

ECEY6009

2009486

Word count – 3,715

### Section one

According to O'sullivan (2009) successful leadership in an early year's is vital for providing a good setting. How leaderships lead will have an impact on the setting, good leadership can allow positive changes when the practitioner has the correct knowledge to lead improvements for the setting. By early years practitioner having a clear understanding of the knowledge that is needed in the early years setting is critical for the success of the setting. Since the 1990s reports have shown that children and their families have an impact on how settings are managed with leadership. Successful leadership has also been recognised by Ofsted in their annual reports and has been considered to provide high quality services to support development and change. Practitioners become leaders for a variety of reasons. Some early years leaders want their visions to come reality, they have the correct motivation to allow positive change to happen in their setting. A leader has the opportunity to make a difference in children's success and failures, the leader is accountable for optimising later life chances, equality opportunities for the children and to support families out of poverty. A leader is able to understand the needs of others and conduct the correct leadership skills when it is needed in different situations. According to Kimberley (2015) A leader's role is different from a manager's role in the early years. A leader's role is to inspire children to do the best that they can be whilst sharing vision that can influence high standards of practice in the setting with skilled knowledge. Having a clear understanding of the role as a leader can allow effective leadership to take place. Leadership in the early years is practitioners taking their own approach to allow the best outcomes for children in their settings and this can be met with effective leadership. Clark (2012) states that many leaders were not in a position of authority in early years settings as they were are not considered to be at management level. Catalytic leadership allowed opportunities for change in the setting and allowed practitioner to realise that leadership is not dependent on their level of authority and position. Furthermore (Baker, 2021) agrees that being a leader is not about having more authority than

someone else, it is about influencing others to achieve great things and develop on their skills. Robinson (2017) States that school leaders have an impact on the culture of the schools for better or worse, leaders influence how children look at things. Everyone has different ideas of what role leadership should play in early years settings, the idea of leaders having the most control is outdated. Robinson states that great leadership is where leaders are able to achieve the end goal and understanding what conditions children need to develop. According to Lewin (2022) States that leadership in early years setting is about creating an aspiring vision for children's future that is inclusive and diverse. effective leadership can deliver ambitious and culturally rich learning environments for children. According to Rodd (n.d.) Some Practitioners in early years have not understood the concept of leadership in early years and how leadership can overall improve the quality of provision in the setting, practitioners need to be leaders to ensure their roles and responsibilities are done effectively. Early years practitioners are often not wanting to become leaders, perhaps this is because leadership continues to be perceived as an optional extra in relation to pressing curriculum and other demands in the setting, there are training, professional development opportunities and pathways that can support leadership in early years practitioners. In order for practitioners to understand the importance of practitioners becoming leaders a number of factors needs to be acknowledged. The training that practitioners receive does not prepare them to take on leadership roles instead their training is based on delivering child-centred education and care. Leadership requires practitioners understanding of children, families and communities. Leadership is also considered as a choice by practitioners, whether practitioners want to inspire children and improve their quality of work and care that they can offer to children and their families. Furthermore Phillp (2022) successful leadership requires practitioners to understand how children develop and pedagogy. Practitioners need a good understanding of how children learn and how they as practitioners can support children's learning further. Some leaders in school settings did not feel as if they were influencers or had the authority, this is narrowed down to whether practitioners understood the principles of early years and if they were using the correct pedagogies in practice. DeLong (2018) states that Ella Baker influenced the Civil rights movements in the 1950s and 1960s. Ella Baker was seen as a catalytic leader. She believed that anyone could become a leader when being empowered, Baker worked to create opportunities for leadership,

to inspire others to take action and effect change. Baker inspired many other activists and leaders to continue to fight for social justice. Baker helped to establish the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee which allowed young people to have a voice.

There is a lot of factors that can affect children's lives in the early years and have an impact on their development and learning. Adverse childhood experiences and obesity in children are just two factors that can have a negative impact on children.

