



UKSC_Class_ForestSchool_ChildIdeas

Teacher Education Design Principle + code:	10. Teacher education should enable teachers to recognize and build on children's ideas, theories and interests for the teaching of science and mathematics. TE:ChildIdeas
Specific Teacher Outcome(s):	10.1 Teachers should be able to use a range of strategies for picking up on children's ideas, theories and interests 10.2 Teachers should be able to build flexibility into planning to take advantage of unexpected events, children's interests and questions
Factors linked with:	T: Ped; AO: Affect; LA: Quest; A: Strat; A: Form.
Type of material (image – interview (int) – classroom extract (class):	Classroom extract and interview
Originating from:	
Country report :	D4.3 UK (Scotland)
Case:	Case 20
Episode:	Forest School
Teacher:	Sarah
Age Group:	3-5
Selected episode present in D4.4 Appendix	Yes



Identifying and capitalising on children's interests

The setting for the episode was a protected wildlife area in the city walking distance away from the preschool centre. It has open areas of vegetation, woodland and a pond.

This episode follows the explorations of Ian that illustrate the opportunities provided for children to follow their own interests and make connections to their previous experiences at the site. His immediate focus was the pond. He poked the ice with a spade. He observed holes in the ice and collected some water in his spade to look at it more closely. Sarah, the teacher built on his interest drawing attention to the differences in the pond compared to the previous week and suggesting that he might look at the water more closely with a magnifier. After some considerable time Ian was still at the pond. This time he was poking at the ice with a litter picker. Marta the Nursery Nurse asked him about what he was noticing, encouraging him to explain what he was doing.

Later Ian took the researcher round the site to photograph the different fungi he had noticed, another developing area of interest over time. In a conversation with the researcher about this visit to Forest School later in the afternoon, Ian highlighted these two activities (breaking ice and photographing fungi), making connections with previous experiences at Forest School. The photographs taken by Ian were included with his reflections in his profile.

Using questioning to encourage communication of ideas and interests

Nursery Nurse: What can you see?

Ian: Bubbles.

Nursery Nurse: Where do you think they are coming from?

Ian: Animals – may be frogs? Maybe air coming up?

Nursery Nurse: You're doing a good job – the animals will be really pleased. Can you see the bubbles moving around?

Ian: Putting more air for the animals. (...)

Ian splashed round the edge of the pond, breaking up the ice.

Ian: Can see big bubbles – when you hit the bubbles it makes much more.

Nursery Nurse: Why are you rescuing the animals?

Ian: So they can breathe – whole pond nearly dug up now – saw breathing.



Reflection on experiences provides insights into Ian's interests and ideas



Ian: When I went to Forest School it was brilliant. I liked the most taking pictures (*of fungi*) and that was the best thing I did there.

Researcher: So the best thing was taking pictures?

Ian: And lots of smashing ice on the pond.

(...)

Researcher: What were you doing in smashing the ice (..)?

Ian: So the animals could breathe under the ice?

Researcher: Have you been there another time? Have you seen any animals?

Ian: I think I been there a long time ago.

Researcher: What did you see?

Ian: I think I saw frogs in the summer – and before I saw frogspawn.

Researcher: That sounds exciting what was it like?

Ian: It was sort of jelly – and tadpoles inside the ball of jelly.

Researcher: Wow!

Ian: Not the kind of jelly from what you eat and got tadpoles inside it.



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