

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.

“Our National Mission places wellbeing at the core of our new curriculum, supporting our children and young people to become healthy confident individuals” (Williams, 2019). Education Minister for Wales, Kirsty Williams, spoke these words this year during Mental Health Awareness week. In this time of great change in the Welsh education system, it could be argued that case studies and the observation of pupils are of heightened importance, in order to ensure a smooth transition for pupils and to maintain their well-being, as we adopt a new curriculum.

The use of case studies, observations and critical incidents in the context of reflective practice is widely acknowledged as highly important and effective. “Becoming critically reflective increases the probability that we will take informed actions” (Brookfield, 1995, p.22). Tripp states that the analysis of critical incidents invariably leads to “improved professional judgement” (Tripp, 2012, p.125). Such an incident happens in context, and that context can, and indeed must, inform a teacher’s practice.

This essay is a critical evaluation of an incident that I observed in a primary school. As such, I aim to question and analyse, without bias, the context, meaning and effects of the incident. I will discuss my chosen method of observation, and I will describe why, in my view, the incident merits further analysis. I will also discuss this incident with regards to theorists and literature. Finally, I will reflect on the incident in terms of what I have taken away from my analysis and how I will use it to enhance my future teaching practice.

The critical incident that I observed took place in a small primary school in a small village in South Wales. According to their most recent Estyn inspection (2016), there are 187 pupils on the school roll, aged three to eleven years. Both the school’s current performance and prospects for improvement were rated as good. In preparing for this essay, I carried out four official observations (see Appendices 1-6). This assignment will focus on one of these observations (see Appendices 5-6). The class in which I observed the incident that I will go on to discuss in this essay, was a Year 5 class containing 24 children: 14 girls and 10 boys. There was one teacher in the classroom, and myself as a non-participant observer. The incident took place during the first session of the day in a maths lesson.

In accordance with BERA guidelines, which state:

The confidential and anonymous treatment of participants' data is considered the norm for the conduct of research. Researchers should recognise the entitlement of both institutions and individual participants to privacy, and should accord them their rights to confidentiality and anonymity (2018)

the names of the school and any teachers or pupils will remain confidential throughout this essay.

Observations in educational research, such as case studies and critical incidents, are vital tools for improving our “understanding of contexts, communities and individuals” (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2013, p. 3). The aim of such observations is to improve practice, whether that be for an individual, or more widely for the field of education. In the case of the learning event on which I am focusing in this essay, I was observing children with the intention of identifying a critical incident. Whereas case studies have boundaries which are necessary in order to frame the data and subsequent analysis, a critical incident can be any incident. This is because, as Tripp describes, any incident can be “rendered critical through analysis” (2012, p. 25). The incident that I observed was a snapshot of an event, and the data that I collected was limited to what I observed at the time. Therefore, it could be argued that critical incidents are more open to bias, because reflections and judgements are based more upon interpretation, rather than on data analysis. In contrast, case studies, as described by Cohen et al (2011), recognize the numerous variables that can affect a situation, and therefore the need to involve multiple sources of data, often collected over time, in order to provide a depth of study. However, a critical incident could be extended in order to gather more data and information, which would increase validity.

Regarding the critical incident of this essay, the data that I collected was based upon my observations, which were of a narrative and descriptive nature. Of course, there are numerous other methods that can be employed when carrying out observations. A sociogram, for example, is an effective and straightforward tool for analysing pupils' relationships with each other, how they change, and the effect they can have. However, it requires planning before the observation. Another method would be to record the use of a particular teaching strategy, be that a behavioural strategy or a style of questions. The results can then be analysed to determine how effective that strategy is. In one observation that I undertook, I employed a method of tracking the movements of the teacher (see Appendix 3). This method is effective for analysing teacher-pupil interactions, and the results of different teaching styles.

In the class from which my critical incident comes, I initially intended to observe the class as a whole, and to make general notes. However, the behaviour of one pupil (who, for the purpose of anonymity, I shall refer to as Pupil X) caught my attention very early on in the lesson, and as such I decided to focus my observations on Pupil X. Throughout the rest of the lesson I recorded her movements around the classroom, behaviour, participation and interactions. In the long term, this method would be useful for keeping track of changes in behaviour. My role in this observation was a non-participant, and I was removed from the pupils, in order to observe in an unobtrusive manner. Furthermore, none of the pupils in the class were told that they were being observed. This allowed me to minimise the risk of the Hawthorne Effect on my observations, for, as Franz states, “when a researcher withholds the true nature of a study, participants have a lower probability of behaving in an expectation-consistent manner” (2018 p. 768). That being said, I recognise that my presence alone could have had an effect on the pupil’s behaviour, for, “the Hawthorne Effect says that you cannot measure people without affecting the people by the measurement” (Machol, 1975, p. 31).

In *Successful Futures*, Professor Graham Donaldson proposes four core purposes of the new curriculum of Wales which articulate the “vision of a well-educated young person” (2015, p. 28). These four purposes are that all young people will be: ambitious, capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy, confident individuals. These purposes will form the basis of all decisions regarding teaching and learning in the Welsh education system.