According to NHS (2021) The experience that children have in early years will have a massive impact on how children grow and develop physical and mentally, their experiences can also have an impact on their feelings and behaviour. Adverse childhood experiences are highly stresses and traumatic events that have taken place in children's lives, this could be from physical abuse, sexual abuse, living with someone who abused drugs or alcohol. Adverse childhood experiences can have a negative impact on children's future, it can allow children to suffer from health problems such as heart disease or cancer, as well as increasing the risk of children being involved with violence. Adults in children's lives have the responsibility to ensure that children are safe from harm have the correct support when needed. Furthermore Webster (2022) Adverse childhood experiences has resulted in poor outcomes for children, research has shown that financial problems and parental mental illness increased the risk of children suffering from developmental issues and health problems. To support children experiencing adverse childhood experiences programs should focus on developing attachments for the children. Hawthorne (2021) states that it is required that all schools understand adverse childhood experiences under the latest safeguarding children legislation. Practitioners have the opportunity to identify and to support children that have or are experiencing adverse childhood experiences, practitioners have the duty to support children to have the best outcomes in their lives. Children that are experiencing ACE's are less likely to do well in their school years as it may impact their ability to focus, memory and language. School setting and practitioners are able to reduce adverse childhood experiences by providing parents with information on the affects it can have on children mentally and how it can have an impact on their development. Practitioners needed to be aware on how to manage situations as well as noticing signs that a child may be struggling. School's are able to share resources on about healthy

relationships and lifestyle which can have a massive impact on children's lives. If a child in the setting is showing problems in their behaviour, is it important that practitioners see this as what's happened to that child to cause this behaviour to occur not what is wrong with this child and this can be achieved by good practice leadership. Adverse childhood experience can not be ignored, practitioners have the role on ensuring children are supported and have access to local services such as, Children's and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) that is also able to provide support to children. Practitioners knowledge on Adverse childhood experiences can be widened by attachment and trauma training.

Sahoo et al (2015) believes that childhood obesity has an impact on children's physical and psychological health. Children that are overweight are at higher risk of developing disease such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases from a young age. Research has shown that the obesity in childhood can affect children's physical health, social and emotional well-being and affect their self esteem. It has furthermore shown to have a negative impact on children's academic performance and lower the quality of life that the children are able to experience. Children suffering from obesity are also at more risk of not attending school. Obese children are at higher risk of being excluded for activities by other children and are often bullied for their weight, which can contribute to the children suffering with obesity to have low self esteem and can also affect their performance in school. Public Health England (2022) agrees that childhood obesity can cause serious health issues for children and families, obesity can affect children's physical and mental health that can continue into their adulthood. Practitioners have an important role in supporting families to tackle obesity for children. Leaders are able to provide the correct services to support families facing obesity, leaders can also role model healthy behaviours for children.

## Section Two

Children's Commissioner for Wales (No Date) States that Rocio Cifuentes is the Children's Commissioner for Wales. Rocio came to Wales in the 1970s as a refugee from Pinochet dictatorship in Chile when she was a baby. Rico started her job as the children's commissioner in April 2022 and will remain as the children's commissioner

for seven years, Rocio will be protecting and promoting children's rights in Wales. Rico has also worked with many charities before entering her new role. According to Welsh Government (No Date) Wales is the first county in the UK to have their own independent Children's Commissioner. Established by the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children's Commissioner for Wales is an independent human rights institution. The commissioner's aim is to promote children's right and welfare and to safeguard children. The commissioner's role is to inspire children to have better outcomes and challenges whilst working with alongside of people and organisations. Children's Commissioner for Wales (No Date) states that the commissioner of Wales role is to inform people of the importance of children's rights and to evaluate decisions that have been made by the Welsh Government that could affect children's rights. Children and young people can find out about their rights under the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC). Rocio Cifuentes, the commissioner of Wales works with children up to the age of 18 and up to 21 if the child has been in care, or 25 if the child has been in care and is still remains in education. Rocio listens to the voice of the children and supports them if they have been mistreated, she will also influence the Government and different organisation that make a difference to children's lives and supports them to carry out what they have promised. According to Research Service (2019) Every school in Wales has a legal duty to ensure that bullying is dealt with successfully and aims to protect children from abuse and bullying. The existing legislation with relevance to bullying for Wales are, quality Act 2010, Education and Inspections Act 2006, Children Act 2004, Education Act 2002, Government of Wales Act 1998, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. Sam's story was introduced as listening to children's experiences of bullying and included priorities for improvement for the Welsh Government. Children's Commissioner for Wales (2017) In 2003 the first children's commissioner, Peter Clarke highlighted that bullying was a hot topic that came up in many conversations with children, that year the Welsh Assembly Government introduced 'Respecting Others' guidance which aimed to provide support for schools to tackle bullying and the impact of bullying for children. Children have the right to receive an education, be safe, to survive and thrive. In 2005 many schools did not have an anti-bullying policy in place. In 2017 it was clear that bullying was still a major concern in school and practitioners needed the correct skills to prevent and tackle bullying when children are experiencing

