

# Haere mai, Sam

## Learning story

9 September

Teacher: Justine

Haere mai, Sam, and welcome to the Lincoln University Early Childhood Centre.

Sam appeared tired after Mum and Dad left, so I wrapped him in his blanket from home, and he fell asleep in my arms around 8.45 and slept until 9.30. He woke and gave us a few smiles as I held him, but he appeared quite drowsy and drifted in and out of sleep over the next hour. He fell back to sleep at 10.30, and I popped him back in his bed. He woke again at 11.15, completely refreshed, and polished off 120 ml of breast milk. After he brought up wind and had a nappy change, he joined me on the couch and stared very intently at the black and white ladybirds on the ceiling.

A great first day!

### Short-term review

This was Sam's first day in the early childhood setting. At eight weeks old, the noises, smells, and his new caregivers are unfamiliar to him. It was great that Hannah and Brad brought along one of his blankets from home as it gave Sam a feeling of familiarity. The bottle is familiar to him also, and he took that from me with no trouble.

He seemed very content during his time here and was able to sleep undisturbed.

### What next?

As Sam's primary caregiver, I will be guided by Sam's individual rhythm, ensuring that the routines he experiences with us are calm, relaxed, and unhurried. This will enable him to develop a sense of trust in me and a sense of well-being and belonging in the early childhood setting.

## Learning story:

### The beginnings of trust

9 September

Teacher: Justine

This morning, after his feed and a burp, I put Sam on the floor beside me. He was a bit fractious, so I began to sing. Immediately, Sam was silent and began to smile. As I sang, he moved his arms and legs about and began to sing his own song. There were lots of "ah's" and "oh's" to accompany me. Sam maintained eye contact throughout this experience, responding to my smiles and facial expressions with his own beautiful smile.

### Short-term review

Sam is beginning to trust the new world around him and clearly communicates his needs. He responded to my interactions with confidence and felt secure enough to imitate the sounds I was making. Sam used animated gestures and verbal communication to express his delight in this experience.

### What next?

Continue to respond to Sam's vocalisation, offering him sounds to imitate. Sam's primary caregivers at the centre will continue to be guided by his individual rhythm, ensuring familiar, relaxed routines and interactions.



### Parent's voice

22 November

*Sam started going to the centre for three mornings a week when he was two months old. He pretty much knew only us. It was reassuring to us that Sam seemed to have got to know Justine in a couple of days, and now she is his favourite person at the centre. We really like it that Justine takes a genuine interest in Sam and his development and that she records all her observations in his daily diary and learning stories rather than just telling us about him each day. We really appreciate the learning stories and look forward to reading more of them! It's a great record of what he's up to while he's there – something for us to look at and to show Sam's whānau.*

*Sam has developed while at the centre, and it's neat to see him interacting with the other adults and children. When he first started, he seemed to find it loud and would sleep a lot to block out the stimulus. Now, at four months old, he is much more aware of his surroundings and soaks everything in. He always has plenty to do at the centre and is very interested in everything around him during his awake times.*

*Since Sam is our first child, we didn't have many expectations about child care beyond that Sam would be looked after while we weren't there. But over the two months that Sam has been at the centre, we have been pleased to find that he is looked after by people who genuinely like him and want to participate in his development as much as we do.*

*They make an effort to see that he not only has his basic needs met but that he also has lots of learning opportunities, including talking and singing to him and giving him a variety of toys and activities.*

*Another aspect of the centre we like is that they facilitate our interactions with Sam during the day. Both of us are encouraged to come and visit him, and Hannah comes to breastfeed Sam twice during the day. (Sam is now at the centre three whole days a week.)*

*At home, Sam likes to play in bed with us in the morning, go for walks with us, watch his cat and dog, read stories (lots!), take a bath, and play with his toys (mostly with his tongue!). He enjoys relaxing and having a kick in his cot while watching and listening to his mobile. He especially enjoys this time in his room after a busy day at the centre. He likes to go out in the backyard and watch us hang out the washing, play with the dog, or work in the garden.*

*We feel that Sam is very settled and content in his time at the centre and that he likes going there. The routine that Sam has at the centre is pretty much the same as at home, and so his life is very smooth, with few disruptions. Through our efforts, and those of Justine and Ginny, Sam is a very contented child.*

### Predicting

28 November

Teacher: Justine

Yesterday, when Sam woke, I went to his cot and opened it. Sam tracked the door of the cot sliding back. Once it was open, I quietly approached Sam, asking if he'd had a nice sleep. I stood for a few moments, rubbing his chest, and he was full of smiles and those slow, lazy movements of a waking child.

As I unwrapped him, I told him I was going to get him up. As I reached to put my hands under his body, he lifted his head. I didn't think much of this until this morning when I was changing his nappy. Once again, I explained to him what I was doing, and as I reached under his body to lift him, he raised his head.

### Interpretation/analysis

Sam is showing a lot more interest in the world around him. His ability to track a moving object is well developed. Once again, Sam responds to me with smiles, and this time he predicts what is about to happen to him.

I have always interacted with Sam in a calm, relaxed manner, explaining what is happening to him as I go. I believe this has enabled him to begin to take responsibility for his care and to

predict familiar events that occur throughout his day. This demonstrates his developing sense of well-being within the centre and the sense of trust he has in me as his primary caregiver.

#### **What next?**

As I am on leave in a week, I will ask Ginny to take over some of Sam's daily routines so that he becomes familiar with her while I am still around. Hannah has been coming over to feed him at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., and I will encourage her to continue this while I am away so that there are not too many changes in Sam's day.

#### **Parent's voice**

*Hannah informed me today that when they go into Sam's room at home to get him up, they often find him grunting as he struggles to lift his head and upper body in anticipation of getting up. She also mentioned that he is beginning to assist them as they dress him by pushing his arm into his sleeves.*

#### **What's happening here?**

Sam and his family are new members of the childcare centre community. A number of assessments are recorded here, as Sam's teachers track how he is making sense of this new world, developing a sense of trust, and beginning to predict events. Sam's parents contribute perspectives from home.

#### **What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?**

These assessments take note of Sam's responses and reactions to his new environment while acknowledging the complexity of learning associated with Sam making sense of new people, places, and things.

The teachers make their roles and reflections visible in assessments, recognising the importance of their relationships with children in learning.

Sam's father adds a perspective to the assessments his teachers have made and provides comments about the usefulness of these to himself, Sam's mother, and other members of Sam's whānau.

#### **How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?**

Both the undocumented and documented assessments on Sam's learning help his parents to value and support his participation in this early childhood community.

Sam's parents' comments on his interests and routines provide a critical interface between Sam's worlds at home and at the centre.

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

The teachers actively seek opportunities for building responsive and reciprocal relationships between the children and their whānau. They regularly share stories at staff meetings to seek each other's perspectives and share understandings and responses to learning. They provide both verbal and written assessments and information in formats (notebooks and learning stories, including photos) that are interesting and relevant to Sam's parents from the very beginning of their involvement in this community.