

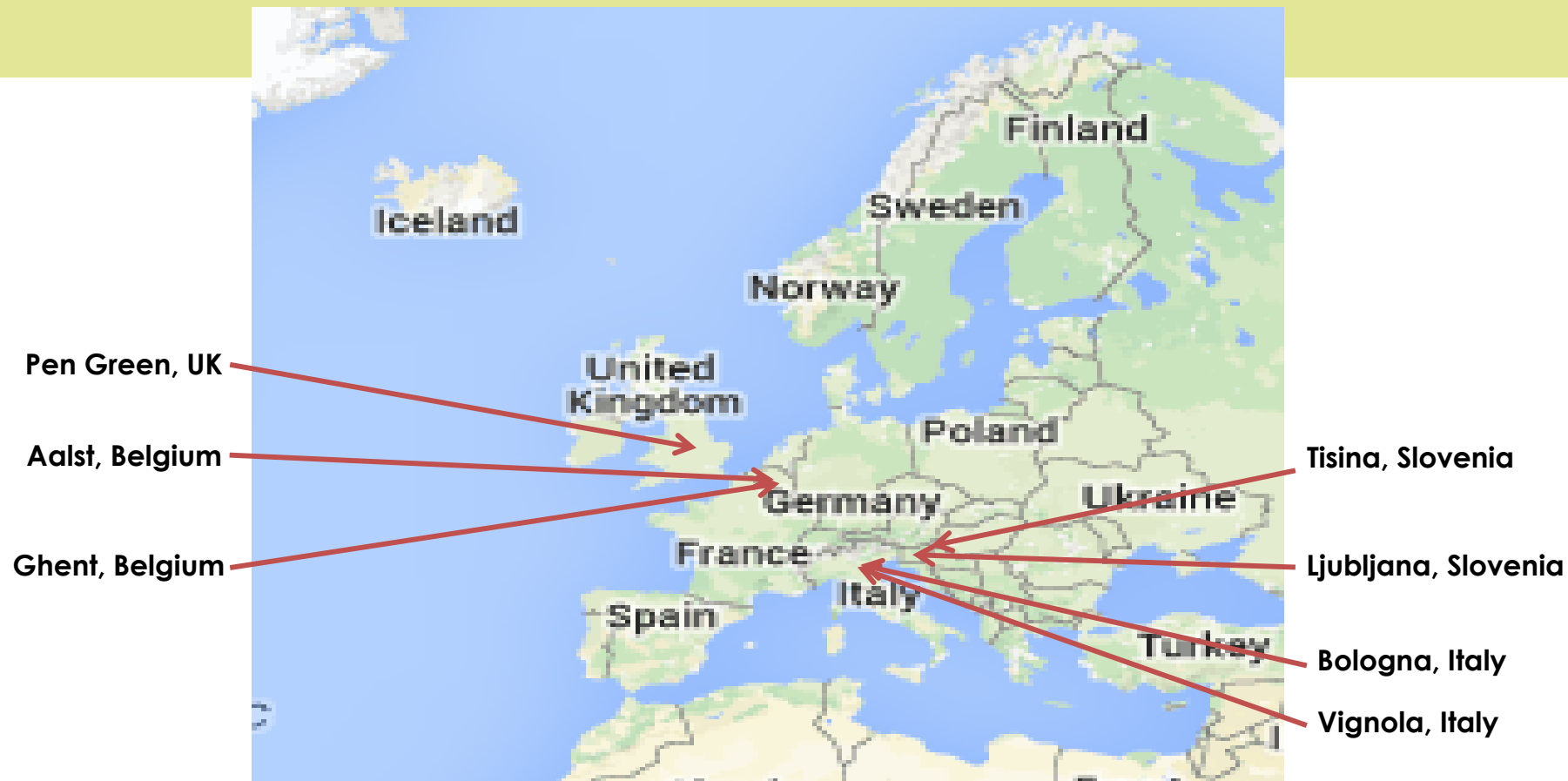
The 'Corby Better Start Project': collaborative and innovative practices to ensure smooth educational transitions



