

Personal Development Plan

What do I know: By completing my degree I will be able to achieve my goals to become the person I am wanting to be.				
What have I learnt: Hard work, determination, and time management will benefit me to be successful.				
What to develop: To develop an understanding and knowledge of my objectives, to have completed these ambitions which will allow me to progress within my future career. This will also allow me to be the person I want to be mentally and physically.				
Objective	Actions	Resources	Target Date for achieving objective.	Success criteria
<i>Complete first aid training</i>	Undertake a first aid training course. Manage my time effectively to ensure I have time to complete this course. Pay for the training course (£198), Attend the course.	Notebook and pen to take notes. Teacher for the course, Transport to get to the venue.	02/01/2024	I will receive a certificate to know I have successfully completed my first aid course – I will need to review and renew this every 3 years.
<i>To successfully complete Early Years Education and Care degree and then undertake a teaching PGCE</i>	Make sure I complete all activities and assignments to the best of my ability. To enable me to do this I will need to make sure I focus on my time management, academic skills, and attend all lectures to help understand and gain the knowledge that I need for the future during my time at university and my future life outside of university. Ensure that I am reading essential topics and producing the assignments elegantly.	A device to complete assignments, Lectures, Lecturers, References – books, ebooks, journals, and articles. Internet connection.	01/08/2027	I will know I have completed this by receiving a certificate in my graduation once completing the 2 years of my degree. I will then go onto completing my teaching PGCE that again will result graduating as a Qualified Teacher to enable me to work as a primary school teacher.
<i>Positively control my anxiety and mental health</i>	Visit my GP Find strategies that help me manage and control my mental health, for example meditation, finding a distraction or/ and use the best stress management relaxation techniques while learning more about my disorder. Understand more about my own mental health and what makes me feel the way I do.	Techniques to calm me Books and websites to guide me in the right direction. Internet connection	15/10/2024	I will know I have successfully achieved this by feeling better within myself. I will be able to complete day to day activities without feeling ill and anxious and will be able to go to an event or celebrate an occasion without needing or feeling sick, breathless, and unwell physically and mentally first.

Briefing Paper

Within this briefing paper we will be comparing the difference between reflection and reflective practice within an early years setting. We will analyse theory reflective models which has been produced by Gibbs and Driscoll. (Brock, 2015) once said Reflection and reflective practice are core values of professionals and have a key role in professional training. Reflective practice is a key role for any practitioner to undertake.

Reflection and Reflective Practise

(Pacey, 2016) suggests that as a practitioner in early years your aim is to always provide the best possible care and support for the children within your setting. Reflective practise is an important aspect within your role to help you maintain and continually improve the quality of practice. Reflective practice is a process of thinking and analysing your own practice, with the aim to challenge, modify, develop, and improve. This should be an ongoing cycle that happens regularly to support reflection and improvement for you and the children around you. To be a reflective practitioner it is important to take a balanced view of your practice, celebrate your strengths but to acknowledge areas that need developing. Evaluate your practice by thinking about why you choose one way of working and consider working in other ways to introduce new ways of learning and planning. This is key for you to become more confident within your practice.

Reflective Practise in Early Years Practise

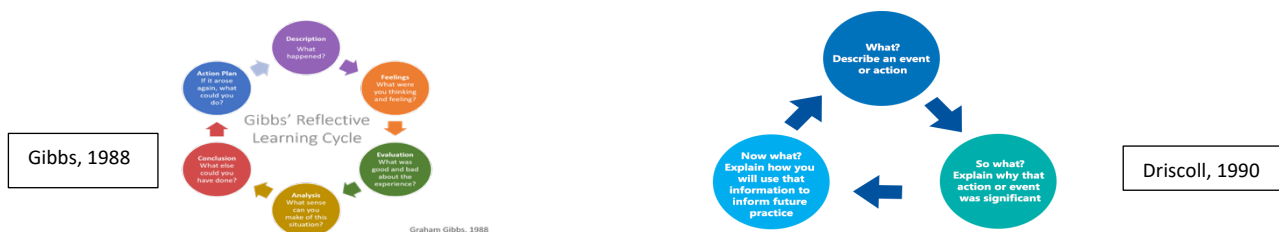
(Early Education, 2023) says that reflective practice in early years is vital as reflecting on your own practice is something that only you can do. Reflecting on your own practice is critical for you to be able to build as a practitioner and will always be a tool to self-improvement and development. Gaining insight of your role will help practitioners learn from their own experiences and reflections. Teaching is a skill where pedagogy is gained through processing and reflecting on yourself. (Birthto5matters, 2021) agrees that reflective practise within a setting is essential as this will enable practitioners to develop a critical understanding and development within their own practice to become more proactive and not only improve the quality of care and education offered to children but also improve their own skills.

The Theory of Reflective Practise

According to (University of Cambridge, 2023) reflective practice can be a difficult start. Luckily, there are many models to help guide practitioners in the right direction, these include brief outlines from the beginning. Some models are easily lead whereas others are more advanced. It is important you chose which one is best for you.

