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Part 1 - **Introduction**

In this section of the assignment, there will be a critical evaluation of how effective the use of digital devices is in supporting children's ICT development. It will explore both the positive and negative aspects of children's ability to access ICT and digital media, and also consider how children's learning can be developed through the use of ICT.

In Donaldson's (2015) *Successful Futures*, he argues that it is essential for children and young people to have access to ICT to be able to develop their digital and ICT skills as future citizens. In order to achieve this, ICT must be integrated in their curriculum as a core curriculum subject, Donaldson's view is to incorporate fresh and more up to date activities to allow a more fun and interesting aspect to their education in digital media and ICT. Practitioners can offer support to children while learning by looking and understanding all the ways in which ICT is used in the curriculum. In addition to the curriculum, the Digital Competence Framework (2018) offers a range of opportunities for children to be educated and ensure access to ICT and digital media is given to young children.

The Digital Competence Framework (2018) focuses on how children can become digitally competent which is recognised as a crucial aspect of a children's education. Nurseries and schools implement this by ensuring they have received enough information and findings through evaluation to allow them to plan for the future for improvements. encouraging effective leadership by having the skills to pass onto children. Edwards (2019) discusses having a range of learning opportunities through ICT and digital literacy skills. High quality activities need to be implemented into the curriculum for children to be challenged and apply these skills. Often nurseries and schools face challenges when implementing the Digital Competence Framework (2015) in that early years' practitioners have trouble being able to develop and share what they would like implemented into their education. The curriculum does not always map out or be able to identify the opportunities it can provide for them in their curriculum. The training is not always provided for the early years practitioners to be able to educate children's skills and knowledge.

The Foundation Phase (2015) outlines the importance of implementing ICT and places it within the curriculum so that digital skills can be implemented in as many areas as possible. For example, digital devices can be used to help develop children's thinking, communication and their ICT. The Foundation Phase (2015) and Digital competence framework (2018) identify a range of ways to support and encourage children's learning skills in literacy and numeracy tasks. The DCF is all about how important ICT and media really has become to children's education. During 2020, The Welsh Government (2021) looked at when the Coronavirus outbreak began, children and young people had to resort to using ICT and digital media for their education. Lessons were delivered using Microsoft Teams, and Zoom, and Facetime was used to communicate with children and parents to monitor

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progress of home learning. Whilst it has helped to develop the role of ICT in education, and ensured many children had access to learning opportunities, unfortunately, it created a very difficult situation for children and young people who did not have digital devices at home, or who had to share them with siblings to access lessons

There are important considerations that practitioners should be aware of when using ICT in children's learning. One of the most important aspects is that children are using the internet, ICT and digital media in a safe way. Children should access educational games through HWB and reading eggs. It is important for children in nurseries and schools to access ICT and media in a safe way because it can have such a positive impact on their education, but there are also dangers. Most places are designed to be as safe as possible. but it is vital that early years' practitioners understand that there are advantages and disadvantages to the children accessing the digital media and ICT. NSPCC (2021) look at how children accessing media can put themselves in danger of being exposed to inappropriate content on their media devices such as computers, laptops, iPads, phones and tablets. Children must have the correct privacy settings to ensure they are not at risk of viewing any inappropriate content. Often parents' number one fear is their child at risk of being groomed online, so parents and practitioners should check that the games they play online are safe and age appropriate for them. Children being educated on internet safety will also help to minimise the risk of children getting into trouble or sharing details about themselves with strangers.

Looking at both the positive and negative aspects of children using ICT, Erdogan et al (2018) examine parents' feelings about implementing ICT into a child's education. Clearly, some parents have concerns about their children using digital devices as part of their education, and they have concerns about their children's safety in doing so. However, as the role of digital play has developed as well as the type of environments and materials children use. Nierengarten (2018) discusses research and how in the last 10 years it is shown that digital media has been given a prominent role in children's education. In 2011, it was shown that nearly 10% of children aged 2 or younger have used a computer or mobile phone. In 2013, the number rose to 38%. By this figure increasing each year, it just shows how many parents incorporate digital media into their child's home life and education. Such a rapid increase in the use of digital media by children has understandably raised the question of whether or not it is the best guide for their development. However, as Donaldson (2015) discusses, being digitally competent prepares children for the future and can have so many benefits to their development and education.