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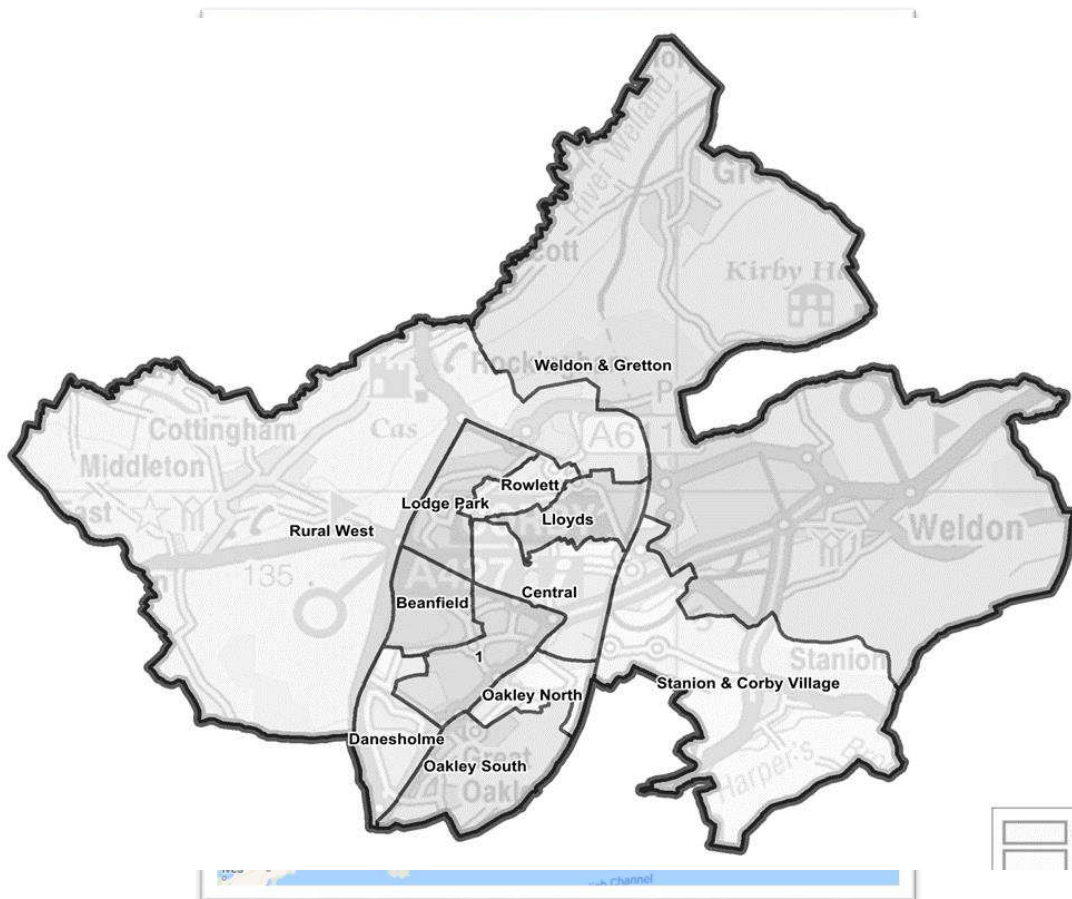
for children and their families





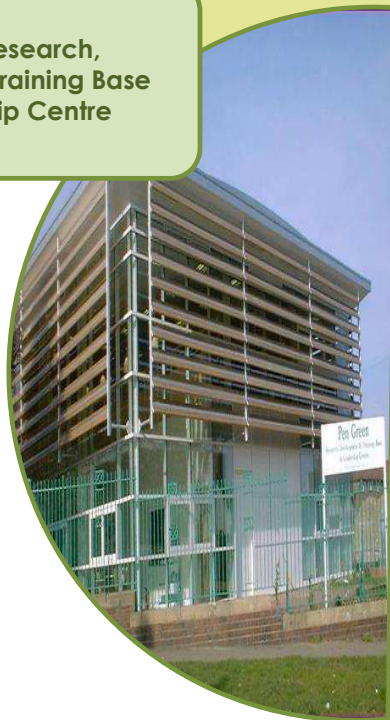
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Corby in Context



