

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

This assignment will identify a critical incident within a primary school setting using observation strategies. Then using reflective practice, recognise and evaluate a critical incident to identify next steps to improve future practice. A critical incident is a personal opinion on the significance of an event. As Tripp (1993) suggests viewing a critical incident is a judgment that is made, and the basis of the judgment is the significance we attach to the meaning of the incidents.

Raj Joshi (2018) explains that critical incidents are something that educational practitioners interpret as a problem or a challenge. The use of critical incidents in terms of reflective practice have a benefit to a teacher's continual development. Richards and Farrell (2010) say that the cycle of documenting and reflection provides opportunity for teachers to learn more about their teaching, the pupils and themselves. Teachers must think about not only what happened but also why it happened. This can be considered good practice as the analysis of what occurred can be undertaken, next steps identified, and the outcomes can be used for future reference towards their professional development (Raj Joshi, 2018).

The use of reflective practice helps facilitate the development of new knowledge, skills, and dispositions in teachers by promoting observation of actions in a real-world environment (Slade, Burnham, Catalana and Waters, 2019). The use of reflective practice in this study will identify issues that arose from the observations and uncover the link between theory into practice and the next steps for potential improvement in future lessons. As Tripp (1993) states that there are valuable trends in regard to investigating critical incidents in schools, one being the use of applying the knowledge of research methodology used in the university to school-based learning.

Observation

The observation will take place in primary School A, located in the Vale of Glamorgan. The school currently has 471 pupils, aged 3-11, with 14 single-year classes. The national average for free-school meals (FSM) in Wales is at 19%, whereas this school has 36% eligible for FSM. The majority of pupils enrolled are of a White British demographic and come from homes

where English is the main language. The school is categorized green for support needed which is the highest category for schools (Estyn, 2017). As of 2018, School A receives an average of £3500 per pupil per annum (Mylocalschool.gov.wales, 2019)

As familiarity with a child's community and culture may provide the researcher with informative context which could lead to assumptions (Bates, Schneck and Hoover 2019) it was important for the researcher to remain impartial at all times after gathering evidence on the educational setting. The school has also identified there being 31% of students having Additional Learning Needs (ALN) with the national average being 21% (Estyn, 2017). The observations will focus on the nursery setting. The nursery has around 50 students, which are split into morning and afternoon classes. The researcher undertook two days of observations in a particular class having 7 children, in each of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Methodology

Observations were completed during lessons specific to literacy, numeracy and experiential learning, where children learn through play and the environment around them. Research will be undertaken in an educational environment by observing a number of lessons. There are a number of qualitative research methods that could have been used, with the chosen one being a case study approach. A case study analyses an incident rather than gathering more general statistical evidence as case studies develop a theory of causal factors which can help researchers to understand similar situations (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2017). Similar to the Critical Incident Technique, which helps collect and analyse data about activity in authentic situations and becomes significant to the people involved (Hughes, Williamson and Lloyd, 2007). A critical incident method is used when there is an event-based focus, it is then used to investigate said events that are perceived critical by the researcher (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010).

There are a number of potential disadvantages to using qualitative research methods. As Nisbett and Watt (1984) explain, it can be prone to "observer-bias" meaning that the person observing will only see what they want to see and these methods can be selective and subjective. Although different to bias, subjectivity has been related to the expression of personal opinions and beliefs that are considered too 'fleeting and personal' to the researcher to be considered for scholarly attention (Athanasiadou, Canankis and Conillie, 2019). On the other hand, qualitative research is interpretive in nature and requires detailed observation, analysing the whole picture (Atieno, 2009) highlighting the importance of a holistic approach in the classroom. Atieno (2009) continues, that the purpose of qualitative research, particularly the use of the critical incident method, is to learn from the participants in a setting or a process by which experience it, the meanings they put on it, and how they interpret the experience. It

was vitally important to look at things from a students point of view in this setting, looking at how behaviours have transpired and certain learning techniques created by the environment they are in. It was important for the researcher to record this during the evidence gathering and see how it affected the learning.