bullying. School in Wales should be able to have a clear understanding and strategies for recognising and tackling bullying for children. Children were asked to describe how they were feeling through an imaginary character called Sam. According to agenda Online (No Date) When children are exposed to bullying their rights under the UN Convention of rights of the child are being breached. Sam's story was designed by the commissioner for Wales and published in July 2017. The report contains views on bullying by children and young people that are experiencing bullying in Wales. The Sam's Story report allowed children to express how they were feeling and what experiences they were having with bullying through an imaginary character called Sam, which allowed the Commissioner's team to gain a more of an understanding how the children were feeling and what bullying looked like. Children may experience bullying due to disabilities, gender, gender identity, race, religion, or sexual orientation that are all protected by the Equality Act 2010. Furthermore, Children's Commissioner for Wales (2017) states that most children reported to feel safe in school but not all children did, bullying and the risk from others allowed children to feel unsafe and alone, especially children that came from lower income families. Children from lower income families were at higher risk of experiencing bullying in school by other children and being vulnerable for social exclusions and name calling by other children within their setting. Children that experience bullying are less likely to thrive in school and receive lower grades. The commissioner's intentions were for children's experiences of bullying were more understood and that school settings prevented bullying and tackled bullying more effectively when occurred and that children had accesses to receiving mental health services when they were needed, and programmes are place to support children's well-being. NSPCC Learning (No Date) States Children can experience bullying at any time in their early years and anywhere which can lead to children to feeling isolated. Bullying can have a negative impact on children's performance and attendance at school as they may find it difficult to attend school due to being afraid. Bullying can also cause distress to children that witness bullying as they may not know or understand how to help the child that is being bullied. Children's Commissioner for Wales (2017) states that children that witness bullying taking place often do not know how to react to the situation. Children that are witnessing another child being bullied should inform a trusted adult and practitioners, strong action by schools is overlooked as important by the children. Children's Commissioner for Wales (2017) also states that children

and professionals that used the imaginary character called Sam to express how they were feeling with experiences of bullying found that being different was a key factor of bullying such as different backgrounds, poverty, disabilities, gender stereotyping and physical appearance. The second factor of bullying was isolation, Sam was described as having no friends, by the children having friends can lower the risk of the child being bullied as well as having friends to support the child if bullying were to take place. With children using the Sam approach within their setting allowed Sam or someone else to inform the practitioners of a child that was being bullying where the practitioner was then able to resolve the situation which also allowed the children to see how important the schemes are. Sam's needed a person that they could trust within in the setting, it showed that by children having a trusted adult that they were able to communicate with seemed to be a key element to dealing with bullying. With school across the country tackling and preventing bullying taking place had positive resources that were available for Sam's in the school that they were attending and should be taken seriously by practitioners. Welsh Government should place statutory duty on schools to record all types of bullying incidents, by school setting keeping a record of bullying this will allow schools to have a better performance dealing with bullying in the future and will also practitioners to monitor their impact on their anti-bullying policies. Schools in Wales should adopt a child rights based approach within their setting and promote children to learn about their rights and how to respect others with valuing equality children are less at risk to encounter bullying. The children's commissioner for Wales, the right way to education is a practical guide that practitioners are able to use in school to achieve this Children's Commissioner for Wales (No date) states that the framework will support practitioners in all early years educational settings to develop children's human rights in their settings, children's human rights are on the face of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 . By promoting children's rights enables equality and non- discrimination while empowering children.

### Section Three

Welsh Government (2022) States that the pandemic had a devastating effect on our economy and the cost of living is causing impact on households across Wales, effecting lower income households the most. There is estimated to be 31% of children in Wales to be living in poverty. Children that are living within poverty are at higher risk of having poor cognitive and developmental outcomes in their early year assisting children that are exposed to poverty is critical. Furthermore, Wickham et al (2016) states that children growing up experiencing poverty in the Uk are more likely to suffer from health and developmental outcomes than children that are not exposed to poverty, children from poorer backgrounds are also at higher risk of suffering with cognitive, social – behavioural and health condition. A study has shown that children growing up in poverty circumstances have a higher risk of death in adulthood. According to Hanson et al (2013) children exposed to poverty are also exposed to stressful and dangerous environments, empirical investigations have highlighted that child living in poverty are exposed more to violence, separation from their families and receive less support. Low income families are more likely to lack in resources that children will benefit from to support children's development and tend to have a smaller play space for children which can have a negative impact on children's learning, behaviour, mental health and physical health that can be carried into their adulthood. UNICEF (no date) States that there are more than 700 million people that are still living in poverty conditions, with children been affected by the lack of food, hygiene, a place to live, health and education which can affect how children survive and to develop. There are 2 billion children across the world that lack access to clean water and nutrition which is described as matrimonially poor. Due to the affected of the coronavirus there is estimated to be 100 million children that are living in multidimensional poverty. With the risk of children dying twice more likely in their adulthood than a child not living in poverty and having less skills to achieve higher paid jobs allows risk for children to encounter poverty in their adulthoods. There are a low number of Governments across the world that have plans in place to support child poverty as a national urgency. According to Wales Centre for public policy (2022) Poverty and social exclusion are major issues in Wales. Before the outbreak of coronavirus poverty rates in Wales dropped from 25% to 23% over 20 years, since then Wales has seen an increase with almost a quarter of people in Wales are living in poverty. Wales rates of poverty are higher than England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Poverty is growing with the effects from the coronavirus

