

ECEY4009 – The professional practitioner

For this assignment I have submitted the following

Component 1 – Personal development plan

Component 2 – Models of reflection

Component 3 – Essay

Component 1 - Word count 587

Reflective Personal development plan				
Objective /	Actions (How will I achieve this objective/ what needs to be done?)	Resources (What support and resources are needed to achieve this objective?)	Target Date for achieving objective	Success criteria (How will I know I have achieved this goal; how will I review this?)
<i>Welsh Training</i>	Attending Welsh course Use simple Welsh phrases daily Use Welsh greetings daily Seek feedback from Welsh Leaders	Liaise with Welsh lead Practice daily Welsh with children e.g. 'Sut wyt ti'n' Use class resources	October 2025	I will feel more confident to use incidental Welsh around the school Pupils will respond and use more Welsh themselves
<i>Improve provision knowledge</i>	Visit settings Training Observations of experienced peers Research curriculum documents	Liaise with team to share their knowledge Money to invest in provision	October 2025	To feel more confident to share knowledge with my team Understanding children have engaging provision activities
<i>Develop time management skills</i>	Use a physically diary to stay organised and on top of deadlines	A diary Support from family, friends and colleagues Reflection time – see what	October 2005	Workload to feel balanced Consistently able to meet deadlines

	Review and reflect to see if I have managed my time effectively Seek feedback from line manager	worked and what could be improved on		Feel more organised and on top of workload Tasks are completed to a high standard
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Reflection

Over the past term I have been focused on three areas of development – developing my Welsh language skills, improving my knowledge of effective provision and building up my time management.

Since completing Welsh training, I have found that my confidence to use the Welsh language has improved. At first, I felt nervous to use Welsh as I know I lacked confidence in the pronunciation and remembering key phrases however I have found that practicing regularly and with the encouragement from Welsh- speaking colleges it has made notables difference. I feel confident to use Welsh greeting and simple instructions with pupils daily. Going forward I plan to build my Welsh vocabulary and build my confidence by using more incidental Welsh through the day.

Improving my provision knowledge had also had a strong and positive impact on my practice. As I have recently returned to the foundation phase in the first time in 11 years I did struggle with provision. I have gained a lot of knowledge observing experienced colleagues and attending training sessions at other settings this has helped me to understand how well planned provision supports children's development and independence. Through the observations and conducting my own research I now feel more confident in my understanding of how the environment and resources promote the four core purposes of the curriculum for Wales.

Finally, developing my time management skills has helped me stay more organised and focused both in work and in my studies. Using a physical diary and setting clear goals over the week has reduces stress and allowed me to meet deadline without feeling overwhelmed. I have also developed the skill in which I will breakdown larger tasks into smaller chunks and reflect weekly on what worked well and what I could improve on to ensure deadlines are met. I feel that all my targets have helped me to

become more confident, organised and further my professional understanding. Each goal has had a big impact on my professional practice. I will continue to develop these goals over the course of my career.

Component 2 – Word Count 1000

What is reflective practice?

Reflective practice is the skill of looking back to move forward to learn. Reflective practice is the process of thinking about a situation and analysing the pros and cons of the whole process and then what could be done differently next time. An example of this is when I have run intervention groups when the session has finished, I sit and reflect on how it went I think about the children I have worked with and if they were able to access the activity i think about the level of engagement from every child and if there were some children that struggled with an aspect of the session I sit and adapt the planning for the next session to insure they are able to access it and they feel valued and are able to achieve the task at their level of development. By reflecting on the session, I can ensure that all the child in the intervention group are able to feel empowered in there learning and achieve the goal of the session. Reflective practice helps us as professionals to develop the skill of self-awareness by identifying strengths, weaknesses that helps us to improve our everyday practice. Reflective practice ensures a high quality of professional standards that helps practitioners to provide a strong consistent team approach ensuring all children's educational and wellbeing needs are recognised and met. Reflective practice helps professionals to not only reflect on their teaching practice but to also reflect on their interactions with children, young people, other professionals, parents and carers as professionals need to be approachable and are ensuring that they are consistently upholding the settings professional conduct policy. By reflecting on your interactions, you can build positive relationships throughout your career.

Why is reflective practice important for the Early year's practitioner?

Reflective practice is important for the Early years practitioner as it gives them the opportunity to improve their practice by identifying their skills and limitations not only individually but as a team. Through reflective practice practitioners can highlight areas of improvement that can benefit the quality of their everyday practice and the quality of care and education that they provide for children in their setting. Reflective practice supports the child's holistic development by ensuring practitioners can identify what works well and what could be done differently to ensure that all children's individual needs are met. As the early years settings are constantly changing reflection can help support staff with teamwork, safeguarding and communication "The reflective process sees the professional constantly questioning what they see, hear and feel, sharing the insights this provides with their colleagues." (Gasper 2015, pg 6). Reflective practice can also identify any training that could support and improve their role for example safeguarding training ensuring all staff are aware of the safeguarding policies and procedures and are confident in duty to protect a child. Reflective practice could also identify that training could be needed to help the practitioner meet the needs of the child an example of this is if child were struggling with their speech, it would be beneficial for the practitioner to attend Speech and language training to support the child to communicate their needs. By ensuring that professionals are able to access professional development meetings within their setting it gives them the opportunity to highlight any training they feel could benefit their practice and support any children that they feel aren't having their needs met.