As I have previously stated, in my observations (see Appendices 5-6), I observed Pupil X, who caught my attention because unlike the majority of her peers, she was not talking to those around her. She was slouched in her chair, with her head resting on hand, and leaning on the table. During the starter task, when the teacher asked for hands up to answer the questions, Pupil X did not put her hand up at all. When the teacher encouraged discussion in talking partners, Pupil X did not take part. All of these factors suggested to me that she was disengaged and disinterested. However, when it came to completing the written task, which was to copy out and answer sums from a textbook, I observed that Pupil X completed this task extremely quickly, and finished the task even before the majority of her peers had finished writing out the date and learning objective. At this point, Pupil X informed the teacher that she had finished, and she was told to help any of her peers that required it. She then went on to help four other children, working with them one at a time. I observed how she did not simply tell them the answer, but rather worked through the question with them bit by bit, using a place value grid as an aid, so that they came to understand the maths for themselves. I was struck by the contradiction between her body language, which seemed to

suggest disengagement or boredom, and her actions, which suggested confidence and drive.

When considering this incident with regards to Donaldson's four purposes, the two that seemed to relate the most were 'ambitious, capable learners' and 'healthy, confident individuals'. When looking at Donaldson's description of an ambitious, capable learner, we can see that Pupil X was building up a body of knowledge and that she understood the mathematical concepts of the lesson. She was also able to explain the ideas and concepts of the lesson, as I observed her instructing her peers. From the speed at which she completed the written task, it could be argued that she enjoyed solving problems. However, in contradiction to an ambitious, capable learner, Pupil X did not seek any challenge, but rather she remained passive for the first part of the lesson. When comparing Pupil X to Donaldson's description of a healthy, confident individual, we can see that she had formed positive relationships with her peers, who trusted her ability to help them. In being a helpful and contributing pupil, Pupil X could be described as a valued member of society. However, although Pupil X was confident in completing her written work, she did not have the confidence to participate in the first part of the session. Therefore, perhaps she would benefit from building her mental and emotional well-being.

When reflecting on the critical incident (see Appendix 7), several questions occurred to me: firstly, what was the level of well-being of Pupil X, and did her well-being affect her level of involvement? Secondly, following on from considering her level of involvement, was she challenged enough in the lesson, and what was her level of learning? I will now consider these questions with regards to literature and education theories.

As I stated in the introduction of this essay, well-being is at the core of the new curriculum in Wales. As such, it is logical to begin by analysing the role of pupil well-being, specifically emotional well-being, in education. In recent years, the Welsh government has committed to improving the well-being of the population. Within the education setting, this commitment involves ensuring that schools are healthy settings, where pupils' education is "supported by a holistic approach to health and well-being" (Donaldson, 2015. p. 27). This highlights the important responsibility that schools have to play in improving pupil well-being. A report from 2012 by the Chief Medical Officer of England describes the key role of the school:

Promoting physical and mental health in schools creates a virtuous circle reinforcing children's attainment and achievement that in turn improves their wellbeing, enabling children to thrive and achieve their full potential. (2012, cited in Public Health England, 2014, p. 5,)

Furthermore, Health and Well-being is one of the new areas of learning and experience within the draft curriculum. In *Successful Futures*, Donaldson states that emotional well-being, along with social and physical well-being, are key in order for children and young people to thrive and engage in the classroom. (Donaldson, 2015). This link between well-being and involvement is due to the reasoning that involvement links to strong motivation, fascination and satisfaction. The Flemish educationalist Ferre Laevers believes that high levels of well-being and involvement are necessary to ensure deep-level learning. He defines well-being as “a state in which one feels at ease, shows spontaneity, is self-confident and enjoys its presence and interactions with others” and involvement as “(a signal of) how children are concentrated, absorbed and fascinated, how they are engaged in activities and operating at the very limits of their capabilities” (Laevers and Declercq, 2018, pp. 326-327). Two five-point scales, the Leuven Involvement Scale and the Leuven Well-being Scale (see Appendix 8), were developed as tools to measure and assess involvement and well-being. According to Laevers (2008), these scales are particularly useful when completing observations of children and young people.

However, the scales could be problematic when applying to pupils with additional learning needs, whose behaviour and signals may not reflect what they are actually feeling. Furthermore, it could be argued that the scales are not effective, as their application is subjective and it comes down to the judgements of the observer. For example, in the context of the critical incident, initially, Pupil X may have scored a level 3 on the Leuven Well-being Scale, indicating a moderate level (neither happy nor unhappy, often indifferent) and for involvement, Pupil X may have scored a low level 1 or 2 (does not engage in activities, does not seem to take anything in). These scores would indicate that Pupil X was achieving a low level of learning. However, from the incident, we know that Pupil X had a high level of understanding, and she went on to improve her level of involvement when completing the written task. Laevers suggests that continued or further observations, for example, at different times of the day and in different environments, are necessary in order to form a more comprehensive understanding of the child, and how their well-being and engagement is affected in different situations. Indeed, had I stopped my observations before the written task, I may have concluded that Pupil X was not engaged in the lesson and was therefore not achieving deep-learning. Yet, from my continued observation of Pupil X, I was able to see that she had taken in what she was being taught, and she then went on to apply it and communicate it to her peers. As Didau notes, “Because we can’t see anything happening, we assume nothing is happening. But listening is a highly active skill that requires focus and attention” (2016, p. 79).

