

## A Letter to Kelly

*Context: At the time of this moment, Kelly is just under two and half year's old. She attends our service for two days a week and transitioned up to my room a little over two months ago.*

To Kelly,

We had great fun during our painting this morning, didn't we? So much so that we got paint everywhere, including the floor! As we started to tidy up after our activity I got the cloth to give the floor a wipe to get some of the paint stains off the floor. Your friends moved off to the next activity, but you stayed. I could sense your curiosity as you came over to watch me. You stood silently for a moment, watching intently, before you asked "*Philip, you cleaning?*"

I responded, "*Yes, Kelly. I want to get the paint off the floor in case you or your friends slip on it.*"

"*Oh,*" you replied and I could see your eyes remained fixated on my actions. Behind your eyes I could see you trying to put the pieces together like a jigsaw.

I stood up to wring out the cloth in the sink. It was only when I turned back around I could see where your deep thinking had led you. I watched on as you went over and took one of the hand towels from the box. You then moved over to where I was cleaning up the paint. You hunkered down and started to wipe away at a paint stain on the floor. After a few seconds, you paused and looked at the hand towel. The paint mark remained on the floor. You turned to me with a puzzled expression. "*not working,*" you tell me. I knelt beside you and leaned closer to show you the cloth that I was holding. You reached over with your right hand and felt it. "*Oh, that's wet.*"

Pausing again for a moment like earlier, I got a sense that you were connecting the dots in your mind. You immediately stood up and moved over to our water jug which sat nearby. I watched as you held the hand towel under the jug and proceeded to turn the nozzle. *Drip. Drip. Drip.* The water trickled onto the hand towel and I watched your face light up into a wide smile. This was followed by a giggle. You returned to the floor and I watched, your smile still spread across your face following successfully dampening the hand towel, as you started to clean the floor. This time the paint stain came off the floor. You looked so satisfied

that you now had helped me in cleaning the floor. *“Look, Philip... I clean it. I clean the floor!”*



I watched on as your excitement and your actions attracted your friends. You suddenly went from helping me to becoming a leader among your group. Your friends began to mimic your actions – going to get their own hand towels and pour water on them. I watched as you stood beside the water jug and showed them how to do it – *“like this,”* you said to your friends as you repeated your previous actions. After the floor was cleaned, you then led your friends over to the easel and proceeded to give that a good wash. Once you had finished that, you

headed over to the home corner to “*clean the kitchen like my mommy.*” You laughed alongside your friends as the puddle on the floor got bigger and bigger with each passing visit to the water jug. But you didn’t mind, you were having too much fun.



Kelly, I was struck by your inquisitive nature throughout your play today. It was wonderful to watch as you reflected on what you had observed me doing and then repeated it in a way that made sense for you. You showed a desire to keep our space clean and later during the play, a desire to help your friends to showcase your learned knowledge. This is a fantastic trait to see displayed at such a young age. It was a joy to watch you display independence as you self-extended without the need for any guidance as you went about first cleaning the easel and then over to the home corner. It was here you recalled your times helping mammy, which brought your experiences from home into the setting. I’m already looking forward to next week to see what might be in store for our play.

From Philip.