

Reflection models are commonly known to support early years practitioners, In order to understand the importance of reflection upon their own practice which supports a practitioner's effective reflective practices for the future (Hayes et al., 2017).

Canning and Callan (2010) explain, the reason why reflective models are important for supporting early years practitioners as they give practitioners a sense of thought and promote ideas on how to evaluate their own practices. Practitioners can reflect as individuals or within a team of other practitioners, to gain ideas and strategies to build upon their own effective reflective practices.

There are two types of similar reflective practice models however, they both reflect differently. The first model is David Kolb Reflection Cycle, ISC Medical (2019) defines David Kolb model as a rotational reflective model which repeats in a four-part reflective cycle.

ISC Medical (2019) continues, Kolbs model has a usefulness in reflections as it can be used in action, looking at any of the four points in Kolbs model. It can be used in practice and experience and explains the reflections of both more clearly.

Thus, supporting critical awareness as Simm and Marvell (2015) explain, practitioners critically evaluate their own working practice to be more critically aware of the learning provision for activities for learning, to ensure children reach their developmental milestones. However, there can be a negative to it as Simm and Marvell (2015) continue, there needs to be a constant engagement in practice, as if there is less engagement in provisions and activity, children will not be engaged and not develop their learning giving less opportunities for critical reflection.

However, the second model has a different strategy of reflection. The second model of reflection is Edward de Bono's the 'six thinking hats' and it is defined as a problem solving and mind mapping tool, commonly used in a working team of practitioners of reflection states De Bono (2017).

Looking over the De Bono's model, it has its usefulness in supporting practice as Kivunja (2015) explains, the model helps practitioners to use critical thinking and problem solving in their reflection, to break it down and find a solution to become a more reflective effective practitioner.

Comparing and contrasting the benefits and limitations of both models, Kolbs model is beneficial for practitioner's reflection as ALQahtani and Al-Gahtani (2014) state, the reflection cycle has four stages and each stage has a different learning style, which then supports each practitioner's chosen learning style as they go through the model. Thus, supporting the practitioner's confidence as ALQahtani and Al-Gahtani (2014) continue, the model makes their different learning styles valued, as practice reflective of learning styles are taken into consideration and listened too.

However, De Bono's model has a different perspective of reflection as Patre (2016) explains, the strength of the 'six thinking hats' takes a practitioners habitual thinking to a more outside lateral thinking approach, as it would be a more indirect and creative approach when reflecting on their own practice and problem solving as an individual or as team meeting.

Linking in with collaboration as Laal and Ghodsi (2012) explain, collaboration is a team approach to enhance learning and problem solve with different opinions and ideas from each practitioner with different perspectives. Thus, supporting sustained shared thinking. As Siraj-Blatchford (2009) explains, sustained shared thinking is important as it explores new ideas together with practitioners, children and families provoking new ways of thinking thus supporting collaboration.

However, there are limitations with both reflective models. The limitations of Kolbs reflection model is more focused on the strengths of the individual practitioner, rather than assessing the benefits in a team (Kelly,1997). This has an impact on the practitioners' practice, their values, skills, knowledge, and experiences are not considered and not listened too (Dennison, 2010). It also does not take into consideration other factors such as, gender or social status (Course Hero, 2020). This is important for effective high quality of care as Ahn and Rodkin (2014) explain, there may be some people who live in different social environments and some may not associate with gender, so practitioners must have an awareness of that.

There are also limitations to De Bono's model. Aithal, Kumar and Shailashree (2016) explain the reflective model could potentially be time consuming, as there may be too many ideas and practitioners may lose track of the main point of reflection. There may be conflicts in the team meeting, as practitioners may disagree at some point being made on what they are reflecting on. This would link with emotion, as Kivunja (2015)

states, relying on gut feelings and emotions can cause conflicts as reflection could be taken personally.

Referring to the two models, , even when they are based on reflection, they are both useful in their own techniques of reflection. Kolbs model is useful on reflection of practice because Moncure and Francis (2011) state, it points out the important parts of the reflection stages of the cycle. It gives the practitioner a viewpoint to process what they have just experienced and to giving a conclusion adapt for the future. ESTYN, CIW and the Foundation Phase supports the importance of reflection, as it teaches practitioners how to improve and learn new skills in their practices helping them to understand the importance of high-quality care in children and families (Macdonald, 2018).

