

Please add your targets from the previous assignment (Only relevant if you have completed an assignment)

Target 1	Greater critical engagement with more recent, relevant research.
Target 2	Endeavour to synthesise wider background research into your writing to aid the support of your key points.
Target 3	Ensure elaboration and engagement with the opposing view/ aspects to be cautious with and limitations whenever possible

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.

<https://v3.pebblepad.co.uk/spa/#/public/kwhG4ZxgdsfcGmWkZ8cnMrdt8y>

Part one

REFLECTION ON SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT (TAB 5)

Asset one- Digital competence

For this first asset I have chosen to focus on improving my Digital competence whilst on placement. As this year's PTE was conducted online, I had to adapt to the remote learning resources that the school was using. Prior to starting the placement, I had a meeting with the Senior Mentor to discuss the different online resources I would be using. She prepared a series of online video tutorials to run through all of the online resources I would have to use and explain how to use them. The tutorials provided me with the understanding of

resources I had not used previously (e.g. J2E, Microsoft teams and HWB). The online tutorials provided a step by step visual representation of all of the different resources. Using this information, I was able to experiment with the different techniques of the sources prior to conducting my first online lesson. Therefore, I was able to build upon the basic skills from the online tutorials to become a lot more competent and upskill my ability when using the different online resources. This proved crucial when providing the children with online activities and lessons, as I understood thoroughly how each of the platforms worked. Before engaging with the tutorials, I had limited prior knowledge in relation to these specific online sources. Therefore, the need for the tutorials was apparent and after using the resources for an extended period of time I feel a lot more confident in my digital competence skills in relation to online teaching. The tutorials provided by the Senior Mentor were critical in the progression of my Digital skills whilst on placement as they provided me with a platform to enhance my overall abilities. I gained a greater confidence in my ability to deliver the lessons online, as I had a profound understanding of the resources, which I feel not only benefitted myself but the pupils as well.

Asset two – Numeracy

For the second asset I have chosen the way in which I improved my Numeracy skills whilst on placement. I was tasked with teaching a 3d shape nets lesson to my Year 4/5 class. This was the first face to face lesson that I delivered to the children after returning from remote learning. As it was the first time, I had met the children face to face I was quite nervous when planning as I wanted to ensure that I made a good impression on the children and the class teacher. I am not overconfident with shapes, especially nets, so, I had to do some prior reading into 3d nets and the different properties of the 3d shapes. I researched a variety of different videos and websites which provided me with the basic knowledge of 3d shapes and especially 3d nets. I found the links useful and informative and I am sure that they improved my knowledge of 3d shapes. As a result of watching the videos and reading through the BBC bitesize website I was a lot more confident when I delivered the lesson. The purpose of the introduction was to revisit the different properties of 3d shapes and to ensure that they understood what a 3d net was. I created a PowerPoint and used the

knowledge that I gained from the research to underline the different properties of the shapes. It was highly beneficial as I was able to explain anything that the children did not understand. Also, as part of the main activity the children were tasked with creating their own 3d nets. Prior to the lesson I experimented with some of the different templates available online to ensure that I was able to make the templates before explaining to the children.

Asset three – Science and technology

For this asset I have chosen to focus on my subject knowledge development, and in particular, the Science and Technology AOLE. As part of the placement this year, the topic was Space and Time, so many of the topic lessons that I was planning were heavily influenced by Space. I had to do some research when planning for some of the lessons, in particular the lesson centred around the phases of the moon. I had not done any work on this subject in any other previous placement or even in my prior education. I did extensive background reading to ensure that I knew what I was talking about when delivering the lesson. I used a variety of videos and websites that explained the different phases of the moon and I was able to plan an effective learning experience for the children. The lesson was delivered in an asynchronous format, so I had to ensure that the activity was tailored to the needs of the children whilst learning from home. They were tasked with creating an explanation poster of the phases of the moon. As a result of the research that I undertook I was able to provide a comprehensive explanation video. I provided the children with the same websites that I used to aid them in their learning as I found them to be informative and complete. Therefore, the websites were not only beneficial to my subject knowledge development but also to that of the children. Having acquired thorough background knowledge, I was able to provide effective feedback on the children's work. I was able to suggest ways to improve which were definitely beneficial to the children's overall learning experience.

