

## **ADULT AND STAFF INTERACTIONS – TYPE AND FREQUENCY©**

### How to measure the type and frequency of interactions between children and adults

This tally chart was used in 2011 to measure what was happening when adults and children interacted with each other in the outdoor environment. The results of which are written up in: Bilton, H. (2012). The type and frequency of interactions that occur between staff and children outside in Early Years Foundation Stage settings during a fixed playtime period when there are tricycles available. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 20, (3), 403-421. doi: 10.1080/1350293X.2012.704763

The way to carry out this observation is as follows: One person needs to be the observer and note down (with a strike (I)) in the correct row descriptor every time an adult approaches a child or when a child approaches an adult. Observe for a 20 minute period. This can be repeated around 12 times over a four week period. In this way staff can analyse the types of interactions they are having with children.

The interactions listed in red are those which have the potential to extend thought and language. All the rest are what can be classed as monitorial or domestic, meaning they are demands to do or not to do something and are not going to develop higher order thinking or language. Although these types of routine interactions are a part of everyday life they should not be at the expense of those interactions which encourage thinking and language.

TALLY CHART BELOW

| <b>Tally chart to measure the type and frequency of interactions between children and adults</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Interaction initiated by child</b>  | <b>Number of incidences in a 20 minute period</b> |
| To ask to play, e.g. 'Will you play with me?'  |   |
| To talk about a discovery, e.g. 'Look what I have found...'                                      |   |
| To talk about something the child has done/made/created, e.g. 'Look at this...' 'I am...'        |   |
| To ask for help as they are hurt, e.g. 'I've got hurt.'  |   |
| To mend something, e.g. 'Can you mend this?'   |   |
| To sort a disagreement, e.g. 'Jayne is being horrible, won't let me...'                          |   |
| To find a resource and give back something, e.g. 'Can I have...? Can I have my ...back?'         |   |
| To seek clarification, e.g. 'Do you want us to...'   |   |

| <b>Interaction initiated by the adult</b>  | <b>Number of incidences in a 20 minute period</b> |
|--|---|
| <b>Adult facilitating learning- why/how/what/encouraging questions</b>             |   |
| Asking what something is, e.g. a picture   |   |
| Whether assistance is needed – dressing, hanging a painting or how to do something |   |
| A request to stop, share, e.g. if something is viewed as dangerous/ unkind         |   |
| Welfare enquiry, e.g. 'Are you alright?'   |   |
| A request to do something, e.g. to put an apron/coat on/go inside                  |   |
| Offering an observation- e.g. 'You are going fast, there's a long queue'           |   |