**INTERVIEW**

**Attendees**

Interviewer​​ NF

HT B - HT B

NF Lovely. So, are we talking with anyone else, or is it just you today?

HT B No it’s just me today.

NF That’s absolutely fine, OK. So, I was just looking at the notes of when we were last in and there’s some interesting things said, because it was a combination wasn’t it? Of talking about the toolkit but also you had that kind of emergency.

HT B We did.

NF And the two teachers, I’m just really interested to know how they got on and how the children have got on? Since we last saw you.

HT B So they’ve settled really, really well.

NF Oh brilliant.

HT B And that’s been sort of in part, we had a bilingual assistant, and we understood the background a little bit more. (Name of bilingual assistant) she came in as an emergency to meet with the parents. We have the bilingual support assessment taking place next week, with both of them. However, the little one in Reception still hasn’t got the hearing aids, so we’re still unsure if it's language, hearing or what?

NF Absolutely, that’s really complex.

HT B We were told that the hearing aids would be in place, and she hasn’t had them so we’re just, they’re all sort of none the wiser. But EMTAS have been brilliant. I spoke to the translator this week and just said, “Look, is there any chance you can give mum a call?” Because mum’s just… we keep asking and she just keeps saying “In a couple of weeks.” And then a couple of weeks goes by and then she says, “a couple of weeks.” So, we just don’t quite know on that. But particularly in terms of the toolkit, the collaborations worked really well with Child I which has been fantastic, Child I is in year 2, so yeah lots of support for her.

NF When you say the collaboration, you mean in terms of kind of the collaborative small group seems to work for her?

HT B Yeah, absolutely. And keeping that consistent for her. So, where other changes sort of might happen in class with other children? We’ve kept her group really the same. So, she’s been able to build up that relationship as well, and it allowed her to then build up that confidence to be able to pick up you know, small bits of language at the moment, but it’s definitely there. And the girls that are with her are really then able to identify when she’s trying to express something and obviously, she signs through Child W with her own made signs, so they are now learning those signs as well, so it’s so complex but it’s just been fabulous to sort of watch that transformation of all of them.

NF And how are the teachers faring? Are they alright?

HT B They’re better. Yeah. Teacher B3 who we met with the blonde lady. She is, now that she can see that small group and that collaboration with that group for Child I, now she can see how much of a benefit that’s having on her as well. Because she’s able to say, “Oh girls, do you know what Child I’s trying to say?” And we’re able to have it that way. And Child W, yeah, I mean she’s much better generally, she’s settled. We haven’t had as much of the behaviour that we saw at the beginning. Because she feels more comfortable with us and she’s not crying as much. But they’re still frustrated about you know, what’s going on with the hearing basically. Is she getting hearing aids, is she not?

NF It’s impossible. It’s super hard isn’t it, yeah. Great, well I’m really glad to hear because I really felt for them, and for you, because it’s just so, it’s so stressful, isn’t it? And thank God for EMTAS basically, I think.

HT B Absolutely. And thank you to both of you for sort of letting us hijack the meeting in a way.

NF It’s absolutely fine, absolutely, we can't not respond to what the school needs at the time can you? And it made me think actually… I’ve got notes in my notes from our, you know, from the last visit, saying, “I wondered if we might include a kind of emergency?” I can't imagine a head teacher or any teacher in a county or borough that doesn’t have an EMTAS, and that’s the majority, because there’s very few EMTAS groups across the country, and what would they do? I mean you know, so I wondered if we should have a kind of a first aid kit you know, in an emergency or something.

HT B I think that would be really helpful.

NF Yeah.

HT B Because I think particularly when you get children… When parents English is OK, or there is somebody within the family that you can communicate with. But when you’ve got the barrier of the parents not understanding either, it’s… And I felt awful for them, because we’re firing all these questions at them, and mum’s saying, “she can't hear.” Well, OK, “So why can't she hear?” And we’re not doing it in that way, but in our heads, we’re thinking, “We’ve described this, you’ve got no idea what we’ve said, you’re entrusting your child to us.” And I put myself in their shoes and think I couldn’t do that if I was to go to another country and just leave my child somewhere they didn’t… So yeah, I think that would be really helpful.

