to further develop (Jennings et al 2012, and Fewster 2010). At both Home-fell

Nursery and All Hallows Pre-school it was possible to see children recognising and appearing

to be confident with routines associated with registration, the daily time-table, snack-time,

tidy-up time and lunchtime. In the following examples children in both settings follow and

understand the expectations.

Field notes 34: Observation- Home-fell Nursery
> *Penny has put on a dress and gone to the drawing table. She is sitting alone*
> *drawing. Betsy came and joined her sitting next to her. Neither girl appears to*
> *acknowledge the other. Another girl arrives and speaks to them. They ignore her*
> *and she leaves. Betsy leaves and Penny continues colouring in a pre-printed picture.*
> *She doesn't appear to be concerned that she is alone. She is concentrating on*
> *colouring.*
>
> *The bell rings for registration. Penny immediately takes off the dress goes and*
> *hangs it back up before going and sitting on the carpet for register time.*

Penny understands the purpose of the bell and taking-off the dress and hanging it up before

going and sitting on the carpet. It is a clear demonstration of her understanding of the

expectations of the setting. None of the children in the setting appeared to need the

expectation explained to them.

Field notes 35: Observation- All Hallows Pre-school
> *Children start each morning with wake and shake. They then do a visual timetable.*
> *Children do sign, but this is being emphasised. Children are being asked to observe*
> *and copy the sign as remembering the order of the day. Children are shown the*
> *symbol for free-play they go and start choosing where they wish to play or engage*
> *with activities.*

Similarly, at All Hallows Pre-school the children begin the day with a wake and shake activity

prior to the register. The visual timetable for the day is then shared with them, they clearly

understood the timetable and that they could go and choose for themselves what they

wanted to do. The repetition of routines by the practitioners seemed to help the children to

feel secure. They also had a sense of what would happen and what would be expected of them.

The principle of Enabling Environments (DfE 2012) states that practitioners should provide flexible learning opportunities, which is something that pack-away settings offer. It also states that children should have time to become deeply involved with their activities, developing their natural interests and curiosities; this may be something that could prove more challenging in these settings where materials can never be left in place from one day to the next, therefore their interests need to be developed in different ways. In order that children in pack-away settings can have a full range of opportunities, there is a need for clear routines and organisation as well as for the staff to have good knowledge of the children's interests and to be able to follow them (Jones 2010). The practitioners in both Home-fell Nursery and All Hallows Pre-school appeared to organise the setting using a range of clear routines as well as demonstrating a good understanding of the interests of the children in their setting and offering them experiences based on that knowledge.

6.3 Adults as facilitators of role-play

The adults in the two settings were responsible for organising the role-play opportunities for the children. They appeared to do this drawing on their knowledge of the children's interest but without engaging the children in the process. They laid out different scenarios each day however, it was rare to see them actively participating in the play themselves. The following photographs and observations demonstrate the role the adults took in organising and facilitating role-play in the two settings.

Each day when the children arrived a new opportunity was on offer to them. These were planned and set up by the adults, children were not engaged in discussions about how these

could be organised. Therefore, the adults had a powerful role in the structure and

organisation of the settings. The organisation of the setting is covered by Enabling

Environments within the EYFS (DfE 2012). Staff are expected to create environments that

meet the needs of the children in their care and enable them to develop and learn. They

need to; stimulate children's innate curiosity, provide a range of resources, model skills and

behaviours as well as listening to children and asking questions (Kingdon 2014). Equally, '...

quality learning environments support children's learning with a rich variety of materials

that enable them to explore and make discoveries' (Yelland 2011, p. 6). Settings that are

housed in non-permanent spaces, where they need to set up and pack-away each day are

faced with important challenges, there are few opportunities for children to choose their

own materials. The practitioners may have engaged in developing a co-constructed enabling

environment where what is provided is decided by observation-led planning; however,

there will remain an element of what is laid out has been chosen by the adults given that

the children are not present when the setting is being laid out each day (Rose and Rogers

2012). It seemed that, whilst the planning informed themes that were often on-going,

children usually arrived not knowing what would have been provided for them that day. The

role-play area in each setting was set up prior to the children arriving. Themes that were

evident included; home corners, cafes, vets, building sites.

The only occasion when there was a change to this system, of the role-play being organised

before the children arrive without them being aware of what would be on offer, was on a

pirate day that was held in All Hallows Pre-school. The children had been informed some

weeks in advance and were encouraged to come to pre-school that day dressed as a pirate.

They were told that there would be pirate-themed activities on offer and there was some

discussion in advance as to what sorts of activities could be made available to them. On that

day, the role-play area was set up as a treasure island, there were several pirate related

activities laid out around the setting and the outdoor climbing frame was decorated as a

ship complete with pirate flag. Role-play materials including dressing-up clothes were made

available on the day to children who arrived without the requisite costume. The children

had been informed that there would be a range of pirate activities on the day. This prior

information engendered enthusiasm. Whilst not all children arrived in fancy dress, they

were ready to participate in the day having this preceding knowledge. This prior planning

supported the children in being able to participate more fully in their role-play, given that

they could plan and develop some of the necessary language that would be associated with

the play opportunities (Leong and Bodrova 2012).

Rogers (2010, p. 155) argues that much of the writing that can be found on playful

pedagogies discusses the role of practitioners in creating a learning environment but fails to

mention, '… the ways in which children exercise agency through their active participation…'

This omission means that children are often not given the necessary opportunities to

negotiate the curriculum that is on offer to them. Opportunities in which children

participate in the planning process allow for a more meaningful engagement with their play

and an opportunity for them to contribute to what will actually occur. The pirate day

allowed for this to happen. The event was also shared with parents and carers in a way that

the rest of the curriculum was not, letters were sent home and posters were displayed in

the setting. This sharing of the event allowed families to communicate with their children

about the event. High quality settings within the EPPE research were effective in sharing

their curriculum with parents and carers and this resulted in more positive outcomes for

children (Sylva et al 2010). Research evidence demonstrates that children make better progress where families and settings work in tandem (Sylva et al 2004). This approach to creating and facilitating the curriculum allows children to develop their full potential (Rose and Rogers 2012).

During the thirty in-depth observations of role-play there were only three occasions when an adult or practitioner was observed participating in the actual role-play area. These observations occurred at Home-fell Nursery. Some modelling behaviour occurred at All Hallows Pre-school but this was not in the role-play area, however this modelling of behaviours necessary for role-play has links to Wave Play (see chapter 4) where role-play activities occur outside of the role-play area.

In one scenario, discussed in detail in Chapter 4 *Fieldnotes 7*, the staff member attempted to engage the children and model appropriate behaviour with hairdressing equipment. Hannah, the child that had engaged with the equipment appeared to have her own ideas of what it was that she wanted to do. She ignored the member of staff and was happy to play in her own way. The staff member left no longer seeming to wish to engage in the role-play opportunity. For improvisation or a joint role-play scenario to occur there needs to be an acceptance of the offer, in which one player accepts something from another and uses it as a basis to build the scenario (Lobman 2003). In this instance, Hannah appeared to reject the offer and no other offer was made. The adult and child were not seen to participate in a joint play episode (Corsaro 2010).

The second occasion is seen in greater detail in Chapter 5 *Fieldnotes 27*, a student who was engaged on the Early Years Professional Status programme worked with the children in the

role-play area. The student was hoping to be able to add to the children's experiences of

using money and tills. Caleb quickly demonstrated that he already had some awareness of

this and led some of his friends in using the materials. The student remained with the role-

play, engaging in the play, until it concluded. She was observed attempting to add the

language and vocabulary that would support and stimulate their play (Leong and Bodrova

2003, 2012). In the third scenario, the member of staff does not spend long with the

children, but she does appear to attempt to give the children some of the language that

they will need to extend their play (Leong and Bodrova, 2003, 2012).

Field notes 36: Home-fell Nursery, Role play home corner
> The role-play area is set up as a home corner. A boy and a girl have sat at the table and are using the tea-pot and are pouring "tea" into cups.
>
> A member of staff joins the children. The staff member starts to talk to the children asking if someone is making the tea and what they are eating. The girl quickly leaves taking the kettle with her. The boy stays sat at the table. The girl returned and poured "water" from the kettle. She wanders around the home corner and finally sits on a chair opposite the chair that she was initially sat on. She and the boy show some concentrated interest in the food.

The practitioner joins some children who are already engaged in role-play using the home

corner materials. On this occasion, the children appear to accept the offer (Lobman 2003)

accepting that the adult is a play partner not someone dominating the play (Howard et al

2006). However, in these scenarios the children were visiting a play opportunity that was

presented to them on the day, not something that had been planned with them in advance

in which they had had opportunities to become familiar with some of the language and

behaviours (Leong and Bodrova 2003, 2012).

Modelling behaviour was observed at All Hallows Pre-school, however this occurred on the

large mat rather than within the actual role-play area that had been set up as a café on that

day. The episode is described in greater detail in Fieldnotes 22 in Chapter 4. The staff

member was engaged with the children modelling the use of medical equipment. The

children were seen to be engaging in role-play behaviours, testing out the equipment on the

practitioners and on each other. The interaction appeared to be impromptu and not

planned by either the staff or children. However, the member of staff was seen to be

extending the children's play by demonstrating how the equipment worked and adding

appropriate language (Leong and Bodrova 2003, 2012).

So, whilst the staff appeared to rarely engage in role-play activities they did enable the

children to participate in a range of different opportunities that appeared to be related to

the children's areas of interest. A wide variety of different role-play experiences were

planned and offered. These were supported with appropriate props and open-ended

materials that they could use in imaginative ways.

6.3.1 Adult's support for role-play

In both settings, the children appeared confident in asking practitioners to provide

resources that were not available. The children appeared to have a good understanding of

what would be available even if they could not see it. Data drawn from conferences with the

children, observations and conferences with the practitioners demonstrate this.

I witnessed children asking practitioners to get something out from the cupboard,

something that was not currently available but would support their play. It appeared that

the children were aware of what the setting had available and were not afraid to ask for

items. The children appeared to expect that the staff would be available to them and meet

many of their requests and needs, in order that they could extend their play or role-play

opportunities (Rose and Rogers 2012). They appeared to view the staff as collaborators in

their play, supporting and scaffolding them to create additional props.

As part of Rosie's conference of her photographs she pointed out one in which a staff

member can be seen emerging from the store cupboard. When asked about it she discussed

the importance of adults in the setting, saying that she liked Morwenna.

Rosie: '*This is the cupboard there's loads of toys in there and that's Morwenna*.'

She talked about the fact that there were numerous toys in the cupboard and that staff

would get them out if you asked for them. On the pirate day, many of the children arrived in

costume some had not; however, the staff facilitated finding dressing-up clothes, doing

face-painting and supporting the children to make props. Michael arrived without a costume

but was soon supported to create props that enabled him to more fully engage in the play.

Field notes 37: *All Hallows Pre-school*

> A group of children including Michael are engaged in role-play. The used a climbing frame and declared 'This is our pirate ship'. Michael was not dressed up but he found a sword and a hook. He took the role of an aggressive pirate shouting instructions at play peers.

> Play moved inside as a member of staff told them that there was treasure to be found both inside and outside. Michael left the play to go and make a pirate hat with a member of staff.

> Michael and friends come back outside and appear to be back in role-play game as pirates.

A member of staff assisted Michael in making a pirate hat. Once he had completed it he re-

joined the play, demonstrating that he was fully in character. The donning of the hat

appeared to support Michael in his play. The staff were central in supporting the children's

play, in this instance helping him to create the costume. The pre-planning of the role-play

also enabled the staff to be better prepared to support the children. They had discussed the

day in detail and planned that there would be hat making opportunities for the children as

well as face-painting, all of which supported the children in developing the roles and

remaining in character. The staff appeared keen to support the children's play, developing

individual children's interests, in any way that they could. During Eve's key person

conference, the practitioner discussed the ways in which they discover the children's

interests and follow them. Verity, the key person, discussed the ways in which they use

questioning techniques as well as taking a lead from things that they bring from home. At

some point Eve had developed an interest in the traditional tale, The Gingerbread Man.

> Eve's key-person conference
>
> … so, for example if she wants to do something like gingerbread men, we'll do it.
> We'll get the ingredients in and we'll just do it.

Verity demonstrated a flexibility in responding to her key children, considering their

interests and the ways in which she could develop play opportunities for them that allowed

them to follow their self-chosen interests linking to Sustained Shared Thinking (Sylva et al

2004, Siraj-Blatchford et al 2002). However as with the previous examples relating to Bea

and Eve in Chapter 5, some of the critical aspects of SST, with links to extending, clarifying

and problem solving appeared to be absent (Siraj-Blatchford 2002). Nevertheless, the

children appeared to recognise that the practitioners were willing to provide support for

their play. They knew that they could seek assistance in finding items that were not

available or that they needed to create. The children appeared to recognise that the

practitioners provided care and support for them and trusted that they would meet their

needs.

6.4 Children's perspectives of Adults as carer and attachment figures

The children demonstrated that they recognised that the adults in the setting would act as carers for them. The children showed attachment behaviours towards the practitioners. Data drawn from the parent conferences, the children's photographs and the children's conferences support this.

According to the statutory requirements of the EYFS (2012, p.7), '1.11 Each child must be assigned a key person…' The role of the key person is to provide appropriate learning and care for the child, to engage with the family and to encourage them in providing support for their child at home as well as, where necessary, supporting them to seek additional support for their child (DfE 2012). The issue surrounding attachment remains central to discussions on the way in which early years settings are organised, with the key person taking the role of the attachment figure. During the parent conference four of the parents commented on the importance that their children placed on different practitioners within the setting, though not necessarily on their key person. In response to the second question in the semi-structured conference schedule (see Appendix 10),

> '*What do you think is important to them about pre-school and what would they miss if it wasn't here?*'

Natasha, Jack's mother said,

> '*…certain teachers, he loves Morwenna. Lara and Morwenna are his favourites he'd definitely miss them if they weren't there*.'

Sue, Michael's mother added that what he would miss would not be,

> '*... necessarily the children. He comes home and talks about the staff.*'

Clare, Penny's mother mentioned that the,

> '... *relationships with the staff are important. She likes the continuity of the children and the staff*.'

In these first three responses, there is discussion of practitioners who are not necessarily the child's key person. The only parent that named their child's actual key person as being important was Anne, Bea's mother who stated,

> '*She's very attached to Jane her key person, she likes continuity*.'

The nature of the pack-away setting is such that children do not necessarily spend time with their key person each day, the one space of the setting means that they can access all of practitioners that are working. At Home-fell Nursery the children engaged in key group time most days. This meant that they had a clearer awareness of who their key person was and it was parents from this setting that made comments specifically about the key person. In the two settings used in this research a key person system was evident. In both settings the children seemed to demonstrate an interest in all the staff, not necessarily their key person.

In both All Hallows Pre-school and Home-fell Nursery the children demonstrated close relationships with the staff, they were seen talking to them, they photographed them, and they talked about them in their conferences; likewise, their parents talked about them in their conferences. Whilst all the children had a key person and they and their family appeared to know who that was, the children did not necessarily identify that person as the key adult in the setting. Both Jack and Michael took photographs of Heather. She is not the key person for either of these boys; however, both boys identified her as being important.

As part of the conferencing activity the photographs were discussed. When asked why they had taken a photograph of her the boys gave very different answers. Jack simply said,

> '*It's a picture of Heather, she's important*.'

Whilst Michael said,

> '*Heather, she was doing glue and penguins, then she wasn't doing anything. She doesn't do a lot.*'

On the surface, this appeared to be a negative discussion of Heather's role in the setting yet he said it as though it was a joke and Michael was seen choosing to spend time with her as well as photographing her as part of his series of photographs of people and things that are important in the setting. Humour is a socio-cognitive process that is used by children in their engagement with others (Loizou 2005). Children enjoy initiating their own humour in which they often will deliberately do or say something wrong (McGhee 2015). This appears to be what Michael is doing here. He is acknowledging Heather's importance by being negative in a humorous manner.

Heather also appeared in Eve's photographs of people who were important in the setting. Eve took a photograph of Heather with one of the youngest children in the setting, Felix, sitting on her lap. Felix was crying because he'd hurt his head. He had had an accident and bumped his head with another child. During her conference, we discussed the photograph. Eve's assumption was that Heather would provide care for Felix in such a situation. Neither Felix nor Eve expressed any surprise that Heather had taken Felix on her lap and was giving him a cuddle, whilst he was recovering from the accident that he had had. Both Felix and Eve are confident that the adults around them will be responsive to them and provide

appropriate comfort and care (Bowlby 1988). They demonstrated a clear expectation that

that would occur, demonstrating that not only are securely attached but that they

understand that the role of the adults around them is to provide care and support

particularly in times of difficulty.

6.5 Children, Adults and Power

Children appear to acknowledge the power that the adults use within the setting and let

them control situations where it is not necessary to do so. Adults sometimes assume that

things are not of importance to the children even when they are. Data from key person

conferences, and children's photographic conferences are used to illustrate these issues.

Whilst adults sometimes make incorrect assumptions about the children's thinking, wishes

and desires, they also support the children in becoming effective communicators. This

communication often leads to the children continuing to perceive the adults as powerful as

they witness the interactions that the practitioners have with each other, parents and

carers, and the children around them. Children then seem to cede the power to the adults

often suggesting that what the adults are doing is more important than what they are doing.

> Rosie's photographic conference:
>
> Rosie was looking at a photograph of Diane one of the practitioners
>
> *(Researcher: Tell me about this photo.) It's Diane – she's doing important things –*
> *she was making hats. She was making big school hats.*

Rosie was discussing some of the photographs that she had taken as part of a conferencing

activity. The children leaving nursery that summer were to have a graduation ceremony in

which they would wear a cap and gown, Diane was engaged in making the caps. During this

process, she had little interaction with the children. I observed her sitting on a table creating

the hats and calling over children to have them fitted. The process appeared to take several

days of her time. Rosie discussed the photograph appearing to suggest that Diane was

powerful. Both the tone of Rosie's voice and her body language, seemed to be suggesting

that what Diane was doing was extremely important. The underlying message of her talk

was that Diane was doing something far more important than anything that Rosie might do.

Research has demonstrated that many early years settings perpetuate unequal power

relationships between adults and children and that, even utilising a child centred pedagogy,

adults are constructed as more, '…privileged and powerful than children' (Mac Naughton

2005, p.10). The notion of such power seems accepted by the children and usually goes

unchallenged by them. Even in situations where adults in the setting are attempting to

operate from a position of less or diminished power, children do not challenge these power

relationships.

A similar theme emerged through Caleb's key person conference. Whilst neither the key

person nor Caleb were considered to have discussed power, it appears to be an element of

what is being discussed. Caleb is interested in the adults and their roles.

> Caleb's Key Person Conference:
>
> What do you think is important to them about nursery?
>
> The social side, meeting his friends and playing with them. If his friends are with him he's happy to engage. He's more of a leader, he will organise the play, but he is amiable. He likes being able to voice his own opinions, he particularly likes being able to explain things to adults and to engage with adults. He is more than happy to share his feelings.

In Chapter 4, Field notes 12, Caleb is seen to step out of his play to discuss with an adult

what he was doing and what it was that he knew. The relationships that the children have

with the adults are formed through social relationships. In the conference Caleb is described

by his key person, as a leader. This is a powerful role; however, he is seen to apparently seek

the approval of the adults around him, which suggests that he considers their role to be

powerful too. The adults around the children influence the children's behaviours and the

children will often wish to emulate such behaviours (Bowlby 1958). This will include

exercising power. Likewise, many of the photographs taken by the children include

photographs of the practitioners and of me. I was a little surprised by some of these given

that the philosophical approach and values of the settings was not one in which children

were likely to feel that they were expected to be participants in the research even if they

didn't want to be. However, even where I attempted to ensure that there was a balance of

power between the children and me the balance was tilted towards me, making me an

object of interest to the children (Smith 2011, Grieshaber 2001). During Penny's conference,

I discussed with her one of the photographs that she had taken of me.

