

Reflective log

Brief description of the activity
A group activity of eight children to ride on a balance bike. To develop gross motor skills through balance and co-ordination. To enable children to feel confident, secure and self-assured when riding a balance bike to enable transition to a pedal bike.
Aim/Objective of the activity
To learn how to pick up a bike correctly. Build confidence to stop safely. Manoeuvre a bike in controlled manner whilst walking, pushing and gliding. Understand and learn self-propulsion. To become spatially aware of others and objects around them.
Your role
To lead a pre-planned activity with support of a teacher assistant. As a role model to the children I was aware to be enthusiastic to encourage the children to participate and enjoy the activity. To continue to be calm even when situations arose.
Positive aspects – why?
Firstly, the basics of safety were discussed to remind children of the safety measures of themselves and others. The activity planned was appropriate to the age and ability level of the child, where no child expressed concerns and there were challenging opportunities for the more physically developed child. Grouping the children at varied levels rather than identifying the more physically developed and less developed, allowed the children to demonstrate skills and others to build on confidence learning from peers. At the beginning of each stage I introduced the technique verbally and demonstrated how to perform the actions, enabling children to visually learn if they misunderstood of what was being asked. The children thoroughly enjoyed practising the techniques to manoeuvre the bicycles, through facial expressions and feedback describing the activity as ‘lots of fun’ and asking to repeat the activity again the following day.

Challenging aspects – why?

Environmental issues occurred where the children did not like the sun shining in their eyes when returning to starting point, making it difficult to see. I instructed the children to walk beside the bike and push back to the starting point for safety reasons, which reduced the amount of time spent on the bicycles.

There were sixteen children altogether, I separated them into two groups for safety reasons and to give each group effective focused time. The observing group caused distraction to the group in action, where some children focused their attention on them rather on the instructed techniques to be learned.

I was distracted by the observing group, where several questions were asked and requests demanding to go to the toilet. The teacher assistant had to accompany the child indoors to go to the toilet, leaving me with one group in action on the bikes and the observing group agitated waiting on their turn.

What knowledge was demonstrated?

A risk assessment was carried out prior to the activity, identifying the risks, who was at risk and the levels of risk. To reduce the level of risk I decided the group of eight children on the bicycles were to be observed by the teacher assistant and myself. The area was checked to ensure there were no hazards, observing and assessing the risks at each stage of the activity on the child's performance.

It was my responsibility to ensure all the equipment used during the session was checked before starting the activity, to ensure they were in safe working order. The safety checks were carried out prior to the activity to avoid disappointment for the children if the equipment was not up to standard.

Following safety guidelines all helmets were fitted correctly before allowing children to participate, children's hair ties were removed to ensure the helmet was fitted correctly.

I ensured the children were wearing appropriate clothing and footwear, tying all laces to avoid accidents.

Before applying new skills planned within the activity, it was extremely important to teach the children how to stop the bicycle. Demonstrating the stopping technique by the base of the feet or by applying the brakes by encouragement and observation.

What skills were demonstrated?
To ensure children understood spatial awareness, to learn and ride safely near others through demonstration and clear instructions with simple vocabulary. Use of age and level appropriate language to ensure the children understood. Effective communication skills to describe the activity I required the children to perform with clear, concise and short instructions with demonstrations to achieve full understanding. Children repeating the instruction given to show understanding, allowing the child to practice the technique until confident. All children have a preferred learning style and it is important to consider all the learning styles when asking the child to participate using new skills. I developed good observations skills enabling planning for further activities. Taking into consideration the physical levels of development, children were given opportunities to practice before introducing new skills.
Which values were demonstrated?
I showed empathy towards the children while doing their best to complete a technique, explaining and demonstrating in more depth I manually directed the child's hands gently into the correct place and helped another by standing behind and holding onto the handle bars to build confidence. I showed a caring and understanding approach towards the children who found the instructions difficult to understand, demonstrating on the bicycle taking them through the steps gradually. Showing a caring approach towards the children who were nervous and reluctant to manoeuvring the bicycle by encouragement. Listening to the child worries and explaining the safety measures in place, reassuring them they would not hurt themselves and I was there to support when needed. I used positive language, praise and enthusiasm to build confidence and value the child's progress.
What could have been done differently? Why?
Supplying the observing group with board games, drawing paper and colours to keep them entertained to avoid distraction to the children participating in the activity. Ensuring all children visited the toilet before the activity, to avoid the teacher assistant taking the child inside leaving me alone outdoors with fifteen other children.