Gibb's reflective cycle is one of the complex models of reflection. The six-element model is helpful to guide you with reassurance. Gibb's begins to outline the experience being reflected on, encourages you to focus on your feelings about the experience before, during and after. Then leads to evaluation, for you to analyse the situation and try to make sense of it. This will then result in a conclusion, looking at any other actions that may have occurred before being able to create an action plan for you to process the experience.

Whereas Driscoll's 'what model' is a simpler model based on three key questions. By asking yourself three questions makes it easier for you to process the key aspects. It is important with this model that you can begin to analyse and learn from the experience. You should always think what the situation was and what the result should have been. This will give you a better understanding. Afterwards you should reflect on the experience, think about what you have learnt. The final step, you need to consider the action you will take as a result from this reflection. From this model, remember that there may be no changes because of the reflection, that you feel as if you are doing everything you should be. This is equally as important and valid as any other outcome.



Analysing Models

There are different benefits to following a reflective model. However, there are also drawbacks. All reflective models are different and will always have a variety of outcomes. Benefits to using reflective models can keep focused by following each step, structured approached provides a useful start to end point. Whereas drawbacks to reflective models include being time consuming while considering every detail needed. Some models can be complicated to follow.

Gibb's model has six key elements, this can be considered as complicated and time consuming. Seeing this reflective model may be a distraction with a negative thought with how it looks. However, Gibb's cycle can help you in a positive way by expanding your thoughts and considering your feelings. This model goes more in depth to give you a greater idea about the situation to help you become more reflective

and to solve any situation. (Structural Learning, 2023) is convinced that experiences make you grow as an individual, Reflective cycles help with this. From this you will learn what would work better next time, you are able to produce an action plan to address and solve any weaknesses. The first step in the cycle is description, this step describes what has happened. You want to set the scene of the experience and provide some context to support it. The second area is feelings, feelings are an important role as it is vital to solve any issues that make a feel negative. During this section it is critical that you think about your feelings before, during and after the experience. Evaluating your experience after this is necessary as you can determine what went well and what could be improved. The fourth step is analysis, consider what could have helped the situation. To do this you can explore options using the models to help you. Conclusion, make an overall sense to what has happened and consider what you would do differently next time, if anything at all. Finally for Gibb's reflective cycle you produce an action plan, this is for you to create a plan based on your conclusions.

(Toolshero, 2023) believes that Driscoll's reflective cycle is one of the simplest models you will find. Within this cycle the context is the biggest, most important part. The first question stem, 'what?'. You should briefly describe the experience that you will be reflecting on before discussing exactly what happened. Consider the exact steps you did, was there anyone else involved and whether the situation was good or bad with explanation. Step two, 'so what?'. During this element you should think how you felt in the moment, how did you react and why, and did you feel the same about the situation as you do now. You should also think about your experience at this time and consider whether you were experiencing conflict within your personal life, did past situations influence this one. Who was involved and how did they feel, how did they react and why. The third and final question is 'now what?' during this part of the cycle it is important that you take a step back and consider what you have already learnt from reflecting on the situation so far, think about whether you could have prevented the situation and how. Focus on the scenario in a positive way to move forward from the negative experience you witnessed.

Conclusion

Overall, we have discussed two models that are completely different. Gibb's model is more in depth whereas Driscoll's model is simple but effective. It is important to choose which one works well for you and to continually reflect within your early years setting to become the practitioner you need to be.

Written Essay

Introduction

Being a professional is extremely important within an early years setting. Being a professional means, you always have the best interest and welfare of the children at the heart of everything you do, this is noted and is a vital part of Children's Rights (UNCRC, 2023) article three. (Hyson and Tomlinson, 2014) also emphasises that all professionals working with children holds many different roles, and skills which is vital while supporting children and families within your environment. Early years professionals require a unique and in-depth knowledge and understanding of early childhood as well as specific attitudes to be successful. This all brings a professional practise together by providing teamwork, reflective practice, communication, and critical awareness while building positive relationships with everyone.

