

‘Supporting pupil progress: a detailed analysis of one child’s holistic development, with justification for the next steps in learning.’

Student Development and Pupil Progress

M7X02153

Student Number: 1700261

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This essay will analyse the holistic development of child A and the appropriate future progressive steps. The research has taken place in a small village school situated in the southern valley of Swansea. The school consists of two adjacent buildings, front and back playgrounds and a large field and nature reserve close by. The school caters for pupils age three to eleven, who are accommodated in four classes, each spanning two age ranges. In 2017, there were 123 pupils on role, 2.4% of which are eligible for free school meals. Estyn (2014)

In 2017, 100% of the pupils achieved the expected outcome in the Foundation Phase area of learning. Appendix A shows that 71.4% of girls achieved an outcome of 6+ in Maths, a higher rank than that of the boys, 40% of whom achieved the equivalent outcome. Identical figures also showed an attainment gap in Literacy, Language and Communication, as seen in appendix B.

The child at the centre of this research is a male, who is in the Reception class. Child A comes from a stable home life, where he is the older sibling of two. The child's primary language is English; he has no Welsh spoken to him in the home. Child A is not eligible for free school meals. He has a high level of reading for his age, his individual reading level being level 4, one level higher than expected in the reception class. This links with the blue level Rigby star guided reading level scheme. Child A is working at an outcome 4 across the board throughout his education, except for fine motor skills and drawing, where he achieves an outcome 3.

Throughout the research it was ensured that the ethical guidelines produced by the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011) were closely followed. Before any data was collected, consent from both the pupil and class teacher were obtained (Appendix C). It was ensured that the participating child knew his rights and that he could withdraw at any point throughout the process with no consequences. The participating school and any participating people were also made aware that their names would remain anonymous and confidentiality would be respected. To ensure this, any data collected is stored securely and within the guidelines set out by the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice (2017)

When conducting the analysis, I was influenced by Clark and Moss' Mosaic approach (2011), their belief being that children should be treated as experts in their own lives. The Welsh Assembly Government are in agreement with Clark and Moss, stating that

Children and young people should be seen as young citizens, with rights and opinions to be taken into account now. They are not a

species apart, to be alternately demonised and sentimentalised, nor trainee adults who do not yet have a full place in society.

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2004:4).

Child Conferencing is one of the factors of the 'Mosaic approach'. I personally conducted two semi-structured interviews with Pupil A.

Dudley (2011) recommends a semi-structured interview, as it allows the interviewer to deviate from the sequence of the questions when necessary. The aim of the interview was to obtain the individual view of the target pupil with regard to his learning and school life. Influenced by Flick (2011), the conference was conducted in a casual manner to ensure that the pupil had the freedom to reply as extensively as he wished, feeling comfortable enough to respond with his true opinions. As recommended by Clark and Moss (2011) a familiar setting was chosen for the child conferencing. A sofa was set out in the nursery classroom, a place where the child often enjoys playing, so that he was at ease in the setting and comfortable taking part in the child conferencing with the practitioner.

I also ensured that, throughout the conference, the ability to be flexible was most important. For example, another element of the Mosaic approach (2011) was carried out when a tour was taken around the learning environment. This was child led as the child introduced the practitioner to areas throughout the school, inside and outside, stating his opinions about each area. This worked very well, because the child had the opportunity to physically show the practitioner which areas he liked in the school and which areas he would like to develop.

The child conference solidified the research greatly. This method allowed pupils to voice their opinions and teachers to receive direct judgements on the lesson and how to improve their approach. However, despite this method giving a lot of insight into the pupil's views on education, it is accompanied by limitations. It was discovered that, if the child did not understand the question being asked, it was difficult to explain the question without giving examples and putting ideas into their heads and words into their mouths. In addition to this, due to the age of the child, it was difficult for him to articulate his views and feelings in long sentences, so his answers to most questions were simply one word answers and he found it difficult to convey meaning and gave very little reasoning.

