

Brief description of the activity (no more than 50 words)
The activity was carried out in a classroom setting with 16 children aged 3 years old. The Foundation Phase Wales (2014) states the adult- child ratio in reception class is currently 1:8. The activity involved children making a caterpillar which followed on from reading The Very Hungry Caterpillar (2002) book.
Aim/Objective of the activity
The main objective of the activity was to explore the children's creativity. The activity was following on from The Very Hungry Caterpillar (2002) book read as a class, which included using materials such as, loo rolls, milk cartons, kitchen roll tubes to show their own representation of the caterpillar. They had paint, buttons, googly eyes and different colour cards/ paper they could also use. This links to the Foundation Phase Wales (2008) Creative Development guidance. They feel children's curiosity should be stimulated on a daily basis with sensory experiences. It also allows children to express their ideas, feelings and emotions using their imagination.
Your role
My role was to assist this teacher led activity and offer support when the children asked for it. I helped the children to put on their painting aprons and to provide paint when they needed more.
Positive aspects – why?
I felt that I allowed the children to explore their imagination by observing their creativity unfold. As the Foundation Phase (2008) states, it is very important to value children's original ideas which develops their personal and social development, but also encourages their confidence to try new things.

The children did enjoy the activity and had fun doing it. Tawil (2016) believes using toilet rolls or shoes boxes to represent something develops children's problem solving but also settings which provide 'junk' provide variability, flexibility and adaptability and through creating something new it can create feelings of motivation and reward.

The activity gave the children an active involvement to their learning and as The Foundation Phase (2008) curriculum believes children are able to take risks, problem solve, make decisions individually and in groups. (Welsh Government, 2016)

I think the activity showed aspects of good practice due to the range of materials provided, as the Foundation Stage (no date) suggests children's learning environment should be stimulating with many different supplies allowing children the opportunity to choose from a wide range of resources. This also encourages children making activities more interesting and unique to their work by giving them the opportunity to select their own materials.

Challenging aspects – why?

The activity was done in groups of 6 while the rest of the children had free play in the classroom. This caused a challenge as it created a distraction with some of the children who were grouped to do their caterpillar and affected the concentration.

The other challenge was the lack of time we had to complete the caterpillar, which caused some upset with some of the children who wanted to finish. I also felt like I didn't voice my feelings enough to the teacher to inform them about the difficulties and realise this is something I need to improve.

What knowledge was demonstrated?

According to Care Inspection Wales (2019) a setting which is inspected as 'excellent' practitioners should provide very strong practice through consistency in providing positive outcomes and children's wellbeing should be at a high level.

This activity explored the children's creativity and imagination by experimenting with individual techniques and exploring different patterns, colours and textures. As the Foundation Phase (2008) states, children should be able to freely express themselves and make progress in their ability to develop and understand texture, shapes and colour. It developed communication through

discussion of materials and what the children needed to do in the activity, but also during the activity their vocabulary was able to expand. This also leads to hygiene as they had to listen to instructions to wash their hands properly when they had finished. The activity also showed their physical development through manipulation of different tools and also their emotional development by believing in their own ability and being confident in their choices.

This was a hands-on activity which developed the children's sensory play by allowing the children to engage their senses with materials and textures through play. (Early years resources, no date).

The children could share their emotions and feelings, as Foundation Stage (no date) states, children are very expressive, therefore imagination and creativity play an important role in children's knowledge.

What skills were demonstrated?

The children were able to expand their literacy skills. As the Literacy- Reading Curriculum (2014) states, learner's abilities in nursery should be able to remember detail of the story and be able to answer questions. By following on from the literacy aspect, they continually discussed the book whilst creating their own caterpillar which reinforced details.

The activity also showed fine motor skills through creating and making their Caterpillars by grasping materials to stick or paint.

Which values were demonstrated?

The children showed different values in the activity such as; sharing, listening, self-discipline, kindness and patience through taking turns when using different materials. The Foundation Phase (2008) believes, communication and social interaction allows children to learn with and from others.