Values of a Practitioner within a Professional Practise

There are many different values that are critical for a professional practitioner within a professional practise, these include being a positive role model, communication, multiagency working, observation, planning and UNCRC. Values overall are important within a setting because showing different values shows the children how you expect them to behave and achieve, guarantees respect from the professional attitude and following the children's interest within your vital role. Providing values around children will perform structure and routine, this helps the children to settle and relax within your company as they start to understand and undertake the responsibility and show the respect you show to everyone around you. During this you will see that communication is key with the children, staff members and families and will enable you to build a good, trusting relationship with those who need it the most. This will provide comfort and confidence within you as a practitioner. Communication is important within the setting with members of the team to ensure vital information is passed on to support and care for the children. Multiagency working is essential to ensure the children are receiving the best possible care and support they deserve. According to (NSPCC Learning, 2023) and (Sidebotham *et al*, 2026) multiagency work is key when considering children protection and safeguarding. Children and their families will always access a range of services and teams throughout a child's life within their educational environment. It is vital from this that practitioners and outside teams work together to gain an understanding and full view of a child's life and situation to provide a coordinated approach to support any needs. This helps provide support for the child as they can fully understand any risks, a child may be exposed to and what relevant action should be taken to keep them safe. Observation within a setting is paramount because you can support and differentiate any topics or tasks that you would like the children to complete. Observations are vital while working with children to enable you to decide whether a child needs any interventions, to see the level of the child, and to recognise that every child is different and will need different levels of support. Observations helps to monitor the children around you to see how they progress and build positive relationships as you show and provide the care and support to their individual needs. Planning is critical to enable you to make sure work is at every individual ability that can be differentiated for the different needs of others. Work and activities should always be adaptable and flexible due to not every child being the same. Planning should set expectations, as you consider pushing them further. The curriculum enables you to plan for the children so they can access what they need to and to focus on the child's learning as they complete activities or play. The UNCRC is essential to an early years environment as every child has their own right which they should be aware of. Children has rights to go to school, to their own religion and the right to play which should be shown within your environment. The UNCRC also promotes child led activities for you to recognise what the children like, while listening to their needs.

Communication and Relationships

Communication is key when building relationships with children and families who attend your setting because the more you communicate with children will allow you to build the trust between you and the child. It is important to remember that speaking in different ways and using different techniques is a must depending on age, ability and understanding of the child. Building a positive relationship with children will allow families to put their full trust in you and your working environment. When working in early years it is important that you put the children and their families first. (GOV. UK, 2023) says that families are the most important factor in their child's learning due to it enabling the child to do the best they can do, regardless of background. By putting the parents and children first will allow them to feel comfortable to share all they can about themselves, they are able to ask you questions, share concerns that they may have. By building these relationships and trust will allow you as a practitioner to meet the child's needs as you start to find out more about the ability and lives of the individuals. Developing relationships through communication with families and children enables support with personal, social, and emotional develop as well as early literally skills for the children.

Having an In-depth Knowledge

Having an in-depth knowledge and understanding is vital while working within a childcare setting because it is important that the relevant practitioners and team are aware of any background worries or safeguarding issues. Knowing the most valuable, and important details about the children within your care is a must, knowing to communicate and provide the care for the child if any situation occurs or if the child says anything about situations to the team around them. It is important to have in-depth knowledge to ensure the child feels safe and comfortable within your care. (Early Years Alliance, 2019) would agree with this as they state everyone who works with children must understand how to

recognise any signs, symptoms that could indicate a child is being abused, the practitioner also needs to know how to respond to make a child protection referral and who to refer information to, for example the settings Safeguarding Officer. From this it is also important for every practitioner is aware and has understood the safeguarding policy that will be within their setting.

Partnership and Multi-agency Working

As a practitioner it is key to be in communication and to work with multiagency teams. Working as a team helps give the support and care to the children and families in need. It ensures that altogether they can keep the children safe by communicating to provide and take the best possible steps for the child. Partnership working can be many teams with all the same aim, with the different experiences within the teams they are able to give many different points of advice to become overall confident with what to do to support the child at risk or in need as well as the families. (Early Education, 2023) also agrees and says partnership working can be a singular event or on a long-term basis to benefit the children and families. This provides opportunity for consistency of approach, advice and support. The support may include giving advice about poor attendance, or more serious issues for child safeguarding or child protection. Possible partners may include other settings, health visitors and many more!

Observation and Planning

Observation and planning are hugely beneficial when working with children, to see progress from the first observation compared to the most recent. Planning around the observations and ensuring you are including topics that the children originally found hard. As a practitioner in a childhood environment, you are constantly observing and monitoring the children. By observing children, you can keep track on how far they have come in past weeks. (Eyeworks, 2023) suggests that observations are how educators understand children's interests, skills, behaviours, and development stages while planning highlights any areas where children may need extra support, time and attention, allowing for targeted areas to be focused on.

UNCRC

(UNICEF, 2023) is the heart of everything you do as practitioner within an early year setting. UNICEF provides 42 children's rights that are in our care. UNICEF says that children have the right to have the protection from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else that looks after them. Children should be protected from sexual exploitation and says the best interest of the children is top priority in all decisions and actions that affect or involve the child. As a practitioner it important to ensure that every child's right is met at a high standard every single day. The children will always be at the heart of every practitioner's day and should always be safe and happy within their environment. Every right should be seen as a whole, all rights are linked, and no right is more important than another in any practice.

Conclusion

Overall, it is vital to remember that the children within your early years setting is at the heart of everything you do. Working as a team with other partnership is critical while contributing through children's rights. Observations and planning are extremely helpful, and communication is at the start of everything you do. Ensure the children are safe and happy should be priority within every day working life.

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