Strategies used to discover PDA in a Play Based Assessment?

McIntosh, S., Tyerman, E. & Watson, G. (2011) The Elizabeth Newson Centre

The main challenge is creating opportunities for the child to 'demonstrate' their individual presentation of PDA, using strategies that enable their cooperation so that they show their full range of skills

Flexibility

Gemma used a flipchart to negotiate the session structure with Harry:

Gemma: *'Right, for number 4 I'm going to choose…'*
Harry: *'We cold play the hours game'*
Gemma: *'Do you want to put that as number five?'*
Harry: *'We could put it as number four'*
Gemma: *'But number four is my* choice'
Harry: *'Hmmm'*
Gemma: *'Shall we put it as number five?'*
Harry: *'Maybe we could play twister?'*
Gemma: *'Well I was thinking, what about skittles? Shall we call it skittles or bowling?'*
Harry: *'Yeah, okay. But what about games?'*

Other flexible strategies include: giving choice, reducing demands and choosing priorities

Being indirect

Gemma showed interest in some pictures; Fiona ignored her at first, but when Gemma laughed and said:

'These picture are funny', Fiona immediately said,
'What pictures?' and joined her at the table to look at them.

There are a range of indirect strategies that can be used, such as, using distraction, asking for help, rhetorical questions and withdrawing interaction

Relationships

Siobhain used her understanding of Sarah to judge the demands she could cope with, increasing or reducing her interaction as appropriate. Being calm, patient, persistent, fun, creative, using a child's interest and preparing well can all help to build a rapport with a child

Using Pretend Play

When Simon was dressed up as a knight, Emma challenged him to a quest to, 'save the princess'. He then completed a number of cognitive tasks (which he was reluctant to complete earlier on) thoroughly engaging in the game,

'One more puzzle for me'.

Other pretend play strategies are: 'pausing' rather than finishing a game and depersonalising demands by using puppets or other toys

Reference: Newson, E. (2002) Defining Criteria for Diagnosis of Pathological Demand Avoidance Syndrome, The Elizabeth Newson Centre