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.

During this assignment, I have set out to critically evaluate a critical incident within a year 1 and 2 classroom. I aim to look at different observation techniques, and choose the best one to carry out the observation. I will then reflect upon the whole experience in order to work out next teaching and learning steps and become a more reflective practitioner.

The use of critical incidents is very important for reflective practice in teaching. According to Bassot (2016), reflective practice is similar to looking in a mirror to see own practice and ourselves more clearly, and allows them to think more deeply about what they see. It helps them to deepen and improve their understanding of practice. Taking time to analyse and reflect on critical incidents allows practitioners to prevent future mistakes and build their confidence up to feel more secure in their practice. It also allows practice to focus on the needs of the particular child, and try things in different ways to see if they can get a better result.

For my first PTE placement, I am situated in an English medium primary school in South Wales. I will call this school A in accordance with BERA (2019) guidelines, which emphasize the importance of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy while carrying our research.

My local school statistics (WelshGovernment, 2018), show that in 2018, there were 179 pupils, 23.% of which were entitled to free school meals. The pupil teacher ratio is 22:7, and the attendance percentage is 92.2%. It is a green category and Eco school. It also showed that 22% of the children are on school action, compared to 17.2% of children in local authority schools and 14.4% in schools in Wales. Similarly, 16.9% of school A's children are on School action plus, compared to 10.2% of children in the local authority schools and 8.2% in schools in Wales. Also, 24.2% of the children in school A come from a minority ethnic group, compared to 7.8 in the local authority schools and 12.2 in schools in Wales.

In their last Estyn inspection (ESTYN, 2017), School A scored excellent for their current performance and for their prospects for improvement. They also scored excellent for how good their outcomes, provision, and leadership and management were.

I am situated in a year 1 and 2 mixed classroom, with ages 5 to 7, with two teachers and one Teaching assistant. There are 40 children in the class all together, 16 year 1 children and 24 year 2 children. The children are grouped according to ability while carrying out teacher led tasks, however, area activities are carried out in mixed groups according to who the children work well with. These area activities are changed every 2 weeks, and each child should complete each at least once. The areas include water, role play, construction, make it, table top, mark making, ICT, and number.

Tripp (2012) states that critical incidents are unplanned, everyday events, that only become significant through analysis. They are created by the way a situation is looked at and interpreted. Joshi (2018) adds that any event or experience can be critically analyzed through reflection. Teachers and professionals can think about the events that happened, as well as the reasons behind them. Through analyzing a critical incident, teachers are able to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own teaching practice, as well as being able to solve problems more effectively.

Critical incidents can be looked at through observation. Observation involves collecting information through monitoring children's progress, involvement and enjoyment, as well as their attainment (Department for children, Education, Lifelong learning and Skills, 2008). This should enable them to be able to plan a more developmentally appropriate curriculum. According to Banerjee (no date), sociograms are a good observation method to use. They are a way of visually showing the relationships different children have with each other. This helps teachers to identify if children have particular social or emotional needs. The Center for Education innovation (2016) talks about other good observation techniques. These include questionnaires or interviews, which are useful to find out the participants opinions, diaries or journals, where the researcher records their reflections, actions and results throughout the observation process, and interaction schedules, which are used for recording what happens during a lesson.
My chosen observation technique was the case study method. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) support this decision, as they show that case studies provide opportunities to observe incidents as they naturally happen, so it provides a snapshot of children in real situations. They mention that case studies focus on individuals or groups, and try to understand their judgement on the event. I decided to use this method because, as Cohen, Manion and

Morrison (2011) suggest, they can be used to observe unplanned and uncontrolled events. An advantage of this method is that it recognizes the importance of context in observations, as well as descriptions and details. Another advantage is that it provides a rich, chronological description of events. One aspect to be careful of when carrying out case study observations is not to form personal opinions and misinterpret the data. It is important in case studies for events to be able to speak for themselves.

I also chose the case study method as it was participatory as opposed to non-participatory. As Palaiologou (2008) says, participant observations are simple, unplanned and unstructured, which allows for the practitioner to observe unexpected behaviors or changes within activities as they happen. The practitioner is able to write down the most interesting and relevant information, as well their perceptions of events, allowing them to have a better insight into the child or activity. A limitation of this method, however, is that it doesn't provide a complete picture of the situation. As most of the notes would be made from memory afterwards, some evidence may be lost. Similarly, in a non-participant observation, which involves the professional to sit back and observe without participating, some information may be lost as it is difficult to capture everything while note taking (Better Evaluation, no date). Palaiologou (2008) also argues that it is more difficult to carry out than a participant model, as it needs to be planned in advance, and the children may act differently when they know someone is watching them.

