

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 comprise of an observation of a critical incident and how, through reflection and exploration into the potential reasons behind why this incident occurred, and the associated theories; future teaching practice can be altered to support the learner in their learning. The principle of this exercise was to understand that a critical incident did not have to be a negative experience. Moreover, it is any incident which causes the practitioner to think deeper about possible causes and solutions to support effective learning. Tripp (1993 cited in 2011) posited that critical incidents were not just the extraordinary but the “*routine phenomena of their teaching*”. He suggested that teachers reflect on the typical minutiae of their day-to-day practices to identify areas for improvement. By recording and describing the observation made, teachers can delve deeper into the underpinning theory which surrounds or caused the critical incident within the observation. The teacher is also then armed to challenge any longstanding views or beliefs surrounding the child. Tripp’s abstract concept can be seen in my observation of the critical incident from the immersive learning space of a child (Child 1) on the More Able and Talented (MAT) ability table fiddling with their pen and appearing disengaged with the lesson. An uninformed, biased viewpoint could be that this child is displaying bad behaviour and non-engagement; however, with Tripp’s methodology in mind, this viewpoint is challenged, and consideration can be given to possible Additional Learning Need (ALN) requirements, potentially, an undiagnosed neurodivergent disorder such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); or the lesson may be set at the incorrect level of learning and understanding for the learner. Assessment for Learning strategies (AfL) will therefore need to be adopted to ensure the lesson is provided at the correct ability level to ensure engagement. This will, however, be explored with the relevant theories at a later point in this assignment.

The observations were undertaken within the immersive learning space at the Swansea SA1 Campus of University of Wales Trinity Saint David. The lesson was provided via 360° camera footage and is based within the Swansea Local Authority. Following the observation session, it was advised that the school had recently undergone an Estyn inspection. Further investigation into this report advises that at the time of the inspection, the number of learners on roll was 425, with a percentage of children with ALN as 12.4% (Estyn, 2023). This is identified on the report as being less than the national average (16.1% in Primary) however, as will be explored later in this assignment, this figure may increase pending reflection of the observation.

Case Study and Explanation

For this assignment I have only used material drawn from the immersive room setting and have adhered to the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) ethical guidance by obtaining informed consent on the understanding that all identifiable information will be removed for confidentiality.

As discussed above, one critical incident will be focussed on however, for the purpose of this assignment, three observations took place and were written up (please see appendices). On reflection, it was decided that this assignment will focus on and critically evaluate appendix A. This critical incident occurred on Wednesday 12th July 2023 at 9.30am. The lesson was on 'Inferences' within the Area of Learning Experience (AoLE) Language, Literacy and Communication under the Welsh Curriculum 2022. The classroom was that of Year 4 and would consist of children who are working towards Progression Step two or three, dependent on their abilities (Welsh Government, 2023). Under the Welsh Curriculum Reform, Donaldson (2015) recommended children are no longer to be separated into ages and abilities. Donaldson explored how the introduction of progression stages should "*encapsulate the most important aspects of learning*" (Donaldson, 2015) to ensure that the different learning style of learners are respected for them to achieve what it is they need to know. Moreover, the term "*stage not age*" is now commonly referenced and describes the approach to learning that is linked to Black and Wiliam's Assessment for Learning (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Black and Wiliam explore how crucial it is for teachers to be able to adapt their work to meet their learners needs and how this is done through assessment.

One such way Black and Wiliam's advice could be heeded within the observation classroom is to consider that Child 1 is not challenged enough or finds the lesson too challenging and therefore 'switches off'. Whilst the child is sat on the MAT ability table suggests the child is of a more able and talented ability, it is unclear whether this ability is within the AoLE of Language, Literacy and Communication. Therefore, assessment of the child's ability needs to be taken into consideration to ensure that the lesson is aimed appropriately. Consequently, it may be beneficial for the child to be placed on the table supported by the Teaching Assistant to ensure that they remain on task.

