

OXFORDSHIRE, JULY 2015

INTERVIEW WITH MOTHER OF TIM

FAMILY DETAILS:

Tim is the youngest child, with a sister who is 4 years older. Parents were separated not long after Tim was two. Parents have an amicable relationship and Tim spends every alternate weekend with his father, and also time with his grandparents.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CLIMATE:

Tim's key relationship is with his mother. She describes him as "Mummy's little boy" and says that "his father pushes him more, but I tend to cuddle him". He talks to his mum all the time, about most things, but rarely about school.

CHILD CHARACTERISTICS:

Tim is interested in cars, football, motorsports (an interest of his mother's) and has various temporary obsessions, (e.g. the current one is Batman.) He loves books, jigsaw puzzles and sees patterns easily. He is a confident and enthusiastic reader, likes riding his bike and swimming. He enjoys being outside but equally "he loves to watch TV cuddled up to his mum". He asks a lot of questions and picks things up very quickly; an example is a recent visit to Speedway

in Cardiff where he wanted to know all the details of what was going on and had no difficulty in understanding the rules.

Until the age of three, he was fairly shy and still is in some situations, though generally he is now fairly confident and will engage easily with others. He has good friendships, with a couple of boys in particular, and is popular. Whilst he used to be a follower, his mother now describes him as very independent; "very much his own man".

He is not an organised child and is untidy with his toys, etc., though he will line up his cars obsessively.

He has the capacity to persist in activities and can play for hours at one thing. He has a "brilliant memory"; an example is his ability to recall details of outings long after they have taken place. Reasoning skills are well developed and he is able to predict consequences of his actions "but will still carry on".

Max shows empathy with his mother and sister and can pick up on his mum's emotions. He has no serious behaviour problems but he occasionally lashes out at his sister.

PRE-SCHOOL EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES:

Tim has always had bedtime stories and will always choose the books himself – currently he loves the Thomas the Tank series. He is happy to concentrate on work books at home and has good IT skills (father works in technology).

From a very early age he played memory games.

He has only recently been given access to computers.

His father will push him, for example has booked him on football courses to encourage interaction with others; Tim was very reluctant but once persuaded to go, enjoyed it.

His mother says that she realises that she gave Tim much more time than she gave her older child, when she was working, and she can clearly see the difference that this has made. Her approach is not to push Tim but to let him get on with whatever he wants to do.” I just want him to do the best he can. I am proud of him at whatever level”.

HOME EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES:

At two years of age, Tim’s support worker encouraged his mother to allow him to join a playgroup for a couple of hours a week. Progress was slow at first but things moved on rapidly once he moved into the Foundation stage at 4. Tim enjoyed the freedom from his mother and she acknowledges that “the best thing I did was to let him go to playgroup”. He formed a close relationship with his key person who also has a good dialogue with his mother, e.g. she alerted her to the fact that Tim could be lazy, or occasionally would get things wrong deliberately, such as saying the wrong colours when he knew them well. He is aware that he is good at Maths; this was picked up on by a Year 1 teacher.

Described as competitive, Tim gets frustrated when he gets something wrong; one example was that he usually gets 8/8 for weekly spellings, though he doesn’t look at them till the night before the test. On a rare occasion when he only had five correct, he cried at length.