Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Background Information

My name is Angela Cameron. I am an on-line student at the University of the Highlands and Islands and I also work full time in pre-school education.
My career in early childhood begun at the age of seventeen with the course SNNEB offered by the Inverness College. I joined a local authority school nursery in Inverness in '97 following a variety of jobs in day-care and workplace nurseries as well as a short period in the children's ward. Thirteen years later I continue to be employed at the school as a Nursery Assistant although the duties and responsibilities I now have are very different to the initial job description.
In 2000 I studied for a Professional Development Award in Childcare and Education but it wasn't until eight years and two children later that further studies was considered again. Studying for a BA degree in Childhood Practice fulfils my need to consider and reflect my practice and given a confident voice to my ideas.

Self-Assessment in the Early Years: an action research project

By Angela Cameron
May 2010

'Self-assessment, far from being a luxury, is in fact an essential part of formative assessment'

(Black and Wiliam, 1998: 7)

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Contents

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Self-Assessment in the pre school years: an action research project.

Introduction

This paper details a small scale action research project looking into the viability and effectiveness of self-assessment in the early years. This was undertaken in the researcher's own workplace, as part of a whole school development into formative assessment, in response to the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence.

Self-assessment is thought to engage the learner by reflecting on one's own learning and is considered an integral feature of formative assessment in today's educational provision. Clarke (2008;2) tells practitioners formative assessment is often misinterpreted and misused so exploring this area as a research project held merit. The project sought to explore its effectiveness at deepening learning, its feasibility as a feature in a nursery context and also the use of meta-cognitive language and thinking skills.

The data was gathered by active participant observation, interviews and focus groups. Also included is a graphic representation of self-assessment acquirement. Analysis is qualitative forming part of the action/reflection cycle typical of action research.

Research found meta-cognitivity begins in pre-school allowing self-assessment to occur. However analysis shows both are conditional on adult dialogue and support.

Project Process: Management and Ethical Issues

Although a small scale project, success depended on relationships between researcher and colleagues. This was managed democratically which facilitated data collection, supported and motivated staff. Clark (2008) describes a democratic leadership style as involving the leader and one or more employees in decision –making, with the leader maintaining a final say. This is an accurate description of the research project management.

The Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers were referred to as well as the Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (SERA,2005:4) in which reference is made to the Children (Scotland) act 1995 and article 3 of the United Nation's Convention of Children's Rights- that the best interests of the child must be paramount concern. This also asserts researchers should facilitate children's rights to give their own informed consent to participate in research (SERA, 2005:5). Children showed permission to interviews by their own mark, by thumbs up or by a smiley face. Permission was granted from management and parents (appendix 1, 2)

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

The SERA guidelines states enquiry such as action research should not inhibit the practitioner, conditional on data deriving from normal learning processes (SERA, 2005:13).

All material gathered has been returned to children's folders. One copy of the data and the analysis has been kept securely.

Research design: Action Research

It was plain from the beginning qualitative research paradigms would reflect the subtleties of child/adult interaction, as well as offer an explicit understanding of the researcher as data influencer and generator. This interpretivist approach creates knowledge based on observations, responses and reflexive interpretations (Valsa, 2010: 25).

Action research is a qualitative methodology chosen as an approach easily accommodated into the nursery. Coghlan and Brannick (2005: xii) stress it is a process of understanding by observing, living, and experiencing the context whilst simultaneously collecting and analysing data. Action research is characterised by iterative cycles of action and reflection with the researcher placed centrally.

Action research has a long history in education. Valsa (2010: 1) comments that it is a method used for improving educational practice, whilst Clarke (2008) encourages action research as a means to understand formative assessment. This strongly implies that action research is a recognised research paradigm for achieving change and knowledge through active collaboration.

Action Research can be criticised as being a soft option and lacking validity (Valsa, 2010: 37). As a result Coghlan and Brannick (2005:127) suggest the approach should demonstrate rigour more particularly by a clear account of context, relationships and analysis.

Research Participants
- Three members of staff.
- 31 children: 4 five year olds; 17 four year olds; 10 three year olds. 22 boys, 9 girls.