REFLECTION ON PLANNING FOR PROGRESSION (TAB 7)

Progression in learning is an important aspect of a teacher's planning: "Effective planning involves carefully and deliberately sequencing the curriculum content and experiences that teachers intend learners to have. These plans should build on previous learning and achievements to promote further learning" Excellence Gateway (2021). For the purpose of this section I will be reflecting on my planning for progression as part of PTE 3. As mentioned previously, these lessons were undertaken via remote learning due to the Coronavirus pandemic and they were designed for a split Year 4/5 class

Professional Learning Template 1- (Mathematics & Numeracy)

For the first example, I have chosen to evidence progression in learning in relation to the Mathematics and Numeracy AOLE, more specifically using division skills. Due to the pandemic the children had missed a large proportion of school, therefore, I made sure that I started with the basic division skills and then upskill and develop using the basic skills as a foundation. I planned a series of division lessons that lasted a number of weeks and targeted different methods of division. The introduction lesson involved the frog hopping method on a number line. As it was a split Year 4/5 class some of the children had used this method previously, so I had to make sure that the activities were tailored to the needs of all of the children. The purpose of this lesson was to teach and remind the children of the method of partitioning when using smaller and bigger numbers. The children enjoyed and completed the activity without many difficulties. It was differentiated three ways to adhere to the needs of all of the children, however, if the children were in school, I feel that the activities would have been a bit more challenging. This is due to the fact that I tried to ensure that the children were able to complete the activities with limited support, as the circumstances were diverse with every child. The follow up lesson then incorporated a more advanced division method which was the bus stop system. Again, some of the children had used this method previously, however, due to the circumstances I made sure that I

relayed the basics of the method. This built on what the children had learnt previously, but the bus stop method requires deeper thinking which indicates progression in learning. After marking the children's work, I was able to see that they had used elements of both methods to obtain the answer. This shows that they had understood the fundamental division skills and I feel that the progression in learning in these activities is apparent. The children were introduced to a method which they could then build on. The bus stop method is what they will use going forward, so I feel that introducing and using the frog hopping method beforehand has given them a solid foundation which they will be able to build on in future lessons. This series of Mathematics and Numeracy lessons builds on the idea of progression in learning and "includes experiences that enable children and young people to develop their broader numeracy skills" (Donaldson, 2015.p.49). As a result of undertaking these lessons, I feel that I have now developed a much greater understanding of progression in learning and more specifically in relation to Mathematics. I believe that in order to provide pupils with optimum learning experience, progression should be at the heart of a teacher's planning: "Mathematical concepts and ideas should be built on, deepened and connected as learners experience increasingly complex mathematical ideas" (Welsh Government, 2020). To ensure that the lessons were progressive, I made sure I engaged with the principles of progression and I will continue to do so going forward.

Professional Learning Template 2 – (Language, Literacy and Communication)

The second chosen example to evidence progression in learning is a series of Language, Literacy and Communication lessons which encompassed non-chronological report writing in a Year 4/5 class. As mentioned, this placement was heavily affected by the pandemic and these lessons were no different. The series of five lessons were split between remote learning and face to face learning. The main stimulus for the report was 'The Lego story' video which details the creation of Lego and its creators. As part of the introductory lesson the children were tasked with watching the video and then ordering key events from the story using a worksheet I created. The purpose of this was to introduce the children to the video and to ensure that they could remember the key events and in the correct order. After the children had finished watching this, they were tasked with writing a brief summary

