

**Transition from Nursery to School Playground: An
Intervention Programme to Promote Emotional and
Social Development.**

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Abstract

*The current climate of early admission to school means that even younger children, some only 48 months of age have to cope with the intricate world of the school playground, with very little preparation. This paper presents selective findings based on practitioner action research. The focus is the transition from nursery playground to the school playground of thirteen nursery children aged between four-years one month to four years four months. The programme aimed at promoting social and emotional development so that the children became more adaptive to challenges in a new context of the school playground. The findings reveal that process and connectivity of the programme promoted a sense of belonging in which the children reciprocally nurtured each other, acknowledged and recognised feelings and formed friendships so that when they started school they became more **resilient** within the school playground. The findings also highlight areas of vulnerability which need to be addressed concerning school routines and very young children.*

Introduction

As a reception class teacher and co-ordinator for Special Educational Needs (SENCO) within a Local Education Authority school, I had become increasingly aware that for some young children starting school the playground was a daunting, frightening place, which in some cases remained so for the whole of their infant life within school (Smith, 1993). Transition to school is a major event in the lives of the children and their families (Yeboah, 2002), and if a positive adjustment is not made within the first year, then it might affect their long-term social adjustment (Kienig, 1999).

Research regarding the notion of a more formal playtime also supports and highlights the difficulties which young children experience when told, *"to go out and play"* (Roffey, Tarrent and Majors, 1994; Dowling, 1995). Not all children have learnt to negotiate relationships and establish friendships; therefore the playground could be a socially isolating environment. Research by Fabian (1998, 2000, 2002) supports the notion that children find the culture of school bewildering, whilst parents are concerned about their child developing friendships, or being bullied. Whereas Scarlett (1983) adds to the debate by suggesting that the socially isolated child spends much time on the sidelines watching others, which in turn can lead to a need for peer direction rather than autonomy. As a result this can mean that the child becomes devalued as a member of a group, with loss of self-esteem and confidence (Weare, 2000). For a young child making the transition to the school playground there are, according to Pacal and Ghaye, 1988, many emotional and social challenges when moving from the order and security of the classroom to the *"activity space"* (p.16).

The playground is also cited as the most probable place that bullying can occur (Olweus, 1993; Whitney and Smith, 1993; Tattum and Tattum, 2000), especially against lonely or isolated children, who according to Ladd, (1990) are selected as victims at the beginning of the school year.

In recent years there has been widespread interest in developing practices to ease children's transition to school. In the U.K. research has included Ghaye and Pascal, (1988), Bennett and Kell, (1989), Cleave and Brown, (1991), Pollard, (1996), Fabian, (1998; 2000, 2002), in Germany, Fthenakis, (1998), in Denmark, Brostrom, (2000), in Australia, Margetts, (2000), and in New Zealand, Peters (1999, 2000,2003). However, the focus of such research has in the main been promoting continuity from preschool to school, with areas of discontinuity highlighted. There has been little research specifically aimed at transition to school playgrounds, even though the playground has been identified as an area of concern (Ghaye and Pascal, 1988; Blatchford, 1998, 1999; Smith and Sharpe, 1994; Sharpe and Cowie, 1998; Smith,2002).

I believe however that schools could do more to address the issues of young children and the playground, through in-school processes as well as playground contexts.

Theoretical Implications

The African proverb *'It Takes a Village to Raise a Child'* (Clinton, 1996) is used within this research to support the notion that children and families do not live in isolation, but within various levels of communities (Wilson, 1998), which all have an impact upon how the child behaves and develops. The needs of the young child starting school and having to cope with the playground need to be met by the support and involvement of a community of people. In this way a broader perspective is taken in trying to understand what really happens to children within the context of the systems in which they live. In trying to understand and interpret the behaviour we are moving away from a deficit model of blame lying within the child.

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992) refers to an ecological perspective in which the child is viewed within the model of a *"system within a system"* (Sharpe and Cowie, 1998, p.13) in which account is taken of values, attitudes and beliefs. The child is central to, participant in, his/her own life, with a sense of its own context and identity. According to Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) there are five systems which guide human development and interaction (figure 1).

