



## Rachel McMillan Nursery School and Children's Centre

### VERVE Video Interaction (The Keena Project)

This is the result of a project individual practitioners have carried out with a Speech and Language Therapist, Keena Cummins. Using video, Keena develops practitioners' self-awareness of the skills they use in supporting children to develop their attention, listening, play, interaction and communication skills. The practitioners are helped to place each child in the position of being the engine of communication in a 1:1 situation rather than being the respondent or passive recipient.

Initially this was developed with children with speech and language or social communication challenges but the method is now used more widely with all children in the centre.

The most important outcome from this work was that the practitioners gave themselves permission to take a step back and enable the child time to lead the play or interaction. It helped fuse each practitioner's specialism and knowledge of the children and their environment.

Instead of the practitioner taking the lead, the children started to trust their own skills of exploring. It allows the child to experiment with cause and effect - both with toys and equipment and also the adult. It supports children in self-regulation and gives them time and space to organise and process their thoughts in association with the object that they are playing with, without interruption.

It also ensures that the child is not overloaded and gives the adult time to watch and perfect the timing of their interactions. Mirroring the child's movements and actions becomes a powerful tool for engagement and shared understanding of the interaction.