Ager (2021) explains how most nurseries and schools are using a range of digital devices as part of their learning. For example, by using cameras and iPads children can capture moments during their activities; this not only helps develop skills but provides useful evidence for practitioners of active learning. As The Foundation Phase (2015) discusses, children's development should be recorded for monitoring progress, and this happens in nurseries and schools by taking photos, videos and

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recordings. This allows the child the ability to develop their confidence and capabilities in using ICT and digital devices. Such opportunities develop children's interest and motivation to use ICT and recognise it as an important part of their learning. Aubrey and Dahl (2008) look at how England has approached the use of ICT in the Early Years Foundation Stage and present evidence that children aged between birth to five years old are being brought up all around ICT, technology and digital media. By having this environment, not only as part of their home life but in their education, the role of ICT and digital competence is promoted and encouraged. This exposure to ICT and digital media education can develop children's confidence when using these devices and allow them to progress in all areas of their learning new technology, however this is only possible if all children are able to have access to technology, and clearly for children from low income families may not have adequate access to devices and resources. Aubrey and Dahl (2008) look at some positive and negative aspects ICT in education and argue that children's cognitive ability can be detrimentally affected in terms of how they socialise and their emotional development, however, not much is known about how this will affect children in the long term.

Whilst there are positives in terms of children's learning, there are negatives that have to be addressed as discussed by Chassiakos (2021) in relation to children's emotional wellbeing and other health concerns around the overuse of digital media and exposure to iPads and computers at home and at school. Gordon (2021) looks at another negative aspect of children accessing ICT, digital media and any social media online and how many young people have been affected by bullying online, or cyberbullying. The definition of cyberbullying (stopbullying.gov, 2021) is that it is a form of bullying that is carried out using a digital device such as a laptop, computer, an iPad, mobile phones or tablet. The bullying may come in the form of a message through apps or on a range of social media platforms. A common place is also within games such as fortnite, minecraft, roblox and many others that children access daily. This can include sending a message or sharing inappropriate content, posting negative comments or sharing any kind of false information to intentionally hurt someone. It is also distressing that personal and private information is shared, and this is a parent's or early years practitioner's worry as it can lead to children getting upset, depressed or even suffering from anxiety from the hate and bullying. In school and even in nurseries it is vital that children are educated about keeping themselves safe. Parents and practitioners need to make children aware of the dangers and understand how to address them so that they are more likely to use the internet safely and securely.

Safeguarding networks (no date) look at ways to keep children safe on all their digital devices and ensure that there is a healthy balance between allowing children to access their devices, but also enjoy doing other things. Adults need to minimise the risk of children being exposed to potential dangers that could affect their safety. This means parents and guardians being aware of what their child is accessing and that it

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is age appropriate for that particular child so that it is safe and secure. NSPCC (2021) also suggest ways to keep all children as safe as possible such as ensuring they are on safe browsers and privacy settings are in place which are age appropriate. There is also the option to turn on parent mode which can control what the child watches and how long they can access their devices.

NSPCC (2021) accepts it is often difficult for children who are unable to access a digital device or the internet as not everyone has that opportunity. During the Covid 19 pandemic it affected the children who were unable to access a device, which meant it was hard for them to access learning. This is a big barrier for them to face and unfortunately not all schools can afford to purchase sufficient devices so that all children can access learning. This is such a disadvantage to those who are unable to develop their digital and ICT skills as effectively, they are being denied access to this type of education opportunities.