What could have been done differently? Why?

To reflect on the activity, I am going to follow Boud et al. (1985) reflection process.

The children worked in small groups and came and went when they had finished their caterpillar. Due to the distraction which became difficult for some children to concentrate they wanted to play rather than create their model.

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If we did this activity again next time, I think the activity would have been better to have done as a class to avoid distractions, which would have been possible as the Welsh Government (2016) states children ages 3-7 years should have one adult to every 8 children. This would have removed the distraction and involved all children in a group activity.

I did not feel very confident in front of the teachers and assistants, next time I will believe in myself and be confident in my abilities. Also, next time I would get myself involved with the activity, to get the children who were unsure of the task involved, as Early Learning Furniture (2017) believe, being a role model allows the children opportunity to take part and kick start their ideas. To keep the children's interest, as the Foundation Phase (2008) suggest, by praising and encouraging the children while they do their painting, this acknowledges their efforts and the children then develop a positive attitude towards learning and value the activity.

How Reflection can Provide Excellent Services

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What is Reflective Practice?

Reflective practice is a way to look and think about the practice we provide and also consider changes and develop improvements continually. Reflection is a constant cycle of practice carried out with young children to provide a high-quality service. (Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY), 2016)

Why is Reflective Practice Important?

It will achieve greater outcomes for children if you reflect and better your practice. It also benefits parents and guardians who can see improvements and

The Care Inspector Wales (2019) believe for a setting to gain excellence, it should show evidence of sustained high-quality practice. A setting which provides excellent practice should be highly effective and show evidence of the clear impact on the children's well-being, progress and achievement.

Estyn (2017) inspects and provides advice on the standards and quality in education and training in Wales. Estyn believes a setting which provides a quality service should be consistent in their practice and show positive outcomes. For a setting to be considered excellent, it should show a strong performance and practice which is sustainable.

The Foundation Phase Framework (2015) believe good practice is about practitioners understanding, inspiration and challenge of children's potential for learning. They should

Core Values and Skills of a

LISTENING

As early years practitioners it is vitally important we listen to young children, as The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (no date) Article 12 states, children have the right to express their views and feelings in matters that will affect them. Linked to this is Let's Listen (2010) which aims to ensure

EXPERIENCE

Early years practitioners should understand and put into effect the curriculum requirements. Effective practice requires understanding on children's fast development during early years- physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. For example: regular meetings to share experiences and ideas.

SUSTAINED SHARED THINKING

An effective practitioner involves themselves in children's thinking process. The practitioner should have awareness of the child's understanding. To do this effectively, the practitioner should show a genuine interest, encouragement and ask open questions to extend the children's thinking.
(EYFSC no date)

According to Sylva et al. (2004) early years settings which are run by critically reflective, well qualified staff are more effectively run as the practitioners are more

Reflective Models to Guide and Improve

Donald Schön (1983)

Donald Schön's (1983) reflective cycle is a useful model to follow in early years settings. He used the terms 'reflection on action'

Smith and Craft (2011) suggest Schön (1983) ideas give useful ways to consider reflective practice in early years settings. Schön suggests that practitioners use reflection when they come across an unexpected experience.

However, Williams (2002) feels reflection is more than seeing and thinking about practice. He feels, our emotions, feelings and understanding are also important areas of reflection.

Williams (2002:55) stated 'Actions are so much more powerful if

Reflection in Action	Reflection on Action
Experiencing	Thinking about an incident that has happened
Acting on the spot/ immediately	Considering what you would change next time
Thinking about what to do next	Slow process, taking your time

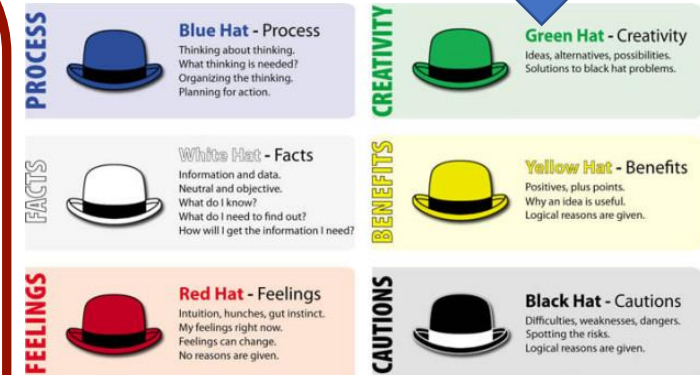
(Schön, 1983)

Edward De Bono 6 thinking hats (1985)

Source: Project Management Academy, 2016.

