

Student Number: 2513719

ECEY4009

Cover Sheet

For this assessment I have submitted the following:

Part 1: Personal Development Plan

Part 2: Briefing Paper

Part 3: Written Piece

I have not used AI

Rhan / Part 1:

Word Count: 503

What do I know already: I am based in a Welsh setting within Flying Start and have been there for over a year. Staff are provided with regular training to support development. I am going to create a table of objectives to develop my professional skills in my work place. What have I learnt so far: Training, observation and reflection are important to consider when setting my objectives, actions and success criteria. With support from my Senior, we have discussed what I do well and what I could improve on. What do I want to develop: I am slowly picking up the Welsh language within the work place however, I want to feel more confident and develop my use of the Welsh language. I must continue with regular training to ensure I am up to date with new policies and practices. I must reflect on my practice as part of my job role, to see where I am working well and to look at areas where I may need to improve and develop further.				
Objective	Actions (How will I achieve this objective/ what needs to be done?)	Resources (What support and resources are needed to achieve this objective?)	Target Date for achieving objective	Success criteria (How will I know I have achieved this goal, how will I review this?)
Develop my Welsh language so I am able to Speak basic Welsh confidently within setting.	Attend the Mudiad Meithrin-Clebran, monthly course which has been booked in by my Senior.	Ensure I have access to a laptop and internet connection to attend the meetings. Arrange my schedule in work to fit around the meetings. I will also use the APP 'say something in Welsh' to help support my learning.	Ongoing target	This will be an ongoing target. However, I will recognise my progress by using more Welsh words within the playgroup setting.
Complete 'Stress awareness' training.	Ensure I make time within my work schedule to complete the online training.	Access Learning@Wales to complete the course. Ensure I have access to a laptop and internet connection in order to complete the training.	October 24th 2025	I will receive a certificate to show I have completed my training which I will then pass onto my Senior through email.

To record myself interacting with a child in setting and use my Adult-child interaction checklist (ACI) to help me develop as a practitioner.	I am going to set up my laptop in the Playroom – ready to record in an area where the full view of the room can be seen. I will take one of the children into the Playroom and record my interaction with the child during an activity of their choice. I will watch the recording back with my senior. Together we will reflect on my practice.	Ensure my laptop is fully charged and set up ready to record before I bring the child into the Playroom. The room must be tidy and set up with various activities for the child to choose from. Check the observation piece has been recorded correctly and I have the relevant paperwork ready for my reflection meeting with my Senior.	October 24th 2025	The observation will be recorded correctly and I will have met with my Senior to discuss and reflect on my interaction with the child. I will have targets set to support my development and work on for my next observation.
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Rhan / Part 2:

Word Count: 1058

What is reflection and reflective practise?

Reflection is often carried out in daily life, with people often questioning themselves - "could I have reacted differently", "should I have said something else?"

Reflective Practice requires thinking, learning and action -

Thinking - what went well and not so well.

Learning - comparing and considering what can be learnt.

Action - creating a plan of action from what has been learnt.

'Professional reflection is a personal thing. It should be a personal reflection with a personal agenda for improvement. This can then be shared in order to make sense of it and to gain advice and support.'

Tarrant (2013). The early years practitioner (EYP) will work in a continuous cycle of self-observation and self-evaluation in order to achieve best practise. Reflective Practice can be carried out individually or as a team to achieve best practice

Why is reflective practise important to EY practise?

'One of the benefits of reflection is its impact on professionalism. Through reflecting on our practice, we become more aware, more in control, more able to see our strengths and development needs.' Tarrant (2013). Reflection enables the EYP to look at their practice in detail which, in return, ensures that children and young people will be given the best opportunity to a 'flying start' in life. Legislation, policy and guidance regularly changes within the Early Years sector. With this change, comes change in practice. Reflective practice improves the skills, knowledge and understanding needed in the job role. It builds confidence within the workforce and encourages the EYP to be more pro-active as an individual. Furthermore, it enables the EYP to critically evaluate their skills and knowledge developing mindful and critical awareness of not only themselves, but also their colleagues.

The theory of reflective practise:

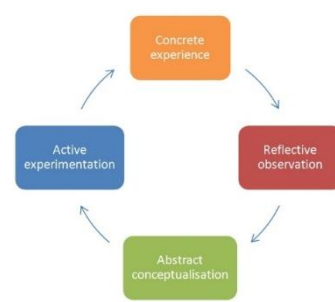
Dewey's theory of reflection challenges the practitioners understanding and encourages moving away from habit. It is about asking questions of best practice - "Is what I am doing the best approach?". Dewey recognises the two as 'routine action' and 'reflective action'. 'Routine Action' - the practitioner carries out their duties and routine without questioning their actions or why the day runs the way it does. 'Reflective Action' the practitioner questions their duties and routine. "the children are unsettled, why could this be? Would a change in routine help?"