However, De Bono's model is useful in a different way of reflection, Vernon and Hocking (2016) explain, the 'Six thinking hats' makes a reflective team meeting more creative and think more outside the box. This suggests critical thinking as Donaldson (2015) states, critical thinking is taking things apart and seeing it in a different approach. Hocking (2016) continues, the method allows practitioners to be more creative in their thinking and each hat gives practitioners a different mind-set when reflecting, as they look at different angles with a different focus for each thinking hat. It supports high quality care and practice as practitioners can approach practice and care critically using a different approach (Hocking, 2016).

After viewing the benefits and limitations of both reflection models, both seem very important to a practitioner's practice, with their different techniques of reflection. The model is important for practice and care as Kolb (2014) states, it reflects in four parts on what practitioners have experienced, on what and how they can improve on and care for in the future.

Even De Bono's 'six thinking hats' model is an important part of a practitioner's reflection, as Al Jarrah (2019) states, it gives practitioners a better advantage of decision-making with a number of point of views. Al Jarrah (2019) continues, it provides an opportunity for more creativity during any decision-making process, as emotions and scepticisms are included by all parties and not restricted to being purely rational. This links to Gibbs model, as his reflection is more about emotions which is believed to support the improvement of resilience and problem solving in practices

and care, by allowing practitioners to say what they feel (Barksby, Butcher and Whysall, 2015).

Early Years Practice of Reflection.

Reflection is used to reflect on practice which supports the developments awareness, practice and quality of care to children and families (Harvey, Coulson and McMaugh, 2016). It is important to reflect on practice as Lotter and Miller (2017) explain, it allows practitioners to critically think about their reflection, they can take pieces of the reflection apart and think about what went well, what went wrong and how they can change their practice for the future.

Reflection also provides a guide to high quality of services from building a partnership with children and families, by providing a safe and trusting environment, involving the families in the child developmental learning and to ensure each child's individual needs (Foundation Phase, 2015; PACEY, 2021).

Skill.

The definition of a skill is a learned ability to help improve work performance and these skills can be learned independently or from experienced skilled trainers (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021).

Practitioners learn their skills through training and experiences however, it is important to reflect upon these skills. Professional practitioners reflect on their skills as Davis (2020) explains, they may need to improve or learn new skills, for example reflecting on their own interpersonal skills, on how they speak and listen, understanding a child's own space and the body language they show to others and to be more aware to each child's individual needs. Davis (2020) continues, another example of reflection would be confidence, this could be reflecting on how the practitioner performs in Storytime, singing or dancing or how to assess a challenging situation and decision making.

These skills can be learned by hands-on approach learning as Fullana et al. (2016) states, these skills are learned from experiences, sometimes things may not go right, so practitioners reflect and adapt it, this is then repeated until the practitioner is experienced in the skill. Supporting this, Dewey (1938) and Williams (2017) explain the theory is about how practitioners learn and develop skills from their own experiences, as once a practitioner, they have experienced skills they can learn and adapt for future practices.

Values.

The definition of values is seeing something of high importance of worth or usefulness in the principles or standards of behaviour, inclusivity or ethos (Collins, 2021).

A practitioner's values are important for settings, as they are based through the understanding of the welfare of the child and families, which links into the children's Act, Unicef, (2021). As Roberts-Holmes (2015) states, professional practitioners reflect on their values based on how they view children, families, and other practitioners, by looking back on non-judgemental or discriminative practice and how they treat others who have different beliefs.

Thus, supporting the settings ethos as Edwards, Gillies and Horsley (2015) explain, settings set a goal to reach a good standard, such as building relationships with the child or a partnership with families and practitioners. However, if someone is being negative, this could impact the ethos. As Lomas and Ivztan (2016) explain, if one practitioner shows bad attitude and behaviour around children, they will copy the behaviour, so it is very important how practitioners present themselves to children, families, and other practitioners.

Professional practitioners reflect on their own role of their professionalism, this can be done by reflecting on it or seeking another professional opinion (Postholm and Skrvset, 2013).

