

Guidelines on Videoing yourselves for Babywatching sessions.

What would we love?

- 30 videos capturing your 'relationship'.
- 10-15 mins long

What does capture your relationship mean?

Parents often worry about what they should video, they worry whether it will be interesting or entertaining. The amazing thing is the children are learning about life and how to 'be human'. That means, videos that show parent and baby together, interacting, playing, feeding, sleeping, changing, crying are all wonderful. It's all part of life and is really valuable. It may be that it's easier to think about a regular 15 mins in the week and whatever is happening is happening. It's all ok! In fact, watching how a parent manages their baby crying teaches us so much more than an always smiling baby! It teaches us that all feelings are ok, how the parent adapts to the needs of their baby etc., On the other end of the continuum, even a sleeping baby is worth watching, the way they snuffle, how the parent holds their baby, gently talks to their baby, imagining the baby dreaming - all wonderful footage!

Should I video the same time of day or different times?

The same time each week or a different time of day are both fine. The key is what is happening between you and your baby, whatever time of the day it is. The more real, the more natural, the better! There is no right or wrong, just an enjoyment at watching what's happening between you and your baby.

Whether you are singing, playing, feeding, changing clothes, changing nappy, soothing, trying to work out what your baby is trying to tell you, or just sitting doing very little, or being together.... it is all okay... even if baby is sleeping, that's interesting to watch!

We are looking for a natural video of whatever happens in that moment between you and your baby.

What equipment do I need?

Usually, a camera on your phone is adequate to capture what happens. We can edit out the part where you are turning the camera on and off. So, don't worry about that. The only other equipment is you and your baby and whatever you're doing!

Where do I put the camera?

Somewhere you can forget about it!

It can make us so self-conscious to think a camera is rolling, actually the more we can forget it's there, the better. If you're worried about time, you could put an alarm reminder on your phone when you start recording (i.e. 12 mins) and then it's easier to stay in your moment with your baby.

Landscape tends to work better than portrait and unless you've got someone with you to video you both, where they can change position and zoom into your faces, we are very happy with a picture that holds both of you in the frame, so placed on a bookcase for example, looking into the room. As babies get a little older, they become very interested in the phone and often reach for it! So somewhere out of reach, that means you can forget about it, is ideal!

We ideally want you to be in a place where you can just enjoy the moment, being with your baby.

Can my partner be in the video, or one of my children?

If your partner walks in or if you have another child who becomes curious, that's fine. It's real life, there's always something to learn. Hopefully, it doesn't happen every session, but the video would still be really useful. It may be that your partner would like to do a 10-minute session instead, that's good too, it's wonderful for the children to see how the other parent is, or even a grandma/grandad!

How do you use the video footage?

A trained Babywatching Group Leader (often a member of the school staff) plays the video to their class and asks questions to help the children understand what's happening. For example:

1. **Observational** - What do you notice, see or hear? What's mummy/daddy doing with their hand? What's baby doing with their mouth?
2. **Motivational** - why do you think baby is sucking his hand? Why do you think mummy/daddy are rubbing his tummy?
3. **Emotional** - I wonder how it feels for baby to have his tummy rubbed? I wonder what it feels like for mummy and daddy? I wonder what mummy and baby are feeling at the moment? Can we guess from what their face or body is telling us?
4. **What would I do if** - I wonder, if you were daddy or mummy, what would you do? If you were baby, what would you do with the toy?
5. **How would I feel if** - I wonder if you could imagine being baby at the moment? What would you say and how would you feel, snuggling in mum/dad's lap?

The children answer the questions and think about what it's like to think and feel. The more emotions the baby expresses, the more the children are able to have that emotion named and understood. It's so helpful to know that anger, frustration, confusion, curiosity are all normal emotions and part of being human. Seeing all those emotions and seeing how the parent works it out with their baby, teaches us all so much.

There is never a right or wrong answer, we are all on a journey of discovery together! The process helps children recognise, name and accept their own feelings without feeling naughty or ashamed. The children improve their feelings vocabulary so they can explain to others how they feel, rather than act out. The children understand what makes a relationship work, becoming kinder and more attentive of another person's signals. As a result, relationships improve.

Watching how you adapt constantly to your baby's changing needs, how you decode and work out what your baby is telling you, helps the children develop empathy. Sometimes, there's quite a lot of crying until we figure it out - that's ok! That's normal, it's the way you will gently persevere and try different things that helps the children watch a loving relationship in action! The relationship between you and your baby is the teacher.