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I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Professional Practitioner Portfolio

Content

- Component 1- Personal development plan/reflection
- Component 2- Briefing paper on reflection and reflective practice.
- Component 3- Essay
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Personal Development Plan

What do I know already? What have I learnt so far? What do I want to develop?

No	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?)
1	Complete the BA-Early Years Education and Care, Practitioner status degree.	Have great time management to research and study. Submit assignments on time each month.	Reading books, journals and articles relevant to each module.	July 2026	I received my degree and attended my graduation ceremony.
2	Enroll onto a master's course for Additional Learning Needs.	Research online into what University's provide this course.	Attending open days at the University's that offer the course.	August 2026	I will be enrolled on the master's degree course.
3	Complete a refresher course on attachment awareness.	Attend the online refresher course.	Speak with the line manager regarding the course, use of laptop to gain online access.	February 2025	I will have a confirmation email of the course start date.
4	Complete foundation POPAT training.	Attend the course within the school setting.	Speak with the line manager regarding the course and having time out of class, to complete it.	October 2024	I will have a confirmation email of the course start date.
5	Complete team teach, and positive behaviour management refresher course.	Attend the practical and theory sessions at work. Pass the test at the end of the session.	Email with course date, the team teach workbook, team teach instructors.	October 2024	Certificate showing completed course.

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No	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?)
6	Complete refresher courses on sensory play and bucket time.	Attend the practical and theory sessions at work.	Email with the course date, sensory objects relevant to the pupils I work with.	February 2025	I will have a confirmation email of the course start date.
7	Complete a liquid vibration session, using the hydrotherapy pool.	Attend the practical and theory session at work.	Hydrotherapy pool, relevant music that match the pupils needs and abilities.	December 2024	I will have email confirmation of the start date.
8	Complete a 3-day first aid refresher training course.	Attend the practical and theory session at work.	Email with the course date, workbook, time out of class to attend the course.	January 2025	Certificate showing complete course.

Firstly, all the objectives set out on my personal development plan are relevant to the post I hold within the school setting. There is annual training around safeguarding and child protection, it is delivered within the school by our designated safeguarding officer.

Secondly, I have attended various courses as a teaching assistant, and put myself forward for courses that enhance my working practice as well as develop my knowledge and confidence to deliver programs such as POAT to pupils within my classroom. Finally, having goals and objectives set out in a personal development plan are a fantastic visual to have, this ensures that they are relevant to my role and that some courses are renewed when necessary.

What is reflection and reflective practice?

Reflection is a succession; it helps people gain understanding into professional practice by rational thinking around any area of it. The understandings developed, and experiences learned, can be useful to uphold appropriate practice and can lead to changes and progression.

Reflective practice is an area which has developed in roles such as teaching, it is a way to learn from these experiences. Professionals in these areas can think about situations that have encountered, how these situations have been successful and what area of training is needed.

Over time other professions have implemented the value of reflective practice, such as universities. Students can use reflection, an example of this can be when working on essays or preparing for a presentation.

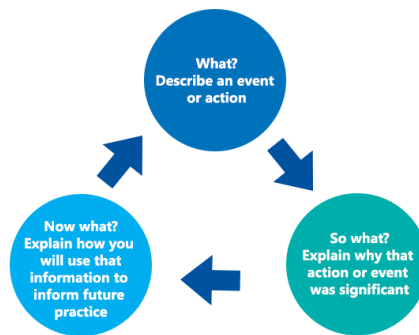
Reflection can also have a personal agender and different people will identify it in different ways. It is important to consider that there is no one way of stating what reflection is or how it should be completed, as a lot will differ on people's own situations.

Why is reflective practice important?

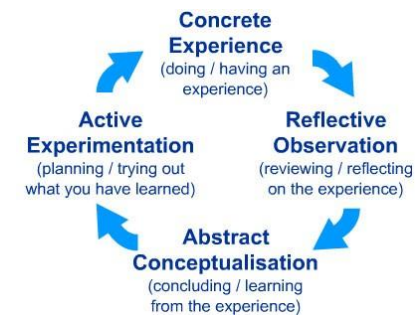
Reflective practice is important and has many benefits both personally and professionally. It can help to focus on planning and potential skills.

Reflective practice can be tough to embed at first, since it comprises of time and effort to implement. With determination, it can become standard and habitual.

Reflecting on an experience can help put the little voice inside the head to good use, as learning from what has been done and how to move forward.



