

Media and digital literacy - EAEE6006/C

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Evaluate and analyse the use of ICT and digital media as a means of promoting and supporting young children's holistic development.

Section 1

Today, ICT has progressed to become an essential component of the education system, and when considering the effectiveness of ICT and digital devices used by young children to access media content or for support with ICT development, there are many aspects to consider when accessing these resources.

Since the Welsh Government asked Professor Graham Donaldson to review the curriculum and assessment arrangements in schools in Wales in 2014 there has been much focus on the development of information and communication technology in education in Wales. The Welsh Government has consistently demonstrated its dedication to education in Wales by making the appropriate changes to the curriculum in order to meet the needs of Wales today. Whilst on his journey to review the curriculum professor Donaldson gathered a considerable amount of evidence to support a report that he would produce on changes to the curriculum in Wales. In order to gather evidence he organised meetings with teachers, head teachers, school staff and other professionals along with feedback from students (Gov.Wales, 2018). Although feedback was generally positive, feedback from school teachers and practitioners seemed to highlight how outdated the current curriculum was, especially in technology, software and digital skills. But feedback from older students was that they wanted a greater focus on life skills, personal confidence, work skills, career advice and health and well-being. It was also mentioned that learning needed to be fun and interesting for children (Gov.Wales, 2018). In order to tackle the concerns highlighted in the current curriculum Professor Donaldson placed Four main purposes at the heart of the new curriculum for Wales 2022. The Four purposes were placed at the heart of the new curriculum to guide all future decisions about educational priorities and strategies and should underpin all teaching and learning in Wales. Within the report produced by Professor Donaldson he suggests that across the new curriculum literacy, numeracy and digital competence should be the responsibility of all teachers (Gov.Wales, 2018). The report produced by Professor Graham Donaldson 'Successful Futures, 2018' highlights the importance of these cross curricular skills.

Drawing specific attention to the cross curricular skills, the report suggests that these play an important role for learning and that they should be developed and strengthened across the whole curriculum. For Learners preparing to enter the world of work, Being fully involved in modern society and the workplace already demands increasingly high levels of digital skill and that will only continue in the future.

Professor Donaldson's report suggests that a digital competence framework should be developed to establish progression and enhance children and young people's learning in preparation for the world of work.

According to the Welsh Government, 2016 'digital competence is the set of skills, knowledge and attitudes that enable the confident, creative and critical use of technologies and systems. It is essential for learners if they are to be informed, capable and have the potential to be successful in today's society' (gov.wales, 2016).

Hwb.gov.Wales (no date) outlines the digital competence framework for the foundation phase, one strand of the Digital competence framework for the foundation Phase is Citizenship. This strand states that through this element of the framework learners will acquire the information and the means to become a diligent and confident digital citizen who will contribute positively to the digital world around them. The purpose of this strand of the framework is to ensure that learners will be prepared and ready to encounter the positives and the negatives of being a digital citizen and will develop the skills and tools to support them until they eventually become independent consumers and producers (Hwb.gov.wales, no date).

If we look back Thirty or Fourty years, there were policies around safeguarding children but quite general and not as they are today.

As times have moved on and with increasing awareness of safeguarding children have developed this has encouraged recent developments of policies and procedure with regards to safeguarding children and the introduction of the all Wales child protection procedures (2008) Or more recently the has been the development of the the safeguarding app, with these it became obvious that we need more policies so that establishments and workforces have protocol to follow and know how to respond to different aspects of safeguarding and protecting children and the issues linked to online abuse and online exploitation within the new safeguarding app and the all wales child protection procedures, but since then we have seen a rapid increase of digital devices so developing policies and keeping up with policies has been quite difficult. Policies look at how something is used or how to manage something and what is acceptable or not within a specific setting and therefore is an important aspect. Policies are a course of action adopted by an establishment, and It is everybody's responsibility to make policies work, as they are only as good as the use that's made of them (gov.uk, 2012).