Another problem while undertaking observations was the 'Hawthorne Effect' which includes the participant having awareness of being studied and therefore altering their behaviour (McCambridge, Witton and Elbourne 2014; Cook, 1967). The children being observed are more likely to modify their 'performance' in front of an observer, with a possibility that pupils will respond in some way to any change in their environment (Woolfolk & McCune-Nicolich, p.35 cited in Chiesa & Hobbs 2008). While observing, researchers either undertake the role of a participant observer or a non-participant observer. Undertaking participant observation enables the researcher to understand the learning environment in its natural setting while potentially taking part in activities with subjects (Kawulich, 2005). Non-participant observations are unobtrusive, meaning the researcher does not engage with the subjects and takes a "fly-on-the-wall" approach and becomes a spectator in the environment (Given and Williams, 2008). With this method, it is claimed, the researcher is able to act objectively and able to make notes in a setting fully focused on direct observation. Given and Williams (2008) argue that this may be seen as intrusive to the participants which may affect their behaviour. While undertaking this study, the researcher took part in non-participant observation at the beginning but transitioned to a participant observation strategy because it enabled the researcher to establish a rapport with the students promoting non-threatening observation (Kawulich, 2005). In this way potentially more accurate and authentic data was collected, through mitigation of the Hawthorne Model, the children became comfortable with the researchers presence leading to authentic incidents taking place.

While evaluating the different research methodologies, looking at the benefits and limitations of qualitative research and the data gathering, notes were taken focusing on key words and details from observation would be best so as to not distract the researcher from engaging fully in the environment, allowing him to look at the incident from an holistic point of view. When there was time shortly after the incident it was written up fully in more detail (McFarland, 2008). Subsequently the researcher was able to apply context to the incident and reflect. When logging the observations, it was important to make sufficient notes on the incident so it gives the researcher a well-defined description of what took place and help to identify next steps (Bates et al 2019). Shortly after the observations were completed the notes were then transcribed onto a more detailed observation sheet, written in full (see Appendices). Questions on the observation sheets were then answered to provide a deeper understanding of the

incidents. Overall, 4 observation sheets and 4 Assisted Reflective Conclusion (ARC) forms were completed.

Critical Incident

The incident occurred during the nursery 'village time' where at the end of the day the teachers gather all the children together in a classroom. In this session the children and teachers interact either to discuss a problem, ask a question or read a story to the children, which is where this incident occurred. The teacher began reading a picture book to an estimated 20 children. The children were sat on a large carpet in front of the teacher and after the first few pages of reading a child (Child-A) was sat at the front near the teacher and began to shout loudly to a friend (Child-B). The teacher asked calmly if Child-B would like to sit next to them and Child B then moved. Child-A was clearly being disruptive in the lesson. In *Successful Futures* (2015) Donaldson, introduces the concept of developing an ethically informed citizen, with a particular focus on respecting the needs of others as members of society. As Child-A was being disruptive, they may have distracted other children in the class which can have an effect on their learning. A short time later, Child-A continues to shout loudly with the teacher this time trying to stop the child by staring solely at them while reading the book, Child-A stops once more and the teacher continues but a few moments later, Child-A shouts loudly, and other children in the group look at them, which shows disengagement with the activity. The teacher addresses the behaviour, asking the child "Child-A, what should we do when someone is speaking?" The child answered "Listen" the teacher then replied, "Well done, now can we give it a try?". The teacher goes on to praise other students in the class that are sat nicely and are engaged. Child-A then sat properly and listened to the remainder of the story and when the teacher finished the book, praised Child-A for adjusting their behaviour. This again links with the four purposes mentioned by Donaldson (2015), in this instance, showing the importance of creating ambitious and capable learners. In this incident the child had not been engaged for the majority of the reading and was disruptive. Children should set themselves high standards and be ready to learn throughout their lives (Donaldson 2015).

This incident highlights the importance of classroom management. Classroom management is crucial for teachers as it is seen as one of the most difficult problems they face (Jones and Jones, 1998). Classroom management includes strategies that help develop a child's engagement and improves their behaviour for the benefit of themselves and others in their classroom (Emmer & Sabornie 2015).

Literature Review

In this section, after observing and reflecting on the incident, questions have been raised regarding the importance of classroom management and whether children should be actively involved in the learning process. Another topic that will be reviewed is the use of behaviourism in education, in particular the use of positive reinforcement and its effectiveness and moral use in an educational setting, looking into this is important as the researcher can consider the effectiveness of reinforcement in managing behaviour and how it can affect the motivation of students. The reason for looking at these particular topics relates towards the incident where the teacher used several methods to try and stop a behavioural issue that was ongoing during the lesson, used a behaviourist tactic in positive reinforcement in the hope that will stop the behaviour reoccurring. The discussion of these topics are important as it will allow the researcher to understand what is involved in classroom management and the effect it can have on the students learning. Additionally, while considering the use of behaviourist techniques such as reinforcement and its strengths and limitations in an educational environment.