Penny's conference of photographs:

That's you Zenna. Because you taught me and I wanted to take a photo of you.

Penny appeared to be almost grateful that I had come to the setting and spent time with

her. This is certainly not how I would have wanted her to feel however being a researcher

undoubtedly meant that I was in a power relationship that I would not necessarily have

wished to have.

6.5.1 Adult led tasks

Within early childhood settings adults will often design tasks and activities. Many of these

are intended to be play-based and engaging for the children, however the children will not

necessarily perceive them as such. Activities developed by adults are often perceived by the

children as tasks and completed as such. Through observations, children's photographs and

children's conferences it is possible to identify ways in which adults expect children to

engage with tasks that they organise.

One such example occurred at All Hallows Pre-school where children were engaged in role-

play as doctors. A member of staff intervened in the play, attempting to extend the play

narrative (Paley 1992, Lobman 2003, Gupta 2009). The practitioner suggested that they

could write prescriptions and provided some materials for them to use in order that they

could do so. Several of children responded positively to the suggestion using the range of

pens and paper and completing the activity. However, the practitioner left the table she had

set up very quickly, leaving the children to complete this alone. Jack was observed

appearing to acquiesce to what he appears to consider to be a request. He completes what

he appears to perceive to be a task. He then seeks a member of staff to request permission

to return to his play.

Field notes 38: All Hallows Pre-school
> *A member of staff asked the boys to write her some prescriptions. The children including Jack all sat at the table to write their prescriptions. Jack drew on the paper and says, 'that's my mummy,' he turns the paper over and draws on the back, 'and that's my daddy.'*
>
> *Jack leaves the table taking his prescription and medical equipment with him. Jack says to a member of staff who doesn't seem to hear him,*
>
> > *'Can I go and play now?'*
>
> *He is clutching the prescription and appears to be looking for someone to show it to. {He appears compliant}. He gives it to a member of staff. Relieved of the prescription he returns to the role-play area.*

Whilst Jack appears to consider this a task which he doesn't appear to wish to participate in,

he does appear compliant and has done something asked of him. He accepted the

asymmetrical power relationship between him and the practitioner and does not question

her authority. He completes the task and then seeks permission to return to his self-chosen activity in which he is playing the role of a doctor.

During a conference, I discussed a series of photographs with Caleb that he had taken of me collecting data and writing notes in my field notes book. I asked him what he thought I was doing.

'Drawing, you're always drawing.'

I asked whether this was a problem. He said;

'It is a problem. It's what you do. You're always drawing.'

He seemed to be unhappy about this concentration on paperwork; something that he perceived as being an activity that I was doing that took my attention away from him and his peers. As someone engaged in participatory research it was difficult to think of other ways in which I could capture what was happening and mitigate the power dynamics. The fact that I spent time writing notes appeared to confer me with additional power. Whilst Caleb does not describe what I am doing as writing, he refers to it as drawing, he appears to perceive it in such a way that was problematic to him.

6.5.2 Children's opportunities to balance the power relationships

Whilst it seemed that the adults usually exercised power in the relationship and that children ceded power to them, there were occasions where the children appeared to gain the upper hand in the relationship. Data drawn from the children's map-making activities and conferences, photographs and observations demonstrated where this occurred.

In chapter 5 I discussed the maps that I requested that the children made of the setting to show which areas of the setting were important to them and why; I particularly wanted to know about where they liked to play and why. Here it could be argued that I was attempting to engage the children through a playful pedagogy but in something that the children would not necessarily view as play (Moyles 2010). The children agreed to draw a map for me, but not because they particularly wished to engage in the activity but because they perceived that I had the authority to ask to them to complete a task (Dahlberg et al 2007). The children participated in the task and created images; however, these were not necessarily of what I had asked. In this way, the children could subvert my agenda to their own (Canning 2007). As the children drew we held conversations, they seemed happy to talk as it was something that they felt that they had control over and that they could achieve. However, they did not always appear to be keen on mapping the setting even on their own terms many of their maps were of something different and usually included information about their lives away from the setting.

During a conference activity with Penny, I discussed a photograph she had taken of the nursery bell. When asked why she had taken the photograph she stated that it was…

'Mrs Geoffrey's Bell; I took a picture because I've rung it lots and lots of times.' Penny's words seem to confer an authority on the bell, not as a bell that belongs to the nursery, but as one that specifically belongs to Mrs Geoffrey, the setting owner and manager. Therefore, Penny appears to recognise that Mrs Geoffrey had a level of authority not enjoyed by other practitioners in the setting. Penny appeared to feel that ringing the bell also conferred her with power. Eve spent one morning moving from working with one adult to another. Her interactions with the adults did not readily convey her authority.

257

However, she was displaying her power in the relationships, gaining what she wanted from each interaction.

Field notes 39: All Hallows Pre-school

> *Eve is on her own this morning. Other friends have not come to pre-school. She decided to come and sit with me. First, she wanted to play with the jack-in-the-box. Next, she asked me to read her a story. She chose Goldilocks (a picture book version) she clearly knew the story and could tell it as I was reading it. She then asked me to read two more stories. She was about to ask for more but I suggested that we went and saw what else was happening in pre-school.*

> *Eve went and found another adult {Diane} who was making mortar boards for children leaving pre-school. Eve had one made ready for her leaving ceremony.*

> *Eve seems to be spending her morning moving from one member of staff to another. She has finished and tried on her mortar board. She moves to join the member of staff {Heather} who is making owl pictures. She is told that there is a queue and that she will have to wait her turn. Eve is not put off. She sits at the table and starts a conversation with the staff member. She is prepared to wait her turn. When one child is offered different coloured paint Eve states,*

> *'I want pink paint'.*

> *The member of staff says that she can have it when it's her turn.*

> *Eve's patience has paid off. It is finally her turn to make an owl. She is confident about gluing her owl. She completes her owl and goes to wash her hands. {They were using handprints as the wings of the owl}. Having cleaned up she gravitates back to the member of staff with whom she completed the task.*

> *Later…*

> *Eve is part of a game of Farmer's in the Den. She gets to choose the person to play the dog. She immediately chooses a member of staff {Vicky} to play the role. This is not a member of staff that she has worked with so far, this morning. This is the 4th adult (including me) she has worked with this morning.*

Throughout the morning Eve appeared to choose adults as her play partners. During the first part of the morning in her interaction with me she demonstrated confidence in indicating her knowledge of the story of Goldilocks. Her asking me to read to her demonstrated her confidence to ask for support and to expect that the adults around her

would co-construct experiences (James et al 1998, Qvortrup 2004, Cosaro 2010). She understood the purpose of a book but also recognised that she could not read it herself and that an adult could support her in being able to do so. Her encounter with me and with Diane who was making the mortar boards was certainly part of a socio-cultural encounter. Eve demonstrated an expectation that Diane would ensure that she had a suitable hat for her graduation.

When Heather told Eve that she would have to wait her turn she did not seem concerned by this. She simply sat at the table and waited. The Tickell Review (2011) identified Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) as being an essential skill that children needed to learn during the EYFS (2012/14). It appears that Eve is developing social skills and an understanding of turn taking as she waited to make her owl. In her final encounter that morning she asked Vicky to play the role of the dog, she appeared sure that she would participate as a play partner. Vicky's engagement in the play appeared to support Eve's self-confidence and self-esteem (Howard et al 2006, Gupta 2009). On the one hand, it would be possible to suggest that Eve was looking to adults for care and support, on the other she demonstrates her confidence within the relationship. Eve has followed the rules, she has waited her turn, she has participated in ways that are expected. She therefore expects that the adults will respect her and treat her in an appropriate way fulfilling her reasonable requests.

 Participatory research with children has the potential to address the balance in the power relationships between researcher and child (Dockett et al 2011). What remains clear is that even when an attempt is being made to demonstrate an equitable approach to the

relationship, an uneven distribution of power often remains. As adults, we regularly ignore aspects of children's play that are of importance to them, not necessarily consciously, instead we do so because we do not recognise the significance of these issues for the children, privileging our viewpoints and agendas over theirs (Canning 2007).

6.6 Adults' assumptions about children

An aspect of the data that I initially ignored when I looked at the photographic data were the multiple photographs of feet. It was only on a second viewing I began to realise that these photographs were not misfires of the camera, rather they appeared to be deliberate acts. They were clearly in focus and the definite subject of the image. All eight children across the two settings had taken photographs of their feet. Photographs of feet had been taken on different occasions and could not be put down to one child simply following the lead of another, particularly given the evidence that this occurred in both settings. I attempted to discuss these photographs with some of the children; however, I was unable to gain a clear understanding of why they were important. However, they were important to the children and something that the staff was not aware of, something that was easy to dismiss.

I discussed some of the photographs with Eve where it was possible to see her feet. She acknowledged that she had taken the photographs saying:

> '...*my shoes. I don't know why.*'

However, she acknowledges that she likes shoes looking at another photograph she says,

> '... *don't know, still don't know why, cos I like shoes and I don't know why.*'

Eve's key person was unaware of her interest in shoes and commented,

> *'I'm surprised by the shoes. I had no idea that she liked shoes.'*

Verity, like me, was unaware of Eve's interest in shoes, despite Eve stating quite clearly in

her conversation with me that they were of interest to her. This is evidence that as adults

that we are unaware of some of the issues that are important to children and that we make

assumptions about some issues. Like Eve, Jack had taken several photographs of his feet.

During a conference with his photographs he made comments about his feet. Jack pointed

to a photograph of his feet saying,

> *'My feet – I love them!'*

He then pointed to a photograph of Rosie and said,

> *'It's Rosie. She taught me to take a picture of my feet.'*

In a further conference with Rosie I discussed the issue of feet. It seemed that she had not

taken photographs of her own feet but looked at one of her photographs she had taken and

said,

> *'It's Chloe, she's jumping, you can see everyone else.... I flashed the camera quite
> quick and I didn't really see her feet through the goggle bit.'*

Rosie demonstrated an awareness of feet even if she had not photographed her own. She,

like Jack and Eve, was not able to explain her interest in them. It was evident that these

photographs of feet were important to them. The three children shared the same key

person, Verity, who was at a loss to explain any of this. However, she acknowledged that the

photographs and the conferences demonstrated that this was something that was

important to the children and something that she had not been aware of previously.

At Home-fell Nursery Bea had taken a significant number of photographs of feet. One photograph was of her and a friend's feet, another was those of a practitioner. It was clear to see that these were very deliberately taken. When asked about them she simply said,

'*I like shoes.*'

In the conference with her key person Sarah said,

'*I am surprised to see the interest in shoes. I wasn't aware of it and I'm not sure where it comes from*.'

However, in my conference with Anne, Bea's mother, she explained that she wasn't particularly surprised by Bea's photographs of feet.

'*I have an older daughter and she and her friends like posing and taking photographs of their feet,*'

Anne demonstrated showing how they would put their feet in together and photograph them. Exploring the importance of feet is significant; however, what is possibly more significant is the fact that as adults we can fail to recognise what is of importance to the children. Whilst there had been an effort on my part to use participatory methods to listen to children in certain areas, this had not been fully successful and needed to go further to relieve uncertainty (Bath 2013). The photographs of feet were not the only photographs that I initially ignored but, having recognised that much of what the children did with the camera was deliberate, I revisited the children's photographs and attempted to look with fresh eyes to try to understand what the children were sharing with me and why it was of importance to them.

Many of the children asked that other children and practitioners lined up or sat on benches in order that they could take group photographs. The camera appeared to enable the

children to exercise a degree of power that they were not used to having; they would not

usually demand that the other children and practitioners followed their wishes in quite such

an assertive manner. The notion of objects as signifiers of power is discussed in detail in

Chapter 4. Rosie was particularly keen to take photographs of staff and children lined up.

Eve joined in with the activity. Rosie took a lead in getting the children and staff lined up for

photographs. When asked about one of the photographs she stated that it was,

> *'Susan, Melissa and John because Tyler didn't want to go into it so I'll maybe take a*
>
> *picture of him next time. Tyler wanted to play. I'm going to take photos. I got people*
>
> *lined up.'*

As with other photographs the children appeared keen to include adults in their

photographs. Rosie's picture shows Susan, the setting manager, sitting with several children.

Eve had a similar photograph. On closer investigation, it was evident that many of the

children at Home-fell Nursery had included Mrs Geoffrey, their setting manager, in their

photographs.

It became evident that practitioners often made assumptions about the children's

intentions that were not necessarily appropriate. I shared some of the children's

photographs with practitioners, particularly the child's key person. Given that the key

person should know the child the most it was interesting to see what they had to say about

the photographs.

Michael photographed Chloe whilst she was playing on the car mat. In his conference, he

explained to me;

> *'That's Chloe* [I took it] *because she was playing with cars. I like the cars.'*

Lara, Michael's key person, was surprised that he had taken the photograph; in her conference with me she expressed her surprise saying that she didn't think that he was particularly interested in cars;

> '...*because he only plays with them briefly*.'

In her experience, the cars were not something that Michael was particularly interested in. Likewise, she was surprised that I had little or no evidence of him engaged in small world play,

> '... *things such as the dolls' house – he loves that.*'

The photographs and the subsequent conferences, particularly those with the key persons, demonstrated that as adults we often make assumptions about children. Lara was certain that Michael was not particularly interested in cars but equally she was certain that he is interested in small world play. His photographs tell a different story.

What is important is that giving the children the cameras and allowing them to use them in self-chosen ways allowed them a voice in their relationship with the adults that they did not usually have. The children could change the dynamics of the relationship; with voice, they also challenged the power relationships. The photographs gave an insight into the play including role-play that the children are interested in, with whom and where. This was not always evident through observations. The photographs demonstrated that adult assumptions about children are not always accurate and that adults working with children need to give them opportunities to demonstrate their ideas and thinking in ways that are appropriate for them.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the importance of all adults in the lives of young children and how those adults participate in a range of different roles. In these two pack-away settings the children look to the adults for a range of purposes; to organise the setting including routines, to organise the play including providing resources that are not currently available and to provide care and support for them. The children recognise the powerful roles that adults exercise, however, at times, they also use their own power and agency. The adults, including me, make assumptions about the children that data initiated from the children's photographs challenged. This is significant and could lead to further research.

In pack-away settings there are some particular pedagogical approaches that are necessary in order to make the setting effective such as planning from the children's interests and providing a secure base from which they can explore (Bowlby 1988, Rose and Rogers 2012). The practitioners need to be organised and to know their children well in order that they can plan and offer experiences that meet the needs of the children (Jones 2010). At the same time, the children appear to wish to have a routine that they can look forward to and understand. In four out of the seven parent conferences, the parents discussed the notion that for their child a strength of the setting was the routines. These routines provide the scaffolding from which the children can develop (Jennings et al 2012 and Fewster 2010).

The practitioners in the two settings were responsible for organising the role-play opportunities for the children. Whilst the choices made were based on observations and knowledge about the children, nevertheless it remained the adults who organised and set up the role-play area usually with little or no recourse to the children, who were not

engaged in the decision-making process. The adults were rarely seen participating in the role-play area however they did engage in some modelling behaviours outside of the area. Such activities link with Wave Play, (see Chapter 4) where not all activities occur within the role-play area. Whilst the practitioners did not actively engage in the role-play, they did however act as facilitators and provide materials that were requested such as props for role-play activities. There was also evidence of them communicating with home and using this information to support their planning. The Pirate Day at All Hallows Pre-school was an example and children were aware of the rich opportunities that would be on offer (Yelland 2011). On this occasion, there was planning in advance that was shared with the children and their families.

The children in the two settings view the adults as carers and attachment figures. It was evident through observations, the children's photographs and both the child and parent conferences that the children developed relationships with the adults that they chose to attach to, not necessarily the ones who were chosen for them as their key person. The one-room space within the pack-away settings allowed for this to happen. Through parent and child conferences it was apparent that the families and the children knew who the key person was, however the parents were also aware that their child had often formed a bond with other members of the team.

Children chose the adults with whom they formed relationships and spent their time; they also accepted unequal power relationships with those individuals even when it was not required. I gave the cameras to the children with instructions to photograph things that were important to them, this request meant that the power remained with me even though

I was attempting to consider the children's perspective and allowing them to take the lead (Mackey and Vaeliki 2011). The cameras themselves appeared to address the unequal power relationships. The children used the camera as a signifier of power (something which was discussed in Chapter 4) enabling them to take more control of both the adults and their peers, or at least to offer them agency in the process. The children made clear choices about what they wanted to photograph indicating what was of importance to them.

Adults sometimes make assumptions about the child's intentions that are not accurate. The photographs allowed an insight that would not have otherwise been possible. An example of this was the numbers of photographs of feet. These photographs were deliberately taken and were of importance to the children; something that only became apparent through reflection and discussion with the children. The cameras gave the children choice about what and who they photographed; they could acknowledge aspects of their play interests which were often different from those that the staff perceived to be of interest to them. Some of the key person conferences particularly highlighted several misconceptions that the practitioners held about the children in the setting.

Children therefore view the adults in their lives as important, not simply those that are allocated specific roles such as key person, but also adults that demonstrate an interest in them and their lives. This was particularly evident in the ways in which the children in the research responded to me as a researcher. Whilst the adults were not seen to regularly participate in role-play scenarios, they actively supported the children's choices within the two pack-away settings. From the data generated I suggest that there are some particularly key roles for adults in pack-away settings: they need to develop an appropriate pedagogy to

meet the needs of children in pack-away settings, they need to provide the secure base

from which children can explore, they need to ensure that they consider some of the

assumptions that they hold about the children.

Conclusion

The PVI sector is under-researched, so conducting research here provides an insight into children's experiences that otherwise may not be highlighted. Pack-away settings are a specific feature within the sector that is not currently recognised by the government or in policy terms. This research provides some opportunities to investigate these settings. In this chapter, I address the questions that framed the research. Therefore, the three questions will be taken in order.

1. How do children utilise resources: objects and space, in their role-play in pack-away settings?

Object play is important for children when developing themes within role-play. Children were regularly seen using objects to support their role-play. Props are an important feature of role-play activities, particularly if children are to develop their role-play activities in mature ways that allow for their learning and development. Various items were used to signify mobile phones and zappers, objects that appeared to be of significance in many role-play activities. Object play can be a site for exploring who exercises power within the game (Kantor 1998). The movement of objects from one area of the setting to another as they developed their play linked with notions of Wave Play.

Wave Play is a form of socio-dramatic role-play. I coined the term Wave Play to describe the form of fluid socio-dramatic role-play that was observed in the two settings. In this form of role-play, the play moves freely from one area or space within the setting to another. Therefore, Wave Play is constituted by the free movement of role-play activities from one locale to another, it includes the ability to move resources and to participate in ways that

may not usually be acceptable in an indoor environment. The props and costumes remain with the children as they move from one space to another in the setting.

In the two pack-away settings the children were seen to utilise space during episodes of Wave Play. The children moved their play from one area to another utilising both resources and space as they see appropriate. In this way, they are enabled to develop confidence in knowing who they are and what they want to do. This ability to choose and make decisions for themselves means that they are developing a sense of self. In the two pack-away settings it was possible to see the children utilising space and resources in self-chosen ways, not necessarily as the adults had perceived that they would.

