

Targets from previous assignment

Target a) Ensure that key theorists are included in both discussion and referencing.

To ensure this is improved, I used more theorist references and matched that with the theorist in discussion.

Target b) Provide a counter argument for recommendations made or critically evaluate aspects to be cautious with.

To ensure this is improved, I will make counter arguments, being careful not to criticise or be judgmental.

Target c) Use more appropriate sources.

To ensure this is improved, I have used more written papers, books, and more reliable websites.

A digital poster, entitled “Start at My Feet”, in which you briefly outline how a school works with parents and the wider community. The poster should be followed by the commentary.

School A is located near its town Centre and is surrounded by many shops, parks and fields leaving the teachers with many opportunities to take the children out and improve on their development as a whole. School A is one of the largest schools in Wales. It currently has 633 pupils; this number is continuing to increase every term. For ALN students school A has two classes in the learning resource base, this is for pupils throughout the whole school. These pupils come from the local authority. School A is currently considered a “pioneer school,” this means that the school is working with the local government and with other pioneer schools to develop a national model of professional learning and pilot on the new curriculum. The school is also considered a lead school, which means that the school receives additional funding. The pupils at school A have a budget of £4834 per pupil, this money goes to creating opportunities for the pupils, such as, Schools trips, equipment for the pupils, help on transportation for some pupils, extra play equipment, creating new and exciting activities for the pupils and getting extra resources. Approximately 33% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, this is above the national average. Some of the funding the school receives goes towards producing the meals as well as on school trips the kitchen also provides meals for the children who need it. The free school meals are there to encourage healthy eating, increasing the variety of food the pupil will eat and aim to improve behaviour and social skills. (www.gov.wales, n.d.). The school spends a lot of time and effort into putting up classroom displays and organising the classroom. School A stated that having a clean and organised classroom clears the mind and helps the pupils focus and get on with work as well as contributing more towards the lesson without any distractions, everything inside the classroom has a home and a place where it belongs. School A believe strongly in displays and the importance of having them, the school has a display for everything that holds importance, this includes, children's rights, mathematics, literacy, phonics, topic work and the pupil's achievements. Each display holds their own importance, the children rights is for the children to know what they have the right to and have a good understanding of what it means. The maths and literacy boards will have help on them to support the children in their learning and giving them the independence to try and do it themselves. The phonics boards will have tricky

words on it and sentence starters to support children in asking questions and having a focus on the harder words and using that to help them learn and understand them. School A works closely with parents, they offer unemployed parents the DocLeaf project. The main aim of this project is to get people in the community back into the workplace. To complete the project they must volunteer for a minimum of 16 hours a week and applying to gain a NVQ qualification in childcare or teaching and learning. The school works with parents on this and eventually it can lead to a job in the school.

An opportunity that supports the school in engaging with the community is visits from the Fire service. Visits from the Fire Service benefit the children in so many ways, including widening their knowledge on the wider community, what is going on in their world as well as learning skills they will need and take into their future. The Fire Service says that the best way to reduce risk is through education and prevention. They also state that children and young people have different educational needs, so the fire service have dedicated staff to deliver workshops on Fire safety, teaching them about fire alarms and the risks of deliberate fire starting. (South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, n.d.) The wider community working with schools promotes the value of lifelong learning, building on the pupil's confidence, resilience and self-esteem in pupils, parents, and the community. (ESTYN, 2020, p.17). The school invite the local fire brigade to visit the children, where they arrive on the Fire engine and the children are given the opportunity to sit in the fire engine and have a look at all the equipment, they use on a daily basis to help put out fires, the children can try on the helmets and the uniform to understand their uses. A challenge the school may face would be the car park/ outer area not being big enough for a fire engine to park on the school grounds, therefore making it impossible or extremely dangerous for teaching staff and teaching assistants to escort the young primary school aged children to see the fire engine up close. The fire service also needs to be cautious not to send out the wrong message and overwhelm the children or make them feel anxious and responsible for keeping others safe. (Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, n.d). Bronfenbrenner's Ecological system theory is involved in the visits from the wider community. The wider community are in the Exosystem, this is the next outermost level and includes the microsystems in which the individuals are involved but not directly embedded. The Exosystem is the influence through other people involved in the individual's life. Children interacting with the people in the Exosystem is beneficial to their well-being as they are developing on their social skills, learning from a new point of view, and expanding their knowledge on what they may already know as well as making it as fun and engaging as possible. (Ettel and Mahoney, 2017, p.4.).

