

The Professional Practitioner Portfolio

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Personal Development Plan

What have I learnt so far: I have achieved level 3 diploma for children's care, learning and development. Achieved 18 th February 2020.					
What do I want to develop: Complete part two training in early years to play. Child – led play. Complete my university course Early Years Education and Care Practitioner. Adjust lifestyle to make more healthier and being fitter.					
Improvement and development	Success criteria	The actions I will take to achieve the goal	Timelines	What will this help me achieve	Achievements How will I know that I have achieved the outcomes that I want/need?
Complete part two training in Early Years to Play. Child – Led Play.	Arrange to complete the course.	Email my employer to ask about reschedule the completion of the second part of the course.	Before January 2025	I believe that having a current placement that involves working with children completing this course will improve my ability to understand and assist them in their play.	I will have completed all units of the play course, passed and received certification.
Complete course in university for Early Years Education and Care Practitioner.	Complete course in two year's time.	Attending lectures Monday evening, completing assignments of a good pass mark.	Start date 2 nd September 2024. Expected finish 31 st July 2026.	After earning my Early Years Education and Care Practitioner degree in July 2026, I plan to investigate potential career paths.	I will attend Swansea University on Monday evenings and complete and pass all the assignments given to me and will therefore gain my degree and attend graduation and receive certification.
Improve my health and well-being so I can continue to provide high quality for the courses.	Making a goal that is specific and to maintain for the future.	Attending fitness classes with my local gym. Working out a schedule that best suits a plan for balancing working full time, studying, and my children's activities after school clubs. Planning and doing healthy meal preps for the week commencing.	To continue for the future.	More organised for the upcoming weeks: A balance between fitting everything into my schedule and feeling better about myself, which should lead to increased happiness and better organisation and time management.	When I have achieved a good work/study/life balance. This will look like a realistic timetable of fitting all aspects of life in that do not leave me feeling tired or stressed resulting in a happier healthier me who can still provide high quality care to the children I care for.

Reflection

Arrange with my employer to reschedule the completion of the second part of the course Early Years to Play, Child – Led Play.

My university course Early Years Education and Care Practitioner, attending Monday evenings, pass all the assignments given to me and will therefore gain my degree and attend graduation and receive certification

When I have achieved a good work/study/life balance. This will look like a realistic timetable of fitting all aspects of life in that do not leave me feeling tired or stressed resulting in a happier healthier me who can still provide high quality care to the children I care for.

Briefing Paper

What is reflection and reflective practise?

According to Paige-Smith, (2011) reflective practice is essential of working with young children. To further their professional growth, early childhood practitioners are encouraged to reflect on their work in a variety of ways. Naturally, early childhood educators have a long history of nurturing and promoting children's learning and development through close observation of their activities. However, it appears that in the twenty-first century, reflective practice in early years settings will become more embedded—that is, a fundamental requirement for all staff members who interact with young children's learning and development.

According to Gov.wales, (2022) the rights of children are outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), an international agreement. The UNCRC's justification is that children's rights involve careful attention because children and young people frequently special care and protection.

All children and young people worldwide are entitled to the rights listed in the UNCRC. Young person 18 years of age and under have the right to play, safety, education, health, and happiness.

Why is reflective practise important to EY practise?

Brock, (2014) has indicated that reading, researching, and gaining professional, practical, and life experience all contribute to the reflective process, which generates knowledge and skills that support and understanding, empathy, and professional practice that benefits children and families. The main objective of practice reflection is to generate ideas for better practice.

Birthingto5matters, (2021) suggests that through reflective practice, practitioners can develop an objective perspective on their profession boost confidence, be more proactive and enhance your abilities, knowledge, and understanding. Increase the standard of care and instruction provided to all children.

Toole, (2024) suggests effective practice in early childhood education has several advantages. You can learn more about how children learn and grow by thinking back on your interactions with them. Planning and carrying out more successful learning activities can then be done with this knowledge. Making better decisions regarding your practice is another advantage of reflective practice. You can identify areas for development and modify your practice by considering the evidence from your reflections. Additionally, you can feel more assured of your ability to make a difference when you observe how your actions improve the learning of the kids.

The theory of reflective practise:

According to Reed and Walker, (2015) the theory of reflective practice, is the importance of curiosity as the motivator for thinking critically and learning about oneself and practice for both individuals and communities of practice. The part this process plays in encouraging us as "knowledgeable doers" to collaborate creatively for the benefit of families and children.

