

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.

Introduction

This assignment requires that I assume the mantle of the reflective practitioner to engage in a process of self- assessment, to challenge any preconceived ideas or accepted norms in an effort to explore alternative strategies, seek remedies and develop procedures that will have a positive impact on teaching and learning in the classroom.

Reflection is important in enabling teachers to critically question their assumptions and deepen their awareness... a teacher will remain open to the idea that all teaching is an opportunity to learn, (Jackson, 2019).

Pivotal in this journey of self- analysis and reflection is the establishment of a focal point for further scrutiny. The idea being to focus on one typical incident that has happened during the course of a normal school day and take an in depth look into the context surrounding that particular incident, to carry out an audit of the workings of the classroom, examine pedagogy, the general environment, the emotional and developmental stage of the pupils involved, their relationships with peers and the class teacher. Reflecting on a 'typical' incident, with the intention to improve teaching and learning within the classroom makes that incident 'critical' to the process, (Tripp 2011) says, "these incidents appear to be 'typical' rather than 'critical' at first sight, but are rendered critical through analysis".

Engaging in reflective practice will highlight strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that effect decisions on pedagogy and enhance the practitioner's skill set and adaptability.

In addition I will examine the different theories of teaching and learning and their application in the classroom and their correlation with the Four Purposes identified in the Donaldson review of the Curriculum for Wales 'Successful Futures' and how they encourage and support the holistic development of the learner.

Observation – School and class context.

Following point 40 of the BERA guidelines 2018, concerning confidentiality and anonymity, throughout the assignment I will refer to the pupil involved in my critical incident as Child A.

My school observation period was based in a small village, community primary school. The school has two sites, the main school catering for Year 1 through to Year 6 and the nursery and reception classes based in a separate building approximately 500 metres from the main school. There are 217 pupils on the register, in the age range from 3 – 11 years, stated in the ESTYN inspection report conducted in June 2018, (ESTYN, 2018).

I was placed in a mixed ability Year Two class, with twenty one, six and seven year old pupils, the class had two Additional Learning Needs pupils, one child diagnosed with epilepsy and another with Autism Spectrum Disorder and ADHD, the class teacher was supported by a teaching assistant. The children were set into four mixed ability groups, they stayed in these groups throughout the day and carried out a variety of differentiated learning activities. Provision within the class revolved around two task tables, on which the pupils attempted specific topic worksheets, one table was supervised by the teacher and the other table by the teaching assistant, a 'challenge' table was located in another area of the classroom, where the pupils worked independently to complete a task selected from an 'options box' and a 'learning zone' occupied another area, which included activities that the children carried out independently. The groups had the opportunity to experience each activity area throughout the course of the day.

Methodology

There are two methods of observational data gathering, qualitative and quantitative, however, analysing classroom behaviour is difficult to quantify with measurable data. To avoid the need for detailed notes there was the potential to use timelines, or to target a small group and their activity, to use a category system, such as the Flanders Interaction Analysis categories, or a sign system, such as The Exeter Schedule (Wragg, 2013), but for this specific brief and for this observation to be unobtrusive and not affect the modus operandi of children and practitioners, a naturalistic, non-participant, qualitative observation was undertaken. The purpose of the qualitative observation was to acquire a broad overview of the ethos, teaching and learning strategies and pupil/teacher relationship and pupil/pupil interactions, an appropriate technique in the circumstances, the disadvantages of this observation strategy is that it is a subjective process and has the potential to miss pupil interactions whilst note-taking, it is also limited in that it highlights behaviours but not the cause and it is a snap shot of events that may or may not be the norm. Observation of the class and the lessons were taken from a discrete area in the room with the opportunity to change positions in order to assemble more information and observation notes from the different locations. Contemporaneous note-taking was the main form of data gathering. (Wragg, 2013) suggests alternative methods of data gathering, for example, video recording

or sound recording, however, logistically, this would have required pre- visits, permissions and preparations and were discounted on this occasion. A narrative of the morning session was hand written, recording the structure of the lesson, its execution, the engagement and interaction between the teacher and the children and the behaviour and social interactions between the children. A sketch of the classroom was drawn, to delineate where and when certain children were sitting or working at particular tables or areas of the classroom. The notes were then reviewed to ensure the events of the day were recorded with sufficient detail and as accurately as possible.