pandemic, cost of living crisis, the war in Ukraine and with the change of budgets by the UK and Welsh Governments. There are four areas suggested for the Welsh Government to tackle, reducing costs and maximising income which will allow families to be able to provide basic needs for the children and the adults within the household, the Government is also able to support people away from poverty long term by higher paid jobs with access affordable childcare, tackling environments that children are living in and providing and offering the correct services and supporting those that suffer from mental health due to living in poverty. Welsh Government (2015) wants to ensure that less children in Wales are living with families where no one works alongside of this the government wants to support children and young people by stretching their skills to support them to get better jobs. Tackling poverty can also have a positive impact on reducing inequalities. It is important that families in Wales are supported as early as possible to allow children to grow where they are able learn in a healthy environment where they are able to develop skills for their future. Practitioners play an important role in ensuring that this is carried out for the children and their families, flying start and free school meals can be offered to reduce poverty. Welsh Government (2017) states that flying start is targeted for families with children under the ages of 4 years old that live in less deprived areas of Wales. Flying start aims to help children in poverty that may be exposed to poor life outcomes in their early years and support children in their early years development in part time childcare for 2- and 3-year-olds to ensure children are healthy and thriving whilst also supporting families. According to BBC News (2018) flying start has spent 600 million pounds on childcare and other support of families in low income areas, some deprived areas were excluded from flying start due to being outside of the designated area. Welsh Government states (2022) are expanding childcare to all 2-year-olds in Wales over the next 3 years. From September, fly start will be expanded to reach up to 2,500 more children across Wales. Currently 36,000 children under 4 are living in poverty with 9,000 of children receiving funding for a flying start setting. Welsh Government has received £20 million pounds to support the expansion for flying start for all children in the next 3 years.

### Reference list

Baker, C. (2021) *Why Is Leadership Important?* Available at:

<https://leaders.com/articles/leadership/why-is-leadership-important/#:~:text=Leadership%20isn%E2%80%99t%20about%20holding%20author%20over%20someone%20else> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).

BBC News (2018) *Flying start child poverty scheme 'excluded' families*. Available at: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-43157012](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-43157012) (Accessed: 17 June 2023).

Children's Commissioner for Wales (No Date) *A Children's Human Rights Approach to Education in Wales* [https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TheRightWayEducation\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TheRightWayEducation_ENG.pdf)

Children's Commissioner for Wales (No Date) *The Children's Commissioner for Wales - About Us*. Available at: <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/about-us/#:~:text=What%20does%20the%20Children%E2%80%99s%20Commissioner%20for%20Wales%20do%3F> (Accessed 17 June 2023).

Children's Commissioner for Wales (No Date) *Legal Powers*. Available at: <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/about-us/legal-powers/> (Accessed: 8 June 2023).

Children's Commissioner for Wales (2017) *Listening to children and young people's experiences of bullying in Wales*. Available at: <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Sams-Story.pdf> (Accessed: 10 June 2023).

Children's Commissioner for Wales (No date) *Rocio Cifuentes- The Children's Commissioner for Wales*. Available at: <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/about-us/the-commissioner-rocio-cifuentes/> (Accessed: 10 June 2023).

DeLong, W. (2018) *Ella Baker: The Unsung Hero Of The Civil Rights Movement*. Available at: <https://allthatsinteresting.com/ella-baker> (Accessed: 8 June 2023).

Hanson, J.L. et al. (2013) 'Family Poverty Affects the Rate of Human Infant Brain Growth', *Plos One Collection: Social Psychiatry*, 10(12). Available at: [Family Poverty Affects the Rate of Human Infant Brain Growth \(plos.org\)](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0181111) (Accessed: 9 June 2023).