Clark and Moss (2011) state that the role of the adult in this research is to support young children to communicate their emotions and their perspectives by providing a variety of resources and environments and

experiences for the child.

To fulfil my role adequately, I also set up a number of enhanced provision tasks where I could observe the child as a non-participant observer.

‘Classroom life is full of habits and routines that pass unnoticed. They will often remain invisible until they are viewed from a different angle or in a new context’

(Stepanek, Appel, Leong, Mangan, Mitchell, 2006: 1)

This approach gave me an insight into the child’s independent learning and experiences within his environment. With no other adult voice influencing him in his decisions, it gave me as the observer a fully rounded, true to self view of the child.

I also lead focused tasks, where I observed the child, as well as assessing him and scaffolding his learning in the moment, in this way taking the role of a participant observer.

The strength of this method of observation is the fact that the observer is fully involved and participating in the child led activity, thus providing a good understanding of the child’s development and, as it is quite an open method, it gives a full picture of the child.

‘Observation involves hearing as much as it does seeing’ (Sharp 2012: 83). This observation method allowed me to do just that. As I was working directly with the child, it allowed him to communicate his opinion about the work, and it gave me the opportunity to be present in the conversations that took place between him and his peers. It also allowed me to gain a clear understanding of where any misconceptions of the work were coming from and any possible limitations the child was experiencing in his learning.

However, this method takes up a substantial amount of a teacher’s precious time. Also, when being observed, the children are aware that the practitioner is writing. This may cause the child to modify his behaviour in some way. In addition to this, it is difficult to record all of the information because, whilst writing down one piece of information, something else more vital could be missed.

In addition to this, Clark and Moss (2011) emphasise that observing a child only gives an adult’s perspective on the child. Taber (2007) advises that data should be collected in a variety of forms, as this increases validity and reliability in the research. As a result, the child observations (appendix N) were used in conjunction with other methods such as child conferencing.

Section 2- Analysis

When analysing the data collected on the child's development, Nottingham's ASK model (2013) will be used to understand and break down the work.

Using the ASK model allows the practitioner to use the data to analyse the child's attitude towards learning as well as the skills and knowledge acquired within that learning.

Attitude

The first area of the ASK model analyses the child's attitude.

In the child conference 2 (appendix D) the child expressed that he learns best from the comments made on his work; a tickled pink comment is something positive about the child's work and a green is a growth comment, which is a constructive comment about how he can improve his work. The child explained that he likes to receive positive comments and to be told what he is good at. As evidenced in the child's work (appendix E) the child self marked his work, making his own tickled pink and green for growth comments.

Katz.L and Chard. S (2000) emphasises that positive feedback gives a child a sense of success and it spurs productivity. Furthermore, when positive feedback is specifically about the competence of the work produced, a child's willingness and desire to continue to succeed is increased. In support of this, an evidence synthesis produced by the EEF, Sutton Trust and Durham University (2016) found that, on average, the provision of high-quality feedback led to an improvement of eight additional months' progress over the course of a year.

During the tour of the school, the child was very excited about the 'Butterfly Garden', an area where the class have independently designed and planted their own garden. This project was entirely child led with no adult influence.

"Evidence indicates that schools involving children and introducing more democratic structures are likely to be more harmonious, have better staff/pupil relationships and a more effective learning environment" Lansdown (2001:5).

Lansdown emphasises the positive effects that child involvement can have on a child's engagement and general education.

It was apparent that the child was proud of the work; he even stated that looking at it makes him happy, and that he likes it because the children worked on it independently. It was evident that the child felt a sense of achievement when in this area of the school.

The main concept that arose from this study was the passion and love that the child had for practical activities. Throughout both interviews he mentioned that his favourite thing to do was play Lego, his favourite place to go is the Lego area, and that when he grows up he aspires to make 'ginormous' Lego.

The observations made on the child reinforced the fact that he enjoys and actively engages with practical activities.

