Portfolio

Part 1: Play Types,

Welsh Government (2014 p4) believes every child has the right to play and their policy says: 'Play is so critically important to all children in the development of their physical, social, mental, emotional and creative skills that society should seek every opportunity to support it and create an environment that fosters it. Decision making at all levels of Government should include a consideration of the impact of those decisions on children's opportunities to play.

What is self-directed play? Self-directed play is about a child deciding what they would like to play, if children want to play with others or on their own. A child will make the rules to a game that they want to play (Kozikidz, 2018). Larson (2013) suggests that Montessori refers to self-directed play, children can choose which activity they would like to do, this can be with a either a toy or an item made from wood or metal, and whether a child can play solitary or if they would like to play with a Keyworker or another child. Larson (2013) suggests Montessori believes that when a child self-direct plays they learn more as they become more engaged in the activity of their own choosing. This helps with a child's psychological needs and can help children with their holistic development.

Juster (2015) states holistic play is about how children develop in many different ways, for example they can learn physical skills through rough and tumble play and role play this can help them with their emotional development, which is very important to a child's wellbeing.

Schoolhouse (2020) states heuristic play means that a child will play with items that are not toys. Children will play with items such as wood, Metal and Plastic. These items are as important as a toy as they teach children to explore different shapes and textures and size to help them solve problems and be creative. One example of this is that children when playing with wood they can learn to build things and walk on them they can also learn about different types of wood. Bruce (2011) suggests that Frobel believes that children should play with natural materials for example "wooden blocks (the Gifts)" this will help them learn and develop through Art.

Nixon (2017) believes Heuristic play is about children playing freely without the guidance of an adult, where they can play with what they want and not what they are given. It teaches them how to explore and what items they like to play with. It can also teach them how to play with other children. Bodrova and Leong 2005 suggest it is important to a child to play freely and for it to be child-led because it teaches them to develop their physical and mental skills.

Sturrock & Else (1998) developed the Play Cycle which supports children's self-directed play. If a child is interrupted, it can distract them and take their concentration away from their activity and prevent them from becoming independent learners. This is supported by Donaldson (2015) within the Successful Futures curriculum, he states that without the opportunity to play children have reduced problem solving and critical thinking skills and they are less able to make informed decisions.

Larson (2013) suggests Montessori believes that a Keyworker can help a child with self-directed play. They can do this by; ensuring that the environment is safe for a child and they have space to explore this, can be either indoors or outdoors depending on what the child decides. A keyworker can place different materials around a room or the outdoor play area, they can observe a child and let the child decide what they want to play with and how they would like to play with it.

Part 2 Risk,

Pilcher (2020) states Keyworkers should ensure the safety of children in their setting. They should undertake a risk assessment of resources a child plays with and activities they participate in. Keyworkers should take into consideration that children should take risks for their own wellbeing because without risk, a child could struggle to solve problems and their strengths which can interrupt their physical and mental health development. Children should be able to play risky play freely indoors or outdoors. Holecko (2020) agrees with Pilcher (2020), when a child takes risks they are using their physical abilities and their cognitive skills. If a Keyworker interrupts or stops risky play it can affect a child's physical, emotional health and their repetition , children should be able to take risks for them to embrace free play and material arts to help them to discover their own strengths. Risk can build a child's confidence and ensure that if they fail they keeping trying until they succeed, for example this can be done by learning to ride a bike, climbing trees or doing sports, Keyworkers should encourage

children to take appropriate risks during play and not stop them from doing it. Risky activities are good for a child's health and physical needs. Play Scotland (2021) agrees with Holecko (2020) and Pilcher (2020) believe children like to use their imaginations and making up games, children can use risky objects of different sizes and shapes or if they are sharp or blunt. Play Scotland (2021) suggests that a Keyworker should let children take any risk so they can learn new skills. Play Scotland (2021) suggests Keyworkers should ensure that the risks are safe for children and ensure the environment the children play in has had a risk assessment for the child not to be in any serious danger.