Professional learning development is also linked to the digital competence framework in that practitioners need to have professional development so that they understand how to deliver digital literacy and digital competence within what they already deliver to learners and that is what is meant by cross curricular aspect of

literacy, numeracy and digital competence within the new curriculum and they can fit in with what teachers and practitioners are doing already, rather than having to change their practice and policies completely. This is also associated with guidance and advice. Guidance and advice at all levels, from management and head teachers all the way down to children and parents. This is supported by Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological systems theory with the child at the centre and is impacted by everything around them, the most immediate being family and the home environment and educational settings and extended family. Therefore it is important to think about all aspects of digital access, digital devices and keeping children safe.

Cyber safety education is an important aspect of keeping children and young people safe online. It is an important aspect of the digital competency framework that the Welsh government created. As we look at the framework and some of the outcomes that are linked to different strands and different ages it is apparent that the outcomes are linked to children understanding how to use devices and how to access content safely. Raising awareness and minimising the associated risks. And make sure that all users/learners that are accessing a range of digital media and experience the benefits that technology brings rather than the disadvantages. This will be an ever evolving subject!

Cultivation theory has existed for more than 60 years, and since the introduction of the world wide web it is still a relevant part of ongoing education in IT and ICT. Studies and research in Cultivation theory show that there is a growing need for the management of all aspects of ITC across all ages (Potter,J,W., 2014) When considering the safety of children that access information from media sources and its effects and influences it has on their learning, cultivation theory is still a useful tool to study the use of ICT and its effects on children's development.

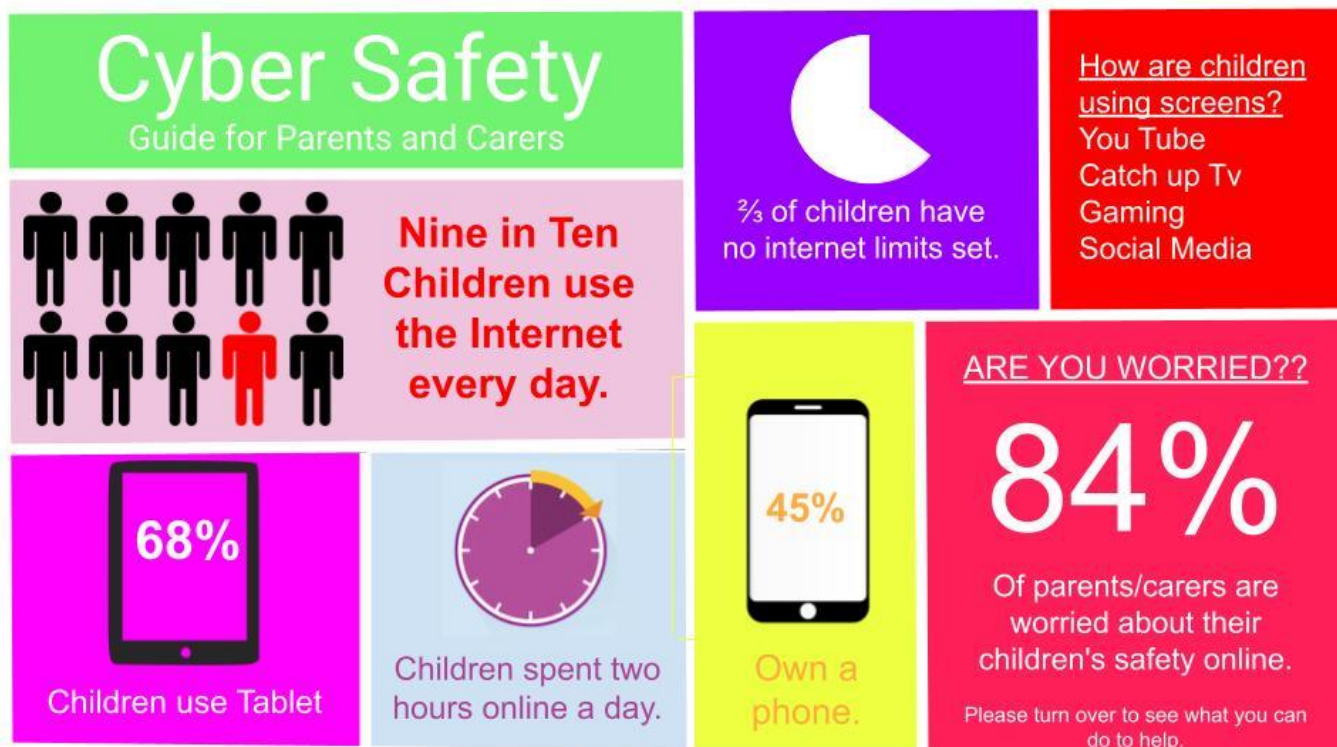
Cultivation theory is a modern day theory that strongly suggests that the influences from entertainment and media due to the growing availability of information and communications technology all day every day can corrupt children's understanding of the real world (Gerbner, G. & Gross, L.,1976). This theory originated by George Gerbner back in the 1960's, and his theory was mostly applied to television viewing and proposed that often with heavy viewing of television viewers perceptions of the real world became more like the world they see through television and media. It is through Gerbner's cultivation theory that we come to realise that television was the main source of storytelling over many decades but of course the theory has developed alongside the consistent developments of new technology into the 21st century. For this reason cultivation theory has made huge leaps forward due to the current availability of social platforms that operate all day everyday, and today anybody can press a button and source or view anything, anytime, anywhere. Due to the growing availability of information and communications technology and it being easily accessible, this can influence children's understanding of the real world.

