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| Fieldnote Note | 20 | Date | 19/7/21 |
| Locations | Bungalow 3, Campus | Weather | Warm and sunny |
| Child interactions | Red, Bea, Norman, Dennis, Graham, Daniel, Eva, and [one of the children] | Staff Interactions | Pru, Jeanette, Blane, Mick, Monty, Mary, Cheryl, Helen, Philippa |
| Times | 2pm – 7pm | Total Time in field | 5 hours |

Arrived on a sunny campus today saying hellos to Graham, Philippa and Mary on my way past Bungalow 1 and then more hellos to Gary, Blane, Eva, [one of the children] and Junior (the latter three being in a paddling pool in front of bungalow 2).

All was relatively quiet up at Bungalow 3, Red and Norman had headed past me with Mick to Bungalow 2 and in the Bungalow (3), I found Pru, Monty and Bob in the kitchen having just finished their (late) lunch. After some small talk, this small group dispersed through the bungalow and I saw that [one of the children] [data removed as consent could not be established]

After a little while, Monty came through from the office and noted that both Red and [one of the children] had not tidied their rooms today and that they would have to do this before any other activities today. When resistance was voiced, Monty just came back with ‘well it’s going to be a very boring day today then’. Pru took up the mantle of getting [one of the children] to tidy [their] room, which was strongly resisted at first but eventually through persuasion and good humour, she convinced [one of the children] that it was in [their] best interests to get on with the tidying and went with [them] to help. As they left the room, Red entered it, taking up a position on the couch and getting the remote for the TV – [data removed as consent could not be established]

Red was flicking about with the TV while also holding on to a tennis racket. He said “I want to die” at one point, to which I replied “that bad huh?”. He confirmed but remained vague but later told me that his family contact had to be rearranged again and he was quite aggrieved about it. He didn’t engage me in conversation about his tennis racket and kept on flicking through the TV, putting on Youtube, which I discovered was disallowed when Monty came into the lounge and joked around with him about being up to things he shouldn’t be as Red had been unable to flick back to Netflix in time to avoid being caught. Norman joined this group and engaged Monty in physical play around the corner seat. Monty seems to be quite adept at the physical play and up for a laugh with the children, even though he has to regularly remind them of boundaries and not to take things ‘too far’. I noticed how very comfortable Norman was with Monty and the level of physical intimacy between them – not just rough and tumble, but standing with his arms around him while they were not playing etc. I was thinking how good it is for the children to have such warm relationships in their lives.

Helen arrived in from Bungalow 2 looking for help to make up flat pack storage boxes – she was looking to see how one was put together and then she could put together the others that she got. Monty, Norman and Red all stepped forward to help. Red quickly decided it couldn’t be done and disengaged. I stepped in to see if I could help but Norman was actually getting it done and so I took a step back. He put the box together and Helen asked him if he would come and help her make up the other ones and he readily agreed to this and headed off with her.

Bob came in and sat next to Red on the couch and showed him a picture/video on his phone of a 12-yo skateboard champion – it sounded like this was a continuation of an ongoing conversation between them and that Red was especially interested in the topic. Red then went off to get involved with the paddling pool at Bungalow 2. While Bob sorted some laundry, I chatted to him periodically while standing near him at the open front door and listening to the laughter coming from beyond Bungalow 2. We were periodically interrupted by [one of the children] who was looking for excuses to get out of tidying [their] room, but Pru was persistent and made sure [they] saw it through to the end. I was commenting on how the entrance path had been coloured with bright chalk – it was big chunky chalk as it would be difficult to do this with a normal sized piece:

[Picture saved separately]

Pru said she was amazed at this activity as things had been quite tense in the bungalow and then [one of the children] came out with the chunky chalk and all of the kids were acquiesced and got involved.

After a while, I walked down to bungalow 2 with Casey at her suggestion and joined a mixed group of children and staff from different Bungalows. The children were in and around the paddling pool and offering soaking wet hugs to various adults – I’m a bit too quick for most of them. This involved in varying degrees [one of the children], Eva, Dennis, Graham and Norma (later [another one of the children], Daniel and Red to an extent) in the paddling pool and Bob, Blane, Mick, Cheryl, Mary, Helen, and Pru. Permutations changed and flowed and staff checked in with each other to say – ‘where did Graham go there’ to make sure everyone was accounted for. For the first hour of this, the staff were largely in a supervisory role being brought in by the children at different times through wet hugs or splashes, or intervening to call for one or other of the children to have a ‘time out’ as things were beginning to escalate. Staff chatted to each other and we confirmed in our conversations how good it is for children to get out in summer and play and entertain themselves. Mick told me about how well the camping trip with Graham, Dennis, Junior and James had gone the other week and how Graham had told him it had been his ‘best holiday yet’. He showed me pictures of their wild camping site and of the river they were next to and seemed to have really enjoyed it himself. Red had a bit of physical play with Mick at the bench where we were sitting and it reminded me of the kind of intimacy between Norman and Monty earlier although Red is in Bungalow 3 and Mick mainly in Bungalow 2, so these kinds of closeness and relationships extend across the whole campus and I realised that this seems to be the case with most staff and children (not all very physical, but established, comfortable relationships).

Staff were also able to chat to each other and discuss things like some of them had a recent night out together for the first time in a while, things that were going on with them personally, things that were going on with the kids. The took joy in the children and their personalities – we were all laughing when Mary comment how Graham and Dennis were ‘total boys’ because they were laughing with each other using the hose to make it look like they were peeing in the pool. While chatting to Cheryl at one point, she was talking about some of the times she’s been spending with the children late and how much she really loves her job. I can see why.

Things started to get reigned in a bit at the paddling pool with first [one of the children] then Eva having their pool time brought to a complete halt (Junior had been inside the whole time I had been there as he had been struggling to ‘regulate’ earlier). The boys from bungalow 1 were then heading in for post-paddling pool baths and I headed up to Bungalow 3 where Pru was preparing the tea.

I chatted to Pru in the kitchen for a while, talking about working in residential and what the work is like, where we worked before etc. Pru has been there for 7 years and she seems to really like the work – she comes across as a very calm, measured, and kind woman.

At tea it was Norman, Red, Pru, Jeanette, [one of the children] and me. Red refused the steak/chicken bakes and while [one of the children] initially resisted, Pru was sure [they] would like the steak bakes and was proved right when [one of the children] asked for a second one (Pru winking at me at this point). The kids initiated a ‘say something nice about everyone at the table’ game, putting me on the spot by making me go first. This was nice although I think both Jeanette and I struggled with each other as we hadn’t spent that much time together but complemented each other nonetheless. Pru later told me that this was nice and she thought the kids had initiated it because I was there (someone new). [one of the children] asked for help cutting [their] steak bake and Red offered to do this and was very kind in his approach to this.

After dinner and tidying up, the kids disappeared into their rooms – Pru was amazed and said this ‘never happens’. I ended up sitting with her on wee seats outside the rooms as [one of the children] in particular is ‘a runner’ – meaning [they] can go off and do whatever [they] feel like without telling anyone [data removed as consent could not be established]. Pru was having some stress as she was not down for a sleepover tonight but this was what had been put on the main rota and now she was feeling obliged as Helen had said she couldn’t ‘cover her sleepover’. Ailey arrived up to help Pru with [one of the children] and Norman (Red having headed out for a drive with Jeanette). Pru went off to discuss with Helen and Ailey and I chatted about the project, another project I’m getting involved in, and our general impressions of the children and the work here. After Pru got back, followed by Helen, I said my goodbyes and left.