

Module code: ECEY4009/C Student number:

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What knowledge and skills do I need to develop?	What do I want or need to achieve- what difference will it make?	What methods could I use?	What support will I need?	What are my target dates?	How will I know that I have achieved the outcome that I want or need?
To develop more skills and knowledge on working with individuals with SEN or ALN	To develop a better understanding of how I'm able to adapt my current skills to meet the needs specifically of SEN or ALN children	Online training such as online courses through High Speed Training such as the Autism Awareness Course. Contact ALN or SEN organizations such as the National Autistic Society to see if they offer any training or events that I could attend	Time off work to attend training, permission from my manager to carry out observations on the individuals, support from my manager to look over observations and reflections	On going	Certificates from training courses, praise from staff when adapting my skills in practice or organizing any tasks, the individual's reaction such as if they enjoyed or if they gain any new skills or knowledge
To gain more confidence in my abilities to create tasks and carry out my work in general.	Be able to plan effective tasks to suit the needs and interests of the children to build positive relationships	Start to plan ideas and ask a manager to look over them, use resources such as Twinkl.	Positive reinforcement from my manager, positive feedback from other members of staff, time to plan, use of resources and materials	1 year	Receiving praise from my manager. Positive reactions from the children such as happiness and excitement. If I am asked to plan more tasks in the future.

			available in the setting		
How to help children with their speech and language development	I would need to acquire relevant information and skills to use it in practice. This would be particularly valuable for children who are new starters within the setting	Online training such as looking on the Elklan Training LTD website Online resources such as looking on the NHS website. Voluntary work shadowing a speech and language therapist.	Time off work to attend any voluntary work or training. Permission from parents of the children that I would intend on specifically working with. Permission from management to incorporate speech and language activities in our day-to-day routines within the setting	On going	I would have more knowledge and different methods or techniques that I would have learned. Using these in practice and seeing any potential improvement in the child's speech and language.
Improving my time management skills	Being able to organize and structure my time more efficiently factoring in any of	Consult the Study Skills support service that the University has to offer.	Keeping in contact with the Well-being service that the University has to offer. Support from	By the next academic term	Feeling less pressure, anxiety and stress. Being more organized and having better time awareness.

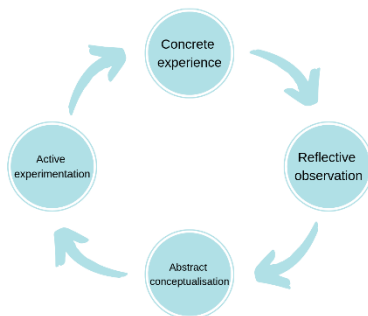
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	my commitment such as family		family for help with managing time such as childcare		
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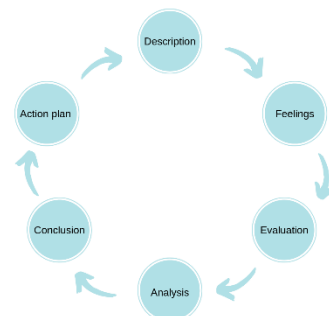
What is reflection and reflective practice? According to Dr Colwell (2019) reflection offers a way in which early years practitioners can identify any difficulty or problem in a systematic and comprehensible way thus including the method of questioning our actions. Reflection can also be seen as a way in which practitioners are able to consider their actions and thus be able to understand and provide grounds for their choices. The result of these methods would be to identify any alternative route or method of action. Reflective practice should allow practitioners to be able to challenge the everyday standard way in which practice is carried out and they should be aware of their actions and why they are being carried out. Practice should be continuously reflected on to maintain high-quality provision.	Why is reflective practice important to EY practice? Reflective practice is important to Early Years practice as it's a way in which practitioners can improve on their own teaching and the way in which they work with children to ensure that the most appropriate learning experiences are promoted for the children. (Brock, 2015, p. 9) It is also a way in which practitioners can translate policy into practice. (Brock, 2015, p. 56) Pacey (2016) highlights that continual reflection thus resulting in improvement can promote benefits for children such as ensuring that their needs are met, their self-esteem is escalated and that appropriate resources are provided for the children for use both indoors and outdoors and that the environment remains engaging, interactive and relevant.
The theory of reflective practice Chen (2023) begins their description of the theory of reflective practice by exploring how John Dewey (1910, 1933) is the significant theorist who originated the theory of reflective practice and the definition of it being centered around thinking and knowing in an interactive manner. Dewey (1910, 1933) explored the route of learning from experience whereas Schon (1983, 1987) explored the route of reflection-in and reflection-on practice. Both theorists favor reflective practice over technical practice as they felt that reflective practice requires more thought and can promote active critical thinking whereas technical practice thrives on routine actions and thought process. The theorist aim was to inform practitioners on ways in which they can escape the usual routine behaviors. Research shown from Colwell (2019) also demonstrates that Dewey's aim was to promote reflective action as supposed to routine action as by a practitioner using a reflective method allows them to be more flexible and requires constant questioning and self-appraisal and that the practitioners who are able to implement reflection in their practice are seen as in-depth in the sense that they are more understanding and are able to challenge the day-to-day running's of the setting whereas those practitioners that implement routine action simply follow a certain plan and see things very much in black and white. Schon's work then builds upon Dewey's work and was able to identify a term in which he called 'professional artistry.' The definition of 'professional artistry' was Schon's way of representing the expertise and skills in which all professionals have that informs their actions. Schon also highlighted a way in which we can further break down the idea of reflective practice. He did this by describing that	