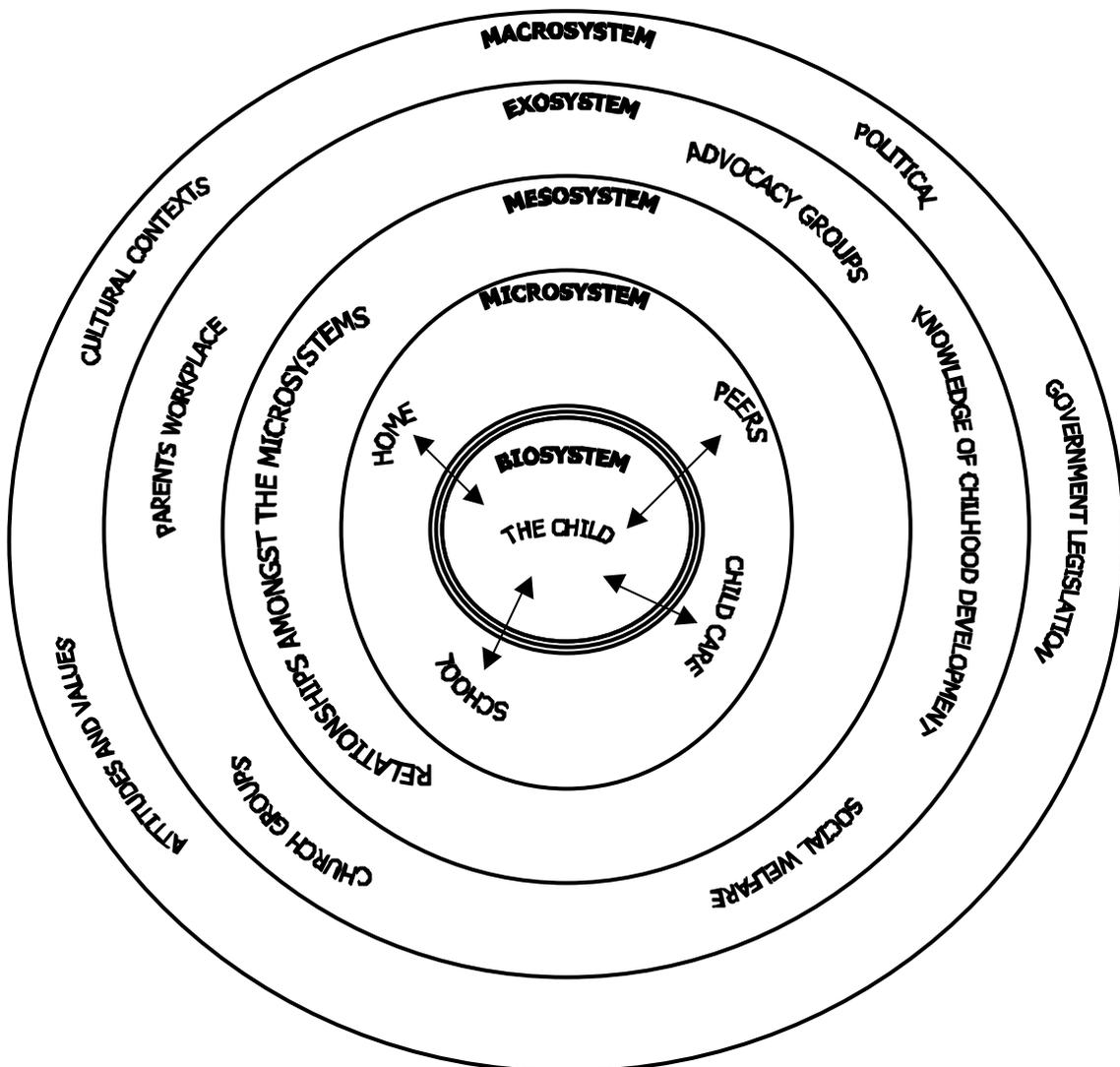


Figure 1. An ecological perspective (the theoretical world of the child). Adapted from Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Bronfenbrenner & Ceci (1994).

The development and behaviour of the child can be influenced by events in any of the systems, and as each child is unique, so is their system. An ecological perspective therefore analyses children's situations on the basis that these situations can be altered or modified through a multi disciplinary approach of collaboration and support (Apter, 1982). In other words, Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1992) offers a developmental frame of reference with a focus upon the child.

The Biosystem.

The biosystem relates to individual differences in attitudes, motivation, ability, temperament and coping strategies, along with the process of time. Children who find the school playground problematic may not have developed the capacity for social understanding. Every child has individual differences regarding personality, emotional expressiveness and interest in other people (Dunn, 1998). How these differences have been promoted and encouraged from birth, will have an impact upon how the child relates and interprets their own feelings and those of others. Authors such as Laevers (1999); Coleman (1996); and Greenhalgh (1994), suggest that emotional well being and emotional literacy help shape the pattern of progress and achievement, and that school success can be predicted by emotional and social measures. How the child interacts within the playground will have some connection to their self perception and self esteem (Lawrence, 1996). Pascal and Bertram (1998) suggest that the child's attitudes, dispositions and inclinations are the intrinsic motivators which sustain children' learning. Therefore it could be claimed that what and how the child has learned before starting school, plus their personal characteristics, will have an impact upon how they react within the playground.

The Microsystem.