By 2022, the new curriculum will be embedded into all primary schools in Wales (Hwb, 2019). The four purposes of this new curriculum are for all children and young people to be ambitious, capable learners, healthy, confident individuals, enterprising, creative contributors, and ethical, informed citizens.

Using the methods stated above, I carried out four different observations (see appendix 1a-d). This assignment will focus on one of those observations (appendix 1a). This observation was carried out during a mathematics activity where the children were given worksheets to complete. The aim of the worksheet was for them to work out sums whose answer add up to a number up to 20, and to colour the squares in the correct colour according to the key. For example, all of the sums that add to 15 needed to be colored in yellow. During this activity, 2 of the children were working independently, whilst the other, child A, did not appear to be concentrating. Child A decided to copy another child's work, which was in the middle of the table which had been completed by a child in the previous group.

This activity links to both the Mathematics and numeracy area of learning and experience, as well as Donaldsons four purposes (Hwb, 2019), as the Mathematics AOLE says that learning maths should be exciting and accessible, as developing maths resilience contributes to the development of ambitious and capable learners.

According to Cornerstones (no date), in Donaldson's view, ambitious capable learners should be able to set themselves challenges that they enjoy, build up their knowledge, and question and solve problems. Child A was not showing this, as she didn't seem to be challenging herself to complete the task. However, it could be argued that she solved the problem of how the task could be completed without her having to work out the answers herself. Another aspect of this purpose is that children should be able to understand and apply mathematical concepts, and be ready to learn. However, Child A was not showing signs of this, as she wasn't ready to learn, and couldn't apply the mathematical concepts she had learned to complete her piece of work.

Another one of the four purposes is for children to become healthy, confident individuals. Donaldson believed that learners should have secure values and beliefs, develop confidence and empathy, and be able to form positive relationships based on trust and mutual respect. During the observed activity, child A was not displaying this, as through copying another child's work, she didn't show that she had very good values. She didn't think about the other child's feelings as she copied her work, which doesn't show good relationship skills or empathy. Children should also be able to overcome challenges, be independent in their everyday life, and be able to lead fulfilling lives and be valued. She may not have been confident enough to complete the task independently, and wasn't confident to try and overcome the problem using her own skills.

This observed critical incident has very important theory links, which may explain the reasons behind child A's behavior. One of these theories is Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Both Interaction Design foundation (no date) and Stoyanov (2017) state that the five main needs in Maslow's hierarchy are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging, esteem needs and self-actualization. They agree that the basic needs have to be met in order for the next level of needs to be met, and so on. If the basic needs are not met, it is likely that a person will experience negative emotions. Stoyanov (2017) adds his belief that human needs can never be satisfied, as once a person has met one set of needs, they immediately set out to meet the next.
However, Stoyanov (2017) recognizes that there are some critics of Maslow's theory, who say that basic needs don't always appear in the order that Maslow suggested. For example,

there are some people living in poverty whose basic food and safety needs are not being met, who are still able to have relationships and meet their love and belonging needs.

It could be argued that child A's needs were not all being met, and as a result, she could not concentrate on her work and complete it to a high standard. She could have been feeling some negative emotions, such as embarrassment and frustration, and so wanted to find a way of completing the work without any further negative feelings.

Granthem-McGregor (2005) recognizes that even if a child is at school and seems to be doing a task, it may not mean that they are paying attention and concentrating on it. this could be for a number of reasons, including being hungry. Eating is a very important basic need that all children have, and this along with access to education are important rights under the UNCRC (Unicef, no date). Gage et al. (2014), Tikkanen (2009) and Zipp and Eissing (2019) all recognize that what children eat affects their school performance and development. Children need a balanced diet to allow them to develop cognitively, as well as develop their concentration and improve their performance.

This suggests that child A could have been hungry and focusing on that, and so eating something may have improve their ability to concentrate and in effect improve their learning. This could be the case as she seemed to be carrying out the activity, however was not fully focused on it. If she had eaten breakfast that morning, for example, her enthusiasm and concentration on the task may have been different.

Although Granthem-McGregor (2005) recognizes that hunger and nutrition are possible factors affecting concentration and performance, it is not the only contributing factor. Lack of Sleep can also have an influence. The National Sleep Foundation (2019) suggest that children aged between 6 and 13 should have between 9 and 11 hours of sleep per night. If they don't get enough sleep, they may have mood swings, behavioral issues and cognitive difficulties, all of which effect their learning ability. Sharma (2014) adds that it can affect their ability to function in school, as well as affecting their health, alertness, school performance and ability to handle complex tasks. American academy of sleep medicine (2019) also agrees with this, saying that children who don't get enough sleep are less likely to think before they act, and don't seem to be able to solve problems as well.

