

A critical evaluation and the identification of next teaching and learning steps focusing on a case study of an individual learner or a group of learners, based on an observed critical incident.

This assignment aims to highlight a critical incident and to examine the ways in which it can be analysed to focus upon and to identify next teaching and learning steps.

*“Critical incidents and critical events are particular events or occurrences that typify or illuminate very starkly a particular feature”
(Cohen et al, 2011).*

This assignment will consider an incident observed in a primary classroom and there will be a reflection upon aspects of learning theories and child development, considering barriers to children's learning and ways in which these combine to help children learn effectively. This will be done in relation to the developing curriculum in Wales and the four purposes highlighted by Successful Futures (Donaldson, 2015) which will allow me to develop my own research skills which will in turn inform my future teaching.

There are many aspects which can affect a child's ability to learn. Bronfenbrenner (Derksen, 2010) expressed this as an ecological system with the child in the centre and the influences upon them being their home life, hunger, tiredness, health and wellbeing. Their learning environment, interest in the subject and quality of learning resources can also be influential.

Several theories exist regarding the various methods of learning and a determining a child's level of intelligence. Behaviourist theorists such as Skinner (Pound, 2011) believe that a learner is essentially passive and will be shaped through negative or positive reinforcement. Constructivist theorists such as Piaget (Halfpenny, 2014) believe that knowledge is constructed based on personal experiences and hypotheses of the environment. Humanist theorists such as Maslow (Stoyanov, 2017) argue that learning is seen as a personal act to fulfil potential.

Four official observations were conducted (see Appendices) and the observed incident upon which we will focus (see Appendix C) involved Pupil C who was experiencing difficulty completing a mathematical task set out in her workbook. Her peers were able to complete the tasks independently, however she was unable to complete the task without receiving guidance and support. It is important to observe the event in light of the forthcoming changes to the curriculum, as this incident would link with the four purposes proposed by Donaldson (2015).

For the purpose of this assignment, the placement school where the incident was witnessed will be referred to as School X, in adherence to BERA guidelines (Bera, 2018) for anonymity. School X is a Primary school located in a deprived area in a town in South West Wales (Estyn.gov.wales, 2019). There are approximately 240 pupils aged three to eleven years at the school. Currently, approximately 11% of pupils are entitled to free school meals compared to approximately 15% as recorded in their last Estyn inspection, which took place in 2014. The number of primary pupils eligible for free school meals in Wales for 2018-2019 was recorded as 78,902 (my local school).

School X has eight single age classes. The pupil teacher ratio is approximately 25:1. The school has identified approximately 14% of pupils as having additional learning needs. Almost all pupils come from English-speaking homes. Very few pupils speak Welsh as a first language. Very few are from a minority ethnic background or learn English as an additional language. The school has several clubs including breakfast, IT, netball, rugby and afterschool clubs. The last Estyn inspection was conducted in 2014 and scored School X 'good' for their performance and 'good' for their prospects for improvement. The class observed by the author was a Year One class which consisted of 30 pupils aged 5-6 of mixed abilities.

The researcher used a case study in her research and considered observation methodology in her qualitative research. When carrying out the research of the case study discussed in this essay, the researcher considered different observation techniques that could be used. The method chosen, was the participant observer method as advocated by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), DeWalt & DeWalt (Kawulich, 2005) and Kumar (2011). This method of observation, according to Kumar (Kumar, 2011) is when the researcher participates in the group's activities with or without them knowing that they are being observed. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) state that participant observation helps guide relationships between participants and informants enabling the researcher to gain a better understanding of a situation. DeWalt & DeWalt (Kawulich, 2005) explain that participant observation enables the

researcher to gain knowledge of the subjects in their natural setting. This method would therefore allow the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the situation itself and gain empathy through personal experience. Furthermore, as per the Foundation Phase Framework (Revised 2015), researchers often adopt the participant observer method when conducting research in the Foundation Phase.