It could be questioned, then, what caused her involvement level to fluctuate so drastically from low to high? Low involvement may signal a lack of confidence, a fear of embarrassment, or boredom, or a more serious problem. In the critical incident, Pupil X completed her written task at such speed, that it is clear that the work she was completing was well within her capabilities. Therefore, the question arises, what was the level of learning of Pupil X, and was the work appropriate for her level of ability? At this point, I would like to discuss Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Vygotsky defined the ZPD as:

Those functions which have yet to mature but are in the process of maturing... 'buds' or 'flowers' of development rather than 'fruits' of development. The actual development level characterized the cognitive development retrospectively while the ZPD characterizes it prospectively (Vygotsky, cited in MacBlain, 2014).

Vygotsky, as a social-constructivist, affirmed that children develop as a result of the relationships they form with others around them. Children learn best through collaborating with others, initially by imitation of a more intelligent other, and then through the internalization of new skills, where the child is now able to perform that skill independently. It is through this interaction and help from a more intelligent other that children move from the zone of actual development (ZAD) to the ZPD. In other words, what a child can do with help at first, for example through scaffolding from a teacher, the child will eventually be able to do without help. The child will have moved from the ZPD to the ZAD, and their ZAD will have grown. And thus, the process must begin again. Vygotsky further states that it is through a child's social interaction that they are able to move from a lower order thinking to a higher order thinking.

Critics of Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development argue that it in fact goes against the social constructivist school of thought. As the theory has been developed over time to include scaffolding within the ZPD, critics have questioned whether scaffolding could lead to "the imposition of a structure on the student" (Searle, 1984, cited in Stone, 1998). That is to say, perhaps the notion of scaffolding is at odds with social constructivism, because the teacher is leading the learning, as opposed to the student taking an active role in their own learning.

However, it is important to note that Vygotsky did not specify the role of the adult or teacher in the ZPD. He described four guiding behaviours: demonstrate how to do something and guide the child in imitation; begin solving a problem and let the child finish solving it; suggest

that the child solve a problem with a more intelligent other; and instruction through language, asking leading questions and analysing a problem for the child to then solve alone (Ketterer, 2008). We can see that the role of the adult is not defined in Vygotsky's work on the ZPD, and it only states a more intelligent other. Furthermore, although the guiding behaviours suggest some direct teaching, which could be described as an 'imposition of a structure', the other suggested behaviours follow a social constructivist principle, as the basis lies in interaction and collaboration.

In the context of the critical incident, it could be argued that Pupil X was not challenged, and she was working solely within her ZAD. This could have caused boredom, which may have then caused her to switch off and become disengaged. This would need to be addressed in order to help Pupil X be challenged to work within her ZPD. However, it is noteworthy that after completing her own work, Pupil X then became the more intelligent other to her peers. She provided scaffolding for her peers when helping them in their own ZPDs.

As I have discussed in my literature review, the two main focuses of the critical incident that I identified were the well-being of Pupil X, and the issue of challenging work. Well-being is key to engagement, and engagement is key to achievement and attainment. Therefore, these interwoven issues are of pivotal importance, and justify analysis, which I will use to inform my own practice.

With regards to the well-being of Pupil X, the first step would be to determine whether her behaviour and attitude was normal or if it was a drastic change from her usual behaviour. As I only had the opportunity to observe the class for one morning, I was unable to ascertain whether this was normal behaviour for Pupil X, whereas her classroom teacher would be in a much better position to know. On identifying any uncharacteristic behaviours, the next step would be to explore what has caused the changes. Of course, there are many factors that can influence well-being. For example, there could be factors in the home, physical or mental health issues, relationships with family, friends or peers, lack of interest, to name but a few. In my own practice, therefore, I will aim to get to know the pupils in my class as individuals: their behaviours, mannerisms, and attitude. This will therefore help me to know if there are any drastic changes. As Cohen et al. (2011) comments, "...a student might only demonstrate a particular behaviour once, but it is so important as not to be ruled out simply because it occurred once."

The next focus of the critical incident was the issue of challenging work. As I observed that Pupil X completed her work extremely quickly, and much faster than any of her peers, the first step would be to consider the possibility of her being a more able and talented pupil. In the specific case of Pupil X, however, I know from her classroom teacher that she had not

been identified as more able and talented. With regards to the notion of the Zone of Proximal Development, the question arises, how does a teacher approach teaching a classroom of thirty unique ZPDs. In the case of the critical incident, each pupil was given the same task, and each pupil was expected to work their way through every question. It could be argued that Pupil X was not challenged by the work. This opens the question of differentiation.

Didau is sceptical of the practice and states that "We certainly can't say with certainty that differentiation doesn't work, but neither can we say it does" (2016, p. 322). However, he also affirms that for him, the best approach to differentiation is to have consistently high expectations of all students, regardless of ability, and to differentiate the level of scaffolding that is offered. This practice is one that I agree with, and one that I will use in my own practice, as it gives students with low self-belief the opportunity to flourish, with help when necessary, while also not holding back higher ability pupils.

However, I also recognise that at times, it may not be necessary to have differentiated work at all. For example, in this critical incident, the students were learning a new topic, so perhaps it was the aim of the teacher to first ascertain the level of understanding, to know where to take the learning in the next session. Furthermore, the way that Pupil X was used to help her peers could have been a way to reinforce her own learning. She had to explain to her peers how to work out the answer, which could help consolidate her own learning. Just as a teacher may ask a pupil 'how do you know?' when they give an answer, it is a method of ensuring that they have properly understood.

