

Appendices

Appendix 1

Record 1

Date and time, year group:

26/10/22 – Session before lunch time – Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5, Year 6

Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context

The observed critical incident took place in the main hall of the school during an assembly that involved almost the whole pupil cohort (all year groups apart from nursery classes). Expressive arts were the AoLE of the assembly consisting of an online Zoom call set up on a large projector screen on the wall of the room. The call was from a music organisation promoting the understanding and appreciation of musical instruments and children's' ability to identify songs by listening carefully to different sounds and rhythms. The instrument used and discussed throughout the virtual session was the harp. A guest harpist played an array of popular, easily identifiable songs for the children of the school and for other schools across Wales who were also watching the call. The assembly took place during the early afternoon, shortly after their lunch break. There was one teacher, and three teaching assistants physically present for the duration of the assembly.

What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work)

Pupils were instructed by the leader of the Zoom call and by the teacher in charge of the assembly, who stood at the front of the hall facing all pupils, 'to sit quietly and listen carefully to the songs played on the harp by the guest musician. Pupils were then prompted by the teacher to state their guesses of songs and to continue to listen to the songs being played in silent appreciation. Many pupils who recognized the songs began to sing the lyrics along with the harpist playing the song and they seemed to enjoy doing so as they were smiling and looking at friends as they sang. The teacher then firmly told all the pupils to remain silent while the music was being played and to not sing along. Pupils were visibly disappointed by this request as could be seen by many frowns across the room. Each time a new song was played that the pupils recognized e.g., songs from 'The Greatest Showman,' 'Frozen,' and 'Harry Potter,' they gasped in excitement and tried to sing along. I overheard one of the teaching assistants say to a group of pupils sitting at the back of the hall that it was okay to sing if it was quietly. They were repeatedly told by the teacher to remain silent or sing very quietly so that the music was not drowned out by the sounds of singing. The teacher became frustrated at having to repeatedly tell pupils to quiet down and began to raise his voice more each time he felt the need to discipline them. The teacher displayed multiple responses to bad behavior during the assembly; the first being assertively whereby he calmly insisted compliance from the pupils. Secondly, they became hostile after their instructions were not followed and threatened to shorten their afternoon play time if they did not conform to their instructions. This

could be observed from the almost immediate quieting of chatter and singing within the room. At this point, some children were displaying signs of stress, such as fidgeting, untying, and retying their shoelaces, poking, and speaking to pupils sat next to them, and repeatedly asking the teacher if they could use the lavatory. Finally, the teacher responded non-assertively when prior methods had failed to stop students from singing along to the songs and they allowed them to sing along to the remaining songs. At the end of the assembly, the teacher expressed to the pupils how he was disappointed by their behavior today, but the pupils were subjected to no further rows or punishment after. Pupils then left the main hall and returned to their classes in an orderly fashion.

Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be "under the hood" in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider?

Key areas of possible exploration identified are Learning Theory to better understand the most effective ways that children learn and what disciplinary methods are proven to be most effective in a school setting. Many age groups with mixed levels of understanding, abilities and maturity were mixed in one room for this assembly which could have played a role in the behavioural issues that took place during the assembly. Exploring areas such as ALN documentation, intersectionality and emotional literacy may give a little more insight.

Differentiating assemblies between infants and juniors may also be a possible area to explore to understand if a large mix of age groups results in positive or negative outcomes.

Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here)

There were several potential extraneous variables. The assembly took place after lunch so the pupils might have found it difficult to concentrate directly after. One teacher alone oversaw almost the whole of the school's cohort, so the consideration of teacher-to-student ratio is arguably insufficient to adequately observe and manage all occurring matters. The presence of a variety of year groups may be a contributing factor as the pupils may not be used to sitting in a room with that many people at one time. Moreover, many student-teachers being present in the main hall may have been a potential distraction e.g., they may have behaved differently if they felt uncomfortable about the presence of strangers in their school. Instructions that the pupils were not to sing along were only made after they had begun singing so maybe if a clear aim of the assembly was delivered and rules set out clearly from the beginning, the pupils' responses may have been different to further instructions.

