

**Supporting pupil progress: a detailed analysis of one child's holistic development, with
justification for the next steps in learning**

The school in which the learner being observed attends is within the City and County of Swansea, there are approximately 481 pupils on role ageing from three to eleven, including seventy-five part time pupils in the nursery. There are 16 single year classes, this includes the nursery. The free school meals percentage is slightly higher than the national of 19%, it is around 21% and the school itself identifies around 35% of its learners are additional learning needs, this is also above the National average of 21% (Estyn, 2016). The school is currently a pioneer school and is working with the Welsh Government and other schools in the area to develop its professional learning community. Very few children within the school have a statement, are in care or are English as an additional language. Most of the pupils are of British ethnicity and very few speak Welsh at home. The learner who is under focus for this assignment is in the Reception class and is considered one of the higher achievers in the class expected to reach outcome 5 at the end of Foundation Phase. Their reading and written work is of a high standard, but they can also rush to get tasks done, meaning they are not maximising their full potential. The learner participates in all classroom tasks and is often asked to carry out jobs and messages for other members of staff as they are considered a very competent individual. However, socially this child is not as developed as their peers and sometimes can display very emotional traits as well as some anxious behaviour.

In order to gather information and collect data for this observation the method I will be using will be the Mosaic approach (Clark & Moss, 2001). This approach is a combination of the typical adult-led research techniques of observation and interviews but also includes tools that make children participants using photographs, mark making and interviews with teacher, which makes its data qualitative. As its name suggests there are many different stages to the approach, which then all

come together in the conclusion of the data, much like a Mosaic. It allows the children to not only use a variety of tools to research and show understanding of their learning but also encourages them to use different “intelligences” (Gardner, 1983). Through map making and tours of their chosen areas of learning it enables them to use their visual, spatial and linguistic skills as well as a variety of others during the process. The approach itself is split into three different stages, the first being gathering information whereas the researcher I spoke to the class teacher, and then looked at the child’s work for more of an overview of their learning. This is also where the child was given an iPad to take pictures of where they enjoyed learning, which moves us on to the second stage of interpreting and discussing the information we gathered. I, the child and the teacher would all look at the information gathered and discuss certain aspects of their learning. Thus leading us on to the final stage of the approach and that is the data analysis which allows myself as a teacher to take on board the opinions of the child as to where they think their learning will lead them, or where they would like it to go and also gain the expertise of the teacher and discuss with them which steps they would take in order to progress this child further.

Before taking part in any research, all participants must give consent, and this is no different with children. In order to gain consent, one must be very careful and take into consideration all the ethical impositions involved, especially if a child has limited verbal and literacy skills. As the children in this observation were under the age of consent, we had to gain parental and teacher consent. A letter was sent home to the child’s parents which was signed and returned, and a copy is shown in the appendix of this assignment (Appendix 1). The child was also reminded at every opportunity that their participation could be withdrawn at any time and that this would not affect any relationship they had with their class teacher or with myself. During the observation I decided to informally interview the child, but with their peers and within his normal ability group, this meant they were more comfortable answering questions, this could then give me a clearer understanding of his learning. Studies show that interviewing children in their peer groups meant it would “counter unequal power relations between adult and child participant”, which meant the child would feel less

intimidated and therefore provide the researcher with better answers for my data collection. It is also far more natural, and they feel more confident sharing information when they are in their peer groups (Corsaro, 1997). Brooker (2007) believed that for children to become “conscious participants” they had to use child friendly methods of collecting data, and this is where the use of photographs and mark making were essential in understanding this child’s attitude to learning.

Taking and sharing photos are fun for children and something they are very familiar with. For those who are unable to communicate as well as others, photographs are a powerful new language for them and enables them to share their learning in ways words cannot (Clark & Moss, 2001, p.24).

One strength of this approach is that there are always tools available for children to use, most schools now have iPad or cameras to use for photographs, and if not, they can use mark makings or drawings to express themselves. The piecing together of all this information and using such a diverse range of data collection tools, rather than interviews or questionnaires, increases the quality of the data.

As mentioned previously, the child being observed is considered one of the higher ability children within the class over all areas of learning. He is considered a multi skilled child with good reading ability and excellent gross motor skills and has continued to develop these throughout his time in Nursery and now Reception within the school. In order to have a clear view of what he is capable of as a learner and for myself as a teacher to identify the next steps needed to move him further in his learning, I would need to look at his learning from a holistic point of view. The “holistic” approach is considering the learner in their entirety and realising that children develop at different stages in life. Just because they are the same age does not mean that they will develop at the same rate. The fact remains that the skills a child develops and how well they continue to develop greatly depends on how we as teachers encourage them to explore these new skills and identify and enhance the surroundings they are in every day (Damovska et al, 2009). James Nottingham developed a model that would enable us to view the child holistically and to help us as teachers to plan our next steps

forward for the learners. This was called the ASK model (2013) and helps us acknowledge the attitude, skills and knowledge in learning.

