

1. The school

My placement school is a community school, owned and run by the local authority. It is an English medium school. There are 282 pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. The school has 27.6% free school meals. This is above national average (My Local School, 2009). The Children's Society explains the importance of free school meals for families with low-income. It can often be the child's main meal each day. This is an important link between the school and the learner because research proves school meals are beneficial for the health and education of children (Children's Society, 2020). An important relationship is that between the school and the local Flying Start. The Deputy head attends to talk about transition of new children. To find out if children are meeting milestones and incase additional support is needed. Referring to Save the Children, it says that a large percentage of children who live in poverty in are behind at 5 years of age. Due to this it is essential to get teaching right in early years education because this can aid children with staying ahead during their education (Save the Children , 2017).



Flying Start logo.
Source: Flying Start,
Pembrokeshire County
Council (2020).



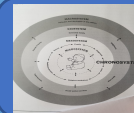
Seren a Sbarc. Siarte
laith characters.
Source: Siarte laith
(2020).

The Estyn report for my placement school said very few pupils speak Welsh (Estyn, 2018). However, the school has recognised the importance of learning Welsh. In September, the pupils wore red, white and green. Parents were invited to launch the start of Siarte laith. The school has obtained the bronze award and they are now working towards silver. The Siarter laith framework offers guidance with Welsh language skills (gov.wales, 2020). The Welsh Government aims to create one million Welsh speakers by 2050. This is detailed in Cymraeg 2050 A million Welsh Speakers (Welsh Government, 2017). My placement school aims to provide children with experiences to enable them to become life long learners (School x, 2019). This links with the four main purposes of the new curriculum that learners should be Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives (Welsh Government, 2015). Teachers need to be good role models and their lessons need to be interesting. Albert Bandura believed children copy the behaviour of others. He believed behaviour needs to be appropriate and then children will have positive and meaningful learning (Gray and Macblain, 2015).

Start at my feet

2. The Learner

The school council's relationship with the community can promote pupil voice. This helps identify what is needed in a school. Priorities and decisions are more informed. It encourages children to develop valuable skills that they can use in life (Estyn, 2016). At a school council meeting, the pupils decided it would be a great idea to write to the parents to ask if they had old toy prams that they no longer needed. They believed younger children could play with these in school. They also wrote to parents to ask for old Christmas jumpers. These were sold back to other parents for a small donation. Old uniform is also brought in. This makes it affordable for people who may not have much money. This links with the four main purposes of the new curriculum. Encouraging children to be enterprising, creative contributors and ethical, informed citizens (Welsh Government, 2015). Psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner believed learning is interdisciplinary. He created his Ecological systems theory. He believed child's development is affected by their surrounding environment. His theory shows five levels with the child in the centre. The microsystem is the child and the child's immediate environment, such as parents, teachers and family with whom interact with the child on a regular basis. Next is the mesosystem which is settings where the child participates and links between settings, such as school and links between family and teachers. The Exosystem is the child's neighbours and the community. The outer ring is the macrosystem. This ring is the culture, beliefs, values, attitudes and the law. Such as Curriculum reform. The Welsh Government. The uk Government and UN Convention on the rights of the child (Pound, 2009).



Uri Bronfenbrenner.
Ecological Systems Theory.
Source: Pound (2009).

4. The community

A school's good relationship with the local community impacts on attainment and aspirations to progress. From school, to further education and employment. This is explained in a Welsh Government publication (gov.wales, 2009). A new community centre offered their hall for the school choir to sing. The school hopes to also use it for other events such as a whole school carol service. At Easter, children attended a local elderly people's home to do an Easter Bonnet parade. St David's day, junior children attended Flying start to sing welsh songs with the small children. The school often invites visitors into the school. They have had the Police, Fire service, African drummers and the local vicar did assemblies about shrove Tuesday and Advent. A good relationship with the learner, school and wider community is paramount. People are social, they make connections between places, people and things. Communities pass this onto children and children learn and develop. (Barnes, 2011).

3. The Parents

Compulsory Education in Wales starts at age five, however children can start school the term after their third birthday (law.gov.wales, 2016). Theorist John Bowlby believed a child develops through a close relationship with their mother and separation is a cause for trauma in childhood. He believed the most important years in a child's development are the first five years (Meggit, 2012). This proves how important the relationship between school and parents is, especially in the early years. In my placement, the ALNCO invites parents of the children with additional learning needs into the school to complete a one page profile together. This is useful for finding out personal information from the parents and this can be used effectively when the child is upset or needs support. The school has open afternoons so parents can see what the children have been learning. Every class also does a parental assembly. Studies have found involving parents in children's learning at an early age has psychological benefits for both child and parent (Athey, 2007). My placement school has recently set up a parent group for well-being and mental health. Parents meet weekly. The first half of the meeting they talk to parents with similar concerns and then they do activities with the children. This is a very significant link between school and parents, because research suggests adult mental health problems can have a negative effect on a young person's emotional health (Schepman, K. Collishaw, S. Gardner, F. Maughan, B. Scott, J and Pickles, P, 2011, p 293-300).

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