Holt (1982) claims that children 'learn to be stupid' in schools. He believes that pupils do this when teachers and practitioners prioritise conformity, order and structure over pupils' engagement with their learning. It is acknowledged that pedagogy has changed since 1982, and it could be argued that Holt's views are somewhat 'out of date'. However, Holt's views are shared more recently by Johnson (2013) who suggests that pupil engagement can be increased in the classroom, when the children are physically moving as an element of their learning.

The target pupil covered the whole school during his tour, as seen in appendix F. In the classroom, the child did not recognise the importance of any other enhanced provision area except for the Lego / construction area.

Throughout the school, the child declared that he liked each area, giving a reason, except for the library. The child shows no interest in reading or writing, even stating that he does not like reading and that it is 'boring'. This is also supported by observations when the child is very reluctant to work in any other enhanced provision area, except from the ICT area or the Lego. When working on a focused task with the teacher, the child has tendencies to rush the work so that he can return to the Lego area. If he is working with the teacher, he can appear very distracted, often looking around to see what his peers are doing in the classroom, and continually asking if he can 'go and play now'.

The target pupil is aware that he lacks concentration. He openly says that his work would improve if he could 'concentrate more'.

Skills

When analysing the skills of the child, as seen in appendix E, the letter formation, and size could be improved.

This is reinforced in the child conference 2. The child is aware that he can improve on letter formation and making letters smaller and more clear. This is also emphasised in appendix E where the child has self marked his work, stating that he is pleased with the cursive handwriting but would like to improve on letter formation and making the letters smaller.

Despite lacking any motivation or willingness to read, the pupil has a good understanding of reading and writing, and what he can do to improve. When he comes across an unfamiliar word whilst reading, without prompting he will decode the word, as well as using the phase 3 phonic sounds to pronounce the word correctly. The child is able to perform the skill very well, and is reading at a level above that which is expected for his age.

Knowledge

Throughout the practitioner's observations, it has been noted that the child particularly excels at oracy and creative arts. He will perform confidently in a variety of performances, whether it is music, drama, or talking to a range of audiences. The child was rag scored a green for the oracy project of instructions for planting a beanstalk. He is able to compose a sentence orally and articulates it well but then finds it difficult to convey the same sentence in writing. For example, as evident in appendix E, when writing an account of the school trip, the child was able to orally tell the teacher about the day in great detail but he required a lot of support to articulate his thoughts into a written sentence.

The pupil has a more willing attitude towards maths, however, it could be argued that the maths activities the pupil has been observed in have contained a practical element, for example, measuring a giant's foot outside, or activities involving symmetry and doubling using spots on a lady bird. As seen in appendix G the child is competent at doubling numbers, and was eager to double bigger numbers but, consistently throughout the subjects across the curriculum, he has difficulty with letter and number formation.

On the whole, the child's physical development is at a high standard. As evident in the teacher's observations (appendix N) the child enjoys to run, play and ride bikes. He has no difficulties with gross motor ability. As seen in the photos (appendix H), when playing dodgeball, the child was able to dodge the ball sufficiently, and throw and catch the ball, the child 'got his arms ready to catch the ball' implying that he has had previous experience with ball games. However, when narrowing down on fine manipulation skills, he finds it difficult to control equipment such as scissors, paint brushes, pencils or tweezers. It could be argued that this lack of dexterity has a direct effect on the child's formation of letters and numbers.

The child's high level of skill in oracy has resulted in a high achievement level of skill in personal and social development, well being and cultural diversity. As noted in the rag scores of PSE lessons (appendix I) the child

is competent and confident in expressing and communicating different feelings, emotions and opinions of himself and of others. Also evident in the photograph (appendix J) the child is able to form relationships and work co-operatively with others and has an understanding of what is fair and unfair and he is willing to compromise.

In regards to knowledge, despite the fact that the child dislikes the area and has no willingness to succeed, he has a good understanding of reading, and needs little support when completing comprehension tasks, being able to retell a narrative that he has read in great detail (appendix K).

In regards to numeracy, the pupil can count reliably past 20, however, experiences difficulty when counting backwards, which also links to difficulty with subtraction.