If child A had not got enough sleep the night before my observation, it is possible that they were tired and not concentrating on the task. This may have caused the child to attempt to cheat without thinking about the consequences to her, or the affect it would have on the

other child and her own education. She may have lost motivation to do the task herself due to tiredness.

Grigg (2010) talks about the humanistic view of motivation, which highlights the importance of building self-esteem and having the determination to succeed. He also mentions the cognitive theorists argument that children are motivated by a personal desire to learn, and that motivation comes from within as opposed to from rewards. Teachers should make sure that learning is relevant, so that children can see the value of it, and are more likely to be engaged in it.

Wyse and Rogers (2016) point out that nobody carries out a task to the best of their ability if they are feeling negative emotions. Young minds (no date) recognizes that children who have low self-esteem usually lack confidence and have a bad image of themselves. They struggle to deal with failure, and are never proud of what they achieve as they think they could have done better. They continuously compare themselves to other children in a negative way. Healthy children.org (2019) describes some of the signs of low self-esteem in children. Child A was displaying some of these, as she would not attempt the challenge set, showing a fear of failure. She also attempted to cheat, possibly believing she would not do well, another sign of low self-esteem.

Positive feelings, on the other hand, provide motivation to solve problems and be creative. These include feeling you belong and you matter, being valued, having a voice and choice, feeling safe, being liked and feeling you can achieve.
If child A felt more of these positive emotions as opposed to feeling like she could not achieve, she may have been able to complete the task she was set. She could have felt these positive emotions through praise and positive reinforcement, an aspect of Skinners theory (Hukam, 2010). According to Maag (2001), positive reinforcement is a universal principle that is effective regardless of age, gender, culture or disability of children. Hukam (2010), Gray and Macblain (2012) and Morgan and Ellis (2011) all agree, saying that it encourages positive behaviour through the use of rewards, such as such as stickers, certificates and praise. These should be used every day, according to Morgan and Ellis (2011), in order for children to be focused, motivated, and to create a positive classroom environment. They also believe that rewards should always be consistent, achievable and fair.
However, Grigg (2010) noted that some children do tasks, such as painting or drawing, because they are in the mood to do so, and not because they have been promised a reward.

Piaget, a constructivist, believed that children learn best through doing things for themselves rather than receiving instructions from adults. Piaget stressed the importance of active learning, where children are free to question, explore and test in the process of constructing their own knowledge.

There are similarities between Piaget's theory and the messages of Montessori, Froebel and Dewey, according to Gray and Macblain (2012). They share the view that children learn best through practical activities, and that the role of the adult is to foster the child's inner drive.

Lacher and Zich (2014) share their findings that children do not learn in a badly managed class, therefore the key to high engagement is classroom management. The use of praise is also important for teachers in order to create a positive learning environment, as well as increasing positive behaviours. They showed that classroom engagement, behaviour and academic performance were increased when a behaviour management tool known as the class Dojo system was introduced.

School A uses class Dojo as one of their reinforcement tools. According to Krach, McCreery, and Rimel (2017), Class Dojo is a free, positive classroom management programme with over 35 million users, including parents, teachers and children. Teachers are able to give dojo's for good behaviours, and take them away for unwanted behaviours, and are able to create a chart based on the children's behaviour. It allows children to receive immediate feedback, allowing them to take control of their behaviour and make improvements. Parents are also able to log in to see how their child is doing. Lacher and Zich (2014) emphasize the importance of parents being involved in their children's education, as it helps the child to improve academically, as well as improve their behaviour. This has been shown to be true regardless of a child's home income or background.

It is possible that Child A wanted a dojo point for doing good work, but knew she would not get one by doing it herself. Also, the fact that parents are able to view them may have scared her, as getting a negative dojo for not completing the task may have meant an extra punishment at home.

However, Krach, McCreery, and Rimel (2017) show concern that some parents are not convinced by the system, as it is seen as a way of bribing the children to behave. It is also argued that it could be used as a shaming tool, as every child's dojo can be shown on the whiteboard screen for all of the other children to see. By posting this data, teachers are violating the children's and their families rights to privacy and records protection under the

Family Educational Rights privacy Act (FERPA 1974). These issues are solvable if teachers used a handled device to track dojo points, or by using a password protected computer. Another issue with the system may be that some parents find it difficult to access the Dojo system at home if they come from a low socio-economic background, as they may not have a computer or internet to be able to access it at home.

Reflection/ evaluation:

Next steps:

Upon reflection, if I were to complete this activity again, I would ensure that the answers were not visible, and other children's work wasn't left on the table, so that no child could cheat. This would give a clear indication of how well each child is able to complete the activity.

