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| Fieldnote Note | 3 | Date | 3/5/21 |
| Locations | Bungalow 2 | Weather | Cold with heavy rain all day |
| Child interactions | [one of the children], Junior, Serge, Eva and Jonny | Staff Interactions | Ronnie, Quin, Helen, Blane, Duncan, Florence, Heidi, Philippa, Millerton and Diane |
| Times | 9am – 6.30pm | Total Time in field | 8.5 hours |

Arrived this morning to a seemingly quiet and relaxed Bungalow 2 where [one of the children] was having her breakfast with Heidi. Shortly after arriving however, [data removed as consent could not be established] The staff here are trying to manage behaviour in a variety of ways, sometimes simultaneously – making the point that behaviour is unacceptable, giving reassurance, and lightening the tension/mood with humour and playfulness.

Millerton was in today to go and take Dom out from his parents – he goes to his parents at the weekend and typically returns after school on a Monday but, as this was a bank holiday, he won’t return until tomorrow. They had word from Dom’s parents that he was struggling, so he was going to take him out on his bike or for a walk or something. He left shortly after I arrived, as did Blane who had been on sleepover. Other staff were coming and going from the kitchen, where I decided to position myself as Eva and Junior were still in their bed/bedrooms and the kitchen is a vantage point from which to interact as everyone comes and goes from there regularly. My attention was caught by Helen sorting out the washing, calling out names as she sorted the items out ‘[X]’s, [X]’s, Eva’s, Junior’s, [X]’s, Junior’s, Eva’s’. Eva and Junior came and went separately, making their respective requests for breakfasts (pop tarts, pancakes with Nutella), which Heidi sorted out for them and took to their rooms. While she sorted the breakfasts, Heidi talked with me about [one of the children] and noted that [one of the children] likes her, and they have a good relationship, and this can make her the target of both [one of the children’s] affections and aggressions. [data removed as consent could not be established] Heidi implied that a ‘therapeutic environment’ was not enough in this case and, in her opinion, more specialist intervention should be going on. Heidi also discussed some of the difficulty she was having with her key child, Dom. She talked about finding his attitude and behaviour difficult for her and a trigger that made her unable to really bond with him despite her efforts. She thought it was a mismatch for her to be his keyworker and she was sure that he did not like her being his keyworker also. She noted that many staff struggle with [one of the children], while she really ‘adores’ them.

[Data removed as consent could not be established]

Junior came into the kitchen and started enquiring about a possible playdate – he was looking for someone to play Xbox with. Jonny from Bungalow 1 was available and came over, but they ended up disagreeing after about 30 minutes or so and Jonny left – although he came into the kitchen and chatted to me for 5 minutes before he left. He remembered my name and asked ‘So, is that you full time now’? When I replied no, he said, ‘oh, just sessional then’? I then explained to him that I didn’t work for the organisation and started to explain a bit about research in my most child-friendly fashion before he quickly changed the subject to Lego.

It had been agreed between [one of the children], Heidi and Helen that [one of the children] and Heidi would go to Tesco to pick up some things that Helen needed from there, however, this had to be timed right. It was a good 40 minutes or so before they eventually left as Heidi assessed whether [one of the children] would manage the trip. She noted while [one of the children] was out of the kitchen that she *knew* that [one of the children] was going to have issues today as they have a ‘look in [their] eyes’. [data removed as consent could not be established] Barry moved on to another placement last week and Dom was away today too. This meant it was just Eva and Junior left in the bungalow. Eva was largely content to play in her room, surfacing periodically to get a drink or see what was going on. Serge came over to play Xbox with Junior of a time-limited period (2 hours a day is the limit for computer screens – 1 hour in the morning if off school and one hour later in the day).

I think some of the staff were worried about me sitting at the kitchen table watching the comings and goings, but I reassured them that this is what I’m here to do – see how things work on an everyday basis, although this did seem like quite an unusual day so far. After computer time Junior, Serge and Eva congregated in the lounge to watch Youtube – sonic booms by jets and then optical illusions – and I watched with them with a rotating staff member as other tasks were clearly being completed elsewhere in the office etc. Lunch was organised but Serge didn’t like the curry Pot Noodle he had asked for (likely because that’s what Eva and Junior asked for) and a call went in to Sue from Bungalow 3 to see what he liked. Serge noted that he was ‘very happy’ that Sue was back. I tried to ask him why Sue was so important to him, but he wouldn’t engage in that conversation with me. He was due to go on an outing at 2pm so decided to go back to his bungalow where Sue could make him something that he liked before he went for his trip.

Junior was unable to go with Serge back to his bungalow as Sue was on herself and had another child there as well, so Ronnie said he would have to stay here. Junior became quite agitated over the course of the next hour – swinging in a chair saying ‘bored, bored, bored’ repeatedly and other comments about wanting someone to play with. Ronnie’s offers to play games with him were rebuffed as Ronnie was clearly not a child. Eventually, after some various checks, Junior was allowed to go to Bungalow 3 to play with Serge who was no longer going on his trip today.

A short while later, [one of the children] and Heidi returned from Tesco with various items that Helen had requested. Helen went through the items noting how pleased she was that they had got her ‘good stuff’. There was some lovely interaction between [one of the children] and Heidi in the kitchen as they prepared a snack to eat – again, playful talk between them and lots of physical contact, hugs and play shoves. Diane came on shift. [data removed as consent could not be established]

Heidi came back through and was sorting out baked potatoes for the Tea, which Junior (who had recently returned from Bungalow 3) insisted that he did not want. I was taken aback when Junior became really verbally aggressive suddenly as he seemed to me to be in a good mood on his return. This situation quickly escalated and, as Heidi was taking him up to his room, I heard her shout ‘Stop! Don’t lift your hands and feet to me!’

I felt a bit tense, and it ended up with me and Eva sitting chatting and eating our baked potatoes while [one of the children] had their tea in the playroom with Heidi and Diane and Ronnie was in Junior’s room with him – it later transpired that an incident form had to be filled in because Junior had to be ‘safe held’ by both Heidi and Ronnie to stop him from hurting himself. A bit later Ronnie came into the kitchen with [one of the children] and a laptop so that [data removed as consent could not be established] Baths for the children were being organised and reports filled out. When [one of the children] went for their bath, Diane came in to let Ronnie know that Junior had been saying he wanted to kill himself and had been choking himself and banging his head of the mirror in a similar vein to other behaviour he had been displaying recently at school (biting himself etc). I asked Ronnie how he felt/coped emotionally with the kind of behaviour that was being displayed and he said that he could cope well enough when it was directed at him but what he struggled most with was if a child was saying ‘you’re hurting me’ in a safe hold, which is done to prevent them from getting hurt.

Things seemed relatively calm again for a while and Ronnie had gone over to speak to a staff member in another bungalow about something. I was starting to prepare to leave,[data removed as consent could not be established]. There was a lot of verbal reassurance going on during the safe hold that I could overhear from the kitchen and the staff seemed to keep cool heads throughout it. I checked-in with Heidi when she came into the kitchen and said I didn’t want to do a runner in the middle of it and whether my leaving would create an issue and she reassured me that it was ok. She said she’d like to be in a position to say that this was unusual behaviour but, unfortunately, it was actually quite a common occurrence. Ronnie came out as I was leaving to apologise and I acknowledged that this is the nature of their work.