Knowledge.

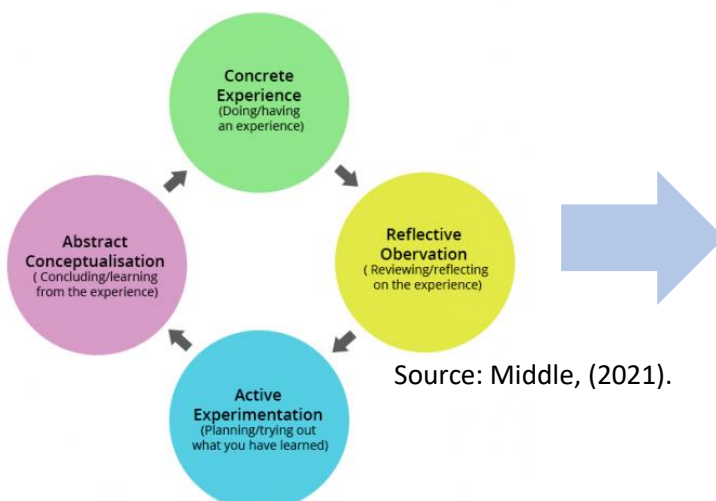
Knowledge is based upon facts, data and information collected from the experiences or learning practitioners have done to understand a topic or subject better (Merriam-webster, 2021).

A practitioner's knowledge is gained from reflecting on their own practices, as Gorman et al. (2010) explains, reflecting each activity they have done gives them insight onto what to change for the next planned activity.

Thus, supporting Critical thinking as Cottrell (2017) states, practitioners can pick a part of their reflection and see which part went right or wrong and how they can improve things for the future.

A professional practitioner reflects on their learning by the experiences in Early Years settings, as they are reflecting on everything they have done within the setting (Moon, 2013). Practitioners should develop the ethical, cultural and routines of children and families by reflecting and understand their needs, to help children develop for the future (Foundation Phase, 2015).

Donaldson (2015) agrees as reflection is important for professional practice, as they need to understand the policy and procedures of the setting and to be aware of the curriculum they follow.



David Kolb – Reflective Cycle.

Kolb's Reflective Cycle is a rotational type which is built of four components, these four parts are; do it, reflect on it, conclude it and adapt it and this is repeated with each activity they do, (Tomkins and Ulus, 2016).

Edward de Bono's – Six Thinking Hats.

De Bono's model is effectively useful on reflection as practitioners in a meeting can critically think about it by breaking it down into pieces improving on their quality provision (Mindtools, no date).

This links in with Estyn, as they believe reflection supports quality of provision in Early Year settings, as it improves a child's development to support them for the future and to reflect upon this to see if practitioners need to take a new approach in improving their quality of provisions (ESTYN, no date).

Source: Right Attitudes, (2016) Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats Model for Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

	WHITE HAT	• Objectivity • Fact-finding	Wear the white hat to focus objectively on the available facts and figures.
	RED HAT	• Passion • Intuition • Emotions	Wear the red hat to look at the problem using intuition, gut reaction, and emotion.
	BLACK HAT	• Caution • Pessimism • Sombreness	Wear the black hat to be vigilant and consider the negative sides of the event, issue, or problem.
	YELLOW HAT	• Hope • Optimism	Wear the yellow hat to think positively. Consider all the benefits of the circumstances.
	GREEN HAT	• Creativity • Inventiveness	Wear the green hat to get creative and invent new approaches.
	BLUE HAT	• Direction • Synthesis • Organization	Wear the blue hat to perform meta thinking. Scrutinize and direct discussion. Synthesize all viewpoints.

<http://www.rightattitudes.com/>

Reference: Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats

Care Inspectorates Wales (CIW).

The Care Inspectorates of Wales are an external agency who are the regulator of social care and Early Years of Wales (Care Inspectorates Wales, 2021). Care Inspectorates Wales (2021) continues, the CIW provide the quality and safety of services for the wellbeing of people in Wales such as:

- Children's day Care;
- Adoption agencies.