Self-assessment Tools
Tools used and applied during free play and interviews (see Appendix 3 for further elaboration):

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

- Traffic lights
- Happy/sad faces
- Thumbs up/ down
- Promotion of meta-cognitive language through chosen words and statements

The principles of self-assessment were applied during specific focused observations such as number recognition and gym sessions as well as the interviews and free play observations. These can be summarised as:

- Child understanding the goal,
- Child committing to goal,
- Child identifying next actions to achieve goal.
- Thoughtful questions
- Careful listening
- Reflective responses

 (Young, 2005: 3)

Chosen data collection methods

To ensure validity and reliability, data collection methods should be the most effective manner of answering the research question. The chosen methods were, effectively, an enhanced version of the existing early years' methodologies of documentation, dialogue and observation.

- **Formal (called the Star Plans) and informal Interviews with children**

In all, 21 informal and 25 formal interviews were documented. These explored the individual's meta-cognitive language and the relationship with practitioner/interviewer. These gave clear information but the ease to talk and write notes simultaneously was overestimated. It was also, at times, incredibly noisy, distracting both child and adult. The informal interview (appendix 4 example) needed to be attempted several times to find a comfortable setting and approach. The formal Star Plan started with a review of the previous (appendix 5a) then asked three specific questions, establishing likes, strengths and areas of difficulty. The answers to the final question are called 'Learning wishes' (Appendix 5b).

- **Active participant observations of children**

This was the primary data collection method, collecting evidence on self-assessment and meta-cognitivity during free play and group events such as mind maps (appendix 6). The only criticism of using the observations was the volume of observations produced- 28 in total. This led to a quantity of inappropriate observations to sift through during the final analysis. (appendix 7)

- **Two focus group discussions**

These generated valuable and detailed insight into the thoughts of staff. The first discussion was rescheduled but this allowed staff to observe techniques and language. The first also determined success criteria whilst the second focus group was a valuable exercise in triangulating all the data collected. It served the purpose of sharing data allowing the picture of self-assessment to become more cohesive (appendix 8 and 9 demonstrate excerpts).

- **Traffic lights monitoring system**

This was added as a method of collecting data, as it detailed the adults' perceptions of children's self-assessment levels. It is a common tracking system used for all observations. Although it can be viewed as a quantitative approach, it is an assessment process that emphasises interpretation through adult consensus.

- **A journal**

This played a central role in documenting the action research process. This was an addition to the original proposal but proved to be useful when Collecting, Noticing and Thinking (Siedel, 1998).

Data Analysis Framework

Integral to action research are action/reflection cycles that feed back into the next planned action/reflection cycles. A fair description of this process is the Noticing, Collecting and Thinking Model suggested by Seidel (1998) in which interesting things are noticed, collected and thought about critically. As the self-assessment research evolved, the cycles of action/reflection mirrored Siedel's model, with the process occurring at different speeds, entry points and repetition. Basit (2003: 145) agrees with this perspective by adding that qualitative analysis is an all encompassing activity that continues throughout the life of a project.

A mass of data was generated so coding data into meaningful chunks of information became essential. Like other qualitative researchers, Basit (2003: 144), credits coding with allocating meaning to information, allowing for further questions and the development of a framework of thought and understanding. Coding data into potential themes was influenced by the literature base as well as the evidence gathered and occurred prior, during and after data collection.

Final analysis/reflection also took place after the allocated data collection and proved a valuable and necessary exercise. Coghlan and Brannick (2005:128) agree that action researchers are often surprised at what happens during the writing up period. Indeed it allowed for a deeper appreciation of the actual

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

meta-cognitive skills necessary to self-assessment (these are detailed in appendix 10).

Data Presentation

The following graph illustrates self-assessment skill at the child's starting and final points. An early stages skill base is characterised by the ability to state preferences either verbally or non-verbally; an emerging skill base by the ability to state areas of difficulties and make predictions using language and/or tools. An established skill base is distinguished by the use of effective meta-cognitive language and reflection on past work with an adult, with a few establishing next steps or strategies for learning.