Classroom management can be defined as actions taken by teachers to build a beneficial learning environment for all students (Evertson & Weinstein 2006). It is somewhat believed that classroom management has an effect on students behaviour and their level of attainment (Gage, Scott, Hirn & Macsuga-Gage 2017; Chandra 2015; Lopes, Silva, Oliveira, Sass & Martin 2017). These authors argue that strong classroom management strategies can be linked with positive student outcomes, these strategies can include caring relationships with students; clearly stated expectations; use of collaborative learning to encourage student engagement with tasks problems and being an involved participant in the learning process (Chandra, 2015; Gage et al. 2017). They also argue that when children are involved in the learning process, problem behaviour decreases and desired behaviour increase through engagement in the lesson (Chandra, 2015; Karakaya & Tufan 2018). Referring to the incident, the teacher read a story to the class and by the literature, suggests that perhaps the behavioural issues that occurred may have been caused by disengagement with the lesson. Gage et al. 2017 found that students in lessons with low classroom management strategies were significantly less engaged. Therefore, by developing a lesson where children are involved in an active learning process, inappropriate behaviour can decrease therefore improving learning through the avoidance of disruption and being engaged with the tasks set. The research above suggests that 'classroom management' is multi-faceted with many different factors needing to be considered to implement good classroom management, and

that negative or disruptive behaviour is an outcome of low classroom management. The avoidance of negative or disruptive behaviour by good classroom management is considered better than having to cure it.

Canter (2009) on the other hand emphasises that establishing an environment where the learners' needs are met, behaviour is dealt with and learning follows the structure intended, are key attributes to classroom management. Although Canter (2009) supports teachers taking an assertive approach, he believes that the best way to control a class is through a teacher-in-charge approach where student compliance is important to building a positive learning environment. This contrasts with approaches taken by the other researchers who argue that learners need to be a participant in the learning process. An example of this would be that researchers above believe that students should be involved in the rule-making process whereas Canter (2009) and Charles & Senter (2005) believe that teachers should formulate rules and make them clear, explain them and model positive behaviour. Through this approach students will learn how to manage their behaviour (Chandra 2015; Dustova and Cotton 2015).

It's important to address the need for having good classroom management strategies, through reviewing literature, its shown that the term classroom management is extremely broad and multi-faceted, with a range of differing opinions on what is the most important aspects of classroom management. However, by addressing the research it shows that the authors put an importance on setting clear, structured rules and informing the class of potential consequences when rules are broken. There is variation in how the rules are designed, as one approach seeks to involve the learner, to engage them in the process to avoid disruption through disengagement while the other looks to be assertive and concise, to make sure the students understand what is expected of them and how they can succeed in class.

Looking at the incident, see Figure 1, on two occasions where the child was being disruptive there was no reminder of rules from the teacher and the child continued being disruptive. Through the use of questioning however, the teacher asked a question regarding a rule that when the teacher is speaking the class should listen. When the child answered, they stopped causing disruption. There is also agreement that teachers should be assertive, in how they act and what they do, to maintain discipline and engagement in the classrooms (Canter 2009; Chandra 2015). Lopes et al. 2017 directed a study which shows that classrooms with more controlling teachers and had less classroom misbehaviour. This informs the researcher that to be an assertive teacher, means they are in control of the classroom environment which lowers the chances of classroom misbehaviour and through questioning they became assertive.

There is a differing opinion from the authors stated above, they have different theories about what comes first, misbehaviour or poor classroom management. Canter 2009; Charles & Senter 2005, argue that teachers should be assertive and be in control of how things work in

the environment which lowers misbehaviour. Yet, Gage et al. 2017; Chandra 2015 say that pupils should be actively involved in the learning process to improve engagement which lowers the chance of misbehaviour. The implication of this means that teachers have different options and can decide what is best for their classroom and for themselves as practitioners as some can thrive in an autocratic environment and some may thrive in a learner-voice approach, taking the needs and wants of the students into account.

