

## Focus group 2

Researcher 0:08

Hello. Hi. Hi everybody. Thank you so much for coming in. If you want to sit on the step there, wherever you would like to sit. That one there, it might be that you can sit together then. Perfect. Well hello, my name is Angela and I've come in to see you just to have a little chat if that's ok? Just to ask a couple of questions if you don't mind? Or for you to tell me how you are, what it's like being back at school after Covid, and being online for school and then coming back in...how you feel about it really. It's just to talk to you about things like that really. Has anybody got any comments? What's it like?

Participant 1:00

Well, basically we feel happy because we're back at school. And we basically learn more since we came back.

Researcher 1:15

Have you? And why have you learnt more?

Participant 1:18

Because we've been home schooling.

Researcher 1:21

Oh ok. And what's home schooling like?

Participant 1:24

So, it was very hard home schooling, but we learnt from home schooling.

Researcher 1:35

What did you learn? What do you mean?

Participant 1:40

All the things we learnt in school, except we learned them at home.

Researcher 1:43

Oh ok. And what was it, was it easier to learn at home or was it harder?

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Participant 1:47

It was hard.

Researcher 1:49

Why?

Participant 1:50

Because it was, like, usually we have a plan at the school, like a timetable. But at home, we don't know which one and because it's a lot more harder.

Researcher 2:05

And is it because there's a lot more going on at home?

Participant 2:08

Yeah

Researcher 2:09

Ok. I'll come to you and then I'll come to you.

Participant 2:15

I think it was hard to study because I had to do it all on my own, because I have a little sibling and my parents are helping him more because he's only in reception.

Researcher 2:26

Oh ok. So you had to do a lot more stuff on your own? And what was hard about that? What didn't you like?

Participant 2:33

Well, like [name removed] said, I didn't have a timetable or a structure to follow.

Researcher 2:48

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I see. And was there lots going on at home? Was it noisy and busy and stuff?

Participant 2:52

We didn't have much family time either.

Researcher 2:56

Oh ok. How come?

Participant 2:58

Because we had to work to end, we, there was lots and lots and lots of homework and things...

Researcher 3:09

Stuff to do?

Participant 3:10

Yeah.

Participant 3:12

Since we were back at school, we get to meet our friends, because when we were at home, we didn't get to meet our friends.

Researcher 3:18

Did you miss your friends?

Participant 3:20

Yeah.

Researcher 3:21

What did you miss about them?

Participant 3:23

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They like entertain me and have fun with me.

Researcher 3:25

Yeah. And you like being with them. What makes a friend a good friend? What were you gonna say?

Participant 3:28

I was gonna say, I felt super bored just working from home, just doing my schoolwork from home, because there was more work than usual and they wouldn't let us, so many children were chatting a lot because they missed their friends during, when we were on Google Meet. And then Miss [name removed] our main teacher had to ban it because there was too much, and no-one was listening.

Researcher 4:08

Oh wow. Is this when you were online?

Participant 4:10

Yeah. And then I didn't get that much help. I have a little brother in year 1. Like, he's fine, it's just that he needs my mum to help him most of the time, and my dad, he can't help me either. Most of the time he's in a different country in the Netherlands, or he might be working from home being too busy.

Researcher 4:40

Oh wow. And I guess that's hard when people are in different countries.

Participant 4:44

Yeah. And I have to work all by myself, and my mum can only help me a little bit. And then, during English, they make it ten times harder than at school and I have to manage to do it all on my own.

Researcher 4:57

So is it nice to be back at school so...who helps you at school then?

Participant 5:00

The teachers. Miss [name removed] and the support teachers.

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Researcher 5:07

Oh ok. And how do they help you?

Participant 5:08

I'm just happy. I'm happy I'm back at school.

Researcher 5:12

Oh that's good. I can imagine, I think you are right. What, how do you get help at school, then?

Participant 5:19

So, for example, if we don't understand a Maths question, one of the teachers will come and help us. But at home, my parents are helping my little brother, I need to research on Google or try to find it by myself.

Researcher 5:43

Ok. And how about in school, how do you get help? I'll come back to you afterwards.

Participant 5:47

We get help from the teachers, and all the adults or from our friends beside us.

Researcher 5:57

And how does your friend help you? How can a friend help you in class with your work?

Participant 6:01

It can help you by like, if you sit next to them, you can like ask anybody, you can tell them to help us and we can get help if we don't understand the teacher.

Researcher 6:13

Oh ok. And have any of you got anyone in your class who hasn't got English as a first language who may need help with their language? Has anybody got anybody in class like that?

Participant 6:21

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No. There used to be a boy, but he left the school.

Researcher 6:26

Oh ok. And what help did he need?

Participant 6:27

So [name removed] had to translate.

Researcher 6:41

What language did you have to translate?

