

Element 2 Reflective log

Brief description of the activity (no more than 50 words)
The activity was to create 'spooky' Halloween cupcakes shaped like pumpkins as a group activity with 8 children between the ages of 3 to 7 who all have specific learning difficulties. We would be making these cakes using, rice krispies. Melted marshmallows, (to give a spooky spider effect), orange food colouring and smarties and Rollo's to finish the cupcakes off.
Aim/Objective of the activity
The aim of the activity was to create Halloween cupcakes with the children who all have specific learning difficulties. The aim was to help the children use their fine motor skills which go along with the Curriculum for Wales Foundation phase framework (2015), outcomes all the while interacting with the festivities of Halloween as well as having a special treat they could take home at the end of the day to show off to their parents or guardians.
Your role
My role was to run the entire session and oversee that the children were taking part as they should be with the help of 3 other practitioners by my side if I required their need or assistance.
Positive aspects – why?
All the children joined in despite their additional learning needs as they all felt comfortable enough around me to join in and smile. They were all aware of how to gather my attention when they needed help or wanted to show me something, which of course I was more than happy to oblige and show them my full attention when possible.
Challenging aspects – why?

Unfortunately, the marshmallow got very sticky very quickly which made it very hard for the children to move the spoon in the mixture and some of the children got some of the sticky mixture on their hands which they did not like the feel of which then became quite distressing to one of the children. I found that the quicker the marshmallow dried the more I started to feel the pressure slightly as I knew that these children were all slightly more sensitive to touch and things on their hands and wouldn't fully understand the meaning of patience so as a practitioner it was my job to manage that patience for not only myself but for these 8 children as well so I felt myself starting to rush slightly which maybe wasn't the best solution as looking back now it maybe put more strain on some of the children as where children with specific learning difficulties lack in some abilities their other senses may heighten in other aspects. For example, where I was letting them take their time stir the mixture and put the mixture into the cake cases at their own pace it may have become apparent that I may have started to hurry them into putting the mixture into the cake cases a lot quicker than the previous person. This may have had an effect on the child which I would be held accountable for as the lead practitioner. This can relate to Schon (1983), theory of in action and on action when you can look back on the event and it can give you the motivation to improve the experience in future.

What knowledge was demonstrated?

This knowledge was demonstrated practically and orally to the children and the children then repeated my movements and actions. When they were asked later on in the day what they did some of the children with the more verbal ability were able to repeat some of the ingredients and method back to one of the teachers which proves that the knowledge was demonstrated correctly to the children.

What skills were demonstrated?

Personally, I feel I demonstrated many skills and strengths within this task, for instance I used skills such as impeccable patience with all the children. I also demonstrated my very weak knowledge of sign language to communicate well with the children that are unable to communicate with speech due to additional learning needs. The children then also demonstrated many skills for example they used their fine motor skills while stirring the spoon in the cake mixture. They also demonstrated basic math skills by counting out how

many cupcake cases each child needed and how many cups of mixture to place into the bowl.

Which values were demonstrated?

Personally, I demonstrated good non-judgemental values within this task where some of the children could not stir the mixture properly that was no concern of mine, I just took it all in my stride and helped that particular individual. The children then demonstrated many values such as good independence and gratitude, for example, every child said thank you to me at the end of the session and the ones without the use of speech used the sign for thank you. Also, all the children showed the value of responsibility for example, they were all responsible for their own cupcake and no one else and they all kept hold of that and looked after their own cupcake individually.

What could have been done differently? Why?

Reflecting back on the activity now I would change the ingredients in the mixture to make the mixture a lot less sticky for the children for example I would use the more common choice of chocolate instead of marshmallows so the children got the full experience and I didn't feel like I had to rush the children along as the mixture dried.