The next topic is behaviourism which is a learning theory developed B.F. Skinner, where he believed that behaviour could be controlled through consequences (Bufford, 2006). During the incident, the teacher used a method within behaviourism known as positive reinforcement. McLeod (2006) states that through reinforcement ideal behaviour can be strengthened and behaviours that are not, will diminish. Positive reinforcement includes providing feedback and praising students motivating them to participate and remain engaged in learning. Linking with the incident, the child is praised for conforming to the rule after causing disruption, with the teacher hoping to increase the probability that the preferred behaviour will happen again (Diedrich, 2010; Phelps 1997). They argue that the simplest form of praise is verbal and is one of the best ways to motivate pupils and emphasise rules (Phelps, 1997). A study by Deci (1972) found that when students were given physical rewards for their work the quality was lower than that of students who completed a task where their reward was verbal praise.

Some practitioners avoid using positive reinforcement as they believe that rewards and praise have a negative impact on intrinsic motivation (Parsonson, 2012; Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996; Kohn 1993). These researchers found that the use of rewards for tasks lowers the quality of work and is less creative than those completing comparable tasks that are non-rewarded. This opinion suggests that the use of reinforcement in a classroom can make students less enthusiastic and could affect the behaviour of a class when rewards are unable to be used. The implications could be detrimental to classroom culture as students will not be ambitious or creative because they will only be willing to do enough to receive a reward and not push themselves to the best of their ability. The research above shows that rewards that are physical and can be used by students can affect intrinsic motivation and harm the development of learners but using praise as a reward can be beneficial to the learners as being praised may encourage them to continue and improve.

It is also argued though that positive reinforcement can leave children only behaving to seek a reward (Rhode, Jenson & Reavis 2010; Kohn 1993) the issue being that children are likely to misbehave then adjust their behaviour to receive praise. Kohn (1993) believes that positive reinforcement, such as praise, can be counter-productive and harmful to the learning of the students. A scenario in an article by Brandt (1995) whereby Kohn described an incident where

praising a single student, for example, for sitting nicely and quietly can mistakenly introduce competition between students in the classroom and manipulates them to get a desired behaviour from the children which can cause a decrease in motivation, fracture relationships and disengagement. Researchers such as Kohn (1993) and Kelsey (2010) argue that a child will only behave to receive a reward and that when the reward ends the behaviour will gradually return.

Positive reinforcement strategy allows teachers to control behaviour in the short-term but can damage them in the long-term as it does not allow students to be self-directed learners with a moral value system or allow them to take risks and challenge themselves (Kohn 1993; Polley 1995; Kelsey 2010).

While stating that reinforcement can be counter-productive, Kohn (as cited in Charles & Senter, 2005) argues that teachers should not punish or reward but encourage students to work collaboratively and build a sense of community within the classroom. This links to the 'ethically informed' purpose by Donaldson (2005) who explains that students should respect the needs of others while having involvement in 'society'. Even though Kohn (1993) and Phelps (1997) have differing opinions on positive reinforcement, they are of the same opinion that humans have a basic need to belong with Kohn suggesting that 'class meetings' be held to discuss topics and make group decisions, arguing that positive reinforcement can negate that feeling of belonging in a classroom though and Phelps states that humans strive to be a valued member of a group and are made to feel valued through positive reinforcement strategies such as feedback/praise, to have others recognise personal achievement (Kohn, 1993; Phelps, 1997).

There are arguments that Kohn ignored a lot of literature regarding the use of positive reinforcement as a behaviour strategy, leading to it being misunderstood (Maag, 2001). Positive reinforcement is perceived to be time-consuming, have contradictory views on cognitive development and demeans humans (Axelrod 1996 cited in Maag, 2001). Maag (2001) also argues that reinforcement is not used because punishment is the preferred method for practitioners and children should not be coerced into behaving as the teacher wants.

All things considered, the use of positive reinforcement can be used as a tool to control and modify behaviour but should be used cautiously. When overused the students may become dependent on rewards or praise and may hinder their learning and development. When not used enough, students may become disheartened and disengage altogether.

Reflection

The advancement of teaching and teacher education over the years has made teachers question their practices for their own development in order to improve the education of their students and through engaging with reflective practice teachers can become more effective. Through reflection teachers can unpick difficult situations that they encountered and develop an understanding of the underlying issues and formulate a solution to the problem. As a teacher becomes more adept at critically reflecting, they can develop new skills and theories to enhance their professional development (Mathew, Peechattu and Mathew, 2019; Cimer, Cimer and Vekli, 2013).

