

A critical evaluation and the identification of next teaching and learning steps focusing on a case study of an individual learner or a group of learners, based on an observed critical incident

INTRODUCTION

The education system in Wales is currently experiencing a curriculum reform, with specific guidelines suggested by Professor Graham Donaldson. Its intended purpose is to meet children's present needs while equipping them for a successful future. Its primary holistic aim is to help each child to develop as healthy, capable and well-rounded individuals who can flourish in the face of future challenges (Donaldson, 2015).

The pressing emphasis towards skills development and inclusivity for young learners, including improvements in levels of literacy, numeracy, digital competency and broader skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and creativity, have fuelled the mission to reduce the attainment gap. The aim is to help raise standards and deliver an education system that Wales can be proud of, after its full implementation by 2022 (Hwb.gov.wales, 2019).

A reflective teaching approach is an essential aspect of continuous professional learning and development. This assignment is based on a critical incident observation of a physically disabled student. A critical incident does not have to be a sudden powerful event: normally it is an incident which has personal significance to the observer (Research & Learning Online, 2019). Such incidences are typical rather than critical, but are concluded as being critical through further analysis (Tripp 1993).

I will endeavour to discuss, evaluate and reflect on this critical incident and relate it to the new Welsh Curriculum and Donaldson's four purposes. This will aid identification of the next steps in my future teaching practice, in order to create an inclusive learning environment for students with additional learning needs (ALN).

OBSERVATION

For a case study that focussed on a critical incident in a classroom environment, observations were undertaken within a secondary school in Swansea. The school is a fully inclusive, mixed gender comprehensive school with student ages ranging from 11-16 years. It is an English medium establishment and is supported by Swansea local authority (Estyn).

2018). It covers five local catchment areas and currently has approximately 885 students on role (Schoolguide.co.uk, 2019).

The school collaborates closely with five partner primary schools to establish a smooth transition from one school to the next. Upon turning 16 the vast majority of students continue their education at one of the nearby colleges, which facilitates learning for A Level and apprentice qualifications (Schoolguide.co.uk, 2019).

As the school serves a diverse social community, where around 2.5% of students speak English as an additional language, it receives children with a wide variety of ability ranges. Estyn (2018) stated that the national average of students who are eligible for free school meals is 16.4%, which is similar to that found in the observed school of 16.3%. In addition, a small amount of children have the ability to converse in Welsh and speak Welsh at home fluently. The percentage of learners with additional learning needs at the school is 25.9%, which is higher than the national average of 22.9%. However, Estyn (2018) reported that the school received 'Good' in all their 'Inspection Area' standards, including a strong support and guidance for additional learning need students. Such learning support was said to have contributed well to the overall standards of achievement at the school.

METHODOLOGY

Within psychology research there are various types of observational methods and clear differences between them. There are two principal types of observation: Non-participant and participant. With participant observation, observers take part and engage in activities where their role allows them access through their involvement as part of the study group. The researcher aims to live and work with the subjects and play a role in which their intention is concealed, in order to take on the appearance of a fellow colleague, volunteer or a person of higher authority. This relates closely to the definition of Covert observation as a simple form of participant observation (Davies, 2007).

However, non-participant observers remain outside the realms of active involvement, and disassociate themselves from any group conversations or activities. The observer's role is to write notes and/or collect data. An example of this is observing the teaching and learning interactions between teachers and students in a lesson whilst sitting within the classroom periphery. The observer takes on the characteristics of a passive reflector and analyser through a 'camera's lens'. However, it is important for them to decide what to concentrate on specifically, as it is impossible to observe everything that occurs within the environment at that time. As such, a non-participatory method lends itself nicely to the purpose of observing

a specific critical incident in a class situation, which can then be evaluated and reflected on in relation to informing and improving teaching practice.

Case studies are universally accepted as an important method within social sciences and research. They offer a diverse look into the explanation and understanding of issues, through the contextual analysis and investigation of real-life phenomenon and events. They also use different approaches for data collection and analysis such as experiments, surveys, action research, participatory research, naturalistic research, historical research and more. They are varied in their design and structure, although observations are key to the vast majority of case studies. Yin (2009) listed three types of case studies: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory.