The Establishment of Self-Assessment Skills
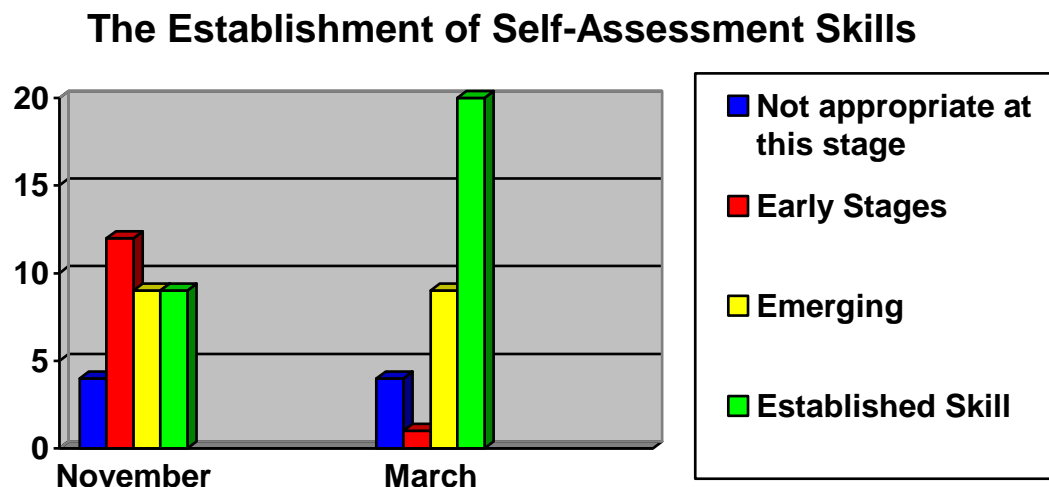
Children initially used meta-cognitive language superficially:

Child (4):'I good at playing the cars'.
Adult: 'How do you know?
Child: (shrugs)

All children were judged to have increased in skill to describe learning and with the adult facilitating, recognise difficulties:

Child (4:11):'When I was making Ben10 pictures, didn't turn out how I wanted it to. Didn't look good'.

Child (3:11): I am good at playing at the house. I'm really good at it.
Adult: How do you know that?

> Child: I know 'cos I know how to do it. I was scared before 'cos there was big boys.

Recognising learning gaps and establishing next steps

Data evidenced some children found verbalising difficulties, progress and skills challenging:

> Adult: What do you think you are good at?
> Child (4): 'Don't know' (Shrugs, squirms in seat).

For others however this was easy, verbally and non-verbally:

> Child (5): Look at that (a picture of herself with one leg) – how will I walk?

> (Adult and children learning to make patterns with a threading activity)
> Child (4:8) Tugs at adult gives a Thumbs down and then walks away.

> Child who initially shrugged and squirmed: 'I make lots of jigsaw puzzles by myself now. Look I got a star moment'.

Sharing gaps in learning was viewed with horror. However, the children were actively encouraged to engage in dialogue:

> Adult: Can you tell me why you are not happy with your circles?
> Child (5): They're all wonky.
> Adult: Yes, I can see that. Do you want to get better at drawing circles?
> Child: I want to draw proper circles.
> Adult: Would you like me to help you practice?
> Child nods.

Identifying next steps was happening with peer coaching and group mind-maps. Strategies for reaching goals showed rote statements and reference to peers:

> Adult: Is there anything you don't think you are good at?
> Child (5): Writing names.
> Adult: How do you think you we could learn this?
> Child: H can do all sorts of words so he could help me. Just keep practicing. If I don't practice, I won't know how to learn.

Attitude

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Staff commented that attitude and language had a bearing on learning outcomes:

> "If you're enthusiastic and give feedback, value what they are doing, then you get more. If the adult guides them and gives confidence to their efforts, this makes the biggest difference".

Staff commented on a few children being reticent and unmotivated. Also by the end of the research, children were judged to be weary of the process, particularly in the observations:

> Child (4): 'I don't know what you're saying' (inching away from the table).

This was not so for everyone however:

> Child A: 'I've finished this. Have you learnt it yet?'
> Child B: 'No'
> Child A: ''Have you learnt it now?'
> Child B: 'No'
> Child A; 'Will you hurry up and learn. Snack's ready'

<div align="center">Deep learning</div>

> 'If we have said that self assessment is a review, or about thinking back on an activity critically, then we are focusing quite deeply on something with that child. We are refocusing, rethinking and re-questioning, allowing that child to make connections with learning or make new thoughts that weren't there before'.