This setting is the environment that the developing child inhabits and interacts with: where his/her social life, family, friends, and community, occurs and where he/she forms their identity as perceived by others. It is through the family that the child develops warm and loving relationships, which in turn enables them to explore their environment with confidence. Sharpe and Cowie (1998) suggest,

"that the securely attached child will increasingly engage with their environment and so cognitive and social development is enhanced". (p.7).

Whereas the child who has been rejected, over protected or abused, will become *"emotionally detached"* (Greenhalgh, 1994, p.50) which in turn will make socialisation within the playground very difficult. However, the microsystem of the classroom and playground also has an important role to play in promoting peer friendships and social competence.

The Mesosystem.

The mesosystem focuses upon the relationship amongst the systems in which the child has direct contact, it is a system of microsystems. The home visiting programme, which was undertaken within this study, demonstrates one way of building a positive home/school relationship. Other direct links within the mesosystem would be whether parents attend school functions or whether the school valued parental contributions. Another factor would be whether classmates or peer groups are invited to the child's home to play or whether there was a lack of friends. The relationships among the systems can be either multi linked or weakly linked (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). If the systems work together as partners , not competitors, as a mesosystem model, then the child's experiences and learning will be maximised. The transition to school requires a collaborative model, which addresses the individual needs of both the child and their mesosystem. If playground difficulties are encountered there needs to be a consensus of support from school, home and peer groups. Both the Children's Act (DOH, 1989) and the Code of Practice (DfES, 2001) advocate a partnership between home and school so that the best interest of the child can be addressed.

The Exosystem.

The exosystem does not directly contain the child, but does have an indirect influence upon the child's life. The exosystem represents the organisations, events and values that influence the developing child's immediate life and family, but with which he/she may not necessarily come into contact. An example could be negative pressures within a parent's workplace causing parental stress, which in turn prevents the parents from coping with any of their child's transitional difficulties. The parents' own school experiences could also have either a positive or negative impact

upon the child. The external pressures experienced by the parent have a cascade effect upon how they are able to manage emotional experiences such as the child starting school.

The Macrosystem.

The macrosystem focuses upon the cultural beliefs, values and attitudes, that prevail in society. The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) presents a global consensus about the rights of children and their quality of life. How schools interpret this within inclusive settings (Bennathen and Boxall, 2000) provides insights into their values and culture (Freiberg, 1999). Ofsted requirements and Government reports, have insured that schools address 'induction policies', but the playground remains a neglected area within many of such policies, despite the recommendations for change suggested by Cleave and Jowett, 1982; Barratt, 1986; Pascal and Ghaye, 1988, who found that for some children the transition to the playground caused distress.

The systems theory framework presents an effective intervention strategy for individual children, families and communities where efforts are coordinated rather than isolated from each other. I would suggest that adopting such a model as part of everyday practice will help everyone within 'the village'. It takes commitment to apply such a model, it is not an easy option within the current educational climate of reform and not everyone will see the value of an ecological approach. However, as David (1999) states,

"Changing minds is not only about the cognitive processes of learning, it is about changing hearts and values too" (p.10).

Research Sample.

The sample of children was drawn from one Local Education Authority school, which had a population of 200 children, expanding to 260 with the addition of the nursery class. There are two study groups, which represent 'purposive sampling' (Mason, 1996).

- **Cohort A.**

Cohort A comprised of six reception class children, three boys and three girls, aged four years and six months to four years and ten months. They were the only new entrants in the summer term, with myself as teacher of the reception class. They had had no school based nursery education.

- **Cohort B.**

Cohort B comprised of thirteen nursery children, being the oldest children in the nursery aged between four years one month to four years four months, who were to be the first children from the new nursery class, to make the transition to school. The self-contained nursery building with its own separate playground was a distance away from the school.

Although there were two separate cohorts of A and B within my research, they were not used as comparative sampling units with each other, but rather as a theoretical understanding of how each cohort experienced the social context of the school playground. Cohort A, had no intervention programme, and Cohort B, had an intervention programme. The focus for comparison was the intervention programme.

Data Collection Techniques

Home Visits provided personal profiles and an ecosystemic perspective, (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) of both Cohort A and Cohort B.

(Cohort A) Target Child Observations (Boulton, 1992).

Each child was observed for six sessions of 20 minutes duration during morning and afternoon playtimes in the playground throughout the term. A total of 120 minutes per child.

From this raw observational data each focal child's activities were classified using an adaptation of Sylva et al (1980) social coding scale.

Data was qualified through,

- Child tracking, using a map of the playground.
- Social grouping;
- Task coding.

This analysis highlighted how the children left the classroom, which areas of the school playground and school field they played in, whether they were alone or in social groups, and how they behaved or interacted. As the non-participant observer, I was able to adopt an interpretive approach (Corsaro, 1985) to life in the school playground.