Participant 6:43

Romanian.

Researcher 6:45

So you were able to translate to Romanian to help him? How did that help him, do you think? Why did you do it and why did he need it?

Participant 6:58

So I translated to them and he had me speak English, which helps, but both of them to learn both languages.

Researcher 7:14

Oh wow. So you were the teacher, really? So how did you feel about that?

Participant 7:17

Well, I'm the only Romanian girl in this class. So I struggled a bit.

Researcher 7:26

What do you mean? With English? Or you struggled to help him?

Participant 7:30

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I struggled to help him.

Researcher 7:33

Ah. Why? What was it that was hard?

Participant 7:35

Because I was just born in England, but I just speak Romanian.

Researcher 7:39

And did you understand him fully?

Participant 7:40

Yeah.

Researcher 7:42

And was it hard? Did the teachers rely on you a lot to help him? How did you feel about that?

Participant 7:45

I finally felt happy that I had someone speak in my own language.

Researcher 7:52

Oh nice, yeah. And you didn't mind translating and supporting? It's a real massive skill that you've got that's being used, isn't it? So I admire you.

Participant 8:09

I also translated a boy. He left the class. There was no person that speaks my language in class, and I'm not that good at speaking my language, I don't know that, I know like a good amount, but I don't know all. And it was quite hard.

Researcher 8:33

Oh ok. And did you translate for him? Yeah? And what language did you translate?

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Participant 8:38

Albanian.

Researcher 8:41

Oh ok. So you helped him?

Participant 8:42

Yeah.

Researcher 8:43

Yeah. And how do teachers help children that need help with languages? How did teachers help in class?

Participant 8:48

It's nothing to do with that question. It's just that, there was this boy named [name removed] in year 1. And then, yeah. I tried to teach him English, because, yeah, he, I don't remember that [inaudible] a different language, it was one or the other, and then the first day here, I showed him around the infant playground, but then now, and then halfway through, he left before we even went to year 2. And now we play on the Astroturf and sometimes at the university. It was very hard, and I showed him around the hula hoops, the climbing frame. It was very hard on the first day he came. He learned how to speak some English, but then by the time he left he knew, like, a lot, but he never knew English. And I struggled, I struggled a lot...

Researcher 10:14

To help him. But you tried. What made you want to help him, I wonder?

Participant 10:18

Because he couldn't speak English and that meant even the teacher, a few children couldn't understand him.

Researcher 10:35

Ok, and you had your hand up as well. Thank you so much for sharing.

Participant 10:40



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This doesn't really have anything to do with languages, but I think from nurse to year two, we used to have a boy in our class called [name removed], and he needed loads of help with the teachers. He knew how to speak English, but he couldn't learn stuff. He was older than us, but he couldn't learn stuff as easy as we could.

Researcher 11:10

Oh ok. So he needed a lot more extra support? Yeah, ok. Thank you. Can I ask another question? When you are with your teachers, what makes you like your teachers? Like what do they do that make you like 'oh I like my teacher, they do this, and they do that.'

Participant 11:30

So, if we know something but we're not sure, they are always here to support us and help us.

Researcher 11:41

You like that, do you? And what do you like?

Participant 11:44

They are kind and they take it step by step and they don't go like harsh and not so strict.

Researcher 11:51

Oh ok. And what do you like?

Participant 11:55

I like them when they help us when we are stuck. Or if it's a really hard lesson, they go step by step and show us examples, and it helps us a lot.

Researcher 12:11

Thank you. And what about you, what do you like?

Participant 12:14

I like that they, if we hurt ourselves, they are always there to help us.

Researcher 12:26

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Yeah. And how do you know if a teacher is listening to you? How do you know if someone is listening to you? What would you do? How do you know?

Participant 12:32

Because when I'm speaking and somebody else is speaking, they will tell them to stop speaking so that I can speak.

Researcher 12:38

So they kind of make some space for you? Yeah. Good. And what were you gonna say?

Participant 12:42

I like them because, if we haven't completed some work, they give us time to complete it.

Researcher 12:50

So they give you a bit more time if you need it so that you can get it done. That does help a lot.

Participant 12:55

The only way I made my friend, urm, I had a friendship until the [inaudible] two. So I had this friend, there was this boy named [name removed]. I think he is Muslim like me. He didn't know how to speak Arabic at the time, so [name removed] and I were friends, when we first met, we were friends, and we started playing, and [name removed] and my parents met a few times and we used to have play dates. And then after that, [name removed] left Miss [name removed] class which is reception. And then, during nursery, I made a friend, and then in year 2, our parents used to play date.

Researcher 14:12

Oh nice, so you could play outside school.

Participant 14:14

And then, before, he used to be a bit fast, yeah and now he is super fast.

Researcher 14:21

Oh wow. What is it about people, what is it that makes you want to be a friend?