(Source: NursingAnswers.net, 2024).



(Source: University of Puget Sound, 2004).

Theory of reflective practice.

Reflective practice comes from the work of John Dewey and Donald Schon. Both theorists have similar variations of reflective practice. According to Dewey (1910, p.6) reflective practice discusses the succeeding, and continual result of any principle or expected form of learning in the way that supports it.

Schon (1983) suggests that reflection as having two aspects: Reflection-in-action, whilst it is happening and change the flow of direction and reflection-on-action, after the event has happened, what other options were available for the event to flow more freely.

Reflective Models

Comparing both Driscoll, J. (1994). and Kolb, D. (1984). models of reflection. Firstly, there is more of an in-depth aspect to Kolb's cycle, more areas to explore and the use of abstract means to gain the desired outcome of the experience. Whereas Driscoll's model only has three elements to consider, which can make it less time consuming and easily accessible. Each model will have their advantages and disadvantages and personal preference to which model is followed is selected by the individual user.

Conclusion

There are many reflective models that are accessible, one may find that some are easier to navigate than others, or that one prefers the simple more accessible reflective model. There are pros and cons to each model that has been included. Firstly, each model offers a structure to follow. Secondly the models allow the users to know when the process has ended. Furthermore, one negative to the models, is that they may not form a relationship in every setting, as reflective practice is a non-stop process.

Recognize and analyze the significance of different aspects of professional practice and why these are important in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children?

To begin with, there are many different aspects of professional practice that are important for meeting the individual and inclusive needs of all children. It is important to recognise the significant differences as it will have an impact on the quality of education and care, and the well-being of the children and the professionals. An inclusive environment is essential, this can be achieved through the space in which a child learns and plays. Having an inclusive environment can encourage positive interactions and feelings, it can help children feel safe and part of the community around them. It is paramount that the learning environment is engaging for children, individuality is something to celebrate, as no two children are the same. For example, having a warm welcoming place for children to explore will encourage growth and development, ensuring that the children are finding their own identity. In other words, this can put children on the right track for future tasks in life, as the children harness self-acceptance, and it can support good self-esteem. Every child should be heard, supported and valued within a safe inclusive environment; this can help build confidence with the child's own ability.

With this in mind, inclusive teaching and learning identifies that all children have a right to a learning experience. In 2004, the Welsh Government adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as the basis of policy making, relating to children and young people. According to Welsh Government (2011), Children's rights are already protected in Welsh law, under the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 - highlighting Wales's responsibility to children's rights and the UNCRC. It also ensures that diversity is respected, it removes barriers and reflects a variety of learning needs. Being a professional practitioner and adopting inclusive practice makes sure that each child is treated equally and with respect, this includes having access to educational resources, thus the children can fully participate in learning and develop new skills.

According to Learning Journals (2021) placing the children's needs at the core, raises the possibility that children will take part in activities, as the children will be interested to learn. For example, if lessons are tailored to the children's own abilities, the children will experience support from the practitioner and be motivated to join in.

Inclusive Practice is important in the early years foundation stage, this stage is critical as the children are most vulnerable. To put it more simply, at this early stage is when the children are beginning to find out about themselves, other children in the creche or nursery and the world around them. Positives interactions are paramount as children will learn behaviours and copy other children as well as the adults around them. Having a professional growth mindset around children will ensure that children grow up as nurtured, well rounded and polite individuals. Promoting beneficial equality and diversity practices ensure that children and people are treated as equals, and that differences are celebrated. It is critical to examine any predispositions practitioners might possibly hold and to set apart whether they are inclusive or detrimental to children learning. Also, according to Learning Journals (2021), inclusive practice has lots of advantages which expand beyond the learning of the child. Having tacit knowledge of these principles also backs the professional development of teachers and improves the experiences for parents.

Professionalism involves consistently achieving high standards in the work that practitioners do, and the manner in which they present themselves. Notably from the previous statement, it is important that the subject that is taught to the children is variable and adapted to different styles of learning. This could mean that as professionals, preparation is key for every situation and having the resources available should any adaptation be needed. For example, if a child is a visual learner, reflect how written tasks can be tailored to meet the need of the individual. Including the use of picture format or an info graph, designed in a way from start to finish, instead of written bullet points which may be overwhelming for some learners. Furthermore, this gives the child or children an increase in succession in this subject, as the adaptation is in a content which the children will understand.

