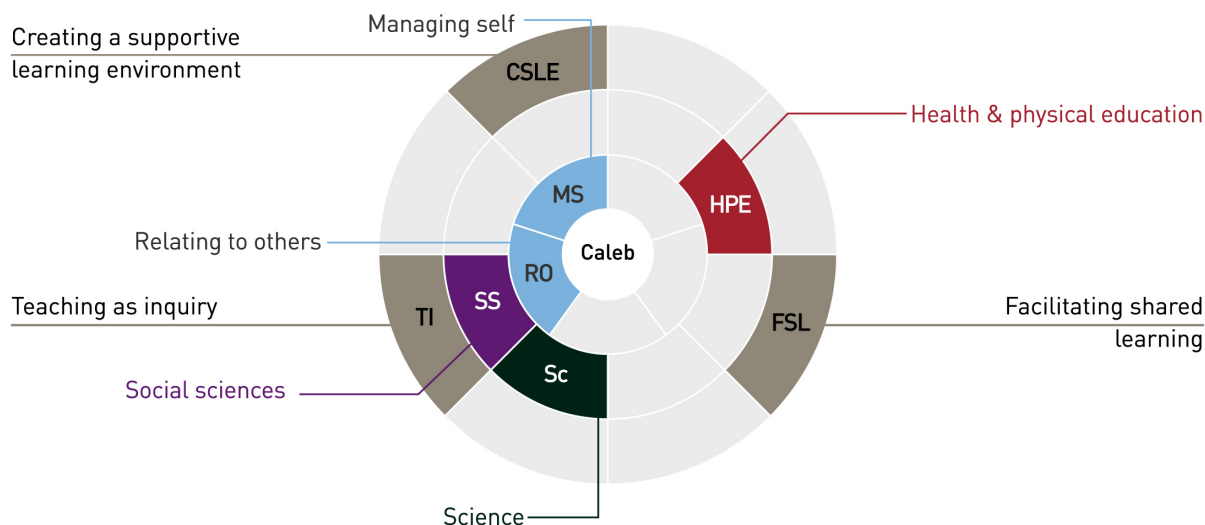


Caleb makes friends

Links to the curriculum



Student background

Name	Caleb	Caleb lives at home with his mother, father, sister, and a dog that he adores. He loves cars, trucks, and Perceptual Motor Programme (PMP) time at school. Caleb wants to drive buses when he is an adult. Caleb has global delay and his school receives 0.1 FTTE teacher support and 12 hours teacher aide time.
Age	8	
Year	3	
School	Primary	

Caleb is a very friendly, cheerful boy who loves following adults around in the playground. Although he is very friendly, he has no interest in “playing” with children, even though the girls are certainly happy to include him in their games. Caleb is not interested in ball games with the boys – the games are too fast and Caleb is not interested in chasing a ball. He tends to kick the ball once or twice then walk away. At his last individual education programme (IEP) meeting we decided one of his focuses would be social skills.

Five learning stories

- 1. Caleb says “yes”** 20 August 2008
- 2. Bottling “worm wee”** 1 September 2008
- 3. Caleb asks Amy** 10 September 2008
- 4. Making sushi** 17 September 2008
- 5. Sharing his vegetables** 24 September 2008

This string of learning stories shows Caleb becoming more aware of his own needs when playing with other children. Caleb is starting to instigate play with others and can choose an activity that he would like them to play. He realises that he also needs some alone time. Caleb is seeing he has an important role in the school (garden club) and that adults and children appreciate what he achieves (growing vegetables).

Caleb says "yes"

Student	Caleb	Date	20 August 2008
		Observer	Jenny (ORRS teacher)

Last week, Caleb's class had a visit from his case worker. She discussed with the children the IEP goal of teaching Caleb how to play with friends. She asked the children to invite him into their play or to play something he would enjoy, even for just a few minutes. Most of the children were excited at the thought of helping. Since then, Caleb has had many offers inviting him to play but he usually says, "No" and walks off. Up until now he has preferred his own company or that of the duty teacher or visiting parent.

