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Assignment Title: Critically reflect on your pedagogical progress demonstrated through required elements of the Professional Learning Passport, identifying a specific area for professional development and justifying next steps for improvement

	Target	What I have done in this assignment...
Target 1	To write in a formal manner.	I have tried to make my work appear less 'chatty' when writing.
Target 2	To ensure autonomy within the essay.	I have ensured I have not mentioned any details of the school in which I am working with or mentioned any names.
Target 3	To proofread your work.	I have printed off and thoroughly proofread this assignment.

Part 1: Professional Learning Passport

Bridging 2 Reflection

Meet

Tystiolaeth / Evidence	Adfyfyrio / Reflect
This online bridging session focused on educating and preparing us students all about different assessment for learning (AfL) strategies that we could eventually implement into our own placement classroom. The AfL strategies were explained to us by an experienced head teacher from a local school, which enabled us students to gain an experienced teacher's views on the different strategies. The pro's and con's of each strategy was discussed and supported by a general discussion in the online call of everyone's prior experiences.	The preparation time was useful as it allowed us students to understand why AfL is important within a classroom and the effectiveness it can have on children. We all shared and discussed our prior experiences in order for us to establish which AfL we'd like to implement within our 'test' stage.

Test

Tystiolaeth / Evidence	Adfyfyrio / Reflect
The test day consisted of us students implementing a chosen AfL strategy into a variety of lesson plans over the course of a week. I had chosen to include the AfL strategy 'thumbs up, thumbs down'.	Due to my lack of teaching experience, my constant worry was that I was setting work for the children at incorrect levels. By implementing this AfL strategy into my lesson I was able to observe the impact in which 'thumbs up, thumbs down' can have on Year 2 children. The feedback of our children and mentors was positive, they found I was able to better understand the levels at which the children understood a task and overall felt this improved my confidence.

Share

Tystiolaeth / Evidence	Adfyfyrio / Reflect
The share day was spent in an online group call in which us students had to prepare and present a presentation explaining our findings from our test days.	The share day was extremely beneficial, it was very interesting to hear other student's perspectives as to how AfL can be used within the classroom. The share day was also beneficial as I was able to gain an insight into how effectively student's feel AfL can work on different age ranges as we are all placed in different areas of schools. The share day truly allowed us all to learn from each other and share our own pro's and con's encountered from the test days and highlight areas in which neither of us may have thought about.

DGB/SKD

Llythrennedd / Literacy

Evidenced by an asset? ✓

Literacy is a subject I have the lowest confidence in. It has been so long since I took part in a literacy lesson, I couldn't fully remember the format of a formal letter so I undertook some 'revision' on the BBC Bitesize website and tested my knowledge using their interactive quiz. I am can now confidently lay out a formal letter, a skill which is needed for my lesson.

Cymhwysedd Digidol / Digital competence

Evidenced by an asset? ✓

For the entirety of PTE1 Block 2 I had to teach through the software Google Classroom. I had never experienced this software so I had to set aside some time learning how to navigate the software. I had to learn quick and fast how to use this software ready for when I was expected to upload lessons and announcements to my class. Everyday I use this software, I learn something new.

Datblygu'r Gymraeg / Welsh Language Development

Evidenced by an asset? ✓

I grew up in England so needed to improve my lack of the Welsh language in order to ensure I can integrate Welsh into my lessons. I downloaded Duolingo as recommended by my Welsh teacher's recommendation and practice for 5 minutes a day. In this instance I was practicing 'good afternoon' as my placement school loves the use of the Welsh language during the register so I will need to know how it greet the children in Welsh.

Professional Experience Template 1: Cross Curricular Themes

Pedagogy Standard: Choose an item.

What did you do and why?

When asked to deliver a lesson on thermometers I believed this was a great way to introduce different areas of learning into one session. The children were learning how to read a thermometer I incorporated cross curricular themes in the following ways:

Naturally, the children were asking questions as to why the temperature differed within different areas of the classroom. I then stated to them that I would not answer their question and they were to use the iPads to answer their questions, this allowed the children to practice their digital competency skills and enabled the children to stay engaged.

The children were also using their literacy skills within this maths lesson as when the thermometer was adjusting to the new area and calculating the correct temperature, the children were expected to write out in full 'The hottest area of the classroom was ..., the coldest area of the classroom was ..., etc.' ready for their results.

What have you learned?