When analysing critical incidents, Tripp recommends a systematic inquisitorial approach in an attempt to view the critical incident from all viewpoints. (Tripp, 2011) suggests the use of different thinking strategies, an example of which is his analysis of “non-events”, which is to question the reason that something happened is because something else did not happen. (Tripp, 2011) also refers to Edward de Bono's CoRT Thinking programme which proposes viewing critical incidents as having plus and minus points and facets that are neither but are none the less equally important in order to develop a perspective on the incident. Another of de Bono, 1987, strategies is to act pro-actively in response to a critical incident, to seek alternative outcomes and through a course of action engineer different outcomes. (Tripp 2011), suggests strategies that require seeking the opinions of others to challenge our pre conceived ideas and expectations or view incidents from the opposing perspective and formulate questions that justify a particular course of action or inaction (Tripp, 2011). Ultimately, Tripp highlights the importance of repeatedly asking “Why?” and suggests that its simplicity belies its capacity to produce significantly revealing results as to causation in critical incident analysis, (Tripp, 2011).

Critical incident analysis is a valuable tool to inform pedagogy and professional decision-making but there is a need for objectivity in identifying incidents and it is important in confronting what Tripp refers to as teaching dilemmas, “Teaching decisions are by and large matters of choosing between mutually exclusive options; what they choose is a matter of professional judgement” (Tripp, 2011). (Tripp 2011) uses the term “personal theory” to describe the inherent beliefs, opinions and values acquired through upbringing, education and life experience that influence professional judgement and it is important when analysing critical incidents that you do not let personal theory cloud your views.

Critical incident linked to the four purposes.

The critical incident occurred during the morning session as the teacher was introducing a new skill, that of reading comprehension. The teacher gave a thorough breakdown of the task to the class, who were gathered on the carpet. Using the interactive board and white

boards, the teacher was able to access the pupils' prior knowledge of reading and writing skills in order to connect the text to the questions. Most of the pupils seemed engaged and were enthused by the teacher's presentation.

Child A appeared distracted throughout the teacher's exposition. He had a specific area to sit when the children were gathered together on the carpet, marked with a red 'x'. He became unsettled and started to fidget, he began by pulling the neck of his jumper over his head for which he received a warning from the teacher and his peg was moved down a section on the behaviour chart. He then started to repeatedly turn around, clearly not listening, for this he received another warning which again resulted in his peg being moved down on the chart. A consequence of his peg being moved to the lower tier of the chart meant that he was sent out of the classroom to sit on a bench in the corridor; as a result he missed 90% of the explanation.

Child A was recalled, joined his group and was given the worksheet along with the rest of the pupils, however, he displayed no intention of attempting the task, the teaching assistant who was working with Child A's group did not provide additional support despite knowing that he had missed the explanation. Child A began low level disruptive behaviour, tapping his stationary on the desk, swinging on his chair, sitting awkwardly, scraping the chair legs on the floor, the teacher gave a non- verbal warning on the first two occasions but undeterred he continued the behaviour, occasionally looking over at the teacher to see if he could elicit a reaction. Child A did not complete the activity.

The behaviour modification strategies employed on this occasion were ineffectual, in regards to Child A, being required to sit in a designated zone, signified there were behavioural issues, being sent out of class at a crucial moment, compounded the situation, both strategies having a negative effect on his emotional well-being, contrary to one of Donaldson's four purposes, this was exemplified by his disruptive, attention seeking responses. Ultimately, the combined effect of pedagogy and behaviour modification was that Child A was deprived of a valuable learning experience, which in itself creates greater divergence in knowledge between him and his peers and additional challenges for his future learning.

The framework for identifying the needs of the pupils and the most appropriate pedagogy is found in the four purpose statements of the Curriculum of Wales. In the case of Child A, he was not engaged in the activity or by the pedagogy, despite the best efforts of the teacher and the consequences of the decisions made in this incident, prevented Child A from, as stated in (Welsh Government, *A curriculum for Wales – a curriculum for life*, 2015), "building up a body of knowledge and acquiring the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in

different contexts”, a key characteristic of the purpose statement, “that all children should become “ambitious, capable learners”, and the ‘time- out’ and inability to complete the task would not have “supported his emotional and mental well- being” by developing his “confidence, resilience and empathy”, a key characteristic of the purpose statement that children should be “healthy, confident individuals”, (Dauncey, M, 2015).

