

Reflection on Early Years Provision

Chang (2019, p.95) states reflection is the ability to evaluate a specific topic, to allow “for improvement and in-depth learning”, therefore increasing the quality of practice and improving children’s opportunities in learning and developing whilst also improving personal development.

Throughout, there will be discussion of models used within provision and how it can impact the way in which we look on our own practice within settings.

Models of provision

Briefing Paper

Reflective Log

Brief description of the activity
The activity that took place is the Hungry Caterpillar story sack, which includes an activity where children count the fruit used and stick the amount of fruit onto a board using Velcro so that the activity can be repeated.
Objective of the activity
The objective of the activity is to increase children’s fine motor skills and coordination when sticking the images of the fruit to the board. Additionally, the activity is aimed to allow for children to be able to identify the fruit names and count the amount of each fruit that will be needed which is stated in the Hungry Caterpillar story.
Your role

Within this activity my role is to encourage each child to participate in sticking the food items to the board and to allow for every child to have a turn, which allows for children to feel included and not excluded. Therefore, enabling children's right to equality and inclusivity, and to not be excluded due to religion, disability, gender or race (Equality Act, 2010).

Positive aspects – why? How could these be developed further?

During this activity children were engaged and actively involved throughout because the activity was age appropriate and children were given the individual opportunity to interact and participate within the activity. Additionally, children were familiar with the activity as it had taken place multiple times beforehand, it was within the setting and children could use the activity on their own if they wanted to.

Interaction was considered highly in the activity because there is an understanding as Piaget discusses, that hands-on experience allows for children to want to be involved and they see activities more as a game, rather than feeling they must do the activity, enabling improved holistic development (Piaget, 1951).

Challenging aspects – why? Link to your own practice.

Challenges within the activity were that it was a loud environment, this is because it was an environment with children who had additional learning needs where their only form of communication was to shout. The children involved were ages two to three, meaning that sitting down for a long time can be uncomfortable, and most children at this age would rather be doing activities involving running around and finding things.

What knowledge did **you** demonstrate?

Knowledge skills that were demonstrated were knowing the behaviour policy and ensuring the behaviour policy was followed, where children sat down in a circle and allowed for every child to have a turn instead of interrupting and trying to do the activity whilst it was someone else's turn. The behaviour policy was also demonstrated because I demonstrated how to listen, by allowing every child to say what they wanted to and by waiting for them to finish before I said anything.

I also understood that not every child may want to participate in the activity, so instead of making every child participate I gave them a choice and asked the children what they wanted to do,

because Montessori believes that when children are given a choice they are more likely to choose something that they enjoy and are more likely to develop because they are involved completely within the activity, instead of feeling like they have to do where most children between the ages of two and three will refuse to participate if they do not want to (Rockingham Montessori School, 2020).

I also ensured that I had knowledge of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, because he believed that children's needs are to be fulfilled before they can learn, I demonstrated this by ensuring children were happy with doing the activity which involves their emotional and social needs because if they were not happy, they would be uncomfortable throughout the activity (Pichère, Cadiat and Probert, 2015).

What skills did **you** demonstrate?

When conducting this activity, I ensured I demonstrated listening and patience skills because when these skills are demonstrated children will repeat this behaviour because they see practitioners as role models and it allows for every child to feel like they can speak because their thoughts, feelings and expressions are valued.

I also ensured that I displayed consistent skills, because when practitioners are consistent children can understand the difference between what is right and wrong without being confused and they feel like they are being treated the same as everyone else and not being treated differently or excluded for any reason.

Which values did **you** demonstrate?

My values that I upheld were that I allowed every child to have a turn and I was inclusive to every child, because this allows for children to have increased confidence as they are being encouraged to be involved and they are praised for any participation they have. This also ensures that I am respectful towards the children and I am ensuring that every child feels respected.

Throughout the activity, I also ensured that a value I demonstrated was non-judgement by accepting not every child is going to get a question right and it is okay for a child to get something wrong, because it is part of a child's development, as trial and error allows for children to take part in risk and challenge.

Additionally, I ensured that children were given a choice of where they want to sit and whether they wanted to participate or not, which allows for children to feel comfortable because they feel like they are in control of their own learning and they can choose what is most comfortable for them to sit on.

What could be done differently in future? Why?

In the future, I will improve the activity by having it outdoors and asking the children to find the fruit and the amount needed for the board, because children will be more involved within the activity and they will be more physically active.

Additionally, I will include songs about metamorphosis on different animals, like frogs because it will extend children's learning and understand and give them a basic understand of how animals change.