Journeyman (2016) believes children learn through risky play. Journeyman (2016) suggest ten percent of Danish Kinder Garden schools are Forest Kinder Gardens, children play in the forest all day. Journeyman (2016) believes children should be able to play freely with what they want to do. Journeyman (2016) suggests children can climb trees and hills which can help them with their physical and mental abilities, it can help them decide how high they can go and it can help them decide how they will be able to get down, it can encourage them to more confident and help them make their own decisions. Play Scotland (2021) agrees with Journeyman (2016) children should be supported with risky play as it is important to their development. Children should be able to have as many experiences as possible. This can help them learn how to become more physical and to use their imaginations to build their confidence and their mental wellbeing. Early Education (No Date) agrees with Journeyman (2016) and Play Scotland (2021) that children should learn through taking risks as it can help them develop physically and mentally. Early Education (No Date) suggests that while children take risks they should not be put in danger. Children can get cuts and bruises that cannot be avoided, this is a part of growing up and teaches them skills that help them look after themselves and avoid it happening again, children learn from experience

Frobel Trust (No Date) suggests Frobel's theory about using 'gift' wooden cubes, can help children learn to count and build, when children build they count how many they can put on top of each other as it gets higher, the objects can fall down and hurt a child, a child will see this as play and they will risk rebuilding it and count how high they can build it until it falls down again. This can help a child build their confidence to take more risks. Pickering (2004) suggests that Montessori agrees with Frobel Trust

(No Date) children learn Mathematical skills by adding numbers together so they can count. When a child can count they learn to build, they can do this by counting how many items they need for the task, for example; building something with wood and for them to do the task they may need to use tools, this is risky for a child, it teaches them physical and mental skills, it can help them solve problems.

Part 3: Observation

According to Hwb Welsh Government (2008) every child should be observed in their Foundation Phase setting, this is because it helps a Keyworker understand a child's skills and their development, it helps them with the understanding of how a child is developing. It can help Keyworkers assess whether a child has any additional needs so the Keyworker can help to give a child further opportunity to help with their learning. Keyworkers can observe in different ways, they can take photos or video clips, take notes and they can write a diary these will help keep a record of a child's development which can help Keyworkers and parents with the planning of a child's future. Louis (2018) also states that observing children playing in the Foundation Phase helps a keyworker to document a child's development and skills, and if a child has any additional needs they can support them. Observing children playing can also help a keyworker learn about a child's interests and a child's understanding of what they play with or how to play with it this can be by using their imagination which can help a child develop mental and physical skills. Harcombe (2021) agrees Keyworkers in the foundation phase setting can take notes and photos while observing a child, a diary could be used to keep a record of a child's learning progress this can be shared with other Keyworkers in a child's setting and parents/carers to help them to have a understanding of the child's development. Harcombe (2021) suggests that children should be observed from a distance, they should not be set tasks as they may see it as working which could make them lose interest in the activity which can make the observation very difficult to carry out. A child should be encouraged to play self-directed play as this could boost their self-esteem and give them more confidence so a child will continue the play and the observation can be done. Howard and McInnes (2012) suggest that children in the foundation phase should not be interrupted as it can have an impact on the observation, if a child feels they are being watched or that a task has been set out for them they may not want to play a particular game anymore which can make the observation difficult to carry out. Lawrence (1998) also suggests

that Montessori believes that a child should not be interrupted while they play as this could distract them from what they are playing and they may not wish to continue to play, A child can also become uncomfortable if they feel as though they are being watched and can this can interrupt the observation of the child. Child Ventures (2014) agrees that children in the foundation phase should be observed from a distance during self-directed play to ensure their safety. Keyworkers should encourage children with self-directed play for their physical and mental wellbeing. According to OpenLearn (1999-2020 a) observation of a child playing in the Foundation Phase setting by a Keyworker is about listening and watching children. Observing a child can help a Keyworker understand if a child can or cannot do something. A keyworker can learn the behaviours of a child and how they interact with others. Larson (2013) suggests that Montessori agrees with OpenLearn, while a child play's they can be observed by a keyworker, it can teach a keyworker about a child's experiences and interests. This can help keyworkers with how a child develops and they can help plan a child's future of learning.

