Student Number: 2310527
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What do I know already: I know that I am a hardworking, caring and positive worker. I am a mother, there for I understand child development and how important it is to show that you're there to listen and learn. What have I learnt so far: In my current role at a primary school, I have learnt how to be alot more patient, how to show understanding and how to work as a team.				
What do I want to develop: A better understand of safeguarding in the school setting.				
Objective	Actions (How will I achieve this objective/ what needs to be done?)	Resources (What support and resources are needed to achieve this objective?)	Target Date for achieving objective	Success criteria (How will I know I have achieved this goal, how will I review this?)
To develop in confidence with public speaking. For instance, when presenting and assignment.	I will take myself out of my comfort zone, push myself to take on bigger speaking roles throughout work in order to help me gain confidence and achieve this objective.	Possible courses that I can take part in through university and the school I currently work in. There are groups available online that offer support and training. I can rehearse my speech, record it and listen back in order to critique my performance. Manage my nerves and use confident body language.	I will reach this target within 12 months. The more tasks I take on that involve public speaking, there is hope I will achieve this sooner.	I will potentially have less nerves following up to a public speech and be confident throughout.
Develop better/positive relationships with the parents at the school i currently work in.	Listen to their needs and opinions,show them that i am happy to listen and learn about their concerns. Reach out to them. They may find it difficult to voice their concerns.	There are 4 group of children in my class, i can work from group to group – hold small meetings for the parents, keeping them on top of information and plans for the term. I could show them what the terms objectives are, what they've accomplished and what i'm	I will also reach this target within 12 months however it will be on going as at the end of term next year, i will be given a different year group.	I will have happy and content parents who aren't afraid to ask me questions.

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	Involve the parents in all aspects of school life. Encourage that I appreciate and want their opinion voiced.	excited about. I will ask questions about the child, as the parents know them best and this could potentially help with any issues along the way. I will also invite the parents to share. Share any concerns, if they would like to know about the curriculum or even let me know how they can help.		
Take part in a Safeguarding course.	I will need to apply – and ask my place of work if I am able to attend in work hours.	To apply for the course in advance with the help of my lecturer.	January 2024 – this is when I will attend the course.	I will understand more about Safeguarding and how it can help me and the children I help in the future.

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What is reflection and reflective practise?

Reflection is more than just describing what has happened. It is about looking back and thinking how has this happened, why this happened and deciding what could be done differently if it was to happen again. In order to reflect, we have to be honest. It can be an uncomfortable process, but would potentially bring many benefits. Reflective practice is simply a way of learning through and from your experience in order to gain new insights (Finlay,2008). Reflective practice is a skill which was developed in order to learn from real life experiences and what they would take away from it. Reflection is a key part of emotional intelligence in which you are able to remain in control of your emotions and understand them. It is human nature to make assumptions but being able to take a step back and reflecting will allow you to see things from a different perspective (University of Cambridge, no date).

Push yourself out of your comfort zone in order to challenge what you already know. This could help you learn what works in those situations, but also what does not work. Then you are able to adjust your actions accordingly. Reflective practice is being able to challenge your own value and beliefs. It is to think about why you are doing something, how does it work and finding ways on how can it be improved. Benefits of reflective practise include increased confidence, to reduce stress and to gain a better understanding about your practice (Barrett, 2022).

Why is reflective practise important to EY practise?

Reflection is a process for all practitioners, which will help you make the correct connections to ensure the children make maximum progress. Reflective practice is important as it allows early childhood professionals to develop a much deeper understanding of their surroundings/practise. Reflective practice will help to achieve the very best outcomes for all children through continually developing the necessary skills (Longford,2017). Longford (2017) suggests that children who are listened to and feel respected are more encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions in contrast to children whose views are not.