of the 'Lego story' to see how much they could recall. The follow up lesson was used as a revision tool and the children were asked to create a mind map of the events using the subheadings: 'beginning, main part, end and names of characters'. The purpose of this was to see how much the children had remembered. I feel that these three activities were crucial in order to instil the key incidents into the children and which they could use later on when writing their reports. To progress the children's learning further, the follow up lesson was centred around the key features of a non-chronological report. The children were tasked with reading through a variety of reports and identifying the positive and negative features. After creating their 'ingredients pot' of key features I provided a comprehensive checklist which they then used as success criteria. This lesson was aimed at ensuring that the children understood the fundamental elements of a report. The final lesson was completed in a face to face setting and the pupils wrote their reports. The fact that the children were back in school meant that I was able to provide them with a lot more support in comparison to remote learning. The children enjoyed writing the report and the completed work was very pleasing. They were able to draw on prior knowledge from the previous lessons (e.g. the summary and mind map) to retell the story. Using their 'ingredients pot' they were able to complete a thorough report with a variety of key features. Overall, I feel that this series of literacy lessons was beneficial to the pupils as it used clear progression which meant that they were able to build on prior knowledge to undertake the whole task. Donaldson (2015, p.40) supports this and believes that literacy should promote "sound understanding of their essential components by developmentally appropriate teaching and learning and rich contexts within which they can be reinforced, extended and applied".

On the whole, planning for progression is key to not only the child's development but the teacher's development as well. Progression in learning is one of the main attributes that promote development and an effective teacher should always plan for progression. This supports Coe et al (2014.p.2) who argue that "ultimately, for a judgement about whether teaching is effective, to be seen as trustworthy, it must be checked against the progress being made by students".

REFLECTION ON PLANNING FOR THE FOUR PURPOSES (TAB 7)

Professional Learning Template 1- (Ethical informed citizens)

As part of the first example of planning for the four purposes I have chosen to evidence the 'Ethical, informed citizens' purpose. Donaldson (2015.p.29) recommended that children and young people should be given the opportunity to "develop as ethical informed citizens of Wales and the World". This particular purpose suggests that children should be given the chance to become more involved with the world around them through learning about their culture and the cultures of different countries. Therefore, schools should be gearing towards a more diverse curriculum which targets all cultures. During placement this year I was given the opportunity to plan activities as part of the Chinese New Year celebrations. I planned two mission tasks which aimed to promote and celebrate China as a country. The first activity was a Chinese lantern activity where the children had to create a Chinese lantern and accompany it with a list of instructions on how to make it. The aim of the lesson was for the children to engage with the culture through making a traditional lantern, whilst incorporating cross-curricular responsibilities through the form of 'Expressive arts'. The children thoroughly enjoyed the activity and produced some remarkable pieces of work. This was completed whilst the children were learning from home but it would have been nicer for the children to make the lanterns whilst in the classroom with their friends. However, I feel that the planned activities made the best of the situation. Once the children had made the lantern, they had the chance to decorate it with traditional Chinese symbols and they wrote their names on it using the Chinese alphabet. The purpose of the second task was to create a persuasive poster advertising China. Once again, this activity promoted China as a country but also worked on improving the children's

literacy skills in a cross-curricular manner. Allowing the children to do their own research about China meant that they had the opportunity to learn more about a country outside Wales. The children produced some lovely posters and it not only improved their knowledge of China, but also their ability to create a persuasive poster which they could use in future lessons. Overall,

I believe that incorporating and basing the mission tasks on China meant that the children were able to immerse themselves into the country and its culture. I feel that it is crucial that children are provided with opportunities to engage with cultures outside their own as it allows a pathway of generational acceptance of diversity in society. This is echoed by Baker (1994) who argues that “what children learn about the wide variety of people in the world around them will significantly influence the way they grow and what kind of adult they will become”. I feel that it is the teacher’s responsibility to promote and include other cultures in learning as it promotes a more ethically informed society. As a result, I will continue to develop my own understanding of other cultures to be able to inform future pupils about all the different societies there are in the world.