NF Yeah, amazing. It’s really interesting in lots of ways. And it also, the visit to you, also made me think about whether we might include a section on EAL and SCN, because we haven’t got that in there. I mean SCN in wider sense, and SEN in a wider sense. So, for example, the EAL and hearing loss or you know, EAL and developmental language delay or whatever. It’s very mainstream at the minute the content. So yeah. So, although you may have felt you kind of ambushed us, as I think I probably said, you know, some months back, everything to a researcher is interesting, because we get a lot from that, it’s really interesting.

HT B Oh well I’m glad.

NF Yeah, I mean the other things you’ve been doing, you had a focus on school belonging, hadn’t you? With all the lovely stuff going on in the playground, for example. You’d also had a focus on kind of talk rich. Have you carried on, in that way?

HT B Absolutely, so in terms of the belonging, we also now, we have two staff meetings planed, to map out festivals across the year. So that we can broaden the festivals that we are celebrating in school. And part of that comes with engaging the parents. So, one of our main targets is to sort of get the parents into school a little bit more. Where they’re able to talk to us about their celebrations, for example, and we in time would like to do sort of an international week. Where we then expand, not necessarily the children that we have in school at the moment, but we look at different countries around the world linking to the geography curriculum, linking in through that all of the countries that we didn’t have represented, the little girl from Brazil for example. So, we make sure there was a Brazil focus, and every child that we have. So, in terms of that belonging widening it slightly more to include the parents into the school. Does that make sense?

NF Lovely, so to go beyond the school gates, in other words.

HT B Yeah, absolutely.

NF How lovely, that sounds great.

HT B And then in terms of the resources there’s still lots of resources. Staff have really been brilliant at researching lots of the resources. Lot of the dolls, the small world books that we’ve been looking at. So, we’ve got lots of lists going on at the moment and our PTA donated £50 voucher for each class for Amazon. And one of the classes has said that they will be using that for more resources that represent the children in their classes.

NF Lovely, all about representation, yeah.

HT B Yeah, absolutely.

NF Yeah. One of the schools did, they got Hampshire Library Service. It was (name of school), they got the Hampshire Library Service in to audit their library for books.

HT B We’ve talked about that as well funnily enough.

NF Yeah, I mean it’s been a big, you know, to allocate a big bit of the budget, about two grand or something to replacing… But it seemed like a really good use of you know, Hampshire’s other wonderful teams that it has.

HT B Absolutely.

NF You know, they found it really useful yeah. OK, so representation, lovely. So, loads going on.

HT B And then in terms of the talk rich bit, we’ve had a staff meeting about it. And staff just feel more conscious about this and making sure it keeps going and they’re supporting each other now. So, although we didn’t widen it out to the LSAs which was one of the bits that I was going to talk about later. LSAs were sort of, you can see they were going, “You’re talking a lot, you’re talking a lot. Children need to talk more”. So, everybody’s sort of helping each other on that journey, which has been quite nice.

NF What these LSAs are saying to the teachers you mean, “you’re talking a lot”? So, they’re kind of monitoring each other.

HT B Yeah.

NF That’s great. Do the teachers mind?

HT B No, they’re absolutely fine, they’re sort of, “Oh, yeah! Okay.” And then it’s moving on. And it’s only in a couple of classes where they’ve got a really good relationship. But yeah, it’s been really interesting. Sort of here and you’re in class and you think, “OK”. And you sort of give them a bit of a smile and they just laugh now.

NF That’s interesting because often we find our LSAs talk too much as well, don’t they? They find it very difficult to let go. So, in some ways it’s almost like professional development for them at the same time, isn’t it? Presumably? Because they get to reflect on, that’s great, I like that. Great. OK, so is there anything that people are finding harder than others? Anything in particular or, it’s really quite quick isn’t it.

HT B Not that’s really come to light. I think the only thing, that’s come up that they said they would have liked, which would have helped, potentially was more Key Stage 1 examples on the toolkit.