Exploratory case studies can be used to examine incidents in data which serve as an interest to the investigator. For example the use of a critical incident case study. They can be used in tandem with other forms of research to develop hypotheses, but can also be used to ask general questions that are meant to widen the scope for further examination of the observed incident. However, descriptive case studies are commonly used to provide narrative accounts and the process of testing theories are more for explanatory ones.

There are contrasting advantages and disadvantages to case studies. Advantages include being illustrative and illuminating (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018) as well as results being more easily understood by a broad audience. They may include unique insights otherwise lost in large scale data, along with assisting in interpretation of comparable cases. Also, they can be undertaken by an individual without the need for multiple researchers.

Disadvantages of case studies include bias, selective personal and subjective issues of the observer, even with the pursuit for flexible analysis. Also, the results may not be generalizable and emphasise the low potential control of external variables (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018).

FOUR PURPOSES

Tripp (1993) suggested the term 'critical incident' originated from history as a moment which marks a significant turning point or alteration in somebody's life, an institution or social background. The incident that will be the subject of this report will concern Student X (Bera.ac.uk, 2019) who required learning support in a Physical Education lesson due to additional learning needs.

The four purposes of the curriculum set out by Donaldson (2015), have guided the design and development of Curriculum for Wales 2022. The aim is to include all the learning experiences and assessment activities in pursuit of the four purposes of the curriculum, which are to develop children and young people as:

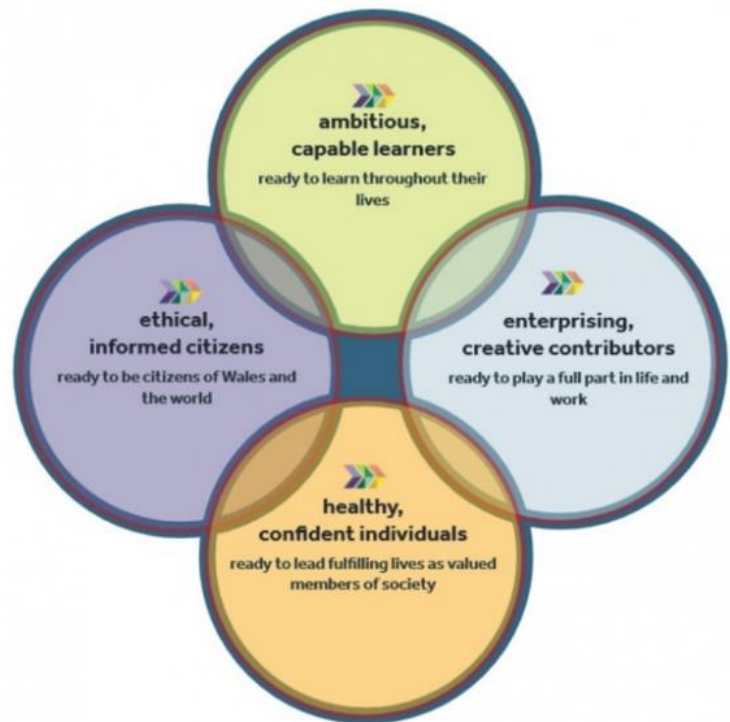


Figure 1.

1. Ambitious, capable learners, determined to gain knowledge throughout their lives
2. Enterprising and creative contributors, equipped to play a full part in work and life
3. Ethically informed citizens of Wales and the wider world
4. Healthy and confident individuals who are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society [See Figure 1].

Four observations were carried out in the school [see appendices 1, 3, 5 and 7]. This assignment focuses on Appendix 1 and 2.

The incident describes a student in year 8 during a Physical Education lesson on the skills and game of basketball. Student X, despite being confined to a wheelchair and accompanied by a Teaching Assistant (TA), took an active part in the lesson despite the clear physical barriers to participation and learning in this situation.

This incident links to Donaldson's purposes, especially the desire for healthy, confident and young individuals. The incident showed that despite the pupil's physical limitations, the student was able to take part in modified and parallel exercises while enhancing individual confidence needed to participate in a team game, gain mutual respect and build peer

relationships. Learning of this particular skill would suffer intensely with an exclusive class situation. In contrast, the inclusivity of the lesson increases independent learning of individuals and Donaldson's aim of equipping learners with the knowledge and skills to manage everyday life as independently as possible. This is comparable with Hwb.gov.wales (2019), which highlights the need for learners to face and overcome challenges whilst building resilience and strong emotional and mental well-being in order to aid risk management and lifestyle decisions.

