**INTERVIEW**

**Attendees**

Interviewer​​​ NF

Teacher A

Teacher A2

Teacher A It’s recorded. So, I would have put my make-up if I’d known it’s being recorded.

NF Oh no don’t worry, no. Not the video, it’s only for the audio, don’t worry, oh no. We wouldn’t do that to anybody. That right, I think that’s, yeah. Sorry I’ve got one that’s being weird.

Teacher A That’s OK.

NF There we go. OK, right, start again. So, when I last came in, it was lovely and I remember seeing quite a, we sort of saw you teach Teacher A2 and we saw a bit on the screen and we talked a lot and you’d got feedback for us as well Teacher A. So, there was quite a lot of kind of, some teachers had taken it forward kind of on their own, haven’t they? As it were, and I just wondered have you continued in that way? I mean it wasn’t very long ago, or has anything else developed since then?

Teacher A I mean as in the first question, because it wasn’t that long ago, I don’t think there’s probably anything that’s particularly changed since your observation. I mean as I’ve explained before, the way we did it as a school… I kind of selected some teachers who would have the capacity and also kind of the motivation to get involved. There were only a few teachers, a select number of teachers and I very much gave them the freedom to pick whatever they wanted from a toolkit that would be most relevant for their classes.

NF Yeah OK, and that’s how you’re going to continue for now, as it were. And Teacher A2, was it, is it, have you been doing it through this term basically, is that right?

Teacher A2 Yes.

NF And did you make choices about what you… It seemed to me when I watched you teaching, it was very much quite of question led in terms of open questions and so on, was that your kind of core focus?

Teacher A2 Yeah, so I looked through the toolkit and thought about the children that we have in our class, and what would work best for them. And so, like we did a lot of open-ended questions, that worked quite well. Although one of the things I would like to do, whereas it’s more of a conversation with like our SLT, is change the learning objectives so they’re questions rather than statements. Because I think that would be quite a good like next step almost.

NF Yes. Lovely. There are other classes in your year group, there are other year 2’s, yeah? Is any of it kind of spreading out to them?

Teacher A2 So it all reflects on resources that we make is shared between all three of us. So, anything that’s on the system and it will be used, in terms of delivery it should be pretty similar. But obviously different teachers have different styles of teaching.

NF Yes, absolutely. So, Teacher A, you decided to do it in this particular way. So, you kind of did a kind of controlling access to some staff, but also those staff were then able to do what they wanted, as it were, with it. But did you feel that if you were to do it again, or if you were to advise another senior leader on how to use it, would that approach be one that you’d still advocate?

Teacher A Possibly yes, just knowing that, at the moment we have quite a few challenging children within the school, that have a lot of incapacity, and lots of other ongoing projects as well. That with obviously as you know, teacher’s workload is ridiculous.

NF Yes, it is yeah.

Teacher A We don’t want to kind of add a new initiative. Or that they had to do something that was a big change. Which is why I chose certain teachers who would understand that you haven’t, that this is not going to be really over us, it is going to be, as you said, like small steps and big change and just make these without feeling overwhelmed, with that initiative.

NF Yeah, and that not wanting to overwhelm has been very common theme in other schools as well although lots of people have done it differently. You know, some people did kind of whole school and then others did kind of a hybrid you know. And other people did kind of completing letting teachers do what they wanted with it. Tt’s been very variable which has been really interesting because I think that’s probably the reality of how it gets used, you know, once it’s rolled out to a wider audience as it were. Yeah.

Teacher A Absolutely and I think I mentioned as well, last year there was a big focus on ELKLAN, which is all kind of around talking and understanding, speech development. So, I thought for some of the things there was a bit of a cross over, so a lot of things have been implemented off the back of that, which is probably quite similar to some of what others are doing.

NF Yeah, so some that you’re already doing as it were. Yeah, and again that’s a common theme, yeah. And we hoped that it would always be something that slides into what you’re already doing rather than feeling like something additional. And Teacher A2, I mean I’m interested to know how that felt for you. So, sort of thinking about question 3, when you went into the toolkit, I’m interested to know how you decided what you wanted to work on?

Teacher A2 So I had a look through it and looked at all the different things that were on there and thought of what would be good to focus on first. I think it’s quite nice having it there all the time because like once you’ve mastered something you could go back to it and do and find something else that would work as well within that master assessor. So yeah, I think it’s more of a reflection on your own practice and what’s there and what’s helpful in order to know what to use. More so than ever I think if someone had said to me, we want you to do this, I think, like being able to do it for your class was really beneficial.

NF Oh right, so a sense of being able to make an independent decision about how you wanted to use it. And that felt like a strength for you?

