

The hidden parts of the play park

exploring the outer edges of the local park

3 year old, Under Fives Roundabout - CAMBRIDGE (ENGLAND)

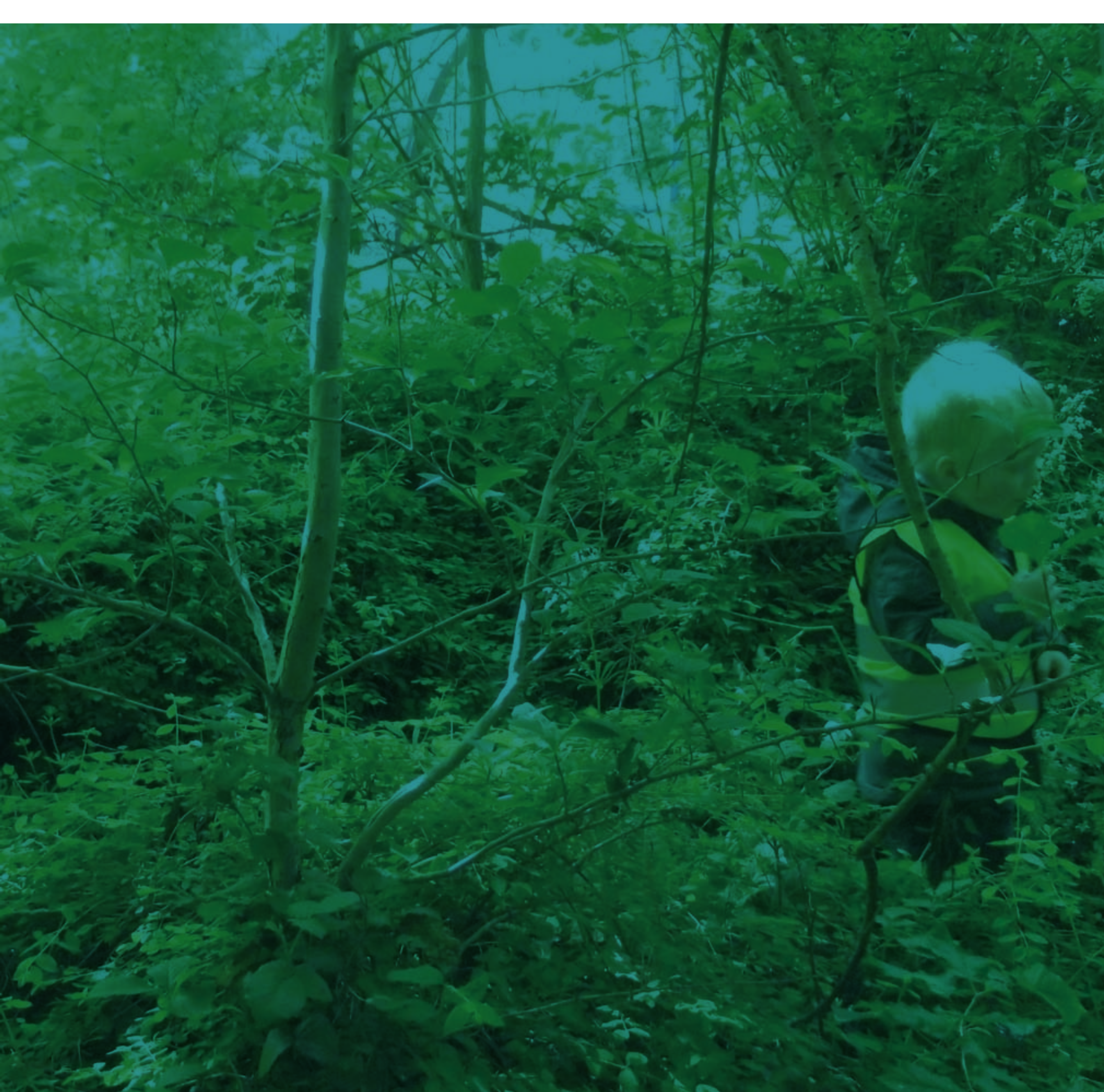
Over a period of 2 terms, the children discover aspects of the park usually unseen. They discuss what creatures might live there and leave works of art and bundles of sticks, eager to revisit to see if their creations are still there weeks later. During this time the children become braver and more curious; they notice changes in the foliage as the seasons change and let their imaginations run wild as they debate who has moved their creations, what may have made the trails through the undergrowth and why the big tree is growing across instead of up! This project has been important for both the adults and the children, to understand there is more to our play parks than the climbing equipment. There are many opportunities for exploration, for encouraging thinking and imagination and also for acknowledging the space belongs to everyone. This project enabled the practitioners to gain an understanding of the child's view of their public space. Some took lots of persuading to explore beyond the play equipment, asking "are we allowed? Is it safe?"



There was a tunnel and everyone had to bend down very low to go through it but not put their hands down on the grass...



They were disappointed when their works of art has been dismantled and scattered across the grass, but showed some understanding that their work wasn't fixed therefore anyone could play with it and make their own creations from the same materials. A parent reported her child had become 'braver' since the experience and, when in different public park, was excited to explore off the track.



We went to the park today and made a Bumbum (bundle) we had to hide the sticks in the forest and then put them in a circle...