The data collected has been very useful in giving an insight into the pupil's attitudes, skills and knowledge. The child conference and the child led tour of the school were extremely advantageous, as the child's opinion came directly from himself and he was also, in most cases, able to give a single reason to support his views. The observations were obtained throughout the lesson, and the child was assessed whilst doing the task or immediately after, thus adding validity to the data collected because it meant that there was less chance of any details being forgotten.

On the other hand, the data collected does have weaknesses: the child taking part in the research is only 5 years old, his beliefs, interests and opinions are subject to change and the data collected in the evidence is only a glimpse into the child's concepts and understanding. The participating child had also known the interviewer for a very short time. This could cause him to feel uncomfortable in the interview and not relaxed enough to share all of his true opinions.

The collection of data was also governed by a time constraint, thus inhibiting a full understanding of the child's ability and allowing a limited time to recognise any gaps in the child's learning. As an example, throughout the period of data collection, the child was able to be observed in only one physical education session.

Section 3- Next steps.

In this section I will revert to first person, as I will be discussing the next steps to take, in light of the data obtained, in order for the child to have the opportunity to make appropriate progress.

Concentration and maintaining engagement is an area in which the pupil needs support. As previously discussed in the data analysis, the child disregarded all of the provision areas in the classroom, except for the Lego. In order to make the areas more engaging for the children, I have recently introduced a 'Reflect and Planning Session' (appendix L). This gives the children the opportunity to reflect on each area of the enhanced provision, discussing which elements they liked and disliked, and what they would like to do in each area the following week. Donaldson believes that 'learners need to be involved in planning their own learning through discussions about where they have reached and how they can be best supported to achieve future aspirations.' Donaldson (2015: 71). Donaldson believes that in order to become capable learners, children need to stand back and observe their own learning, this being achieved throughout the Reflect and Planning session, as it sparks discussion about what and how children learned from each provision.

Preparing a variety of resources specifically chosen by the pupils will allow me to cater for their needs and help to motivate all of the children in my class.

In order to boost the concentration levels, I will also introduce 'brain breaks'. Research shows that brain breaks increase oxygen and energy flow to the brain, thus helping to increase academic achievement and concentration, boosting on task behaviour and improving student attitudes. (School Well being, 2018). These brain breaks could take the form of activities such as a brisk walk or a breathing exercise.

In 'Successful Futures', Donaldson states that teachers will be able to make strong connections between the Health and Well-being areas of Learning and Experience and the Expressive Arts and Languages, Literacy and Communication, Humanities and Science and Technology areas.

In addition to this, he recognises that 'a continuing theme in the evidence for improving attainment was the importance of well-being. Schools need to care for both the physical and emotional needs of children and young people to help them to take responsibility for their own lives, understanding the importance of, for example, diet and fitness, and being confident in managing their own affairs. Independence, self-reliance and respect for others should be fostered throughout the teaching and learning process.' Donaldson (2015:28)

As part of Donaldson's vision, he wants the curriculum to support healthy individuals who 'are building their emotional well – being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy Donaldson (2015)

In order to lift the negative connotations the child has with reading and to improve motivation and concentration, I would also integrate 'pupil voice' into the reading scheme. With regard to the set reading scheme, I would give the child a choice from a number of books at the appropriate level in the scheme. I would also introduce a variety of extra reading material into the classroom, such as comics, books about topics that interest the child, and instructions to make Lego. In the child conference, the pupil intimated that he liked spending time in the 'Cwtch' area, so I would encourage him to choose a book to read in that area in order to help him relax when reading, and to read on his own agenda.