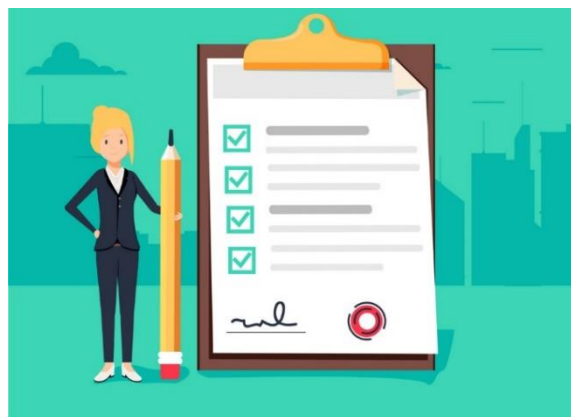
Thus, supporting the UNCRC, as Unicef (no date) states, in article 3 to ensure the care and the protection of children and young people's health and well-being.

The CIW influences the importance of reflection in the care and safety of children and families as Corne-i (2021) explains, it is to ensure the high standards of care to children and families well-being and to maintain a duty of care of safeguarding children.

Quality services.

A practitioner's high quality of service has an impact on a child's development as Sylva et al. (2004) states, this improves children's intellectual and behaviour outcomes in school settings, as the staff build a trusting relationship, and are meeting the child's individual needs.

Interaction with children and families support and develop the partnership of both parties because Siraj-Blatchford (2002) states, parents and practitioners need the partnership to have a better understand of the child's needs, interest and learning style and to use appropriate and understandable terminology while interacting with the child and families.



Source: Childcare inspectors, (2021)

ESTYN.

learning and training in Wales, (Estyn, no date).

Estyn (no date) continues, their reasonability is to inspect nursery and school settings to see if they are maintaining quality practice such as:

- Well-being & Attitude to learning
- Teaching & learning experiences
- Care support and management (Estyn, no date).

Estyn encourages the importance of reflection in the quality standards of education and learning as Estyn (no date) states, it gives a better understand of continual learning as reflection helps practitioners learn new skills for practice and to see if they need to take a new approach in their practice.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, reflection is an important tool for practitioners because they will understand what went right and wrong, they may challenge themselves to learn new skills and after reflecting may take their practice into a new approach.

This will improve high quality provisions, as practitioners are supporting the development of children's educations which is important for their future.

Reflective log

Disgrifiad byr o'r gweithgaredd (dim mwy na 50 o eiriau) <i>Brief description of the activity (no more than 50 words)</i>	
The activity the children will be doing is Christmas cupcake or biscuit decorating. Each child will have a choice of what they would like to decorate, and they will have a variety of decorations to choose from, such as chocolate icing, Christmas sprinkles, mini biscuits and shredded white chocolate for snow.	
Nod/Amcan y gweithgaredd	<i>Aim/Objective of the activity</i>
The objective of this decorating activity is for children to understand the skills needed to decorate a cupcake or biscuits and which tools they made need to use for decorating. To develop their literacy and communication, as to understand the instruction given on how to decorate either the cupcake or biscuits and to read out the decoration ingredients. To develop their fine motor skills, decorative tools such as shaking the sprinkles out and spreading the chocolate icing with a plastic knife, to allow the child to lead with their own independence in decorating and to be creative on how they want to decorate. To develop mathematic development, the child will decide on the number of in how decorations they want to use, the colours of the Christmas sprinkles, the shapes and sizes of the cupcakes, biscuits, and decoration. The overall objective is for the children to learn in a holistic manner through a cooking activity.	
Eich rôl chi	<i>Your role</i>
My role is this activity will be to engage with the children, firstly explaining the activity they will be doing and giving them instructions on how to do it. This is called modelling behaviour and supports Bandura's theory however, my role is also to observe their development and skills, that they may demonstrate through participating in this activity. Writing down bullet points on a sticky note pad on each child on what they are developing, following the outcomes of the Foundation Phase to set them each a target for development I would first ask the children to wash their hands and to wear aprons, following health and safety policy. I will be reminding the children to share and wait for their turn for tools. I will be taking a step back to allow the children to decorate their Christmas cupcake or biscuits, allowing them to develop their independence and I will be asking the children questions on how they feel about the activity and listen to their responses. I will only step in if invited, when the children wish to show me what they have decorated, to see if they need help with anything and to answer any questions they ask. After this, I will be reflecting on this activity to see how well it went, to see if anything did not go well and to write down what to improve on for the next activity.	
Agweddau cadarnhaol – pam? Sut gellid datblygu'r rhain ymhellach? <i>Positive aspects – why? How could these be developed further?</i>	
The positive aspects of this activity were that it provided the children with a sense of confidence, this was because it allowed the children to be creative in their cupcake decorating. The children also enjoyed the activity as it was developmentally appropriate. While decorating their cakes, the children were learning new skills because it enabled them to be creative, also they were able to practice their fine motor skills when shaking the sprinkles out and spreading the chocolate. The children also were communicating with each other on their decorating and took turns in using the tools, politely asking if they could use the tool next. This activity could be further improved for the future by providing a wider choice of resources, such as other decoration tools for example, small icing pipes thus	