Wave Play allows children to develop their exploring notions of their social selves. Further research is needed to discover whether such role-play is observed both in other pack-away settings and in conventional settings. It appears to support children's ability to develop a sense of self and therefore there are implications for practice. Practitioners need to support children in utilising space in self-chosen ways and moving resources to spaces where they believe that they need them. The space available to young children is laid out in the policy documents associated with early years practice. These are often confined spaces which could negatively impact on the children's ability to develop. Policy makers should consider the space that is made available to young children.

2. How do children demonstrate notions of their social-self including notions of *being*, *becoming* and *having been*, through role-play activities in pack-away settings?

Role-play allows children opportunities to understand complex structures of the world around them drawing on *being, becoming* and *having been* knowledge (Cross 2011,

Uprichard 2008, 2010). In role-play episodes children demonstrate integrated notions of the temporal states of *beings* and *becomings* whilst also drawing on *having been* knowledge, or their prior experiences. Whilst historically children were constructed as becomings, someone that was in a state of preparation for their future, ideas of children as beings, as competent social actors capable of making comments about their own lives, is how children are currently constructed particularly in terms of the sociology of childhood (James & James 2004, Jenks 2005, Mayall 2002). Researchers have argued for an integrated rather than an either-or approach (Uprichard 2008 and Cross 2011). Such behaviours enable children to develop personally, socially and emotionally all of which is essential for cognitive development (Vygotsky 1978). Some of the children in this research discussed roles that they were enacting simply for fun, *being*, some as roles that they wished to inhabit in the future, *becoming*. Where children discussed the notion of inhabiting the role in the future they often drew on knowledge that they believed that they held about the role, *having been* knowledge. Role-play allows for both creative mimesis and autopoiesis opportunities, for children to develop the skills that they need to understand the multifaceted structures of the social world as well as re-creating and exploring aspects of their lives for themselves (Papadopoulou 2012). The integration of the three temporal states of the children extends notions of themselves as social beings, interacting with others in pack-away settings. Role-play enables the children to demonstrate themselves as *beings*, *becomings*, and *having beens* in which they can develop personally, socially and emotionally, all of which is important for cognitive development (Vygotsky 1978). In all the scenarios children were developing social skills that enabled them to manage their emotions and their inter-relationships with others (Gupta 2009, Laevers 2004, Bergen 2002). In both settings

throughout the research the children displayed positive self-esteem which is closely

associated an awareness of self as a social being.

In terms of practice it becomes essential that practitioners develop a good understanding of

the three temporal stances in which children operate and the ways in which this impacts on

their constructions of self. The notion of self is an element of personal, social, and emotional

development and has been identified by Tickell (2011) as an essential element of early

childhood. There is therefore, an overlap between policy and practice in that PSED is

enshrined in practice and a good understanding of how it is supported in practice is

necessary in order that children can be supported to develop a sense of self.

3. How do children perceive the adults in their settings with specific reference to role-

   play?

Adults are required to develop an appropriate pedagogy to deliver engaging role-play

activities for children in pack-away settings. The adults were not seen to regularly

participate in role-play scenarios, there were only a handful of occasions where the

practitioners were seen to attempt to engage in the role-play. However, the practitioners

actively supported the children's choices within the two pack-away settings, providing props

or materials that support the children's role-play. The practitioners at Home-fell Nursery

and All Hallows Pre-school provided these opportunities for the children. The role-play areas

were set up by the practitioners before the children arrived each day. However, there were

occasions when the children ignored the adults' intentions and used the role-play in ways

that they wanted. The role-play area and role-play activities need to be carefully planned by

the practitioners in order that children are can develop their play in ways in which they

would want to. Therefore, children need access to open-ended materials and to be enabled to move props from one area of the setting to another (Broadhead and Burt 2012, Rogers and Evans 2008). Further research would provide evidence as to whether practitioners in other settings, both pack-away and conventional, engage in role-play activities with the children. Practitioners appear fearful of engaging in role-play, yet research evidence already demonstrates the value of them doing so. Therefore, practitioners need encouraging to engage in such play activities. Routines in early childhood appear to be important and part of the process of helping children to feel secure and enabling them to know what to expect each day (Jennings et al 2012 and Fewster 2010). In pack-away settings the children do not have a sense of what will be on offer and what the setting will look like from day-to-day. Routines therefore, gain a greater significance than the routines might in more conventional settings. The practitioners in these two settings considered this in their pedagogical approach.

The pack-away nature of the settings has implications for practice and for the children's experiences. There is no understanding of a particular pedagogical approach that frames pack-away settings however, practitioners working in such settings should be aware that there are some specific requirements. Pack-away settings have often been created in response to a need within a particular community. Therefore, the practitioners need to understand that community. In pack-away settings the children have access to all of the adults and often select who they wish to spend time with. This means that the practitioners need to understand all the children as individuals not necessarily simply those for whom they are responsible as a key person. The pack-away nature of the setting means that the practitioners must ensure that they are organised and able to be responsive to the needs of

the individual children finding resources and materials that may not be available for the children to self-select. There was evidence in both Home-fell Nursery and All Hallows Pre-school that the practitioners were engaged in these activities, they understood the communities, knew the interests of all the children and were able to support them in accessing materials and resources. All of which supported the children in gaining a clearer sense of self particularly through their role-play activities.

Adults in pack-away settings provide the secure base from which children can explore. The children in both settings were confident that their needs would be met and that the adults around them would provide care and support (Bowlby 1988). In the two pack-away settings a key person system was in place. However, the children appeared to make their own decisions about the adults with whom they developed relationships and spent time. In pack-away settings where there is a lack of continuity from one day to another, children cannot, with any certainty, have a sense of what the setting will look like when they enter or what will be available to them. In these settings, the provision of a secure base, by the adult, becomes that much more vital. In both Home-fell Nursery and All Hallows Pre-school this was provided by the staff.

Despite a playful pedagogical approach in which the needs of children were paramount, it became evident that some adults occasionally make assumptions about children. All 8 children across the two settings took photographs of feet, usually their own, sometimes their friends and occasionally those of the practitioners. On revisiting the data and discussing it with the children, the practitioners and some of their parents it became evident that this was something, that was of interest to the children, that was often ignored or

misunderstood by the adults. Bea's mother was the only adult who appeared to understand anything of the interest. The assumption that I had made alongside many of the other adults was that these were misfires of the camera not a genuine interest. This recognition that as adults we make assumptions about children is important to consider because it maybe that we are making other assumptions about their thoughts, interests and beliefs that we need which opens-up a new avenue for research.

Research in early childhood is conducted almost exclusively in the maintained sector; rather than the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector (Roberts-Holmes 2012 and Howard 2010). The maintained sector delivers a little over 20% of the provision in the UK with the majority, 78%, being delivered within the Private Voluntary and Independent sector (Roberts-Holmes 2012, DfE 2013). Differences between the two sectors are usually recognised by the levels of qualification with those in the maintained sector generally holding higher qualifications. Therefore, it would seem vital that further research is conducted within the PVI sector, comparisons could then be drawn between the two sectors as well as considerations of what each can learn from the other. More specifically it would be useful to conduct additional research in pack-away settings, whilst the findings appeared to be similar across the two settings this is not a large sample and therefore an increase in sample size would be useful. Such research would also enable us to better understand such settings, particularly about pedagogical practices and key person relationships.

Equally research in conventional settings would allow me to discover whether Wave Play does occur in these spaces. In England, where this research was conducted, there is a focus

on socio-constructivist approaches to early childhood education (DfE 2014). Wave Play is a form of role-play that is socio-constructivist in approach. Other important elements of it are firstly the children's ability to move their play from space to space, secondly to take the props and resources with them. Wave Play provides opportunities for children to develop their notion of self, to explore their own interests, and to work together, all of which supports their development. Therefore additional research would demonstrate whether it occurs in other settings and whether it could be supported to occur.

The Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss 2001) was an appropriate tool that enabled me to work with the children and practitioners and generate data that helped me to understand children's experience of role-play in pack-away settings. The generation of the data longitudinally provided a rich description of the children's experiences. It was possible to see that children's interests in specific role-play themes were consistent rather than simply ignited on that occasion. The use of critical reflection to develop a three-dimensional tool was effective (Brookfield 1995). The practitioners commented on the reflective process noting that it had allowed them to deepen their understanding of some of the children's interests. The Mosaics enabled me to make comparisons and to consider whether the children appeared to be having similar experiences within and across the two pack-away settings.

 There are some key conclusions that can be drawn from the thesis; that can be considered to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field. Wave Play is a form of socio-dramatic co-constructed role-play that enables children to develop; personally, socially and emotionally, to make choices and to work collaboratively utilising space and resources in

self-chosen ways. The integration of the three temporal states of *being*, *becoming* and

having been enables children to engage with notions of their social-selves through role-play

activities. The children in pack-away settings are, frequently, dependent on the adults as a

secure base from which they can explore. They assume that the adults will provide the

support that they need to develop their interests and particularly their role-play. Those

same adults may make assumptions about children's interests and ideas that are not

necessarily accurate. The children constantly demonstrated that they were engaged and

enjoying their play. Rosie demonstrated this when discussing areas of the setting that were

of interest to her and in this short quote it is possible to see engagement in role-play and

integrated notions of self.

> There's the activity park, it's a bit like a castle. I like castles. When I grow up I'm
> going to be a ballerina like my friend.

References

Adams, K. Hyde, B. and Woolley, R. (2008) The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Ainsworth, M. D. S., & Bell, S. M. (1970) Attachment, exploration, and separation: Illustrated by the behavior of one-year-olds in a strange situation. Child Development, 41, pp.49-67.

Ainsworth, M. and Bowlby, J. (1991) An ethological approach to personality development. American Psychologist, 46(4), pp.333-339.

Alderson, P. (2008) *Young children's rights: Exploring beliefs, principles and practice 2E* London: Jessica Kingsley.

Aldridge, M. (2003) Meeting the early learning goals through role-play, London: David Fulton.

Allsopp, L. (2011) Pack-Away Settings Leila.ALLSOPP@education.gsi.gov.uk email correspondence 06/05/2011.

Aubrey, C. and Ward, K. (2013) Practitioner's views on early personal, social and emotional development. Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 18(4), pp. 435 – 447.

Bath, C. (2013) Conceptualising Listening to Young Children as an Ethic of Care in Early Childhood Education and Care. Children & Society, 27, pp. 361-371.

Bennett, N. Wood, E. and Rogers, S. (1997) *Teaching through play*, Buckingham: OUP.

Bergen, D. (2002) The role of pretend play in children's cognitive development. Early Childhood Research and Practice, [Online] 4(1) http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v4n1/bergen.html [accessed] 30/10/10

Bilton, H. (2010) Outdoor Learning in the Early Years: Management and Innovation. Abingdon: Routledge.

Bitou, A. and Waller, T. (2011) Researching the rights of young children under three years old to participate in the curriculum in early years education and care. In Harcourt, D. Perry, B. and Waller, T. (Eds)(2011) Researching Young Children's Perspectives. London: Routeledge, pp.52-67.

Bodrova, E. and Leong, D. (2003) The Importance of Being Playful. Educational Leadership, April 2003, pp.50 – 53.

Bodrova, E. and Leong, D. (2003 a) Building Language & Literacy Through PLAY. Early Childhood Today, 18(2), pp 34.

Bodrova, E. and Leong, D. (2005) Uniquely Pre-school. Educational Leadership, 63(1), pp. 44-47.

Bolton, G. and Heathcote, D. (1999) *So you want to use role-play? A new approach in how to plan*, Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Bosacki, S. (2014) A Longitudinal Study of Children's Theory of Mind, Self-Concept, and Gender-Role Orientation. International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 6(2), pp. 213-228.

Bowlby, J. (1988) A Secure Base: Clinical Applications of Attachment Theory. London: Tavistock/Routledge.

Bowlby, J. (1958) The nature of the child's tie to his mother. International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 42, pp. 317-340.

Bowlby, J. (1952) Maternal Care and Mental Health. World Health Organisation, Geneva.

Brannen, J. (2004) Childhoods across the generations: Stories from women in four generation English families. Childhood, 2004(11), pp. 409-428.

Broadhead, P. and Burt, A. (2012) Understanding young children's Learning through Play: Building Playful Pedagogies. London: Routledge.

Broadhead, P. (1997) Promoting Sociability and Cooperation in Nursery settings. British Educational Research Journal, 23(4), pp. 513 – 531.

Broadhead, P. (2001) Investigating Sociability and Co-operation in Four and Five year olds in Reception Class Settings. International Journal of Early Years Education, 9(1), pp, 23-35.

Broadhead, P. (2006) Developing an understanding of young children's learning through play: the place of observation, interaction and reflection. British Educational Research Journal, 32(2), pp. 191-207.

Broadhead, P. Howard, P. Wood, E. (2010) Play and Learning in the Early Years, London: Sage.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977) 'Toward an Experimental Ecology of Human Development' *American Psychologist*. pp513 – 531.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) Contexts of Child Rearing: Problems and Prospects. American Psychologist, 34 (10), pp. 844 – 850.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986) 'Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives' in *Developmental Psychology*. Vol. 22(6), pp.723-742.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994) Ecological models of Human Development. In Gauvian, M. and Cole, M. (1997) Readings on the Development of Children. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Bromley, H. (2006) Making my own mark Play and writing, London: The British Association for Early Childhood Education.

Brooker, L. (2011) Taking children seriously: an alternative agenda for research. Journal of Early Childhood Research, 9(2), pp. 137-149.

Brooker, L. (2010) Constructing the Triangle of Care: Power and Professionalism in Practitioner/Parent Relationships. The British Journal of Educational Studies, 58(2), pp. 181-196.

Brooker, L. and Edwards, S. (2010) Engaging Play. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Brookfield, S. (1995) Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Bruner, J. (1957) *Going beyond the information given.* New York: Norton.

Bruner, J. (1960) *The Process of Education*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1964) 'The course of cognitive growth,' in *American Psychologist* 19(1) pp.1-15.

Bruner, J. (1966) *Towards a theory of Instruction*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1975) *Towards a theory of instruction*. London: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1976) Play Its role in development and evolution. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Bruner, J. (1986) Actual Minds, Possible Worlds. London: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1987) Making Sense: The Child's Construction of the World. London: Routledge.

Bruner, J. (1990) Acts of Meaning. London: Harvard University Press

Bruner, J. (1996) The Culture of Education. London: Harvard University Press.

Buckler, S and Walliman, N (2016) Your dissertation in education 2e. London: Sage.

Cagliari, P. (2016) *Loris Malaguzzi and the Schools of Reggio Emilia (Contesting Early Childhood)*. London: Routledge.

Canning, N. (2007) Children's empowerment in play. European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 15(2), pp. 227-236.

Carr, M. (2001). *Assessment in early childhood settings: Learning stories*. London: Paul Chapman.

Christensen, J. Mygind, L. and Bentsen, P. (2015) 'Conceptions of place: approaching space, children and physical activity', in Children's Geographies, 13(5), 589-603.

 Christensen, P. and Prout, A. (2002) Working with Ethical Symmetry in Social Research with Children. Childhood, 9(4), pp.477 -497.

Clarapede, E. (1913) *Experimental Pedagogy and the Psychology of the child*. London: Edward Arnold.

Clark, A. (2005) Listening to and involving young children: a review of research and practice. Early Child Development and Care, 175(6), pp.489 – 505.

Clark, A. (2007) A Hundred Ways of Listening Gathering Children's Perspectives of Their Early Childhood Environment. Young Children, 62(3), pp. 76-81.

Clark, A. and Moss, P. (2001) Listening to children: The Mosaic Approach. London: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Clough, P and Nutbrown, C (2007) A student's guide to methodology. London: Sage.

Cohen, L. Manion, L. Morrison, K. (2011) Research Methods in Education 7th ed. Abingdon: Routledge.

Cole, M. (1998) Mind Culture and Activity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Colliver, Y. and Fleer, M. (2016) '"I already know what I learned": young children's perspectives on learning through play', Early Child Development and Care, Vol 186(10), pp. 1559 – 1570.

Connolly, M. (2016) 'Selecting appropriate research methods for an Educational Context', in Palaiologou, I. Needham, M. and Male, T. (2016) Doing Research in Education Theory and Practice. London: Sage.

Conrad, R. (2011) My future doesn't know ME: Time and subjectivity in poetry by young people. Childhood, 19(204), pp. 204-217.

Cook, T. and Hess, E. (2007) What the Camera Sees and from Whose Perspective: Fun methodologies for engaging children in enlightening adults. Childhood,14(29) pp.29-45.

Corsaro, W. (1999) Preadolescent peer cultures. In Woodhead, M. Faulkner, D. and Littleton, K. (1999) Making Sense of Social Development, London: Routledge, pp.27 – 50.

Corsaro, W. (2011) The Sociology of Childhood 3rd ed. London: Sage.

Corsaro, W. (2005) The Sociology of Childhood 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks, California, Pine Forge Press.

Cox, S (2005) 'Intention and Meaning in Young Children's Drawing', in International Journal of Art & Design Education, 24(2), pp.115-125.

Cross, B. (2011) Becoming, Being and Having Been: Practitioner Perspectives on Temporal Stances and Participation across Children's Services. Children and Society, 25, pp. 26-36.

Crowe, B (1973) The Playgroup Movement. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Curtis, A. and O'Hagan, M. (2009) Care and Education in Early Childhood A Student's guide to theory and practice 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Csikzentmihalyi, M (2002) Flow: The Psychology of Happiness: The Classic Work on How to Achieve Happiness. London: Random House Group.

Dahlberg, G. and Moss, P. (2005) Ethics and Politics in Early Childhood Education. London: Routledge.

Dahlberg, G. Moss, P. and Pence, A. (2007) Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care. London: Routledge.

Daniels, H. (2001) Vygotsky and Pedagogy. London: Routledge.

DCSF (2008) Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. London: DCSF.

Department for Communities and Local Government (2015) *English Indices of Deprivation 2015* http://imd-by-postcode.opendatacommunities.org/ [accessed 23/11/2016]

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Eds) (2005) The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research Third Edition. London: Sage.

DfE (2013) Provision for children under five years of age in England [online] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209044/ Main_Text_SFR23-2013.pdf accessed 09/06/14

DfE (2012) Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Runcorn: DfE.

DfEE (1996) Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education. London: DfEE.

DfEE (2000) Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. London: DfEE.

DfES (2000) National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding. Nottingham: DfES.

DfES (2002) Birth to three matters. London: DfES.

DfES (2000) National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding. Nottingham: DfES.

DfES (2004) Every Child Matters Agenda. London: DfES.

Dockett, S. Einardottir, J. and Perry, B. (2011) Balancing methodologies and methods in researching with young children. In Harcourt, D. Perry, B. and Waller, T. (Eds)(2011) Researching Young Children's Perspectives, London: Routledge, pp. 68 - 81.

Dowling, M. (2005) Young Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development, London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Duffy, B. (2010) Art in the Early Years. In Moyles, J. (2010) The Excellence of Play 3rd Ed, Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 123 - 128.

Dyment, J. and O'Connell, T. (2013) 'The impact of playground design on play choices and behaviors of pre-school children', in *Children's Geographies*, 11(3), p.263-280.

Earnshaw, O. (2014) Learning to be a child: A conceptual analysis of youth empowerment. In Educational and Child Psychology, 31(1), pp. 13-21.

Ebrahim, H. (2011) Children as agents in early childhood education. Education as Change, 15(1), pp. 121-131.

Edwards, S. (2011) Lessons from a really useful engine: using Thomas the Tank Engine to examine the relationship between play as a leading activity, imagination and reality in children's contemporary play worlds. Cambridge Journal of Education, 41(2) pp. 195-210.

Einarsdottir, J. (2005) Playschool in pictures: children's photographs as a research method. Early Child Development and Care, 175(6), pp. 523-541.