The ARC model that I used to reflect on this incident and the other incidents that I detailed in my observations (see appendices 7, 9-11), asks the observer to reflect on the positives and negatives of an incident, as well as possible solutions and next steps. This kind of critical reflection is effective for looking at how productive teaching decisions are, and what effect they have on the learners. Furthermore, such methods of reflection are invaluable for continuous professional growth, and require that a teacher take informed action.

In conclusion, I found the method of observing and identifying a critical incident to be beneficial, because it allowed me to see in a real-life context how any incident can become critical through analysis. It is valuable for reflective practice and improvement as a teacher because analysing the incident can reveal important issues or viewpoints, which in turn can inform teaching decisions.

As Tripp states, "To take something as a critical incident is a value judgement we make, and the basis of that judgement is the significance we attach to the meaning of the incident" (2012, p. 8) Therefore, I understand that the issues that I have analysed in my literature review are those that I personally deemed worthy of further analysis. Someone else who

viewed the same incident may have picked up on other topics of discussion. However, I believe that the two areas that I focused on were the most striking from the incident, and as such deserved to be discussed within the context of this essay. I felt that the issue of well-being warranted deeper analysis, particularly when considering the importance that is being placed upon well-being within the new curriculum. And Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development is an appropriate starting point from which to move to discuss differentiation and scaffolding.

This approach of analysing case studies and critical incidents can be invaluable for professional growth. This is highlighted in the new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership, which also details the importance of being a reflective practitioner who:

consistently extends knowledge, skills and understanding and can show how reflection and openness to challenge and support informs professional learning to progressively develop pedagogy (Welsh Government, 2019)

By evaluating a critical incident with regards to literature, I have gained a better understanding of the theories and practices that underpin pedagogy. Above all, I have learnt the value of observations and critical reflection in professional development and improving teaching practice, and such a skill will serve me well as I progress in my career.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Observation 1 Notes



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Yr Athrofa

Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

Observation 1

My role = non participant

Obs method = general observation

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 25/09/2019. (1/2 lesson observed as part of Bridging 1) Lesson details: Year 7 MFL class. 2nd lesson of morning. Teacher tells us that it is their first Spanish lesson (normally do French.)
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) 3 students arrive late. Teacher starts lesson + introduces new topic + begins to teach greetings. 3 more pupils arrive late (5 mins into lesson) so teacher has to start the lesson again. Students confused about why they are having Spanish lesson, which results in minor disruption + chatter among class, which continues throughout lesson.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) First lesson of Spanish. Teacher goes through L.O. and repeats them. Activities fit the L.O. as introduction to Spanish (greetings, what is your name? Alphabet).
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Students that arrived late didn't understand why they were having a Spanish lesson. After practicing in unison, 1 boy didn't realise they would be speaking solo, and asked her how to say it.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Due to disruptive pupils, at first the teacher has to deal with these pupils, so the rest of the class just have to wait. As the lesson goes on, the whole class is able to engage by reciting in unison, and during 'ask + answer' lost focus as went on. 1 boy when looking through workbook asked 'What can we do up to 10?' + she replied 'no, not today.'
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? Practice reciting in unison, teacher hears some mispronunciation, so repeats. Then, 'ask + answer' - pupils individually say 'como te llamas?' and 'me llamo...'. So teacher was able after to say 'a few things I picked up on' and able to correct immediately.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? • Group reciting 'Como te llamas' + 'me llamo...'. Teacher says they will do 'ask + answer' individually. One pupil says "miss, so everyone can hear? How do you say it again?" Was he nervous? • Teacher use restorative hand up to silence, girl straight away put hand up, then loud sigh illustrating frustration with her peers. • When doing the 'ask + answer', one girl recited, and a boy said 'listen to her she sounds like a mouse', which the teacher didn't hear, so wasn't reprimanded. How would the girl have felt?

Appendix 2 – Observation 2 Notes



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

Observation 2

My role = non participant.

Accompanying sheet track teacher movements.

