

Module: ECEY4009

Name: Rachael Baugh

Component 1 – Professional Development Plan

Component 2 – Briefing Paper – Reflective Practise

Component 3 - Written piece – Professional Practitioner

Component 1 – Professional Development Plan (547 Words)

Professional Development Plan (PDP)

Name: Rachael Baugh

What do I already know:

I have a wealth of experience working in schools for twelve years and a good awareness of how to be an effective practitioner. However, to continue to be an asset to supporting my settings in the developing early years profession, I recognise there are some areas that I need to develop to demonstrate the value of continued professional development.

What do I want to develop:

As a personal target I want to develop my confidence in using Welsh language skills to enable me to use Welsh daily at home with my children and within my role as an advisor for early years. Developing my Welsh spoken skills will enable me to effectively support our Welsh medium early years settings and be able to support our English medium settings to develop more Welsh language skills within their provisions. This also supports the Welsh government initiative to increase number of Welsh speakers by 2050.

As part of my ongoing professional development, I have recently completed Element one of the Froebel Trust courses and would like to enhance and further my skills by understanding more about the power of play and importance of play within the early years. By completing Froebel's element 4 that specifically focus on play, I will have a wealth of knowledge and can support two early years settings to implement Froebelian practice and monitor the impact it has on children through observations and staff feedback.

Another area of professional development I would like to improve is my performance and delivery of training, both face to face and online at our early years network. I will provide training once a month, over six sessions and will review and monitor my performance by using peer review from colleagues, participants evaluations and self-reflection to enhance the quality of training I offer and boost my confidence to delivering good training.

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?)
1. Improve my Welsh spoken language skills by completing Entry Level 1 - Dysgu Cymraeg	I will enrol onto the Entry Level 1 course to learn Welsh and attend weekly lessons every Monday at 18.00-20.00pm (Course Reference: CHMO1F08) https://learnwelsh.cymru/learning/course/7037d1bb-277b-ef11-9c36-e267d32cc38e/	Dysgu Cymraeg Coursebook. I will need support from my Tutor to identify areas of development and suggestions for improvement	14/07/2025 (30 weeks)	I will meet with my tutor termly to discuss my progress and set smaller targets for each term to ensure progress is reviewed and targets are manageable/appropriate. I will have a certificate 14/07/2025 as

		areas/set termly targets. Complete coursework and find opportunities to practise Welsh language. Laptop and internet to attend classes.		achievement for completing the course. I hope as part of continued progression and development to access Entry Level 2.
2. Learn more about the central importance of play for children and how to facilitate this in the Early Years.	I will complete a short course on Element 4 of the Froebel Trust: https://www.froebel.org.uk/training-and-resources/short-courses	Time out of work to complete the course	16th and 23rd November 2024 (2 days)	Certificate on completion of Element 4 – 23/11/2024
3. To confidently deliver training to non-maintained settings as part of our early years network group	I will deliver monthly training to non-maintained settings as part of our early years network group. I will undertake some personal research into effective training and delivery skills with books from the library: https://librarysearch.uwtsd.ac.uk	Six training sessions (November-April) at Network meetings Deliver both face to face and online	April 2025	Peer reviews from colleagues to gather feedback on performance and delivery. Evaluations feedback from participants who

		training sessions for variation		completed training to highlight strengths of training and areas that can be developed. By recording my training sessions, I can assess my progress and make comparisons (547 words)
--	--	---------------------------------	--	---

Component 2 – Briefing Paper – Reflective Practise (880 words)

Reflect, Review Respond

What is reflection and reflective practise?

Reflection is when a person reviews on previous experience and analysing the event to gain awareness and understand the success and challenges of the event and what aspect could be changed to improve the experience and outcomes. Bauer (1991) states Dewy's belief of the importance of having knowledge and how this can impact valuable responses and actions.

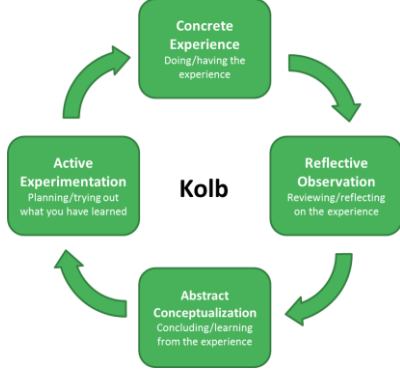
Reflective practise will support practitioners to learn about how they practise, highlighting areas of their strength and areas that they need to be develop. Reflection can act as a valuable tool to personal growth and professional learning because practitioners will be constantly reviewing themselves and practise and using critical thinking to explore how to become more informed and better practitioners. Dyer and Taylor (2012) state that practitioners should learn how to use reflection to understand their

Why is reflective practise important to EY practise?