This colleague's observation served as a baseline to critically review interviews and observations. Staff looked for engagement, focus, energy, enthusiasm and animation, theirs as well as children's. Although it was clear deep learning was occurring and seen predominantly in interviews and group activities, it was not always obvious however if it was self-assessment, dialogue or both that enhanced learning:

Adult and child recalling bursting experiments.
Child (5): I was just popping it then it popped
Adult: What else can you pop a balloon with?
Child (animated): Scissors, a knife. Paper wouldn't. That thing would (points to the tape dispenser)
Adult: My fingers?
Child: Aye. Only if you press.

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Data Discussion

The presentation demonstrated that children do have the potential to self-assess but the use of the word potential is deliberate, implying a supportive environment will enhance these skills. This environment is formed by a positive learning system characterised by specific language, dialogue, attitude and peer/adult support. Black and Wiliam (1998: 9) supports this view by arguing it is a culture of questioning and deep thinking, in which pupils learn from shared discussions with teachers and each other.

Creating a positive learning culture had not expected to be an issue as it was believed to be in place already. However, there were a number of children, who avoided areas of difficulties which staff found interfered with learning. These children clam up when confronted with learning challenges and return to the same comfortable areas. This confirmed Black and Wiliam's view that pupils avoid difficult tasks when they have a choice (1998: 6).

It is reasonable to argue that a child's reflection on oneself will refute areas of perceived difficulties, giving the learner a biased insight into his thinking and learning. This clearly evidences a need for vigilance with these vulnerable learners as there is a danger that learning could stagnate. As a result, Clarke (2008:21) proposes practitioners emphasise the process of learning, putting in effort, and using strategies to learn. Acknowledging gaps in learning should be viewed as a dynamic step forward as this discussion on number recognition demonstrates:

> Adult:' Its o.k. not to know this. You are learning. We're going to help you learn the numbers'
> Child (4): Yeah! (Cheers)
> Adult: Tomorrow we will all think about how we can help each other to learn to recognise the numbers you are learning. Do you have any ideas?
> Child: We can hide them.
> 2nd Child (4): I can jump them

This approach, surprisingly to staff, actually appeared to support the children. They were enthusiastic and confident to propose strategies such as hiding the numbers. A colleague commented 'It's reassuring for the children to think they can't do something because they are learning'. It suggests a temporary state that can be moved on. This confirmed Clarke's view that developing a growth culture encourages challenge as welcomed (2008: 19-20). By the final interviews the initial reluctance was diminishing. As the child with the 'wonky circle' demonstrates:

> Adult: In your last Star Plan, you said you wanted to draw better circles.
> Child (5): I did a bit of a bendy line before.
> Adult: What about now? Are you o.k with it or are you not happy with that?
> Child: I'm happy.

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Being able to self-evaluate is all very well but it is a practitioner's responsibility to justify activities imposed in children. Any activity introduced into the nursery that claims to deepen learning should be carefully monitored but evidencing self-assessment as a deep learning experience proved difficult to pinpoint at first. Staff intuitively believed self-assessment was conducive to enhanced learning but proving it caused considerable debate.
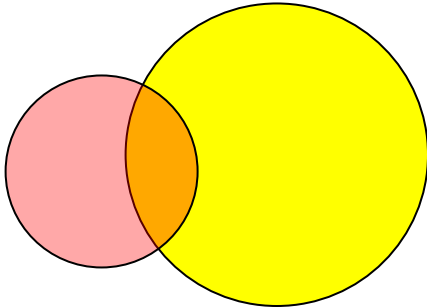
The Curriculum for Excellence 2 (2009:3) states 'an active learning experience is learning which engages and challenges children's thinking'. Staff agreed self-assessment did this by bringing the focus of learning to the forefront of an activity. In essence the child became hyperaware of learning, making the process dynamic and collaborative. Staff recognised this happening particularly during interviews and group activities. The number recognition assessment for example, showed an incredibly quick leap in knowledge after sharing learning gaps and planning next steps together. Also the interviews were interpreted as being longer than anticipated but stimulating, focused and a valuable insight into thinking.

