

## Section 1

1500 words

Critically analyse the implementation of play based early years curriculum- evaluating research evidence and reports

Include intro- what we are looking at, defining topic and highlighting key issues

Looking at the implementation of the foundation, how well or not well it has been implemented and the need for change, looking at key issues from the recommendations/

**Remember what? Who said? So what?**

Page 4 of Jane waters report- the main aims of foundation phase

Maybe mention the 7 areas which are at the heart of the foundation phase- WAG,2008- Jane waters paper

.Welsh government 2015- talks about the evaluation of the foundation phase report and under Recommendation 9 mentions that it should be made compulsory for foundation phase training modules and under Recommendation 11- need for follow up training to support implementation

Welsh government (2015) states that under recommendation 14, there is a need for considerable support for all practitioners that work in the foundation phase so that they are able to implement and use the new framework effectively.

However, - government 2014- lecture 1 look at phone about the part that- only mentions the need for leaders to undertake training on the principles of the foundation phase and does not mention anything about other practitioners needing to have training. Lecture one) this is a critiquing argument. Add about training being needed

In addition to this, Welsh government (2014) states that- there was a lack of clear guidelines when implementing the foundation phase meaning that headteachers, senior leaders and teachers were having to guide the foundation phase practice themselves because additional staff lacked the training and theoretical knowledge to understand the principles of the foundation phase.

Talk about play based curricula, why is it so important to start with

Wood and attfield- 2005- Jane paper- look at page 9 about struggles to define playJane

Welsh government (2014) mentions that the idea of learning through play was misunderstood- siraj- Jane waters, agrees with this and mentions that there seemed to be mixed messages about play in the foundation phase and this resulted in practitioners paying less attention to adult pedagogy meaning that they were not always done in the correct and beneficial way.

Welsh government (2014) states that there has also been a lack of understanding where practitioners don't understand how children learn through things like play, and experiential learning resulting in settings providing a less effective practice. They also mention that in maintained settings this resulted in a more chaotic environment as practitioners didn't understand how to structure the environment to offer play based learning opportunities. Because of this, it was known that they then went back to the old way of how they did it in a more formal way in order to maintain standards

<https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/f9d85dba-85a4-4e87-bb58-a24730ad7e57/foundation-phase-profile-handbook-revised-september-2017.pdf> and wag 2008- Jane waters- mentions that the foundation phase requires a mixture of children learning through adult led activities and child initiated activities. They believe that the practitioner's involvement in childrens play is a key part of a child's learning journey. However- howard and mcinnes ~ (play, not play study- find

when children perceive an activity as play, they show more signs of emotional well-being than when they perceive the same activity as not play. Methods One hundred and twenty-nine children aged between 3 and 5 years participated in the study. The cues children use to differentiate play and not play were used to create an activity session that was 'like play' and an activity session that was 'not like play'. Children who undertook the 'like play' activity scored significantly higher than children who undertook the same activity but 'not like play'. Detailed observational analysis also showed increased behavioural indicators relating to emotional well-being among children participating in the 'like play' rather than 'not like play' activity session. Conclusion Children demonstrate increased emotional well-being when they perceive an activity as play rather than not play. Findings support the proposition that play can be seen as an observable behaviour but also as a mental state. As well as providing important evidence as to the value of play for enhancing children's emotional well-being, findings are discussed in relation to professional practice in children's services. The paper highlights the training needs of practitioners to enable them to understand children's views about play and use this information to create playful situations which maximize the developmental potential of play. It has been demonstrated that children use cues such as: location of an activity, adult presence and choice to determine whether or not they perceive an activity as play

The participants were 129 children from three educational settings; a nursery school with three nursery classes, an infant school with a nursery class and two reception classes and a primary school with two reception classes. - maybe critique?

Johnson, J. and Watts, A. (2018) *Developing creativity and curiosity outdoors : how to extend creative learning in the early years*. First edition. Boca Raton, FL: Routledge, an imprint of Taylor and Francis.

Look

... states that through play, children are able to show their emotions and needs, it is known that through play children can develop on their resilience and confidence and that specifically undirected and child initiated play allows children to problem solve, discover, focus on their interests and promotes sharing. They state that when play is adult led this can sometimes focus more on rules and begins to prevent the benefits of play on their creativity, leadership and group skills..

