

Part 1 – PDP (500 words)

I am currently studying early years education to work towards my future goals. My long-term end goal is to graduate and become a qualified primary school teacher and eventually teach children internationally. I don't plan on permanently living international, but one of my goals to travel and work abroad for a few years pursuing my career. My dream destination to work internationally is Dubai, as it offers excellent opportunities for professional growth, and high-quality education settings.

Through my on-going degree in early years, I have begun to develop a strong understanding in child development, early years curriculum and children's rights, this course so far has allowed me to understand how children learn and how to support their emotional, social, and cognitive growth. During my placement work alongside my university course, I have picked up many more extra skills such as prevent awareness certificate and safeguarding certificate, these real-life experiences working in a flying start setting has boosted my confidence and communication and interpersonal skills.

To achieve my ultimate goal of becoming a primary school teacher the most immediate qualification I need to gain after completing my degree is QTS. I can achieve this through a Postgraduate Certificate in Education or a school-based route. In addition to the formal qualification, I will need to strengthen my practical teaching skills through continuing placements and hands-on experience. I am also going to keep improving my knowledge and skills by hopefully completing behaviour management, lesson planning, and assessment for learning.

My main goal is to earn a QTS and graduate so that I can work as a primary school teacher with full qualifications. I want to teach internationally through government-sponsored or international teaching programs after I have gained enough classroom experience and have developed my professional abilities. I'm particularly interested in Dubai because of its extensive network of schools with a British curriculum and chances for personal development. While I'm young, I would like to teach abroad for a few years to improve my teaching methods and increase my understanding of other cultures.

To achieve these goals, I will continue to engage with my current degree, completing all assignments and placements with dedication. I will stay motivated during this process by making mood boards and breaking my goal up into small achievable steps over time. Once I graduate, I plan to apply for a PGCE or a school-based training route that offers QTS. During this time, I will also complete additional training courses to enhance my employability. Alongside my academic development and looking for schools in the UK, I will research international teaching opportunities, focusing on government or private school programs in Dubai. Whether it's through travel, independent study, my personal goal is to get outside of my comfort zone to build resilience, flexibility, and confidence. These attributes will help me when I go into the teaching profession and work abroad.

I am certain that I can accomplish my objectives and have a fulfilling, international teaching career if I stick to this approach and keep reviewing my progress.

The practice of reviewing past experiences, actions, or situations in order to understand what occurred is known as reflection. Why might that have occurred? and how it might be enhanced going forward. People can learn from their experiences through reflection, which includes critical thinking and self-awareness. The intentional and systematic use of consideration in a work setting is known as reflective practice. It assists professionals in assessing their methods, adjusting to the various requirements of children, and participating in ongoing professional growth. This means that in order to make sure they are successfully serving the requirements of every child, early childhood educators must constantly reflect on their interactions with children, their teaching methods, and their understanding of the surrounding environment. (Carlson, 2023) In the initial stages, reflective practice is essential for several reasons. Reflective practitioners can identify what works well and what requires enhancement, ultimately leading to improved learning results and experiences for children. Children benefit when practitioners adjust their interactions and experiences to suit each child's needs, fostering development in a more effective and meaningful way. This ensures that children are the focus of all planning and decision-making processes (Boodoo, 2024). Reflective practice fosters a mindset of lifelong learning, practitioners become more open to feedback, willing to adapt and motivated to grow their knowledge, encouraging continuous professional development. By reflecting on incidents or safeguarding issues, practitioners can learn from their mistakes, prevent future risks that exist and keep children safer. This is another reason why reflective practice is crucial in the early years. In order to make sure they are providing the best environment possible for young children to flourish, reflective practice enables practitioners to be deliberate, sensitive, and mindful in everything they do. (General Medical Council, 2018). Examining theories of reflection, educational and psychological frameworks underlie reflective practice. Donald Schon significantly contributed to this. Schon presented the concepts of "reflection on action," which involves immediate thinking, reflecting in the moment, assessing the situation, and reacting instinctively, and "reflection in action," which pertains to post event contemplation, reviewing what transpired, evaluating the circumstances, and considering necessary changes for improved future outcomes. He highlighted the importance of professional intuition and learning through experience. In his view, reflective practitioners are always seeking improvement and striving to find enhanced solutions. John Dewey contributes further to the philosophy of reflection (Crosby, 2005). Dewey defined reflection as the intentional, ongoing, and careful assessment of one's beliefs and behaviours in light of pertinent information. He thought that reflection was the secret of learning. (Rodgers, 2002). It is common practice to use Gibbs' reflecting cycle when interacting with individuals. There are six crucial phases in the Gibbs model, these include one. description, taking into account what happened two. feelings, taking into account the sensations and thoughts felt. Three. Evaluation of the experience's advantages and disadvantages four. Analysis of the knowledge gained from this circumstance five. a list of potential alternate courses of action six. plan, specify what actions should be taken in the event that this experience recurs. This is a great learning process since it is well-structured and uncomplicated, encouraging both emotional and critical reflection, which makes it perfect for beginners. (Katie, 2023). David Kolb is widely recognized as an educational theorist, The first phase in the Kolb experimental learning cycle is concrete experience, which is achieved by doing or having an experience you wish to reflect on. phase two is reflective observation, which involves reviewing and considering the event. three. abstract conceptualisation, drawing conclusions, and experience-based learning four. Planning and putting what has been learnt into practice through active experimentation. (Kurt, 2020) This idea promotes applying what has been learnt to future experiences and places a strong emphasis on learning by doing. This cycle complements play-based learning as well. The main difference between Gibbs and Kolb is that Kolb avoids discussing emotions. Kolb's emotional insights are lower than those of other models of reflection. (Cherry, 2025). There are three simple steps in the Driscoll reflection cycle. You first think what is the main crucial question? You are then prompted to describe the experience in detail. Observing and understanding the situation without passing judgement is the major goal of this phase. Thinking about what happened and what were the key events? Analysing the experience, weighing its significance, and determining what you've learnt from it are the next steps. This stage involves thinking back on your feelings and responses. The focus of this final inquiry is now highlighted in the third step which is, how can you apply this information to future actions? This stage is all about planning and improving, and setting goals based on your self-reflection. (Nursing Answers, 2024). The Gibbs and Driscoll reflection cycles differ primarily in their focus and tier structure. The Gibbs cycle's six phases provide a more comprehensive framework for self-reflection encouraging a closer look at feelings and evaluations. Because Driscoll's reflection cycle consists of three main