Following the observation, I posited the question whether there was an underlying, neurodivergent issue and need for additional learning support such as ADHD. Daley and Birchwood (2010) concur that ADHD in children can oftentimes appear as the child not listening when spoken to. During my observation, it can be seen on multiple occasions, let alone the critical incident witnessed, that the child is not paying attention to the teacher and seems to focus more on playing with their pen. Daley and Birchwood further concur that it is this inattentive behaviour that has the biggest impact on the learner's academic achievement and postulates that the examination and understanding of the neuropsychological dysregulation and motivation can lead to appropriate strategies and interventions being introduced. Thus, creating an effective learning environment. In order however for interventions to be successful, it is important to understand what an intervention is. Interventions are different to the typical daily teaching routine. Whilst the study was undertaken on Autistic participants, Legoff and Sherman's (2006) paper on the intervention of using Lego during interactive therapy has identified that the use of a physical 'tool' (in this case, Lego) can help neurodivergent learners to concentrate and cooperate more with their interactions. It can be inferred that providing the ADHD learner with a physical intervention, such as a fidget toy, could support the learner by providing a physical outlet for their impulsions affording them the opportunity to learn without distraction. However, as Legoff and Sherman explored, there are negatives to this approach and identified that further research is needed to ensure that providing a physical intervention will have the desired effect. They noted that the participants of their study may also be receiving interventions through another platform (such as specific support at school) and so, the introduction of a physical tool to aid learning, may not have the desired outcome. It can also be argued that children can at times, not understand why one child is having something they are not. This can cause disruptions to the learning environment and so it may be easier and less troublesome to just allow the learner to fiddle with their pen.

Another area to note which may have an impact on Child 1 appearing distracted could be the time of day/week and year as well as the outside disruption. It is noted that the lesson was taking place early in the morning (9.30am) which may have been affected by whether Child 1 was hungry. It was also taking place on a Wednesday which typically leads to energy levels dipping as the learner is nearing the end of the week. The lesson also took place within the last few days of term before breaking up for the summer holidays which could have impacted on Child 1's concentration levels; and there appeared to be a lot of activity outside the classroom in the hallway. All of which could have impacted on Child 1's engagement with learning. Whilst not directly linked to learners of primary school age, Nückles et al. (2010) explores how student's engagement levels decrease the further through the term they are.

Literature Review

During the observations undertaken, it was noted that the learners were placed into groups of similar ability. This suggests that the approach to learning was considered under a child-centred approach, akin to Dewey's notions (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p37). It is important to note however that whilst Dewey recommended child-centred education, this approach was required to provide learners with support when "*structuring their own learning*". The introduction therefore of a Teaching Assistant, with a lower ability group (as seen in the observation video in the Immersive Room), suggests that the teacher adheres to Dewey's longstanding advice. Similarly, the teacher can be seen to be adhering to Steiner's belief in the approach to education; that the needs of the child, physical, emotional, and cognitive, all need to be responded to (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p42). The approach to support learners' physical, emotional, and cognitive needs is also supported by Noddings (2005) who concurs that a happy child learns better. This can be seen in practice by the way the classroom is set up with similar ability learners in groups. This allows the teacher to spend appropriate time with the lower ability learners and provide support as required to the other learners. In contrast, Maria Montessori (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p40) theorised that learners flourish creatively within an environment which has been carefully set-up by the teacher, to guide the learner in their learning. Whilst this notion could have been considered when placing the learners in their

appropriate ability groups, it appears that the teacher has focussed on the abilities of the learners and the natural way the learner's minds go in response to their specific, structured questioning as opposed to the purposeful set-up of the learning environment for creative purposes.

An alternative explanation as to why the teacher placed the children in similar ability groups could be that of adopting a social constructivism approach akin to Vygotsky's theory. Whilst Piaget believed that all children were "*lone scientists*" (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p66) who made their own sense of their world, Vygotsky argued that by working together and scaffolding learning, learners can enter a "*Zone of Proximal Development*" (ZPD) where greater learning takes place guided by the more knowledgeable other (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p92-101). Vygotsky's theory is also supported by the ecological systems model of Bronfenbrenner (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p114-123) whereby a child's surrounding environment can influence and shape the child's experiences and learning. However, as Bandura argued and exemplified within his 'Bobo Doll' experiment, that motivation was a key influencer; he argued that the child can observe something without it necessarily changing their own behaviour (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p114). The further introduction of authentic contexts in the form of a prop (for example, a shoe in this classroom), provides further links to real-life experiences, scaffolding prior learning by relating it to something they already know and therefore deepens the understanding of the concept.