It is important for practitioners to make time for professional development and reflection, this will help to not only enable practitioners to focus on curriculum development, to help children's learning and development but to also bring a positive change in their setting (Aistear Siolta Practice Guide, 2017). Reflective practice allows you to check whether your work practices are correct and to see if there is anything you can do to help improve the outcome for children. It is important that you reflect on the children's emotions and experiences in order to ensure the child's interests and more importantly needs are met. As a proffesional practitioner, you should always be looking for ways to improve your practice, this could be researching new theories or simply asking for feedback (Cambridge Internation Edcuation, no date).

The theory of reflective practise:

Reflective practice itself was established from the work of Dewey and Schön. Dewey (1938) states that to be as impactful as possible, we should direct our behaviour and actions through planning carefully and through experience. Dewey (1938) explains the key steps to reflection are identifying the problem, to observe the problem or situation in order to gain a fuller understanding, to understand the reasoning behind the decisions made and to test the hypothesis. Schön (1983) then took this further; reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action.Reflection-in-action would allow you to think and react quickly. What is happening? What are you feeling? And what other factors are involved? Whereas reflection-on-action would help you consider the situation again and ask the relevant questions in order to move forward. What happened? Why did it happen? What can we do differently for this situation in the future?

The differences are observing the thought and actions while they are happening, making decisions and adjustments in the moment. Or taking a step back, learn from your experience and adapt these to future situations. This will allow you to have a questionable approach, it will help you consider why things are as they are, or how they could be. Dewey (1938) explains that we learn from reflection on experience, not from experience alone.

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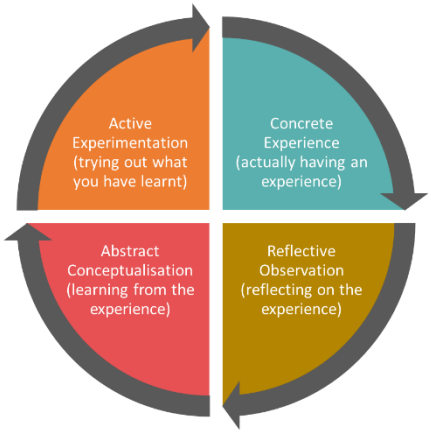
Kolb's Model



Gibbs' Model

Analysis of models – compare/contrast/pros/cons:

As pictured above, Kolb (1984)'s model of reflection shows the major four different stages of learning through experience. Kolb (1984) focuses on reviewing your experience, learning from your experience, implementing what you've learnt and applying what you have learnt. Concrete experience allows you to think about newly experienced situations or past experiences that you need to reflect on. Kolb (1984) explains that reflective observation is about what you may have learnt from the experience and what can you take from it. Kolb highlights the difference in how your assumptions and perception have changed after your experience. The third stage is explained to being able to explore new ideas, with a focus on the present experience you have just gained. The last stage is in Kolb's model shows active experimentation, this stage is how you give a detailed description of how the knowledge you've acquired from this experience is applied in practical situations (Robinson,2022).

In contrast, Gibbs (1988)'s model has a few more steps in place to help individuals with an aim of structuring learning from past experiences (Markkanen et al., 2020). There at six stages to this cycle; this first step is to describe the situation based on your own experience. Following on with describing your thought and feelings in detail in order to reflect. Next you will evaluate what worked well and what didn't work well. Analysis is the fourth step, here you would determine the meaning of that situation along with your evaluation of your success' and failures. Next you would highlight changes that would need to be made, your conclusion. And finally, and action plan; of what you need to deal with regarding future situations. This stage is important as it helps to establish ways to deal with similar situations (Robinson, 2022).

Gibbs' model has more stages in his model compared to Kolb's model. It allows you to be in depth regarding reflecting on your experience, however Kolb's model maybe more suitable as it would take up less of your time to evaluate your experience by following this particular model.