Reflective practise in the early years is important because it brings together reflective theory and current practise. It enables practitioners to reflect on their own practise when working with children to gain an understanding into the development and needs of the cohort they work with. This then helps to inform decisions about planning and gives insight into what is working and what is not. Forming stepping stones to improve the learning experiences and opportunities they provide meaning it will be purposeful, adaptable and successful for children. Lindon (2016) believes that as early years practitioners we need to commit to ongoing learning throughout our working lives and places ownership on individuals to be proactive about reflecting on their own practise to ensure they are

This is supported by Brock (2015) who also views reflective practise as an ongoing process that should be part of being an early years practitioner and should not be a one off process.

practise and transfer knowledge and learnt factors to new experiences.	In my own experience working in classrooms, I was fortunate to be in a school that reflected on practice well. We used daily reflections as a class team to evaluate how the day had gone and to identify areas that were not as successful as we had hoped and shared ideas and thoughts on why implementing a shared plan to improve it for the next few days.
The theory of reflective practise: There are many different models of reflective practise however the works of John Dewey and Donald Schon have been the foundations and instrumental in the development for the theory of reflective practice processes we see today. Dewey (1859-1952) as cited by Brock (2015) believed that reflection was a thinking process whereby individuals examine experiences to understand them and inform future actions. Schon used the basis to bring about the idea of two reflective processes, reflection in action and reflection on action. Both encompass the same shared idea that reflection is about a critical thinking process to derive understanding of what works well and how we can change or tweak practise to influence positive outcomes for children.	

 the cv method (n.d) Schon's model	 cambridge assessment international education (n.d) Kolb's model
Analysis of models – compare/contrast/pros/cons: Schons theory of reflective practise is based on two aspects of reflection, one being reflection in action where we reflect during an event, and this can be seen in practice today by observing the experiences and opportunities we are providing children as they happen and using our role as a facilitating adult to adapt or change it so that it has a positive outcome for children. Schon then uses a second idea of reflection on action which is about reviewing an experience after it has happened and analysing the event and thinking about its success rate and if changes need to be made and what these may look like next time. Like Dewey, Schon believes that we can derive meaning from reflecting to inform future practise. While Schon's theory is useful it does have limitations in that it adapts a very individualised approach and lacks structure so relies on practitioners being committed to reflective process as part of everyday practise.	

Kolb's reflective model of reflection acts as a cycle structure unlike Schon's with each part informing the next process and it also places a focus on looking back on experiences, we have already had to be able to understand and unpick them, acknowledging the positives and negatives and evaluating how we can learn from and build on that experience to inform future practise and responses. The cycle represents a continuous process suggesting there is always room for improvement. This however relies on us being able to repeat experiences more than one and involves making time to explore experiences to gain insight to them.

Conclusion

In conclusion by engaging in reflective practice as practitioners in the early years we can begin to develop good habits that will enhance our continued professional development and lifelong learning journey as we will constantly be evaluating practice and implementing measures to improve upon in ensuring that children receive quality practice and education. There are many different reflective models to help support practitioners to becoming more reflective but nearly all share key elements that place emphasis on the importance of reviewing past experiences in practice so that we can inform future practice and enhance learning and development. Many early years settings are taking active steps to being more reflective by implementing continuous development plans (CDP) within their settings and performance management reviews to promote reflection as whole settings and as individuals who impact the whole setting.

(880 words)

Reference List

Bauer, N, J. (1991) 'Dewey and Schon: An Analysis of Reflective Thinking'. American Educational Studies Association, 23-26 October, p.1-31.

Brock, A. (2015) *The Early Years Reflective Practice Handbook*. Taylor and Francis Group

Cambridge Assessment International Education. (n.d) *Getting started with Reflective Practice*. Available at: <https://www.cambridge-community.org.uk/professional-development/gswrp/index.html> (Accessed: 03 November 2024)

Dyer, M.A and Taylor, S.M. (2012)'Supporting professional identity in undergraduate Early Years students through reflective practice'. *Reflective Practice*, Volume 13(4), 551-563. doi: <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/10.1080/14623943.2012.670620>

Lindon, L. (2016) *Reflective Practice and Early Years Professionalism*. 3rd edn. Hodder Education

The CV Method. (n.d) *Reflective Practice-Schon*. Available at: <https://thecvmethod.wordpress.com/2016/10/24/398/> (Accessed: 03 November 2024).