questions that focus on the event, its significance, and next steps, it is more concise and uncomplicated. (McLoed, 2025). The choice between the Gibbs and Driscoll cycles may rely on the desired amount of thought, but both are helpful tools for reflective practice. While the Gibbs cycle is more comprehensive and examines emotions and assessments, (The University of Edinburgh, 2024) the Driscoll cycle is more straightforward and focusses on the immediate application of learning.

Overall A key element of professional practice in the early years is reflection, which includes a critical examination of the interactions between educators and carers, educational strategies, and the classroom setting. It is essential for pinpointing areas that need improvement and successful tactics, which raises the standard of early childhood education (Rolfe, Freshwater and Jasper, 2001). The production of inclusive, responsive, and developmentally appropriate experiences that foster young children's holistic growth is facilitated by reflective practice (Dalli et al, 2012). Additionally, it supports ongoing professional development, which empowers practitioners to make well-informed choices, adjust to the various needs of students, and match their methods with the most recent research and policy recommendations (Department for Education, 2024).

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Part 3 - Written piece (1500 words)

The term "professional practice" describes the ongoing development and application of knowledge, skills, and understanding in an area of study. It involves evaluating an individual's behaviour, getting feedback, and continuously improving strategies to advance children's development and well-being. essentially it stands for a commitment to upholding quality and remaining up to date on the most recent, successful methods. In order to ensure that every child has access to the support, care, and learning opportunities that are vital to their success, professionals play a critical role in the early stages of education. It is the responsibility of teachers and other childcare providers to create inclusive environments that recognise every child as an individual with unique needs, interests, and circumstances. (Care Learning, 2024)

Each aspect of a practitioner's work with children and families is guided by their professional values. (Schonfeld, 2025) Respect, communication, honesty, compassion, equality, and a dedication to inclusive practices are a few of these. A values-led approach fosters an inclusive and respectful atmosphere where all children are respected for who they are, regardless of their circumstances, background, or ability. (Francis, 2023) Respect for diversity is one of the most significant professional values. Practitioners need to adapt their approaches to accommodate for cultural, linguistic, social, and economic differences in order to ensure that every child feels acknowledged and supported. For example, honouring holidays from other cultures or having access to bilingual materials can foster a feeling of connection. (Elite Team, 2025) Equally important is the ideal of equality, which involves actively removing obstacles that might prevent certain children from having equal access to opportunities, no child should be mistreated unfairly under any circumstances. Building strong relationships with children, parents, coworkers, and outside experts requires effective engagement. (Teach, 2024) Childcare educators can understand children's needs, share information, and collaborate on support strategies through communication. Communication with children involves more than just spoken words. Since interaction is the foundation of education, social development, and emotional well-being in younger children, it is essential for meeting each child's specific and inclusive requirements. In the end, it fosters a more inviting and caring environment by empowering children to express their needs, form bonds with their classmates, and participate in educational activities. (Hood, 2019) Treating people equally and providing them with equal opportunities for success is

what is meant by equality. (Birth to 5 matters, 2024) Children come from a variety of circumstances, and some may be at a disadvantage because of discrimination, poverty, disabilities, or language challenges. Encouraging equality makes it easier to equalise levels of play and guarantees that every child has the opportunity to realise their full potential. (Hamlets, 2017) Additionally, equality fosters a healthy learning environment because it makes children feel secure, welcomed, and self-assured. This supports their mental health and motivates them to pursue education. This value supports children's rights and is consistent with the UNCRC in these particular sections. (The City of Edinburgh Council, 2022).