An Opportunity that the school uses to support families and children in need is home visits done by the family support officer. The family support officer can come to the home before the child starts school to get to know the child and seeing a familiar face will reassure the pupil and make the settling in process a little easier for the pupil and the parents. (The Key for School Leaders, n.d.). School A also offer home visits to vulnerable families while their child is in school. This done to build a trusting and nurturing relationship with the parents. This is done when the pupil needs extra resources to complete school, when the parents cannot afford it, a family support officer will also visit the home of the pupil if absent. When a pupil is absent the family support officer will visit the following first day of absence. In a more severe cases the family support officer will visit as soon as they are made aware of the absence. (ESTYN, 2020, p.57). Home visits provide valuable opportunities the school to help parents complete applications to access local authority support, benefits, and housing. This ensures that the home circumstances for the children and their families is stable and the ability to have a positive impact on

well-being. (ESTYN, 2020, p.58). Home visits are also there for families who feel uncomfortable coming into school, have trouble finding transportation or have mobility issues. While on the visit strategies are put into place (Theme 3: Welcoming families to engage with the school Resources 1-9 Family and community engagement toolkit 3, n.d.). However, school A said they face many challenges with the home visit strategy. Families living in poverty is a main reason. It is said that children living in poverty have a lower performance level, lower self-esteem, and have a lower attendance rate due to being exposed to a higher rate of illness. These children living in poverty have limited access to technology, school materials and resources for schoolwork. (Yu and Greever, 2014, p.5.). School A strongly stated that this is not something that should be overlooked, however it should not be something the school draws attention to as it risks putting stress on the child as well as the parents. Families living in poverty are less likely to be able to afford essentials, such as, Food, heating, and clothing. The parents are going to struggle to provide a decent standard of living or be able to take part in enjoyable activities with their children. They will also face food insecurity and cramped living conditions. (Action for Children, n.d.). Due to these impacts on poverty the parents may feel embarrassed or uncomfortable with family support officers coming into their home and seeing their conditions. Abraham Maslow created a hierarchy of needs, these were physiological needs, safety needs, needs of affection, belongingness and love, needs for esteem and needs for self-actualisation. Self-actualisation is at the top of the hierarchy pyramid, this is when all of the needs are satisfied, then and only then are the needs for self-actualisation activated. (Simons, Irwin and Drinnien, 1987). Maslow described self-actualisation as a person's need to be and to do what they were meant to do. (Maslow, 1943). The whole concept of self-actualisation is defined as the "full use of personal potential." This means that each person possesses a set of capabilities which they develop over time. Finding meaning in one's life, achieving growth, attaining wholeness, and nearing perfection. (www.topessaywriting.org, n.d.). Abraham Maslow's linked in with home visits and their challenges and opportunities as the school staff can help the pupils and their families to reach their self-actualisation.

From this assignment I have learnt the importance of the school working with parents and the wider community. School A works extremely well with the parents and the community in supporting the children before they start school, during school and supporting children financially and a stable home life. I had the chance to witness the school I was on placement at organise a soup kitchen in the school hall, here a warm meal was served up and a warm drink for homeless or struggling families. The school choir performed at this, getting the children involved and letting them see the good they are doing. Several times throughout the year, the children take part in fundraising events to raise money for charities of their choice. Last year the school fundraised money for The Welsh Air Ambulance, Race for Life, homelessness, and the local food bank. From these events the school listened to the children and their beliefs in helping these charities and the best to raise money for them. Standards for teaching and leadership are designed to support teachers to be the best they can be and reflect practice that is consistent with the realisation of the new curriculum. The first standard I would like to influence my teaching is having strong leadership skills. I will exercise leadership through all aspects of professional practice to support the efforts of others across the school and beyond to fulfil the educational ambitions for Wales. I will demonstrate a professional attitude and behaviour whilst developing positive relationships with learners, parents/carers, and colleagues, which illustrates a personal commitment to the fundamental principles of equity and of maximising the potential of all learners. (Welsh Government, 2019, p.57.) The second standard to influence my teaching is Collaboration.

As a teacher I will actively seek and engage with support from a range of formal and informal sources. This includes observation and team teaching, whilst demonstrating increasing levels of independence. (Welsh Government, 2019, p44.) The Third standard I will use to influence my teaching is professional learning. I will consistently extend knowledge, skills and understanding and show how reflection and openness to challenge and support professional learning to progressively develop. (Welsh Government, 2019, p47.).

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