I would also try and successfully differentiate the work so that all of the children are challenged but are still able to complete the task. Although the work that was set was differentiated, Grigg (2010) recognizes that even for the best teachers, differentiation is difficult to get completely right. It is possible that the work set for child A was too difficult, so she could have lost motivation due to feeling incompetent. A solution to this could be to set a slightly easier task to see if that enables her to complete it more independently.

Grigg (2010) also suggests a solution, which is giving children in a group the same piece of work, and allowing them to discuss and support each other. This is similar to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which describes the gap between what children can do alone, and what they are able to do with help from a more knowledgeable other (MKO), be that a child or adult. Vygotsky believed that it is better for a child to have help from someone working at a level marginally higher than their own.

According to Gray and Macblain (2012), Vygotsky recognized that children will all require different levels of support, and are capable of different levels of achievement. He realized that two children of the same age and ability could reach different achievements due to personal or social factors. Gray and Macblain (2012) also recognized that Piaget's theory was similar, as he believed that more able peers are able to explain an activity to another child, and both children can gain a greater insight into the problem through their shared learning.

Another suggestion would be for the teacher to model the requirements of the task so that every child knows exactly what is expected of them. Morgan and Ellis (2011) suggest a reason for this. They say that children are like sponges, and learn a lot from watching others. Gray and Macblain (2012) talk about Bandura's social learning theory. Bandura recognised that social factors, including observation, aids children's learning. He also believed that motivation was a key factor in children's behaviour. During the activity, I would provide encouragement and praise to the children, to ensure that they stay motivated.

Brookfield (2017) states that critical reflection is the way of identifying how accurate our assumptions about teaching are. It is about constantly trying to check these assumptions in order to inform everything we do as practitioners. This is important in order to ensure that everything we teach and do for children actually helps them to learn.

Solent university (no date) tells us that the term 'reflective practice' is associated with Donald Schon, who's 1991 theory suggests that there are two types of reflection. These are 'reflection in action', which happens during an activity or event, and 'reflection on action', which happens after an activity or event. Reflection in action is experiencing and event, and thinking on your feet about what to do next and doing it straight away. Reflection on action is thinking about something that has already happened, and taking time to think what you would do differently next time.

Another reflection tool is Kolb's learning cycle (1984) (Solent university, no date).
This has four elements. These are experience, observations, reviewing and reflecting on the experience, developing ideas and learning from the experience, and testing ideas through trying out what has been learned in practice. These elements form a loop which can be started at any point, although it normally starts with the experience.

The reflection technique I decided to use were the Arc forms (see appendix 2a-d). This method really helped me to structure my reflections and think about all of the important aspects of the observed critical incident. However, it was a lot of information to remember about each of the four incidents, therefore it would have been easier to focus on one critical incident at a time.

For this assignment, I have carried out an observation of an activity in a year 1 and 2 mixed classroom. I used the case study method to observe the children, using a participatory approach. I then looked at this observation in detail and reflected on it, to see what I would

change if I were to carry out this activity. I thought about the next steps for this activity, and how the reflection developed me as a practitioner.

Throughout this process, collaboration with the teacher was vital, as well as communicating with the other members of staff such as the TA. This is in line with the professional learning standards (Welsh Government, 2019), which states that collaboration is important for allowing effective pedagogy to spread. It was clear that the teacher recognised that teaching effective pedagogy is paramount, along with ensuring that the children are able to achieve the best outcomes possible.

This process has allowed me to become more reflective, and think more about my role as a reflective practitioner (PACEY, 2016). Reflection is very important for good practice, and will allow me as a practitioner to continue to improve my practice. It will improve my confidence and motivation, as well as allowing me to set targets in order to improve. This will benefit all the children within the setting, as well as their parents and carers, as they will be getting the best education and care, and achieve better outcomes.

Reference list:

American academy of sleep medicine (2019) *Sleep problems may affect children's behavior.* Available at: http://sleepeducation.org/news/2012/10/29/sleep-problems-may-affect-children%27s-behavior (Accessed: 27th September 2019).

Banerjee, R. (no date) *Robin Banerjee's Sociogram tools.* Available at: http://users.sussex.ac.uk/~robinb/socio.html (Accessed: 21st September 2019).

Bassot, B. (2016) *The reflective practice guide.* Oxon: Routledge.

BERA (2019) *Ethical guidelines for ethical research*. https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online#guideline40 (Accessed: 27th September 2019).

Better Evaluation (no date) *Non-participant observation.* Available at: https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/nonparticipantobservation (Accessed: 26th September 2019).

Brookfield, S. (2017) *Becoming a critically reflective teacher (*2nd Ed). San Fransisco: John Wiley & Sons inc.