Likewise, having good communication skills is vital when working within any educational setting. Communication can be shown in many forms, such as non-verbal body language, tone and pitch, facial expressions and eye contact. It has been proven that many children with additional learning needs will have some difficulties with communication, as well as gross motor skills and fine manipulative skills. Other professional services will have an input with the children experiencing these significant needs and educational plans will be put into place to ensure that they receive adequate support to access all areas of the curriculum. Additionally, to this is where professional practitioners could implement diversity and include children that have additional learning needs, as well as different cultures, race and religions. As a result of having an expanded, diverse environment it can help promote and build the foundation blocks for existing in a varied society.

It cannot be denied that equity is different from equality. Equality which aims to provide fairmindedness in treating everyone identical regardless of need. Equity attains fairness through treating everyone in a different way, dependent on need. Reflective practice (Dewey, 1910), (Shon, 1983), is crucial when teaching in the early years. In other words, reflecting on observations made throughout the day and having effective communication and teamwork, can develop a good rapport with parents and caregivers of the children, thus in turn building relationships with other professionals within multi-agency meetings regarding the child. For example, by observing children in their learning environment it gives early years practitioners a greater understanding of the children's skills and how each child learns. In other words, lessons can be tailored to the children's own learning needs, this is because of the observations seen and by creating an inclusive environment that will be accessible for all children.

An equally important aspect of being an Early Years professional is ensuring the safety of all children. Following policies and procedures within the work setting and ensuring that all staff are aware of these during the induction process. According to Estyn (2004, pg 9) All staff that have been appointed, will have continuous training and development and are aware of the need for safeguarding children and are familiar with the procedures to follow, if any concerns arise. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, regardless of whether staff are

voluntary, on placement or a paid employee. According to Veale (2020, pg 270), Safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children can be defined as ensuring that children are safe from exploitation, that children's access to health care is not denied, and ensuring that children can grow up in environments consistently providing safe and effective care.

Furthermore, The Children Act of 2004, that was introduced, was not designed to replace the framework of The Children Act 1989 but to coincide with the foundation of the act and work alongside it. It is aimed at professionals who safeguard children as part of their work. The Children Act 2004 (Goby and Vickers, 2024) works alongside other legislations that protect the well-being and development for children in England and Wales. Notably local authorities now have clear child protection guidelines, ensuring that all local authorities in England and Wales appoint a children's service executive that is liable for child protection, thus requiring cooperation among local authorities and other multi-agencies, which is essential to ratify child welfare. Under the act all children must be heard and acknowledging the children's feelings when making safety decisions, authorities also implement whistleblowing measures and clarify how staff can escalate safeguarding concerns if they sense that inadequate actions have not been completed to protect the child or children within the setting.

In conclusion, having an inclusive and individualised environment for children to learn, grow, play and develop has been proven as a success. It incorporates diversity within the setting from children with different backgrounds, needs, race and religion. By using reflection and observations, it gives professional practitioners the knowledge to overcome any obstacles that may arise when delivering activities and lessons to children. The environment especially gives children a flying start in life, having a welcoming and safe place the children can access everyday encourages children to have the confidence to overcome obstacles, and participate in engaging activities. Having a range of resources readily available, enhances child participation, this includes making adjustments to the structure of the lessons, so that every child can access the curriculum, regardless of their ability.

Furthermore, ensuring good communication is paramount to a successful environment, this includes staff, children, parents and other professionals, as this helps to accomplish good relationships. Building an inclusive and individualised environment makes sure that every child matters. Each child will have different encounters and learning styles. Having an inclusive and individualised environment that builds knowledge and understanding of the children's outlook, certifies that every child is heard, seen and treated with fairness and equality. At the same time, it ensures all policies and procedures are adhered to and the safeguarding Wales Act 2004 is at the core, whether the children are accessing settings, in school, creche or within the community. It also incorporates the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child statements. It is clear that the analysis of having an inclusive and individualised environment for children and Early Years professionals, improves the standards of learning and development for both.

It has been well documented throughout time that children learn through play and experiences modelled by their main care givers and the staff that work closely alongside them. It is detrimental for children's growth that being part of a larger varied society enhances their personality. These experiences start at home and the continuous process that happens in the creche, and school settings set the children up for becoming kind, well mannered young people of Wales and the world. Finally, this is the reason that having an inclusive and individualised environment is so important in the early years stages of children. One should not forget that at this stage, is when the children are likely to start forming their own opinions and thoughts of the world around them and this is the foundation blocks for the children to succeed later on in life.

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