

“I know, you could write all this down!”

Child’s voice

Child: Olivia

3 September

Teacher: Judy

Olivia has just moved into a new home, which the family has been building up to for a few months. Olivia sat down next to me on the edge of the sandpit and told me all about her new house. After a while, she looked at me and said thoughtfully, “I know, you could write all this down!”

I went inside to get paper, pen, and clipboard. On my return, Olivia continued her story: “I’ve got one bed in my room and it is all white, and Tim has got two beds, and Mum and Dad have got one big double bed. Grandad’s room is downstairs. We are all upstairs.

“We have stairs, you know, and lots of colours in the bathroom. Why don’t you write while I go and play with the girls?” Off she went to play with her friends.

Short-term review

Olivia has known for quite some time about her move to her new home, and her excitement and joy was evident in the way she was describing the house to me.

Olivia is confident and articulate when expressing herself and thinks carefully before sharing her information.

Skills, knowledge, and dispositions Olivia is demonstrating in relation to literacy:

- What is said can also be written to read later.
- It is a good idea to record important events and information.
- Information about Olivia’s life can be shared with her teachers in a way that they will understand and appreciate.

What’s happening here?

Olivia sits down on the edge of the sandpit to tell the teacher all about the new house she has just moved into. After a while, she suggests that the teacher write it all down. The teacher gets writing materials and writes down Olivia’s words.

What aspects of children’s contribution to assessments does this exemplify?

Olivia is deciding what should be recorded. She tells the teacher information about an event of value that interests her (her move to a new house), and she instructs the teacher to write down the details.

The teacher has recorded two perspectives here, Olivia’s and her own. The features that Olivia finds worthy of note are the beds in the bedrooms, the whereabouts of Grandad’s room, the stairs, and the colours in the bathroom. The features of the storytelling that the teacher finds worthy of note are Olivia’s understandings that what is said can be written to read later and that important events and information are usefully recorded (both features of early literacy). The positive relationship between Olivia and her teachers is also noted.

How might this assessment develop children’s capacity to contribute to assessments?

Olivia’s family will probably be interested in both these perspectives. The recording of Olivia’s story informs them of Olivia’s viewpoint and of the teacher’s willingness to follow Olivia’s request to contribute to her own assessment portfolio. When Olivia revisits this assessment, she will be encouraged to continue contributing to her assessments.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

It is Olivia who is noticing, recognising, and responding, with the assistance of a writer. Olivia expects the teacher to follow her instructions – and she does. We can assume that the teacher values the children taking a leadership role in what is noticed, recognised, and responded to and that she also values children having a voice in their own assessment records.