Einarsdottir, J. Dockett, S. and Perry, B. (2009) 'Making meaning: children's perspectives expressed through drawings', in *Early Child Development and Care*, 179(2) pp.217-232.

 Elfer, P. Goldschmeid, E. and Selleck, D. (2012) Key Persons in the Early Years 2E. London: Routledge.

Fewster, C (2010) 'Designing Routines and Transitions with Children In Early Childhood Settings', in Educating Young Children: Learning & Teaching in the Early Childhood Years, Fall2010, 16(2), pp. 42-44.

Fox, M. Martin, P. and Green, G. (2007) Doing Practitioner Research. London: Sage.

Frahsek, S. Mack, W. Mack, C. Pfalz-Blezinger, C. and Knopf, M. (2010) Assessing different aspects of pretend play within a play setting: Towards a standardized assessment of pretend play in young children. British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 28, pp. 331-345.

Gillen, J. (2000) Versions of Vygotsky. British Journal of Educational Studies, 48(2), pp. 183-198.

Gobo, G. and Marciniak, L. (2016) 'What Is Ethnography?' in Silverman, D. (2016) *Qualitative Research 4e*, London: Sage.

Goldschmied, E. and Jackson, S. (2004) *People under three: young children in day care*. London: Routledge.

Göncü, A. (1998) Development of intersubjectivity in social pretend play. In Woodhead, M. Faulkner, D. and Littleton, K. (eds) (1998) Cultural Worlds of Early Childhood. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 117 - 132.

Goouch, K. (2008) Understanding playful pedagogies, play narratives and play spaces. Early Years, 28(1), pp.93 – 102.

Gray, D. (2014) *Doing Research in the real world*. London: Sage.

Green, C. (2015) '"Because we like to": Young Children's Experiences Hiding in their home environment' in *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 43, p. 327 – 336.

Greene, S. and Hill, M. (2005) Researching Children's Experience: Methods and Methodological Issues. In Greene, S. and Hogan, D. (2005) Researching Children's experience: Approaches and Methods. London: Sage, pp. 1 - 21.

Grieshaber, S. (2001) Equity issues in research design. In Mac Naughton, G. Rolfe, S. and Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2001) Doing Early Childhood Research International Perspectives on Theory and Practice. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill, pp. 136 - 148.

Grieshaber, S. And McArdle, F. (2010) The Trouble with Play. Maidenhead: The Open University Press.

Guba, E. and Lincoln, Y. (2005) Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences. In Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Eds) (2005) The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research Third Edition. London: Sage, pp. 191 – 216.

Gupta, A. (2009) Vygotskian perspectives on using dramatic play to enhance children's development and balance creativity with structure in the early childhood classroom. Early Child Development and Care, 179(8), pp. 1041 - 1054.

Hanline, M. Sande, M. and Phelps, P. (2008) 'A Longitudinal Study Exploring the Relationship of Representational Levels of Three Aspects of Preschool Sociodramatic Play and Early Academic Skills', *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, Vol. 23(1), pp. 19-28.

Harcourt, D. and Conroy, H. (2005) Informed assent: ethics and processes when researching with young children. Early Child Development and Care, 175(6), pp. 567 – 577.

Harcourt, D. and Conroy, H. (2011) 'Informed consent: processes and procedures seeking research partnership with children', in Harcourt, D. Perry, B. and Waller, T. (2011) Researching Young Children's Perspectives: Debating the ethics and dilemmas of educational research with children. London: Routledge.

Harcourt, D. Perry, B. and Waller, T. (2011) Researching Young Children's Perspectives: Debating the ethics and dilemmas of educational research with children. London: Routledge.

Harris, P L (2000) Understanding Children's Worlds the Work of the Imagination. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harwood, D. (2010) Finding a voice for child participants within a doctoral research: Experiences from the field. Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 35(4), pp. 4 – 13.

Hedges, H. Cullen, J. and Jordan, B. (2011) Early years curriculum: funds of knowledge as a conceptual framework for children's interests. Journal of Curriculum Studies 43(2), pp.185-205.

Hendy, L. and Toon, L. (2001) *Supporting drama and imaginative play in the early years*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hickson, H. (2016) 'Becoming a critical narrativist: Using critical reflection and narrative inquiry as a research methodology, Qualitative Social Work, Vol. 15(3), pp. 380 – 391.

Hill, M., J. Davis, A. Prout and K. Tisdall (2004) 'Moving the Participation Agenda Forward', *Children and Society* 18: 77–96.

Hirsh-Pasek, K. Golinkoff, R. Berk, L. and Singer, D. (2009) A Mandate for Playful Learning in the Preschool Presenting the Evidence. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hofkins, D. (1995)' Playgroups Shake off old image' in Times Educational Supplement, Issue 4101 (1995) ISSN: 0040-7887.

Hohmann (formerly Gelder), U. (2007) 'Rights, expertise and negotiations in care and education', *Early Years*, 27(1) pp. 33-46.

Hoicka, E. and Akhtar, N. (2012) Early Humour production. British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 30(4), pp. 586-603.

Holland, P. (2003) We don't play with guns here. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Holstein, J. and Gubrium, J. (2016) 'Narrative Practice and the Active Interview' in Silverman, D. (2016) *Qualitative Research 4e*, London: Sage.

Hoogsteder, M. Maier, R. and Elbers, E. (1998) Adult-child interaction, joint problem solving and the structure of cooperation. In Woodhead, M. Faulkner, D. and Littleton, K. (1998) Cultural Worlds of Early Childhood. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 178 – 195.

Howard, J. (2010) Early years practitioners' perceptions of play: An exploration of

theoretical understanding, planning and involvement, confidence and barriers to practice.

Education & Child Psychology, 27(4), pp. 91-102.

Hutt, J. Tyler, S. Hutt, C. and Christopherson, H. (1989) *Play, Exploration and Learning A natural history of the pre-school*. London: Routledge.

James, A. and James, A. L. (2004) Constructing Childhood. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan.

James, A. Jenks, C. and Prout, A. (1998) Theorizing Childhood. Cambridge: Polity Press.

James, A and Prout, A (1997) Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood Contemporary

issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood. London: Falmer Press.

Jansson, M. (2015) 'Children's perspectives on playground use as basis for children's

participation in local play space management' in *Local Environment*, 20(2), p. 165 – 179.

Jarvis, P (2007) Monsters, magic and Mr Psycho: a bio-cultural approach to rough and

tumble play in the early years of primary school. Early Years: Journal of International

Research and Development, 27(2), pp. 171-188.

Jenks, C. (2005) Childhood 2nd ed. Abingdon: Routledge.

Jennings, D Hanline, M and Woods, J (2012) 'Using Routines-Based Interventions in Early

Childhood Special Education' in Dimensions of Early Childhood, Spring2012, 40(2),

pp. 13-22.

Jones, M (2010) Pack away the daytime. Early Years Educator, 12(3), pp.28-30.

Kalliala, M. (2014) Toddlers as both more and less competent social actors in Finnish day

care centres. Early Years an International Research Journal, 34(1), pp. 4-17.

Kantor, R. Elgas, P. and Fernie, D. (1998) Cultural knowledge and social competence within a preschool peer-culture group. In Woodhead, M. Faulkner, D, and Littleton, K.(eds) (1998) Cultural Worlds of Early Childhood. Abingdon: Routledge, pp.133 – 154.

Kay, E. and Tisdall, M. (2012) The Challenge and the Challenging of Childhood Studies? Learning from Disability Studies and Research with Disabled Children. Children and Society, 26, pp. 181-191.

Kellett, M. Forrest, R. (aged ten), Dent, N. (aged ten) and Ward, S. (aged ten)' 'Just Teach Us The Skills Please, We'll Do The Rest': Empowering Ten-Year-Olds as Active Researchers' in Children & Society Vol 18 (2004) pp. 329–343.

Kellett, M. (2010) Rethinking Children and Research: Attitudes in Contemporary Society. London: Continuum.

Kenny, A. (1968) Descartes. London: Random House.

Kingdon, Z. and Gourd, J. (2014) Early Years Policy: The impact on practice. London: Routledge.

Kingdon, Z. (2014) Policy and the change in the early years learning environment. In Kingdon, Z. and Gourd, J. (2014) Early Years Policy: The impact on Practice. London: Routledge, pp. 152 – 172.

Knight, S. (2013) Forest School and Outdoor Learning in the Early Years 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Laevers, F. (2011) Experiential Education: Making Care and Education More Effective Through Well-Being and Involvement. Leuven: CEECD.

Laevers, F. (2004) Starting Strong Curricula and Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education and Care. OECD.

Langston (2011) A guide to the revised EYFS: Part 1 an overview. Nursery World, 111(4277), pp. 15 – 18.

Leeson, C. (2007) Going round in Circles Key issues in the development of an effective ethical protocol for research involving young children. In Campbell, A. and Groundwater-Smith, S. (2007) An Ethical Approach to Practitioner Research. London: Routledge, pp. 129 – 143.

Leong, D. and Bodrova, E. (2012) Assessing and Scaffolding Make-Believe Play. Young Children, 67(1), pp. 28-34.

Lindqvist, G. (2010) When Small Children Play: How adults dramatise and children create meaning. Early Years, 21(1), pp. 7 – 14.

Lobman, C. (2003) What Should We Create Today? Improvisational teaching in play-based classrooms. Early Years, 23(2), pp. 131 - 142.

Loizou, E. (2011) Disposable Cameras, Humour and Children's Abilities. Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 12 (2), pp148- 162.

Lofdahl, A. and Hagglund, S. (2006) 'Power and Participation: Social representations among children in pre-school', in Social Psychology of Education, 9(2), pp.179-194.

Lofdahl, A. and Hagglund, S. (2007) Spaces of Participation in Pre-school: Arenas for Establishing Power Orders? Children and Society, 21, pp. 328- 338.

Lundy, L. (2007) ''Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' in British Educational Research Journal Vol. 33(6), pp. 927–942.

Lundy, L. McEvoy, L. and Byrne, B. (2011) 'Working with Young Children as Co-Researchers: An Approach Informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', *Early Education and Development,* Vol. 22(5), pp. 714-736.

Mackey, G. and Vaeliki, S. (2011) 'Thinking of children: Democratic approaches with young children in research', in Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 36(2), pp. 82-86.

MacNaughton, G. (2005) Doing Foucault in Early Childhood Studies. London: Routledge.

MacNaughton, G. and Hughes, P. (2008) Doing Action Research in Early Childhood Studies. Maidenhead: McGrawHill.

MacNaughton, G. Rolfe, S. and Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2001) Doing Early Childhood Research: International Perspectives on Theory and Practice. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Mayall, B. (2002) Towards a Sociology for Childhood thinking from children's lives. Maidenhead: OUP.

Maynard, T. (2007) Forest Schools in Great Britain: an initial exploration. Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 8(4), pp. 320 – 331.

Maynard, T. (2007a) 'Encounters with Forest School and Foucault: a risky business', in Education 3 – 13, 35(4), pp. 379 – 391.

Maynard, T. and Powell, S. (2014) An introduction to Early Childhood Studies. London: Sage.

Maynard, T. and Waters, J. (2007) 'Learning in the outdoor environment: a missed opportunity?' Early Years, 27(3), pp. 255-265.

McGhee, P. (2015) The playful brain: Development of young children's humour. Education

Young Children – Learning and teaching in the early childhood years, 21 (2), pp. 20 – 22.

Meltzoff, A. (1999) 'Origins of Theory of Mind, Cognition and Communication' *Journal of Communication Disorders*, Vol. 32(4), pp. 251–269.

Miles, M. Huberman, A and Saldana, J. (2014) Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods

Sourcebook. London: Sage.

Morton, K. (2011) 'Happy birthday PLA', in Nursery World (Haymarket Business Publications

Ltd). 2/24/2011, Vol. 111 Issue 4257, p10-11.

Moser, T. and Martinsen, M. (2010) The outdoor environment in Norwegian kindergartens

as pedagogical space for toddlers' play, learning and development. European Early

Childhood Education Research Journal, 18(4), pp. 457–471.

Moyles, J. (1989) *Just Playing.* Buckingham: OUP.

Moyles, J. (2010) Thinking about play: developing a reflective approach. Maidenhead:

MacGraw Hill.

Mukherji, P. and Albon, D. (2010) Research Methods in Early Childhood. London: Sage.

Murray, J. (2012) Young children's explorations: young children's research? Early Child

Development and Care, 182(9) pp. 1209 – 1225.

Mussen, P. (1970) Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology 2E. London: John Wiley.

Noddings, N. (2012) 'The language of care ethics' in Knowledge Quest Caring is Essential,

40(4), pp. 52-56.

Nutbrown, C. (2012) Foundations for Quality. Runcorn: DfE.

Nutbrown, C. (2013) Shaking the foundations of quality. Why childcare policy must not lead to poor-quality early education and care. Sheffield: Sheffield University.

Ofsted (2013) Conducting Early Years Inspections. London: Ofsted.

Oldland, E. (2011) Transition from clinical manager to university lecturer: a self-reflective case study', in Higher Education Research & Development, 30(6), p779-790.

Palaiologou, I. Needham, M. and Male, T. (2016) Doing Research in Education Theory and Practice. London: Sage.

Paley, V. (1981). Wally's stories. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Panagiotaki, G. Nobes, G. Potton, A. (2009) 'Mental models and other misconceptions in children's understanding of the earth' *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology,* Vol. 104, pp.52–67.

Papadopoulou, M. (2012) The ecology of role play: intentionality and cultural evolution. British Educational Research Journal, 38(4), pp. 575-592.

Papatheodorou, T. Luff, P. and Gill, J. (2011) Child Observation for Learning and Research. London: Pearson.

Parker-Rees, R. Leeson, C. Willan, J. And Savage, J. (2010) Early Childhood Studies An introduction to the study of Children's Worlds and Children's Lives. Exeter: Learning Matters.

Parten, M. (1932) 'Social play among preschool children' *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Vol 28(2), pp. 136-147.

Pascal, C. and Bertram, T. (2000) Further Memorandum from the Effective Early Learning Project (EY 81) [online] Available from:

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmeduemp/386/0061406.htm [accessed] 16/06/14.

Pascal C. and Bertram A.D. (2002) Assessing Young Children's Learning: What Counts? In Fisher J. (2002) (Ed) The Foundations for Learning. Paul Chapman, London, pp. 87 – 101.

Pass, S. (2007) When Constructivists Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky were Pedagogical Collaborators: A viewpoint from a study of their communications. Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 20, pp. 277-282.

Pellegrini, A. (2009a). *The role of play in human development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Pellegrini, A. (1987) 'Rough-and-tumble play: Developmental and educational significance' *Educational Psychologist*, Vo. 22, pp. 23-43.

Pellegrini, A. (2009b) 'Research and Policy on Children's Play', *Child Development Perspectives*, Vol.3(2), pp.131-136.

Pellegrini, A. (2010) 'Games and play mean different things in an educational context' *Nature*, Vol.467(7311), pp.27.

Pellegrini, A. and Smith, P. (1998) 'The Development of Play During Childhood: Forms and Possible Functions', Child Psychology & Psychiatry Review Vol. 3(2), pp. 51 – 57.

Piaget, J. (1951) Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood. London: Routledge.

Piaget, J. (1955) *The Construction of Reality in the child*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Piaget, J. (1959) The Language and Thought of the Child. London: Routledge Kegan Paul.

Piaget, J. (1970) 'Piaget's Theory,' in Mussen, P. (1970) *Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology 2E*. London: John Wiley.

Piaget, J. (1977) Origin of Intelligence of the Child. London: Penguin.

Piaget, J. (1978) Development of Thought: equilibration of cognitive structures. Oxford: Blackwell.

Pillar, A. (1998) 'What do Children Think about the Drawing Process?' *Journal of Art & Design Education,* 1998, Vol.17(1), pp.81-8.

Pound, L. (2013) *Quick guides for Early Years: Cognitive Development*, Abbingdon: Hodder Education.

Powell, M and Smith, A. (2009) 'Children's Participation Rights in Research', in *Childhood*, 16(1), pp. 124-142.

Pramling Samuelsson, I. and Johansson, E. (2009) 'Why do children involve teachers in their play and learning?' *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 17(1), pp. 77-94.

Pre-school Learning Alliance (2016) https://www.pre-school.org.uk/about-us

Prout, A. and James, A. (1997) A New Paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood? Provenance, Promise, Problems. in James, A. and Prout, A. (1997) Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood Contemporary issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood. London: Falmer Press, pp. 7 – 33.

Pugh, G. And Duffy, B. (2014) Contemporary Issues in the Early Years 6th ed. London: Sage.

Punch, S. (2002) 'Research with children the same or different to research with adults?' in *Childhood* 9(3), pp. 321- 341.

Pyle, A. and Alaca, B. (2016) 'Kindergarten children's perspectives on play and learning', Early Child Development and Care, (10/27/2016), pp. 1 – 13.

Quan-McGimpsey, S. Kuczynski, L. and Brophy, K. (2013) Tensions Between the Personal and the Professional in Close Teacher-Child Relationships. Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 27, pp. 111-126.

Qvortrup, J. (2004) 'Editorial: The Waiting Child'. *Childhood*. Vol. 11. pp. 267-273.

Rankin, B. (2004) The importance of intentional socialisation among children in small groups: A conversation with Loris Malaguzzi. Early Childhood Education Journal, 32(2), pp. 81 – 85.

Rapley, T. (2016) 'Some Pragmatics of Qualitative Data Analysis', in Silverman, D. (2016) *Qualitative Research 4e*, London: Sage.

Rasmussen, K. (2004) 'Places for children – children's places' in *Childhood*, 11(2), p. 155 – 173.

Rivas, C. (2012) 'Coding and Analysing Qualitative data', in Seale, C. (2012) *Researching Society and Culture*, London: Sage.

Roberts-Holmes, G. (2011) *Doing your Early Years Research Project 2e*. London: Sage.

Robert-Holmes, G (2012) "It's the bread and butter of our practice": experiencing the Early Years Foundation Stage. International Journal of Early Years Education, 20(1), pp. 30-42.

Roberts-Holmes, G. (2013) The English Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) and the 'split' Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) system. European Early Childhood Research Journal, 21(3), pp. 339-352.

Robson, S. (2012) Developing thinking and understanding in young children. London:

Routledge.

Rogers, S. and Evans, J. (2008) Inside Role-Play in Early Childhood Education. London:

Routledge.

Rogers, S. (2011) Rethinking Play and Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education. London:

Routledge.

Rose, J. and Rogers, S. (2012) The Role of the Adult in Early Years Settings. Maidenhead:

McGraw-Hill.

Roskos, K. and Neuman, S. (2011) The Classroom environment, first, last and always. The

Reading Teacher, 65(2), pp. 110-114.

Russell, W. (2012) '"I get such a feeling out of … those moment": playwork, passion, politics

and space', in *International Journal of Play*, 1(1) p. 51 – 63.

Sammons, P. Siraj-Blatchford, I. Sylva, K. Melhuish, E. Taggart, B. and Elliot, K. (2005)

'Investigating the Effects of Pre-school Provision: Using Mixed Methods in the EPPE

Research', in International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 8(3), pp. 207-224.

Sarantakos, S. (2005) Social Research 3rd Ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sawyers, J. and Carrick, N. (2008) Symbolic play through the eyes and words of children. In

Wood, E. (2008) The Routledge Reader in Early Childhood Education. London: Routledge, pp.

136 – 160.

Schaffer, H. (1996) Social Development. Oxford: Blackwell. Schaffer, H. (2004) Introducing

Child Psychology, Oxford: Blackwell.

Schieffelin, B. and Ochs, E. (1998) A cultural perspective on the transition from prelinguistic to linguistic communication. In Woodhead, M. Faulkner, D. and Littleton, K.(eds) (1998) Cultural Worlds of Early Childhood. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 48 - 63.