In spite of the drawbacks, the student conveyed some aspects of the four purposes and showed a willingness to participate in modified basketball exercises. Exercise tasks involved shooting, passing and dribbling with basketballs and concluded with a mini game with rotation of four teams. As this was the student I followed from lesson to lesson, the idea of him learning to lead a fulfilling life as a valued member of society appeared to be encouraged. In addition to the PE lesson, I noticed that this student also took creative ideas and a positive energy into other subjects including History and Science, despite also having a clear visual impairment. This was evident when a Teaching Assistant had to write on a small handheld scribe device as an aid for him to see at closer range. As such, this seemed to help the student, who did not appear to be too afraid of making mistakes and grasping opportunities, whilst being able to contribute some ideas where applicable.

LITERATURE REVIEW

How young people perceive themselves within the school community has an enormous impact on their learning and behaviour. One of the many ways students learn is through experiential learning, known as constructivism. It implies people construct meaning and knowledge from their own experiences throughout life (Sydney.edu.au, 2019). Jean Piaget believed that children learn by 'doing' and suggested there was four stages of learning: sensorimotor; preoperational; concrete operational and formal operational. These periods differ with age and cognitively progress from egocentrism to concrete and finally to more abstract and creative thinking. However, Piaget has been criticised for basing his research on experiments conducted on his own children and using skewed data to draw his conclusions. According to Wearmouth (2016) and Gray, C. and MacBlain, S. (2015), there was inadequate consideration of the importance of children's varying cultural and social backgrounds, environment, race, gender and motivation or specific learning needs. Furthermore, it is argued that his theory is inflexible as it under values ability and undermines the influence teachers can have on learning (Gray, C. and MacBlain, S, 2015).

Lev Vygotsky introduced another model of constructivism in a contrasting context to Piaget. Vygotsky implied the importance of language as well as a carefully organised and rich environment for learning. He concluded through interacting with others, specifically a more knowledgeable other, learning materializes and is developed (Wearmouth, 2016). Meaning relationships between fellow learners and between adults and pupils, along with the correct learning environment, are imperative. As such his theory recognises the importance of teachers as facilitators that scaffold and develop learning. However he has been criticised for his belief that language precedes thought, as children with limited or no speech would be incapable of thought (Gray, C. and MacBlain, S, 2015).

In relation to the observed incident, if it was not for the schools inclusive approach in connection with the new curriculum for Wales, Student X would be void of many possible learning experiences gained in this time. Despite criticisms, both theorists agree that children's direct experience with their environment is vitally important to their learning (Capel, Leask and Younie, 2019). Wearmouth (2016) adds that this has made a valid contribution within primary schools to organise their classrooms with concrete materials and resources to provide a rich learning environment.

Another significant aspect of Vygotsky's work is 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD). Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) suggested that he believed communicative instruction could reduce a pupil's gap between their current level of learning and the level they could be functioning at with adult or peer support. Within the ZPD, the more experienced peer/adult is essential. Practice below the zone invokes learning, for example, to encourage the development of skills to become automatic. This is certainly evident in the observed case. Initially Student X took part in warm up exercises within the PE lesson. This included short shuttle wheelchair runs and getting familiar with a modified basketball. Evidence of the ZPD can clearly be seen in this case as the pupil was always assisted by a TA, which is a good illustration of Vygotsky's 'more experienced other' as well as fellow class peers. Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) says this view of learning emphasises the role that adults play in supporting that learning. This is an example of 'socio-constructivism'. Wearmouth (2016) suggested that this was the construction of knowledge in a social context, and that it stressed the necessity for group/peer interaction along with adult intervention to consolidate learning and extend thinking. Unlike Wearmouth (2016), Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) argued that teachers can both impede or support pupil learning in a varied manner and stressed that it is fundamental teachers adopt their own discourse to assist cognitive and conceptual aspects of children's learning.

In schools, the terms additional learning needs (ALN) and disability are used in relation to providing additional support for students' learning needs and requirements. Gov.wales (2019, p2) states "A learner has ALN if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for additional learning provision."