The use of classical condition approaches can be viewed towards the latter part of the immersive room session whereby the teacher reminds the learners that the reward system, in this case 'Class Dojo's' will be used. This classical condition approach is alike Pavlov's 'Dog' and Watson's 'Little Albert' experiments (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p48-51) whereby a bell/ hammer was used to elicit a conditioned response. Within the classroom, the mere mention of the term 'Dojo's' had the whole class sitting to attention, eagerly awaiting a reward. This approach could be altered to an operant style of conditioning, in the form of positive punishment (adding something to decrease behaviour) or positive reinforcement (adding something to increase behaviour). Skinner and Thorndike (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p54-57) both believed that "*pleasant responses*" can either strengthen or weaken negative behaviours. Therefore, if the teacher of the

class advised at the start of the lesson how the learners can achieve dojo's, this could have enhanced Child 1's engagement and concentration levels throughout the lesson as opposed to just sitting still and paying attention at the end of the lesson when Dojo's were mentioned. Howard, Burton and Levermore (2020, p50) further support this view that if children are provided with clear frameworks for discipline and reward, then children (learners) will be placed within a safe learning environment where expectations are known to the learner.

However, if there is, as posited earlier in this assignment, an undiagnosed Additional Learning Need (ALN) such as ADHD, then the use of operant conditioning tactics may be feeble. It is agreed by Howard, Burton and Levermore (2020, p50) that children with ADHD have a *"triad of impairments"* such as hyperactivity, impulsivity, and concentration difficulties. With a child who does not have a diagnosis, this can lead to biased opinions of the child just eliciting 'bad behaviour'. Therefore, it is imperative to look deeper and provide a humanistic approach to learning (learner-centred) to support to the child in several different ways. Daley and Birchwood (2010) agree that children with ADHD need support to enable learning to take place. As backed by Legoff and Sherman (2006), the use of a physical 'tool' to transfer the learner's attentions to, may work as an approach to aid learning. The provision of a silent fidget toy may reduce disruption to the learner's learning. It is interesting to note, however, that Croley et al (2023) explored this in further detail and concluded that whilst in theory it seemed appropriate to provide a fidget toy to aid engagement in lessons, the opposite occurred. Croley et al further deduced that if a fidget toy is provided without strict rules, then the de-implementation period can be quite a difficult time. It would therefore be prudent to expand on this research and decide whether it is a best to provide a fidget toy on a case-by-case basis with strict rules to check levels of engagement. The important thing to remember in any case where the learner has an ALN is to ensure inclusivity. As supported by Sakellariadis (2021) who stated, *"with today's emphasis on personalised learning, there is no reason why tailor-made provision has to be offered in a separate place"*.

As discussed earlier in this assignment, Child 1 could have found the lesson either too challenging or not challenging enough and this is what could have led to the child's disengagement with the lesson. This is where Assessment for Learning plays a pivotal

part. Wiliam (Black and Wiliam, 1998) discusses how through a mix of summative and formative assessment, learning can be accelerated. It is the process of improving learning as well as proving what has been learned which can support the learner in their learning journey and is described as *“the bridge between teaching and learning”*. However, due to the fast-paced way in which a teacher’s day is set out, different elements of AfL are needed to ensure that assessment takes place (Black and Wiliam, 1998). These are:

- Sharing of success criteria with learners,
- Assessment of the quality of questions and quality of talk,
- The use and quality of feedback, and
- Peer and self-assessment.