Pacey, (2016) has indicated the reflection is crucial component of work and will help the children in care as well as their parents and guardians. Additionally, you will gain from this on a personal and professional level. Developing a reflective practice will help you sustain and get better as you progress. Better results for children can be attained through reflection and ongoing development. Consider a few more advantages that this might offer them: Their specific requirements are met. Their sense of self-worth is increasing. A setting that is adequate, supportive, and involved, with opportunities both indoors and outside with resources that are appropriate for them parents and carers will also gain from the process because they will be able to observe improvements in your practice and have faith that the care you are giving is excellent and always becoming better.

Toole, (2024) suggests you can continually improve your work and give children the greatest learning opportunities by having regular reflection time. In early childhood settings, reflective practice is essential because it not only helps teachers by enhancing their instructional strategies and professional development, but it also has a significant benefit for young children's overall development and educational experiences.

Gibb's model



(Source, Performance Management Systems Ltd (2022))

Kolb's model



(Source, Kumar (2018))

Analysis of models – compare/contrast/pros/cons:

According to Bandara, (2023) although reflective practice is the foundation of both Kolb's and Gibbs' reflective cycles, which aim to use experiences to enhance learning, their techniques and applications are different. Gibbs' model has six different phases: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and action plan. In contrast, Kolb's model has four stages. Focus: Kolb promotes ongoing development through practical experiences by highlighting the experiential learning process. Gibbs provides a more structured reflection, on the other hand, which is ideal for critical analysis and drawing conclusions that can be put into practice. Applicability: Kolb's model is frequently that used to encourage experiential learning in training and educational settings. Gibbs' framework is adaptable to provides a strong variety of sectors, which include healthcare, education, and workplaces, and its framework for in-depth evaluation. Kolb's Reflective Cycle in 1984 It is a four-stage theory that shows experiential learning and includes Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation. The cycle promotes the idea that learning by doing is an ongoing process in which observations and reflections are based on real-world or immediate experiences. A cycle of learning and development is maintained when people use this reflection to begin to understand new ideas and apply them in future circumstances. By providing a methodical, structured approach to reflective practice, the Gibbs Reflective Cycle guarantees that important lessons are learned from previous experiences. The six stages of reflection—description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion, and plan of action people are growing both personally and professionally.

Conclusion:

As suggested by Bandara, (2023) both Kolb's and Gibbs' reflective cycles, aim to use experiences to enhance learning, their techniques and applications are both different. Gibbs' model provides much more structured reflection, which is ideally for critical analysis and for drawing conclusions which can then be put into practice, which aims to use experiences to enhance learning. Gibbs framework is for in-depth evaluation, its adaptable to provide a strong variety of sectors, this includes education, healthcare, and workplace. Gibbs Reflective Cycle guarantees that important lessons are learned from previous experiences. Bandara, (2023) also suggests that Kolb's model is often used to encourage with experiential learning in training and educational settings. Kolb's promotes ongoing development which is through practical experiences by highlighting the experiential learning process.

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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.

According to Schon, (1992) the professions are now essential to our society's basic process. Whether it is for fighting wars and protecting the country, educating our children, diagnosis and treatment and illnesses, judging and punishing lawbreakers, resolving conflicts, managing industry and business, designing and building structures, or aiding with those who are incapable of caring of themselves, we conduct society's major business through professionals who have been specially trained to doing so. Our main institutional structures offices, hospitals, schools, courts, and armies—are places where people can practice their professions.

Schon, (1992) also suggests institute for child development professionals, claims that professionals in early childhood education work with children, families, and communities all at once. As a society, the work of raising and educating young children affects all aspects of our lives. Early Childhood Education Professionals provide the necessary care and education of children before, during, and after school hours while their parents and carers and are at work or even at school. They can be found teaching in third grade public and private school classrooms as well as full day licensed childcare centres. Successful early childhood education professionals have held positions as coaches, mentors, university professors, public school administrators, and directors of childcare facilities.

Arnerich, (2024) suggest there are four main guiding principles that should influence early childhood practice. They are as follow:

Each young person is unique in their own way, capable, resilient, self-assured, and always learning new things. When adults who are aware of their needs and interests provide the children with support and direction, children then thrive. They start learning and require the development.

A strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or caregivers is beneficial to all children.

Positive relationships teach the children to be strong and self-reliant.

Significance of education and growth. Children learn and then go on to develop at varying rates.

For children to achieve great things, development must include the formation of strong social and emotional foundations.

According to Paige-Smith, (2011) language development is a social process in which each person must take part. It is, at the very minimum, a two-way social communication process with a sender and a recipient. Language is more than just an abstract concept. System of norms and expectations to be learned, but an active component of the process of socialisation. Young children gain a sense of self-identity, an awareness of who they are and where they may sit comfortably into the social structure, thanks to the responses and reactions of others when they attend to their needs. This comprehension develops gradually as the child gets older and is connected to other developmental areas.