Welsh government (2015)-Evaluating the foundation phase report and Welsh government (2014) - states that under recommendation 5 and 6, practitioners need to be provided with training and guidance on how to use the foundation phase pedagogies, for example the 12 essential foundation phase pedagogical elements

Jane waters page 13 and 14- Jane waters- page 12 mention that the word play is not included in any of these twelve elements and mentions that the evaluation of the foundation phase makes recommendations about changes in pedagogical practice by being shown how rather than understanding why they need to be changed. They then go on to discuss that pedagogical change is more likely to happen when educators understand why their actions have an impact on the child's learning. This shows confusion with the pedagogy vs outcomes. Jane waters- page 8 mentions that in order for teachers to fully understand and embrace pedagogic change, they need support and time.

Maynard et al(2013) Jane waters paper states that there is no clear guidance or explanation on the approach and pedagogy that practitioners could use. Siraj- blachford mentions that there was a lack of coherence in regards to the foundation phase pedagogy when it came out originally, so practitioners were using sociocultural and constructivist approaches rather than one clear approach.. look at pilot study page 7 in relation to this,

Mention lit and numeracy framework

#### The National Literacy and Numeracy Framework

The National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF) became a statutory curriculum requirement for schools in September 2013 and for settings in September 2015. The LNF has been introduced to raise standards in children's literacy and numeracy skills by helping all practitioners to:

- develop literacy and numeracy skills throughout the Foundation Phase Areas of Learning
- integrate literacy and numeracy into continuous, enhanced and focused provision, indoors and outdoors
- inform discussions with parents/carers, children and other stakeholders
- help children with their own self-assessments
- monitor, assess and report on individual children's performance
- identify children who may benefit from additional support.

Formative assessment using the LNF is a statutory requirement and practitioners are required to assess children's literacy and numeracy across the curriculum using the LNF. Annually schools will need to produce a narrative report to parents/carers on their child's progress and their next steps in learning based on these assessments. The profile aligns with this process as the formative assessments of LNF carried out over the year will inform the profile.

<https://hwb.gov.wales/storage/f9d85dba-85a4-4e87-bb58-a24730ad7e57/foundation-phase-profile-handbook-revised-september-2017.pdf>

White wick (2019) topic 1 lecture looks at topic one talks about the statistics of the pisa testing and mention that Wales was the only country to score below the average OECD in reading, maths and science.

Mention funding- eval of foundation phase report- recommendation 16 mentions funding should be provided to schools and funded non maintained settings so that they can develop and improve on their foundation phase learning zones indoors and outdoors.

Recommendation 17 talks about finding fo Soraj (2014) Jane waters- mentions that there is no actual consistent assesment framework to support progression in the foundation phase. Lewis (2014) page 15/. So the early years development assessment framework came in place which is designed to chart childrens progress.

Talk about ratios- eval of fp report- recommendation 21- look into it

Donaldson, 2015- his report- look at topic 1 powerpoint for reference, states that even though the foundation phase curriculum was outdated and needed to be changed, he believed that this early years curriculum was still a highlight of wlesh education and had a good foundation that the new curriculum could build upon, - mention the new curriculum- areas and 4 core purposes

... huw lewis, 2015- topic 1 lecture- agrees with this and states that the successful futures document is the start to an egaging 21<sup>st</sup> century curriculum which is shaped through international thinking allowing the next steps of the journey to begin.

Jane waters- page 16- states that in order for the new curriculum to work affectively, there is a need for a firml eadership to ensure there is a strong focus on the pedigogical development.

A crucial factor to remember is that Successful Futures' is only relevant for children aged three to sixteen and this cuts out approximately 120,000 early years professionals that work with children under 3 years old. (Stats Wales, 2017).

Resources include – howard and mcinnes, whitewick 2016- needs for change, PISA, our national mission- welsh gov, ESTYN, prosperity for all? OECD

Critiquing-

Jane waters- page 13 and 14- They also mention that the findings from the stocktake document mention that only a fifth of the foundation phase settings were classed as doing well.

