

Student Number: 1703089

Primary PGCE

School Development and Pupil Progress

M7X02153-C

‘Supporting pupil progress: A detailed
analysis of one child’s holistic
development, with justification for the next
steps in learning.’

Introduction:

The school where the research and data collection took place was in a large urban school - it is situated in the Bridgend local authority and set within large grounds. In recent years there have been various extensions to the accommodation, including the addition of five demountable classrooms. The traditional catchment area around the school includes families who are socially and economically disadvantaged, as well as those who are relatively prosperous. A majority of pupils, however, live outside this area and come mainly from two large estates with a significant amount of social housing. Around 30% are entitled to receive free school meals, which is above the local authority and national averages. The ability of pupils on entry varies each year but is generally below average. There are currently around 400 pupils on roll, aged three to eleven, taught in four single age and eight mixed age range classes, including approximately 40 learners who attend the nursery full-time; two Foundation Phase classes temporarily contain around 30 pupils approved by the local authority. The number on roll was similar to the number in their last inspection. Around 22% of pupils are registered as requiring special educational needs support, which is similar to the national average; none have a statement. Around 9% come from an ethnic minority background and approximately 7% receive support in English as an additional language. No pupils use Welsh as their first language. Eight pupils are looked after by the local authority. The individual school budget per pupil in 2018 detailed that the budget was £3080 per pupil (This description and figures has come from Estyn's website).

The learner for this piece of research is a 5 year old (60 months) male and is within a mixed age reception and year 1 class. They were chosen by liaising with the class teacher as to who would be the most appropriate in regards to developing their learning. The purpose of this assignment was to collect a range of data on this learner and then analyse it to find out ways and approaches that could be implemented to progress this pupil from where they are currently to where they need to get to.

Data Collection:

Pupil opinion and pupil voice was at the core of the data collection. The 'Mosaic Approach' devised by Clark and Moss (2001) was used as it allows for the learners to express their views on their own learning. The term 'mosaic' is used as a metaphor for piecing together the perspectives of the learners through a range of data collection sources (Clark, 2004). This approach was recommended by the lecturers of the module, as the desired method of which to gather information because of its extensive research. The approach was built on a constructivists view proposed by Vygotsky (1978), where children are viewed as having a main role in their development and learning. Within this approach the learners are given research tools to allow them to become actively involved in the research. These tools include using cameras to take photo's of areas of particular interest, as well as bookmaking to explain their views (Clark, 2004). This gives the learners a sense of responsibility and directly is in line with Article 12 of the UNCRC (1989), which details that learners should have a voice on matters that directly affect them. More recently, Welsh Government (2011) have mirrored this view and have asked for pupils to have the chance to express their views about their own learning.

The sources of data collection were; interviews (with the class teacher and the subject), observations, the subject taking photographs, and analysis of the learner's work. From reading Patton (2002), the interviews were semi-structured, and a point was made to make them very conversational. The questions were very much open-ended, so the learner could have every opportunity to give an answer. The interviews were sometimes just with the learner in question, and on other occasions they were with the subject's whole ability group. This has been found to aid in more detailed responses when learners are answering questions in small groups (Gillham, 2000). However, although there have been researchers (Patton, 2002) who have successfully used interviews within their research, it had to be considered that the learners may go completely off topic during a question (Greenfield, 2011). To combat this, the questions were open-ended, but were specific enough to make sure the learners

understood what the question was asking. Observations of the target child were made to see how engaged they were with the different types of provision around the classroom. Welsh Government (2008) have detailed the importance of observing learners so that teachers can determine what that child is interested in. They (Welsh Government, 2008) have also suggested methods of observing children, for this study the research didn't take an active role, they sat close by and made notes on what was engaging or disengaging the learner at that given time. The final source for the data collection came in the form of the target child using the class 'Learn Pads' to take pictures of the areas they enjoy most in their classroom and outdoor provision. Clark and Moss (2005) found that the learners enjoyed taking the photos and that they gave richer answers in their interviews when talking about the photographs they took. Although Greenfield (2011) does not dispute the views of Clark and Moss (2005) on the subject of pupils taking photos, they do suggest that if the data collection is to include learners taking photographs then they should adopt a strategy used by Hart (1979), where they asked the learners to order the photos they had taken, which allowed for deeper discussions in their interviews. Analysis of the learners work allowed for the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of where the target child was currently at, in terms of academic performance.