Schiller, W. and Einarsdottir, J. (2009) Editorial Special Issue: Listening to young children's voices in research- changing perspectives/changing relationships. Early Child Development and Care, 179(2), pp. 125 – 130.

Scruton, R. (1984) A short history of modern Philosophy. London: Routledge.

Seale, C. (2012) *Researching Society and Culture*, London: Sage.

Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2010) A focus of Pedagogy Case Studies of Effective Practice. Sylva, K. Melhuish, E. Sammons, P. Siraj-Blatchford,I. and Taggart, B. (2010) Early Childhood Matters Evidence from the Effective Pre-school and Primary Education project. London: Routledge, pp. 149 – 165.

Silverman, D. (2016) *Qualitative Research 4e*, London: Sage.

Siraj-Blatchford (2009) Conceptualising progression in the pedagogy of play and sustained shared thinking in early childhood education: A Vygotskian Perspective. Education and Child Psychology, 26(2), pp. 77-89.

Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2014) 'Early Childhood Education', in Maynard, T. and Powell, S. (2014) An introduction to Early Childhood Studies. London: Sage.

Siraj-Blatchford, I. and Siraj-Blatchford, J. (2001) An ethnographic approach to researching young children's learning. In Mac Naughton, G, Rolfe, S. And Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2001) Doing

Early Childhood Research: International Perspectives on Theory and Practice. Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 271 – 290.

Siraj-Blatchford, I. Sylva, K. Muttock, S. Gilden, R. and Bell, D. (2002) Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years. Research Report No 356, Norwich: DfES

Siraj-Blatchford, I. Taggart, B. Sylva, K. Sammons, P and Melhuish, E. (2010) Towards the transformation of practice in early childhood education: the effective provision of pre-school education (EPPE) project. Cambridge Journal of Education, 38(1), pp. 23 -36.

Smith, A. (2011) Respecting children's rights and agency Theoretical insights into ethical research procedures. In Harcourt, D. Perry, B. and Waller, T. (Eds)(2011) Researching Young Children's Perspectives. London: Routledge, pp. 11 – 25.

Smith, L. Dockerell, J. and Tomlinson, P. (1997) Piaget, Vygotsky and beyond. London: Routledge.

Smith, P. (2010) Children and Play. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Smith, P. Cowie, H. and Blades, M. (2003) Understanding Children's Development. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Soler, J. and Miller, L. (2003) The Struggle for Early Childhood Curricula: A comparison of the English Foundation Stage Curriculum, Te Whariki and Reggio Emilia. International Journal of Early Years Education, 11(1), pp. 57-68.

Stoecklin, D. (2012) Theories of action in the field of child participation: In search of explicit frameworks. Childhood, 20(4), pp. 443- 457.

Storli, R. and Hagen, T. (2010) Affordances in outdoor environments and children's physically active play in pre-schools. European Early Childhood Research Journal, 18(4), pp. 445-456.

Sutton-Smith, B. (1997) The Ambiguity of Play. London: Harvard University Press.

Sutton-Smith, B. and Kelly-Byrne, D. (1984) The idealization of play' in Smith, P. (1984) Play in Animals and Humans. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 305 – 321.

Sylva, K. Melhuish, E. Sammons, P. Siraj-Blatchford, I. and Taggart, B. (2004) The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) Project: Final Report. Nottingham: DfES.

Sylva, K. Melhuish, E. Sammons, P. Siraj-Blatchford,I. and Taggart, B. (2010) Early Childhood Matters Evidence from the Effective Pre-school and Primary Education project. London: Routledge.

 Te One, S. (2011) 'Supporting children's participation rights: curriculum and research approaches', in Harcourt, D. Perry, B. and Waller, T. (Eds)(2011) Researching Young Children's Perspectives. London: Routledge.

Theobald, M. Danby, S. Einarsdóttir, J. Bourne, J. Jones, D. Ross, S. Knaggs, H. and Carter-Jones, C. (2015) 'Children's Perspectives of Play and Learning for Educational Practice', Education Sciences, Vol. 5, pp. 345 – 362).

Thomson, J. and Philo, C. (2004) 'Playful spaces? a social geography of children's play in Livingston, Scotland', in Children's Geographies, 2(1), p. 111-130.

Thomson, R. (2011) EYFS review prioritises how children learn. Nursery World, 5th April 2011, [online] Available from: < http://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/nursery-world/news/1096034/eyfs-review-prioritises-children-learn> [accessed] 04/06/12.

Tickell, C. (2011) The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning. [online] Available from: http://media.education.gov.uk/MediaFiles/B/1/5/%7BB15EFF0D-A4DF-4294-93A1-1E1B88C13F68%7DTickell%20review.pdf [accessed] 26/01/13.

Tovey, H. (2007) Playing Outdoors: Spaces and Places, Risks and Challenge. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Trevarthen, C. (1998) The Child's need to learn a culture. In Woodhead, M. Faulkner, D. and Littleton, K. (1998) Cultural Worlds of Early Childhood. London: Routledge, pp. 87 – 100.

Tronto, J. (1998) 'An ethic of care', *Generations* Vol. 22(3) pp. 15-20. Umek, L. M. and Musek, P. L. (2001) Symbolic Play: Opportunities for cognitive and language development in preschool settings. Early Years, 21(1), pp.55 - 64.

United Nations (2005). *General Comment No. 7: Implementing child rights in early childhood* (No. UN/CRC/GC/7). Geneva,Switzerland : United Nations, Committee on the Rights of the Child .

UNITED NATIONS (2009) GENERAL COMMENT No. 12 (2009) The right of the child to be heard (CRC/C/GC/12)COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Uprichard, E. (2008) Children as 'Being and Becomings': Children, Childhood and Temporality. Children and Society, 22(4), pp. 303-313.

Uprichard, E. (2010) Questioning Research with Children: Discrepancy between Theory and Practice? Children and Society, 24(1), pp. 3-13.

Urban, M, Vandenbroeck, M. Van Laere, K. Lazzari, A. and Peeters, J. (2012) 'Towards Competent Systems in Early Childhood Education and Care. Implications for Policy and Practice', *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 47(4), pp. 508 – 526.

Uren, N. and Stagnitti, K. (2009) Pretend play, social competence and involvement in children aged 5 -7 years: The concurrent validity of the Child-Initiated Play Assessment. Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, Vol. 56(1), pp.33 – 40.

Vig, S. (2007) Young Children's Object Play: A window on Development. Journal of Development and Physical Disabilities, 19, pp. 201-215.

Vosniadou, S. (1992) 'Mental Models of the Earth: A Study of Conceptual Change in Childhood' *Cognitive Psychology*. Vol. 24, pp.535-585.

Vygotsky, L. (2004) Imagination and Creativity in Early Childhood. Journal of Russian and East European Psychology, 42(1), pp. 7-97.

Vygotsky, L. (1986) Thought and Language. London: The MIT Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1978) Mind in Society. London: Harvard University Press.

West, A. (2007) 'Power relationships and Adults' resistance to Children's participation', in Youth & Environments, 17(1), pp. 123-135.

White, E. Peter, M and Redder, B. (2015) 'Infant and teacher dialogue in education and care: A pedagogical imperative', Early Childhood Research Quarterly 30 pp. 160–173.

Whitehead, M. (2009), *Supporting Language and Literacy Development in the Early Years*, Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Whittington, V and Floyd, I. (2009) 'Creating intersubjectivity during socio-dramatic play at an Australian kindergarten', in Early Child Development and Care, 17992), pp. 143-156.

Williams, B. (1956) 'Personal Identity and Individuation' in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series, Vol. 57 (1956 - 1957), pp. 229-252.

Williams, B. (1973) Problems of the Self. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wood, E. and Attfield, S. (2005) Play, Learning and the Early Childhood Curriculum 2nd Ed. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Wood, E. (2007) Reconceptualising Child-Centred Education: contemporary directions in policy, theory and practice in early childhood. Forum, 49(1 & 2), pp. 119-134.

Wood, E. (2010) 'Developing integrated pedagogical approaches to play and learning' in Broadhead, P. Howard, J. and Wood, E. (2010) Play and Learning in the Early Years. London: Sage.

 Woodhead, M. Faulkner, D. and Littleton, K. (1998) Cultural Worlds of Early Childhood. London: Routledge.

Wright, G (2010) 'A problem shared', in Nursery World, 15th April 2010, p 14-15, London: Haymarket Business Publications.

Yelland, N. (2005) Critical Issues in Early Childhood Education, Maidenhead: OUP.

Yelland, N. (2011) 'Reconceptualising Play and Learning in the Lives of Young Children', in Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 3(2), pp. 4-12.

Appendix 1

The following series of figures demonstrates how the Mosaic approach has been adapted for this thesis. Usually the Mosaic is developed in one piece as shown as below:

Gaby	Observation	Conferncing	Cameras	Tours	Maps	Parents	Practitioner
Friends and role play with friends	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Adults being there						◆	
Making things		◆	◆	◆			
Singing		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	
Tasty food		◆				◆	
Wish to join in with four year olds				◆	◆	◆	

(Clark and Moss, 2001, p.45)

The Mosaic for this thesis has been created in layers. The first being made from the data I generated with the children, the second from allowing the key person for each child to reflect on the first layer of the Mosaic that I had created and the third by allowing the parent to reflect on the first two layers.

Figure 1 demonstrates the first level of the Mosaic for Penny: here the traditional Mosaic has been portrayed.

Figure 2 demonstrates the second level of the Mosaic for Penny; here the key person conference has been overlaid once they have had a chance to reflect on the first layer of the Mosaic.

Figure 3 demonstrates how the second level transposes onto the first layer of the Mosaic.

Figure 4 demonstrates the third level of the Mosaic for Penny, that of the parent conference level.

 Figure 5 demonstrates how this third level is transposed onto the other two layers. Of note is that the original Mosaic is still evident with the subsequent levels being transparent and the information showing through.

Figure 6 is a further example of how the respective layers could be stacked in order to demonstrate the three-dimensional nature of the Mosaics.

For the remaining Mosaics, only the final figure, whereby the three layers are transposed, will be presented.

Figure 1
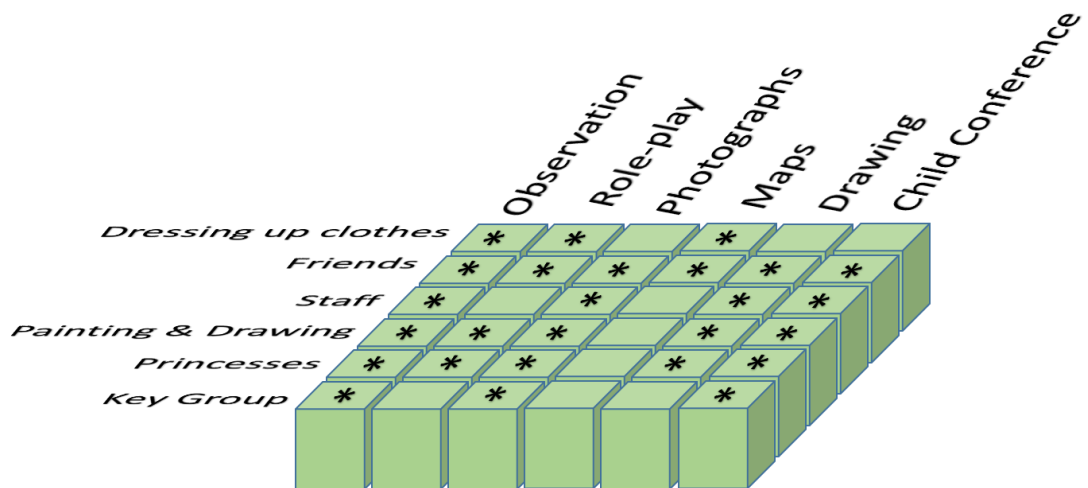
Figure 2
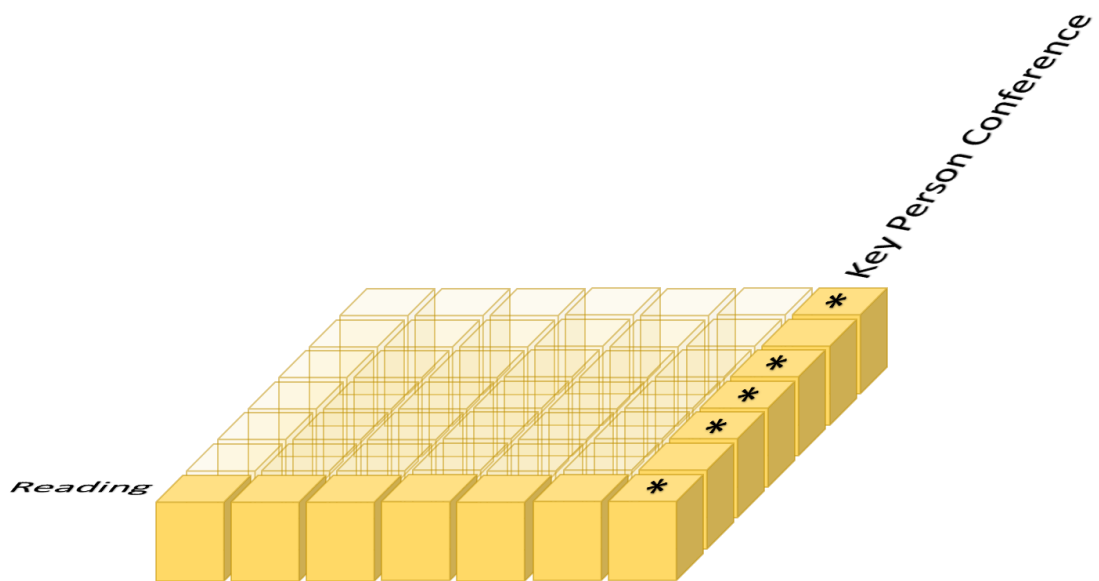
Figure 3
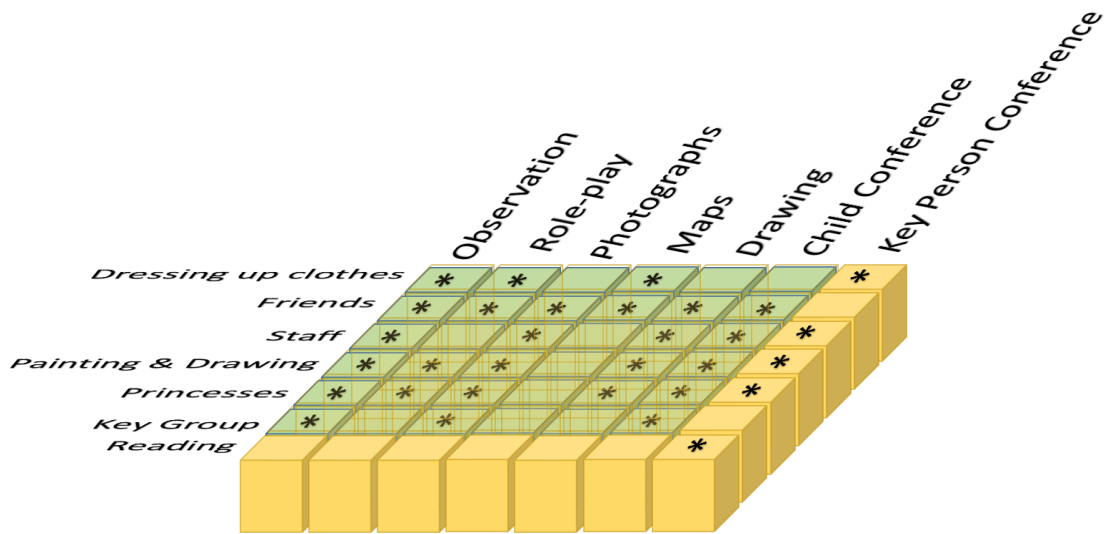
Figure 4
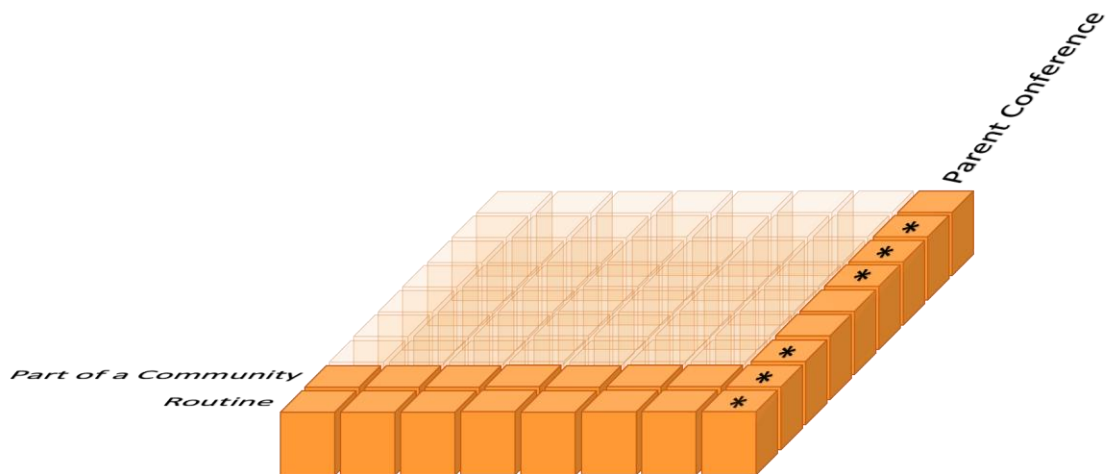
Figure 5
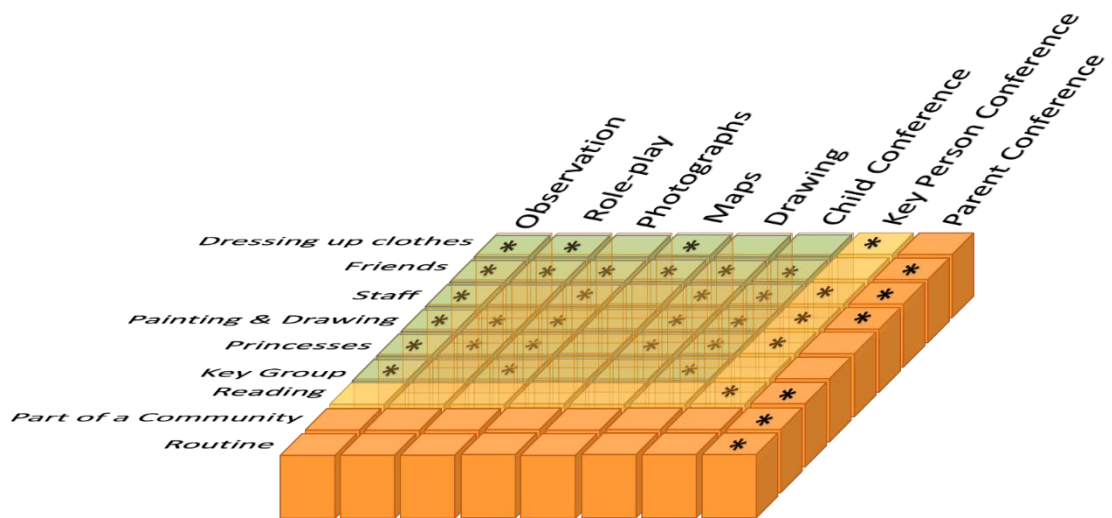
Figure 6
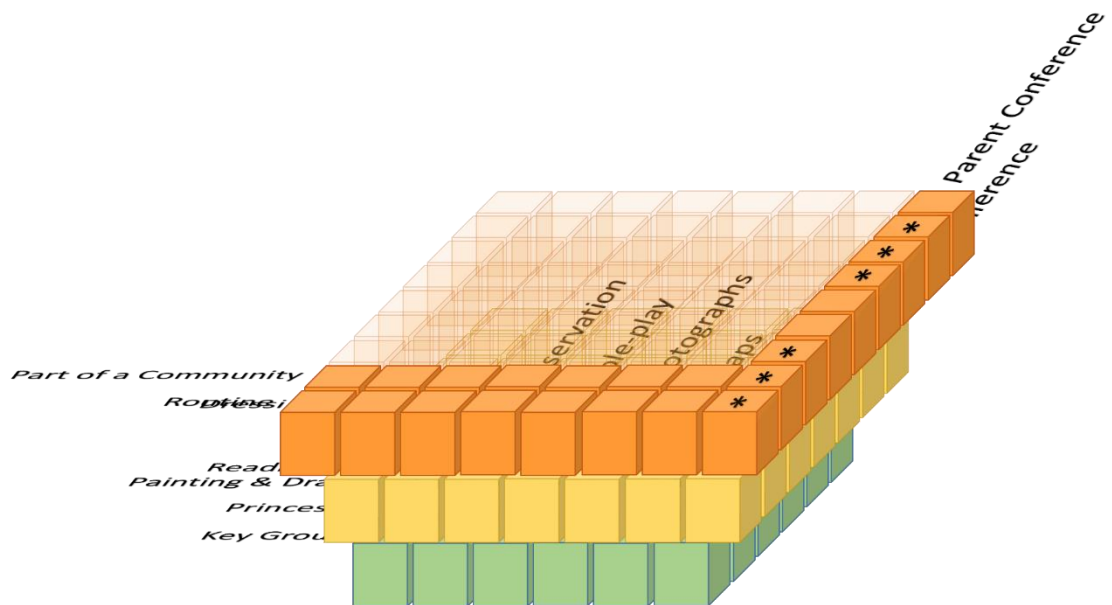
Appendix 2 - Hannah's Mosaic