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

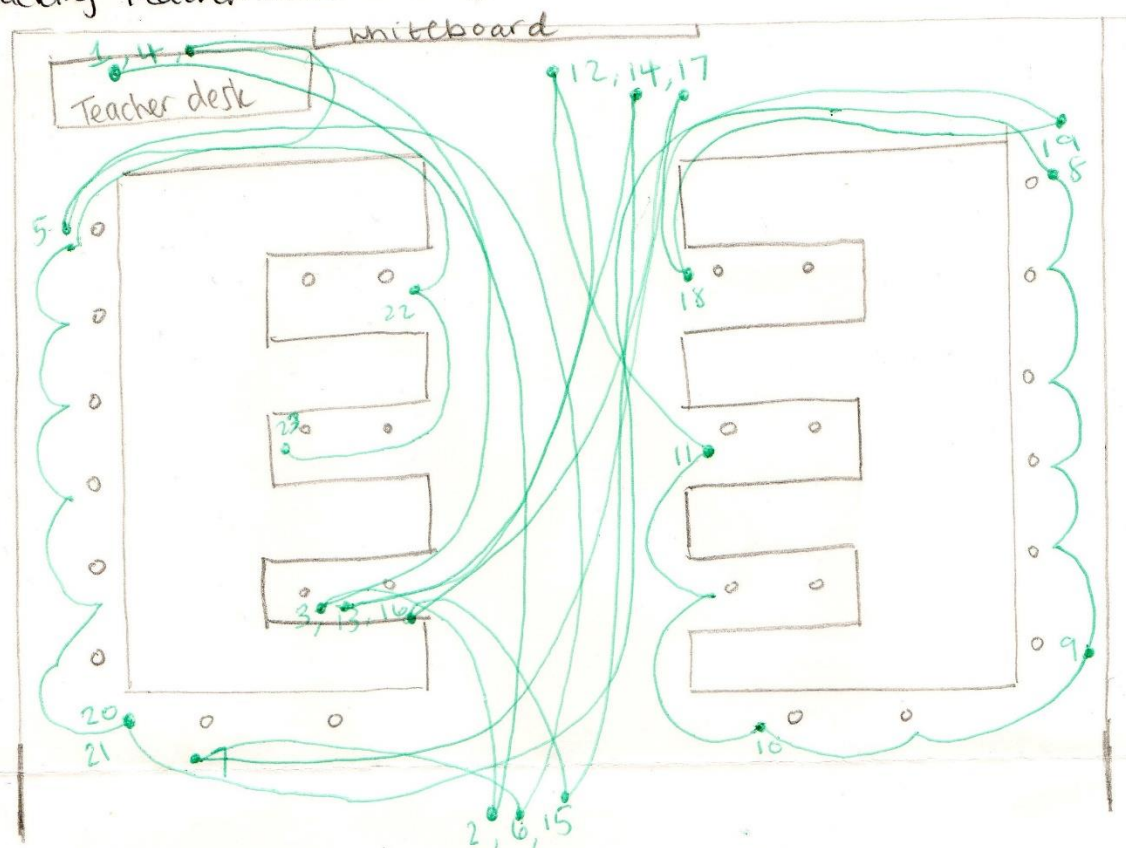
Lesson directly after lunch break.

Date: 25/09/2019
Lesson details: Top set Year 9 maths (1/2 lesson observed as part of Bridging 1) Teacher tells us before lesson that there is a seating plan, with better behaved students sat at back of class. The pupils know the routine, to come in, sit down, straight away to get on with starter on board.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Students get on with routine straight away & complete the tasks quickly & quietly with little disruption (critical incident). The teacher works very quickly, but students do keep up, no complaints, so clear that they are used to this.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Starter - consolidation of previous lesson. Main task - new topic. Teacher goes through L.O. with class. Teacher tells class that the example q is an GCSE q worth 2 points. (Students know the activity is necessary in terms of relating to their future GCSE exam.)
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Students know to complete starter task straight away. Main task - teacher goes through example on board as whole class, and students copy this so they know what to do for individual task. ~~When going through example, teacher explains possible mistake to avoid.~~
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Engagement is positive. All students complete starter task as instructed. Students told to get a textbook once finished in order to complete extension questions (see critical incident). Although it is a new topic, it is a development of previous topic so students don't appear to be finding it challenging (they complete task with little teacher input).
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? Starter - teacher walks from pupil to pupil, stopping to give input where needed. Goes through answers on board as whole class, asking pupil for answer (no hands up) Asks 'how do you know' when pupil gives answer. Main task - teacher walks from pupil to pupil to assess progress, and gives feedback as apt.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? 1) One boy who is sat at back (one of best behaved acc. to teacher) finishes the first task, and but doesn't go to get a textbook for extension. After a couple of mins, teacher notices the boy not doing anything (he is not being disruptive, he is just sat) and asks him if finished. Boy answers yes. Teacher asks would you like a textbook then, and boy nods yes. 2) Head of department walks in to classroom, class stand up, head of dept asks 'everything ok?' then leaves. Class disrupted for no reason. 3) One girl finishes first task but doesn't go to get textbook. Begins to chat with those around her. Teacher asks why is she talking 'I've finished'. 'Have you done extension?' 'I don't want one of those'.

In response to pupil question

Appendix 3 – Observation 2, diagram tracking teacher movements

25/09/2019 Yr 9 maths.
Tracking Teacher movements Observation 2



1. Register at desk
2. Goes to get equipment from cupboard.
3. Hands out equipment.
4. Back to desk
5. Individual pupil feedback
6. Get equipment
7. Hand out equipment + pupil feedback
8. Pupil feedback
- (8-9 - checks pupils work)
9. Stops to give feedback
- (9-11 - checks pupil work, stop when apt)
11. Checks pupil wellbeing of pupil absent previously.
12. Goes through answers to starters on board (5mins)
13. Checks pupil behaviour (asks if they have phone)
14. Return to board to start main task + work through examples.
15. Get equipment (gives worksheet for pupils to hand out)
16. Address individual pupil concern.
17. ~~In response to pupil concern~~ In response to pupil concern at board & explains possible mistake to avoid.
18. Individual pupil feedback.
19. " "
20. Checks on pupil sat quietly
21. and gets a textbook to give to pupil (critical inc.)
- (21-22 checks each pupil, stop when apt)
23. Critical incident 3 (see observation notes)

Appendix 4 – Observation 3 Notes



Prifysgol Cymru
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Observation 3

My role = ~~participant~~ participant

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Observation method = observing 1 task, which 3 different groups do, able to compare how different groups approach the task)

Date: 26/09/2019

Lesson details: Year 1/2 mixed class. Maths lesson.