I would also use the child's love for Lego to help develop other skills, for instance, I would introduce smaller Lego blocks into the classroom to develop his fine manipulation skills. A study shows that children with fine motor delays were less efficient in hand manipulation skills; poor pencil grasp leads to poor legibility in handwriting. However, it is argued that, whilst strong fine motor skills are needed for a good pencil grasp, there could be other underlying issues such as sensory or visual concerns. Lego can also improve proprioception. The knowing of how much pressure to place through an item, building different Lego structures with a variety of Lego pieces can help improve this, thus helping children to recognise how much pressure to place through their writing utensil. (Greutman, 2017)

The data also enlightened the fact that the child benefits from gaining positive feedback. To ensure progress, it could be suggested that peer marking be introduced to the class. Peer marking would enable the pupil to get positive feedback and constructive comments whilst checking his progress against others. To achieve this, I will organise the pairs within mixed ability, ensuring that throughout the week, the child works with many other members of the class.

Peer assessment allows the pupil to reflect on his work and grasp the task better through interrogating the success criteria (Murtagh, 2012; Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Donaldson (2015:71) states that 'In order to become capable learners, children and young people working with practitioners and peers can help learners to hone their metacognitive skills because collaboration provides them with an opportunity to talk about their thinking processes, compare them with others and refine their learning skills as a result'

Peer assessment has the potential to aid the child in both literacy and maths. To avoid any confusion between the peers the peer assessment would take place after a group focused task with the teacher, mainly consisting of verbal feedback sessions in the form of mini-plenaries, where the teacher is present as a non participant observer.

Conclusion

This assignment has enabled me to engage with the participating pupil and explore how he learns. It has also improved my observation techniques and my insight into the important role that learning environments play in a child's development, thus improving the learning experience for all of the pupils in my class. The data collected allowed me to reflect and think critically about my teaching and allowed me to adjust my teaching style in order to benefit every member of my class.

I have found this most useful when I have been considering the enhanced provision areas in the classroom; it has encouraged me to listen to the children's ever important opinions and to make the areas as individual and engaging as possible. I have tailored the provision areas to suit the interests and needs of the participating pupil (see appendix M) when Lego has been used to engage the child in the small world, story narrative area, and colour and fun activities have been used to increase the child's fine motor skills and spelling skills.

The data analysis highlighted how important it is as a teacher to build relationships with each pupil in the class, and how important it is for children to feel valued and listened to, as this results in increased motivation and pride in their work.

The child conference with the participating pupil allowed me to appreciate his love for Lego and construction and to use it as a way to enhance his learning in the areas that need developing, for example, reading and fine motor skills.

In my future practice, I will be sure to continue to reflect and plan with pupils and find out in which areas they like to learn best and how they can develop.

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Appendix

Mathematical development

Represents the percentage of pupils achieving at least outcome 5 and at least outcome 6 in "Mathematical development".

Achieved Outcome 5+

Achieved Outcome 6+

The graph displays the percentage of pupils achieving at least outcome 5 and at least outcome 6 in 'Mathematical development' from 2012 to 2017. The Y-axis represents the percentage (%). The X-axis shows the years. The legend indicates five data series: School-Total (red circle), School-Boys (blue square), School-Girls (green triangle), School-Boys (blue square), and School-Girls (green triangle). The School-Total line is red, School-Boys is blue, and School-Girls is green. The School-Boys and School-Girls lines are also shown for comparison.

Year	School-Total	School-Boys	School-Girls
2012	10	10	10
2013	55	30	30
2014	30	50	20
2015	65	65	65
2016	60	50	70
2017	58	40	70

[illegible]

C- consent letter



RE: PPGCE (with QTS), permission and confirmation that work has been undertaken in school for assignment Darhulnial Yagol - Chennodh Nigebhion - School Development and Pupil Progress (M6X02151-C) (M7X02153-C)

Dear class/senior mentor,

For the university module 'School Development and Pupil Progress', trainees are required to identify one 'average' attaining learner within the class in which they are based and, over the PTE, explore what helps the pupil to learn language and mathematics. Such exploration could involve:

- observation;

- asking the learner to identify places/things that help him/her learn language and mathematics;

-discussing what helps the pupil learn language/mathematics and how they feel about those areas with the pupil and/or teacher;

- collecting samples of work which might show something about the learner's language and mathematics learning.