According to Ginsburg (2007) play is about how children develop in different ways, they learn to use their imagination, it helps them to become more physical and helps their mental abilities, play can also help with a child's emotional wellbeing it can help a Keyworker to observe a child in the Foundation phase to understand a child's wellbeing and give the child the help they need if it is required. Bruce (2011) suggests that Frobel agrees with Ginsburg, play helps children with their physical and mental needs and that it can help children express their emotions in different ways this can help the observation of a child go smoothly.

Part 4: Play when undertaking observation

According to Family Lives (no date), play is important to a child's development. It helps them to recognise what they are capable of. When children play they become absorbed in the game they are playing, this can teach them many different skills for example language and social skills. Play helps children learn how to use their imagination, when a child uses their imagination can help them solve problems on their own and to work with others. Scholastic (2020) agrees with Family lives (no date) children learn by using their imagination, children can learn language, social and emotional skills this can help them be more creative and solve problems. When

children observe others they can learn how to pretend and act them out, they can do this on their own or they can invite others to join in however the play has to be played by the child's rules.

Larson (2013) suggests that Montessori believes that play is an activity and by observing a child at play they will continue to do the activity until they are ready to finish it for themselves. Kimberly (2017) agrees with Montessori theory that play is important to a child's development and should not be interrupted, a child should be able to play freely with what they are interested in, if the play is interrupted it can have an impact on the child that is learning through play, a child could lose interest in the activity and no longer find it fun which could cause the child to lose interest and no longer want to continue to do the activity.

Howard and McInnes (2012) believes children identify an activity as 'play', play can be more effective where the location of play is, the opportunities they have in the environment and what the role of an adult is during the activity. If a child does not view an activity as play and that an adult is watching them this could have an impact on the observation outcome as a child could think they are doing a task set out for them and no longer sees it as play. Froebel Web (1998-2015) agrees with Howard and McInnes (2012) the location where a child plays is important for example in the garden as it teaches them to observe nature, this can help a child develop and grow. Donaldson (2015) also agrees with Howard and McInnes (2012) if a child feels as though an adult is observing them they can become distracted, this can make a child feel like they are being judged and they may not wish to carry on with the activity, this can cause the observation to be affected. Bruce (2012) suggests that Frobel believes children's play should be open-ended activities, where children can decide for themselves if they would like to do an activity. They can use their imagination and be creative. Children can decide the rules and if they want others to play the activity. Children can learn to discover new things and they are able to use their imagination freely. Frobel's theory agrees with Howard and McInnes (2012) children as they both believe that play is important for a child's development for their social and mental skills. Child Ventures (2014) suggests children can make their own rules and be the lead in their roles this is good for their imagination and their development skills. Child Ventures (2014) suggests that when children self-direct play they may use words that they do not understand, a keyworker supervising the child can ask the child if they know what a

particular word means, or it can be put into a sentence for the child to understand, a child will learn when and how to use this particular word while they play and use their imagination, a child teaches themselves with self-directed play with the encouragement of a Keyworker. According to Ahmad, et al. (2016) Piaget believes that play is about the “Cognitive Development” of a child, it is about a child being able to solve problems for themselves and it can help them make their own decisions. “Cognitive Development” can also help a child use their imagination which is important to their future. Webster (2016) agrees with Ahmad, et al. (2016) Vygotsky suggests that play is also important to a child’s cognitive development as it helps them use their imagination by pretending or acting out a role of an adult for example washing dishes or cleaning the home

First Discovery (2020) suggest that Vygotsky believes that children learn through scaffolding learning, they learn to interact and learn new knowledge within an environment. First Discovery (2020) suggests Piaget and Vygotsky agree that children are hands on learners, however Piaget believes that a child learns universally and Vygotsky believes “each culture provides different tools of the intellectual adaption” (First Discovery 2020). According to First Discovery (2020) Erickson believes a child will always follow the same path in their development, if a child’s experience is negative or positive through the path it can set a child back for later in their lives. According to (QCA/DfEE, 2000 cited in OpenLearn, 1999-2020 a) observing children while they play is important as it helps a keyworker see how a child’s development is growing. It shows keyworkers what a child likes to play with, what their interests may be and show their experiences. The keyworker can identify a child’s weaknesses or their strengths, they can identify any needs a child may have. This can help keyworkers plan a child’s future curriculum. (QCA/DfEE,2000 cited in OpenLearn, 1999-2020 b).

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