

Adult Pedagogic Strategies



In 1997 we invited parents to take part in a study, funded by the Teacher Training Agency, to consider the pedagogic strategies that both workers and parents were using. We began by introducing a group of parents to the work on Adult Style being used in the Effective Early Learning Project (EEL) (Pascal & Bertram 1997).

Within the EEL Project, Pascal and Bertram drew on the work of Carl Rogers in order to think about how, as adults, we interact with young children, in order to facilitate their learning. Rogers, when working with adults, talked about the following three qualities:

- Genuineness or realness
- Prizing, acceptance, trust
- Empathy or empathic understanding

Pascal and Bertram translated these qualities into adult behaviours that facilitated young children's learning:

- Stimulation or introducing new ideas or resources
- Allowing autonomy
- Sensitivity or listening and watching in order to intervene appropriately

At first the Pen Green workers and parents used the EEL framework to discuss what they were seeing on several video sequences of adult/child interactions.

We then spent time video-recording this group of parents, each with their own child, settling them into nursery and then supporting them in their play. We filmed the same children with their Key Worker from the nursery. All the parents and workers met and looked at the video material together and subsequently began to reflect on and analyse what were the effective teaching strategies that were being used. From this detailed analysis, we arrived at a framework of effective adult teaching strategies used by both parents and nursery staff. This study has been repeated several times since, most recently with parents and workers in our 0-3 provision (The Nest).

We have found the frameworks for thinking about our pedagogical interventions with children are helpful when engaging in peer-peer observations.

Taken from A Celebratory Approach to SEND Assessment in the Early Years www.pengreen.org

Adult Pedagogic Strategies

(Pen Green 2005)

(a list derived from observations of adults interacting with 2-4 year old children)

1. The adult watches and listens to what the child is doing before intervening
2. The adult knows about the child's family experiences and links what they have done previously to what they are doing now
3. The adult shows the child they are interested by their facial expression, by being physically close to them, by mirroring the child's facial expressions and verbal intonation, therefore empathizing with the child's expression of emotions
4. The adult encourages the child to make choices and decisions and to take appropriate risks
5. The adult encourages the child to go beyond what the adult knows about and is open to learning new things alongside the child
6. The adult is aware of the impact of his or her own attitudes and beliefs and how these might affect the child's learning
7. The adult plays and learns alongside the child. The adult is committed to their own learning and encourages the child's curiosity
8. The adult checks out the child's meaning and gives the child time to respond or to question
9. The adult offers language to support the child's actions and offers new information to the child
10. The adult acknowledges both the child's feelings and the child's competence and capability

Although these effective pedagogic strategies were arrived at through looking at video material of children from two to four years of age, this framework is still useful for staff to critically reflect on their own practice with even younger children. There are, however, some other things that need to be taken into account when thinking about the very youngest children, from birth to two years:

Does the adult know about a child's daily routine?

Does the adult know whether a child has a transitional object?

Does the adult know who are the important people in the child's life?

Does the adult know how a baby likes to be held and rocked?

Does the adult know how a baby likes to be comforted?

Does the adult know a child's home vocabulary?

Are these things evident in daily practice, through what you see and what you hear adults saying to children?



The Revised Adult Pedagogic Strategies (2013)

(the most recent version derived from observations of adults interacting with 0-3 year old children)

1. **Subtle Intervention** - The adult watches and listens to what the child is doing before intervening
2. **Linking Experiences** - The adults are aware of the child's experience with other adults at home and in the setting
3. **Acknowledging** - The adult acknowledges the child's presence, emotions and capability by:
 - being physically close to them including using touch if appropriate to make contact (see also strategy 8)
 - tuning in to the child's facial expressions and vocal intonation, including playfulness and teasing
4. **Working with the Child's Initiative and Agency** - The adult considers what the child is bringing to each interaction, checks out the child's meaning and gives the child time to respond or to question. The adult encourages the child's curiosity and ability to make choices including taking appropriate risks
5. **Adult Learning** - The adult is committed to their own learning. S/he is open to play and learn alongside the child, encouraging new learning for both child and adult
6. **Adult Attitudes** - The adult is aware of the impact of his or her own attitudes and beliefs and how these might affect the child's learning
7. **Using Language** - The adult knows about the child's home vocabulary, offers new information to the child, including preparation for what is about to happen and describing what has just happened, and language to extend the child's actions
8. **Using the Body** - The adult affords learning experiences using the body ranging from using slight touch to whole body experiences if appropriate. The adult knows how individual babies and children like to be held, rocked and comforted.