

# Louise Oliver ECEY4002 Reflective Practice Briefing Paper

## Introduction

This is a briefing paper explains the importance of reflective practice and how it will help the children and staff development in the early year's setting.

According to Donald Schon reflective practice is a broad term that comprises of a variety of different professionals that come together with their own knowledge, understanding, experiences, and skills, that are suitable to their role and duties within the working environment and to put them into practice to help, encourage and support the child and their families for their development but also for the professional's development.

## What is reflective practice?

Research by MacNaughton (2003) suggests that professional application is a vital part of expanding a practitioners understanding and knowledge. It is important that measures are put in place for the personal tasks which need to be applied daily and previous experiences for the professionals to think through in their mind and to learn how to deal with them and best to move forward.

According to Alice Paige-Smith, Reflective practice is a very important part of working with children in the early years setting. Staff that work in that environment have an obligation to have discussions about what is working and what is not and put in place to benefit the child.

All professionals must provide a high standard of effective services and opportunities for the children and their families and they should be committed to their own development and reflective practice in the environment. By reflecting it provides mutual goals for multiple agencies involved in the early years sector. It is very important that when groups of professionals work together to participate in professional development that they actively reflect as a group as part of good practice.

Working in the early years sector as a professional requires that individuals should have skills. Knowledge, understanding, a good viewpoint suitable to their role within the setting. In addition, it requires regular reflection upon practice and engagement in supported ongoing professional development'' that is according to (Sjolta,2006).

Every child is entitled to the best possible start in life and education, which allows them to achieve their best. Children develop at different stages, in the early years. and it is very important children have lots of different experiences between birth and the age of five as it can help their development and impact on their future.

According to the website what is professional learning? (12 October 2021) It is important that professionals provide the best opportunities they can for children their own professional development which will enhance their knowledge and understanding practice of their role which will be beneficial all round.

Reflection and critically reflective practice are important factors of providing a high standard of education and learning in your working environment. Reflective practice gives opportunities for early years practitioners to develop a n understanding of their own practice, and continuous professional development which will help them to gain skills, knowledge and best approaches to achieve the best outcomes for children. That is according to MacNaughton (2005).

There are many benefits of reflective practice which is a vital part of emotional intellect, and in developing understanding of others. There are many skills reflective practice can also help such as developing p creative thinking skills and encourages active engagement in work processes and that is according to the website skillsyouneed.com.

A researcher called David Kolb, who is an educational researcher has developed a four-stage model regarding reflective practice. He says the main reason for the model is to learn and gain new experiences and complete the 4 stages of the cycle which include TEACH, SELF ASSESS, CONSIDER and put into PRACTISE.

According to Graham Gibbs who is a sociologist and psychologist has created a study called 'learn by doing'. He has also designed a Reflective cycle model. Gibbs states by using reflective practice for learning you gain more experiences and it allows you to better your performance for the future. Reflection on your own learning is key and if it is not done then how will you know what needs to be improved for the next time. He Says it is important to take the time to reflect because by reflecting this is the only way to learn and progress.

Reflective Cycle' is a good way to reflect and from that you can take on board any important factors that you felt went well or not so well. So, this is why reflection is very important.

According to Skillsyouneed.com, children deserve the best possible start in life which will allow them to achieve their goals and reach their full potential. Children's development starts from birth and some develop more quickly than others in the early years and a child's experiences and it can have an impact on their future. If possible, all children should have safe and happy childhood. Good parenting and a high standard of education is also a factor to help provide good foundations for the children to grow and develop. There are standards set out for early years practitioners. They should meet the children's needs and to use their knowledge and skills for them to progress through school life According to the website statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (7 October 2021) there are requirements set s for the learning and development for safeguarding children and promoting their wellbeing. The the areas of learning development which must give the child lots of opportunities, activities and experiences in the early year's settings. The early learning providers must help children work towards knowledge, skills, and understanding by the time they turn five and assessment for measuring progress and targets for the parents and carers to see what level the child is at or working towards.