There was, however, a consensus that the right wording and conversation was at the heart of self-assessment. Whitehead (1997: 84) agrees saying early years' settings should be organised to promote genuine mutual conversations between children, adults and other children. To demonstrate the powerful roles language and dialogue play in deepening learning through self-assessment, two models of talking are proposed:

'The Talking About You' model: Children are assessed then talked *about* without input from the child at all. They are not involved in identifying or acknowledging the gaps in their learning. See figure 1.
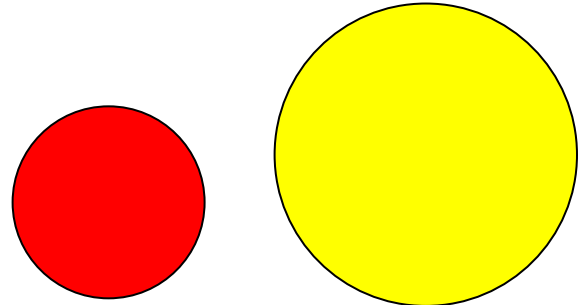
'The Talking With You' model: Children are assessed and talked *with*, placing them equally in a cooperative learning experience and modifying language as appropriate. See figure 2.

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Figure 1   **Figure 2**
'Talking with You' model.   **'Talking about You' model**

Adult and child discussing   Adult and child not in discussion
and focusing on goal.

The Talking with You model echoes Vygotsky's zone of Proximal Learning which illustrates the child's starting point and where he could potentially be with the social environment constructing meaning around activities. Vygotsky (Pound, 2005:39-41) believed that the everyday talking with adults crucially constructed knowledge around language and thinking. This is true when the same principles are applied to learning self-assessment. Indeed the practitioners now wish to further refine meta-cognitive language and transfer the qualities of flow and energy so prominent in interviews and group activities into free play.

This discussion continues by reminding practioners that when considering self-assessment, sustainability should also be evaluated. As the nursery was saturated in meta-cognitivity, it is no surprise levels of self-assessment skill were so elevated. However this level of intervention became intense and fatiguing. Pound (2005: 77) reminds practitioners that unsuitable learning strategies bore and stress children. A colleague also observed 'they've started to roll their eyes and turn away from you'. Such intensity is not to be recommended. The challenge therefore is to incorporate project findings into manageable chunks without compromising learning.

This dialogue concludes by confirming the view that self-assessment can deepen learning but the recurring influence on self-assessment is recognised as positive and modified meta-cognitive language. The words 'I'm learning' are a good starting point. Caution should be taken however to ensure children enjoy the process and do not resent intrusions into their play by overzealousness.

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Personal Learning and Development

As is the nature of action research, separating fact from thought during analysis at times seemed impossible. The data collection was also immense, and although valuable, it hampered the management of time and focus. Allocated time to tasks were either under or overestimated leading to moments of deep frustration.

It is disconcerting to think that routine sets of practices shaping the learning environment were compounding a negative learning output. The research shook some deeply rooted beliefs, particularly the sharing or detailing the individual's gaps in learning with the individual. However, it has been an active learning experience that on the one hand has challenged and on the other allowed joy and optimism to blossom. The words 'I'm Learning' encapsulates the ethos that is now developing.

Conclusion

This paper concludes by stating self-assessment is a feasible tool for learning. Most significant, however, is that self-assessment does not require gimmicks or complex tools. The second is that language and a positive attitude help establish a culture of change, of moving forward. This gave children a sense of comfort and reassurance that they were all on a journey of learning but at different stages. Finally, although self-assessment can lead to a deeper experience it is the day in day out modelling and reinforcing of meta-cognitive language and reflective collaboration that is required to establish the necessary thinking skills to successful self-assessment.

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

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Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Appendix

Appendix 1: Permission letter to parents

Dear Parent,

Subject: Research Project on Self-Assessment

I am currently studying towards a BA in Childhood Practice at the UHI. In order to achieve degree status I must pursue and lead a small action research project. My chosen subject of research is Self Assessment in the Pre-school Years and I wish to answer the following questions:

1. Can self-assessment be a viable and effective tool for learning in pre- school?

2. Does self-assessment happen naturally in free play or formal group times?

3. Can children have or develop the necessary skills to allow the process?

4. How effective is self-assessment at deepening learning in early years and how do we know?

5. Is self-assessment a feasible tool to use in the routine of the nursery life?

It is hoped that this action research project will assist nursery staff to develop their practice in enhancing children's involvement with their learning.

In order to answer the research questions it is necessary to collect:

- Examples of children's work such as drawings, writing, building

- Written documentation of what children think and say about their learning through familiar, everyday practices such as circle time, gym, folder reviews with their key worker. In addition we will be using techniques such as happy/sad faces, thumbs up/down and traffic lights.