The critical incident brought up many interesting ideas that could have been explored but the researcher chose to explore the importance of classroom management and its links to behaviour issues and using positive reinforcement to manage behaviour. Using Gibbs (1988) reflective cycle, the researcher was able to evaluate the research completed, which brought up a variety of opinions and sources arguing over the correct way to approach misbehaviour, particularly the use of positive reinforcement. My experience of what happened made me question what was the use of it in terms of improving behaviour in the classroom, I believed it to have a positive and immediate effect in the short-term as the child continued the desired behaviour until the end of the lesson but I was unable to continue my observations to see if there was a long-lasting effect. Many researchers are of the opinion that positive reinforcement should not be used in education as it can harm the student's learning and development through using rewards and its negative link with intrinsic motivation. My opinion is that when used correctly positive reinforcement can be a good behaviour management strategy but should not be used all of the time due to the consequences laid out in the research, including the negative connotations it has with motivation. Kohn (1993) discussed its use and its creation of competition in class as a negative, but I believe when used correctly it highlights modelling of other students behaviour as something for others to aspire to and when a child follows that model and receives praise themselves they may repeat it in hope of further reinforcement. For future teaching practice the teacher may want to consider the effects of reinforcement on motivation as the research suggests there is a negative correlation between reinforcement and motivation. The teacher might look to use other behaviourist techniques such as negative reinforcement or punishment and see that a more adept strategy for their class.

The incident occurred during a reading session and the behaviour happened when Child-A became disengaged. Reflecting on the incident and the research, there is evidence to suggest that when learners are not engaged in the experience, problem behaviours can develop where

there is low classroom management. The teacher may consider using a shared reading technique, where the children are involved in the reading by being asked questions to develop their understanding. When engaged, problem behaviours may decrease. Another alternative might be to read to smaller groups of children throughout the lesson so it is easier to control, while other groups are completing separate tasks with other members of staff. This may also lower the chances of disruptive behaviour.

Conclusion

A non-participant approach was initially used to observe the pupils in the environment but as pupils became familiar, a participant approach was used to build relationships and make them comfortable in expressing themselves. During the incident, the observer was in a non-participant position watching the teacher lead the children in a reading session. The teacher used a number of techniques that interested me and through the use of Gibbs (1988) ARCs, I thought this warranted further research. The approach used by the researcher modelled the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership and through reviewing the literature and critically reflecting on the incident the researcher was able to look at differing opinions on the topic of positive reinforcement and classroom management and was able to provide suggestions to improve future practice, which include using a different reading technique to maintain engagement and lowering numbers in a session to maintain classroom management and also the short-term use of positive reinforcement is fine but be wary of its consequences, potentially using different behaviourist techniques to maintain standards. This study shows the importance of using reflection to inform professional learning to develop future practice. Critical reflection is a vital component of the Professional Teaching Standards for Wales in terms of developing Professional Learning (Welsh Government, 2018). It was important that this was used because it influences development into furthering professional growth and through introducing reflection into everyday practice it will benefit not only the practitioner but also the learners will have a more authentic and rich experience.

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Appendices

Figure 1.

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26/10/19
Lesson details: V. Hange Time Time to Share a Story/Song & discuss a big problem or big question as a village.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) All the students from the different classes come together and sit on the mat in front of the teachers. Teachers discussed problems from the day and asked questions to engage pupils in conversation. Children were encouraged to collaborate in pairs and discuss problems raised by teachers. Teachers then also read a storybook to the children. Asked questions to check understanding after.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the lesson is to discuss a problem with the classes (behavior/mess). Discussion was teacher-led but questions were asked by teachers, open/closed, to make children think of their actions. Teachers also shared a story to enhance literacy, language & communication.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) As the discussion was teacher-led, questions were given to the pupils, "why do we look after our resources/trash?" and "what do we do when we tidy away?" Children were allowed to share with the group their answers and were sometimes asked for further questioning from teachers. As teacher-led, teachers modelled behavior by sitting with children and encouraged others to listen when someone was sharing.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Students were fully allowed to engage in the lesson and were encouraged to share their ideas with the whole group and in pairs or in smaller groups.