Schon's theory of reflection looks at reflection in action and reflection on action. Reflection on action requires the practitioner to look back on their practice and analyse what went well and not so well. Reflection in action requires the practitioner to reflect in the moment. A skill that is important to have as a paramedic or police officer. 'There are those who choose the swampy lowlands. They deliberately involve themselves in messy but crucially important problems and, when asked to describe their methods of inquiry, they speak of experience, trial and error, intuition, and muddling through.' Schon (2016). Schon believes reflection requires the practitioner to have confidence in their practice but to be willing to try new ways of working.

Gibbs' model



Kolb's model

**Analysis of models – compare/contrast/pros/cons:**

Gibbs model involves thinking about feelings. The practitioner should consider how they felt in the moment – good and bad, they must research to help their understanding, think about other ideas of how they could have responded and create a plan of what to do if the situation arose again. The diagram above, shows how Gibbs' model is planned out. It requires detail and a lot of thought process into the practitioners ideas and feelings. This can be useful if the practitioner is new to reflection as the language is easy to understand and the reflective cycle is broken down into smaller chunks – making reflection easier to understand and develop skills. Too much focus on emotion may shadow the process of evaluating fact. The practitioner could become caught up in negative thoughts which would be unhelpful to the process. Common Pitfalls, Providing too many irrelevant details or going on tangents, Mixing emotional reactions or personal bias into the factual account. Forgetting to mention critical aspects of the setting or participants.' McLeod (2025).

Kolb's model discusses real tangible experience. The practitioner should look at what happened, observe what went well/not so well, use knowledge and theory to develop their understanding and finally, actively practice and test what they have learnt. Unlike Gibbs' model, Kolb's model is less about feeling and more focused on concrete experience. It requires the practitioner to focus on action supported by observation and knowledge. 'This process is flexible rather than linear, some learners might reflect more before they act, while others learn best by jumping in and adjusting along the way. The key is that all four modes contribute something vital to the creation of enduring knowledge.' McLeod (2025). Kolb expects the practitioner to use model at any stage but makes the point that all four sections are required to be looked at in order to achieve good practice of reflection.

Gibbs' model has six divided sections making it easier to the practitioner to separate their thoughts and build an understanding in each area. The language used is also easy to understand. This would be a useful model for a new practitioner who may be unfamiliar with reflection and reflective practice. However, the use of focus on feelings and emotion could be confusing to the practitioner as it could cloud judgement if focused only on negative feelings and reactions. Kolb's avoidance of emotion and feelings enables the practitioner to fully focus on observation, knowledge and action. Although the model only has four sections, the thought process and action required is still as plentiful as Gibbs' model. The use of more complex language could be confusing to a new practitioner or a practitioner unfamiliar with reflection. This model may be useful to a practitioner who has experience in reflective practice and has attempted other models of reflection but is looking for a different method.

Conclusion

Both Reflective models are useful to the Early Years Practitioner. 'These models provide a useful guide or place to start but reflection is a very personal process and everyone will work towards it in a different way. Take some time to try different approaches until you find the one that works for you. You may find that as time goes on and you develop as a reflective practitioner that you try different methods which suit your current circumstances.' University of Cambridge (2025). It is important for the Early Years Practitioner to find a model that suits their way of working best.

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Rhan / Part 3:

Word Count: 1539

Written essay:**Recognise and analyse the significance of different aspects of professional practise and why these are important in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children.**

This essay will recognise and analyse the significance of different aspects of professional practice and why they are important in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children.

It can be assumed that the word 'professional' relates to a person who has qualifications. However, within the childcare sector, this is not the case. A 'professional' can include the roles of a volunteer, student or childcare practitioner. 'In other contexts 'professional' refers only to those with a qualification or specific expertise, but in early years there is a greater understanding of the value and importance of the qualities individuals demonstrate in practice, with or without formal qualifications' Gasper (2015). Throughout the years, the role of the Early Years Practitioner (EYP) has developed from a supporting role to the teacher, to a front facing role supporting children and families through the Early Years, with the EYP being given the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills throughout their practice. 'The invisible workforce has been transformed into a visible workforce through professional learning and new employment opportunities' Hallet (2013).

The work of EYP is based on values such as, social justice, professional commitment, trust and respect. It is about equality but also understanding equity – giving people what they need in order to have the same opportunities as everyone else. 'The ethical practitioner is required to have basic qualities of empathy and commitment in order to be effective in understanding and interpreting the professional responsibilities of the role. These features sit well with the motivation of most individuals to act with 'decency' in their relationships with others and particularly the emotional commitment to working positively for children, a value set which combines normative and applied models of ethical practice (a commitment to

justice and care).’ Reed, Walker, Callan (2015). It is important that EYP share these values in order to understand and support the children and families in their care.

Strong values help to build an understanding of the child and their background, to show empathy and support the development of positive relationships between the child and carer.

