### Transcript: Cowgate Under 5s - A Froebelian approach

**Liann Higgins**: As I say, we're a local authority nursery, but our ethos has been very much inspired by our head of centre, Lynn McNair, who is a Froebelian trained practitioner. Lynn has 30 years' experience in early years, she was awarded an OBE in 2010 for services to children and she's currently studying a PhD, so she's very, very knowledgeable. She has long held this view of children and childhood based on her Froebelian training.

Friedrich Froebel was a German educator. He coined the term kindergarten. He operated in the late 1700s into 1800s. He saw children very much as creative, competent and capable beings **now**. He acknowledged childhood as a period in its own right, so believed that we should be very much celebrating what's happening now as opposed to always looking towards the next stage. He was a huge advocate of the outdoors. Having started off his career as a forester, and having a real affinity with nature himself, he recognised the myriad opportunities that time in the outdoors affords children in their learning. He was very much one who believed that at the stage, we should be the stage. We should be celebrating and valuing what's happening now.

That's very much what drives our practice here. We might show our children where to look, but we never tell them what to see. We believe very much that play is the fundamental way that children learn, and play opportunities and experiences should merely provide all the impetus for learning that children inherently have.

We now probably have - over 75% of our staff are Froebel trained since the Froebel Certificate in Childhood Practice was resurrected at Moray House in 2010. I was among one of the first cohorts. I did it the first year and what a difference it made to me personally. I mean, before I did my Froebel training, I would have confidently told anybody that I was an excellent practitioner. Having done the training, I realise that I'd barely scratched the surface of my potential as a practitioner. Being Froebelian does - it encourages you to reflect. It encourages you to, then, challenge things that you've historically done. It encourages you to question what is the best benefit of the child?

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