As explored earlier within this assignment, the teacher of the class could provide a self-assessment sheet to Child 1 to see where the child lies with their belief in their ability on ‘Inferences’. This will allow the teacher to gauge the lesson appropriately next time to ensure Child 1 is more engaged with the lesson content and, potentially, reducing the risk of fidgeting/ fiddling with their pen.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Furlong (2015) identified a need for teachers to be *“research informed”* and so, the skill of reflecting on one’s own practice became something which was taught. On further exploration into reflective practice, I will attempt to adopt Gibb’s Reflective Cycle (1988) in my own teaching practice as I feel that this holistic approach to reflection affords me the opportunity to investigate into the deeper meanings of the way a critical incident arose and how it was dealt with. Similarly, I will implement Brookfield’s (2017) four lenses approach to reflection and self-assess my practice, obtain the learner’s views as well as consulting with my MKO’s (colleagues/ peers), further following up with research.

As explored earlier and reflected on further, if I was to encounter this critical incident in my own teaching practice, I believe it would be an extension of research to provide a fidget toy to Child 1 to see if this does in fact support them within their learning. Despite Croley et al (2023) arguing that the provision of a fidget toy does not aid learning, it was recognised that there is little research surrounding this learning style and further study is

required. It would be interesting to see whether this is in fact a determined situation or whether, as posited by myself, this is something whereby the success is measured on a child-by-child basis. There are, however, some negatives to the provision of a fidget toy to a child such as:

- The child (learner) in receipt of the fidget toy being 'othered' or 'special' leading to potential bullying,
- Other children (learners) within the classroom requesting fidget toys, a 'one rule for one, something else for another' argument can be raised here by the other children (learners),
- The provision of a fidget toy could add to the disruption to Child 1's learning or the learning of their peers who are near the child.

This approach therefore would be interesting to note and reflect on to ascertain whether the provision of a fidget toy is a learning aid or hinderance.

Secondly, Assessment for Learning is a highly important approach to adopt when teaching (Black and Wiliam, 1998). It was also identified that ideally, the teacher will sit with Child 1 to assess their learning, abilities and understanding of the concepts within that learner. However, I note this is not always possible, especially within a classroom of 30+ learners, all of whom need to be met with a learner-focussed approach and so the use of self-assessment will be required. Therefore, in my personal teaching practice, I would adopt an assessment of the learner, coupled with a self and peer assessment practice to gauge an understanding of where the learner was. If this approach identified a lack of understanding, then I would place the learner on a different ability table during Literacy, Language and Communication lessons, potentially with an adult MKO (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p91-110), in the form of the Teaching Assistant, to afford the learner optimum support during their learning. Conversely, if the learner was finding the lesson too easy then I would ensure that there were extension activities for the learner to complete to ensure that they would not impact on the other learners. Alternatively, a Social Constructionist approach to learning can also be provided with Child 1 as the MKO to another peer. This may support the learner to remain focussed on the task, however, does run risk of Child 1 becoming a distraction to a lower ability peer. Classroom organisation skills could therefore become an impactful factor when considering this option (Clegg and Billington, 1994).

Thirdly, a practice I will attempt to adopt is that of an operant conditioning approach, namely positive reinforcement. Along with Skinner and Thorndike's (Gray and MacBlain, 2015, p54-57) belief of the introduction of a reward stimulus will keep negative behaviours to a minimum. It is my belief that if I as the practitioner were to highlight to the class at the beginning of the lesson that dojo's will be given for good engagement then Child 1's fidgety behaviour will be reduced. Little reminders to the whole class throughout the task of dojo rewards will be given to remind learners that their engagement will be rewarded could also help keep Child 1 on task as it was noted that Child 1 responded well to the mention of rewards (Dojo's), i.e., they sat to attention, arms crossed and engaged. The AfL approach of providing the success criteria for the lesson (Black and Wiliam, 1998) at the start of the lesson (on the board) as well as the mention of rewards if learner's reach success, will also be a gentle (visual) reminder to learners to try and stay on task.

Discussion

Whilst the critical incident witnessed was that of Child 1 fidgeting with their pen and appearing disengaged, this critical incident has greatly shaped my pedagogical choices and deepened my understanding of being reflective and looking further into incidents for underlying conditions. I feel that although Child 1 fiddling with their pen may seem on the surface a minor inconvenience, through looking deeper into the incident, it has brought about many questions which may affect not only my own teaching practices but that of my own class and interactions with all learners.