Hannah's Mosaic
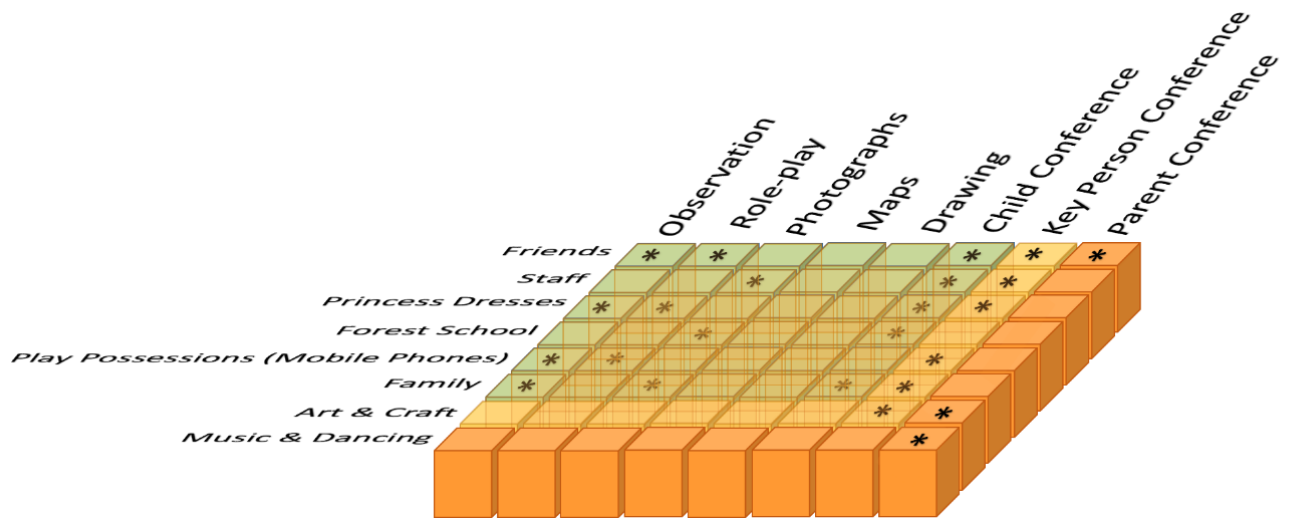
Appendix 3 - Bea's Mosaic

Bea's Mosaic
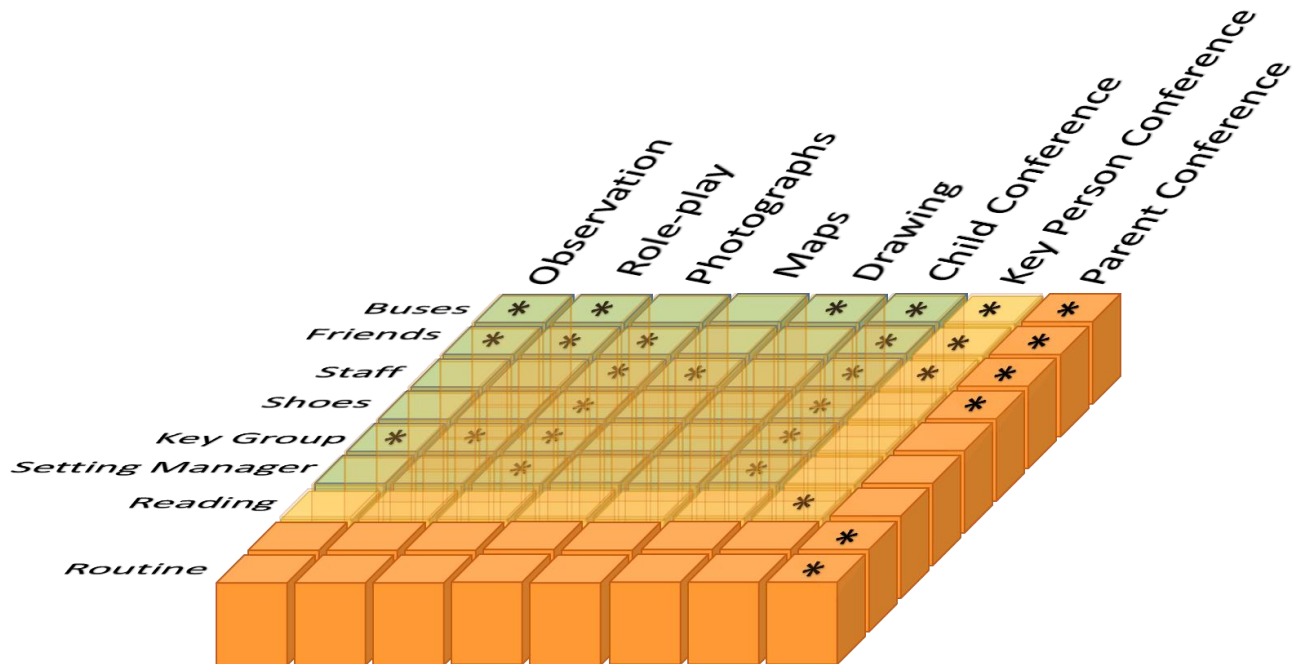
Appendix 4 - Caleb's Mosaic

Caleb's Mosaic

Please note that despite repeated requests his parents decided not to participate in the parent conference, hence the layer is missing from his mosaic.
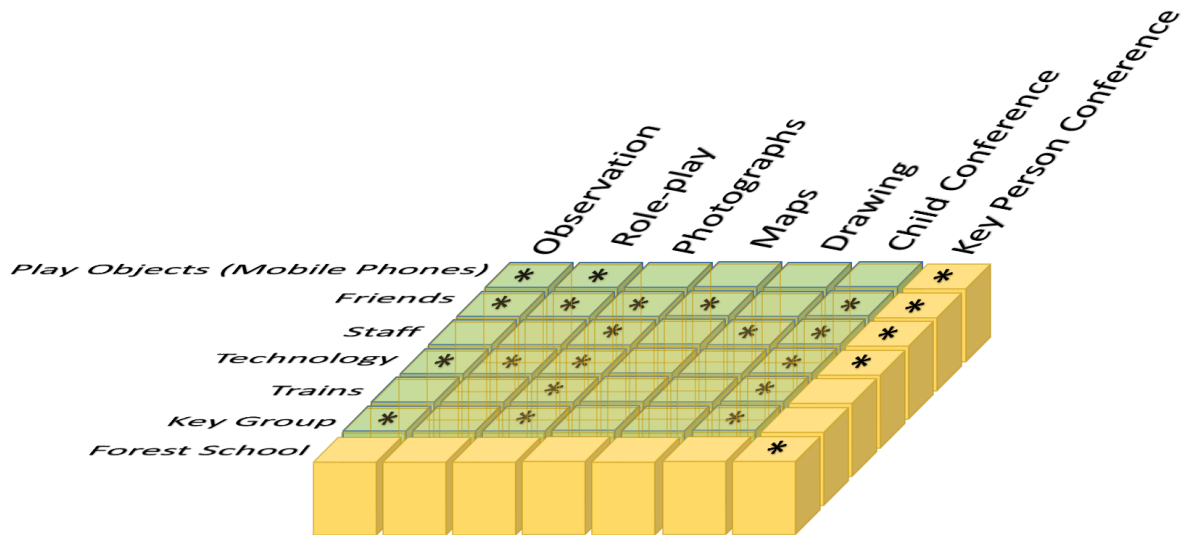
Appendix 5 - Rosie's Mosaic

Rosie's Mosaic
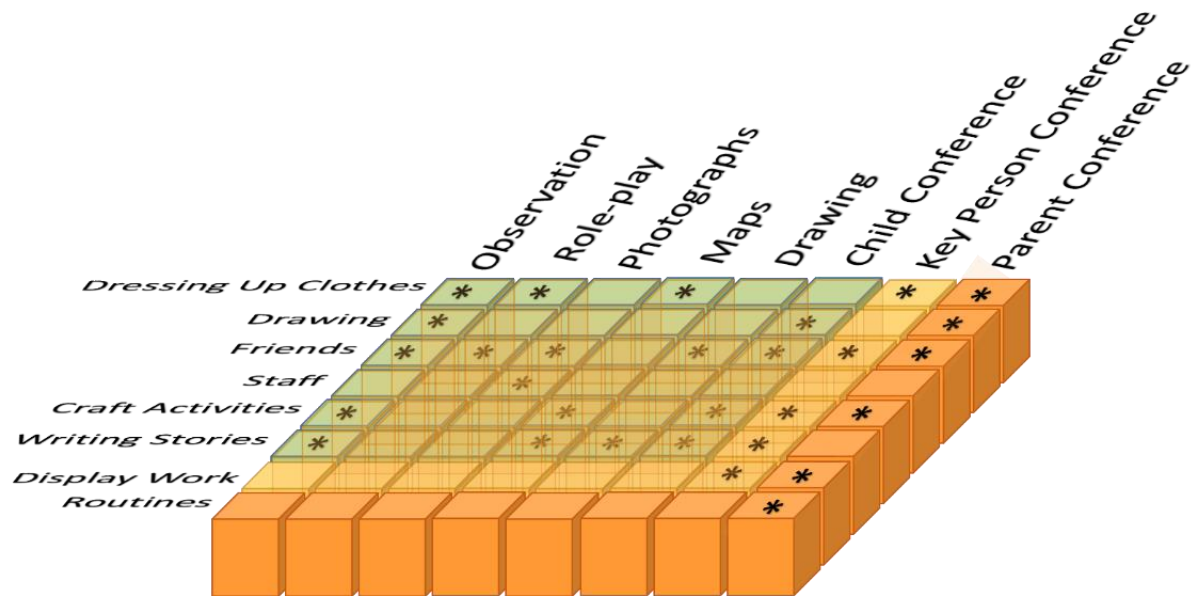
Appendix 6 - Eve's Mosaic

Eve's Mosaic
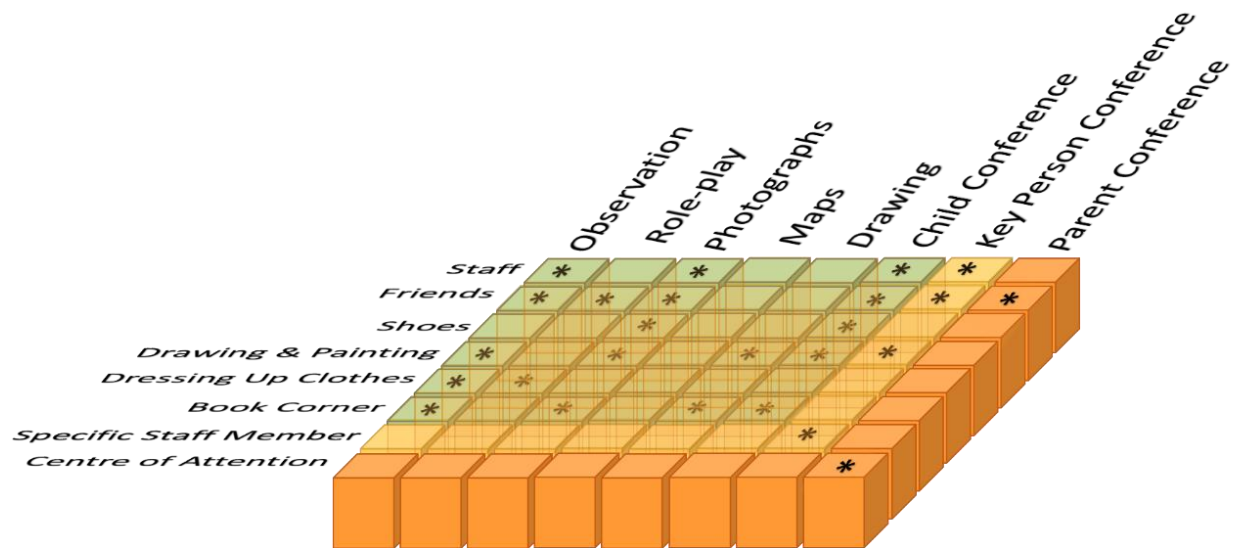
Appendix 7 - Jack's Mosaic

Jack's Mosaic

325
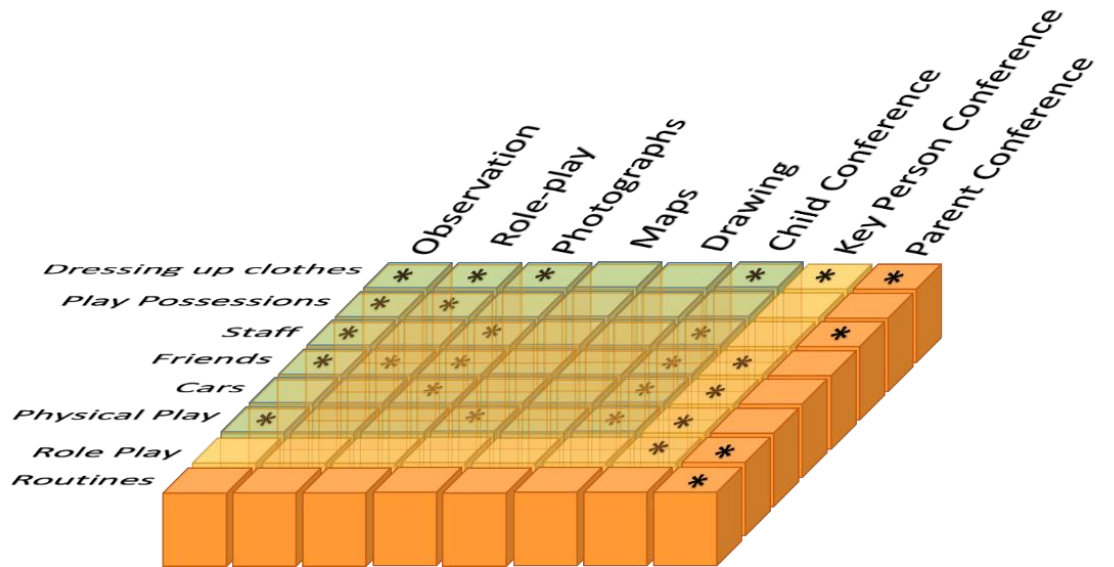
Appendix 8 - Michael's Mosaic

Michael's Mosaic

	Observation	Role-play	Photographs	Maps	Drawing	Child Conference	Key Person Conference	Parent Conference
Friends	*	*	*			*	*	
Staff			*		*			*
Dressing Up Clothes	*	*	*		*	*	*	
Play Possessions	*	*						
Cars		*			*		*	
Physical Play	*	*		*	*	*	*	
Small World Play						*	*	
Craft Activities						*	*	
Sustained Play							*	
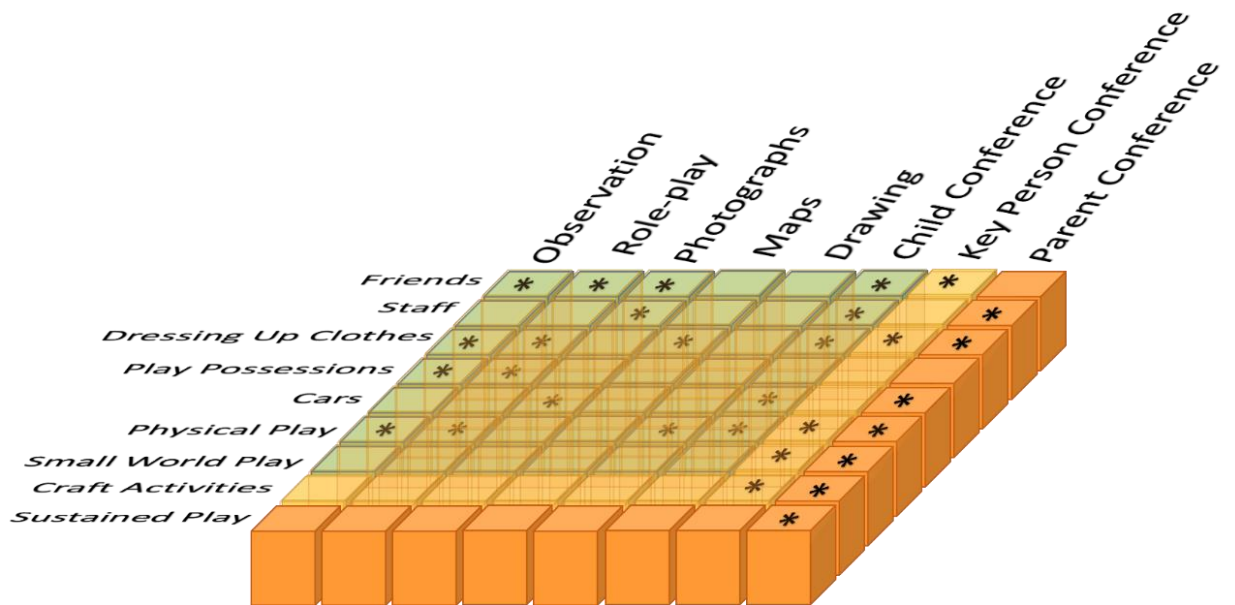
Appendix 9 - Practitioner's semi-structured Interview schedule

Practitioner Semi-structure interview questions

1. What do you think that X particularly enjoys about nursery?

2. What do you think is important to X about nursery, what would they miss if it wasn't here, wasn't happening?

3. How do you find out about what X likes and what interests them?

4. How do you engage in SST with X?

5. What do you think about X's mosaic?

6. Do you have any further comments about X and their play that you would like to add?

Appendix 10 - Parent's semi-structured interview schedule

Parent Semi-structure interview questions

1. What do you think that X particularly enjoys about pre-school/nursery?

2. What do you think is important to X about nursery, what would they miss if it wasn't here, wasn't happening?

3. How do you think that the staff find out about what X likes and what interests them?

4. Have staff discussed SST with you – do you have any concept of what it is?

5. What do you think about X's mosaic?

6. Do you have any further comments about X and their play that you would like to add?

Appendix 11 - Informed Consent Practitioners

September 2012

Project Information Sheet: Staff and Practitioners

Research project: Role-play in pack-away settings: the impact on sustained shared thinking

My name is Zenna Kingdon and I am from University of St Mark and St John, as part of my professional development I am completing a research degree through Plymouth University.