Be assured that photographs of children are NOT necessary but photos of work such as a junk model may be used. It is not necessary to identify the children at any time.The final analysis document will be available to those who wish to see it. If you require any further clarification then please ask.

Please indicate below whether you agree or not to allow your child's work and words to be used to support the research project.

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Angela Cameron.

I _____ do/do not give permission for the work and words of _____to be used in a Nursery Action Research Project on Self Assessment in the Pre school Years. I understand that this is led by Angela Cameron and colleagues at Cauldeen Nursery.

Appendix 2: Permission letter to school management

I am currently studying towards a BA in Childhood Practice at the UHI. In order to achieve degree status I must pursue and lead a small action research project. My chosen subject of research is Self Assessment in the Pre-school Years which also happens to be an area for development within the school. It is hoped that this action research project will assist nursery staff to develop their practice in enhancing children's involvement with their learning.

I have enclosed a copy of my research proposal for your consideration. As you will see discussions with my colleagues in the nursery are an essential part of the research process, as well as the collection and analysis of children's work and data. In addition it is proposed that the collection of data should be complete by the week ending Friday 12th March '10. All work and words data belongs to the children and will be returned to their folders or shredded. Observation logs will be kept in our observation folder.

Parents and guardians of the children will all receive the opportunity to agree or disagree to their children's work and words being used to explore self assessment, as well as individual staff members. Please be assured that the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants will be strived for. If, however, a crucial piece of data is necessary to the outcome of the research but could compromise anonymity, then this will be discussed directly with the individual, parent and management before proceeding.

I am writing therefore to seek permission from the school management team in order to proceed with the research proposal. I will require a written response from the school management to satisfy the University's guidelines as soon as possible. If you require any further clarification, please contact me directly.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Angela Cameron

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Appendix 3: An agreed 'core' set of tools

- Thumbs up and down, happy and sad faces and traffic lights to use during observations and dialogues with the adults. These were worked into the natural flow of free play and observed by the adult that engaged with them.

- Promotion of meta-cognitive language: adults would begin to use and model meta-cognitive styled language. These can be summarised as such:

- I'm learning
- I've learnt
- I like
- I don't like
- I'm happy about that
- That's a thumbs up/down(verbal or gesture)
- I wish
- Easy
- Difficult
- Hard
- I'll try again
- Good job, o.k. job or not a good job.

These questions were also used through observations and informal interviews:

- Are you happy with what you have done? If not can you tell me what you are not happy with.
- We are going to learn the following?
- Was that hard for you, easy for you? Maybe next time we'll try something different.
- Show me what you are learning
- How could you do this differently the next time?

Self-assessment in the early Years: A research project by Angela Cameron

Appendix 4: Example of informal interview log

Children's Self Assessment Documentation
(EXCERPT FROM DATA, NOT FULL DATA)

Child's name: Donald Duck

Date of discussion: 24'02'10. no. 19

Summary of learning/subjects reviewed: folder, drawings, and photos.

Summarise the discussion:
Points at every drawing. Describes everyone from memory.
There is a picture of hand prints. We both look at our hands, which are dry not wet with paint. He says 'dry'
A 'sticky picture'. Adult: 'The writing on it says 'it's still wet' but now….' Child: 'it dry. It shiny now'
He points to the last drawing as his best work. He doesn't see the difference between the first and last drawings.

Evaluation: although this flowed well, responses were non-verbal with the adult commenting. The theme of dry and wet recurred several times.
Child said 'I like that', used thumbs up.
Photos a good prompt.

Staff signature:

Appendix 5a: The Star Plan Interview Review example

Plan Review

Adult: In the last star plan you said you wanted to be better at drawing.

Child: I only a little better (at drawing).
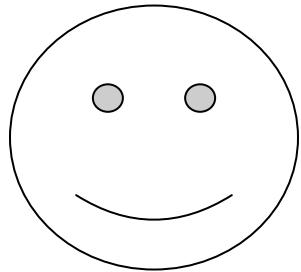
Adult: is that o.k.?

Child: ah-ha.

Adult: Is there anything you wish to be better at now?

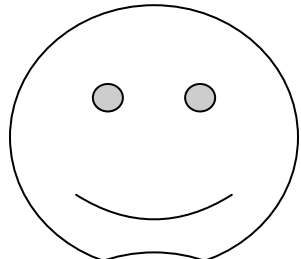Child: I not better at building sandcastles.