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A Good Start for All in Corby

- 'A good start for all: Sustaining Transitions Across the Early Years'
- Previous research – Race to the Top
- What we are going to do
- Who will it involve

Research Aims

To undertake case studies to research transition experiences for children at risk of social exclusion, including:

- Traveller families (Gypsies, Roma and Travellers (GRT))
- Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND)
- Child Looked After (CLA)
- Other vulnerable groups

Research Framework

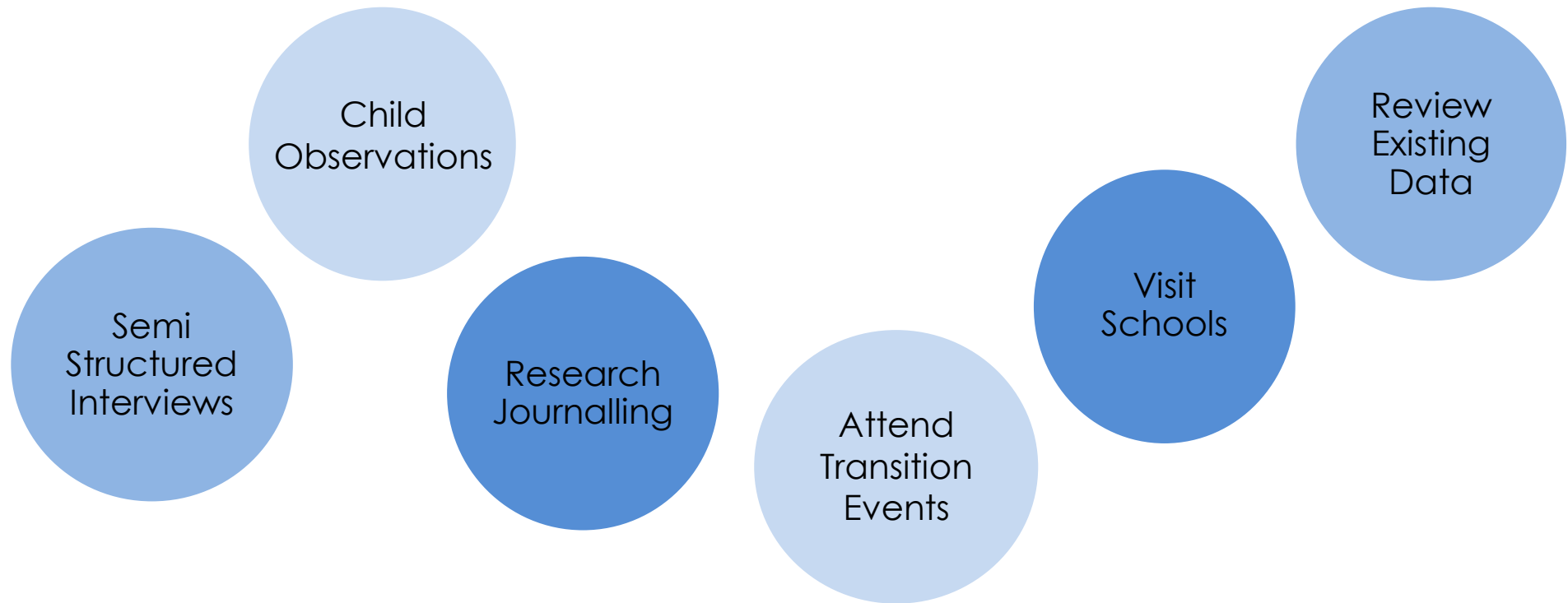
To support children's vertical transitions
by researching and understanding their
needs, and their ability manage their
horizontal transitions.
(O'Connor, 2013)

Vertical
Transitions
are the
moves
through
early years
settings
and
school.



Horizontal transitions happen throughout the child's day, from day-to-day and weekly.

Paradigm, Methodology and Methods



Interpretivist Paradigm, Qualitative, Ethnographic, Purposive Sample, Case Study.