Examples of this are cartoons, japanese video games and comic book heroes and this is a growing concern as children are spending more and more time in front of screens and could be misled into thinking that violent activity is acceptable unless

strict parental guidance is exercised. So how do we gain a balance between right and wrong? As education begins at home, is it obvious that access to media by any means is the responsibility of the parents, carers and guardians. But the responsibility is not only down to parents, carers and guardians. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety brings together government, industry, law enforcement, academia and charities to work in partnership to help keep children and young people safe online. According to a UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) (2010) review, Four out of Five children and young people aged between Five and Fifteen access the internet at home and Fifty percent of parents have no filtering or parental controls in place to keep their children safe (Gov.uk, 2010). The UK Council for Children's Internet Safety (UKCCIS) now known as UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) was renamed in 2018 to ensure it will work to improve online safety for everyone in the UK. Saferinternet.org (2018) does highlight the priority areas that the UKCIS council intend to improve safety for all, these include but are not limited to: cyberbullying, sexual exploitation, Hate crime and hate speech and any discrimination against groups that are protected by the Equality Act (saferinternet.org.2018). In addition to the UKCIS, Ofcom is the broadcasting regulatory body for the United Kingdom. The purpose of ofcom is to make sure that everyone gets the best out of their TV, broadband, home phones and mobile phone services and to protect viewers and listeners, especially minors (ofcom.org, 2021). Through Ofcom you can make complaints concerning inappropriate content or programmes parents fear may be harmful to children or those responsible for caring for children. Ofcom has a complaints procedure for a number of issues depending on what the concern is about.

In summary, we know that with the increasingly rapid pace of technological development, cyber safety is paramount for children and young people and must be consistently emphasised. In order to safeguard the structure of modern education and our children's future we cannot underestimate the importance of entering a new era of education and safeguarding is a necessary part of its development. This will evolve at an ever increasing rate, therefore constant monitoring must be implemented by the appropriate governing bodies. However, parents, carers and teachers should not be overlooked in current and future technological advancements, as all future development should be inclusive.

Section 2



Keeping Your Child Safe online, A Guide For Parents and Carers.

Modern children's lives have changed and improved dramatically over recent years. Better health care, public safety, and support for their physical and mental well-being (OECD, 2021). However, at the same time there are new stresses for children today. New technologies mean children have access to smartphones, tablets and other information and communication technologies which gives them great opportunity to access the digital world (OECD, 2020).

"Young children are our most precious resource. The use of ICT in the learning environment does, however, come with some risk." (Beauch, 2010).