Adult: What could you do or I do to help you there?
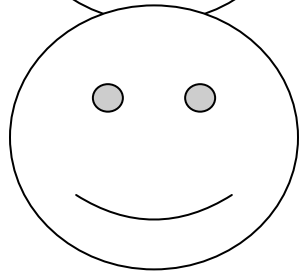
Child: Need a better bucket and a spade. Need water too'

Appendix 5b: The Star plan

I am…….

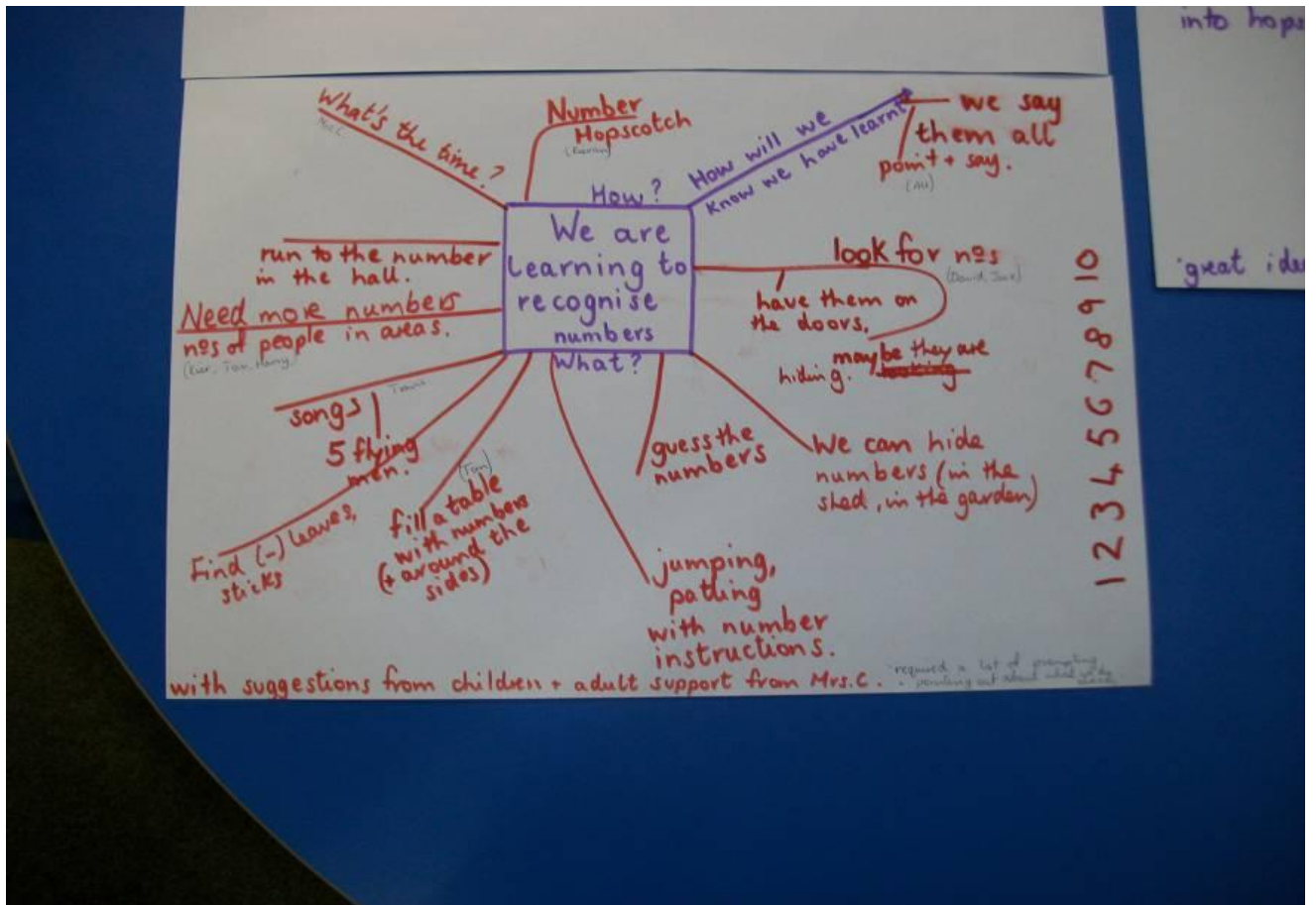**I like……**

I wish……

The   Plan of ………………………, Date:……..