Component 3 - Written piece – Professional Practitioner (1607 words)

Recognise and analyse the significance of different aspects of professional practise and why these are important in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children (1500words)

A professional is a term that relates to an area of work or a specific set of skills, knowledge and experience a person may have and is often represented with formal qualifications. The early years practitioner as a profession has changed throughout the years and Hallet (2013) maintains that what started as a predominantly caring role has evolved into valuable and important profession. However, due to incorrect misinterpretations of the titles that we give early years practitioners they often do not always get the recognition, value and importance they deserve as a professional. This is also echoed by Reed and Walker (2015) who point out that being a professional alludes to those who have recognised qualifications or expertise within a specialized area, rather than focusing on the qualities and values that individuals may have. Within my own experience working alongside early years practitioners, they often lack confidence and see themselves as inferior to other professionals they work alongside rather than viewing themselves in an equal partnership workforce. Because of this Welsh Government (2017) have recognised and highlighted this misconception and consequently have set out to raise the standards and profile of early years practitioners and have developed an “Childcare, play and Early Years Workforce Plan. Welsh Government (2017) has stated several specific aims within the workforce plan to raise the standards, quality and recognition of the year years over the next ten years.

There are numerous aspects that inform excellent professional practise, and they are all connected ensuring we as early years practitioners are providing holistic and inclusive settings for children to enable them to thrive and reach their full potential. Firstly, we need to foster effective communication and build good relationships to enhance support for families and children. This will develop trust and respect between practitioners and ensure that children and their families are supported well. It we do not invest in

effective communication, relationships will break down, this can lead to misunderstandings, conflict and frustration and render children and families unsupported and without the tools they need to flourish.

Professional practise that encompasses effective communication can be demonstrated in the investment of forming good relationships by working with multiagency to advocate for the children and families we work with. By collaborating with multiagency we can cater for all aspects of a child because we will have a shared knowledge and understanding of the child to inform the best resources and support for them. Gasper (2009) suggests practise working solely on its own is ineffective and often has catastrophic results whereas a more multiagency approach has a proven success rate and positive impact for children and families. However, Reed and Walker (2015) suggest that early year practitioners encounter challenges due to their lack of recognised professional status and can therefore be overlooked when working with multiagency. Miller and Cable (2011) also recognise that working as a body of professionals with a shared interest in children and families is not always easy because each professional may have varying perspectives or goals. However, it is important to be able to find a collective solution for positive outcomes through discussions with mutual respect and by creating an understanding that only one professional may hold the key.

Working in the early years as with many other professions means it is always evolving therefore it is essential practitioners are embarking on continued professional development (CPD) to ensure that as a practitioner in the early years our knowledge and understanding is relevant, current and adapting to changing policies and guidelines to ensure quality practise. Bleach (2014) states that the continued professional development is a journey and key part to developing professionalism in practice. An idea that is also supported by Conkbayir and Pascal (2014) who state that for practitioners to be providing excellent practise and care they need to be proactive about gaining knowledge and understanding of children and how factors of the modern world and current affairs can impact them so we can tailor responses and actions. However, this assumes all early year's practitioners are reflective, autonomous learners and want to enhance their professional practise. Many practitioners are reluctant to welcome change and new ways of thinking and like the traditional ideas and keep things the way things have always been done. Miller and Cable (2011)

stress that the increased interest and the evolving early years profession means that it is vital for practitioners to be open and willing to engage in ongoing changes to the sector to improve the quality of practise. However, it could be argued that settings can also be subject to limited accessible funding to facilitate ongoing training and professional development, especially within the current climate where staff are difficult to retain. This issue frequently leads to the same practitioners attending training or new developments and whole settings therefore rely on messages being cascaded down. This opens for misinterpretation of ideas and selective sharing of high interest areas or focusing on parts that are important to that individual, rather than utilizing collective reflection on whole setting practice to implement positive change.