The Foundation Phase (2015) and The ALN provision (2018) both designed by the Welsh government has ensured that children with additional needs will have support in place so they can access ICT, digital media and digital devices just as other children can. It is important as set out in the Equality Act (2010) that all children are treated fairly and have equal access to resources within education. That means ensuring they have a successful time in school. having a good range of software and assistive technology for the children to help with processing skills and organising information. This not only supports children learning and education but also ensures that they have access to the resources they need. This will enable them to develop digital skills which will take them forward throughout their compulsory education.

In conclusion, the use of ICT and digital devices is essential in order to support children and help prepare them for the future. It is so important that all children have the opportunity to access technology and use ICT and digital devices so that all children are equal in their learning. By implementing the DCF and the ICT element of the Foundation Phase (2015), children are able to develop a wide range of skills that they will need as future citizens. In addition, this will also develop their self-confidence, problem solving skills, independence and so many other aspects; just the ability to use these devices is a skill that will help them for many years to come.

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Part 2:

How can we keep your children safe?

A guide for parents and carers.

Help us by supporting and safeguarding children in digital media/ICT and how you can support this issue.

What are the issues parents and Carers are faced with?

- *Cyberbullying*
- *Being exposed to inappropriate content*
- *Privacy settings not suitable for their age*
- *Obsessions*
- *Safe browsers*

Cyberbullying.

How can parents and carers safeguard their children on social media, ICT to prevent cyberbullying? Cyberbullying has become such an important issue in schools and has become much more of a problem in recent years. How are children in early years settings affected by cyberbullying? Gordon (2021) claims that research has shown that "five tweens have been cyberbullied while 59% of teens have been harassed online". This shows that it is an issue that is getting worse and needs to be stopped. Whilst it is difficult to protect all children from bullying, ensuring safety measures are in place to prevent young children from cyberbullying will help. It is worrying that many children have experienced some sort of bullying online, so it is important to talk to your child and be aware of who they are talking to online.

This leaflet is to support any parents or guardians who may feel anxious or worried about their child being online or using media. This leaflet is to support and help parents and carers safeguard and support children to use ICT safely.

The Conversation, 2017



Why should parents be aware of their children's rights?

(The Standard, 2017)

UNCRC - Children have a right to use media and ICT, stated in Article 17: Children have the right to access information that is important to their health and well-being. Children have the right to safely access the internet and use media within home life and school life. Article 28 states all children have a right to education which should be free.

Policies and legislations

Welsh Government 2018 look at online safety and having an action plan for children and young people in Wales. The Welsh Government 2018 discuss how their main aim is to ensure that all children are protected and safe from illegal, inappropriate content and online behaviours. It is in place to ensure children have the opportunity to access online activities. The online safety is one of the Welsh government's crucial goal and having a legislation in place to protect children and young people from any negative activities and giving them an opportunity to access online safely

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Using social media safely with children and young people.

The charity NSPCC (2021) supports the idea of children using social media, ICT and all kinds of media in a safe way. NSPCC (2021) highlights what kinds of benefits are involved in children using media and social media. Firstly, it offers them opportunities to be able to remain connected to their peers and family when using social media and ICT/ Media. Benefits include having access to online educational games or activities such as Reading Eggs and HWB which are used in a number of schools. Using ICT offers opportunities for children to interact with one another and these websites are designed to be safe for the children to use.

NSPCC (2021) recognise there are disadvantages and at times children may be at risk of using media. They may be exposed to inappropriate content on their computers, Ipads, phones and tablets if children have not got the correct privacy/ security setting on their device. This can put them at risk of being exposed to the content that is inappropriate for them. One of the biggest risks is being groomed online so ensuring the games that they use have the correct settings is essential. Children are not able to know who they are talking to, and it is vital to protect them from harm. NSPCC (2021) discusses the importance of children not sharing private personal information, so they are not at risk. NSPCC (2021) also mentions the risk of Cyberbullying and how children often may be the subject of abuse through anonymous bullies. Unfortunately, this can often encourage children to also engage in cyberbullying.