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Data gathering

- Observations in setting
- Information from Child's Celebration of achievement file
- Information from child's on-line journal
- Making children's learning visible data and school data
- Home visits
- Visits to school and nursery
- Semi-structured interviews with key people
- Journalling the research

Ethical Considerations

- Anonymity
- Confidentiality
- Gatekeepers
- Informed Consent
- Right to Withdraw
- Data Protection

- Vulnerability of Participants
- Rapidly Changing Circumstances
- Power in Relationships
- Safeguarding

Who do we mean by 'Travellers'?

Traditional

- The 'travelling community' is used to describe people with a nomadic lifestyle, usually known as Gypsies and Travellers.
- Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers are protected against discrimination and have protected characteristics of race under the Equalities Act 2010
- In terms of health and education, they are among the most deprived groups in the Britain.

Cultural

- 'New Travellers' or 'New Age Travellers' are a diverse group, originating mainly from the settled British population, some now in their 2nd or 3rd generation
- Choose, or end up, living as a Traveller for different reasons
- These reasons often include strong personal or political convictions - e.g. living off the grid' - many now settled into private sites or rural communes.

Occupational Travellers and Show People

- A cultural minority that have owned and operated Fairgrounds and circuses for many generations, their identity being connected to their family businesses
- This group also includes Bargees or boat dwellers living primarily on narrow boats.

How many Travellers live in England?

- The total number of Traveller caravans in England in January 2016 was 21,306 - 1,183 more than in January 2015.
- Overall, the January 2016 count indicated that 87% of traveller caravans in England were on authorised land and that 13% were on unauthorised land.
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/traveller-caravan-count-january-2016>

Gypsy and Traveller life in Corby

- Two authorised Traveller sites
- One site for Gypsy and Traveller families – 10 pitches
- One site for New Traveller families – 6 pitches
- Sites are situated very close to one another, see themselves as distinctively different, show prejudice and hostility towards one another.
- Several times per year Occupational Travellers visit Corby– fairground and circus show people come to town and set up authorised sites and support local events.