Whilst collecting the data for this piece of research, ethical considerations were made to make sure that the data collected remained secure and the names of the school and the learner involved were anonymous. For the research, the school name was labelled as 'School 1' and the learner in question was labelled as 'Child A'. In regard to keeping the data that was collected safe, it was stored on a password protected memory stick. Additional considerations were also made to make sure that 'Child A' didn't feel singled out and that the rest of the class didn't feel left out. To combat these issues, data was collected on a wider range of pupils. It was also paramount to make sure that the study (mainly interviews) took place in areas that were comfortable and familiar to the pupil (their classroom). Prior to commencing the interviews with 'Child A', they were briefed on their right to end the interview whenever they wished, they just had to hold up the exit card. It was also made sure that

permission was granted by the class teacher before any data was collected (Please see Appendix 1 for permission letter). The ethical decisions and considerations were made on the basis of reading the guidance written by BERA (2018).

Analysis of Learner:

For all the data gathered, Nottingham's (2013) 'ASK' model will be used to analyse the whole learner. Child A's attitudes towards their learning will be acknowledged, as well as the skills shown in their work. Finally, their knowledge will be analysed in reference to what outcome their work was assessed at, from looking at the Welsh Governments (2015) indicators.

The first part of the data collection began with me asking Child A if they would mind having a discussion with me about how they learn best. Child A agreed with having the conversation and I briefed them on that they were free to leave at any time. From our conversation (Please see Appendix 2 for interview transcripts), Child A seemed to really enjoy certain areas of the classroom. The common link between these areas were that they all engaged Child A's senses. He said that he really enjoyed the water area because he loved the feel of the water, as well as doing his 'counting' in there. He also said that he enjoyed watching the tadpoles and making pictures in the 'make it' area. I then asked Child A if he wouldn't mind taking some pictures of the areas he enjoys the most in the classroom (Please see Appendix 3 for Child A's photographs). I then asked if there was another other place within the school that they enjoyed, and he immediately said he enjoys going outside on the outdoor provision. I then gave him a 'Learn Pad' and asked him to show me these places and could he take some photos of them for me. Child A explained that he enjoys going outside and using the 'water shooters' to learn his days of the week. The 'water shooters' are filled with a water-based paint mixture and the learners have to squirt the days of the week in order. He also showed me these tubs with a magnifier as the lid, he said 'You can put insects in here and look at them closely'. From our conversations (See Appendix

2) and the photographs he has taken (See Appendix 3) it seems as though the learner enjoys investigating insects and animals, as well as performing practical tasks.

I wanted to find out more about Child A, so asked if the class teacher would mind giving me more detail on his holistic development (See Appendix 2 for interview transcript). She told me that he is currently on target in terms of his development and is working at 'Outcome 3' (Welsh Government, 2015) in majority of the areas of learning. From looking at the Welsh Governments (2017) expectations, a learner of 5 years old should be working at 'Outcome 3', which is how old Child A is. I asked if there was anything in particular that Child A needs to work on to get him ready for his new class in September. The teacher identified that Child A seems to struggle with getting his days of the week in order, and it is something she would like him to be confident with by the end of the academic year. Finally, I took a selection of Child A's work (See Appendix 4 for Child A's work) to analyse to see where they are at in regard to the outcomes published Welsh Government (2015). From looking at Child A's mathematics work it can be suggested that he is working at 'Outcome 3' (Welsh Government, 2015) as subtracting simple numbers (below 5) from numbers is a skill within this outcome. Likewise, to be able to distinguish when to use a capital letter (for example, at the start of a sentence) and then, when to use lowercase letters (for example, the words in a sentence) is also an 'Outcome 3' (Welsh Government, 2015) skill within the literacy section of the document. From looking at Child A's literacy work (Appendix 4), it can be seen, that they have been able to correctly place a capital letter to begin the sentence and a capital 'I' in the sentence to talk about themselves, as well as using lowercase letters for the other words in the sentence. Child A also designed and made their own plant pot during one lesson where the focus was on the germination process of plants. I observed Child A making their pot (Appendix 4) and saw how confident they were with using glues or tape to stick two different materials together, which is also an 'Outcome 3' (Welsh Government, 2015) skill. The final piece of Child A's work I analysed, was a 'Knowledge and Understand of the World' piece of work, where Child A drew a representation of a frog's life cycle (Appendix 4). From looking at the Foundation Phase Framework (Welsh Government, 2015), I would say