Hyson and Tomlinson, (2014) suggests that to give children the best start in life and make sure that their welfare and best interests are kept at the forefront of all decisions, emphasize that early year's practice apply their knowledge and expertise in dynamic, fluid, demanding, and regularly exhausting environments.

According to Johnston, J. *et al.* (2018) over the years, child protection and safeguarding have become more important. This is a professional responsibility, but one could also argue that it is also increasingly becoming a moral responsibility for everyone, regardless of whether they work with children or not.

Johnston, J. *et al.* (2018) suggest working with children requires that practitioners be familiar with the terminology used in the early years setting and comply to it consistently. Otherwise, it might make it more difficult for the group of experts who look after and advance the welfare of children to function effectively. Nevertheless, because of various factors, definitions and terminology in society develop over time. Safeguarding, protecting children from abuse; preventing health or developmental impairments; making sure that children are growing up in environments that support the delivery of efficient and safe as well as care. taking steps to give every child the best opportunity in life, is paramount in a childcare professional's work for children to thrive.

Dixon, S. *et al.* (2022) suggests that although the agencies and individuals involved usually have similar objectives regarding the safeguarding process, multi-agency working can be complex so that each has its own policies, procedures, and practices. The various organisational structures of various agencies make this even more difficult. Some, like education or health, are viewed or handled as a single entity under a general heading, which can mask important distinctions and levels of complexity within their teams and structures. For instance, a family's education may consist of multiple pre-schools or schools, each of which operates as a separate, largely independent entity. Health can refer to primary and secondary care, midwifery, health visiting, and other professions that may be subject to various professional guidelines, work protocols, and/or boundaries.

According to Bristol Childminding Network, (2015) planning, evaluation, and observation will aid in the growth and education of children. Children are first observed to comprehend and consider their present interests, development, and learning. This is the first step in the cycle of observation, assessment, and planning.

The process of keeping an eye on children in paying attention to what they have to say, and recording what we see and hear is called observation. One of the most important aspects of daily professional practice is observation, as it is officially known. With children of every age, it involves closely observing, listening, and documenting a child or group of children's activities to determine each child's unique needs.

Bristol Childminding Network, (2015) also indicates through observation, we can ascertain each child's desires as well as how they respond to various situations, such as care routines or unknown people. We can determine which activities, routines, or experiences a child finds difficult or pleasant, as well as any that seem to cause anxiety. Through observation, we can assess each child's special care and learning requirements and their progress. We can then plan the next steps in the learning and development of the children based on our observations.

Unicef, (2016) has shown as of July 12, 2022, 196 nations had ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), a significant and legally binding agreement that establishes the fundamental rights of all children, regardless of their abilities, race, or religion.

The foundation of everything we do is the UNCRC. It is the most extensively ratified international human rights treaty in history and the most complete declaration of children's rights ever generated.

Some articles of the summary of the UN Convention on the rights of the child, which is important for professional practice, Article 3 (best interests of the child) the best interests of the child should be the main priority in all decisions and actions that affect children. Article 28 (right to education) every child has the right to have education. Primary education must be no cost and should be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights and beliefs. poorer countries must be help by the richer countries. Article 29 (goals of education) Education developing every child's personality is a must, talents and abilities to the full. Must encourage the child's respect for the human rights, as well as respect for parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment. Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express them views, feelings they feel and of wishes in all that is important affecting them, and to have their views to be considered and taken seriously. This right always applies, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the children day-to-day home life.

Smith, (2017) suggests that early childhood education's dedication to children's rights has given us an alternative viewpoint on how to perceive and interact with young children. Rights are entitlements that all people have access to.

Children will benefit from a higher standard of living, chances for healthy development, and the ability to reach full potential when their rights are respected.

According to Brith to 5 matters, the best way to support children's learning and development is to start with the child and then match experiences and interactions to suit their needs. What is commonly referred to as formative assessment or assessment for learning is described by the observation, assessment, and planning (OAP) cycle. A key component of effective early childhood practice is ongoing formative assessment. It entails direct observation children as part of every activity, which is typically retained in the practitioner's memory but may occasionally be recorded. With this wealth of information, the practitioner can determine how a child is growing, learning, and developing, and then plan the next steps for the adults to support and extend the learning.

Unicef, (2016) suggest the rights of all children are outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), an international accord. The UNCRC's explanation is that children's rights need particular attention because children and young people frequently require special care and protection.

According to Gov.Wales, (2022) all children and young people everywhere have the right to the rights listed in the UNCRC. Young people (18 years of age and under) have the right to play, safety, education, health, and happiness.

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