I have learnt how simply cross curricular themes can be implemented into lessons and the benefits it can have on the childrens attitudes towards the lesson. For example, we have a child who struggles with maths and was struggling to grasp the concept of reading a thermometer and affecting their attitude towards the lesson but as a result of the introduction of ICT and literacy being a part of the lesson, this caused their attitude to improve towards the end of this lesson. This lesson has caused me to learn how important cross curricular lessons can be to students and this lesson is the best lesson I have taught to date.

What next?

Due to the success of using cross curricular within this lesson, I will continue to use this within my future lessons. I can imagine this the continued use of this could benefit the lower ability group who often have troubles staying focused within lesson, which could be because they are struggling with that area of the lesson. The use of cross curricular lessons also enable children to flourish in more areas than one, therefore maximising the impact a single lesson can have, ensuring the children can reach their full potential. Moving forward, I will be the using cross curricular approach but must note that, although the lesson is cross curricular, the children must understand the initial starting point of the lesson.

Professional Experience Template 2: Differentiation

Pedagogy Standard: Choose an item.

What did you do and why?

When planning a lesson surrounding letter writing, in which the children had never had any lessons on prior, it was important to ensure this lesson was differentiated well due to the children having never explored this area before. Within my lesson plan the children were expected to re-organise and label a jumbled up letter. This was differentiated as the lower abilities groups' resources were colour coded, for example, the '5th January 2020' resource and the 'Date' resource were both printed and laminated in the same colour so these children were able to colour match these resources. However, the middle and higher ability group had black and white resources so '5th January 2020' and 'Date' were in standard black and white, offering little support.

What have you learned?

This letter writing lesson plan and resources allowed me to truly understand how differentiation can be used to aid students to understand a topic. I also feel the use of differentiation within this lesson has highlighted how differentiation can be used to ensure a particular lesson can suit all students and can push the lower ability students and this will not hold back the higher ability students. I have also learnt that differentiation is not only the use of different level worksheets and that there are many ways in which you can differentiate a lessons resources. The children responded extremely well to these new differentiated resources and the children seemed to better understand my lessons when compared to non-differentiated resources.

What next?

In future lessons I aim to differentiate further resources in addition to the worksheets as a result of positive feedback from the students and my teacher. I noticed the children were extremely engaged as a result of the differentiated resources, so I will ensure resources are differentiated as well as worksheets. I will also explore ways in which to further differentiate my lessons to ensure my lesson suits my class full of a wide range of different abilities.

Professional Experience Template 3: Listening to the learner

Pedagogy Standard: Choose an item.

What did you do and why?

As a result of the brand topic 'Mexico', I was intrigued as to what the children would like to learn about as this topic was new to me as much as it was to them. I had to think of a software in which allowed students to virtually add their views and ideas and allows the children to interact with each other's comments. I found the software 'Padlet' which allowed children to add their comments and allowed students to 'heart' their peers' comments. The aim for finding a software like this was that it allowed myself to be able to listen to what the students' wanted to learn and also gave these students a voice in their learning.

What have you learned?

I have learnt that the students have a great imagination when thinking of things to learn about their new topic 'Mexico'. It was also interesting hearing what the children would like to learn about as their new topic as it was completely different as to what I expected them to enter onto the Padlet. As I am not aware of the classes characteristics (due to never meeting the class), my teacher has stated that Padlet has allowed the quieter students to open up and have a voice within the class which she feels they may not have expressed if the children were in a classroom. The feedback from Padlet has overall been positive by teachers who believe it is a great way of listening to the learners and giving them a voice.

What next?

Moving forward, regardless of online teaching or in the classroom teaching I will aim to use Padlet within my lessons as I feel it allows the students to post their ideas online with the ability for them to reflect upon them. I have learnt to listen to the student's ideas as to what they'd like to learn as it gives themselves a voice and also give myself ideas when planning.

Part 2: Critical Reflection

Introduction

The writer has chosen to explore cross curricular practice within lessons and the effectiveness of including cross curricular links within a lesson. The writer has chosen this aspect of practice to explore as this area is personal to them as their best lessons to date have always included strong cross curricular links, for example the writer undertook a thermometer lesson which included lots of cross curricular links as this lesson required the children to mix their science, maths and geography knowledge and skills in order to achieve the learning objective. The writer also feels the students have also always responded extremely well to lessons in which involve cross curricular links. So, this generates the writers want to further explore the differing perspectives and debates which may exist around this aspect of practice and it's effectiveness.