the professional artistry was able to be implemented in two different ways, by reflect-on-action and reflect-in-action. The differentiation between the two methods is that reflection-on-action requires practitioners to look back and take into consideration why certain situations were to arise, whereas reflection-in-action would take a opposite approach where practitioners would be required to reflect and make any changes or adaptations as a situation was to unfold. Both methods are useful within practice for practitioners although the reflection-in-action may require practitioners more time and practice to feel more comfortable with it to implement it efficiently throughout their everyday running of their setting.

Kolb's Model



Gibb's model



Analysis of models- compare/contrast/pros/cons

According to University of Cambridge (2023) Kolb's model (1984) focuses on furthering ones understanding through real life experiences that we go through, and the model contains four stages which include: Concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The model begins by starting with real-life experience. This can be a situation that is new, or it can be a situation that has arisen previously. The next stage involves individuals reflecting on said experience and making a note of anything new or of an occurrence that the individual has not experienced before thus resulting in having the ability to prosper new ideas. The final stage of the method includes implementing our newly developed ideas in different situations. This model expresses the idea of learning becoming a direct result of our reflections and experiences.

In comparison Gibb's model contains six elements including: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan. This model begins by looking at the reflection of the experience and can be seen as more complex although the model does take into consideration the individual's feelings during or after the reflection process whereas Kolb's model does not. The next step of the model would be to evaluate the experience and think about the positive and negative attributes. This evaluation is then used to try and make sense of the situation thus resulting in a conclusion regarding whether there were any other actions that could have been taken or not to reach an alternative outcome. The final stage of the model includes creating an action plan of measures that can be taken if the individual were to involve themselves in a similar situation again.

University of Cambridge (2023) suggest that the pros of the use of reflection models include the structure that they give for individuals to follow thus creating a point that an individual can begin at to assess the different levels of a given situation and providing the individual with reassurance and evidence that the process has been completed. The cons and or barriers to the reflective models would include whether an individual is able to factor time into their existing schedules to reflect or compose a reflective model, having a lack of motivation to reflect, some of the reflective models can set unrealistic expectations thus resulting in the idea that reflection should be ridged and undertaken in a certain way.

Conclusion

In conclusion reflection is a key aspect of personal and professional development and without having the ability to reflect on a given situation or practice there would be little room for improvement and change. Some individuals find changing routines or their way of working daunting and overwhelming although change should be portrayed as a positive attribute as children are developing and changing every day and as practitioners it would go against policies and procedures if staff do not adhere to the children's ever-changing interest and dislikes. Without reflecting on activities or events that happen daily we have no evidence to support the children's learning in the sense that to make relevant adaptations individuals need to be aware of the elements that are working for the children and the ones that aren't to adapt plans and activities to meet the needs of the individuals.

Part 3

This piece of writing is based on the significance of different aspects of professional practice and why these are important in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children.

To begin this essay the definition of professional practice and what is a professional has been researched. According to Aldridge and Evetts (2003, cited in *The reflective early years practitioner*, 2013, p.102) more than one concept relates to professionalism such as being a professional, promoting professional behavior and working with other similar professionals and possessing a professional identity. These very concepts can be difficult to relate to whereas Kelchtermans (1993, cited in *Professionalization, leadership and management in the early years*, 2010, p. 98) highlights the aspects that are needed to be a professional as being self-esteem, self-image, task perception, job motivation and future perspectives which are far more relatable and easier to recognize. The subject of defining the meaning of professional practice is researched and through a direct quote, quoted by Siolta (2006, cited in *Longford County Childcare Committee*, 2017) as “practicing in a professional manner requires that individuals have skills, knowledge, value and attitudes appropriate to their role and responsibility within the setting. In addition, it requires regular reflection upon practice and engagement in supported, ongoing professional development.” This quote signifies the different elements that are needed to ensure that early year’s practitioners are well equipped to fulfil their roles and responsibilities within the setting and highlights the importance of reflection and ongoing professional development as part of professional practice.