Center for Education innovation (2016) *Observation techniques.* Available at: http://cei.ust.hk/teaching-resources/action-research/observation-techniques (Accessed: 20th September 2019).

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2011) *Research methods in education* 7th Ed. Oxon: Routledge.

Cornerstones (no date) *Embedding the four purposes.* https://cornerstoneseducation.co.uk/content/uploads/2015/07/Embedding-the-Four-Purposes-Cornerstones-Curriculum-Wales.pdf (Accessed: 12th October 2019).

Department for children, Education, Lifelong learning and Skills (2008) *Observing children,* Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government. Available at: https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/hwb-live-storage/a8/9c/a8/ee/f299432c801d025d875da415/observing-children.pdf (Accessed: 17th September 2019).

ESTYN (2017) *A report on School A.* Available at: (link available on request) (Accessed: 24th September 2019).

Gage, H. et al. (2014) 'Views of parents in four European countries about the effect of food on the mental performance of primary school children', *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition,* 68(1), pp. 32-37. DOI: 10.1038/ejcn.2013.214.

Granthem-McGregor, S. (2005) 'Can the provision of breakfast benefit school performance?', *Food and nutrition bulletin,* 26(2), pp. 144-158. DOI: 10.1177/15648265050262S204.

Gray, C. and Macblain, S. (2012) *Learning theories in childhood.* London: SAGE publications Ltd.

Grigg, R. (2010) *Becoming an outstanding primary school teacher.* England: Pearson Education limited.

Healthy children.org (2019) *Signs of low self-esteem.* Available at: https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/Pages/Signs-of-Low-Self-Esteem.aspx (Accessed: 4th October 2019).

Hukam, D. (2010) 'Comparison of the frequency and effectiveness of positive and negative reinforcement practices in schools', *Contemporary issues in education research,* 3(1), pp. 127-135. https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/docview/196352422?accountid=130472&rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo.

Hwb (2019) *A guide to Curriculum for Wales 2022.* https://hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/a-guide-to-curriculum-for-wales-2022/ (Accessed: 20th October 2019).

Interaction Design foundation (no date) *Maslow's hierarchy of needs* Available at: https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/maslow-s-hierarchy-of-needs (accessed: 12th October 2019).

Joshi, K. R. (2018) 'critical incidents for teachers' professional development', *Journal of NELTA Surkhet, 5, pp. 82-88.*

Krach, S. K., McCreery, M. P. and Rimel, H. (2017) 'Examining teachers' behavioral management charts: a comparison of class dojo and paper-pencil methods', *Contemporary school psychology,* 21(3), pp.267-275. DOI:10.1007/s40688-016-0111-0.

Lacher, A. and Zich, M. (2014) 'High student engagement through classroom management', *St. Catherine university,* PP. 1-38. http://sophia.stkate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1066&context=maed.

Maag, J. W. (2001) 'Rewarded by punishment: Reflections on the disuse of positive reinforcement in schools', *The council for exceptional children,* 67(2), pp. 173-186. DOI:10.1177/001440290106700203.

Morgan, N. S. and Ellis, G. (2011) *A kit bag for promoting positive behavior in the classroom.* London: Jessica Kingsley publishers.

National Sleep Foundation (2019) *Children and sleep.* Available at: https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/children-and-sleep (Accessed: 25th September 2019).

PACEY (2016) *Developing self reflective practice.* Available at: https://www.pacey.org.uk/Pacey/media/Website-files/PACEY%20member%20practice%20guides%20(PDFs)/PG04-self-reflective-practice.pdf (Accessed: 21st October 2019).

Palaiologou, I. (2008) *Childhood observation.* Exeter: Learning matters.

Sharma, M. L. (2014) 'A study on the role of sleep on health and scholastic performance among children', *Archives of disease in childhood,* 99(1), pp. 68. DOI: 10.1136/archdischild-2014-306237.161.

Solent university (no date) *How to think reflectively.* Available at: https://learn.solent.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=2732&chapterid=1112 (Accessed: 16th October 2019).

Stoyanov, S. (2017) *Abraham Maslow's A theory of Human Motivation.* London: Macat international Ltd.

Tikkanen, I. (2009) 'Maslow's hierarchy and pupils' suggestions for developing school meals', *Nutrition and food science,* 39(5), pp. 534-543. DOI: 10.1108/00346650910992196.

Tripp, D. (2012) *Critical incidents in teaching.* Oxon: Routledge.

Unicef (no date) *A summary of the UN convention on the rights of the child.* Available at: https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf?_ga=2.32634238.1311896668.1572298647-1235525564.1572298647 (Accessed: 6th October 2019).