To consider the suns position at different times of the day to benefit the performance of the activity and avoid the sun affecting the children's vision.

Allow more time for feedback from the children, encouraging open questions to establish what was learned in the activity including likes and dislikes.

Apply non-structured play in planning to enable the children to build confidence, explore new skills and discover new ones.

Discuss positive and negative outcomes of activity with teacher assistant, to develop an overall analysis from all involved.

Overall the activity planned worked effectively, although improvements will be made to improve practice next time, to allow significant free time and overcome distractions with an activity to keep the observing children entertained.

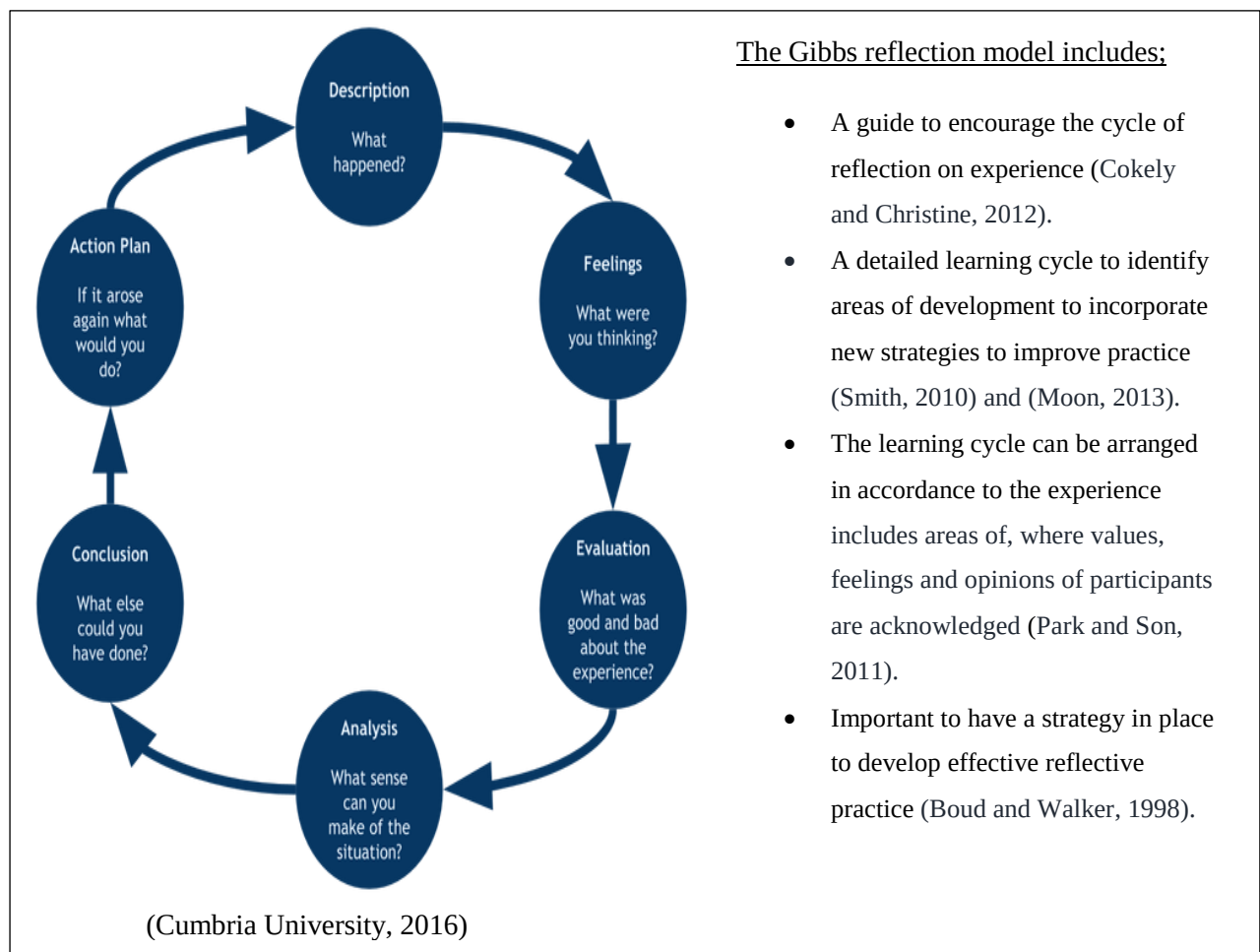
The importance of effective practice as a means of maintaining quality services for young children

What is reflective practice?