Having decided upon adopting the participant observation method, the researcher considered a variety of techniques including field notes, voice recordings and a questionnaire. The advantage of video recording, according to Kumar is that "the observer can see it a number of times before interpreting an interaction or drawing any conclusions from it" (Kumar, 2011, p.136). Cohen, Manion and Morrison also state that "video cameras might create the problem of reactivity" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.462). While this method would have enabled the researcher to analyse the incident retrospectively, it could also result in the Hawthorne effect, as the pupils may modify their behaviour knowing that they were being recorded. Kumar (2011) also describes questionnaires as a method of data collection. Both of these techniques would however be against normal practice in the classroom and would not provide the most valid and reliable results. DeWalt, DeWalt and Wayland (Kawulich, 2005) describe field notes as "both data and analysis, as the notes provide an accurate description of what is observed and are the product of the observation process" (Kawulich, 2005). Having considered these methods, the researcher decided to use field notes as her method of data collection.

A non-participant approach was contemplated which Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) explain involves the researcher adopting a passive and non-intrusive role and which Kumar (2011) explains is when the researcher pays attention and does not become involved in the group activities. The advantages for this approach are that the researcher can observe and judge a scene in real time, allowing them to rationalise their observations without bias. The overt nature of this observation, allows a more ethical approach as people are aware they are being monitored. There is potential for this method to lead to the Hawthorne effect, whereby those people under scrutiny act differently as they are aware they are being watched. Furthermore, the distant nature of this method may make it more difficult to obtain accurate results, whilst potentially being costly and time consuming.

The researcher considered critical incident methodology in her research. According to Tripp (2012:25), "incidents happen, but critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of an event." The critical incident technique is a method of objective analysis and evaluation used to form a judgement which discusses the

procedures used to collect information regarding critical incidents. It could be argued that it is a flexible method which occurs in routine practice and which is easily understood. However, it could be considered unreliable as events could be misinterpreted. Case study methodology was also considered which Kumar (2014) argues is “the basis of a thorough, holistic and in-depth exploration of the aspect(s) that you want to find out about” (Kumar 2014, p.155). Case study methodology has been used by experts such as Freud for years and gives more insight into a specific aspect of someone’s behaviour rather than looking at something as a whole. It could be argued that it is more easily understood and allows for more detail however it may be considered a biased method of data collection. Having considered both research methods it is evident that a critical incident is a case study.

When reflecting upon Donaldson’s (2015) four purposes it seems clear that three of them can be considered in this situation. The pupils were provided with Abacus workbooks which were colourful and eye catching and which also worked well for Pupils A and B who enjoyed the work and completed it to a good standard. However, Pupil C was not engaged and the work appeared to be too challenging for her. Therefore, this method of learning did not align with Professor’s Donaldson’s purpose of ‘creating ambitious and capable learners’ as the pupils learning styles did not match with his aims.

As Pupil C did not appear to be connected to the task and displayed low levels of self-confidence it was decided to introduce the ‘smiley face’ method which generated interest, motivation and enthusiasm. The researcher wrote the numbers on a piece of paper and drew a number of ‘smiley faces’ beneath each number to represent the number. The researcher and Pupil C then counted the ‘smiley faces’ together and she was then able to calculate the total. This method ultimately led to her being able to successfully complete the tasks set in the workbooks, thus increasing her self-confidence. Also, the introduction of this new method enabled her to be a more active participant in her learning. This meant that she became a creative contributor to her learning. In addition, this method helped her to improve her knowledge, understanding and skills which could in turn have a positive effect on her health and wellbeing and increase her level of ambition. By developing her understanding of mathematical concepts, she should then be able to have the confidence to apply her numerical skills in her day-to-day living.

The incident illustrated the importance of scaffolding on a child’s learning based on a constructivist approach. The researcher assisted the child to learn by providing temporary support and guidance in order for her to achieve the desired outcome.