Welsh Government (2019) *Professional standards for teaching and leadership.* Available at: https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/hwb-live-storage/fc/a7/a4/e2/e348428381e68434ea93f611/professional-standards-for-teaching-and-leadership-interactive-pdf-for-pc.pdf (Accessed: 17th October 2019).

WelshGovernment (2018) *My local school.* Available at: (link available on request) (Accessed: 24th September 2019).

Wyse, D. and Rogers, S. (2016) *A guide to Early years & primary teaching.* London: SAGE publications Ltd.

Young minds (no date) *Supporting your child's self esteem.* Available at: https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-self-esteem/ (Accessed: 3rd October 2019).

Zipp, A. and Eissing, G. (2019) 'Studies on the influence of breakfast on the mental performance of school children and adolescents' *Journal of public health,* 27(1), pp. 103-110. https://link-springer-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/article/10.1007/s10389-018-0926-4

Appendix:

Appendix 1a:

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

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 26.09.2019
Lesson details: This activity took place in a mixed year 1 and 2 classroom with 2 classroom teachers. Both teachers did separate carpet time for their year group, and then the children were mixed up to do different activities around the class. The activity the children I observed were carrying out was a maths and colouring activity, where the children were asked to work out sums whose answers add up to a number up to 20. The aim was to colour the numbers according to their answer, for example, if the answer was 15 they would colour the square in yellow. There were 3 children sat at the table carrying out this activity.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) This task was directed, however was not adult led, as the children had to sit down and work it out for themselves. During the activity, 2 of the children were engaged and carrying out their activity well. However, one of the children was not very engaged, and was distracted.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The aim of the activity was to help the children be able to work out mathematical calculations up to 20. The objective of the activity was written on the sheet so that they knew what they were aiming to achieve.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) Two of the children knew what they were doing and were able to get on with it quietly. The other child didn't seem to know what the objective was, and didn't want help to complete the activity.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) Two of the children were engaged, and the tasks was suitable for their level of ability. There were different sheets to differentiate between the children with higher or lower abilities, and so there was differentiation of the task. The other child seemed to find the challenge difficult, and wasn't very engaged in it.
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? The teacher used checking and marking strategies to check the children's understanding of the activity.

Specifics / Critical Incidents
Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

One of the children was not engaged in the activity and didn't seem to understand what she had to do. As a result, she began to copy another child's work. This could have been because she didn't understand, because she was tired or hungry, or because she didn't believe that she could do it without any help.

Appendix 2a:

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

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 26.09.19

Lesson details:

This activity took place in a mixed year 1 and 2 classroom with 2 classroom teachers. Both teachers did separate carpet time for their year group, and then the children were mixed up to do different activities around the class. The activity the children I observed were carrying out was a maths and colouring activity, where the children were asked to work out sums whose answers add up to a number up to 20. The aim was to colour the numbers according to their answer, for example, if the answer was 15 they would colour the square in yellow. There were 3 children sat at the table carrying out this activity.

Classroom culture
(Are the students focused on learning?)

This task was directed, however was not adult led, as the children had to sit down and work it out for themselves. During this activity, the child I observed was very focused and engaged in the activity, and was carrying it out well.

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

The aim of the activity was to help the children be able to work out mathematical calculations up to 20. The objective of the activity was written on the sheet so that they knew what they were aiming to achieve.

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

The child I observed was very clear about what needed to be done, as the learning objective was written on the sheet, as well as the task instructions.

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

The worksheets were differentiated, so that the children with higher mathematics ability would have more difficult worksheets to complete. The child that I observed completed one of the worksheets very quickly without needing any help, and so decided to chose one of the more difficult ones to challenge themselves. This suggested to me that the first worksheet wasn't challenging enough, so possibly chose the wrong worksheet to begin with.

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

The teacher used checking and marking strategies to check the children's understanding of the activity.

Specifics / Critical Incidents
Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

The child I was observing chose to complete another worksheet after she had completed the first. This could be for a number of reasons, including the fact that she wanted to please the teacher.

Appendix 3a:

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

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 25.09.19
Lesson details: This incident took place while the children were on their areas around the classroom. One of the children was in the mark making area, and the task was to write a couple of facts about space using their previous knowledge and the books provided on the desk.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) The children did seem to be focused on their learning, as they were concentrating on writing their sentences.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the activity was for the children to practice their writing skills, as well as being able to remember space facts they had been learning about.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The children were clear on what they had to do, as the teacher had explained it at the start of the session, and the learning objectives were clearly written by their work station.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) The children did seem engaged in the activity, as they appeared to be writing down a lot of interesting facts, and telling them to eachother.
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? The teacher marks the work as they complete it, and the children get praise for completing it.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? The incident was that the child took her work to the teacher, however the writing was messy, and there wasn't as many facts as the teacher had asked for. When asked to do it again, the child said they had rushed the work for a dojo point- she had seen another child have a dojo for doing good writing in the area.