The aspect of values that are important for a professional practitioner are highlighted by Pacey (2009-2023) throughout their code of ethics. The values that are highlighted are that early years practitioners should ensure that child’s rights, views and their needs are at the forefront throughout practice, ensuring that individuality, diversity and any differences are celebrated and valued, ensuring that anti-discrimination and equality of opportunity are promoted effectively, the children’s well-being and health are of upmost importance and should be promoted actively, ensuring that children’s safety not only physically but also personally are properly safeguarded but also allowing the child to take positive risks and challenges but only if appropriate to the specific child’s capabilities, promoting self-esteem, positive self-image and resilience as these factors are vital to all children’s development, being able to promote confidentiality by ensuring that confidential information that has been gathered is respected unless a child’s well-being or protection is at risk. As part of why values are important to professional practice, *Nursery Resources* (2018) highlights that practitioners should be teaching children that their voice and their thoughts and feelings are listened to, taken into consideration and most importantly that they are valued and that the children’s opinions are important. To coincide with this view that *Nursery Resources* (2018) has highlighted, the United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child, Article 12 would

reiterate the points highlighted above as Article 12 suggests that all children have the rights to express their views and have those views considered and taken seriously. (Unicef, no date.)

Another very vital aspect of professional practice would be communication and relationships. WJEC CBAC LTD (2019) suggests that ensuring practitioners can build effective relationships to promote successful working partnerships with the fundamental aim of ensuring that the needs of the children and their families are met. Effective and good communication amongst practitioners, multi-agencies, the children and their families also allow all parties to gain the crucial element of trust. Following on from the point of effective communication it is not only oral speaking skills that practitioners would need to ensure that they are promoting effectively but also ensuring that practitioners are able to listen carefully and to be encouraging in order for individuals to ask questions and also being prepared to reiterate information that's been given in order to be able to potentially refer the parents or carers to colleagues that may have more experience if an issue were to arise or if the parents or carers had any queries or concerns. It's also important to also bear in mind that some parents or carers are unaware of the Early Years Foundation Phase, or the development aims hence reiterating the importance of effective communication and building strong relationships.

As practitioners to implement effective practice there is the crucial requirement of sustaining in-depth knowledge and understanding as the Department for Education and Skills (2005) suggests that by having the knowledge and understanding practitioners can expand on children's learning and thus are able to support children with their learning. There is also a fundamental need to gather an understanding of the diverse ways in which children can learn and develop to ensure you are meeting the learning needs of the specific child and all their interests. Knowledge and understanding are also valuable to effectively work with other professionals in and around the setting as there may be circumstances that you may need to implement the knowledge and understanding effectively such as if a safeguarding concern was to arise. Kimberley EYC (2016) believes that each setting should have a clear safeguarding procedure that practitioners should follow and practitioners are required to attend a minimum of a level 1 safeguarding training course which would help to develop an individual's knowledge and understanding to ensure that the relevant safeguarding policies and procedures are being adhered to and so that practitioners are able to log any concerns that may arise in order to eliminate the possibility that an individual may forget vital information or they may think that a concern that they have picked up on may not be worth logging. It is important that the individual is aware of what to do and what not to do in a safeguarding situation. The procedures that should be followed include ensuring that the practitioner takes the concern or allegation seriously, that they ensure that the information that is logged is factual, and that individuals should act upon their concerns as soon as possible and promptly. In a safeguarding situation individuals should not approach the parents with their concerns or discuss any concerns with anyone other than the appropriate designated safeguarding leader, to not give any false hope or sense of security to the child such as

making promises that things will be ok and to not put any pressure on the child to continue with the conversation if they are not feeling comfortable to. Without the relevant knowledge, understanding and training mistakes could be potentially made that could be detrimental on a child and their well-being. To corollate with the points gathered on safeguarding the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child, Article 3 suggests that the best interest of a child should be of top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children. (Unicef, no date)

To promote the individual and inclusive needs of the children within practice consideration must be taken on the importance of partnership and multi-agency working. Nicholas, A (2015 pp. 269-281) claims that integrated working ensures that all those involved in supporting children whether that be multi-agencies and families working together to ensure that the child is at the center of the decision making to improve their lives by ensuring that their needs are being met. This is also demonstrated in Article 3, of the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child, the best interest of the child (Unicef, no date.) To effectively work together Nicholas, A (2015 pp.269-281) suggests that there are specific skills required such as confidence and the ability to reflectively work with professional partners effectively thus can result in developing positive networks of communication.

For practitioners to ensure that they can meet the needs of the children within their care and promote professional practice careful consideration must be made for the observation and planning cycle. According to West Sussex County Council (2021) the observation and planning cycle aids the support for the child's learning and development. Expanding further on the planning cycle, it begins with observing children to better understand the child's current interests, their current development and their learning styles. Using the information gathered within this observation practitioners are then able to plan accordingly for the next steps for the child's learning and development and if required information gathered from the child's parents such as their interests and how they feel they are at with their development can also be included in the planning process.

The arguments presented indicate that there are many different aspects of professional practice and ensuring that practitioners are aware and are implementing these aspects throughout their role and thus enables the continuous professional development of the individual. Ensuring that practitioners understand the importance of professional practice means that they are ensuring that the individual and inclusive needs of children are being met. These aspects of professional practice as highlighted above are the aspects that, to me, portray Early Years Practitioners as being professionals within their own role as within the childcare sector there is no element of one size fits all. Careful and knowledgeable consideration should be taken in all areas of professional practice. All children are individuals, and their interests and values should be carefully considered to promote diversity, equality and inclusion.

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