Critical Discussion of Chosen Aspect

Cross curricular lessons are lessons in which work towards developing a child's knowledge and understanding in more than one area of the curriculum and allows for the teacher to teach multiple subjects at one time (Barnes, 2015; Ward-Penny, 2010; Kerry, 2015). The idea that lessons should focus on more than one area of the curriculum is by no means a new idea, it can be argued that this idea originates from the theorist Dewey (1902) who argues that there is "no benefit in creating false opposition between 'subjects' and 'child' as a focus for curriculum" which can be further supported by Blackstone (1967) who argues that children's learning does not fit into subject categories. Currently, teachers are not required to teach in a cross curricular way, however it is encouraged by the new and upcoming Donaldson (2015) curriculum and by Ofsted (2002) who state features of successful primary school is one that can apply knowledge and skills learned in one subject to another.

It has been argued that cross curricular lessons are particularly good for breaking a child's subject anxiety or stigma as a result of the cross curricular subject learning (Ward-Penny, 2010; Savage, 2010; Kanar, 1991). To support this, Kerr (2016) and Beilock & Maloney (2015) both conducted separate studies to explore how cross curricular lesson can alleviate 'maths anxiety'

within students in which they both found a strong positive correlation between the use of cross curricular lessons and the lowering of anxiety within students who suffer with anxiety surrounding maths. These findings are extremely important as YoungMinds (2018) conducted a survey and found one in eight children (aged 2-19) suffer with anxiety, therefore highlights the need for a solution to alleviate subject anxiety within schools. However, we must note Kerr (2016) and Beilock & Maloney's (2015) study's were conducted solely on maths anxiety, so further studies surrounding the other areas of the curriculum are needed in order to suggest cross-curriculum learning can solve all subject anxieties.

Despite the fact that cross curricular lessons can reduce student anxiety, Barnes (2015) and Johnson (2009) state cross curricular lessons make it extremely difficult to individually assess and feedback a student's progress in a single subject due to the nature of cross curricular lessons involving many aspects from different subjects. This is problematic as assessments allow for teachers to become aware of their student's academic levels, become aware of their students' gaps in knowledge and allows for an insight into areas in which the practitioner may need to adapt their teaching strategies, therefore if assessment are not successfully in place this could cause major issues to both the teachers and their students (Black, 1998; Popham, 2008; Tomlinson & Moon, 2013). If Barnes (2015) and Johnson's (2009) statements are correct, the theorist Skinner (1983) would agree with Black (1998), Popham (2008) & Tomlinson & Moon (2013) idea that assessment is crucial for both student and teacher as he believes feedback is the best way to control a child's behaviour and learning and therefore may not agree with the use of cross curricular lessons within schools due to the assessment issues it can hold.

Cross curricular lessons have also been found to help improve a child's problem solving skills (Bellanca, 2015; Kelly & Stead, 2013; Rozakis, 1998). To support this, Barnes (2015) conducted research and found that cross curricular lessons can enhance the connections between the left brain and right brain and therefore positively impact and enhance a child's problem solving skills. Levine & Munsh (2010) state by enhancing a child's problem solving skills you better their chance to achieve and strengthen their sense of achievement. Steinmayr, Weidinger & Schwinger (2019) explored the importance of a child's sense of achievement within a classroom

and found sense of achievement can improve a students' positive wellbeing and academic outcome. These studies mentioned above can all be linked back to the new and upcoming Donaldson (2015) curriculum and could potentially explain why this new curriculum has such an extremely strong emphasis on cross curricular learning and children's wellbeing as the researchers above suggest cross curricular learning and a child's positive wellbeing come hand in hand.

Bell (2010), Savery (2015) and Major & Palmer (2001) state cross curricular lessons allow for knowledge based learning to become skill based learning. Knowledge based learning is the idea that the teacher is to use the information the student already has and build upon it and focuses heavily on the use of lectures, workbooks, reading and listening in order for students to gain further information (Mora & Kennedy, 2019; Akerkar & Sajja, 2010; Raelin, 2008). Skill based learning is when you teach a student to be able to independently think for themselves, you will teach the student how to achieve the correct answer rather than telling them the answer, creating independent life long learners (Connolly, 2011; Alperin & Benes, 2020; Frischmann, 2020). Amiyani & Widjajanti (2018) and Hannon & Daneman (1998) conducted research investigating the differences between knowledge based learning and skill based learning and found that children who took part in the skill based learning approach had much better outcomes than the children who took part in the knowledge based learning approach highlighting that skill based learning can lead to better outcomes in children. This shows us that it is a positive that cross curricular lessons allow for knowledge based learning to transform into skill based learning and this approach can benefit the students. However, the reader is to note that Hannon & Daneman's (1998) literature is extremely dated and therefore could lack credibility to support that claim that the cross curricular lessons causing knowledge based learning to become skill based learning is a positive.

