

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

435 words

What do I know already? I have a GCSE grade C in Welsh and complete Helpwr Heddiw sessions daily. I would like to develop this skill as it would benefit my career and boost my confidence. I have a good understanding of additional learning needs as I work with children with ALN but would like to gain a deeper insight.				
Objective	Actions (How will I achieve this objective/ what needs to be done?)	Resources (What support and resources are needed to achieve this objective?)	Target Date for achieving objective	Success criteria (How will I know I have achieved this goal, how will I review this?)
<i>Develop my Welsh language skills.</i>	To develop my Welsh language skills, I will need to enrol on an online Welsh course. I will read books that will support my Welsh language skills.	I will need an online Welsh language course for teaching assistants. Foundation Phase Teaching Assistants: Entry Level Course (South) Courses Learn Welsh I will need to purchase books that support beginners that are learning Welsh. Welsh for Beginners (Internet-Linked) by Angela Wilkes & John	July 2025	I will know I have achieved this goal by completing the course. I will have read various books and be using more incidental Welsh with the children in my class, colleagues and family. I will review this by continuing the course moving on to a more advanced level and testing my ability.

		Shackell – National Library of Wales Online Shop		
<i>Develop my knowledge and understanding of Additional Learning Needs.</i>	To develop my knowledge and understanding of Additional Learning Needs I will complete an online learning programme regarding Additional Learning Needs. I will also speak with the school ALNCo to gain further knowledge and advice. I will ask my headteacher if I can attend courses and complete further training regarding Additional Learning Needs.	To do this, I will complete the National Learning Pathway for Additional Needs (NPLP ALN) Develop your ALN skills and knowledge - Hwb (gov.wales) I will read the 20 chapters to develop my knowledge.	January 2025	I will achieve this goal after I complete the online learning programme and further research as I will put what I have learnt into practice. I will be able to support the children in my class with additional learning needs.
<i>Develop my confidence and self-belief</i>	To do this I will need to push myself out of my comfort zone. When given a choice, I will select assignments which involve speaking and presenting. I will research how I can	I will require support from my tutors regarding assignments that involve speaking and presenting. I will also require a course that encourages self-confidence and belief. Confidence Building Training Course iHasco	April 2025	I will have achieved this by completing the course and research. I will feel more confident in myself and my abilities.

	improve my confidence and self-belief and find a course to complete.			

901 words

The importance of reflective practice

What is reflection and reflective practice? According to the Health and Care professions council, (2021), reflection is a technique that helps practitioners to gain a better understanding of their professional practice by studying each aspect of it. They state that there is a variety of methods of reflective practice such as self-reflection and team reflection and that the findings that come from reflection and reflective practice can help to continue and enhance good practice to benefit the practitioner and service user.	Why is reflective practice important to EY practice? Gunning, (2022) states that reflective practice is important for personal growth and development and can be achieved through collaborative conversations with colleagues, a reflective journal or a reflective model. Reflective practice can help to introduce new approaches, questions and challenge expectations. (Bolton and Delderfield,2018) Brock, (2015) suggests that it is crucial for Early Years Practitioners have a good understanding of reflection and reflective practice as education and care is always evolving and has a huge effect on children and families. Therefore, it is important that early years practitioners continue to develop their knowledge and skills and reflect on this to improve their practice. However, Bolton and Delderfield (2018) suggest that reflective practice may challenge those in a position of authority as they feel controlled. Practitioners may also find
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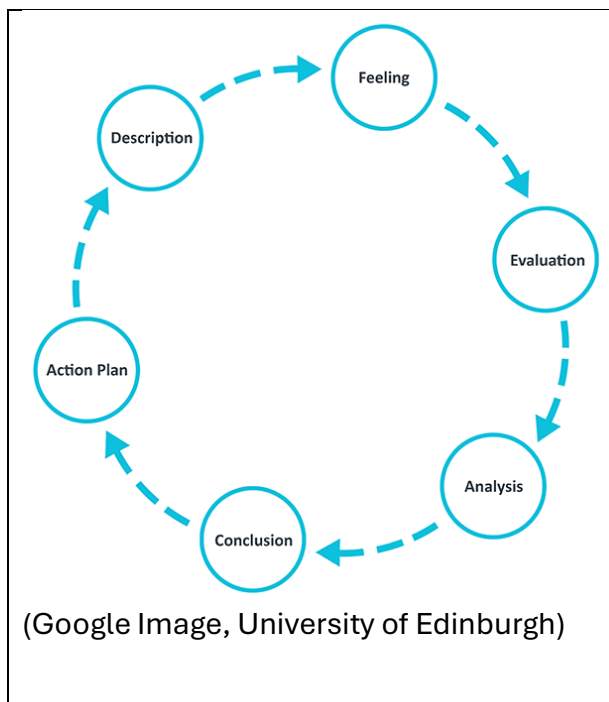
	reflective practice to be demanding and time consuming.
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The theory of reflective practice:

Study Prism, (2024) states that Donald Schon's theory of reflection is knowing the difference between reflection on action and reflection in action. They state that reflection on action is the method of reflection used after completing a task. The practitioner will think back to the situation, consider their strengths and weaknesses and learn from it.