Swiss theorist, Piaget holds the view that there are set steps and sequences to a child's intellectual development and that intellectual development results from an active, dynamic interplay between a child and his/her environment (Halfpenny, 2014). Piaget believes that all children progress through four stages: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational and a child's knowledge is composed of schemas; categories of knowledge from past experience that help us to interpret and understand new experiences. In contrast, Vygotsky (Smidt, 2009) believes that cognitive development occurs through social learning and developed the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development.

Piaget argues that children learn through active self-discovery and believes that children will only learn when they are ready, whilst Vygotsky holds the view that children learn through instruction and guidance and believes their development can be accelerated to an extent with correct scaffolding and within the ZPD. Each of these views were proved in the observation as the scaffolding provided by this researcher and the interest generated inspired the pupil and promoted learning. These findings also support the views of Bruner (Smidt, 2011) whose theory of scaffolding is very similar to Vygotsky's concept of ZPD. The main basis of Bruner's theory is that students are active learners who construct their own knowledge. His theory stresses the role of the adult in education. Bruner argues that what decides the level of mental advancement is the degree to which the child has been given fitting instruction in conjunction with practice or experience. It was the researcher's input that helped the child's learning to progress.

Like Piaget, Bruner (Smidt, 2011) describes stages of cognition. Bruner holds the view that people represent knowledge in three ways and these emerge in developmental sequence: Enactive, Iconic and Symbolic. The main difference between Piaget's and Bruner's stages is that Piaget describes a sequential development where Bruner's modes are more of a continuum. Both Bruner and Vygotsky stress the importance of a child's environment, in particular their social environment and that adults should assist a child to develop their skills through the process of scaffolding which is a view that has been supported in the critical incident observed.

Bruner agrees with Piaget on several issues. Both agree that children are pre-adapted to learning however Bruner argues that development is a continuous process and not a series of stages. Both agree that children's cognitive structures develop over time however Bruner believes that cognitive development can be accelerated. However, both agree that children are active participants in the learning process though Bruner holds the view that the

involvement of more knowledgeable peers and adults can have a profound impact on learning which was proved in the incident observed.

Another form of learning theory which could be considered in relation to this incident therefore is that of Humanism which focuses on the human freedom, dignity and potential. Humanists believe that it is necessary to study the person as a whole, especially as an individual grows and develops. This is in contrast to the behaviourist theory of operant conditioning (which argues that all behaviour is the result of the application of consequences) and the cognitive psychologist belief that discovering knowledge or constructing meaning is central to learning.

American Psychologist, Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1998) motivational theory comprises of a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. He argues that lower level needs must be met before individuals can attend to needs higher up. From the bottom of the hierarchy upwards, the needs are: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization. He argues that growth needs stem from a desire to grow as a person, not from a lack of something. Once these growth needs have been met one may be able to reach the highest level called self-actualisation and the incident observed also illustrated the importance of self-actualisation in the classroom as the child observed clearly made progress when she was able to meet her potential as her individual learning needs were addressed. It has been acknowledged that Maslow's theory has made a major contribution to teaching and classroom management in schools as, rather than reducing behaviour to a response in the environment, Maslow adopts a holistic approach to education and learning. Applications of his theory to the work of the classroom teacher are obvious. Before a student's cognitive needs can be met, they must first fulfill their basic physiological needs. For example, a tired and hungry student will find it difficult to focus on learning. Students need to feel emotionally and physically safe and accepted within the classroom to progress and reach their full potential. Maslow holds the view that students must be shown that they are valued and respected in the classroom, and the teacher should create a supportive environment. Students with a low self-esteem will not progress academically at an optimum rate until their self-esteem is strengthened. In the incident observed, the child's achievement levels improved greatly as her confidence and self-esteem were raised by the researcher's intervention.

This view is also supported by American Psychologist, Carl Rogers (DeRobertis, 2006), who agrees with Maslow's main assumptions, however he added that for a person to develop, an environment which provides genuineness, acceptance and empathy is required. He believes

that all people possess an inherent need to grow and achieve their potential. Rogers argues that the formation of a healthy self-concept was an ongoing process shaped by a person's life experiences. Rogers suggests that self-concept begins to develop during childhood and is heavily influenced by parenting. He also holds the view that every person could achieve their goals, wishes, and desires in life. When, or rather if they did so, self-actualisation took place.