**Conclusion**-mention the implementation, barriers, key findings- look at powerpoint 1

Need for change is my thread

Section 2-

Considering the concept of the unique child- critically evaluate methods of assessments

1500 words

(2 max) either compare 2 of them or talk about one that's old and one that could replace

Talk about barriers of types of assessments- I.e- funding, ratios

The short and long term benefits of outdoor play and the importance of practitioners providing opportunities of outdoor play

When working in the early years sector there is a need for practitioners to give children the opportunity to learn and play in multiple stimulating environments. When children experience this, they are able to thrive, their bodies and minds develop at a continuous rate as they learn through real experiences and play. The outdoors is a special environment as it provides children with meaningful experiences as Children prefer to play and learn in natural environments and tend to interact with other children in a more effective way, they will go on to use these key skills they continue to develop throughout their lives (Johnson, J. and Watts, A. (2018) and (Welsh government, 2022).

Johnson, J. and Watts, A. (2018) states that the outdoor environment promotes social learning and is an ideal area for practitioners to encourage children to explore, test, observe and experiment, this allows them to grow by developing more error free ideas. Vygotsky (1986) also highlights the importance of social interaction for children to develop, he believed that children could extend on their learning and thinking through discussing their ideas and views with other children and practitioners.

Welsh government (2022) state that the outdoors is excellent for experiential learning as it provides specific possibilities for children to participate in risky, creative and spacious play, this is said to encourage curiosity and independence., They believe that understanding the outdoor environment is a key resource for a child's holistic learning. practitioners need to support this by ensuring that they provide focused, continuous provision in the outdoor environment, this can promote child led learning and endless play opportunities. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, n.d) agrees with this and states that children should be offered opportunities to learn the key principles of their holistic development.

Froebel trust (no date) talks about the Froebelian trust and states that the experiences children have when they are young can shape their futures. The importance of hands on, natural play is key to a child's well-being, each child is different and focussing on what a child can do is the best starting point, children are capable of growing the most

through doing things alone. This goes in line with Waters (2016) comment about self worth and self esteem being at the core of the foundation phase.

Babies should be given the experience to access the outdoors in early years settings. (Johnson, J. and Watts, A. (2018) states that the Outdoors offers a more exciting and stimulating environment, by taking babies outside practitioners are able to support their growth by encouraging them to develop on their senses, when babies begin to crawl, they are able to move to what they want to look at allowing them to experiment by themselves with textures and discover new objects and things around them, as babies and children explore with elements such as sand, water and snow it allows them to develop confidence to continue experimenting and discovering for themselves. They believe it is vital that practitioners to encourage outdoor play as this provides children with endless chances for exploration.

Through outdoor play, children can explore ideas, risk take, Problem solve and make decisions by themselves allowing them to understand themselves and the world around them (waters, 2016). Welsh government (2022) adds to this and talks about the curriculum for non-maintained settings and state that the opportunities we offer to children in the early years should be purposeful to each child, they should focus on the child's interests and encourage independence, wonder, risk and challenges. Practitioners should support this by supporting each individual child's progression journey. Practitioners need to ensure children can go to areas that allow them to gain a sense of curiosity in their surroundings making it easier for practitioners to observe and engage in children's play and learning.

Welsh government (2017) states that A practitioner's role when working with children is to support, observe, interact and gain information, they should then respond with various activities and questions to encourage children to engage with the world around them, this can be done by taking children into the outdoors as children are known to behave and learn in a different way outdoors. Froebelian trust (no date) mention that when children experience the nature around them and their personal involvement in it, it allows them to learn about living things and begin to look at the bigger things in life such as sustainability and the climate around them. Welsh government (2022) mention that throughout education, children have the benefits of learning about the natural world and how they can protect it, through learned experiences in the early years, children will learn a broad understanding about the importance of the climate

and sustainability resulting in them having more positive actions in the decisions they make later on in life.

Welsh government (2015) States that within the foundation phase framework it is essential for children to have the chance to explore and investigate their surroundings, both indoors and outdoors. Siraj, Kingston, and Melhuish (2015) and Waters (2016) agree with this and talks about children's capability of sustained shared thinking and how it links back by having key interactions with adults and space to explore and investigate. The key issue surrounding this is mentioned by Buono and Doss (2017), they state that practitioners can sometimes be unsupportive and limit children's development because they are worried about potential accidents happening whilst being outdoors, this is resulting in children being stuck inside and feeling disconnected from the outside world. Are you ensuring the children in your care are able to have the opportunity to go outdoors and enhance their involvement in sustained shared thinking?

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