Research on Listening to Children

There is a wealth of research on the benefits of listening to children. Included is a brief introduction to some of these influential pieces of work.

A Brief Introduction to “The Mosaic Approach”

Clark and Moss (2001) present both a framework for listening and suggest the Mosaic Approach to listening to younger children. The framework for listening is:

- Multi-method: recognises the different languages or voices of children
- Participatory: treats children as experts and agents in their own lives
- Reflexive: includes children, practitioners and parents in reflecting on meanings and addresses the question of interpretation
- Adaptable: can be applied to a variety of early childhood institutions
- Focussed on children’s lived experiences: looking at lives rather than knowledge gained or care received
- Embedded into practice: a framework for listening which has the potential to be both used as an evaluative tool and to become embedded into early years practice

Within this framework, Clark and Moss suggest a two staged Mosaic Approach:

- Stage One: Children and adults gather documentation and practitioners and parents reflect on what they think life is like for the child(ren)
- Stage two: Piecing together information for dialogue, reflection and interpretation and practitioners and parents listen to the child(ren’s) own perspectives

Clark and Moss (2001) Listening to Young Children The Mosaic Approach