The incident observed also illustrated the importance of wellbeing and involvement on a child's ability to learn. According to Laevers, (Laevers and Declercq, 2018) high levels of well-being and involvement will allow children to experience deep level learning. He highlights the importance of the way in which adults interact with children and believes that this is key to the achievement of well-being and involvement. As he believes a child with low levels of well-being is more likely to display extreme behaviour and will not be able to engage with opportunities in an educational setting. The child observed benefited greatly from adult interaction which improved her wellbeing and involvement in the task set.

The incident observed also illustrated the importance of consideration of potential Additional Learning Needs (ALN). Birkett (Birkett, 2007) states that teachers have a duty to support pupils with highly complex needs. The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (2013) emphasises the importance of schools to work hard to ensure that the curriculum on offer provides effective learning opportunities for all pupils, whatever their needs. It explains that suitable learning challenges must be set where all pupils can experience success in learning through teaching that is suitable to their individual abilities. Also, overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils by ensuring that teachers make provision for ALN pupils to be able to participate in assessment activities. A fact made clear when researcher intervention and adaptation of the task enabled the child to meet her potential.

Bruner (Smidt, 2011) believes that scaffolding - providing a great deal of support to the ALN child during the early part of the task and gradually transferring more responsibility to the ALN, can help acquire more cognitive development in the individual. Slavin (Slavin, 2006) agrees that this scaffolding in the form of hints or leading questions can help the ALN transverse their ZDP. Examples of scaffolding techniques for teachers include questioning, labels, feedback, prompts and modelling, some of which were used the researcher in the incident observed. Tappan (Tappan, 1998) introduces a model to aid teachers to carry out optimum scaffolding to support an ALN student to move through their ZDP.

Vygotsky studied the psychological development among to ALN children (Daniels, 2011). He also stresses the importance of social learning in the upbringing and education of children with ALN. According to Vygotsky, the personality of children with ALN is not determined by their need, but rather by their social environment and its dialectical interaction with the child. Thus, the social aspect is crucial in the upbringing of children with ALN.

Vygotsky holds the view that interaction with peers is one of the most important socio-cultural conditions for development and socialization among children with ALN. Vygotsky, observed that with the proper assistance from an adult or a more advanced peer, a child is capable of much more learning than on his/her own, a belief supported by the incident observed. He states that the process of scaffolding brings about abilities that have been in the process of emerging and developing (that is, have not yet matured) and thus reveals the hidden potential of a child, which is crucial for both diagnosis and prognosis.

In this critical incident I believe that the constructivist approach is the most appropriate. Constructivist teachers present questions and problems then direct children to help them find their own answers. Children come to the classroom with previous knowledge, understandings and ideas. This prior knowledge is the basic material for the new knowledge they will construct.

"Incidents tend to be 'typical' rather than 'critical' at first sight, but are rendered critical through analysis" (Tripp, 2012:25). Critical reflection enables us to highlight areas which we would like to learn about, understand better or find different ways to approach best practice. Critical reflection can be used regularly to analyse and identify children's learning and development needs and to inform planning. Our reflections and discussions should therefore ultimately lead to the best possible outcomes.

Reflective models can be critical to reflection and provide a good framework and a good starting point for a teacher. Several models of reflective practice exist, however, they all share the same purpose which is to achieve the best results for the child and the teacher. When reflecting upon the critical incident I observed, I considered using Kolb's four stage reflective model (Kolb, 1984) referred to as experiential learning which enables us to learn from our experiences in practice. The basis of this model is that an individual must complete a cycle of the four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation for effective learning to take place. Kolb's model was adapted by Gibbs (Gibbs, 1988) who developed a more structured six-stage approach which covers description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action

plan. Whilst not wishing to devalue either model as both are effective, I decided to use the Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) model, which encourages the researcher to focus upon feelings, remembering and understanding, evaluating and understanding and reflecting upon conclusions and further actions. I selected this model as I felt it would provide me with a more balanced view of myself and my role as a teacher.