Personal Development Plan

Further development	Why?	How?	Where?	When?	Implications
Learn British Sign Language (BSL), to improve communication between practitioners and children, which allows for language barriers to be reduced.	During working with children with additional learning needs (ALN), communication is a direct barrier between understanding what a child wants or needs.	To learn British Sign Language, I will phone 01267 235413 and arrange to become part of the British Sign Language level 1 beginner's course. This will last ten weeks and is once a week.	I will follow websites, such as the National Deaf Children's Society (2021), to understand when and why learning sign language can be beneficial in children's development. I will also go onto the Carmarthenshire County Council (2020) website where they state there is a sign language course in Carmarthen that costs £85.	I will take part in this course in 2022, because during the current circumstances involving Coronavirus the course is no longer available until further notice.	The implications involved are that the course could never become available again, in this circumstance I will look closely on the Carmarthenshire County Council (2020) website to see if there will be another course made available in a different area. Additionally, not all children that are verbally impaired can speak sign language, to overcome this I will use the Makaton (2011-2020) website

					to become involved in an online Makaton sign language course.
Expand my understanding and knowledge of Autism in children.	It will allow for me to understand the strategies of supporting children with Autism and it will give me a wider understanding of how Autism can affect each individual child.	To expand my understanding and knowledge of Autism in children, I will research Autism on the Ambitious about Autism (2021) website and I will participate in an Autism Awareness Training Course. Additionally, I will volunteer in an additional learning needs school to gain experience.	The Ambitious about Autism (2021) website discusses the ways that families of children with Autism can be supported and how Autism affects children and families lives. Within the High Speed Training (2021) website, there is an Autism Awareness Training Course which will cost £30 and is an online course. It discusses how Autism affects children and the strategies of support that can be given to children on the Autism spectrum.	After my studies in The University of Wales: Trinity Saint David, I will focus on improving my understanding of additional learning needs and participate in volunteering and courses that will enhance my understanding of Autism and other learning disabilities.	An implication involved can be that there may be a larger range of courses, which can cost too much money overall. To overcome this, I will talk to the setting I am volunteering with to help me to develop my understanding and knowledge of Autism in children.
Improve my confidence when reacting to negative behaviour in children.	During placement opportunities and work within an early setting, I have found it difficult to gain the confidence in understanding how to react to children's	To improve my confidence, I will read the behaviour policy within the setting and discuss with the manager of the setting on the strategies that can be used in reacting to negative behaviour in children. I will also work	I will do this in the setting that I am within because it will allow for me to work with the team of the setting to improve my confidence. Additionally, it will also allow for each team member to share how they react to negative behaviour which will give me a wider perspective and understanding	I will do this after my studies in University because studies will allow for me to gain more knowledge, which I can then build on once I have finished.	There is the possibility of not having a team that is willing to share their experiences with me as they believe it could breach confidentiality stated in the general data protection regulation (GDPR) (UKRI, 2020). To overcome this, I will only ask for the way the practitioner reacted and if I will not repeat the information

	negative behaviour.	closely with a more experienced practitioner, in order to understand how they react to negative behaviour.	of practitioners who may have different experiences in reacting to negative behaviour.		provided to me unless I believe that it could cause harm to the child or practitioner.
Develop a way to balance University life and work life.	I have found it difficult in prioritising my University Studies and work life, which has caused me to leave my studies until soon before the deadlines.	I will ensure that I create a timetable, which will allow for me to make use of free time, whilst also ensuring I have time to be involved in activities that I enjoy and to go to work. I will also purchase a calendar where I can see in advance what will need to be prioritised.	This will be completed within my home, where I will also display the timetable and calendar to ensure that I do not overlap activities, work or studies with each other in order to not become overwhelmed.	This will be completed before my next module in University, this way I can ensure that I can balance studies, work and family time with one another.	During balancing studies, work and family time, I may not be able to involve in hobbies that I may enjoy, to overcome this I will ensure that I have free time to participate in activities that I enjoy.
Taking initiative in settings when a child is struggling or is becoming bored of an activity.	As linked with confidence, I have struggled with taking initiative of a set activity that children are involved in and improving it to enable children to become more engaged.	I am going to observe how other practitioners adapt an activity to direct it towards individual children. I will also involve myself more when planning activities for children, because I may be able to provide information	I will continue to work in early years settings, because it will allow for me to gain more experience and knowledge on what resources are available and how I can take initiative in developing activities to be more effective to children's development.	I will do this when I am next in early years setting. However, throughout my life I will continually observe other practitioners and children because there will be different learning opportunities every day and there may be something	An implication involved could be that a child does not want me to participate in the activity, I will adhere to the child's wishes and not disturb their play if they do not want me to because a child's play cycle and the way they development should be initiated and led by them.

		that a different practitioner may not have known which could improve an activity.		different that I can try.	
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