Assessment

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

As 'village time' occurs often throughout the week, children understand the setting and what is to be expected of them. The teacher made children aware of the problems that would be discussed and asked them "why do you think these are problems?". Teacher asked questions before, during and after to engage them in understanding what the problems were and how to rectify them.

In terms of the readings, the book had been used in previous sessions so some pupils may have an understanding of the story and what questions would've been asked. During the story other staff tried to make sure that children were paying attention and read along with the teacher quietly to the child to keep them engaged, focusing on onset phonics and suggesting to the children to speak along. If children were messing around they were removed and sat closer to the teacher.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

- In the storytime section of "village time" there were 2 children sat in front of the storyteller. Child A was shouting and teacher asked child B if she would like to sit next to her. The child moves, diffuses the incident by ignoring the behavior of child A. Child A continues to shout out, the teacher still reading, then directs her attention to her, and ~~she~~ they stop. Teacher praises other children's good behavior, and child A then models.
- Prior to the discussion, teacher praises all children for creating lovely cakes, train tracks etc. followed by negative of (bulk of discussion) then follows with more positivity, stating they know the class can be better and encouraged them to keep up the good work.



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

Dyddiad/Date: 26/10/19

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

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	At the start of the incident I was intrigued how the teacher would handle the situation without affect the rest of the class. I felt that the child was starting to disturb as others had also started to shout. The teacher did a good job initially to diffuse the situation and remain on task, but the child eventually continued. I felt other staff could've supported, but would that undermine her authority?
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	The teacher was telling a story to a class of nursery students. The children were seated in the front row, but on the end, away from the teacher. The teacher was sat on a chair with the children on the floor. The teacher was beginning to become visibly distracted and tried to address the behavior while still reading which would've affected the flow and might've distracted the pupils.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	What was good about how the incident was handled was that the teacher moved one of the children away from the other in the hope that would solve it. The teacher also attempted praising other children's positive behavior to help stop the negative behavior. Perhaps more staff to help the teacher while reading.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	A possible solution to this may have been to have another member of staff to deal with the behavior. The teacher could've also stopped the story to speak to the child, but that may have caused further trouble in the class. After addressing the same problem on 3 separate occasions, next time the teacher could either ignore the attention seeking behavior or address it in the first instance and make sure it doesn't happen again by having the child sit next to her instead of moving another child.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Figure 2

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26/10/19
Lesson details: Mathematics and numeracy. Counting rhymes and songs, using objects to count to 5.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) The students were sat in a circle around the teacher, who led the lesson through song and rhymes. The children engaged in song with the teacher, the song being "5 little ducks" and counted from 5 to 0. The teacher would use her fingers to show how many ducks were left, which the pupils copied and would say the number encouraged by the teacher. The children were then asked to put pebbles in the correct order from 0-5. The teacher would address the class with closed questioning and they would work together to put them in order.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The lesson purpose was clear as the songs used would start at 5 and work down or vice versa. Also the use of pebble, physical objects, the children could physically touch and put in order (with help of staff) meant they were learning from doing the task and seeing the order in which they go.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) As the teacher led the singing, it was clear the children ~~enjoyed~~ heard the song before. They followed the teacher's visual cues (fingers on hand) and the teacher waited for the children to say the correct number before carrying on with the song. During pebble maths, the teacher would use open (what number is next?) and closed (what number is this?) to check understanding. The teacher would use a lot of positive feedback when a child was correct, which encouraged them to interact more.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students were able to sing along with the teacher and enjoyed doing so. It was not above their ability, the teacher used visual prompts to support their understanding which kept them in time, therefore engaged. In terms of pebble maths, children came closer together in a circle and worked together to create a number line to 5. There was no hands-up procedure, children were encouraged to answer and move the pebbles themselves into a number line. I believe the students were challenged appropriately, as the teacher provided support through questioning when required.

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Assessment

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Before the start of the lesson activities, the teacher stated that they would be singing a song and asked the children what song they would like, giving options of two songs, with the children picking "5 little ducks". The teacher asked if they'd remembered the song and they said "yes".

The teacher assessed student understanding during the song by giving varied wait time between questions (numbers in song), only continuing when the children would sing the number before the teacher. This meant the children were singing the numbers on their own instead of copying the teacher. The teacher would hold up fingers as prompts to support the children.