NF Yeah, I know. That is fair, it’s got a bit of a key stage 2 focus, yes. So, what we’re hoping to do, next term we’ve got funding still to get sort of photos and hopefully videos, if any teachers will let me in to video them, but I haven’t had much luck so far. And yeah, I absolutely agree, we need to focus more on Key Stage 1, as there’s a lot of Key Stage 2 in there, yeah.

HT B Yeah, and that was the only thing they sort of said they find challenging. Because they go and look… And a lot of the time we printed the guides which are really handy, they’re so short and they’re using them in their planning files. And they go to it, and they go, “Oh but that’s Key Stage 2… we can think about it but…”

NF No, yeah. It’s difficult because we’re a bit kind of yeah… I’m sure EMTAS will have more key stage 1. And we just need to mind what we’ve already got. And I think that’s entirely fair criticism, yeah. So, I’m just looking at question 2 and you did that sort of 2B, where you gave staff the toolkit and said, “make what you want of it”. Not quite that, it wasn’t quite that. Sorry.

HT B So we have an initial staff meeting where I introduce it to everybody, and just showed them how to log on, how to access it, and gave them the overview that you’d given to us at the beginning. And then I’d said to them, “Look”… We sort of talked a bit more about which one shall we focus on. They were concerned about the small group one, I think I said to you previously.

NF Yeah, that’s right.

HT B Because trying to get through everybody. So that’s fine. So, we kind of together, but with a bit of guidance from me, it’s fair to say. Focussed on the belonging and the talk more. So that was that collaborative, working together to work out what we wanted. And then I said to them, “And you know, these are the guides, this is the bit that you need to read, this is the bit that I’ve read as SLT and as an EAL coordinator and then you can go off and use that.” So, it was kind of free but with guidance initially.

NF Exactly. Yeah, kind of a hybrid. A few schools have gone with that kind of in between, with the two. And have you found that that, I mean did you feel that that worked? Would you do it differently if you were doing it again?

HT B I think it has worked in the sense of one person has almost taken the lead on it, so obviously we’re just focussing on early years and year 1 initially. One person seems to have taken the lead on that and that seems to be, not through any sort of me saying that needed to happen, or them deciding that. But it seems to be the person that’s got more EAL in their class because it’s more at the focus of their mind.

NF Interesting.

HT B But as I said earlier, they printed and saved the information so that they didn’t have to log in every PPA session, and they would sort of act to the grids, etcetera. I think if we would change it next time, I probably would do it more focussed to make it more whole school. So, I think I would plan in more staff meetings. I think the reason that didn’t happen is because we plan our staff meetings so far in advance that when it came about and I realised what we might need, we already had them planned.

NF Yeah, absolutely.

HT B So our plan is to continue that for next year and plan in staff meetings.

NF You know, so you might do something a little bit more systematic with it maybe next year?

HT B Yeah, absolutely.

NF Ok. Absolutely. The way that the research, a research project works is not the way a school has to work. And we’re going to come in and say, “Right, what do you do this now” And you’re going, “But I, you know, I planned my staff meetings last summer!” Quite right, and it’s impossible, isn’t it? Yeah.

HT B It was quite nice that we had that flexibility to try it, I think in that way. And now that everybody sorts of had that touch on it, and they know what it is. Actually, looking at it together as a staff team will include then some of the teachers like year 2, who have only had that touch on it, and some of our other teaching members of staff who are at staff meetings, but aren’t based in class, you know? Premium teacher for example, they will then have access to it. So, it feels right the way we’ve done it. But I think yes, it needed that more guidance from us.

NF Great, OK. We’re only asking that because we’re just interested to know… Because obviously we hope that we’ll take all the feedback from you that have piloted for us and tweak it and add things as it were, and then hopefully roll it out to all Hampshire schools. But those schools of course won't have like an introductory session. So, no they won't no. This is always the problem with things like this is the, you know, the researcher or the team, or whatever, have to walk away because you can't work with 600 schools. So, I guess that there would be something more advisory for head teachers in how to use it. And I think this hybrid that leaning towards a bit more, control is the wrong word. Being a bit more directive about the content is probably the way that we’ll go so that’s really interesting hearing your reflections there, thank you. What else did we look at? Oh 4 yes, these principles, you’ve already been mentioning them in terms of talk rich, school belonging, and collaborative. They’re kind of in your head there.