Conclusion

It is clear that reflective skills serve a pivotal role in Early Years education as it helps you take a step back, observe and ask questions in order to come to a conclusion that benefits all involved. It also helps improve your personal and professional development. The reflective cycle is to teach, reflect and to take action. Reflective practice is an important tool to help improve your learning in education and in life experiences. Reflection is a very important skill to learn through experience, we maximise the potential of learning new things. In order to improve this skill and to gain a better understanding, you must actively analyse your experience and actions. In conclusion, Dewey (1938) and Schon's (1938) analysis of reflective practice has shown how important reflection is. Not just in Early Years education but throughout life.

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A professional is an individual who performs a specialised skill or activity. Being professional in the workplace is important, you must follow guidelines, codes of conduct and curriculums (Peninsula,2023). In education, it is important to keep on top of subject knowledge and being too able to instruct students with age-appropriate tasks while working as a team with other professionals, to plan teaching methods and to stay on the curriculum (Indeed, 2023). It is important as a professional in education to understand your curriculum. A curriculum refers to what is taught through a lesson in a school or a course. To gain knowledge in a curriculum and to know what must be taught is essential, it plays an important role in the development on the students or children (Anney1997, 2021).

Professional values are guiding your beliefs and principals that can influence your work behaviour (Poorchangizi et al., 2017). An individual who can display professional values will be able to present a professional image by showing reliability, consistency, and honesty. Will be able to deliver outcomes to the organisation's standards, quality and timescales. And will be accountable for their own actions (University of Bradford, no date). The main key values for a professional practitioner are to be caring and compassionate, to be patient with the children, have a positive attitude and to also be dedicated to the children (Cummings, J. no date). A vital value is to understand the importance of play. The main aim of being an Early Years practitioner is to teach the children, we want them to learn. If they are happier to learn through play, that should be built on and allowed. The importance of play in children is fundamental in childhood (Brock,. et al 2013). Whether it be climbing, crawling, or pulling – play is a form of learning (Early Years Matters, 2018). It is important to be the child's role model, to show them the correct way to behave. It is important to be on time, to be ready for the day ahead and to also listen to the children's opinions, questions, answers and concerns. It is equally as important to introduce the parents' opinions and to be open to their contributions in their child's education. The parents may be nervous to share their personal opinion, but they know their child best and their opinion on certain subjects may help. Reynolds, A (2022) explains that being honest and reliable is paramount, all children are different, they all have different values. It is important to acknowledge them as individuals, to gain trust and to then build a relationship.

Communication is a collaborative process, that essentially develops from birth (Turnbull, K. L., & Justice, L. M. (2012). White (2019) explains that research shows communication is significantly influenced by their social and cultural environment. Their interests, health and wellbeing also play a role in this developing skill. Communication isn't just about written or spoken words, children may express themselves through pictures, drawing or gestures. White (2019) suggests again that research shows children's competencies in communication skills and language underpin their holistic development and wellbeing. This skill is vital to learn as it not only helps with their cognitive development, but with their emotion and social skills as well as their cultural awareness and understanding.

It is important to use clear language and to speak clearly, it is also encouraged to listen to the individual, to show you have understood what they are saying by repeating it back, this will give them a voice and allow

them to express themselves in the future. YouAreMom (2018) explains, you must be emotionally available. If a child in your care is unable to communicate these feelings to you to show that they aren't or are happy, you must be able to show them exactly how to do this. Patience is key, explain to them that it is good to allow your emotions out and it will give them a positive outcome.

Praising the child is a vital stage. It could be done through voicing the praise and explaining how well they have done or simply giving them a sticker at the end of the day. Any form of praise is good praise, and this could help build their confidence (Belden,C 2022). Teamwork through communication in professional practice plays a vital role, all members have different experiences, therefor everyone has something to include. Communication will make sure everyone is on the same page and all have the correct information going forward.