## Who should reflect?

According to Alice Paige-Smith, sharing information is a very important part to enable intervention as is to help those who need any additional support. Here are some examples of multi-agency professionals who maybe involved with the child and their family; Teachers, Teaching assistants, Speech and language therapist, Play therapists, family work educational psychologist and a community nurse. It is important to reflect because it is good practice and that is how you learn what is working and what is not working for each individual child and yourself as a practitioner. Every professional who is involved with the child's education and family should reflect. Professionals need to create adequate time for reflection and meet with mentors.

An effective partnership is based upon equality in working together neither partner has more power than any of other professionals involved. The quality of the relationship formed is a very important part of working together and by doing so it can establish respect and trust, so information can be shared more easily (drapper,2010). There is an opportunity to reflect upon partnership working using the 'partnership sandwich' framework for your reflection. Main key components working together as a partnership are: Asking, Relationships, Trust, Nurturing, Equality, Respect, Sharing, helping and information.

When professionals have their meetings, it is a time when they can work together, pass on information, and ask for information and advice. By working together as a team it means that through personal contact and professional understanding, good relationships are being established which have many benefits such as effective communication which is the main purpose for the meeting and to build on developing a professional facility and service around the children and families by working together and that is according to Elaine Hallet.

## How can it be useful?

According to Victorian Early Years and Development Framework, (October 2021) reflection ss a very important part of professional practice and allows early years professionals to develop a good understanding of their own practice and continually improve the certain skills, knowledge and the way achieve the best outcomes for children. Reflection is useful because learning from day to day situations and any issues or concerns that arise during our working day in the early years settings, helps us as practitioners and children to develop our knowledge and skills and that is according to PACEY(10 October2021).

Reflection is a good basis for professional and personal development; It means learning and having lots of different experiences and awareness of their surroundings. Plans that have been set out help with development and growth. and it is a way of recognizing and articulating what we are learning there and then basis. That is according to the website education.vic.gov (October 2021).

According to Alice Paige-Smith reflective practice is very useful in the early years for social and emotional development amongst other things such as: understanding how to behave in different situations, having the ability and learning how to behave in different situations, to empathize with others, to be self-disciplined and develop positive dispositions as part of the child's learning .Young children's emotional and social development includes developing positive relationships with others, interpersonal ,intra-personal understanding, helping them to grow in self-confidence and self-esteem. A child's social and emotional development is a very important part their learning and helps them grow and they have a sense of their personal identity

By the Children having a wide range of opportunities and experiences it helps all aspects of their development. A child's early years experiences with others, helps to set them in good stead for future and their social emotional development. It can also help for the child's well-being and resilience. Children's life experiences also play a vital part in how they relate to other people and how other people their peers relate to them. Their parents also set expectations about the child's behavior and if it is typical and acceptable.

## How can reflection be used?

According to the website aussiechildcarenetwork.com reflective practice is used on a daily basis in the early years, through learning from everyday situations. issues and concerns that arise which form a part of our working routine. Here are some personal examples of how it can be used in my working environment; encourage staff to reflect on their day by having group discussions, have regular meetings and promote some activities through workshops.

This what I would do; Discuss with my class teacher about setting targets, share my experiences and knowledge about what the child has been doing and carry on reflecting on a daily basis.

## Summary

I will now summarize my briefing paper on reflective practice in the early years. I have learnt that in the education setting, reflection is an effective way to asses children's development and what level they are at academically, so the professional knows what level of work to set for child's ability. This is a continuous process that involves professionals identifying what makes the child learn best. It is a very important that the child is given the correct level of work because it could have an impact on the in certain aspects of their development, such as social, emotional and cognitive. It is also important to have child lead activities for example; child-initiated play because it supports and encourages children's creative and imaginative learning and this is how they develop their skills. By having child lead activities, it encourages them to have hands on experiences allowing them to use their initiative and with the new curriculum coming into force in Wales a lot of the children's learning is going to be through play. I have also learnt the importance of building good a good rapport between the children and parents and other professionals and to meet on a regular basis for feedback and information sharing for everyone's best interests but mainly the child as they are the main priority for them to have an enjoyable and happy education.

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