I hold the view that active learning which involves children in the learning process is important. Donaldson (2015) states that real life opportunities for learning should be created. In the critical incident observed I would suggest a shopping role play using resources such as cash registers, shopping lists, price labels and creating menus. Skills development in real life situations could then be adapted depending on the ability of the child. I believe that good teaching requires the application of creative and innovative teaching strategies in order to meet each child's individual needs.

I would propose giving the child opportunities to select and vary the level of challenge in her learning. Selecting her own learning task could reduce the stigma associated with being given less complicated tasks. I would encourage children of mixed abilities to occasionally work together by promoting small group or whole class activities, but I would also encourage like ability groups to work together as through verbally expressing their ideas and responding to others the children could develop their self-confidence, communication and critical thinking skills which will be vital throughout their lives.

The Abacus workbooks provided a solid learning foundation for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and worked well for pupils A and B as they did not require assistance to complete the calculations. Pupil C however required scaffolding support in order to improve her calculation skills and thus attain the same level as pupils A and B which proved to me the importance of scaffolding and the need for me to reflect on differentiation and different learning styles in my lesson planning.

I believe multimedia could be employed in the classroom in order to introduce new academic principles. Learning can become more interactive when technology is used as children can physically engage during lessons as well as instantly research their ideas, which develops autonomy and caters for a wide range of learning abilities and needs. This is particularly important as the balance between providing children with appropriate challenge, opportunities for success and maintaining high expectations can be difficult in low attainment groups. Assessment for Learning (AFL) and peer evaluation are both effective strategies in promoting children's learning. If the child involved in the incident had been set the task to

assess her own learning, she may have given insight to the researcher as to her learning needs which could be used for future planning opportunities. Likewise, if she had been working with a group of like ability peers there could have been an opportunity for discussion and practical activities to simplify the task and promote learning.

I believe that encouraging children to ask questions and investigate their own ideas helps improve their problem-solving skills as well as allowing them to gain a deeper understanding of academic concepts. I think this will prove key in my teaching experiences and I will ensure that I will include many AFL opportunities to allow me to assess children's progress and inform future planning and teaching. I would also make sure that the children are provided with opportunities to lead their own learning so promoting their engagement and encouraging them to take ownership of their learning which is a key factor in Donaldson's Successful Futures (2015).

Conclusion

I chose to use the participant observer method when considering the critical incident observed as I felt this would allow me to gain a better understanding of the situation and to develop empathy through personal experience. I also felt this method would prove more valuable in the Foundation Phase. My findings allowed me to realise the value of scaffolding to support children's learning and the importance of differentiation for the various abilities within the classroom. The child observed was seen to struggle with the traditional workbook and needed scaffolding intervention with a more practical application to enable her to access her learning. Once I realised she was responding well to the 'smiley face' and more visual approach this allowed me to support her appropriately and move her learning on. When using the ARC model during my reflections it became clear that the need to reflect upon individual children's needs through scaffolding support and differentiating work to address different learning styles is an approach I feel will be key in my future teaching career. When considering the Code of Professional Conduct and Practice and my personal professional responsibility as a teacher I feel this approach will help me to engage with learners, to encourage their confidence and to empower them, so ensuring their educational and personal development. It therefore seems that Tripp's belief that highlighting areas which we would like to learn more about, understand better or find different ways to approach best practice has proved successful in my assessment of the critical incident observed as I have highlighted areas which will undoubtedly inform my own professional and personal development.