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Participant 14:25

He, urm, so then I had another friend. So we were always [inaudible]. Then we were friends ever since that time.

Researcher 14:53

So you can have a fallout with your friends, but you can still be friends. Has anyone else ever fallen out with their friends? And what makes a good friend? Yeah, what were you going to say?

Participant 15:01

I have this friend, and she is the same age as me but she's in the tailored curriculum, so she can't do the stuff that I can, but even if I don't do things, she always says that I didn't do it...

Researcher 15:28

So she kind of has your back and looks after you?

Participant 15:32

She's been my friend since the first day of nursery. So she's always been here with me.

Researcher 15:37

She's always been there with you.

Participant 15:39

She's my best friend, and she, we've been friends since reception, but first I knew [name removed].

Researcher 15:55

So you've all been friends?

Participant 15:58

We like to stay with each other because we are kind together and if, like, there's something that like, goes wrong, we get sad or we hurt ourselves, our friends are always here to help us.

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Researcher 16:15

It's nice to have friends, yeah, when you're feeling a bit. Did you stay in contact with each other? During Covid.

Participant 16:30

I've got their phone numbers.

Researcher 16:32

Oh so you could ring each other up and things?

Participant 16:34

During Covid, my friend [name removed], he used to do video calls all through home schooling.

Researcher 16:43

Ah, so you were calling each other through home schooling stuff?

Participant 16:53

Ah my friend [inaudible] who is in reception always made friends with [inaudible].

Researcher 17:00

So you've got all connections and links?

Participant 17:02

Yeah. And we've arranged one play date so far, and we've been calling each other, he's been calling me on the iPad on my laptop and on my Mum's phone, and sometimes we arrange for a playdate, but we can't. I miss being home a little bit, because I like to be home a little bit as I got to have a little rest.

Researcher 17:48

Ok, you got to have a rest. Thank you. Your hand was up, what did you want to...

Participant 17:52

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There used to be this girl names [name removed] but over lockdown we didn't know until a few weeks ago that she had left. So, but my mum still has her number in her phone, so I can call her. And a few weeks ago, bank holiday, I got to go to her new house all the way in [location removed], so she's moved far away.

Researcher 18:21

And how does that make you feel to see her?

Participant 18:23

It made me feel happy because I got to see her once again.

Researcher 18:29

I bet she was pleased to see you?

Participant 18:32

She got us a necklace that has our faces on it, her on one side and me on the other.

Researcher 18:38

Ah, that's lovely. That's real friendship, isn't it? How about you?

Participant 18:40

I actually like having friends because I have many friends and they are nice to me and they always have my back, [multiple names removed].

Researcher 18:54

Yeah, it makes you feel better about, it makes you feel safer maybe, does it, that they have your back? Yeah.

Participant 19:00

It's very good to have friends, because when you are sad, they make you happy, or when you're in trouble, they stand up for you.

Researcher 19:04

## Focus group 2

How do they make you happy? How...

Participant 19:08

Like when you are sad, when you get hurt, they help you. If you twist your ankle, they help you go to the teacher. Or if you hurt your knee, they'll come with you. They used to have like a friend to come with us to get a plaster.

Researcher 19:40

Oh ok, so it's nice to have help from people? Shall I have a look and see what other questions I've got to ask you. Let me just have a look at this. So, what do you all think of Covid? What's your response to Covid? Yeah, what do you think of Covid?

Participant 19:56

I think, I don't like how, during lockdown, like, we got separately. I got so used to being with my friends, having fun, and then Covid comes along...

Researcher 20:20

And stops it. And were you worried about it?

Participant 20:23

Yeah. I was missing my friends because they have always been here for me.

Researcher 20:32

Yeah, you would miss them. And how did you feel about it? Yeah...

Participant 20:38

Two thumbs down.

Researcher 20:40

Oh. Why?

Participant 20:41

Because like [name removed] said, it makes me separated from my best friends.

## Focus group 2

Researcher 20:51

And do you think everybody's following the rules about Covid? Are people following the rules?

Participant 20:56

No.

Researcher 20:57

No? What are they doing that they shouldn't be doing?

Participant 20:59

After the lockdown lowered, we were allowed to go to parks, but we're not supposed to stay in contact with people that are not in the same household. I saw a whole football players, and around 20 players compete and not in the same household.

Researcher 21:26

Oh wow. They were kind of not listening to the rules?

Participant 21:20

Once the lockdown reduced, there were so many people coming, and then Corona got more bigger.

Researcher 21:29

Is anybody worried about it, or are you feeling that it's going now?

Participant 21:31

I'm feeling that it's going now because we've found the vaccine and going back to my positive side.

Researcher 21:40

Was you not in your positive side for a while? No? You was in a not positive side? So what does it mean to be in a positive side now?

