

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT – SCSA 11 – PLAY-BASED LEARNING

(Music)

(TITLE)

Play-Based Intentionality in Year 2 Classrooms

PETA WHITFIELD

Oakwood Primary School

[as Miss Susie Socks] *Excuse me! How dare you get me out of bed at this time in the morning? What time is it? Oh my gosh.*

[Children] *Six o'clock!*

[Peta, as Susie] *Six o'clock? Okay, well –*

[Children] (pointing at clock, laughing) *'One o'clock, it's one o'clock!'*

[Peta, as Susie] – *well because it is so early in the morning – (alarm beeps) Oh my gosh, what is that?*

What I love about Oakwood is that we're blended. So we've got programs that fall within that explicit instruction bracket, but we also have the freedom to bring play into our classrooms and it just makes for such a valuable learning environment and the kids thrive.

[Peta, as Susie] *Look out. Thank you. Alright, what is your name?*

[Louie] *Louie.*

[Peta, as Susie] *Oh Bluey! I love that show. Do you like it too? I love Bluey, do you have a sister named Bingo?*

[Louie] *No! No!*

PETA WHITFIELD

My character to tune in for investigations is Miss Susie Socks. Um, it is something that I started a couple of years ago with my class and just as an, uh, a way to get them more engaged into looking at our learning intentions and what, what it is that we're actually doing with our investigation time to make it purposeful and intentful.

[as Susie] *When I was here last time, I noticed that you guys were learning all about something old, something new. What was that? What was that that you were learning?*

[Louie] *Um, um, toys from the past and present.*

[Peta, as Susie] *So are you, like, a time traveller?*

[Louie] (Nods)

[Peta] And it kind of stuck. It became something that they look forward to each time we investigate and it's carried across into all of my classes, um, to the point now where I have my ex-students coming up and asking how Susie Socks is going. So, um, it's embarrassing for me, but at the same time I— I secretly love it because I get to just be a goofball in front of the kids and ... and they respond really well to it.

[as Susie] *I haven't even done my hair. I've still got rollers in!*

The beautiful thing about play-based learning is you can do that across a broader spectrum and it's all child led.

[as Susie] *We're investigating now?*

[Children] *Yeah!*

[Peta, as Susie] *Wow.*

LINDA STARBUCK

Instructional Coach, Oakwood Primary School

So for us, that's about the way that we bring age-appropriate early childhood pedagogy into our explicit teaching and then also allowing time for our children to show what they learn in those literacy, numeracy, and uh, subject areas in a more integrated inquiry investigation approach.

[Peta, as Susie] *Tell me, what are you wanting to do for your investigations?*

[Child] *Hmm, maths.*

[Peta, as Susie] *Maths! I've never met anyone in my life that has said maths. Tell me more, I'm intrigued. Tell me about maths. What do you love about maths?*

[Child] *Hmm ...*

[Linda] I guess the idea that it's a holistic approach. So we are not just looking at academics and— and results, um, in a way that you can produce your learning with pencil and paper. It's about showing your learning in lots of different ways.

PETA WHITFIELD

[as Susie] *So you want to do some subtraction?*

[Child] *Yes.*

[Peta, as Susie] *I love that idea. Do you know, I saw that there's an area at the back over there.*

[Child] *Yes?*

[Peta, as Susie] *And I don't know why but Mrs Whitfield's put playing cards on the table. Could you maybe use those for subtraction?*

WILL DAVIS

Principal, Oakwood Primary School

There's a theme that runs through from K to 6, and that is choice – uh, child's agency, I suppose. The children have some choice over their learning when we are doing intentional play and also when we are doing inquiry learning in Years 3 to 6.

[Child] (Calculating at a whiteboard) *So we found C, which is 56, now we need to find D.*

[Will] They don't look the same in terms of how... how they present to the students and, and the opportunities they provide, but they essentially are part of the same strategy in the fact that the children have some choice and, and some ownership of their learning.

JAYE FOGARTY

Oakwood Primary School

So we do a lot of explicit – and especially I noticed a change from Pre-primary to Year 2, that there is so much more curriculum. However, it all blends in so beautifully that... As you've seen in our investigation area, the reason I've put the globe in, um, a math area is because the children, I did a worksheet with them, and they just didn't understand the seasons. Uh, these kids are very hands-on and I am finding a lot of kids of today, they are, they're wired, they're used to screens, so they're actually not listening to just the old, you know, uh, 'talk and listen' sort of teaching. So when we got the globe out and we interacted and I showed them how the earth moves around the sun, that's how we then integrated the Noongar seasons and why they observed the weather as opposed to we just slapped, you know, three months into the seasons.

PETA WHITFIELD

Oakwood Primary School

So let's roll the dice and see how we go. Yeah.

[Child] 6.

[Peta] *Okay. So what number are you going to make?*

[Child] 36.

