

# George makes music

## 27 June

George took an interest in music today after I encouraged him to join in. He sat on my knee and gripped a stick puppet of a cow while we sang "Old McDonald". He chewed on the cow's leg and smiled at me. He really enjoyed it when I said "Moo, moo" quickly and loudly in a deep voice.

## 28 June

George became more involved in music today and danced to The Wiggles while standing and holding onto my hand. Previously, George has preferred to continue in solitary play during our music sessions, exploring the toys on the shelves and in the plastic drawers.

## Learning story

26 July

Teacher: Shaz

George became involved in creating his own music this morning. He discovered the basket of musical instruments and picked up a large shaker, banging it hard onto the floor. He looked up at us smiling at him and continued to bang even harder. We laughed and said, "You're making music, George."



George went on to play different instruments, tapping the tambourine with one hand and playing the xylophone with his pointing finger.

Later, George was back at the basket of musical instruments, shaking the bells and banging on the tambourine. He tipped the basket over, exploring and listening to different instruments.

## Learning story

27 July

Teacher: Shaz



Today, I led a planned music session using the musical instruments. George participated with delight, playing all of the instruments. I was playing the guitar, and George took great interest in this, strumming it with his fingers and squealing with excitement, bouncing up and down to the music.

## Interpretation

George is really interested in the different sounds that different objects make. He obviously gets a lot of pleasure out of the music and sounds that he makes. He is listening carefully and is engaged in what he is doing.

## What next?

What else can we do to support George in working with sounds and music?

- Plan some music sessions to accommodate George's interest in the musical instruments, including the guitar.
- Utilise the opportunities we have to incorporate sound making into George's day-to-day experiences.
- Could we make a soundboard for George?



George takes his turn placing and removing his flower on the board as everyone sings "Five Coloured Flowers in a Garden Grow".

## Learning story

2 August

Teacher: Nadine

We were fascinated by George's involvement with heuristic play today. He sat in the same place for a rather long time, experimenting with several different objects and revisiting each one frequently. It seemed that he had certain objectives in mind.



George's first item of interest was a shiny spoon with a long, wooden handle. He used his hand to bang

down on a metal bowl as if he was banging on a drum. He then used the spoon to bang on three different bowls as if they were a set of drums.

George used the spoon to stir. He tasted the spoon, licking it as if he was licking an ice cream. He used his teeth to pick the spoon up by the long, wooden handle as if he had no hands.

He then went back to stirring. He used the metal container and a small wooden container, banging the spoon inside both containers and carefully listening to the different sounds he was making. After a while, he put the wooden bowl inside the metal bowl. He lost interest but later on went back to revisit his favourite spoon.

### Interpretation

The way George kept focused on just a few of the heuristic play objects was of real interest to us. Though he was really involved in making sounds, he was fully exploring the objects through touch and taste as well. After trying different combinations of objects, he chose to use the spoon as his tool for making sounds.

### What next?

Make use of more opportunities like this one for heuristic play when there are fewer children and fewer interruptions for George.

Set up heuristic play materials in different areas of the environment and present the materials in different, creative ways for George to discover and explore.

## Learning story

16 August

Teacher: Nadine

At morning tea time, after deciding he had had enough to eat, George began to find other uses for the kai table. Banging on the table with both hands, he laughed cheekily, looking up at us and then at Jack, who was sitting beside him. Continuing to use the table like a drum, he then started beating using alternate hands. Jack, who had been quietly watching with interest, then also started to join in.



### Interpretation

This is another example of how George finds pleasure in exploring sound and how he initiates this himself. There was a shared sense of fun here as George and Jack's friendship continues to grow.

### 18 September

George was fascinated by the clicking noise from the yellow bus as he pushed it across the floor. As he was passing a large basket of toys, he stopped to see what was inside. He picked up the toy on the top of the basket. This was a small plastic turtle filled with tiny balls that rattled as George pushed it across the floor.

### Parents' voice

*We are delighted with George's development since he has been at the centre. He's a lovely mix of bookworm, musician, artist, friend, and lovely, funny little boy. Shaz, Nadine, and Sally have definitely developed these skills, and we appreciate their individualised planning of developmental activities and the loving care they provide. If George ever leaves home, we know where he will head!*

## Learning story

13 November

Teacher: Shaz

To extend George's interest in music, I made some drums out of old tins and hung them from a tree outside.

When George spotted the tins, he started to play them, using a long plastic pipe to explore the sounds. When George's friend Jack arrived, he looked at George as if to say, "Can I join you?" They smiled at each other with acceptance. Suddenly, George stopped and began to sing "da, la, da". They both showed great pleasure, smiling and laughing as they tapped on the tins.

When Jack decided to run off into the trees, George followed close by his side. As Jack tapped the stick he was still holding, George acknowledged that he was making similar sounds as with the tins, pointing and repeating his song, "da, la, da". They seemed very excited as they both stamped their feet up and down, laughing together.

### Interpretation

George has continued to enjoy developing his social play and is building many friendships with his peers.

George loves music. He is eager to explore sounds from the world around him. George responds to his own music making by mimicking the sounds he has put together to produce his own songs. He is developing a sense of rhythm and beat and is using sound as a fundamental form of expression when singing to music.



### What's happening here?

The excerpts here are about George's developing interest in music and in sound making over a four-month period. A visiting exemplar co-ordinator wrote a commentary throughout the series of assessments. She writes:

George started attending the centre as a ten-month-old, and it wasn't long before he was introduced to the music experiences on offer at the centre. Some occasions when George showed interest or involvement in these music sessions were shared verbally between the teachers and George's parents, and some were recorded in his portfolio.

### What aspects of continuity does this assessment exemplify?

George's musical pathway is illustrated by the way he:

- explores the sounds he can make with an increasing range of objects;
- moves from exploring on his own to also playing a role in interactive small-group music activities;
- incorporates sound making and singing into his social play;
- develops his sense of rhythm and beat.

### How might this assessment contribute to continuity?

The commentary records that George's teachers "regularly share their observations with George's parents, seeking their input whenever possible". Many of these discussions are unrecorded, but a number of them go into his portfolio. George's parents also respond informally and formally, including making a contribution that describes him as a "lovely mix of bookworm, musician, artist, friend". Although this record focuses on George as a "musician", other pathways are recorded as well.

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

The parents comment on the "individualised planning of developmental activities and the loving care" that the teachers provide.