The Theory of reflective practice

There are many reflective theories to research that would benefit your role practitioner I have chosen to look at the 'Gibbs Reflection cycle' by Graham Gibbs, and 'Kolb's experiential learning' by David A. Kolb.

Gibbs reflective Theory cycle



Image available at [Gibbs' Reflective Cycle | Reflection Toolkit | Reflection Toolkit](#)

Kolb's Theory of reflection

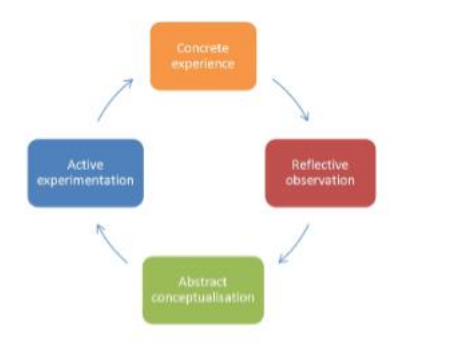


Image available at nicole-brown.co.uk/reflective-model-according-to-kolb/

Firstly, I will be looking at Gibbs reflection cycle and his six steps of reflection. Gibbs cycle starts with you looking at the description – what happened – you describe an outline of the situation. You then move on feelings – what you were feeling throughout the situation, you then move onto evaluate – looking at the positive and negatives points, you then move to Analysis – what did you think of the situation and then the conclusion – could you have done anything differently, and then lastly we move onto Action plan – what would you change in the future. Gibbs give us a detailed reflective process that we can self-evaluate our practice enabling us to focus on our feeling and emotions at different stages of the situation that we are reflecting on. Gibbs focuses on emotions enables us to reflect in a planned and ordered way rather than randomly.

While Kolb's reflective model consists of only 4 steps – concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and lastly Active experimentation. Kolb's looks at reflection as part of the learning journey and a skill needed throughout the learning process to meet children's needs, by encouraging constant professional development using a continuous cycle of doing, thinking, learning and trying again.

I feel there are many pros and cons to both these theorists while both teach good reflective practice and techniques to support you within your role, I have noticed that

both offer some similar reflective steps both are a reflective cycle encouraging continuous improvement. Both theorists look at what we can learn from the experience/ situation providing us with the opportunities to reflect on each step and giving us a deeper understanding of what went well and what didn't go so well ensuring we can improve if the situation arises in the future. Both Gibbs and Kolb's have had a massive impact on how professionals reflect on their practice not only during official observations but through every task and activity when working with children and young people they are constantly thinking of how they can improve their practice to ensure the children and young people's needs are met and they are able to thrive and feel empowered throughout their education.

Component 3 - Word count - 1592

What is a professional

A professional is a person who is trained or has an expertise in a specific profession. A professional is someone who acts with integrity and display's strong passion of commitment to their job and a wanting to constantly improve their practice with continuous development with training. "All professions have unique skills, knowledge, and ethical standards that guide them in what knowledge and responsibilities are required and how to execute what has been learned." Preze (2015)

What is professional practice?

Professional practice is how we conduct ourselves within our profession ensuring we are correctly qualified for the role in which we work. We also need to be able to follow the rules of the organisation and conduct ourselves with integrity ensuring we are responsible trustworthy professionals. Professional practice ensures you can provide a safe and professional environment for the children and adults you work with.

What values are important for a professional practitioner and why are values important to professional practice?

Perez stated in 2015 that "values are critical to the ethical identity of the professional" Perez (2015) meaning that values are the foundation any

professional's practice. I feel that as a professional practitioner you should be compassionate and empathetic enabling practitioners to care and meet children's needs. I also feel it is important for professional practitioners to be respectful and ensuring that everyone is valued and treated fairly, A professional practitioner should also have integrity assuring you are trustworthy and honest especially when handling confidential information shared by children, families and colleagues. By ensuring values are upheld it ensures legislation and policy are followed. Values are the aspects that underpin our professionalism in our practice and everyone within the organisation feels valued and respected. Professional values are essential for a positive working environment, when all the practitioners have same values, it creates effective, open, clear and consistent communication within the team and with children, parents and carers.

Why is communication and relationships important for professional practice and meeting the needs of the children?