HT B Absolutely. So, it’s been quite nice to hear, again, staff using those as well. And the only thing we did initially, a lot of us were going, “Oh what was the other one?” And it was always enquiry led that we forget, for some reason. So, we talked with a couple of teachers around whether or not, like a staff room poster? As part of that pack? That would be quite handy just to pop up around school somewhere.

NF With the principles on?

HT B Yeah, and I did look at the initial… the actual principles where it’s all detailed out, the very first document in there, the very first page of that, but it wasn’t quite right for what we were looking, at if that makes sense.

NF Right OK, yeah.

HT B Just something like that.

NF How to make your own thing of it? Absolutely yeah.

HT B But we just felt that that would be quite good.

NF Yes, absolutely. I’ve just realised I’ve just missed a question out, haven’t I? Let’s go back to 3, and I think in a way we’ve sort of covered it. Because we talked about your decisions of how to use the toolkit and how you’ve done it, and have you gone back in to find more. In a way, yes, you’ve said that teachers did go back in, and have been finding other things, so yeah.

HT B So, initially they printed the guides, and they felt they were really bite sized chunks. Which I remember you saying at the beginning, you tried to make them really user friendly.

NF We did try, yeah.

HT B And that’s definitely been the feedback from my staff. It’s that they’re not sort of lengthy onerous documents. They can print it; it’s kept in their planning file or in their diary and they can just very quickly refer back to it. So actually, a lot of them now, almost know it because, well, no I don’t mean use it as a reminder.

NF No, I know what you mean, but yeah, it’s become a familiar part of their planning, it’s part of their planning toolkit as it were, yeah.

HT B Absolutely which is really, really good. And then we had the issue with the packet. We couldn’t open the packet for a while.

NF No, I remember.

HT B But we can now.

NF Thank God, because I was worried, I really couldn’t work out what was going on, and so.

HT B No, and I tried on my phone, I tried on an iPad, I tried… But no, it now opens easily so which is really helpful, so we are able to do that.

NF Are you trying with the Padlet? Because you know, no one has mentioned the Padlet, and I haven’t been directly asking about it. Because it’s covered in stuff, isn’t it? I wondered how user friendly it feels.

HT B Yeah, I think because we haven’t been in it for that long I haven’t explored it as much as I have some of the other things. But when I have had a look at it. I was on it the other night, just having a quick look and double checking a couple of bits. But it just felt… it looks like you can find everything easily.

NF Hopefully, yeah.

HT B Because you don’t know what you don’t know is there, if that makes sense? Yeah, I think I’ve kind of explored it. But yeah, and that would be something I’d want to show at staff meetings, for example. So, I’d almost want a staff meeting where we can have a look at it together, and then people have got their iPads and their laptops there, to make their way and explore it, a little bit more. But yeah, as I say, much as been printed or referred to as hard copies. So, whilst they might not have necessarily logged on, if they felt they needed, which is why I thought we need to just guide them back to certain aspects.

NF And also, it’s not been very long. I mean it’s very short. So, you know, I’m aware that the kind of ongoing use of it is going. To hopefully go on for much longer than this and so I certainly hope to be checking back in with schools in sort of 6, 12 months’ time, to see what people are doing, including, it’s fine if they’re not doing anything.

HT B No I think we will be. I think it’s a specialist tool, you know, for all staff across the school including support staff, as well.

NF Yeah, and I think what seems to be coming across to me, is you started with just the one-year group as it were. And you’re now, as you build it say through into next year’s professional learning, that it’ll be more of a whole school initiative, as it were.

HT B Absolutely, yeah.

NF Yeah, that’s great yeah, so yeah. I was talking to School F this morning. They’ve done exactly the same. Started with year 5 and now it’s starting to filter out, as it were. It’s a nice model, isn’t it?

HT B Yeah, absolutely.

NF Yeah, and they felt also that you get buy-in by doing that. If you do it with a group of teachers you want to do it, a bit like you’ve just said, one of your teachers is taking the lead, and then the buy-in brings everyone else along, hopefully, as well.