Literature Review

Individuals draw on their experiences of the world around them, in many different forms and work to make sense of what they perceive in order to build an understanding of what is around them. (Pritchard, 2005)

There are three core theories which have attempted to explain the processes of learning they are behaviourism, cognitive constructivism and social constructivism, an understanding of which, reveals how elements of each are evident in everyday teaching and learning practice.

Behaviourism arises from the work of B.F Skinner, who demonstrated how rats can be conditioned as a result of experiments involving rewards and he coined the phrase ‘operant conditioning’, which means that behaviour can be affected by the consequences of that behaviour (McGregor, 2007). Reinforcement in a positive way, for example, praise, rewards or other benefits, follow the premise that rewarding aides the reinforcement of appropriate classroom behaviour (Prichard 2005), conversely, being reprimanded for unacceptable behaviour with a resulting negative consequence, is an example of Skinners theory to demonstrate that children can learn from both aspects of reinforcement in order to know how to behave and learn.

Simply put, the theory argues that all children have the ability to learn, if there is an incentive, whether it be through positive reinforcement or negative reinforcement in the form of praise or punishment. This contrasts with the cognitive constructivism, credited to the work of Jean Piaget, which, describes how children cognitively adapt to new experiences, through the synthesise of prior learning or knowledge, which is distinct from the theory of behaviourism, in that cognitive constructivism is an internal learning process and behaviourism is influenced by external factors, notably rewards and punishments, (Gray and McBlain, 2015). If one applies the rationale of these theories to the situation in the critical incident, we will see that the class teacher was employing a behaviourist approach to modify the behaviour of Child A with the imposition of a penalty for his disruptive manner in the hope that he would modify his behaviour accordingly and follow instructions to complete the task, the hope being that the negative consequence would make him learn, this ignores the

fact that there might be an internal disconnect, for whatever reason cognitively, with his understanding and the cognitive constructivists would argue that Child A would have had to make some connection with previous learning, which in Child A might be missing. This could further be explained by the element of the cognitive constructivist theory of learning referred to as the 'Schema Theory' this is an explanation of the processes of building new knowledge and understanding, Johnson- Laird 1983 from (Prichard, 2005), explains it in the following terms, "human beings understand the world by constructing models of it in their mind." (Pritchard 2005) writes that a schema represents an individual's current state of knowledge and understanding about a particular topic and therefore, whenever new learning is taking place, it is a good idea to review what was already known about the topic in question to ensure that the new learning is to be effective.

Child A's reaction to the new learning might signify that the connections from previous learning may not have been established due to previous disruptive behaviour or time- outs and his reactions were a symptom of his lack of understanding in this instance. Cognitivism recognises that changes in behaviour can be an indication of lack of understanding (Kelly, 2012).

The third theory is social constructivism, resulting from the work of Lev Vygotsky, who argues that learning occurs from a child's interaction with skilled adults and through social interaction with their peers (Allen and Gordon, 2017). This contrasts with Piaget's theory, which argues that learning is a more personal or individual process.

Lev Vygotsky also posits the idea that children have a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which means that individuals have a certain level of natural understanding of a topic when working on their own, however, with further guidance from a More Knowledgeable Other (MKO), the learners can significantly increase their knowledge or skills surrounding that topic and bridge the gap between only having a little knowledge of the information, to having a much wider understanding of the information and retaining new knowledge more effectively. (Gray and McBlain, 2015).

The application of the social constructivist approach to the critical incident with Child A could have been more impactful, had there been opportunity for group work or collaborative work, involvement with peers, might have avoided the lack of engagement with the activity during the initial explanation. Similarly, there may well have been a positive outcome, had there been additional resources, a list of words to give help, a list of sentence builders or a practical task prepared, to be completed independently or supported by the (MKO) or in this case the teaching assistant, which may have helped Child A with the understanding of the concept under discussion.

