09 May 2011

# The language of Photography

Part 1 in a series of three project support documents.

## Stage 1-Getting started

Here we have outlined ways in which you could begin the project with educators in your setting, with children and their parents.

**The educators -** Professional development

Discuss the project with staff team to be involved. Give printed copies of the project guidance to staff members, Arrange a staff meeting to discuss the project further once all educators have read the guidance.

Watch ‘Born into Brothels’ DVD (Available via Amazon- this was one of the inspirations for the project)

Order a bunch of cameras – Recommendation Fuji finepix ([www.fujifilm.co.uk](http://www.fujifilm.co.uk)) refurbished range and memory cards, prices starting from £50. Once you have the cameras make sure they are charged, have a home, have an empty memory card , are set to highest resolution and that the flash turned off.

**The Children**

Select a group of children to work with cameras (4-6.) Have a meeting with the group of children, show them the cameras and how the basic functions work. Give each child a camera.

Explain that there are 3 stages to taking a photograph.

1. Half press the button before you take the photo...this is the focus
2. Press button down fully
3. Hold the camera still...the digital camera needs a bit of time to process the photo

Initially ask each child to give their camera to a friend to take a photo of them- in this way you will be able to identify whose images are on each camera by the first picture.

Ask the children to use the cameras to photograph what they most like in the setting/school/ centre.

By giving them a challenge you offer a focus for their photography. Encourage the children to look closely at the picture they are taking and take their time. Ask them to consider: what is inside the frame? Is everything in the picture that they want to include? Can you see what is important to the photographer? Is the image close-up enough? Which angle is best?

Download the photos onto the computer either by placing memory card directly into computer – or use a memory card reader with USB plug into your computer. Memory card readers are cheap and mean that you can upload images off any memory card to your computer. Save each child’s series of images in a folder with their name in a sub folder with the date.

Meet with the group of children. Open each child’s file, orient the pictures correctly- portrait or landscape so that they are clearly visible and as the photograph was taken- and view as a slideshow. Encourage the children to discuss the images, and choose which are their favourites and why. Ask them to give titles to the images. Record the children’s words and responses.

(this exercise could be repeated with further groups)

**The Parents**

Organise a sharing session with all parents of the class group. This session will be to inform them about the project, why you are using photography, and your approach. (see parents section of Guidance document) This will enable them to understand and value the project and support their children, especially when they bring cameras home. We have attached the project précis which you could give parents. Provide the parents also with a précis of a comparable project which demonstrate the value of photography in the Early Years e.g. Julian Germain’s ‘My Family Project’(Sunderland) Offer parent’s group a follow-up workshop session-introducing basic photographic skills through direct activity e.g. Propose the following tasks-Photograph something from 3 angles. Take a picture of something no-one else would photograph. Take a picture of something you like in the setting. Title the images and review them in the group.

Give parents a specific parental permissions form for the project which seeks permission for children’s own images and images of the children to be used in the setting, in Sightlines project material, to be shared with other project groups and possibly for a final national open air and on line digital exhibit.

**The Project**

We require you to send us 4 things at this first stage.

**Context:** An outline description of the group/setting

**Educators:** A description about how the children encountered/approached the task and educators observations/conversations (what did they notice?)

**Children:** The children’s comments/questions about the task and the photos   
Photographs: A selection of images- with titles – no more than 6 images per child.

We look forward to receiving your material.

Good luck

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