HT B Absolutely yeah. But it doesn’t feel done to, it feels done with. Because they go oh let’s have a look at this as part of the PPA. Whereas if I sat there in a staff meeting going, “And this is what we now need to focus on for everybody.” Everyone gets that, “Oh! it’s another thing.” So, it’s just kind of happening naturally, which is why I feel that that’s… What I said earlier whether I would change the way we’ve done it and start with the staff meetings, I don’t actually know. Because that may well be that that’s where I feel we’re at, because we’re at this point now if that makes sense.

NF Yeah, absolutely yeah. And I guess the value of it is about being able to take it from the point that you’re at now, as it were, yeah. Which is what all the schools are kind of saying, which is great. Where are we? We might have answered 5 a bit. We talked about you know, do you feel that things have become sustainable over time, and I guess the fact that you’re, you started small, and you’re moving up to whole school will probably promote that.

HT B Absolutely. And I think just that staff awareness is what I’ve noted down. Staff seem to be talking, not that we weren’t before, but the conversations seem to be much more prominent now.

NF About?

HT B What we can do for our multilingual children.

NF Lovely.

HT B And equally as you saw with our two ladies, they’re not worried about coming to ask, now.

NF Good.

HT B Because I think they feel that there is something that we can, now, reach out to.

NF That’s great. God it’s awful that teachers feel worried about asking, about something so incredibly difficult. Nobody ever felt worried about asking about that.

HT B And I hate that. And it’s one of the things that one of the coaches shifts that I had to sort of change, since I’ve been here. But that was a real fear of coming to ask because they felt judged. And that could have, you know, both bits could have been… But I feel that they know there’s something we can now reach to, and hopefully within that culture shift, as well, we’ve been able to sort that out. That’s another conversation but that was something I really had to battle with when I started.

NF Right OK yeah. Because I mean this is really tough, isn’t it? The idea that any teacher would think we had all the answers for dealing with a new arrival with complex needs. None of us do, do we?

HT B Well I sit there sometimes and say, “I genuinely don’t know, but we can reach out to and it’s out there.”

NF Yeah, good, that’s really interesting. So, what’s nice is you’ve alluded to… So, question 6 which is kind of hard-to-get hold of really, is we were kind of hoping that certainly the focus on the school belonging would, kind of be, something that might promote more talk about. Or you’ve said staff awareness, about kind of diversity and the needs of multilingual children. What you seem to be saying is the conversations are doing that already, yeah.

HT B Yeah absolutely.

NF Is it that people feel more positive towards them, or better able to manage their needs, or is it one thing or another?

HT B One of the words that was used the other day when we were talking about it, was naivety. So, some people felt quite naïve, because they have, and this was their conversation, they have been brought up in (name) and they’ve not really experienced much of the diversity that we’re now seeing in (name).

NF Yes of course.

HT B So for them, they’ve had to really change, you know, how they see their own local community. As well as then being able to teach those children. So, they felt quite naïve, and you know… They felt quite bad about it that. They did feel that, and their eyes have been widened through their own experience. So, I think it’s been that sort of learning shift for staff as well, and that’s now allowed them to know that actually it’s OK if we want to ask. For example, one of our traveller children, we’ve had that conversation with mum around, “OK, this is the situation here. But we want to know what it’s like from your culture and here’s ….” So, we are having more of that open dialogue, I think. And the same with our multilingual children, you know, “OK, in your culture this is the situation, as we understand it, are we right?” And that, it’s given staff the confidence to do that.

NF That’s great, and it’s ok, as you say it’s ok to ask and if you don’t ask then you don’t know.

HT B No, exactly.

NF Yeah, there’s a kind of a Britishness, isn’t there? Sort of an anxiety that you’re not allowed to talk to somebody as if they’re different, because it’ll be somehow offending them. Whereas of course the opposite is true really, isn’t it? But that how we all are… I was that teacher at in [unintelligible], but equally kind of completely narrow white experience. And I think it’s really wonderful, it reflects really well in your staff, doesn’t it? That they’re able to articulate that shift in their own mindset, that’s brilliant. Yeah. That’s lovely to hear.