Today, in the playground a girl approached Caleb – put her arm around his shoulders and asked him to play chasing. He stood still, thinking about it for a minute then said, "Yes". The two of them ran off and were joined by two other girls. Caleb chased them around the tree, then they swapped roles and they chased him around the courtyard. He was enjoying himself and shouting to them as he ran. After a couple of minutes, Caleb left the girls and went back into the class. I followed him and asked if he wanted to continue playing with them. He said, "No". You had a little play, then realised you needed space. Well done Caleb.

A good start!

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Individual education programme goal

Caleb will initiate and maintain interactions with children in the playground for five minutes.

Key competencies

Relating to others

Caleb was able to make a decision when asked to play with another child and happily joined in an activity for two minutes.

Learning areas

Level 1 health and physical education: Relationships with Other People: interpersonal skills

Caleb enjoyed playing with the girls, then realised his needs had changed and he wanted to be by himself.

Level 1 health and physical education: Personal Health and Physical Development: regular physical activity

Caleb was able to participate in creative play and identified it as an enjoyable experience.

Where to next?

The teacher aides, duty teachers and I will continue suggesting games in which Caleb may like to participate. We will also ask him which children he wants to play with and help him to walk up and ask to join in.

Our aim is for Caleb to:

- extend the length of time he will play with others
- initiate the play – go to other children and ask them to play with him
- verbalise his needs, whether he wants to play or be alone.

Bottling "worm wee"

Student	Caleb	Date	1 September 2008
		Observer	Jenny (ORRS teacher)

Today was Garden Club day. Two children per class are in the garden club. Caleb was excited and took his lunch to join the others by the vegetable plot. The gardener said there were some seeds to plant (parsley seeds) that needed to be grown for the school fair. Two girls showed Caleb where the pottles and compost were kept and helped him to get started. Caleb levelled the soil ready for the seeds. The gardener told him to put a few seeds in the palm of his hand, then pick out the seeds and drop them into the pottle. Caleb struggled with the coordination required, so he asked for help from some of the other children. Good thinking, Caleb.

Once that task was finished one of the other boys asked Caleb to come and help with bottling the "worm wee", which had collected in the bottom of the worm compost. Caleb was told to help pour some into a funnel held by another boy. Caleb was delighted to help and took the job very seriously. They worked well together, with the older boy assisting him and guiding him. There was not much talk but a lot of concentration and teamwork. Caleb stayed on task for eight minutes.

Caleb learned that "worm wee" is very good for the garden and will make the vegetables grow well. He wanted to tip a whole bottle on his small vegetable patch. His buddy explained it was very strong and Caleb would be able to put a small amount on his garden later in the month. (The rest of the "worm wee" will be put into small bottles and sold at the school fair.)



Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Individual education programme goal

Caleb will initiate and maintain interactions with children in the playground for five minutes. Today, Caleb worked alongside other children with less reliance on adults to provide support. He asked for assistance from other children and accepted their help (with seeds and bottling the "worm wee").

He was able to stay on task, working with another child, without adult intervention for eight minutes.

Key competencies

Relating to others

Caleb was able to recognise that he needed assistance planting little seeds and asked other children to help. This was an important step, as Caleb tends to rely on adults to help him and very rarely goes to children. Caleb also loved working with a "big buddy" to achieve something worthwhile.

Learning areas

Levels 1 and 2 science: Nature of Science: investigating in science

Caleb has extended his knowledge and experiences in the garden (planting seeds, seeing the layers of a worm farm, and observing the product of worm compost).

Where to next?

Celebrate and consolidate

I would like to give Caleb many opportunities to work alongside other children where he can learn the social skills of asking for help and persevering with a task until it is finished. There will be some class opportunities coming up where the syndicate cook a variety of foods.