It was questioned whether Child 1 may have an underlying additional learning need which will need to be addressed to ensure that the learner is meeting all four purposes of the Welsh Curriculum (Gov.uk, 2023). This has informed my teaching practice to take into consideration the many ways I can make my teaching and classroom inclusive.

The significance of inclusivity within the education environment is of utmost importance and whilst supporting the learning journey of one, ensuring inclusive and informed practice

in everything, can lead to greater acceptance of all (Peer and Reid, 2021). These all add to the sense of belonging to the child, their acceptance amongst their peers, reduced 'othering' with the increased tolerance for diversity, the wider school community and helps create resilience and improved wellbeing amongst learners (Howard, Burton and Levermore, 2020, p69-83). However, whilst Brown (2016) concurs that inclusive practice is necessary, they note that "...children with SEN were still viewed separately from their peers" indicating that othering can still take place. Nevertheless, I will attempt to be as inclusive as possible throughout my teaching practice to ensure that learners' wellbeing is supported. As explored by Noddings (2005), a happy child learns better.

Another incident that was witnessed but not focussed on was that of the learners working in pairs/groups of similar abilities. The learner I focussed my critical incident on (Child 1) was sat on a table of learners, all are of a MAT ability. This grouping of children supports the Social Constructivist approach and peer learning. This was viewed in practice during an extended observation of my critical incident and will be stored for use during my own teaching practice; how the importance of a peer to keep the learner on task and scaffold learning is highlighted. As witnessed, Child 1 is fiddling with their pen during the lesson; whilst the lesson is continuing, Child 2 is seen attempting to pull Child 1 back to task by placing the worksheet in front of them. Although this was successful at first, Child 1 subsequently returned to their fidgety behaviour of fiddling with their pen. This can indicate that the learner (Child 1) may be struggling with the concept and so the placement of Child 1 with a more knowledgeable other (MKO) such as the Teaching Assistant, coupled with the Teaching Assistant's superiority, may help keep Child 1 on task and reduce the need for Child 2 to assume the role of MKO. As explored above, it may also be an option, dependant on Child 1's ability, to place Child 1 as the MKO with a lower ability child. This may help focus Child 1's attention and allow the learner to become the 'teacher'.

Conclusion and Recommendations

As explored throughout this assignment, reflective practice in teaching is a crucial part of ensuring learners are on track to meet the four purposes as influenced by Donaldson (2015) and posed by the Welsh Curriculum 2022 (Welsh Government, 2022).

Through my reflections as a practitioner and further reading, I have reached the conclusion that I will be adopting a social reconstructionism approach to education, akin to Bell Hooks (1994) and ensuring that there is an ongoing recognition that all contributions to the classroom, when utilised effectively, can create an open learning environment. It is the practitioner's responsibility that the needs of the child are met, and that suitable support is put in place to ensure that the learner feels safe, comfortable, and supported to learn and therefore, continual reflection of one's own practice, alongside professional discussions with peers will help create an efficient learning environment. Previously, I identified that I followed Schön's (1983) approach to reflective practice, in that I reflected *in action* and *on action*, whereas now, I will adopt a reflective practice more in line with Brookfield (1998) and Gibbs (1988) and draw on a highly descriptive reflection, literature and discussions with peers and learners to inform my future practice and adapt it appropriately.

Whilst many learner's needs are met, the approaches explored and adopted can also meet with several of the professional standards (Welsh Government, 2019). Through AfL, the Refining Pedagogy Standard (*"Managing the Learning Environment"*, *"Assessment"*, *"Differentiation"* and *"Recording and Reporting"*) is met by showing consideration for the different learning abilities and adapting lessons to suit the learner. Via the provision of a fidget toy, this can support the Influencing Pedagogy Standard (*"Challenge and expectations"*, *"Listening to Learners"*, *"Learners Leading Learning"*, *"Sustained Effort and Resilience in Learners"*, *"Reflection on Learning"* and *"Learning outcomes and Well-being"*) as well as supporting the Collaboration Standard (*"Enabling Improvement"*). These approaches will also lead to the development of my own Professional Learning Standard (*"Wider Reading and Research Findings"*, *"Professional Networks and Communities"* and *"Continuing Professional Learning"*).