Professional Learning Template 2- (Ambitious, capable learners)

As part of the second example, I have chosen to evidence the ‘ambitious and capable’ purpose. Donaldson (2015, p.29) recommended that children have the opportunity to develop as “ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives”. As a brief overview, this particular purpose suggests that children should be challenging themselves and setting high standards for their work in order to become a more knowledgeable and insightful individual. During my time on PTE 3 I was given many opportunities to include this purpose. In particular, whilst the children were learning from home, I introduced a self-reflection worksheet for the children to complete after a piece of work in order to assess it. A real positive of the template was that it was designed around the four purposes of learning. In line with the four purposes, the school had designated characters that related to each of them. Each character included an element of outdoor education which heavily influenced school life in this particular institution. The children were able to say which character they were and this in turn relates to one of the four purposes. For example, the 'Stick at it Squirrel' relates to the ambitious, capable learner element as they were resilient

and challenged themselves. I know that it worked really well as the children were able to assess their own work and use the terms 'what went well' and 'even better if' to promote further learning for future lessons. It provided the children with the opportunity to self-assess their own work and list aspects that could be improved. This suggests that they were working towards the 'ambitious, capable learners' purpose as they were challenging themselves to progress. Vogels (2017) supports the use of self-reflection in the classroom: "reflection time is valuable to anyone as a means of creating greater self-awareness, appreciating process as well as product, and deepening one's learning". Therefore, I feel that implementing this form of self-assessment allowed the pupils to distinguish their level accurately and be aware of how they could develop and improve. Welsh Government (2020) support this: "assessment should always focus on moving learning forward by understanding the learning which has already taken place and using this to ensure that each learner is challenged and supported appropriately". In relation to planning for the four purposes, and this purpose in particular, I believe that a self-reflection worksheet is a truly effective tool in order to promote further learning and provide challenges in order for the children to develop.

Going forward I will ensure that all of the four purposes are at the heart of my planning to "help children and young people, to see the point of what they are learning and how the aspects of learning fit together" (Donaldson, 2015.p.106).

Part two

The aspect chosen, which aims to promote pupil progression, is cross-curricular responsibilities and the importance of incorporating a series of AOLEs into a specific lesson. Due to the evolution of the Welsh education system, the need for cross-curricular learning has become more apparent. Donaldson (2015.p.35) believes that the education should "promote coherence and encourage children and young people to make connections across different aspects of their learning". This underlines the importance of incorporating a wide variety of skills and AOLEs in lessons. It ensures that pupils are provided with an optimum learning experience, filled with opportunities to broaden their knowledge. Barnes (2015) echoes the importance of cross-curricular and believes that this form of learning "recognises

multiple viewpoints and seeks to build more knowledgeable, lasting and transferable understandings of the world around us". Therefore, there is a need for teachers to continue to improve their ability to plan an effective cross-curricular lesson.

The decision to choose cross-curricular learning as the aspect for development was undertaken upon reflection of learning experiences whilst on placement. Cross-curricular responsibilities were at the heart of planning, especially the lessons mentioned in part one. However, it is crucial that teachers continue to develop in a range of areas. It could be argued that continually improving the ability to deliver an informative lesson, which encompasses the cross-curricular responsibilities, is one of the most important. Therefore, the theory of cross-curricular learning will be critically examined with the hope to "promote progression in children and young people's learning" (Donaldson 2015.p.35).

The concept of cross-curricular teaching is not a recent phenomenon as the idea of unifying subjects and disabling the strict barriers of disciplines has been well documented. The purpose of this style of teaching is to provide freedom in learning and place the child's learning at the centre. Dewey (1902) echoed this and argued that "there is no benefit in creating a false opposition between subjects and the child as a focus for the curriculum". This enforces the sense of unity between subjects. DES (1967) agreed with the notion of breaching the strict barriers of subject disciplines and argued that "rigid division of the curriculum into subjects tends to interrupt children's trains of thought and of interest and to hinder them... some work at least should cut across subject divisions". This is echoed by Taylor & Francis (2015) who felt that "teaching in a cross-curricular context makes the place of the learner central, rather than the place of content". This supports Dewey (1897) who "argued that children should be deeply and personally involved in the creation of knowledge" (Barnes, 2015. p.50). This underlines that child progression is at the centre of cross-curricular teaching as there is more opportunity to express themselves in a variety of contexts.