I will ask his parents whether he can help sell some of the 'worm wee' at the school fair.

Caleb asks Amy

Student	Caleb	Date	10 September 2008
		Observer	Jenny (ORRS teacher)

It was another sunny lunchtime. I noticed Caleb wandering around by himself singing quietly. He then saw a girl from his class who was playing in a small group. Caleb ran up to her. He put his arm around her shoulders and asked if she wanted to play with him in the playground. She turned around and said, "Yes". Caleb gave a big smile and ran off with her. I followed and saw them go up the ladder and across the suspended tunnel. The girl's friends joined in. They played together for about two minutes before he drifted off and looked for a duty teacher to chat with. He really enjoyed his time with the girl – short though it was. In the afternoon when he was asked what he did during his lunch break he was unable to remember, but once Amy reminded him about the play in the playground Caleb was pleased with himself and said that Amy was his friend. The children are being very supportive and are helping Caleb towards achieving his goal.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Relating to others

Today, Caleb initiated play with a child and was happy when other children joined in.

Caleb is learning that it can be fun to play with other children and that children offer different play opportunities from those that result from staying with the duty teacher.

Learning areas

Level 1 health and physical education: Relationships with Other People: interpersonal skills

Caleb demonstrated an awareness of his needs (asking a child to play with him in the playground).

He was prepared to share his friendship when other children wished to participate.

Where to next?

Celebrate and consolidate

I would like Caleb to initiate play with others and be able to stay with the children for longer periods of time.

We have made a chart where he can choose one or two children he would like to play with during lunchtime and consider which activities he would like to play with them.

Making sushi

Student	Caleb	Date	17 September 2008
		Observer	Joy (teacher aide)

Today the three classes in the syndicate met to make sushi. The children were learning to write instructions. To start with a teacher demonstrated the steps required to make sushi. Caleb was very interested in watching what was happening – especially as it involved food. Once the demonstration was finished, the children were split into teams of four and given the necessary equipment.

Caleb was in a group with three other children. Caleb was great at watching two children put the rice into the sushi maker container and squash it down. One boy asked Caleb to choose the vegetables to put on the rice. Caleb chose carrot, avocado, and tuna. One girl said she didn't want tuna. Caleb accepted this and was quite happy to leave it out. Caleb was having difficulty scooping out the avocado. The boy asked if he wanted help. Caleb said, "Yes". The boy held the avocado for Caleb. It was messy but successful. Caleb said, "Can I eat it?" and the group said, "No, wait". Caleb was also asked to wet the end of the seaweed for rolling up the rice.

Caleb watched all the steps in the making of sushi. He didn't talk very much but co-operated with the others and contributed when asked. Once the sushi was finished, it was cut into pieces by the teacher and shared out among the children. Some children didn't want their pieces so Caleb enjoyed having extra.

Well deserved Caleb!

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Relating to others

Caleb was able to actively listen and watch the other children in his group and follow their instructions when asked.

Caleb was able to make choices about fillings, then co-operate with others when someone didn't like his choice.

Learning areas

Level 1 social sciences: Social Studies

– Understand that people have different roles and responsibilities as part of their participation in groups.

Caleb needed to work as part of a group and understand that it required turn taking and compromise (choice of fillings).

Caleb was also learning that team members help each other as required (scooping out the avocado).

Where to next?

Celebrate and consolidate

I would like to see how Caleb interacts with classmates and provide him with opportunities to take a greater role in team activities, as he still plays a minor role in all group work.

There is a new group being formed at school for the teaching of social skills. They meet once a week and discuss and practise skills required in everyday interactions. Caleb will be part of this group.

Sharing his vegetables

Student	Caleb	Date	24 September 2008
		Observer	Jenny (ORRS teacher)

As Caleb is so enthusiastic about the vegetable plot, his teacher and I decided to get him to share his achievements with the rest of the class. It was decided to have a tasting session of herbs and raw vegetables. This tied in well with the class topic – healthy eating.

