

# INSPIRATIONAL CLIMBING!

Nicola, you are truly amazing! We have been watching and listening to our children in the past several months as they engage in risk-taking exploits through exploring heights and climbing. A great deal of energy and time has been and continues to be invested in this project so we know that it is learning that is both important and significant. You have been one of the children most interested in testing yourself and your strength and skills in relation to the climbing opportunities before you.

In response to this learning focus we borrowed some stairs from one of the other rooms for a day. The stairs are quite steep. Very steep in fact! We arranged them with a small table at one end and sat back to watch and record what happened.

Many children climbed and enjoyed the new perspectives and feelings of exhilaration and perhaps empowerment at being up so high. But it was you, Nicola, who took on these steps with a most inspirational approach. We captured your exploration on video, and we have as a team watched and marvelled at you as a learner many times since!



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You first climbed up on the table and used it as a step to get onto the top of the stairs. You held on to the top and swung a leg over and climbed down with the expertise of someone very practised at such climbing. Once is, however, never enough when there is something so challenging and wonderful in our space, and you headed straight back to repeat your actions. This time, however, you encountered a problem. When you tried to get your foot over the top to get onto the highest step you had trouble getting your boot over. You moved your hands one way and then another to try and squeeze your foot through, but it just would NOT work. Nicola, you are not one to shy away from a challenge, and this was certainly the case in this instance. If your foot wouldn't get over one way, there was sure to be another way to approach the steps. You leant your whole body over the step and climbed down upside-down!





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As a team of educators we have marvelled at this for many reasons:

- Coming down such steep steps took enormous strength. You were working against gravity, and had to hold on tightly with your hands so that your torso and legs didn't topple you over yourself.
- You had to think about how to organise your body around the climb onto the steps in the first place.
- When things didn't go according to plan, you had the cognitive flexibility to change your approach in response.
- You showed the most wonderful confidence in your own ability to take on such a big challenge—there was no hesitation apart from a moment taken to reassess the situation and work about a different approach to the descent.
- You demonstrated an amazing amount of courage. This was a new resource—not one which we have had previously in our space, but this didn't stop you from approaching and throwing yourself with all your being into a wholehearted exploration of the possibilities it held.

What a wonderful way to show your strength and your competence as a climber, but also your competence as a learner prepared to invest your all into your investigations into the world around you.

We will continue to marvel at this example of your climbing and approach to your learning, and will also look to find ways of enriching and extending your experience in our environment.



Documented with love and care for Nicola by Karen.  
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