What is my project about?

I am interested in children's experiences in pack-away settings, pre-schools that operate in spaces such as village halls or community centres. I will be particularly focussing on the role-play or home corner areas and considering how this impacts on children's opportunities to engage in sustained shared thinking.

Why am I doing this project?

I am doing this project because sustained shared thinking has been an aspect of early years practice that is valued by the government. Through my research I want to see what the reality of the practice is for young children and to gain a clearer idea of practitioners' concepts of what it means.

Who will be taking part in the research project?

The following people will be taking part in the project: children who have parental permission to participate and have also given their informed consent to participate; the parents and carers of children who are engaged in the project; practitioners who work with the participating children.

How will I take part?

Participants will be engage in semi-structured interviews in which they will be asked to discuss data that has been gathered and presented by the children in the setting. The discussions will be audio recorded but if you object to this then I can simply take notes.

What will happen to the information collected from the interviews?

The results from the discussions will be written up as part of the thesis for my research degree. I am hoping to present some of the results at an international early years conference and to also write a paper for publication in an academic journal. All names of people and places will be changed in order to protect the identity of all participants in the project. It will not be possible identify who made specific comments.

How to agree to take part?

- To take part you need to tell me that you would like to take part.

- You can do this by emailing me (email address below) or by telling me when I am in the setting.

- You do not have to take part in this project if you do not want to.

- If you don't want to take part you do not have to tell me why you do not want to take part.

- No-one other than myself will know if you do not want to take part.

- I do not want you to do anything that you are not happy doing.

How to tell me if they don't want to continue

- If you decide to take part in the project and then decide you don't want to continue with the project – you can tell me that you have decided that you do not wish to continue.

- No-one will know that you have withdrawn.

- If you do not wish to tell me directly you can do so through your manager or another practitioner in your setting if that is more comfortable.

Keeping the information you tell me safe and private

- If you decide to take part in this project your name and your setting's name will not be used in any documents that are written.

- All that you tell me is private unless you tell me something about a child which makes me worried about the child's safety.

- All the information that we talk about, if it is written down, will be kept safe locked in the Faculty of Education Health and Welfare, University College Plymouth St Mark and St John where I work. I need to keep this information for 10 years as Plymouth University, the awarding body for my degree, has a rule that we keep all information from research for 10 years.

How can you contact me about this project after it has finished?

- When I have finished collecting data in the pre-school and having discussions with you I can be contacted if you have any concerns or would like to raise further questions.

- You can email me directly my email address is include here and in my contact details: zkingdon@marjon.ac.uk

My contact details are: Zenna Kingdon

                                    Faculty of Education Health and Welfare
                                    University of St Mark and St John
                                    Derriford Road

Derriford
Plymouth
PL6 8BH

zkingdon@marjon.ac.uk

01752 636703

Consent Form

I agree to take part in the research project.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent to this at any time and that my participation is voluntary.

I understand that every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure anonymity/confidentiality which will include all data being kept securely locked at the University College Plymouth, St Mark and St John and the decision not to record any personal identifiers or names.

I understand that my name and my setting's name will not be used in the report nor will there be anything in the report that could identify us.

I understand that I can contact Zenna Kingdon after the project is completed if further discussion or clarification is needed. Zenna's contact details are above.

Name:………………………………………………………………………………………………

Signature:………………………………………………………………………………………….

Role:…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Date:………………………………………………………………………………………..l

Appendix 12 - Information and consent forms for working with parents

March 2013

Project Information Sheet: Parent/Carer/Person with Parental/Caring Responsibility

Research project: Role-play in pack-away settings: the impact on sustained shared thinking

My name is Zenna Kingdon I work at the University of St Mark and St John and as part of my professional development I am undertaking a research degree through Plymouth University.

What is my project about?

I am interested in children's experiences in pack-away settings, pre-schools that operate in spaces such as village halls or community centres. I will be particularly focussing on the role-play or home corner area and considering how this impacts on children's opportunities to engage in aspect of learning that is known as sustained shared thinking.

Why am I doing this project?

I am doing this project because sustained shared thinking has been an aspect of early years practice that is valued by the government. Through my research I want to see what the reality of the practice is for young children.

What will happen if my child/children take part?

I will ask your child/children whether they would like to participate in my project. They will need to understand that I will want to observe them whilst they are playing and I may wish to ask them some questions about what they are doing and what they think about their pre-school. I will be making it clear to the children that they are not expected to participate in my project, the decision is theirs and they also have the right to change their mind and leave the project.

Can parents or carers take part in the project?

Yes they can.   If your child/children have chosen to participate in the project then I would really like it if I could discuss with you some of the data that your child/children have created. I would value your input because I am aware that no-one knows your child/children better than you do. I would also like to know how you feel about your child/children's pre-school.

How will I record the discussions?

I would like to use an audio-tape in order that I don't miss any important information that you or your child/children share with me. I do recognise that not everyone is comfortable with this and I will take notes if that is what you or your child/children would prefer.

What will happen to the information collected from the interviews?

The results from the discussions will be written up as part of the thesis for my research degree. I am hoping to present some of the results at an international early years conference and to also write a paper for publication in an academic journal. All names of people and places will be changed in order to protect the identity of all participants in the project. It will not be possible identify who made specific comments.

Agreeing to take part

- To take part you will need to tell me that you would like to take part.

- For your children to take part you need to tell me that you would like your child/children to take part. They will also need to tell me that they would like to participate.

- You and your children do not have to take part in this project if you do not want to.

- If you and your child don't want to take part you do not have to tell me why you do not want to take part.

- I do not want you or your child to do anything that you are not happy about them doing.

How to tell me you don't want to continue

- If you decide to take part in the project and then decide you don't want to continue with the project – you can tell me that you have decided that you do not wish to continue.

- If your child decides to take part in the project and then decides that they do not want to continue that is fine too. They can tell me or one of the practitioners in the setting if that is more comfortable for them.

Keeping the information you tell me safe and private

- If you decide for yourself and your child/children that you would like to take part in this project I will not use your name or your children's name in anything that I write.

- All that you tell me is private unless you or your child tells me something that makes us worried about your child's immediate safety.

- All the information that we talk about, if it is written down, will be kept safe locked in the Faculty of Education Health and Welfare, University College Plymouth St Mark and St John where I work. I need to keep this information for 10 years as Plymouth University, the awarding body for my degree, has a rule that we keep all information from research for 10 years.

How can I talk to someone about this research after it has finished?

- When I have finished collecting data in the pre-school and having discussions with you I can be contacted in a variety of ways if you have any concerns or would like to raise further questions.

- You can email me directly yourself and my email address is include here and in my contact details: zkingdon@marjon.ac.uk

- You can also ask practitioners in the setting that your child/children attend to contact me and for me to get in touch with you.

Finally

- By taking part in this project you and your child/children can help me collect information about sustained shared thinking in practice.

- You can ask us any questions you like about this project

- Remember we only want you to take part if you want to take part.

- Remember we only want your child to take part in the project if they themselves want to take part.

- Remember if you are unhappy about anything to do with the project you can tell us.

- Think about whether you would like yourself and your child/children to take part if you are happy for them to do so please sign the consent section.

- If you have any questions I am happy to answer them as are some of the staff in the nursery.

My contact details are: Zenna Kingdon

Faculty of Education Health and Welfare
University of St Mark and St John
Derriford Road
Derriford
Plymouth
PL6 8BH

zkingdon@marjon.ac.uk

01752 636703

<u>Consent Form</u>

I have read and understood the information regarding the research project that is taking place in the early years setting that my child/ren attend.

- I am happy to participate in the project.

- I am happy for my child/ren to participate in the project.

- I am happy for audio recordings of discussions to occur.

Your Name:………………………………………………………………………………………

Your Signature:………………………………………………………………………………………

Your Child's Name:……………………………………………………………………………………….

Your Relationship to Child (for example: mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, uncle, carer):……………………………………………………………………………..

Date:………………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix 13 - Information for children and their informed assent

Consent form for children

Research project: Role-play in pack-away settings: the impact on sustained shared thinking

Zenna Kingdon

Faculty of Education Health and Welfare,

University of St Mark and St John

Zenna has explained what the project is about, how I will be involved and what will happen to any materials that we produce together (notes or audio-tapes of interviews).

YES	NO

I am happy to help Zenna with this project	YES	NO

1. I understand that Zenna will keep my name a secret when she writes her report so no one except Zenna and I knows who I am.

YES	NO

2. I understand that Zenna may have to talk to a social worker or my carer if there are things I say that make them worried about my safety. I also know that if they think they should do this they will discuss it with me first.

YES	NO

3. I understand that even if I say yes to things now, Zenna, will always ask me during the interview whether I am still happy with being involved with her project and it is OK to say no and she will stop.

YES	NO

4. Although I have agreed to things above, I understand that I do not have to do anything I do not want to do and I can stop at any time if I change my mind.

YES	NO

5. I understand that, if I change my mind about Zenna using anything I have said or done, I can ask Zenna, to take my words or work out of her project, but only up until the time she starts writing it up

Yes   No

6. Zenna has told me that the interviews she does will be used in a thesis. Zenna will also use some of the interviews to write academic journal papers. She may also present some of the findings from the interviews at academic conferences.   I understand this and am happy for her to use the work we have done together for that. I understand that Zenna will not use my name or anything that can identify me in any reports.

Yes   No

If you are happy to go ahead please sign the form below and date it.   A copy of the form will be left with you.

Signed……………………………………Date………………………………………

Signed by Zenna.…………………………………………...

Date…………………………………………………..

Appendix 14 - Map of setting – Home-fell Nursery – Mobile phone and zapper play

Kitchen Hatch

Entrance Doors

Administration table

Craft Materials

*

Globes and world dolls

Table of wooden bowls

Unit of trays of natural materials

Table for making decorations

Colouring Table

Craft Materials & Hand washing

Table of Compare Bears

Trains on floor

Cushions and mats

Train table

Book Case

Garage

Puzzles

Unit

Slide

D u p l o

Door to the Garden

* = Coat Racks

*

*

Cot

Table of Dolls

Tub of clothes

Mirror

Table and 4 chairs

*

346

Appendix 15 - Map of setting - Home-fell Nursery - Knights and Castles role-play

Kitchen Hatch

Entrance Doors

Table

* = Coat racks

Admin Area

Mat with coloured rice

Small world Knights & Castles

*

Table

Mat with fir-cones, feathers & images of birds

Table of Knex

Play dough

Plates, glasses, glue

Small World Princess

Collage

Hand washing

Tyres

*

Table of shapes

Book Corner & cushions

Slide & Mat

Storage

Cot

Cot

Storage

Mirror

Table, phones and pens

Book Case

Wooden Rocker

Dressing up Clothes

Tool Station

Door to garden

*

Table of Abacus

Appendix 16 - Map of setting – All Hallows Pre-school – Vets Practice Doctors and emergencies role-play

Kitchen
Hatch

Entrance
doors

Cushions

Folders

Craft Materials

Sofa

Book
Trolley

Table

Table

Table

Lunch bag Trolley

Writing Materials

Large Mat with Stepping Stones

Veterinary
Role-play
Area

Small World Railway

Dressing up
clothes

Doors to the
garden
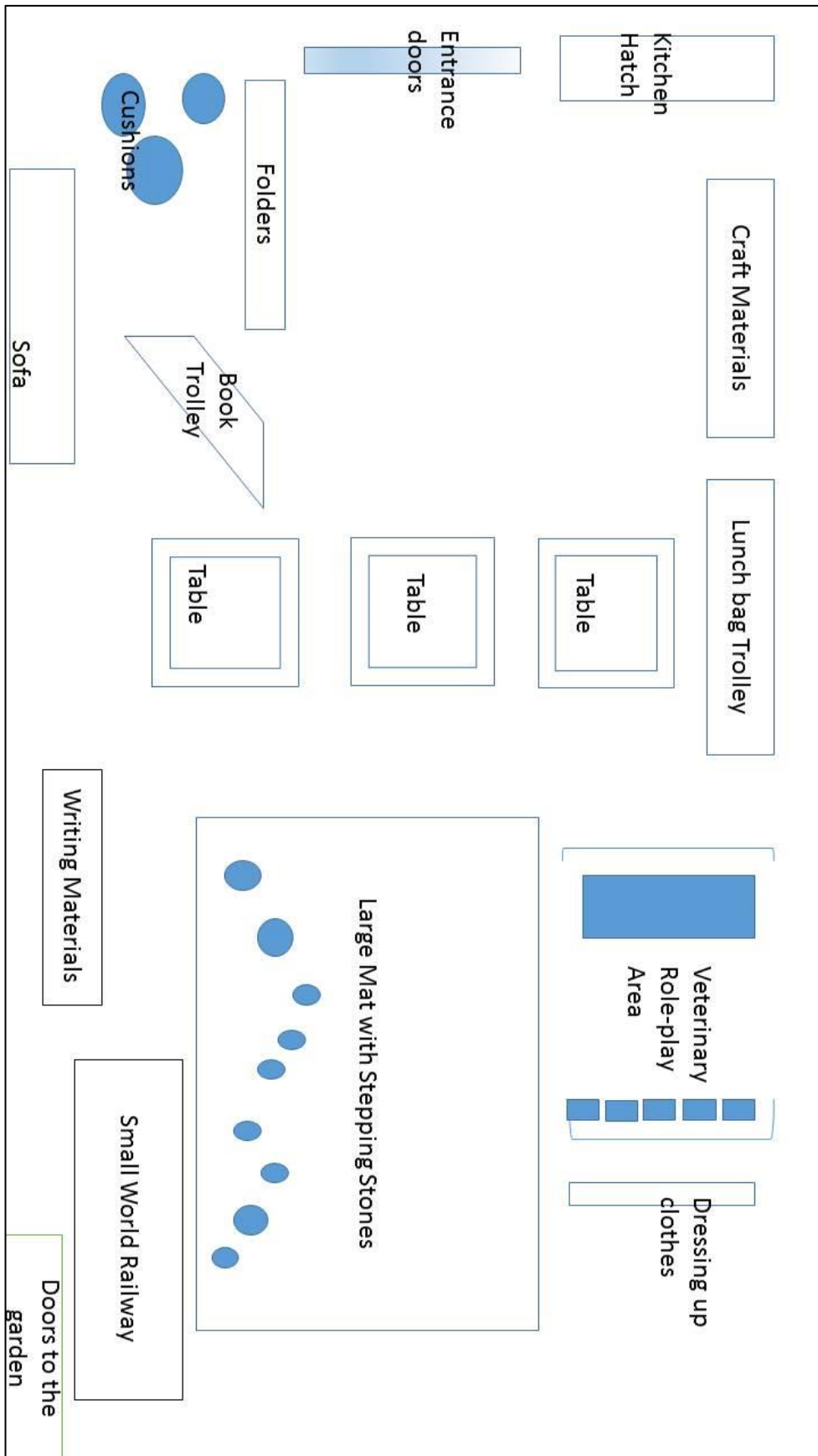
Appendix 17 – Selection of Raw Data

Observations *Home-fell Nursery*
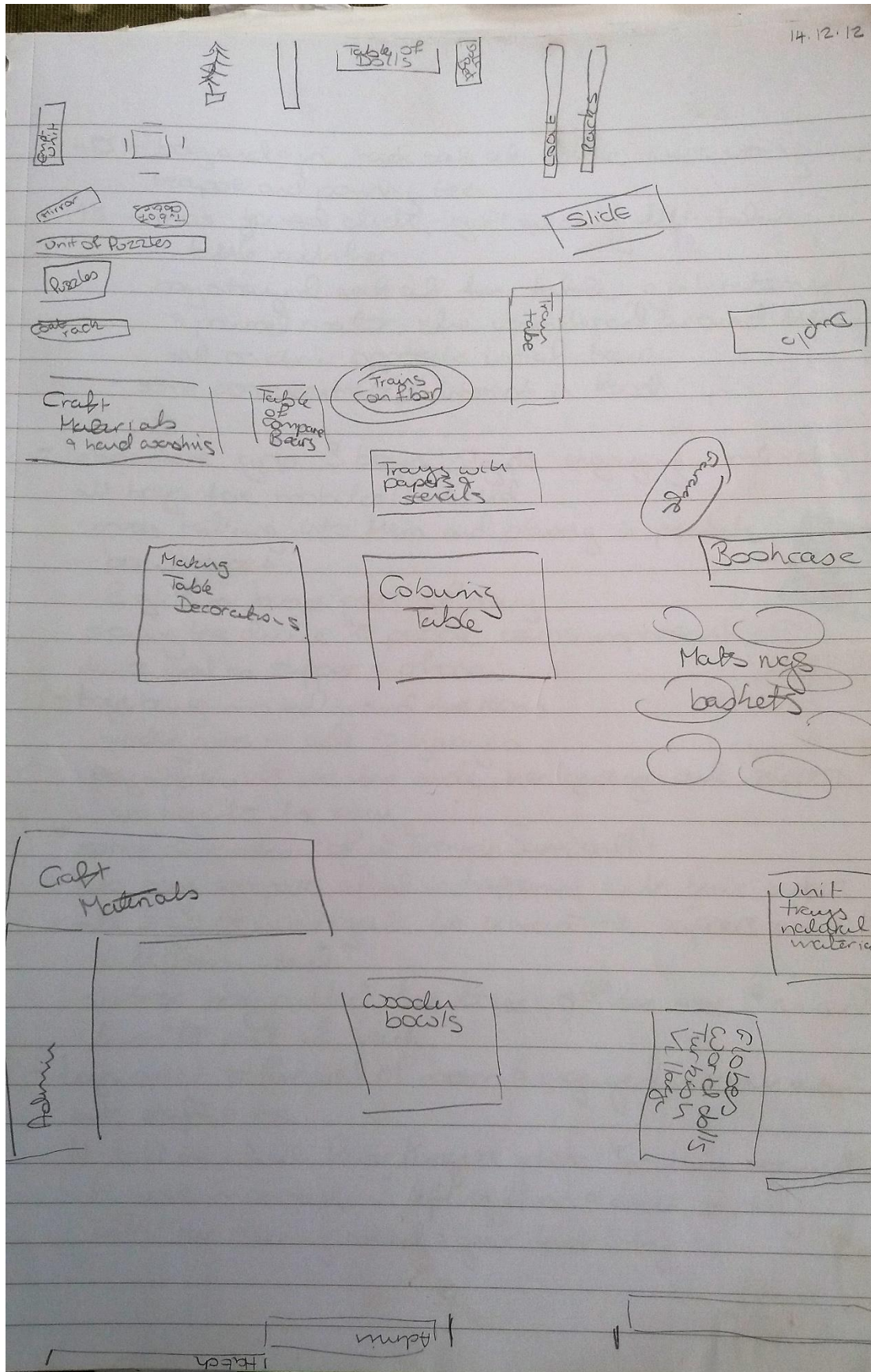
9.40 - boy and girl had sat at table were using teapot and pouring tea
45 - mos joined club, girl quickly left taking bottle with her.
boy stayed sat at the table, girl returned & poured water, she wandered around then sat on chair opposite initial chair.
- some concentrated interest in food.