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Appendix A

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 September 2019
Lesson details: The classroom consisted of 30 pupils aged 5-6. The theme of the lesson was 'Read, Write, Inc.' Materials were ready and provided (flash cards, whiteboards, marker pens.) The lesson took place on the mat. A Teaching Assistant was present. Pupils were asked pre-questions to recall what they had previously learned. Many responses were given. The lesson was structured. The lesson began with a 'speed sound' session. The lesson progressed to writing on whiteboards.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Pupils appeared happy, interested and comfortable with each other. The majority of the pupils appeared focused, motivated and were enjoying the tasks. Pupils with ALN were given more attention and support as they appeared to lose interest. The teacher provided regular feedback to keep the pupils on task.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the lesson 'Read, Write, Inc' was to improve literacy skills. All activities (flashcards, white boards) promoted the purpose of the lesson.
Direction



(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

Instructions were clear and specific.

The lesson was teacher led and the pupils focused on the teacher.

Pupils with ALN were given additional attention and support to keep on task.

Pupils asked the teacher for support when required.

MAT pupils provided assistance to some of the other pupils.

Access and challenge

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

The majority of the pupils engaged in the lesson.

ALN pupils required closer guidance, supervision and assistance.

Pupils engaged with the flashcard sections well.

Some verbal prompts were required.

Some pupils were very vocal in their verbal responses to the flashcards. They were enjoying the 'flash cards' section and interacted well.

Some MAT pupils engaged with other pupils by helping and checking their white board work.

MAT pupils completed the tasks at a quicker pace than others which was evidenced on their whiteboards.

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

Instructions were clear and specific.

The pupils' understanding was assessed throughout the lesson by use of the teacher's questions and feedback from the pupils.

Any mistakes were recognised and constructive feedback was given.

Pupils whiteboards were assessed regularly.

Regular praise and encouragement were given.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

I noticed that a MAT pupil was raising her hand frequently in order to answer the teacher's questions. She was extremely eager to attract the teacher's attention and



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was enjoying the task. Her answers were always correct. She appeared irritated that she was not allowed to answer every question.

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*

Dyddiad/Date: 26 September 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings <i>Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?</i> <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	I noticed that a MAT pupil was eager to answer the questions and was curious as to why she was so keen and that she was becoming irritated when she was not allowed to answer every one. I felt that she could have been targeted with more open-ended questions as the basic question and answer scenario was too simple for her. I was concerned that she would become disinterested and that she may not develop to her full potential.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>"Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?"</i> <i>"Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"</i>	She displayed high levels of understanding for her age. She was clearly determined to answer every question and struggled to allow others to have their turn. She was irritated when others answered questions and struggled to interact with other pupils.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>"Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?"</i> <i>"What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i>	She could continue to work with other MAT pupils and be given more challenging tasks whilst also being given the opportunity to act as a mentor. She could work with less able peers to guide and instruct them which would also give her the opportunity to improve her social skills whilst also sharing her knowledge.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions <i>"Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?"</i> <i>"Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?"</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?"</i> <i>"What could be done next?"</i>	A more comprehensive strategy could be put in place to enable her to develop to her full potential. A no hands up policy could be applied in the classroom. Involve her in working in a range of settings and contexts, e.g. individual, groups, pairs, class, cross year group, cross key stage. Extra-curricular learning activities could be provided/extension tasks for independent research and learning.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Appendix B

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: The classroom consisted of 30 pupils aged 5-6. The lesson comprised of various challenge tasks (various tasks for various pupils). Pupils were split into groups to complete individual tasks. One task I observed was Lego therapy. The theme of the Lego therapy task was to construct objects out of Lego pieces. A box of Lego pieces was provided. The Lego therapy task took place on the mat. The teacher situated herself near to the pupils who were completing the task and provided close supervision.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Several pupils on the mat had ALN. Pupils worked individually to make their own Lego creations. The pupils appeared happy at first and interested in the task. The majority of pupils remained focused, motivated and were enjoying the task. Pupils with ALN displayed short attention spans.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the task was to improve social communication skills. Sharing Lego pieces and working in close proximity promoted the purpose.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)



The children were familiar with the task and did not require an explanation.

They pupils with ALN worked at a slower pace, were distracted easily and had short attention spans.

Access and challenge

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

Some pupils worked independently and did not require any prompting or encouragement.