Benefits to digital media and ICT.

Orlando (2017) of The Conversation discusses how children using media and social media enables them to share ideas, access a variety of information and different viewpoints. It allows children to use this platform to support their education.

The royal Australian & New Zealand college of psychiatrists, (2018) also claim there are important benefits children gain from using ICT. In the current pandemic because of COVID-19, most children have been able to access education with ICT. It has also enabled children to connect with their friends from school. There are a range of educational apps that have supported children's learning in the absence of being able to attend school.

Welsh Government 2015 discusses how the Foundation Phase 2015 look at using ICT and being digitally competent is crucial and so essential for all children and young people so they are able to develop their skills which will benefit them in the future. ensuring you can offer their digital learning outside the classroom so you as parents and carers are able to use ICT in a safe environment in their home. Best thing to do as a parent is to talk to your child about internet safety and your children use it. This in place in nurseries, schools and encouraged to be followed at home.

Ucciferri (2021) looks at Tiktok policy looks at age requirement and safety of children using the app and requires a child to be at least 13 years old to use the app. It requires any one under the age of 18 to have permission from a parent or guardians. It ensure only friends of the account if under 18 can't comment and like the material this prevents cyber bullying or inappropriate content being seen. Youtube help (2021) also has a policy on age but it does allow children to use but ensure that inappropriate video are restricted to any viewer under the age of 18 years old. It looks at things like child safety, with anything potentially dangerous for the children, videos which is intended for adults only is restricted to young children. Youtube kids was designed for children and only shows appropriate content meant for a child. Murse (2021) Facebook policy says that by law with social media and email services require children to be at least 13 to create an account and must still have guidance from parents/ guardians.

Safeguarding your children whilst using media and ICT.

How can you safeguard your children when they are using media and ICT?

Safeguarding networks (No date) provide information on how to keep the children safe. Today, children are using a number of devices, not only computers in school but also IPADS, phones, game consoles, laptops and other forms of ICT. It is becoming a lot harder for parents and guardians to keep their children safe. Whilst allowing children access to these devices has a number of benefits, there are potential dangers threatening their safety. There are a number of sites or chat rooms that may put them at risk. Young children are not always aware of what they are accessing online; they may think they are accessing something safe and secure, but unless they are protected there can be no guarantees. NSPCC (2021) suggest safeguarding children whilst they are accessing online by parents and careers ensuring they are accessing a safe browser. They also need to ensure that the privacy settings are set to suit their age bracket and check that the parental control option is on; this guarantees the children are accessing the appropriate content.

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Part 3:

Activity Plan for Digital Literacy Skills Activity: Outdoor nature scavenger hunt with Ipad.		
Nifer o blant: <i>Three children</i>	Oed y plant: <i>Six year olds</i>	Nifer o oedolion: <i>one adult</i>
Lleoliad: <i>School PlayGround</i>	Amser paratoi: <i>Depending on the child, it takes an hour to an hour and a half.</i>	Amser gweithgaredd: <i>Fourty five minutes</i>
Adnoddau: • Three Ipads • List of items to be found • Bag or box to put the items in once found		
Cysylltiadau â deilliannau llythrennedd/cymhwysedd digidol: “Express themselves creatively and imaginatively” (Welsh Government, 2015: 13) “Experience and use a range of media and stimuli including emerging technologies” (Welsh Government, 2015: 13) “Experiences that allow them to adopt a variety of roles, including leadership within a small group, paired learning or working within a team” (Welsh Government, 2015: 18) “Tasks and challenges that encourage problem solving and discussion” (Welsh Government, 2015: 18) “Experience and use a range of media and stimuli including emerging technologies” (Welsh Government, 2015: 22) “It is essential that children have access to a variety of media to express themselves and ample opportunities to apply their imagination in a purposeful way. “Children acquire and develop skills at different rates and must be allowed to develop at their own unique, individual pace” (Welsh Government, 2015: freedom of expression - Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law” (UNCRC, Article 13 2021: 1)		