- elsewhere grp 3 boys, 2 girls engaging in role-play all boys have mobiles/hand held.
- much talking into them and placing in pockets 'pow' noises,
2 girls no longer part of play.
showing the device to people seems important.
dwice used as zapper a phone.
- boys have moved around the room
reading area -> slide -> garages
they appear to use the slide, then garage but zapper are key to the play
* some discussion of a Fireman Sam outfit
- two boys compare what is happening with their zappe
- all 3 go to investigate the xmas tree. zappers are still being used
another boy pulled the tinsel off the tree * as him to put it back.
- boys went to far end of room & engaged in convers with staff & me.
N - told me about Power Rangers phone. For him see the most important. 3 left together & went to play with 'car steering wheel & gear lever' toy.

Compare | Features
Bears | grows like

Coat Hooks

Slide
& Mat

Hoops Shelf

Storage

Drawing of
Covered

Small World
Castle

Horst Crafts
& gel

Storage

Table Shelter
objects
& some down

Table
Coat Hooks | Hooks cards

Drawing
Table
& Equipment

Paper
9-13
row

Book
2

Storage

Box
XOX

Sparkly
Giving
& Striding

Beads

Observations
ideas

Coat Hook

Covered
Tables

Covered
Tables

Storage
Drawers

Table
wooden
objects

Admin

Table Moss,
wood &
images of
leaves

Love Spiders
& Bugs

Admin

Coat Hooks

09.00
- From around 9 chdn begin to arrive. I was interested in the area where the bags were laid out. I wanted to see whether any chdn choose to engage with it.

- many of the girls have put on the dresses that are available as more put them on others follow. Some of the girls put the dresses on but simply continue with other activities.

- grp of 3 begin role-play, dressed up and with buggies & car seats with babies.

· make use of large area of setting, move around the setting before returning to rp area, as did now less engaged. 2 sit at the table and create food. E+A become interested in bags & add them to the buggies before going for another walk with the babies, they discuss going home.

· a mobile phone is taken from the bag, A makes a phone call.

- again they take the babies off for a walk.

- they stop at the drawing table. the babies are parked beside them whilst they undertake some colouring, soon leave drawing & return to home corner, again the phone comes out E→A 'can I wear the bag on me?' A appears to agree but again they go out with A wearing the bag.

- E+A now go to a table where some painting has been set up. they again park the buggies right beside them. They collect aprons & put them over rp dresses.

- they are painting when the bell is rung for register, chdn at painting table are allowed to continue whilst everyone does register.

- E finished first painting and takes it to try, comes straight back to start another painting, A finishes first painting puts to dry, washes her hands, she comes back to table. E has finished they both go and join all the chdn sat on carpet for registration, they take with them their bab

- when registration finished removes dress leaves baby behind.

All Hallows Pre-school

Chdn start each morning with coalie and sheilie. They then do a visual timetable. Chdn do sign, but this morning this is being emphasised. Chdn are being asked to observe and copy the sign as well as remembering the order of the day. Chdn are shown the symbol of playtime to go and start choosing.

Eve is helping construct the slide. She has arrived with a large Peppa Pig. She is finding ways of carrying PP whilst fixing the slide. This

Jack and two friends have found police helmets (dressing up clothes don't appear to be out) They are engaging in a game police role-play. Jack walks over to me "We are real police men and we put naughty people in jail. Look at my hat and the top. [Is it a real police helmet?] Yes and I've got handcuffs. I've got a gun too it's back at the police station. [Oh my goodness I hope it stays there.] I haven't got a gun so I'm going to have to make one - but it will shoot real. Are you naughty. [Arrests me, then lets me go.] We have to go someone else is being naughty."

Jack goes. Within minutes he has a piece of inter-locking shapes in his pocket, he is clearly using it as his gun.

(Jack to another mos)

My auntie didn't catch no baddies. [repeats several times] I said what type of policeman are you, you didn't catch no baddies. [Did you want her to arrest people] Yes, I want to catch the baddies. [Perhaps everyone was being good.] (Some I missed.) Someone else was arresting baddies b

she was just sitting and thinking. I was cross. [Why were you cross?] I went her to arrest baddies where type of policewan is she. I phoned my dad. [Did you talk to him about it?] Yes and we phoned my auntie X. [Ooh my you talked to everyone?] Yes we were all cross my auntie A was cross. [Oh she was cross too.] Yes we were all cross. Jack then left to play.

Mapmaking Conferences

Rosie
Making a map

- well the cars are over there. [Do you like playing with cars] yes. That's the way the cars get in -

- there's the activity park. it's a bit like a castle [likes castles] when I grow up I want to be a ballerina like my friend

- the kitchen over there.

- oh the tables - there's the fishing game and the chairs.
  I don't like doing doing chairs like that [conversation about writing]

- Painting! I love painting. It's fun because you get messy. I'm not allowed to get messy. I mustn't get my white clothes messy.

- I did necklaces yesterday with all these jingle jangle things on them. That's a daisy chain that I made. And [x] made a jingle jangle chain.

- Rosie has talked all through her mapmaking. much of it is very literal but she talks all through and is willing to give details.

Rosie's Map

Reflective Notes

12ᵗʰ - the session appeared a little more organised the role-play appeared to be better set-up. Today I followed Jack. He spent even longer in role that Michael.

Object possession: Jack was very attached to the case of medical equipment. He took with him everywhere all morning.

Mobile phone: He had a mobile with him and used it from time to time however it did not appear to have the same significance as

seen previously.

Wave play: again Jack took his play to a number of areas of the nursery. Most of the play occurred in either the rp area or the book corner, though with most of it occurring in the book corner. Though Jack took some of the play to the large mat. interestingly it did seem that the majority of the play moved btwn the 2 spaces.

*Parent Conferences -***Penny**

Penny's Mum

1 thin she enjoys variety of ac, social
iteracts being part community grp, registration
creative, talking to the staff, outside
time, t/s – trips to Buckland special
days, dressing-up – maybe lunchtime.

2. too large grp couldn't like
   too noisy
   rels with staff
   continuity of chdh + staff
   variety change everything every day diff
      stimulus
   outside space
   predictability. structure but not too
      much structure.

3. by observing her, by questioning her
   asking the [mum]

4. Not discussed.

5. No, didn't mention princesses, but know
   v.similar to what said.

5. at home most time enjoys np
   A expects mummy to be in role, has
   to pracs, new teacher

Key-person Conference – Hannah
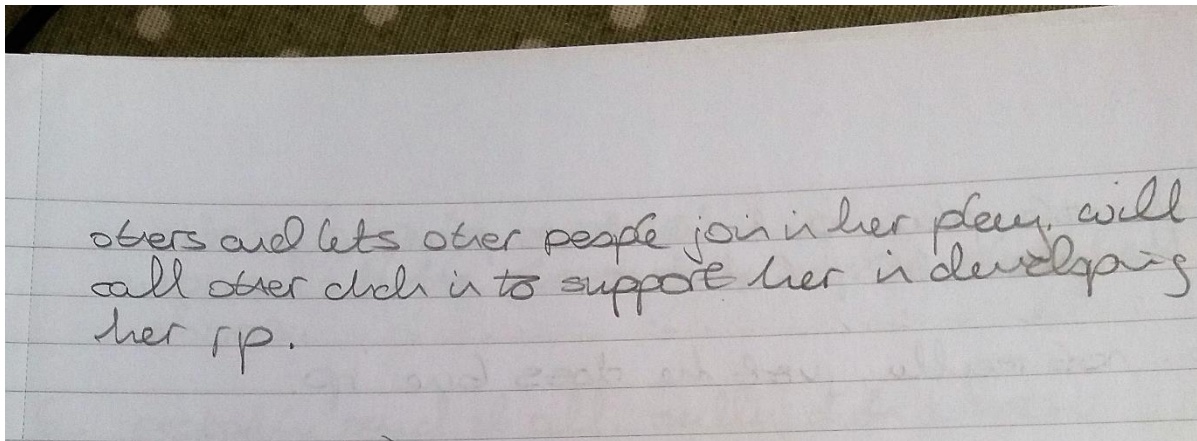
Hannah

1. - be social, loves playing with friends, imaginary play, small world, & dressing up.
   inside & outside.

2. meeting with friends
   - be enabled to act out role-play.
   - environment is made available to her.

3. through observation, assessment, what they like & choose
   - chats - feedback, interests outside nursery,
   circle time in grp time, news, what has interested them.
   - engage in circle time at FS too.

4. - can try, you have to start off an activity working
   - initially start with a basic subject or theme,
   could be their ideas or from an adult.
   - the grp is the younger half of the year and often levels to them copying the one before.
   - if they've really enjoyed and engaged with something, try to include in the planning re-visit & extend.
   - try if we can if they have an interest.

5. She enjoys art & craft, she spends a great deal of time. places carefully.
   loves painting & sticking.
   careful with what she does.

6. very social, very happy really enjoys coming to
pre-school.
really thrives on freidships.
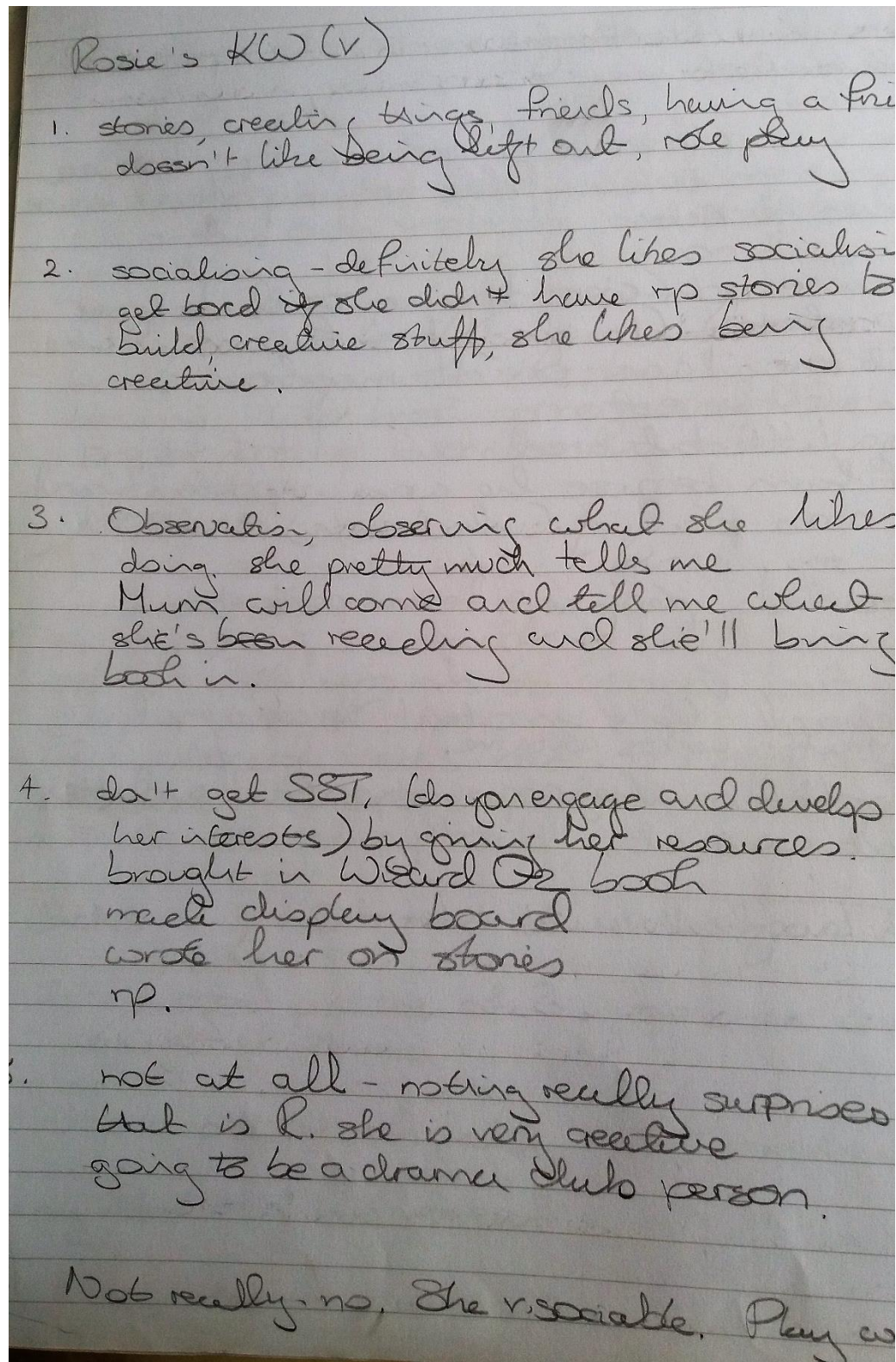
Rosie

Rosie's KW (v)

1. stories, creating, things, friends, having a fri
   doesn't like being left out, role play

2. socialising - definitely she likes socialis
   get bored if she didn't have rp stories to
   build, creative stuff, she likes being
   creative.

3. Observation, observing what she likes
   doing, she pretty much tells me
   Mum will come and tell me what
   she's been reading and she'll bring
   book in.

4. don't get SST, (do you engage and develop
   her interests) by giving her resources.
   brought in Wizard Oz book
   made display board
   wrote her own stories
   rp.

5. not at all - nothing really surprises
   that is R. she is very creative
   going to be a drama club person.

   Not really, no. She v.sociable. Play w

others and lets other people join in her play. will call other chdn in to support her in developing her rp.

Eve

Eve's KW (L)

1. She quite like the babies (what do you mean) the role play with babies - she's into craft enjoys creative into everything.

2. Demelza, absolutely loves D. (mos)
that's a hard one because she's into everything. she really likes babies but if it's not did she'll go and play with something else, not like she's stuck for.

3. observe & will tell you.

4. just do it, difficult to explain. same as J's go with their lead. plan so for example if she wants to do something like gingerbread men, we'll do it, we'll get the ingredients in and do it.

5. Surprised she didn't do map. I did one the other week with a dad and she's been draw them ever since and giving them to me,

no! - she loves the the corner,
surprised at the shoes didn't know she like
shoes.

6. probably said it all, really didn't know
she likes shoes - bkos her!

Children's photograph conferences

Penny

1. it was so funny, there's a bit of green, like colouring. I like colouring them

4. because I like painting - pictures of me & my brother & Easter Eggs & Christmas + everything

7. because (girl not know) Fly because he's in blue grp like me (I had to guess who her favourite Disney characters. Cinderella blue dress Dinosaurs

16. I took that for Fly. For boys.

22. because their two of my favourite teachers (are not here, discussion. of where she is. Then where Granny & Grandpa are - they are missing. I dressed up on World Book as Cinderella when she's getting married.

29. Meet Holly & Nathan I took that lot of photos of Nathan because he's in blue group. It's important because I'm in it. I'm a princess super hero. Isla is my best friend.

43. That's you Zenna, Because you taught me & I wanted to take a photo of you.

7. Megan & Oliver - playing with the dinosaurs & the trucks they are two of my friends.

5. This is one of my favourite I has been given

2. The doll is the same name as me with blues eyes meant that a

7. That's me. That's one of the best pictures because it's me.

5 That's of the frogs. That's one of my favourite animals. I like blue, I like pink & I really really like salami sandwiches.

39. Mrs Coopers bell. I took the picture because I've rung it lots and lots of times.

9. I took because it was the same colour as my camera.

Caleb's (Please note his working pseudonym was Fly)

Fly's Photos

Discuss - of my photo. You're drawing
you're always drawing [Says it's a problem]
It's what you do. You're always drawing.

I like both ones. Red Nose one [Why] Red Nose Day
Because

Eve's got a camera and I took a photo. She was walking

Jar - She's doing green group.

Anya - with a funny face. That's why I took it. Can't
see her feet.

Tyres -

82 - George is laid down.

- people - all in different groups [Is that a problem]

- trains - likes trains.

- Leo - because he's raking a funny. all ways
  shares stuff with me. to share stuff with him. That's
  funny

- talking about a child who walked up to us. 'I didn't
  photograph her. She wasn't here.' [She was]

Picture of me
no - head up.
I like we scared.

Jessie a
her Jumper photo - I like

Shared.

Fly loves pressing the buttons - so that it shoots through
as a slide show.

Working analysis of interests – Caleb (again with working pseudonym, Fly)

Evaluation of Fly's interests

Object possession: mobile phone / zippers
key element of play, possession equals power
phone = phone a multi-use object.

Technology: seen during use of tape machine.
demonstrates interest in inside of machine, w
to know how it works
- till & card machine, keen to swipe the ca
- use of camera, took more pictures than an
  other child, keen to take them and used
  different functions on the camera to creat
  effects
- enjoyed using the computer to view the
  photographs. clearly doesn't have much
  access to a computer, he was more interested
  in being able to quickly flick through the
  photographs than looking at the content

Money: demonstrated interest in money and wa
  seen attempting to count it.

Trains: demonstrated through photographs, b
  he states that the interest is not his, it
  is his friend who is interested in trains, s
  to demonstrate an interest in what his frien
  are interested in.

374

Publications

Conference Papers

2016 EECERA Dublin – 'Wave play: fluid play to support social co-construction'

2016 EECERA Dublin – 'Flourishing: Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care'

2015 EECERA Barcelona – 'The Creative Curriculum: Flourishing in the play environment'.

2015 EECERA Barcelona – 'Object Play: Power and self-identity facets of role-play in pack-away settings'.

2014 EECERA Crete – 'Beings and Becomings: An integrated Approach'

2014 EECERA Crete – 'The role of adults: Quality, Care and Organisation'

2013 EECERA Tallinn – 'Children's Voice: Methodologies to support children as knowers and social actors'

2013 EECERA Tallinn – 'Policy: Changes in the Early Years Learning Environment'

2012 EECERA Porto – 'Playful Pedagogies in the Early Years: Sustained Shared Thinking'

2011 EECERA Geneva – 'The impact that a Foundation degree is perceived to have had on Early Years settings in the South West of England'

2010 Marjon Learning and Teaching Conference – 'Using role-play as a teaching medium in Higher Education'

2010 EECERA Birmingham – 'Role-play at Key Stage 1: Children's Perspectives'

Books

Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (Eds) (2014) *Early Years Policy: Understanding the impact on Practice,* London: Routledge.

Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J & Gasper, M (Eds) (2017) *Flourishing in the Early Years: Contexts, Practices and Futures*, London: Routledge.

Chapters:

Kingdon, Z. (In Press) 'Childhood' in Trotman, D. Lees, H. and Willoughby, R. *Key Concepts in Education*, London: Routledge.

Kingdon, Z. (In Press) 'The Creative Curriculum: Flourishing in the play environment' in Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (Eds) (In press) *Flourishing in the Early Years: Contexts, Practices and Futures*, London: Routledge.

Kingdon, Z. and Gourd, J. (In Press) 'What is flourishing?' in Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (Eds) (In press) *Flourishing in the Early Years: Contexts, Practices and Futures*, London: Routledge.

Kingdon, Z. and Gourd, J. (In Press) 'Flourishing and quality,' in Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (Eds) (In press) *Flourishing in the Early Years: Contexts, Practices and Futures*, London: Routledge.

Kingdon Z (2014) 'The EYFS: Tickell and beyond: a critical perspective' in Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (2014) (Eds) *Early Years Policy: The impact on Practice*, London: Routledge.

Kingdon Z (2014) 'Policy and the change in the Early Years learning environment', in Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (2014) (Eds) *Early Years Policy: The impact on Practice*, London: Routledge.

Kingdon Z (2014) 'Research informed policy myth or reality: Sustained Shared Thinking', in Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (2014) (Eds) *Early Years Policy: The impact on Practice*, London: Routledge.

Kingdon Z (2014) 'The impact of Foundation degrees on practitioners' in Kingdon, Z and Gourd, J (2014) (Eds) *Early Years Policy: The impact on Practice*, London: Routledge.