Caleb was asked to choose two children from his class to help pick some produce. He went up to a boy and asked, "Do you want to pick veges with me?" (This was interesting because Caleb doesn't interact much with boys.) He also chose a girl who had only joined the school last term. She was not back in class after lunch so he waited by the door until she returned. The three children then went outside. Caleb proudly showed them his plot. He told them about the broccoli he had cooked and eaten.

Together, they decided to pick Italian parsley, silverbeet, chives, broccoli, and celery.

Caleb was sampling the food as they picked it. Caleb was able to show them where the chives and silverbeet were.

Once they had picked enough they took it back into class. The class got into a circle and Caleb was asked to name some of the things he had grown. He needed prompting. Caleb and the two chosen children passed around the veges and herbs to those who wanted to try them. The children commented on how they tasted. Two boys wanted to eat more silver-beet, some loved the celery and chives. Most of the children screwed up their faces at the Italian parsley.

Caleb needed redirecting quite a lot as he was keen to keep snacking on the chives rather than pass food around. He certainly enjoyed the results of the vegetable plot.

At the end of the session, the children gave Caleb a big clap. One child said Caleb would be a good cook. Caleb was delighted. Another child said he was very clever to grow the vegetables. Caleb certainly enjoyed sharing his garden with the children and they were able to encourage him and relate to him in a new way.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Individual education programme goal

Caleb will initiate and maintain interaction with others in the playground for five minutes.

Caleb is learning to interact with others for longer periods of time when working on a task together. Today's session was rewarding because the other children could see something special Caleb had achieved and were able to give him truthful compliments.

Key competencies

Relating to others

Caleb widened the group of children he was comfortable with by choosing a boy with whom he does not normally interact.

Managing self

Through the encouragement of his classmates, Caleb is able to see himself as a gardener. He is keen to continue gardening at home.

Learning areas

Level 1 social sciences: Social Studies

– Understand that people have different roles and responsibilities as part of their participation in groups.

Caleb now sees one of his roles as gardener and enjoys being part of the garden club. In today's lesson he took on a role of leader and teacher. This is a role the class rarely sees him in.

Levels 1 and 2 science, Investigating in Science

Caleb and his classmates widened their experiences by tasting a range of raw vegetables and herbs. They showed a willingness to try unfamiliar foods, even though they realised they would probably not enjoy them.

Where to next?