encouraging further development of fine motor skills also adding an element of challenge.

Another development with a cookie cutter on cookie dough and baking them for decorating or using some fruit for a health opinion and to continue to develop their skills for the next activity. To also ask the children what they would like to decorate next or would they like to bake from a recipe and decorate after.

Agweddau heriol – pam? Cysylltwch a'ch arfer eich hunan.

Challenging aspects – why? Link to your own practice.

However, the challenges were, there was one child in the group who was vegetarian and did not have a lot of sugar within his diet. To follow his parents' wishes, the child was unable to decorate with the resources supplied. I therefore had to adapt the activity to suit his needs by cutting up fruits for him to make a fruit face or fruit salad, so the child was still included in the activity.

Pa wybodaeth wnaethoch **chi** arddangos?

*What knowledge did **you** demonstrate?*

The knowledge I demonstrated in this activity was firstly being aware of health and safety, to check if any children had allergies towards any of the ingredients and to be aware of the children's dietary requirements, such as vegetarianism.

Secondly, reading and studying about policies and procedures at university and the importance to understand and follow them. Thirdly, the hygiene policy to make sure children have washed their hands and the table is cleared and clean preventing germs from spreading.

Fourthly, to be aware of following the Foundation Phase curriculum, to plan out the activity by following the seven areas of learning and to observe the activity for any developmental needs and changes.

Lastly, supporting the activity by following the Foundation Phase outcomes and listening to the children by giving them lots of praise and to encouraging them to try new things and to 'have a go' on using new tools, showing good modelling behaviour.

Pa sgiliau wnaethoch **chi** arddangos?

*What skills did **you** demonstrate?*

The skills I demonstrated was to show a lot of enthusiasm and encouragement, by giving the child plenty of praise on their decorating skills giving them the confidence to be more creative.

I was flexible with my time management by preparing the decorating the activity before the children arrived, so it was ready to start the lessons. I also cleared and cleaned the activity table before and after. I provided the resources, such as getting the decoration tools, the cupcakes, and biscuits ready for the activity.

I also communicated with the manager, first to discuss my activity and then communicated with the children throughout the activity, asking them how they felt about the activity, using open questioning and listened to their answers.

I then reflected on the activity to see what went right or wrong and to see what needs to be improved for next time.

Pa werthoedd wnaethoch **chi** arddangos?

*Which values did **you** demonstrate?*

The values I demonstrated were being non-judgemental towards children in my care, with regards to both the mother and child who followed a different diet.

During the activity all the children were included within the activity and no child was left out.

I also presented myself as a good role model to the children, by supporting good behaviour and a positive attitude. I showed the children respect by listening to their conversation and questions.

Beth allai cael ei wneud yn wahanol yn y dyfodol? Pam?

What could be done differently in future? Why?

Upon reflection, the next time I carry out this activity I would consider discussing more in depth with the teacher as to ascertain dietary requirements. This would ensure a wider choice for the children with allergies or differing diets, it would also provide further learning opportunities for the other children in the group to discuss different diets. Another consideration would be to cook and follow the recipe with the children giving them a challenge of following a recipe.