Appendix 4a:

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

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 24.09.19
Lesson details: This incident took place during a carpet time activity, where the children were asked to work out the answers to mathematical questions. The teacher gave the children a sum to work out, and told them to work it out in their heads or use their fingers. The children were given time to work it out, before the teacher asked one child for the answer.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Most of the students seem to be focused on the learning, as they all seemed to be working out the sums and putting their hands up to answer. It was clear that most of the children were either putting the number in their heads and counting, or using their fingers to get to the correct answer.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the lesson was for the children to practice working out sums in their heads or using their fingers. It was also for the teacher to gage who understood how to work the sums out and who didn't.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The children were all clear about what they needed to do, as the teacher explained to them what they needed to do at the start of the activity, and reminded them how to work out the answers to the sums.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) As some of the children are higher or lower ability, some of the sums were slightly easy or difficult for them. however, the teacher asked a range of sums so that all the children were challenged and were able to answer questions.
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? The teacher assessed the children's understanding by watching to make sure that all the children were trying to work out the sums. She also asked a child to answer each question to ensure that they were getting to the correct answers.

Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? The incident occurred when one child was asked to answer a question. He had his hand up, however when he was asked for the answer, he thought for a few seconds then said 'I don't know'. He may have done this for the attention of the teacher, or he could have been struggling but put his hand up for the teacher to think he knew how to work out the answer. The teacher then gave him some more time to think, before asking if he would like another child to help him.

Appendix 1b:

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

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

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

Dyddiad/*Date*: 26.09.19

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/*Critical incident (focus):* mathematical activity

Profiad/ *Experience*	
Teimladau/ *Feelings* *Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?* *"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"*	• Happy and pleased when the two children were getting on with their work nicely. • Feelings of shock when one child began to copy the other child's work • Feeling concerned that the child didn't understand the work, and wasn't going to gain any skills from the activity. • Slight confusion over how to correctly handle the situation without damaging the learning.
Cofio a Deall/ *Remember and Understand* *Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda?* *"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"* *Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig?* *"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"*	Two of the children carried out the activity nicely and met their learning objective. This is an example of high motivation during the lesson. For two of the children, the differentiation was effective, as they carried out work at their own level independently. One of the children didn't get on with the work independently and tried copying another child's work. This is an example of low motivation during the lesson. There were no resources provided to help the children to work out their sums, which may have helped the child carry them out more independently. For one child, possibly the work set was too difficult, and so she wasn't able to complete it on her own, and so she thought copying was the best way to do so.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ *Evaluate and analyse* *Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?* *"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"* *Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf?* *"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"*	This was an ineffective session for one child, as they didn't use or develop their own knowledge and skills to complete the task. I would keep the learning objectives on top of the work, as the children who worked well were able to understand and follow them. One child did not understand what she had to do, so would have benefitted from some additional help from the teacher. As the observer, I was not well known to the children, so she possibly was too shy or afraid to ask for help, and refused it when asked if she needed it.

Appendix 1b continued:

Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ *Conclusions and actions* *Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd?* *"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"* *Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf?* *"What will you do next?"*	• A solution could be allowing the child to work with a more knowledgeable other to help her through the activity and to help her gain confidence. • Provide more resources to help the child work more independently. • Taking away the completed sheets from the table so there is less chance of being able to copy. • Model how to complete the activity and start off together so that she gains confidence. • Provide a better way of motivating the children- help them see the importance of their work. • Teach all the children the importance of completing your own work and not copying other children's work.
Y profiad newydd / *Transformed experience*	

Appendix 2b:

Y Drindod Dewi Sant University of Wales Trinity Saint David | Yr Athrofa Addysg a'r Dyniaethau Education and Humanities

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

Dyddiad/*Date:* 26.09.96

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/*Critical incident (focus):* Mathematical activity

Profiad/ *Experience*	
Teimladau/ *Feelings* *Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?* *"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"*	• Happiness- the child wanted to carry out the activity again and learn more from it • Confusion- what were the child's motivations? Did they want praise or were they really enjoying the activity? • Questioning- did the child work out the right answers or had she guessed or copied them?
Cofio a Deall/ *Remember and Understand* *Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda?* *"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"* *Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig?* *"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"*	• The child carried out another worksheet after completing the first one. This could be due to her enjoying the activity. • She clearly understood the activity to carry it out so quickly • Time may have been an issue, as if she completed all the different activities too quickly, there may not have been a follow up activity for her to do. • The child completed the first worksheet quickly, suggesting that it was too simple and not challenging enough. • Possibly she didn't have the answer right, or had copied them • The other children at the table could have influenced her decision, as she may have wanted to impress them. • The main areas for development were mathematical skills.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ *Evaluate and analyse* *Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?* *"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"* *Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf?* *"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"*	• I would keep the activity the same, as most of the children found it fun and engaging. • The learning was effective as the children seemed to know what they had to do and were getting on with it. • All of the children were clear on the learning objectives of the task • I would ensure that the activity was differentiated well, as the activity seemed to be too simple for one of the children, so she wasn't well challenged.