[Peta] 36.

So a lot of people would look at play-based and go, well, they're just playing. You're wasting all of this valuable learning time, and a lot of families probably look at it and go, oh, the teachers are just having a breather, it's just time to, to sit down and let them do their own thing.

So we're gonna pretend that each one of my fingers is now worth 10, but I don't have enough fingers so I'm gonna have to double it.

But it's not, um, you know, it is very involved and as, as a facilitator of that investigation, you are in there and you are asking those questions to provoke their thinking and you're getting them engaged in the different resources.

[Child] 164.

[Peta] *You are a legend. Gimme a high five. Good job!* (Laughs)

WILL DAVIS

Principal, Oakwood Primary School

We are definitely not child minding. The, look, some parents have a bit of an interesting idea about what play ... and, uh, the place of play in the classroom, um ... but intentional play that– that is rooted in quality, explicit teaching will lead to great outcomes because it's a chance to apply those skills, um, and apply that knowledge across.

[Jaye] *We just spoke about these marbles bouncing everywhere. What do you think is the issue that it's not working?*

[Will] So as far as us being babysitters, no. There is a lot of hard work and planning and intentionality that goes into us ensuring that our kids learn.

[Child] *Can I please have some help?*

JAYE FOGARTY

Oakwood Primary School

Even yesterday, our science machine lesson, if I had just sat on the board with a PowerPoint and showed them how machines move and all these different things, they would've switched off in five minutes flat. Whereas the conversations that investigations allow and then we walk around and scaffold those conversations and then build on it from there. And they learn from each other.

[Child] *We need to measure you, Grayson.*

[Grayson] *Why?*

[Child] (Pointing off-screen) *To see if that's taller than you.*

WILL DAVIS

Principal, Oakwood Primary School

We've provided clear guidance and some whole-school approaches, but as a Principal, I'm not in the classroom every day. They, they are in a much better position to know their students and make decisions that they will need to based on their students. We also give them opportunities to collect data. That means those decisions are evidence-based.

[Jaye] *See how the wheels move to move the string?*

[Child] *Yeah.*

[Will] But yes, absolutely. And as a team, we've handed over that responsibility, and that's not to say we won't be involved in some of those decisions as well, and they will want our input into some of those decisions, but they're— they're well placed and well trained to be able to make those decisions for the good of our students.

JAYE FOGARTY
Oakwood Primary School

And that's the pulley we found in the playground.

Because of Will the whole leadership team and all the staff, their belief in this stuff works. So he even promotes that there's just not enough hours in the day to get all this done, and if you are strapped for time, use investigations to teach science, use investigations to teach HASS.

Ah, I actually have bought spray bottles for this purpose, but you worked out how to do it.

WILL DAVIS
Principal, Oakwood Primary School

There's a quote, which is: 'The best way to prepare kids for being five is to let them be four all year.'

[Child, to Peta as Miss Susie Socks] *Haha. You're Taylor Swift!*

[Peta, as Susie] *I wish I was Taylor— actually, do you know what? No, Taylor Swift wishes she was me. She wishes she was Miss Susie Socks.*

(Children laugh)

[Will] We're not looking ahead to, oh, what do they need to know by Pre-primary because they'll learn that in Pre-primary if we do a good job in Kindy with the skills and, and, uh, knowledge that they need.

PETA WHITFIELD
Oakwood Primary School

[Peta] *Why did you choose not to use that one?*

[Child] *Because if you put a 10 in there is two numbers.*

[Peta] *There's too many, that's right, and our place value can only have one digit.*

I came into teaching as a mature age student. Um, and I guess I was just driven. I— I've tried a few different things and it wasn't for me, but I love being able to come in and see the kids and see them smiling. I love being able to nurture them and watch them picking up things that I'm teaching them.

[Peta] *You are a superstar.*

[Child] *And it's going backwards: 9, 8, 7.*

[Peta] *It is just like counting backwards.*

And just getting to know them on a deeper level. Um, it's from a family perspective. I'm a mum, I've got three kids myself, so I feel like I'm able to juggle a little bit easier, that work-life balance.

There is a magic piece of rubbish on the floor. There's a [jinna?] gem for the person that picks it up.

It is still tricky, there are times where maybe I feel like I'm not doing one or the other justice, but I think that's normal with any career you go into. It's just for me, teaching is what ignites that flame.

[Peta, as Susie] *Oh young man, what is your name?*

[Maxie] *Maxie.*

[Peta, as Susie] *Oh, Lexie. Maxie! Sorry. You know I'm terrible at names.*

[Interviewer] *What other characters do you play?*

[Peta] *Just this one. (Laughs) At this point in time, just this one.*

[Interviewer] *Not Dame Edna Everage's ...?*

[Peta] *Oh my god, Dame Edna can eat her heart out! (Laughs)*

(END)