William (2018) has conducted research on several curriculums around the world and found that the curriculum's within the UK have "far too much stuff in" which causes teachers to have to "make a professional decision about what stuff you're going to leave out, and the important point here is that not all content is equally important". However, it has been found that cross curricular lessons allow teachers and students to be able to meet the curriculum within a

limited time frame and allows the students to be able to achieve as much as possible as a result of cross curricular lessons allowing teachers to implement different aspects of the curriculum into a single lesson (Cho & Brown, 2013; Walsh, 2010). This highlights that cross curricular lessons can both benefit student and teacher when it comes to meeting the difficult demands of the curriculum (William, 2018).

An implication of implementing cross curricular lessons into schools is that many experienced teachers have had limited experience of cross curricular lessons as a result of the curriculum being extremely rigid and often offers limited space for flexibility (William, 2018; Parker, Heywood & Jolley, 2011). The issue of implementing a new idea or scheme into a school in which the teachers are not trained or experienced upon is that it can cause teachers to resent the new idea or scheme in which is being implemented into the school and applied on the students. Another issue in which can occur when teachers are not trained or experienced on is that it can cause students to not make any progress as continuous teacher training is in place to ensure the teacher has the skills in place for their students to learn effectively (Sattar, Abdul & Ghafoor Awan, 2019; Orchard & Winch, 2015; Hunter, Oliver & Luckin, 2014). However, back in 1986 Lasley (1986) stated “teacher training is constantly changing” highlighting that there will continuously be modern ideas to enter the classroom in which will require constant training, in which mirrors the Department for Education’s (2020) slogan of “the ever-changing classroom”.

To finish the critical discussion, it is important to explore pupil voice and your students’ perspective of their cross curricular lessons. Christopher (2012) and Savage (2010) explored students’ thoughts and opinions of cross curricula lessons and found many of the children enjoyed learning in this way as they often felt less anxiety when learning in this way felt more independent and felt they were learning at their own pace. Literature above supports some of these ideas, however there are new concepts and ideas mention within Christopher (2012) and Savage’s (2010) research which requires further research to validate their claims.

Conclusion

From this critical discussion of cross curricular lessons, there are many things the writer will take onboard in their future teaching experiences as a result of literature and findings mentioned above.

The first idea influenced from this critical discussion is for the writer to try and use cross curricular lessons to help their students who suffer with anxiety towards their learning, the writer has previously worked alongside and experienced students who struggle with 'subject anxiety' so the writer would love to try a cross curricular lesson in order to try and combat this issue. This is an area with alarming statistics so the writer would love to conduct further research into how cross curricular lessons can affect children's anxiety towards subjects other than maths, as a gap was identified. This will also allow the writer to add to their PLP and achieve the QTS standard 'Continuing professional learning' and 'Wider reading and research findings'.

An area in which the writer feels they need to further explore as a result of this critical review is ways in which they could assess a single subject within a cross curricular lesson, the writer would like to try out an 'assessment book' method approach in which they would observe the children from a far during the lessons and take notes of their progress and interactions with other students, this will hopefully allow them to make a better judgement of a child's development within a single subject as this was an a big downside of cross curricular learning.

Another idea generated from this critical discussion is for the writer to use cross curricular lessons to build the confidence of their students through the use of problem solving activities. An example of a way in which the writer could implement this is by creating a game where the children have to solve riddles in order to gain money which can be used for a trip to another country and the children will have to use their problem solving skills, maths skills and geography skills. This could be linked to the QTS standard 'Real life, authentic contexts' and the writer could use this as evidence on their PLP.

The writer has also been made aware of the importance of focusing on skill based learning as opposed to knowledge based learning. The ways in which the writer feels she could achieve this

in further practice by not answering students' questions instantly and instead giving the student's information they need to try find out their question themselves, for example the writer could provide the children with a book, iPad or computer and push them in the right direction to become independent learners.

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