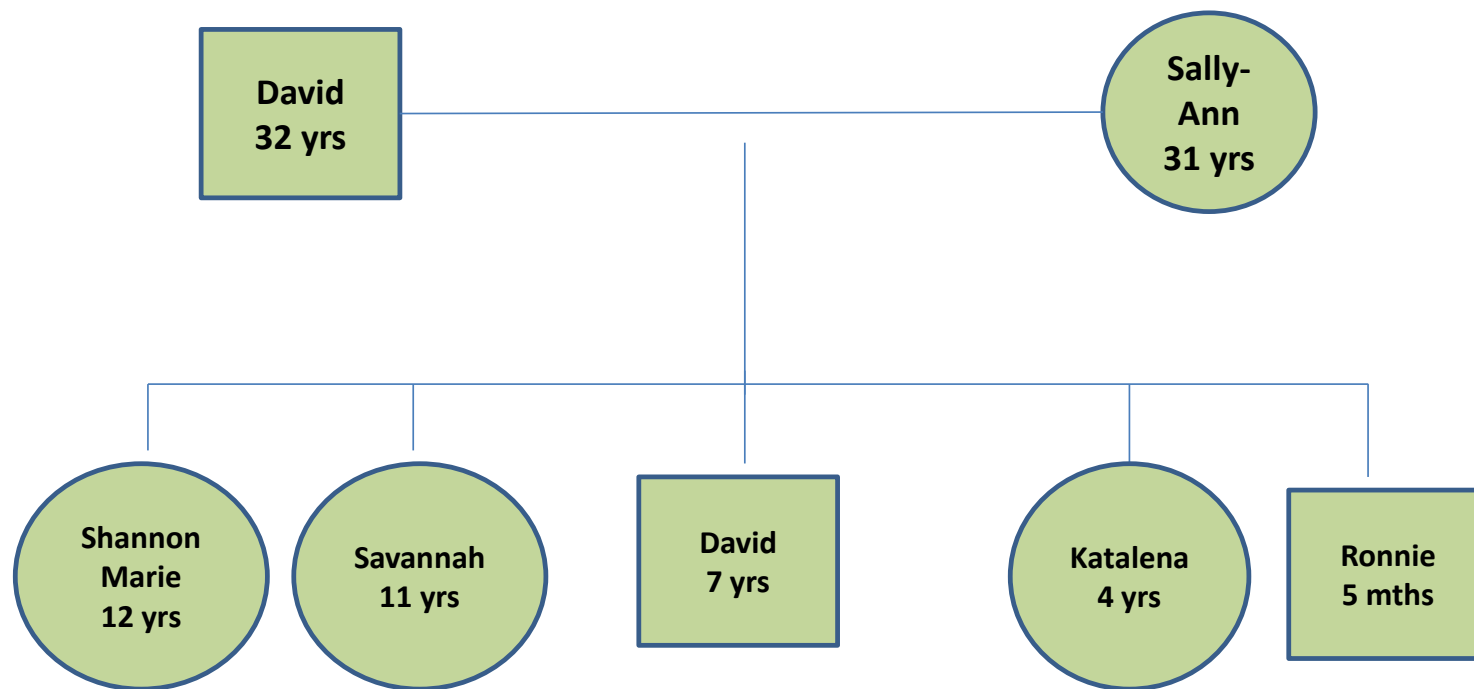
Case Study- Katalena

Dunlop Close



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Katalena in context



Genogram – Family 1
Irish and English Travellers

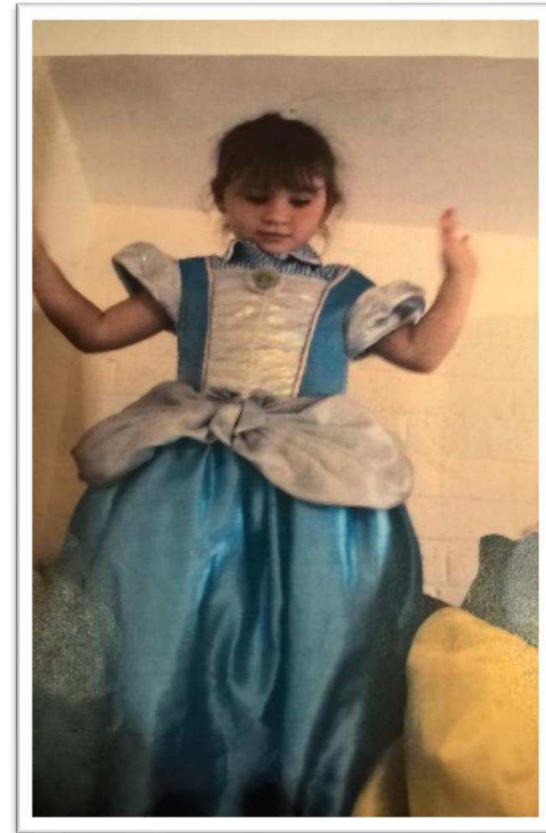
Katalena – Emergent Themes

Importance of Role Play, Language and Communication

- Non-verbal communication, language to communicate needs, language in play

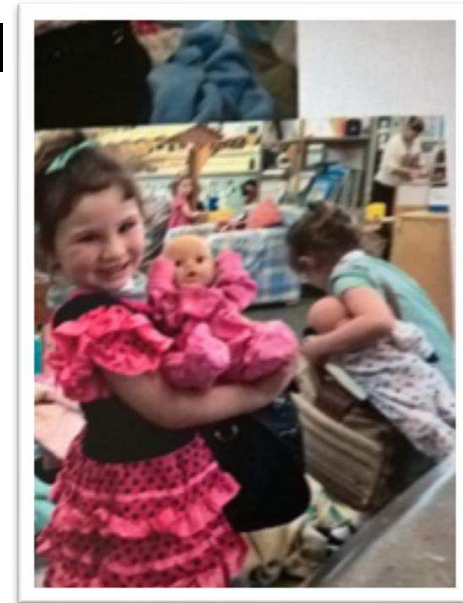
Social Relationships, Friendships, Trust and Security

- On a visit to school Katalena kept close to her sister, held on to the bug tub and woodlouse
- Wanted to engage with her teacher



Supporting Katalena's Transition

- Regular visits to the site by family worker and Homestart
- Transport
- Supporting the family to complete forms for school
- Liaison with school and local authority
- Allowing Katalena to engage in her own way
- Resource packs sent home
- Visits to school with peers
- Family engagement in joint Transition project



