

## Catherine MacMillan – Port Charlotte Primary School

I'm here in Primary 1 / 2 at Port Charlotte Primary School on the island of Islay with Catherine MacMillan, class teacher. Hello Catherine.

*Hello.*

We are surrounded by your class here as well, doing all manner of activities.

*Yes, there are lots of different activities going on this morning.*

We are sitting beside four or five children who are engaged with the Eyepet for the Sony Playstation 3.

*Yes.*

You have been working with this for some time now. How have you found it?

*We just started in the last couple of weeks and they are really loving it so far, they are really excited about it. Every day they come in the first thing they ask is "When are we going to get the Playstation on to play the Eyepet?" Our topic at the moment is pets so it fits in really nicely with that and we can use it as a stimulus for all different learning throughout the curriculum.*

How did you get involved in this?

*Maggie Irvine had asked what topics I was doing and what stage I had at the moment and I was telling her it was Primary 1 / 2 so she thought that it would be a perfect chance to give it a go so I said to her as well we were trying to think of a way of setting up a transition between primary 1, when the new Primary 1 starts in August so this is an ideal way to set up cooperative learning groups, where it consists of a pre-school child, a Primary 1 and a Primary 2 all in the one group together. So it is getting ..... class really. Because the pre-school unit is not part of the main building.*

A shout of joy – they are showering Fluffy who has just hatched. You can see the look on their faces, you can see how engaged they are, they are lost in it. It's a beautiful thing to see. How are you finding their attitude to the traditional focussed learning tasks that you have got integrated into this when you move away from the game. How are you finding their reaction to that? Their engagement with it?

*They are just so motivated because everything that reflects around the Eyepet at the moment it is just totally inspiring to them and has given them a really good context for their learning. Focussing on writing instructions we did an activity looking at writing the instructions for brushing your teeth and they just weren't motivate at all even the top writing group were struggling to get four instructions, they were not inspired at all but straight away they started taking notes and they don't miss out on this or somebody else so they know exactly what to do. They have a list of 10 instructions for the Eyepet and they are so excited about it.*

There are lots of other activities going but I think it is all over because now it is the hairdryer but earlier the children were rushing about .....

*This is the first time we have had the hairdryer out. I think because it is on every day the others have got used to it, because I have to admit that to begin with it would be a distraction whilst trying to do activities with the rest of the class it would be distracting but because they have all got used to it and they know they are all going to get their turn that they are not distracted at all.*

Some teachers haven't persevered with it, I think they found it, for various reasons, to be not for them. There is a bit of a skill threshold to get over with this game in particular it just the manipulation of the control.

*No, I must say it's been really good because when I took it when it first arrived I found it quite difficult to keep the cars straight and I thought this might be quite difficult, especially when I had cancelled out the pre-school children but it is really nice to see how they work together to help one another out and because they are so used to using games based learning and things at home they are sort of used at having to position themselves correctly and persevere.*

They don't see it as failure do they?

*No, not at all. They are quite determined they are not going to give up which is really nice to see.*

Dearie me, dearie me!

*It's non-threatening to them and they just keep going and give it a try and they know of course that they can easily quit and go back another day.*

Well listen I think we'll go off and maybe join in here because I can see they are styling the Eyepet. Catherine, I can see your application of the game has been integrated well into the class and it's been really great to see.

*We'll keep you posted this is just week two but hopefully the excitement will continue and they will get lots of learning out of it.*

Great stuff, thanks very much.