- Reflective practice is a process to develop skills, where practice is reflected upon, experienced and reflected on again as a continued professional development cycle. Essential to improve personal skills providing effective learning for children (Reed and Canning, 2010) and (Venninen et al. 2012).
- Establishing an open mind through re-visiting an experience identifying qualities and areas of improvement, setting goals and applying alternatives (Lindon, 2012) and (Bolton, 2014).
- Identifying personal judgements on own experience by critical analysis and evaluation to improve the quality of practice, building on knowledge and values to become an effective reflective practitioner (Reed and Canning, 2010) and (Leeds Beckett University, 2015).

A method of reflection

Research states reflection requires a structured plan to produce quality strategies to improve the performance of practice (Boud and Walker, 1998). An example of a reflection model is given below:



Why is reflection important

- Professionals who deliver activities daily may get caught up in routine where effective practice can be forgotten (London, 2009).
- Reflection on practice enhances learning and stimulates professionals to question the purpose of the activity? the outcomes achieved? the effectiveness of practice delivered? the child's engagement and motivation? improvements to be made? Considering feelings? (Hallett, 2012).
- Structured reflection models encourage professionals to apply new strategies to establish and provide effective learning for children (Muller et al, 2012).

How reflection will improve practice

- Professional reflection is effective by the whole team working together, where staff are committed to follow a reflection cycle to improve practice. New methods and approaches can be incorporated to develop a positive continuous professional development through experience and learning (Venninen et al. 2012).
- All professionals attending reflection meetings, where professionals are valued equally and encouraged to discuss current knowledge, strengths and weaknesses of practice. Action plans can be agreed, and strategies put in place to improve the quality of child's learning (Venninen et al. 2012).

Promoting effective communication and engagement with children and families

- Effective communication with parents and carers is fundamental, where essential information is provided to support children's wellbeing (Blanford and Knowles, 2009).
- Important to respect and listen to parents and carers treating them as valuable partners who effectively contribute new ideas, qualities and strategies to develop the reflection process (Suleyman, 2011).
- Effective communication with parents and carers increases the child's language, cognition, confidence developing into successful academic achievers (Miller et al, 2012) and (Bardri et al, 2014).
- Interacting and listening to children is essential to develop an effective approach through shared thinking and the child's views. To acknowledge the child's interests, express new ideas and develop social behaviour and cognitive progress early years learning (Callan and Reed, 2011).

Personal Development Plan

Area for further development	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
To enrol on an English General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) course, to achieve opportunities for teacher employment in the future. Increase knowledge to deliver quality learning to children in employment.	- To obtain a B grade to enable access to Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). - Gain confidence in reading fluently and writing effectively with use of correct grammar within employment. - To produce accurate spelling and punctuation.	- Consistent Attendance in lectures. - Reading resources online and in the library. - Research and practice English GCSE questions. - Research and practice grammar and punctuation. - Development of spoken and written English language whilst studying Early Childhood degree at university.	- Applying to study English GCSE at Coleg Sir Gar Ammanford. - Support from the course tutor. - Gaining Knowledge and experience in employment. - At university developing critique and analysis techniques required for assignments.	July 2020

To obtain a Post Graduate Certificate in Education, to achieve a qualification for employment in a primary school preferably in foundation phase.	• During the Seven years' experience of employment in a primary school has proven to be rewarding. • It is overwhelming and rewarding to work with children to encourage them to excel in small or large steps. • To play an important role in the child's life by supporting and making a difference in learning. • To work effectively to promote wellbeing, values, listen and respond to children.	• Achieving a 2.1 qualification in early years childhood degree. • Gaining further knowledge and understanding through research online and Library resources. • Continue employment in a school setting to expand knowledge and experience. • Seek further training in employment to keep up to date with the learning frameworks and interventions.	• Applying online to enrol at Carmarthen Trinity university. • Considering a one-year PGCE distance learning option, discussion to have with headteacher after achieving an English GCSE and degree. • The support of headteacher to direct me on relevant training opportunities to increase my knowledge and understanding. • Attend add sessions with teachers after school to learn new skills practiced by teachers.	July 2021