that this work is at 'Outcome 3' as they have been able to sort the stages into a specific order from using the information given about what the frog looks like in each stage.

The attitudes shown by the learner in relation to their own learning, showed that they are curious, persistent, full of wonder and were willing to ask for support. These attributes are described by Nottingham (2013) as attitudes that 'outstanding' learners demonstrate. Especially when observing Child A during the focus task on the life cycle of a frog, Child A was very engaged and full of wonder when the teacher was going through the stages of the life cycle. Child A had been observing the tadpoles in the classroom everyday and he had been asking the class teacher and the teaching assistant questions regarding when they were going to turn into frogs. In comparison, Child A seemed less engaged when given a mathematics worksheet to complete on the topic of subtraction. They were willing to ask for support during the lesson, but they did not demonstrate the curiosity that they had previously shown during the life cycle lesson. This is a common attribute within mathematics as Boaler (2015) suggests that traditionally mathematics is taught through a passive approach, with the teacher leading and the learners copying. This could be the reason why Child A seemed less engaged with the mathematics lesson than the lesson on the frog's life cycle. It is felt that if Child A's mathematics was taught through an inquiry approach, where they could use problem solving skills to enhance their learning then Child A may become more engaged within mathematics lessons (Boaler, 2015). The skills that Child A showed during the data collection process met some that Nottingham (2013) described as essential for learning. They were able to ask relevant questions regarding the order of a frog's life cycle. They were also able to work as part of a team when sorting the cards with the different stages of the life cycle on them. Some of the skills that Nottingham (2013) identifies, weren't apparent during the mathematics lesson, especially paying full attention to the speaker. This was because Child A was disengaged and reasons for this were described by Boaler (2015) when discussing Child A's attitudes to learning. Finally, the knowledge demonstrated by Child A was previously discussed and it was felt by the researcher and the class teacher that Child

A is currently working at 'Outcome 3' in the areas assessed, using Welsh Governments (2015) outcome descriptors.

From using the data collection model and the models for analysing the data, it has allowed the researcher to gain a better understanding of where the whole child is at in regard to their overall development. That is not saying that these models do not have any limitations, as there are a number. Using the mosaic approach (Clark and Moss, 2001) did give Child A chance to take responsibility and have their voice heard, but as the researcher had only been in the classroom just over a week before the data collection began, I feel that Child A was probably not as open as they would have been if they were being interviewed by someone they were more familiar with. It is also felt that due to the nature of a Foundation Phase class, not all learning is evidenced and stuck into books, which meant there was limited pieces of work to choose from to gain an understanding of their development. It was stated that Child A is currently at 'Outcome 3' (Welsh Government. 2015) for the areas discussed but they have not demonstrated all of the criteria to meet the outcome in the pieces of work used of the analysis, if the data collection had been given more time, it is felt that a better representation of Child A would be been apparent.

Next Steps:

From looking at the analysis of Child A it can be suggested that they enjoy inquiring activities as they enjoy looking at the tadpole tank and the insect magnifiers. It can also be proposed that Child A enjoys practical tasks or activities that involve the senses, which was apparent from what Child A said about the water area in the classroom. Finally, it was found that Child A was less engaged with mathematics, which Boaler (2015) suggests is due to the passive approaches used traditionally to teach pupils mathematics. A range of approaches have been sourced to show how Child A could develop their learning and move toward the next steps of their development.