When working with children you will have to work with a wide range of professionals to ensure every child's needs are met. Communication between professionals needs to be open, honest and respectful this creates an environment where people feel they can approach other professionals and raise any concerns confidently. (Dunhill 2009) said 'Good communication is central to working with children, young people their families and carers' Dunhill highlights that good communication is key and that all adults involved in a child or young person's life should engage in positive and effective communication to ensure they are given the best possible opportunities for development and well-being. This includes communication between professionals and between professionals, parent and carers ensuring that all language is clear respectful and appropriate to each audience. The professional practitioner should also be aware of not only their verbal communication but also their non-verbal communication looking at their body language ensuring they are aware of how their body language can affect their communication for example crossed arms, lack of eye contact and turning your body away can all create barriers in effective communication as it was lead people to feel that their views are not valued, it can also leave the professional looking unapproachable and can reduce the trust between the adults and with the children. Poor non-verbal communication can also

affect the communication between the professional and the child, as the child could see the professional as unapproachable and could discourage the child from expressing themselves and sharing important information.

Communication and relationships are vitally important as when, these two skills aren't met it results in a breakdown of communication and confidence between the professionals, children, parents and carers.

Why is having an in-depth knowledge and understanding important to professional practice, including aspects of safeguarding?

Having an in-depth knowledge and understanding of professional practice is essential for providing high quality care and education to children and young people. It helps professionals to understand and ensure a child's needs are met. Professional practice also ensures that legislation and policies are followed creating a safe environment for staff, children and young people.

Professional practitioners have a duty of care to ensure that any safeguarding concerns are reported through the right channels. Training is offered yearly for staff to make certain that they are confident in the legislation and policies in place surrounding safeguarding, the training offered explains types of abuse that a child or young person could be exposed to and how they as professionals are able to look out for signs and offer support to that child or young person. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility to protect young people and children "Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play" (Working together to safeguard children pg 6). The Children's Act 1989 was written to promote the child welfare and to protect them from harm and the Children's Act 2004 is in place to strengthen the 1989 Act but to also ensure that all agency's involved with a child or young person work together and communicate creating a system where multi-agency's work effectively together.

Why are partnership and multi-agency working important to professional practice?

Partnerships and multi-agency working is important to professional practice as it ensures that children and young people can access the support they need to thrive throughout their educational journey. As the professional practitioner you will liaise

with lots of professionals and multi-agencies to guarantee that you can support a child's need, this means that you will need communicate effectively "agencies have become essential to identifying the needs and planning the support for each child or young person" (Ally Dunhill 2010) When there is a breakdown in the communication between agency's can result in a child or young person involved falling through the cracks and being failed by those who should be there to ensure they are met with all their basic rights.

How does the observation and planning cycle inform professional practice and ensure practitioners are meeting the needs of children?

Observations play a key role in everyday practice of any professional working with children. Observations help us as practitioners see where a child's or young person's learning, development and wellbeing are at, they also allow us to plan effectively making sure we meet each child's learning needs. Observations can highlight if a child is unable to access a certain activity this then gives the professional the opportunity to tailor planning to support children to access the curriculum. Observations help and can help reflect a child's individual level of development and ability. When practitioners plan from their observations, it ensures that children are challenged by achievable goals. Observations can also highlight any emotional or social changing helping staff to identify any safeguarding concerns.

How do the principles of the UNCRC inform professional practice and why is it important?

The United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a document stating the rights of every child "this declaration states that mankind owes the child the best that it has to give" (Cohen CP. United Nations: Convention on the Rights of the Child) this shows that no matter the child's circumstances or background every child is able to be treated equally and fairly. The UNCRC gives professionals core principles to follow in their practice to ensure a holistic child centred approach guaranteeing equality and inclusion for every child. The UNCRC has helped shape the curriculum for Wales by ensured that children's rights are at the centre of our curriculum. This is reflected in the Four Core Purposes where we as a country believe it is important that every child can be Ambitious capable learners,

Enterprising, creative contributors, Ethical informed citizens and healthy confident individuals. Both the UNCRC and Curriculum for Wales empower children to thrive in their learning and then become active members of society both now and in the future.

Conclusion – Summary of points

In conclusion I have feel that as a professional practitioner should be approachable with professionals, children and their families and communicate positivity to ensure the children and your people they support are able to access learning opportunities at their own age and stage of development. I feel that observations are a part of professional reflection and when done correctly they can ensure that all needs of the child are met in a challenging yet achievable way. Observations can also reflect how you can improve your practice so that you are constantly learning and adapting how you teach. I also feel it is essential that all professionals communicate and are proactive in promoting children's rights and protecting them from harm by ensuring that both the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 are implemented in their everyday practice

I feel that the UNCRC have had a massive impact on children's rights ensuring that all children can achieve their full protentional no matter their background. I also feel that the UNCRC have has a huge impact on the Welsh curriculum ensuring that we have a child centred approach and all learning can thrive throughout their education journey. "Another of Welsh Government's jobs is to make children and young people aware of their rights under the UNCRC. That means we need to make you aware of the rights you are entitled to." ([Children's rights: Information for children | GOV.WALES](#)) This in imbedded in our everyday practice by ensuring that children are aware of their rights, well-being, and talents. I feel it vital that every child's holistic development is met to ensure they reach their full potential.

References

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