Total Word Count - 4274

References

Black, P. and Wiliam, D. (1998) *Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment*. London: GL Assessment.

British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2018), *Ethical guidelines for Educational Research*. Available at: <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018> (Accessed on: 27.10.23).

Brookfield, S. (2017) *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. Second edition. San Francisco, [California: Jossey-Bass.

Brown, Z. (2016) *Inclusive Education: Perspectives on Pedagogy, Policy and Practice*. London; Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315691152>.

Clegg, D. and Billington, S. (1994) *The Effective Primary Classroom: The Management and Organisation of Teaching and Learning*. London: David Fulton, in association with the Roehampton Institute.

Croley, K.E. et al. (2023) 'The Effect of the Fidget Cube on Classroom Behavior among Students with Perceived Attention Difficulties', *Behavior analysis in practice*, 16(2), pp. 547–557. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-022-00734-4>.

Daley, D. and Birchwood, J. (2010) 'ADHD and Academic Performance: Why Does ADHD Impact on Academic Performance and What Can Be Done to Support ADHD Children in the Classroom?', *Childcare, health & development*. Accepted for publication 13 October 2009, 36(4), pp. 455–464. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2214.2009.01046.x>.

Donaldson. G. (2015) *Successful Futures Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/successful-futures.pdf> (Accessed on: 27.10.23).

Estyn (2023) ----- [deleted for confidentiality purposes] *Primary School Report*. Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/6702239> (Accessed on: 03.10.23).

Furlong, J. (2015) 'Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers: Options for the future of initial teacher education in Wales'. Available at:

<https://media.bloomsbury.com/rep/files/teaching-tomorrows-teachers-final1.pdf>
(Accessed on: 01.11.23).

Gray, C. and MacBlain, S. (2015) *Learning Theories in Childhood*. Second edition. Los Angeles: SAGE. (pgs 37, 40, 42, 54-57, 66, 91-110, 114-123,)

Gibbs, G. (1988) *Learning by Doing: A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods*. London: FEU.

Gov.uk (2023) *The Four Purposes for the Curriculum for Wales*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/the-four-purposes-of-the-curriculum-for-wales.pdf> (Accessed on: 02.11.23).

Hooks, Bell. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. London: Routledge.

Howard, C., Burton, M. and Levermore, D. (2020) *Children's Mental Health and Emotional Well-being in Primary Schools: A Whole School Approach*. Second edition. London: Learning Matters. (pgs 50, 51, 69-83).

Legoff, D.B. and Sherman, M. (2006) 'Long-term Outcome of Social Skills Intervention based on Interactive LEGO® Play', *Autism : the international journal of research and practice*, 10(4), pp. 317–329. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362361306064403>.

Noddings, N. (2005) *Happiness and education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nückles, M. et al. (2010) 'Expertise reversal effects in writing-to-learn', *Instructional science*, 38(3), pp. 237–258. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11251-009-9106-9>.

Peer, L. and Reid, G. (eds) (2021) *Special Educational Needs: A Guide for Inclusive Practice*. Third edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Sakellariadis, A (2021) *Inclusion and Special Educational Needs: A Dialogic Inquiry into Controversial Issues*, in Peer, L. and Reid, G. (eds) (2021) *Special Educational Needs: A Guide for Inclusive Practice*. Third edition. London: SAGE Publications.

Schön D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner*. London, England: Temple Smith

Welsh Government (2023) *Area of Learning Experience, Languages, Literacy and Communication*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/languages-literacy-and-communication/descriptions-of-learning/> (Accessed on: 26.10.23).

Welsh Government (2022) *Developing a Vision for Curriculum Design*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/developing-a-vision-for-curriculum-design/#curriculum-design-and-the-four-purposes> (Accessed on: 03.10.23).

Welsh Government (2019) *Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/19bc948b-8a3f-41e0-944a-7bf2cadf7d18/professional-standards-for-teaching-and-leadership-interactive-pdf-for-pc.pdf> (Accessed on: 03.11.23).