Attitudes

In general, this pupils' attitude towards learning is considered good. He is always actively listening and participating in group and class discussions, even though sometimes as he knows the answer to most questions asked, he is known to shout out, and take over even when it is not his turn. As coined by Lev Vygotsky children often pick up habits and attitudes to learning from those around them, if they have no positive influence or role model to learn from then their attitudes and habits around learning will be the same as those around them. Learning can be inhibited if attitudes towards learning are not paramount, likewise this can be a problem if the student does not feel accepted by the teacher or their peers. This was made evident to me one day whilst conducting a lesson with the rectangle group, which the observed child is a member of. He had previously had a disagreement with one of his peers, which had upset him and therefore when asked questions throughout the task he was very distracted and emotional. He could not learn at his optimum level as something had stopped him from doing so. Arthur Combs (1982) championed the importance of students' acceptance by their teacher and their peers, which in turn distracted him from his learning. Nottingham believed that in order to become an outstanding learner one had to display certain characteristics some of which are curiosity, resilience and persistence, some of which this child displays in abundance, others however he struggles with. Being one of the higher achievers within the classroom he is often right with his answers, however, he does not often stretch his ability and answers and often does the bare minimum. Nottingham also emphasises the way in which we are too quick to jump in and give children the answer to questions, this child often jumps in with answers which are often correct, however in some cases where he is not, he often looks to the teacher or his peers for help with the answers. Nottingham (2013) writes that it is in our times of

struggle we learn to be resilient and this is one skill this child needs to develop within his learning. Whilst doing our fact file on the moon, this child had asked me “Miss what’s the point in this we’re never going to actually get to go to the moon are we?”. It was after that comment that his attention was elsewhere and his attitude towards the task was non-existent. Current research from Zimmerman and Schunk (2012) shows that how a learner perceives a task is one of the most important elements of a learner’s success, much like the views of John Hattie where he believes that children should be involved in their own learning and be able to actively participate in this through task’s they believe are relevant to their own personal goals. If he was more actively involved with the task beforehand would he have been more engaged throughout?

Skills

Through using the Mosaic approach to gather data it enabled the child to show me as the teacher where they enjoyed learning, and where they felt their skills lied within the classroom. Even though this child has the verbal skill to express where and how they liked to learn the use of modern technology made the experience more engaging for him and enabled him to creatively express where he enjoyed learning and to also enhance his IT skills by doing so (Edwards et al 1998). Nottingham recommended that as well as developing children’s attitudes to learning that we also try and develop their skills that they need for learning. These skills tend to fall into different categories such as social, physical and communication. The skills this child possesses are of a high standard, his writing and his enjoyment for reading shows in his work (appendix 2). He also displays very high fine motor skills, he enjoys playing with the Lego, but he is also able to tie his laces and help others in the class to do so. This child’s enjoyment through Lego is an essential part of his problem-solving skills shown in his numeracy work (appendix 3) and his creative building skills shown in his IT work, as well as his fine motor skill development. Through playing and exploring in the outdoor area (appendix 4) he is developing a wide range of skills including developing initiative, how to use simple tools such as

gardening or building tools and allows him to develop sensory skills such as the use of the water tank, the sand pit and mud kitchen (Kosanke & Warner, 1990). Research has also shown that outdoor play also increases the activity within the brain and nervous system and clears the thought process for better learning (Hannaford, 1995). This is an essential skill and demonstrated within the work he completes daily, after play and lunch is usually when he is at his optimum learning levels, in the morning he can often be quite sluggish and unenthusiastic with his learning, unlike other children who are better in the morning as they have more energy. (Appendix 5 shows the conversation the child and I had regarding the photos he had taken)

Knowledge.

The child being observed has a good range of knowledge for a child of Reception age, he is often giving examples in class and as seen in his work on the planets (shown in appendix 6) he was able to label the planets and colour them correctly from the song we had been learning in class. During phonics sessions we are currently looking at the digraph “sh” and not only was he able to participate within the class activity with words we had chosen as a class, but he also brought his own words with “sh” in them and corrected a child in class when they assumed sugar began with a “sh”. Before each new topic as a school there is always a RAP session, where the children can choose what things they wish to learn about associated with a new topic. This is vital for the learning of the children and how well they engage with the task. This learner wanted to find out facts about the moon, and why some planets are warm, and some are cold. As reception children they enjoyed the songs about the planets, and this child could name and provide facts for the moon and planets though this song.