Similarly, the possibility of undertaking an authentic task could have resulted in greater engagement with the information and ideas involved in the activity. (Selinger, 2001), says authentic tasks are, “tasks which pupils can relate to their own experience, inside and outside of school”, this relates to the cognitive theory of internal learning processes.

An understanding of learning theories is essential in establishing the appropriate pedagogy to achieve the best learning outcomes, but classroom management and an effective learning environment are equally important, as observed in the critical incident, the teachers lesson plan and delivery was ideally targeted for the majority of the pupils but still did not prevent the disruptive behaviour of Child A, this correlates with (Oliver and Reschly, 2007), who posited that, “effective instruction reduces, but does not eliminate, classroom behaviour problems”.

In the area of classroom management theory, there are three prominent exponents, B.F Skinner, William Glasser and Alfie Kohn. In contrast to Skinner's behaviourism theory, Glasser's reality or choice theory argues that we are internally motivated and have the capacity to make our own choices and are not influenced by the possibility of rewards or punishments (Hussung, 2016). This approach encourages children to become more considerate and empathetic through positive teacher/pupil relationships and the development of rich learning experiences that allow children to succeed. In Kohn's approach, children are allowed to explore learning that interests them, acknowledging that children do not learn at the same pace and all learning is heavily child centred (Hussung, 2016). Kohn's approach in turn, reflects the humanist theory, this is attributed to the work of Abraham Maslow, Maslow's humanism theory focused on the individual's self- motivation to achieve the best of their potential and envisages the roll of the teacher as a facilitator in the learning process, (Allen and Gordon, 2017).

The philosophy and principles of these learning theories, can be seen to have coalesced in the development of the new curriculum for Wales, which has set at its foundation, the four core purposes, to ensure that every child is prepared, willing and able to make a valuable contribution to society in the 21st century. Teaching and learning theories and practices are constantly changing to adapt to the new challenges of society, as can be seen from the behaviourist theory, prevalent in the early to mid- twentieth century, to the humanist theory by Maslow and Kohn, (Pritchard, 2005), this is also shown in the development of the new curriculum for Wales, by the implementation of the Digital Competency Framework, now one of the three core cross curriculum responsibilities in addition to literacy and numeracy, in that it acknowledges societal changes from the development of digital technology and the internet and the opportunity for new learning experiences taking place online through peer

networks, web browsers and other internet sharing tools, its inclusion acknowledging the relatively new learning theory of 'Connectivism', originated by George Siemens and Stephen Downes, that mirrors the development and aims of the digital competency framework (Krist2366, 2015).

Reflection

The critical incident came to prominence early into my observation period and it effectively amounted to a target observation of Child A, although I remained alert to the generality of events in the classroom. The Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) models were used to record my reflections on the observation. I found the four categories in the ARC reflection model, 'feelings', 'remember and understand', 'evaluate and analyse' and 'conclusions and actions', to be beneficial in that they provided a structure and focus for a comprehensive report.

Newly aware of Tripp's concept of 'personal theory', I began to question whether my personal point of view and empathy for Child A had influenced by choice of incident. I considered 'operant conditioning' strategies employed in the classroom reasonable to establish behaviour protocols and boundaries and they acknowledged by the majority of the class. The use of a behaviour chart for the class is a valuable tool to establish class rules and behaviours and are effective with children with low motivation or high anxiety, where positive reinforcement might work (Pritchard, 2005). However, I did not consider the dilemma referred to below, faced by the class teacher in this instance.

Skilled observation is a craft that needs to be nurtured, a greater awareness of the relationships and personalities that are acquired by a permanent class teacher, would undoubtedly assist in the selection of critical incidents. According to (Wragg, 2013), it might be more informative, if Child A was observed over a set period of time across different learning activities, this may reveal differing behaviour traits which may be symptomatic of the time of day, area of learning, peer grouping or pedagogy. Time sampling could thus reveal significant trigger points for remedial action. Similarly, with the focus on Child A, observing his choices and interactions with peers and practitioners throughout the school day, and his engagement with and time spent on different learning experiences, may provide additional avenues for further investigation and intervention, perhaps a more collaborative, contextualised approach may have resonated better with his particular learning style.