Appendix 2b continued:

Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ *Conclusions and actions* *Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd?* *"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"* *Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf?* *"What will you do next?"*	Make sure that all work is differentiated appropriately, and that all children are challenged. Ensure that the higher ability children are challenged through more difficult questions. Make sure that there is a follow up activity in place for those children who finish the tasks before the end of the session. Ensure that the children who are rushing are getting the correct answers, and that they know how they got to them.
Y profiad newydd / *Transformed experience*	

Appendix 3b:

Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant University of Wales Trinity Saint David | Yr Athrofa Addysg a'r Dyniaethau Education and Humanities

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

Dyddiad/*Date*: 25.09.19

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/*Critical incident (focus)*: mark making activity

Profiad/ *Experience*	
Teimladau/ *Feelings* *Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?* *"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"*	Happy to see all of the children completing the activity nicely and collaborating with each other Concerned- the child seemed to be completed work for praise and a dojo point rather than wanting to learn.
Cofio a Deall/ *Remember and Understand* *Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda?* *"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"* *Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig?* *"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"*	The activity was fun and engaging for most of the children The positive reinforcement ensured that the child attempted the work, and learned something from it. The children were all talking about their facts, so they were learning from each other. The books on the desks helped the children to recall facts that they had learned during their previous lessons, as well as allowing them to discover new facts. The reward/ praise was the reason for the child rushing the work and, as a result, doing it incorrectly. She didn't gain as much as she would have by rushing it, as she wasn't fully concentrating and didn't complete the learning objective. The activity was differentiated, as the lower ability children were not expected to write as much as the higher ability children. The main areas for development were communication and writing skills.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ *Evaluate and analyse* *Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?* *"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"* *Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf?* *"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"*	I would keep the fact that its done in groups, and that they children were able to communicate their ideas and collaborate with eachother The use of resources was effective, as the books allowed the children to discover facts on their own. The fact that the child was attempting to complete the activity just for a dojo point or some praise was a worrying element, as she wasn't gaining as much from the activity.

Appendix 3b continued:

Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ *Conclusions and actions* *Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"* *Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"*	Make sure there are clear expectations set for the children, so that they know the level of work they need to carry out in order to succeed. Rethink and reflect on the way that praise and dojos are given out, so that children are not completing activities just to get one. The activity could have been modelled by the teacher so that the children could have visibly see how much is expected from them.
Y profiad newydd / *Transformed experience*	

Appendix 4b:

Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant University of Wales Trinity Saint David | Yr Athrofa Addysg a'r Dyniaethau Education and Humanities

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

Dyddiad/*Date*: 24.09.19

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/*Critical incident (focus)*: carpet time activity

Profiad/ *Experience*	
Teimladau/ *Feelings* *Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"*	Confusion- I wasn't sure if the child knew the answer or not, and if not, why they put their hand up. Empathy for the child- he may have felt embarrassed or stupid for not knowing the answer, and that is not a nice situation to be in.
Cofio a Deall/ *Remember and Understand* *Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda? "Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"* *Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"*	The idea of questioning children on the carpet all together helped the children, as they were in a familiar environment. When the child had difficulty, the teacher allowed him some time to think, and then asked if he wanted to chose another child to help. The child didn't seem to be able to answer the question, even though he had put his hand up to suggest that he did. It was difficult to differentiate, as the whole class were answering the same questions. The child may have wanted the teacher and his friends to believe that he knew the answer so that he didn't look like he couldn't work it out.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ *Evaluate and analyse* *Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol? "What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"* *Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf? "What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"*	I would keep the carpet time aspect the same, as it is a different method of learning and the children enjoy it. I would ensure that the children were allowed enough time to think and work out the answers, as well as being able to ask another child for help if they get stuck. The child possibly wanted the teacher to think he knew the answer, and didn't want his classmates to think he couldn't work it out.
Casgliadau a chamau gweithredu/ *Conclusions and actions* *Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"* *Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"*	Use a whiteboard or other AFL strategy in order to clearly see which children know the answer. This would also reduce any embarrassment for the children if they don't know the answer. Ensure that the questions are suitable for every child in the class.
Y profiad newydd / *Transformed experience*	