Element 4 Personal Development Plan

Area for further development (provide further details)	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
1. Knowledge	To improve my Welsh knowledge skills and language.	I can achieve this by attending welsh coffee morning put on at the university to learn more about the welsh language and use it more with adults and children around me where possible.	I can do this at the Coleg sir gar Carmarthen called Coffi clonk free of charge as I am a student at the university.	Every Tuesday lunch time
2. Knowledge	Since working with special needs, I have found the passion to learn sign language. So, will need to improve my knowledge and understanding of sign language.	I have learnt some basic sign movements over the past few months from my fellow colleagues on placement but not enough to get me though talking to children by myself through the ways of sign.	I can attend a British sign language course at the QE high school in Carmarthen at a cost of £200 which gives me level on in BSL.	Starting in September on Thursday evenings 4-6pm
3. Skills	I have a basic background of the Welsh language but unfortunately not enough confidence to use the language in public.	By achieving my Intermediate level certificate as I have a level C in my Wels GCSE.	On the Lampeter campus on the Coleg Sir gar for 4 hours per week for 4 weeks	This course is run for 4 hours per week for the month of July at a cost of £210 which includes ensuite accommodation, breakfast and evening meals.

4. Skills	Listening skills	I have the ability to listen to children when they are distressed and need someone to talk to.	I am able to achieve this skill to many different children whether they are in distress, upset, happy, nervous or just need a friendly chat I can be that ear to listen and talk to.	I can put this skill into practise any time of the day on a daily basis.
5. Values	morals	I have the enthusiasm to engage with the children at all times and enjoy activities but not always the confidence to start an activity off my own back so that would be something I need to work on.	This would be worked on within a classroom with children. And could be maybe achieved by shadowing someone more superior to myself, for example, the main class teacher.	This would be done on a daily basis.
6. Values	Empathy	I have the ability to stop and listen to a child and try and understand their frustration and emotional distress and try and help them in the best way possible	I try to achieve this in their normal school which is normally my placement setting.	In normal day to day routine.

What is reflection?

Reflection is a journey of learning to becoming a caring and understanding practitioner with morals and values and becoming someone who can reflect day to day activities moment to moment. (Johns 2013). Appleby, (2010:8) believes that reflection is the ability to think critically and creatively within your own personal development and knowledge skills.

Reed and Canning, (2010:1) also agree with this by stating that Reflection entails plenty of practice and values and that they lead to the underpinning of the work of early years foundation.

Care inspectorate Wales

According to the Care inspectorate Wales (2019) reflection is linked to good practice throughout all types of settings that include young children for example, CIW focus mainly on non-school placements, for example, child minders, nurseries etc. They perform regular inspection to the placements to ensure that all children up to the age of twelve are being treated fairly and being looked after correctly and following the correct Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2005. One main thing that inspectors of the CIW check in these settings are that the leading practitioners are able to perform tasks such as listening and honesty with children which are all types of reflection and to ensure that all practitioners always act in the child's best interest.

Estyn

Estyn is responsible for monitoring schools within Wales and ensuring that they are following the correct statutory guidelines and have the child best interests in the centre of everything they do. Estyn's report (2015-2016) states that the best and easiest way to tell if a school has a high standard of teaching is by looking at the depth of the pupils thinking for example, no matter how old they may be, can a four year old tell you about a story read In class and interpret the story in different ways where they have listened and gone into depth into their thinking. Estyn (no date) believe that Reflection are a big part of a young child's education where they can learn different values skills and knowledge for example, from picking up their first pen they then may go on to be inspired to write a novel I the future if they learn that determination and different skills and techniques.

Skills and knowledge

- Listening skills
- Language skills, for example, welsh.
- Sign language for children with addition learning needs and abilities.
- Confidence

Professional practitioner

Becoming a professional and reflective practitioner can mean taking on a dual role such as, according to, Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) they believe that at one point in a day you could be the main actor in a performance in amongst all the children putting on the show of your life hypothetically. Then possibly an hour later you could be sat down like a member of the audience watching and analysing the entire performance. To achieve this, you must have full self-control of your body, feeling and emotions and be aware at all times of your own actions and emotions and what affect that could cause on the children around you.