Main Findings and Discussion

- Trust – sensitivity
- Importance of family
- Identity – how do I help Katalena and Esther to be proud of their cultural heritage and build their own individual identity?
- Multidimensional relationships - connectedness, shared humour, balance of control, intimacy and shared positive emotions. (Dunn. J. 1993) – Relationship between Katalena and Esther, their friendship and family
- Shared role play as a tool for transition, making sense of new experiences and environments
- Role of an advocate



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Implications for practice

Sustaining Practice

- Attendance
- Follow the children into school
- Work with school and the local authority to provide transport to support the children's attendance.
- Staff Professional Development – understanding Traveller heritage and culture

Informing Practice

- Work with local schools and the local authority to gain better insights into Traveller life and law
- Make sure we all do the very best for these children, as one of the most vulnerable groups in education.
- Promote social competencies within school
- Enhance positive child-teacher relationships to improve transition

Improving Practice

- Work closely with class teachers to offer innovative ways to engage families in transition - Erasmus project
- Transition project for vulnerable children when school is quieter
- Engage with parents in ways that feel right for them – one size does not fit all.

References

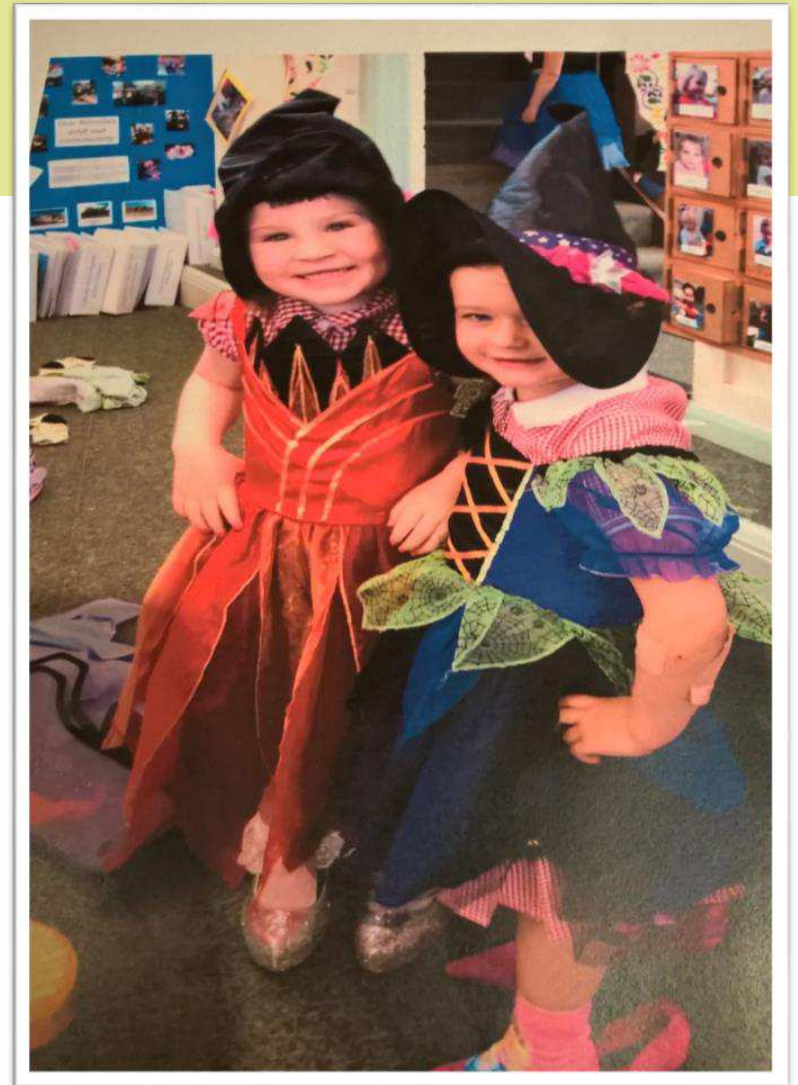
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Thank you

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