The consequence of Child A's behaviour in the classroom, was a time- out period outside the classroom, to sit in the corridor, he therefore, missed the explanation of the task. The dilemma for the teacher here was, to either avoid the disruption to the learning of the

majority of the class or exclude Child A from the room, which impacted adversely on his personal understanding. A question to consider would be, do the rights of the many, outweigh the rights of the individual? Unfortunately, Child A was equally unsettled outside in the corridor, which is a typical consequence of a time-out as noted by (Fontana, 1985).

Another remedial strategy in response to the critical incident would have included a discussion with the teaching assistant prior to start of the lesson, to appraise her of the lesson objective and to suggest that Child A, whilst remaining in the class, was taken to a discrete area to have one to one reinforcement of the class teachers instructions. An alternative suggestion, depending on the additional learning needs of Child A, would be to provide differentiated work, supported with word lists or sentence building prompts, the task could also have involved the use of iPads or computers, with pre-designed resources that may appeal to Child A's interests and therefore add motivation. Another approach would be for the teaching assistant to include Child A in a small group and start a discussion around a class book or familiar story and orally complete a series of comprehension questions in pairs or as a group. I acknowledged that the challenge confronting every teacher is that they are facilitators to satisfy the learning requirements of every child in the classroom, with appropriate provision of interesting and challenging learning experiences.

Alternative to the ARC model for observations, would be to use David Kolb's Four Stage Reflective Learning Cycle (1984), which has a similar approach to critical incident analysis, but involves having a new or novel, concrete experience, to observe and record the details for future reflection, to assess the strengths and potential improvement areas with that experience, followed by research on the event and then make preparation to test situations, arising from the initial observation at some future date (Cambridge International Education Teaching and Learning Team).

Or the reflection model, designed by Gibbs, which is a six stage model, that involves a description of the incident, an analysis on your personal and emotional response to the event is followed by the evaluation of the strengths and areas for development for both pupil and teacher, this leads on to an analysis including research of relevant literature, that results in an action with a way forward, which might involve action research or continued professional development courses. (Cambridge International Education Teaching and Learning Team). I found the ARC model very teacher-friendly and would favour its use on future occasions.

Conclusion

The opportunity to perform the role of the reflective practitioner has brought into focus, that teaching is a dynamic and continuously evolving process that creates dilemmas and challenges on a daily basis. The need for innovation and evolution in teaching and learning will be crucial in the classroom for pupils and teachers and particularly with the implementation of the new curriculum for Wales, which includes the principle of subsidiarity in its foundation document (Donaldson, 2015), thereby allowing the practitioner greater autonomy in the development of the curriculum. Qualitative observation and critical incident analysis have been invaluable exercises that have challenged my views and opinions and although a solitary activity for the purposes of this assignment, I can appreciate how the opportunity to share and discuss ideas and support initiatives with colleagues, would be beneficial to all stakeholders within the school.

The professional standards for teaching available since September 2018 (Welsh Government: Professional Standards for Teaching and Learning, 2019), indicates on the standard of “refining teaching”, the element, “managing the learning environment” which defines a highly effective teacher as someone who is “taking a growing responsibility for their own learning”. In the standard “advanced learning”, the element “four purposes for learning” defines a highly effective teacher as, someone who is “able to articulate the impact of pedagogy upon learning outcomes” and in the “progression in learning” element, a highly effective teacher is someone able to articulate the next steps in a way which, “applies disciplined learning across the four purposes”, (Welsh Government: Professional Standards for Teaching and Learning, 2019). These examples highlight the changing role of the practitioner in the 21st century to someone who will need to be progressive, adaptable and engaged in action research with the continual desire to raise standards of teaching and learning.

Word Count = 4,238

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Appendices

1) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: Literacy - The lesson objective was to write a sentence in their books that matched the correct picture of a typical morning routine in the house. Using and having an understanding of nouns, adverbs, past tense, time tense, first person etc.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) The learners that were carrying out the activity on the focused task table appeared to be engaged in that activity and were making every effort to follow instructions from the teachers whilst carrying out the activity.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the activity was to demonstrate an understanding of how to use nouns, adverbs, past tense, time tense, first person, etc, in order to construct a sentence using pictures as prompts and use the correct words for each sentence.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The learners gathered on the carpet before the task started and had a full recap of their previous work on the meaning of nouns, adverbs etc, with the learners responding well and showing a very good understanding of the task ahead.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) During the carpet recap before the task was carried out, all learners were engaged and participated in answering questions on the topic they were covering. When the learners went to their set groups to perform the task, most were engaged and completing the work successfully, however, one or two learners lacked concentration and appeared to be not as enthusiastic and the ones that were more able had no extension task to carry on with once they finished that particular task, there was no differentiation in work for the learners on task.