(Cohort B) Participant Observation through the use of Field Notes

Watching and listening gained a complementary perspective of the "*real world situations*" (Robson, 2001). Informal note taking, journal entries and unstructured field notes were used to capture how the individual children of Cohort B were responding throughout the programme. More systematic observation schedules (Pollard and Tann, 1987) were used to record whether the children could make a daily choice of activity, and what the activity was. A timed observation schedule was used to record who the children played and interacted with, in the nursery context and within the playground.

Audio Recording, Video Recording and Photography

The Cohort B group sessions regarding Box Full Of Emotions and friendship were audio taped.

The Intervention Programme

Data which had previously been collected in the school playground using Cohort A, highlighted specific elements needed to shape an intervention programme. Certain 'needs/dispositions' were identified including the following:

- Children need to have gained independence and have a certain amount of autonomy.
- They need to have positive self-esteem.
- Children need emotional stability. They need to be able to recognise emotions in both themselves and others.
- Children need to be aware of positive behaviour and to know right from wrong.
- Children need good communication skills, both verbal and non verbal, in order to exchange information, communicate ideas and play.
- Children need to have moved from an egocentric stance and have an ability to see things from a different perspective.
- Young children need social skills, which enable them to join in activities, or encourages them to include others.
- Children need to be able to make friends.
- Children need to feel a sense of belonging.

If, at their own level of maturity, children can be helped to develop the understandings and behaviours to deal constructively with these needs, it is my belief that they would then make a far more positive entry into the social world of the school playground. Therefore an intervention programme which addressed these areas and promoted friendships would provide the curricular vehicle for such a transition.

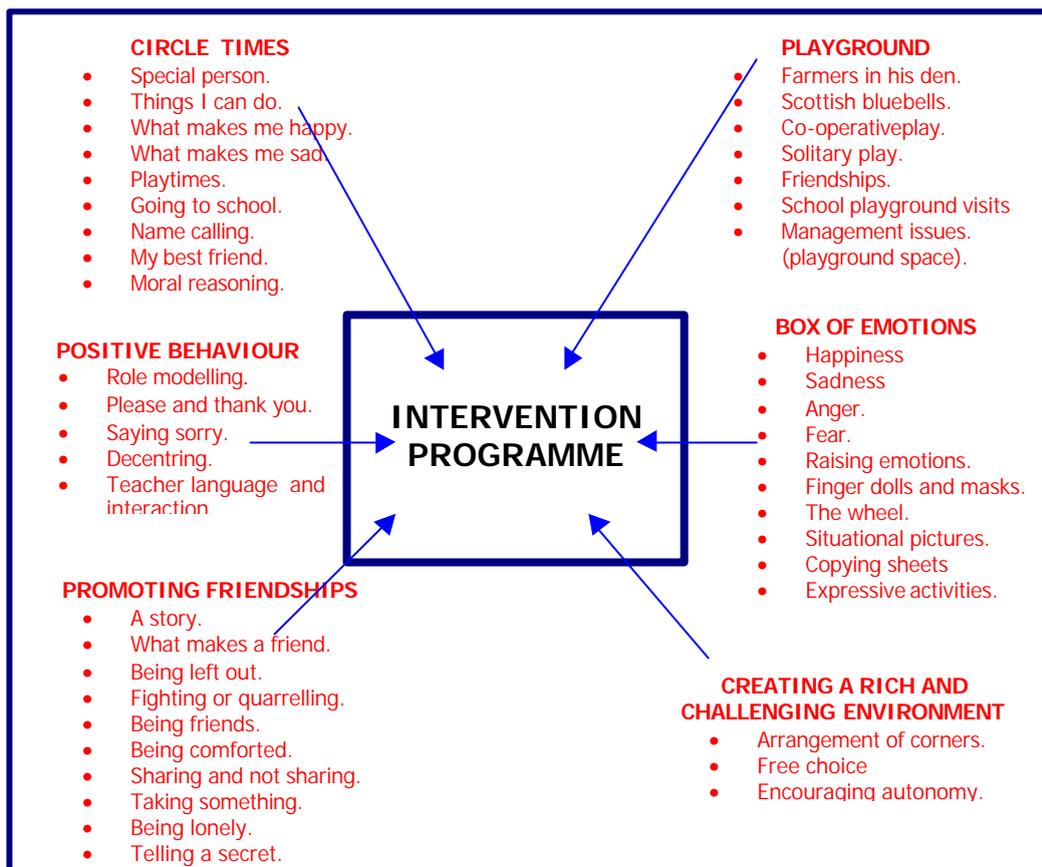


Figure 2.

Intervention Programme

When considering a programme of support for the four-year old children in the nursery I was able to succinctly condense the issues which had emerged from the Cohort A data analysis, into six specific areas of consideration. These areas consisted of:

- Developing self-esteem.
- Recognition of emotions.
- Promoting friendships.
- Encouraging independent choice.
- Role modelling positive behaviour.
- Playground activities.