Values

- Honesty
- Non-judgemental
- Anti-discriminatory
- empathy

Flying start and clych methrin

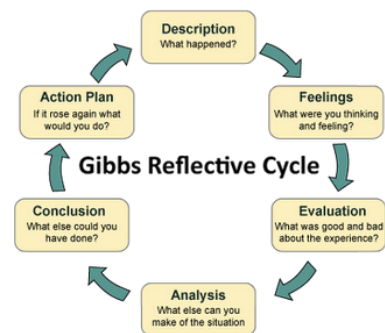
According to Welsh Government (2017) Flying start and clych methrin is an early years programme for disadvantaged families for children up to the age of four recommended by the health visiting team to help prevent poverty and to try and support early learning with young children. This it to try and encourage early onset of skills such as communication and social skills such as sharing. These programmes are also designed to help parents understand how to help teach their young children and babies some core skills such as clapping and singing and possibly even a second language for example, the Welsh language as clych methrin is normally performed in Welsh groups.

These groups are all Estyn approved and all flying start foundation following the foundation phase framework (2015) with all highly trained practitioners running the groups who are all trained in many skills working with and around the child's needs and abilities.

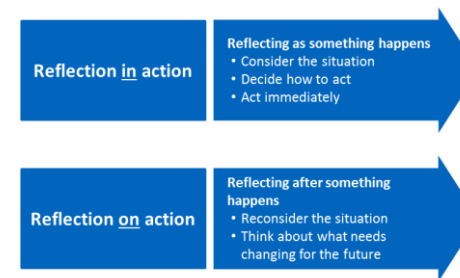
Examples of reflective models

Gibbs reflective cycle, this contains 6 elements and steps to aid a positive reflective practice.

Whereas Schon (1983) in action and on action approach to reflection is a way you can change what happens during and after the event and reflect upon the outcomes.



(University of Kent 2012)



(Cambridge assessment international education no date)

Gibbs

According to Mulder (2018) Graham Gibbs is an American sociologist and psychologist who published his first book titled 'learning by doing' in 1988 which is regarding the reflective cycle model which is made up of six different steps and stages as shown in the diagram above. These stages each represent a new way of gaining a new insight of self-practice and the ability to examine the experience received from the activity you achieved. Potter (2015) believes that Gibbs reflective cycle is very similar to another theorist names Scharmer (2007) where he used this method of reflecting exercises to apply the same findings as Gibbs but on a more deeper and understanding meaning. Another theorist that agrees with this approach is Middleton (2017) who agrees with Gibbs and believes that reflection is the most important part for a human to learn as she believes that it is essential for the personal growth and ability to learn and reflect in a meaningful way.

References

Ghaye, T. (2000) Into the reflective mode: bridging the stagnant moat. Reflective Practice, 1(1) 5-9.

Estyn (No date) 'Effective practice search' available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/effective-practice/search?sector=1444> [Accessed on 21/01/2019]

Ranson, R. (1998) 'Lineages of the learning society' in S. Ranson (ed.) *Inside the Learning Society*, London: Cassell.

Schon

According to Smith (2001) Donald Alan Schon was born in 1930 in Boston where he trained as a philosopher. His first book was titled, 'Displacement of Concepts' and was published in (1963) but it was his book titled, 'the reflective practitioner', that was published in 1983 that first introduced his main theories and ideas which are known as on action and in action.

Schon has 2 approaches to reflection and these are, in action and on action, in action is a methodical way of thinking on your feet, for example if a child falls off a side you think quickly and run over to try and stop that child hitting the floor and from hurting themselves or to comfort them. Then on action is where you look back at the situation in depth and think about what about things went well? What didn't go so well? What you could change and how you could improve or better the situation next time.

Enfield and Stasz (2011) agree with the way that Schon's methods work as they use his methods in teacher education and state that it is seen as beneficial to their students and structures their reflection in a way that they can work with and use easily.

