

Knowledge and Understanding

Katrina Foley

Developing a child's interest through cooking – Francis, 3 years 4 months

One afternoon Francis arrived with a packet of jelly to make. Because of his interest and the positive link between home and school, we agreed to help. Francis used scissors to cut up the jelly. Ideas of hot, cold, dissolve, cooling and stirring were all discussed. When the jelly dissolved we discovered that we had not got a mould. Francis went to the design technology area and selected a Pringles crisp tube, a chocolate box, an egg box and a foil tray. He asked if he could use these, and whether they would work. I encouraged him to try and see what happened. He was very interested in the different container shapes. He quickly realised that the chocolate box and the egg box did not work well! The Pringle container and the foil tray were then put into the fridge for the next day – this encourages continuity between sessions as well as opportunities to recall the work of the previous day. The next day, we saw how the jelly had changed and how well the Pringle container had worked. The jelly was an interesting, long shape and Francis and his mother were delighted when he took it home to share. The experience lasted well over one full session.

The whole scientific task had been completely changed by Francis's interest and ideas. It also helped him to develop positive attitudes to the new setting