Each area was of equal importance, intricately woven to help shape and support the children. The programme was systematically introduced over a period of two terms, which was the time that the children spent in the nursery before making the transition to school. Playground research (Blatchford and Sharp, 1994: Blatchford, 1999)) suggests that involving the children themselves in decision-making and conflict resolution is the most successful contribution in effecting changes to social behaviour in the playground. With this in mind, and with the data analysis from the previous cohort, a programme was devised. (fig.2.)

First and foremost, the nursery layout needed to be thoughtfully planned in order to promote independent learning. It needed to provide a place where children could make decisions, and be encouraged to take ownership. Within such an environment I could then address the five further issues, which had arisen from Cohort A data analysis.

Secondly, I had in previous years used circle-time activities with older children, in order to raise awareness, develop a sense of collaboration and to solve problems. It was a technique which I valued therefore I decided to adapt it for

use with four-year-old children and incorporate self esteem activities as well as using the process as a vehicle for dialogue.

Thirdly, data collected from Cohort A (reception children) outlined the importance of friendships or playmates within the playground. The lonely, quiet or anxious child typically needed a constant companion whom they could relate to, and play with, when amongst the large crowds within the playground. Therefore I focused upon promoting friendships in the nursery, through encouraging co-operative play and through actually teaching friendship skills. For this purpose I used a citizenship resource, which included large pictures and stories for promoting such friendship and which also encouraged moral reasoning. (Rowe and Newton, 1994.)

Fourthly, for all social interactions children need to be able to recognise emotions in both themselves and their peers. This is particularly true within the playground where the management of behaviour can be problematic. For some children such recognition and articulation needs to be carefully taught, as they have not had the opportunity within their own families to talk about their feelings. So for this part of my intervention programme I used a set of materials namely A Box of Full of Feelings, developed in Belgium by Professor Ferre Laevers (1994). These materials were appealing, practical and easily accessible to young children and offered a carefully structured teaching tool to reinforce emotional recognition.

Fifthly, the final elements revealed by the data analysis were the significance of positive behaviour within the playground and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. To address this within the nursery there needed to be a consensus of opinion between all staff regarding teaching styles, behaviour management and appropriate role modelling.

Finally, a part of the programme needed to include the dynamics and geography of the playground itself. The nursery children needed to learn some traditional games which they could play together, either in the nursery playground or when they moved to the school playground. I felt that the children also needed to experience the school play ground before actually starting school. So for one playtime each week we made the transition to the school playground and into the designated area for the reception class children. These visits helped to ease the 'fear

of the unknown' and helped the youngest children to adapt to the noise and bustle of a busy playground. It was a deliberate awareness raising strategy, a form of desensitisation to the unfamiliar setting.

Implementation of the Programme.

The programme evolved through a series of mini-cycles, a flexible model which enabled myself as the teacher researcher to use my intuitive theory or '*knowing in action*' (Ghaye and Ghaye 1998. p4). I introduced this first four-week cycle as a reconnaissance phase during which I observed how the children reacted to each part of the programme. This reflection on practice helped me to shape the next cycle.

o **Circle Times**

Throughout each week two separate and distinctive circle-time activities were introduced. At the beginning of each week a 'Special Person' circle time operated, and at the end of the week a 'democratic' circle-time was used for the children to discuss concerns, and debate specific issues. Although these two circle-times had different aims the philosophy was the same, both being vehicles for promoting a positive nursery environment where everyone was listened to and had equal rights and opportunities. (Wolfendale, 1997).

o **The Format**

The way in which a self esteem enhancement programme is introduced to the children is absolutely crucial in determining whether or not it will be successful (Lawrence, 1996). I wanted the children to believe that they were a special person and that they had many attributes and accomplishments. The ritual of using a golden magic box was sustained through my dramatic use of voice and exaggerated gestures, living the moment with the children and appearing surprised when a name appeared. Written recording of each child's response was displayed on the wall providing evidence of affirmation from the children themselves, and showing appreciation and acknowledgement of other people's qualities. It was a way of nurturing each other and so promoting positive relationships, as well as enhancing the self-esteem of the chosen child.

Democratic Circle-Times

Throughout the programme the topics for discussion during the democratic circle times were,

- Things I can do;
- What makes you happy?
- What makes you sad?
- Has anyone called you names?
- Playtimes
- Going to school
- Name calling
- My best friend
- Moral reasoning

For each session the children held a large teddy bear when it was their turn to speak. The bear was used to give support and security when held and was also used as a signal to speak. Within the circle you listened until the bear was passed to you. I found that the quieter, more shy, children would in the first instance talk to the bear rather than the group. However, once they felt comfortable and not threatened by the process they gradually gained in confidence and turned the bear around to face the other children.