Some students with ALN had difficulty engaging for long due to concentration and focus difficulties.

The pupils were aware of the task as they were familiar with the Lego therapy activity.

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

The pupils understood the task as they had participated in it previously.

Regular feedback, encouragement and praise was given.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

Pupil A became impatient as Pupil B would not give him the box of Lego pieces when he asked for them.

Pupil A threw a piece of Lego at Pupil B. Pupil A disrupted the task being carried out.

Pupil A approached the teacher and told her that Pupil B would not give him the Lego piece. The teacher asked Pupil A to ask Pupil B nicely if he would give it to him. Pupil B then gave him the Lego piece. Pupil A apologised for his behaviour.

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 26 September 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Pupil A has ALN and displays challenging behaviour. He requires additional support from the Teacher. I am concerned about his development and his behavioral issues and the affect they have on his peers.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand "Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?" "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	Pupil A does not appear to be developing in comparison to his peers. He lacks social and communication skills.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse "Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?" "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	At present I would try to keep him as engaged as possible by providing as much motivation, attention and assistance as possible.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions "Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?" "Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?" "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	If Pupil A's behavioural and ALN are investigated formally then procedures could be put in place to ensure his educational needs are met. A 1-1 teaching assistant could be beneficial for him which would in turn also benefit the other pupils. If a formal diagnosis is made then a formal intervention plan could be implemented. Prior to a diagnosis being completed I would prepare an Individual Behavioral and Educational Plan. I would spend more time with him to get know him better. I would create a pupil profile of his likes and dislikes. I would work closely with his relatives to gain a further understanding of his needs outside of school.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Appendix C

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26th September 2019

Lesson details:

The classroom consisted of 30 pupils aged 5-6 of mixed abilities.

The theme of the lesson was 'challenge tasks'.

Pupils were split into groups of mixed abilities to complete individual tasks.

One task I observed was Mathematics.

Materials were ready and provided (Abacus workbooks, pencils, erasers.)

Three pupils took part in the Mathematics task.

Two pupils (Pupils A and B) sat next to one another at one desk and Pupil C sat at another desk facing them. I sat with Pupil C.

The teacher and a teaching assistant were sat nearby at other desks with other pupils assisting others with their tasks.

Music played when the task was coming to an end.

Classroom culture

(Are the students focused on learning?)

Learning objective was given.

Pupils completing that Mathematics task seemed excited to start the task.

The workbooks were brand new and they had not yet used them.

The workbook cover was colourful and the pupils looked interested and keen to start the activity.

Objectives

(Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)

Learning objective was given.

The purpose of the task was to improve mathematical skills.



The objective was to complete the mathematical tasks namely additions and was explained at the start of the task.

The pupils were able to read the instructions in the workbooks.

Direction

(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

Learning objective was given at the start of the task.

The teacher checked for understanding before they commenced the task and the pupils confirmed that they had understood.

Access and challenge

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

Pupils A and B worked independently and did not require any prompting or encouragement. They appeared to be engaged and focused.

Pupil C was having difficulty completing the task and paused several times. Pupil C was not fully engaged. The task was too challenging for her.

Pupil C was struggling to complete the additions. As she was struggling, I wrote the numbers on a piece of paper and drew 'smiley faces' beneath the numbers to represent the numbers. We then counted the 'smiley faces' together and she was then able to calculate the total. She then wrote the total in her workbook and continued this method a few times until she was able to complete the calculations in the workbook independently.

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

Teacher explained the challenge task and the pupils stated that they had understood.

Teacher marks the workbooks following the lesson.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

Pupil C was struggling to complete the additions. As she was struggling, I wrote the numbers on a piece of paper and drew 'smiley faces' beneath the numbers to represent the numbers. We then counted the 'smiley faces' together and she was then able to calculate the total. She then wrote the total in her workbook and continued this method a few times until she was able to complete the calculations in her workbook independently.