Assessment

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

Before - recap on carpet

During - teacher and TA sat on the table with the children and were monitoring their work as they were going along and correcting or guiding them towards the right path throughout the task.

After - the learner's self- assessed their work after they had finished, with green, orange or red stamps, depending on how difficult or easy the learners found the activity.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

During the carpet recap, the teacher was asking questions to prompt their previous knowledge, the teacher expected hands to be raised to answer the question, however, some shouted out the answers before they were asked, the teacher only picked on one little girl to tell off even though most of the class were doing it and that little girl no longer bothered to raise her hand to participate in the recap.

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

Dyddiad/Date: 26th September 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings <i>Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?</i> <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	<u>Task 1- Sentences</u> The learners were engaged in the introduction of the task given by the teacher on the carpet and seemed to be clear on what was required of them and proceeded to carry out the activity independently within their groups. The class was clam and orderly.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda?</i> <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i>	The recall section on the carpet before the task started that called on their previous knowledge of the subject was very positive; the learners were very enthusiastic and keen to answer. There was no constant monitoring of the group that was in the learning area,

<i>Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig?</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	whilst the other groups were on the task table, this allowed situations in that area to become a little disruptive and out of control. No differentiation in tasks for the more advanced learners.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?</i> <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf?</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	The carpet time recall, explanation and practice of the activity before going off to their groups. Having the teacher and TA on the activity table, guiding the learners throughout the task also helped them progress with ease during the task. No monitoring of the learning area and the children had no clear objective. There was no extension task for the more able learners once they had completed the task.
Casgliadau a champau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions <i>Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd?</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf?</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	To possibly have intermittent checks on the 'learning area' by the teacher or TA, to make sure that the children in that area were making appropriate use of their time there and provide more advanced follow up work for the pupils that were able to complete the task at a faster pace than others, in order for those children to practice and expand their knowledge further. I would review the activities in the learning area to ensure they were appropriate and sufficiently challenging. I would introduce a reward scheme that reflected good behavior and/or completion of the set tasks.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

2) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: Literacy - Handwriting - to practice writing the letters a-e in lower case, cursive form, by tracing those letters on a piece of paper several times.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) Once the activity had started the learners did seem focused with the assistance of the teacher and TA giving them prompts to continue and be able to complete their work.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the activity was clear to the learners because they immediately started the task that was set, whereby they had to trace lines of letters from a-e.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The teacher provided a recap of all the letters on the interactive board, the learners used their 'magic fingers' to trace the letters in the air, they also knew a rhyme to help with each letter shape, some were then chosen to draw the letters on the board to practice.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All learners were able to engage in the lesson, however, there were some learners with a more advanced idea of handwriting and letter formations but they were not able to progress further with any more letters because the whole class were only focusing on the letters a- e, no differentiation or extension work was provided.
Assessment How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching? Before - all learners had a recap on the carpet. During - teacher and TA continuously monitored and checked the learners' progress on

the tables.

After - the learners used the green, orange, or red self- assessment stamps at the end of the task.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

On the Monday of this week, a new boy started the school, he has the additional learning needs of autism and ADHD, at the time of my observation he had still not been placed into a group and was therefore left to peruse some class reading materials on the beanbag on the carpet on his own, whilst the other children went to their groups to start the task.