Wearmouth (2016) proposed that we question whether we need to be labelling children as having a 'disability' or any type of 'need', as it focusses on their weaknesses, deficiencies and not strengths. Doing so may enable us to better understand their capabilities and potential, rather than just concentrating on their barriers to learning.

"Where use of the label ... 'needs and/or disability' depends on the sense of deficiency in children, it is often seen as reflecting a ... 'deficit model' of difficulties in learning and/or behaviour. This model has a sense of being in some way inferior or distant from the norm.." (Wearmouth, 2016: p5)

With the view of holistic inclusion in schools in Wales, the practical answer to this question should be considered, so that approaches to diversity and difference are not negatively impacted. However, other educators argue that identification of individual 'needs' is imperative in order to justify individual attention and resources (Cole (1990) in Wearmouth (2016)). Others suggest that most barriers to learning are environmental and not within the individual, due to how society in general responds to them. This 'social model' is becoming more accepted within schools as a way to individualise and differentiate learning and promote a more inclusive classroom environment (Peer and Reid, 2016).

Wales' national commitment to educational inclusion within the ALN Act is a commitment to creating a system for supporting children and young people aged between 0 to 25 years who have ALN (Gov.wales, 2019), including the introduction of learners individual independent development plan intended to meet the relevant standards for learning irrespective of the complexity of their needs. In reference to the observation in this report, Student X was seen to be included in the PE lesson by use of modified and parallel exercises relevant to his specific learning needs[Appendix 1].

Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) describe inclusion in education to involve the process of increasing the participation of children in the communities and curricula of schools, whilst reducing exclusive practice. In support of this statement, inclusion is concerned with the participative learning of every student vulnerable to the pressure of exclusivity, not only those described as having an additional learning need or impairment. Other authors (Peer and Reid, 2016) question this definition and point out that inclusion is concerned with developing schools for staff as well as pupils. The evidence of inclusion can clearly be seen

in the observed case where due to Student X's limitations, and with the help of a TA, inclusion in lessons was as productive as possible. This is exemplified in the work undertaken by the TA as a fellow team player in PE, in passing a softer, larger basketball to the student at shorter distances. The effectiveness of this technique is in understanding the strategies to identify and support knowledge growth within an environment that might not be totally familiar, in order to aid progression and involvement. This approach is similar to what Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) described as one of the 'Pillars of Inclusion'. This helped the teacher adapt and plan inclusive pedagogical resources and approaches, so as to not create barriers to learning before entering the classroom. Peer and Reid (2016) added that engagement, fun and building on strengths is central to any plans for learning. An inclusive learning environment is therefore a key pillar, as well as working with additional adults and peers, which reiterates Vygotsky's constructivist theory of ZPD. Other pillars of inclusion include, a multi-sensory approach (which can be noted from the use of a softer larger ball in practice), adult-pupil communication, memory and the consolidation of learning as well as motivation. These distinctions are further exemplified by Donaldson (2015) and the links to his four purposes, especially the desire for young children to become ambitious, confident and capable learners, who identify and grasp opportunities once engaged with any task no matter the difficulty of challenge.

Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) stated four areas for categories of SEN (special educational needs) or better described as ALN by Gov.wales. (2019). One particular area being communication and interaction. This was evident from my observation, as the lesson included visual aids, additional cues and repetition, softer, larger, coloured basketballs, space, height and distance adjustments under the guidance of the TA. Area two deals with cognition and learning. It touches on learning difficulties, implying that they can cover a wide range of needs (Peer and Reid, 2016), including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) through to profound and multiple learning difficulties(PMLD) which can alter attainment levels massively due to the severe and complex learning difficulties. The third area deals with social, emotional and mental health difficulties including behavioural concerns and attention deficit disorder (ADHD). The final area conveys sensory and/or physical needs, examples of which include physical disability and visual impairment observed with Student X. Wearmouth (2016) therefore stated the importance of differentiation of activities, tasks and resource needs to account for the full range of learning needs among students in the classroom and adherence to any requirements on individual development plans (IDPs) as constructed by the new Welsh Curriculum Gov.wales (2019). However, Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) stressed the idea of not needing to develop an

infinite sum of ALN pedagogies, but rather that the teacher and assistants build a broad repertoire/toolkit to extend or intensify particular learning experiences for the students.