Vygotsky (1978) stated that a variety of methods need to be adopted when educating children. Rains, Kelly, and Durham (2008) have more recently suggested that due to learners of the same age being at different development stages, it is important that a range of approaches to learning should be adopted. Blessinger and Carfora (2014) have researched using different methods within a variety of subjects and learning areas. They researched the effects of using inquiry-based learning within the classroom. Using this approach allows for the learner to take more responsibility on their own learning and become more active in the learning process (Blessinger and Carfora, 2014). They also found that the learners developed deeper thought, something which Bloom (1956) had previously acknowledged as being an attribute of outstanding learning. The challenges for the approach come in the way of staff not being trained or having the experience in developing deep questions (Blessinger and Carfora, 2014). Drayton and Falk (2001) also state that the approach will only work effectively if the questions and problems are meaningful to the learners. Other challenges that may be faced when implementing this approach would be if the learners are not fully ready to channel their deeper thinking skills. In addition, the pupils need to be given time to get used to taking charge of their own learning and being active within their lessons (Blessinger and Crafora, 2014).

In reference to Child A, it is felt that for them to move onto the next stage of their development, the class teacher could implement an inquiry-based learning approach. More specifically within mathematics, where it was noted that Child A was less engaged. It is felt that Child A's mathematics should be delivered through a topic that is of interest to them, for example tadpoles or frogs. Once this has been established, then the focussed tasks that Child A is apart of need to allow for Child A to become more active in the learning process. An example of this would be, instead of Child A (and the rest of their ability group) being given a worksheet to complete on the topic 'subtraction', a worded problem should be introduced to engage deeper thinking and get the whole group to take responsibility in answering it. This will need a lot of scaffolding and modelling but once that has been cemented, the benefits that have been discussed earlier, should then be seen in Child A. With the age of the

learners in Child A's class, the class teacher will need to make sure that the worded problems are either written in child-friendly language or discussed, where the teacher reads the question and the rest of the group work together to answer it. To see if this does impact Child A, it is recommended that the class teacher implements a scale of engagement, similar to the Leuven Scale (Laevers, 1994), to assess how engaged the learners are with this new approach to mathematics.

Another approach that was identified with having the potential to progress Child A's learning, was the introduction of a multi-sensory approach. This approach uses activities that engages a range of senses upon an individual (Joshi, Dahlgren and Boulware-Gooden, 2002). There has been a rich history of using a multi-sensory platform to make learning relevant and accessible for all learners. Orton (1925) found that using a multi-sensory approach within education, helped learners diagnosed with dyslexia access their learning. Fast forward around 90 years and multi-sensory approaches to learning are still being documented but have been modernised. Taljaard (2016) investigated the using of multi-sensory technologies such as virtual reality in the classroom and found that learners improved their problem-solving skills. They were also able to recall more information and they demonstrated more engagement in tasks when there was a multi-sensory aspect was introduced. Their findings have also been supported by science, where it was discovered that the human brain works at its optimum when in the presence of multi-sensory processes (Shams and Seitz, 2008). In light of this finding, Praveen (2016) stated that if a child is disengaging in the way or approach they are learning in, the class teacher needs to adapt their approach to get the learner to engage. Although there are many positives to using multi-sensory processes in learning, it has to be noted that a large amount of the research that has looked into multi-sensory learning has been within the field of 'Additional Learning Needs' education (Mather and Goldstein, 2001). However, it is felt that the potential positives from adopting these methods could benefit learners that do not have any diagnosed 'Additional Learning Needs'. Another challenge when implementing this approach comes from class teachers having to potentially create a

wider range of learning materials so that all learners can engage with a multi-sensory approach that suits their learning (Taljaard, 2016).

In regards to Child A's development, it was observed that they enjoyed using areas in the classroom where they could use practical skills to consolidate learning. It is felt that adopting a multi-sensory approach and using the practical skills that Child A has developed should be used within their focussed tasks. Especially within mathematics, where Child A was described as be disengaged. An example of this would be using materials such as, 'Multi-link' blocks for Child A to use to visually see what subtraction actually means. Taljaard (2016) has also researched the use of virtual reality technologies within mathematics and concluded that the learners in their study were very engaged with the technology and it had a positive effect on learning. School 1 has be certified as a virtual reality school and I feel that Child A would benefit from using this approach within their learning.