Undertaking this work should support trainees in understanding how children learn and how they can develop their teaching to ensure effective learning. Trainees are expected to be independent in undertaking this work and they have been given strict ethical guidelines to follow although we anticipate that undertaking the work above would be in line with typical day-to-day classroom practice. The trainees have been asked not to reveal the identity of the learner or the school within their assignment.

Students have been asked to:

1. Seek permission for this work (by consulting with the class teacher and learner)
2. Provide verification that the exploration work has taken place.

We would therefore be grateful if you could confirm that permission has been sought and that exploration tasks have been undertaken by signing below.

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT): _____

SCHOOL NAME (PLEASE PRINT):

SENIOR|MENTOR/CLASS MENTOR NAME (PLEASE PRINT):

[REDACTED]

Student to verbally ask the child: "I have talked to [trainee's name... Miss / Mrs/ Mr] about my work, and I am happy for it to be used in their work. I know that my full name won't be used. (Record their response below).

Yes

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact:

Helen.Jewis@uwtsd.ac.uk (PPGCE Lead) / sarah.elsey@uwtsd.ac.uk (Module Lead)

Many thanks in advance,
SDPP module team

Carol Schupp
Part of 4' with
Lisa & Bill & Jim
Jayne Morgan

Can I P order
Fingerprint
Form a P order

Endorsements:

D- Child Conference

Interview 1

Set in nursery class

T- What do you think your good at?

Lego

When I grow up I can do writing and painting.

T- What do you think you could grow at (improve at)

Reading

Making bigger lego

Making my letters smaller and use ski slopes.

T- What will help you get better?

Concentrating more

T- How can teachers help you improve your work?

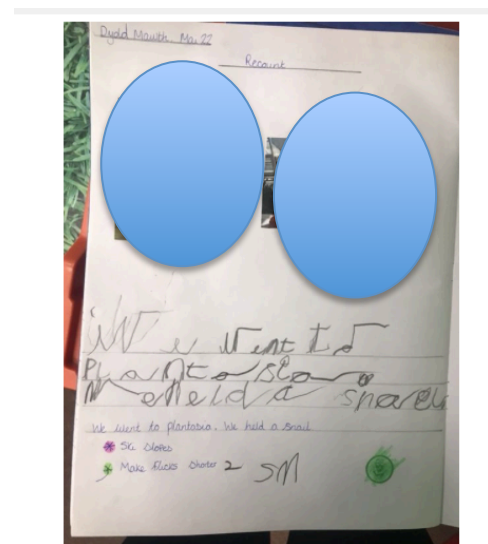
Put tickled pink comments and green for growth comments on our work because I like to know what I am good at.

(Two comments on what they have done well, and one constructive comment on how they can improve, this can be done by pupils or teacher.)

T- What is your favourite thing to do in school?

Lego

Appendix E- Childs work- writing



F- Pupil tour of the school

Learning walk-

In the classroom-

I like to play lego

I like to make jails and make up stories with the lego.

I also like the 'Cwtch' to lie down with the teddy.

In the corridor-

I like the worry wall, I like to put my hand on it.

I like the pretty colours.

Library-

I do not like reading.

Teacher asks- how can reading be more fun for you?

-I like books with pictures and looking at pictures. The books we read are boring and I like books about Lego and Star wars.

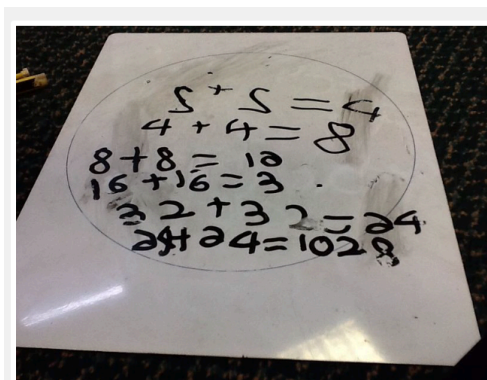
School hall-

I like it in here because it is big and I can run around.

Outside in the playground looking at the area where the children have gardened and planted flowers-

I feel happy when I look at this. I am proud because we made it ourselves.