REFLECTION/EVALUATION AND NEXT STEPS

The critical incident as part of this report was handled well by the school and support staff. Being a school who practice Donaldson's (2015) proposals on ALN, they were able to give Student X a good learning experience. An example of how next steps can be taken with regards to inclusion and ALN can be seen in the Gwynedd and Anglesey regions in Wales. Gwynedd.Llyw.Cymru (2019) provided an executive summary that conveyed an additional learning needs and inclusion strategy. They advocated a whole school action plan that identified those who have differentiated additional learning needs as a priority across the whole community for each school in their constituency. As such, the identification of the additional learning needs of pupils is the responsibility for the whole community of the school rather than that of coordinators, assistants and/or senior management alone. This document, along with Gov.wales (2019) relate to and apply Donaldson's (2015) view in that they help to ensure that "children and young people (between 0 and 25) who have additional learning needs take advantage of opportunities and gain experiences that are planned effectively for them, in order to allow them to make progress according to their ability" (Gwynedd.Llyw.Cymru, 2019: p2). Additionally, they propose a strategy of an integrated team whose skills include

specific expertise

according to

conditions/disorders as

well as location. This

specialist service includes

a staffing structure split

between inclusion services

and additional needs

services [See Figure 2

below]. Expertise in such

an integrated team should

be updated regularly to

ensure that the evidence-

based interventions are

relevant and accurate.



(Figure 2: from Gwynedd.Llyw.Cymru, 2019)

Every ALN child has specific individual educational needs, and in my opinion the opportunity for all staff to develop a growing understanding of their learning requirements and provisions is imperative. As such ensuring all students learn to the best of their ability and are not paralysed by the lack of adequate planning, inappropriate resources or an inclusive learning environment is crucial to my future teaching practice.

Education.vic.gov.au (2019) identified an extension of critical thinking to be called critical reflection. Critical reflection, described similarly by Pollard and Anderson (2008), can help to develop the quality of teaching and it provides children with valued learning experiences. It asks us to think about our practice and ideas and then it challenges us to step-back and examine our thinking by asking probing questions. In addition, being reflective allows one to analyse and consider ways to improve our professional development. It is negative activity however, argued Cottrell (2011). Therefore one may feel that it is only necessary to make positive comments rather than seeking for areas of development.

I have the opinion that it is important to reflect and be critical of your own teaching so that you can learn from what you have done previously and consider strategies in order to progress in your future teaching practice. Tripp (1993) suggested that reflective teaching was crucial because it enabled teachers to evaluate their decisions, and highlighted ways in which to develop and progress their professional development.

Reflecting on the critical incident, along with the many good aspects there could have been additional ways to enhance Student X's learning experience. For example, ensuring regular student feedback about whether lesson activities were appropriate to their ability and learning needs. Involving them in relevant decision making about their own learning and how to devise better future exercises may help to prevent learned helplessness issues that may occur by over simplifying or scaffolding tasks. Some ways to address inclusion of ALN students in a basketball PE lesson, include bouncing balls when passing, using balls of different textures, weights, size and colour to scaffold a multisensory experience. It was evident that Student X needed height, distance and pace adjustments, as he was not able to catch or pass the ball from a long distance and at a fast pace. Arguably all ALN students will require careful management of all their personal plans and learning provision, to allow for their specific conditions to be addressed across all subjects and the school community. In addition, it is important to facilitate clear health and safety regimes relating directly to individual IDP specifics (e.g. medical conditions) and that there is adequate use of zones, space and room for students with mobility difficulties to use the classroom setting safely. This can be addressed through appropriate planning of the classroom layout.

Please see [Appendix 2, 4, 6 and 8] attached for ARC reflection sheets for observed critical incidents to support this report.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, students with ALN are required to be of top priority with regards to the new curriculum (Donaldson, 2015). As seen in the case study on Student X, with eyes on holistic inclusion, different scaffolding learning resources and strategies are at the forefront of the transition plan. Whilst these students will always face learning challenges, they now have greater options for inclusive learning and input into the learning alternatives that most effectively address their needs.

Relating to the professional pedagogies stated in Welsh Government (2019) - the professional standards for teaching and leadership document, my approach to this report reflects upon these values. For example, pedagogy and teaching needs to be refined to create the most effective and inclusive learning environment possible for all ALN students. This description implies that the learning environment should be fit for purpose, organised and enable achievement of the four purposes for learning (Welsh Government, 2019). Furthermore, that the leaders expect the learners to have a significant role in managing and influencing the learning environment.

