

'Play'

JBr has created a questionnaire about the importance of play and asked both BK staff and staff from our partner schools to complete it. The staff at both BK and our partner school completed the questionnaire with similar results. One of the teachers from our Italian partner school said that play *'is the universal language of childhood'* and that *'it is through play that children understand each other and make sense of the world around them.'* This is fantastic way of describing 'play' and illustrates that other cultures and countries put the same importance on play as we do in the UK. It was great to that the Italian teachers listed positive impacts of outside play as when we were part of a Comenius project in 2012 we visited Italy and noticed that there were no playgrounds. This has obviously changed over the last few years and although they stated that some barriers to learning outside are lack of space to renovate and time to be outside which are also true within many UK settings, they are obviously very aware of the benefits.



We created a powerpoint about play which showed our children participating in different types of play. This was sent to the two partner school for them to discuss with their children.



The school in Uganda responded to our powerpoint with some lovely images of their children dancing and playing outside. The teacher stated that 'they don't have toys at school as they come to school to learn'. Teachers therefore found it tricky to complete the questionnaires as the only 'toys' they have are pieces of sports equipment, such as skipping ropes and balls. The head teacher said that they also have limited toys at home and that 'play' to them is about being outside. This was really interesting for us

and explained why many of the children who arrive at BK from Nigeria find 'playing' and 'sharing' very challenging. We also find that the parents are only ever interested in academic achievements and often aren't concerned about their social skills and how they interact with peers. From the interactions between the 2 schools it can be assumed that they believe 'play' to be actual group games which are adult initiated and what we would consider to be 'structured play'.

It was amazing to see the video of the Nursery 'debate'. The children spoke incredibly confidently, and were very passionate about their opinions.



They recorded the Nursery children completing a game which we are going to learn after Christmas and then send back to them.