Another reason to be actively involved in continue professional development and reflective practise is to inform how we can implement the curriculum into our practise. Early year provision has been influenced and informed from different theories and approaches spanning many years. The early works of Urie Bronfenbrenner and his theories on ecological systems influenced how we support child development and learning even today, he recognised that child development is multifactorial and about the relationships. The curriculum supports practice in various developmental areas and fosters a holistic framework. It acts as a guidance for practitioners to be able to plan effective opportunities and experiences for children that is also adaptable to ensure that the diverse needs of children and young people are met. The introduction of the non-maintained curriculum means that practise can align with developmental milestones and starts with where the child is at within their own development and enables practitioners to monitor and capture progress through observations. The observation and planning cycle alongside guidance from the curriculum allows for practitioners to make decisions about planning that is purposeful, follows the interests of the cohort/children at that time and it also offers more flexible opportunities to adapt experiences and opportunities so that children are successful, and learning is always accessible. Observations open pathways to identifying needs or areas to develop. Barber and Paul-Smith (2010) believe that observations are key elements to understanding the children we work with and that having a clear and good knowledge of the purpose of observations and how to use the information they provide enables us to meet childrens needs and facilitate the inclusive

building blocks they need to progress. Effective observations will also highlight developmental areas that may need extra support or early interventions strategies. Therefore, practitioners can put targets in place and by monitoring these we may need to implement multiagency working much sooner for children to get the right support and build the foundations to their learning and future.

The values we share as practitioners and as a whole setting these are integral to forming high standards for the children and families we support. They enable us to create safe environments and trust. However, values are shaped by the experiences we have, communities we live in and our cultural influence's therefore everyone will have a different opinion of what values are most important. It is therefore crucial that early year settings can foster shared values in their settings that represent the diverse nature of the people that work within the early years. According to Wilson (2016) as early years practitioners we are best placed to supporting children and families and by ensuring we strive to develop good relationships through respect, good communication and shared challenges.

Underpinning to all these aspects and as practitioners and adults with responsibility for caring for children we need to have a strong understanding and knowledge on The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This convention is important as it outlines children's rights and places responsibility upon adults to advocate for the children we work with, to facilitate them with the resources to achieving the best possible outcomes for their futures. As practitioners we need to know about these rights to be able to embed them within our settings informing our professional practice to shape the futures of all children. Key elements to the articles of the UNCRC is our duty and obligation to safeguard the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It places a duty on all practitioners to actively ensure they have the knowledge and understanding through training of current legislation and guidelines to safeguarding processes and practise that are regularly reviewed and developed in line with change and work. Reed and Canning (2009) emphasize the importance of the "Every Child Matters" framework and legislation in placing all professionals involved with children with responsibility to work together to prevent harm and risk.

In conclusion there are many significant aspects of professional practise, and they all play a vital role in meeting the individual and inclusive needs of children. They all encompass and emphasize the importance of placing the child at the heart of everything we do and ensuring that children have the resources to thrive into the best version of themselves. There is statutory guidance and legislation based on theory to help guide our practice but ultimately by ensuring we engage in reflective professional practice, develop good working relationships as a whole community and facilitate children to learn and develop in ways that are meaningful and purposeful to them, we can provide the ultimate professional practise.

(1607 words)

Reference List:

Barber, J and Paul-Smith, S. (2010) *Early Years Observation and Planning in Practice*. London: Andrews UK.

Bleach, J. (2014) 'Developing professionalism through reflective practice and ongoing professional development'. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, Volume 22 (2), 185-197.

Conkbayir, M and Pascal, C. (2014) *Early Childhood Theories and Contemporary Issues, An Introduction*. Bloomsbury Academic

Gaspar, M. (2009) *Multi-agency Working in the Early Years: Challenges and Opportunities*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Hallet, E. (2013) *The Reflective early years practitioner*. SAGE.

Miller, L and Cable, C. (2011) *Professionalization, leadership and management in the early years*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Reed, M and Canning, N. (2009) *Reflective Practice in the Early Years*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Reed, M and Walker, R. (2015) *A Critical Companion to Early Childhood*. SAGE Publications, Inc.

Welsh Government. (2017) *Childcare, Play and Early Years Workforce Plan*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/childcare-play-and-early-years-workforce-plan> (Accessed: 30 October 2024)

Wilson, T. (2016) *Working with parents, carers and families in the early years: the essential guide*. Routledge.

AI Cover Sheet

I have acknowledged the use of Google Scholar to research for my studies.