Hamlyn [google images] (2017)

Gasking [google images] (2020)

Keire Mcalinden ECEY4002/C

Developing and understanding Reflective practice.

What is reflective practice?

Kishore (2020) states that reflective practice is a cycle of learning that you progress from. It is a process where we think and talk about the core of a setting, this is backed up by Pollard (2002). According to Pollard (2002) when professionals take time to analyse a setting and allow themselves to stop, think, challenge and change an Early years setting it provides the opportunities to incorporate different understandings and enhance a child's ability to learn and develop further. When you can reflect on professional practice you give yourself an open mind that encourages you to see where you could have done things differently and improve in future, enhancing your professional knowledge and understanding. The purpose of reflective practice is so the professional practitioner can provide higher standards, better quality and more enjoyable experiences for young children and their parents or carers. Brookfield (1995) believes that in order to provide these high-quality experiences that continue to benefit children and families, practitioners must seek and delve deeper to make sense of existing and new materials. Practitioners should consider, how do these materials link? What do I already know? When you ask yourselves more questions it will allow you to find the answers to challenge and change existing knowledge that can contribute to developing new ideas in a setting. (Moon,1999)

Schon's reflective Theory

The Schon reflective Theory represents the difference between reflection *in* action and the reflection *on* action. (Schon.1983) The difference between these reflections that Schon made a distinction between were as follows. (Paige-smith & Craft. 2011)

Reflection *in* Action - Thinking on your feet.

Smith & Craft (20011) state during an early years setting, practitioners will make decisions in action when they are active in action and thought. Reflection in action can be something as simple as judging whether to join a child that is playing. You should take into consideration; does it look like the child would like to be alone? Could this be an opportunity to engage and play alongside a child? (Lindon and Todd, 2016, p 44)

Reflection *on* Action- Thinking after an event.

According to Lindon (2016) This type of reflection can be thought about after an event has happened. Reflection-on-action can be a process you encounter alone or by talking out loud, however this is best supported by other people with different inputs and techniques that can benefit and support that reflection. This statement is supported Max van Manen (1995).

Schon (1983) suggested that reflection should be used in an Early years setting by practitioners when the situations they encounter are unique. As the terms above suggest, the idea of using reflective practice was based on the actions in the setting itself. Schons ideas inspired imaginations of many different settings, such as health care, education and social care. It went on to influence practices all around the world to seek improvements in practice. (Paige-smith & Craft. 2011.)

The importance of reflective practice and how it improves a setting.

(Habash. 2022) When we reflect on our practice it gives us the tools to encourage self-improvement and development. We will become more knowledgeable practitioners with a higher standard of care when we allow ourselves to learn and grow through our reflections. This gives us more insight and helps us see a bigger picture. Gunning (N.D) Agrees and backs up this statement. According to Howatson-Jones (2010) When we write and analyse our experiences in a setting, we are able to make more sense of a situation. This will then help to develop a sense of understanding that last and contributes to your lifelong journey of learning.
Children who feel listened to and have respected views become children that are more likely to take the lead and become responsible for their actions. Evidence shows that when children are given the independence and control of their life, they are more likely to thrive in areas such as wellbeing and a greater level of self-esteem. (Longford. 2017) Kamal. (2020) believes that reflective practice has a positive effect on practitioners. It allows time and space for professional development which then allows practitioners to focus on a child's development and learning, bringing positive change into settings. (Longford County children committee, 2017) also backs this up.

Challenges in reflective practice.

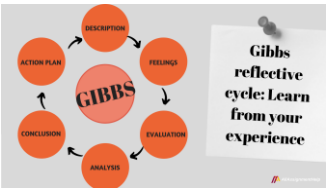
There are challenges that follow reflective practice. These can be things such as, not all practitioners having full understanding of how to follow reflective practice. Sometimes evaluating and analysing can feel uncomfortable, and this can also be time consuming. (Koshy. 2017) Time management needs to be implemented in order to reflect. (Education summary, 2022) In order to overcome some of the barriers that could be faced in reflective practice, you can follow steps such as, allowing yourself regular time to reflect. For example, allocate yourself half an hour after each session to reflect on action. Education summary (2022) also states that when reflecting you should also minimise distractions this may mean experimenting with suitable environments that allow you to focus and reflect effectively. Practitioners should find areas that work for them and that will take their mind away from things that may be or cause distractions. (Education summary 2022) You may find that being in a working environment causes too many distractions and makes your mind wander to other jobs that need addressing. It is important to remember your reasonings behind the reflection taking place. For example, you could write the reasoning for reflection on a post note or in a diary briefly, so that you have the information to go back on when you are ready for your reflective analysis. (Study skills, N.D). Library guides (2022) suggests that you should consider yourself as a barrier to reflection. This can be difficult to overcome and in order to develop the confidence to do so, you need a certain level of insight. When you realise that reflection is personal to each person and explore different methods it will enable you to find the perfect reflective method for you. (Library Guides 2022). Over time you will develop more confidence when reflecting, start with short sessions of reflection and reach out for support from colleagues and other reflective practitioners, ask for feedback and advice on where you can improve and what else could help you develop in reflective practice. (Guilfoyle. 2020).