In addition to this, Peer, L. and Reid, G. (2016) reiterate that you cannot expect to solve all students' learning problems on your own in the classroom as a teacher. They stress that you must seek advice from experienced staff to ensure your own expansion of knowledge and experience and never to forget to listen attentively to these certain students on what works for them. In support of this, Capel, Leask and Younie (2019) echo the need not to identify every student's profile or IDP, but to endeavour to sustain variety in the learning experiences designed for them. Therefore, it is not just how you present information, but also about appropriate ALN knowledge, lesson/class planning, provision of relevant modified resources for students, the suitability of tasks they undertake and the ways in which they can access their progress while tapping into the new curriculum for Wales.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2/10/19
Lesson details: Year 8 – Physical Education lesson. Involved the importance of teamwork and communication. Warm ups including passing, catching, shooting with a basketball and a little team game with rotating teams. This was a lower ability class.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Yes. All seemed very keen to be involved and included in the lesson. Raising hands and applying opinions on teamwork and communication when applicable.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) They allowed pupils to get used to the feel and movement of the basketball as well as practicing catching and throwing. Partner work that included running/dribbling with the ball and passing using different methods such as a single armed throw or a chest pass. Purpose of the lesson was inclusion and to allow access to different learning experiences out of the classroom environment.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The students were well instructed during tasks. They were also shown 1-1 tips by the teacher if their technique was not quite right. Tasks were set out clearly and every pupil knew what they were doing.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students were challenged when it came to the practice game as communication and teamwork were important here. The lesson addressed certain barriers to learning as well as inclusion, described in the critical incident below.

Assessment

(How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?)

High praise was given to everyone constantly during practice and the main game. This assess their ability when praised for a good pass, shot or good use of communication.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?)

The incident describes a pupil in this physical education lesson. Pupil X, despite being confined to an electric wheelchair, having additional learning needs and accompanied by a teaching assistant, took full part in the lesson. Despite the clear barriers to learning in this situation, inclusion was constant for this pupil throughout the lesson. A softer ball was used in practice to aid his initial involvement, and even went on to use a real basketball when taking part in the final game. He traversed around the court when pupils were asked to run or dribble, and played a role as part of a team.

Appendix 2 – ARC Reflection

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA)

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model**Date:** 2/10/19**Critical incident (focus):** ALN pupil inclusion PE lesson

Profiad/ Experience	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	Initial feelings were questioning whether it was possible for the pupil to take part. It was not something I had ever seen before. It was really eye opening to see the level of inclusion possible even with the clear barriers to learning due to his physical impairment.
Remember and Understand <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	Layout of the lesson seemed clear and planned accordingly for the pupil. Involved use of TA in modified exercises and the use of modified equipment. Teacher appeared to know the pupil's sporting ability level, as well as implementing strategies for inclusion of ALN pupil X in the class. Disappointing elements included the lack of use of peer involvement/scaffolding in exercises prior to the game; an identified space/zone for safe manoeuvrability of pupil's wheelchair in sports hall; hearing any feedback from pupil on suitability of exercise for his ability.
Evaluate and analyse <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	The use of differing resources, e.g. using a ball of a particular colour, size, or material to aid quality of multisensory learning. Include good behavioural and time management including use of physical and visual expositions where possible to link to other subjects. Trustworthy and strong relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils to make an effective learning environment for ALN pupils. The use of assistant staff when applicable as this is important aid to ALN pupils with varying needs. That pupil X was not heard being asked for specific feedback from the lesson, as to whether it was too easy or hard for his ability. This to me is an important aspect to scaffolding learning appropriately for this pupil and ensuring resources are adequately but not overly modified.