	To form relationships with children and parents to provide wellbeing and positive outcomes.		Observing a variety of teachers during lessons and activities.	
Develop presentation skills, to enable me to perform in front of a large amount of people without feeling anxious. To increase confidence and develop control of pace, volume and tone of speech.	- To build on confidence to present and speak in front of others. - Developing essential presentation skills to enable me to be a good role model to children, members of staff and to represent the school. - To be professional when attending meetings and discussions with outside agencies.	- Completing work required for presentation in advance to effectively present evidence. - Record and listen to completed presentation at every opportunity to reflect on skills, be familiar with the order and orally pronouncing references. - Applying different tones to be enthusiastic and engage the listener.	- Developing confidence, by asking and answering questions in lectures. - Build on confidence whilst presenting in front lectures at university. - Reflecting on the performance and considering the feedback given to produce further development. - Practice presentation in front of friends and family to develop skills and confidence. Encouraging feedback	July 2018

		• Viewing demonstrations of professionals presenting online. • Research presentation skills to practice and reflect upon to build confidence.	for me to consider when making improvements. • Reading aloud to children in school at every opportunity to develop clear pronunciation and pace of reading.	
Develop referencing skills to a high standard, to achieve all possible marks towards my final grade.	• To achieve a good mark in the reference list not to lose marks in the overall mark given in the assignment. • Essential referencing skills will enable me to achieve a 2.1 in the Early Years Childhood degree. • To avoid plagiarism within assignments which could cause a	• Organised with assignments to allow efficient time to revisit the reference list and place references in alphabetical order. • Referencing all research to avoid time wasting by researching the sources again to obtain the relevant information. • Reference throughout the writing of the assignment	• In written assignments. • Identify references in lectures on power point. • Asking questions in lectures when unsure on how to reference a source of information. • By tutor support and acknowledging feedback. • Attending additional reference classes and accessing support given at the library.	October 2018

	penalty towards my work. To accurately references sources to enable lectures to trace the sources used within the assignment.	to avoid confusion and inaccuracy. - Refer to Harvard referencing handbook to ensure everything is set out correctly. - Practice referencing at every opportunity to develop skills.		
To increase awareness of autism, supporting the children's in the school to develop their wellbeing.	- To gain knowledge and understanding of sensory sensitivity, where these areas can be identified and reduced within the learning environment. - To enable me to provide support to prevent the risk of	- Discussions with the SENCO in school. - Research online to enhance my knowledge and understanding. - Reading resources at school and library.	- Training to develop support in Intervention. - Attend an autism awareness course through employment. - Online learning resources and courses.	September 2019

	increase in anxiety levels. To develop understanding of the child, where learning can be based around the individuals interest.			
1. Develop skills on listening and interacting with children.	- To encourage children to speak and have their views listened to. - To develop understanding of children's priorities, interests and concerns. - Listening is a vital part of establishing relationships with children and essential to develop learning.	- Research resources at the library and online. - Watching videos of professional's interacting and listening to children. - Observing teachers in school with permission granted.	- Attend courses through employment to gain and develop skills. - Teachers in the setting to provide feedback on my interaction and listening skills with suggestions of improvement. - To prepare a checklist where I can refer to after interaction to reflect upon to acknowledge if	September 2018

			the interaction was successful.	
Develop Welsh language to support children who are from fluent Welsh speaking families attending an English school.	• To increase employment opportunity within both English and Welsh speaking schools. • Whilst teaching in Wales, the Welsh spoken language is not essential, although most of the schools are Welsh medium and the Welsh spoken language is a requirement. • To support children from Welsh speaking families to translate into English language. • It is beneficial to speak Welsh in Wales	• Online Welsh reading materials. • Listening to Welsh tapes and watching you tube videos. • Watching welsh programmes on S4C with subtitles.	• Speaking welsh to colleagues, friends and family. • Speaking welsh to children and parents from a welsh background. • Online refresher course. • Welsh training course through employment.	July 2019

	because English schools also teach children the Welsh language.			
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