Article 2: All children, regardless of their circumstances.

Article 3: Adults are required to act in the child's best interests.

Creating engaging and nurturing environments for children's learning and development is the main goal of professional practice in early childhood settings. This includes assessing and refining one's own work, creating inclusive learning environments, and engaging with children in a positive way. Professional practice encompasses a wide range of abilities and factors, including ethics, responsibility, and professional growth, in order to uphold a high standard of practice and establish a solid professional identity. A vital skill that all early years practitioners and educators must have is planning and observation. While planning helps set clear and personalized goals, observation allows you to assess progress and make necessary adjustments. Planning is crucial for meeting individual and inclusive needs of children because it guarantees a customised learning environment, encourages good mental health, and creates equal access to learning opportunities, planning is essential for addressing the particular and inclusive needs of children. Practitioners can design engaging and motivating experiences that enhance the growth of each child by being aware of their individual needs and interests. As well as observations, this skill helps teachers understand each student's unique abilities, needs, and learning preferences, they are crucial in meeting inclusive and personal education requirements. (Louis, 2022) Gaining this understanding enables more targeted and customised planning and education, ensuring that each child is recognised and supported. By seeing children in various settings and evaluating activities, educators may spot skills, pinpoint areas that need support, and comprehend individual

preferences, creating a more inclusive and effective learning environment. These are both key for staying effective and improving your skills. (Connect Childcare, 2024)

Clear communication, respect for one another, and a shared dedication to the child's best interests are essential for effective multi-agency interaction. Joint training and regular meetings might help overcome obstacles caused by differences in professional language, priorities, or procedures. (NSPCC, 2023) Trying to handle every aspect of a child's development when they are confronted with obstacles like special educational needs, disabilities, mental health issues, or safeguarding concerns can be difficult. Practitioners can use specialised knowledge to develop well-coordinated and successful support plans by working across organisations. To promote a child's interactive development in the classroom, for instance, a speech-language pathologist might collaborate with an early childhood educator. Additionally, multi-agency teams encourage early action, which is essential to prevent minor problems from getting worse, by bringing together different expertise and resources, ensures comprehensive support for children and promotes better outcomes for children. (Evans, 2010)

The UNCRC serves as an essential structure that directs early childhood and education professionals' activities. It defines the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of every child and acknowledges them as individuals with rights deserving of protection, provision, and participation. The UK ratified it in 1991. (UNICEF, 1989) The UNCRC gives practitioners the authority to defend children's rights and challenge actions or regulations that harm against them. A culture of respect, safety, and empowerment is promoted when the UNCRC is incorporated into day-to-day operations. These rights consist of,

Article 2: All children have rights, regardless of race, religion, ability, or background. This underpins anti-discriminatory practice and inclusive education.

Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration. Practitioners must ensure that all decisions and actions prioritise children's well-being.

Article 12: Children have the right to express their views and have them taken seriously. This promotes child voice and participation in planning and decision-making.

Article 23: Children with disabilities have the right to special care and support. This reinforces the importance of tailored provision and inclusive environments.

(University of Dundee, 2023)

By professionals understanding and applying the UNCRC, a greater understanding for children's well-being will be held in the setting as well as it can promote their participation in decision-making, and ensure equitable access to services and opportunities. A rights-based approach in education fosters situations where children feel heard, respected, and safe. All of which are critical building blocks for inclusion and growth. (Children's Parliament, 2022)

In conclusion, addressing the particular and inclusive needs of children requires a variety of components of professional practice, such as core principles, effective communication, cooperation across organisations, observations, strategic planning, and adherence to the UNCRC. Each element has a distinct but connected function in creating environments where each child is respected, recognised, and given the tools they need to thrive. Professional values such as fairness, integrity, and dignity help to create inclusive and moral practices. Using a variety of abilities and knowledge, collaborative partnerships enable a holistic approach to meeting various requirements. Monitoring provides essential insights into children's development, enabling immediate identification of needs and preventative planning. Every child can have a customised and accessible learning experience thanks to thoughtful and flexible methods. In the end, the UNCRC acts as a framework focused on rights, reminding educators of their responsibility to defend and promote each child's rights. (Dyer, 2016) When combined, these practice elements provide a solid foundation for providing high-quality care. Teachers are more equipped to assist each child in achieving their full potential in terms of social, emotional, and intellectual development when they incorporate these values into their daily work. It is crucial to ensure that early childhood educators have access to high-quality professional development that leads to long-lasting practice changes since a child's experiences

throughout the first five years of life have a significant impact on outcomes later on, Professional practice ensures children get the best start at life through quality care and education. The values spoken about in this essay are all key for creating a supporting and enriching environment. (NCFE, no date)

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