HT B So, I grew up in, just outside of London so for me we had quite a sort of diverse culture by the time I left there and moved to (name). So, for me it was almost the opposite, and I was sort of, “Wow! This is more white British than I’m used to.” But whereas I’d taught in Staines, and we had a big traveller community, we had lots of diversity there. So, it became second nature, so you sort of come in and do that and then you sort of get people going, “You can't ask that!” Well, yes, you can! So yeah.

NF It’s funny isn’t it yeah.

HT B Yeah.

NF Yeah, that’s a lovely reflection, yeah. And I guess it’ll make them do, possibly. I mean another thing I really enjoyed about what you were doing in the playground; was this kind of promoting opportunities for children to kind of talk in home languages as well. So, that was to me, felt like a kind of real growth of that, the bigger picture of the children, rather than the just worrying about the you know, “What do I do in my English lesson?” So yeah. It’s quite hard to think about one without the other really? Isn’t it? I think yeah. Lovely. OK, fabulous. Question 7 I think we’ve sort of covered, so is there anything we’ve been unable to find? So, you absolutely rightly said, you need more Key Stage 1. Is there anything else?

HT B Just the staff room Principles Poster, I think.

NF Staff room Principles poster. OK, yeah, absolutely yes.

HT B Something that sort of details them, but you know, that’s just there in your face, almost, that we can put up around school.

NF Lovely, OK. Staff and principles rules. Interestingly the work that this comes from originally which is my friend who’s in the US, who’s had this other way about thinking about this. It’s more complex and it’s got loads going on. She’s got exactly that, a kind of poster that’s got a principle and then sort of a two-sentence explainer of what it is, yeah.

HT B Absolutely yeah.

NF OK I get what you mean? yeah.

HT B It would support that conversation because at the beginning, particularly, people were sort of going, “Oh, so let's, right, that’s right.” And you know it, but they just wanted to confirm their own understanding. Whereas, if it was there and it was up by the computers when they have PPA, and things like and in their diaries, it would just be really handy.

NF OK, we’ll try that one, OK, lovely. Alright. And the last one, we’ve probably talked about a lot already as well, about the future because you’ve talked already. About what you’ll do in September and the things that you already do. Is there anything you wanted to add at all on that or have we covered all of that?

HT B No, I think the main bit as I say is that whole schoolness now and including the support staff. So, naturally they’ve been, it’s sort of filtered out to them, but getting them involved more in the actual toolkit side of it, would be beneficial, as well. Because actually a lot of them are doing that intervention.

NF Whole schoolness?

HT B

Yeah, whole school definitely. A lot of them are doing the intervention side of it with these children as well. So, that would be really handy for them to have sight of the toolkit and the overview and know what the teachers are talking about.

NF Yeah, because it can be used in any way, you’re right, it can be used as an adaptation of whole class teaching, or it could be used at small group intervention level. Yeah, great. Lovely. Whole schoolness, we’ll take that one away, lovely. Well, it’s just been a real pleasure talking with you and it was a real pleasure actually going back into my notes as well because we just had such a lovely afternoon because you’d taken it slightly differently. No one else took us round the playground for example and showed us, and we just so enjoyed that, it was just great, you know. And the way that everyone’s come to it differently is great anyway, but yeah, you were definitely original in your take on it.

HT B We like to try! It was useful. Because that for us is such a big part at the moment as well and we’ve seen such a change in all of our children including those with different languages and it’s just been… It just felt it was nice for you to see it, but yeah, I hope it was good.

NF Totally, it was totally, totally lovely, yes, it was great. So lovely, so I will be back in touch after Easter asking any school if they’ll let us come in and take photos and film teachers, if they’re happy to. Which I know is unlikely, but we can ask. And then I definitely will hopefully be checking back in with schools just in a kind of how’s it going way. So, this isn’t a goodbye hopefully because I’ve just so enjoyed working with the 10 schools we’ve been with. And I’m really grateful to you for all that you’ve put in Tash as well, on top of everything else.

HT B It’s been really nice to be part of it, so thank you.

NF Lovely.

HT B I’m really excited.

NF You’re welcome, and we’ll see each other again hopefully.

HT B Absolutely. Right take care Naomi, thanks so much.

NF Thanks very much, bye.

HT B Bye.