Purves (1993) felt that for learning and knowledge to be successful we as teachers needed to share and actively involve children in the success criteria of a task. It is of no use to them to be told what to do if they are not actively involved in their learning. John Hattie believed this to be true also, he felt that children, especially those in Foundation Phase would not engage in learning if they did not feel they had an important role within a lesson or a big decision about the lesson. By conducting

these RAP sessions at the beginning of each topic the children were involved from the first lesson. I could then plan accordingly and use their suggestions and ideas to create fun and intriguing lessons. As seen (appendix 7) the work produced by this child on their moon fact file was of a high standard, and they did so independently. By introducing the task to them as a favour from astronaut Tim Peake, he also went home and researched him and came into school with a fact file on the astronaut. Through capturing their attention straight away their interest is sparked and the work they produce as a result of this will be of a better standard. His knowledge and understanding throughout different areas of the curriculum are of a good standard and there are no doubts he will make his Foundation Phase indicator and is on track to becoming a MAT pupil. However, the knowledge this child displays takes us back to his attitude to learning, when he wants to learn and puts the effort into a task it shows, when he is otherwise distracted, be it emotionally or by a new toy in the classroom that also shows, therefore it is my job as the teacher to find a way to engage him and keep him engaged throughout the task in order for him to reach his full potential. He is on a clear outcome three when it comes to Literacy, which is seen in the Foundation Phase Framework as he can perform and remember songs as well as recognise alliteration and rhyme. He can blend and build cvc words independently and always responds appropriately to tasks and other stimuli.

Often as teachers we are looking to improve the lower ability children or stretch the middle children and these few who are considered MAT (more able and talented) are almost left to their own devices as we assume, they already know what the other do not. As this child is heading down the path of becoming a MAT pupil for him to continue developing at the rate, he is currently I need to look at strategies to stretch his learning further and to challenge him in all areas of the curriculum. Estyn reported in 2011 that there were very few interventions taking place in Primary and Secondary school for these pupils. However, after observing this child and his behaviour I have looked at some

interventions and strategies to incorporate his ability with his interest in different areas within the classroom.

Numeracy Development.

As mentioned previously his numeracy skills are developing and he can already count twenty objects reliably, pay and count using a variety of coins and as seen in the appendix he can sort and classify objects using a variety of criterion, which means he is a clear outcome three on the Foundation Phase Framework. In the appendix (appendix 8) when asked to take pictures of areas he liked to learn, he took a picture of the desk that is considered the area where the teacher works. When asked why, his response was that he enjoyed working with the teacher and hoped himself to be a teacher one day. From this I have decided that one of the ways to develop and solidify his learning in numeracy is to introduce peer tutoring. "The more capable students help less capable students to learn through cooperative work in pairs or small groups" (Topping, 1996). This would mean that I as the teacher would give the higher ability students the tools, they would need to help the lower ability students to not only offer them support but to also solidify their own learning. Topping also believed that students who helped others to learn also learn themselves by teaching, they are learning the information twice. They must be confident in delivering the information which means they need to know the skill well themselves. Duran et al (2003) see peer tutoring as a positive pedagogical approach, through creating the pairs or groups of children, those who are being taught have a common shared objective with those who are teaching and that is to improve their knowledge and capability of acquiring a certain skill. As mentioned previously when this child does not know an answer to a question he often turns to a teacher or another pupil for support, with him as the teacher it is giving him the independence to learn and to learn by expressing his ideas and the way he would work out a specific numeracy problem. "Mutual learning is the road to superseding independence (Boud, 1998), the emphasis is not put on the actual task but more the teaching and

the delivery of the skill. John Hattie (2012) also believes that children should be actively involved in their own learning, through developing the skill of reflection. For this child to be able to deliver problem solving answers for the lower ability children he will first need to reflect on his own learning, develop the areas he feels are lacking. As shown in the appendix (appendix 9) we had an informal conversation about this where he told me he felt he needed to improve on his times tables. He believed that this would benefit him in the long run as he would not then need to use his fingers to count. This is an essential skill he has displayed whilst having an informal chat with myself and has already identified the areas of learning he feels are his weaker points. The Sutton Toolkit promotes peer tutoring and after extensive research has gathered that it has a positive impact on learning with an additional five months progress and though all pupils seem to benefit from the effects of peer tutoring those of lower ability seem to make the biggest progress.