Study Prism, (2024) also states that reflection in action happens in the moment where the practitioner will use their skills and knowledge to support their decision making. Schons theory of reflective practice has impacted and benefited Early Years practitioners today as it supports lifelong learning as practitioners can overcome barriers, help develop practitioners critical thinking skills and enhance self-awareness. (Hero,2023)

However, whilst Schon's theory is an excellent tool for reflective practice it also has obstacles. Care Learning, (2024) suggests that some practitioners may find it to be time consuming and struggle to find the time to complete reflection on action whilst working a full-time job. Schons model may also cause emotional distress as the process looks at the individuals' weaknesses which some practitioners may find hard.

Gibbs' model**Kolb's model**Analysis of reflective models

Gibb's reflective model is a six-step reflection model. Stage 1 begins with a brief description of the event. Stage 2 looks at the practitioners' thoughts and feelings and those around them and begins to analyse these feelings. Stage 3 is evaluation which looks at the practitioners' strengths and weaknesses and allows them to assess the situation and gain a better understanding. Stage 4 is analysis which links together the practitioners' findings from stage two and three and allows the practitioner to make a more in-depth analysis.

Stage 5 is the conclusion where the practitioner will sum up their findings and look at what they have learned and discovered. Stage 6 is creating an action plan of how to improve.

Gibb's model can provide clear and direct steps to follow and help practitioners to make sense of their work and better their practice. However, it also has limitations as it can cause practitioners to be overly negative about their practice making it difficult to see the positives or learning opportunities. (BiteSize Learning,2024)

However, Kolb's reflective model is more concise and follows 4 stages. The first stage begins with a concrete experience. Stage 2 is a reflective observation of stage 1. Stage 3 is abstract conceptualisation which looks at what the practitioner has learned and gained from the experience. The last stage is active experimentation where the practitioner can experiment with new ideas and apply what they have learned.

Kolb's reflective model has many advantages as it is so concise it makes the process of reflection simple and easy to grasp and can be applied to different scenarios. However, the disadvantage of Kolb's model is that it does not take into consideration the views of others and is seen as a simple, starting point to reflection. (Study Prism,2023)

The two reflective models are different as they have different stages. Gibbs reflective model is more in depth and would benefit a larger group as this type of reflection would be more time consuming. However, Kolb's model of reflection is more concise and would

benefit a practitioner working alone or in a small team. However, Kolb's model is often seen as too simple, and many believe it excludes crucial parts of learning. (Cloke, 2023)

Another difference according to University of Cumbria, (2020) is that Gibb's model recognises the significance of the practitioners' feelings which is important working in Early Years. They also have similarities as they are both easy to follow and have steps to make the process of reflection easier.

Conclusion

To conclude, there are a variety of different reflection models, however, each practitioner is different. Reflection is personal to everyone, and a practitioner may need to experiment and try different reflection tools before finding what suits them best. The practitioner may find both models of reflection useful for different aspects of their practice.

1,362 words

Professional practice in the Early years

Values are the principles you live by and believe to be most significant in your work and everyday life. Recognising the values most important to you can be beneficial to practitioners as it can help with decision making, setting goals and being happier. (Mind Tools Content Team, 2022)

Professional values in the Early Years

A commitment to social justice and social inclusion is essential for a practitioner working in Early Years as every child has a right to inclusion and to access education.

Deverakonda,(2013) states that settings procedures and practice should display an

inclusive and anti-discriminative approach, break stereotypes and appreciate that all children are different. Inclusive practice has many benefits to both children and practitioners as it encourages fairness, allows children and practitioners to gain a better understanding of different cultures and helps to develop empathy and social skills. (Jackson, 2023)

Patience and professionalism are values that are vital for practitioners working in Early Years. However, Over the years, Early years educators have been under-qualified and paid poorly with very little training. In recent years there has been an emphasis on professionalizing the Early Years workforce with a level 3 qualification becoming the minimum. There is a link between professionalism and quality of learning and to develop professionalism in Early Years practitioners require adequate qualifications, training and to feel their work is valued through a higher income and better working conditions.

(Hallet, 2012)

Patience and professionalism in the Early

years is fundamental to good practice as children learn from the adults and professionals around and often mimic their behaviours. It is important that practitioners are good role models and help children to regulate and understand their emotions.