At the end of the pebble maths section, when the children had the numbers in the right order, the teacher led the children in counting the numbers on the pebbles to instill understanding.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

- During this lesson, the teacher positioned themselves on the floor, with the children in a semi-circle around her. As she was at the centre and at their level she was able to engage with students and lead the session. Very minimal teacher movement.
- The teacher offered the children a choice of songs they could choose from, giving the sense of autonomy but with the teacher guiding it.

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

Dyddiad/Date: 26/09/2019

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

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	I felt this was interesting as the teacher gave the students options to choose a song to sing. I felt this was a great idea, as students are given choices and made to feel as if they have control of the lesson. While as in fact, the teacher had created a structure in which they were able to choose but the options followed the lesson objectives so it wasn't important which one was chosen.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	At the start of the lesson, the teacher gave the children information on what they were going to do, and went on to say "Now you can choose (option A) or (option B) it's up to you!". The children seemed excited at the prospect, which caused some bickering between what option should be chosen. With the option agreed, engagement was high. I felt that giving the children freedom within a structure benefited the learning as it seemed to increase engagement and motivation.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	The idea to give children an opportunity to contribute to their own lesson plan is great. The learners seemed to engage with the learning more and were clearly motivated and excited. Creating a learning environment where children can contribute can ensure effective teaching and learning in the future.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	The major issue in this incident is the little argument or 'discussion' which ensued when the teacher gave the children the options. A potential solution to this would be for the teacher to facilitate the learning of discussion as this did eat into the lesson. Potential next steps would be to explain to the children the need for collaboration and maybe give each child a vote to choose as some children did not participate in the discussion.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Figure 3.

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26/10/19
Lesson details: Inquire and Discover. A time and space to activate children's minds and ensure they apply all of their intelligences and all of their senses. Educators give time to modelling and encouraging persistence, collaboration, perseverance and resilience.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Children are offered activities, indoor and outdoors, which include Creative arts (Painting), Cookery, Wooded area to explore and an obstacle course (P.E.) and more to engage with. Staff oversee tasks. Sometimes asking questions to children on what they are doing and why and also providing advice on how to improve. Staff encourage pupils to be persistent and resilient in their tasks, work collaboratively and persevere with their tasks to keep them engaged. Teacher movement is constant.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose is to give the children ample opportunity to play, explore, ask questions and work with the 4 purposes provided by Donaldson (2012). The activities promote this by having an outdoor learning area, reading area, art zone and cookery area which are monitored by staff.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Children are given autonomy in what they decide to do and can go from one area to another. Teachers use 'key words' such as "Team-work" and "persevere" and praise children using them. "Well-done for collaborating with each other" Open and closed questioning is used to improve their conceptual understanding. "Do you think the shell goes in the mix? Why not?" Teachers also play and help (cookery/art) to help model and support and provide demonstrations on how to do it correctly.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students are able to engage in the lesson as there are a wide variety of activities to choose from and can change activities whenever they want. Children sometimes given 'play tasks' i.e. "Can you build me a train track?" to engage them further. Some students may not feel challenged compared to others i.e. a child baking for the first time compared to a child that does it daily, but children are encouraged to try different things to test them.

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Assessment

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

Student understanding is not really checked before in ALL activities, but for example cooking, basic questions on preparation are asked to check understanding. As it is centred around experiential learning and play, Assessment takes place mainly during in the form of questioning i.e. "How much butter in the mix?" or asking a child to identify the first letter of their name with alphabet blocks. After the lesson, children are given time to reflect, be accountable to themselves and others and celebrate their successes and mistakes. Teachers ask questions to help children evaluate and extend their thinking and identify how to move the learning forward.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

- The use of key words from teachers, such as "Team-work, resilient, collaboration" etc to nursery aged children. Match the experience to a word at an early age through receiving praise.
- Mistake from child who dropped tin & pens on the floor, teacher did not blame child but spoke calmly, insisting that mistakes happen and that the child learns from it and how to right it (clean up).
- Child A dropped a box of toys on the floor, teachers encouraged classmates to work together to help clean up the mess, Child A ran off and the other children started to clean it up.