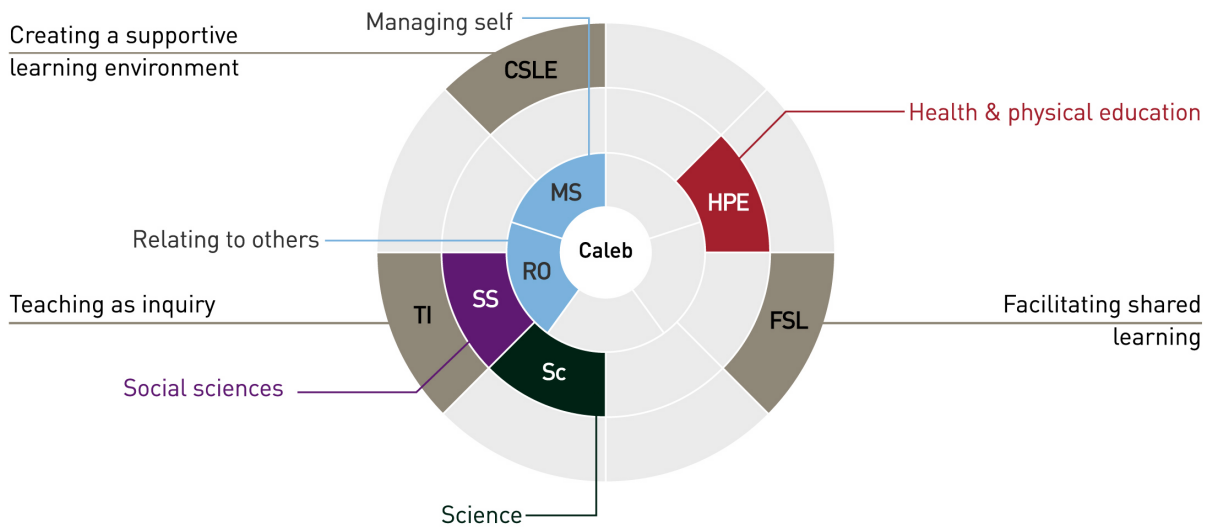
Scaffold

Caleb has identified some special friends. He is now seeking them out in classroom activities. Caleb is still not keen to play for long with others but hopefully next term we can build on this.

We have learned that Caleb needs time by himself and he is starting to verbalise when he needs this.

He is learning how to interact with others in situations outside of traditional "play" in ways that are more meaningful to him (working with a buddy on a task).

Reflection – what the stories exemplify



Key competencies

Caleb is learning to ask children to play with him in the playground. He is realising he likes playing with others for about three minutes then needs quiet time by himself. This is important because different people have different social needs (relating to others and managing self).

We are now also more aware of encouraging social interaction through meaningful activities and interests and will continue to provide many opportunities for Caleb to work in a small group or with a buddy both in and outside of the classroom. The big buddy system works well with Caleb ("worm wee" story).

It was good hearing him ask other children for help when planting the seeds and scooping out the avocado, rather than turning to the nearest adult for assistance (relating to others).

How might these stories strengthen Caleb's identity as a learner?

Caleb is showing greater confidence in his social skills and is beginning to ask others (Amy) to play with him, as well as asking for help from children (planting seeds and scooping out avocado) during in-class activities. His growing confidence was also illustrated when he asked other children, who he does not usually mix with, to help him choose and pick vegetables (agency). Caleb is realising that interacting with children can be fun and rewarding and he is applying the skills learned in a range of situations, such as in-class activities (across the syndicate and own classroom) and in the playground (breadth).

For more information on the four dimensions of agency, breadth, continuity, and depth (ABCDs), refer to *Narrative assessment A guide for teachers*.

Learning areas

Levels 1 and 2 science

Level 1 social sciences: Social Studies

Level 1 health and physical education

Caleb has extended his knowledge and experiences (science) in the garden and with the tasting of raw food. He is seeing himself in the role of gardener and cook and is keen to continue growing vegetables that can be eaten. Caleb has enjoyed working as part of a group; for example making sushi, bottling "worm wee", and picking and tasting vegetables (social studies). Caleb is now interacting with more children and is able to initiate play for short periods of time. He recognises when he wants to play with others and when he wishes to be alone and is able to act on these varied needs (health and physical education).

Effective pedagogy

What does this tell us about teaching and learning in this setting?

The teacher followed Caleb's interest in the garden and food and used these as a framework to practise interacting with others (teaching as inquiry). The teachers have created a supportive learning environment where Caleb is accepted and assisted by his peers (in the playground, making sushi, and sharing his vegetables). The adults have facilitated shared learning with Caleb so he is now interacting with the gardener, garden club members, and class members as well as teachers. He was able to ask for help and accept it from other children – reducing his reliance on teachers and teacher aides. Caleb's classmates have been keen to help him with his IEP goal and have included him in playground games.

Reflective questions for the reader

"When it's appropriate, do you include time for students to work quietly on their own?"

"What have you done recently with your students that proved to be a really effective stimulus to their curiosity?"

"Which classroom practices and strategies do you find most successful for encouraging students to share their learning and to participate in learning conversations with each other?"

Useful resources

Janney, R., & Snell, M. E. (c2006). *Social relationships and peer support* [Part of the set *Teachers' guides to inclusive practices*] (2nd ed.). Baltimore, Md.: Paul H. Brookes Pub. Co.