Teacher A2 Yeah, and actually it’s good to reflect on your own practice anyway. So, having that time to look through it and see, “Oh, this is what I think will work for our class and this is actually what I would like to get better at”, was useful.

NF Oh that’s nice that people, yeah, not many people have mentioned it having kind of a reflective use. That’s really interesting to hear. Do you think when you went into it, I mean obviously I’m working with EMTAS, and my interest is very much in children with EAL. Did you go into it initially as a kind of thinking about just your children with EAL, or do you think you had a kind of bigger focus in mind?

Teacher A2 I think the children with the EAL were always in the back of my mind, but as Teacher A said, because we have quite diverse classes, and we use ELKLAN.

NF Yeah, you do.

Teacher A2 A lot of the things that we have used to help the other children as well, so it’s not necessarily just for our children who are EAL. It’s helped some of our children with communication needs and understanding and things like that.

F Yeah, so it’s got a kind of, that kind of cross class appeal, even though we might have gone into it… So, there’s quite a lot of very, you know, about different levels of proficiency and so on, that you still found enough cross class appeal as it were for it to work for everyone?

Teacher A2 I think also, we did a lot of like collaboration as well, so I always make sure I pair like especially this year, a higher ability child with a lower ability child. And actually, those children who are higher ability, having to explain things in a different way in order for the other child to understand, helps them as well, with their understand and thinking differently. So, it’s good for everybody across the class rather than just focussing on our children.

NF That’s good, that’s good to know. So, question 4 is sort of an extension of this in a way. We wondered if engaging with the toolkit would encourage teachers to think differently about their children who are EAL or who are traveller, in terms of creating a provision for them and I think it’s probably a hard one to answer. So, you know, and people haven’t been using it for very long. So, some schools have mentioned that it has made them think, I mean a bit like you said yourself just now Teacher A2, it kind of makes you think a little bit more explicitly about them, and their needs. Do you think it has changed the way you plan for them at all?

Teacher A2 I think it enhanced our planning for them. So, we always had like things that we could use for different children if they needed more support in the classroom. But it always makes us think of, “OK, how are we going to make sure this is accessible to everybody?” Especially those who don’t have the same language skills, and particularly in that science lesson that you saw of all that vocabulary that they need to have in order to access a lesson. And making a bigger emphasis on knowing the vocabulary. And then, things like English, we’ve been sending home like vocabulary sheets with like English and home language things on.

NF Lovely.

Teacher A2 So they can have those interactions at home. And it makes you, it does make you think about the little things that we can do to help support them within a group.

NF That’s great. So, things like the vocabulary sheets, was that something you were already doing?

Teacher A2 So we started it as part of like our ELKLAN training. So, we make them online and it comes up, you can add pictures from the actual books and things.

NF Lovely.

Teacher A2 Onto the system and then you type in the English word, and it automatically translates it. So, we started that last year, but I guess it makes you understand the importance of actually this is why we’re doing it.

NF Why it’s worth doing that. So, it gives you a bit of the why, yes, lovely. Great. Yeah, a lot of people have said that as well. So, they had things they were doing which they’ve enjoyed a kind of sense of affirmation, I suppose. Or confirmation that this is the right thing to be doing, because everyone’s trying their best, aren’t they? Frankly. So, question 5, I’ll just ask it more explicitly for you Teacher A2. So, obviously you’ve made some changes to your practice that I saw in the lovely science lesson, it was delightful watching it, thank you for letting us watch. Have you kind of done those sorts of open-ended questions and the other kind of talk-rich approaches you were using in other subjects as well?

Teacher A2 Yes, I would say, once you’ve started using the toolkit it’s quite easy to apply it to all different subjects, because you’re in that kind of mind train of using it. And it is quite transferrable, so… Probably the more I use it… I’m more doing it subconsciously, than thinking about it, I guess.

NF Do you think it’s just made you talk less, for example, and listen more?

Teacher A2 Yeah, and yeah, it seems that you, yeah, because I started saying yeah. Yeah, once you’ve started doing it, you kind of get into the habit of it which is…

Teacher A I think you’re probably more conscious of it as well, aren’t you? Because I think working with children and being a teacher… We talk a lot because we think the more, we talk the more they’re going to take in and learn. But as you say, sometimes it’s giving them that space to actually have the time to think and talk.

NF Lovely.

Teacher A It’s a different process I thought, so varying at different rates.

NF Yeah, and the other teachers, Teacher A, I mean you showed me their feedback. Do you think there are things that they’ve commented on that they’ve changed in the practice?

Teacher A Yeah, I think so, just thinking about groupings and how we do that a little bit differently, in order to get the best from the children. And I think the year 4 teacher mentioned about setting up the group because obviously it’s a little bit difficult sometimes with the practicalities of it. But just kind of being aware of where that might fit in a little bit easier and making that adaption.