Being patient can also benefit the well-being of a practitioner as it helps to build positive relationships with children and staff, and it can be exhausting and emotionally depleting to have frequent feelings of anger and frustration. (Daycare Glastonbury,2018) However, if a practitioner is not patient and professional this can have a detrimental effect on children and their education and the practitioner's career as it may lead to disciplinarys.

Teamwork is an important value to have working in the early years as you will be required to work effectively with a variety of different people such as other members of staff, families and children. To work effectively within a team practitioners will need to have good leadership, communication and training opportunities. Working well within a team is important to maintain good practice as teamwork creates a safe, nurturing and positive environment for children. A good team can enhance children's learning and ensure that children's learning is steady and consistent. When practitioners work well within a team it can improve their practice as they can share ideas and enhance their knowledge. Effective collaboration can help to solve problems in a timelier manner and improve critical thinking. However, there are barriers to working effectively within a team such as having poor communication skills. Practitioners can overcome this barrier by attending staff meetings and discussing any issues. (Care Learning, 2024)

What is communication?

Effective communication in the early years is essential for children's development and wellbeing. (Kent and Moran, 2019) Communication happens when individuals share thoughts and ideas with one another. There are many different types of communication and in Early years it is often more than words and written information. It is important for practitioners to communicate effectively as there are barriers to communication for children who are visually impaired, deaf or have other disabilities. The practitioner will need to meet the communication needs of each child and follow the legislations and

procedures in place for children with SEND. To support children with visual impairments practitioners should consider the size and colours of displays around the room and be mindful of the lighting. It is important to support children with a hearing impairment as children could be missing between 20-50% of what the practitioner has said which will have a detrimental effect on their education. (McMahon and Dyer, 2018)

Effective communication between staff is also important as it can improve staff wellbeing, boost productivity and create a better working environment. Practitioners can improve their communication with other members of staff by being positive, offering support and listening. Practitioners must try to remove any barriers to communication and work as a team. (Education Support,nd)

It is important to communicate effectively with parents and families as it helps parents to understand what their child is doing in school and engage with their learning. This often leads to higher levels of achievement as parents and families can offer better support at home. Good relationships and communication between parents and practitioners are crucial for encouraging learning and development. This also links with Albert Bandura's theory of social learning where children learn by watching the adults around them and imitating their behaviours. Therefore, if children see positive communication and relationships between their caregiver and practitioner, they are more likely to communicate effectively. (Wilson,2015)

The importance of multi-agency work

Children and their families will often work with different agencies and services, especially looked after children or children deemed to be at risk. These may include social services, the police and healthcare professionals. These professionals work together to achieve the same goal, improving the lives of children and their families and keeping them safe. Multi-agency work is important as it creates positive outcomes for children. Other advantages include easier access to services and building relationships and trust. However, there can be barriers to multi agency work such as a lack funding, time restraints as many services have waiting lists and poor communication. (Cheminais, 2008)

The importance of observing children

Observation is important working in Early Years and is very good practice. Using a variety of methods of observation such as video recordings and diaries will help the practitioner gain a deeper understanding of the child. Barber and Smith, (2010) suggest that it is important to get to know the children and observe them frequently so that the children have a better understanding of their learning and to help the practitioner track the children's progress. They state that the main principle for observation is to see how a child socialises with other adults and children and alone, recognise any problems or changes and to ensure practitioners are meeting the needs of the child. Barber and Smith, (2010) suggest that observation is important as it helps to create a holistic view of the child you are observing and benefits their learning and development. However,

some observations may not be accurate due to the Hawthorn which implies that children's behaviour can change when they know they are being observed. (Perera, 2023)

The importance of planning in Early Years

Planning is a crucial when working in Early Years. Ofsted suggest that outstanding practice with regards to planning includes including the children's interests and involving them in planning. This will help children to engage more with their learning. Practitioners must also ensure activities are adaptable to suit changing interests. (Barber and Smith, 2010) They also state however, if a practitioner fails to plan or plans inadequately, a child's learning and progress will be affected.

The UNCRC

The UN Convention on the rights of the child is a legal document that is signed by 196 countries that states the rights of every child despite their race, religious beliefs or capabilities. The UNCRC is important as it ensures every child has the right to play, express themselves, be safe, access education, protection of their identity, acceptable living standards, access healthcare and know and understand their rights. (UNICEF, 2024)

It is important that practitioners are aware of children's rights as ensuring the children know and understand their rights will mean they are more likely to respect the rights of their peers, family and the practitioners working with them. However, If the children do not know and understand their rights, they may be less likely to make a disclosure which influences the practitioner's ability to safeguard the children. It is crucial that practitioners respect children's rights as the children will feel safe coming to the setting and it will improve their wellbeing and resilience. (UNICEF,2017)

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