‘Communication is central to all interactions between people. This includes encounters between agencies that provide welfare and support, between professional practitioners and between professionals and service users seeking support’ Dunhill (2010). The EYP must adapt their way of communicating in order to achieve good communication. This includes, using straightforward language for parents, a more professional approach for co-workers and professionals, simple language for children and young people - dependant on age and stage. By adapting their language, the EYP ensure all involved understand what is being communicated and of what is being asked of them. Particularly when communicating with each other, professionals use language that may not be familiar to another. Integrated working ensure every person involved with the child is working from the same page, and has a consistent approach. ‘The number of agencies that support children and young people has grown, while the issues children and young people are experiencing have widened and become more complex. Communicating effectively across these agencies has become essential to identifying the needs and planning the support for each child or young person.’ Dunhill (2010). Miscommunication could cause confusion between parents, carers and agencies. It may result in poor planning, missed opportunities and lack of support for the child. Moreover, in regards to safeguarding, miss communication could be a case of life or death for a child.

It is essential for the EYP to have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of their professional practice in order to keep the children in their care safe and healthy. Flying Start, Newport, require every EYP to attend mandatory training, including, safeguarding, first aid and food hygiene on a bi-annual basis. Flying Start Policies are developed from the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which has informed Welsh Government Legislation. Article 6 of the UNCRC states “Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.” In regards to

safeguarding, Welsh Government have developed legislation to support children and young people who are in the care of Professionals. 'Everyone working in an education setting, whether employed by the local authority or otherwise, who comes into contact with children and their families has a role in safeguarding children. They form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and are in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children to prevent issues from escalating'. Welsh Government (2025). The EYP see the children in their care, daily. They may be the first to notice changes or signs that cause concern, therefore it is important they can recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and what to do there are concerns. Regular training supports the EYP in building confidence of their knowledge and will ensure they are not afraid to take action if needed.

Multi-agency working is essential in the early years sector. 'Communication forms a large proportion of the work undertaken by professionals in the children's workforce and is the ingredient that brings all of the agencies together, ensures they become 'joined up' and allows integrated working to be carried out.' Dunhill, Elliott, Shaw (2010). Every Professional involved with children and young people have a specific set of skills that are valuable to the child or young person. Each professional involved with the child holds a piece of the puzzle, which, when put together, can show the full picture of the child or young person's life and development. Without all the pieces crucial information may be missed, impacting the child, sometimes, with devastating consequences. Lord Laming's inquiry into Victoria Climbié's Death found 'the main task facing all the agencies is to jointly agree a response following the identification of concerns about a child. This response must meet both the immediate needs of the child and promote the child's welfare' Laming (2003). Multi-agency working, when done effectively, ensure that everyone is working in the best interest of the child.

The observation and planning cycle is an ongoing process of observing the child, assessing their play and development, then planning accordingly. 'It involves observation of children as a part of all activity, which is most often held in the mind of the practitioner but may sometimes be documented, using this rich information to understand how a child is developing, learning and growing, and then planning the next steps for the adults in supporting and extending the learning'. Birthto5matters

(2021). Observation support the EYP in learning to know the child in all areas of development, ensuring no child is missed. It may also flag up if a child needs support with speech and communication. The assessment of observation enables the EYP to question and consider, in depth, the behaviours and play of the child. For example, What is happening? what is the child learning?. From this, the practitioner is able to fully understand the child, enabling them to develop an individual and personal approach for the child, providing activities that are age, stage and developmentally appropriate. The assessments are useful when speaking to parents and professionals as the information the EYP provides will be clear and show a good understanding of the child. 'Information can be communicated clearly in a summary form to inform discussions with parents, other agencies, or professionals involved with the child and family'. Birthto5matters (2021). The sooner the practitioner is able to recognise concerns with the child's development, the sooner an action can be put in place and other professionals can be contacted.

'The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an important, legally binding agreement signed by 196 countries (as of 12 July 2022) which outlines the fundamental rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.' UNICEF (N.D). The agreement ensures that children are protected in all areas of their life. The rights inform Government legislation which is followed by all councils throughout the country. There are four key articles within the UNCRC that governments follow to inform their own legislation:

- 'Right to non-discrimination (article 2)
- Commitment to the best interests of the child (article 3)
- Right to life, survival and development (article 6)
- Right to be heard (article 12)

In 2004, the Welsh Government formally adopted the UNCRC as the basis of policy making relating to children and young people.' Welsh Government (2022). The UNCRC rights ensure all professionals working with children and young people are working from the same page, with children being the focus of their practice. Furthermore, they make certain children are treated fairly, no matter their background or abilities to give the child the best chance in life.

From all the points mentioned, it is clear to see how, knowledge, training, personal and professional reflection are significant within the role of the EYP. The UNCRC informs legislation, ensuring a child-centred approach. However, it is also important to consider that the EYP need to have values and ethics that match that of the role in order to meet the individual and inclusive needs of children. With all points considered every aspect of professional practice work collectively to create the best possible chance at education and life for the child.

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