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

Dyddiad/Date: 26th September 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings <i>Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?</i> <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	<u>Task 2 – Handwriting</u> I felt the learners were placed in mixed ability groups with clear aims and outcomes for the activity.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda?</i> <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig?</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	The learners were able to practice on the interactive board before hand with the teachers guidance, using a rhyme for each letter and their 'magic finger' to trace the letter in the air before starting the activity in their groups. The learners then used the self- assessment stamps to mark their work on how they felt it went. Some of the learners finished the task before the rest of their group and no follow up task was provided for those particular learners.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?</i> <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and</i>	The practice of the letters on the interactive board, along with the rhymes and 'magic finger' tracing were all very effective in making clear the task ahead for the learners. Also, the handwriting picture frames on every table aided the task by allowing the learners to use them to double check the

<i>learning in the future?"</i> <i>Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf?</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	correct way of writing a letter in the alphabet. No follow up work, which led to those particular learners who had finished to be left unoccupied on the carpet causing a minor distraction to the other learners who were still working on the activity.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ <i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd?</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf?</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	Provide a follow up task that is ready to use for the learners who finish early for them then to be able to further their learning without having to wait for the rest of the class to catch up. I would re arrange the groups and place the more confident writers in a group with a more challenging writing task. Perhaps to copy a word, or sentences or create their own sentences.
Y profiad newydd / <i>Transformed experience</i>	

3) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2 nd October 2019
Lesson details: Numeracy - the aim was to practise counting up five numbers in order from a different starting number point and correctly placing those next numbers in the sequence.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) The learners appeared focused and engaged with the introduction and explanation of the task that was given by the teacher on the carpet, all the learners participated in answering the questions that the teacher was asking them regarding the task ahead.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The clear purpose of the task was to ensure the children could correctly count up five numbers from any random number they were given in the tens units. The lesson activity promoted this by using a worksheet that had different starting numbers on them and the children had to write down the next five numbers after each starting number. Each child was given a number line from 0-100 in order to help them if they were unsure of the next number in the order.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The children seemed clear on what the activity was and how to carry it out, the teacher went through the task on the whiteboard, giving examples of the same type of questions that were on the work sheet and the class were answering them together on the carpet to make sure that everyone was along the right lines. The teacher used the thumbs up, thumbs in the middle or thumbs down strategy to assess their level of understanding before they started the task.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All learners were able to engage in the lesson, the two tables that had the worksheet task had the teacher and TA on the each of those tables, they provided guidance and assistance where it was needed if the child was stuck on a particular question, however, all children seemed to be able to complete most of the worksheet with little help from the teacher or TA.

The learners were challenged in the task, there was differentiation between the two tables on what numbers were being used on the worksheet, one table had 0-20 the other table were working on number in the 30s, 40s and 50s.

Assessment

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

Before - the teacher explains and walks through the task with the class all together, asking questions in order for the children to try to remember their previous learning of numbers rather than just give them the answers straight away.

During - the teacher or TA who was on the table working with the children on the task would ask them what they thought would come next in the order of numbers and see if the child could solve it themselves first before giving the answer in order for them to progress onto the next question.

After - the learners self- assessed using the traffic light stamps

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

When the class had to go to assembly in the morning after the register, the new boy with ALN, specifically ASD and ADHD, walked to assembly with the teacher instead of with the rest of the class, the teacher took a three minute egg timer with her and told the boy that they would only stay in assembly for three minutes in order for him to stay at ease with going into different environments with larger groups of people, he happily went along with this and when they came back first having only been in assembly for three minutes, the teacher praised him for being able to stay there for that amount of time and gave him dojo points which he watched the teacher do on the board, the boy was very pleased with himself that he had achieved this and seemed at ease with most activities for the rest of the day.
This boy was not included in the maths activity than followed assembly.

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 2nd October 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	The experience of the first task of the day was a very positive with all the learners engaging in the summary on the carpet and then they were able in most cases, working independently, to carry on with the activity in their groups.

Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>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?"</i> <i>Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	The summary session on the carpet was very informative and clear for the children to understand what was required of them, the teacher also explained why the children would need the skills of being able to count on from any random number they were given for when they progressed into juniors. The teacher used good questioning in order to draw upon the learners prior knowledge of the subject. The TA missed how the teacher was explaining to count a number and pair them correctly (by using the magic number), so the group that was with the TA were told a slightly different way of working out the right answer, which would ultimately lead to some confusion for the learners when they carry out the task again in the future.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>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?"</i> <i>Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf? "What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	The questions strategies during the introduction of the task were very effective in bringing out the children's prior knowledge of the subject, this also allowed the teacher to assess their understanding of the activity. Having the teacher and the TA on each table where the task was being carried out was encouraging for the learners to have the reassurance that they were carrying out the task correctly. Also the different size of numbers between each tables allowed the one table to continue their learning of bigger numbers rather than be stuck on lower numbers. The TA missing the introduction to the task and the correct way that the 'magic numbers' were used, leading to mixed ways of teaching the same activity.
Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions <i>Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiau siomedig a nodwyd? "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf? "What will you do next?"</i>	Ensure the upkeep of clear communication between the teacher and the support staff to safeguard consistency and clarity in the children's learning. I would have immediately have instructed the TA to support the boy with ALN, with a task that was specific to his needs, giving him the option of working on the tables with the rest of the group if he was willing and able. This would ensure that he felt integrated and part of the group and engaged in a worthwhile, productive activity. I would try to develop some collaborative and community building activities to integrate the boy to cultivate friendships.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	

4) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2 nd October 2019
Lesson details: An introduction into answering questions based on a short written piece of text i.e. comprehension skills.
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) The learners were focused and enthusiastic in learning this new skill, they all appeared to answer questions and participate in listening to how the teacher was explaining the task to them during the carpet time introduction and explanation.
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) The purpose of the lesson was to answer questions based on a piece of text, which incorporated their previous learning of past tense, first person, conjunctions etc. The text was read three times to the class, while they were sitting on the carpet, how to answer the questions was also explained and looked over together as a class before the children went to their tables. The activity was directly related to the purpose of engaging their learners prior knowledge of reading, spotting first person words, conjunctions etc. and the worksheet was a replica of the one that was explained together as a class during the carpet introduction.
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) The teacher spent a quality amount of time explaining the activity and how to answer it. Therefore, giving the learners a clear idea of what was involved and required of them.
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) All students appeared engaged and challenged in the activity and found it more of a fun learning experience to have a go at something new rather than have a defeatist attitude towards a new challenge. It was challenging for all because the activity incorporated handwriting skills, reading skills, linking the questions to the piece of text and was a new topic for the whole class.

Assessment

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

Before - the teacher gave a thorough breakdown of the new skill during the carpet introduction and used visual aides to help the learners see how it was to be carried out.

During - the teacher and the TA had a table each and were guiding the learners through the task and helping them if they needed assistance.

After - the traffic light stamps were used to show how the learners felt the task went.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

A boy was sent out of class during the introduction to the new literacy task for being disruptive and not sitting properly on the carpet after being given a warning on two occasions. When he came back in he had missed the introduction of the new topic and therefore, was not engaged in the lesson at all and was swinging on his chair, banging rulers on the tables etc. in order to gain attention and create a scene, ultimately distracting the teacher and causing a disruption to his peers.

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 2nd October 2019

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings <i>Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?</i> <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	The carpet session given by the teacher prior to the task was effective in introducing a new area into the children's learning. It involved clear continuation from their previous work in the use of first person, past tense, conjunctions etc.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda?</i> <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgi oedd yn siomedig?</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	Access the children's prior knowledge of recounts and applying it to their task today of reading a piece of text and answering questions linked to that text. The teacher also explained how to negotiate the task, by explain that if they were not sure of the answer to the question they could refer back to the text in order to get the answer. One boy was reprimanded and penalized, which was recorded on a behavior peg chart, the boy was undeterred and receive a time- out in the corridor, missing the full explanation.

	The boy was not given any extra instruction on how to carry out the task when he was allowed to return to his desk, therefore, he did not complete it ended up causing a disruption to the rest of the table.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?</i> <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf?</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	The thorough introduction of the new task to the class on the carpet was effective and engaging for most of the class and they were able to carry out the task with little assistance. The behavior protocol was designed to manage the class, but when applies in this instance, it was to the detriment of the boy who missed a valuable learning experience.
Casgliadau a champau gweithredu/ Conclusions and actions <i>Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd?</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf?</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	As the boy had previous issues and had to sit in a specific space, perhaps the TA could have offered some measure of control or this could have been anticipated and the TA could have sat with the child and reinforced the teacher's explanation one to one, at a table or more relaxed location. As the child did not respond to negative reinforcement, he might respond to positive reinforcement, such as reward.
Y profiad newydd / Transformed experience	