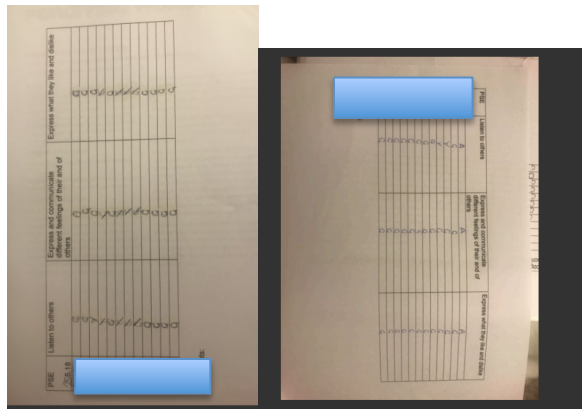
G- Child's Numeracy work



H- Physical Education



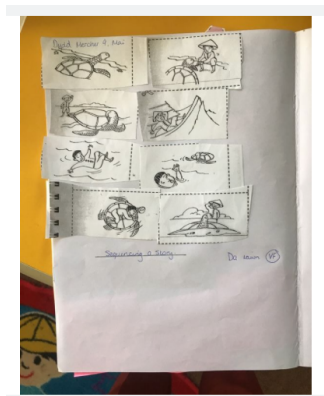
I- Assessments of PSE



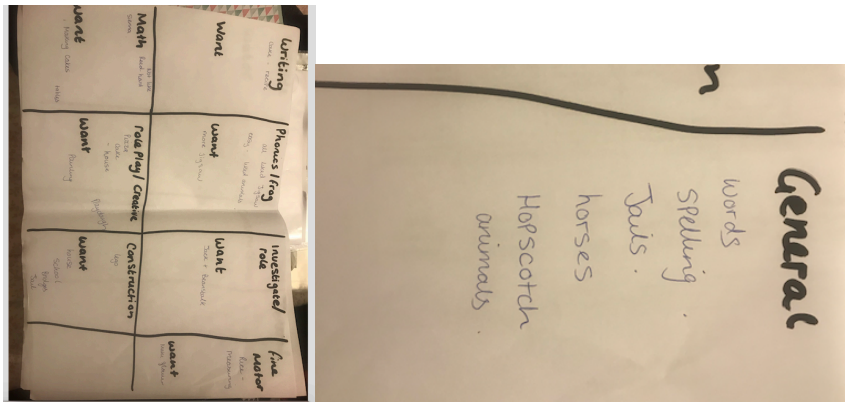
J- Child working collaboratively with others



K- Comprehension



L- notes from Reflect and plan session



M- enhanced provision



N- Teacher observation notes on pupil.

Observation notes- Pupil A

When taking part in the P.E lesson [REDACTED] was very eager to begin the lesson and was very excited. When outside he listened to the teacher intently, however, sometimes he would become impatient and interrupt asking if he could be going. When playing the game [REDACTED] enjoyed running around, he was the only child who did not complain about running or ask to go inside. The child took a leadership role within the group, often directing children where to stand.

Drama-

When performing the story of Jack and the Beanstalk [REDACTED] was a confident performer. The child could retell the story in great detail and would often help other members in his group by telling them what comes next. Sometimes the child would have difficulty in accepting that children played different roles in different ways.

[REDACTED] portrayed a character well, selecting appropriate dialogue.

Enhanced provision-

If not directed, [REDACTED] will always go to the construction/ Lego area of the enhanced provision. When directed to another area the child is reluctant to work there. Often, as the teacher the reward of Lego is used to motivate the child to do work. However, I have noticed that when this is in effect, [REDACTED] rushes his work, not completing it to his full potential, in order to play Lego.

Outside-

When outside, I have noticed that [REDACTED] likes to play a chasing game with a group of children. He has participated as the child being chased, and the child who does the chasing. [REDACTED] also chooses to ride the bikes frequently. It is rare to see the child in the water area, or the mud kitchen.