Participant 21:51

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It means that, like, I can go anywhere now and see anyone.

Researcher 21:57

It makes you feel better?

Participant 21:59

It's very good to come back and be with your friends and have fun. And it's very good because now that we are out, we have stopped home learning, we have a little more help than when we are at home, it's a lot more easier because we have like, we know what we're gonna do next.

Researcher 22:25

Yeah, so you've got kind of an idea?

Participant 22:27

And, like, we, urm, we know what's gonna happen at school.

Researcher 22:37

I agree. And you had your hand up?

Participant 22:38

I found it hard since Coronavirus came because there's never been something like this since we've been alive, so since we've never had anything like this, it's hard for us because we don't know what's going on and what's gonna happen.

Researcher 23:03

Sure, yeah. No, there's a lot to deal with, isn't there? A lot to deal with. I think we might have come to the end now. Yeah, what were you going to say?

Participant 23:12

I think, there might be some children I love talking to [inaudible sentence]. But then Coronavirus ruined everything. It's like, I don't get to get a get fresh air, even if I play with one of my favourite [inaudible], it doesn't even cheer me up. Even though my parents brought me a new game in the Easter holidays, [inaudible several words], I still, I started playing on the PS3, but I still upset, I still [inaudible several words] image of before Coronavirus happened.



## Focus group 2

Researcher 24:30

What image? What do you mean?

Participant 24:32

Like an image of playing with my friends, an image like that. And sometimes I just go away and stay in my dreams for five minutes, and then I just close my game and throw the controller. And my parents...

Researcher 24:55

It makes you feel a bit angry?

Participant 24:57

It makes me feel a bit angry.

Researcher 24:59

It does make you angry. Last two points then, to finish up.

Participant 25:03

It's really good that we are back at school because now that we are with our friends, we feel a little bit more happy and like [name removed] said, less angry, we feel a little less angry.

Researcher 25:21

Yeah. And did you all feel angry?

Participant 25:26

It was really hard for us, because we've never been through a big pandemic like this. And then we had to stay home, and also, usually, once a year, my grandparents come here, but, and they are keeping away our family, we can't meet our family.

Researcher 25:49

Yeah. Is that making you angry? Yeah. Powerful. Thank you for sharing. Last one then, before we finish.

## Focus group 2

Participant 25:57

Coronavirus isn't only separating us from our friends but from our family. I have a cousin and they have loads of cousins and the last time I have seen any of them has been around two years now.

Researcher 26:16

Oh wow. Does that mean then that you kind of miss them? You miss them. Ok well I'm so sorry that you've had so many, sort of, missing your family, friends, you've had Covid. But we've also got another group outside to come in now. So I'm going to say thank you so much. One more quick then, what is it?

Participant 26:34

I had cousins sometimes a few times a year, like one or three times a year they would come, like, because we have a celebration called Eid, it's the 31<sup>st</sup> day of Ramadan, that means for how long we've been fasting, fasting means we have to eat breakfast at 4o'clock at dawn and then we can't eat or drink all day until 9o'clock. I managed to last [inaudible few words] and told everyone I got a game. I did the fasting [inaudible few words]. I tried, and my parents didn't wake me up when we were told we wake up early in the morning. And my cousins were supposed to come but only like a few came.

Researcher 27:44

Is that because of Covid?

Participant 27:26

Yeah because they have cousins that come all the way up for it, and I have a few cousins who live a few doors down, and they came, and the year before Covid ruined everything for me, because the day before the 30<sup>th</sup> day of Ramadan, you can choose presents, and then you're meant to wrap it up and yeah, your parents wrap it up for you after you go to the toy shop and choose what you want to buy, and then it's Eid, and it's similar to like Christmas, instead your cousins buy things for you and you have no idea what it is. Two years ago, we got a fun game where there's this fishing game called 'gone fishing'. And then it ruined everything...

Researcher 29:05

Yeah. I'm just gonna stop because we have got to go because there's another group, but I'm so sorry that that was hard for you. What were you gonna say, just quickly because we've got to go then, we're running out of time, but I could listen and talk to you all day long.

## Focus group 2

Participant 29:13

Like [name removed] pointed out, Eid last year was very disappointing last year because I didn't get to see my cousins. I was supposed to see my cousins last year too, but I have a feeling this year, Eid will be even better because we get to go to the toy shops and to get to go to the part. Eid this year is actually tomorrow.

Researcher 29:40

Oh wow, so it's tomorrow. So you might get your presents this year, and you might see some family this year?

Participant 29:47

I need to get all my school work done on time because I need to bring my Lego. There's this [inaudible word] Lego that's important for me, and a gift for Ramadan...

Researcher 30:03

And you'll have to get it sorted out. Well listen, we have to take you back to class, then, guys, thank you so...

[End of transcription]