Literacy Development.

As seen in the appendix (appendix 10) this child is constantly achieving green ratings for his spelling and literacy work, his reading is of a high standard and he communicates well in class with adults. However, he is often more engaged with a numeracy task than he is with a literacy task. He is often questioning “can I go yet?” or “am I done now?” which obviously promotes a lack of interest. He relies heavily on his ability but does not often go the extra mile to do his very best like some of the others in the class. As mentioned previously one of the photographs he took when asked where he enjoyed learning was the outdoor area. I then decided to look at ways of developing literacy skills through outdoor play. This way his literacy would continue improving, but he would also be enjoying the tasks and skills I had set out for him. All children benefit from learning outdoors and being outdoors, but there is more to outdoor learning than sitting outside and writing a sentence or reading a book. The outdoors provides ample opportunity for children to develop their communication skills and there is also evidence to prove that some children learn better outside

than they do sat at a desk (Bilton, 2002). Even though this child seemed engaged with the numeracy element and enjoyed sitting at the “teachers’ desk” his literacy interest is not as high. There is also further evidence to show that boys seem to find interest in being outdoors where they can be more hands on and involved in different tasks, whilst listening to others and being able to project their voices across a space, which they would not be able to do in a classroom environment. Not only does being outdoors provide a fun learning experience but there are ample opportunities when the correct resources are available for mark making and sentence writing. Motivation is paramount at this age and unless the child is motivated and wanting to learn then the effort, they will put in will be minimal. By listening to this child and focusing on his enjoyment for the outdoors, hopefully in turn his literacy skills will develop across the board from writing to communication. If the provision is correct outside and I have put in place specific activities to enhance the children’s learning studies show that these, especially boys, who have the freedom to choose their activities develop a sense of self education (Walter & Marks, 1981) which instils a curiosity in them to learn. Bandura (1977) believed that this problem-solving way of learning promoted one’s ability to want to succeed and through listening to the children and giving them these problems to solve their development will only increase.

Personal Social Development.

One other interest this child shows is playing with the Lego and using the show me tell me table (appendix 11), where children display their work and can then answer questions about what they have made. However, when playing with the Lego, this child often forgets to share and is quick to remove any other items from the show me tell me table. Lego therapy was originally introduced for children with ASD, however, because of its success within special and mainstream schools they have started to introduce it to children who need to develop their personal and social skills. Through using the Lego, there are three different participants who must all take turns and not speak over each

other when one is completing their role, something again this child finds very difficult. In turn the intervention provides opportunities to develop turn taking skills, listening and communication skills. The therapy also develops resilience and is very much a child led intervention (Stanton-Chapman et al, 2012). Through promoting his natural love and curiosity whilst using Lego, but also developing these skills would enable him to increase his social interaction with his peers, whilst learning these vital skills that he seems to lack. It also begins to develop these problem-solving skills that will become paramount when he moves further into Key Stage 2, including dealing with conflict and dealing with his own emotions rather than promoting his own work he would begin to work collaboratively which are both considered key skills (Owens et al, 2008).

Welsh Language Development

With the impending new curriculum beginning in Wales, the development of the Welsh Language within English medium schools is becoming stronger than ever, and during my time observing in this class I could see a real flare for Welsh developing within this pupil. He enjoys the songs and rhymes for the order of the day the weather and the “helpwr heddiw” song, and he will often ask for the toilet in Welsh. Encouraging children to learn a different language is always beneficial and providing them with the tools they need to develop this language at an early age gives them a stronger appetite for learning as adults which only opens them to more opportunities within the field of work and further education. “Singing is a good way for children to practice the sounds and pronunciation of a new language” (Welsh Government, 2008). As this child enjoys the more creative side of learning a language, singing, rhyme and even dance could be incorporated into lessons to enhance his skill to bilingualism. Studies have shown that bilingual children develop better higher-order cognitive skills which in turn will develop their working memory and their ability to shift attention which has been associated with better academic outcomes. As mentioned above, this child does not engage with literacy as well as numeracy, by providing creative tasks and meaningful lessons

through Welsh it will engage him better and allow him to flourish in the language. As one of the children in the classroom lives on a farm, we looked at the different animals in Welsh which enabled him to put a real-life context to the task and encouraged discussion within the group. Using more creative forms of teaching the language and incorporating it into everyday activities within the classroom, and outside the development of another language will only increase his ability and knowledge of other subjects (appendix 12)