There are many contrasting perceptions in relation to the idea of cross-curricular learning.

Many believe that the idea is revolutionary and widely beneficial but there are some arguments against this way of teaching.

Alleman and Brophy (1993. p.287) highly support the idea and believe that “curriculum integration is one of those ideas that is obviously good”. This is echoed by Hayes (2010) who believes that “it emphasises a fusion of ideas and concepts within and across subject areas and broader life experiences in attempt to make education more relevant and meaningful for children”. This suggests that the freedom of cross-curricular teaching allows for more information to be learnt in a variety of different areas. However, Edvocate (2019) believes that “there needs to be a sizable shift in the way the school day is structured and in how teachers plan their lessons”. This argues that the contemporary education system is not yet prepared for the nature of cross-curricular teaching as it is so different from the traditional way. Conversely, Edvocate (2019) does argue that “connecting even two subjects together with a similar lesson focus can deepen the learning for students who often ask, ‘when will I ever need this?’. The purpose is to expand learning at all levels”. This is supported by Donaldson (2015.p.67) who argues that “it is important that children see the relevance in their learning to the world beyond the school gates and that opportunities are taken to forge links to the world”. Estyn (2018) conducted research into ‘School X’ regarding developing skills. It was found that “teachers now plan for cross-curricular themes that interweave literacy, numeracy, ICT and digital skills regularly and purposefully” (Estyn, 2018). Planning in line with the new curriculum and the cross-curricular responsibilities, is seen as a priority in this specific school and they have created a number of projects that develop this. In particular, through “working with Cymdeithas Ysgolion dros Addysg Gymraeg (CYDAG) to develop a project relating to the weather, Year 6 teachers planned a range of ambitious activities that applied innovative techniques” (Estyn, 2018). The project provided the children with real life experiences and encompassed an abundance of important skills and has had a hugely beneficial effect on the children’s standard of work. Estyn (2018) found that “rich projects such as these have had a positive effect on pupils’ oral, writing and digital skills, which will prepare them well for the future”. Therefore, this particular case study is undoubtedly in support of cross-curricular learning. The incorporation of more than one discipline has added to the children’s learning experience and raised their individual levels.

However, Greenwood (2013) found that “at a practical level cross-curricular work is seen by some as not being the most efficient way for children to learn”. Teacher perception is crucial in the effectiveness of cross-curricular teaching. Barnes (2015) agrees and found that “teachers’ attitudes and approach to the classroom atmosphere and learning environment they construct their particular pedagogical style, strongly affect the learning dispositions of children”. The role of the teacher is to provide their students with the optimum learning environment, and if their teaching style is more geared towards single discipline lessons, the effectiveness of cross-curricular learning will not be as complete. For example, in School X “as a school, leaders and staff were keen to foster innovation by nurturing flexibility to achieve in more creative ways that engaged pupils’ interests” (Estyn, 2018). This suggests that the compliance and enthusiasm of the teachers to prepare cross-curricular lessons enhanced the success of the project. Therefore, for a cross-curricular lesson/project to be successful the teacher has to be fully invested into this specific style of teaching and planning lessons.

As well as teacher enthusiasm to incorporate cross-curricular learning, the teacher’s knowledge and ability to deliver a cross-curricular lesson is crucial. Barnes & Shirley (2007) found that many practitioners have had minimum involvement with cross-curricular work, either as pupils or during their school-based training. This is supported by Alexander (2010) who recognised that teachers who did not have an appropriate subject knowledge of how children learn, could have negative results in terms of their ability to teach in a cross-curricular manner. In comparison, in the hands of teachers with the appropriate range of skills the progress in learning can be enormous. For instance, Estyn (2018) conducted research in School A focusing on “developing a skills-based curriculum”. The main priority of the school was to plan “engaging learning activities to enhance their pupils’ cross-curricular skills in meaningful contexts to attain the statutory demands of the new curriculum” (Estyn, 2018). To aid in the effectiveness of the school’s scheme “staff were provided with training sessions” (Estyn, 2018) to generate a skills-based curriculum. This proved to be critical in the overall success of the scheme as “the pupils have benefited from experiencing exciting learning experiences that are well structured and thoughtfully engineered to refine and develop a wide range of cross-curricular skills in meaningful contexts” (Estyn, 2018). This

highlights the importance of teacher knowledge to ensure that cross-curricular methods are successful and beneficial in the progression of the children's learning.