I also feel that I could have played a more active part in the activity, by arranging for another staff member to observe, so I could join in with the activity and communicate with the children about the activity. Another think I could have done different was to be more creative with the activity by baking the cupcakes and cookies. I feel I could have followed a baking recipe with the children as they would have learnt even more life skills needed for the future. By joining in with the activity, the children could have felt more confident in decorating the cakes and biscuits, by following me creating my own designs on the cupcakes or biscuits.

Area for further development (provide further details)	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
To have more confidence in myself and be less self-doubtful.	I wanted to feel more confident in my practice and myself and be less doubtful about my abilities.	To be more open with myself and to set myself targets such as do not dwell on things. Learn from past mistakes and change them or step out of my comfort zone to develop my confidences and to ask other people thoughts. opinions on myself to see where I can improve. To read back on feedback from my assignment, the positive and negative points and build upon them by getting feed-back from my 1-to-1 support.	I would ask peers in my class, my peers on the degree programme, work advisor and lectures. I would join a support group or a club.	I would like to set myself a few goals to work on now, by reading feedback from my work and asking my peers for opinions and to reflect back on myself to see if I have reached my goals in becoming more confident. To keep going until I feel much more confident in myself.
Picking up my creative hobbies such as drawing.	I used to be very creative in my work and artwork, however I have lost interest in being creative due to being busy with work. I feel that this will increase my employment opportunities if I can demonstrate additional and useful skills	I would like to start off small by drawing small things and to fit it in to my chill time, as I do find drawing an escape and it relaxes me. To maybe get back into creative writing as it is my passion, to write stories as I find this may help me with my work I have researched local drawing groups, Art clubs, as well as photography clubs and workshops to join for the day supported by the UWTSD.	I would do this with myself or with others and I would be creative either indoors or outdoors to get better thoughts and ideas. In photography club we would take pictures and get creative in photo shop. Workshops would be small arts & crafts activities supported by the UWTSD.	I would like to do this when I have more time. I would like to increase my skills and talk with others to get some more creative ideas. This would be completed 2022-23
I would like to join courses to increase my professional skills in understand the mental health and vulnerability of children.	I would like to learn new skills to become better in my own practice and to help me in my future career as I would like to work in therapy and learn more about mental health and safeguarding. I feel this would provide me with further skills that will support me to develop professionally into an area of therapy work.	I would like to see if there are any courses linked to play therapy, counselling, or mental health links: Mental Health Awareness Training Online Course (highspeedtraining.co.uk) Get some advice from an experienced worker in mental health or therapy work.	I would also go and see the UWTSD Careers Advisor - Mark Thomas. Work with Charities who work in family centres in my area: Home-Start UK (home-start.org.uk) .	When I have more time for myself and the pandemic has calmed down, I would like to go and find some workshops to learn new skills. 2022-23
To be more organised with my time management	I can be good being organised with work, but it can be very	I would like to get a file or create a chart to sort all my paperwork out and	I would like to ask others for advice on how they keep their work organized	I will be organizing my work now starting off by sorting old

	untidy and unorganized and sometimes I lose notes of my work. I find I do not set myself time for my module work and free time	maybe have separate files for each paper, putting the dates on each paper I have written so I know which one is recent and which is old. To have a timetable set out with my 1-to-1 support on when I can do my module work.	and ask on how to keep them safe and not get lost or ruined. Ask for help from my 1-to-1 support for helping me organise my work.	paperwork out to see which to keep and which to throw away if not needed. I will keep all of my work safe in a file or if online to be a file and password protected. I email my 1-to-1 support my module work and keep it organised.
To be more open to advice with other professional practitioners.	To learn more about my practice, I would like to learn more from an experienced peer as I would like to improve on my own practice. To go into work placement to learn more about being a professional practitioner.	By reflecting on my own working practice too, if there is anything I need to improve on. To ask other practitioners' opinions on my own working practice and ask for their support in helping me improve my practice.	I would ask practitioners in the workplace and reflect on my own reflection logs to see if things have improved or Anything I need to work on. Asking my work placement for feedback and asking my lecturer on how to improve on my professionalism.	I will be reflecting on my own practice and read about the feedback I receive from my module work.

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