This leaflet is a guide for parents, carers and guardians to provide information and tips to keep young children safe online.

- 1. Take Control**
Talk to your child it is important to explain how information, communication, technologies, ICT, screens and online platforms should be used and why. Set limits and agree on boundaries together for your child's time online (Internet Matters, 2020). However, it is important to review your rules as your children grow and become a more active online learner. Making the most of your parental controls can support your child online safety and control the content that they are accessing. Fifty per cent of parents currently do not filter or have parental controls in place for their children's online access (UKCCIS, 2016). Filtering is an effective way to make sure that your child is not accessing inappropriate material that makes them feel uncomfortable and causes anxiety. For young children, it is important to prioritise face-to-face interaction and online contact that encourages active play to support language development and other skills.
- 2. Informal Conversation**
The NSPCC (2021) reviewed suggestions by parents and carers to talk to their children about online safety. Their research shows that if parents talk about it on a regular basis when the child does feel worried or something has happened online then they are more likely to talk to their parents about their issues. The NSPCC (2021) also suggest that when a parent/carer shows an interest in their child's online life they can be more likely to talk to their parents or carers, but they must remember to be open-minded about subjects or content that your child approaches you about.
- 3. Search Safety**
Parents and carers can assist their children to search safely by using child-friendly search engines. Another way of helping children search safe can be done on Google and other search engines as well as YouTube where parents can log in and choose the information that is searched for is relevant for their children's age. For more information go to: google.co.uk/safetycentre where advice and guidance are available.
- 4. Set a good example.**
Social learning theories like Bandura (McBlain, 2018) suggest that children copy adults' behaviour so it is important that parents act in a responsible way, children can not be expected to limit their online time if they always see their parents on their phones or tablets. It is important to model and encourage breaks from time spent on screens and also to discourage the use of devices in the bedroom at night, as these can keep children awake, meaning they have less sleep, leading to them being tired and possibly being disengaged when in school. The National Sleep Foundation (SCLHealth.org, 2019) recommends that parents should stop their children from using devices thirty minutes to an hour before bedtime as light from screens suppresses melatonin and can affect the quality of your child's sleep (Hog Medical Group, 2019). The sooner parents enforce a no screen before bedtime rule the better as it gets harder to enforce the older the child gets.
- 5. Further reading and guidance.**
There are a range of services available that provide information to parents and carers in regards to online safety if you have concerns. One of which is www.thinkuknow.co.uk which is set up by the National Crime Agency and they provide a wide variety of resources that parents and carers may find useful to help them keep their child safe. Another trusted website is www.childnet.com they provide information to parents and carers on how they can start a conversation with their child about being safe. If parents or carers have concerns these can be reported to www.saferinternet.org.uk

Useful links:
www.parentalcontrols.co.uk/parental-controls-links
www.internetmatters.org
www.saferinternet.org.uk
www.childnet.com
www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety

SafeInternet.org

Online Safety

Follow the SMART rules to help stay safe online.

S Stay **safe** online by not sharing your personal information.

M Do not **meet** anyone who you have only become friends with online.

A Do not **accept** messages and friend requests from people you do not know.

R Not everything online is **reliable**. People online are strangers and you can't always trust everything they say.

T Tell an adult you trust if anything happens online that you do not like.

(Source: Day Cream Education, 2021)

Section 3

This planned activity is hide and seek with the use of walkie talkies. The activity involves a group of 7 children aged 5-7 years (key stage 1). The children need to be split up into 3 pairs and then one individual child to seek. The activity would begin by each pair being allocated a colour, the colours of the teams would be selected at random, picked from a hat, with the seeker being the color Red. Then a fully charged walkie talkie will be given to each pair and the seeker. Within their pair they need to decide between them who is the caller and will have the walkie talkie and will also need to decide between them where they will hide. one child in each pair and the child that is seeking is to use the walkie talkie for the activity. The child that is seeking will close their eyes and count to ten, while the 3 pairs of children go and hide, just as they would in a regular game of hide and seek. But since they have walkie talkies, the children hiding can give instructions to the person seeking to find them and navigate them to their location. The hidden children, one pair at a time, by colour reference, will give the seeker instructions and directions, while the seeker is trying to follow the instructions to find their classmates one pair at a time. The teacher will accompany the seeker, in order to ensure communication is clear. Once all children have been found and the activity is over the children can pair up again, pick colours at random and give someone else a chance to be the seeker.