• **Emotional Well-Being Strategies.**

Being able to identify, name and distinguish between feelings is a key emotional skill (Dunn, 1993; Goleman, 1996) so I felt that an appropriate strategy for encouraging such identification needed to be gradually but systematically introduced into the nursery curriculum, through using 'A Box Full of Feelings'. Experiential dialogue (Laevers and Van Sanden, 1995) was another important strand of emotional growth, which was linked to our behaviour policy in which the children were encouraged to have respect and care for others. When a child upset

one of their peers they were asked to not only say sorry, but to talk about how they were feeling, and more importantly, how the victim was feeling. In this way both children were exploring and sharing their feelings, which enabled a more positive conflict resolution strategy to be initiated. The more often the children used this approach the more natural the process became. They were learning to handle their emotions, a particularly important development, particularly for the children who displayed socio-emotional difficulties, or the children who had poor communication skills, and so often resorted to physical expression rather than linguistic expression.

- o **A Box Full of Feelings: Getting started**

Introducing the four basic emotions of happiness, sadness, anger and fear, all at once could be confusing for such young children so it was decided for the first four weeks to introduce one emotion each week and explore this emotion in depth.

- o **The Format**

Each week as the large picture was shown to the children three stages of introduction were used in order to help the children to identify the emotion. Firstly the children were asked 'How do you think this little girl is feeling?' The children were asked individually and given time to think about their response.

Secondly, when everyone had given a response their attention was drawn to the posture of the figure with the view of raising their awareness of body language associated with the emotion.

The third stage of this process was transferring the emotion to their personal experience by asking the questions "What makes you feel happy? What makes you feel sad? What makes you angry? "Have you ever been scared?"

Although A Box Full of Feelings has been carefully constructed to provide a scaffolding approach to working with emotions there is no time limit and the process is continual. Therefore throughout the rest of each week activities were provided which sometimes supported the emotion and other times did not. For some children, being confronted by strong emotions day after day would be too much, or appear threatening, so a balance had to be found. To supplement each weekly emotion a carefully chosen story was told which the children could recognise as depicting the weekly emotion. These story sessions were with the whole of the nursery group, all thirty children. This had a cascade effect upon the younger children as they began to recognise emotions through the use of stories.

Weeks 5-8 included exploring emotions through the use of drama. Whilst weeks 9-13 involved using finger puppets, masks, emotion houses and line drawings from the Box Full of Feelings

- **Promoting Friendships.**

The third vital element of the programme focussed upon promoting friendships. The data analysis of Cohort A suggested that if children were able to socially interact and make friends they were more likely to have positive experiences within the playground. Further research suggests that unpopular, aggressive, or socially withdrawn children tend to perform poorly at school (Putallaz and Gottman, 1981) and have difficulty in forming adult relationships in later life. Therefore learning to make friends and how to make friends needs to be promoted firstly through the family and then the nursery and school. The nursery environment provides the ideal context within which to promote the skills of communicating, sharing, perspective taking, empathy and socialising through play. If young children learn these skills before they start school then they are more likely to be able to initiate friendships within the playground. Research (Duck, 1991) suggests that the relationships which are formed at nursery school are likely to affect the child's whole future, particularly in the areas of disliking and rejection.

In order to promote friendships and raise the children's awareness of social or anti-social behaviour, a commercially produced set of materials was used for specific sessions each week (Rowe and Newton, 1994). To sustain and nurture these weekly sessions every natural opportunity within the daily routines was utilized, with emphasis upon the word 'friend'. Social occasions such as arrival time, circle times and playtimes when coats had to be put on, were used as ideal opportunities for helping each other and promoting friendships. As the weeks began to unfold the children themselves prompted each other regarding their feelings and general protectiveness

- o **Getting Started**

The sessions lasted approximately twenty minutes depending upon the length of discussions, and responses were tape recorded in order to allow myself to interact fully within the group discussions.

o **The Format**

The first session was introduced as a story, and my role was to encourage children to suggest possible answers to open-ended questions, which needed philosophical answers (Lipman, 1991). Questions related to moral reasoning, for thinking things through, for community building, for making friends and getting to know people. Four-year-old children are mostly active and any activity which required verbal responses needed to also have some element of surprise in order to maintain the children's enthusiasm and interest. Therefore puppets, dolls and pictures were used as supporting materials.

The following sessions were introduced in pictorial form using line drawings of children, with each week depicting a different situation:

- being left out;
- what makes a friend;
- fighting or quarrelling (boys and girls);
- being friends (involving two and three people).
- Being friends involving two or more (boys and girls).
- Unfriendly behaviour by an aggressive girl.
- Sharing.
- Not sharing
- Being comforted
- Taking(stealing) something
- Being lonely
- Telling a secret.

As the weeks progressed the children became more confident and assimilated what they had learned and reasoned from these sessions. Their acts of friendship making and moral reasoning began to become a more obvious part of the nursery routines and playground behaviour.