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*

Dyddiad/Date: 26 September 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings <i>Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?</i> "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	I was concerned that Pupil C had difficulty calculating the totals and that she was not advancing as well as Pupils A and B. I was concerned that she had lower levels of confidence and had difficulty focusing. It was disappointing that she could not have 1-1 support but this was as a result of the class size.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>"Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?"</i> "Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"	She knew what she had to do but did not have the ability to complete the task without further guidance and assistance. She did not appear to be advancing compared to the two other pupils and required guidance and further explanation to complete the calculations. Her work was not assessed during the lesson due to class size.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>"Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?"</i> "What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"	Continue to provide opportunities for the pupils to work in mixed ability groups as appropriate. Continue to provide interesting and colourful workbooks.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions <i>"Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?"</i> <i>"Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?"</i> "What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?" "What could be done next?"	Introduce additional learning resources, IT and role play. Provide additional teaching support/scaffolding. Peer to peer support and like ability group activities. Assess progress during and after the lesson.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

Appendix D

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 25 September 2019
Lesson details: The classroom consisted of 24 pupils aged 6-7. The theme of the lesson was 'The Great fire of London.' Pupils were split into groups to complete individual tasks. One task I observed involved the pupils: • cutting up pictures, • gluing them onto work book pages, • writing an interesting fact next to each picture, and • putting them in chronological order. The task was based on the knowledge they had gained from a previous lesson. Materials were ready and provided (paper with images to be cut up, glue, scissors, pencils). Four pupils took part in the task which I observed. A teaching assistant was present in the classroom.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Pupils appeared happy, interested and comfortable with each other. The majority of the pupils appeared focused, motivated and were enjoying the tasks at first. Pupils appeared to be of similar ability and did not display any behavioural issues.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) Learning objective was given. The purpose of the lesson was to improve their knowledge of the 'Great fire of London'.

The teacher explained clearly the purpose of the task.

The teacher checked for understanding and the pupils confirmed that they had understood.

The activity promoted the purpose of the lesson.

Direction

(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

Learning objective was given at the start of the task.

The teacher checked for understanding before they commenced the task and the pupils confirmed that they had understood.

Access and challenge

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

Pupils A, B and C worked independently. Pupil D appeared to be struggling with placing the pictures in chronological order. Pupil D received assistance by way of explanation and assistance in putting the pictures in chronological order.

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

Teacher explained the challenge task and the pupils understood.

Teacher checked progress during the task period.

Pupils' understanding was assessed during the task by use of the teacher/TA's questions and feedback from the pupils.

A few mistakes were identified by one pupil having difficulty in placing the pictures in chronological order.

Regular praise and encouragement were given.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

I noticed that Pupil D required additional guidance and assistance compared to his peers. He appeared to have difficulty placing the pictures in chronological order.

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*

Dyddiad/Date: 25 September 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings <i>Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?</i> <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	I noticed that Pupil D required additional guidance and assistance compared to his peers. He appeared to have difficulty placing the pictures in chronological order and relied on support and assistance to complete the task. I felt that he was struggling and could not work independently. I was concerned that he would become disinterested and that he may not develop to his full potential.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>"Allwch chi restru elfennau'r achos yng nghyd-destun y dysgu?"</i> <i>"Can you list the aspects of the incident in the context of learning?"</i>	He displayed difficulty in understanding the task which had been set for him. He was only able to complete the task with guidance and assistance.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>"Beth y gellid ei gadw yr un fath i sicrhau addysgu a dysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?"</i> <i>"What could be kept the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i>	Continue to provide guidance and support when required. Continue to have mixed attainment groups. Continue to have small groups.
Casgliadau a champau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions <i>"Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r mater a nodwyd?"</i> <i>"Beth y gellid ei wneud nesaf?"</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the issue identified?"</i> <i>"What could be done next?"</i>	The teacher and teaching assistant could continue to provide temporary support until the pupil reaches his goal without assistance. Ask the child to tell a partner what they have to do to check if they have really understood the task set. Work with the child to carry out the sorting activity and discuss each step before shuffling the pictures and asking him to do it again with less support so developing his independence.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	