~~After~~ Starter to session with carpet time. Each child has a number line and whiteboard + pen. Work on counting in tens. After carpet time, split into 4 groups. I observe one activity, which involves a matching pairs task, matching pictures of tens + units

Classroom culture

(Are the students focused on learning?)

During carpet time, most of the children are focused + engaged. A few children are fidgeting + talking to each other. When the teacher asks a question, the majority of children use their number line to work out answer. During the matching task, each group tries to understand the task and complete it, but become bored + frustrated, so lose interest.

Objectives

(Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)

Purpose - continuation of previous lesson. Teacher asks the students what they did last time (counting in ones + tens). Today, working more on counting in tens. This objective is communicated verbally. The matching task - the children do not understand the objective so

Direction

(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

Matching task, each group that does this task do not know what to do it, so have to ask the teacher. Then, as they do the task, ~~they~~ because there is no teacher supervising, they make many mistakes, but do not know. Each pupil has different opinions, and

Access and challenge

do the task differently, so they get agitated and start to slide the cards around table, not doing task properly. (After 15 mins, swap groups)

Majority of children engage with starter at carpet time. They appear to be challenged, since not every pupil gets every question right. Matching task - even after receiving instruction from teacher, they find the task extremely challenging + struggle to complete it. Because they are unsupervised, they do not know whether they have been successful.

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? During starter task, use of whiteboards, teacher looks at each child's whiteboard, and use a blipstick to ask one. Then asks the rest thumbs up/thumbs down if they agree. For second question, which is more difficult, she notices as they write that lots have wrong answer, so she explains at front what ~~not~~ to do + tells them to check their answer.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

• During carpet time, one boy stands up and moves to other side to sit down. Teacher says "That's very mature of you. Did you move because Pupil X is distracting you?" Minute or so later, another boy does the same thing, although this time teacher does not acknowledge it.

• Group work, each ~~group~~ group doing the matching task is unsupervised so they struggle to complete the task, get bored + agitated, and stop trying to complete the task, just mess around instead.

Appendix 5 – Observation 3 Notes



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Observation 4

My role = non participant

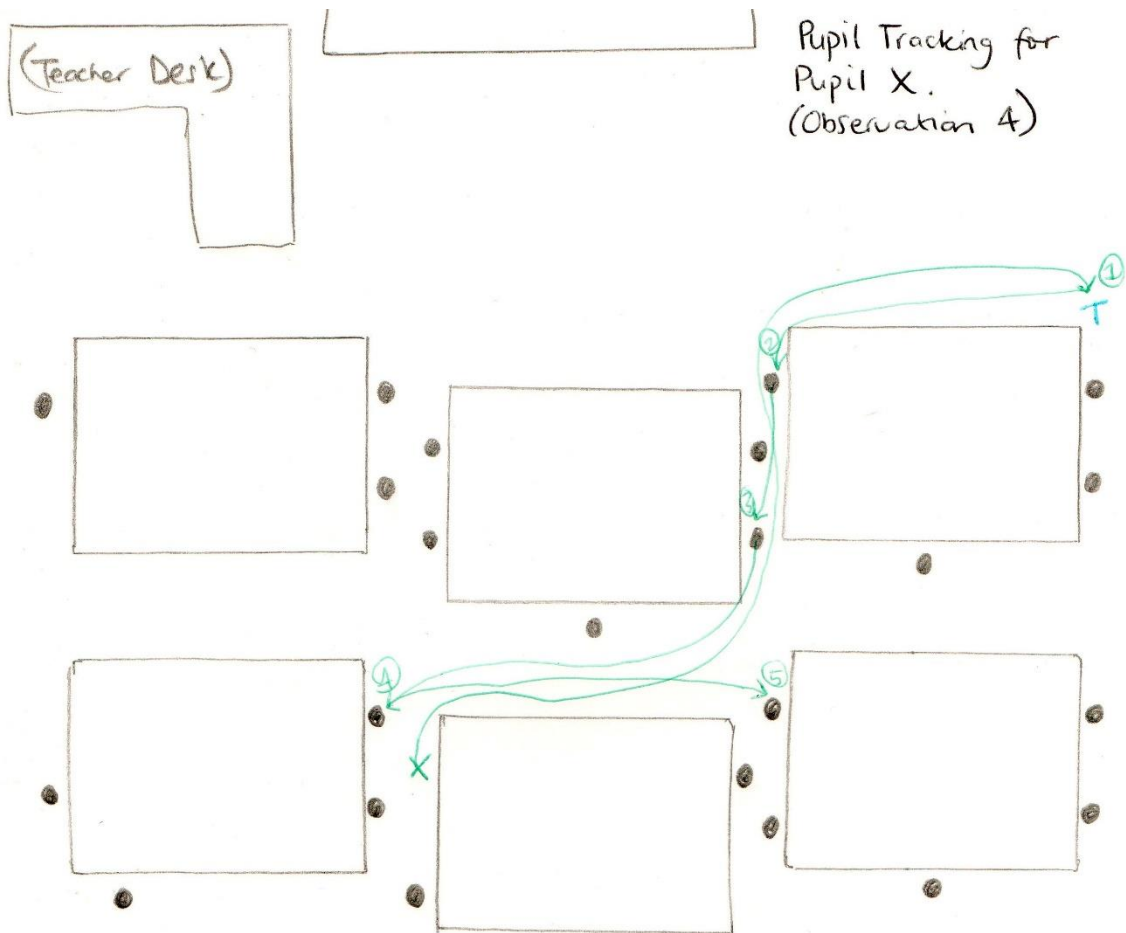
OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Observation method = individual pupil
Pupil X ← tracking (interactions, movements, behaviours.)

