



CASE STUDY 3

SCARBOROUGH, JULY 2015

INTERVIEW WITH MOTHER OF ALEX

FAMILY DETAILS:

Alex lives with his mother, step-father and younger sister. Mother works part time and father full time. The family relocated from Hull when Alex was 2 years old.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CLIMATE:

Mother described a stable family unit, with her own mother nearby but “not too close” and there are ‘lots of positive relationships’ in Alex’s life. He has a very close relationship with his stepfather, who has been regarded as ‘Dad’ since Alex was 4 months old. Mother says she enjoys parenting and has adopted an “easy –going style” where Alex is never pushed, but allowed to follow his own interests and his natural independence. Behaviour has never been an issue and Alex has always been given encouragement, “as long as we know what he needs”.

HOME EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES:

The family are all talkative and have always read a lot and engaged in arts and crafts, drawing and music. Alex has used technology from the age of 2 ½. Both parents are consistently communicating with him and will sit with him and engage with him when he shows an interest in something.

From birth, there has been a clear routine. Schooldays are structured and set bedtimes are important but weekends less so, and Alex is encouraged to choose what he wants to do.

CHILD CHARACTERISTICS:

From 0-12 months, Alex tended to be very ‘clingy’ to his mum, and then became very independent. He overcame a stammer by learning to slow down and became confident and exploratory in character. His mother describes him as “bright, enthusiastic, friendly, and adaptable”. He is able to express his emotions easily and there is “little below the surface”; he is described as “a big softy”, who will cry easily at certain films. He loves drawing, stories, messy play, building bricks and going to the park and beach. He is interested in sport and athletics and shows an interest in music, happily playing along with toy guitar, drums and bugles, as the whole family jams in the living room.

PRE-SCHOOL EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES:

From 0-2 years, he was cared for by his mother and at 2, he began attending a day nursery which continued until starting school at 4. Mother was initially reluctant to send Alex to pre-school, but the living situation at the time was difficult; living in a maisonette with no garden, no friends nearby. With hindsight, she commented that it was the best move she could have made: “He had the opportunity to do things you can’t do at home. They know more things to do. He was getting a bit bored at home and this gave him the opportunity to try new things and to make friends. He opened up, he was brighter, he did more at home, and he learned to relate to children of different ages”.

His key person reported back that he was ‘amazing’ and had clear strengths in English and reading, and a developing interest in Maths.

At nursery school, staff advised his parents to “keep him at the drawings” as this was a clear interest.