Appendix 6: Mind map on next steps on number recognition

Appendix 7: Example of observation log

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Observation Log –no. 16

Date: 12/02/10
Context: drawing table
Time: a.m.
Description:
'I wish I could draw people'. J drew a circular shape with legs, eyes, mouth. He has progressed but 'I want to draw better'. Adult: 'Look at your first drawings. You have learnt to draw a head now'
I notice he is holding pen awkwardly. We talk that if he wants to draw better then he will need to hold his pen correctly.
'I learnt it a little better'

</div>

Appendix 8: Agreed success criteria discussed at first focus group: Effectiveness of self-assessment at deepening learning?

1. Children will need to show more detail and more thought in their work – How will this be recorded and evidenced?

2. Use of the language

3. What about the Learning Plan- will that show progress?

4. The traffic lights will give our impression of progress.

5. The children use the language and skills necessary for thinking about learning and thinking. Is this enough?

6. There are mind maps but these often only reflect the most verbal and confident thinkers and reflect the knowledge of a select few. How to track progress of the least confident?

7. Also we need to appreciate that children may not remember a learning event

8. One way to show progress would be to have a control group but we feel that this would be unethical and unopportunistic. That's a big no-no for us.

9. Suggestions-
- Two learning objectives with specific and non-negotiable learning goals e.g. shape, number and colour recognition. We outline what needs to be to reach the goals, together we identify the numbers we are not sure about, together we wonder what we could do to learn these, we put these into practice, we put this plan into action, and then we regroup. Then we can evaluate whether we feel we have reached our goal. Did we do a great job?
- Our formal Folder interview- with more specific pointers but is more individual- we are here looking for evidence of actual language. Look at photos and collection of work there. Take cues from the children.

Appendix 9: Excerpt from the second focus group meeting on effectiveness of self-assessment as deep learning and its feasibility

Effectiveness of self-assessment at deepening learning
A: I'm still anxious about this.
T: I think it does.
A: how?
T: it makes me feel that I have learnt something from the exchange.
C: Yes, I think it does.
A: is it just the *dialogue* taking place that prompts the deep learning experience and not specifically the meta-cognitive language or self-assessment prompts?
C: but if we have said that self assessment is a review or thinking back on an activity critically then we are focusing quite deeply on something with that child. We are therefore refocusing, refocusing, and refocusing allowing that child to make connections with learning or to make new thoughts that weren't there before.
A: I get that. I just wonder about evidencing that that.

Feasibility of self assessment in the every day:
A: this is about whether we can do this everyday.
C: It is worthwhile doing but it has to be workable for all It's hard to do everyday. I mean it is difficult to do regularly it is too time consuming.
T: I think we can include it everyday. Using vocabulary is the best.
A: the experts tell us we are meant to do it everyday after activities.
C: Yes but what activities? How do we choose them?
A: can we not include it by discussions?
T: It can be too intense.
A: a few questions here and there in the course of the day?
C: It can be done formally and informally but we have to be careful we do not overdo it.
A: there is a danger that it becomes a chore.
C: the written one for their folders was good.
A: is that because it is written proof?
C: Maybe!
A: I must admit I liked that a lot too. It cannot be done every week, though, it would lose its effectiveness- maybe once a month or term.
A: we can't do this at the same level.
T: some elements fed into our practice.
C: I think we still need to develop our questioning and language skills.
T: yes to feel confident.
A: o.k we could have a list up on the wall at various points.
A: we should start earlier next year – it will be interesting to see how the 'experienced' children develop their skills next year.
C: a termly written assessment is good and manageable.
A: with the Learning Plans?
C: yes, but it needs to feed back as soon as possible into plans.

A: I think we can do that. In fact we were doing that.
C: I'm also thinking that we should have self assessment as a learning outcome.
A: to provide evidence?
C: Yes.
T: we can do it several times.

Appendix 10: List of meta-cognitive skills required for self-assessment

- Correcting, explaining, planning, and reflecting: further broken down into:
- Recognising good work and skills
- Recognising progress
- Recognising gaps in skill
- Develop success criteria/redevelop success criteria or respond to someone else's criteria
- Develop a base of strategies and support
- Recognise what helped previously
- Share ideas with peers and adults
- Memory/recall