Date: 02/10/2019
Lesson details: Year 5 maths lesson
Lesson starter = recap of previous lesson of putting numbers with decimals into a place value grid.
Main task = multiplying numbers with decimals by 10, 100. (First examples on board, then from textbook)
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Pupil X does not appear to be focused on learning. Body language suggests disengagement. Does not put her hand up to answer questions, does not take part in 'talking partners'. Main written task - Pupil X is very focused. Completes task extremely quickly.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Starter task - teacher explains that it will help them in main task, & that they must understand it before moving on. Main task - examples that teacher works through on board. Instructs them to complete a page from textbook. At this point, writes L.O. on board for students to copy from.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Teacher gives students a success criteria by writing out an example on the board of how he would like the work to be completed in their books. All pupils given same questions, and told to work through as many as they can do.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Students are able to engage by putting their hands up to answer, and by talking with their partners to discuss an answer. Some students find it challenging, as they make mistakes, & require help in the written task. Pupil X does not engage in starter, so not clear if challenged. However, does engage in written task, though appears not to be challenged. She then engages others.
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? Hands up to answer questions, when a pupil gives an answer, he asks for hands up who agrees, hands up who disagrees. Also asks "how do you know?" Pupil X does not put her hand up to show if she agrees. After having finished the written task, she tells the teacher that she has finished, but he doesn't check her work, just tells her to help others.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? • Pupil X doesn't take part, appears disinterested or disengaged. But, she completes the written task very quickly, even before others have finished writing out the date & L.O. Upon finishing, teacher told her to help others. I observe her helping 4 peers, one on one, in an effective & positive way. She goes through the question bit by bit, using a place value grid to scaffold, to help them to come to understanding.

Appendix 6 – Observation 4, diagram tracking movements of Pupil X



X = Pupil X

T = Teacher

- 1 - Tells teacher she has finished (told to help others)
- 2 - Helps peer
- 3 - Helps peer
- 4 - Helps peer (peer called her over for help)
- 5 - Helps peer (who was struggling, Pupil X used place value grid)

Appendix 7 – ARC Reflection Notes from Observation 4



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ARC notes for Observation 4

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 02/10/2019Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Behaviour of Pupil X - Contradiction between her body language and her actions.

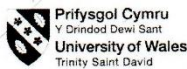
Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Initially, I was concerned about the well-being of Pupil X, who was behaving differently from peers, seemed disengaged, body language concerning. When she completed the written task, I was impressed by how quickly she finished it. I was interested in the contradiction between her apparent level of well-being, and her level of involvement, I was also impressed by the manner in which she helped her peers.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda? "Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?" Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	Pupil X was able to complete the task, and whereas she didn't get involved in the starter, the teacher would have been able to assess her level of understanding by her written work. Also, the way she helped her peers went extremely well. It was disappointing that Pupil X was allowed to not take part. Pupil X did not take part initially - why? Why was she not challenged her behaviour not questioned? What was her level of well-being? Was she challenged enough?
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol? "What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?" Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf? "What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"	Effective teaching in the future - give children different ways to show their understanding. If they can't verbalise it, let them write it down, or physically show it (where appropriate to allow for differences). Also, sometimes, effective to ask children to help each other, because some children may not want to ask for help from a teacher. Cause - that Pupil X did not get involved - why? And that she didn't seem challenged.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materion siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?" Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"	Encourage involvement, don't give pupils the chance to go unnoticed. A possible solution would be differentiation. If Pupil X wasn't challenged, may require higher level of work. However is differentiation the best practice? Also, important to understand why she wasn't taking part - even if not challenged, she could have taken part.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Finally, important to ascertain what level of well-being was, as her body language suggested an issue.

Appendix 8 – Leuven Scale for Involvement and Leuven Scale for Well-being (Adapted from: How to apply The Leuven Scales in practice by Matt Arnerich)

<u>Leuven Scale for Involvement</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Leuven Scale for Well-being</u>
Don't engage in activities. May stare of daydream. Easily distracted and don't seem to take anything in.	1 – Extremely Low	Child is not at ease, and doesn't feel happy. They are primarily anxious or tense.
Similar to level one, but more subtle.	2 - Low	Similar to level one, but more subtle.
Child may seem busy, but in reality may not be absorbed, or fully concentrating. Often act routinely, and can be easily distracted.	3 – Moderate	Neutral posture, neither happy nor unhappy, often indifferent, rarely enthusiastic. Few moments of satisfaction.
Similar to level five, but more subtle.	4 – High	Similar to level five, but more subtle
Regularly absorbed and engaged. Strong signs of concentration, persistence and energy. Not easily distracted, and enjoy a challenge.	5 – Extremely High	Having fun, enjoying the environment and having a positive effect on others around them.