Appendix 3**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2/10/19
Lesson details: Year 8 – History. A lesson working from booklets and case studies, talking about medieval world views and Christopher Columbus as an explorer.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) The majority of pupils were engaged and focused on the lesson. It grabbed their attention as there were discussions about views (both comparing and contrasting) and video clips as visuals to aid the learning experience. The class included some sporadic behavioral issues.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) There was a clear purpose to the lesson, which included varying tasks in books and booklets. For example reading out loud to the class and following the teacher while he reads. The activities promoted thought discussions about Columbus and why he would voyage to discover America. Such as his funds, his crew recruitment and arguments with the church.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The pupils were clear about the starter questions and the first few questions on the task given to them in their booklets. E.g. questions 1-5 were clearly instructed and followed amicably. However question 9 the pupils needed re-direction/re-instruction slightly.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) The worksheet in the booklet was well organised. All students were challenged by the task, which included many rich and open questions that needed opinionated answers. Constantly checks understanding by asking for reassurance of instructions and answering queries. All students were situated in a suitable environment to engage well in the lesson.

Assessment

(How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?)

Classic method of whiteboard mostly used. Question 6 asked to design a poster to access their imagination, and to use the details learnt in today's lesson. The teacher also checked individual answers against model answers.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?)

A critical incident observed from this lesson was a mobile phone ringing/alarm sounding during the teacher's exposition. The pupil said "I thought it was on silent sir". The phone however was not in the pupil's bag but in a pocket. The teacher therefore asked to turn it off or put in on silent and place it in the pupil's bag. There was no apology from the pupil to start off with but after prompted by the teacher apologised and got on with the lesson amicably and focused on the exposition.

Appendix 4 – ARC reflection

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA)

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model**Date:** 2/10/19**Critical incident (focus):** Mobile Phone

Profiad/ Experience	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	My initial feelings towards the situation were that it seemed the pupil was taken by surprise by the phone going off. Maybe the teacher was too harsh on the pupil as this was a first offense with no warning. However, I feel the pupil should know school policy on mobile phones and adhere to them correctly.
Remember and Understand <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	Layout of the class was clear and planned within a very appropriate learning environment. Resources were not over/under prepared and time management and transitions were well structured. Teacher knew the pupils well and diffused unruly behaviour abruptly. Explanations and instructions were clear to me however the pupils needed re-instruction and a different explanation for some questions. This meant too much repetition.
Evaluate and analyse <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	Use of differing resources. Time management including recaps and starters, expositions and transition timings. Use of marking, both peer and individual marking. Making good use of teaching assistants if applicable. General self-organization to do with lesson plans and preparations. The explanations and reinstruction (as mentioned above) as well as the mobile phone incident.

<i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	Remind the pupils earlier on in the lesson that phones are prohibited by the school during lessons and inside the school walls. Also to make sure phones are off/on silent for everyone before the commencement of the lesson. Aim to learn from this observation and include aspects in my future teaching in similar situations.
Y profiad newydd / <i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix 5**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2/10/19
Lesson details: Year 8 – Music. Lesson was designed to practice playing a short excerpt of music on a keyboard for an assessment.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) At times. Some are more focused than others. As the pupils had access to headphones, they could listen to their own piece of music instead of out loud. This was a reason that attention was lost so easily in the practice time.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) There was a clear purpose to the lesson, to get ready for the assessment. Practice time was set aside purposely to get them all ready to play their piece. Pupils can trail notes on the music staves at their own pace and not feel rushed due to access to headphones and music booklets.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The pupils are all clear about what was expected of them that lesson. With the teacher moving around and giving advice on a 1-1 basis over the task time.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students were able to engage. There were more pupils than keyboards but this problem was solved by paring up. All students were challenged as the majority have no musical background.

Assessment

(How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?)

Teacher was constantly asking for reassurance of knowledge and instruction during the short starter, exposition and practice task.

The teacher asked three pupils at random to play to the class before the lesson ended. This helped the teacher to gauge whether her class are ready with the upcoming assessment.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?)

One of the three pupils selected randomly to play out loud to the class (selected with a name wheel) was clearly nervous about playing and lacked confidence. As well as shock when his name was selected, he played to the best of his ability. However, he seemed very dejected when receiving feedback afterwards, with no eye contact with the teacher at all. He was second to play, and the quality of his piece was of a much lower standard than the first's. This dejection carried on at the end of the lesson when leaving, even though he was highly praised for his efforts.