The equipment required for the children is:

A defined area for the activity.

4 x Walkie Talkies (one for each pair and seeker).

A brief on operating the device e.g. All switch to channel 1.

A start and finish point.

The role of an early years practitioner here is to put together an activity that will keep children engaged throughout the day, and to encourage learning and development, through play and teaching whilst enabling children to build their language, literacy and numeracy skills (Stonebridge, 2018).

In the first instance the practitioner needs to test the range of the walkie talkies and set parameters of where the children are allowed to go before sending them out (Midland, no date).

The practitioner will then give the children a brief about the activity. The practitioner will give a team brief about how to operate the walkie talkie, and where the designated area for the activity is and outline the boundaries. The practitioner will also give a safety brief to make sure that the children know that wandering far away could take them out of walkie talkie range, and to also encourage them to stay cautious and safe, but to have fun. The children are clear that the activity will end once the last pair is found. The rest is up to them!

As an early years practitioner the role of the practitioner within this activity is to create a secure environment and encourage children to use their imagination to learn. Through this activity the practitioner will observe the children and the activity in order to identify children's digital competence and communication levels as well as problem solving as part of being paired with someone else to encourage teamwork and sharing. The practitioner can also observe how well the area and environment serves for the activity and can then adapt or modify the environment to more support the children (Stonebridge, 2018).

Section 4

This activity was chosen by the practitioner as it seemed to carry many opportunities to promote aspects from the digital competence framework for the foundation phase in Wales. One strand of the digital competence framework for the foundation phase is interacting and collaborating (Gov.Wales, 2019). Two elements within the interacting and collaborating strand of the framework are 'communication' and 'collaboration' and it is through these elements that the group taking part in the hide and seek activity will look at this type of digital communications device to see how effective it is (Gov.wales, 2019). It is also within these communication and collaboration elements of the digital competence framework that the group at the age of 5-7 years (key stage 1) aim to be able to contribute to a group activity using information and communications technology, and also aim to be able to collaborate with a partner on a piece of digital work. The activity for the group carried all of these elements, they seemed to fit comfortably within the activity. As the activity was outdoors and self- directed, after the point of the practitioner giving the brief this was to promote independence for the group. According to Schwarzmuller, G. & Rinaldo, V (2013) the importance of Self-directed play, also known as free play, promotes social and cognitive development when aligned with curriculum based objectives. Also according to Wilkinson (1993) methods of instruction that included guided free play provide opportunities that make content meaningful for learners. Understanding how children develop is important for all those who work alongside them. Teachers, mentors and practitioners need to have an understanding of children's developmental processes in order to meet their needs, so the role of the practitioner within this activity is important. According to early educators as far back as Jean-jacques Rousseau in 1911, it was viewed that the teacher or practitioner is central to creating and managing the learning environment that would be positive and effective, and where children could be introduced to purposeful learning (MacBlain,2018). Alongside the practitioner creating environments that offer children meaningful and purposeful opportunities to learn, they offer 'scaffolding'. The scaffolding process is where adults work alongside children to support them in their progress and learning (Gray, C. & MacBlain, S.F , 2015) And according to MacBlain, S.F. (2014) Amongst the number of benefits that the scaffolding process offers, a key factor is that it is very flexible can be used by teachers and practitioners in almost any setting, and deliver positive results. Although this is an important factor, its is not

the only role of a practitioner within children's learning, and alongside this the role of teachers and practitioners is to be knowledgeable. Researchgate (2000) states that by having a more knowledgeable source or someone with a better understanding, a more knowledgeable Other is able to expose learners to knowledge beyond their current educational level.