Appendix 9 - ARC Reflection Notes from Observation 1



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ARC notes for Observation 1

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 25/09/2019**Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):**

As a group reciting 'Gmo te llamas' + 'me llamo'. Then, teacher says they will do ask & answer individually. One pupil says 'miss, so everyone can hear? How do you say it again?'.

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	I found it interesting that the pupil was being so disruptive, and talking out of turn, suggesting that he was very confident in himself. Yet, when he realised they would have to speak individually in front of class, he said 'so everyone can hear? How do you say it again?'. This might suggest that he wasn't confident in doing this and didn't want to embarrass himself by pronouncing it wrong.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda? "Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?" Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	The boy, although he may have feared embarrassment, he took the step to ask for further instruction in order to consolidate. Though not disappointing as such, perhaps it suggests ~~fear of failure~~ that the boy has a fear of failure, and fear of making a fool of himself in front of his friends.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol? "What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?" Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf? "What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"	The method of 'ask & answer' can be used effectively to hear how each pupil answers. Also, it boosts the confidence of the pupil, as they have to speak aloud in front of their peers. Especially good to encourage this at a young age, to stem the risk of fear of pupil speaking / fear of failure from developing. The cause of the fear of failure may be lack of confidence in his academic ability.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?" Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"	Solution to ~~reaser~~ addressing the pupil's fear of failure would be to encourage an environment of respect, where it doesn't matter if you fail. Another solution is to increase praise for academic achievements, so that a pupil will grow in confidence in their abilities. Finally, relating to fostering a positive learning environment, would be to encourage a 'growth mindset' in pupils, where you can learn from your failures.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Appendix 10 – ARC Reflection Notes from Observation 2



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ARC notes for Observation 2

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

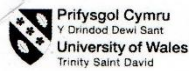
Dyddiad/Date: 25/09/2019

Boy finish first task but doesn't go to get extension as was instructed at start. Teacher noticed, and asks if he would like a textbook & he nod yes.

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	I was concerned for the pupil, because he was sat ~~just~~ doing nothing once he had finished the first task. He wasn't chatting to those around him. ~~But I~~ wondered why he didn't get the work for himself. Issue of pupil wellbeing?
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda? "Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?" Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	- The pupil was clearly capable, as he completed the first task very quickly. - Teacher noticed the pupil not doing work, so was able to address this. But, didn't ask why the boy didn't go to get the work for himself. - The pupil didn't go to get the extension task for himself. The teacher had to notice & get the task for him. So he sat doing nothing for a few mins until teacher noticed. Would he have sat doing ~~these~~ nothing for the rest of the lesson if the teacher hadn't noticed?
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol? "What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?" Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf? "What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"	- Ensure to pay attention to each pupil, to address any issues asap. - Ensure to have differentiated tasks for pupils. - Teacher didn't address <u>why</u> the pupil didn't go to get the extension task. Did he not know that he was supposed to (^{possible} poor instruction?) or did he not want to do extension (in which case why?) or did he not want to walk from back of class to front to get the task (possible lack of confidence?)
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?" Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"	- Possible solution would be to ask the student why he didn't go to get the extension task. I wouldn't do this in front of other pupils, so as to not draw attention to it. Just in case it is ~~an issue~~ of wellbeing. May also be necessary to make adjustments e.g. give out extension task <u>with</u> first task. - Important to note that because I only observed half a lesson, the teacher may have addressed this incident after I had left. And of course, the teacher would have knowledge of the pupil's personality etc.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Appendix 11 – ARC Reflection Notes from Observation 3



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ARC notes for Observation 3

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 26/09/2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Carpet time, one boy stands up to move to other side. Teacher says "That's very mature of you. Did you move because pupil X is distracting you?" Minutes or so later, another boy does the same, but teacher does not acknowledge it.

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Initially, I was impressed that such a young child would show the initiative to move away from someone who was distracting. I found the way the teacher said "that's very mature of you" to be a positive way of acknowledging his decision.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda? "Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?" Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	I thought that acknowledging the boy who moved was a positive way of recognizing that he chose to move in order to improve his own learning. I question if it was necessary to ask "did you move because he was distracting you?" because this drew attention to the misbehaviour of the other child, and the first child then had to tell on his friend. Furthermore, is it fair to acknowledge the good behaviour of one child, but ignore the same good behaviour of another? (That being said, it could be that the second boy only moved in order to receive praise, and the teacher may have a good reason for not acknowledging it.)
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol? "What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?" Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf? "What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"	I will keep the same method of ~~positive~~ recognizing & praising good behaviour & positive choices, as this will be positive reinforcement. Cause of the most disappointing element - bringing attention to the negative behaviour.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?" Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"	Possible solution, would be to use tactical ignoring of negative actions, for example, if the effect of the pupil's misbehaviour will not be long lasting or if it will not effect other pupils. Another solution is to reinforce the rules at the start of a task. In a young class, the children may need reminding of how to behave properly in a situation. Or, think about where pupils can sit, for example, sit the pupils who may misbehave closer to the teacher.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	