Continuing professional development is crucial in professional practice. All practitioners should be enthusiastic to keep improving their practice. This will ensure that not only their knowledge is up to date, but their skills are up to date with regulations and current legislations (DSDWEB, no date). The NSPCC (no date) state all organisations that come into contact or work with children should have policies and procedures in place for safeguarding. This would ensure that every child has a right to equal protection regardless of their age, religion, belief or disability. Safeguarding is an action taken to help the welfare and care of children and to protect them from harm. Safeguarding help protect children from abuse and maltreatment, and it helps prevent harm to children's health and development. It also allows us to enable all children to have the best outcome possible. SCIE (2020) states that multi agency working is detrimental to children's lifestyle and education. A group of different professionals helps bring different experiences to your practice. It will allow you to gain further knowledge on certain topics and see everything with a different perspective. This will also help you share the workload. It is extremely important to recognise that certain professionals are best fitted to certain individuals/ children. They may have more of an understanding about said child and be able to communicate easier with them, the child might find this of help to. Working with multi agencies isn't just about taking constructive criticism but about listening to what has been said and learning for that experience, to not only help you in future situations, but to help the children involved. Delaney, S (2016) states that multi agency working is vital to effective child protection and safeguarding. By accessing multi agencies, it gives an increased understanding, it allows access to improved or more effective services. And it also helps provide different opportunities to learn about different roles and to develop a shared knowledge, this can help achieve the best outcomes for children and young families (NSPCC Learning, 2023).

The observation and planning cycle is a well-used process by Early Years practitioners. This cycle is used to develop high quality programmes for Early Years children (The Educator, 2022). The (OAP) cycle is an integral part as it is a formative assessment which involves observing children's development, their way of learning and growing. It also helps plan the next steps for adulthood. The three-step cycle involves observation, assessment and planning. The Educator (2022) explains that these three steps are crucial in

identifying the children's individual needs, abilities, and interests. It ensures that all children are on the right track, making progress and meeting appropriate targets.

The United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally binding international agreement that sets out the rights of every child. Whether that be civil, political, social or cultural (Save the Children, no date). It is important as a professional practitioner to understand equality. All children are equal, they don't have to earn the rights, they should not be linked to responsibilities. The four general principles of the UNCRC are every child has the right to life, non-discrimination, the best interests of the child and every child has the right to be heard (Education Scotland, no date).

Every child has rights "without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status"

(UNICEF, no date; Article 2).

The UNCRC has three principles. These principles proved a solid framework for the well being and treatment of children and young adults in society, The three principles are Protection, Provision and Participation (Campbell-Barr, V. 2021). Campbell-Barr, V (2021) relays that professionals should continuously protect children from all forms of exploitation, abuse and neglect. They should also prioritize children's safety, the need for a secure environment and that their basic needs are met. The second principle spoken about, explains that it is paramount that professionals allow children access to healthcare and education. They must also ensure that all children in their care have access to food, clothing and shelter (GOV.UK, 2011). GOV.UK (2011) state that the third principle is Participation. Professionals should always ensure that the children are involved in decisions that are made, that could affect their lives. It is vital that all children are given equal opportunities to be able to express their views and opinions. In order to create a child-centred system in professional practice that values the well-being of the children and young people, it is important to incorporate these three principles. If these principles are followed correctly, it can also help professionals work with children and their families more efficiently. All children have a right to any decisions made that may affect or help shape their life, therefor they should be given opportunities to express their emotions and opinions in a safe environment. It is important to understand that children are not helpless objects, or property of their parents. We must recognise them as human beings and subjects of their own rights. Children should be given the chance to enjoy the basic qualities of life.

To be a professional, you must follow a curriculum, codes of conduct and guidelines. You must be reliable and show consistency throughout. In early years, you must be the child's role model, how you behave is how they will behave. You must be willing to listen to their questions and more importantly, their concerns in any situation. Communication is key, allow them time to talk to you in confidence and praise them for doing so. As stated previously, safeguarding is an extremely important role, you must have the correct policies in place and ensure all children have equal protection and make sure all basic needs are met. Professionals

should always be in guidance with curriculums and new legislations in order to prevent any harm, and to help encourage development for the children.