Throughout this observation I have used the Mosaic approach and the ASK model, both of which have enabled me to focus on an individual child's development within my classroom. Using the mosaic approach, I was able to see the way in which a child thinks and had the opportunity to see their learning from a different perspective. As mentioned by Rinaldi (2001) the approach of visible learning only seems to bridge the gap between teachers and pupils, who are sometimes out of touch with their views and their opinions on things. As a teacher going forward with my career, I would take time to listen to my pupils and acknowledge their learning individually and as mentioned in "the hundred ways of listening" (Edwards et al, 1998) listening to children is an essential part of educating them. If we do not understand how they learn then how can we teach them? The ASK model enabled me to see and break down how this child learns and how their attitudes can impact on their skills and their knowledge. A child can have all the knowledge they need, but if they have not got the attitude to learn or I as a teacher do not promote the right attitude for them to learn then they will not succeed in developing as they should.

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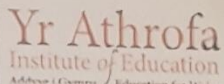
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Appendix 1 – The letter of permission given from the class teacher in order for me to carry out observations within her classroom.

 Prifysgol Cymru
Y Ddedod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

 Yr Athrofa
Institute of Education
Addysg I Gymru / Education for Wales

RE: Primary PGCE student assignment: permission and confirmation that work has been undertaken in school for assignment 'School Development and Pupil Progress', Summer 2019

Dear class/senior mentor,

For the university module named above, trainees are required to identify one learner within the class in which they are based and, over the course of the Professional Teaching Experience, explore their learning in detail. The evidence that they need to gather could include:

- observation;
- asking the learner to identify places/things that help him/her learning;
- discussing what helps the pupil learn and how they feel about learning with the pupil and/or teacher;
- collecting samples of work which might show something about the learner's progress and development.

They are asked to focus on knowledge, attitude and skills in language, mathematics, wellbeing and at least two other areas of the curriculum to gain an holistic picture of the child. They then suggest the next steps for the learner, and indicate how these will be achieved. Trainees are expected to undertake this work independently wherever possible, and have been given ethical guidelines to follow (although undertaking the work above would be in line with typical classroom practice). The trainees have been asked not to reveal the identity of the learner or the school within their assignment. Students have been asked to:

1. Seek permission for this work (by consulting with the class teacher and learner)
2. Provide verification that the work has taken place.

We would therefore be grateful if you could confirm that permission has been sought and that tasks have been undertaken by signing below:

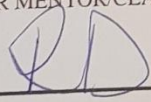
STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT): Kassandra Foden

SCHOOL NAME (PLEASE PRINT): [REDACTED]

SENIOR MENTOR/CLASS MENTOR NAME (PLEASE PRINT):