Appendices

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

Record 1

Date and time, year group: Weds 12th July 2023, 9.30am, Year 4
Where and When: Language, Literacy and Communication lesson on Inferences. Whole class discussion followed by pair/ Group work. Mainstream, Mixed ability classroom: (1 Teacher, 1 Teaching Assistant, 25 Learners) - Two tables of More Able and Talented (MAT) ability, - One table of lower ability with support of a Teaching Assistant (TA) and - Two tables of medium/ mixed ability; one of which has English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners on.
What happened: Since the beginning of the lesson, Child A on More Able and Talented ability table fiddled with their pen for approx. 3 mins. Teacher was asking whole class for answers on 'Inferences'. Child A avoided eye contact and fiddled with their pen throughout the whole class discussion when peers were holding their hands in the air providing answers to the teacher's questions.
Areas of possible exploration: • Possible undiagnosed ALN (ADHD?) as Child A seems fidgety and not paying attention. Look up use of fidget tools as a learning aid? • Lesson not at the correct level for Child A. E.g., Child A is sat on a table of MAT ability so may not be challenged enough / over challenged by lesson content. Look at Assessment for Learning (AfL) Concepts. • Child A may not understand the Concept. - AfL • Child A may not want to engage with whole class answering. Look at behavioural approaches/ approaches to provide safe surroundings for mistakes to take place. • Operant conditioning when mentioning Dojo reward system. See notes for reaction of Child A.
Notes: • Midweek session (Wednesday) – 'hump day' children could be on the countdown to the weekend. • Nearing the end of the school year (12th July) – enthusiasm for learning may be lower. Other classes may be playing games as opposed to learning new Concepts. • Distractions outside door – in direct view of Child A. • When the teacher referred to Dojo's (reward system) later on in the lesson, Child A sat to attention and started to engage.

Record 2

Date and time, year group: Weds 12th July 2023, 9.30am, Year 4
Where and When: Language, Literacy and Communication lesson on Inferences. Whole class discussion followed by pair/ Group work. Mainstream, Mixed ability classroom: - Two tables of More Able and Talented (MAT) ability, - One table of lower ability with support of a Teaching Assistant (TA) and - Two tables of medium/ mixed ability; one of which has English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners on.
What happened: Child B on More Able and Talented ability table had their hand up while teacher is asking whole class questions. Teacher did not choose Child B to respond.
Areas of possible exploration: Child B on More Able and Talented ability table had their hand up while teacher is asking whole class questions. Teacher did not choose Child B to respond. • Child B could be missing the lesson content while their hand was up. Look into focus of child during hands-up activities. Child B could be so focussed on getting their response out, content of lesson is not being absorbed. • Transitions theories – child is new to the school. Could be answering to help them fit in? • Vygotsky theory of More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) – no partner next to them during group work. • Assessment for Learning. Lack of peer assessment. Teacher assessment however had placed the child on the MAT table.
Notes: I was advised following the observation that Child B was new to the school (arrived approx. 3 weeks before).

Record 3

Date and time, year group: Weds 12th July 2023, 9.30am, Year 4
Where and When: Language, Literacy and Communication lesson on Inferences. Whole class discussion followed by pair/ Group work.

Mainstream, Mixed ability classroom:

- Two tables of More Able and Talented (MAT) ability,
- One table of lower ability with support of a Teaching Assistant (TA) and
- Two tables of medium/ mixed ability; one of which has English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners on.

What happened:

Child C was very distracted during the lesson. Fidgeting, playing with their hair, had back to the class and the teacher, gazing off into the distance. This table was the second MAT ability table however this was placed right by the door into the classroom where there was a lot of distractions outside of the door.

Areas of possible exploration:

- Possible undiagnosed ALN (ADD/ ADHD?) as Child C seems fidgety and not paying attention. Look up use of fidget tools as a learning aid?
- Lesson not at the correct level for Child C. E.g., Child C is sat on a table of MAT ability so may not be challenged enough / over challenged by lesson content. Look at Assessment for Learning (AfL) Concepts.
- Child C may not understand the Concept. - AfL
- Look for theory re: 'Line of sight' for learner/ teacher – as the child had their back to the teacher, could this affect learning?

Notes:

Child C did not engage/ alter their behaviour with mention of Dojo reward system.