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

Dyddiad/Date: 26/10/14

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): Communication (Inquire and Discover)

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	When the incident occurred initially, I thought it was a wonderful idea and it was great to see children helping clean up another classmates mistake. The teacher encouraged teamwork, which was great and the pupils bought into it. What changed then is when the child who made the mistake, left it for others to clean up which I felt was not right.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	In this lesson, teachers encourage collaboration and teamwork to fix and solve problems. This was an ideal opportunity that for a small period of time, was in action. It looked like the children understood that it'd be quicker if a few others helped, which was fascinating. Problem occurred when child A left and others remained cleaning up. The lesson aims were also resilience and resilience and child A was left unreminded.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i achrau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	The fact the teacher initially addressed the mistake and spoke to the child calmly about next steps was good, as was the teacher then went to other children and spoke calmly and asked if they could help child A clean up, which they did. This provided children with concrete experience of teamwork and collaboration.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	Most of the incident was handled well and within the lesson objectives and ethos in the school. The problem was the lack of supervision in the clean up attempt. As the cleanup began, child A left shortly after, leaving others to clean their messes. Having an adult/staff member supervise the cleanup and informing children how important it is to take responsibility for their own mistakes, which links with Donaldson (2012) ethically, informed citizens.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Figure 4.



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date:	26/10/19
Lesson details:	Language, Literacy and Communication. Focus on names. Recognition of name tags, talking about first/second names focusing on onset sound and other sounds in the name. Write their name in Special Writing.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?)	Students put their name tags on a tree to signify their attendance every day, but in this lesson the teacher brought the tree in and used the name tags for the lesson. Teacher would start by saying "whose name begins with..." and the children would stand up to answer. There was progression when all children were focused and engaged in the task. All children participated in writing their name on A2 paper and drew a picture of themselves.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)	yes, the lesson aim was to focus on their names and to recognise their name tags. Activities included matching themselves to the sound (phonics) of their name and attempting to write their name. Questions were asked to check understanding.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)	The children understood that when the teacher would say "whose name begins with..." they would stand up if they thought it was them. They understood they were working on their names as they were given their name tags off the tree as prompts. When it came to writing, the teacher did a demonstration of what she wanted them to do, modelling to the students what was needed to succeed.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)	All students were able to engage in the lesson as they all had their name tags with each child able to answer questions on more than one occasion. All students were challenged as mistakes were made but questioning from teacher helped them answer correctly.



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Assessment

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

- Before = Teacher brought in the tree with all the pupils names on it. Teacher asked the pupils to collect their own name tag. As the L.O was to recognise their name tag, this checked their understanding of what their ~~name~~ looks like.
- During = Teacher used closed questioning and open questioning to check understanding. Open - "Who's name begins with...?" or Closed - "Is that your name tag?"
- After = Teacher did not assess understanding after the lesson, questions answered during were sufficient and the lesson had run out of time.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

- A child had brought a toy into the class from the playground and was playing with it when the teacher was talking. The teacher, instead of shouting a command or raising her voice, spoke to the child quietly saying "Would you like to put the toy away now? We can play with that after!" The child put the toy on a counter and sat down ready to work. Use of questioning to check their own behaviour?

Dyddiad/Date: 26/09/2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): Classroom management.

Profiad/ Experience

Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	When the child started to play with the toy, I was wondering how the teacher would react. As the child was not engaged with learning, I was expecting the teacher to take the toy away or reprimand the child. I felt the teacher did well in the scenario of speaking quietly to the child, and the use of questioning, to almost guide the child to the correct answer. It was comforting to see how calm the class remained during the incident, including the reaction of the child.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	As the teacher was talking about what was needed from the children, the child started to play with a toy, therefore was not engaged and could well have caused a distraction to the other learners. The teacher did have to stop explaining to spare the child, which could've led to further disengagement from others, but was justified when the child agreed with the decision. As this was at the start, it was stamped out early on, so did not interrupt further learning.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	The way the teacher spoke to the child, personally and calmly, with questioning instead of commanding meant that the situation was defused. To avoid the incident entirely, perhaps make a class rule, agreed on by pupils, that toys are only to be used in free-time or when directed and not during lessons. The way the teacher guided the student to making a good decision as well could also be considered effective.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	As stated above, a possible next step could be to introduce 'classroom rules' so children know when they can or cannot play with the toys. The lack of statement of rules when learning tells me that this could be a regular occurrence, so as to stop this happening frequently, toys could either be incorporated with the learning or rules be established to prevent it happening again.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	