Conclusion:

To conclude this assignment, a number of approaches have been identified to progress Child A in the learning process. From analysing the data collected it was found that Child A is working at 'Outcome 3' (Welsh Government, 2015) across the areas of learning. To progress Child A onto 'Outcome 4' (Welsh Governemnt, 2015) and beyond, it is felt that an inquiry-based learning approach could allow for the learner to become more engaged within mathematics. Also, with Child A showing an interest in the practical areas within the classroom (make-it and water areas) and the outdoor provision, it would be beneficial to Child A, if a multi-sensory approach to learning was adopted to channel into their interests. In relation to these approaches, it is also felt that with the new curriculum for Wales (Donaldson, 2015) having a high focus on pupil well-being, a range of varied approaches should be adopted to allow for learners to get the most out of their education. This has also been documented by Boaler (2015) and Praveen (2016), who have also called for varied approaches to learning being

adopted in education. They believe that these varied methods move the learner from being passive to becoming more active in their own development.

To improve this study, it should have been given more time, so that the researcher could have gathered more evidence on Child A and got a better understanding of them holistically. During the data collection period, School 1 was inspected by Estyn, which in its nature did mean that it was difficult at times to gather suitable information. I also feel that having two researchers instead of one would improve the study, as it could avoid any of the results being viewed as bias. Following an approach, such as Dudley's (2014) 'Lesson Study' would have been far more beneficial. This would have been because a group of researchers would have been able to collaboratively collect data and then analyse it. Furthermore, due to the age of Child A and the nature of a Foundation Phase classroom in Wales (Play-based learning), not a lot of data was able to be collected in terms of pieces of work in books. If this study was to be done again it would be essential that child observations would be the essential part of the data collection process.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Permission Form



RE: Primary PGCE student assignment: permission and confirmation that work has been undertaken in school for assignment 'School Development and Pupil Progress', Summer 2019

Dear class/senior mentor,

For the university module named above, trainees are required to identify one learner within the class in which they are based and, over the course of the Professional Teaching Experience, explore their learning in detail. The evidence that they need to gather could include:

- observation;
- asking the learner to identify places/things that help him/her learning;
- discussing what helps the pupil learn and how they feel about learning with the pupil and/or teacher;
- collecting samples of work which might show something about the learner's progress and development.

They are asked to focus on knowledge, attitude and skills in language, mathematics, wellbeing and at least two other areas of the curriculum to gain an holistic picture of the child. They then suggest the next steps for the learner, and indicate how these will be achieved. Trainees are expected to undertake this work independently wherever possible, and have been given ethical guidelines to follow (although undertaking the work above would be in line with typical classroom practice). The trainees have been asked not to reveal the identify of the learner or the school within their assignment. Students have been asked to:

1. Seek permission for this work (by consulting with the class teacher and learner)
2. Provide verification that the work has taken place.

We would therefore be grateful if you could confirm that permission has been sought and that tasks have been undertaken by signing below:

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT): Luke Kinsey

SCHOOL NAME (PLEASE PRINT): [REDACTED]

SENIOR MENTOR/CLASS MENTOR NAME (PLEASE PRINT):

Nicki James

SENIOR MENTOR/CLASS MENTOR NAME (PLEASE SIGN):

Nicki James

Appendix 2: Interview

Interview 1: Researcher and Child A

Researcher – Which areas of the classroom do you enjoy going to?

Child A – I love the water area, I like doing my counting in there.

Researcher – Are there any other areas you like?

Child A – I really like looking at the tadpoles and making pictures in the 'make it' area.

Researcher – That's really cool, are there any other areas around the school that you enjoy?

Child A – Yes, I love using the insect magnifiers outside and the water shooters.

Interview 2: Researcher and Class Teacher

Researcher – How is Child A doing, regards to the outcomes?

Class Teacher – He is achieving outcome 3 in all areas.