How Connectivity Emerged

As I analysed and reflected upon the programme, I became aware that a further dimension of the programme was evolving, which I have called '**connectivity**'. I could feel and see the connectedness having an impact upon the children as they became more involved. I chose this description to demonstrate how the daily sessions linked with each other, not only throughout the week, but also across the thirteen-week cycle. I felt that it was this connectivity which made the programme more meaningful to the children and gave it its uniqueness.

The first four-week reconnaissance phase also highlighted that the intervention programme could be used as a vehicle for diagnostic assessment regarding linguistic development, social and emotional well being and personality, behaviour, and cognitive development.

Transition to the School Playground

This was the final cycle of action and reflection. To enhance the trustworthiness of my account I used complementary triangulation. This is shown in Figure 3.

Each child was observed for 6 sessions of 20 minutes duration, during morning and afternoon playtimes in the school playground for one term (13 weeks). As 'marginal' participant observer (Robson, 2000) field notes were used to record what Cohort B did, with whom and where.

- Audio recording of semi structured conversations with Cohort B
- Photographic evidence of critical incidents regarding friendships and play
- Audiotape recording of reception class teacher informal conversation
- Six Lunchtime supervisor's perceptions through diaries and interviews.
- Twelve parental diaries and conversations

COMPLEMENTARY TRIANGULATION OF EVIDENCE

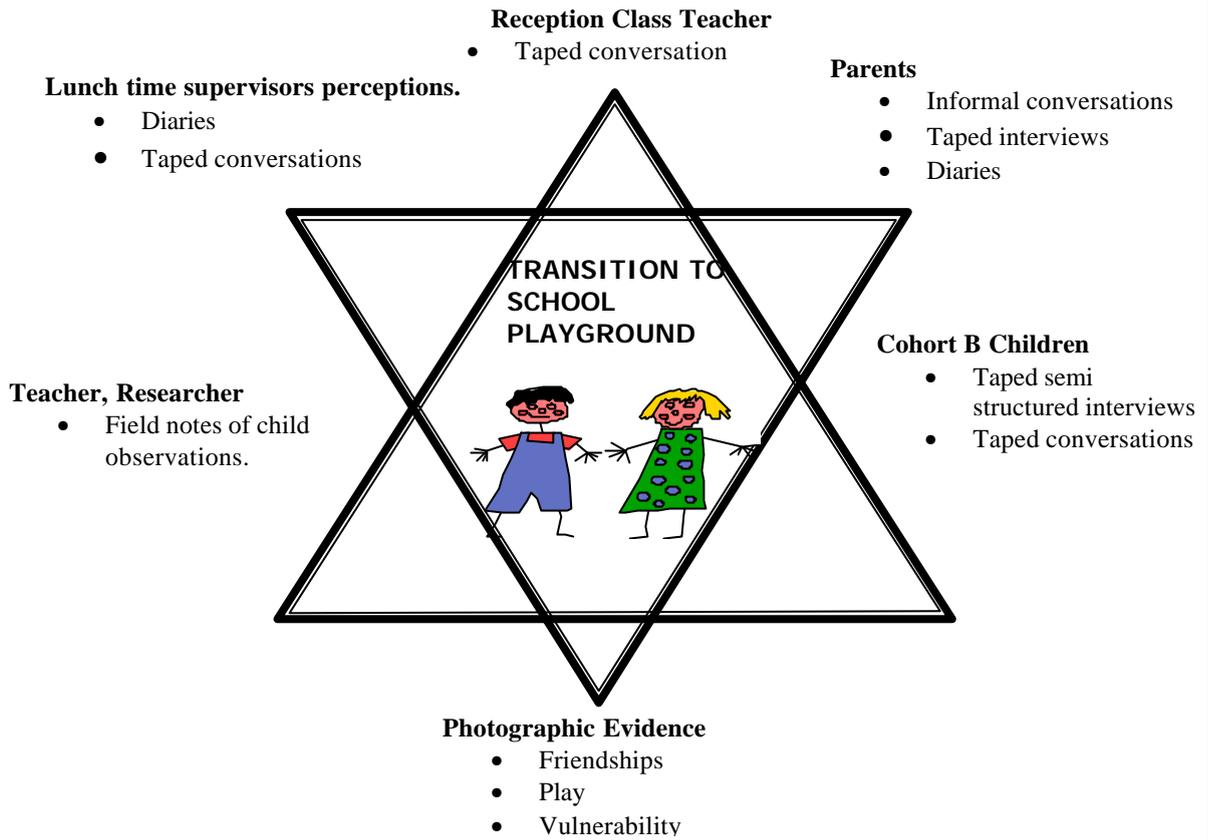
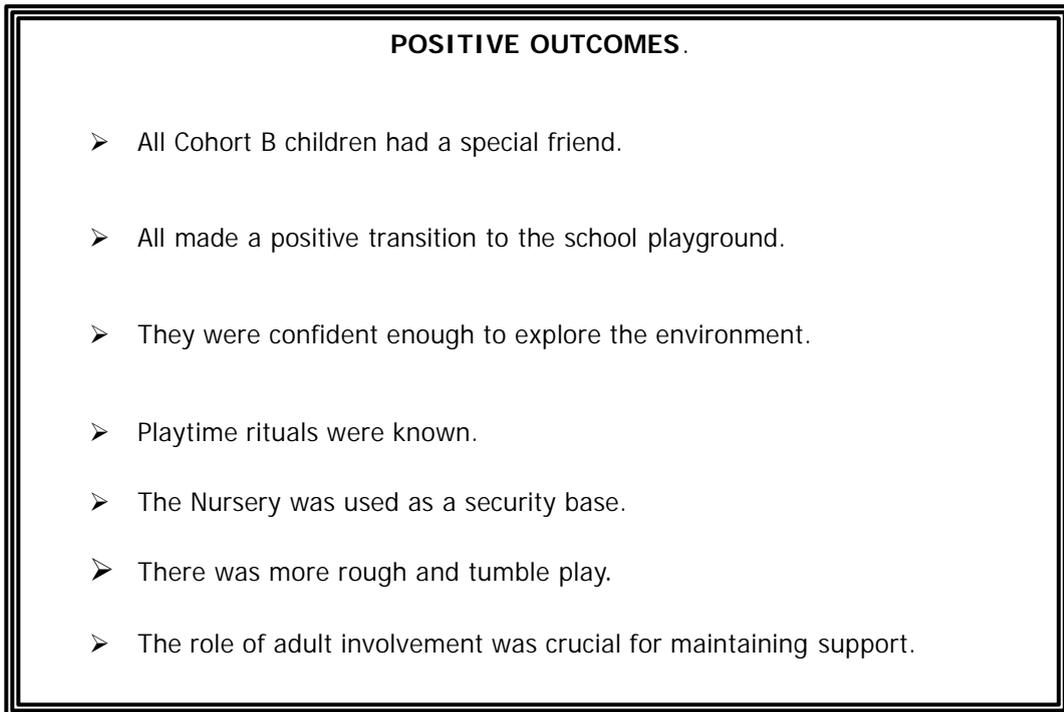