Rachel Dawson 

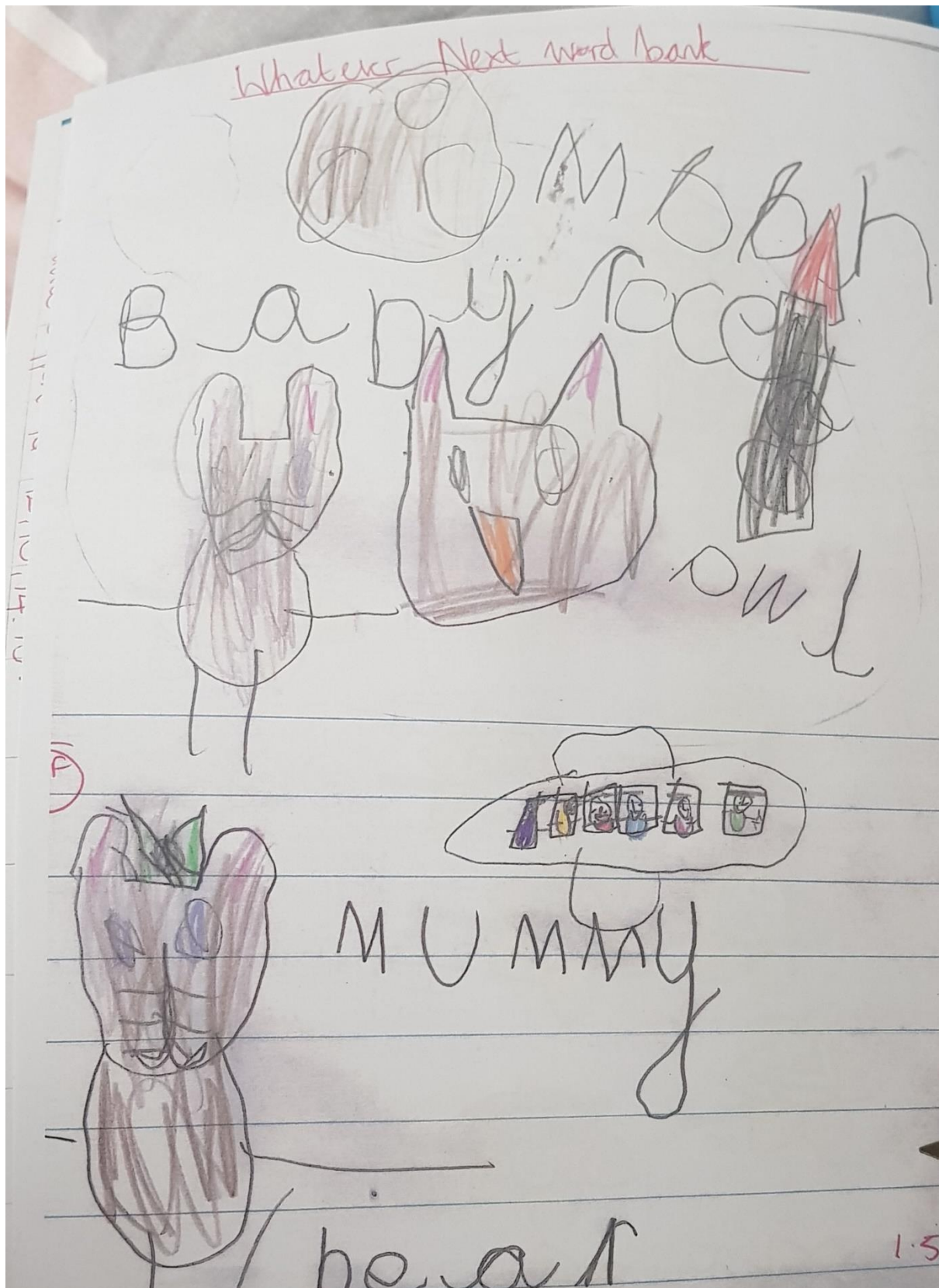
SENIOR MENTOR/CLASS MENTOR NAME (PLEASE SIGN):



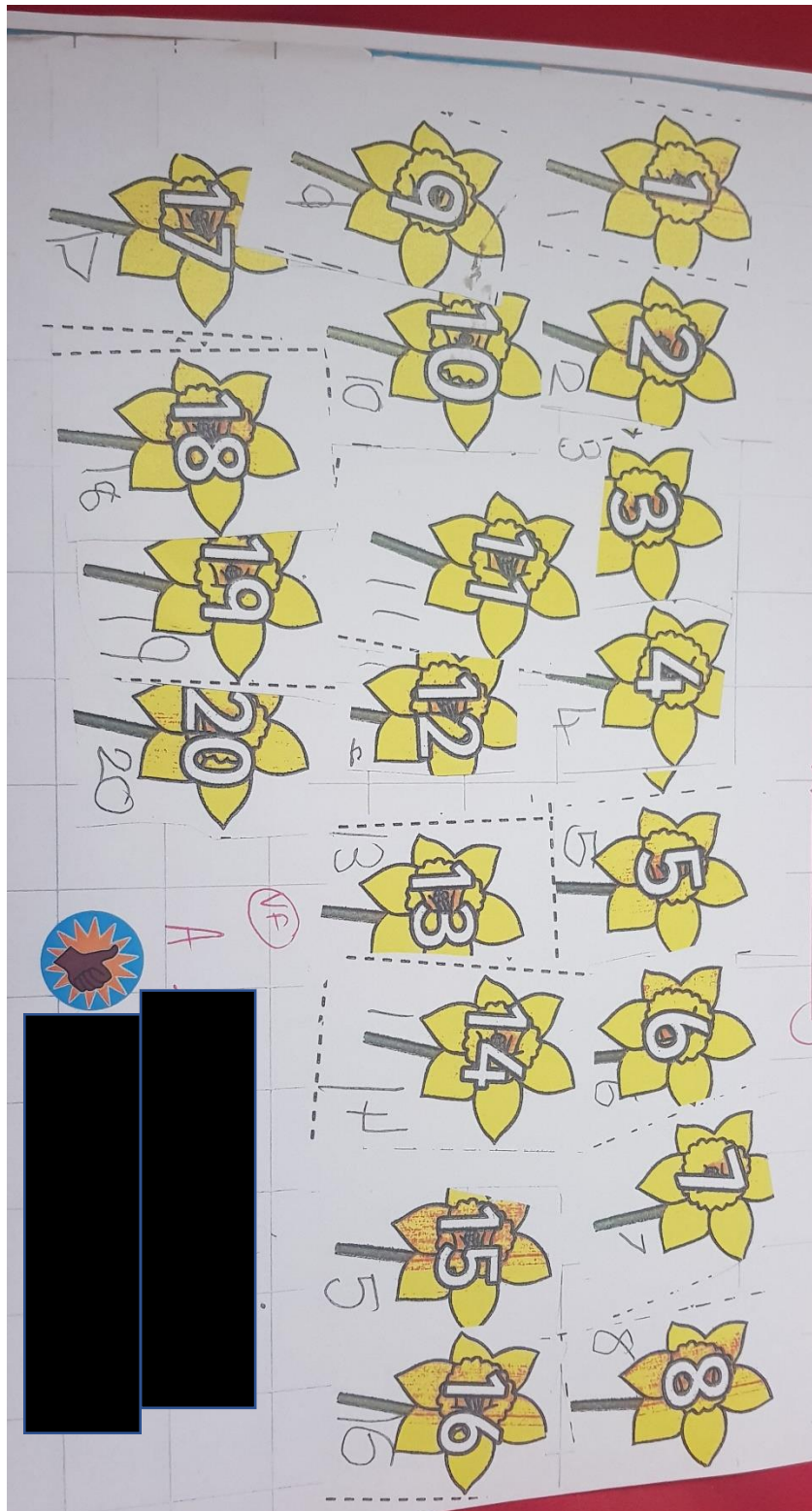
If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the module lead, Mr Mathew Jones.
M.Jones@uwtsd.ac.uk