Another benefit of adopting a cross-curricular style of teaching is that "since it makes connections among disciplines this approach fosters critical thinking and collaboration from students as well" (Edvocate, 2019). This is supported by Ofsted (2002) who found that through using cross-curricular methods it "ensured that pupils applied the knowledge and skills learned in one subject to others- reinforcing learning and increasing understanding and confidence". However, Gardener (1993, p.195) believes that "in the absence of high standards, a progressive programme can rapidly become an excuse for laziness, laissez-faire procedures and even anarchy". This suggests that a cross-curricular style has the potential to abolish the authenticity of traditional subjects due to the integration of more than one subject in a lesson. Barnes (2012) supports this and argues that "subject progression is difficult to achieve, even when only two subjects are involved, it is almost impossible with three or more".

It is clear that there are many conflicting opinions regarding cross-curricular and single subject learning. However, Ofsted (2010) emphasises that there is not necessarily a conflict between the two disciplines and that both can exist successfully side by side. This is supported by the Steiner Curriculum which "often uses separated subjects, but also provides regular opportunities to put subject learning into cross-subject contexts" (Barnes, 2015, p.51). This shows that the two formats of teaching can co-exist within the same curriculum.

After the investigative analysis, the benefits and drawbacks of cross-curricular learning are apparent. I believe that the benefits outweigh the negatives and there should be an emphasis placed on incorporating this style in schools. However, I think that there should be certain criteria in place to ensure the success of this teaching style. For instance, teachers should be provided with opportunities to improve their ability to integrate cross-curricular techniques through training and courses. This will undoubtedly help the success of the scheme as teachers will be able to provide more rounded learning experiences for the children. However, there is always a financial aspect to training and courses, but I feel that

the benefit of having a more skilled teaching cohort outweighs the financial side. The successful projects of School X and School A emphasise the need for a curriculum more focused on cross-curricular learning as it provides children with greater life experiences. The success of the projects also underlines that through providing children with more freedom in learning it allows for even greater progression in their development.

In conclusion, from the way in which the Welsh education system is evolving, it is crucial that teaching styles are able to adhere to more skills-based learning. This emphasises the need to undertake cross-curricular teaching in order to incorporate a variety of skills in the classroom. Also, the freedom of cross-curricular learning allows for more realistic skills to be taught: “cross-curricular learning prepares the way for students to learn and work together, which is more reflective of real life” (Edvocate, 2019). This is in support of Donaldson (2015.p.110) who argues that “teaching needs to be directly related to pursuing the curriculum purposes, exploiting opportunities to apply and make connections in learning in authentic contexts”. Another strong argument for the use of cross-curricular learning is that it is centred around the progression of learners. The ability to make connections between different areas highlights how effective the technique is in helping to develop a pupil. Greenwood (2013) undertook research into cross-curricular and had the opportunity to interview a Year 5/6 teacher regarding their perceptions of the style and this was their response:

“A cross-curricular approach helps children make connections and see relevance. It backs up and underlines learning in other areas and underlines work they have already done”. (Greenwood, 2013.p.451)

Overall, the opportunities for development with cross-curricular learning are endless. To ensure that children receive the optimum learning experience, teachers should adapt their teaching styles to incorporate a plethora of skills into lessons. Children should be given the opportunity to experience the world using all their different senses. If completed effectively cross-curricular teaching can undoubtedly provide those opportunities. This supports the aim of Donaldson (2015, p.18) to “move away from ‘learning about’ to ‘learning to’, with a growing skills focus and emphasis on application and development”.

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