Figure 3.

Complimentary Triangulation of Evidence

Analysis reveals the following major positive issues. (Figure 4.)



Areas were identified which need to be addressed through future school policy. These are shown in figure 5.



Figure 5.

Areas for development

Conclusion

Overall analysis of data highlights the fact that Cohort B displayed varying degrees of resilience (Howard, Dryden & Johnson, 1999; Krovetz, 1999) which helped them to be socially integrated within the playground. Triangulation of data shows they continued to play together as a group, which also included other siblings. They looked out for each other if one of them was in trouble or got hurt, and this collective bonding helped to sustain resilience against possible risk factors, such as being bullied or falling over, or lunchtime difficulties.

The fact that the theoretical framework for this research was embedded within an ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994) meant that the process- person-context model enabled researcher, staff, parents and children to work together in order to sustain the children's resilience, which had been promoted through the intervention programme. I would suggest that when considering future school practice and policy there are specific issues which need to be addressed. These include the following:

- **The Intervention Programme.**

The programme could become part of a developmentally appropriate curriculum within the Foundation Stage (QCA 2000), with emphasis upon **process**.

- **School Routines**

Lunch times continue to cause confusion and upset for some younger children. How can schools address this?

- **Tiredness**

How can this be addressed for the younger children?

- **Vulnerable children in the playground.**

What extra support can be offered so that shy or lonely children are socially included in their first weeks at school?

- **Lunchtime Supervisors**

The lunchtime supervisors played an important part in this research, which raised their self-esteem. How can this be maintained? How can their role be developed?

- **A Playground Co-Ordinator**

Analysis of findings highlights the importance of the researcher's role in linking the programme to the school playground interactions, so that effective intervention could be implemented when risk factors were highlighted. It could be assumed that without this co-ordination the children would have been more vulnerable. Therefore, I would suggest there needs to be a named person, a point of contact for parents, lunchtime supervisors and staff whose role it is to co-ordinate action. Could this be a lunchtime supervisor? Could a Playground Co-Ordinator be appointed?

The programme within this research helped to give everyone **a sense of belonging** by encouraging a nurturing ethos, which enabled those involved to feel valued, supported and to look after each other.

This sense of belonging developed and became stronger through the connectivity of the daily and weekly strands of the programme. As the programme evolved, so the **connectivity** strengthened and sustained its impact.

The sense of belonging and connectivity of the programme took the children parents and staff through **transitions of learning** and **transition of place**. The whole process promoted democracy and resilience so that the children became more equipped to make a positive transition to the school playground.

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