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“Access to information from the media - Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand” (UNCRC, Article 17 2021: 1)

Details of the activity:

Incorporating digital literacy with use of ICT into a scavenger hunt in the outdoor school playground. Thirty items hid in the school playground before the activity with a thirty-minute time frame for adults to get that activity set up. All three children will have an iPad to use as their camera and a paper list of the items they will be collecting. The children will have 45 minutes to gather all the items and take photos to show they have found them. Children using an iPad to take a photo will promote the use of technology within the twenty-first century. This activity is designed for six to seven-year-olds to be able to have independence through a child led play-based activity which allows them to develop digital competency skills through a range of media and using new technology early on.

The adult will place thirty items around the school playground in advance for the children to find and take a photo off as proof that they have found the item. The role of the adult during this activity is to allow the children their independence throughout but to offer guidance if needed. Also, to deal with any technical issues with the iPads that may occur. The adult's primary role is to provide the children with a child led play based fun activity that they can experience and develop in a number of areas.

Aims of the activity:

The aim of the activity is to promote digital literacy and the competence of a group of young children when accessing ICT. The children should demonstrate the ability to be independent through a child led based activity. This is achieved by allowing the child the independence to use an iPad to take photos when looking for items hidden in the environment.

Practitioners should ensure the child's views, opinions and interests are taken into account when the activity begins and enable them to express themselves. The children should have the opportunity to use their creative skills and imagination throughout the

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scavenger hunt, which should also create opportunities for the children to problem solve.

Part 4:

This discussion will be an evaluation of the activity planned. It will look at how the chosen activity is linked to the digital competence framework standard and how it is designed to meet the curriculum standards and the requirements necessary to target the developmental goals that are in place for the children to develop their skills and abilities.

The activity is an outdoor nature scavenger hunt with the use of an iPad which will promote digital literacy and use of ICT. The children will be using their fine motor skills abilities to be able to grasp the iPad. This activity supports children's learning as from a young age they are being given the opportunity to access digital literacy opportunities and ICT use in their education. Donaldson (2015) discussed the importance of digital literacy in the document 'Successful Futures' which looks at the Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales and how incorporating digital literacy and the use of ICT can prepare children for a successful future within society. Donaldson (2015) says that all children need to be digitally competent, and he places this competency as a priority in children's education.

The activity planned should be child led, promoting independence and enhancing learning which is what the current curriculum does encourage. The new curriculum with the Welsh Government (2020) also supports child-led activities because that is how children learn, taking responsibility for their decisions and collaborating with their peers to build their understanding. Children will be more enthusiastic learners if they can learn more about the subjects they are interested in. When planning a child led activity it was looked at in depth on how the children will benefit from this. It is important to offer children opportunities, such as being able to express themselves in a creative and imaginative way, as well as encourage their ability to experience and use a variety of media technologies. It is also important to assign children a role or task, which enables them to take on a responsibility and to be able to problem solve tasks and challenges thrown at them. A scavenger hunt can offer a number of opportunities: practitioners will need to prepare and lead the activity, planning well so that children get the most out of the learning experience. The activity was designed to be play based and depending on how the children take on their roles in the scavenger hunt it is flexible which was designed to offer numerous opportunities for the children to experience.

The Welsh Government compiled the digital competence framework (2018) which has four strands and elements which are placed for children aged 3 years old to 16 years old. Digital competence is compiled with a number of abilities that allow children to use their skills in an imaginative way when using important kinds of

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technologies. Children these days need to be aware of these new systems and types of technology and as it is their opportunity to become successful in their future education. Digital competence is often looked at similar to information and communication technology which is ICT. Digital competence is combined with three aspects which includes literacy and numeracy so it can have a focus on growing children's digital skills which are so crucial to allow a wide range of education in their digital skills. The DCF has four strands such as citizenship, interacting and collaborating, producing and data and computational thinking and these four strands have to be incorporated into the designed activity.