Hawthorne, H. (2021) *Adverse Childhood Experiences | Guidance on ACEs for Schools*. Available at: <https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/adverse-childhood-experiences/> (Accessed: 9 June 2023).

Lewin, L. (2022) *Early Years Leadership: Roles & Attributes of a Good EYFS Leader*. Available at: <https://www.makingbusinessmatter.co.uk/early-years-leadership> (Accessed: 18 June 2023)

McDowall Clark, R. (2012) ‘I’ve never thought of myself as a leader but...’: The Early Years Professional and catalytic leadership’, *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 20(3), pp. 391-401. Available at: [Full article: 'I've never thought of myself as a leader but...': the Early Years Professional and catalytic leadership \(tandfonline.com\)](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14639225.2012.688888) (Accessed: 6 June 2023).

NHS (2021) *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Attachment*. Available at: <https://mft.nhs.uk/rmch/services/camhs/young-people/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces-and-attachment/> (Accessed: 16 June 2023).

NSPCC Learning. (No Date) *Protecting children from bullying and cyberbullying*. Available at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying#skip-to-content> (Accessed: 11 June 2023).

O'Sullivan, J. (2009) *Leadership skills in the early years: making a difference*. London ; New York: Network Continuum.

Public Health England (2022) *Childhood obesity: applying All Our Health*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-applying-all-our-health/childhood-obesity-applying-all-our-health> (Accessed: 12 June 2023).

Research Servies (2019) *Tackling school bullying*. Available at: <https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s84064/Research%20Brief.pdf> (Accessed: 21 May 2023).

Robinson, K. (2017) *The Role Of Leadership In Education Needs To Change, It's Time To Stop Following The Leader...* Available at: <https://hundred.org/en/articles/the-role-of-leadership-in-education-needs-to-change-it-s-time-to-stop-following-the-leader> (Accessed: 18 June 2023)

Rodd, J. (No Daten *Leadership: an essential ingredient or an optional extra for quality early childhood provision?* Available at: <https://tactyc.org.uk/pdfs/Reflection-rodd.pdf#:~:text=Leadership%20is%20a%20vital%20ingredient%20in%20the%20pursuit> (Accessed: 18 June 2023).

R, Phillip. (2022) *The importance of effective Early Years leadership | Teach First*. Available at: <https://www.teachfirst.org.uk/blog/importance-early-years-leadership> (Accessed: 15 June 2023).

Sahoo, K., Sahoo, B., Choudhury, A.K., Sofi, N.Y., Kumar, R. and Bhadoria, A.S. (2015) Childhood obesity: Causes and consequences. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, 4(2), p.187

Unicef (no date). *Child Poverty*. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/social-policy/child-poverty> (Accessed: 01 June 2023).

Wales Centre for public policy (2022) *Poverty and social exclusion: A way forward*. Available at: <https://www.wcpp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Poverty-and-Social-Exclusion-A-Way-Forward-Policy-Briefing-.pdf> (Accessed 17 June 2023).

Webster, E.M. (2022) *The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Health and Development in Young Children*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2333794x221078708>

Welsh Government (No Date) *Children's Commissioner for Wales - Welsh Government*. Available at: <https://cymru-wales.tal.net/vx/mobile-0/appcentre-3/brand-2/candidate/so/pm/1/pl/8/opp/7088-Children-s-Commissioner-for-Wales/en-GB> (Accessed: 10 June 2023).

Welsh Government (2022) *Child poverty strategy: 2022 progress report*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/child-poverty-strategy-2022-progress-report-html>

Welsh Government (2022) *Flying Start expanded in Wales*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/flying-start-expanded-wales> (Accessed:14 June 2023).

Welsh Government (2015) *Child Poverty Strategy for Wales*. Available at: [child-poverty-strategy-for-wales-report.pdf \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/child-poverty-strategy-for-wales-report.pdf) (Accessed: 9 June 2023).

Welsh Government (2017) *Flying Start Health Programme Guidance*. Available at: [https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/flying-start-health-programme-guidance\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/flying-start-health-programme-guidance_0.pdf) (Accessed: 12 June 2023).

Wickham, S., Anwar, E., Barr, B., Law, C. and Taylor-Robinson, D. (2016) Poverty and child health in the UK: using evidence for action. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, 101(8), pp.759–766. Available at: <https://adc.bmj.com/content/archdischild/101/8/759.full.pdf> (Accessed:18 June 2023).