Researcher – Are there any particular things Child A struggles with?

Class Teacher – He struggles with getting his days of the week in order and he disengages with mathematics.

Appendix 3: Photographs

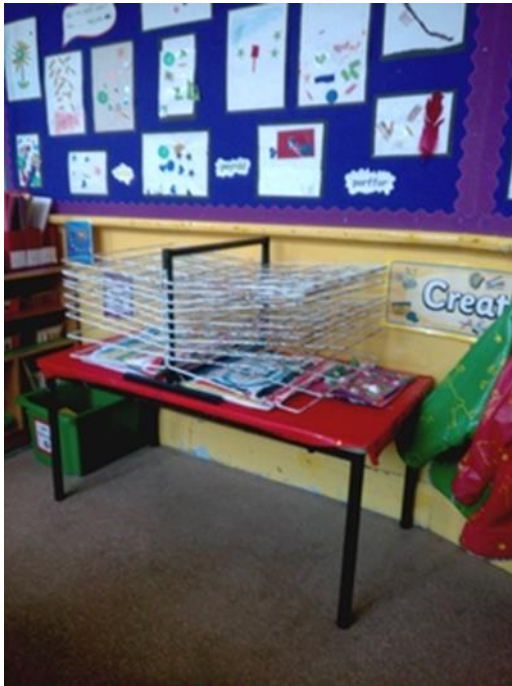
Photograph 1 – The water area in the classroom.



Photograph 2 – The class tadpoles.



Photograph 3 – The ‘make it’ area in the classroom.



Photograph 4 – The ‘insect magnifiers’, in the outdoor provision.



Photograph 5 – The ‘water shooters’, in the outdoor provision.

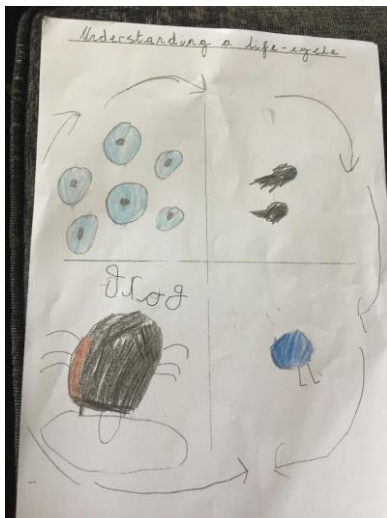


Appendix 4: Child A's Work

Creative



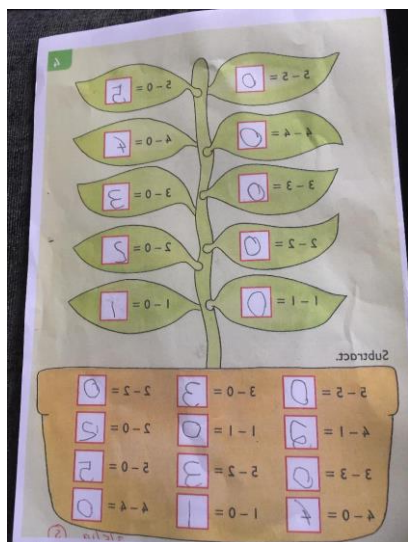
Knowledge and Understanding of the World



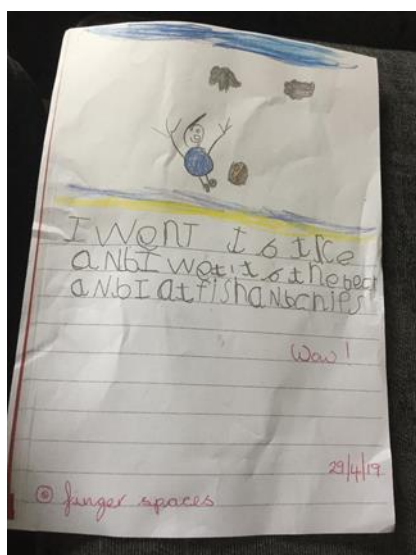
Student Number: 1703089

Word Count: 4084

Mathematics



Literacy



Student Number: 1703089

Word Count: 4084