NF Yeah, I’m just looking back at my notes. That’s right, she made small groups, yeah OK.

Teacher A And I know Teacher A3, the one we saw on the video, obviously she works in the green room.

NF In the green room.

Teacher A And she’s got that smaller classroom. So, obviously a lot of her work is adapted anyway, but I think because she’s worked so hard with those children it is almost taking us a step back now, still giving them scaffolds, but allowing them that opportunity and practice that is a very important skill.

NF Yeah, and what about those principles, I just realised I missed out question 4 here. Less talk principles. Do you think those are something you might, you’re already working with, or do you think in a way you’ve gone with these sorts of practical things we’re going to choose now, rather than thinking of the kind of school belonging, talk rich collaborative and all that. Is it possible to unpick them?

Teacher A When I first looked through it, I looked at like what our classes and things like that. So, the ones I focussed on were like collaboration and talk rich, but I think it’s easier to look at it in, what practical things you can do with it? Rather than as a whole kind of document.

NF Yeah, and I think maybe where it’s been taken in a whole school it might be that those make more sense as opposed to an individual teacher making those, principles for themselves as it were. Yeah. And I’m actually going to skip to question 8 because I think we’ve covered most of the others anyway. I mean in terms of, do you think Teacher A there’s going to be a further development of its use after you’ve trialled it with the individual teachers?

Teacher A I mean at the moment because there’s a few other new initiatives that are being kind of pushed, probably it will be on the back burner. But I think that’s because, as I said last year was very much our focus on kind of some of the principles that are in the toolkits. However, I feel obviously I talk to teachers all the time about different things they might struggle with, and obviously Teacher A2 being the leader can speak to her team. But I feel if any teachers had concerns or wanted some more support with things that come with this, I would absolutely put reflection. As well as if in the future we have another focus on language, or how it could be used, I would speak to senior leadership and see if actually we could put this in there, as a kind of insert.

NF Yeah, OK, so it might develop. As you say it’s already built on a previous initiative anyway, isn’t it? Yeah. OK, sorry I’m going all over the place here. I’m going to go back to my question 7, as a kind of final one. Is there anything that you [Teacher A] and Teacher A2, that you might be best placed to answer this. Was there anything when you kind of went into the toolkit hoping you could find, and it wasn’t there, and you wish it was there? Was anything missing as it were?

Teacher A2 I don’t think so. I think because we also using like widget which has a lot of visuals and that. So, we had our own things in place already, whereas I guess if you’re a school that didn’t have those things, it might be useful to have some examples. But yeah, I don’t think there was anything that I was looking for that I couldn’t find.

NF Lovely, yeah, a lot of schools have said they’ve used it alongside widget as well. That’s been a really popular use of it as well, within other schools. OK, let me just scribble that one down. Is there anything else you haven’t covered that you wanted to kind of say to me about the whole experience?

Teacher A2 I don’t think so.

Teacher A No. But it would be nice to be a part of it and obviously I hope that what we’ve done has helped you somewhat.

NF Absolutely it has yes. Each of the 10 schools has done it differently and it’s just been fascinating. It’s just been lovely watch and I’m so grateful, particularly grateful for schools like yourself that let us actually see teaching because that’s brave. Thank you so much for that, yeah, that’s really great. So right, I’ll be in touch again after Easter, and schools don’t have to say yes to this. But what we’ll be doing next is, revising the toolkit in light of everybody’s feedback, because obviously that was the whole point of you working in this lovely way with us. And I’ll be hoping to come into schools just to capture some images or video of teachers who are happy to be videoed which I realise will be a very small number of teachers. So, I’ll get back in touch with schools after that and those will be things that we then include in the kind of, the revised toolkit. So, I’ll be back in touch about that. And also, I might be, I’ll be getting back in touch with schools, kind of in 6 to 12 months time just to ask how people are getting on and you can reply or not to that as and when it happens. I’m just letting you know it’ll come.

Teacher A OK, lovely, thanks.

NF But thank you both so much for your time and taking part and it’s been really a pleasure working with you, and I really enjoyed visiting your school as well, it’s lovely.

Teacher A It was lovely getting that feedback, as well, so thank you.

NF It’s a really nice school, yeah.

Teacher A To actually come and watch Teacher A2, because that’s something I don’t often get the chance to do, is it?

NF No, it’s fabulous, thank you.

Teacher A No, thank you very much, take care and enjoy your Easter.

NF And you, yes when it comes yeah. Long wait this year. Take care. Bye.

Teacher A And you. Bye.

Teacher A2 Bye.