Many thanks in advance
SIGNED COPY TO BE INCLUDED IN APPENDIX OF ASSIGNMENT

Appendix 2 – An example of one piece of Literacy work completed by the child under observation. As seen below he shows good examples of cursive writing and spelling was all independent work.



Appendix 3 – here is an example of the child’s numeracy work. As seen below he has the ability to count from 1-20 independently, recognising the numbers and also writing them appropriately.



Appendix 4 – photograph the child took of the outdoor area where he enjoys playing in the sand and finding the numbers on the fish.



Appendix 5 - Conversation between myself and the child about his areas of learning.

Teacher (1) – So (name) why have you chosen these places you like to work in in school can you tell me why you picked the Lego table?

Child (2) – I always like to play with the Lego and sometimes the boys play with me but sometimes I just play by myself but then I might be sad on my own.

1 – do you enjoy building things with the Lego? What sort of things do you like to build?

2- I like to build space rockets because I like astronauts and I like the planet song we sing.

1 – but you like building them with your friends not by yourself?

2 – yeah (name of child) is my friend but sometimes he wants to play with the other children and I don't want to sometimes.

1 – and why not?

2- because (name of child) is my best friend and he has to play with me sometimes.

1- But we do know we should share things and you could play with the other boys and girls in class?

2- I don't mind playing with other people sometimes, but then they mess up my rocket.

1 – why did you choose the table Miss works on as one of the places you like to learn>

2-because I like doing work with Miss it makes me have more brain Mammy said, and I like going there because sometimes she gives us stars if we do good work.

1-what about if you don't do good work what happens then?

2-well I always do good work so I always have stars I do. But she does sometimes shout at (name of child) if he doesn't behave when he is doing work.

1-do you think maybe you would like to help (name of child) when he is doing work? So you can show him then how you work things out?

2-yeah I would like to help him because I know what to do and sometimes he doesn't, I would want to be a teacher I think like you Miss.

1-what else did you take a picture of?

2-i took a picture outside because I love going outside and playing in the sand pit and the water where I can find the fish and the numbers.

1-do you like doing things like that outside or just playing with them?

2-well I am playing with them but I like doing number things because I like maths because it gets done quicker.

1- You took a picture of the creative area outside as well why did you choose there?

2- I like making things with glue and string and paint, but sometimes when I go out there people are too loud and then I come back inside and I play with the Lego then instead.