Stewart Ranson (1998: 2) describes Donald Schon as 'the great theorist of the learning society'.

Conclusion

Within this paper we have come to the conclusion that reflective practice is complicated but can be worthwhile when performed effectively within the early years' foundation and around young children. Then, reflective practice will fulfil its potential to help us "make sense of the uncertainty in our workplaces" and offer us the "courage to work competently and ethically at the edge of order and chaos" (Ghaye, 2000, p.7).

Reference page

Appleby, K. (2010) *Reflective thinking: reflective practice*. In M. Reed and N. Canning (2010) *Reflective practice in the early years*. London: Sage. Pp.7-23.

Cambridge assessment international education (no date) Available at: <https://www.cambridge-community.org.uk/professional-development/gswrp/index.html> [Accessed on 13/01/2019]

Care inspectorate Wales (2019) '*Guidance handbook for inspecting care and education in regulated non-school settings eligible for funding for part-time education*' Available at: <https://careinspectorate.wales/sites/default/files/2019-01/190103-guidance-handbook-en.pdf> [Accessed on: 21/01/2019]

Curriculum for Wales Foundation phase framework (2015) Available at: <https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/foundation-phase-framework-revised-2015.pdf> [Accessed on 10/01/2019]

Enfield, M. and Stasz, B. (2011) 'Presence without being present: Reflection and action in a community of practice', *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning*, 11(1), pp. 108–118. Available at: <https://ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=58601457&site=ehost-live> [Accessed: 11 January 2019].

Estyn (2015-2016) '*The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales*' Available at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/ESTYN_Annual%20Report%202015_2016_English.pdf [Accessed on: 21/01/2019]

Estyn (No date) '*Effective practice search*' available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/effective-practice/search?sector=1444> [Accessed on 21/01/2019]

Ghaye, T. (2000) Into the reflective mode: bridging the stagnant moat. *Reflective Practice*, 1(1) 5-9.

Johns, C., & Burnie, S. (2013). *Becoming a reflective practitioner* (4th ed.). Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons.

Middleton, R. (2017) *International Practice Development Journal* 7 (1) [4] [fons.org/library/journal.aspx](https://www.fons.org/library/journal.aspx)

Mulder, P. (2018). 'Gibbs Reflective Cycle by Graham Gibbs'. Available at: <https://www.toolshero.com/management/gibbs-reflective-cycle-graham-gibbs/> [Accessed on: 16/01/2019].

Osterman, k., & Kottkamp, R. (1993). *Reflective Practice for Educators: 'Improving Schooling Through Professional Development'*. Corwin Press. Newbury Park. California: Sage.

Potter, C. (2015). Leadership development: An applied comparison of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle and Scharmer's Theory U. *Industrial & Commercial Training*, 47(6), 336-343.

Potter, C., 2015. Leadership development: an applied comparison of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle and Scharmer's Theory U. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 47(6), pp.336–342.

Ranson, R. (1998) 'Lineages of the learning society' in S. Ranson (ed.) *Inside the Learning Society*, London: Cassell.

Reed, M. and Canning, N. (2010) *Reflective practice in the early years*. London: Sage.

Schön, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner. How professionals think in action*, London:

Schon, D.A. (1983) *The reflective practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.

Smith, M. K. (2001, 2011). 'Donald Schön: learning, reflection and change', *the encyclopaedia of informal education*. Available at: www.infed.org/thinkers/et-schon.htm. [Accessed on: 15/01/2019].

Standards and Framework Act (1998) Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents> [Accessed on:21/01/2019]

University of Kent (2012) available at: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/learning/PDP-and-employability/pdp/reflective.html> [accessed on: 11/01/2019].

Welsh Government (2017) *'Flying Start'* Available at: <https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/parenting-support-guidance/help/flyingstart/?lang=en> [Accessed on 21/01/2019]