|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Fieldnote Note | 1 | Date | 26/4/21 |
| Locations | Bungalow 2Residential Campus (outdoor) | Weather | Cold (11C), cloudy, rain at times |
| Child interactions | Anna, Dom, Barry, Ava, Junior, Serge, Dennis and Graham | Staff Interactions | Ronnie, Quin, Katya, Helen, Thelma, Blane, Pru, Karly, Bob and Mick |
| Times | 1pm – 7pm | Total Time in field | 6 hours |

Arrived on site at 1pm and headed directly for Bungalow 2 where I knew I was going to be based. All quiet on site as the children were at school at this point. I was feeling a bit ‘newby anxious’ as I entered again but Ronnie and Quin were both there and I was able to feel recognised and enter into discussion right away. I was quickly introduced to a SW student, Karly who is on placement there and also to Helen who I hadn’t met before. Karly was asking about the research, if I was doing a PhD etc and the conversation circled around this for the first few minutes while I explained to Karly about the research and answered other questions about myself and my previous research.

Over the following 20 minutes or so I was engaged in various conversations and small talk with staff members who were based in this bungalow (Ronnie, Helen, Karly) and others who came and went on various errands (Thelma and Quin). At 1.30, I sat down with Quin, Thelma and Ronnie as they went through some planning for the day. This involved discussing each bungalow in turn, updates on issues ongoing for the children, and identifying staff members who would work with the children on their return from school and what activities could be undertaken with them. Quin explained that this is a new planning activity aimed at avoiding unnecessary ‘dead time’ and to aid staff in planning activities and understanding the children. Some examples:

Barry is going to be moving on from the organisation this week and this is a big transition for him and potentially for the other children who live in Bungalow 2 along with him. He was out with his keyworker visiting the place to which he will be moving. His keyworker (Mick) had been brought in today over and above the normal staff allocation in order to spend one-to-one time with Barry and to allow space for the other children to be informed about his move. Various permutations of activities/options were discussed for Barry depending on whether he wanted to be out, be in, be active, or have some quiet time. There is a degree of waiting to see how some situations play out for the young person but they are aware that he may have particular needs at this time.

[data removed as consent was not established]

After this meeting, the bungalow became somewhat deserted as various staff members went to collect the children from school. I spent some time chatting with Karly about her dissertation, her studies generally, and her own care experience and how this interacts with her placement in residential childcare.

The children arrived back in waves with Dom leading the charge. He swaggered up and into the bungalow, noticing me but then paying scant attention. He was quickly into the room as this is him getting back on campus after a weekend away at his home (goes there from school on a Friday and comes back to campus from school on a Monday). He gets his bag checked as he has been found to have this crammed with sweets on return from home. While this was being attended to [one of the children], Eva and Junior arrived back together. All three had a good look at me as they came into the kitchen. Eva immediately asked for my name as she said she had forgot it. I had already answered her by the time that [another child] said [they] remembered that I was Andrew. Junior also made the point that he remembered who I was as well. While the children had some snacks, I chatted with Eva who noted that I hadn’t been there since Christmas, which I confirmed and she then asked why I was still wearing Christmas jumpers (my predilection for fair isle coming up again in fieldwork).

Very quickly after snack, [one of the children] had gone to the skate park with Blane and Dom had gone out with Ronnie and Karly, leaving just Eva and Junior in the bungalow along with Helen and Katya although Helen was nearing the end of her shift. While I sat and chatted with Eva about her coin collection, various practical tasks (washing etc) were completed by the staff in the same room (kitchen). Junior was keen to play with Serge from Bungalow 3 and took to trying to sort out the logistics of how this would work for the staff despite the staff trying to get him to wait until they could talk to the staff from the other bungalow to see if this is something that could be arranged. I was able to talk to Katya about the project as I had not met her before and she said she hadn’t seen any of the information leaflets (I gave her one before I left later).

I went outside to have a look at the chickens. Thelma and Pru were sitting at a bench while Dennis and Graham were playing about. Junior and Serge approached with Serge asking who I was and I realised that I hadn’t properly met him yet. I didn’t have much time to explain who I was before Graham had led me off by the hand to show me in the chicken coop and comment on how long it had been since I was last up. After surveying the coop with Graham, I returned to the bench where Thelma and Pru were sitting with Thelma laughing at Pru who had, when Thelma told her who I was, said ‘oh, it’s good to see his body’ [meaning to see in person]. We had a laugh about this. Arrangements were made about the staffing between Bungalows 2 and 3 and Eva went to 3 to play with Simone while Serge played with Junior outside, occasionally joined by Graham. One of the things I was noticing during this time was how much some of the children like for adults to watch them play and/or to get involved while others were happy to do their own thing. Later, I realised that all of the children (and almost all children generally I would think) like for adults to watch or be involved in their play sometimes.

While chatting to Pru and Katya, I commented on how remote this place was and Pru noted it was a nightmare when any of the children run off as you have to go through fields and burns etc to get to them sometimes.

Barry arrived back – he’s taken a stretch since I saw him last. Briefly said hello to Mick who was spending the day with Barry. After a while, it was getting cold and had started to rain so I went into Bungalow 2, briefly made some notes at the kitchen table and then joined Katya in the lounge with Junior and Serge. They set up Youtube to watch TABS, which is basically watching snippets from computer games/scenarios that other people have played (and obviously recorded). They were totally into this. Helen replaced Katya who I think was having to deal with some other issues (unknown to me) in some other part of the bungalow. She was concerned about some of the apparent violence depicted in the TABS videos but Serge assured her it was a 7+ content and, although there were things getting fired around there was no blood or gore or anything and the children (as young as they are – 8yo) were able to reassure her ‘it’s not real you know, it is just a game’.

Dom arrived back with Ronnie and he was keen to watch Youtube but the other boys were, although they took up the offer of some Xbox time and Dom put on some dancing tick-tok videos and started throwing some shapes! I joined in for a bit, but it was hard work and I was surprised by his stamina as he was dancing for ages. In the meantime Eva played with home-made silly putty and commented on which of the dancing cartoon characters she liked the best in each short video/dance move. Serge had to go and get his controller for the Xbox but wanted Junior to go with him but Junior was really interested in the dancing videos when he saw them and ended up involved in that until Serge returned with his controller. Bob came over from Bungalow 3 and Ronnie asked him to stay here while he dealt with something.

We were called through for tea, which was chicken burgers chips, beans, and salad. Serge went back to bungalow 3 as he didn’t want to have tea here and had been denied the option of staying here only to continue to play Xbox. Bob followed him back after Ronnie returned. Some interesting chats at the dinner table. I noticed how some children have to be encouraged to eat more while others have controls so that they don’t eat too much. [One of the children] arrived back with Blane as everyone else was finishing. They asked if I would stay at the table while they had her dinner and I agreed to that. Both them and Blane were clearly hungry having been out in the cold at the skate park for a few hours.

After Tea, I couldn’t believe there was more dancing by Dom. It was impressive stamina again. While he was dancing Blane completed some paperwork and other tasks. Ronnie and Katya interacted with Eva, [one of the children], Dom and Junior as they came and went from the room each having a subsequent bath before returning. Dom was last to go and was being encouraged to do so when I said my goodbyes and left.