This reflective model can also be useful for practitioners in the early years as Sheth (2012) discusses, the brain thinks in 6 different manners during the decision-making process, it can become a battle with many thoughts coming in mind from all directions. Therefore, the 6 thinking hats allow a person to think in one direction at a time to generate ideas. Also, this reflection model brings an extra element which is the red hat, this symbolises feelings. (Sheth, 2012).

For example: imagine 6 thinking hats stacked on your head at once, this will feel very overwhelming.



To conclude, reflection is a thought process of looking at past experiences, asking questions, looking to the future and making changes to improve practice and

Useful References:

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Element 4

Area for further development (provide further details)	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
1. Knowledge Research and apply for a Family Intervention Team job in the council.	To gain hands on experience in the job and to gain a better understanding of the area of field to explore whether the potential career as a Social worker is suitable. To pursue a career that I have always had an interest in and to work directly with families and children in need, children in need of protection and looked after children.	Using the Pembrokeshire County Council search engine for jobs. Search Family Intervention Team Worker and download the job description. Check the job description for the entry requirements and experience they want prior to applying for the job.	Using Google and the Pembrokeshire County Council Website. Seek guidance from Louise who is a senior Social Worker in the council. Ask Louise for interview practice and questions that might come up in an interview.	January 2020.
2. Knowledge Look at Post graduate courses that will help to	To gain more confidence and knowledge of children with additional learning needs. To gain a recognised qualification in this field.	Look on the university of South Wales website and have a look at the modules listed, the entry requirements	Book and attend an open evening at the University of South Wales to find out more information, and to talk to the academic staff about other	January 2020.

develop my understanding of additional learning needs.		and how much the course is going to cost.	aspects of studying, such as student finance or scholarships.	
3. Skills Team work	To communicate effectively, share skills, knowledge and information. To facilitate cooperation within and between organisations. With the type of work, I want to be able to do, it is vitally important that as a team we work together effectively to increase efficiency to gain the best outcome possible.	Make the most of group discussions and team working sessions in University and contribute when possible. Be confident in my own ideas that they are important to discuss and share with the rest of the team or my peers in University.	University and my personal job. My peers can also support me by boosting my confidence and believing in my ideas.	Ongoing
4. Skills Presentation	To improve confidence and effectiveness of presenting information.	Practice multiple times alone and in front of friends or family. Attend a public speaking course in Pembrokeshire College to	Pembrokeshire College, peers, friends and family.	Ongoing

		help nerves and learn coping strategies.		
5. Values Dedication	To maintain knowledge of best practice.	Read academic journal articles to keep up to date with the news. Attend meetings, join in with discussions and input to them.	Researchers, work professionals, colleagues.	Ongoing
6. Values Empathy	Have an understanding of how someone else feels regarding any situation.	Through practice and over time. Talk and listen to people. Travel somewhere new, out of my usual environment to explore different cultures which will help to give me a better appreciation for others.	Family, friends, colleagues, peers.	Ongoing
7. Other? Kindness	Kindness and compassion are effective in many types of work. In the social work field, kindness will be a motivational factor that will help through the tough days, knowing that the hard work you put in will help people	Shadowing peers who show kindness to others and want to achieve great outcomes.	Peers, personal job, work experience in settings. Travelling, different countries and cultures.	Ongoing

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	and achieve a successful outcome. Empathy will help to build good relationships while working and in my personal life.			
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