To evaluate the activity as a whole, it not only meets some aspects of the digital competence framework set out by the Welsh Government but also other requirements of the new curriculum for Wales 2022. Within the activity lies its relation to the new curriculum for Wales 2022. The Curriculum for Wales 2022 promotes a more holistic and child centred approach to learning, and is to be more broad and balanced. It also states that health and well-being is one of its six areas of learning and experience within it, and therefore always needs to be considered when planning for children's learning. According to health.org.uk, (2017) to consider health and well-being into children's learning and experiences gives a more rounded education that positively influences long term health outcomes. And a good well rounded education creates strong foundations for healthier lives resulting in developing lifelong healthy habits (health.org.uk, 2019) which is promoted by the new curriculum in Wales. From this we can see that one activity can promote not only the use of one of the six areas of learning but multiple areas at the same time. The Welsh Government has produced much documentation and guidance on the new curriculum for Wales 2022 and the areas of learning within it. One document that has guidance on health and well-being is available from hwb.gov.Wales (2019) and provides guidance and information within its 'statement of what matters', and within this section it is outlined that this particular area of learning gives children opportunity to explore the connections between the experiences they have and mental health and emotional well-being. The statement of what matters (hwb.gov.Wales, 2019) goes on to highlight that when given opportunities that allow children to explore the complexities of these connections, they will be able to recognise that feelings and emotions are neither fixed nor consistent. Margaret McMillian states that teachers who work with children in primary schools have a responsibility to give children the opportunity to experience outdoor play as much as they can, and turn the outdoor play into a learning experience (Machan, 2016)

In addition to this, children's walkie talkies are another ideal way of giving children space whilst still supervising and observing them. This gives them the opportunity to build communication skills, and promote independence. As well as these many benefits, it gives children the chance to gain other skills at a young age, such as the children telling each other where they are going, and as they are low cost and very durable, walkie talkies are a great way to teach children how to care for and be responsible for a possession (Midland, no date). Language, literacy and communication is another area of learning within the new curriculum for Wales, and this activity allows great opportunities to build language and communication skills for young children, it aims to support learners across the whole curriculum to grow skills

and gain knowledge in Welsh, English and international languages as well as in literature (hwb.gov.Wales, 2019) This means that different languages should be explored to support the development of skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Never underestimate the value of communication skills. To be able to communicate effectively is possibly the most important of all life skills. We use it to pass on information to others, and it's how we understand what is said to us. Communication, as a definition 'is the act of transferring information from one place to another (skills you need, 2020).

One of the most essential skills in life is communication. It plays a lot of roles, people use it to encourage, share ideas, connect and more. Without communication, there will be misunderstanding.

After carrying out an activity it is important to evaluate and reflect on it. Reflective practice is a tool that can be used for improving learning in relation to work and life experiences according to (skills you need, 2011). Reflective practice allows practitioners to gain an important understanding of their own practice, and give them the opportunity to improve the necessary skills and approaches in order to achieve the best outcomes for children.

Is also important to reflect with the group of children to discuss what they have done and achieved by taking part in this activity. This will help the children be aware of what they have learned within the process and taking part in the activity, and the relevance it has. This enables the group to identify the value that an activity has on their learning. Giving the group time to reflect and feed back to the practitioner is also important, and from this the practitioner will gain valuable information from the group and note this for the next activity. Giving every child within the group a voice and the opportunity to reflect and feedback is part of a child centered approach and will promote character building, thinking for themselves and and further promote independence.

Gibbs reflective cycle is a tool that was created to reflect on experience to improve planning and outcomes for future activities. It is a model that consists of phases. It breaks down the experience giving opportunity to reflect on experiences as they happen (learning performance 2019).

To build upon this activity for future planning, it would be beneficial to incorporate some Welsh language skills. There is also great opportunity to introduce other activities using walkie talkies, such as a scavenger hunt or eye spy. There also needs to be considerations made to adapt this activity for individuals that have additional learning needs and any provision that needs to be put in place for learners to take part in activities.

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