Citizenship

Digital Competence framework (2018) The first of the four strands is citizenship, which covers children's identity and wellbeing. It is important that children are taught to use devices responsibly and to consider the safeguarding issues around accessing the internet. In this activity, it covers the opportunity to educate children on the use of online behavior and cyberbullying. ensuring digital rights and licensing and ownership is applied as children need to be aware of what comes with the use of technology.

Interacting and collaborating

Digital Competence framework (2018) A central part of children's learning takes place when they collaborate and share information with their peers. This strand is important within the digital framework because in learning collaboratively, children will understand better how to use devices and store and share information securely. The chosen activity relates to this strand when children are working in their groups, so they are able to find the objects stated in their list and ensure they share their findings with one another.

Producing

Digital Competence framework (2018) Children will use an iPad to take pictures of the objects in the scavenger hunt, so they will also need to learn how to take photos and produce them following the activity. Producing is an important strand to the DCF because it helps children learn about how they can use pictures from devices to make a classroom display or just for an individual project. Children will be supported whilst using an iPad throughout this activity and they will be helped to source and search the objects and then use the images for a follow up activity. Children should be encouraged to evaluate their progress, assessing what went well and what they could have done better, as this encourages them to think about how they can improve on their work.

Data and computational thinking

Digital Competence framework (2018) looks at the collection of data as a very important part of becoming digitally competent. Children need to learn how to use technology in order to collect and store vital bits of information, important for their learning. In this chosen activity, the children will be using their problem-solving skills to find the pictures. then what the children will do with data their pictures they

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created and produced throughout the activity they will be able to save their data to use in the future. children need to have the ability to be digitally competent for their future.

The Children's commissioner (2021) discusses the digital 5 a day and how it promotes and allows children to include digital skills in their framework which promotes a number of areas such as being able to connect, be active, creative opportunities, get involved with others and being mindful throughout.

This activity can be adapted to meet a range of children's abilities, their needs and dispositions. The activity is an outdoor scavenger hunt with iPads, which has been planned for children aged six years old. The objective of the activity is to ensure that this is an inclusive activity which all children can take part in. Having the scavenger hunt in the wide outdoor environment allows children with additional learning needs and physical disabilities to be able to take advantage of being in an outdoor environment which is less restrictive than a classroom. However, some children will need additional support to participate in the activity. Children with ALN will need access to an LSA for the activity, giving children with additional learning needs extra time when needed. LSAs can offer help throughout activity if children are finding it difficult to access and identify items on the list. Furthermore, LSAs may need to assist some children with the iPad as they may need support with the use of taking photos. The Foundation Phase (2015) was planned to be suitable for all children as part of the foundation phase framework and it ensures it is able to support children who may need extra support due to SEN or ALN. The Welsh Government with the ALN provision (2020) discuss how they ensure all schools offer extra support for any child with ALN.

On completing the activity, it is important that practitioners ensure that any changes or adaptations needed will be applied in the future activity. In other words, the best possible thing to do after an activity is to evaluate what went well and what difficulties arose so that practitioners can improve the activity if it is to be repeated (Gibbs, 1998). In this way, changes can be made to ensure that the activity is inclusive and that all children are able to get involved in the activity.

In conclusion, it is so important for all practitioners to create opportunities for children to be able to use ICT and develop digital skills for the future. Activities need to be inclusive and accessible to all, making sure all children have the opportunity to participate and develop their digital skills. Early years practitioners need to be able to critically evaluate and reflect on the activities they have planned in order to learn from and improve on their day-to-day practice (Gibbs, 1998). In using a reflective model, practitioners can make any changes that are needed to ensure the children are engaging in the activity and that learning outcomes are being met.

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