Appendix 2

Record 2

Date and time, year group:

26/10/2022 – Morning – Year 4

Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general
classroom context

The identified AoLEs are Health & Wellbeing and Mathematics & Numeracy. The pupils appeared to be settled and were sat in groups of around four pupils per table. The teacher stood at the front of the class to explain the starter task and all pupils faced themselves toward the teacher to listen attentively. The task was to complete a variety of long multiplication and long division questions as a recap of what they have already learned about the topic. The questions were displayed on an electronic whiteboard at the front of the classroom with different coloured lists of questions for different abilities within the class. All pupils were familiar with the process and knew which list of questions they needed to complete.

What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work)

While pupils were on task, the teacher quietly circled the class while observing each tables progress. The teacher made herself approachable by slowly moving around the class in no hurry so if any pupils requested her assistance, she'd be able to help immediately. While the teacher was helping a pupil with a question that they found difficult, a pupil from another table near the back of the classroom

with their back facing toward the whiteboard was seemingly struggling to see the whiteboard that was located moderately far away from them at the front of the classroom. They were also asking the pupil sat next to them if they could copy the questions from their book. Moments later, the teacher noticed the pupil frequently turning around to copy the question and squinting their eyes and asked them if they were able to see the board without difficulty. The pupil responded saying “No, I can’t see the board” and so the teacher calmly offered the pupil the option to move seats if it would make them feel more comfortable. The pupil was happy to move seat and continued with their work without any further issues.

Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be “under the hood” in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider?

The pupil may suffer with confidence issues and may not have felt like they could put their hand up to ask for help. The teacher noticing this critical incident and rectifying it instantly demonstrates a successful connection with the fourth purpose of ‘Healthy, confident individuals.’ Maybe the pupil has unidentified issues with their sight that impaired them from working at the same speed as others in the class. The font of the writing/numbers may have been too small for those to see sat at the farthest table from the front of the classroom.

Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here)

The environment was controlled, calm and quiet throughout the first session of the morning. There were no notable distractions and directions were made explicit as all pupils worked well independently and required little assistance throughout.

Appendix 3

Record 3

Date and time, year group:

29/10/2022 – Morning – Nursery

Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context

There was one teacher, and three teaching assistants present. The teacher assigned a small group of children, around three or four pupils in each group, to an activity. Some pupils were to complete their activity outdoors within a contained section of the school for the nursery, with the assistance of a teaching assistant and some pupils remained in the classroom. The observed incident took place on the floor of the classroom where a small group of pupils sat together in a circle around some equipment. The identified AoLEs are Health & Wellbeing and Mathematics & Numeracy.

What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work)

There was a plastic box filled with sharp safety pins and wooden shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle). Pupils also had a wooden board and small hammers. The task was to use safety pins and hammer different shapes onto their wooden boards. Once completed, they would be asked to identify the name of each shape in Welsh e.g., 'cylch', 'sgwâr', 'triongl' and 'petryal'. Pupils would then remove the

safety pins and shapes from the wooden boards and return them to the storage box. While the nature of the task contained possible risks, the pupils completed this task independently without direct supervision or visible concerns. Most of the pupils completed this task without difficulty and were instinctively careful when handling the safety pins. One pupil accidentally poked themselves with the safety pin and displayed some signs of stress such as becoming red in the face and slightly tearful. The teacher quickly noticed the pupil and calmly approached them asking what had happened. The pupil showed their finger, which had a very small abrasion, to the teacher and the teacher very calmly told the pupil that they were alright, and the pupil continued with the task, now more careful when handling the safety pins.

Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be "under the hood" in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider?

Upon personally asking the teacher about the objective and value of this task, they said that this activity allows pupils to become familiar with different shapes while learning to work and navigate themselves independently. The teacher explained that she responded calmly when the pupil hurt themselves as children learn and reflect adult's behaviour and so if the adult remained calm then the child was quickly reassured that there was nothing to worry about. It would be of interest to research the way young children learn from adults and to find supporting evidence on this area.

Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here)

The teacher disclosed that directions had previously been made explicit and that all pupils frequently complete this task and so have learnt to remember to be cautious when handling sharp objects.