Reflection as a practitioner in Early years

Teaching early years magazine (ND) states that as reflective early years practitioners we think, create and talk about exciting experiences that we could create within a setting daily. Practitioners may find themselves reluctant to discard of household packaging or items they no longer need, in case it may be useful in practice. (Hanson & Appleby.2016). Hansel (2016) also believes that this becomes a way of life for early years professionals. If we take the time to stop and question, why we implement these actions into our lives outside of a setting we can see that we are continuously reflecting and trying to improve the quality of our practice. Justifying our actions help us to develop as practitioners (Schon. 1983). This statement shows that in reflective practices it is difficult to avoid continuously reflecting and questioning your settings, especially when this is linked to quality improvement. (Macbeth. ND).

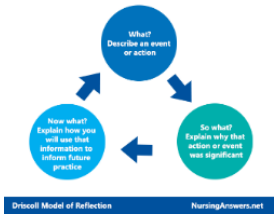
What is a reflective model?

Brush (2020) states that models of reflection can benefit early years practitioners by guiding them to a better understanding of their own learning and thinking strategies and what works best for them. This will guide practitioners to implement analysis and improvements in a setting. Reflection allows you to emphasis awareness of personal knowledge, experiences and beliefs. (Brush. 2020). According to Jones. (2022) there are many models of reflection, but the fundamental basis is the same. Jones (2022) believes that models are just 'Models'. They are not always suitable for every situation and the models often suggest that you follow the cycle in order, which may not be useful to your circumstances in an early years setting. Even though Models are useful they do not always need to be fully relied on when reflecting, reflection is personal, and these models are used as a guideline. This is information is backed up by university of the people (2022).



(All assignment help UK [google images] 2019)

Types of reflective models.



(Nursing answers [google images] 2018)

Gibbs reflective model.

It is believed by All assignment help UK (2019) that people Learn more effectively through experience. However, if we do not take the time to reflect these experiences and think about what improvements could be made then we cannot progress and learn from them. (All assignment help UK. 2019). This method can encourage practitioners to be more attentive, it enables an analysis on the positive and negative impacts that a situation may entail (Mark 2021). According to Smith (2021) the framework of Gibbs reflective cycle includes 6 steps.

Description- This step is to enable Practitioners to understand what happened. What was the outcome? Who was there? What did you do? (Smith. 2021)

Feelings – During this stage we should talk about the thoughts of the situation. How did you feel before, during and after the activity? What are your views now it is over? (Gibbs. 1988)

Evaluation – This where the positives and negatives should be discussed. What went well? What didn't go to plan? (The university of Edinburgh 2020)

Analysis – This step is to develop further understanding of what you can perform better if a similar situation arises again.

Conclusion- An opportunity to really reflect on yourself to prevent a recurrence of unwanted outcomes in future.

Action plan – A time to think about how you can prevent future similar situations. Find a plan and make changes. (Gibbs.1988)

Consuunt (2022) states that this reflective cycle gives practitioners an opportunity and the correct tools to help provide growth and learning from experience within setting. In order to obtain desired results, the cycle should be repeated, this will encourage professionals to draw up conclusions that will allow us to do better in future practice. (Consuunt 2022)

Driscoll's reflective model

Nursing answers (2018) believes that the Driscoll model of reflection is the simplest of the models. Driscoll (1994) studied three questions in this reflective model. These were, what? So what? And now what? These questions were developed over three different years, 1994, 2000 and 2007. (Nursing answers 2018). When we ask ourselves this we are able to analyze and learn from our setting experiences.

According to the University of Cambridge (ND) the first step 'What?' should be a moment to describe the situation or experience and set it into context to give us a clearer idea of what happened. (Borton. 1970) We should then be reflecting on 'so what?' what did we learn from this experience? And finally, Driscoll. (2007) suggests that during the 'now what?' reflection, practitioners should use this step to think about the action. Is this something we could change? Should be try something different or was it successful. Always consider that there may be no changes in the reflection. This is a valid outcome and practitioners should not worry if there are no changes to an experience or activity that they have encountered. (University of Cambridge, ND).

Conclusion

As practitioners who implement reflective practice in settings, we need to remember the importance of self-awareness. Always think about where you can improve as professionals. By doing this it will become a steppingstone to reaching personal goals and providing a successful Early years setting that continues to allow growth and room for development for the children in setting. (Harrappa Blogs.2020)

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