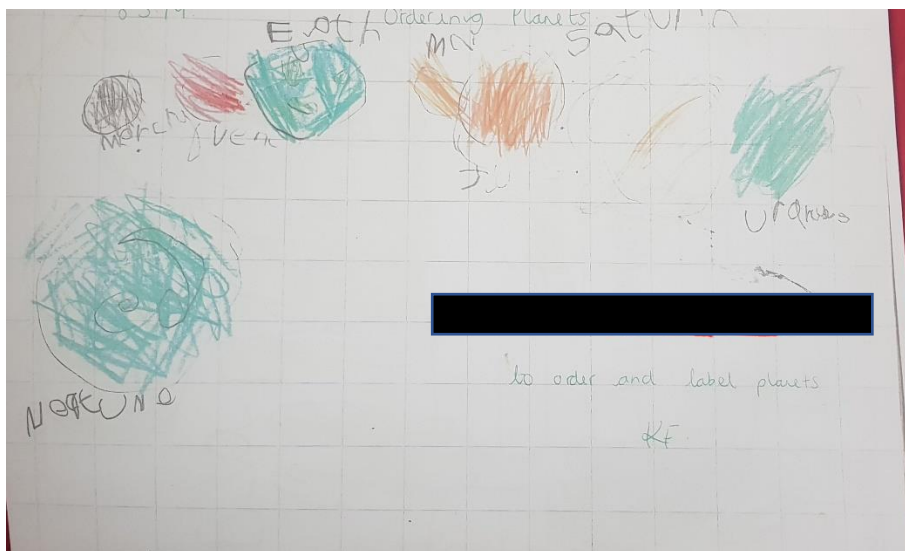
1-so you don't like the children being loud outside when you're painting?

2-no sometimes they are loud and then they don't share things with me like the paint or the glue and when I want a colour they won't give me it.

1- Well you know you have to wait your turn for things when everyone is using them?

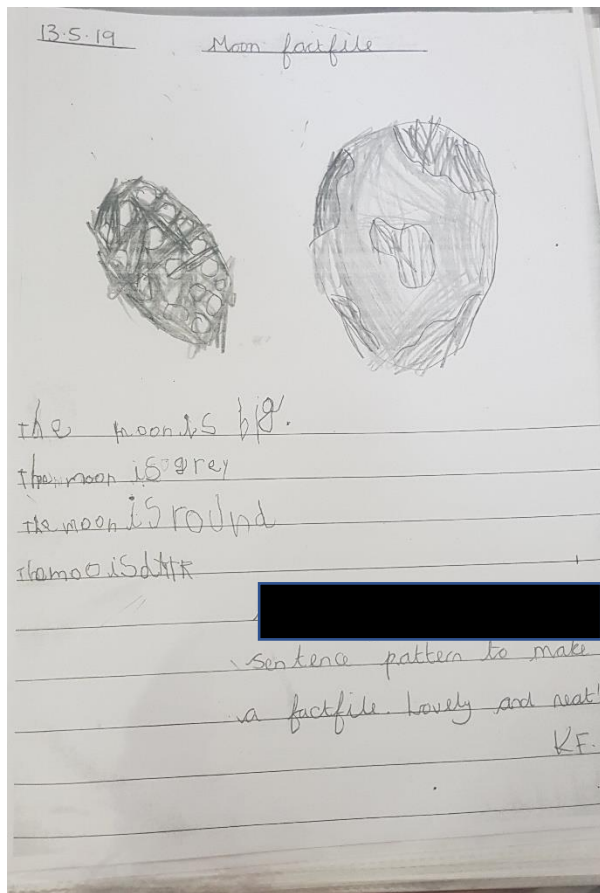
2- Sometimes I do, can I go now?

Appendix 6 – here is another example of the child's numeracy work where they had to sort planets from closest to the sun – it also shows his creative ability and his knowledge of the colour of the



planets

Appendix 7 – here is another example of their literacy work. Using facts about the moon previously learnt in class but also some facts he found himself after sparking an interest in Tim Peake.



Appendix 8 - Here is the “teacher desk” where the child said he enjoyed learning with the teacher.



Appendix 9 – when asked about his learning and what he wanted to improve this was the conversation we both had.

- 1- Right, (name of child) if you were me now and you were marking your work and you had to write something you needed to do better can you think of something you would write?
- 2- What about myself you mean? My work?
- 1- Yes about your work, what could you do better do you think?
- 2- I think my maths is good but I need to do my times tables, Mammy said to me that if I wanted to be good at maths then I have to know my times tables first because they help you with everything else.
- 1-what about your writing, your reading things like that then?
- 2-I'm good at reading I am Mammy reads with me all the time in the house, but sometimes I can rush my work a bit because I don't want to sit down for a long time and do it.
- 1- But you know when you're in school you have to do work sometimes?
- 2- Yeah I do sometimes, I just get bored with writing things all the time.

Appendix 10 – Here are some examples of RAG ratings in my file for this child in particular.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Appendix 11 – here is another photograph taken by the child of another area of the classroom he enjoys learning. The Lego and show me tell me table where children are able to showcase their work.



Appendix 12 – here is another photograph taken by the child which shows his enjoyment of being creative in school.



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