Appendix 6 – ARC reflection

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA)

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model**Date:** 2/10/19**Critical incident (focus):** Playing music out loud to peers

Profiad/ Experience	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	I gather feelings of sadness regarding this incident, as the pupil was clearly distressed about playing in front of his peers. The fact that feedback was not really listened to and other pupils were chuckling sometimes on wrong notes, made me feel that maybe the pupil's relationship with that subject will be altered.
Remember and Understand <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	Layout of the class was clear and the lesson planned within a very appropriate learning environment. Resources were not over/under prepared and time management and transitions were well structured. The fact that pupils were easily distracted off task, without knowing what they were actually doing because of the sound coming through headphones.
Evaluate and analyse <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	Use of certain resources when applicable, and to take a risk and change something if things aren't working. Time management including recaps and starters, expositions and transition timings. Use of marking, both peer and individual marking. Making good use of teaching assistants if applicable. General self-organization to do with lesson plans and preparations. The cause of the most disappointing element was the fact that the teacher had no idea if they were actually practicing properly as requested because of headphone use. Also the random name wheel really puts kids on the spot in a worrying way in music lessons.

<i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	Relating to the dejected pupil, reassure him he is doing well and perhaps allow him to work with a more musically abled student if possible to aid his practice. Have them be play in front of the class in pairs perhaps? Or allow them to concentrate on playing one hand (left or right) and play collaboratively in pairs. Also maybe sporadic use of the random name wheel after getting to know the pupils in your class. Aim to learn from this observation and include aspects in my future teaching in similar situations.
Y profiad newydd / <i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix 7**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26/09/19
Lesson details: Year 8 - Geography Lesson. Asked to study maps, recap on how to read them and task included labelling geographical aspects, capital cities and countries on a personal map of Europe to stick in their work books.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) The majority of the students were focused on learning. However, not all. Thus making it overall a difficult class to control, due to the sporadic attention in transitions periods and tasks. Class included some distinct behavioral issues.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) There was a clear purpose to the lesson. The teacher had prepared clear tasks and resources accordingly and communicated instructions clearly. Lesson activities aided visual learning through different techniques (i.e map of Europe and colours).
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Pupils knew the lesson credentials and how to implement their knowledge to the task. An example of this can be seen from the fact the pupils didn't ask basic question about the task at hand. The teacher did not have to repeat herself. They also knew good and accurate work could earn them positive behavioural points, so the majority took pride in their work.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students were situated in a suitable environment to engage well in the lesson. All students were challenged by the task, which included many rich questions. However, no one finished the task fully.

Assessment

(How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?)

Teacher was constantly asking for reassurance of knowledge and instruction during the starter, exposition and task.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?)

Pupil sat at the back of the class causing constant disruption. Constantly off task, talkative, physically unsatisfied and easily irritable. An example of this included scratching a compass on the back of an empty/free classroom chair next to the pupil. Movements also included constantly standing up out of seat and wondering about the classroom, in turn other pupils following that example. Empty plastic bottles were also thrown at certain points of the lesson by the pupil, which was reported to the teacher. The teacher was always weary of this pupil, however did not ask the pupil to move after belligerent offenses. A teaching assistant was also in the classroom vicinity to aid as much as possible as well as two observers including myself.

Appendix 8 – ARC reflection

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA)

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model**Date:** 26/09/19**Critical incident (focus):** Bottle thrown by pupil

Profiad/ Experience	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	As this happened early on in the lesson, it felt like an uncontrolled atmosphere to start the lesson. The worrying feeling that upon re-offense, this could seriously harm a fellow pupil or adult and cause further disruption. Does this child do this repetitively in other classes? Why is the pupil doing this?
Remember and Understand <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	Layout of the class was clear and planned. Resources were not over/under prepared. Teacher knew the pupils well and time management and explanations were very good. Behavioral management. A clear sociograph between pupils across the classroom even within a seating plan. A constant battle from the teacher for attention and voice.
Evaluate and analyse <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	Use of differing resources. Time management including recaps and starters, expositions and transition timings. Use of marking, both peer and individual marking. Making good use of teaching assistants if applicable. General self-organization to do with lesson plans and preparations. Scanning around class, pupil's misbehavior when teacher's back is turned. Pupils became bored quickly if not interested in the task or the task was too difficult for them.

<i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	Seating plan. Separate problem behavior using a demeanor as the lead figure in the classroom. Speak with respect but sternly and offer alternative options with a warning. Take further action by fulfilling the warnings and removing pupil/s if constant defiance occurs. Try to eliminate problems as best as possible as soon as they occur.
Y profiad newydd / <i>Transformed experience</i>	